



**Butler:** Hello, have a seat anywhere. Waverleys will be here shortly.

**Nanny:** (*Irritated and gruff*) Where is Uncle Cornelius? The sooner he gets here, the better.

**Maid:** (*Anxious*) You don't have a cold, do you? I'm supposed to spray down anyone who might have more than the normal amount of germs. (*Other characters warn her about the aerosol bottle when and if Uncle Cornelius arrives*)

**Gardener** points out the dog placements and waxes poetic about Fang OR hides if people stare or say anything.

(*At rise Butler is at central microphone. He fumbles with the equipment and will finally have to have help to turn the mic on and speak into the correct end of the microphone*)

**Butler:** Welcome. Mr. and Mrs. Waverly should be here any minute to open this event. They were investigating talking fish this morning at the Great Dismal Swamp. Something about nuclear material leaking into the swamp. We'll just wait a couple of minutes more.

(*Reporter arrives. Explains she is here to cover the story of the Waverly's work in the swamp. Butler explains they are late because of a traffic mishap.*)

**Boy:** Where is Uncle Cornelius?

**Butler:** He should be arriving any time now

**Gardner:** Yes, he should be arriving any time now. The chauffeur is bringing him

**Maid:** Yes, the chauffeur is bringing him. I heard him say he was bringing him

**Nanny:** Yes, the chauffeur is bringing him. Just be patient now.

**Boy:** Does he know where to bring him?

**Butler:** Of course he knows where to bring him.

**Gardner:** yes, a chauffeur always knows where.

**Maid:** Yes, the chauffeur knows where. I heard him say he knew where to bring Uncle Cornelius. He was to bring him to (*insert location*).

**Nanny:** (*Impatiently*) Yes, the chauffeur knows where to bring him. Just be patient now.

**Boy:** Does he know when to bring him?

**Butler:** Of course he knows *when* to bring him

**Gardner:** Yes, a chauffeur always knows when

**Maid:** Yes, the chauffeur knows when. I heard him say he knew when to bring Uncle Cornelius. He said he was to bring him tonight.

**Nanny:** (*Impatiently*) Yes, the chauffeur knows when to bring him. Just be patient now.

**Boy:** (*to Nanny*) Then why isn't he here?

**Nanny:** I don't know why he isn't here yet. Do you know why he isn't here yet? (*Looks to Gardener*)

**Gardner:** I don't know why he isn't here yet. Do you know why he isn't here yet? (*Looks to Maid*)

**Maid:** I don't know why he isn't here yet. Do you know why he isn't here yet? (***Looks to Butler***)

**Butler:** I don't know why he isn't here yet. Do you know why he isn't here yet? (*Asking audience*)

**Boy:** Can't you call him on the car phone?

**Nanny:** (*Impatiently*) Talking and driving is not safe. You wouldn't want him to get in an accident would you? (*The rest chime in agreeing with her it would not be safe*)

**Boy:** No.

**Maid:** (*Demanding and impatient*) What are we going to do!!!!????? The Waverley's aren't here? (*Butler looks pensive, resting his chin on his fist and staring off into space. After a second or two...*) You're the Butler. Do something.

**Butler:** Let's serve the salads and hope the Waverleys and Uncle Cornelius arrive soon (*Everyone chimes in about what a good idea. Salad course is served. Reporter moves around to the audience asking what they have heard about talking fish in the Great Dismal Swamp*)

*After salads are served, Reporter interviews each of the servants. This is done without set lines but should be as diligently rehearsed as set line script. Each character must get out the information listed in their character description at this time. They do so in their own words and in character. They should be interviewed in the following order: Boy, Butler, Nanny, Maid and Gardener*

The Uncle Cornelius Caper  
Scene II

*After the salads are served the Butler's gets a call. (Can't find the cell phone. Then can't get it to work right. Comments how he hates these newfangled things.) Finally takes the call. The caller has hung up. Nanny says to see if they left a message. Has to have audience help. No message, butler gets audience member to do caller back stuff. Finally gets the call and has to have the gardener listen to it. Gardener whispers to him. Throughout the remaining dialogue the boy is polite but somewhat confused, the maid generally lost during the exchanges and the Butler struggling to communicate to the adults without communicating to the Boy)*

