

AND SO THEY HAD NONE

by Robert Alan Ward



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And So They Had None

A comedy mystery dinner theatre

by Robert Alan Ward

CAST OF CHARACTERS

WILLIAM HUBBARD

Henpecked sports zealot

CLARA HUBBARD

Bossy, will do anything but housework

EDGAR J. WEATHERBY

Globetrotting American business tycoon

UTA (OO-ta) WEATHERBY

Sophisticated German wife of Edgar

JAMES SMALLEY

Straight-laced deacon

AMANDA SMALLEY

Health food and fitness fanatic

FRANKLIN KLEEHOPPER

Computer marvel, social disaster

GRETCHEN KLEEHOPPER

IRS tax return auditor, karate freak

LUANA PARACZYSTLEWITZ

(Para-SHES-tul-witz)

Frustrated crime solver

NARRATOR

PRODUCTION NOTES

SOUND EFFECTS

Baseball broadcaster (May be improvised by someone Off-stage or taped.)

COSTUMES

William	Baseball cap and shirt under a cooking apron.
Clara	Plain Jane. She has curlers in her hair. One of her pockets has a hole in it.
Edgar	Bright Hawaiian shirt, lei around neck, white pants, sneakers, sunglasses, jacket.
Uta	Formal evening gown, fancy necklace, jewelry, long white evening gloves, fancy swept-up hairstyle, fur coat.
James	Conservative suit and tie.
Amanda	Flamboyant sports togs.
Franklin	Total nerd.
Gretchen	Coldly professional, glasses, hair up, long overcoat over a T-shirt with "Have you paid your taxes today?" lettered on the front, and "I (red heart) taxes" on the back, white karate pants, black belt.
Luana	Plump but stylish.

STAGE SET

Only one set is necessary for the entire play. Have the kitchen at Stage Right with an entrance/exit (dining room) to the right of it. The kitchen needs an oven (May be constructed from a large cardboard box.) and a cupboard with a lock. The "bathroom" doesn't actually have to show, but can be behind a barrier in the middle. The back door is at a middle exit near the barrier, and the front door is the stage left entrance/exit. "Windows" may be mimed. The living room (complete with TV) is in the middle of the stage. The coat rack should be near the front door. Crossword puzzles, magazines, a large candy box, and candy wrappers should be scattered about the set. The skateboard should be on the floor by the TV. A microphone and possibly a lectern may be placed at one side for the Narrator.

PROPS

Skateboard

Coat rack

Crossword puzzles, magazines

Large candy box, candy wrappers

Walkman headphones for William

Computer

Key and penny

Boston cream pie

A book representing *Ten Little Indians*

Smelling salts

One copy of *Sports Illustrated*

Mystery-Solving Kit containing: Ink pad and paper, latex glove, pipe, magnifying glass, notebook and pen

Piece of paper with a nursery rhyme printed on it (see p. 14)

File

Jar of petroleum jelly

Cloth

Ski mask

One pair of black gloves

Towel

Empty pie plate

MEAL

You will need to appoint a kitchen coordinator to oversee meal preparations. He or she will decide on a menu. One suggestion is tossed salad, lasagna and garlic bread, and Boston cream pie for dessert. Support personnel needed include kitchen helpers, servers, and a host or hostess for the evening.

ORDER OF EVENTS

- 1. (Optional) Beverages and/or appetizers are served.**
- 2. Scene 1**
- 3. Salad course is served.**
- 4. Scene 2**
- 5. Entree course is served.**
- 6. Scene 3**
- 7. Dessert and coffee or tea are served.**

BACKGROUND

Some years ago my wife and I took our turn hosting three couples from our church for dinner. For the evening's entertainment, I decided to write a pie theft mystery play, casting us and our unwitting friends as the characters. As best I could, I tried to model the characterizations on their real personalities (with a little exaggeration). After dinner, we sat around the living room and I sprung the scripts upon our startled guests. We had a rather unique time.

The play has since undergone several revisions, including the introduction of a ninth character. The names have been changed to protect the guilty.

“There is a season for every event under heaven,” we are told in Ecclesiastes. There is “a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.” Life needs balance. To be serious, or giddy, all the time is unhealthy.

