

Mystery at Mystery Lodge

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CAST

Rona DeLaRue...	...Lauren Haven
Bernice Cuddlethwump...	...Dawn Krosnowski
Cartier...	...Matt Alex
Joe Barker...	...Kyle Dekker
Dennis Radkeson...	...Eric Thompson
Samantha Tennison...	...Angela Fox
Jenny Radke...	...Haley Sisler
Shubert Schuler...	...Salsa Sterling

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Scene 1: Bernice and Cartier

[BERNICE enters and her cell phone rings.]

BERNICE

Hello, Mystery Lodge in beautiful rural Wisconsin. I'm Bernice Cuddlethwump, hotel manager. How can I help you?
[pause] Yes, we do have rooms available this weekend. How many nights? Of course. Would you... no, I don't know why we call it Mystery Lodge. Well, we are located on the shores of Lake Conundrum so... no. That wouldn't be the reason, no. I'm afraid the Lodge was named many years before I... [laughs politely] yes sir. It really IS a Mystery. No, that IS the first time I've ever heard that joke. Really. What name should I put on your registration? Good, let me transfer you to our front desk so they can get your credit card information.

[BERNICE pushes a few buttons on the phone and puts the phone back in her pocket/purse]

[CARTIER enters]

CARTIER

Bernie!

BERNICE

Bernice.

CARTIER

Bernice! So good to see you!

BERNICE

So good to see you too, Cartier.

[They hold both hands and kiss each other on the cheeks. This action is just a bit friendlier than one might expect from people who are just good friends.]

BERNICE

It is so good to have you back at Mystery Lodge

CARTIER

Well you know I've been on my yacht trying to write a follow up to my 1996 smash hit "Uptown Boogie Funk Machine Tango" and song writing can just get so tiring! And I thought, "Why don't I go visit my good friend Bernie at Mystery Lodge?"

BERNICE

Bernice

CARTIER

"...Bernice at Mystery Lodge? She's always good for a little inspiration!"

BERNICE

Well that's very flattering, Cartier. I do hope that we can help you enjoy your stay this weekend.

CARTIER

Oh, I'm sure you can. I could use a little relaxation. I also just finished taping a season of Celebrity Inkmasters and it was exhausting.

BERNICE

How did you do?

CARTIER

Oh you know I can't tell you that! You'll have to watch to find out.

BERNICE

Well you've won every other reality show you've appeared on so I hope this didn't break your streak.

CARTIER

I'm not going to tell you! You can't squeeze it out of me no matter how hard you try!

BERNICE

Here's your room key. Is there anything else I can do for you?

CARTIER

Oh yes! Would you put this in your house safe?

[Cartier hands Bernice a bag that appears to have something heavy in it. Bernice looks inside the bag.]

BERNICE

Is this...

CARTIER

...yes. It's my Grammy for best new artist, 1997.

BERNICE

Oh my! Do you always carry this with you?

CARTIER

Of course.

BERNICE

Of course. I'll put it in the safe where it will be the only item of value. Nothing else in the safe is at all valuable. Just your Grammy.

CARTIER

Good. Thank you. I'll be going to my room now.

BERNICE

Excellent. I'll have a member of my staff check in with you later to see if you need anything.

CARTIER

Oh, I don't think that will be necessary.

BERNICE

[crestfallen] No?

[realizing what BERNICE was implying]

CARTIER

I mean yes! That would be perfect! I can't wait to have a member of your staff check in with me later.

BERNICE

[brightening] Good. Excellent. I'll make sure they check in with you at about 9:45 tonight. Will that be satisfactory?

CARTIER

Yes. Yes indeed. I'll see a member of your staff at that time.

BERNICE

Should we be prepared to receive you at dinner service?

CARTIER

Oh yes, please. I'm going to take my bags to my room now. Everything except my Grammy for best new artist, 1997.

BERNICE

I have that right here.

CARTIER

Good afternoon Bern...ice.

BERNICE

Good afternoon!

Scene 2: Bernice and Joe

JOE

Excuse me?

BERNICE

Yes. How can I help you?

JOE

Hi there. My name is Joe Barker and I...

BERNICE

Oh! You're our contest winner!

JOE

That's right. I won a contest on 99.1 WMOS - the Moose.
Biggest radio station in Wrenshall, Minnesota. I'm really
excited.

BERNICE

Well of course you are. I thought the contest was for for
two adults...?

JOE

That's correct. Me and my wife Mary. Mary is in the room
with our boys. I'm just wondering about dinner.

BERNICE

Dinner will be starting in just a few minutes.

JOE

That's great. But I was wondering if you could send some
food up to my room. You see Mary is staying with the boys
and she won't be able to make it down for dinner.

BERNICE

Of course we could have some food sent up for her. Can
you tell me your room number.

JOE

We're just down the hall in room 107.

BERNICE

I'd be happy to have something brought up to her right
away. Is there anything else I can help you with?

JOE

Well... now that you mention it...

BERNICE

Anything I can do for you?

JOE

I hate to be a bother.

BERNICE

It's never a bother. That's why I'm here. My job is to make your stay as pleasant as possible!

JOE

Well I had to bring along my 1954 Harris Brothers 3/4" spanner because the engine on our Corsica was running just a little bit funny. It's a very important tool and I would just feel a little bit more comfortable if there was someplace I could keep it safe.

[Note: spanner in plastic case containing light]

BERNICE

We do have a safe on property. I could store your...

JOE:

...1954 Harris Brothers 3/4" spanner

BERNICE

...yes, that. I could store it in our safe for the weekend.

JOE

You have one of those hotel safes?

BERNICE

Of course!

JOE

What brand is it?

BERNICE

Heavens, I don't know. It has a big silver O on it.

JOE

That'd be an Optimex then.

