

Here Soufflé, Gone Tomorrow

A Comedy in Two Acts

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# Here Soufflé, Gone Tomorrow

## Cast Of Characters

### In Order of Appearance

<u>BRIDGET:</u>	Neurotic TV Show Producer, F 30s-40s
<u>PIERRE:</u>	Seasoned French TV Chef, M 30s-40s
<u>MARCIE:</u>	Southern Production Assistant, F 20s
<u>DAVID:</u>	Ambitious British Sous Chef, M 20s-40s
<u>JANET:</u>	Hard Nose Detective, F 30s-50s
<u>OFFICER WOOD:</u>	Handsome Police Officer, M 30s-50s
<u>OFFICER HALL:</u>	Fearful Police Officer, F or M 20s
<u>RICK:</u>	Aging Hippie Tech Operator, M 50s-70s
<u>CONRAD:</u>	Pierre's Understudy, M 30s-40s
<u>HUGO:</u>	Pierre's Emergency Contact, M 30s-40s

*Note: Pierre, Conrad, and Hugo are to be played by the same actor. ONLY PIERRE should be listed in the playbill.*

### IMPROV NOTES:

This show has interactive moments with the audience during pre-show, intermission, and other times during the show.

Prior to the show, RICK should tinker with cameras near the stage. MARCIE can show the audience to their seats while flirting with the men. BRIDGET can interact in the lobby, but she shouldn't be aware that the audience is entering the theatre, she should go backstage before the house opens. DAVID can help with concessions if needed and PIERRE should actively try to anger a couple men by flirting with their dates.

During intermission, Officer Hall and Officer Wood should interview the audience. If possible additional backstage crew and other theater peeps should be dressed as officers during intermission to help facilitate. Two people should be dressed as the Crime Scene Tech and the Medical Examiner if time and additional crew allows, if not, DAVID and RICK can fill those needs to remove the body in view of the audience. If DAVID and RICK serve as Crime Scene Tech and Medical Examiner, they should be costumed so as not to be recognizable by the audience as DAVID and RICK. An OFFICER should escort people to the bathroom area to help keep the illusion intact.

#### TECHNICAL NOTES:

There are blackouts during this show that are explained by power fluctuations and mischief. If going completely black with flashlights is not doable to the degree written in the script, please consider low level emergency house lights as an option to keep the stage as dark as possible in order to keep the mischief a secret.

Characters will use flashlights and cell phone lights during the blackouts and can minimize movements for safety. If emergency lights need to happen, please add the two optional lines on page 45 and utilize low audience lighting to facilitate movements. Safety first is a definite must.

All weapons should be fake.

An opening in the upstage wall hidden from audience view or a trap door under the island is recommended for quick, non noticed escapes.

#### CHARACTER NOTES:

There are many quirky characters in this play that should be performed as real as possible. Though melodramatic and fast paced at times, there should be a sincerity in the characters instead of surface caricaturization for laughs.

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### SYNOPSIS:

It's thirty-five minutes before the filming of the famous cooking show La Pâtisserie de Pierre. The live studio audience is packed in like sardines as the peppery producer uncovers a steamy secret. Her boyfriend - the show's star chef - is devouring the flaky production assistant. Outraged by the bitter betrayal, the producer drops him like the hot potato only to witness his death moments later. But when the cops arrive, the body is gone, and the stage is soaked in suspects. Can the detective find the body? Uncover the juicy motives? And catch the crusty killer all while keeping the ravenous audience from boiling over?

This saucy mystery on the set of a live studio cooking show is dripping with drama, delectable desserts, disappearing bodies, lookalikes, laxatives and really bad accents.

### TIME

Present Day, Early Fall

### PLACE

Set of a TV show in Hollywood, California.

## ACT I

## SCENE 1

The live TV set of the cooking show *La Pâtisserie de Pierre*. The filming area consists of an upscale kitchen complete with cabinets and countertops and an island. The remaining off camera area should resemble a sound stage with visible tech gear including cameras and a prep area with a folding table and at least one rolling chair. There should be at minimum a door SL near the prep table that leads to a hallway and kitchen, one SR that leads to dressing rooms, and one that could be used as an audience and/or cast entrance or exit. Though the audience/cast door does not need to be on stage, it **SHOULD** be visible from the audience.

