

A Will to Murder

Bob Naquin



ArtAge
Publications



ArtAge supplies books, plays, and materials to older performers around the world. Directors and actors have come to rely on our 30+ years of experience in the field to help them find useful materials and information that makes their productions stimulating, fun, and entertaining.

ArtAge's unique program has been featured in *Wall Street Journal*, *LA Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *American Theatre*, *Time Magazine*, *Modern Maturity*, on CNN, NBC, and in many other media sources.

ArtAge is more than a catalog. We also supply information, news, and trends on our top-rated website, www.seniortheatre.com. We stay in touch with the field with our very popular e-newsletter, *Senior Theatre Online*. Our President, Bonnie Vorenberg, is asked to speak at conferences and present workshops that supplement her writing and consulting efforts. We're here to help you be successful in Senior Theatre!

We help older performers fulfill their theatrical dreams!

ArtAge Publications
Bonnie L. Vorenberg, President
PO Box 19955
Portland OR 97280
503-246-3000 or 800-858-4998
bonniev@seniortheatre.com
www.seniortheatre.com

NOTICE

Copyright: This play is fully protected under the Copyright Laws of the United States of America, Canada, and all other countries of the Universal Copyright Convention.

The laws are specific regarding the piracy of copyrighted materials. Sharing the material with other organizations or persons is prohibited. Unlawful use of a playwright's work deprives the creator of his or her rightful income.

Cast Copies: Performance cast copies are required for each actor, director, stage manager, lighting and sound crew leader.

Changes to Script: Plays must be performed as written. Any alterations, additions, or deletions to the text must be approved.

Permission to Film: You do not have permission to film, record, or distribute the play in any medium. You are also not allowed to post on electronic services such as, but not limited to, YouTube. Exceptions must be granted by written permission from the publisher.

Royalty: Royalties are due when you perform the play for any audience, paying or non-paying, professional or amateur. This includes readings, cuttings, scenes, and excerpts.

The royalty for amateur productions of this show is posted online. It is payable two weeks prior to your production. Contact us for professional rates or other questions. Royalty fees are subject to change.

Insert the following paragraph in your programs:

Performed with special permission from ArtAge Publications' Senior Theatre Resource Center at 800-858-4998, www.seniorthatre.com

A Will to Murder © 2019 by Bob Naquin

A WILL TO MURDER

By Bob Naquin

CAST

JEEVES: The butler. Formally dressed. Talks with a British accent. Dedicated and long-standing servant to the dead, central character, William Robert Thornburg.

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: Lawyer and executor of William Robert Thornburg's massive estate. Charged with making certain the deceased's monies get into the right hands.

MITZIE: The head maid. Dressed like a maid. The sexier the better. High heels. Dedicated and long-standing servant to William Robert Thornburg. Has the hots for Daren. And everyone else.

ROBIN BANKS: She is the niece of William Robert Thornburg. Dressed manly and costumed like the construction worker in the Village People. Has a smudge of grease on her cheek.

CANDY STRIPER: Another niece of William Robert Thornburg. Quite girly and scatterbrained.

IVANNA LOTTSKOV: William Robert's Russian mistress. Dressed flamboyantly. Speaks with a thick accent. Just in it for herself.

SCARLETT LEDERER: Dressed demurely in funeral attire. Sniffs a lot into a lace handkerchief. Pious mistress of William Robert Thornburg and only interested is saving his soul.

OFFICER MURPHY: (M optional F) Dressed as a police officer. Carries a note pad. Called in to sort out the mysterious happenings at the estate.

Place

At the estate of the late William Robert Thornburg. In an upstairs study.

Time

The present.

A WILL TO MURDER

Setting: Down left (on the floor) is the pantry, hidden from the audience's view. (A backlit silhouette screen would be ideal. The shadow of the actors in this area would be seen as shadows.) In any case, some action takes place in the pantry out of sight of the audience, but within hearing. There is a serving cabinet on the stage in plain view of the audience. This is where the servants prepare the tea and cake they will serve to the people at the will reading. Everyone enters and leaves through a doorframe (sturdy).

Music: Pink Panther theme.

At Rise: Jeeves enters with several booklets, wills (probable cue cards) in his arms. He carefully places one at each seat, taking some time in rearranging the place settings to perfection

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: *(enters brusquely, puts papers at the head of the table.)* There you are Jeeves, my good fellow. Is everything in order for the arrival of our guests?

JEEVES: *(stands at attention and replies very formally)* I believe things are as you wish, Mr. Golightly. Will that be all?

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: Yes, Jeeves, that is all until the guests arrive. Then you should serve them tea and some light refreshments.

JEEVES: Very good, Mr. Golightly. *(he turns to leave)*

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: Oh Jeeves?

JEEVES: Yes, Squire?

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: Did you consider the proposal I made to you?

JEEVES: I did, Squire.

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: And are you willing to do as I wish?

JEEVES: I am sir. I have faithfully served the estate of Mr. Thornburg *(he always pronounces it Thooornbuurg)* for many years and I see no reason why I should not continue, even after his untimely death.

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: Untimely death! Billy Bob Thornburg was 87 years old and a bit of a philanderer. It is a wonder he lasted as long as he did.

JEEVES: *(stiffly)* Whatever you say, sir. Mr. Thornburg did seem to enjoy the occasional slap and tickle, but he was nothing but generous to me in all my years of service. I suspect his largesse will continue even after his unfortunate death.

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: I would not get my hopes up, Jeeves. I have looked over Mr. Thornburg's will, and he has left all of his money to...let's just say you might be disappointed if you are expecting money from his estate.

JEEVES: I must say I am disappointed to hear that, Mr. Golightly. After all of my years of service, Mr. Thornburg promised that the head maid, Mitzie, and I would be remembered in his will. Without that money I will indeed be broke.

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: You are remembered in his will. However, many people would have to die before you or the head maid would come into any money.

JEEVES: Very well, Mr. Golightly. Then I am more than willing to do as you have asked of me.

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: Splendid, my good chap. Now, do you remember the signal? *(he pulls slowly at the ear lobe that faces the audience, three times)*

JEEVES: I do remember it. *(he repeats the signal)* I will do as you ask when I get the signal.

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: *(he looks back at the papers on the table in front of him)* Very well, Jeeves. You may go.

(Jeeves starts to leave)

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: Jeeves. One more thing. Would you send in Mitzie the maid?

JEEVES: Certainly, sir. *(JEEVES exits)*

(Mitzie the maid enters carrying a gavel)

MITZIE: *(in a smoldering voice.)* You wanted *(emphasis here)* ME, Daren?

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: *(not looking up.)* Give me just a minute, Mitzie.

MITZIE: *(huskily)* Take your time, Daren. *(suggestively)* I am like a 7-11. I am open all day and all night.

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: *(looks up at Mitzie and goes over to stand close to her.)* You look fetching today, Mitzie. What are you doing with my gavel?

MITZIE: *(sexily)* I thought you might want to *(pauses)* pound it a little. Later.

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: *(he grasps her hands as she holds the gavel and looks into her eyes)* Yes. I just may want to bang it a little. *(he takes in from her)*

MITZIE: Whatever you desire. I am like FedEx. If you take me home I will absolutely, positively be there overnight.

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: I am sure you would be, darling.

MITZIE: *(huskily)* I am like UPS. I run the tightest ship in the business.

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: I am sure you do.

MITZIE: I am like Kentucky Fried Chicken. I am finger—

DAREN GOLIGHTLY: *(interrupting)* Ok. I get the idea *(staring into her eyes)* Have you thought about what we discussed earlier?

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!