MURDER
ON THE
518

By Michelle Giles

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~ FOR SCOTT AND MATT, WHO ALWAYS INSPIRE ME. ~

MURDER ON THE 518

BY MICHELLE GILES

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(In Order of Appearance)

Travelers
SIDNEY BENNETT...............pesky paparazzo 12
RACHEL KNOX.....................happy honeymooner; 23
Caleb’s wife
CALEB KNOX......................the other half of the newlyweds 24
ELLIOIT WILLIAMS ..............meticulous writer 27
MIKE UMBARR ...................enthusiastic basketball coach 38
HOLLY BARNES....................lofty astronomy professor 40
LAUREN MALONEY ...............veteran ER doctor 32
ABBY WELLS........................passionate veterinary technician 32
NELSON HENRY ...................upbeat musician 29
OWEN CASEY ....................focused private investigator 55
DEREK WARREN .................intense executive chef 30
JENNIFER WARREN .............creative pastry chef; Derek’s wife 30
avery MILLEN ....................savvy pharmaceutical CEO 53
JILLIAN HILL ....................dutiful assistant to Ms. Millen 40
ISABELLA MADISON ...........pompous movie starlet 10
LUCY BLAKE .....................faithful assistant to Ms. Madison 40

Others
*ACTOR ONE ......................as Conductor, Waiter One, 21
Executive Chef, and Police
Officer One

*ACTOR TWO ......................as Ticket Seller One, Waiter 23
Two, Sous Chef One, and Police
Officer Two

*ACTOR THREE .....................as Ticket Seller Two, Waiter 20
Three, Sous Chef Two, and Police
Officer Three

*OTHERS can be played minimally with three actors for the smallest
cast size or broken down into individual roles for larger casts. See
PRODUCTION NOTES.
SETTING

Time: The present.
Place: The West Coast 518 train from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE
Scene One: The Salt Lake City train station.
Scene Two: The dining car of the West Coast 518, that evening.
Scene Three: The dining car, a few minutes later.

ACT TWO
Scene One: The dining car, in the early morning hours of the next day.
Scene Two: A platform at the Los Angeles train station, that afternoon.

SET DESCRIPTION

Train stations: The Salt Lake City train station can be played minimally in front of the curtain. There are benches DOWN CENTER and along the edges of the stage, and a ticket counter or booth with two windows DOWN RIGHT. The entrance to the station is LEFT, and the exit to the train platform is RIGHT. The train platform at the Los Angeles train station can be played on a bare stage.

Dining car: Four tables with four chairs each are onstage in a staggered arrangement so the audience can see all the characters. Each table has a low, floral centerpiece with a card numbered Table One through Table Four, along with napkins, flatware, and glasses. There is an easel DOWN RIGHT. LEFT leads to the kitchen, RIGHT leads to the other train cars that include the lounge, passenger cabins, and the front of the train.
ACT TWO, Scene Two:

Guitar case (NELSON)
Thick book (ABBY)
Single sheet of paper, pen (ELLIOT)
Silver case, key on a bracelet (AVERY)
Paper bag containing water glass and Elliot's notepad (OWEN)
Handcuffs (POLICE OFFICER TWO)

SOUND EFFECTS
Train whistle, train starting.

COSTUMES
The time period is the present, so all costuming is flexible. Some
suggestions include:

RACHEL and CALEB wear similar clothing that makes them look like a
vacationing couple.

JENNIFER and DEREK should be identifiable as chefs, perhaps dressed
in all white or in clothing with a food motif.

NELSON is the most casual character and can wear clothing such as
jeans, a tie-dye or band t-shirt, or other “easy going” clothes.

SIDNEY is undercover and wears dark colors, trying to blend in with
his surroundings.

MIKE can wear a t-shirt and shorts, sweats, or other sport clothing.

ISABELLA can wear any type of clothing that makes her stand out as
a diva, over-dressed and trying to draw attention to herself. She
changes for ACT ONE, Scene Two, into a flashier outfit, such as a
ball gown, sequins, a feather boa, long gloves, etc.

ABBY can wear something that identifies her love of animals. A shirt
with an animal printed on it, especially marine life, would be ideal.

LAUREN, HOLLY, LUCY, AVERY, JILLIAN, and ELLIOT are all traveling for
business and can wear appropriate business attire such as a suit and/or
tie for ELLIOT and pantsuits, skirts, sweaters, or dresses for the women.

LUCY and ISABELLA wear the same necklace.

CONDUCTOR wears a uniform and a watch and carries a whistle.

POLICE, WAITERS, CHEFS, and TICKET SELLERS should wear uniforms.

FLEXIBLE CASTING and CAST SIZE
OTHERS can be played with as few as three players for a minimal cast
size of nineteen, or broken down into individual roles for a cast as
large as twenty-eight.
MURDER ON THE 518

ACT ONE
Scene One

1 AT RISE: The Salt Lake City train station. TICKET SELLERS ONE and TWO work behind a small counter RIGHT. OPTIONAL EXTRAS sit on benches or move around the stage with assorted luggage, on their way to various destinations. SIDNEY is seated on a bench holding a newspaper as if to read it, but inconspicuously surveying the room and ALL who come and go. ALL TRAVELERS except ISABELLA carry luggage.

CONDUCTOR: (ENTERS RIGHT, crosses DOWN CENTER, and blows a whistle.) All aboard! West Coast 518 bound for Los Angeles now boarding on Platform Two! Departure in fifteen minutes! All aboard West Coast 518! (EXITS RIGHT.)

RACHEL: (ENTERS LEFT with CALEB.) I can’t believe this day has finally arrived! The day I get to head to Los Angeles with the love of my life on our honeymoon! Can you believe that we’ve already been married for three whole weeks, Caleb?

CALEB: It feels like only yesterday that my beautiful bride became my beautiful wife! I can’t wait to spend the next ten days exploring Los Angeles with you, Rachel.

RACHEL: Walking along the beach…

CALEB: Visiting all the museums…

RACHEL: Going on all the rides at Disneyland…

CALEB: Seeing all the stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame…

RACHEL/CALEB: I’m so excited!

RACHEL: I have been looking forward to this trip every minute of every day since our wedding. I don’t want anything to spoil our wonderful honeymoon together.

CALEB: Well, we had better hurry up and get our tickets. We don’t want to miss the train! (They cross to the ticket counter and conduct their stage business with TICKET SELLER TWO as ELLIOT ENTERS LEFT.)

ELLIOI: (Carries a notepad and pen, writing as he crosses to TICKET SELLER ONE. An eccentric writer, he narrates his life in third person, reading aloud to no one in particular what he is writing.) Elliot entered the train station. The platform was brightly lit against the dimming light of the waning day. People were moving to and fro, hustling and bustling to reach their destinations. (RACHEL and CALEB take their tickets and rush OFF RIGHT.) Elliot approached the ticket counter, eager to begin his own journey.
TICKET SELLER ONE: (Hears ELLIOT and is confused.) May... I help you, sir?

ELLIOIT: As Elliot approached the counter, the young ticket seller asked, “May I help you, sir?” Elliot replied, “Why, yes, thank you. May I please have one ticket to Los Angeles?”

TICKET SELLER ONE: (Still confused, looks around a bit.) Sir, are you saying that you would like to purchase a ticket to Los Angeles?

ELLIOIT: (Sighs.) Elliot sighed in frustration at the ticket seller, who didn’t seem to understand his simple request to purchase a ticket to Los Angeles. It was imperative that Elliot get to Los Angeles the next day to meet with his publisher and present his latest collection of short stories.

TICKET SELLER ONE: Sir, if I could just have your attention for one moment... I’m not sure I understand—

ELLIOIT: (Slams his notepad down on the counter. To TICKET SELLER ONE.) Yes! I need to purchase a ticket to Los Angeles! I just said that!

TICKET SELLER ONE: My apologies, sir, I— I was not certain if you were speaking to me or speaking to, umm... your notepad.

ELLIOIT: As a writer, I need to be constantly aware of my surroundings and record every detail so that I can incorporate it into my work! Even everyday conversations and interactions can find their place in the written world.

TICKET SELLER ONE: I see... Well, here is your ticket. Enjoy your trip to Los Angeles, sir.

ELLIOIT: (Takes the ticket, picks up his notepad, and begins writing again.) With a ticket finally in hand, Elliot made his way to the boarding platform. As the warm evening winds swirled about... (Wanders OFF RIGHT, still muttering to himself while writing furiously. MIKE ENTERS LEFT carrying a bag of basketballs and a duffel bag and approaches TICKET SELLER TWO.)

TICKET SELLER TWO: How can I help you, sir?

MIKE: (Louder than necessary.) One for Los Angeles!

TICKET SELLER TWO: (Wincs at the volume.) Yes, sir. And will you be keeping your sports equipment with you, or would you like to check that bag?

MIKE: (Still loud.) My equipment goes where I go! You never know when the opportunity to use it will arise! Need to be prepared! (HOLLY ENTERS LEFT with a briefcase. TICKET SELLER ONE waves her over to the ticket counter.)

TICKET SELLER TWO: I don’t think there will be the opportunity to play basketball on the train, sir.
MIKE: I didn’t become Mike Umbarr, top sports recruiter in the western conference, with that type of attitude! (Four individuals—LAUREN, ABBY, NELSON, and OWEN—ENTER LEFT and form a line. ABBY carries a thick book. NELSON carries a guitar case and is constantly tapping a beat on it. OWEN reads a newspaper.)

HOLLY: (To MIKE.) Excuse me? I think that the pursuit of knowledge should be held in more esteem than the pursuit of basketball championships, especially at a university! I hope the students you recruit understand the value of receiving an education and do not think the entirety of their college experience should be spent in a gymnasium seeking the approval of mindless sports fans.

MIKE: (Aghast.) How dare you talk about sports that way?! Sports provide teamwork, physical fitness, critical thinking, and so much more! Just who do you think you are?

HOLLY: Professor Holly Barnes, University of Utah, department of physics and astronomy. While you spend your time recruiting people to run around a basketball court in circles, I spend my time researching the night sky.

MIKE: Isn’t it a little bright in Los Angeles to be “researching the night sky”?

HOLLY: For your information, I am going to the city to give a presentation on the Perseids at the Griffith Observatory. The meteor shower was particularly spectacular this August due to the setting of the waxing crescent moon.

MIKE: And you think I’m the crazy one? You’re speaking gibberish! Nerd.

HOLLY: Neanderthal! (MIKE takes his ticket and EXITS RIGHT in frustration. HOLLY grabs her ticket and storms OFF behind him.)

TICKET SELLER ONE: We can help the next two customers, please! (LAUREN and ABBY approach the two ticket windows.)

LAUREN: (To TICKET SELLER ONE.) Good evening. One for Los Angeles, please.

ABBY: (Excited, to LAUREN.) I’m heading to Los Angeles too! (To TICKET SELLER TWO.) One for Los Angeles, please! (Sticks her hand out to LAUREN.) I’m Abby Wells.

LAUREN: (Shakes hands with ABBY, polite but unenthusiastic.) Dr. Lauren Maloney. It’s nice to meet you.

ABBY: (Even more excited.) You’re a doctor?! You know, I’m studying medicine—well, veterinary medicine. I’m going to Los Angeles to get experience as an aquatic vet tech. It’s a little hard to work with marine life in Utah! I bet you could teach me a lot.

LAUREN: (Tries to be nice, but not interested.) Well, that’s nice of you to say, but I’m an emergency room physician, not a...
veternarian. I don’t think I’ll be able to help you very much with your marine studies.

**ABBY:** But so much of medicine can be applied across disciplines! *(Holds out her book.)* I read that in my *Introduction to Marine Studies* book. I think they were talking about animal studies, but I mean, humans are mammals, right?

**LAUREN:** Listen, I do love my job, but everyone needs some time off, wouldn’t you agree? I’m spending my time off visiting some family in Los Angeles. And truly, work is the last thing I want to think about while I’m there. It was nice meeting you, though. *(Takes her ticket and abruptly EXITS RIGHT as ABBY grabs her own ticket and takes OFF after her. DEREK and JENNIFER, followed almost immediately by AVERY and JILLIAN, ENTER LEFT and get in line behind NELSON and OWEN. DEREK and JENNIFER bicker. AVERY reads a business magazine and carries a small silver briefcase along with her other luggage. JILLIAN talks quietly on a phone.)*

**TICKET SELLER TWO:** Next two customers, please!

**NELSON:** *(Approaches TICKET SELLER ONE as OWEN goes to TICKET SELLER TWO. NELSON continues to tap a tune on the outside of his guitar case.)* Hey, there. One for the city of Flowers and Sunshine, friend.