**Butler:** *(To Nanny)* I think you better take the boy... somewhere.

**Boy:** Why? I want to wait for my parents and Uncle Cornelius.

**Nanny:** *(Annoyed)* Where do you want me to take him?

**Butler:** Take him and wash behind his ears.

**Nanny:** Wash behind his ears???

**Butler:** Yes, wash behind his ears

**Nanny:** But we did that before we came

**Butler:** Do it again

**Nanny:** I did it right the first time

**Butler:** I don't care. Take him out and wash behind his ears.

**Nanny:** I don't see ...*(The light comes on. Nanny finally realizes what the Butler is saying without actually saying it)* Ohhhhhh. Yes of course, wash behind his ears.

**Boy:** But I did it before we came

**Nanny:** We better check. Come along

**Boy:** But you checked before we left

**Nanny:** It doesn't hurt to check twice

**Boy:** But you checked when we got here

**Nanny:** Right??? (*Looks to Butler for help*)

**Butler:** (*To Boy*) But she didn't check in the nursery and the light there is different than the other light. (*Other cast agrees audibly*)

**Nanny:** Yes, the light is very different. We shall have to go check behind your ears in the other light

**Boy:** What other light?

**Nanny:** (*Looking to Butler for help*) Errrrr uhh? Well, you know, the other light.

**Boy:** I don't know. What other light are we talking about?

**Nanny:** What other light are we talking about? (*Gardener and Maid shrug*)

**Butler:** Check in the nursery light.

**Nanny:** Of course, we'll check in the nursery light.

**Maid:** Then check in the classroom lights. All the classrooms

Gardener: Then check in the outside light. On all 4 sides of the building

**Butler:** And then you should check ... uhh... ummm ... (*asks audience to help think of places*)

**Nanny:** Right. We'll check behind his ears everywhere.

**Boy:** But that will take too long. Uncle Cornelius....

Nanny: I know for a fact Uncle Cornelius doesn't approve of dirt behind the ears. Especially at an affair like this. Come along. You wouldn't want to disappoint Uncle Cornelius would you?

**Boy:** No ma'am (*They exit*)

*Butler explains there has been a terrible occurrence. The chauffeur reported that when he went to the study to get Uncle Cornelius he found Uncle Cornelius lying on the rug, not moving. There were signs of a struggle, things knocked over, broken glass, muddy footprints.*

Maid: What are we going to do?

Gardener: What are we going to do?

Butler: I'll call Dr. Bovinius. He'll know what to do. *(Calls with the cell phone after much difficulty)*

Butler: *(Into the phone.)* Dr. Bovinius, this is the Butler. What is going on? *(Places hand over phone and speaks to cast and audience)* Doctor Bovinius is on the scene *(During the call the Maid and Gardener crowd him trying to hear the doctor)*

Butler: Dr. Bovinius says he's.... *(Whispers to Gardener)*

Gardener: I can't believe it. *(Whispers to Maid)*

Maid: I can't believe it. *(Whispers to audience member)*

Butler: *(To audience member)* Go ahead, you tell everyone. I just can't say it. *(Gets audience member to announce it)*

Gardener: Uncle Cornelius is dead. *(Shakes his head)* I just can't believe it. It will break the boy's heart

Maid: *(To Gardener)* How are you going to tell him?

Gardener: I'm not going to tell him. That's not my job. My job is to garden *(Looks at Maid)*

Maid: I'm not going to tell him. That's not my job. My job is to maid... I mean clean. *(Looks at Butler)*

Butler: I'm not going to do it. That's not my job. My job is to butle.

Gardener: You've got to do it. You're the butler

Maid: that's right. They always say "The butler did it.

