

The Mystery of the Starlight Sapphire

By Kathy Applebee



CAST

Smithson
Gill Bates
Merry Pason
Zulfik
Janitor
Indira
Ching Kong
Veronica Pond
Betty Blue
Amelia Windsor
Bertha Windsor
Delilah Lou Maybelline Texaco

Scene I

Setting: A hospital cafeteria. The doors to the room where the dinner and play will take place should have signs indicating it is a hospital cafeteria. Signs in the hallway indicating the location of doctor's, hospital areas, etc. can be added for humor and atmosphere. See separate document for ideas. A ticket taking table is within 12 feet of the entry and may be roped off to ensure all persons entering pass by the table.

An area visible to the audience has a table on which the gem is displayed and a microphone. Characters should have place cards at their seats indicating that the seat is reserved and the name of the character for which it is reserved. No characters except for Gill and Merry should be seated at the same table.

Action begins while the audience is in line for the doors to open.

At rise: The following characters are "waiting in line" with other audience members for the doors to open. They should be in line in the following order and spaced about every 5-10 regular audience members. Their lines are ad libbed.

Smithson identifies himself as a gemologist from the Smithsonian and asks anybody and everybody about the jewelry they are wearing. Where is it from? Passed down the family? How many carats? Are you willing to sell it? He will "examine" it with his eye piece. He also asks if people have ever visited the Smithsonian and if so they have seen the latest display.

Gill is working on his computer, generally ignoring everything around him except to periodically speak with Merry. Merry introduces himself and Gill to audience members informing them Gill is his younger brother and bores them with how smart and creative Gill is. Occasionally Merry takes a cell call from companies wanting to buy recently developed or almost ready inventions and informs Gill, advising him whether to sell or hold out. Gill can't be bothered with the financial details and absent-mindedly agrees with whatever Merry suggests. This can continue during dinner with amounts shouted across the room with outrageous dollar amounts. Gill always leaves it to his brother's discretion to accept or reject the offer.

Delilah fans herself languidly. She flirts mildly with all the men and looks condescendingly at other women.

Zulfik should be cued to "arrive" about one minute after the doors open. Indira about one minute later, struggling with a large bag or suitcase. Zulfik should harass her and invite people who arrive after Indira to get ahead of her in line. Indira should respond with her typical "outrageous" but allow the audiences to get ahead of her. As they reach the ticket table Zulfik should insist the bag or suitcase be checked by Ching for security purposes. Ching should pull out various items which will embarrass Indira who will once again comment on the outrageousness of the situation.

Ching and Amelia Windsor are at the ticket table. Amelia is chewing what is obviously a huge piece of gum. Bertha will remark frequently how crass it is for her to chew gum like a cow in public. Bertha and Amelia will greet each audience and cast member as they enter. Bertha makes sure everyone has a ticket and will vocalize what she thinks of anyone trying to get in for free. Cast members should introduce themselves as their characters and that they are here for the auction. Bertha mutters over what a sordid affair this is. She's practically being robbed of a family heirloom by a good for nothing gold digger.

Janitor is sweeping near the doorway but stays mostly out of everyone's way. Ching is actively guarding the gem, striking karate or judo poses. If an audience member asks her a question she replies by putting her hand in their face and saying "Talk to the hand." Amelia profusely thanks people for coming and invites them to look over the brochure on each table that related the history of the Starlight Sapphire.

Bertha appears to be holding "court" complaining to anyone who will listen how horrible and trashy Amelia is and what a travesty the auction is. When Zulfik is seated he should ask people at his table if anyone has a piece of gum explaining his ears had trouble equalizing on the flight over. If not he should ask another table. If all else fails he "remembers" he has one in his pocket and chews it. Delilah should ask her table if anyone has gum and remark one should always have fresh breath – just in case. In the event her table does not have a piece she may ask another table or resort to "finding" one in her handbag.

AMELIA: *(Goes to mic.)* Good evening everyone. I want to thank you all for coming tonight. Part of the money you paid to watch the auction will be going to benefit the new children's wing. Several of the children who have been helped by the hospital have volunteered to sing later tonight. A few will share their stories. But there are many, many more children who need to be helped. The auctioneer will be here after dinner. But before he arrives I need to make sure I have all the correct information on those of you cleared to bid tonight. *(Looking out over the audience)* Mr. Smithson?

(Note: When cast members speak they should stand unless otherwise noted)

SMITHSON: *(Raising his hand.)* Here.

AMELIA: *(To Smithson.)* Mr. Smithson we have received a voucher from the Bank of America on behalf of the Smithsonian. You are cleared to bid up to your maximum limit, which of course is secret. All maximums are to be kept secret to keep the bidding as fair as possible. *(To audience.)* Mr. Smithson is a gemologist from the Smithsonian.

BERTHA: *(Standing and speaking in a most nasty manner.)* I just want to say this entire auction is a disgrace.

INDIRA: *(Standing and interrupting.)* Yes, a disgraceful outrage.

BERTHA: *(Perturbed at being interrupted.)* The Starlight Sapphire has been a family heirloom for years and this... this ... floozy has no business selling it. Why my son ever even spoke, much less

married, this piece of trailer trash is beyond me.

GILL: *(Pausing to look up from the computer.)* If I remember correctly your son sustained a severe closed head injury in the course of a polo match. That could explain... *(Veronica enters the first time. When she is not noticed, she leaves crestfallen to try again)*

BERTHA: *(Perturbed that he would bring up family matter in public.)* Keep quiet you ... you Geek!

Merry: Yes, but let's keep in mind he's the richest geek in the world. Compared to his bank account the Windsor family fortune simply pales. *(Bertha glares at him and sits with a disgusted snort.)*

BERTHA: You have no right to sell this family heirloom.

INDIRA: Indeed no right because the Starlight Sapphire belongs to the government of India. It was stolen by capitalistic genchnas!

AMELIA: *(With the greatest sincerity.)* But the children. Think of the children. *(Veronica enters, more obviously than the first time)*

BERTHA: If you ask me there are far too many poor children in the world already. If they can't afford to go to the hospital they have no business going. *(The rest of the cast, except for Gill who continues to work on his computer, display disbelief on their faces at such a statement. After a moment of shocked silence Betty Blue rushes in.)*

BETTY: *(Rushing in carrying the sack over her shoulder)* Sorry I'm late. All these people kept stopping me to get my autograph.

VERONICA: Your autograph? Why would anyone want your autograph? Now my autograph, people have stopped me millions of time for my autograph. In fact, if you weren't able to get my autograph before I'd be happy to give you one.

SMITHSON: *(Pointing)* You're Betty Blue! *(Excited)* You're that sixteen year old singing sensation from West Virginia.

MERRY: That's right. Your song, "I'm in Hog Heaven Over You" is topping all the charts.

GILL: *(looking up briefly.)* Number one on country and western. Number two on American Top Forty.

BERTHA: *(In the snottiest voice possible.)* Came off the farm to see the show, did you?

BETTY BLUE: No, I'm a bidding. I'm gonna get me that there sapphire to give to my momma. Then she's gonna be proud of me.

BERTHA: I don't think you understand. This is an auction. The Starlight Sapphire is worth millions of dollars. Do you understand what an auction is?

