

MR. PATTERSON'S \$5,000 DOG IS DEAD

1-Act Comedy

By J. Michael Shirley

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-2-

I wish to thank Kay Caputi for her valuable technical assistance in writing this play. And I wish to give special appreciation and recognition to my wife, Donna, for her wonderful support.

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Three students have been hired to take care of Mr. Patterson's purebred dog for the weekend at his estate while he is out of town. The kids, a bumbling trio, stick the dog in the yard so they can watch a game on TV and have the stuffy butler serve them lots of snacks.

But when they hear about a dog run over down the street and can't see Mr. Patterson's dog in the yard anywhere, they start to worry. At that moment, Mr. Patterson calls to say he's coming home early. The pandemonium that follows makes this a play of non-stop laughter.

CHARACTERS

Flexible cast of 5*

VINCE: Wants to appear as a brave, intelligent leader but is lacking at times.

CARL: Intelligent, but lacks the backbone to be "the" leader.

JOEY: Usually manages to stay out of harm's way.

BUTLER: Stuffy, starched servant; with British accent, if possible.

MR. PATTERSON: A wimpy little fellow who probably wouldn't hurt a fly.

**(Although male names are listed, the kids and Mr. Patterson may be male or female. We recommend the butler continue to fit the stuffy, male stereotype. If the kids are played by all girls, more than name and pronoun changes may be made. For instance, the pool room may be changed to sauna, the big game on TV to the latest movie, etc.)*

Mr. Patterson's \$5,000 Dog is Dead

-4-

SETTING

All action takes place in the TV room of the luxurious Patterson residence. There is a sofa CS with an afghan folded across it. An end table and an armchair are SR of the sofa. Other furniture can be used as desired. The TV is imaginary, DSC. Foyer entrance is off set SR. Patio/backyard entrance is off set SL.

PROPS

Two bowls of popcorn and four bottles of soda on a tray; a towel; and a portable telephone. Vince and Joey wear watches.

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: VINCE, followed by CARL, enter from SR, and cross to SR of sofa.)

VINCE: Hey! Would you get a loada this house. Did you see all that marble out there in tha ... tha ... *(Indicates foyer with thumb of DS hand.)*

CARL: Foyer.

VINCE: Yeah, that's what it is ... the foyer. Yeah ... real classy. *(Hands on hips, gazing upward.)* This place has gotta have more chandeliers than Buffington Palace.

CARL: That's Buck-ing-ham Palace.

VINCE: *(Turns to face CARL.)* Yeah ... yeah ... that's what I said ... Buffington Palace. Can you believe, out of all the kids that work at the kennel, that it would be you and me that would end up with a piece of cake like this?

CARL: Listen, Vince, *(Crosses to CS, front of sofa.)* I don't know if it's gonna be such a piece of cake. I mean, this guy is a real rich and powerful guy in this town. He flies all the way to the west coast just to enter this ... mutt ... in some kinda dog show or somethin' ...

VINCE: Mutt!?! *(Crosses to CARL'S right.)* Are you crazy, man? This ain't no mutt! This is a \$5,000 thoroughbred, wire-haired pointing griffon! *(HE pronounces it "griffan," gesturing SL to backyard area to give audience idea of location of backyard and dog.)*

CARL: Griffon. *(Said in an airy tone of voice.)*

VINCE: Yeah, that's what I said, griffon. And this guy is willing to shell out 200 bucks. Did you hear me? 200 smackers for us to come over here and doggie-sit. And look, we get to sleep here ... there's a wide screen stereo TV set ... a pool room ...

CARL: And don't forget the butler.

VINCE: *(Sarcastically.)* Yeah, let's not forget twinkletoes. *(Crossing DSL still looking around.)*

CARL: OK! OK! You've made your point! Are we lucky or are we lucky?

Mr. Patterson's \$5,000 Dog is Dead

-6-

VINCE: We are luc-ky. *(Crosses to CARL for high five and other business. Still in front of sofa CS.)*

CARL: OK, so you've taken care of the dog.

VINCE: Yep, I'm lettin' him run around in the backyard.

CARL: Are you sure he'll be all right out there? Shouldn't we keep an eye on him or something?

VINCE: Heck no! *(Checking watch.)* It's seven-forty-five ... the game starts at eight ... so what? Let him run his little wire-haired legs around the yard an hour or two. By then, the game will be over and we can brush him down and put him to bed for the night. OK?

CARL: Sure ... sure. OK, so all we need now is a little pop and some chips and we'll be all set. How 'bout I run down to Seven-Eleven and grab a bag or two of Cheetos and ... *(Turns and starts to exit SR, but does not exit.)*

VINCE: Eh ... wait up. What's the use in runnin' yourself to death? *(Crosses to sit in chair.)* Remember where we are? *(Looking around, gesturing with hands.)* The Talmadge Hall.

CARL: That's Taj Mahal, Vince, Taj Mahal.

VINCE: Yeah, that's what I said ... Talmadge Hall. And you know what comes along with this place? Drinks and pretzels. And you know who we got to run to the Seven-Eleven for us? Old Twinkle Toes, that's who.

CARL: Yeah, that's right. *(Very stiffly, with British accent.)* I'll summon the butler, sir. *(Crosses to doorway and calls.)* Oh, Lurch ... Hey! Twinkletoes ... Yooooo-hoooo.

BUTLER: It's Nevel, sir. May I be of assistance?

VINCE: Yes, Navel ...

CARL: Nevel.

VINCE: Ah, Navel ... my partner and I would like to have some refreshments, if you know what I mean ... we're gonna watch the big game tonight and we'd like to have a couple a colas and --

CARL: Some popcorn.

VINCE: Yeah, and some popcorn. *(VINCE rises from chair, moves to imagined TV set, DSC, turns it on and makes adjustments to the set.)*

End of Freeview

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