**TICKET SELLER ONE:** I’m sorry, where, sir?

**NELSON:** The City of Angels? The Big Orange? La-La Land?

**TICKET SELLER ONE:** I’m afraid I still don’t understand, sir.

**OWEN:** He means Los Angeles. *(To NELSON.)* Can you please stop your tapping? I’ve been reading the same paragraph over and over the whole time we were in line, because I can’t concentrate with all the racket! *(To TICKET SELLER TWO.)* I also need one ticket for Los Angeles, please.

**NELSON:** *(Continues to tap on his guitar case.)* Why so serious, my newspaper-reading friend? What is it that’s taking you to the coast?

**OWEN:** I am not your friend. I am Owen Casey, private investigator. I’m trying to read this article about bank fraud, but you seem intent on stopping that from happening. And of course we’re on the same train.

**NELSON:** Private investigator, huh? That sounds pretty exciting, friend. Music can be exciting, too. Probably in a… different way.

**OWEN:** Definitely in a different way. Since you’ll probably tell me anyhow, what takes you to Los Angeles? Peace and love?

**NELSON:** I’m going to become a musical sensation, friend! This guitar is my ticket to the good life. I’m off to the coast to play my way
LUCY: Oh… I don’t believe this… Jillian, how could you?

FIN! You figured it out! It was me!

JILLIAN: (ALL gasp.)

You’ve got to be quicker than that to surprise me!

MIKE: Going somewhere?

DEREK:

LUCY: (After a pause.)

OWEN: HOLLY:

So you poisoned her to make her sick?

HOLLY: JILLIAN:

That’s why you killed her? You were angry about her insults?

AVERY:

JILLIAN: Lucy, I didn’t mean to kill her! Honest, I didn’t!

OFFICERS TWO and THREE handcuff JILLIAN and bring her CENTER. (OFFICER ONE holds the evidence bag and silver case while POLICE move to apprehend JILLIAN.)

excitedly to each other. POLICE OFFICERS ONE, TWO, and THREE surprise. JENNIFER, LAUREN, ABBY, HOLLY, OWEN, and ELLIOT talk DERK and MIKE. LUCY, RACHEL, CALEB, and NELSON react with

And the only person who was near both Isabella and Sidney right

Isabella. One other person who handled the open case of medicine.

We couldn’t have killed him, and she didn’t kill Isabella.

we realized that Avery was nowhere near Sidney at any point. She

first, as well. But when we went back through Elliot’s notebook,

around to cut her off.)

and LUCY. MIKE and DEREK notice JILLIAN moving away and circle

feel better after you killed her!

I thought a bunch of pictures of her getting sick all over the train

about looking her best and being better than everyone else that

what would bring Isabella down a notch? She was so worried

that Sidney was on board and taking pictures to sell, I thought,

right to talk down to us? To all of us! Fame doesn’t give people the

was so rude to everyone. I mean, what did she think gave her the

and surprise.)

confession, ALL react appropriately with various levels of shock

But there was one other person at the table with you and

right before her big movie premier would be just the thing to mess

up her perfect Hollywood image!

I was so angry at the way Isabella treated us at the train

cuts in front. LUCY rushes ON behind her, carrying an excessive

amount of luggage and muttering apologies to AVERY and JILLIAN

as she passes. JILLIAN is very frustrated. AVERY tries to calm her.
SIDNEY, who has been inconspicuous to this point, suddenly gets very excited. He pulls out a small camera, which he tries to hide behind his newspaper, and begins to photograph ISABELLA.)

ISABELLA: (Between her large personality and her copious luggage, she and LUCY take up the entire space in front of both ticket windows.) This place is just disgusting! Just look around! It’s too hot, that train is making smoke—and is that sand blowing around the floor? This is not a place I should be expected to set foot in.

LUCY: Isabella, we’ve been over this. We have to take the train to Los Angeles as part of your next movie, Sunset on the Rails. West Coast Railways is the company providing the trains for the film, and they said they won’t have their name appearing in the movie unless you are seen actually riding one of their passenger trains for publicity. It’s in your contract!

ISABELLA: Well, Lucy, I have no idea why you agreed to that. You are supposed to look out for my interests, and this is not something a movie star would be interested in!

LUCY: I’m your assistant, Isabella, not your agent. He’s the one who agreed to this. Besides, I’m sure it won’t be as bad as you are making it out to be.

TICKET SELLER ONE: (To ISABELLA.) Excuse me, miss, but those women were in line before you. Please step to this side.

ISABELLA: Do you know who I am? I am Isabella Madison, star of the movie One More Day, which is currently the top-grossing film in Iceland, Greenland, and Norway! I don’t step aside, and I certainly don’t wait in lines with people. People wait in lines for me!

JILLIAN: That’s ridiculous! Just because you are a movie star doesn’t mean you can just cut in front of people in line!

AVERY: (To TICKET SELLERS.) It’s fine. Take care of them. We can wait. (ISABELLA continues to complain to LUCY and TICKET SELLERS while AVERY turns to JILLIAN.) Don’t worry about it, we will get to the counter in a minute.

JILLIAN: She can’t just get her own way because she made some foreign film that no one has ever even heard of! You deserve more respect than she does. She should wait behind you. You’re the CEO of Salt Lake Pharmaceuticals!

AVERY: Yes, Jillian. And you are my assistant. And as the CEO, I’m telling you not to worry about it.

ISABELLA: (Mid-rant.) …and that is final! I don’t care if the only sleeper cars you have left house two people, I demand my own! And when is dinner? I am just famished from this whole ordeal!
1 TICKET SELLER TWO: Dinner will be served tonight at seven o’clock in the dining car, and breakfast will be served tomorrow morning at eight a.m.

ISABELLA: The food on this train had better be prepared by competent chefs. The last thing I need on this venture is substandard cuisine. And I had best have my own table in the dining car! I absolutely will not have my meals disturbed by whatever other nonsensical people are on this ridiculous train trip. (EXITS RIGHT in a huff, leaving her luggage behind. LUCY grabs both tickets and follows her OFF, apologizing again to AVERY and JILLIAN as they approach the ticket counter. As ISABELLA passes, SIDNEY hides behind his newspaper. TICKET SELLER TWO comes around from behind the window to move their luggage OFF RIGHT.)

TICKET SELLER ONE: (TO JILLIAN and AVERY.) I apologize for the inconvenience, ladies. Thank you for your patience. Where are you heading?

AVERY: No problem. It wasn’t your fault. Two tickets for Los Angeles, please.

TICKET SELLER ONE: Certainly. And would you like to check any of your bags?

AVERY: No, thank you. We need to go straight to our business meeting with Sunset Pharmaceuticals as soon as the train arrives, and I don’t want to have to wait for the baggage to be unloaded.

JILLIAN: I still don’t understand why we can’t just fly there, Ms. Millen. We could have arrived tonight and had plenty of time to get ready for your presentation. Or should I say, get ready for your takeover? This will be the third company that Salt Lake Pharmaceuticals has acquired this year!

AVERY: (Gestures to the silver briefcase.) You know we can’t take our pharmaceutical samples on a plane. I always worry that the change in air pressure will ruin them and then the presentation will fall flat. This is a big acquisition for us, Jillian, and we can’t have anything go wrong.

JILLIAN: Of course you’re right, Ms. Millen. As always. (Takes their tickets and follows AVERY OFF RIGHT. TICKET SELLER TWO goes behind the ticket window again.)

CONDUCTOR: (ENTERS RIGHT, checks his watch, and blows a whistle.) All aboard! West Coast 518 bound for Los Angeles, final boarding call! Departure in five minutes! All aboard West Coast 518! (EXITS RIGHT.)

SIDNEY: (Grabs his luggage and runs to the ticket counter.) I need one ticket on the 518 please.
TICKET SELLER TWO: The train to Los Angeles, sir?

SIDNEY: It doesn’t matter where it’s heading. All that matters is that Isabella Madison is on it, and that means I need to be on it, too.

TICKET SELLER TWO: Forgive me, sir, but why must you be on the train with her?

SIDNEY: Because I’m Sidney Bennett, paparazzo extraordinaire! I heard that she had to ride a train for her new contract, and I followed her to Salt Lake City on her movie tour. I’ve been sitting in this station for two days waiting for her to show up!

TICKET SELLER ONE: We’re well aware.

SIDNEY: My patience has paid off, because I watched every person board this train, and no one else is here on assignment! Photos of Isabella Madison throwing her tantrums on this train are going to skyrocket me to the top!

CONDUCTOR: (ENTERS RIGHT and blows a whistle.) All aboard! West Coast 518 to Los Angeles is now departing! (EXITS RIGHT. SIDNEY grabs his ticket and runs OFF RIGHT. SOUND EFFECT: TRAIN WHISTLE and STEAM TRAIN START as LIGHTS FADE to BLACK. CURTAIN.)

End of Scene One

ACT ONE
Scene Two

CURTAIN UP on the dining car set. ELLIOT is already seated at Table Four and writes in his notebook. WAITER ONE ENTERS LEFT from the kitchen carrying a clipboard, and waits DOWN LEFT near the kitchen door. WAITER TWO ENTERS LEFT with the seating chart, places it DOWN RIGHT on the easel, and EXITS LEFT. WAITER THREE ENTERS LEFT with four pitchers of water, places a pitcher on each table, and EXITS LEFT.

ELLIOt: (Writing.) The dining car could be best described as “quaint.” The four tables, each adorned in modest drapery, stood anxiously awaiting the arrival of their occupants, eager to fulfill their purpose. The three staff members moved about, excitedly seeing to their activities.

WAITER ONE: (Crosses to ELLIOT, startling him.) Good evening, sir. The dining car has assigned seating. May I see your ticket, please?

ELLIOt: Elliot was startled by the arrival of the steward. He had not realized that he would need to bring his ticket to dinner with him and was frightfully unprepared for the conversational exchange.

WAITER ONE: (Taps ELLIOT on the shoulder.) Excuse me, sir, but if you could just tell me your sleeping cabin number, I can check my
list and tell you your seating assignment. We posted a chart by the entrance, but you arrived beforehand.

ELLIO T: (To WAITER ONE.) I like to be the first one to arrive in group settings. It gives me the opportunity to make as many observations as possible for my short stories! I’m Elliot Williams, writer, sleeping cabin fourteen.

WAITER ONE: (Checks clipboard.) Ah, yes, Mr. Williams. Turns out cabin fourteen is actually assigned to this table. (Pours a water for ELLIO T.) May I bring you something else to drink while you wait?

ELLIO T: (Gets lost in his writing again.) Elliot was pleased with the good fortune of selecting the table at which he was supposed to sit. As he desired no other beverage than the water that was already provided, the remaining waitstaff returned to the kitchen to continue with their dinner preparations. (Takes a drink and then looks up at WAITER ONE. After a moment, WAITER ONE realizes she’s been dismissed and EXITS LEFT to the kitchen. ABBY, LAUREN, OWEN, and NELSON ENTER RIGHT. ABBY carries her book, OWEN carries his newspaper, and NELSON has his guitar, on which he plays a random tune. ALL stop at the seating chart. [NOTE: Once seated, ALL PASSENGERS can pour waters and/or drink from their water glasses throughout the scene as appropriate.])

ABBY: (Reading her book to LAUREN.) And it says right here that working on a beach rescue can be just as taxing as working in an emergency room. I told you there’s so much you can teach me!

LAUREN: Yes, I do imagine that rescuing an injured sea creature on the beach can be a very stressful situation. But as I said before, I would really prefer to leave work off the train. I would just like to enjoy my travel in peace. (Consults the board.) Okay, cabin six, table two.

ABBY: (Consults the board.) Oh my goodness, I’m at table two with you! I am going to have the best time on this trip!

LAUREN: At least one of us will… (Moves to Table Two, followed closely by ABBY. They take their seats. WAITER TWO ENTERS and crosses to Table Two to take orders, and then EXITS LEFT. JENNIFER ENTERS RIGHT and stands behind OWEN and NELSON.)

OWEN: (To NELSON.) I truly hope you are not planning to entertain the diners with that instrument. Some of us came to the dining car to actually dine. (Consults the seating chart and moves to Table Four.)

NELSON: (Calls after him.) You never know when inspiration will strike, friend. And some people find that listening to music while dining can be a very enjoyable experience. (Consults the seating chart.)
NELSON: Is your husband on this train, friend? I would love to talk to him about the benefits of music and eating. And to offer my services to this restaurant of yours!

NELSON: Nelson. Nelson Henry, musical sensation. I will keep my eyes open for your husband, my friend. Perhaps we can convince him that music is the key to success. (JENNIFER moves to Table One, and NELSON crosses to Table Four.)

OWEN: (Visibly agitated at the arrival of NELSON.) The same train, and now the same table? What does a guy have to do to get a break around here?

NELSON: Come on, my investigating friend, we are going to have a great time together on this journey. You need to give our friendship a chance.

OWEN: Why is that exactly?

NELSON: You never know when you might need a friend. In fact, I know a song about that. (Picks up his guitar.)