For myself, the tendency is to err on the side of the serious. Truly, “the days are evil.” We are constantly at war with the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Over a period of time, such warfare becomes wearying. If we fail to take time for rest, we will burn ourselves out. Laughter is emotional rest.

This play is a satire of the foibles that plague our humanity. We're just people. So let's loosen up and laugh at ourselves a little. In the end, we'll be better fighters.

Scene 1

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(You have the option of serving beverages and/or appetizers to your guests prior to Scene 1. After the appetizer plates [if any] have been cleared and your guests have been welcomed, the scene opens with the NARRATOR in place behind a microphone.)

NARRATOR: This is the home of William and Clara Hubbard in suburban Pinewood. William, in the kitchen, is the dedicated father of two. His lovely wife, Clara, is primping in the bathroom. At the moment, they're preparing for three couples from their church, Pinewood Community, who are coming over for dinner and an evening of fellowship. *(WILLIAM checks the oven and comes into the living room to watch his baseball game on TV. The broadcaster can be heard.)*

WILLIAM: Come on, Tony. Just give me a single.

CLARA: *(From the bathroom)* William? *(No answer)* William?

WILLIAM: Yes, dear?

CLARA: Come here! *(He moves toward the bathroom, craning his neck to keep watching the TV as long as possible. He fails to see the skateboard, steps on it, and falls.)*

WILLIAM: Woo! That's the third time this week! Billy! That does it! *(He angrily tosses the skateboard out the back door just as CLARA enters.)*

CLARA: Oh, that's fine. Now someone else will break his neck on it. *(He starts to go out to retrieve it, but is stopped by CLARA's next line.)* The rolls are burning! *(He rushes to the kitchen as she turns off the TV.)* How many times do I have to tell you to pay attention in the kitchen? *(She opens the kitchen window.)*

WILLIAM: Sorry, dear.

CLARA: Did you add the sour cream to the casserole?

WILLIAM: Yes, dear.

CLARA: Is the salad made? Is the table set?

1 **WILLIAM:** Yes, dear; yes, dear.

2 **CLARA:** If you hadn't been so distracted listening to your
3 stupid ballgame, we wouldn't be in this mess.

4 **WILLIAM:** Sorry, dear.

5 **CLARA:** You should be. (*Doorbell*) Oh no! (*She dashes about the*
6 *living room gathering up crossword puzzles, magazines, a large*
7 *candy box, and a bunch of empty candy wrappers scattered*
8 *about. All of these are thrown over the set and out of sight.*
9 *She pulls out her hair curlers and also throws them out of*
10 *sight. Then, undergoing a complete change of countenance, she*
11 *opens the door to greet the first guests. FRANKLIN,*
12 *GRETCHEN, and LUANA enter.) Franklin, Gretchen —*
13 **We're so glad you could come. Honey, the Kleehoppers**
14 **are here.** (*WILLIAM comes out from the kitchen.*) **And who is**
15 **this?**

16 **GRETCHEN:** We hoped you wouldn't mind, Clara. This is
17 Luana Paraczystlewitz. We're old college gymnastics
18 teammates.

19 **CLARA:** Of course not. We're delighted to have you, Luana.

20 **LUANA:** Thank you — smells like an interesting evening.

21 **WILLIAM:** How are things down at the IRS, Mrs.
22 Kleehopper?

23 **GRETCHEN:** Ms.

24 **WILLIAM:** Ms. Kleehopper.

25 **GRETCHEN:** Let me make one thing perfectly clear, Mr.
26 Hubbard. I never mix my professional and social lives.

27 **WILLIAM:** Sorry, poor question. May I take your coat?

28 **GRETCHEN:** You certainly may. (*She takes off her coat and*
29 *hands it to him. He hangs it on the coat rack and retreats to*
30 *the safer environs of the kitchen. He puts on headphones to*
31 *listen to his ballgame. GRETCHEN's "Have you paid your taxes*
32 *today?" T-shirt now looms prominently. She takes off her*
33 *glasses and puts them in her coat. Then she pulls a barrette*
34 *out of her hair, and down it flops.)*

35 **FRANKLIN:** Do you have a computer, Mrs. Hubbard?