BETTY BLUE: Sure I do - I saw auctions plenty of times at the county fair. My aunt Matilda's jelly always goes for a good price but one time my cousin Betty Lou had a pie that went for 50 bucks cause these two guys who was sweet on her was just a bidding 'gainst each other and ... (*Bertha cuts in.*)

BERTHA: What I meant to say is the sapphire will start at 1 million dollars. Anyone who is bidding must have at least 1 million in an account to be able to bid.

BETTY BLUE: A million - no problem

BERTHA: (*Haughtily.*) Do you have a credit voucher to deposit so you can bid on the Starlight Sapphire?

BETTY BLUE: What's a voucher?

BERTHA: (*Smugly.*) Something from your bank that proves you can pay whatever amount you bid.

BETTY BLUE: Don't believe in no banks. Back during the depression my great, great pappy Smugs done lost all his money when the banks went under.

BERTHA: Do you have a pre-approved credit card?

BETTY BLUE: Don't got no credit card. Momma didn't bring none of us 'yung'uns" up to be buying stuff on credit. Bad credit's what ruined Uncle Bubba ... (*Zulfik moves to Ching. He talks inaudibly to her pointing at the sack Betty is carrying*)

AMELIA: (*Feeling sorry for Betty intervenes and asks, but with little hope of a positive answer.*) I don't suppose you electronically transferred money to another account then? (*Betty shakes her head "No".*) No? Never mind.

BERTHA: You have to have some way of paying to be a bidder. We can't let you bid unless we know you have the money to pay for it.

BETTY BLUE: I duz believe you got somethin' 'gainst pig farmers. Did all the rest of 'em hafta get the third degree?

CHING: Miss, miss. What's in sack?

(*Betty opens sack so Bertha, Amelia and Ching only can peer inside. Their eyes widen. Bertha's mouth drips open. Amelia quickly closes the sack up. Bertha whispers an aside to the nearest tables "It's filled with money. Twenties and hundreds."*)

AMELIA: (*Incredulous*) You came in here carrying that much cash?

CHING: Don't you have a bodyguard?

BETTY BLUE: Don't need one. I can wrastle any pig anywhere so I don't reckon some human's

gonna be much problem.

AMELIA: Let us get that locked up in the safe. I wouldn't want to see it get stolen.

BETTY BLUE: No. I think I better hold on to it. Don't be taking no count of no bank.

AMELIA: *Trying to think of something.*) It's not a bank - it's like, it's like... it's like a holding pen when the pigs go to the county fair.

BETTY BLUE: *(Brightening)* Now that makes sense. Sure - here ya go. *(Hands over the bag to Amelia who hands it to Ching who carries it off stage. Pulls a piece of bubble gum out of her pocket and chews. Blows bubbles with it during the rest of the scene.)*

AMELIA: Where was I? *(Checking her list.)* Yes, here. Delilah Lou Maybelline Texaco. *(Bertha will go in search of a seat because her feet are killing her. If possible she will order an audience member to get up and give her their seat)*

DELILAH: *(In her slowest sexiest Louisiana drawl.)* Right here, darling. *(Languidly waving her fan in response.)*

AMELIA: We have cleared your husband's credit card. You are free to bid tonight.

DELILAH: Of course I am sugar. My Big Bob Texaco wouldn't want his Delilah to be disappointed. What Delilah wants, Big Bob pays for.

AMELIA: *(Reading from list.)* The most exalted ambassadorial representative of the perfect principality of Pakistan, Zulfik Hashim. *(Zulfik basks in the titles, bowing and grinning ear to ear.)*

INDIRA: *(Shouting)* Pakistani genchna! He is nothing but a thief and liar and oath breaker as all Pakistanis are.

ZULFIK: *(Aside to audience.)* Does anyone have something for nerves you can give her?

AMELIA: Ambassador Zulfik, you are cleared to bid. However I must ask that you allow Ching to take your sword. We don't allow weapons.

ZULFIK: This sword is ceremonial.

AMELIA: *(Kindly but firmly.)* I'm sorry, Mr. Zulfik, but I must insist. *(Zulfik shrugs with acceptance and Ching gets the sword and disappears off stage with it.)*

AMELIA: We do appreciate your cooperation. *(Looks back to her list. Trying hard to pronounce a baffling name.)* Indee Nee ha roo

INDIRA: *(Insulted by the pronunciation.)* My name is Indira Nehru (Nay roo).

ZULFIK: *(Aside to audience.)* Neigh *(Whinnying like a horse)* Roooooo

AMELIA: (*Apologetically.*) I'm so sorry. We have received confirmation of your line of credit from the National Bank of India.

INDIRA: (*Indignant and emphatic.*) This is an outrage. The Starlight Sapphire rightfully belongs to India, my beloved country. (*Jabbing finger at Bertha.*) It was stolen by imperialistic pigs. (*Bertha gets out of seat and marches up to Indira looking for a battle.*)

BERTHA: How dare you besmirch the Windsor name! You cow kisser.

INDIRA: Cow kisser!?

ZULFIK: (*Aside to audience as Ching keeps the women apart.*) With a face like that she'd be lucky to get even a cow to kiss her.

AMELIA: (*Upset by Bertha's rude behavior*) Please. Let us conduct this auction in a proper polite fashion. I believe I have checked all the bidders off my list.

VERONICA: (*Waving and making as big an entrance as she can*) Wait! Wait! What about me? How could you forget me?!!!

AMELIA: I'm sorry... (*Consulting her list and finding nothing.*) Your name is ...?

VERONICA: (*Indignant.*) Everyone knows who I am.

BETTY BLUE: I don't.

VERONICA: That's because you probably don't have electricity on your pig farm. Otherwise you'd recognize me from all my movies. They play at least one every day on all the cable shows.

ZULFIK: (*Aside to audience.*) Probably on the oldies channel. (*To Smithson.*) Mr. Smithson, if you would be so kind, you know about ancient civilizations. Do you know who she is?

VERONICA: (*To Zulfik, put out.*) I beg your pardon. Just what are you trying to imply about my age. I'll have you know I am quite a young woman.

SMITHSON: I can't say as I know who you are either.

GILL: (*Looking up from computer.*) I don't know who you are. Too bad I didn't bring my retina scanning (*Stops as Merry places a finger on his lips to shush him*)

Merry: (*Aside to audience*) And Gill knows everything worth knowing.

AMELIA: (*Staring hard, face screwed up like she is trying hard to recall some obscure fact.*) I'm afraid I'm going to have to see some form of identification.

VERONICA: (*Defensive and huffy*) I have the most famous face in America. Only a fool wouldn't recognize me.

BERTHA: Obviously not or my daughter-in-law, who is the biggest fool I know, would know who you are.

CHING: We don't have all day! Show her your ID. (*Veronica Finally pulls out her passport and a hanky for her fake whine and cry about how terrible it is not to be recognized.*)

VERONICA: It's all that incompetent's fault. Not being able to get parts. People forgetting me. If my agent only had done his job I wouldn't have to put up with this horrible treatment. It's a good thing I fired him

Ching is keep trying to figure out if Veronica is the person in the photograph. Smithson comes up to look over her shoulder and help. They stage whisper back and forth while Veronica pretends to weep. Gill will remind Merry it's time to try the new antacid gum he is working on and both of them will put a piece in their mouths to chew. Gill will ask other people at the table if they want a piece.

