



## 2-PERSON SCENES

This scene is from a Stage Partners play, free to read in full at [yourstagepartners.com](http://yourstagepartners.com).

***This Murder Was Staged*** by Patrick Greene and Jason Pizzarello      1 M, 1 any  
Comedy

*Everyone has a motive to want tyrannical director Sinclair Hemmings gone - especially his long-suffering stage manager Trudy in this flashback.*

### Scene 3

*(SINCLAIR HEMMINGS pushes a table and chair onstage and places them in front of TRUDY, who takes a seat. She has a binder in front of her on the table. SINCLAIR paces behind her.)*

**SINCLAIR:** Do you know what I'm thinking?

**TRUDY:** *(Under her breath. Very dry:)* You're thinking you want to make some tweaks.

**SINCLAIR:** I'm thinking I want to make some tweaks. Act One should feel like "Act Fun," but it's feeling like... "Act None." Do you know what I mean?

**TRUDY:** Unfortunately, yes. And you want to start from page one and redo it all, don't you?

**SINCLAIR:** No, no not, not all. I think we could start somewhere back at bit. Close to the beginning.

**TRUDY:** Okay, what page?

**SINCLAIR:** Hmmm. One?

**TRUDY:** Page one?

**SINCLAIR:** That's a good idea. Let's do it all over.

**TRUDY:** We've spent the last three and a half days tech-ing Act One alone. We don't have enough time to start from scratch.

**SINCLAIR:** Nonsense. We're not using all of the hours in the day yet, are we?

**TRUDY:** We can't use all of the hours in the day—

**SINCLAIR:** What? Because there are rules and regulations and unions and laws of nature? Yada yada, yada— this the Theatre.<sup>1</sup> What matters most is art, am I right?

**TRUDY:** No.

**SINCLAIR:** Great! Now, Judy...

<sup>1</sup> Note: Sinclair never simply says this word, he performs it. Whatever choice the actor playing Sinclair makes, it should be BIG when saying this word. Maybe he says it in some pompous way. Maybe he pronounces it differently every time. Maybe he extends the words so that it goes on way too long. Whatever he does, it's highly eccentric.



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**TRUDY:** It's Trudy.

**SINCLAIR:** Let's call that a minor rewrite.

**TRUDY:** You want to rewrite my name?

**SINCLAIR:** Trust me, it's an improvement. Never settle for the first draft of anything... Now, Judy... In addition to starting again from page one, I'm thinking about doing some recasting.

**TRUDY:** You want to recast the play during tech?

**SINCLAIR:** No, that's absurd... I want to recast *some* of the parts... We'll do a sort of audition-tech hybrid. I assume you've run those before.

**TRUDY:** That's not a thing that anyone has ever done before.

**SINCLAIR:** Then we are pioneers, Judy. I like your spirit.

**TRUDY:** I could kill you.

**SINCLAIR:** Let's order dinner first. Why don't you get everyone's orders and then come back and we'll get started again?

**TRUDY:** I've already got everyone's orders... Except yours.

*(JUDY— Sorry, TRUDY— hands SINCLAIR a menu. He looks it over.)*

**SINCLAIR:** No... No... This won't do.

*(SINCLAIR takes a pen and starts crossing things off of the menu.)*

**TRUDY:** What are you doing?

**SINCLAIR:** This menu is all wrong.

*(SINCLAIR starts writing on the menu.)*

**TRUDY:** Are you rewriting the menu?

**SINCLAIR:** Yes, well, it's rather dreary... It needs more... *(He rubs his fingers on one hand together indicating something intangible.)* Do you know what I mean?

*(SINCLAIR hands TRUDY the menu.)*

**TRUDY:** What is this?

**SINCLAIR:** It's what I want.

**TRUDY:** You just wrote in "Mother's Chicken."

**SINCLAIR:** Yes, well I want the chicken that Mother used to make for me.

**TRUDY:** You can't just write in your own things on the menu.

**SINCLAIR:** But I'm the director.



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**TRUDY:** (*Getting more frustrated:*) Not of the restaurant!

**SINCLAIR:** I should be! What amateurs!

**TRUDY:** You crossed out the veggie burger with fries! <sup>2</sup> That's what I ordered. The thought of having it has been the only thing gotten me through today.

**SINCLAIR:** You know what's better than a veggie burger? The Theatre. Yum. Take a bite.

(*SINCLAIR tries to hand TRUDY an imaginary...Theatre...sandwich? TRUDY just stares him down.*)

**SINCLAIR:** No?

(*SINCLAIR takes the imaginary...whatever it is...back and he takes an imaginary bite.*)

**SINCLAIR:** (*Chewing, and then talking as though his mouth is full:*) Mmmmm....Theatre..... and a plate of Mother's Chicken. Go ahead and place the order, Judy.

**TRUDY:** (*She takes a deep breath and then calmly:*) Somehow. Someway. I'm going to kill you.

**End of Scene.**

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<sup>2</sup> Whatever you choose, in no way should it be implied that what Trudy likes is humorous. It can be whatever dish you want, but make sure that you are not making fun of the dish.

### **THIS MURDER WAS STAGED by Patrick Greene and Jason Pizzarello**

**Length:** 100-120 minutes

**Cast Size:** 8-25 actors

**Genre:** Backstage Murder-Mystery Comedy

**Synopsis:** It's opening night of a brand-new mystery play, but just as the killer is about to be revealed, the body of the play's director falls onstage instead. In that moment, the theater becomes an active crime scene, and everyone from cast to crew to even the audience becomes a suspect. But how is the intrepid detective supposed to find the killer when everyone and their mother (literally) has a motive to want the demanding director gone? *This Murder Was Staged* is a fast-paced, backstabbing, backstage comedy from two of the writers of *The Alibis* and *Rogues' Gallery*.