1 CLARA: (*Indicates computer.*) Yes we do, Franklin. It's a top
2 brand, too — a Saralank. William and I won it at a
3 timeshare presentation.

4 LUANA: Says here it was made in Sri Lanka.

5 CLARA: Yes, right next to Ohio. William and I won't buy
6 anything foreign made. (*FRANKLIN has at it and gets*
7 *totally engrossed in the keyboard.*)

8 GRETCHEN: You did, of course, declare this on line twenty-
9 two of your ten-forty federal income tax return — didn't
10 you?

11 CLARA: (*A scared pause*) Oh, we must have.

12 GRETCHEN: Good, then you haven't a thing to worry about
13 when I pull up your return on Monday. (*Doorbell rings.*
14 *CLARA answers it. EDGAR and UTA enter.*)

15 CLARA: Edgar and Uta. Oh, Uta, you look so stunning!

16 EDGAR: Doesn't she, though? If only I could afford to keep
17 her.

18 CLARA: Let me take your mink. (*She takes it and unconsciously*
19 *indicates what she really meant by the above words by grabbing*
20 *it greedily and holding it possessively before she hangs it on the*
21 *coat rack.*)

22 UTA: We just returned from Tahiti.

23 CLARA: Oh, how was your trip?

24 UTA: Very boring — I hates these business trips. Too many
25 meetings where men prattle foolishly about making money.
26 Making money means nossing to me. I only spends it.

27 EDGAR: I'll take your evening gloves, Uta. You wouldn't want
28 to soil them at dinner. I'll put them right here so they
29 won't get lost. (*He puts them in the left pocket of his jacket,*
30 *which he hangs on the coat rack. Then he goes over and turns*
31 *on the TV [with volume turned down] and sits down to watch.*
32 *UTA picks up a key and penny off the floor.*)

33 UTA: What is this? A key and a penny?

34 CLARA: I've been looking all over for that key. Keep the
35 penny.

1 **UTA:** We never deal in pennies. Edgar only carries hunderts,
2 and I only uses plastic. (*CLARA puts the key in one pocket*
3 *and it falls through to the floor. She picks it up and puts it in*
4 *the other pocket. The doorbell rings. JAMES and AMANDA*
5 *enter. AMANDA is carrying a Boston cream pie.*)

6 **AMANDA:** Surprise!

7 **CLARA:** James and Amanda. Now we're all here. Bet you're
8 both starved, what with your aerobics class and James'
9 deacon duties.

10 **AMANDA:** We're on a new B-complex stress vitamin that we
11 take with our raw cashews and carrot juice each
12 morning. Gives us lots of stamina.

13 **CLARA:** What do we have here?

14 **AMANDA:** This is a Boston cream pie made of all natural
15 ingredients. It's from an old recipe that's been in my
16 family since my great ancestor Sarah Mayfield landed on
17 Plymouth. (*WILLIAM throws down his headphones in disgust*
18 *and enters the living room.*)

19 **WILLIAM:** I can't believe it! Schmudkins hits into a double
20 play to end the game. Why do they even play the bum?

21 **AMANDA:** He hit two home runs yesterday.

22 **WILLIAM:** That was yesterday. What has he done for me
23 today?

24 **JAMES:** "Vanity of vanities," sayeth the preacher. "All is
25 vanity." You mustn't get so upset, William. It's only a
26 meaningless game. Except when they win.

27 **WILLIAM:** Which isn't very often. Hey, what's this? Things
28 are looking up. (*By now everyone except FRANKLIN is aware*
29 *of*
30 *the pie.*)

31 **CLARA:** It's Amanda's Boston cream pie, dear. Her
32 grandmother, Sarah, taught her the recipe one day while
33 they were out driving in her Plymouth. I'm so glad you
34 drive American cars.