CHING: Picture must be 30 years old.

SMITHSON: I thought you had to have a new passport picture at least every seven years.

CHING: Do you think she had plastic surgery or something?

SMITHSON: No, I think she needs to have plastic surgery.

Merry: Gill here has checked her out on his U938. By running the age progression simulation he developed for the FBI when they look for lost children using a photograph taken some years previously he has confirmed this woman (*Indicating Veronica with a wave of his hand.*) is indeed Veronica Pond.

AMELIA: Thank you. (*To Veronica.*) You are free to bid. All of you with special clearance may come forward at this time as Mr. Smithson authenticates the gem as the Starlight Sapphire.

Delilah sashays to the table fanning herself and running her fingers across the shoulders of a couple of men as she passes them. As Gill, Merry and Betty move towards the table, Zulfik cuts Indira off, causing her to bump into him.

INDIRA: (*Stumbling into him.*) This is outrageous! How dare a Pakistani genchna, an untouchable, dare touch my person! (*Zulfik just smiles.*) Your government will hear of this.

Ching carefully removes the gem from the display case. The bandages make it difficult but she eventually hands it to Smithson. Smithson holds it up to the light and examines it with his gemologist device. The entire cast oooohs and ahhhhhs staring avidly and for once not even Gill is distracted. They hold their collective breath as Smithson slowly rotates the sapphire to examine every facet. Finally ...

SMITHSON: This is the Starlight Sapphire. (*He gently hands the jewel to Ching who has difficulty grabbing it with the bandages.*)

AMELIA: (*Calls on audience member who will lead the prayer.*) Could we all stand as we pray over the food?

After everyone has stood the food is blessed. At "Amen" the lights go out and all cast get rid of their gum. Scuffling. Confusion and chaos should be heard. A chair or two are knocked over. In the darkness we hear in rapid succession.

The lights go out.

Designated character takes the Starlight Sapphire and hides it away.

Smithson knocks over a chair

Zulfik takes the sign from his briefcase and tapes it to Indira's back.

Veronica screams

BETTY BLUE: Momma save us!

CHING: *makes karate sounds then* "Ouch, my fingers"

DELILAH: My, you have cold hands

INDIRA: This is outrageous

Merry's cell phone rings

MERRY: Gill, Bill Gates wants to speak with you.

GILL: Tell him to call back

BERTHA: Will somebody please find the light switch!

Lights go back up

Delilah has planted a huge lipstick kiss on the cheek of a cast or audience member during the lights out. Veronica has fainted on the floor. When no one from the cast goes to help her, and if no one from the audience does, she opens one eye and peeks around. If no one still goes to help, she will resort to moaning about her head and insisting some cute men lift her up. She will reject the first few and ask for younger men with cameras)

SMITHSON: The Gem! It's missing!

AMELIA: The Starlight Sapphire is gone ?!!!

MERRY: Everyone stay where you are. Do not panic. Don't move. (*All cast gasp*)

BETTY BLUE: Was it aliens took the gem? They abducted Elvis so maybe they ...

BERTHA: (*Angry*) Shut up! Where is the gem? Amelia – you stupid idiot. How could you have let this happen? I knew you didn't have enough security. A judo expert with bandaged fingers was the best you could do?

AMELIA: (*Cowering*) I tried to get Pinkerton agents ...

(Indira is outraged when the sign is discovered on her back and Merry gathers it as evidence. Zulfik

smirks. If no one in audience says anything about the sign Merry will discover it and confiscate it as evidence and hand it to the janitor for safekeeping.)

MERRY: As an officer of the court I am placing everyone under house arrest.

CHING: *(Hands on hips)* How you arrest house? Beside, this no house. This auction.

INDIRA: Arrest me? Outrageous - I have diplomatic immunity

ZULFIK: *(Aside to a table "more like dippy immunity" then aloud and confidently)* My embassy will insist on the involvement of Interpol or another international law enforcement agency.

DELILAH: - No judge would put a southern lady like myself behind bars.

BERTHA: I will not be arrested. The Windsors are one of the oldest and most respected families. We don't want to be plastered all over the newspapers like commoners.

VERONICA: *(Suddenly alerted to possible publicity)* Oh! I did it! Arrest me.! Call the cops and the sheriff and the FBI and CIA and the National Guard but especially call the photographers! I did it! I'll confess. I'll tell all. Call the papers.

BERTHA: No newspapers!

VERONICA: Yes, newspapers! *(They start to quarrel. Ching tries to arrest Veronica and Bertha tries to stop it. Finally Merry takes charge)*

MERRY: *(To Ching)* Don't arrest anyone just yet. What's her name there *(Indicating Veronica)* is just confessing to get attention. *(To everyone)* I'm the closest thing to the law here since as an attorney I am an officer of the court. I'll take over.

SMITHSON: Now wait one minute. My grandfather was a Texas Ranger and everyone knows they're the best lawmen around. I should be in charge. Everyone in the vicinity should be frisked to see if the gem is in their possession.

MERRY: On the basis of your grandfather being a Texas Ranger? I think not.

DELILAH: *(Pointing to an audience member, coyly and flirtatiously)* That attractive man there can frisk me.

VERONICA: No! Me! He can frisk me.

INDIRA: This is outrageous! *(Janitor has made his way inconspicuously over to Merry)*

MERRY: No frisking. *(Janitor whispers to Merry)* Yes, good idea. I'm going to deputize all of you who are in the audience. Consider yourselves deputized since we don't have time to do you individually. And it only applies to those of age. You *(Pointing to the other characters)* are under

house arrest and may not leave the room

SMITHSON: I'll be the head deputy.

MERRY: That would be like making the coyote security at a hen house. *(Janitor again whispers to Merry).* Great idea. Gill, run off a sheet on all our suspects so our deputies here can keep track of motive and opportunity. Then start checking them out on the SQUE database and see what you turn up on any of them. One per table ought to do it. Deputies, crimes like this can be solved by figuring out who has both motive and opportunity to commit the crime.

In order to keep the suspects in sight I'm going to have them serve dinner. Deputies, feel free to question any of the suspects.

GILL: Right. *(Gill sets his computer up and begins working with it. The screen will remain blank. If an audience member comments on that Gill explains it is a privacy screen that only the person wearing his glasses can read).*

(Except for Janitor and Gill the cast serves dinner)



Starlight Sapphire

Scene II

During dinner the following things happen: Gill distributes the sheets. Characters interact with tables in character as they serve the food. Janitor makes the rounds of the tables, sweeping underneath, occasionally asking a table or individual to get up so he can check under the table or a chair. If the optional False Find scene is to be done, it should be done during scene II.

MERRY: *(Coming to microphone with Gill)* Ladies and Gentlemen. Gill has an important announcement to make.

GILL: I have run the suspects through my database and have some startling news. *(Janitor speaks to Merry quietly on the side)*

MERRY: *(Shakes his head in agreement as Janitor speaks to him)* Gill, let's wait a moment on the announcements. I think we'll have each of the suspects make a public statement first. Do you have your Polly Walla with you?

