

# The One Item



# Director's Notes

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## Brief overview of The One Item

The audience gathers for what they think will be a memorial service for the missionary fondly known as Uncle Buck but ends up trying to save Sadie McCrady (Buck's niece) and themselves from being swindled by the unscrupulous pawnbroker Harry Sneed. Not only must they solve what ONE ITEM Sadie should choose for her inheritance but they must uncover who is the impostor is.

Plot is broken into 3 scenes. One before dinner, one between dinner and dessert and the last after dessert is served. A sample ending is provided in the event this is produced as a fund raiser for missions. It can be adapted for any occasion as best suits a producer's individual situation.

## Major characters

Harry Sneed - The greedy pawnbroker who would sell his own mother for the right price.

Abdul Ak Bar - Christian and Saudi businessman with an international corporation based out of Indonesia

Dr. Kitty Ratchet - semi retired doctor, Roanoke Bible College professor and former missionary

Mr. Withers – Old, old friend of Uncle Buck's. Played baseball and enlisted in the Navy together as teenagers. Forgetful, mostly deaf and a big scene stealer

Fi Fi La Cher - American translator for the Louvre Museum in France

Adonis - Illegal immigrant posing as a Greek antiquities dealer to assist Harry's unscrupulous agenda.

Hezekiah - An out of work actor posing as a missionary from the Dominican Republic. (Can be a female role as desired)

## Minor Roles

Eve - Roanoke Bible College student majoring in missions who recently finished a summer internship to Thailand. She is sweet and polite.

Sadie McCrady - College student and niece of Uncle Buck, sweet, young, naive.

Sum Jung Dood (pronounced some young dude) - Thai national who has just arrived in the states to study at Roanoke Bible College so he can go back to Thailand and preach the gospel. Speaks very little English

Samantha -An 80 year old, wealthy, refined widow

Buff - Tough, gruff, uneducated security guard who works for Harry Sneed

# Suggestions for The One Item

## Casting

Withers and Adonis have potential for many ad libs and should be comfortable with off the cuff humor. They should be willing to make fools of themselves to get laughs. Withers baseball team need not be the Mets. You can make it whatever baseball team's cap he uses for his costume.

Sadie has fewer lines and less stage time than most of the cast and therefore needs a strong persona to gain the audience's sympathy quickly. (Choose an area college for her to attend. It cannot be Roanoke Bible College)

Sum Jung Dood need not speak any real Thai. However buying or borrowing Thai language learning tapes from a public library to be more authentic.

Withers, Dr. Ratchet, Abdul and Samantha will deliver their eulogies in their own words based on information they are given on their character descriptions. It is not out of place for their characters to refer to notes. In the event less experienced actors lose their train of thought, advise them to pause as if getting choked up, collect their thoughts, and then continue.

If you need additional cast to serve or want to cultivate future performers you can assign those people the roles of current Roanoke Bible College students who knew Uncle Buck

## Menu

Oriental can be done inexpensively yet lend itself to the atmosphere. A pasta alternative for those who do not like oriental foods may help ticket sales. Keep in mind Harry Sneed is cheap and unlikely to provide a lavish meal. The cast can comment on how cheap the menu is and how disrespectful it is to Uncle Buck's memory.

You may choose to omit the small bit of one lettuce salads.

If you choose to have a menu that Harry was unlikely to provide have the cast circulate that Abdul and Samantha ordered and paid for the food because Harry was planning on serving hot dogs and chips. With buns from the day old bakery. Without condiments. And no dessert

## Suggested Set

In order to make Harry Sneed look cheap and tacky up front we suggest you use no tablecloths, toss place settings in a disheveled heap on the table, then carefully place 2-3 “artifacts” on each table as centerpieces. Place a copy of “Valuable Artifacts for Sale - Suggested Retail Prices” on each table to assist the audience in deciding which item is the ONE ITEM.

Place a standing microphone in a central location for Harry to use as master of ceremonies and for characters delivering eulogies.