BERNICE

You know a lot about safes?

JOE

A mechanic has to know a lot about a lot of things.

BERNICE

Well we'll take good care of your spanner at no extra charge.

JOE

Oh my gosh! Would you do that?

BERNICE

Of course! Service is my middle name!

JOE

Really? That's an amazing coincidence!

BERNICE

Oh. No. I mean my middle name is Frances. Saying Service is my middle name is just an expression.

JOE

Oh. OK. Strange expression.

BERNICE

Yes. I suppose so.

JOE

Mind you, there's nothing wrong with the middle name Frances. I DID think Service sounded like a nice middle name to have. Unusual.

BERNICE

It would be. But it's not. It's just a figure of speech.

JOE

Yes. A strange one.

BERNICE

Yes. Would you like me to take your...

JOE

...1954 Harris Brothers 3/4" spanner?

BERNICE

Yes, that.

JOE

Yes please. I'd be so happy!

BERNICE

Good then. I'll just take it and make sure that some food is sent to room 107 as soon as possible.

JOE

Could you send some chicken nuggets for the boys?

BERNICE

Of course

JOE

Their middle names are Hiram and Odysseus.

BERNICE

Those are nice names.

JOE

Yeah. Not as nice as Frances, though. Or Service.

BERNICE

No...

JOE

Well, just gives us all the more reason to have another one!

BERNICE

Good to hear that!

JOE

Thanks very much Mrs...

BERNICE

Cuddlethwump. Bernice Cuddlthwump

[JOE shakes BERNICE'S hand and exits.]

Scene 3: Bernice and Samantha

[BERNICE is holding CARTIER'S bag, JOE'S spanner]

BERNICE

I'd better get these items to the safe.

SAMANTHA

Well it's about time you were ready to help me!

BERNICE

Oh, hello, Mrs. Tennison.

SAMANTHA

Don't you hello me! I've been waiting for you to get done talking to that simple man for twenty minutes!

BERNICE

I was only talking to him for a moment.

SAMANTHA

Are you suggesting that I don't know how long twenty minutes are?

BERNICE

No, Mrs. Tennison. Of course not.

SAMANTHA

My cousin owns this resort.

BERNICE

Yes, I know.

SAMANTHA

And he will hear of it if I'm treated poorly.

BERNICE

I'm sure he will.

SAMANTHA

My cousin James Tennison who, as you know, is the owner of this Lodge, invited me to spend the weekend FREE OF CHARGE and I accepted because I usually enjoy such good service here.

BERNICE

I do try to keep all my guests satisfied.

SAMANTHA

I don't care about all of your guests and neither does my cousin, James. I care about me and how you have up to this point failed to serve me!

BERNICE

Well, Mrs. Tennison, how can I make it up to you?

SAMANTHA

You can put my purse in your safe. It has very valuable things in it. Very valuable things!

BERNICE

I'm afraid this purse appears to be empty.

SAMANTHA

Of course it's empty! The purse is so valuable, I can't afford to damage it by using it to hold valuable things.

BERNICE

Of course not

SAMANTHA

It was designed and built in Italy! Where they design and make extremely expensive purses like this one!

BERNICE

It looks... quite expensive.

SAMANTHA

Yes it does!

BERNICE

I'll be happy to store it in our safe. Is there anything else I can do for you?

SAMANTHA

Will dinner be starting soon?

BERNICE

Yes.

SAMANTHA

Good! Because I'm famished. I can't believe you've made me wait until whatever time it is...

[BERNICE looks at her watch and tells SAMANTHA the time]

SAMANTHA

...to be seated for dinner. Do have my private table ready.

BERNICE

I'm afraid the convention has spoken for most of the tables this evening. I can't give you a private table, Mrs. Tennison.

SAMANTHA

Really! Well my cousin will hear of this.

BERNICE

I'm sure he will.

[SAMANTHA storms away and bumps into RONA]

RONA

Oh. Excuse me.

SAMANTHA

Yes! Excuse you indeed. You should watch where you are going!

RONA

You bumped into me...

SAMANTHA

Those are interesting earrings.

RONA

Thank you.

SAMANTHA

I used to have a pair just like them.

RONA

Really? Why did you...

SAMANTHA

I'm not interested in having a conversation with the likes of you!

[SAMANTHA storms off]

RONA

The likes of who...?

Scene 4: Shubert meets Rona

[BERNICE is now juggling three objects, the gem, the spanner, and the purse

SCHUBERT enters unobtrusively and mixes with others or does stage business]

RONA

Hello, yes? Are you in charge?

BERNICE

And you are?

RONA

[Shocked] What? Really! Why, I have never been so insulted in my life.

BERNICE

Oh! Of course! It's YOU! You just look so much younger in real life!

RONA

[Mollified] The camera DOES add ten years!

BERNICE

If you could just sign right here...

[BERNICE holds out a clipboard and watches as RONA signs, reading her name upside-down]

BERNICE

...Ms. DeLaRue!

[SHUBERT turns around quickly]

SHUBERT

Rona DeLaRue? The most famous food critic in the northern upper midwest?

BERNICE

Really? You looked taller on TV.

[with a final skeptical glance turns to stage business with someone else]

RONA

[preening] Why yes! You must be one of my many fans! *[extends hand]*

SHUBERT

[shaking hands] In a manner of speaking. When you were the Secret Reviewer for the Duluth Tribune you wrote a one-star review of my last restaurant! And the star was an asterisk to a footnote reading "Don't eat there!" [pause] I thought you were taller.

RONA

[Taken somewhat aback, but soldiering on] I'm afraid I didn't get your name.

SHUBERT

Shubert Schuler, sous chef.

RONA

[slightly more wary] Ah! And where is your executive chef?

SHUBERT

Er, well, yes - Mystery Lodge doesn't actually have an executive chef right now.