The stage is empty. BRIDGET rushes on followed by PIERRE who is pulling on his trousers. PIERRE speaks in an over the top French accent.

BRIDGET

I am not changing my mind.

PIERRE

Bridget, please. You do not do zis to me.

BRIDGET

To you?

PIERRE

I lav you.

BRIDGET

If **THIS** is your recipe for love, I'll take the quiche.

PIERRE

She mean nozsing to me. Absolutely nozsing.

BRIDGET

Funny. She means the world to me. She means the end of our relationship.

PIERRE

No, no no.

(PIERRE takes BRIDGET  
in his arms)

We stay togezzer for za sake of zee little vones.

BRIDGET

We don't have kids Pierre and...

(BRIDGET grabs a  
knife off the island)

If you don't leave me alone, YOU never will.

PIERRE

How dare you say such a zing. Little Franco and Fefe would be heart broke to hear you say zeese things.

BRIDGET

They're birds Pierre. You smuggled them in to eat, remember?

PIERRE

I could never!

BRIDGET

You planned to pluck, stuff and broil them.

PIERRE

Theze is not true. Zay are me babies.

BRIDGET

Well they don't classify as children regardless of how well you prepare them.

PIERRE

How dare you zuggest I murder Franco en Fefe. I could never commit Ortolicide.

BRIDGET

That's not a word Pierre.

PIERRE

Don't you remember zee little blindfolds covering zeir sad little eyes?

MARCIE hops onstage. Her shirt is on inside out. She pulls on her shoes as she falls into Pierre. She speaks with a southern accent.

MARCIE  
Bridget, I can't lose another job.

BRIDGET  
You should have thought of that before plucking the chef.

PIERRE  
Plucking zee chef?

BRIDGET  
Yes Pierre,  
(BRIDGET mimics  
PIERRE'S accent)  
plucking zee chef.  
(BRIDGET points the  
knife at PIERRE'S  
genitals)  
Now go get ready before I debone you permanently.

PIERRE  
Ohhh Kay. I goes now.

PIERRE exits quickly. MARCIE  
rushes to BRIDGET.

MARCIE  
Please Bridget! I didn't know that you and Pierre were filling  
the cream donut.

BRIDGET  
Ew, Marcie.

MARCIE  
Don't put me to pasture Bridget. I'll jus' die.

BRIDGET  
Be quiet for a second.

BRIDGET looks out to the  
audience.

MARCIE  
You don't know what this job means to me.

BRIDGET  
Shut up.

MARCIE  
But Uncle William Davis said this was my last ride at the  
rodeo. If I can't hold on, I'll be knee deep in cow pies by  
morning.

BRIDGET  
I told you to SHUT UP MARCIE!  
(MORE)

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

(BRIDGET presses her  
headset)

Rick can you bring up the house lights?  
(the lights come up  
on the house)

Ah...ha ha ha...Hi!

(to MARCIE)

Did you forget to tell me you let the audience in early?

MARCIE

I don't think so?

BRIDGET

You don't think you forgot to tell me or you didn't know they  
were here?

MARCIE

Ah...the first one?

BRIDGET

So you don't think you forgot.

MARCIE

No.

BRIDGET

Which means you remember.

MARCIE

(confused)

I do?

BRIDGET

So you knew?

MARCIE

I'm...not so sure anymore.

BRIDGET

So, you did NOT let the audience in?

MARCIE

Oh! Yes. I did that. I just couldn't remember if I  
toooooo lllllld you.

BRIDGET slams her clipboard  
down on the island in  
frustration.

BRIDGET

(to the audience)

This is why our ratings are in the pot.



MARCIE  
Bridget?

BRIDGET  
What?

MARCIE  
(whispering)  
That man over there, I think he's dun givin' me the eye.

BRIDGET  
Well, just don't let him give you anything else.

MARCIE winks at the man in the  
audience and flirts with him  
raising her skirt to show some  
leg.

BRIDGET  
(to Marcie)  
What are you doing?

MARCIE  
He's giving me the eye, I'm sending back a leg.

BRIDGET  
Stop that! There are kids in the audience. Now, go and make  
sure Pierre is ready...

(MARCIE rushes  
offstage)  
and stay away from him!  
(MARCIE stops and  
runs back on)

MARCIE  
Which one?

BRIDGET  
Which one what?

MARCIE  
Which one am I done supposed to stay away from?  
(MARCIE points  
backstage and to  
the man in the  
audience)

BRIDGET  
Both of them. All of them!

