

SAMUEL FRENCH SAMPLE PERUSAL

This sample is an *excerpt* from a Samuel French title.

This sample is for perusal only and may not be used for performance purposes.

You may not download, print, or distribute this excerpt.

We highly recommend purchasing a copy of the title before considering for performance.

For more information about licensing or about purchasing a play or musical, please visit our website.

www.samuelfrench.com

www.samuelfrench.co.uk

DRAT! THE CAT!

A NEW MUSICAL COMEDY

Book and Lyrics by

IRA LEVIN

Music by

MILTON SCHAFER



45 West 25th Street New York, NY 10010-2751

Phone: (212) 206-8990 • (866) 598-8449

Fax: (212) 206-1429

info@samuelfrench.com

samuelfrench.com

DRAT! THE CAT!

A NEW MUSICAL COMEDY

Book and Lyrics by

IRA LEVIN

Music by

MILTON SCHAFER



45 West 25th Street New York, NY 10010-2751

Phone: (212) 206-8990 • (866) 598-8449

Fax: (212) 206-1429

info@samuelfrench.com

samuelfrench.com

Copyright © 1961 by Ira Levin
Copyright © 1966 by Ira Levin

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this title is subject to a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including Canada, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including professional, amateur, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. In its present form the play is dedicated to the reading public only.

The amateur live stage performance rights to this title are controlled exclusively by Samuel French, Inc., and royalty arrangements and licenses must be secured well in advance of presentation. PLEASE NOTE that amateur royalty fees are set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. When applying for a royalty quotation and license please give us the number of performances intended, dates of production, your seating capacity and admission fee. Royalties are payable one week before the opening performance of the play to Samuel French, Inc.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid whether the play is presented for charity or gain and whether or not admission is charged.

Particular emphasis is laid on the question of amateur or professional readings, permission and terms for which must be secured in writing from Samuel French, Inc.

Whenever the play is produced the following notice must appear on all programs, printing and advertising for the play: "Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc."

Due authorship credit must be given on all programs, printing and advertising for the play.

No one shall commit or authorize any act or omission by which the copyright of, or the right to copyright, this play may be impaired.
No one shall make any changes in this play for the purposes of production
Publication of this play does not imply availability for performance. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are <i>strongly</i> advised in their own interests to apply to Samuel French, Inc., for written permission before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre.

45 West 25th Street New York, NY 10010-2751

Phone: (212) 206-8990 • (866) 598-8449

Fax: (212) 206-1429

info@samuelfrench.com

samuelfrench.com

CAST

(In order of appearance)

The Mayor.....ALFRED SPINDELMAN
Pincer, Superintendent of Police.....CHARLES DURNING
Mallet, Chief of Detectives.....GENE VARRONE
Roger "Bulldog" Purefoy, Former Chief
of Detectives.....DAVID GOLD
Kate Purefoy, His Wife.....LU LEONARD
The Doctor.....LEO BLOOM
Bob Purefoy, The Purefoys' Son,
a Patrolman.....ELLIOTT GOULD
The Van Guilder's Butler.....HARRY NAUGHTON
Matilda Van Guilder, a Socialite.....JANE CONNELL
Lucius Van Guilder, Her Husband,
a Millionaire.....JACK FLETCHER
Alice Van Guilder, Their Daughter.....LESLEY ANN WARREN
The Maid.....JACQUE DEAN
The Minister.....AL LANTI
The Mayor's Wife.....MARIAN HARALDSON
Julietta Onderdonck, a Dowager from Boston...MARIANA DORO
The Judge.....DAVID GOLD
The Prosecutor.....LEO BLOOM

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Ensemble

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The action takes place in New York City and environs. The time is a Spring in the latter part of the 19th Century. There are two acts.

*

ACT ONE

- Scene 1: Various Places in New York City
- Scene 2: A Bedroom in the Purefoy's Flat
- Scene 3: Lucius Van Guilder's Study and Counting Room
- Scene 4: Alice Van Guilder's Boudoir and A Secret Chamber
- Scene 5: The Purefoys' Kitchen
- Scene 6: Pier Fourteen
- Scene 7: Van Guilder's Study and The Garden
- Scene 8: The Van Guilders' Cellar

ACT TWO

- Scene 1: Police Headquarters
- Scene 2: The Cellar
- Scene 3: Van Guilder's Study
- Scene 4: The Woods North of the City
- Scene 5: Various Places in the City
- Scene 6: The Woods and The City
- Scene 7: Van Guilder's Study
- Scene 8: A Courtroom

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT ONE

DRAT! THE CAT!.....Citizens, Patrolmen, The Mayor,
Pincer, Mallet

MY SON, UPHOLD THE LAW.....Roger Purefoy

HOLMES AND WATSON.....Alice Van Guilder, Bob Purefoy

SHE TOUCHED ME.....Bob

WILD AND RECKLESS.....Alice

SHE'S ROSES.....Bob and Kate Purefoy

BALLET: IGNOBLE THEFT OF THE
IDOL'S EYES.....The Cat, Patrolmen, Attendants
of the Idol

