

THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG

INFORMATION SHEET

An unconscious leading lady, a corpse who can't play dead, a ruffled detective, and a word-mangling butler (among others) must battle against technical problems, forgotten lines, and sabotaging scenery in a quest to arrive all in one piece at the final curtain call.

This is an extremely fast-paced and physically taxing show that requires a cast and, ESPECIALLY, a crew with a lot of energy who are willing and ready to get a workout!

We are looking for truthful, funny, physically adept performers who can commit to the style of the play and fully inhabit the characters. It is vital to believe in the characters who are performing the play-within-the-play, as that is from where the heartbreaking comedy comes. With that in mind, we are looking for actors with a keen ability and understanding of comedy, but are able to play the truth of the scenes. In reference to the character descriptions below most characters are written with he/him or she/her descriptions but casting is not limited to those specific descriptions. All characters (besides Annie and Trevor) require (RP) British accents.

Setting

*The action takes place on the opening night of the Cornley Drama Society's production of the murder mystery play **Murder at Haversham Manor**.*

Available Roles

Annie- the company's stage manager with a Lancashire accent. She has the biggest journey of any character. She's initially terrified by acting, but is willing to kill for it by the end of the play. Her terror turns to joy, and then to fury. She starts small, but grows and grows. (Irish, Lancashire, American Accent)

Chris/Inspector Carter - director of the play-within-a-play Murder at Haversham Manor and plays the esteemed Inspector Carter. This is the biggest day of his life. He is rigid and uptight. The experience of performing the show is both nerve-wracking and exciting. His pain is evident and every time someone laughs, the pain deepens.

Robert/Thomas Colleymore - pretentious actor, as evidenced by his presentational style. But - he's not a parody of a bad actor, just unaware of others around him. He does not feel bad when things go wrong and never learns from his mistakes. There's a power struggle between Robert and Chris to be president of the Corley Poly Drama Society (a position that matters a great deal to Robert).

Dennis/Perkins**- has no real desire to be involved in the theatre; he just wants friends. He believes if he does well in the show, he'll be more successful socially. Laughter from the audience is agony and a personal tragedy for him. He's slightly oblivious, but understands when he gets things wrong.

***Trevor** - the play's curmudgeonly lighting and sound operator who simply wants to get on with the show. Doesn't like actors and is easily distracted. When things go really sideways, Trevor is forced to act in the play. (British is preferred but any accent will do, including American)

Jonathan/Charles Haversham - is a bit bland personality-wise but sees himself as a James Bond-type. Excited and having fun. He technically has to drive the show. He cares about the play, but it's mostly just for fun for him. The role of Charles Haversham is a very physically demanding role.

Max/Cecil Haversham/Arthur - has never been onstage before. He learned his lines and does exactly what he's told to do. He has zero connection with any of the actors, but when he gets a laugh he breaks the fourth wall and engages with the audience. Childlike and naive. His mistakes are fundamental. He doesn't think anything through.

Sandra/Florence Colleymore - is vain and has a huge ego. She wants to be loved. She has ambitions to go to Hollywood and will hurt anyone standing in the way of what she wants, but is smart enough to stay on the good side of someone who can help her (like the director). The stakes are high for her. Very physical role

Stage Crew - 2-3 actors to play non-speaking roles to act as Annie's team backstage. These actors will be causing many of the set's visual gags to go off and perform many of the practical sound effects

*Non-gender specific

**Male character played by any gender