RONA

Was he or she taken ill?

SHUBERT

No, um, it's just a matter of money.

RONA

Ah.

SHUBERT

And not having it.

RONA

Times are hard all over.

SHUBERT

So for now it's just me. Setting the menus, making the entrees, preparing the desserts, the whole thing!

RONA

Doesn't that make you the executive chef?

SHUBERT

Oh no! No, I couldn't handle that kind of responsibility!

RONA

I see.

SHUBERT

So what brings you all the way to Mystery Lodge?

RONA

I've heard SUCH good things about the food here! I'm sure you'll prepare something marvelous! I'm sorry if my other review started us off on the wrong foot.

SHUBERT

On the wrong foot. Indeed. [Obviously has idea] Well Ms. DeLaRue I'll put my heart and sole into tonight's dinner!

RONA

I'm sure I'll enjoy it!

SHUBERT

And I'll look forward to reading your review!

[As they part BERNICE turns to engage RONA, handing her a room card]

BERNICE

Ms. DeLaRue you're in room 17. If you have any valuables to secure, we have a hotel safe available here.

RONA

Really? What kind?

BERNICE

Um... Jewelry? Awards? Important hand tools.

RONA

No, I meant, 'What brand of safe?'

BERNICE

It's an Optimex.

RONA

A good brand. You really know your safes!

BERNICE

As Concierge it's my job to know everything about Mystery Lodge.

Scene 5: Jenny met by Shubert

[JENNY rushes in, wearing her uniform under a jacket. She's also wearing earrings]

JENNY

I'm so sorry! My cat got outside and I had to track her down before I could leave but she went up a tree and I had to borrow a ladder from my neighbor and *bref*, she was-

SCHUBERT

Fine, fine, not a problem. But hurry up and get ready, guests have already started to arrive.

JENNY

Ah, *merde*! I'll grab a tray.

[JENNY starts to walk away]

SHUBERT

Are you forgetting something? *[Indicates earrings]*

JENNY

Oh, right! *Mes boucles*! Is there anywhere I can stash them for a couple hours? I don't want to run all the way down to the lockers.

SHUBERT

Talk to Bernice. She might hold onto them for you.

JENNY

I don't know... they're kind of special. Can I run out and lock them up in the employee lounge?

SHUBERT

There's no time! We've got to get these cocktails served and this food prepared.

[Leans in closer - stage whisper]

SHUBERT

Don't tell anyone, but there's a critic here tonight. It's my chance to show the world what our kitchen can do and I'm not going to pass this up!

JENNY

I thought you hated critics?

SHUBERT

That's the best part. Nothing feels better than taking some stupid critic's stupid critiques and negativity and throwing it back in their stupid, critical faces!

JENNY

Maybe here in the lobby isn't the best place to talk about hating the guests?

SHUBERT

I love our guests! But this critic is a heel.

JENNY

Right. Well, I'm going to clock in and maybe ask Ms. Bernice if she'll hold onto my earrings.

[Beat]

JENNY

Mr. Schuler?

SHUBERT

Yes?

JENNY

Please don't do anything that gets the kitchen shut down. I really do like it here.

SHUBERT

Don't you worry. I'll toe the line.

[Note: Improved moment between JENNY and DENNIS interrupted by BERNICE]

Scene 6: Bernice and Jenny

BERNICE

Jenny! Come here!

JENNY

Oh my gosh, Ms. Cuddlethwump! I'm so sorry I was late!

BERNICE

It's becoming a bit of a habit now, isn't it Jenny? Don't you enjoy working here at Mystery Lodge?

JENNY

Mais oui! I was just...

BERNICE

It's fine, Jenny. Just try to be more conscious of the time, all right?

JENNY

I will. I promise.

BERNICE

I have a few things for you to do.

JENNY

Certainment!

BERNICE

What?

JENNY

Certainment! It's French for certainly!

BERNICE

Of course it is. Look, I need you to make sure you bring some dinner to Mary Barker and her two children in room 107.

JENNY

What should I bring them?

BERNICE

You can bring Mary whatever we are serving for dinner. Chicken nuggets and fries for the kids.

JENNY

I'm on it!

BERNICE

Also, I need you to put these items in the safe.

JENNY

Is this a Grammy?

BERNICE

Yes it is.

JENNY

And this is a...

BERNICE

Spanner

[opens case which shines in faces]

JENNY

It looks like a wrench.

BERNICE

Except it glows.

JENNY

Then why not call it a wrench?

BERNICE

Because it isn't mine.

JENNY

And this old purse is...

BERNICE

...Samantha Tennison's

JENNY

So it is...

BERNICE

...very valuable.

JENNY

Right. I'll put these in the safe.

BERNICE

Oh! I changed the combination to the safe today.

JENNY

Why?

BERNICE

Because our owner, James Tennison, has entrusted me with the storage of the very valuable MacGuffin Diamond and I plan to show him that his trust has not been misplaced!

JENNY

The MacGuffin Diamond?

BERNICE

Certainly you've heard of the MacGuffin Diamond!

JENNY

Of course! Every museum wants the MacGuffin Diamond!

BERNICE

Well our owner, James Tennison, has owned it for years. It's a family heirloom. It has been kept at the National Museum of Gems and Other Important Geological Items. But with International Thief the Chartreuse Goose on the loose we are secretly holding it here for safe keeping until representatives from the museum arrive next week!

JENNY

Wow! That's a huge honor!

BERNICE

Yes it is. And I want to make sure nothing goes wrong.

JENNY

So how am I supposed to put these things in the safe if I don't know the combination?

BERNICE

I'll tell you. But you can't tell anyone else, understand?

JENNY

I promise!

[BERNICE whispers in JENNY's ear]

JENNY

Let me repeat that back to you. It's seventy-

BERNICE

SHHHHHHH!