DANCING WITH ALICE.....Bob, Alice, Mr. & Mrs. Van
Guilder, Guests

DRAT! THE CAT! (Reprise).....Mr. & Mrs. Van Guilder, Guests

PUREFOY'S LAMENT.....Bob

ACT TWO

A POX UPON THE TRAITOR'S BROW..Pincer, Mallet, Emma, Patrolmen

DEEP IN YOUR HEART.....Bob

LET'S GO.....Alice and Bob

IT'S YOUR FAULT.....Mr. & Mrs. Van Guilder

WILD AND RECKLESS (Reprise)....Bob

BALLET: THE UPSIDE-DOWN THIEF..Bob, Citizens, Patrolmen,
Citizens

TODAY IS A DAY FOR A BAND
TO PLAY.....Pincer, Mallet, Emma, Patrolmen,
Citizens

SHE TOUCHED ME (Reprise).....Bob and Alice

I LIKE HIM.....Alice

JUSTICE TRIUMPHANT.....Entire Company

TODAY IS A DAY FOR A BAND
TO PLAY (Reprise).....Entire Company

ACT ONE

Scene 1

VIGNETTE: THE STAGE OF THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

A bediamonded Wagnerian SOPRANO is trilling an aria. Just when it looks as if everyone is in the wrong theatre, a BLACK-GLOVED HAND sneaks out around her waist and one by one removes all her diamonds. IT tucks a calling card in her décolletage and SHE sings on, happily unaware.

VIGNETTE: THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART.

Two GUARDS and a CHIEF GUARD wheel a cast-iron chest over to a wood-and-glass display cabinet. Alert and wary, they unlock the chest. The CHIEF GUARD takes out a glittering diamond necklace and puts it in the cabinet. He locks the cabinet profusely, gives the GUARDS their orders, and goes, wheeling out the chest. The GUARDS guard. Within the cabinet's upper glass portion, the BLACK-GLOVED HAND appears (accompanied by a meowing motif in the MUSIC). The HAND removes the necklace and replaces it with a calling card. Then the lower wooden portion of the cabinet wheels itself away, propelled by GLOVED HANDS protruding front and back. The glass portion of the cabinet is left supported on four thin legs. The GUARDS guard diligently.

VIGNETTE: A PRIVATE ROOM AT DELMONICO'S.

A portly gentleman - we don't know it yet, but he's the MAYOR - is on his knees before a coy SHOWGIRL who crouches giggling in a big armchair, her back to the MAYOR. Laughing, HE takes a huge diamond ring from

his pocket. SHE shakes her head, won't even look at it. HE reaches in among her skirts and pulls out her hand, only it isn't hers, it's - meow - the BLACK-GLOVED HAND. The MAYOR puts the ring on its finger and the HAND withdraws. The SHOWGIRL is still shaking her head, so the MAYOR brings forth a diamond bracelet. He pulls out the HAND again and puts the bracelet on it, while cajoling and laughing with the SHOWGIRL. The HAND disappears again and still the SHOWGIRL is being coy. All the MAYOR can find in his pocket is a small diamond brooch; he holds it up doubtfully and the HAND shoots out and grabs it. Now the MAYOR is understandably peeved. HE shakes a finger at the SHOWGIRL, lecturing her angrily.

VIGNETTE: THE MAIN SHOWROOM AT TIFFANY'S, IN UNION SQUARE.

Several SHOPPERS are being attended by frock-coated CLERKS. The BLACK-GLOVED HAND lifts a tiara from a dummy, leaves a calling card, and then takes a necklace that a WOMAN SHOPPER thinks she is handing back to a CLERK. IT rifles a few showcases, loots the shelves, etc., etc.

The MUSIC BUILDS TO A CLIMAX and the PRINCIPALS IN THE FOUR VIGNETTES simultaneously discover the calling cards the HAND has left. Terrified, THEY read the cards aloud and sing:

Everybody
"So long, Charlie, the Cat strikes again!"

He's here!
The Cat!
The Fiend of Union Square!
And Irving Place
And Sutton Place
And Lord above knows where!

Oh, drat!
The Cat!

Everybody (Cont'd)

He's pulled another coup!
He's grabbed another diamond
and fled without a clue!

(PATROLMEN leap in from all directions.
PINCER and MALLET rush about searching
fruitlessly for clues)

He's here!
He's there!
Intangible as air!

He's there!
He's gone!

Pincer

(With no conviction whatever)
We've several leads we're working on.

Everybody

He's here!
The Cat!
Manhattan's king of thieves!
He leaves regards
On calling cards
And laughs up both his sleeves!

Oh, drat!
The Cat!
The Beast Who Lurks Unseen!
He's taken every diamond
From the Bronx to Bowling Green!