OWEN: Please don’t.

NELSON: Well, maybe my writing friend would enjoy a nice dinner tune. I was just saying how much music can enhance the dining experience.

ELLIOI: (Winces.) Elliot winced at the prospect of the guitar-wielding man at his dinner table regaling him in song. However, he decided to give in, as arguing would likely only delay the song’s inevitable arrival. (OWEN and ELLIOI look uncomfortably to NELSON and wait for him to begin.)

NELSON: (Notices them.) Come on now, friends, why so serious?

OWEN: I am not your friend. Do you even know what the word “serious” means? How do you expect to launch your music career being this passive?

NELSON: I think you misunderstand me, friends. I am very serious about my music. (To OWEN.) But where will I get if I am as uptight...
as you, not even willing to make a friend? (To ELLIOT.) Or always having my face in a notepad? I want to enjoy the journey!

ELLIOl: (Looks up from his notepad.) While you may want to enjoy the journey, I want to record the journey. Writers need a great deal of material to create and work from, and recording day-to-day activities helps to provide some of that material.

OWEN: You know, in some ways, being a private investigator is like that. Like in this bank fraud case I was just investigating, the scheme was complex. There were lots of moving players in the game. If I hadn’t been paying attention to my surroundings, I never would have realized that it was the security guard who was walking the bonds out the front door!

NELSON: Okay, serious friends, no dinner music. Perhaps I can channel some of the serious energy at this table to write a serious song. (To ELLIOT.) May I borrow a piece of paper, writer friend?

OWEN: He’s not your friend, either! None of us are friends! (WAITER ONE ENTERS LEFT and crosses to Table Four to take orders, but gets entangled in the conversation at the table. ELLIOT hands NELSON a piece of paper and continues to record notes as NELSON talks enthusiastically to OWEN and WAITER ONE. CALEB, RACHEL, AVERY, and JILLIAN ENTER RIGHT. AVERY carries her silver briefcase.)

RACHEL: (Consults the seating chart.) Our first honeymoon meal, darling! And look, we’re at Table One!

CALEB: And we are in cabin one! It must be because we boarded the train first. (They move to Table One as AVERY and JILLIAN consult the seating chart.)

RACHEL: I think it is because you are my number one, and I am your number one. (She and CALEB embrace.)

JENNIFER: Oh. My. Goodness. You two must be on your honeymoon.

No one who has been married longer than a week would be acting like the two of you.

CALEB: We are on our honeymoon! But we’ve been married for three weeks, and we love each other as much as ever!

RACHEL: Are you married?

JENNIFER: Yes I am, though I seem to be flying solo at the moment! (Looks around.) Where on earth is Derek? Dinner is going to be served soon. I guess I’ll just order for him. (WAITER THREE ENTERS LEFT and moves to Table One to take orders and then EXITS LEFT. JILLIAN and AVERY move to Table Three. SIDNEY skulks ON RIGHT, followed by MIKE and HOLLY. SIDNEY carries his camera and surveys the car for Isabella, then consults the seating chart.)
JILLIAN: I’m sure your case of samples would have been just fine in your cabin, Ms. Millen. After all, your cabin door locks, and the case has a lock on it too. And you are the only one who has the key to the case.

AVERY: You’re probably right. But as I said earlier, this acquisition is just too important to leave anything to chance. No samples, no presentation, no acquisition. I’ll just slip it under the table where it won’t bother anyone while we eat, and I’ll feel much better.

JILLIAN: Of course, Ms. Millen. You are right as always.

HOLLY: (To SIDNEY,) That’s a very nice camera you have there. Are you a professional photographer? I’m sure you can get some lovely shots of the scenery while we travel.

SIDNEY: Of sorts. But the only thing I want to photograph is right here on the train with us.

MIKE: (Loud, as HOLLY puts on reading glasses and consults the seating chart.) I recognize you from the train station! Why were you just sitting around if you had a train to catch?

SIDNEY: Can you please keep it down? I’m here to photograph Isabella Madison! You know, the movie star? I need to sit down before she gets here and sees me. (Moves to Table Four and sits, trying to hide himself behind the floral centerpiece. MIKE consults the seating chart. WAITER ONE wraps up the discussion at Table Four, takes SIDNEY’S order, and EXITS LEFT. LUCY ENTERS RIGHT with a pile of assorted folders and papers. She moves to consult the seating chart. then waits for Isabella.)

MIKE: A paparazzo, eh? Those people cause all sorts of trouble for good athletes. They should just leave people in peace!

HOLLY: It seems to me that if people don’t want the attention of the media, then perhaps they should choose careers that are less high-profile. (MIKE and HOLLY continue as they cross to Table Two.)

MIKE: Another crack at athletes! Just because no one is interested in what you do doesn’t make what we do less important.

HOLLY: I believe I said “people” in general. You are the one who brought up athletes! You are completely insufferable! (She and MIKE sit. MIKE puts his wallet on the table. HOLLY removes her reading glasses and sets them on the table.)

LAUREN: Didn’t I see you two arguing earlier? What is going on?

HOLLY: We are just having a bit of a disagreement about academics. I feel that the pursuit of knowledge is a most noble endeavor. Coach here does not.

MIKE: You know I never actually said that studying wasn’t important.

HOLLY: Yes, you did! At the ticket counter!
MIKE: Nope. I said I was a sports recruiter, and you started right in about how dumb sports are. I never even got a word in edgewise! I went to college on a sports scholarship, you know? To study! I wouldn’t have made it to college without that scholarship!

HOLLY: And what is your degree? A bachelor’s in being loud and obnoxious?

ABBY: You know, being physically and mentally fit is important for people. It’s important for marine life, too. I read here that some species of marine life actually play games with each other and are smart enough to create tools for themselves! Isn’t that neat?

LAUREN: I have to agree with Abby here. As doctors, we frequently tell patients that physical and mental acuity are both very important. I see a lot of people in the emergency room who could have prevented injury by either being in better shape or by using their minds to avoid the injury causing situation in the first place.

HOLLY: See, the good doctor here says people need to use their minds when engaging in physical activity.

MIKE: Yeah, I’m sure that looking up at the stars while you run will really help avoid injury!

HOLLY: And there you go again! (MIKE and HOLLY go back to arguing as ABBY goes back to her book. WAITER TWO ENTERS LEFT, moves to Table Two to take orders, and EXITS LEFT.)

JENNIFER: (Waves DEREK over to Table One as he ENTERS LEFT.) What on earth were you doing in the kitchen?

DEREK: I’m a chef, aren’t I? I was doing market research for our restaurant!

JENNIFER: In the kitchen of a train?

DEREK: You have to be more open-minded, Jennifer. You never know what you can learn from new situations!

JENNIFER: This from the man who has shot down every one of my ideas! (To CALEB and RACHEL.) See what I mean about marriage? This is what I get to deal with!

DEREK: Don’t listen to her. We are just a little bit on edge because of this new restaurant we’re opening.

RACHEL: You own a restaurant? That sounds exciting!

JENNIFER: Well, we don’t own the restaurant. Not yet, anyway. The owner is one of those investment real estate types. He bought the restaurant thinking it would be a breeze to run as a sort of side business for himself, but he found out pretty quickly that running a restaurant is really hard work. So he started looking for some people with decent experience.
With all due respect, Miss Madison, this tantrum is really not necessary. I assure you that Jillian and myself will be perfectly amicable dinner companions.

DEREK: The owner is letting us totally design everything, right down to the paint on the walls and the napkin colors! We’re hoping that if this goes well, we might be able to buy the restaurant down the road.

CALEY: Is it hard going in to business with your spouse? I mean, Rachel and I love spending time together... (They embrace.) ...but we go to two separate jobs during the day.

JENNIFER: It’s definitely been a challenge. And we have been arguing a lot lately.

DEREK: You’re right. Let’s try to enjoy the rest of our trip. One night without talk about the restaurant, okay? We can pick it up tomorrow.

JENNIFER: Sounds good to me. (To CALEY and RACHEL.) So what sights are you two planning to see on your honeymoon? (Continues the conversation with DEREK, CALEY, and RACHEL as ISABELLA ENTERS RIGHT. She has changed into an unnecessarily flashy outfit and walks right past LUCY without noticing.)

LUCY: There you are, Isabella. Did you really have to change your outfit again? The one you wore before was just fine for dinner.

ISABELLA: A movie star belongs to the public, Lucy. These people might have already seen me today. They expect me to change my outfit.

LUCY: We need to get seated so dinner can be served. It’s already after seven. I checked the chart, we’re at table three. (ISABELLA starts towards Table Three, followed closely by LUCY, but stops abruptly halfway there. LUCY runs into ISABELLA and drops her files. RACHEL and HOLLY move to help her pick up. ALL OTHERS pause to watch the scene, except SIDNEY, who instead takes photos furiously, hidden behind the floral centerpiece.)

ISABELLA: Lucy, who are these people sitting at my table?!

LUCY: (Stooped down, picking up files.) I’m not sure, Isabella, the other people who are assigned to this table? What’s the matter?

ISABELLA: You might recall that when we purchased our tickets on this ill-conceived journey, I demanded my own dining table. I will not be forced to interact with these... commoners! (ALL react with one another in response to being called “commoners.” AVERY and JILLIAN stand and approach ISABELLA. WAITERS TWO and THREE ENTER LEFT and stand near Table Three.)

AVERY: With all due respect, Miss Madison, this tantrum is really not necessary. I assure you that Jillian and myself will be perfectly amicable dinner companions.
**AVERY**: Really! This is the second time today that you treated us like this! We don’t deserve it. No one here deserves to be talked down to and told they are “commoners,” either!

**WAITER TWO**: Please, Miss Madison, as you can see, our dining car is full to capacity. We want to accommodate your every request, but we cannot make more tables appear. Won’t you take a seat so we can serve the meal? Everyone is quite hungry.

**LUCY**: *(Has finished gathering the files and documents and now stands by ISABELLA.)* Please, Isabella, it’s fine. You don’t even have to talk to them. Please, just have a seat.

**ISABELLA**: *(To WAITERS.)* Well, you had all better be prepared to give me everything I request for the remainder of this journey or none of you will be employed after this trip! I am Isabella Madison, and I will be treated as such! *(ALL react with disapproval—annoyed or dismissive—to her speech, as ISABELLA and LUCY move to Table Three and sit. WAITERS EXIT LEFT. AVERY starts to return to the table, but JILLIAN pulls her aside.)*

**JILLIAN**: I cannot believe how she keeps treating you! If this was a pharmaceutical conference, you could make demands like her! She has no idea who she’s talking to!

**AVERY**: Jillian, please. We cannot always choose who we have to deal with on a day-to-day basis. We will be the more mature people in this situation and be better for it. Now, let’s sit down and try to enjoy our meal. *(Moves with JILLIAN back to Table Three and sits as WAITERS ENTER LEFT with dinner plates, making sure ISABELLA is served first. WAITERS continue to ENTER and EXIT to serve meals until ALL PASSENGERS have a plate, at which time ALL WAITERS EXIT. PASSENGERS eat casually and chat.)*

**LUCY**: *(As ISABELLA intentionally ignores OTHERS and picks at her food.)* I don’t think we were actually introduced. I’m Lucy Blake, Isabella’s assistant. We are pleased to meet you.

**AVERY**: *(Shakes hands with LUCY.)* A pleasure. I’m Avery Millen, CEO of Salt Lake Pharmaceuticals, and this is my assistant, Jillian Hill.

**LUCY**: I’ve heard of that company! It’s an honor to meet the CEO.

**JILLIAN**: Ms. Millen is the youngest CEO in the company’s history and has grown the corporation more during her leadership than the last three CEOs combined.

**AVERY**: Yes, thank you, Jillian. She makes it sound more exciting than it really is, though. It’s a challenge to grow a small company, and our current growth is only happening because of the work all the others before me put in.
1 **LUCY:** Still, those are some impressive accomplishments. Did you study business?

**JILLIAN:** Actually, she studied chemistry. Most of our top pharmaceuticals are based on Ms. Millen’s own chemical designs.

2 **AVERY:** Again, thank you, Jillian. After the previous CEO retired, the board of directors thought it would be a positive change to have someone making the decisions who understood how the products we sell actually work. I did end up doing some business studies, but Jillian is a big help with the business side of things.

3 **LUCY:** That’s really interesting. I studied business management myself and would definitely not know anything about pharmaceuticals, so I see what the board of directors was thinking. It sounds like that decision is working well for them!