The times in the script should be changed to accommodate your schedule. Have the deadline be about 30 minutes before you actually plan to end. This creates a mood of urgency.

## Required Props

Letter 1 (the original in an envelope addressed to Sadie and enough copies so each table can have one)  
Letter 2 (optional - have copies of this available for each table)  
Inventory list labeled “Valuable Artifacts for Sale - Suggested Retail Prices” (This is not included in this packet and must be compiled and produced by the props department)  
Letter of Introduction for Sum Jung Dood

The following items should be among the artifacts on the tables to provide items that might match the “clues” found in Uncle Buck’s real letter to Sadie. A “suggested retail price” is listed in { }

Rocks (labeled “Moon Rocks”) {\$45,000}  
Long nails or spikes (Labeled Nails from Calvary) {priceless - make offer}  
An autographed baseball (We used an old one and had each cast member “sign” as a baseball player of their choice) {\$23,000}  
A baseball card {\$5,699}  
Something locked with a combination lock (If asked, Harry does not know the combination or what is inside. He will assure potential buyers it’s probably quite valuable) {\$77}  
Something that will pass for rhinestone or diamond jewelry (labeled Rhinestones from the Rhine) {\$25}  
Something with the number “1” on it. {\$120}

## Suggested Props

The rest of the artifacts used can be whatever you choose so that each table has 2-3 artifacts for the audience to examine.

We suggest some pottery, decorative weapons and art work the cast may own that looks like it could be from a foreign country. Whatever you use should not be valuable or have sentimental value in case objects are lost or broken. You may want to include an unlabeled floppy disk, an old doll, a stuffed animal (maybe there is something hidden inside?) some unidentified sheet music, a mining claim from the 1800's(template included below), some jewelry and other items that just look interesting or odd. After you have decided what you will use, 2 -3 items per table, place them on an inventory list of "Valuable Artifacts for Sale - Suggested Retail Prices" and assign each one a "suggested retail price". Have two prices lower than \$25, a few in the hundreds and a couple totally outrageous. Using a couple of things marked "made in China" can be very funny. Adonis can get "caught" promoting fraudulent artifacts then try to cover up by saying. "Oh, Chinese. From the Ming Dynasty. You buy."

Props may want to provide Harry with business cards to pass out. These should include "Harry Sneed's Pawnshop", a fictional address such as "Sleeze Lane, next door to Sneezy's Bar and Grill" and a phone number with a local prefix followed by 6666. Add some money related clip art.

## Letter 1 for "One Item"

(This should be copied by Fi Fi La Cher onto plain paper. Enough copies should be run so each table can have one at the appropriate time)

My dear niece,

How I wish I could see you one last time but it is not to be. Ebola is fatal and I count my life in hours, not days or weeks.

My dearly departed sister's only child - How proud I was to learn that you wished to follow in my footsteps. The world needs missionaries and translations of the Bible everyone can understand. I am pleased you intend to graduate then find ways to bring audio Bibles to people who not only do not have the Bible in their language but who cannot read either. God bless you and your endeavors for him.

As you know, my collection is in the hands of Harry Sneed. Believe no advice he gives you. It was necessary to pawn them for my last trip. Little did I know it would be my very last. In the event I could not return or buy the items back, it was a condition of the pawning that you could pick any one item as your inheritance. Select the right one.

Harry Sneed is not to be trusted. I fear you may have to rely on clues I have sprinkled inside this letter and the recollections of my various associates. As a boy I loved the infield. Being in the navy was a good thing, not because I learned about weapons but because I learned about love. I traveled all over and collected a few things. I mostly collected souls for the kingdom and memories of my work. Looking back, some of the paths were really rocky. Yes, my life had some interesting combinations.