He comes!
He goes!
A wolf in catlike clothes!

He goes!
He comes!

Mayor

(In conference with PINCER and MALLET)
And all you do is twiddle your thumbs! Blast and damnation!
As Mayor of New York City, I demand action, Pincer!

Pincer

As Superintendent of Police, sir, I agree with you one hundred
per cent!

Mallet

(The short one, in the middle)
As Chief of Detectives I would like to resign.

Mayor
Not on your life, Mallet! With Roger "Bulldog" Purefoy on his deathbed, you're what we're stuck with.

Pincer
Maybe the old Bulldog can still give us a hand! We could go down and poke him a bit.

Mallet
He was such a keen detective...

Mayor
(Producing a wrench and giving it to MALLET)
Show him this pearl-handled monkey wrench. The Cat left it behind last night at the Union Club.

Mallet
(Passing wrench to PINCER)
With less than a monkey wrench to go on, Bulldog Purefoy caught the Tap-dancing Strangler!

(PINCER passes wrench to CAT's hand)

Mayor
It's the first clue we've had, so show it to him and - where is it?

Pincer
I gave it to you.
What are you talking about? I just gave it to you this minute!

Mayor
No you didn't, I gave it to you! -
You idiot! Damnation, Pincer! As Mayor of New York City -

Mallet
You gave it to him and he gave it to me and I - no, I gave it to you - no, he gave it to me -

Everybody
He's here!
The Cat!
Manhattan's king of thieves!

He leaves regards
On calling cards
And laughs up both his sleeves!

Oh, drat!
The Cat!
The Beast Who Lurks Unseen!

He's taken every diamond -
The right ones,
Blue-white ones,

Everybody (Cont'd)
White-blue ones,
The new ones,
The old ones,
Unsold ones,
All fine stones,
No rhinestones!
From the Bronx to Bowling Green!

BLACKOUT

Scene 2

A small bedroom in the Purefoys' flat comes into view. ROGER PUREFOY lies dying. A bearded DOCTOR in vest and rolled-up shirt sleeves sits at the bedside, applying his stethoscope to PUREFOY's sunken chest. KATE PUREFOY stands by, wringing her hands helplessly. The scene resembles that old painting "The Doctor" or whatever it's called. The DOCTOR cleans his stethoscope -- maybe that's the trouble -- and tries again.

Kate

Oh, Doctor, is there any hope at all?

Doctor

I'm afraid not, Mrs. Purefoy.

(KATE sobs quietly. PUREFOY mumbles)

He's asking for Bob again.

Kate

He'll be here any minute now, I'm sure of it. It takes him such a long time to get back from his beat.

Doctor

(Readying a hypodermic syringe)

One would think the boy would have a beat closer to home, what with his father here being the former Chief of Detectives.

Kate

Oh no, Roger would never have used his influence, and Bob would never have wanted him to. It wouldn't have been fair to the other fellows.

Doctor

(Testing the syringe carefully into the air)

Well, I suppose somebody has to patrol Far Rockaway...

(HE injects himself in the arm and blinks appreciatively. KATE wipes ROGER'S brow. Pincer and Mallet, enter DSR, hats in hands. From the beginning of the scene, other PATROLMEN have been visible US, waiting respectfully for the Great Old Detective to die)

Pincer
Mrs. Purefoy?

Kate
Yes, yes? Who is it?

Pincer
I'm Superintendent Pincer and this is Chief Mallet.

Kate
Oh, bless you for comin'. Here, let him see your faces.
(Leads them to the bed)
Bulldog. Bulldog, look.

Roger
(Looks)
Yicchh!
(And turns away disgustedly)

Pincer
(To the DOCTOR, speaking across the sickbed)
We were wondering if he might still be able to have a few words with us. About - the Cat.

Doctor
It is out of the question, gentlemen. Already the infection has moved into the - whatchamacallit. The big thing next to the round thing...you know.

A Patrolwoman
(Among the PATROLMEN USL, a handkerchief to her cheek)
I can't believe he's dying! Just last week, at Headquarters, he was so - so vigorous!

Pincer
Well, there'll be no stopping the Cat now. He'll have the entire city in his vicious claws.

Kate
(Wiping her eyes)
Bob thinks the Cat is someone in high society, because he steals in all those private clubs, and fancy hotels and thee-ay-ters.

Mallet
Bob?

Kate
Our son. He's a patrolman.

Pincer
I didn't know Roger had a son.

Kate
That was so the boy would get no special favors.

Pincer & Mallet
(To each other, simultaneously)
The son of Bulldog Purefoy!?!)

(There is a TREMENDOUS CRASH from off-stage)

Kate
That must be Bob now!

(BOB enters and embraces KATE. PINCER
and MALLET look at him with awe and
excitement)

He's been asking for you over and over...
(Leads BOB to the bed)
Bulldog, Bob's here now. Bulldog. Bulldog.