**JILLIAN:** You studied business management? To get bossed around by a demanding movie diva?

**AVERY:** Jillian!

**LUCY:** No, it’s okay. I get that question a lot. *(Leans in for a more private conversation.)* Actually, Isabella and I were friends in high school, then we went to the same college. When she started getting parts in commercials and guest TV appearances, she asked me to be her assistant because she knows nothing about business and, to be honest, I really needed a job. She didn’t start to get like this until that movie of hers really took off. *(Leans back out.)* Working with Isabella is great for now, but one day I would like to get into a different line of business. *(SOUND EFFECT: MULTIPLE TRAIN WHISTLES followed by EMERGENCY STOP as LIGHTS FLASH briefly. ALL react by lurching or whipping back in their seats to simulate the train braking suddenly. ALL react in confusion and commotion as glasses fall over, dishes spill to the floor, etc. LUCY’S papers also spill to the floor. LIGHTS UP as WAITERS rush ON.)*

**LAUREN:** *(Stands up. Over the din.)* I’m a doctor. Is everyone alright? Does anyone need medical attention?

**ISABELLA:** What is the meaning of this?! My dinner is completely ruined, and my clothing is soiled!

**WAITER THREE:** Our sincere apologies, Miss Madison. There must be a good reason why the train has stopped. We will find out right away.

**OWEN:** *(To WAITER THREE.)* I’m an investigator. Maybe I can help. *(Follows WAITER THREE OFF RIGHT. Throughout the rest of the scene, WAITERS ONE and TWO EXIT LEFT and RE-ENTER with pitchers of water and pour everyone fresh glasses of water—starting with ISABELLA, of course. WAITERS continue to EXIT and RE-ENTER*
as they try to clean up the mess. They should be ONSTAGE when
WAITER THREE returns with OWEN. DEREK motions to JENNIFER,
and they EXIT LEFT to the kitchen. ISABELLA moves throughout
the room fanning herself with one of the folders, continuing to
complain haughtily. RACHEL and HOLLY help LUCY clean up her
papers. SIDNEY moves around, trying to discreetly take pictures
of ISABELLA. LAUREN moves around the room checking on each
person, followed closely by ABBY. AVERY and JILLIAN remain at the
table and check the contents of the small silver case, which JILLIAN
closes quickly when LAUREN and ABBY approach AVERY. CALEB,
MIKE, NELSON, and ELLIOT move DOWN CENTER and crane their
necks to look out over the AUDIENCE out the “train windows.”

ELLIOI: (Writes furiously.) The passengers moved about the dining car
frantically, each trying to make sense of the sudden events.

MIKE: I can’t see anything. We’re too far away from the front of the
train. Someone should go out there and check it out!

NELSON: I don’t think that’s a good idea, my sports-playing friend. We
should stay put until we hear what’s going on.

HOLLY: (Stands and approaches MIKE.) That would be your solution,
wouldn’t it? Just use brute force, climb out of the car, and run
headlong into a potentially dangerous situation.

MIKE: And if it were up to you, we would sit here forever waiting for
information! Take some action!

HOLLY: We have been here for only moments! Some patience would
benefit you! (MIKE and HOLLY begin to argue, which causes
OTHERS to begin to move DOWNSTAGE and join in bickering. During
the argument, ISABELLA returns to Table Three and sits. She takes
a drink of water, puts her head in her hands, and appears to cry.
LUCY moves to comfort her. DEREK and JENNIFER return ON LEFT
just as OWEN and WAITER THREE ENTER RIGHT.)

OWEN: Hey, hey, hey! (ALL go silent. WAITERS ONE and TWO take a
position nearby WAITER THREE.) Listen, we went to the front of the
train and the conductor says there was a rockslide on the tracks.
They already have people cleaning it up, and we should be on our
way in no time.

WAITER THREE: We greatly apologize for the inconvenience. If you
would all like to go to your rooms, freshen up, then return to the
dining car, we can get this cleaned up and serve the meal again.
(There is a general murmur of approval from ALL as they move to
their respective tables, gather their belongings, and prepare to exit.)

LUCY: (To ISABELLA, who still has her head in her hands.) Come on,
Isabella, let’s go back to your room and change your outfit. (No
response.) Isabella? Seriously, it’s not so bad! You brought lots
of clothes. (No response. ALL begin to watch and move closer in curiosity. SIDNEY continues to take pictures.) Isabella? (LUCY shakes ISABELLA’S shoulder to get her attention, which causes her to fall to the floor, dead. ALL react in shock. LAUREN runs to ISABELLA, followed by ABBY. LAUREN and LUCY kneel on the floor with ISABELLA while ABBY takes charge. LAUREN attempts to revive ISABELLA, including miming CPR, but without success.)

ABBY: Miss Madison?! Everyone, back up, give us some space! (To SIDNEY.) You, are you taking pictures? Stop that! (To OTHERS.) You, pass me a pitcher of water! You, give me those napkins! You, give me your coat to use as a blanket! You, call 9-1-1! Okay, Lauren, I have supplies. How can I help?

LAUREN: There’s nothing you can do.

ABBY: I can so! I have lots of skills! I can—

LAUREN: Abby, listen to me. There’s nothing you can do. There’s nothing I can do. She’s dead. (LUCY screams as ALL OTHERS react in shock. BLACKOUT.)

End of Scene Two

ACT ONE
Scene Three

LIGHTS UP on the dining car, a few minutes later. A tablecloth has been placed over ISABELLA’S body. ALL PASSENGERS except OWEN, LAUREN, and ABBY have returned to their respective tables. OWEN paces back and forth DOWN LEFT attempting to make a phone call. LAUREN and ABBY are DOWN RIGHT talking quietly. WAITERS ONE, TWO, and THREE move from table to table filling waters and checking on passengers, then EXIT LEFT. LUCY is visibly upset and is being comforted by AVERY while JILLIAN sits nearby. SIDNEY continues to try to take pictures inconspicuously from Table Four. ELLIOT writes frantically in his notebook.

RACHEL: I can’t believe Isabella’s dead! It’s just awful.

CALEB: I know! She was so young. And she wasn’t sick or anything.

NELSON: Wow, nothing like someone dying to ruin the feel-good atmosphere of a dinner, friends.

AVERY: Lucy, I’m so sorry about Isabella. I know you said the two of you were friends for a long time.

LUCY: (Crying.) It’s like it’s not even real! I just don’t know how this happened. I was with her all day and she was totally fine. Even at dinner she seemed fine. And then all of a sudden she dies? I just don’t understand!
HOLLY: Did she hit her head when the train stopped suddenly? Or choke on what she was eating?

DEREK: I doubt it. If something like that had happened, she would have made a scene about it, and all of us would have known. (ALL but LUCY agree.)

LUCY: (Angry.) What is the matter with you all?! A young woman drops dead and you make jokes about her?

avery: I’m sure no one meant to make a joke—right, everyone? (There is a general murmur of agreement from ALL.) He just meant that Isabella didn’t mention getting injured or feeling sick at all. She didn’t react like she was choking.

Owen: (Pockets his phone.) There’s no cell reception here. We must be too far into the mountains right now. I’m having no luck getting a call through to the authorities, but train personnel are trying to get a hold of someone on the radio and have asked me to take on the investigation in the meantime. Lauren, did you notice any injuries or any other clues about how she died? You’re the medical expert here.

LAUREN: Well, actually, Abby and I were discussing that. I didn’t notice any injuries of any type. When I tried CPR, her airway was clear, which disproves the idea that she may have choked.

Owen: Can you determine a cause of death?

LAUREN: It appears that her heart just stopped. Unfortunately, I have no way of determining what caused that to happen.

Avery: Lucy, did Isabella have any sort of history of heart disease? Was she taking any kind of medicine?

Lucy: No! She was totally healthy. The last time she saw a doctor was a while ago, but her checkup was fine. If she had any sort of medical issue, I would have known about it. We never picked up any medicine for this trip. She hates taking any kind of drugs at all.

Mike: Do you think it was something she ate? Should we be worried?

Jennifer: I don’t think we have to worry about that. Most all of us ate the same food. If there was something wrong with dinner, more than one of us would have been affected. And besides, other than some kinds of fish, I can’t think of any foods that just make your heart stop. We didn’t eat anything like that. I mean, you can get food poisoning, and sometimes that can be really serious, but it isn’t instantaneous.

Owen: So let me get this straight… Isabella had no history of heart disease or illness of any kind. She didn’t eat anything that may have gotten her sick, and she didn’t get hurt when the train stopped suddenly. Her heart just stopped.
CALEB: Hold on... are you saying what I think you’re saying?

HOLLY: It seems so unlikely...

ABBY: You don’t really think...

LUCY: Wait. What are you saying?

Owen: I’m saying that I don’t think this was an accident. I’m saying that I think Isabella Madison was murdered. (ALL react with various levels of shock and surprise except SIDNEY, who appears excited and tries to snap another inconspicuous picture of the scene.)

ELLiot: (As he writes.) Elliot could hardly contain his shock and surprise. Murder on the 518? Improbable but not impossible! (Glances around the room, then back to his notepad.) The passengers began to speculate as they tried to process this sudden revelation.

RACHEL: You really think that someone here could have killed her? All of us were right here together when it happened! Wouldn’t we have seen something?

CALEB: Rachel and I definitely did not plan to murder anyone during our honeymoon. Romantic trips do not include bodies in the dining room!

NELSON: Hold on, my romantic friends. Actually, everyone was not all here together around the time that our movie star friend died.

ELLiot: (Flips back through the pages of his notebook.) Nelson is right. Derek and Jennifer ran off to the kitchen right when the train stopped. And Owen followed the waiter out. How can we know what they were doing while they were gone?

Owen: Elliot is right, I did leave the room. I went to find out why the train had stopped. But think about it. If I left the room, when would I have been close enough to Isabella to harm her? And what would my motive have been to hurt her anyway? Any investigator worth his salt will tell you that a crime needs two things—opportunity and motive. I didn’t have either one. The people who were actually in the room the whole time had much more of an opportunity.

DEREK: We went to the kitchen to make sure that the sudden stop didn’t cause a fire or injure anyone. We are chefs, you know.

JENNIFER: And what motive would we have had? Isabella didn’t do anything to us.

HOLLY: You didn’t seem to be too happy with the scene she made earlier in which she declared you a “commoner.”

JENNIFER: Well, neither did you! It seems like that could have been motivation for someone like a professor to get pretty upset!

HOLLY: Oh, please. Someone like myself commit murder over something as frivolous as a minor insult? That seems highly
unlikely, don’t you think? Especially since there are far stronger,
more common people present! (Looks suspiciously toward MIKE.)

MIKE: Again with the insults! Somehow being athletic makes me a
murderer? You heard the doc, Isabella wasn’t injured! Are you
saying the doc is lying to all of us?

ABBY: Lauren is absolutely not lying! I was right there with her.
Isabella wasn’t hurt!

JILLIAN: Don’t you study fish? How would you even know if something
was wrong? Besides, the doctor is the one who went from person to
person right after the train stopped. She had the most opportunity!

LAUREN: I don’t appreciate your insinuation. I am a healer. A crisis
happened, and I jumped in to help. While I have no desire to
participate in this absurd debate, I feel the need to point out that
you and your boss represent a pharmaceutical company, which
would give you access to potentially life-threatening materials. Not
to mention, we all witnessed the fact that Isabella treated you
both rudely the whole evening. Wouldn’t that make you both prime
suspects of foul play?

AVERY: Absolutely not! Pharmacists take an oath too, you know. My
goal is to never do harm with my products. I would never use my
company’s resources to intentionally hurt someone!

JILLIAN: What about Elliot? A good murder could be just the inspiration
he needs for a great story! After all, he’s the one who said real life
is the best story material.

ELLIO: I am much too busy recording events to be part of them. And,
from what I have recorded, it would seem that Lucy is the most
likely suspect of any foul play.

LUCY: That’s crazy! Isabella was my best friend.

JILLIAN: She may have been your best friend at one point, but
she clearly treats you very poorly. Ordering you around, making
unrealistic demands, making you clean up her messes! And
you never leave her side! You had the best opportunity and the
best motive!

MIKE: She’s right! Pressure like that can make people do crazy things.

DEREK: We all saw how badly Isabella treated you, but you still say
she was your best friend? What kind of sense does that make?

OWEN: (ALL except OWEN, LUCY, ELLIO, and SIDNEY start talking
among themselves, agreeing that LUCY is the prime suspect. ELLIO
writes furiously while SIDNEY continues to snap pictures of the whole
scene. LUCY tries to plead her innocence. After a few moments,
OWEN interrupts.) Everyone just hold on! (ALL go silent.) You’re all
forgetting one very important thing. Okay, so Lucy had opportunity
and motive. But she’s not the only one! Lucy is not the only person who follows Isabella everywhere. Lucy is not the only one who relies on Isabella for her career. In fact, Lucy’s career would be over if Isabella died... But Sidney’s career would skyrocket! The money he would make from having exclusive photos of Isabella’s murder would take him straight to the top! (ALL immediately and enthusiastically agree.)

SIDNEY: (Comes forward with his camera.) People! People! I didn’t kill this woman!