All the items invoke fond memories of my adventures. Many are valuable only for sentimental purposes. Some would be worth a little money to a museum or collector. But one, THE ONE ITEM, is worth thousands, enough for you to start your life's work. Your decision therefore must be a hard one; I

can only Hope it is the hardest of your life

## Letter 2 for “One Item”

(This should be a word processed document placed in an envelope labeled “Sadie” in a man’s handwriting)

My deer neice,

I want you to no that I love you. Do good in yur work. The most valueable thing I owned came from isreal. It is real nails from the cross. God bless.

uncle buck

## Suggested Mining Claim for “One Item”

(Copy by hand onto a 5" X 7" scrap piece of a brown paper bag that has been aged. Aging can be done by repeatedly rolling and unrolling the paper in different directions until it becomes worn. Allow the edges to become somewhat ragged)

Claim: Territory of Wyoming

Parcel 498

Registered this day, 24 of April, 1856

Bearer to own property and all mineral rights.

(Sign as) Peabody Page, Deputy Assistant, United States Department of Commerce

## Sum Jung Dood’s Letter for “One Item”

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a letter of introduction for Sum Jung Dood from Mi Long, Thailand. He is enrolling as a student at Roanoke Bible College upon entrance to the United States. He speaks very little English. He intends to return to Thailand as an evangelist.



## The One Item

*[Setting: A dingy rented hall. As audience files in a table almost obstructs their entry. On it are two signs. The first scrawled on a torn sheet of notebook paper reads "Memorial for Uncle Buck. No Freeloaders" and displays the ticket price. The second is printed attractively on cardstock and reads "Check out the fine artifacts for sale". A cash box and tickets for sale are on the table.*

*The hall is set for a dinner. The place settings have been haphazardly strewn across the tables in contrast to the two to three carefully placed artifacts. Each table has a "Suggested Price List" but no tablecloth or other adornment. A mop and bucket, several brooms and unused tables, chairs and junk litter the periphery giving the set a shabby atmosphere.]*

### Scene I – Welcome to Uncle Buck's Memorial Service

*(Harry and Buff are stationed at the entry table, making absolutely sure everyone entering either has a ticket or pays for one. Harry adlibs his greetings "Be sure to look over all the fine artifacts." "All these fine artifacts will be on sale at Harry Sneed's Pawnshop." "I'll gladly sell any tonight if you can meet the suggested retail price right now." Buff stands with his arms crossed glowering at the people as they enter. He informs them he is not to be messed with and used to be a tough bouncer in Las Vegas. He adlibs lines like "Open your purse, lady - how do I know you haven't got a gun and you're planning on stealing all these valuable artifacts." "Mister, lemme see what's in those pockets. Could be a bomb."*

*(Sum, Samantha, Hezekiah, Eve, Adonis and Fi Fi are scattered throughout the tables interacting with guests as they arrive. Sum bows repeatedly to the guests and shows his letter of introduction. Fi Fi specifically is asking for a description of Sadie McCrady since they have never met and she has a very important letter to deliver in person. Adonis carries a rag and Windex (or other brand that can be easily recognized as a glass cleaner). He specifically lets guests know in his inconsistent accent that he is a knowledgeable and expert Greek antiquities dealer. Besides adlibs he uses the following: "Know all about artifacts." "You want I wash your glasses the better to see these fine artifacts." "You buy artifacts, good deals. You come. See suggested price list. "I never met Harry Sneed before. Never been here before. Never saw any of these things before. Never been to the pawnshop". "I'm named after the Adonis from Greek mythology because I am so handsome.") Hezekiah, Eve and Samantha introduce themselves, how they know Uncle Buck and bemoan the tragedy of his death.)*

*Sharply at 6 pm Harry strides to the microphone. Buff remains at table in case of stragglers.*

**Harry:** *(In his most pleasant snake oil salesman voice.)* Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen. *(Checks the watches fastened to the inside of his jacket.)* It is 6 o'clock on the dot. If you'd all take your seats we'll get started. As you know we are here to pay tribute to Uncle Buck. I

was one of his dearest and closest friends. Uncle Buck knew me as a man of integrity who he could trust. When he needed emergency money to go to the Congo I would have just given it to him but he insisted he pawn all these items, fine and valuable artifacts every one of them, to me in the event he did not return. He didn't want to inconvenience me or hurt business. Uncle Buck was that kind of guy.

