

After-School Detectives

by
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SYNOPSIS

High school outsiders Agatha, Sebastian, Claire, and Ryder have bonded as the After-School Detectives devoted to solving crimes and misdemeanors at Yankum High School. Trouble is, they don't get the slightest bit of recognition even though they've found lost lab animals, returned extorted lunch money, and stopped a blackmail plot. Head detective Agatha (named after her mom's favorite author) figures if they could just get one Big Case, they'd make a name for themselves.

It doesn't take long! When someone breaks into janitor Willy's office and steals petty cash, school resource officer Cleo Killingsworth is on the case. She immediately points her taser at the After-School Detectives because Wyatt and girlfriend Frankie say they saw the kids sneaking out of Willy's office just before the money disappeared. Principal Rathburn, aka Heartburn, is too taken with State Department of Education expert Caleb Craven to concern herself with such matters. So it's up to the After-School Detectives to get to work and clear their names.

Clues lead the kids on a very twisted path that involves romance, kidnapping, and stolen art with a heavy dose of crazy adults constantly complicating every step the detectives take—not to mention bullies Wyatt and Frankie popping up like spies ready to scuttle any success the After-School Detectives might enjoy. The action becomes fast and furious as a flurry of text messages tricks the villainous culprit, secures the petty cash—along with three kidnap victims—and millions of dollars in stolen art. Now that's a Big Case!

CHARACTERS

(5 m, 7 w)

AGATHA PRINGLE: a high school student.

SEBASTIAN SHELL: a friend.

CLAIRE MARTINEZ: another friend.

RYDER GILL: another friend.

OFFICER CLEO KILLINGSWORTH: school resource officer.

THEODORA RATHBURN: (a.k.a. Heartburn) school principal.

CALEB CRAVEN: from the State Department of Education.

PRUNELLA PONDER: English teacher.

WYATT RIGGLE: a sophomore.

FRANKIE KARN: his girlfriend.

WILLY JENSEN: the school janitor.

VIVIAN VAN GOOCH: the art teacher.

VOICES OF SECURITY OFFICERS

Synopsis of Scenes and Sets:

ACT I

Scene 1: Yankum High's boiler and janitor's room right after school. *A few boxes or crates here and there, a small desk for Willy at left along with his mop and bucket.*

Scene 2: A hallway a short time later, played before the curtain.

Scene 3: Ms. Ponder's English classroom, a short time later. *A few student desks, a short file cabinet, and perhaps a white or blackboard.*

Scene 4: Ms. Ponder's English classroom, the following morning.

Scene 5: A school hallway a short time later, played before the curtain.

Scene 6: A old school tool shed that day after school. *A few old boxes or crates, a bench, an old lawnmower, and a container holding garden tools.* Also, the next morning, outside of school.

Scene 7: The art room the following morning, played before the curtain.

ACT II

Scene 1: The old tool shed during lunch that day.

Scene 2: A school hallway later that day. Played before the curtain.

Scene 3: The dumpster area behind Tastee Freeze, that evening. *A couple of garbage cans, old boxes, and garbage bags.*

Scene 4: Ms. Ponder's English room, the next morning.

Scene 5: The old tool shed, an hour later.

NOTE: Lines addressed to the audience are written in *italics*.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: Yankum High's boiler and janitor's room right after school. A few old boxes, crates, a small desk at left for Willy along with his mop and bucket. AGATHA, wearing a trench coat and fedora, stands with her back to the audience. SFX: Ominous music plays for a moment until she turns around.)

AGATHA: *Who'd you think I was? Sam Spade? Nick Diamond? Hercule Poirot? Sorry. My moniker's Agatha. Agatha Pringle. Laugh and I'll full you so full of lead you'll sink to the bottom of the East River like a stone. Just kidding...a bit of detective humor. I'm way too young to pack heat and I can't even watch a WWF SmackDown without getting queasy. But I'm all for justice. That's what my mom always taught me. And that's why she named me Agatha. Her favorite author was Agatha Christie, so here I am, an ace detective at Yankum High where I head up the ASD. For those of you out of the loop, ASD stands for After-School Detectives. Since we're not an official club, we weren't even on the radar at nothing-ever-happens Yankum High until six months ago. That's when we met after school in the boiler room so Wyatt and Frankie wouldn't make fun of us while we were waiting for our busses.*

(SEBASTIAN enters left.)

SEBASTIAN: *Hey, Aggie, I got great news. (Noticing audience.) Oh, hi! I'm Sebastian, Bashy for short.*

AGATHA: *He comes all powered up with more computer skills than a Silicon Valley CEO. So, what've you got, Bashy?*

SEBASTIAN: *You know Amanda?*

AGATHA: *Freshman. Lunch money extorted by Wyatt Riggle?*

SEBASTIAN: *That's her.*

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AGATHA: Go on.

SEBASTIAN: Got her lunch money back.

AGATHA: No kidding? How?

SEBASTIAN: Used my spy cam to record Wyatt opening his locker, zooming in on him spinning the combination, and bingo!

AGATHA: You broke into his locker?

SEBASTIAN: For a good cause. He had her \$2.65 wrapped in a note from her mom sitting on the top shelf!

AGATHA: How's the victim?

SEBASTIAN: (*Shyly.*) Gave me a kiss.

AGATHA: She did, ha?

SEBASTIAN: But don't worry. You're still top banana.

AGATHA: I must have some kind of appeal, ha?

(*SEBASTIAN groans as CLAIRE enters left reading a text.*)

CLAIRE: *Claire here! You want anything on the social scene at school, I'm your source.* (*To SEBASTIAN and AGATHA.*) Oh, hi guys. I was just reading a text from the nurse. You remember that confidential student file that went missing?

AGATHA: Sure do. Would have made life pretty difficult for whatshername if that bit of health information leaked.

SEBASTIAN: Wyatt and Frankie and their buds would have had a field day.

AGATHA: So where'd you find the file?

CLAIRE: Frankie's backpack.

AGATHA: Any motive other than making fun of the poor kid?

CLAIRE: I'd say blackmail. The file had a rough draft of a ransom note in it.

AGATHA: That so?

CLAIRE: (*Pulling out a piece of paper, reading.*) We know all about your problems in the past—and it's spelled P-A-S-S-E-D—and if you don't want the whole school to know—and whole is spelled H-O-L-E—bring \$20 to school tomorrow in an unmarked paper bag and leave it in the trash can by the French room by 8:20.

SEBASTIAN: Willy empties that trash can at 8:30.

End of Freeview

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