HOLLY: You must admit, Sidney, Owen makes a compelling argument for your participation in this crime. Can you definitively prove that you were not involved?

SIDNEY: Okay, I know that I got a little excited at the mention of the word “murder,” but that doesn’t mean I wanted her dead. Sure, I’m going to profit from this, but wouldn’t all of you get a little excited about something that could improve your careers? Most of you on this train are going to Los Angeles for work!

OWNEN: I’m afraid I’m not convinced. I will have to confiscate your camera.

SIDNEY: My camera? No way! Why?

OWNEN: You say that you didn’t do this. And I do want to believe you. Innocent until proven guilty, right? So you’ve been taking pictures all night. You may have taken a picture that can help us find the actual cause of Isabella’s death.

SIDNEY: All right. But I’m staying with you while you look through my pictures. I go where my camera goes! (Holds onto the camera.)

LAUREN: I’d like to join you both while you look. If the cause of Isabella’s death does turn out to be something that we all came into contact with, I’d like to find out as soon as possible.

ABBY: I can help too! You know, this is a lot like trying to help a sick animal. The animal can’t tell you why it’s sick. You have to sleuth for the answer!

LAUREN: Sure it is...

JILLIAN: You really think that Sidney may have taken a photo with the murderer in it? When all of us here didn’t see anything?

OWNEN: No one was looking for a murderer when the event actually happened. Now we have the opportunity to go back through the night knowing what we are looking for! Sidney’s obsession with taking pictures of Isabella might end up helping her after all.

MIKE: Hey, don’t you think we should do something with this body? I’m no expert, but I don’t think we should leave it in the middle of the dining room until we get to Los Angeles tomorrow.
1 **Owen:** Fair point. If this was a murder, I’d hate to disturb the crime scene. But we can’t very well leave it here.

**Lucy:** *(Upset.)* Can we all just stop calling Isabella “it”?

**Avery:** Lucy, maybe you should go back to your room and lie down.

5 **Nelson:** Hold on there, business lady friend. If there is a dangerous person among us, is it really smart for us all to separate from each other?

**Holly:** I have to agree with Nelson. Especially since we do not yet know who the dangerous person is.

10 **Rachel:** Well, you know what? I think this is all ridiculous! All I want is to get to Los Angeles and have a nice honeymoon. I have a very hard time believing that anyone here would have murdered anyone else. Lucy, how about you stay with us?

**Lucy:** Are you sure? I mean, I don’t really want to stay alone, but I don’t want to intrude on your honeymoon.

15 **Caleb:** We would love to have you join us, Lucy. Rachel is right. We don’t even know that a murder happened here. Everyone needs to stop jumping to conclusions. Someone died and that is awful. Do we have to make it more awful? *(ALL begin talking among themselves, debating what should happen.)*

**Mike:** *(Authoritative.)* Alright, listen here, you pansies! *(ALL stop and listen.)* Right now, we just need a plan! First, Isabella’s body. Who has an idea?

**Derek:** Actually… I do. When Jen and I were in the kitchen, we commented that the train had a really large refrigerator. I think this train must be designed for longer trips than just overnight. I bet we could use it for this. *(Beat.)* As long as everyone is okay with dry cereal for breakfast tomorrow.

**Mike:** Okay, that’s a start! Derek, you and Jennifer go to the kitchen and handle that. *(Derek and Jennifer Exit Left.)* Next, did anyone have any luck getting through to the police yet? *(ALL stare in silence.)* I’ll take that as a no. Elliot, Nelson—go to the front of the train, find the conductor or engineer or someone, and find out if they successfully radioed for help.

**Elliot:** *(As he writes.)* Elliot leapt into action, eager to gain more information for the benefit of the situation.

**Nelson:** Come on, my writing friend. Maybe you shouldn’t write while you walk. *(Nelson guides Elliot Off Right as Elliot continues to write while he walks.)*

40 **Mike:** Good! Now the rest of us are going to wait to do anything until they come back. *(Indicates Owen, Lauren, Sidney, and Abby.)*
Except you people. If you want to look through pictures, knock yourselves out.

**ABBY:** Owen, shouldn’t you be giving the directions? Aren’t you the investigator?

**OWEN:** Private investigators usually work behind the scenes. Once my brain starts working on a case, I tend to forget about the other things going around me. Let’s get started looking at these pictures. Sidney’s certainly captured the whole night on that camera! *(Moves with LAUREN, ABBY, and SIDNEY to Table Four, where SIDNEY begins to show them pictures on his camera. AVERY guides LUCY to Table One where they join CALEB and RACHEL and try to help LUCY feel better. JILLIAN remains at Table Three. MIKE and HOLLY move CENTER.)*

**HOLLY:** Well, it appears that someone likes to hear himself talk.

**MIKE:** Oh, shut it! I didn’t see you stepping up to take any action. Seems like something a “smart” person would do.

**HOLLY:** Being able to bark out orders does not automatically qualify you as intelligent. *(Concedes a bit.)* But, you did get people moving in the right direction. *(SOUND EFFECT: TRAIN WHISTLE and STEAM TRAIN START. ALL react by lurching to indicate that the train has started moving again.)*

**JILLIAN:** *(Moves DOWN CENTER and looks over the AUDIENCE “out the window.”)* Speaking of moving in the right direction, it looks like we’re moving again.

**JENNIFER:** *(ENTERS LEFT with DEREK.)* Good news! We helped the kitchen staff clear the space in the cooler for Isabella’s body. They are actually cooking most of the food now for our replacement dinner.

**NELSON:** *(ENTER RIGHT followed by ELLIOT, who continues to write furiously.)* Here’s the story, traveling friends. Our train-operating friends have been in radio contact with the authorities. We are basically in the middle of nowhere right now. They want us to proceed to our final destination of Los Angeles where the authorities will meet us when we get there. We’ll probably have to put off our arrival plans until we all speak to our police friends.

**JILLIAN:** Ms. Millen, what if we miss your meeting? That’s the whole point of us being here!

**avery:** I’m sure the company will understand if we have to reschedule, given the circumstances.

**JILLIAN:** This whole thing is just insane! I’m going to try and contact them and figure this schedule out. Maybe we’ll get cell reception
now that the train is moving again. (Takes out a phone, moves UPSTAGE, and paces back and forth to try to get reception.)

DEREK: Hey guys, help us move Isabella’s body into the cooler. Lauren, come see if you think this will work for the rest of the trip.

ABBY: I’ll come too!

LAUREN: Of course you will. (DEREK, MIKE, NELSON, CALEB, and ELLIOT take hold of ISABELLA and carefully start to carry her OFF LEFT. SIDNEY jumps up and starts to take pictures of this. LAUREN and ABBY follow OFF LEFT, shooting angry glances at SIDNEY.)

JILLIAN: (Still pacing UPSTAGE and trying to make a call. To SIDNEY.) Are you seriously still taking pictures? What is the matter with you?! She’s dead!

SIDNEY: You bet I’m still taking pictures! Do you have any idea how much money I’m going to get for these? Isabella might be dead, but she’s still going to make me rich! (LUCY sobs, and ALL OTHERS react with various degrees of anger and disgust.)

OWEN: (Steps in front of SIDNEY. As they square off, JILLIAN wanders by Table Four.) Seriously, that’s very inappropriate. And declaring that you’re going to capitalize on her murder definitely doesn’t make you sound innocent. Plus, the police are going to confiscate this camera when we get to Los Angeles. It’s evidence.

SIDNEY: It’s private property! They’ll have to give it back eventually! And I’ll still be the only one with these photos! (Pushes past OWEN and EXITS OFF LEFT, raising his camera to take more pictures as he goes. A moment later, WAITERS ONE, TWO, and THREE ENTER LEFT.)

WAITER ONE: Excuse me, everyone, but the kitchen staff is ready to serve the meal. If you could all please vacate the dining area for a few minutes, we will clean up the mess and have dinner ready momentarily.

OWEN: I’m sorry, but we’d better leave the dining room as is. If Isabella’s death was due to foul play, there may be evidence in the room that will help identify what happened. Can we serve dinner somewhere else?

WAITER TWO: The lounge car is available, though there may not be enough table space... But as long as some people don’t mind standing, it should be a fine space to serve. (DEREK, NELSON, ELLIOT, MIKE, CALEB, and SIDNEY ENTER LEFT and return to their respective tables. SIDNEY places his camera on the table then reaches for his glass of water and takes a sip. NELSON, MIKE, and CALEB also take a drink once they’re seated. LAUREN and ABBY ENTER LEFT and join OWEN at CENTER.)
ELLIO T: (As he writes.) Elliot was surprised at the physical strength required for the task of moving a body, even with the assistance of many. He required immediate sustenance. (Takes a drink of water.)

DEREK: What I think Elliot means to say is that was much harder than I expected. Jen, pass me my water. (JENNIFER does and DEREK drinks.)

LAUREN: (To OWEN.) Everything looks like it will be fine in the kitchen. It’s a good thing this is a short trip. This is definitely not a long-term storage solution.

WAITER THREE: Everyone, please, we know you’re probably all hungry. If you could all follow us, we will show you to the lounge car and serve you dinner. (WAITERS ONE, TWO, and THREE move to the RIGHT of the dining car and encourage OTHERS to follow. ALL except SIDNEY stand and begin to make their way right.)

LUCY: I’m just going to eat in my room, I think. I’ve had enough excitement for one night.

CALEB: That sounds good to me. Rachel, how about we eat with Lucy?

HOLLY: Actually, a quiet dinner in my room sounds appealing. Can we just make our plates and take them elsewhere?

MIKE: Sounds good to me. (To OWEN.) What does our investigator think?

OWEN: I suppose folks could eat in their rooms. It’s not like anybody’s going anywhere.

WAITER TWO: Of course, no problem at all. Anyone wishing to dine in their quarters can collect their plates in the lounge and take them back to their rooms. (ALL murmur in agreement except for SIDNEY, who remains seated but now has his head on the table, buried in his arm. WAITER THREE notices and moves to him.)

WAITER THREE: Excuse me, sir, did you not hear us? We’ll be serving dinner elsewhere. (No response from SIDNEY. ALL get very quiet as they observe WAITER THREE and SIDNEY.) Sir, can you hear me? Sir? Sir?! (Gently shakes SIDNEY’S shoulder, and SIDNEY falls to the floor. ALL react with shock. OWEN, LAUREN, and ABBY run to SIDNEY.)

ABBY: Sidney! (Shakes him.) Sidney! Can you hear me?

LAUREN: (Checks the body for breathing and heartbeat.) Abby, it’s no use. His heart stopped… He’s dead. (ALL react.)

OWEN: (Steps forward.) Alright everyone, it’s time we face the facts. We have two people dead from sudden, unexplained heart failure. It’s possible to believe that one death was a unique occurrence, but with two deaths, we can’t deny it anymore… There is a murderer on this train. We don’t know who, we don’t know how, and we don’t know why. And if we don’t figure it
out soon, there could be more of us dead before we reach Los Angeles. (BLACKOUT. CURTAIN.)

End of ACT ONE

ACT TWO
Scene Two

LIGHTS UP on the dining car in the early morning hours of the next day. SIDNEY’S body has been removed. All other items from the previous scene have been left where they are. LUCY is sitting at Table One, absently playing with a necklace she is wearing. ELLIOT sits at Table One across from LUCY, holding his notepad but staring at LUCY. JILLIAN ENTERS RIGHT and starts to move UPSTAGE to the back of the room, but stops to listen to ELLIOT and LUCY.

LUCY: Elliot, what are you doing?

ELLIOt: Writing, of course.

LUCY: (Laughs.) No, you’re not. You’re staring at me.

ELLIOt: Your expression is most captivating. You look... despondent. (As he writes.) Elliot sat across the table from the despondent young woman. She sat in silence, quietly clinging to the small golden trinket in her hand. Elliot wondered at the significance of the small golden piece...

LUCY: Isabella gave it to me... I didn’t even realize I was playing with it. (JILLIAN moves closer to Table One.)

ELLIOt: (As he writes.) The young woman was clearly deeply affected by the sudden death of her close friend and employer.

LUCY: Isabella wasn’t just a close friend, she was my best friend. I don’t know if I’m angry, or sad, or frightened, or what I’m feeling.

ELLIOt: Despondent.

JILLIAN: (Sits at the table with LUCY and ELLIOT. To LUCY.) I don’t mean to interrupt, but I really don’t understand.

LUCY: Hey, Jillian, I didn’t see you come in. What do you mean?

JILLIAN: How can you say Isabella was your best friend? She really didn’t seem to care about you at all. Or anyone for that matter.

LUCY: (Thoughtful.) It’s... hard to explain. I think sometimes success can do things to people. Isabella never cared about being famous. She just wanted to act. She was always the happiest when she was playing a part.

JILLIAN: Are you saying that she was pretending to be mean?