35 **WILLIAM:** It looks so good, I think I could eat the whole

1 **thing** myself. (*He reaches for the pie, but CLARA grabs it*
 2 *first.*)
 3 **CLARA:** Oh, no. He means just what he said. Better let me
 4 **lock it in the cupboard.** (*She puts the pie in the cupboard,*
 5 *takes the key out of her pocket, and locks it.*)
 6 **EDGAR:** You've got to be joking.
 7 **CLARA:** No joke. I've even booby-trapped the hinges.
 8 William's a human vacuum cleaner.
 9 **UTA:** You Americans are all so strange. You lock up your
 10 pies, you only want to buy American things, and you hits
 11 this little ball with a stick and run around like madmen.
 12 And why do you call it beastball?
 13 **CLARA:** Dinner is served. Please come and be seated in the
 14 dining room. (*LUANA pushes her way to the front and exits*
 15 *first. Then comes GRETCHEN, who threatens karate chops to*
 16 *other would-be passers, EDGAR, WILLIAM, AMANDA, UTA,*
 17 *and CLARA. JAMES taps the engrossed FRANKLIN on the*
 18 *shoulder. They also exit. Following the blessing of the meal, the*
 19 *salad course is served.*)

20

21

Scene 2

22

23 (*After the guests' salad plates have been cleared, the cast enters*
 24 *from the dining room.*)

25

25 **JAMES:** A most delightful meal, Clara. William is fortunate to
 26 have such a gourmet chef for a wife.

27

27 **WILLIAM:** That's good to hear. (*AMANDA takes GRETCHEN*
 28 *aside.*)

28

29 **AMANDA:** I've got this tax question I'd like to ask. Can you
 30 help me?

31

31 **GRETCHEN:** Sure.

32

32 **AMANDA:** We're married, filing a joint return with five
 33 exemptions. Last year, we itemized, figuring our adjusted
 34 gross income after an SEP. Would we be better off using
 35 schedule D or the tax tables?

33

34

35

1 **GRETCHEN:** My fellow taxpayer, ask not how little tax you
2 can pay for your country, but how much.

3 **AMANDA:** James' last paycheck said "amount due" on it.

4 **GRETCHEN:** That is a problem. Well, nothing could be
5 simpler. All you need to do is figure your adjusted gross
6 income after the SEP, add the SEP tax from schedule SE,
7 add the recapture taxes from form 8611, and the excess
8 profits tax. Then you enter the amount on line fifty-three
9 of form ten-forty, subtract line fifty-three from the
10 amount of income tax withheld on your W4, or add the
11 difference, multiply that by the square root of 813, add
12 ten percent of the applicable city sales tax according to
13 court decision CD736-A, add the migratory snail studies
14 supplement, and you should know which way to go.

15 **LUANA:** Isn't it time for dessert?

16 **CLARA:** Not yet. First, I have a "get acquainted" question to
17 go around the room. (*Everyone groans.*) What is your
18 favorite spare time activity? You first, Edgar.

19 **EDGAR:** I get into my Lear jet, climb to twenty-two thousand
20 feet, close my eyes, and do lazy eights to Beethoven's
21 Pastoral Symphony. I find it soothing after I buy out a
22 corporation and fire all the management.

23 **UTA:** I love to shop in Monaco, ski the Alps, and attends the
24 Bolshoi — all in the same day.

25 **AMANDA:** When I'm not working out, I try to improve my
26 mind by reading good, classic American literature like
27 *Ladies' Home Journal* or *Jane Fonda's Workout Manual*. Did
28 you know that sixty-four percent of all Americans are
29 obese?

30 **LUANA:** (*Sarcastically*) Oh, dear.

31 **JAMES:** I never waste time on frivolous trivia. Besides, Jesus
32 said, "Beware of practicing your deeds before men," so I
33 really shouldn't say. (*Everyone is impressed.*)

34 **GRETCHEN:** I take classes at the local junior college. Last
35 semester I took Karate III. Now I'm taking U.S. History

1 101. At the moment, we're studying the destructive long-
2 term socio-economic and environmental effects of the
3 Boston Tea Party.

4 LUANA: Besides enjoying good food, I love to watch *Murder,*
5 *She Wrote* on TV. But I'm frustrated. I've seen a hundred
6 and thirteen episodes now, and I haven't picked the right
7 killer yet. Even on the reruns.

8 CLARA: What about you, Franklin?

9 FRANKLIN: I like to figure out probabilities. For instance,
10 what do you think the odds are of a solar systematical
11 collision between the second moon of Mars and Halley's
12 Comet?