Butler: That's what they say when someone has been murdered. *(They all look at each other, realizing what he's said)* *(Looks at audience)* Can't one of you do it? *(Waits for audience reaction)*

Gardener: I think it's the nanny's job. Nanny's work closely with boys. *(ad lib. She's not here. Let her do it. Yes, that should be her job)*

Maid: She won't do it if it's not in her contract. She doesn't do anything that's not in her contract and that she's not getting paid for. So you have to do it. *(Looks at Butler)*

Butler: I think his parents should be the ones to tell him. We all know how close he was to Uncle Cornelius. How he had his snack with him every day after school, how he read to him before bed. I think he needs to hear it from his parents (*They all agree. Nanny and boy return. Butler hushes everyone up.*)

Butler: Are you back so soon?

Boy: Yes, we washed behind my ears and checked everywhere.

Butler: Did you check in the nursery?

Nanny: Yes, we checked in the nursery

Boy: My ears are clean

Butler: Did you check in the other light?

Nanny: Yes, we checked in the other light. the other light.

Butler: What other light are we talking about?

Nanny: the classroom lights.

Butler: Did you check all the classroom lights

Boy: Yes, we checked in all the classroom lights

Gardener: Did you check in the outside light.

Boy: Yes, we checked in the outside light

Gardener: On all 4 sides of the building

Boy: Yes, on all 4 sides of the building

Butler: What about the other places (*Goes into all the places the audience suggested*) (*then he is obviously stuck .... (phone rings, butler answers.)*)

Gardener: (*Nodding his head toward the phone*) I think the boy needs to go take his nap

Boy: (*Confused*) I don't take a nap anymore

Nanny: (*Annoyed once again*) He doesn't take a nap any more

Butler: (*Holding hand over phone*) The new nap

Nanny: What new nap?

Butler: The new nap. It's not exactly new - just new for the boy.

Nanny: The new nap?

Butler: Yes, the new nap Dr. Bovinius prescribed

Nanny: Dr. Bovinius?

Boy: Dr. Bovinius isn't my doctor. He's Uncle Cornelius's doctor

Butler: Yes. Dr. Bovinius called. You have to take some nap

Nanny: Why does he have to take some nap?

Boy: Yes, why do I have to take some nap?

Butler: Because Dr. Bovinius said you should take a nap

Nanny: What nap?

Butler: You know, THE nap.

Nanny: (*Finally catching on*) Oh, that nap

Boy: (*Confused more than ever*) What nap?

Butler: The ... (*Stammers then gets the audience to give reasons to take a nap*)

Nanny: Come along, now. You wouldn't want Dr. Bovinius upset because you wouldn't take your nap.  
(*They start to leave*)

Nanny: Where should he take a nap?

Butler: I don't know. I don't butle here (*Looks at Gardener*)

Gardener: I don't know. I don't garden here (*Looks at Maid*)

Maid: I don't know. I don't maid here... I mean clean here

Nanny: I don't know. I don't nanny here *The (Rest do asides - She doesn't nanny when she's at home either. The boy is always with Uncle Cornelius, etc.).* You're the butler. You tell me

Butler: (*Gets ideas from the audience*)

Boy: But what good will it do to take a nap?

Butler: (Stammers) Let's ask your nanny.

Nanny: (Stammers) How I should know. Ask the gardener.

Gardener: (Stammers) How should I know? I garden. Ask the maid

Maid: (Stammers) How should I know? I maid. I mean clean. Let's ask this man. (Turns to audience member and gets suggestion, then from as many other audience members as she wishes) That's why you should take a nap

Butler: Best take the nap

Gardener: Yes, best take the nap.

Maid: Yes, best take the nap.

Nanny: Yes, best take the nap (*Nanny and Boy start to leave ...*)

Boy: But Dr. Bovinius is Uncle Cornelius's doctor. He's not a pediatrician.

Nanny: We'll call your parents. They're doctors

Boy: But they're not pediatricians. My mum is a microbiologist, My father is an ichthyologist. Neither one is a pediatrician

Butler: But they are your parents (*The others agree & butler calls while boy explains to the audience what his parents do*)

Butler: His parents have agreed he should take a nap

Boy: I don't want to go to sleep. Uncle Cornelius...

