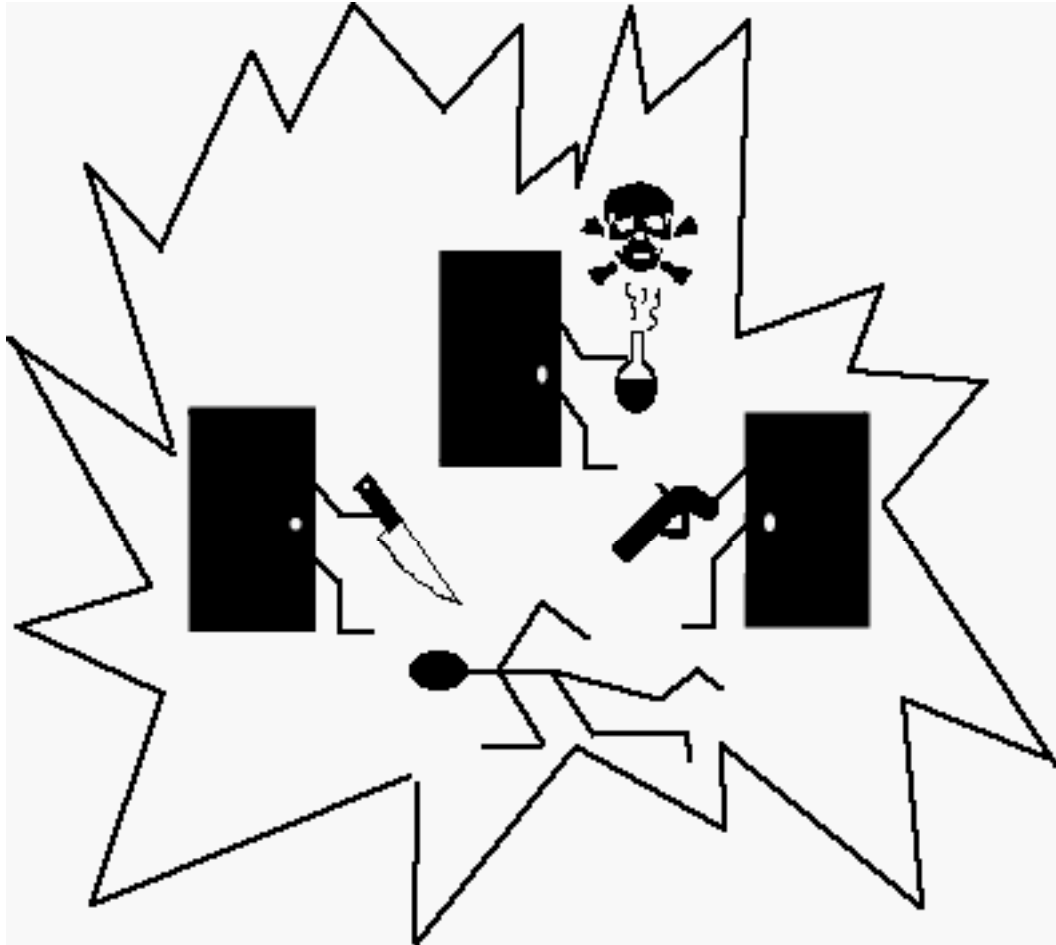


# GOOD GRAPE HUNTING

A Murder Mystery for Dinner Theater



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## CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:

## GOOD GRAPE HUNTING - (ii)

**DOODIE FRUDEE:** The oldest of the two Frudee brother's. Used to be in show business. Thinks he was a game show host in another life. He and his brother have inherited this winery. Doodie knows nothing about wine and a minimal amount about business, but he is thrilled with the new chemically engineered wine, and believes this is going to save the winery!

**RUDY FRUDEE:** Doodie's younger brother. Rudy is a real party animal. He knows nothing about how to make wine, just loves to drink and "cop a buzz." Despite his partying ways, he is very much in love with his wife, Prudy. He leaves the business end up to his brother, and is content to pour the wine during the tasting - as long as he can drink right along with everyone else.

**TRUDY FRUDEE:** Wife of Doodie Frudee. Dumb as a rock. Doesn't know anything about anything. It's difficult to converse with her but she's easy on the eyes. Has a good heart and sincerely means well.

**PRUDY FRUDEE:** Wife of Rudy Frudee, and the Winemaker of the Frudee Family Winery. Is very knowledgeable about wine and winemaking, and doesn't believe you can chemically engineer wine which will taste like the real thing. She and Rudy are living proof that opposites attract!.