JENNY

Oh! Right!

[JENNY whispers it back to BERNICE]

BERNICE

Correct.

JENNY

OK. I'll put these things in the safe and then I'll get
some food to room One seventy-

BERNICE

107!

JENNY

Right. 107.

Scene 7: Jenny seats Dennis

SHUBERT

Are you ready to serve the meals? I have to prepare Rona DeLaRue's special dinner.

JENNY

You're making something particular to her?

SHUBERT

I don't know, I was thinking of filet of sole.

[SHUBERT exits to kitchen]

[JENNY and DENNIS enter the room]

JENNY

Here, sit here. The convention has the other tables so you have to sit with the VIPs. I can't believe you actually came to the dinner. You're going to get us caught!

DENNIS

I couldn't turn it down! There's a detective's convention in here tonight, this is my only chance to impress them and join their ranks!

JENNY

These people are here to eat, not solve mysteries. Especially the mystery of "Who is this weirdo and why is he crashing our banquet"!

DENNIS

Relax. I've got the perfect disguise.

[DENNIS pulls out an obviously fake moustache]

JENNY

What are you doing? Blend in!

DENNIS

I don't blend.

JENNY

Dennis, that moustache is atrocious.

DENNIS

EXACTLY! It's so bad, the fine sleuths in this room will instantly suspect something. Who is he? Is he an international spy? Perhaps a wealthy villain, infiltrating his nemesis' organization? Maybe he's secretly the leader of this very organization! Nobody will suspect that I'm just an ordinary, run-of-the-mill...

JENNY

For the sake of my job, you'd better not finish that thought.

DENNIS

The only one I worry about is your butler lady.

JENNY

Bernice? She's the concierge

DENNIS

Yes. I think she's made me.

JENNY

Made you what?

DENNIS

It's detective-speak for I think she suspects something.

JENNY

Oh no!

DENNIS

And for the sake of my illustrious future in the PI industry, you'd better get back to doing your job.

JENNY

N'importe quoi. Next time I'm locking you in your cabin. Or better yet, out of it!

[JENNY leaves to seat more guests, DENNIS smugly sits in his seat and plays with his moustache]

Scene 8: Sam Harasses Jenny

[JENNY walking near table where Samantha is seated.

SAMANTHA raises hand and snaps fingers repeatedly until server approaches.]

JENNY

Is there a problem Miss...

SAMANTHA

Tennison. Miss Samantha Tennison, or have you forgotten?

JENNY

Of course I haven't forgotten you, Miss Tennison. After all, you are the cousin of the owner of our lovely establishment. I've served you many times here at Mystery Lodge. I'm sure you remember me.

SAMANTHA

Why would I remember some waitress? The nerve.

JENNY

Well, if you don't remember me, my name is Jenny, and I'll be taking care of the VIP table tonight.

SAMANTHA

Am I a VIP? Because my empty water glass says otherwise.

JENNY

My apologies. I'll take care of that right away.

CARTIER

Oh. If you're getting drinks, could you be a dear and get me a Fuzzy Navel?

JENNY

Of course, Mister Cartier

JOE

I'll take a Bud.

JENNY

Right away, Mister Barker

RONA

Sparkling water.

JENNY

Tout de suite, Miss DeLaRue.

DENNIS

Tea. Earl Grey. Hot.

JENNY

[stiffly] Right away Mister... ?

DENNIS

Mister Radkeson

JENNY

Ugh...

SAMANTHA

[cutting off the exchange] No! All you need to bring is my water. Then you can take care of *them*.

JENNY

I'm sorry, Miss Tennison, but it's my job to serve everyone at this table. That means that I need to serve you, Mister Cartier, Mister Barker, Miss DeLaRue, and Mister... Radkeson...

SAMANTHA

Does it say in which order you're supposed to serve them? No. I'm not telling you not to do your job. I'm telling you to do your job exactly the way you're supposed to, by serving the most important person at the table first. And once I'm done eating, then you can pay attention to them. Understand?

CARTIER

[to Joe as if speaking to camera]
That's when I knew Sam had lost it. Her? The most important person at the table? She must be daft.

JOE

Sorry Mister Carter, but I honestly have no idea what you're talking about.

SAMANTHA

Look, you have two options. Either you do what I want, or I talk to my cousin James, who owns this establishment, and you'll be out of a job in the blink of an eye. Water. Now.

JENNY

Right away, Miss Tennison. I'll be right back with your drink... And everyone else's.

[*Jenny exits quickly.*]

JOE

Well now, that wasn't very polite.

SAMANTHA

I'm not here to be polite. I'm here to enjoy my meal in peace, and you're not helping with that.

(Improv discussion until drinks arrive.)

[JENNY enters carrying a tray of drinks. She serves everyone else first before bringing a glass of water to SAMANTHA.]

JENNY

Here you go, Miss Tennison.

SAMANTHA

It's about time. Do you know how long I've been waiting? I bet you expect a tip or something, right?

JENNY

Well...

SAMANTHA

Of course you do. You see someone important like me and you want to take them for everything they've got. You're all alike. Get out of my sight.

[JENNY starts talking with the others.]

JOE

See, that's what I'm talking about.

SAMANTHA

Do I know you?

JOE

Name's Joe Barker. I'm a mechanic from Wrenshall, Minnesota, population 397.

SAMANTHA

That's so nice for you. Shouldn't you be somewhere else?

JOE

Yep, usually would be. Except a couple weeks back I was listening to 99.1 WMOS The Moose, and they did one of those call in contests. The question was what is the base curb weight of the 1977 Ford Mustang Cobra II. I figured everyone would know it was 2791 lbs., but I gave it a shot anyway, and whattya know? I won a weekend stay here!