Butler: Uncle Cornelius wouldn't want to hear you wouldn't do as your parents asked and take your nap  
*(All ad lib- you don't want to disappoint Uncle Cornelius do you?)*

Boy: No, I'll take the nap. *(They exit)*

Butler: That was Dr. Bovinius on the phone... Uncle Cornelius confirmed dead. Wet rug, not a mark on Uncle Cornelius body. Could have been cardiac arrest or a respiratory problem. It could be an accident. *(Pause for dramatic effect)* It could be a murder. *(Another pause)* It could be an inside job. *(They all deny it, are aghast)*

Gardener: What are we going to do now? *(To maid)*

Maid: I don't know. What are we going to do now? *(To Butler)*

Butler: I'll tell you what we are going to do now. We are going to serve dinner.

The Uncle Cornelius Caper  
Scene III

*(Reporter can finish interviewing cast and audience. After dessert is served Nanny returns. Gardener is more assertive than usual when talking to the nanny. She is her usual annoyed self)*

**Gardener:** Why aren't you with the boy?

**Nanny:** He's asleep.

Gardener: He's not asleep

**Nanny:** He is asleep I tell you

**Gardener:** How could he be asleep wondering where his uncle Cornelius is?

**Nanny:** I tell you he's asleep. I know when the boy is asleep. I have been his Nanny nearly 10 years now. The boy is asleep

**Gardener:** It's been less than 5 minutes.

**Nanny:** Your grandfather falls asleep in 2 seconds

**Gardener:** Stop changing the subject. The boy did not fall asleep.

**Nanny:** He did and I would know. He's asleep.

**Gardener:** I don't believe it. You don't do your job. No wonder the Waverlys are getting ready to pension you off.

**Nanny:** *(Certain)* They are not going to pension me off.

**Gardener:** They are. I heard them say the boy is getting old enough and since he spends so much Cornelius h time with Uncle Cornelius he doesn't need a nanny anymore.

**Nanny:** *(Worried)* But my bonus. What about my bonus?

**Maid:** The 10 year bonus. Getting 2 years' worth of salary if you stay 10 years... You won't get it.

**Nanny:** But I'm counting on it

**Maid:** You won't get it. You won't have a job either and no one else is going to hire you. Other folks will want one like they see on Nanny 911 not someone old and.... like you

**Nanny:** You are spiteful. You're lucky to have a job at all. You - nearly killing Uncle Cornelius that time.

**Maid:** It wasn't my fault. I hardly sprayed any aerosol...

**Nanny:** You were told Uncle Cornelius cannot tolerate aerosol. You are lucky to be still employed, even if they did demote you to scullery maid.

**Maid:** At least I'm not mean like you. *(Sobs, carries on, looks to audience for solace)*

**Butler:** *(Cell call comes. The entire fumble thing again).* Time of death was at least *(One hour before doors opened)*. Footprints don't appear human. Its times like these you need an investigator.

**Maid:** Shall we call Scotland Yard?

**Butler:** *(Growing more and more frustrated at Maid's stupidity)* We can't call Scotland yard. They're in England. They won't answer a call from here.

**Maid:** Scotland Yard is in England? Why isn't it in Scotland....?

**Butler:** Forget Scotland Yard.

**Maid:** What about Sherlock Holmes? He always gets the case solved.

**Butler:** Sherlock Holmes. He's in England too.

**Gardener:** Is not....

**Butler:** There's no such person as Sherlock Holmes. He's a fictional character in a book.

**Maid:** Well then, that cute guy Nick. They always have him on the news at the crime scenes. *(Nanny is agreeing he's cute)*

Butler: From CSI?

**Maid:** Yes

Butler: CSI is a TV show.

**Maid:** But he's real, not made up like Sherlock Holmes

**Butler:** He's a real actor not a real detective.

**Nanny:** How about the guy on America's Most Wanted. He's real.

**Butler:** He is real

**Maid:** But he's not that cute. *(Nanny is agreeing)*

**Gardener:** Enough about cute and fiction. Uncle Cornelius may have been murdered. What are we going to do? We need professional help.

*Detective volunteers to help. Brags and mentions it couldn't hurt to have wealthy patrons like the Waverly .and rambles on and how what a great detective she is. Drops local names and events as well as national cases that she worked on. Brags as much as possible*

*Explains about motive an opportunity. All cases boil down to figuring out who had the opportunity (including access to the murder weapon) and motive to kill*

**Detective:** Now, it's about time these people got their dessert. *(To Butler)* Move! Hop to it! In the

meantime I am going to interview the suspects.