GILL: My new invention that will replace the polygraph? The one we're going to market to parents to use when their children come home late or fail to clean their rooms?

MERRY: Yes.

GILL: No

ZULFIK: *(Aside to audience)* Too bad. We might have been able to find out the "Star's" real age.

MERRY: Mr. Zulfik. If you have something to say do so now, publicly for all to hear. Did you take the gem?

ZULFIK: I did not but I would have had every right. The gem rightfully belongs to the country of Pakistan.

INDIRA: That's outrageous. Pakistan relinquished any claim to the Starlight Sapphire when that genchna Fatima ran off with a camel driver and dishonored Bhim and the entire Indian nation.

CHING: Mohawk? Navajo?

INDIRA: India! The country of India.

MERRY: Let's not get into an argument. Perhaps we should start with the history of the Starlight Sapphire.

ZULFIK: *(Proudly)* The Starlight Sapphire was the most prized jewel belonging to the rulers of

Pakistan since the dawn of time. It was reputed to have the power to harness the stars. Pakistan has always had the most perfect sapphires in the world; unlike some lesser countries (*Glances meaningfully at Indira who bristles*) The Maharajah's of India sought unsuccessfully to obtain it for many centuries. But it was not until 615 B. C. when a marriage contract was drawn up between Fatima, daughter of the Pasha Bhawal of Pakistan and her betrothed, Bhim, son of Jasraj, the Maharajah of India the sapphire was the dowry.

DELILAH: How romantic.

ZULFIK: The greedy Maharajah Jasraj was not satisfied with the magnificent brilliant jewels he owned. He greatly desired to possess the Starlight Sapphire because Pakistani wise men had determined it to possess mystical powers that could reach the stars and bless one's children for untold generations.

INDIRA: There is no such thing as a Pakistani wise man. The terms are mutually exclusive of each other, you Pakistani genchna!

MERRY: Enough bickering.

INDIRA: Just before the wedding that faithless genchna Fatima ran off with a camel driver. Humiliated and betrayed, the Maharajah refused to return the Sapphire to Pakistan. And threw it away.

GILL: This explains partially explains why there is constant conflict between the countries of India and Pakistan.

ZULFIK: But what she is not telling is how it suddenly reappeared in 1220 A.D. when the Rajah Shah Dara used it to bribe Genghis Kahn to expand the Mongol empire toward Pakistan. Miserable trouble starting Indians.

CHING: Mohegan? Cherokee? (*Indira and Zulfik start shouting at each other and Ching*)

MERRY: Enough. It's not a wonder your countries can't get along. Not even the diplomats can. (*Disgusted*) And they're supposed to be (*Searching for the word*) ... diplomatic. Take your seats. (*To Gill*) Gill, you've made quite a study of the gem. Continue the legend.

GILL: When the Khan died the Starlight Sapphire was never found among his possessions. The legend began that it had a will of its own

The Shah Dara placed a Hindu curse upon the gem so that a thief stealing it would suffer disgrace, poverty and infestation by fleas. He blessed it to bring long life and fame to those who would rightfully possess it and use it for the good of children.

The legend of the luck of the jewel reached the ears of a British Major

INDIRA: An imperialistic pig!

GILL: Who seized the sapphire in the name of the Imperial Crown. He intended to send it to his beloved daughter but died from a nasty infection secondary to flea infestation.

GILL: In 1882 a poker game took place on the Orient Express. A Texan bet the Starlight Sapphire on a straight flush. The winner of the hand had a royal flush.

DELILAH: I know the next part of the story. The Texan insisted there was cheating involved, drew a gun and tried to seize back the gem. He claimed to have that right as a Texas Ranger but the others aboard broke it up before a shot was fired.

GILL: The winner was a man from New Orleans who claimed to be the King of the Riverboat Gamblers.

DELILAH: He was found dead in his compartment aboard the Orient Express the following morning. Rumor had it he was murdered by the ranger fellow but nothing was ever proven. What a shame.
(*Glares at Bertha*)

MERRY: Mrs. Windsor. How did your family come to possess the gem? (*Both Bertha and Amelia begin talking at once, stop, Bertha glares at Amelia who is cowed by her mother in law*)

Merry: Mrs. Windsor, senior.

BERTHA: I know what you are trying to insinuate. My family is a well-respected upstanding member of the community. The sapphire has been in my husband's family for generations. I don't believe a word of any poker game story you and *that* (*With disdain*) scientist cooked up. My husband's grandfather, Winston Windsor I found the Starlight Sapphire when he served in the British army in New Delhi.

Ching: Ah, deli. Roast beef on rye.

SMITHSON: And none of the Winston Windsors would ever loan it to the Smithsonian, the greedy snobs. That gem is one of God's most perfect creations and should be put on display for the entire world to enjoy.

BERTHA: The Smithsonian has inadequate security.

SMITHSON: And you call this (*Indicating Ching*) adequate security? A karate student who burned herself on a waffle iron?

BERTHA: I certainly didn't arrange the security! It was her! (*Indicating Amelia*) Why didn't you just hire two boy scouts? That might have been cheaper and cheap is your middle name.

AMELIA: I tried to get the Pinkertons but there was some confusion and all they could send was ... her.

BERTHA: Just another example of your low class trailer trash upbringing.

CHING: Talk to the hand.

MERRY: Enough! Is there anyone here that doesn't want to get into an argument?

AMELIA: My husband, Winston Windsor the fourth inherited the gem when his father died. He was eternally grateful the children's hospital had saved his life. On his deathbed he made me promise to sell it to benefit the children's hospital

MERRY: Tell us more about that.

BERTHA: I'll do the talking now. My son was injured, gravely injured in a polo match. The children's hospital saved his life but I think he was always a little off in the head. He had to be to marry so beneath his station.

DELILAH: I remember reading about it in the society pages. Everyone was shocked when the he announced his marriage to a waitress.

BERTHA: None of this would have happened if his father, Winston Windsor the Third had taken a firmer hand with him. It was traumatic for father and son when my boy had that brush with death. But then my husband neglected his family and the duties of his station to devote himself to raising money for that hospital for poor children. (*Muttering but audible*) Like we don't have enough poor children already.

BETTY BLUE: You got something against poor people. I'll wrastle you for that. (*Starts to throw down*)

MERRY: Please, ladies!

ZULFIK: (*Aside to audience*) And he uses that term very loosely.

MERRY: The arguments are bad enough without resorting to violence. Remember why we're here.

BERTHA: (*Disgusted*) Who can forget.

AMELIA: (*With sincerity*) Yes, let us remember the children. I beg of you. Whoever has the gem, I beg of you, return it. No questions will be asked.

MERRY: Of course questions will be asked.

SMITHSON: Justice must be served. I'll find that gem if I have to take this place apart with my bare hands.

JANITOR: I don't think that will be necessary. (*Walks to display table. Reaches underneath to pull out the Sapphire which has been stuck to the bottom of the table with chewing gum. All characters express amazement. Veronica belatedly faints*)

AMELIA: The gem!

SMITHSON: Somebody stuck it underneath the table with ... gum!!

GILL: Is it the genuine Starlight Sapphire? *(While Smithson gets ready to examine it...)*

BETTY BLUE: I guess that wasn't no aliens that took it after all.