13 WILLIAM: Who cares?

14 LUANA: Go ahead, Franklin. Tell us.

15 FRANKLIN: OK. *(He starts punching keys at the computer.)* That's
16 odd. Something's already programmed in, and it's
17 blocking access.

18 LUANA: Put it on the screen.

19 FRANKLIN: OK. *(He hits one key.)*

20 The three little kittens have lost their mittens,
21 And they began to cry.

22

23 Oh mother dear, see here, see here,

24 Our mittens we have lost.

25

26 Lost your mittens, you naughty kittens?

27 Then you shall have no pie.

28

29 No pie? No pie?

30 No, you shall have no pie.

31 JAMES: Of all the silly, inane nonsense.

32 UTA: Speaking of mittens, Edgar, would you please bring my
33 evening gloves from your jacket? I begin to feel a chill.

34 EDGAR: Of course, my darling. *(He goes over to the coat rack*
35 *and works with his back to the audience, as well as those On-*

- 1 *stage, so no one can see what he is doing.)*
- 2 **AMANDA:** We still haven't heard from William or Clara.
- 3 **WILLIAM:** The Padres lose, and you ask me that? I take
- 4 tranzquilizers.
- 5 **AMANDA:** Never do that. Let me put you on a good B-
- 6 complex stress vitamin.
- 7 **WILLIAM:** How will that help the Padres win?
- 8 **CLARA:** I read Agatha Christie murder mysteries.
- 9 **GRETCHEN:** How do you ever find time for that with all your
- 10 housework, cooking, and children?
- 11 **CLARA:** I just head to the necessary room and lock the door.
- 12 Right now, I'm halfway through *Ten Little Indians*.
- 13 **LUANA:** A fascinating story. Want to know how it turns out?
- 14 **CLARA:** I've already peeked ahead.
- 15 **EDGAR:** Uta, my dear, your evening gloves appear to be
- 16 missing.
- 17 **UTA:** You have such trouble to find things, *meine liebe*. I will
- 18 get them. *(She moves to the coat rack and begins searching.)*
- 19 **LUANA:** Isn't it time for dessert?
- 20 **CLARA:** We should wash the dishes first. *(More groans.)*
- 21 **EDGAR:** I'm going out to the backyard for a while. I feel
- 22 nauseated. Must be jet lag. *(Exit EDGAR.)*
- 23 **JAMES:** And I've got to retrieve a document from the car.
- 24 *(Exit JAMES.)*
- 25 **FRANKLIN:** Uh, Clara? Where's the bathroom?
- 26 **CLARA:** Right through that door over there. *(Exit*
- 27 **FRANKLIN.)**
- 28 **GRETCHEN:** It's just like men to disappear when there's
- 29 dishes to be done.
- 30 **CLARA:** But they'll be back for dessert.
- 31 **AMANDA:** Anyway, we'll help. *(WILLIAM makes a break for the*
- 32 *backyard, but is caught by CLARA.)*
- 33 **CLARA:** We've still got William. We use the wash and watch
- 34 method here. He washes, we watch.
- 35 **UTA:** Good for you, Clara. I could never get Edgar to wash

1 the dishes.

2 **CLARA:** (*Astonished*) You mean you do them yourself?

3 **UTA:** Of course not. We just throw them away. But it's no
4 problem. You can buy new china nearly anywhere in the
5 world. (*UTA has been searching EDGAR's jacket all through*
6 *this.*) Edgar was right. My evening gloves are missing.

7 **LUANA:** Well, they've got to be somewhere. (*The lights*
8 *suddenly go out.*)

9 **AMANDA:** What is this?

10 **CLARA:** I don't know. Could be storm damage or an
11 overloaded circuit. William, go out and check the breaker
12 box. William? William? Oh, I'll do it myself.

13 **UTA:** Do you keep a torch around here?

14 **GRETCHEN:** Flashlight, Uta — and it's baseball, not
15 beastball.

16 **LUANA:** I have some matches in my purse — if only I could
17 find them in the darkness. (*The lights come back on.*) Oh,
18 there they are. (*Everyone is trying to get reaccustomed to the*
19 *light. AMANDA is near the computer.*)

20 **AMANDA:** I wonder what caused it. (*Looks at the computer.*)
21 Hey, what's this? Another nursery rhyme?