*Interviews the suspects for motive & opportunity.*

**Detective:** I've interviewed everyone but the Waverleys. (*Suspiciously*) Where are these mysterious Waverleys? Seems very odd that they should be so late considering they are the guest speakers. And since a murder has been committed.

**Butler:** They are still not here? What should we do?

**Detective:** I'm calling Dr. Bovinius. Give me the phone. (*Dials*) Yes, is this Dr. Bovinius? Good. I'm probably the most famous detective in this area. I'm on the case now and I have a few questions. Exactly what goes on in that laboratory on the Waverly estate? .... Microscopic research? .... Germs and such? .... Germs that could kill if they escaped? .... They have ponds with what? Fish? ... Yes, of course I know an ichthyologist is a scientist that studies fish. Every well educated person knows that.

What is the time of death? (*Says time of death*) What were the tracks like? ... Not human. More like paw prints... Broken glass and what might be water all around the corpse? Thank you. I'll be in touch.

**Maid:** (*Frightened*) Not human! What does he mean ... not human? (*Turns to Gardener*)

Gardener: How should I know what he means? What does he mean, not human (*To Nanny*)

Nanny: How should I know what he means? What does he mean, not human (*To Audience*)

Butler: Not human. That's what he means. Maybe some big dog made those footprints. (*Everybody is staring down the Gardener*)

Gardener: I don't know what you mean, some big dog.

Butler: A big dog like Fang (*The rest of the cast nods in agreement*)

Gardener: You know Fang isn't allowed into the house after the last time

Detective: Last time? What happened last time?

Gardener: (*Tells story of Fang and Aunt Madeline*). Fang would never hurt Uncle Cornelius. See Aunt Madeline is HER (the Mrs. not the Mr. Dr. Waverly) Aunt Madeline

Maid: But Fang was upstairs. I saw him. He was...

Butler: You saw Fang? That means you were upstairs (*Maid realizes she's been caught*)

Detective: Did you know Fang got in and was upstairs?

Butler: You were upstairs? When you were demoted I distinctly told you that you could NOT go upstairs. (*Maid starts crying*)

Detective: (*Starts hard core questioning, gets up into Gardener's face and is menacing and intimidating*) Did you know Fang got in and was upstairs?

G (*Starting to crack*) I... I... Umm .. Yes, but only for a few seconds. Just long enough to get my boots off.

Detective: (*Backing him into a wall or corner*) Out with it.

Gardener: I stopped by the kitchen to get a piece of pie. Mostly don't like to be seen but my daughter is the baker. She's a marvelous crust maker... So flaky ... so...

Detective: Enough! Back to the matter at hand.

Gardener: Fang and I had been mucking out the koi pond. We were all mud. She opened the door to hand out the pie - warm, steamy blueberry pie, so heavenly, flaky crusty...

Detective: Get back to the matter at hand

Gardener: Fang slipped in on my blind side. You see a roast was...

Detective: (*Very loudly and impatiently*) Enough about food!

Gardener: I couldn't go in with the boots all muddy. It only took a second. When I called Fang came right down the stairs.

Maid: Traipsing mud through the kitchen I suppose and I'll have to clean it up.

Gardener: I didn't think there had been a problem

Detective: Did you hear all the commotion?

Gardener: (*Hangs head and goes for the sympathy of the audience.*) Yes. But Fang is a good dog he is. Never complains no matter how much Cornelius h work we have to do. Doesn't care I have only one eye, these scars and a limp. Fang loves me anyway. (*Getting hysterical*) Blame me! Not Fang! It's not his fault, the faults mine. I'll leave the Waverly's service, I'll take Fang with me and he'll never bother

anyone ever again. *(Falls at detective's feet, other servants pat him and help him up; even the nanny isn't as gruff as usual)*

Gardener: *(To audience)*. Dogs love unconditionally, they do. Too bad more people don't see past what they can see on the outside

Detective: There we have it. Fang killed Uncle Cornelius. Probably went right for the throat.