SAMANTHA

Fascinating. Don't you have someone else to talk to?

JOE

Nah. The wife's taking a nap back in the room.

SAMANTHA

Waitress!

JENNY

Yes, Miss Tennison?

SAMANTHA

Get this man out of here!

JENNY

I'm sorry ma'am, but I can't do that.

SAMANTHA

You're useless! Go get me someone who can kick this lowlife out!

JOE

That's not very nice, friend.

SAMANTHA

I'm not your friend. I'm Samantha Tennison. My cousin owns this establishment.

JOE

And my cousin cuts hair, but that don't make me a barber.

Scene 9: Joe Talks to Samantha about Pants

JOE

You know, I think I do know you from somewhere.

SAMANTHA

I've never seen you before in my life.

JOE

Really? You ever been to Duluth?

SAMANTHA

What kind of question is that?

JOE

Well, the wife and I were shopping up in Duluth a couple months ago.

CARTIER

Oh, the shopping in Duluth is fantastic! I love wandering around and popping in all the little stores and restaurants, and everyone there recognizes me, and that's always SO embarrassing!

SAMANTHA

I wouldn't know. I've never been there.

JOE

Really? I could swear I saw someone that looked just like you working at one of the shops.

SAMANTHA

Me, working in *Duluth*? That's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard. You must be mistaken.

JOE

That shop you work in sells the best pants.

SAMANTHA

I don't work at an outlet mall in Duluth!

JOE

I don't think I mentioned the outlet mall.

CARTIER

Miss DeLaRue, have you ever been to Duluth?

RONA

Have I been to Duluth!? I've reviewed restaurants all over the Northern Upper Midwest. Why I was the Secret Reviewer for the Duluth Tribune! I'm shocked you haven't heard of me.

CARTIER

Well, maybe if you'd been on TV.

RONA

I have actually, though I've been told I look shorter in person. The camera adds ten inches.

CARTIER

Oh, then of course I've heard of you! But if you're from Duluth, you could never be as famous as the Chartreuse Goose.

RONA

Of course not. I mean, a food critic compared to an amazingly talented and unrivaled cat-burglar?

CARTIER

Exactly.

DENNIS

Oh, the Chartreuse Goose; I'm such a fan of his or her work!

The Chartreuse Goose has had a suspiciously long career, beginning in the 1980's and continuing to this day. During that time she, or he, robbed the Rotating Radisson Restaurant three times!

RONA

Four actually

DENNIS

Oh, I'm sure it's three, once per decade

RONA

It's been four decades.

SAMANTHA

It's true. The Chartreuse Goose has been robbing Duluth since before I was born!

JOE

So you DO know about Duluth

SAMANTHA

I know LOTS of things. I once sailed into the Duluth harbor on my private yacht, and the first thing they told me was that the Chartreuse Goose had robbed the Rotating Radisson Restaurant for the fourth time that very day! Of course I never set *FOOT* on shore. Ugh!

JOE

Whatever you say. These pants I'm wearing right now are the ones you sold me.

SAMANTHA

I didn't sell you anything! You're insane! Why do I have to put up with you while I'm just trying to have a nice meal? You'd think that in my cousin's establishment, a Tennison would be treated with the dignity and respect that my name commands. It's a sad day when I see how far Mystery Lodge has fallen. I just want decent service and some quality food. Is that so much to ask!?

JOE

You gave me a real good deal on them too.

[SAMANTHA sighs.]

CARTIER

Just let him talk, Sam. We know it can't be true.

DENNIS

Actually, there's nothing that says it can't be true. Anything is possible.

SAMANTHA

Is that what you think!?

DENNIS

Oh, no. No not at all. I meant it would be possible for anyone else, but not for you of course. Not true at all. I mean, for you it's just ridiculous.

SAMANTHA

Yes, it is.

JOE

The best compliment I can pay someone is that they look exactly like someone who sold me a good pair of pants.

Scene 10: Shubert serves Rona

[SHUBERT emerges from kitchen wearing only one shoe, with a special meal on a platter for RONA]

SHUBERT

Madame, here's a meal I've prepared especially for you.

[SHUBERT serves RONA, waits anxiously as she takes a bite]

SAMANTHA

[Veruca Salt style] *I* want what *she's* having

SHUBERT

I only have one

SAMANTHA

Well make another!

SHUBERT

I only have enough for one more

SAMANTHA

Then make one for me!

SHUBERT

I can't, she might want seconds.

RONA

Young man, what is this delicious dish?

SHUBERT

Moose Moussaka

RONA

Moose... moussaka?

SHUBERT

Yes, it's made with a layer of aubergines in self-empowered olive oil, a layer of ground moose with spices, and a Dechanel sauce based on cream of mushroom soup.

SAMANTHA

Dechanel sauce? You mean béchamel sauce don't you?

SHUBERT

Well it's exactly like Bechamel sauce but a LOT cuter, and laced with tongue.

RONA

Are you sure empowered olive oil is a wise choice?

SHUBERT

Well sometimes when you have an idea, you just do it. You just do it.

RONA

And moose mousaka constitutes...

SHUBERT

Greek/Iron Range fusion - we call it Trojan Moose.

RONA

Brilliant! Exquisite! Wait until I bring this idea back to civilization!

SHUBERT

This isn't civilization?

RONA

[patronizing laugh] My dear boy, there isn't a decent opera within 50 miles.

SHUBERT

The local church has a good string quartet.

RONA

Noted. If I develop cultural anemia I shall turn to your quartet for resuscitation.

SHUBERT

Trojan moose gets a lot of traction with our guests.

JENNY

Ms. DeLaRue, will you be wanting any dessert?

RONA

Oh, what are you making?

SHUBERT

A cobbler.

Scene 11: Joe and Samantha Visit Loo

JOE

Hey, Carter, where's the can?