I have decided to sell the artifacts he collected on all his travels so everyone who wants can have one to remember Uncle Buck or to own an extremely rare and precious artifact. I knew it would be wrong for me to selfishly keep them. Uncle Buck would have wanted them shared with all of you, his dear friends. Now all these fine valuable artifacts will be offered for sale. We have a suggested price list on each table. These appraisals were done by *(Indicating who Adonis is with a wave of his hand.)* Mr. Adonis here. A reputable and extremely knowledgeable Greek antiquities dealer.

**Adonis:** *(Cutting Harry off prematurely, smiling broadly and pointing to himself.)* Very knowledgeable. You just ask Adonis and I tell you what to buy and how much pay. You pay Harry man here. *(Grinning like a fool and pointing to Harry.)*

**Harry:** *(Slightly annoyed at the interruption.)* I'm sure many of these items are worth thousands of dollars and some of course will be of sentimental value to those who knew and loved Uncle Buck.

**Adonis:** So you pay lots, OK. *(Holding up Windex and rag.)* I come wash your glasses so you can see to write a check.

**Buff:** Stop interrupting. Harry's only rented the place until 8:30 so shut up.

**Harry:** You'll have some time between dinner and dessert to get another look at these wonderful and valuable artifacts Uncle Buck collected during his travels abroad....

**Withers:** *(Withers enters in his wheelchair being pushed by Dr. Kitty Racket.)* Are we there yet? This doesn't look like a baseball game!

**Dr. Racket:** *(Leaning closer to his ear and speaking in a loud clear voice.)* It's not. It's a tribute to Uncle Buck. You remember Uncle Buck don't you?

**Withers:** Buck McCrady. Yup. We played ball together. Good player, Buck was, even if he did strike out in the game we played against Smithfield. Terrible shame that loss. We were in the war together too. Is he here?

**Dr. Racket:** No, Uncle Buck passed away. He died in the Congo. We're here to pay him tribute.

**Withers:** *(Surprised.)* He died, did he? Why didn't anyone tell me? Make sure I find out about any memorial service. I want to be there. Uncle Buck was my best friend. It's the least I can do. Did I ever tell you we played ball together....?

*(At a nod from Harry, Buff makes his way over to Withers and Dr. Racket.)*

**Dr. Racket:** That's why we're here. *(Slightly louder.)* To pay tribute to Uncle Buck. *(Looking at Buff and indicating Withers with a friendly pat on the shoulder.)* This is Mr. Withers, a dear childhood friend of Uncle Buck's.

**Withers:** *(With pride.)* Yes, I am. Best friend he ever had. We played ball together in high school. Then we enlisted and were in the war together. *(Looking at Dr. Racket. Pause)* Who are you?

**Dr. Racket:** *(Speaking more loudly and slowly, moving so he can see her face more clearly.)* I'm Kitty Racket.

**Withers:** The Kitty has a hatchet? Why are there cats at a ball game? *(To himself.)* Must be the mascot.

**Dr. Racket:** No, I'm a friend of Uncle Buck's. Dr. Racket. You remember me, don't you?

**Withers:** I don't remember ever seeing you before.

**Adonis:** *(Aside to audience.)* I don't think he remembers much.

**Harry:** *(trying not to display his impatience.)* Could you just take your seats. You're interrupting things and we're on a tight time schedule. Buff get their tickets *(In a confidential stage whisper)* Make sure they've paid. I won't have any freeloaders.

**Buff:** *(Gruffly.)* Where are your tickets?

**Withers:** My ticker? *(Places hand over heart.)* Yes, I've had a couple problems with my ticker lately.

**Buff:** *(Yelling)* Tickets!

**Withers:** Tickets? I have season tickets to all the Mets games.

**Dr. Racket:** No, he means the tickets for the memorial service.

**Withers:** We have to pay to be at a memorial service? What kind of a world do we live in now? I never heard of such a thing. Paying to go to a memorial service?