Butler: *(Grasping at straws trying to clear Fang)* But Dr. Bovinius said there wasn't a mark on him and Fang would have left a bite mark. *(Less hopefully)* At least one.

Nanny: It was Aunt Mad. Fang set her off. She went crazy. It was Aunt Madeline.

Detective: *(Arrogant)* Who's the detective here? *(To Butler)* You can't even run their household. Scullery maids upstairs, pies being given to the help, a nanny that can't wash behind the ears.

Nanny: *(Defensively)* That ear washing thing was just to get the boy out of the room

Detective: So you say.

*The parents arrive and ad lib in concerned voices "Where is he?" "How is he?" "Does he know?"*

**Detective:** *(Disgusted)* Who are these people?

**Butler:** *(Announcing to everyone)* Doctor Waverly and Dr. Waverly

**Detective:** *(To audience - I thought they were affluent. They look like crosses between Jacques Cousteau and homeless hillbillies)*

**Female Dr. Waverly:** We lost track of time really,

**Male Dr. Waverly:** We lost track of time... We were so close.... we found no radioactivity....Then the tunnel. But we came as soon as we could.

**Female Dr. Waverly:** We didn't even stop to change

**Detective:** *(Aside)* that's obvious

**Butler:** Quick, before the boy arrives - his Uncle Cornelius has passed away. There was nothing Dr. Bovinius could do. *(Parents are overcome)*

**Male Dr. Waverly:** It will break his heart.

**Female Dr. Waverly:** My poor baby, he.... *(Interrupted by the boy running in and hugging them)*

**Boy:** Papa! Mummy!

*Boy explains how he tried to take a nap because they told him to but just couldn't.  
Argument between Nanny, Gardener and Maid doing "I told you so's". Butler breaks it up*

**Male Dr. Waverly:** Your mum and I have something we have to tell you.

**Boy:** Uncle Cornelius. I know. I could hear. I didn't want to spoil the party. Uncle Cornelius would have wanted everyone to have a good time. *(Stars to tear up)*

**Female Dr. Waverly:** *(Takes son in her arms and comforts him)* You are a brave, brave boy. Uncle Cornelius would have been proud. Honey, I'm so sorry.

**Male Dr. Waverly:** *(Putting an arm around mother and a comforting hand on the boy)* As a scientist I can tell you life and death cannot be separated. I don't know why. But God does and I can tell you as a Christian that God made the world and He doesn't make mistakes. He knows what he is doing, son.

**Female Dr. Waverly:** But not even death can separate us from those we truly love and who love as well. A part of everyone we love and who have loved us lives on in our hearts. *(Hugging him close)* I know it's hard. You were close to Uncle Cornelius. I know you'll miss him terribly.

**Boy:** I will never love anything like I loved Uncle Cornelius.

**Female Dr. Waverly:** You will. A heart that closes itself off becomes hard and cold and more easily broken. One slip and it shatters like an icicle falling from a roof. It's the tender heart, one not afraid to love even if it may hurt sometimes; it is the tender heart that survives. Do you understand?

**Boy:** Yes. Uncle Cornelius was my best friend. He would always listen to me.

**Female Dr. Waverly:** Uncle Cornelius would want you to love again.

**Boy:** Yes, mum

**Male Dr. Waverly:** Besides, son, we can always get you another goldfish

**Detective:** GOLDFISH! *(Outraged)* You mean to tell me Uncle Cornelius was a gold fish? I was investigating the death of a goldfish?!

**Male and Female Dr. Waverly:** Yes, didn't you know?

**Butler:** And Aunt Madeline is the cat.

**Detective:** (*Shocked*) A cat!!!

**All:** Yes, the cat.

**Detective.** (*Put out*) I suppose you're going to tell me Fang is some sort of cousin next.

**Male Dr. Waverly:** Don't be absurd. Fang is a dog. (*All shake their heads at how stupid the detective is*)

**Female Dr. Waverly:** (*Sweetly, feeling sorry for the detective*) And Dr. Bovinius is our vet. But we appreciate you helping. Really. It was sweet of you. (*To husband*) Shan't we give her a token of appreciation?