CARTIER

My name is pronounced Car-tee-AY, and the loo is out in the lobby.

JOE

Okay, I'll go ask Lou.

SAMANTHA

Argh! I'll show you!

[JOE and SAMANTHA exit together]

[Improvisational lobby bickering between JOE and SAMANTHA - SAMANTHA is trying to get JOE to shut up about the pants]

Scene 12: Concierge and Cartier spied by Dennis

BERNICE

Cartier? You have a call from the Beauty talent agency.

CARTIER

So I have a Beauty call?

BERNICE

Quite. You can pick up the call in the lobby.

[BERNICE and CARTIER exit]

DENNIS

Hmmm... I've never heard of the Beauty talent agency!

RONA

I'm sure there are lots of talent agencies you have never heard of.

DENNIS

I sense... a clue!

[DENNIS follows BERNICE out]

[DENNIS sees BERNICE and CARTIER kissing, hurries back inside looking for JENNY]

[SAMANTHA returns]

[JOE returns]

Scene 13: Jenny Reveals Crime

*[BERNICE and CARTIER return from different doors,
each looking slightly disheveled]*

CARTIER

Bernice, thank you, that was a very important phone call.

BERNICE

[out of side of mouth] Sh!

CARTIER

Please notify me immediately if I receive another call.

[JENNY enters the room, frantic]

JENNY

Ms. Cuddlethwump, can I please talk to you?

BERNICE

Not at the moment, Jenny, we're in the middle of dining.

JENNY

Please, it's really important-

BERNICE

Jennifer, I'm busy at the moment, please return to your station

JENNY

It's about the safe-

BERNICE

[to guests] Forgive me, our staff can be overly enthusiastic-

JENNY

[loudly] The MacGuffin Diamond is missing! We've been robbed!

[SHUBERT enters from kitchen]

BERNICE

[to guests] Please excuse me a moment.

[to Jenny]

Talk.

JENNY

I don't know what happened! I went back to the safe to grab my earrings. I wanted to move them to my employee locker because it would be safer and then I wouldn't have to bother you after the dinner-

BERNICE

Jenny!

JENNY

Desole! I opened the safe and it was empty. Everything is gone! The MacGuffin Diamond, my earrings and whatever else may have been kept in there!

BERNICE

Tell me this is a joke

SAMANTHA

Are you telling me you lost my purse?

[RONA removes earrings surreptitiously]

JOE

Hey now, so my 1954 Harris Brothers 3/4" spanner is missing?

CARTIER

Not my Grammy! NOOOOOOO!

RONA

Oh no, my earrings are gone too!

SHUBERT

And... and someone stole my shoe!

JENNY

I don't know what happened! It was locked before dinner started!

DENNIS

It's a mystery!

JENNY

This is not the time!

DENNIS

This is the perfect time! It's a mystery! A mystery at Mystery Lodge! *[poses dramatically]*

[A beat while no one is impressed]

BERNICE

Can everyone please be quiet for a moment! Now, let's try to figure out what happened.

Scene 14: Bernice asks Detectives for Help

BERNICE

Ladies and gentlemen, it seems that there has been a robbery at Mystery Lodge. We're fortunate to have a conference of the world's greatest detectives here tonight. All of you are seasoned detectives, and I'm confident that you'll be able to solve this mystery. Clearly none of you are the culprits, which leaves one of these seven individuals.

JOE

I'm not really a numbers man, but I think there are eight of us.

BERNICE

Eight? Well, clearly I didn't do it, so I don't see why I need to be a suspect.

DENNIS

If you aren't the culprit, then clearly you don't have anything to hide.

SAMANTHA

That makes sense to me.

CARTIER

It couldn't have been Bernice. She's the concierge of the hotel.

DENNIS

That settles it, she's definitely a suspect. The butler always does it!

BERNICE

What are you talking about? I'm not a butler.

DENNIS

That's EXACTLY what the butler would say!

BERNICE

But in any case, with regards to the crime, I have nothing to hide. I'll gladly submit to the investigation if it helps them solve the crime. We'll all cooperate fully.

JOE

Well I was readin' in the paper that the Chartreuse Goose was spotted in the area

DENNIS

Then that means that one of US must be the Chartreuse
Goose! Probably... [dramatically - and points at BERNICE]
THE BUTLER!

SAMANTHA

Wait a minute! Why can't YOU be a suspect? You didn't
even have anything stolen from you!

DENNIS

But I can't be the Chartruese Goose, I've been studying
him, or her, for years! Besides, I'm not the only one who
didn't lose anything - the chef there didn't have
anything stolen either!

JENNY

Wait! Shubert is missing a shoe!

SHUBERT

Well would you look at that?

RONA

Doesn't that make you Shubert Schuler, the shoeless sous
chef?

SHUBERT

[looking pointedly at her] Yes. Yes it does.

BERNICE

Miss Tennison, Mister Barker, Mister Cartier, Miss
DeLaRue, Mister Radkeson, Jenny, and sous chef Shubert,
let's split up and tell the detectives everything we
know. Please do your best to answer any questions they
might have. It's the only way to truly find the culprit.
We'll leave it in your capable hands to figure out which
one of us is the Chartreuse Goose.

Scene 15: Suspects go Table to Table

- 1 Samantha once robbed by CG who took the earrings
- 2 Shubert becomes increasingly uneasy as he realizes that Rona is probably not the real Rona DeLaRue. For one thing the Rona DeLaRue was taller and older. Also she seems to have no memory of the devastating review she unleashed upon his former restaurant. He can invent terrible quotes she used in the review, and Rona will not know whether they're real.
- 3 Cartier and Samantha knows Rona wore chartreuse earrings.
- 4 Dennis knows about Oswald Cuddlethwump but the CG has continued to rob since then. The CG can't have always been the same person.
- 5 Jenny knows Dennis is obsessed with the Chartreuse Goose.

