

**MORE BODIES PLEASE**  
By Dale Ahlquist

## Cast of Characters

10 Females; 8 Males; 1 Either

(M/F)	<u>MR. STETSON:</u>	Dead body.
F	<u>MISS GOODHUE:</u>	Receptionist.
M	<u>MR. FENWICK:</u>	Manager.
F	<u>DEE DEE:</u>	Waitress.
M	<u>CHARLIE:</u>	Cook.
M	<u>RAYMOND HEATHERINGTON:</u>	Anniversary couple, Ginger's husband.
F	<u>GINGER HEATHERINGTON:</u>	Anniversary couple, Raymond's wife.
M	<u>SKIP CONWAY:</u>	Newlywed.
F	<u>BRENDA CONWAY:</u>	Newlywed, Skip's husband.
M	<u>CARL:</u>	New maintenance guy
M	<u>MR. XERXES:</u>	Mysterious guest
F	<u>LAVENDER JONES:</u>	Beautiful guest
M	<u>MR. FOGG:</u>	First trench coat
M	<u>MR. FOG:</u>	Second trench coat
F	<u>LILLIE CALLIOPE:</u>	Spinster sister
F	<u>MILLIE CALLIOPE:</u>	Spinster sister
F	<u>MARIE LEMARQUE:</u>	Guest
F	<u>MRS. KESSLER:</u>	Guest
F	<u>THEODORA TINKER:</u>	Guest

Scene Breakdown

ACT I - Hotel Lobby of Cedar Manor Resort.

ACT II - Hotel Lobby of Cedar Manor Resort.

Approximate Length

90 minutes

Time

Ambiguous. Quasi-modern day

Place

Lobby of the Cedar Manor Resort

ACT I

Setting: The entire action of the play takes place in the lobby of the Cedar Manor Resort, with the reception desk on one side of the stage and the restaurant on the other, and an entrance upstage center.

At Rise: On the floor in the center of the stage is a dead body. The phone rings. MISS GOODHUE enters from behind the reception desk, and as she answers the phone, she sees the body.

GOODHUE

Hello, Cedar Manor Resort.

(Sees the body, slight pause, with crestfallen disappointment instead of shock)

Oh no, not again.

(To person on phone)

No, sir, I didn't mean you! I meant...I mean, I'm sorry, can I help you?

(Pause. She looks at the receiver as the person has obviously hung up. She sighs, hangs up.)

(Enter DEE DEE from the restaurant side. Sees the body.)

DEE DEE

(With great disappointment)

Oh no, not again!

(Phone rings again)

GOODHUE

(Expectantly)

Hello, Cedar Manor Resort, how may I help you?

DEE DEE

(Annoyed by the dead body)

It's almost time for breakfast!

GOODHUE

(Into phone)

I'm afraid we have no vacancies.

DEE DEE

You might have one vacancy.

GOODHUE

I could put you on a waiting list and call you back shortly. Very good.

(She writes)

Thank you for calling.

(Hangs up, turns and calls over her shoulder)

Mr. Fenwick! You'd better get out here.

(Enter MR. FENWICK)

FENWICK

(Sees body)

Oh no, not again! Who is it?

DEE DEE

It looks like Mr. Stetson from Room 122

FENWICK

Oh good.

GOODHUE

What do you mean, "Oh good."

FENWICK

He paid for three nights in advance.

DEE DEE

What are we going to do? People are going to be arriving for breakfast any minute.

FENWICK

Miss Goodhue, get Fredrickson up here and remove the body. Worst maintenance man I've ever seen. He should always check the lobby first thing in the morning.

GOODHUE

Okay....

(Exit GOODHUE)

FENWICK

corporate is not going to like this.

DEE DEE

The health inspector is not going to like this.

FENWICK

The health inspector doesn't like anything.

DEE DEE

This is two guests in two days. Yesterday it was Mr. Barnes in Room 121.

FENWICK

You don't need to remind me, Dee Dee.

(RAYMOND and GINGER HEATHERINGTON, a middle-aged couple, arrive for breakfast. DEE DEE sees them and exits quickly, leaving them to FENWICK. They see the body and step back, startled.)

RAYMOND

Well, what the devil? Will you look at this?

GINGER

Well, Raymond, now you can stop complaining. Someone else is obviously having a worse day than you.

FENWICK

Just step around it. We'll get that cleaned up in a minute.