Roger
Bob? Bob? Is it you, Bob?

Bob
Yes. Yes, Dad.

Roger
Bob...

Bob
Lie back, Dad.

Roger
Bob -
I can tell -
That my ticker's ticked as far as it can tock -

Bob
Shh... Lie back, Dad, lie back.

Purefoy
Bob --
Listen well --
Good advice is all I leave you, but it's better than a
thousand shares of stock.

Bob
Don't try to talk too much, Dad...

Purefoy
My son, uphold the law.

Bob
I will, Dad.

Purefoy
Defend our civil code.

Bob
Yes. Yes, I will.

Purefoy
Remember that the brightest badge,
Uncared for, will corrode.

(BOB is all but kneeling at the bedside
now and the scene has become terribly
solemn - like the Dying King putting the
crown on the Princeling)

Incur no mark of black
Upon your coat of blue.
Be equally as careful, Bob
Of both your plainclothes too.

(A gleam of remembered glory comes into
PUREFOY's eyes, and we hear the brave
sound of faraway bugles)

Be unshakable.
Be unswerving night and day - in short, unshakable.
Be a man of whom they say, "He's so unshakable
That he's not - shakable!"
My only son,
Uphold
The law!

(Somehow PUREFOY seems to be getting
stronger; HE's sitting up now)

Walk proudly on your beat
And twirl your stick with grace.
The twirling of the stick, you'll find
Is seldom out of place.

Participate, my boy,
In departmental sports.
Be known for making clean arrests
And legible reports!

(Now HE's up on his knees. BOB makes
anxious, calming gestures while KATE
and the DOCTOR come DS, concerned)

Be unshakable!
Be a tiger in the fray - I mean, unshakable!
Or to put it still another way - unshakable!
That's it! Unshakable!

Purefoy (Cont'd)

My only son,
Uphold
The law!

(And now HE's standing. BOB, KATE and
the DOCTOR try to restrain him, but to
no avail)

Be ready with your gun!
But shout before you shoot!
When passing by a fruitstand, Bob --
DON'T TAKE THAT PIECE OF FRUIT!

Climb upward through the ranks
And hear me as you do:
Uphold the law, my only son,
And the law will uphold you!
Yes, the law -- will uphold --

(But the last note is too much for
PUREFOY; HE topples over, stiff as
a mackerel. BOB and the DOCTOR catch
him, stretch him out on the bed, and
rearrange the blanket. The DOCTOR
listens with his stethoscope while BOB
holds the sobbing KATE. Sighing, the
DOCTOR draws the blanket up over
PUREFOY's face; the old man's bare
feet appear; short blanket)

Kate

Oh, Bob...!

Bob

Shhh...

Kate

He gave his whole life and strength to the endless fight
against crime and corruption!

Bob

It was a good fight he fought, and I intend to continue it.

Pincer

(Going to BOB and offering his hand)
You're your father's son, Bob Purefoy. It's in your eyes,
and in the set of your jaw.

Bob

Thank you, sir.

Pincer

You're patrolman no longer; you're - Acting Detective Purefoy!

Bob
What? What?

Mallet
Assigned for an indefinite period to catching the Cat!

Kate
Oh, Bob!

Bob
Me?

Pincer
It's a job that was made for the son of Bulldog Purefoy!

Kate
You can do it, Bob!

Bob
(Thinks, and decides)
I can. I'll capture the Cat! In a week! Well...two weeks.
I will. I swear it!

(HE steps forward and salutes his
father's body. KATE proudly sings
as POB marches off purposely into
infinity)

Kate
Be unshakable!
Or to put it still another way - unshakable!
That's it! Unshakable!

Scene 3

The lights come up in Lucius Van Guilder's study. MRS. VAN GUILDER, holding a memo pad, is giving instructions to the BUTLER.

Mrs. Van Guilder

Now I've worked out the seating arrangement very carefully, Malthus, and I want you to follow it precisely.

Butler

Yes, Madame.

Mrs. Van Guilder

Penrod Leffingwell will sit on Alice's right...

Butler

Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Van Guilder

And Harley Garrison will sit on her left. Unless cotton shares continue unsteady, in which case Mr. Garrison will be at table 2, and Stanley Van Runkle will be at Alice's left.

Van Guilder

(Entering briskly, followed by the MAID, with a tray of money)

Counting time! It's counting time! Everybody out of the counting room. Out of the counting room, please. Out, please.

(The MAID, having set the tray on the table, exits. The BUTLER follows)

One thousand, two thousand, three thousand, four thousand, five thousand, six thousand -

Mrs. Van Guilder

Lucius, you simply must have a talk with Alice before Saturday night. What's the point in my giving parties if she refuses to dance with anyone?

Van Guilder

Look at this! People who wrinkle money shouldn't be allowed to have any!