MARCIE  
Well...How'm I supposed to make Pierre ready if I can't go  
near him? I mean, that don't make no sense.

BRIDGET  
Great question...figure it out.

BRIDGET shoves MARCIE toward  
the exit.

MARCIE  
But, what if I accidentally bump into him?

BRIDGET  
Oh...NO ho ho ho ho ho HO. There's NOOO bumping into Pierre  
accidentally or not.

(BRIDGET points to  
MARCIE'S chest.)  
Keep those little bumps to themselves. Got it?

MARCIE  
But what if--

BRIDGET  
Five foot buffer between you and him at all times!

MARCIE looks down at their  
feet for comparison.

MARCIE  
Five of your feet or five of my feet?

BRIDGET  
...You know what, never mind what I said. He deserves you.  
So go...and make sure Pierre is ready to start filming. Okay?

(BRIDGET points  
offstage and Marcie  
leaves. To audience)  
Sorry about all that. But I wasn't expecting you guys just  
yet. We've got oh

(BRIDGET looks at  
her watch or cell  
phone)  
...thirty five minutes before we start filming.

Blackout. BRIDGET pushes her  
headset and speaks as the lights  
pop back on.

BRIDGET  
Rick? What's going on? ...Power fluctuations? Wonderful.  
(to Audience)  
It's always something around here. But nothing to worry about.  
Just sit back, relax and we'll get the show on the road soon.  
Now, if any of you-

MARCIE runs back onstage with  
a note.

MARCIE  
(whispering)

Bridget?

BRIDGET  
(To audience)

Need to use the restroom, you'll want to do so before we lock down for picture.

MARCIE  
BRIIIIDGET.

BRIDGET  
(To audience)

If you must go while we are filming, you won't be able to get back into the studio till we stop filming.

MARCIE  
BRIDGET!

BRIDGET  
WHAT Marcie? What can I do for you? Did you change your mind and now you want Mr. Evil Eye over there instead of Pierre? Well go ahead, have at him. Have everyone. Take Rick too. I don't care!

RICK  
(over loudspeaker)  
Slow your roll there Bridge. I'm taken.

BRIDGET  
It makes NO difference to her.

MARCIE  
I really didn't know.

BRIDGET  
Stop saying that! How could anyone not know? Heck the audience even knew. Right? We were on \_\_\_\_\_  
(insert popular  
daytime talk show  
name)  
last week promoting the show.

MARCIE  
Oh, I saw THAT...  
(confused)  
You were there?

BRIDGET  
Why are you here Marcie? I told you to go get him ready.

MARCIE  
I did.

BRIDGET  
So you're interrupting me to tell me he's ready?

MARCIE  
No.

BRIDGET  
To tell me he's not ready?

MARCIE  
NO.

BRIDGET  
Well is he ready or not?

MARCIE  
I don't know. He done flew the coop!

BRIDGET picks up a knife  
unknowingly, like a nervous  
habit to fidget with things.

BRIDGET  
What do you mean? Where is he?  
(MARCIE hands BRIDGET  
a note. BRIDGET  
reads)  
...He's leaving the show.

MARCIE  
That makes as much sense as grits on toast.

BRIDGET  
He says it's a hostile working environment.  
(BRIDGET points the  
knife at MARCIE)  
This is NOT a HOSTILE WORKING ENVIRONMENT!

MARCIE  
You are thrustin' a knife at me.

BRIDGET  
That was not a thrust. This is a thrust.

BRIDGET thrusts the knife at  
MARCIE and holds it in front  
of her. MARCIE uses her index  
finger to move the knife to  
the side.

MARCIE  
Sugar, I know what a good thrust looks like.

BRIDGET

I'm sure YOU do.

MARCIE

You might could apologize.

BRIDGET

To him? Are you crazy?

(BRIDGET flails the  
knife at MARCIE)

Get off this stage and find him or you won't be able to beg  
for your job back. Understand?

(MARCIE runs  
offstage. BRIDGET  
finally puts the  
knife down. She  
speaks to Mr.  
Evil Eye.)

Don't look at me like that, you dodged a lemon there squinty.

(BRIDGET presses  
her walkie)

Rick, let's dim the house lights so the audience can relax  
while I hunt down Pierre.