RAYMOND

Are you the manager?

FENWICK

Yes, I'm Mr. Fenwick. How can I help you, Mr. um...?

RAYMOND

Heatherington.

FENWICK

Ah yes.

RAYMOND

Any word on when we can switch rooms?

FENWICK

Nothing yet, sir. I'm afraid we're completely full.

RAYMOND

You realize it's our anniversary.

FENWICK

(Looking at the register in front of him)

Um, yes, I see that, sir. Congratulations.

RAYMOND

Are you aware we have come here to Cedar Manor Resort every year for 47 years?

FENWICK

That's wonderful.

RAYMOND

And we have always stayed in the same room.

FENWICK

Indeed, sir. I see there was an error in the booking, and I do apologize. We'll get it sorted out.

RAYMOND

Why can't we switch with the party staying in our room?

FENWICK

I'm afraid it's not that simple. But I assure you we'll do everything we can to take care of it. We certainly don't want anything to ruin your anniversary.

RAYMOND

47 years.

FENWICK

Marvelous. Now why don't you enjoy a nice breakfast. Dee Dee!

(They step around the body and DEE DEE emerges to escort them to a table)

DEE DEE

Good morning. Mr. and Mrs. Heatherington. How are you today?

GINGER

(Friendly)

Fine, thank you!

RAYMOND

Could be better, considering today is our anniversary.

DEE DEE

Oh, happy anniversary.

RAYMOND

47 years. And we've always come to Cedar Manor.

DEE DEE

That is the sweetest thing.

RAYMOND

And we always order the same thing for breakfast.

DEE DEE

Oh? Well then, let me just take your order.

RAYMOND

Fried gingerbread cakes, of course.

DEE DEE

Oh. I'm afraid we don't carry those anymore.

RAYMOND

What? Cedar Manor is famous for its fried gingerbread cakes!

DEE DEE

I'm sure it probably was at one time, but we have a different cook.

RAYMOND

My wife's name is Ginger.

GINGER

And he calls me Gingerbread.

RAYMOND

And we want the fried gingerbread cakes.

DEE DEE

Well, don't worry! I'm sure the cook can make fried gingerbread cakes.

RAYMOND

(Looking at dead body)

What's the matter with him?

DEE DEE

It appears that he's dead, ma'am.

RAYMOND

Well, I hope it isn't catching.

GINGER

I hope it wasn't something he ate.

FENWICK

Dee Dee!

DEE DEE

Yes Mr. Fenwick?



FENWICK

(Nodding toward the body)

Get a tablecloth or something.

(Exit DEE DEE. Enter MR. XERXES, who almost collides with GOODHUE, who is rushing back in.)

GOODHUE

Oh, I'm sorry!

XERXES

My fault entirely. I'm obviously preventing you from doing your job.

(They both approach the reception desk. GOODHUE seems anxious to tell FENWICK something, but is obviously waiting for XERXES to first be taken care of.)

FENWICK

May I help you?

XERXES

Xerxes. Room 111. My TV doesn't work.

FENWICK

I'm terribly sorry, Mr. Xerxes. I'll send someone to fix it right away.

XERXES

It doesn't matter. I don't watch it.

FENWICK

Then why are you complaining?

XERXES

I wasn't complaining. I was just letting you know.

(He turns around and almost trips over the body)

FENWICK

We're going to get somebody to take care of that.

XERXES

It looks like somebody already has.

(He proceeds to a table)

FENWICK

(In a loud angry stage whisper)

Did you find Fredrickson?

GOODHUE

(The same)

Yes!

FENWICK

Why isn't he getting this body out of here?

GOODHUE

Because he's dead.

FENWICK

I know he's dead. How did Fredrickson suddenly get squeamish about dead bodies? He didn't have any trouble yesterday when he removed the body from Room 121.

GOODHUE

No, Fredrickson is dead!

FENWICK

Fredrickson! Dead?

GOODHUE

Yes! Dead! I found him lying on the floor of the boiler room.

FENWICK

How did he die?

GOODHUE

I don't know.

FENWICK

Well, he certainly didn't work himself to death. Laziest maintenance man I've ever seen. I'll bet he died in his sleep, sleeping on the job.

(DEE DEE enters and covers the body with a large tablecloth or sheet)

GINGER

It's all very nice, Raymond, that we've come here every year for 47 years, but has it ever occurred to you that I might like to go somewhere else?