Mrs. Van Guilder

Lucius! If you don't pay attention you'll wind up with a spinster on your hands! I simply cannot understand that girl! Penrod Leffingwell revolts her! Stanley Van Runkle makes her ill! I talk and I talk and I talk, and she doesn't hear a word I say.

Van Guilder
Would that I had the gift.

Butler
(Entering)
Sir, a policeman wishes to speak with you.

Mrs. Van Guilder
A policeman?!

Van Guilder
It's probably just a parking offence. Show him in.

(BUTLER goes)
Don't be alarmed. Where's that wrinkled - ah, here it is.
Policemen like wrinkled money. It's quieter.

Mrs. Van Guilder
I've been so on edge ever since the Cat took Maude
Leffingwell's diamond stomacher! He was standing right
behind me! He could have strangled me!

Van Guilder
Well, his loss is our loss - I mean, his gain is our loss -
I mean, our loss is his gain - oh, you know, ah there!

(The BUTLER has shown BOB in)

Bob
Mr. Lucius Van Guilder?

(The BUTLER takes BOB's helmet from his
head and exits)

Van Guilder
That's right.

Bob
Acting Detective Purefoy, sir!

Van Guilder
A pleasure to meet you. One of the horses on the wrong side
of the street, eh? Pay the fine for me like a good fellow,
will you, and keep the change?

Bob
It's - it's not a parking violation, sir.

Van Guilder
No?

Bob
No, sir. The Tribune says that you folks are giving a big
party on Saturday night.

Mrs. Van Guilder

Is it against the law to give a party?

Van Guilder

I assure you, officer, it's going to be quite respectable; no showgirls, no excessive drinking, no wild dancing, no naughty games in dark corners, no bawdy singing -

(Turning to MRS. VAN GUILDER)

You know, it isn't too late to cancel the whole thing.

Bob

Sir, sir, I'm sure it's going to be a very respectable party, but I believe that an uninvited guest may make an appearance.

Mrs. Van Guilder

Laura Van Brockenhorst and her three daughters! If they try to get next to Penrod Leffingwell, I'll scratch their eyes out!

Bob

Oh no ma'am, no. I mean the Cat.

Van Guilder

The Cat?

(MRS. VAN GUILDER faints. VAN GUILDER shouts to the upper floor)

SHE FAINTED!

(Instantly the MAID comes down the stairs with brandy, and the BUTLER enters R. The BUTLER and VAN GUILDER pick up MRS. VAN GUILDER and put her on the chaise. BOB looks on, distressed)

Bob

I'm most awfully sorry, Mr. Van Guilder! I didn't mean to alarm her.

Van Guilder

Don't worry young man; my wife passes out several times a day. Never for very long, unfortunately. Oh, come, come, Matilda! Open your eyes!

Mrs. Van Guilder

(Groans piteously)

Ohh! The Cat! Here in our mansion! Molesting our guests! Ohh!

Bob

I'm not certain he'll come, Mrs. Van Guilder. It's only a suspicion. But I'd like to be here Saturday night, and have patrolmen on duty at the various entrances.

Mrs. Van Guilder
Policemen at our party! OHH!

Bob
We'll wear plainclothes if you prefer; I have a neat blue suit that's very incon--

Van Guilder
(On "that's")
No need for that; it's a masquerade party. No one will know, Matilda; they'll think they're in costume.

Mrs. Van Guilder
(Sobbing)
But I'll know! I'll know! The entire evening will be poisoned!

Van Guilder
There, there, dear; there, there. They won't speak to anyone, except the Cat. Isn't that so, Purefoy?

Bob
Yes, sir. We won't speak to...

Alice
Father dear, before you go, could you give me -- oh, excuse me.

(ALICE VAN GUILDER has tripped into the room and stopped short, seeing that she has interrupted a conversation. SHE looks at BOB; BOB looks at ALICE. BOB falls in love. Small wonder, for ALICE is the prettiest girl in the world)

Van Guilder
This is our daughter Alice.

Bob
How do you do...

Van Guilder
Alice this is Detective Purefoy.

Bob
Acting Detective...

Van Guilder
Oh, yes; sorry. Acting Detective Purefoy.

Alice
How do you do...

Mrs. Van Guilder
The Cat is coming to the party! That awful thief! He'll be here! Stealing right and left!

Alice

What?

Mrs. Van Guilder

Don't faint, dear! Don't faint!

(ALICE has never fainted in her life,
and she doesn't look as though she's
going to)

Van Guilder

It's only supposition.

Bob

That's right, Miss... And please don't be frightened. If
he should show up, we'll catch him, never fear. Justice
triumphs in the end; it always does.

Mrs. Van Guilder

They want to come to the party! Him! Policemen!

Alice

Oh?

Bob

We won't speak to anyone...

Alice

But...how fascinating! And how kind of you!

Mrs. Van Guilder

Fascinating? The shame? The disgrace?