**Male Dr. Waverly:** Yes of course - pay up. (*Patting his pockets, looking for a wallet*) I never carry any cash ...

**Butler:** I've got it. (*Pulls out wallet*)

**Female Dr. Waverly:** By all means give her what she's worth.

*Butler takes out a bill and asks audience who has change for a \$1000? \$500? \$100? \$50? How about a \$20? Finally hands detective \$1.00 and says keep the change. Detective is insulted and humiliated)*

#### OPTIONAL ENDING FOR VALENTINE'S DAY

Maid: With Valentine's Day approaching many Americans are turning their hearts toward love and romance. Let us consider the words of King Solomon, who had 300 wives and 700 concubines.

TBA: Place me like a seal over your heart,

like a seal on your arm;

for love is as strong as death,

its jealousy unyielding as the grave.

It burns like blazing fire,

like a mighty flame. (Song of Solomon)

Reporter: Many waters cannot quench love;

rivers cannot wash it away.

If one were to give

all the wealth of his house for love,

it would be utterly scorned.

Photo: Though Solomon was the wisest man of his time he did not realize what we do - that love is indeed stronger than death. This is how we know what love is, Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

Baker: The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. I Sam. 16:7 (this needs to tie in with your comments about your cousin and how people treated him because of how he looked)

TBA: In the words of the disciple Jesus loved - Anew command I give you that you love one another. Even as I have loved you so you must love one another. All men everywhere will know you are my disciples if you love one another.

TBA: Paul also speaks of love in First Corinthians 13.

Butler: if I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. (Needs to tie in with you speaking 5 other languages)

Detective: If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. (Needs to tie in with your "I know everything and can solve any mystery")

Nanny: If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. (ties in with you being preoccupied with your bonus)

Detective: Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. (Ties in with your boasting and pride - I know double whammy on the detective)

Gardener: It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered; it keeps no record of wrongs. (needs to tie in with the fact that even if your cousin blames the Waverley's for your injuries you have not kept score.)

TBA: Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

Parents in unison, shoulders together, outside hands on the boy's shoulders: It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres.

Boy: Love never fails.

Entire cast in unison: And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

These below were considered but are currently rejected.

Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 8:39

neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 12:10

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Romans 13:8

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law.

Rm. 13:9-11

The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law

I Cor. 8:1

Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up

### **The Uncle Cornelius Caper Director's Notes**

The Uncle Cornelius Caper is a three scene play with dinner occurring between scenes one and two and dessert between scenes two and three. It has many opportunities for ad lobbng and audience involvement.

#### **SET and PROPS:**

Central microphone and if possible roving mica  
Talking fish wall plaque. (One brand is Billy Bass)

#### **COSTUMES & HAND PROPS:**

Character descriptions include costume and hand props.

#### **LIGHTING:**

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No special lighting is required.

#### SOUND:

Central microphone. Having a wireless hand held mic increases the audience's participation. The reporter character take a microphone around to get audience comments, questions and ideas works well but is optional.

#### RUN TIME:

Varies greatly by audience size and method of serving meals. Scene I lasts approximately 4-5 minutes. Scene II runs about 12-14 minutes. Scene III has the greatest variability. Allow at least 25 minutes. However interactive audiences may considerably lengthen either scenes II or III with questions, conferring with other tables, conducting their own questioning of the suspects

Any complete run time will be an estimate only not only because audience interaction but because of time needed to serve and eat. Single line buffets leave those served first with time to interact with the cast while others are being served or eaten. Double or more line buffets leave the cast with less unstructured dialogue. The more members of the audience; the more time that needs to be factored in. If meals are being served at individual tables the number of servers becomes a factor. If china and metal utensils are used more noise is created and must be played over than paper or plastic products. Tablecloths help diminish distracting noise.

This show was first produced at the Kempsville Church of Christ, Virginia Beach, VA in February of 2007 with a total run time of 1 hour and forty-five minutes.