**DR. JUDITH FRUDEE:** A viticulture scientist and second cousin to Doodie and Rudy. She has devised a way to chemically engineer wine and is selling the idea to the Frudee Brothers Winery. She is very beautiful, very smart, very flirty, and very sexy!

**DR. WILLIAM BEABORE:** A Doctor of Viticulture. Teaches at Florida A&M University, a leading Viticulture school in the United States. Is prestigious, famous, boringly knowledgeable, and bitter. His great-grandfather lost the Frudee Family Winery in a poker game 100 years ago. Wants to destroy the winery and the Frudee Family, and does everything in his power to accomplish this goal!

## PRE-SALAD SCENE:

## GOOD GRAPE HUNTING - (1)

*(All actors mingle except WILL and JUDY, and stay on.)*

**DOODIE:** Welcome, Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm Doodie Frudee...

**ALL ACTORS:** Howdy Doodie!

**RUDY:** That was fun! Let's do it again!

**ALL ACTORS** *(involve audience)*: Howdy Doodie!

**DOODIE:** No more of that, now! As I was saying, I'm Doodie Frudee, one of the co-owners of the Frudee Family Winery.

**RUDY:** Give yourself some credit, man! My brother here used to be in show business. I'll bet you've heard of him.

**DOODIE:** Thank you, Rudy. To continue, I'd like to extend a warm welcome to our guests here tonight. Our Wine Tasting Event should prove to be our best show yet! We've done a lot of rehearsing for this event, and I'm sure...

**RUDY:** Come on, Doodie, everyone here just wants to get corked! Let's start drinking!

**TRUDY:** I'd like to get corked.

**PRUDY:** Trudy, we aren't here to "get corked." Remember, we talked about this earlier tonight. This is a CULTURAL event to taste and appreciate some fine wine.

**TRUDY:** I know that.

**PRUDY:** Then why did you say you wanted to get corked?

**TRUDY:** I don't know.

**DOODIE:** This is a good time to bring out all the special people making guest appearances here this evening. First up, my lovely wife, Trudy Frudee.

**TRUDY:** But YOU can call me Trudy.

## PRE-SALAD SCENE:

## GOOD GRAPE HUNTING - (2)

- DOODIE:** My brother, Rudy, who will be pouring for you this evening.
- RUDY:** I'll be pouring all right, until we're fractured, fricasseed and fried!
- DOODIE:** RUDY, this is a live broadcast, and there are a lot of people here depending on our...
- RUDY:** Are you kidding? Tonight will be GREAT! We'll get annihilated, amped up and ass kicked!
- DOODIE:** What?
- RUDY:** Beleaguered, befuddled and beliviated!
- DOODIE:** Ladies and gentlemen, I have no idea what my...
- RUDY:** Bloated, blotto and blurry eyed!
- DOODIE:** RUDY...
- RUDY:** Boiled, bombed and booze brained!
- DOODIE:** OK, hold it right there. This is NOT about...
- RUDY:** Bushwhacked, brass eyed, and burned to the ground!
- PRUDY:** Rudy, honey, let Doodie finish.
- RUDY:** Sorry Prudy-Pie, I got carried away *(Rudy and Prudy kiss)*.
- DOODIE:** Excuse me! They're like two little love-birds! Everyone, please meet our final contestant, Rudy's wife, and our much esteemed Winemaker, Prudy Frudee! Take a bow, Prudy.
- PRUDY:** Thank you Doodie, and welcome everyone.
- (JUDY enters.)*
- DOODIE:** Ah, you made it! Everyone, before we begin tasting this evening, I would like to introduce my very special guest, our second cousin on my late Father's side, and someone who is going to put the Frudee Family Winery on the map! Dr. Judy Frudee.

## PRE-SALAD SCENE:

## GOOD GRAPE HUNTING - (3)

- JUDY:** Thank you, Doodie. It's my pleasure.
- DOODIE:** Why are you late, Dr. Frudee? Something to do with our new project, I hope?
- JUDY:** I got caught up doing some lab work. In fact, I brought a couple of vials with me, which I put them in the back room. I need to keep an eye on them.
- DOODIE:** You've got your Eyes Wide Shut!
- JUDY:** You could say that. Anyway, I'm happy that after so many years, we've finally found a way to be mutually beneficial to one another, if you know what I mean.
- DOODIE:** Ah, yes, well, Dr. Frudee here has invented a process whereby wine can be... well, why don't you explain it to everyone, Dr. Frudee, in laymen's terms.
- JUDY:** Please, Doodie, call me Judy, after all, we are KISSING cousins, aren't we?
- TRUDY:** Excuse me?
- DOODIE:** She just means we're close, Trudy.
- JUDY:** Yes, quite close. And I'll be happy to explain the process. You see, normally, all that is needed to turn grape juice into wine is the simple, entirely natural process of fermentation. Fermentation, as we all know, is the chemical change of sugar into alcohol and carbon dioxide gas brought on by yeasts.
- PRUDY:** Right, Judy, and since yeasts live on the outside of grape skins, all we have to do is break the grape skins and the yeasts can go to work.
- TRUDY:** I like that part.
- PRUDY:** Which part?
- TRUDY:** The part where you break the grapes. All those naked guys in the big vats...