Alice

Oh, Mother, really! There's no shame! Why, you should be
grateful that Mr. Purefoy is willing to protect us!

(To BOB)

Of course you'll come to the party; with as many of your
associates as you care to bring! And you shall speak to
everyone! You'll be honored guests.

Bob

Gosh -- thank you!

Mrs. Van Guilder

(To VAN GUILDER)

She's your daughter; she isn't my daughter; I'm childless.

Alice

Mother... Would you rather have your guests robbed of their
diamonds? You remember what happened at the Ottendorfers'...

Mrs. Van Guilder

(Heaves a deep sigh)

I'm ill. Take me upstairs, Lucius.

Van Guilder

I'm due at the Exchange, m'dear. Today's the day we spring the trap on the small investors.

Mrs. Van Guilder

Take me upstairs!

Van Guilder

All right, all right...

(Helps her from her chair)

Mrs. Van Guilder

(Leaning on him, fanning herself)

Mind you, young man; policemen who look respectable!

Bob

Oh, yes, ma'am! I'll pick them out personally!

(The VAN GUILDERS go. BOB begins to twirl his nightstick to impress ALICE, but then it gets out of control and almost knocks down the chandelier. ALICE screams; BOB holds his head to protect it. Then he retrieves the nightstick and explains with embarrassment)

Bob

The thong broke.

Alice

I've never met a detective before. Not even an acting one.

Bob

I've never met - an Alice Van Guilder before.

Alice

How surprising; there are so many of us. Do you really think you'll catch the Cat?

Bob

Oh yes, Miss, I'm sure of it! Crime doesn't pay.

Alice

Oh.

Bob

I've worked out what we call his "modus operandi," and I figure he's going to strike either here or at Pier Fourteen. And I'll be waiting for him, ready to pounce!

Alice

Pier Fourteen?

Bob

A Japanese idol is being delivered there at one o'clock today. It's a gift to the city of New York, and it has diamonds instead of eyes.

Alice

Diamonds?

Bob

Twenty-carat ones. They're slanty, but very big.

Alice

Goodness!

Bob

I've got a dozen patrolmen guarding the place.

Alice

Wonderful!

Bob

Only now I hope the Cat doesn't show up, because if he does -- then I won't have an excuse to come to your party..

Alice

(A beat)

May I be your assistant on Saturday night? Oh, I know you'll have all your patrolmen, but I mean your -- personal assistant?

Bob

Gee, I don't know if detectives have personal assistants.

Alice

Of course they do!

Bob

I thought they always -- worked alone...

Alice

(Singing)

Have you read the latest number
Of Harper's Magazine?
There's a story there by Conan Doyle.
It's about a new detective -
He's marvelously keen-
And he has a chap, a doctor, who's his foil.
Together they're second to none,
But "together" means two, sir, not one!

Bob

I'm afraid I don't read Harper's Magazine...

Alice

Sherlock Holmes has

Alice (Cont'd)

Doctor Watson.
Watson trots in
Back of Holmes.
All the plots that
Holmes finds knots in
Watson
Jots in
Tomes.

(SHE takes a meerschaum pipe and a
magnifying glass from Van Guilder's
desk and gives the pipe to BOB. HE
doesn't quite know what to do with it)

'Cause it takes
One to the heavy brainwork,
One to do the more mundane work;

(SHE polishes the magnifying glass
and gives HIM that too)

One to say It's element'ry,
One to say Amazing!

You be Holmes and
I'll be Watson;
In high spots, in
Catacombs -
Any place the
Cat gavottes in,
Watson
Trots with
Holmes.

(SHE takes BOB's hand and HE rises
and joins HER delightedly)

Bob and Alice

It's just as
Right as rain; we fit the format!

Bob

I the brain!

Alice

And I the doormat!

Bob

(Prowling with magnifying glass)
I will search.

Alice

(Watching for intruders)
And I'll be sentry!

Bob and Alice
We'll be just amazing!

(THEY join hands again)

Bob
Lucky Holmes to
Have a Watson!

Alice
Thanks a lot, sincerely,
Holmes!

Bob and Alice
Poor old Cat will
Soon feel small as
Hottentots 'n
Gnomes -
When he runs into Sherlock Holmes!

Alice
And Doctor Watson!

(THEY laugh. BOB realizes he is
still holding ALICE'S hand, and
hastily drops it)

Bob
Gosh, Miss Van Guilder, I'll bet we solve this case
quickly and I hope it takes about five years!

Alice
Then I can help you Saturday night?

Bob
Yes! You can tell me who the different people are!

Alice
Introduce you to them as a friend of mine!

Bob
And I can question them without their even knowing it!

(A beat. ALICE touches BOB'S hand)

Alice
Would a copy of the guest list be a help to you?

Bob
Would a copy - Gee, it sure would, Miss Van Guilder!

Alice
Wait right here!

(SHE hurries up the stairs and exits.)