**Dr. Racket:** *(Shrugs like she can't believe it either.)* Where are our tickets? You were going to put them in a safe place. *(While Buff and Harry impatiently wait Withers looks everywhere on his person for his tickets – pockets, under his hat, inside his bathrobe. Harry griping and complaining in a stage whisper to Buff the whole time.)*

**Dr. Racket:** *(Looking with disgust at Harry and Buff asks the audience.)* What kind of a man would be mean to a little old man in a wheelchair" *(Harry gets more worked up into a stroke producing rage. Withers finally locates the tickets in his bedroom slipper and holds them out to Harry.)*

**Harry:** Buff, get the man's tickets.

**Buff:** *(Thoroughly disgusted.)* He's had them in his slipper. I'm not gonna touch 'em.

**Harry:** You don't think I'm going to touch them do you. You're a tough Las Vegas bouncer. Nothing should bother you, right Buff. *(Buff grumbles to himself, takes the tickets and throws them in the trash. In the meantime Withers begins wheeling himself toward one of the tables.)*

**Withers:** *(Mostly to himself.)* "Where's the hot dogs? You gotta have hot dogs at a baseball game. *(Withers wheels himself close to a table and falls asleep, occasionally rousing to ask where Maude is or who's up to bat. During the course of the evening he will move around looking for Maude. If asked who Maude is he'll reply "Haven't seen her; have you?"*

**Racket:** *(To Harry.)* I noticed how upset you got with that little old man. Be careful or you'll have a stroke."

**Harry:** *(Sneering at her remark about a stroke.)* How would you know anything about strokes?

**Dr. Racket:** I'm a doctor. And I'm a professor of medicine at the Bible College.

**Harry:** *(Immediately changing from angry to charming.)* Buff, quit wasting your time with that old half-wit. Seat this woman immediately. *(Stage whisper to Buff as Buff approaches)* She's a doctor. That means she has money.

**Buff:** *(Stage whisper back.)* Right, boss, I gotcha. Money. *(They exchange a conspiratorial head nod and Buff graciously escorts Dr. Racket to the back.)*

**Harry:** *(Returning to mic and regaining his composed veneer.)* Now, let's get this thing moving. It's *(Opens his jacket to check the time.)* way after six and this has got to be wrapped up by 8:30 pm sharp.

**Dr. Racket:** *(To Buff, but loud enough to be heard as she scans the audience.)* Where's Sadie McCrady, Uncle Buck's niece? I'd like to be seated with her if I could.

**Harry:** I don't know. We sent her an invitation. I guess she couldn't be bothered to attend this wonderful memorial service for her Uncle Buck. After all the effort Buck and I put into this, you'd think she could have shown up.

**Dr. Racket:** That's not like Sadie. Especially since Uncle Buck was leaving all his artifacts to her. She needs the money to finish college and start an audio book ministry for people who speak Thai and can't read. He talked to me about how proud he was that she wanted to become a missionary the day before he left so suddenly to go to the Congo. We were having coffee.....

**Harry:** *(Glancing at watches and cutting her off abruptly.)* That was before Uncle Buck pawned everything to me. *(Quickly.)* Not that I expected him to do that. No, I Harry Sneed would have gladly given him the money myself, as a gift, but Uncle Buck insisted. Now he did ask that his niece Sadie McCrady be given one item as her inheritance. I can't imagine why she isn't here but the contract states she has only until 8:30 pm tonight to make her choice. Since she couldn't be here would all you wonderful people mind selecting for her? *(Indicates the audience.)*

**Adonis:** *(Cheerfully grinning.)* You people pick, yes. Adonis help you pick the right one.

**Abdul:** *(Entering.)* Excuse me - is this the memorial service for Uncle Buck?

**Harry:** *(Exasperated with all the interruptions.)* Yes. You are late.

**Abdul:** My chauffeur had trouble parking the Bentley.

**Adonis:** *(holding up the Windex and rag.)* You want I wash windshield? I do good job for you.

**Harry:** *(Annoyed at Abdul.)* You should have arrived on time. We have a schedule to ... Bentley? You drove here in a Bentley? *(The light bulb goes on.)* With a chauffeur! *(Stage whisper to Buff behind his hand.)* A Bentley. He must be rich.