22 **LUANA:** Read it.

23 **AMANDA:** Old mother Hubbard,
24 Went straight to the cupboard,
25 To fetch her poor doggy a bone.

26
27 But when she got there,
28 The cupboard was bare,
29 And so the poor doggy had none.

30 **LUANA:** Something strange is going on around here. Wait a
31 minute! The three little kittens lost their mittens. Uta's
32 evening gloves are lost. Old mother Hubbard — Clara
33 Hubbard! When she got there, the cupboard was bare!
34 Where's Clara? Clara? Clara? (*CLARA enters.*)

35 **CLARA:** The main power switch was off. Someone must've

- 1 **thrown it.**
- 2 **LUANA: Quickly, Clara — open the cupboard.** (*CLARA pulls*
3 *the key out of her pocket and does so. The cupboard is bare.*)
- 4 **AMANDA:** (*Blood-curdling scream and a faint*)
- 5 **LUANA: I knew it.** (*WILLIAM enters from the bathroom.*)
- 6 **WILLIAM: I heard Amanda scream. What's the matter?**
- 7 **LUANA: It would seem that her Boston cream pie has**
8 **vanished. Here, help me get her to the sofa.**
- 9 **WILLIAM: The Padres lose, and now the dessert is gone? It's**
10 **too much for a man to take in one day.**
- 11 **LUANA: We all hurt, William.**
- 12 **UTA: Not me. American pastry is much too sweet and heavy**
13 **for me. I prefer the French.**
- 14 **GRETCHEN: No wonder we had a three-billion-dollar trade**
15 **deficit last month.** (*JAMES enters from the front door, and*
16 *EDGAR from the back yard. CLARA is waving smelling salts*
17 *under AMANDA's nose.*)
- 18 **JAMES: What happened, Amanda?**
- 19 **AMANDA:** (*Sobbing*) **Oh, nothing, really — just six hours of my**
20 **precious time, mixing and baking my Boston cream pie**
21 **to matriarch Sarah's exacting specifications, all down**
22 **the drain.**
- 23 **JAMES: You mean, it's gone?**
- 24 **LUANA: Quite so.**
- 25 **EDGAR: Is this all some sort of cruel joke?**
- 26 **LUANA: I'm afraid it's all very real, Edgar. The game is afoot.**
27 **A pie thief is amongst us. I suspect no one. I suspect**
28 **everyone.**
- 29 **WILLIAM: Look there — down on the floor.**
- 30 **ALL:** (*Looking down and saying together*) **Pie crumbs.**
- 31 **LUANA: They're trailing off this way — toward the bathroom.**
- 32 **GRETCHEN: The trail stops here — right by the tub.** (*Part*
33 *of the bathroom is visible from the audience. The tub is just*
34 *out of sight. GRETCHEN picks up the book.*) **Hmmm, here's**
35 ***Ten Little Indians*. The corner of page twenty-six is folded**

- 1 down. And it's filled with pie crumbs.
- 2 **ALL:** *(Together)* Clara!
- 3 **CLARA:** I didn't do it.
- 4 **JAMES:** Come now, Clara. Confession is good for the soul.
- 5 **CLARA:** But I didn't do it.
- 6 **LUANA:** Let me see that book. *(She looks at page twenty-six and*
7 *brushes out the crumbs. Then she flattens the fold from the*
8 *lower right corner of the page that acted as a marker. She*
9 *moves to the middle of the book, and flattens out another fold*
10 *from the upper right corner. Meanwhile, JAMES has picked up*
11 *Sports Illustrated from the floor and is browsing through it.)*
12 **Let me see that Sports Illustrated.** *(She leafs through it and*
13 *flattens out another marker from the lower right corner.)*
- 14 **UTA:** Why is the window open on such a cold night? Please
15 shuts it.
- 16 **LUANA:** Wait a minute. *(She steps up and peers out the window.)*
17 Hmmm. *(She closes the window and steps down.)*
- 18 **CLARA:** I was never in the bathroom. When the power went
19 off, I went out to the breaker box.
- 20 **WILLIAM:** We often have spontaneous power failures here.
21 It's the electric company, never the breaker box. Clara
22 knows this.
- 23 **CLARA:** Oh William, how can you be so awful? I'm innocent.
- 24 **LUANA:** Of course you are, my dear. Haven't we all forgotten
25 something? Where's the pie dish?
- 26 **GRETCHEN:** She threw it out the window.
- 27 **LUANA:** And where is Franklin? *(Sudden loud clanging as if*
28 *FRANKLIN were stumbling around among the trash cans near*
29 *the back porch. He enters, dazed and disheveled, with pie*
30 *splattered all over his face and chest, and the pie plate in his*
31 *right hand.)*
- 32 **ALL:** *(Together)* Franklin!
- 33 **FRANKLIN:** Huh?
- 34 **JAMES:** Why did you steal the pie?
- 35 **FRANKLIN:** Pie? I didn't steal any pie — did I? *(He goes to*