LUCY: Isabella’s agent was always telling her that no one pays attention to “nice” movie stars, and that if she wanted to get noticed, she needed to really make a scene wherever she went.
And I know it looked like she was always so mean to me, but I know that wasn’t really her. That crazy Isabella you guys all saw? That was just how she acted in public. Playing another part I guess.

JILLIAN: But didn’t it bother you that she made herself the center of attention? Don’t you feel like you deserve to get some of the credit?

LUCY: I never wanted that. I like being behind the scenes. That’s why we worked so well together, why we spent all our time together for so long. See this necklace? Isabella bought us matching ones before this trip. She said it’s because we did all of this together.

JILLIAN: I really had no idea...

LUCY: Most people don’t. But she built her whole image on being the stereotypical “crazy movie star.” I always thought she could have made it just being herself. And maybe if she wasn’t so awful to everyone, she would still be alive. Anyway... you seem to spend a lot of time with Avery. You must see multiple sides of her personality, right?

JILLIAN: I guess, a little, but she’s pretty much the same person all the time. I like things to be straightforward, you know? (Pause.) Hey, it’s been a long day. You should really go eat something. I think they’re still serving dinner in the lounge car.

LUCY: Thanks for listening. Most everyone else keeps trying to interrogate me because they think I murdered my best friend and the photographer who was chasing her. You’re right, it has been a long day. I think I’ll just skip dinner and go to bed. Good night.

JILLIAN: Rachel! What’s the matter?

CELEB: Sweetheart, what’s wrong? Why did you run out of the lounge crying?

RACHEL: This isn’t how our honeymoon was supposed to go! I wanted it to be perfect!

CELEB: I know. I wanted it to be perfect, too. (NELSON ENTERS RIGHT with his guitar.)

RACHEL: Now when we get to Los Angeles, we’re going to have to spend our time in a police station being accused of murder instead of sightseeing and celebrating our wedding! We didn’t do anything wrong!

CELEB: I know that, sweetheart, all I want is to be with you, too. But we’re all suspects. We have to let the police do their job.

NELSON: Circumstances got you down, honeymoon friends?
CALEB: Yes! This honeymoon is turning out to be a disaster!

NELSON: Come on, now. It’s not all that bad.

RACHEL: Are you serious?! Two people have been murdered, and you say it’s “not all that bad”?

NELSON: Well, it wasn’t either of you who got murdered, right? And maybe you have to change your travel plans a little when we get there, but you’ll be spending your romantic time together soon enough. And think of the story you will have to tell your friends when you get back home!

JILLIAN: Nelson has the right idea, guys. This will be over before you know it. For us, at least, who didn’t know either of the victims.

CALEB: I suppose you’re right, Nelson. (Hugs RACHEL.) I think we are losing sight of why we’re on this trip in the first place.

RACHEL: Thanks, Nelson. This whole thing is just making me a little crazy, I think.

CALEB: How is it that you keep so calm and positive, Nelson? Aren’t your plans for Los Angeles going to be messed up, too? Didn’t you say you have a meeting about your music?

NELSON: Well, truth be told, friends, I don’t have a meeting. I sent out lots of copies of my songs, but I didn’t hear back from any of the record labels where I sent them. I decided to go to Los Angeles anyway to try and make it on my own. And if I stop being positive, how will I have the courage to make it? (OTHERS nod in agreement.)

RACHEL: Wow, Nelson! I don’t think I would be able to just dive in to something like that. I bet someone will decide to give you a chance!

CALEB: Yeah, you’re so determined. I bet your music is great! Want to share some of it with us?

NELSON: I would love to, friends! I started writing some new songs during this eventful journey of ours. I think I left my notes over at my table in all the confusion. Come take a look! (Moves with CALEB, and RACHEL to Table Four, and they sit to review Nelson’s music notes. AVERY ENTERS RIGHT with her silver case, looking concerned. JILLIAN starts to move to Table Four to join the OTHERS, but stops when she sees AVERY.)

AVERY: Hello all. Jillian, there you are. Have you seen Owen? I need to speak with him.

NELSON: Sorry, business friend. We haven’t seen him in a while. Anything we can do for you?

RACHEL: Yeah, you don’t look so good. Is everything okay?
AVERY: I’m fine, I just... lost something. I’ll look around here and see if I can find it. What are all of you up to in here?

RACHEL: Nelson was just about to play some of his music for us!

AVERY: You’re sitting around playing music at a table where someone was just murdered? Aren’t you bothered at all by what’s going on?

JILLIAN: You seem pretty upset, Ms. Millen. Can I help? What’s missing?

AVERY: (Pauses.) No, Jillian. I’m fine, thank you. If you see Owen, please send him in my direction.

JILLIAN: (Concerned.) Of course, Ms. Millen. (AVERY moves to Table Three and starts to look around and under it. JILLIAN starts to move LEFT but stops when MIKE and HOLLY ENTER RIGHT.)

HOLLY: Would you stop it? You can’t just come barreling in here and disturb the evidence— (Sees OTHERS.) Well, never mind. Clearly no one seems to care that two people died in this location and that nothing should be disturbed until it is processed by the authorities. Where is that private investigator, anyway? Shouldn’t he be handling this?

MIKE: I never said I was going to touch anything! I just left my wallet at the table. I don’t think that getting my wallet will “disturb the evidence,” do you? (Moves to Table Two.) Why did you follow me in here, anyway? Don’t trust me? Think I have something to hide?

HOLLY: Well, people eager to remove things from crime scenes seem somewhat suspicious. Also, if you must know, I brought my reading glasses with me to dinner and left them on the table during all of the confusion.

MIKE: So it’s not okay for me to come get my wallet, but it’s perfectly fine for you to come get your glasses? Why is that? Seems pretty suspicious to me.

HOLLY: Because I won’t barrel through the room and disturb everything in sight!

MIKE: I don’t barrel anywhere!

AVERY: (Moves to Table Two.) Will you two stop it?! You have been at each other’s throats all night! We have much larger problems than whatever it is you are fighting about.

CALEB: (Rises.) Really! You two should take a page out of Nelson’s book and get some positivity.

AVERY: That isn’t exactly what I meant—

NELSON: (To CALEB.) So true, friend!

AVERY: If we could all just focus on the problem—

RACHEL: Come on, guys, let’s go be calm and positive elsewhere! (EXITS RIGHT with CALEB. NELSON follows them OFF carrying his
music notes and guitar. AVERY returns to Table Three and continues to look around, then sits. MIKE and HOLLY move to Table Two to retrieve their items. JILLIAN starts to move to Table Four, but is stopped by OWEN, LAUREN, and ABBY as they are chased ON LEFT by the EXECUTIVE CHEF and SOUS CHEFS ONE and TWO. HOLLY and MIKE sit at Table Two.)

EXECUTIVE CHEF: (Yells.) For the last time, get out of my kitchen!
SOUS CHEF ONE: We are chefs, not murderers!
SOUS CHEF TWO: We had nothing to do with these deaths!

LAUREN: I am not accusing you of murder! I’m just worried about the safety of the passengers. We have to get to the bottom of this!

EXECUTIVE CHEF: And is it very safe for the other passengers that we store bodies in my cooler?!

OWN: We emptied the cooler before we put the bodies in it! There is no danger to the passengers there!

ABBY: (Notices JILLIAN.) Hey, Jillian, what’s up? Did you come to help us sleuth for clues?

JILLIAN: No, actually… I lost my cell phone. I came to see if I dropped it back here during all the commotion with Sidney. Did you put his body in the cooler, too?

SOUS CHEF ONE: Unfortunately, they did!
SOUS CHEF TWO: It is completely unacceptable!

OWN: Listen, for the last time— (OWN, LAUREN, ABBY, CHEF, and SOUS CHEFS ONE and TWO begin to argue while JILLIAN moves to Table Four and looks around for a moment. Unseen, she slips Sidney’s camera inside her jacket, then EXITS RIGHT. AVERY tries to get OWEN’S attention without success as DEREK and JENNIFER ENTER RIGHT.)

JENNIFER: What on earth?

DEREK: Hey, cut it out! (Crosses with JENNIFER to the middle of the group to break up the argument.)

EXECUTIVE CHEF: Look! Here are two more people to invade my kitchen!

DEREK: We are not here to invade your kitchen. Actually, we were coming to tell you how much we enjoyed the dinner we just had!

JENNIFER: (To OTHER PASSENGERS.) What are all of you doing in here?

ABBY: (Indicates OWEN and LAUREN.) We were sleuthing for clues in the kitchen!

OWN: Sort of… I’m convinced that these deaths have to do with something that the victims ate.

avery: Owen, I really need to speak with you about—
1 **JENNIFER:** We already told you, there are virtually no foods that would cause this to happen. You’ve searched the kitchen—did you find any dangerous food?

**DEREK:** We all ate the same things! Take it from people who work in a kitchen. When you serve something like this, an event where everyone eats the same food and all the dishes are the same, you have no idea which plate is going to end up at which table.

**JENNIFER:** And do you really think the kitchen staff randomly decided to put dangerous food on just two plates? And even if they did—

**EXECUTIVE CHEF/SOUS CHEF ONE/SOUS CHEF TWO:** Hey!

**JENNIFER:** I’m not saying that you did! But really, what are the chances that those two plates would end up in front of the intended people? Seems way too coincidental for me!

**OWEN:** I see what you’re saying. What about the wait staff, though? They serve each person individually. And they were in the dining room with us the whole time before the meal was served. Plenty of time to see where each person was sitting.

**DEREK:** *(Indicates JENNIFER.)* We’ve been in and out of the kitchen a dozen times by now. The trays get handed right to the wait staff and then they walk out the door. When would they have the opportunity to sabotage the food?

**JENNIFER:** Weren’t Isabella and Sidney at different tables? Did two separate waiters decide to commit murder?

**OWEN:** Okay, okay. I get it. *(Paces back and forth.)* The food theory doesn’t quite add up.

**EXECUTIVE CHEF:** If you are quite satisfied, we will be returning to the kitchen—without all of you! *(EXITS LEFT followed by SOUS CHEFS ONE and TWO. DEREK and JENNIFER sit at Table One. LAUREN and ABBY stand CENTER. OWEN continues to pace as AVERY approaches him.)*

**OWEN:** *(To himself.)* Something is missing. What’s missing?

**avery:** Owen, I really need to speak with you.

**MIKE:** I know what’s missing.

**HOLLY:** What are you talking about?

**MIKE:** Owen said something is missing. I know what it is.

**avery:** You do?

**MIKE:** *(Moves to OWEN as HOLLY follows.)* No need to sound so surprised!

**avery:** I didn’t mean it that way, I just—

**OWEN:** Okay, enough! Mike, what are we missing?

**MIKE:** Seems to me that you all are getting too hung up on finding out the “how” and not on finding out the “why.” People died, we’ve
HOLLY: Yes, you did! At the ticket counter!

MIKE: Didn’t I see you two arguing earlier? What is going on?

LAUREN: I believe I said “people” in general. You are the one who

MIKE: (Loud, as HOLLY puts on reading glasses and consults the

SIDNEY: MIKE sit. MIKE puts his wallet on the table. HOLLY removes her

brought up athletes! You are completely insufferable!

MIKE: What you do doesn’t make what we do less important.

SIDNEY: In light of the disappearance of the photographer’s camera, which

created a large gap in the quest for visual evidence.

HOLLY: I believe that was a “yes.”

DEREK: Jen, let’s go see if we can find that camera.

OWEN: No! All of us are staying right here until we figure this thing out.

DEREK: But—

OWEN: I know, not everyone is here. But Mike was on to something

before. All of us who are in this room right now have been trying

like crazy to figure out what happened here tonight. Either all of us

are the best actors ever, or we are the ones that genuinely don’t

have anything to hide. Either way, let’s go back through Elliot’s
notes together and maybe focus on the people who haven’t been trying to solve the crime. (HOLLY, MIKE, DEREK, JENNIFER, ABBY, and LAUREN move to Table One and start flipping back through the notes with ELLIOT. OWEN starts to join them, but AVERY stops him.)

AVERY: Owen, I need to speak to you. Privately. Now. (Moves DOWN LEFT with OWEN for a private conversation. LAUREN leaves Table One and follows them.)

OWEN: What’s up, Avery? You don’t look so good.

LAUREN: (Approaches OWEN and AVERY.) Avery, I don’t mean to intrude, but if you are feeling sick at all we really need to—

AVERY: No, I’m fine! Actually, Lauren, good thing you’re here too. So, both of you know that I work at a pharmaceutical company and that I’m going to Los Angeles with samples for a presentation, right?

OWEN: Right.

AVERY: Well, when the train stopped suddenly, when there was that rockslide on the tracks, I opened up my samples case to check on everything and all seemed to be fine. But when I returned to my cabin after dinner, I decided to check on the samples again. And when I opened the case, I saw one of the vials was missing! (Curious, ABBY leaves Table One and crosses LEFT, about halfway to where AVERY, OWEN, and LAUREN are gathered. OTHERS continue to look through Elliot’s notes.)