BOB watches raptly as she goes. Alone,
HE catches a sight of the audience,
comes DS incredulously, and asks)

Bob

Is she really real?
Was she really there?
Or did I somehow just imagine her
As starving men see menus in the air?

No, I didn't imagine her! She's real! She smiled at me!
She spoke to me! She gave me a flower!

She touched me!
She put her hand on mine, right there -
She touched me!
I feel a sort of tingle where
She touched me;
A sparkle,
A glow!

She knew it!
It wasn't accidental, no,
She knew it!
She smiled and seemed to tell me so
All through it;
She knew it,
I know!

She's real,
And the world is alive and shining!
I feel
Such a wonderful drive toward valentining!

She touched me.
I simply have to face the fact,
She touched me;
Control myself and try to act
As if I remember my name,
But she touched me!
She touched me!
And suddenly nothing is the same!

One touch
And New York is a part of heaven!
One touch,
And I'm handsome and smart and six-feet-seven!

She touched me.
I simply have to face the fact:
She touched me!
Control myself and try to act
As if I remember my name -
But she touched me!

Bob (Cont'd)

She touched me!
And suddenly nothing is the same!

(ALICE returns with a copy of the
guest list)

Alice

Here you are, Mr. Holmes.

Bob

Thanks a lot, Mrs. Holmes. I mean Mrs. Watson! Doctor
Watson!

Alice

Sherlock Holmes is a bachelor.

Bob

I never read Harper's Magazine.

Alice

Will you come early on Saturday, around eight o'clock,
and tell me all the news?

Bob

I certainly will! Eight o'clock on Saturday!

(HE backs to the door)

Alice

Good luck at Pier Fourteen.

Bob

Thanks, Miss Van Guilder!

Alice

Alice is my name!

Bob

Alice --

Alice

(Waving into the hall)
Good-bye!

Bob

(Off)
Good-bye!

(There is a TREMENDOUS CRASH, as of
someone falling down the marble stairs
of a Fifth Avenue mansion)

Alice

Oh, dear! Are you all right?

Bob

(Coming back to retrieve his nightstick
that has been thrown back on-stage with
the sound of the crash)

Yes, yes, I'm fine! Good-bye!

(Off)

Scene 4

ALICE gives a delighted little leap and climbs up the staircase to her room. She bursts into laughter.

Alice
(Scarcely able to get the words out)
Acting -- Detective -- Purefoy!

(During the following she strips off her demure gown and reveals a Cat costume; puts on tail, gloves, etc.)

How many of you guessed that I'm the Cat?
How many; come on, raise your hands.

Well, you're smarter than the Police Department!
Meow!

What I really wanted to be was a veterinarian. Mother fainted when I told her. What she really wants me to be is married. To Penrod Leffingwell, or Stanley Van Runkle, or Harley Garrison. Ugh! They're thieves. Not honest outright thieves, but sneaky corner-cutting ones, like every man in this world. Penrod Leffingwell has figured out three ways to cheat on his income tax. And we don't even have an income tax!

But Mother says a woman without a diamond is like a man without a country. She says it and says it and says it and says it. It used to make me all tense and edgy ...

(SHE lights a cigarette - in a foot long holder)

Then one night, at the De Puysters' mansion-warming, I took Mibsy De Puyster's giant engagement ring. And the next night, at the opera, George Bronk's diamond stick pin. You should have seen the carryings-on! All those people shouting and swooning because a thief was in their midst!

(Giggles)
Now it's a sort of - hobby. And I'm not tense and edgy any more!

Meow!

Penrod Leffingwell? Stanley Van Runkle? Harley Garrison?

I don't want their diamonds!
I don't need their diamonds!

Alice (Cont'd)

Let 'em keep their diamonds!
I get my own!

WILD AND RECKLESS, free as air,
Smooth as satin, power to spare.
Say I'm evil, I don't care!
Watch me smoke my cigarette!

WILD AND RECKLESS, on the town,
And the town on the run!
Ask me why the displays
Of unladylike ways
And I answer, "It's fun!"

(SHE dances)

WILD AND RECKLESS, on the town,
Raising H-E-L-L!
Come and see my next scene;
One o'clock, Pier Fourteen -
And remember - don't tell!

(Exits over the rooftops)

Scene 5

LIGHTS COME UP on the Purefoys' kitchen. KATE is cheerfully cleaning. BOB enters, dancing on air with an imaginary partner.

Kate

Don't tell me! Don't say a word! I can guess it just lookin' at you! You did it! You captured the Cat!

Bob

The who?

Kate

The Cat! The Cat!

Bob

Oh, that's nice, Ma! It'll be company for you while I'm on duty! Here, kitty, kitty, kitty. Here, Kitty, Kitty.

Kate

The Cat, I mean! The Cat! The fellow who's been takin' all the diamonds!

Bob

Oh! Oh, oh, yeh, yeh. The Cat. Yeh. The Cat. Yeh.