1 *scratch his head in a memory gesture, but instead clangs*
2 *himself with the pie plate. He looks at it in shock.)*

3 **AMANDA:** What are you doing with my pie splattered all over
4 you, and my pie plate in your hand?

5 **FRANKLIN:** I ... I just found it in the back yard.

6 **JAMES:** A likely story.

7 **LUANA:** Hold on, everyone. This has gone far enough. I'm
8 going out to my car to get my Hercule Poirot Junior
9 Detectives Mystery-Solving Kit. I'm gonna solve me a
10 mystery.

11 **EDGAR:** Hmmp! You've got to be kidding. You just told us
12 you hadn't guessed the right killer in a hundred and
13 thirteen episodes of *Murder, She Wrote*.

14 **AMANDA:** Even on the reruns.

15 **LUANA:** Haven't you ever heard of the saying, "The one
16 hundred and fourteenth time's the charm"? (*Exit LUANA.*)

17 **EDGAR:** No, I haven't. Who does she think she is?

18 **FRANKLIN:** Why don't we just forget about all this and play
19 some computer games?

20 **AMANDA:** You'd like us to forget about this, wouldn't you,
21 Franklin?

22 **UTA:** What about you, Amanda? I've seen you do your
23 aerobics. You are fast. You could've easily eaten the
24 whole pie in the time it was dark.

25 **AMANDA:** But I'm not the one with pie splattered all over me.

26 **GRETCHEN:** What about the pie crumbs in Clara's book?

27 **CLARA:** I'm innocent. But you, Gretchen — you're always
28 trying to take a bigger bite of the pie. And where was
29 William during the power failure?

30 **WILLIAM:** I was off looking for a flashlight. But I seem to
31 recall an incident in Edgar's life that makes him a prime
32 suspect.

33 **EDGAR:** William, don't.

34 **WILLIAM:** Sorry, Edgar, but the stakes here are just too high.
35 It was when we were eight year olds together in Vacation

1 Bible School. Edgar spotted some unguarded cookies in
2 the kitchen and went for them.

3 EDGAR: So I had a couple of cookies. That was twenty-four
4 years ago. And you pledged your silence to me that day.

5 WILLIAM: Only after you agreed to roll a cherry bomb into
6 the girls' restroom during recess. And it wasn't just a
7 couple of cookies, Edgar. It was six dozen Oreos.

8 EDGAR: All of this proves nothing. I'm different now.

9 UTA: Yes, now he could eat many more. I've seen him.

10 GRETCHEN: You, Uta, are probably the least suspect of all
11 — and if I know Agatha Christie, that makes you the
12 most suspect. Besides, Boston cream pie is early
13 American pastry, and early American pastry had a
14 decidedly strong French influence, which you've already
15 admitted that you prefer.

16 UTA: What you excuse me of is totally preposterous. I resents
17 these incinerations. What about James? He has that lean,
18 hungry look — probably because Amanda starves him at
19 home with all those bean sprouts and bamboo shoots.

20 AMANDA: (*To UTA*) If I had the pie in my hands right now,
21 I'd mash it in your face. (*LUANA enters.*)

22 LUANA: All right, everyone, stop bickering. I'll have to take
23 all your fingerprints so I can compare them with those
24 on the pie plate.