Scene 16: Chartreuse Goose Captured

BERNICE

Ladies and gentlemen I'm sure by now you know who the Chartreuse Goose is! Let's go around table by table and gather your conclusions, I'm sure they are all in agreement. Remember your answers should be in writing, and no changing your answers!

[listen to summaries of the tables]

SHUBERT

Jenny, I don't think Rona DeLaRue is really Rona DeLaRue!

JENNY

You think she's the Chartreuse Goose?

SHUBERT

I remember her being older, and taller... and she doesn't remember ANYTHING about the review that shut down my restaurant!

JENNY

Well it has been a few years.

SHUBERT

You don't understand, she's a restaurant reviewer, but she doesn't even realize that she just... ate my shoe!

JENNY

What?!

SHUBERT

I wanted revenge, so I cooked my shoe and called it Moose Moussaka!

CARTIER

I'm probably the only person in the room who knows what chartreuse is! Well, [indicating Rona] except her...

RONA

Whatever do you mean?

CARTIER

Your earrings... they were chartreuse!

SAMANTHA

And I recognized my own earrings! Earrings stolen from me years ago by the Chartreuse Goose!

CARTIER

Fortunately, I have these! [holds up fuzzy handcuffs]

BERNICE

The evidence is in, and we think YOU are the Chartreuse Goose!

[The Chartreuse Goose is handcuffed to a chair]

RONA

Yes, all right, you've caught me. I AM the Chartreuse Goose, Duluth's most notorious redistributor of wealth - I rob from the rich, and give to the somewhat-less-rich, that is to say, myself. And now that the diamond is missing I suppose you want to know how I did it. Usually people do. As I've got a captive audience [rattles handcuffs] I might as well oblige.

When I first learned that the MacGuffin Diamond was going to be here I decided to adopt the identity of famous food critic Rona DeLaRue. We are not dissimilar in appearance... except that she's older... and taller than me. And a man. But I knew he would be in Ontario tonight to accept an award at the Canadian Canned Comestibles Conference, or "Cans."

Upon arrival I saw that the hotel safe is an Optimex 272B with a group 1 double-cylinder action and a five-bolt throw. As everyone knows the Optimex is subject to a day-lock vulnerability on the last digit of the primary cylinder, so cracking it to extract the contents would be child's play. But I had to wait until the lobby was empty to make my move.

As soon as everyone was present in this room I slipped unseen from my seat by ducking under the table. Then I used a rappelling rope concealed in my wristwatch to make my way up to the rafters, leaping from beam to beam. I slipped out that side door, then crossed in front of those large pane-glass windows undetected. In the lobby I moved behind the desk, checked in a couple who arrived while I was there - room 17, Bernice - and then cracked the safe as soon as they left. Scooping everything into a hidden pouch on my belt I crossed again in front of those windows, leapt back across the beams, and lowered myself into my seat with...

Oh, wait, of course... I didn't do ANY of that... because you've CAUGHT THE WRONG PERSON. As any of the people at this table can tell you I have been sitting here since before the safe was locked. Oh, and I was lying about the safe, the thief must have had the combination!

So while, yes, you have the honor of sharing a meal with Duluth's most famous cat-burglar, the Chartreuse Goose... I didn't do it. I suggest you consider as suspects those persons who found an excuse to leave the room and rob the lobby safe during the past half hour!

Scene 17: Dennis Reveals Exits

DENNIS

She's right! Wow, the Chartreuse Goose is so cool! I mean... She's right! Everyone else left the room at some point except for her. Jenny and Shubert both were in and out of the room during the meal service.

SHUBERT

Of course I was. That's part of my job.

DENNIS

And Miss Tennison and Mister Barker both left the room to use the restroom... Allegedly.

JOE

Sure did!

DENNIS

But the culprit made her fatal mistake when she left the room under the guise of a phone call for Mister Cartier!

RONA

Which you only know because you left the room to follow them. Allegedly.

DENNIS

True, but I know I didn't do it!

RONA

I didn't do it either, but I'm still handcuffed to a chair.

DENNIS

Fair point. Well, if we all could have done it, what do we do now?

BERNICE

It seems that once again we need to turn to our incredible detectives for help. Ladies. Gentlemen. There must be something we're missing here, some question we're not asking. If you would please help us find the culprit, I'm sure that seven of us would be very grateful. We'll answer any questions you might have to try to help you solve this mystery and find out who the true identity of the thief is.

SHUBERT

Um, Miss DeLa... I mean, um, Miss Goose?

RONA

Call me Char

SHUBERT

Char, um, you're NOT the reviewer Rona DeLaRue! You aren't responsible for closing my Duluth restaurant.

RONA

No, I'm happy to say that one isn't my fault either! Wow, this is weird, I've never been so not-guilty of things in my life.

SHUBERT

But... but that means I... You...

RONA

But I'm still waiting for you to bring out the delicious cobbler you promised me...

SHUBERT

[Flees in shame]

Scene 18: More questioning

- 1 Joe has broken into a safe before with his buddy, he knows drilling a safe takes hours
- 2 Cartier wants to be on a robbery reality show but you have to have a criminal record of burglary to qualify
- 3 Jenny needs money to go to France
- 4 Sam suspects everyone
- 5 Cartier knows Sam is no longer with her husband and that all of her money would have come from him
- 6 Dennis has a portfolio full of security details about the lodge, the Chartreuse Goose and the Marvel Cinematic Universe
7. Jenny knows Cartier is unpopular now among fans. How does he still have all this money?
8. Joe keeps giving different excuses for what his wife is doing.