**Buff:** *(Stage whisper back.)* One of those oil sheiks I bet.

**Harry:** *(Once again gracious and charming.)* Let me personally escort you to see all the wonderful artifacts. *(roughly)* Buff, get dinner served.

**Abdul:** Did I miss the eulogies?

**Harry:** No, we don't have time for any eulogies. We're on a tight schedule here. I'll be charged extra if we're not out of here at 8:30 pm sharp.

**Abdul:** *(Shocked.)* But this is a tribute, a memorial service. I for one would like to speak about Uncle Buck.

**Harry:** I had no notice anyone wanted to say anything. It can't possibly be arranged now. Time is of the essence. I've only paid until 8:30 and Buff.... *(Notices Abdul stepping closer and not happy with his answer.)*

**Adonis:** *(inserting himself between them.)* I help. I'll arrange talking. *(Turns Harry away from Abdul, leading him away with a hand on his shoulder.)* Go ahead, you man *(to Buff.)* serve food. Adonis will take care of it. Harry, you no have stroke. Doctor there *(Waves toward Dr. Racket)* warned you about stroke.

**Abdul:** Aren't we going to have a prayer first.

**Harry:** A prayer!!!!?? Aren't you a Muslim?

**Buff:** Yeah, a Muslim. I thought you prayed to Mecca at dawn or something. *(Chuckles.)*

**Abdul:** I happen to be a Christian and Uncle Buck would have wanted us to pray over the food. *(The two of them start arguing, Adonis intervenes, pushing them apart.)*

**Adonis:** Yes, yes we have prayer - you man *(Point to an audience member.)* you say prayer. *(Harry glares at Adonis, Adonis quickly adds.)* You man, *(To person selected to pray.)* you say short one. Quick.

*(Prayer.)*

**Adonis:** Ok. *(To cast.)* You want speak. You come see Adonis. *(To Eve)* Especially you, pretty lady. *(To rest of cast.)* You want say something about Uncle Buck, come see Adonis. Everybody else – eat.

*(Withers wakes up and wheels to a table. He tries to cut his food with a spoon, mixes up which glass to drink from and wants to know what the score is and who's pitching. After about two minutes he'll wonder aloud where Maude is and wheel himself to another table and repeat the process. He can continue until the next scene begins or he's made the rounds. He then falls back asleep.)*

# The One Item

## Scene II

*(As the meal winds down Harry takes his place at the podium with Buff, arms crossed and glowering, next to him.)*

**Harry:** Folks, if you haven't already had the chance to look at these valuable artifacts take a moment to do so. While you're at it select a couple for yourselves, in Uncle Buck's honor, to take home tonight. We accept cash, of course. I can imagine Uncle Buck would want these most precious possessions of his to wind up in the hands of his dear friends.

**Sadie:** *(Rushing in out of breath.)* Is this the Memorial Service for Buck McCrady? Am I too late?

**Buff:** *(Gruffly.)* Who are you?

**Sadie:** Sadie McCrady. I'm the niece.

**Adonis:** *(Suspiciously.)* Denise? I thought you said you were Sadie.

**Harry:** *(Initially taken aback and surprised, then recovering to his sweet tone.)* We are so glad to have you here. I thought you weren't coming. I was surprised you didn't respond to my invitation.

**Harry:** The special invitation I sent you.

**Sadie:** *(Confused.)* I didn't get an invitation. Was I supposed to get an invitation?

**Harry:** Of course. Buff, how could you fail to get the invitation to this woman? *(Buff shrugs, mumbles something about losing his reading glasses.)*

**Sadie:** I was picking up some milk at the store. I just happened to hear some people at the produce section talking about this memorial service. One couldn't believe someone was charging money for people to attend a memorial service. The other said it was a real shame since it was for Buck McCrady, a man who gave so much of himself for others. They were talking about my Uncle Buck. *(A bit desperately.)* I had no idea. I came as quickly as I could but I had to drive all the way from Shellenville.