OWEN: What?!

LAUREN: Avery, this isn’t good. What does it contain?

AVERY: Well, that’s the worrisome part. It’s a new medication that my company is developing… to help patients who are at risk for heart failure. It hasn’t been widely tested yet.

OWEN: So, what you’re saying is that we are missing a vial of untested heart medication on a train where two people have been found dead due to heart failure?

ABBY: (Cries out.) Oh my goodness!

DEREK: (Looks up from the notes with the OTHERS.) What is it?

ABBY: Avery is missing medicine that causes heart failure!

JENNIFER: (To AVERY.) Are you serious? When were you going to share that piece of information with the rest of us?

ELLIOT: This new development is most exciting! (Tries to take back his notebook to continue writing, but HOLLY pulls it away. HOLLY tears out a piece of paper and hands it to ELLIOT, who uses it to continue to write while HOLLY continues to read the rest of the notes.)
DEREK: (Stands and moves CENTER.) Owen, your whole, “Let’s focus on the other people” theory is crazy! This woman clearly had the means to commit these murders, and she had the opportunity. We should have kept the focus on her the whole time! She was right at the same table as Isabella, who was rude to her!

LAUREN: Do you genuinely think that she would have brought this to our attention if she was the one who committed the crime?

DEREK: Maybe that’s her plan! To make us think she’s innocent!

HOLLY: (Reads from the notebook,) But Derek, from what I’m reading here, Avery was nowhere near Sidney at any point in the evening. And I think it is somewhat farfetched to believe there are two separate murderers on this train. (Angry, DEREK storms OFF LEFT.)

JENNIFER: Derek, come back! (EXITS LEFT after DEREK.)

OWEN: Let’s just give those two a minute. Avery, tell us more about this medication. I think it’s safe to assume that this is the best lead we’ve had so far for a cause of death.

avery: Well, like I said before, its primary function is to help patients at risk for heart failure by helping to regulate heart function. For someone who is sick, too little would be ineffective, but too much could be very dangerous.

ABBY: So what would happen if someone without a heart problem took it?

avery: It would be safe to presume that the same would hold true for a healthy person. A small amount would probably go unnoticed, but a large dose could likely cause serious heart problems.

LAUREN: What characteristics does the medication itself have? Would people realize they were taking it or can it be hidden somehow?

avery: Actually, that’s where my company has been focusing our research. All of the medications I’m taking to my presentation are in liquid form with no colorings or added flavors. We’re trying to develop a line of medications for people who have difficulty swallowing traditional medications.

ABBY: That sounds like a great idea! I bet it would be useful for animals, too!

LAUREN: (To ABBY.) Focus! (DEREK and JENNIFER ENTER LEFT with a pitcher of water and a stack of glasses.)

MIKE: Okay, so if you claim it wasn’t you, who else had access to your case?

avery: That’s the thing. The case never left my possession. I’m the only one with a key, and I still have that right here (Holds up a key attached to her wrist on a bracelet.) The only times all evening that
the case was open were right after the rockslide and just now, in my room.

**DEREK:** Sorry about before, everyone. I’m pretty on edge. I thought we could all use some water. Anyone?

**ABBY:** Sure, thanks, guys.

**ELLIO: T** *(As he writes.)* Elliot was parched from excitement and welcomed some refreshment.

**MIKE:** Sounds good to me! *(ABBY, MIKE, and ELLIOT move to DEREK and JENNIFER and start to pick up glasses of water to drink.)*

**LAUREN, AVERY, and OWEN suddenly gasp as HOLLY flips through the pages of the notebook furiously.**

**LAUREN/HOLLY/avery/owen:** *(Yell.)* Don’t drink that!

**JENNIFER:** What! Why? What’s the matter?

**OWEN:** The water glasses! That has to be what’s happened!

**LAUREN:** If the medicine is a liquid, it would be very easy to add to a beverage!

**avery:** And the medicines are designed to have very little color and taste. No one would even know they were drinking it!

**HOLLY:** *(Holds up the notebook.)* Elliot took amazing notes. And right before both deaths occurred, many of us were sipping water.

**JENNIFER:** What about when Sidney died? I don’t remember drinking anything then.

**HOLLY:** *(Flips through the notebook.)* It’s not quite as clear. But remember, right before Sidney died, those who had helped move Isabella’s body came back in the dining room and had some water. *(AVERY moves to Table Three and stares at it, deep in thought.)*

**MIKE:** Well, good catch! So now we just need to figure out who got a hold of the medicine and got close enough to both people to put it in their water!

**ABBY:** We still need to find Sidney’s camera, too!

**HOLLY:** I’m positive that this notebook will continue to be a valuable resource. If we continue to look back through it, I am confident that we will figure out who had the opportunity. *(OWEN moves to Table Three next to AVERY.)*

**avery:** We might not need the notebook…

**owen:** *(To AVERY.)* I think you’re right.

**CONDUCTOR:** *(From OFFSTAGE or through the SPEAKERS.)* Attention, passengers. We will be arriving in Los Angeles in approximately ten minutes. Please be prepared to leave all belongings on board when exiting until the authorities have had the opportunity to survey the scene and speak to everyone individually. Thank you.
1 **LAUREN:** Do you both have an idea of what happened?

**ABBY:** Tell us!

**OWEN:** Okay, everyone. We have ten minutes before we get to Los Angeles. Grab that notebook and let’s get to work. Now that we know exactly what we’re looking for, we can catch the murderer by surprise when we get there if we all work together. Are you all in?

**MIKE:** Go team! *(ALL gather around Table One and start talking excitedly as the LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK and the CURTAIN Closes.)*

End of Scene One

ACT TWO

Scene Two

CURTAIN UP on a train platform in Los Angeles. POLICE OFFICER ONE stands near the LEFT EXIT, ready to greet PASSENGERS as they come off the train. As PASSENGERS ENTER RIGHT, POLICE OFFICER TWO will lead them to the side and begin to take statements. POLICE OFFICER THREE stands near a group of OPTIONAL EXTRAS who make up various NEWS REPORTERS, ONLOOKERS, TRAVELERS, etc. *(NOTE: If no extras are being used, POLICE OFFICER THREE can direct dialogue that pertains to the CROWD either OFFSTAGE or to the AUDIENCE.)*

**CONDUCTOR:** *(ENTERS RIGHT. [NOTE: If doubling, this line can be delivered from OFFSTAGE or over an intercom system.])* Just arrived! West Coast 518 from Salt Lake City has just arrived on Platform Four! Just arrived, West Coast 518! *(EXITS RIGHT.)*

**POLICE OFFICER THREE:** *(To the CROWD.)* All right, folks, back it up! Give us some space! We’re conducting an investigation here! This platform is closed! Back it up! *(ALL PASSENGERS begin to ENTER RIGHT. NELSON carries his guitar, ABBY carries her book, ELLIOT carries a single sheet of writing paper and a pen, AVERY carries her silver case, and OWEN carries a paper bag. OWEN, AVERY, and HOLLY ENTER last and stand away from the OTHERS.)*

**POLICE OFFICER ONE:** Alright, folks, please just follow us. Head right over there... *(Indicates POLICE OFFICER TWO,)* ...and we can start taking your statements. Please leave all belongings on the train until we can conduct an adequate search.

**POLICE OFFICER TWO:** Right this way, folks, we will try to do this as quickly as possible! Stay together!

**POLICE OFFICER ONE:** Sir, your guitar! Madam, your book! You with the bag! Please, folks, all belongings stay on the train!

**ELLIO:** *(As he writes.)* While wanting to follow the officer’s wishes, Elliot was dismayed at the prospect of being separated from his writing supplies during what promised to be a very exciting
series of events. He also failed to comprehend how a guitar and a marine studies book could pertain to the details of this particular investigation.

POLICE OFFICER ONE:  *(Puzzled.)* What?

abby:  He doesn’t like to be separated from his notepad. I can put my book back on the train, though. Nelson, you want me to take your guitar? Avery, I can take your case for you, too!

avery:  That won’t be necessary, Abby. I’ll be handing my case straight to the police.

jillian:  Ms. Millen! You’re handing all your samples over to the police? Don’t you think you should keep them with you?

avery:  Nonsense. You heard the officers, everything on the train is evidence. I wouldn’t want to complicate the officer’s investigation by leaving them a case of dangerous samples that they couldn’t open. *(Hands her case to POLICE OFFICER TWO.)* Here are all my pharmaceutical samples, along with the key to the case.

owen:  Hello, officers, let me introduce myself. My name is Owen Casey and I am a private investigator. I wanted to deliver this evidence straight to you along with this silver case. In this bag is the notepad from our resident writer Elliot Williams, which I think you will find very helpful when re-constructing the activities on the train during the journey. This bag also contains the camera that belongs to Sidney Bennett, the deceased paparazzo who was constantly taking pictures until he died. *(ALL react when OWEN reveals that the bag contains Sidney’s camera. JILLIAN moves DOWNSTAGE away from the OTHERS and checks her inside coat pocket, looking confused.)*

Mike:  You found the camera?

abby:  That’s awesome, where was it?

nelson:  I did not even know our photographer friend’s camera was missing!

police officer three:  Wow, that’s a stroke of luck for us. The poor guy might actually help solve his own murder.

police officer one:  *(Takes the bag and looks inside.)* You say this camera was missing? Where did you find it?

holly:  Actually, his camera was never missing. The camera I brought along to record my upcoming lecture looked very much like Sidney’s. My camera is still missing. This one was under Sidney’s dinner table the whole time! *(ALL react positively to the news except JILLIAN, who looks inside her coat again, nervous.)*
ISABELLA: (Between her large personality and her copious luggage, she Mid-rant.)

AVERY: (To TICKET SELLERS.) That’s ridiculous! Just because you are a movie star doesn’t make it out to be.

JILLIAN: That’s agreed to this. Besides, I’m sure it won’t be as bad as you are supposed to look out for my interests, and this is not something a movie star would be interested in! It’s in your contract!

COAST RAILWAYS is the company providing the trains for the film, Los Angeles as part of your next movie, Sunset on the Rails. This is not a place I should be expected to set foot in.

This place is just disgusting! Just look around! It’s too hot, that and LUCY take up the entire space in front of both ticket windows.)

SIDNEY, who has been inconspicuous to this point, suddenly gets very excited. He pulls out a small camera, which he tries to hide behind his newspaper, and begins to photograph ISABELLA.

JILLIAN moves slightly away from the GROUP.

It was you! It must have been you! No one else had access to your case! Plus, you were sitting at the same table as Isabella for dinner! And you just said in front of everyone that you opened the case right before she died! I can’t believe you tried to make me...
feel better after you killed her! (Throughout the following exchange, JILLIAN slowly moves away from OTHERS while watching AVERY and LUCY. MIKE and DEREK notice JILLIAN moving away and circle around to cut her off.)

HOLLY: (Moves to LUCY.) Lucy, listen. I thought that same thing at first, as well. But when we went back through Elliot’s notebook, we realized that Avery was nowhere near Sidney at any point. She couldn’t have killed him, and she didn’t kill Isabella.

OWEN: But there was one other person at the table with you and Isabella. One other person who handled the open case of medicine. And the only person who was near both Isabella and Sidney right before their deaths.

LUCY: (After a pause.) Jillian! JILLIAN turns to run but is intercepted by DEREK and MIKE. LUCY, RACHEL, CALEB, and NELSON react with surprise. JENNIFER, LAUREN, ABBY, HOLLY, OWEN, and ELLIOT talk excitedly to each other. POLICE OFFICERS ONE, TWO, and THREE move to apprehend JILLIAN."

DEREK: Going somewhere?

MIKE: You’ve got to be quicker than that to surprise me! (POLICE OFFICER ONE holds the evidence bag and silver case while POLICE OFFICERS TWO and THREE handcuff JILLIAN and bring her CENTER.)

JILLIAN: Fine! You figured it out! It was me! (ALL gasp.)

LUCY: Oh… I don’t believe this… Jillian, how could you? (Moves to the side, where RACHEL and JENNIFER comfort her.)

JILLIAN: Lucy, I didn’t mean to kill her! Honest, I didn’t!

AVERY: But you did kill her! And why Sidney?! Why? (Throughout the confession, ALL react appropriately with various levels of shock and surprise.)

JILLIAN: I was so angry at the way Isabella treated us at the train station when we were buying our tickets. And again at dinner! She was so rude to everyone. I mean, what did she think gave her the right to talk down to us? To all of us! Fame doesn’t give people the right to act that way!

AVERY: That’s why you killed her? You were angry about her insults?

