HOTEL PICKLE

A Farce by Sam Havens

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Two young innkeepers, Alex and Rolly, are struggling to make a success of a once-elegant hostelry in the Hamptons, but it's tough, especially with the owner, Lucinda Pickle, breathing down their necks. Of course it doesn't help that the hotel's permanent resident, Mrs. Prescott, collects pet mice; that the hotel chef, Cookie, is given to bursting into tears and resigning; and that a petty criminal, Willis the pickpocket, is looking for a place to hide out.

When Hollywood horror movie producer Julian K. Silverblatt checks in with his vain bodyguard and his sneezing secretary, things really go nuts. Add two romance plots and soon everything spins out of control. Gunshots, UFO sightings, characters falling off of roofs, chef's hats catching flame, escaping mice and, of course, lots of flying doors make this play winningly clever and chaotic.

World Premiere of *Hotel Pickle*
University of St. Thomas
Drama Department
Houston, Texas
September 26, 2002
Directed by Sam Havens

The original cast included:
Alex: Ben Warner
Roland: Jacob Millwee
Cookie: Joey Milillo
Mrs. Prescott: Valerie Armin
Lucinda Davenport: Casey Waldner
Willis: Chris Cipolla
Mrs. Harcourt-Hill: Morgan McCarthy
Judith: Skye Shrum
Ellie: Kym Ngo
Dubby: Luke Maresh
Julian K. Silverblatt: Chris Tennison

CAST OF CHARACTERS
6 m, 5 w

ALEX: Co-host of the Davenport House. Twenties, confident, snappy, an eye for the ladies.

ROLAND: Alex's co-host. Also twenties but not so confident.

COOKIE: The Davenport House chef. He is excitable and has an accent cobbled together from many countries.

MRS. PRESCOTT: Permanent resident of the Davenport House. Advanced in years. Eccentric. Collects pet mice.

LUCINDA DAVENPORT: Owner of the hotel, ambitious, ruthless, unstoppable.

WILLIS: Career criminal. Likes disguises and accents.

MRS. HARCOURT-HILL: Transplanted English woman, the cream of Hampton's society.

JUDITH: Roland's girlfriend in his dreams. Restless, attractive.

ELLIE: Mr. Silverblatt's secretary. Perhaps mousy in appearance but passionate in nature. She is physically awkward and suffers from dust allergies.

DUBBY: Mr. Silverblatt's bodyguard. Handsome, tanned, wears a bandage over his recently-bobbed nose.

JULIAN K. SILVERBLATT: Ego-maniac Hollywood producer. He is given to vanity and grandiosity.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Act I Scene 1 -- Afternoon
Scene 2 -- That evening
Scene 3 -- The next morning
Act II Scene 1 -- Late afternoon
Scene 2 -- The next day

SETTING

The lobby of the once-elegant Davenport House in the Hamptons on Long Island. Registration counter, sofas, chairs, writing desks, potted plants. In addition to the front door, there are doors to upstairs rooms, a kitchen, a pantry, a bathroom, and steps to the roof.

SOUND EFFECTS

Sound effects include several explosions from the kitchen, offstage gunshots, phone rings and falling bodies hitting the ground. Also, cheers and applause from a real or prop applause machine.

See end of script for **PROP AND COSTUME** notes.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: ROLAND punches numbers into an adding machine. A length of white tape curls from the machine. SFX: The telephone rings.)

ROLAND: *(Answering.)* Hotel Pickle, East Hampton's small hotel where you'll find a chocolate mint in the bathroom and fresh soap on your pillow. Rolly speaking. Yes sir, we have rooms available.

(ALEX strolls in from outside, a cell phone to his ear.)

ROLAND: *(To ALEX.)* Alex! Good news!
ALEX: *(To ROLAND.)* Someone checking in?
ROLAND: Right! His voice sounds familiar!
ALEX: I'll bet. Just a minute. *(Into his cell phone.)* Ah! So you have rooms available?
ROLAND: *(On phone.)* Oh, yes. You can have your pick.
ALEX: Good. I'll take one. Maybe I'll take two.
ROLAND: You will? That's wonderful! *(To ALEX.)* He's taking a room! Maybe two!
ALEX: Maybe you'd better get his name.
ROLAND: May I have your name, sir?
ALEX: Yes, my name is Alex!
ROLAND: *(To ALEX.)* His name is Alex. Just like you.
ALEX: That's because it <u>is</u> me! Good grief, Rolly! You're even dumber than I am!
ROLAND: *(Hangs up.)* Oh. I thought you sounded familiar.

(ALEX grabs tape from adding machine.)

ALEX: Look at our weekly revenue. The only hotel on Long Island with empty rooms.
ROLAND: We have Mrs. Prescott in room three-thirteen.
ALEX: Rolly, Mrs. Prescott lives here under a special deal. Her monthly check barely covers our bill for those little bottles of shampoo.

ROLAND: Sometimes a few people stay here.
ALEX: Great! We'll put that in the brochure.
ROLAND: It's the elevator.
ALEX: We don't have an elevator.
ROLAND: That's what I mean.

(SFX: BOOM! A loud explosion from the kitchen.)

ALEX: What the heck is that?
ROLAND: The kitchen!

(COOKIE enters in a cloud of smoke. His chef's jacket, white pants and his chef's hat are smoking. He has soot on his cheeks.)

ALEX: Cookie! What happened?
COOKIE: Happened? Nothing happened.
ROLAND: Nothing happened? The kitchen just went <u>boom</u>!
COOKIE: Not to worry. I merely exploded a chicken.
ROLAND: Are you all right?
COOKIE: Yes. But, it is a sign that I must leave. I will do the honorable thing and resign.
ALEX: Cookie, you can't resign. You're our chef.
COOKIE: Please spare me the humiliation. I fire myself! Cookie, you are fired! Good! Let's leave!
ROLAND: Cookie...
COOKIE: But, without me you will perish. You will be reduced to eating Velveeta cheese on cardboard.
ROLAND: Please, Cookie...
COOKIE: My triumphant exit is spoiled only by these photographers and reporters.
ALEX: Cookie, must you always be so dramatic?
COOKIE: Dramatic? I will show you dramatic when I toss myself from the roof. *(COOKIE exits up the steps to the roof.)*
ALEX: Cookie, don't go to the roof.
COOKIE: That is where I belong. Astride the eaves of this once-elegant hotel, weeping with the pigeons. *(HE is gone.)*

End of Freeview

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