Scene 19: Concierge Asks for Findings

BERNICE

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe we've answered enough questions. With such a rare item as the MacGuffin Diamond missing, we can't afford to make any mistakes, so please take a moment to compare notes with your fellow detectives at your table. When everyone is ready, we'll close this case once and for all.

[Everyone chats while tables converse.]

SHUBERT

Rona... Char... um I have a confession to make.

RONA

That you served me a cooked shoe?

SHUBERT

You knew!?

RONA

Believe me, I've eaten worse. Before I took on the role of the Chartreuse Goose from the prior holder I did a stint in Stillwater for burglary. Leather shoe hot dish was a delicacy.

SHUBERT

I am SO sorry, I didn't know!

RONA

Think nothing of it.

[Shubert awkwardly hugs the handcuffed Rona. Those sitting nearby or watching closely will see him slip her a key, saying "I hope this makes up for it."]

CARTIER

So YOU'VE been in PRISON?

RONA

Yes...?

CARTIER

Oh! I'm SO jealous!

BERNICE

It appears that everyone is ready. Now, who believes that the crime was committed by the real Chartreuse Goose?

[Wait for responses while RONA reacts.]

And who believes that I, Bernice Cuddlethwump, committed the crime?

[Wait for responses while BERNICE reacts.]

And who believes that Joe Barker committed the crime?

[Wait for responses while JOE reacts.]

And who believes that Samantha Tennison committed the crime?

[Wait for responses while SAM reacts.]

And who believes that Dennis Radkeson committed the crime?

[Wait for responses while DENNIS reacts.]

And who believes that Cartier committed the crime?

[Wait for responses while CARTIER reacts.]

And who believes that Jenny Radke committed the crime?

[Wait for responses while JENNY reacts.]

And who believes that Shubert Schuler committed the crime?

[Wait for responses while SHUBERT reacts.]

Scene 20: Culprit Captured

BERNICE

It seems that we're not entirely in agreement. Well, we know that the Chartreuse Goose didn't do it, because she never left the room. Beyond that, I'm not really sure. I guess the only option now is...

CARTIER

FINE! I confess! Only convicted felons are allowed to compete on The Reality Escape, a new prison escape reality show. I did it. Take me away!

[RONA quietly removes handcuffs and exits.]

BERNICE

But Cartier, it couldn't have been you. When you weren't in the room, you were with me the entire time!

DENNIS

It's true. When I left the room to follow the butler, I saw them together.

JENNY

I've been taking care of tables all night. When I wasn't in the dining room, I was with Shubert.

SHUBERT

I was much too busy preparing a special meal for our critic. I prepared a shoe so delicious that an actual food critic wanted seconds.

JENNY

Well, she's not an actual food critic

SHUBERT

LET ME HAVE MY MOMENT

[JOE starts backing away slowly and sneaking away from the group towards the door.]

JENNY

Come to think of it, whenever I was in the dining room, I was taking care of Miss Tennison. The only exception was when she walked Mister Barker to the restroom.

SAMANTHA

Are you implying that I did it? That's preposterous! All I did was tell him to stop talking about his pants at dinner. It's uncouth and uncivilized. After our chat was over, he went towards the restroom and I came right back to the dining room.

DENNIS

Which means that it must have been Joe!

[JOE exits.]

BERNICE

Don't let him get away!

[ALL rush towards the exit. RONA enters followed by JOE wearing fuzzy handcuffs.]

BERNICE

Mister Barker, I'm shocked. What would your wife say?

RONA

Oh, that's the best part. Do you want to tell them, or should I?

JOE

Might as well be me. That contest from 99.1 WMOS The Moose... It was rigged. My wife Mary works for the station. We used it to get access to the hotel. Figured we'd break into the safe and get some nice stuff. We never dreamed that we'd get our hands on the MacGuffin Diamond.

SAMANTHA

We? You mean your wife knew about it?

JOE

Knew about it? Heck, she's the one that opened the safe. All I had to do was give the wrench to Bernice and then text Mary when the coast was clear. She just walked in, put in the combination, and bingo.

BERNICE

But how did you know the combination? We just changed it today!

JOE

Mary put a microphone in the case with my spanner.

JENNY

So the spanner was a trick the whole time?

JOE

Of course it was. Who the heck puts a wrench in a safe?

BERNICE

That all may be true, but I whispered the combination to Jenny. There's no way you heard it!

JOE

Course we didn't hear it then, but we heard it loud and clear when she said the numbers as she opened it up.

BERNICE

Jenny!

JENNY

Hey, you can't blame me for a secret microphone wrench!

BERNICE

But I don't understand how you escaped the handcuffs?

SHUBERT

Er, that was me! I felt guilty for serving her a cooked shoe, and slipped her the key when I apologized.

RONA

The authorities should have already arrived at your room, which means your wife is in custody. They'll be by to pick you up any minute. Dennis, can you make sure the police find him in the lobby?

DENNIS

Right away, Miss Goose!

CARTIER

Here's my agent's number, honey - you should SERIOUSLY consider reality television. I know JUST the show!

[DENNIS and JOE exit.]

RONA

Thank you, but right now I just want to enjoy a nice relaxing weekend. Plus, I'm still hungry.

[RONA looks at SHUBERT.]

SHUBERT

Okay, okay. I can take a hint. One cobbler, coming right up!

[SHUBERT takes off his shoe and walks towards the kitchen.]

Scene 23: Thank You followed by Improv Games

BERNICE

Ladies and gentlemen, you've done it! You solved the Mystery at Mystery Lodge, presented by Fearless Comedy Productions! Thank you all for attending and playing along. We had a wonderful evening, and we hope you did too. If you had any questions for us or if you think you figured out any of the character's secrets, we're be mingling for a few minutes. Feel free to ask us whatever you'd like. Thank you again for attending, and we hope you enjoyed Mystery at Mystery Lodge.