#### CASTING SUGGESTIONS:

The Detective is a most challenging role since the detective is a "director on stage" during scene 3. The Detective must be thoroughly familiar with all other character information and prepared to ad lib questions to bring out all relevant information during scene 3. Cast accordingly

The Reporter should be comfortable with initiating interaction with the audience. This character can make the difference between a show that is watched and a show where the audience feels as though they were participants. This character can actually take pictures or video of the event while they work the audience. It also has been split between two people with one acting as the reporter and the other as their photographer.

If you decide to split the role the reporter can preen, add make up, and fuss with hair before photographer takes their picture when interviewing an audience or cast member.

Most characters have no real names and are referred to by their position so the names of the mentioned but unseen characters (Aunt Madeline, Dr. Bovinius and Uncle Cornelius) take on a more real image in the audience's minds. For casts with less experience it is recommended the cast NOT be informed that the unseen characters are actually animals and a veterinarian. This allows them to form mental images of people which, in turn, makes it easier for inexperienced performers not to "slip up" when they interact informally with the audience. After 2 or more rehearsals, allow them to read the script in its entirety.

## CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

**AUDIENCE INTERACTION:** Suggestions for characters when they interact with the audience off script. More detailed information is found in the section entitled "Interview Q & A"

**Butler:** Butler for the Waverly family. Stiff, formal, British accent. Butler wears a suit and appears very formal. A tuxedo is not out of place, nor is a white towel draped across one forearm. Cell phone in one pocket.

**AUDIENCE INTERACTION:**

Butler can't handle electronic devices. He fumbles with the cell phone every time he has to use it.

**Maid:** Airheaded, pleasant maid at the Waverly's mansion. Jersey or Yonkers's accent. Wears black skirt and blouse with a white apron and maid's cap. Carries an aerosol can of disinfectant and a duster.

**AUDIENCE INTERACTION:**

Concerned they might be bringing in germs and will offer to spray them down if they feel they need it or will offer to "dust them off". Cries easily and allows and encourages audience members to comfort her.

**Nanny:** Usually annoyed and appears cold and unfeeling. Preoccupied with money – amassing as much as possible. . Wears black. Have her hair severely pulled back and no make up

**AUDIENCE INTERACTION:**

Very little. Doesn't really like people. Gruff.

**Gardener:** A shy recluse who loves the dog Fang. He wears coveralls, boots and has a trowel or other garden tool in his back pocket. Has burn scars on his face, walks with a limp on the same side and has difficulty using the hand on that side. Gardener was hurt in a fire in the Waverly laboratory which is how he sustained the scars and disabled hand and the limp.

**AUDIENCE INTERACTION:**

During the beginning of the show will shyly interact.

**Detective:** Arrogant and haughty. During most of the show (s) he is seated as if she is any other audience member. Should wear a trench coat over street clothes. Can have a pad and pen in one pocket to appear to take notes. (Can have notes about the show on the pad ahead of time as a “cheat sheet” to make sure everything is covered.)

**AUDIENCE INTERACTION:**

Can ad lib as needed.

**The Female Doctor Waverly:** Kind, gentle but should evoke a huge laugh by how she is dressed. British accent optional. Galoshes, hooded raincoat with a lifejacket over it, mask and snorkel on head over the hood.

**AUDIENCE INTERACTION:**

None

**The Male Doctor Waverly:** Kind, speaks with authority. Should elicit chuckles from the audience when he is seen. Wears waders, a raincoat, mask and snorkel on head, carries a fish net and bucket containing the talking fish. His hair should be a mess. British accent optional.

**AUDIENCE INTERACTION:**

None

**The Boy:** Age 6-10, the younger the better. Well behaved, polite, inquisitive. Should handle “ichthyologist”, “microbiologist” and his other scientific words like they are every day words in his vocabulary. Dressed in a suit and tie, a “preppy” look.

**AUDIENCE INTERACTION:**

Asking if anyone has seen a black limo because that’s how his Uncle Cornelius will arrive.

**Reporter:** Eager to get the scoop for the National Inquirer or another publication who regularly covers bizarre phenomena such as alien abductions and in this case, talking fish. Street clothes, hat with press ID attached, voice recording device (does not have to be operational), and camera or camcorder (does not have to be operational).

**AUDIENCE INTERACTION:**

Asks audience and cast questions and gets quotes from the audience, “records” their answers and “takes pictures”