DELILAH: *(To the prone Veronica)* And I thought you were an actress. That's no way to swoon. This is how you swoon. *(Faints into the arms of Gill. Gill is absolutely bewildered by this and passes her to Merry. Delilah stands on her own, kisses Gill on the cheek leaving a lipstick print, causing him to be bewildered all over again. Veronica is obviously annoyed at being upstaged)*

SMITHSON: *(Examining the gem)* Yes, this is the Starlight Sapphire. *(To Janitor)* How did you...

AMELIA: Now we can have the auction.

MERRY: Not until we have gotten to the bottom of this. How did the Starlight Sapphire wind up stuck to the bottom of the table with gum!? Who was chewing gum this evening?

Allow some time for the audience to tell who they saw chewing gum, who asked for gum, etc. Characters can accuse each other and encourage the audience to speak and even accuse audience members who may have been chewing gum... If a cordless mic is available this presents Merry with a good opportunity to go to each table to get a statement from them regarding gum.

BERTHA: I knew gum chewing was a disgusting low class habit all along.

MERRY: Perhaps you are a bit too vocal about that. You may just be trying to throw suspicion on someone besides yourself.

BERTHA: Humph! I never

MERRY: Someone in this room is a thief. Deputies, you must still remain vigilant. Anyone who had access to gum is a suspect. Even if that someone is your own family member, your date for the evening or a complete stranger who you noticed chewing this evening. Now I have an additional task for all of you. Besides serving as deputies and witnesses you must serve as members of a grand jury as well.

Mrs. Windsor is right in keeping this sordid affair from the papers. We must do this for the sake of the children's hospital however, not her own. We would all hate to see the hospital and the children it serves suffer any negative consequences because of tonight's misadventure.

We will continue the investigation. I must ask that you listen carefully to what will be said. In America a grand jury determines if there is enough evidence for someone to stand trial. A jury is composed of twelve people. What I propose is that we hear what each suspect has to say, you

deliberate during dessert and then we'll reach a verdict. Any suspect gathering twelve votes against them will be handed over to the police for justice.

SMITHSON: Yes, let justice be served.

INDIRA: This is outrageous!

ZULFIK: *(Looking with superiority at Indira)* I have nothing to hide.

BETTY BLUE: Me neither. My momma didn't raise no thieves.

VERONICA: *(Hopefully)* Can we still get some reporters and photographers.

BERTHA: *(Pointing to Zulfik)* He looks like a thief. He could have put the Starlight Sapphire in that briefcase when the lights were out. What do you have in that briefcase?

ZULFIK: None of your business.

MERRY: I think we must insist you open the briefcase, Mr. Zulfik.

ZULFIK: And if I refuse?

INDIRA: Then it will prove what a guilty genchna you are. *(They glare at each other. Slowly Zulfik places the briefcase on a table and opens it. During the next few lines Gill picks up each and every item so the audience can see the array of weapons he was carrying. Lastly he raises the tape with a puzzled look)* What! No Slurpee machine? You seem to have everything else.

BERTHA: See. He's the thief. Why else would he bring all these weapons to an auction?

ZULFIK: *(With as much dignity as he can muster)* Ceremonial. Strictly ceremonial. I think you should however be asking about how much the gem was insured for.

MERRY: Good idea. *(To Bertha)* How much was it insured for?

BERTHA: Seven million.

AMELIA: You had insurance? I spent money getting insurance because I didn't think your policy would be in effect.

MERRY: How much did you insure it for?

AMELIA: Three million

GILL: This all could have been avoided if you had used the newest security device I invented. The TYX 3000...

MERRY: Gill, not now. Don't give away any secrets.

GILL: What about some of the secrets I discovered about some of the suspects?

MERRY: Yes, of course, Gill. What did your investigation turn up?

VERONICA: I hope it's something on me! Don't you think you ought to question me? I remember being questioned when I was on the Perry Mason TV show. I was playing a

GILL: *(Oblivious to Veronica and cutting her off) (During the following conversations she tries steal the limelight but is unsuccessful)* For starters, Delilah Lou Maybelline Texaco is a descendent of a New Orleans riverboat gambler who just happened to be the man found murdered on the Orient Express.

DELILAH: *(At first shocked, then regaining her composure)* Nonsense, utter nonsense. I'm simply here with my rich, oil well owning husband's checkbook to buy myself a birthday present.

MERRY: You may have come out of revenge.

DELILAH: *(To audience with all her composure)* Now ladies, if your husband gave you the checkbook and said buy your own present wouldn't you be out looking for a piece of jewelry? Now don't be shy. Raise your hand if you like jewelry. *(Pauses for audience to respond. Veronica loudly proclaims she does and tries to steal the limelight but is shut down when Delilah continues)* With a ten million dollar line of credit I suppose I'd be wearing the Starlight Sapphire real soon.

MERRY: *(Scoffing)* Ten million? What's ten million when my bro... I mean my client, Mr. Bates here has ten billion? He needs the Starlight Sapphire for his research into black holes. No one could have outbid him.

BETTY BLUE: I would have wrestled him for it then. I'd do anything to get that there blue stone for my mamma.

MERRY: Anything?

BETTY BLUE: Anything that weren't illegal.

GILL: *(Interrupting)* Let me read what the Grand Ole Opry Fan Club quoted Miss Blue as saying. "'I owe it all to my Momma.'" gushed the 16 year old singing sensation from the back hills of West Virginia. Her new hit 'When Pigs Fly' has gone platinum and is topping the charts for the 13th straight week.

Although the young star is crazy about her pigs, inside sources say Miss Betty Blue is absolutely devoted to her mamma. She once walked 17 miles in the snow to fetch her mamma's corn cob pipe that fell off the back of the family Chevy.

"I'm gonna make my mamma prouder than a peacock when she gits her next mamma's day present.

I'd do anything for my momma

BETTY BLUE: My momma didn't raise no thieves. I brought my money and I was gonna pay cold hard cash for that there blue jewel.

MERRY: So you say. Maybe you thought you could fool us all into thinking you're just a down home country girl who'd never dream up a plot like this.

VERONICA: (*Losing patience and interrupting*) What about me! Why isn't anybody asking me questions or uncovering skeletons in my closet?

MERRY: Fine. Miss Pond, did you have a motive for stealing the gem?

VERONICA: I wanted it splashed across the headlines of every paper in the country. "Veronica Pond Buys Starlight Sapphire. They'd print my picture wearing it. I would have invitations to appear with it on talk shows. I desperately need the publicity because my publicist was so incompetent and my agent is lazy. I haven't worked in months except for that adult diaper commercial. It's humiliating.

ZULFIK: (*Aside to audience*) More like years.

MERRY: Stick to the topic. You had a motive to steal the gem.

VERONICA: But I couldn't steal it or I wouldn't be able to publicize I had it. It would defeat my purpose if I ended up in jail. You can't go to casting calls if you're in prison.

ZULFIK: (*Aside to audience*) You can't go to casting calls if you're out of prison but they are not calling either.

MERRY: Mr. Smithson?

SMITHSON: I have no motive to steal the Starlight Sapphire. How could I put a stolen gem on display?