## PRE-SALAD SCENE:

## GOOD GRAPE HUNTING - (4)

**PRUDY:** We don't do it that way anymore, Trudy.

**TRUDY:** We don't?

**PRUDY:** No, now we use presses.

**TRUDY:** But there are naked guys pressing, right?

**PRUDY:** Of course not! Fully clothed people work the presses, Trudy.

**TRUDY:** That's too bad.

**RUDY:** Prudy-Pea, remember when we used to play press the grapes?

**PRUDY:** Rudy, honey, not here.

**RUDY:** Sorry sweetie, I got carried away (*Prudy and Rudy kiss*).

**JUDY:** To continue, We USED to use presses, Prudy. What I've done is invent a process where that entire step is eliminated.

**PRUDY:** What do you mean?

**JUDY:** I've chemically engineered grapes where the fermentation process has already taken place inside the grape skin.

**PRUDY:** How is that possible?

**JUDY:** Anything is possible in science, Prudy. Better living through chemistry. And in this case, I've found it is entirely possible not only to chemically engineer pre-fermented grapes, but by using different types of grapes and different combinations of chemicals, I can produce every variety of wine known today, and do it faster and cheaper than the traditional method.

**DOODIE:** Yes, and we here at the Frudee Family Winery have worked with Dr. Frudee, er, JUDY, in her work and are finally going to reap the benefits!

**PRUDY:** How are we planning on doing that, Doodie?

## PRE-SALAD SCENE:

## GOOD GRAPE HUNTING - (5)

**DOODIE:** We're sponsors of her research. Now that the prototype is ready, she has solid investors for the new winery. The wineries that invest will be the wineries that make the money! And you know what I always say.

**PRUDY:** What?

**DOODIE:** Show me the money!

**RUDY:** Wait a minute. Are you saying the grapes are already loaded?

**JUDY:** Loaded?

**RUDY:** Full of hooch.

**JUDY:** Hooch?

**RUDY:** Booze!

**JUDY:** Yes, that's exactly what I'm saying.

**TRUDY:** Then do we just chew up the grapes instead of drinking a glass of wine? Because I think that sounds gross.

**JUDY:** No, Trudy, the grapes are harvested the same way as before. But then, instead of crushing the grapes and having them ferment in vats or barrels, they can be processed exactly the same way as if you were producing fruit juice then bottling it immediately.

**DOODIE:** HUGE savings in time and money, right Judy?

**PRUDY:** This doesn't sound right.

*(Will enters.)*

**JUDY:** I know it's an unusual concept, especially for an established oenologist such as yourself.

**PRUDY:** It's not that. I just don't quite understand how the use of chemicals can cause fermentation within the grape.

**JUDY:** Better living through science!

## PRE-SALAD SCENE:

## GOOD GRAPE HUNTING - (6)

- PRUDY:** Yes. But it seems to me you need to GENETICALLY engineer a new variety of grape, one that has yeasts growing inside the skin rather than outside. How can you do that chemically?
- JUDY:** It's a combination of chemicals, and also how the grapes are grown.
- PRUDY:** How do you grow these grapes?
- JUDY:** For one thing, I have alternating rows of my grapes and moonseed. Moonseed keeps certain insects away and causes a chemical interaction in the soil. It's being used extensively in France right now.
- PRUDY:** France? Moonseed only grows in North America.
- WILL:** I have the same concerns.
- DOODIE:** What are you doing here?
- WILL:** Why wouldn't I be here? This is supposedly a wine-tasting event, is it not? And I am a wine taster.
- DOODIE:** So YOU say.
- WILL:** Ladies and Gentlemen, I am Dr. William Beabore, Doctor of Viticulture at Florida A&M University, the Center for Viticulture Science and Small Farm Development, in Tallahassee.
- DOODIE:** And an uninvited and very unwelcome guest.
- WILL:** Oh come come, you aren't still mad about my opinions during the Tallahassee "Taste of Florida" Wine Tasting Event, are you?
- DOODIE:** Is that the one where you said you could taste the powdery mildew in our Chardonnay?
- PRUDY:** No, that was at the American Wine Society Commercial Wine Competition, in Hilton Head, South Carolina.
- RUDY:** I thought that was where he said you could taste the noble rot in our Riesling.
- PRUDY:** No, that was at the Atlantic Wine Summit.