**Buff:** *(Gruffly.)* It's too late for you to eat. The food is all gone.

**Sadie:** I'm not worried about food *(Anxiously.)* Mr. Sneed, do you have the letter?



**Harry:** *(Innocently.)* What letter?

**Sadie:** The letter my Uncle Buck left with you. Just before he left for the Congo, Uncle Buck left a message on my phone that he'd left a letter for me with you. He said it was important that if anything happened to him *(Starts getting choked up.)* that I read the letter. *(Takes tissue from her pocket and dabs her eyes.)*

**Harry:** Oh! That letter. Buff, where is that letter.

**Buff:** I dunno. I don't have my reading glasses with me. You know I can't read a thing without my reading glasses, boss.

**Sadie:** You must have it. Uncle Buck said he left a very important letter with you.

**Harry:** Do you mean this letter? *(Removes letter from inside jacket pocket and hands her letter. She opens it.)*

**Sadie:** *(Confused, not accusing)* This can't be the letter. *(reading aloud)* My deer neice, - *(pauses and looks up.)* He spelled dear "d-e-e-r" and misspelled niece too. *(continues to read)*

I want you to no that I love you. Do good in yur work. The most valueable thing I owned came from isreal. It is real nails from the cross. God bless.

uncle buck

*(Looking up)* This doesn't even look like his writing!

**Harry:** *(Shaking his head sadly.)* You know how it is when you get old. Sad but true. It happens to everyone.

**Sadie:** This can't be from my Uncle Buck *(Shows letter to others)* The words are misspelled, he didn't use capitals .... *(Eve gently takes the letter and begins circulating among the tables letting them see it. She may mention she doubts a college professor would spell so poorly.)*

**Harry:** *(Patronizingly.)* Of course it's the letter. Uncle Buck gave it to me, one of his closest associates and friends I might add. Here's the inventory list he left for you. According to the agreement I had with Uncle Buck you can pick any one of these items as your inheritance. The rest now belong to me. Your Uncle Buck wanted you to have the nails from the holy cross. He said so in his letter. Adonis, get those nails for her so she can be on her way. *(Adonis goes to look for the nails.)*

**Sadie:** *(Positive she is correct.)* This inventory list isn't right. Uncle Buck never learned how



to use a computer. He used this old Royal typewriter and the "R" key always hit crooked. These are from a word processor.

**Harry:** It's what your Uncle Buck gave me. Isn't that right, Buff?

**Buff:** Anything you say, boss.

**Fi Fi:** Excuse moi. (*Fi Fi leaves her carry on and makes her way to the front. As she speaks to Sadie she hands her a letter.*) I have a letter from your uncle. I am Fi Fi La Cher. I met your uncle when we were both in Thailand a few years ago.

**Sadie:** You're the translator for the Louvre, aren't you? I remember him telling me about meeting you in France. You helped him when the luggage got mixed up at the airport.

**Fi Fi:** Yes. Actually, He helped me when I misplaced my carry-on bag. It had a manuscript vital to my work at the Louvre. But I saw him just a few days ago when I was working at an archeological dig in the Congo. It was just before he died. He dictated this letter (*Pointing to It.*) and asked me to give it to you. He asked me to deliver it to you by hand. (*Adonis tries to take the letter from Sadie but Fi Fi blocks his way.*)

**Sadie:** (*Choking up*) How did it happen? All I know was he got sick but then nothing...

**Fi Fi:** Ebola. (*Gets flustered when she realizes she doesn't have her carry-on luggage. starts looking around for it. Retrieves it and returns to Sadie.*)

**Dr. Racket:** Ebola! How awful. That is such a terrible disease. Virtually no way to cure it. (*Shakes her head sadly.*) Poor Uncle Buck.

(*Cast echoes that sentiment as long as needed for Fi Fi to return to Sadie.*)

**Fi Fi:** Your Uncle Buck had gone to see an ex-student of his who was distraught. He'd just lost his wife and two children to Ebola. It's a terrible disease and was spreading so fast. Uncle Buck of course tried to help. In the process he became infected.