MERRY: Who knows? Perhaps revenge for your Texas Ranger grandfather who lost the Starlight Sapphire in a poker game on the Orient Express. Perhaps he killed Delilah's ancestor?

SMITHSON: Leave my grandfather out of this.

GILL: Merry, this just came up on the computer. (*Reading from computer*) A Ching Kong Ming Dum Fong lee Swan do Mang Ping was recently deported from Hong Kong for theft. Her date of birth, country of origin, occupation and native language are all unknown but the picture matches Ching Kong. And I quote, "Said criminal has been escorted from our jurisdiction and is to be barred from ever entering again. Please Note: China, Japan, Laos, Hong Kong, Korea and Thailand and the Canary Islands have also deported her for theft as well.

MERRY: Ching, what do you have to say to that?

CHING: Talk to the hand.

MERRY: What did she steal?

GILL: (*Reading from computer*) Candy. From a baby.

MEERY: (*Incredulously*) You stole candy from a baby?

CHING: Candy have lots sugar. Sugar bad for teeth.

DELILAH: (*Smiling at a male audience member*) Speaking of sweets, Mr. Pason, these nice people haven't had their dessert yet.

MERRY: Yes. Ladies and gentlemen, deputies and members of the jury. Are there any questions any of you have for any of our suspects? (*Allow audience to ask questions on the mic*) Feel free to question any of the suspects individually if you feel the need. But remember, someone who would steal the Starlight Sapphire ...

ZULFIK: (*Aside to audience*) Or candy from a baby.

MERRY: Would probably not hesitate to lie to you. . I suggest you deliberate with the people at your table and carefully consider who may be the guilty party. Suspects, please serve the jury their just desserts.

DESSERT AND AUDIENCE DISCUSSION AT THEIR TABLE

Servers bring coffee and dessert, characters circulate talking up their innocence, blaming others, tables discuss the clues and come up with their theory. (Janitor goes to change)

Starlight Sapphire

SCENE III

When dessert has been served and the audience has had a chance to deliberate move into the dialogue. Merry should give a 4 minute and a two minute warning before the dialogue starts that the jury should be wrapping up their deliberations.

MERRY: Ladies and gentlemen. I assume you have listened carefully to the evidence presented, that you have discussed this matter with your fellow deputies and jurors and have come to a conclusion as to whom the police should arrest. It takes 12 votes in a court of law so any suspect here tonight who receives twelve or more votes will be turned over to the police. You may declare your verdict by raising your hand when a suspect's name is called out. I'll count the votes and record them

SMITHSON: I object! How do we know you won't cheat?

MERRY: I suppose you want to count and record? *(The two men seem to be about to face off. Janitor whispers to Merry who nods in agreement.)* To keep things above board we'll have two members of the audience count and record. Do we have any volunteers? *(Selects two people and gives them pen and paper).* Any more objections, Mr. Texas Ranger?

SMITHSON: Fine by me.

MERRY: Now, besides these suspects *(Indicates the cast with a sweep of his hand)* are there any other suspects we should include?

Allow the audience time to "nominate" a fellow audience member who may have been chewing gum. If the audience does, Merry should have them stand. He should have them say their names and give them an opportunity to "confess".

Who thinks Smithson is the guilty party? *(Allows time to count and tally between each name)* Ms. Delilah Lou Maybelline Texaco? Betty Blue? Bertha? Amelia? Ching? Indira? Zulfik? *(Include any audience nominated suspects at this time)*

MERRY: I guess that's everyone.

VERONICA: You forgot me! Veronica Pond! I'm Veronica Pond. I'm famous! Why can't anyone remember that? Please, vote for me. It may be the only way to get my picture in the paper.

MERRY: That about wraps it up.

SMITHSON: Hold it right there. I notice you didn't put your name or Gill's out there. Folks, who think this slick lawyer fellow could have done it? How about his brother, Gill? *(Turns to tally people.)* So who has the most votes? Let's get them tied up until the police arrive.

(Before they can answer the Janitor stops them)

JANITOR: Stop! No one is going to be arrested.

MERRY: Who do you think you are interrupting these proceedings? That's obstruction of justice.

JANITOR: I'm known as Agent Double O six point five.

BETTY BLUE: You look just like the janitor guy who was here. Are you two from the same litter?

JANITOR: No, I'm from The Agency.

MERRY: Agency? What agency?

JANITOR: THE Agency. It's on a need to know basis. If you don't already know, you don't need to. Besides, there are two of us here from THE AGENCY. I'll let you wonder a little longer who the other one is. Now, let us solve this mystery together.

As Merry Pason told you folks earlier this evening, opportunity and motive are keys to crime. Gill Bates is responsible for the lights going out.

SMITHSON: I'll grab him while you read him his rights.

JANITOR: Hold on. The lights going out were an accident. This place isn't wired to handle that new invention of Gill Bates. Gill Bates had no motive to steal the gem. He knew he could outbid anyone here and he would have because his research, not money, is most important to him.

There is someone else we can eliminate on that basis as well – Amelia. She has never been all that concerned about money or image. This very much irritated her mother-in-law.

ZULFIK: *(Aside to audience)* Is there anything that wouldn't irritate her? She's grumpier than a camel with sore feet.

JANITOR: Amelia cared about the children the hospital could help. That's probably why blue blooded Winston Windsor married her; she was a kind, caring individual. She is no thief, nor a gold digger as Bertha claims.

Bertha thinks quite a bit about money and image. She would never have placed the family's reputation in jeopardy by committing a crime. Plus, she is allergic to chewing gum and her hands would have broken out if she had touched the gum.

Betty Blue had plenty of motive, she said herself she would do anything for her momma. But something this complex is undoubtedly beyond her grasp and we all know her "momma didn't raise no thieves."

Veronica wouldn't have risked going to jail since it would mean no more acting career. Smithson

couldn't have put a stolen gem on display.

Indira and Zulfik probably had the most motive of anyone here tonight and neither would have considered taking what they believed rightfully belonged to their respective country's as theft. But Zulfik was too busy putting this (*Displays kick me sign*) on Indira's back.

ZULFIK: (*Insulted*) How dare you accuse me of such a thing?

JANITOR: Seeing as how the tape used matches the tape in your briefcase, the handwriting matches yours and this sign reads "Kick me" in Pakistani, it was an easy deduction. (*Zulfik looks ashamed*)

INDIRA: That's ... that's

JANITOR: Outrageous?

INDIRA: Yes.

JANITOR: Delilah had opportunity. She probably has more relatives in the Bayou underground than can be counted but she had no intention of ever associating with them once she married Big Bob and moved to Texas. She too, had no use for a stolen gem since it couldn't be enjoyed publicly

If Merry had wanted to steal it he would have had his brother come up with a foolproof plan. Yes, that's right, Merry and Gill are brothers. But both are law abiding citizens and, as I said earlier, Gill could have outbid anyone.

Ching obviously would not have the manual dexterity with the bandages. Besides....

CHING: (*In perfect English*) Besides, I'm the other agent from The Agency.

SMITHSON: (*Frustrated and confused*) What agency?

CHING: (*In perfect English*) Talk to the hand.