JILLIAN: No! All I wanted to do was embarrass her. When I realized that Sidney was on board and taking pictures to sell, I thought, what would bring Isabella down a notch? She was so worried about looking her best and being better than everyone else that I figured a bunch of pictures of her getting sick all over the train right before her big movie premier would be just the thing to mess up her perfect Hollywood image!

HOLLY: So you poisoned her to make her sick?
NELSON: I'm going to become a musical sensation, friend! This guitar
OWEN: I am not your friend. I am Owen Casey, private investigator.
NELSON: He means Los Angeles.
TICKET SELLER ONE: I'm afraid I still don't understand, sir.
NELSON: The City of Angels? The Big Orange? La-La Land?
TICKET SELLER ONE: I'm sorry, where, sir?

Next two customers, please!

LAUREN: Listen, I do love my job, but everyone needs some time off,
ABBY: But so much of medicine can be applied across disciplines!

anyhow, what takes you to Los Angeles? Peace and love?
Music can be exciting, too. Probably in a… different way.

the same train.

I'm trying to read this article about bank fraud, but you seem
newspaper-reading friend? What is it that's taking you to the coast?

I'm going to become a musical sensation, friend! This guitar
OWEN: Why kill Sidney though? He was going to sell the embarrassing
NELSON: When Owen and Sidney decided to go through his pictures to
look for a picture of the murderer, I knew I had to get his camera.
He never stopped taking pictures! I was sure that he had a picture
of me poisoning Isabella’s water. And I knew I would never get
it from him willingly. He hardly ever put the camera down! I still
had the rest of the vial in my pocket, so as soon as I saw my
opportunity, I put the rest of the vial in his water!

AVERY: You knew it was going to kill him, and you did it anyway!

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opportunity, I put the rest of the vial in his water!

AVERY: You knew it was going to kill him, and you did it anyway!

JILLIAN: And for nothing! I snuck back to get his camera as soon
as I could and hid it in my coat pocket. But now I find out that
I have somebody else’s camera! I didn’t even see anyone else
with a camera!

ABBY: That’s because no one else had one! (POLICE OFFICER ONE
opens the bag to reveal a notebook and an empty water glass.
LUCY, RACHEL, CALEB, JILLIAN, NELSON, and POLICE OFFICERS
TWO and THREE react with surprise. POLICE OFFICER THREE
searches JILLIAN and pulls the real camera out of her coat pocket.)

POLICE OFFICER ONE: I wondered why you kept calling this empty
water glass a camera. Glad I just went along with it!

OWEN: Avery and I figured out that Jillian was the only one who had
access to the case of pharmaceuticals, and we knew she must be
the murderer. Holly went back through Elliot’s notes and realized
Jillian must have Sidney’s camera, but we knew she would never
give up the evidence unless we tricked her into it.

ABBY: I decided that if we pretended we had the camera, it might
make Jillian nervous enough to confess! And I was right!

POLICE OFFICER ONE: To LUCY.) But I never meant for her to die. I had no idea
that what I put in her water would kill her!

AVERY: I can’t believe this! How many times have I told you that we
work with dangerous items! What were you thinking?!

OWEN: Why kill Sidney though? He was going to sell the embarrassing
pictures of Isabella just like you had planned.

JILLIAN: When Sidney started saying how he was going to sell all his
pictures of Isabella and make all this money from it, I realized it
didn’t matter what happened to Isabella, she was still going to be
famous! And, Sidney was going to get rich from her fame!

HOLLY: So you killed him?

JILLIAN: When Owen and Sidney decided to go through his pictures to
look for a picture of the murderer, I knew I had to get his camera.
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JILLIAN: So I did have the camera all along! And you all didn’t actually have a picture of me poisoning anyone!

POLICE OFFICER TWO: Of course, now that you’ve confessed in front of all of us, it doesn’t really matter if we have a picture or not.

POLICE OFFICER THREE: You’re under arrest! Let’s go! (POLICE OFFICERS TWO and THREE lead JILLIAN OFFSTAGE.)

POLICE OFFICER ONE: Well, folks, we will still have to ask all of you to come to the station for official statements, but now that we have the murderer and a confession, we should be able to get you on your way soon enough. If you will all follow me, we have cars waiting to take you downtown. (EXITS RIGHT. DEREK, JENNIFER, AVERY, OWEN, HOLLY, LAUREN, ABBY, and MIKE cross to CENTER.)

OWEN: Nice work, everyone. Abby, brilliant idea with the camera bluff!

LAUREN: Abby, I know that I didn’t want to work on this trip, but obviously this trip had other plans. You were a great asset throughout all the chaos. You’re very bright, and I’m sure you’ll make a superb vet tech!

ABBY: That means so much! I learned so much about keeping cool under pressure from you! You know, during an animal emergency—(Continues to talk to LAUREN as they EXIT RIGHT.)

HOLLY: (To MIKE.) I do hate to admit it, but you had some very effective insights throughout this investigation. Perhaps I underestimated you.

MIKE: (Elbows HOLLY, jokingly.) That’ll teach you to judge a book by its cover, eh, professor? (HOLLY and MIKE begin to exit.)

HOLLY: I never did hear what your college degree is in, Mike.

MIKE: Criminal justice! (HOLLY throws her hands up as she and MIKE EXIT RIGHT. RACHEL, CALEB, and NELSON move DOWN CENTER.)

RACHEL: Well, this was all very surprising!

CALEB: I’ll say! What a way to start our honeymoon!

RACHEL: Jennifer, you and Derek worked so well together to help solve this crazy case!

JENNIFER: I suppose we did. (To DEREK.) You know, we work much better together when we aren’t fighting.

DEREK: You’re right, Jen. We need to find a way to keep ourselves on track, listening to each other, and working together on the restaurant instead of working against each other.

NELSON: If I may, cooking friends, I know a fabulous musician who happens to be looking for work and is very good at keeping people calm and relaxed. (ALL laugh.)
DEREK: Come on, Nelson, let’s talk terms in the car. (EXITS with JENNIFER, OWEN, CALEB, RACHEL, and NELSON.)

AVERY: (Starts to EXIT but sees LUCY sitting alone on a bench alone. AVERY goes and sits next to her.) Hey, Lucy.

LUCY: Hi, Avery.

AVERY: You coming?

LUCY: Yes… I just can’t believe this. I’m sorry I thought you were a murderer.

AVERY: To be honest with you, I feel somewhat responsible. I should have been more careful about who I trusted to be my assistant and handle the samples.

LUCY: You couldn’t have known what Jillian would do. I don’t think anyone would have guessed it. I know I didn’t.

AVERY: (Stands.) Well, this might not be the greatest time, but I find myself needing a new assistant. Someone who has a good mind for business, good organizational skills, and who’s good at following directions. (Hints.) Someone who might be in need of employment…

LUCY: (Stands, excited.) Me?! You want me to be your assistant?

AVERY: (Stands.) I know you are going to have a lot on your plate in the near future handling Isabella’s affairs, but after everything settles down, give me a call. Salt Lake City’s a great place to live.

LUCY: I will! (Shouts to ELLIOT.) Elliot, come on! (AVERY and LUCY EXIT.)

ELLIOt: (Moves to CENTER and looks around. As he writes.) Elliot realized that he was the last train passenger remaining on the platform. Before joining the others, he reflected on the bizarre series of events that befell him and his fellow passengers on West Coast 518. After this trip, it was unlikely that any of their lives would truly be the same. Friendships torn apart, new relationships forged, old relationships made stronger, and new opportunities presented. (Starts to exit, then stops suddenly and faces the AUDIENCE.) What an amazing story this would make! (Looks excitedly at his notes as he runs OFF. BLACKOUT.)

END OF PLAY
PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES ONSTAGE
Salt Lake City train station: Ticket counter, tickets, benches.
Train dining car: Four tables set with dishes, flatware, glasses, low floral centerpieces, and table numbers, sixteen chairs, easel. For ACT ONE, Scene Three, there’s also a tablecloth over Isabella’s body.

PROPERTIES BROUGHT ON

ACT ONE, Scene One:
Luggage, train tickets (TRAVELERS)
Small camera, newspaper (SIDNEY)
Whistle (CONDUCTOR)
Notepad, pen (ELLIOT)
Bag of basketballs, (MIKE)
Briefcase (HOLLY)
Thick book (ABBY)
Guitar case, lots of loose change, bills (NELSON)
Newspaper (OWEN)
Business magazine, small silver briefcase, key on a bracelet (AVERY)
Phone (JILLIAN)

ACT ONE, Scene Two:
Notepad, pen (ELLIOT)
Clipboard (WAITER ONE)
Seating chart (WAITER TWO)
Four water pitchers (WAITER THREE)
Thick book (ABBY)
Newspaper (OWEN)
Guitar (NELSON)
Silver case, key on a bracelet (AVERY)
Camera (SIDNEY)
Reading glasses (HOLLY)
Wallet (MIKE)
Papers, folders (LUCY)
Serving trays, order pads, pens, dinner plates, pitchers (WAITERS)

ACT ONE, Scene Three:
Phone (OWEN, JILLIAN)
Water glasses (WAITERS)

ACT TWO, Scene One:
Water pitchers, drinking glasses (JENNIFER, DEREK)
Silver case, key on a bracelet (AVERY)
Guitar (NELSON)
ACT TWO, Scene Two:
Guitar case (NELSON)
Thick book (ABBY)
Single sheet of paper, pen (ELLIOT)
Silver case, key on a bracelet (AVERY)
Paper bag containing water glass and Elliot’s notepad (OWEN)
Handcuffs (POLICE OFFICER TWO)

SOUND EFFECTS
Train whistle, train starting.

COSTUMES
The time period is the present, so all costuming is flexible. Some suggestions include:

RACHEL and CALEB wear similar clothing that makes them look like a vacationing couple.

JENNIFER and DEREK should be identifiable as chefs, perhaps dressed in all white or in clothing with a food motif.

NELSON is the most casual character and can wear clothing such as jeans, a tie-dye or band t-shirt, or other “easy going” clothes.

SIDNEY is undercover and wears dark colors, trying to blend in with his surroundings.

MIKE can wear a t-shirt and shorts, sweats, or other sport clothing.

ISABELLA can wear any type of clothing that makes her stand out as a diva, over-dressed and trying to draw attention to herself. She changes for ACT ONE, Scene Two, into a flashier outfit, such as a ball gown, sequins, a feather boa, long gloves, etc.

ABBY can wear something that identifies her love of animals. A shirt with an animal printed on it, especially marine life, would be ideal.

LAUREN, HOLLY, LUCY, AVERY, JILLIAN, and ELLIOT are all traveling for business and can wear appropriate business attire such as a suit and/or tie for ELLIOT and pantsuits, skirts, sweaters, or dresses for the women.

LUCY and ISABELLA wear the same necklace.

CONDUCTOR wears a uniform and a watch and carries a whistle.

POLICE, WAITERS, CHEFS, and TICKET SELLERS should wear uniforms.

FLEXIBLE CASTING and CAST SIZE
OTHERS can be played with as few as three players for a minimal cast size of nineteen, or broken down into individual roles for a cast as large as twenty-eight.
EXTRAS may be added as desired in ACT ONE, Scene One as travelers, and ACT TWO, Scene Two, as travelers, reporters, police officers, or onlookers.

ORIGINAL CAST

_Murder on the 518_ was originally performed on November 2, 2018, by the Mask and Hammer Drama Club at Forest City Regional High School in Forest City, Pennsylvania. The cast was as follows:

Mr. Caleb Knox .........................Isaiah Canfield
Mrs. Rachel Knox .......................Hailey Gray
Ms. Isabella Madison .................Emma Jo Burrasca
Ms. Lucy Blake ..........................Olivia Casper
Mr. Sidney Bennett .....................Ryan Notari
Mr. Elliot Williams .....................Anthony D’Antuono
Coach Mike Umbarr ....................Blaise Albright
Professor Holly Barnes ...............AnQi Chen
Mr. Owen Casey ..........................Matthew Giles
Mr. Nelson Henry .......................Raymond Ondrako
Chef Derek Warren ....................David Lynch
Chef Jennifer Warren ..................Destiny Englert
Ms. Abby Wells ..........................Sidney Hodges
Dr. Lauren Maloney .....................Lila Ingenito
Ms. Avery Millen .......................Katie Nguyen
Ms. Jillian Hill .........................Jessica Notari
Conductor/Extra .........................Branson Casper
Waiter One ..............................Sage Bilko
Executive Chef ..........................Branson Casper
Police Officer One .....................Ryan Notari
Ticket Seller One/Extra ...............Emma Barney
Waiter Two ...............................Maiya Rizner
Sous Chef One ...........................Austin Grosel
Police Officer Two ......................Billy Williams
Ticket Seller Two/Extra ...............Breanna Howe
Waiter Three ............................Hannah Perry
Sous Chef Two ...........................Jasmyn Stewart
Police Officer Three ...................Joshua Russo
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