(Shrugs)

No, I didn't capture him. He's - around somewhere...

(Inhales deeply of the rose he carries)

She touched me....

La-da-da-da-da-dee-dee-doo,

She touched me...

Kate

And a red rose like that, is it a new part of the uniform?

Bob

(Smiles)

No, a - a girl gave it to me.

Kate

Oho, I see...

(BOB sits at the table and KATE, smiling to herself, turns to the stove. BOB studies his rose and thinks)

Bob

Did you ever know anyone who had beautiful knuckles?

Kate

No, not that I can remember. Your father's older sister

Kate (Cont'd)

Maureen was proud of her wrists. They weren't really that thin, though; it was just that the other girls had such terrible thick ones.

(Brings bowl of stew to the table)

Bob

Alice's wrists are - are like - the stems of lilies!

Kate

I don't suppose that would be Paddy Maloney's Alice, by any chance?

Bob

No.

Kate

I didn't think so. Poor thing, losin' her hair so young.

Bob

She touched me,
She touched me,
She touched me...

Kate

Tell me, Bob, in the course of your meetin' with her, did she by any chance happen to touch you?

Bob

How did you know!?!

Kate

Oh, we mothers have ways of knowin'...

Bob

She did! She touched me right here, and she's real, and she's going to help me capture the Cat, and she's so beautiful and so friendly, and so, so, so, she's, she's....

She's roses. She's snowflakes. She's barrels of apples,
And ice cream and velvet and bells when they ring.
She's birthdays and New Year's, the night before
Christmas,
The last day of school and the first day of spring!

Other girls,
Other girls,
Borrow and buy
Cosmetics and feathers and fur.

Kate

Other girls,
Other girls,
Hopelessly try
To change themselves into her!

Bob

She's bluebirds and baseball and hitting a long one
And laughing and dreaming and Central Park Lake!
She's marbles, the clear ones, and milk when you're
thirsty,
She's five kinds of candy and six kinds of cake!

Kate

Other girls,
Other girls,
Ain't it a shame?
They're seaweed and splinters and glue!

Other girls,
Other girls.
No one's to blame.
Pray God, the poor creatures pull through!

Bob

She's all of the stars and the moon when it's rising,
And music and peace and the automobile,
And how can I live till the next time I see her?
She touched me right here and she's really, really real!

Kate

Well, it's nice that you've got the afternoon off to sing
and be happy.

Bob

What do you mean? I'm eating supper.

Kate

Supper? You're eatin' lunch!

Bob

What? Oh, no. No. The idol. They must be taking it off
the ship right this minute!

(HE grabs his coat and runs. KATE
grabs his helmet and runs after him)

Kate

Your helmet! Bob, wait! You dassn't go fightin' without
your helmet on your head!

BLACKOUT

Scene 6

A diamond-eyed idol, such as the Japanese are always worshipping, is delivered to Pier 14. Kabuki-style ATTENDANTS turn it over to guardian PATROLMEN, but despite everyone's careful attention, ALICE penetrates both groups and eventually makes off with the Idol's eyes; the whole being presented in the form of a comic ballet.

The end of the ballet finds PINCER alone and bereft among the ATTENDANTS, all of whom have committed hari-kari. He picks up the card that the Cat has left in the ravaged idol.

Pincer

"So rong Charrie"...?

(HE tears up the card. BOB enters hurriedly. HE stops short, aghast, and assimilates the situation)

Bob

The Cat - struck?

Pincer

The Cat struck.

Bob

Gee, I - I feel - I feel just awful....

Pincer

(A pause, and a deep, forebearing sigh)
All right, forget it. Go on. Go back to Far Rockaway...

Bob

(Aghast)
To Far --?

Pincer

(Nodding)
You're lucky. A sunlit beach; long, rolling waves...

Bob

But -- what about -- the Van Guilders' -- Saturday night?

Pincer

I'll send one of the regular men. I'll find somebody, somewhere...

(HE rises, rubbing the back of his neck wearily. BOB is trembling)

Bob

But, sir -- I spoke to the Van Guilders, to Alice Van Guilder! She's going to help me! Introduce me to the guests! Tell me things about them! She wouldn't do it for -- for just anybody! I'm sure she wouldn't!

Pincer

(Walking slowly out)

All right, you go... But Sunday morning go back to Far Rockaway, all right?

Bob

Yes! Yes, sir! Sunday morning.

(BOB exits. PINCER examines the pattern on the hari-kari victims, picks up one of their knives and mimes the pattern on his own stomach; at the final jab into his stomach makes a tentative try at a stab but cries out)

Pincer

Ooooh!

BLACKOUT

FINISH READING THIS SCRIPT

Visit our website to purchase the full script or to explore other titles.

www.samuelfrench.com

www.samuelfrench.co.uk

To stay up to date on all that we are doing, follow us on social media:



*Titles for licensing are subject to availability depending on your territory.