25 EDGAR: This is a wanton invasion of my constitutional right
26 to privacy. I shall refuse.

27 WILLIAM: Have you something to hide, Weatherby?

28 EDGAR: Of course not. All right. This will serve to fully
29 exonerate me.

30 LUANA: Now place your thumb and four fingers on this ink
31 pad, and make a rolling impression on the fingerprint
32 sheet. (*While each is doing this, LUANA puts a latex glove on*
33 *one hand, puts a Sherlock Holmes-type pipe into the side of her*
34 *mouth, and gets out a magnifying glass.*)

35 GRETCHEN: That's not Hercule Poirot.

- 1 **AMANDA:** Even worse, smoking is dangerous to your health.
- 2 **LUANA:** It's just a prop to help me think. *(She puts the*
3 *magnifying glass in her gloved hand and picks up the pie plate*
4 *with her bare hand.)* Hmm. That's odd. Neither Amanda's
5 nor Clara's prints are on this dish. And I saw both of
6 them handling it. Make a note of that, uh, Gretchen.
7 *(GRETCHEN does so in the notebook.)* Franklin's prints are
8 on the dish.
- 9 **JAMES:** It has to be Franklin. We caught him red-handed.
- 10 **LUANA:** Or at least pie-faced. My prints are on the dish.
11 *(She realizes how.)* Oh.
- 12 **GRETCHEN:** Hey, what's this on the floor? Another nursery
13 rhyme?
- 14 **LUANA:** What does it say?
- 15 **GRETCHEN:** Simple Simon met a pieman
16 Going to the fair.
17
18 Said Simple Simon to the pieman,
19 Let me taste your ware.
20
21 Said the pieman to Simple Simon,
22 Show me first your penny.
23
24 Said Simple Simon to the pieman,
25 Believe, I have not any.
- 26 **JAMES:** What is it with all these ridiculous nursery rhymes?
- 27 **LUANA:** Elementary, James. Obviously, they hold the key to
28 solving our mystery. Uta, would you please retrieve your
29 evening gloves from Edgar's jacket?
- 30 **UTA:** But Luana, they are missing.
- 31 **LUANA:** If my hunch is right, you'll find them there now.
32 *(UTA goes over and checks the left pocket — nothing. Then she*
33 *pulls them out of the right pocket.)*
- 34 **UTA:** You are right — and they are soiled wiss pie.
- 35 **ALL:** *(Together)* Uta!

1 UTA: I not do it.

2 JAMES: Nonsense. We all know that Franklin did it.

3 AMANDA: I think it was Gretchen.

4 GRETCHEN: And what motive could I possibly have? Sooner
5 or later, I get most of the pie anyway. In my opinion, the
6 deacon did it.

7 CLARA: William is the chief suspect in my book.

8 EDGAR: No, the crumbs were found in your book.

9 UTA: Amanda is the only one who could possibly eat the
10 whole pie so fast.

11 WILLIAM: Edgar downed those six dozen Oreos in five
12 minutes.

13 EDGAR: Enough of this silly game.

14 LUANA: This is no game, Edgar. Pie theft is a very serious
15 matter. Especially since I didn't get any. But there need
16 be no more debate. I now know who the culprit is.

17 ALL: *(Together)* Who?

18 LUANA: Not so fast. There's something I must tend to first.

19 And may the guilty party squirm. *(The stage goes dark and*
20 *LUANA comes fully downstage to address the audience. A*
21 *spotlight, if available, trains on her.)* Now all the clues are
22 in, and the culprit can be positively identified. You sharp
23 ones caught it. How many of you think it was Clara?
24 How about William? What about Franklin? Gretchen?
25 James, the good deacon? Amanda? Edgar? Uta? Who
26 thinks I did it? Oh, dear me. I wanted to, but I've been
27 trying to get this part for months. Parts come hard for
28 me, you know. No way was I going to lose out for a little
29 pie. I'm getting mine later. The culprit made one fatal
30 little slip-up. They always do. We will continue with the
31 final, climactic scene after your meal. *(The entree course is*
32 *served at this point.)*

33

34

Scene 3

35



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AND SO THEY HAD NONE

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