JANITOR: The person responsible was chewing gum but has no idea that they are the responsible party. When the lights went out Amelia was startled. She accidentally spit out the huge wad she was chewing against Bertha's orders. It stuck to the Sapphire. She groped around in the dark and then stuck the gum under the table like kids do. She was so worried about Bertha catching her with gum she never even noticed the sapphire was stuck on it.

SMITHSON: (*Confused*) Does that mean we can't arrest anybody? (*Merry and Gill whisper back and forth*)

VERONICA: (*Aside to audience*) Does that mean the police and reporters and photographers aren't coming?

JANITOR: Yes, the auction can go on as planned.

AMELIA: Thank God the children's hospital will get their addition.

MERRY: There is no need for an auction. As double O six point five has said, Gill would outbid everyone else. In return for giving him the gem for his research he will give the hospital whatever is needed for the wing. Who should we make the check out to? *(Amelia goes over to speak to him. He pulls a checkbook out and writes a check)*

INDUIRA: *(Sputtering in anger)* That is *(Calmly, for once)* Actually it is not outrageous. The Shah wished for the Starlight Sapphire to bless many children and now it will. *(Announcing)* India relinquishes her claim to the gem.

ZULFIK: *(To Indira)* I think that is the first thing I have ever heard you say that was NOT outrageous. *(To the audience)* Pakistan too relinquishes any claim to the Starlight Sapphire. *(Indira and Zulfik stare at each other for a moment, close the distance between them and shake hands. The other characters applaud.)*

BERTHA: Well, that's all well and good but the Windsors do NOT relinquish their claim. *(Amelia takes a step toward her)* And I certainly am not going to shake your hand. *(Amelia stops, crestfallen)*

ZULFIK: *(Aside to audience)* Maybe we can have an auction anyway. Anyone want to bid on the world's worse mother-in-law? *(Bertha glares at him)*

BETTY BLUE: I wanna donate the earning off my next CD to the hospital. That would make my momma prouder than any six gems. And the pigs wouldn't appreciate her wearing it anyway. She might as well hang an ear of corn on a string and wear that.

DELILAH: I happen to know a guy with a few spare oil wells. We'll be sending the deeds. That should provide operating funds for the new wing for a long time.

VERONICA: *(Sputtering, not wanting to be left out)* I'll donate half of what I make on my next movie.

ZULFIK: *(Aside to audience)* Half of nothing is nothing. *(Veronica glares at him)*

SMITHSON: But what a loss to the world, what a loss for people everywhere to admire one of God's most perfect creations.

GILL: Mr. Smithson, I'd be happy to lend it to the Smithsonian to display when I am not using it in my research.

SMITHSON: You are truly a generous man.

ZULFIK: *(Aside to audience)* Now if he could just get some fashion sense. *(He and Indira chuckle with each other)*

AMELIA: What a wonderful evening this has turned out to be after all. Thank you all for coming and

we urge you to remember “Children should be of utmost importance, more than wealth or glory. The well-being of children, physically, mentally and spiritually should be the foremost factor in any decision made by a family or nation.”

CAST: (Ad lib) God bless. Good night.

Starlight Sapphire

Director's Notes

The Mystery of the Starlight Sapphire is a three scene play with dinner occurring between scenes one and two and dessert between scenes two and three. It has many opportunities for ad libbing and audience involvement. However during the portion of the script when the gem is “stolen” the timing must be exact or the mystery is blown. Careful repeated rehearsal will help ensure a smooth scene.

SET and PROPS:

A display table measuring at least 2'X2' and no larger than 4'X4' covered with a dark table cloth that hangs over the edges by 6 inches. (black or deep blue velvet looks best). A security box is placed upon the table. The sapphire displayed can be done in a small glass case, on a mirror or however best causes the gem to sparkle in the lighting you have available.

Two identical “Starlight Sapphires” (One to be set head of time, the other to be displayed.)

Optional: A brochure describing the gem and its history. This can be handed out in lieu of a program.

COSTUMES & HAND PROPS:

Character descriptions include costume and hand props. The stage manager will need to set one of two identical “sapphires” just prior to the show. The sapphire is to be partially encased in putty and stuck beneath the display table. Have the stage crew practice setting the jewel and allowing 3-4 hours to elapse to make sure the type, amount and placement of the putty will hold the gem to the underside of the table as long as it will be needed to be hidden there.

LIGHTING:

The only requirement for lighting is the ability to cause complete and utter darkness for 30-40 seconds. It is recommended that the lighting be kept quite bright prior to the “lights out” so that the audience’s eyes take a longer time to adjust, giving the cast more time to complete their actions. Following “lights out” the lighting can be adjusted to softer lighting to give a dining ambience.

SOUND:

Central microphone. Having a wireless hand held mic increases the audience’s participation. If one is available, Merry should use it during scenes two and three.

RUN TIME:

Varies greatly by audience size and method of serving meals. Scene I lasts approximately 17-19 minutes. Scene II runs about 20 minutes. Scene III has the greatest variability. Allow at least 15 minutes. However interactive audiences may considerably lengthen either scenes II or III with questions, conferring with other tables, conducting their own questioning of the suspects. The optional False Find scene takes approximately two minutes.

Any complete run time will be an estimate only not only because audience interaction but because of time needed to serve and eat. Single line buffets leave those served first with time to interact with the cast while others are being served or eaten. Double or more line buffets leave the cast with less unstructured dialogue. The more members of the audience; the more time that needs to be factored in. If meals are being served at individual tables the number of servers becomes a factor. If china and metal utensils are used more noise is created and must be played over than paper or plastic products. Tablecloths help diminish distracting noise.

This show was first produced at the Kempsville Church of Christ, Virginia Beach, VA in October of 2006 with a total run time of 1 hour and forty-five minutes.



Starlight Sapphire

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

CAST: Costume, props and information for cast only.

AUDIENCE INTERACTION: Suggestions for characters when they interact with the audience off script.

Smithson: A gemologist for the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D. C. He chews gum during the first scene. If asked he tells people it's Asprigum for a headache.

CAST: Smithson wears a suit, string tie and cowboy boots. He carries a jeweler's loop to examine gems. Smithson's grandfather was a Texas Ranger who lost the Starlight Sapphire in a poker game on the Orient Express. (Smithson can be played by a female)

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

He strongly believes "One of a kind gems are God's treasures to be enjoyed by ALL the people of the world."

Notice and examine audience member's jewelry. Where is it from? Passed down the family? How many carats? Are you willing to sell it?

Have you seen our newest display at the Smithsonian? Have you ever seen our Hope Diamond?

During dessert comments that if Gill Bates is the smartest man in the world why doesn't he know who stole the Starlight Sapphire? Asks for volunteers to be part of his posse when the guilty party is found and needs to be "taken down."

Merry Pason: Intelligent take-charge lawyer of Gill Bates

CAST: Merry is actually Gill's older brother. He wears a suit, tie, carries a briefcase and cell phone.

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

Gill is the smartest man he ever met. He got PhD's simultaneously from M.I.T. and Cal. Tech when he was 12. He built his first computer from old watch parts when he was 5

Once he has the Starlight sapphire he'll be able to harness starlight to replace fossil fuels. The Starlight Sapphire contains the color, cut, clarity and size perfect for his research.