RAYMOND

We went somewhere else once, Gingerbread. Three years ago. Belmont or Bellfont or something or other. Wasn't as good as Cedar Manor.

GINGER

Yes, I agree it wasn't quite as good, but at least it was different.

RAYMOND

I don't see why we should risk going somewhere else that might not be as good. We know what to expect here.

GINGER

Well, that's just it. What about something unexpected?

RAYMOND

(Nods toward body)

There. We didn't expect that! And I didn't expect to get the wrong room. You see? Unexpected usually just means inconvenient.

(Enter LILLIE and MILLIE CALLIOPE)

FENWICK

Good morning, ladies!

LILLIE and MILLIE

Good morning.

FENWICK

Did you sleep well?

MILLIE

We didn't sleep at all.

FENWICK

Why not? Was something wrong with the room?

LILLIE

The room is fine.

MILLIE

We never sleep at night.

LILLIE

We sleep during the day.

MILLIE

We're nocturnal twins.

LILLIE

As opposed to fraternal.

MILLIE

We're just going to have a bite to eat now.

LILLIE

And then beddy-bye.

(They see the body)

MILLIE

Oh dear. It looks like he fell asleep without even bothering to go to bed.

FENWICK

Miss Goodhue, you need to get that body out of here.

GOODHUE

Not in my job description.

FENWICK

Don't be ridiculous! It's not in anybody's job description! Go get Charlie to do it.

GOODHUE

The cook? He's making breakfast!

FENWICK

Go get him!

(Exit GOODHUE. Enter THEODORA TINKER, to the reception desk.)

FENWICK

May I help you?

TINKER

Theodora Tinker.

FENWICK

Tinker...here we are. Five nights. Deluxe suite. I need an ID please.

TINKER

Here. And here.

Oh. FENWICK

What's the matter? TINKER

FENWICK  
(With disappointment)  
You're from corporate. You get a discount.

Yes. TINKER

And your gain is our loss. FENWICK

Well, we're on the same side, aren't we? TINKER

FENWICK  
Maybe you think so, but it's the bottom line of Cedar Manor Resort that is affected. And corporate is going to frown on that.

I wouldn't worry about it. TINKER

What do you do at corporate? FENWICK

I'm an accountant. TINKER

Oh, great. Came to look at our books? FENWICK

No, I'm on vacation. TINKER

You're probably a spy. FENWICK

No, I'm— TINKER

FENWICK  
corporate is always trying to undermine us. Don't think we don't know that.

TINKER

Do you think I could just check in?

FENWICK

Your room's not ready yet. Care to wait in the restaurant?

TINKER

The discount applies in the restaurant, too, right?

FENWICK

Yes, but you'd better take that into account to show that we would have made a bigger profit this weekend if you hadn't come.

TINKER

(Noticing the body)

What's going on here?

FENWICK

One of the guests passed away suddenly. But don't worry. He paid for three nights in advance. So we'll be able to resell the room. Be sure to tell corporate.

TINKER

Are you just going to leave him there?

FENWICK

Of course not. And if you really are on our side, you won't tell corporate anything about that!

TINKER

(She crosses to the tables. Sees XERXES sitting alone.)

Good morning.

XERXES

Good morning.

TINKER

I'm an accountant. I'm on vacation.

XERXES

That's...

(Looking for a word)

...capital!

TINKER

I think the rates at this resort are very reasonable. Don't you?

XERXES

I...think that I could reason with them.

TINKER

What does that mean?

XERXES

I think they're...about right.

TINKER

Do you think they're slightly higher or slightly lower? Is that what you mean by "about right"?

XERXES

I see how tricky language can be.

TINKER

Language? What does language have to do with it? I'm talking about numbers.

XERXES

I thought you were on vacation.

TINKER

Yes...yes, I am. I explained that, didn't I?

XERXES

Yes, you did.

TINKER

I'm having a very relaxing time, thank you.

XERXES

You're...welcome.

TINKER

I should eat something. After all, this is the restaurant. I think the price of the food here is very reasonable, don't you?

XERXES

Extremely reasonable.

TINKER

Extremely? Do you think it's priced too low?

XERXES

You say you're an accountant.

TINKER

Yes, I did say that, didn't I?

XERXES

By any chance are you the accountant for the corporation that owns the resort?

TINKER

And if I were, would that matter?