(House lights go  
down)

BRIDGET rushes off SR as DAVID  
enters carrying a tray of  
chocolate soufflés. They spin  
around each other nearly causing  
a collision. He places the  
soufflés on the SL prep table  
as MARCIE enters.

MARCIE

Oh David! Have ya seen Pierre?

DAVID

Unfortunately yes.

MARCIE

Well, where?

DAVID

In MY kitchen trying to nick one of my superb soufflés.

(MARCIE rushes to  
the SL exit.)

But I told him to sod off.

MARCIE heads back to David.

MARCIE

Will you please help me find him? I'm in a bit of a pickle  
and I can't open the jar.

DAVID

What are you on about?

MARCIE

Bridget's pitching a hissy fit over Pierre and me partakin' a some horizontal refreshment.

DAVID

Really? Has he been sacked? Is Bridget gutted?

MARCIE

That don't concern me much.

DAVID

They've been an item for two years Marcie.

MARCIE

I'm about to fly off the handle here David. Now, I'll check his dressing room, if you'll check his driver?

DAVID

I doubt his golf clubs will offer useful information.

MARCIE

His car driver David. Please? I'll be sugar in your tea.

(DAVID nods in  
agreement and MARCIE  
kisses him on the  
cheek.)

Call me on channel two when you find him.

DAVID watches MARCIE leave SR,  
wipes off the kiss, and grabs  
a small spray bottle out of  
his pocket. He spritzes the  
soufflés, pockets the bottle,  
removes his gloves and exits.

PIERRE enters sniffing the  
air. He is drawn to the  
soufflés.

PIERRE'S CELL PHONE RINGS.

PIERRE

Bonjour?

(MORE)

PIERRE (CONT'D)  
 (he speaks in a  
 normal American  
 accent for the  
 rest of the phone  
 conversation. He  
 uses a loud whisper  
 so as not to be  
 overheard)

You said you'd be here today...Well you don't have to worry,  
 I handled it. Too late, too bad. I am not going to apologize!  
 You had plenty of time to tell her on your own. AH?! No!  
 That's not acceptable. Fine. I'll fix it.

(He leans over the  
 soufflés.)

Oh god, you smell heavenly.

(to the phone)

No, not...never mind.

He hangs up the phone, looks  
 around, and sneaks a soufflé.  
 He dashes behind the island  
 and scarfs down the dessert as  
 BRIDGET rushes in. He should  
 finish the whole soufflé while  
 talking to BRIDGET.

BRIDGET

There you are. What's all this nonsense about leaving the  
 show?

PIERRE'S accent returns.

PIERRE

You don't vant me, I don't vant zhe show.

BRIDGET

Stop being childish.

PIERRE

No, no, NO! I only do zis show for you.

BRIDGET unknowingly grabs the  
 knife back off the counter.

BRIDGET

There is no way out of your contract Pierre we've been over  
 this.

PIERRE

Bull true. If I fearz 'arm, I get out.

BRIDGET

You fearz 'arm? Really?

PIERRE

I get ah...dah...dead letters every day.

PIERRE pulls letters out of his pocket and slams them on the counter.

BRIDGET

You mean death threats?

PIERRE

Oui. And now you vis da knife. Hostile, no?

BRIDGET

Oh pear!

BRIDGET puts the knife in a drawer and slams it shut.

PIERRE

I do not need baby sitter!

BRIDGET

What? No...Not au pair...oh pear, as in the fruit.

PIERRE

I prefer banana.

BRIDGET

You would.

PIERRE

AH! Zhat's it. I go.

BRIDGET grabs PIERRE's arm.

BRIDGET

No. You can't do this. You've already screwed up my love life, do you really want to sear my career too?

PIERRE

You take me back?

BRIDGET drops Pierre's arm.

BRIDGET

Of course not.

PIERRE

But it waz mistake. She shrew herself over me.

BRIDGET

And ripped your clothes clear off?



PIERRE  
 I waz protesting zee whole time.  
*(PIERRE grabs BRIDGET's hand, gets on his knees and begs.)*  
 You know I love no von but you. I do last show zen run a way vis me, huh? Ve go to Paris where zere no crazy naked vomen.

BRIDGET  
 I always wanted to see the Eiffel Tower or the Louvre...No!

BRIDGET pulls away. PIERRE follows while still on his knees.