Gill Bates: Probably the most brilliant scientist/inventor of this era, Gill is preoccupied with his work and with little else. He is currently working on harnessing light from the stars as an alternative to fossil fuels. He carries Chiclet type gum in a pill bottle.

CAST: Gill has disheveled hair, thick glasses (possibly with nerd tape holding the middle together), high water slacks, and a short sleeved white dress shirt with plastic pocket protector with a slide rule, protractor, pens and pencils in it. He wears black or brown dress shoes and white socks. He carries a futuristic computer.

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

Very little. He seems startled if anyone other than Gill speaks to him. He's lost in his world of scientific and technological thought.

Zulfik: A patriotic but impudent diplomat from Pakistan sent to bid on the Sapphire.

CAST: Zulfik wears formal attire, fez, diplomatic sash with 1 to 3 medals and a ceremonial scimitar. His briefcase is full of "Ceremonial" weapons - brass knuckles, pepper spray, daggers, garrote, noose, etc. and a roll of tape.

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

Zulfik is a prankster and always ready with a wise crack, more good natured than evil and is likely to make snide remarks about anything, but particularly Indira and all things Indian. He is chewing gum because she has trouble equalizing her ears on intercontinental flights. The Starlight Sapphire legally belongs to Pakistan. The Indian Government should have returned it centuries ago. The groom from India was so ugly and mean the Pakistani Princess Fatima would have run off with a camel if the camel driver hadn't been handy.

Janitor: Nameless janitor who for the most part blends into the background, rarely speaking or making any eye contact. He is chewing gum.

Cast: During most of the show he is dressed in a janitorial jumpsuit, cleaning rag hanging out of his back pocket and carrying a broom or mop. In the last scene he reappears in a black turtleneck and slacks with a "James Bond" demeanor. (Can be played by a female)

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

Asking people to move she can see under tables and chairs.

Females:

Indira: A diplomat from India who is easily affronted. The phrase making a mountain out of a molehill could have been coined for her.

CAST: Indira wears a sari, bare feet or sandals, with jewelry, hairstyle befitting an upper class educated woman from New Delhi. She carries an evening bag and either a large bag or suitcase that will be searched.

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

The jewel was stolen from India by capitalistic imperialistic pigs.

Zulfik is a genchna (pig)

Pakistan forfeited their right to the Starlight Sapphire when the princess ran off with the camel driver.

If it didn't rightfully belong to India why did it keep returning there?

She is chewing gum because she has trouble equalizing her ears on intercontinental flights.

Ching Kong: Fragile looking security guard with little command of the English language.

CAST: Ching wears a martial arts costume and has individual bandages on each finger and thumb.
(Ching can be played by a male.)

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

When guarding the Starlight Sapphire: “Stay back or...” while making karate moves and noises.

“No understand English. Talk to the hand.”

“Where you when lights went out?”

(See false find script insert)

Veronica Pond: An aging actress who once had a brilliant career as a child star but is now desperate to be back in the limelight.

CAST: Her costume should be slightly dated but glitzy and include sunglasses, gaudy jewelry, sequins, hankie, glitter, heavy makeup, a small purse containing a mirrored compact and lipstick and a flashy pen she uses to sign autographs.

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

Your agent and publicist are hopeless. You fired them both.

Share movies you were in. Let your co-stars be older actors and actresses to hint at your age then quickly cover by saying you were a child star when you did that movie.

“Do you want my autograph?” (You can sign napkins.)

When serving, hand things to the audience to serve for you so you can check your make up in the mirror in your purse.

You can’t wait until the media carries the story of you purchasing the Starlight Sapphire. It will put you back in the limelight where you belong.

Betty Blue: Down home country teenage singing star who skyrocketed to fame with her country and western hit “When Pigs Fly”. Her families are pig farmers and except for her dear momma, pigs are her favorite things on earth.

CAST: Betty Blue wears cut off shorts, a gingham shirt, pig tails, rope belt. Her feet are bare and some mud has been splashed on them and her legs. She carries a large drawstring well-worn sack filled with cash. Has a twang accent. A potbellied pig on a rope leash would be a nice touch.

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

Strong handshake like a man.

Her favorite book is Charlotte’s Web.

She showed pigs at the county fair and one year you won with a potbellied pig she named Kevin Bacon.

Miss Piggy is her favorite actress.

She were so scared when your momma fell off the John Deere tractor and got hurt, fearing she might die. Her mother taught her how to sing and wrestle pigs

and since becoming rich Betty offered to buy her momma indoor plumbing, a pink Cadillac, one of those singing fish you put up on the wall but she's refused them all. So you are going to get her this here gem as a token of your appreciation for all she did for you.
"Momma didn't raise no thieves"

Amelia Windsor: Former waitress and wife of the lately departed Winston Windsor IV. Amelia is kind but uncouth. She chews a large wad of gum in the beginning of the show...

CAST: Amelia wears black as she is still mourning her husband's death. It should be polyester and slightly trashy, static cling if at all possible.

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

Her mother-in-law might do anything to keep the Starlight Sapphire in the family.
Dearly departed husband Winston Windsor IV wanted more than anything to build an addition to the hospital. She'd hate to disappoint him.

Bertha Windsor: Amelia's snobbish cranky mother-in-law. She is firmly opposed to plans to sell the Starlight Sapphire, a family legacy.

CAST: Bertha is at least sixty five years of age and dressed tastefully.

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

Amelia is gold digging trailer trash and an embarrassment to the Windsor family name.
The Starlight Sapphire is a family heirloom and should not be sold.
Amelia probably stole it and planned to cash in the insurance policy as well.

Delilah Lou Maybelline Texaco: Flirtatious southern Belle raised on the bayou but currently married to the Texas oil tycoon Big Bob Texaco.

CAST: Delilah wears tasteful flowing clothes that befit a member of the old southern aristocracy. She has a southern drawl.

AUDIENCE INTERACTION:

Flirts

"I wouldn't do well in prison. Those orange jumpsuits aren't very flattering."
How her wealthy and sweet husband sent her off with the checkbook to buy "a little something" for her birthday.

Starlight Sapphire

OPTIONAL FALSE FIND SCENE

The following scene is optional and would be played out while the audience is either in the buffet line or being served at their table.

The Ching character will find an audience member who is wearing jewelry that fits the scene and play the scene at that audience member's location.

CHING: *(Shouting)* Come quick! I find Starlight Sapphire. This lady have it! *(Cast members except for Gill and Janitor will move to see what she has found)*

SMITHSON: That's not the gem. That isn't even a sapphire. Sapphires are blue.

ZULFIK: *(Aside to nearby audience)* How did she ever get a security job?

CHING: *(Disappointed, to Smithson)* You talk to hand.

After a few moments

CHING: Come quick. I find Starlight Sapphire, really! Come see! *(Cast members except for Gill and Janitor will move to see what she has found)*

SMITHSON: That's not the Starlight Sapphire.

CHING: *(Adamantly)* Is blue.

SMITHSON: Yes, it's blue but it's not the Starlight Sapphire. The Starlight Sapphire is at least 75 carats.

CHING: *(Shaking a bandaged finger at Smithson)* No carrots for dinner. We had corn *(Or another vegetable.)*

ZULFIK: *(Aside to audience)* Maybe she should have ordered glasses with those bandages.