XERXES

Not to me, certainly.

TINKER

If the corporation gives me a discount for staying at its resort, shouldn't I take advantage of it?

XERXES

By all means.

TINKER

But even if I didn't get a discount, the prices would still be reasonable, don't you think?

XERXES

I think we already covered this, didn't we?

TINKER

Why did *you* choose to stay at this resort?

XERXES

I...probably shouldn't tell you.

(Tinker looks at him in a puzzled and suspicious manner)

(Enter MRS. KESSLER, to reception)

KESSLER

Excuse me.

FENWICK

Yes?

KESSLER

I don't wish to complain....

FENWICK

Ah, that's great.



KESSLER

...but there seems to be a problem with the heat in my room.

FENWICK

Well, ma'am, there should be no problem with the heat. It is turned off this time of year.

KESSLER

Oh, I was wondering about that. It does seem like this would be a good time of year to have the heat turned off.

FENWICK

Yes, indeed, ma'am. But if you're too cold....

KESSLER

No, no. I'm not too cold. I'm too hot because there is heat coming into my room.

FENWICK

You're saying the heat is on?

KESSLER

Yes, the heat is on.

FENWICK

Well, that's impossible, but I'll send someone to take a look right away.

KESSLER

Thank you.

FENWICK

And what room is that?

KESSLER

123.

FENWICK

123. Mrs. Kessler.

KESSLER

Yes.

(She doesn't move)

FENWICK

(Repeats)

I'll send someone to take a look right away.

KESSLER

Thank you.

(Still doesn't move)

FENWICK

Is there something else?

KESSLER

Well, as a matter of fact, there is. It seems that the hot water is not very hot. It really hardly got warm when I bathed this morning.

FENWICK

I see. So the air is too hot and the water is too cold.

KESSLER

Yes, something like that.

FENWICK

Well, it could be that there is an extra strain on our hot water heater in the morning, but I will have the same person come and look at it right away.

KESSLER

Good. Thank you.

(Not moving)

FENWICK

Something...else?

KESSLER

Well, I was going to ask—what color is the water supposed to be?

FENWICK

What color? No color at all.

KESSLER

That's what I thought. But the water coming out of my faucets seems to be a rather brownish sort of brown.

FENWICK

(Trying to keep his patience on all fronts)

That...is very distressing. I will have someone take care of that at the same time.

KESSLER

Thank you.

(Doesn't move)

Anything else? FENWICK

I do have one other question. KESSLER

Yes? FENWICK

Was I supposed to bring my own sheets and towels? KESSLER

What?! (Erupting) FENWICK

And what about toilet paper? KESSLER

One moment please. (Trying to regain control) FENWICK

Miss Goodhue! (Shouting)

(GOODHUE emerges)

Yes, Mr. Fenwick? GOODHUE

This poor woman has had every possible thing go wrong in her room  
(Leans in, sotto voce)  
and now I'm going to have to refund her money, and do you know what that looks like to  
corporate?

(Loudly again so KESSLER can hear)  
Now you go with her and do whatever it takes to make sure she is happy.

Yes, Mr. Fenwick. GOODHUE

(Back to FENWICK in a sing-songy sotto voce)  
Did you happen to mention to her that we don't have a maintenance man?

FENWICK

(Sotto voce)

No.

(They continue to have this conversation sotto voce, while smiling at  
KESSLER)

GOODHUE

Why not?

FENWICK

Because guests don't like to know things like that.

GOODHUE

But it wasn't our fault that Fredrickson dropped dead just now.

FENWICK

Not our fault but still our problem. And by the way, where's Chi-Chi?

GOODHUE

I have no idea.

FENWICK

Why do we pay for housekeeping when she doesn't housekeep? Go find her and send her up to Room 123 to make it up. Then send her down to me so that I can fire her.

GOODHUE

So then we won't have a maintenance man or a maid.

FENWICK

Yes. In the meantime we'll save some money since we won't have to pay either one.

GOODHUE

Well, you'll have to find Chi-Chi yourself because I have to attend to Mrs. Kessler.

(To KESSLER)

Come with me, Mrs. Kessler, Let's see what we can do for you.

FENWICK

(To KESSLER)

Thank you for your patience, Mrs. Kessler. I assure you, heads will roll.

KESSLER

I didn't mean to cause all this trouble.

GOODHUE

No trouble at all.