## PRE-SALAD SCENE:

## GOOD GRAPE HUNTING - (7)

- TRUDY:** I remember him saying our Cabernet was skunky.
- PRUDY:** That was at the Florida State Fair Wine and Grape Juice Competition in Tampa Bay.
- DOODIE:** When did he say our Pinot Noir smelled like burning rubber?
- PRUDY:** The Wine fest at Hilton Head.
- RUDY:** Prudy-Poo, I thought our Sauvignon Blanc had the finesse of a rusty nail at that one.
- PRUDY:** No, honey, that was the International Eastern Wine Competition (*Prudy and Rudy kiss*).
- DOODIE:** When did he...
- WILL:** It doesn't matter what I said or when I said it. I'm entitled to my opinion, and as a renowned wine judge and critic, my opinion is sought after and respected.
- DOODIE:** Your opinion, Dr. Beabore, is taking my show off the networks.
- WILL:** Your show? I would hope my opinion would encourage you to work just a little harder at your little... show.
- DOODIE:** Our little... how dare you! This winery has been turning over a nice "little" profit and I won't allow you to destroy us with these untrue reviews!
- WILL:** Oh? What are you going to do?
- DOODIE:** I'll do something, I'll...
- PRUDY:** DOODIE, just calm down. We all know he's been trying to destroy our winery. Don't stoop to his level by acting irrationally.
- WILL:** That's amusing, coming from you, Prudy.
- PRUDY:** What's so amusing about that?

## PRE-SALAD SCENE:

## GOOD GRAPE HUNTING - (8)

**WILL:** I believe that your behavior over the past few years indicates a high-level of irrational behavior. I think you know what I'm talking about.

**PRUDY:** I most certainly do not!

**WILL:** Maybe it's time you and I had a little chat, Prude. Unless you're back in school and you don't have the time.

**RUDY:** You can't turn back time, Doc.

**WILL:** What do you mean by that?

**RUDY:** Your grandfather never could play poker. He should never have bet the farm, so to speak. Why don't you have a drink!

**WILL:** I think I'll leave the drinking to you, Rudy.

**RUDY:** Ok.

**WILL:** By the way, is that your Mercedes parked out front?

**RUDY:** Yes, so?

**WILL:** Nothing. It's a fine car. You have the SL550, right?

**RUDY:** That's none of your business.

**JUDY:** Doodie, I think we should simply ignore this intrusion and continue with our tasting.

**WILL:** I'd like to ask you a few questions first, Dr. Frudee.

**JUDY:** Please, call me JUDY. And why don't we talk privately, Will. This doesn't seem like the place to get into a heavy scientific discussion regarding my techniques.

**WILL:** If I recall correctly, Judy dear, the last time we talked privately you prevented me from doing any talking.

**JUDY:** That's not true.

**WILL:** You're right. Neither of us were talking. We were... preoccupied.

**PRE-SALAD SCENE:**

**GOOD GRAPE HUNTING - (9)**

**TRUDY:** Sometimes I get preoccupied and forget to talk. I think that's normal.

**WILL:** Yes, Trudy, I remember a night not long ago when you weren't talking. But I don't think it was because you forgot.

**TRUDY:** What do you mean?

**WILL:** You seemed to have a great memory... for certain things.

**TRUDY:** I don't know what you're talking about.

**JUDY:** I don't know what he's talking about either. Although I do recall a conversation about the trip to Italy I have planned. That was right after the difficulty you were having with your...

**DOODIE:** When are you going to Italy?

**JUDY:** In a month or so, Doodie, after we have everything set up.

**DOODIE:** During construction of the new winery?

**JUDY:** Only if I'm certain things are going smoothly, Doodie.

**DOODIE:** Judy, there's no place like home!

**JUDY:** Right. Will, when was this so-called evening you're alluding to?

**WILL:** Judy, do you really want me to divulge all the little details of that night?

**DOODIE:** Of course she doesn't. A gentleman wouldn't. Oh, that's right, you're no gentleman, you're a wine critic.

**EVERYONE:** *Begin shouting accusations at Dr. Beabore who nods and laughs at the outburst. He does not respond to any of the accusations.*

**DOODIE:** All right, all right, let's all calm down. We've lost control of the show and it's unfair to our television audience. I suggest we take a commercial break, and we'll be back in just a few moments to start the tasting. In the meantime, I believe salads will be served.

*ALL EXIT.*

**PRE-SALAD SCENE:**

**GOOD GRAPE HUNTING - (10)**