PIERRE  
 Please Bridget. Ve start family of our own. I promise no more Ortolans. You, me, zee pick fence you always vant.

BRIDGET  
 But...How could I ever trust you again?

PIERRE  
 You know I do not lie.  
*(PIERRE pulls BRIDGET into a hug holding her close.)*  
 Not to you. You and me fly to France. I tell you everyzing about me, me family, me brozeer. Please come vis me. Ve start over. Je adore you Bridget.

BRIDGET  
 I...I need time...  
*(BRIDGET pulls away)*  
 I don't think --

PIERRE  
 No. No time to zink. You must jump for love Bridget. Life too short to--

PIERRE grabs his stomach and his throat.

BRIDGET  
 Pierre? Are you okay? Pierre?

PIERRE stumbles and falls to the floor DEAD.

BRIDGET  
 Not funny. You proved your point. Pierre? This won't get you out of your contract...Oh swizzle sticks!  
 (MORE)

BRIDGET (CONT'D)  
(BRIDGET presses  
her walkie)  
Rick call nine one one!  
(BRIDGET kneels  
beside PIERRE'S  
body shaking him. )

BRIDGET  
Don't do this to me. No, no, NO! This can't be happening.

DAVID and MARCIE run onstage.  
DAVID stops abruptly and MARCIE  
body plants into him.

DAVID  
What's going on?

BRIDGET grabs a knife out of  
the island.

BRIDGET  
It's Pierre. He collapsed.

DAVID checks PIERRE for a pulse.

MARCIE  
You stabbed Pierre?

BRIDGET  
No, I did not stab him! Do you see blood anywhere?

DAVID  
Then perhaps we ought to put the knife down?

BRIDGET  
Oh fondue!

BRIDGET tosses the knife on  
the counter.

MARCIE  
That sounds mighty good.

BRIDGET  
What?

MARCIE  
Fondue. Now I got a hankerin' for some chocolate.

BRIDGET  
How can you be hungry at a time like this?

MARCIE

You done brought it up.

BRIDGET

No, I most certainly did not!

DAVID

He's dead.

MARCIE

DEAD?

BRIDGET

DEAD?

MARCIE

But he can't be. We's goin' to France.

BRIDGET

Excuse me?

MARCIE

He's fixin' to show me Paris. Where he grew up. Introduce me to his...

BRIDGET

(Mocking Pierre's  
accent)

Family? His broozer?

MARCIE

He done told you?

BRIDGET

(to Pierre)

You no good, two timing...

BRIDGET kicks PIERRE'S feet.

DAVID

What are you doing?

BRIDGET

Turkey died before I could beat the stuffing out of him.

(She kicks him again  
repeatedly.)

You son of a --

DAVID grabs BRIDGET and pulls  
her away from PIERRE'S body as  
she continues to attack him.

BRIDGET

Love me do you? HA! I'll show you love you sorry egotistical  
french--

RICK  
(Over loudspeaker)  
Bridget! We got an audience.

BRIDGET  
I know. I was going to say...PASTRY.

MARCIE  
An egotistical pastry? She ain't got the good sense god gave a goose.

DAVID  
Some assistance Rick, things have gone a bit pear shaped down here.

RICK  
(over loudspeaker)  
The heat are on their way.

DAVID  
Heat? Oh coppers. Well done Rick.

BRIDGET  
You can let me go David.

DAVID releases BRIDGET.

MARCIE kneels down next to  
PIERRE's body.

MARCIE  
(crying)  
Lord, no, no NO!

BRIDGET crosses to the island  
and opens a drawer.

MARCIE  
How can you take someone as fine as a frog hair split four ways?

BRIDGET picks up a knife and  
slams the drawer closed. She  
stalks MARCIE with the knife.

DAVID  
Bridget?!  
(DAVID gets between  
BRIDGET and MARCIE.)  
What ARE you doing?

MARCIE  
Keep her away from me David. She looks like she's done gone plumb crazy.

BRIDGET barks at MARCIE who  
SCREAMS and runs offstage.  
BRIDGET throws the knife on  
the counter.

DAVID

You all right?

BRIDGET

My two-faced, adulterous, ex-boyfriend, who happens to be the  
host of my show is dead. My career is curdled cream and all  
I want to do is slap a sex addicted Production Assistant silly.

(Laughs in pain)

I'm a pressure cooker David and I'm ABOUT to BLOW!

BLACKOUT.