Authorities had commandeered my museum truck to use to transport some doctors. I was waiting near the makeshift hospital to be picked up by a bus. I missed the first one because I couldn't find my bag. While I was searching for it I just happened to see Uncle Buck, lying on the ground outside of the medical compound where the victims were being brought. I was only allowed so close but we were able to talk for a bit. He asked me to take down a letter for you and if at all possible hand deliver it to you. A couple of hours later he had..... (*Everyone pauses quietly for a moment in reverence for the dead.*) As soon as I could I came stateside to find you.

Sadie: Thank you. *(The two women hold each other's eyes for a moment but are interrupted when ...)*

Harry: *(Accusingly.)* That letter is probably fake. I wouldn't count on it really being from Uncle Buck. She's probably trying to pull a fast one on you. She doesn't sound French to me.

Fi Fi: *(Defensively.)* That's because I'm an American. I just work for the French. I'll show you my passport. *(Fruitlessly searches through her carry on and purse. Among other things she pulls out gardening tools, a roll of duct tape and a can of spray paint.)*

Abdul: *(To Sadie.)* Perhaps you'd like to share the second letter with all of us so we can help you determine if it is genuine.

ADONIS: *(Arriving with the nails)* Denise maybe not want to read. Here, Denise. You take nails, Adonis take fake letter. *(Tries to snatch letter, Fi Fi keeps him from it, they glare at each other.)*

Sadie: Yes, I'll read the letter. *(Reads letter aloud.)*

My dear niece,

How I wish I could see you one last time but it is not to be. Ebola is fatal and I count my life in hours, not days or weeks. *(Pauses to sniffle.)*

My dearly departed sister's only child - How proud I was to learn that you wished to follow in my footsteps. The world needs missionaries and translations of the Bible everyone can understand. *(Sniffle.)* I am pleased you intend to graduate then find ways to bring audio Bibles to people who not only do not have the Bible in their language but who cannot read either. God bless you and your endeavors for him. *(Swallows.)*

As you know, my collection is in the hands of Harry Snead. Believe no advice he gives you. *(Pauses to look at Harry. Harry and Buff both examine the ceiling.)* It was necessary to pawn them for my last trip. Little did I know it would be my very last. In the event I could not return or buy the items back, it was a condition of the pawning that you could pick any one item as your inheritance. Select the right one. It is the 6<sup>th</sup> one on the inventory I gave Harry. But be wary. He's been known to cheat people. *(Glances at Harry)*

Harry Snead is not to be trusted. *(Everyone including Sadie stares hard at Harry and Buff who return to examining the ceiling.)* I fear you may have to rely on clues I have sprinkled inside this letter and the recollections of my various associates. As a boy I loved the infield. Being in the navy was a good thing, not because I learned about weapons but because I learned about love. I traveled all over and collected a few things. I mostly collected souls for the kingdom and memories of my work. Looking back, some of the paths were really rocky. Yes, my life had some interesting combinations. *(Takes a deep breath then continues)*

All the items invoke fond memories of my adventures. Many are valuable only for sentimental purposes. Some would be worth a little money to a museum or collector. But one, *(Emphasizes.)* THE ONE ITEM is worth thousands, enough for you to start your life's work. Your decision therefore must be a hard one; I can only Hope it is the hardest of your life *(She pauses thoughtfully, then hold letter to her heart.)*

**Abdul:** *(Holding out his hand.)* May I? *(Sadie hands it to him and he examines it.)* This letter has no signature.

**Fi Fi:** He couldn't touch it at all. Not even to sign it. The medical people made sure I stayed several feet back.

**Dr. Racket:** A necessary medical precaution. Ebola is very contagious.

**Harry:** That letter is obviously a fraud. Uncle Buck would never say anything like that about me. We were dear friends. That woman *(Adonis jabs his finger at Fi Fi.)* - that Fi Fi La Cher - is probably a fake with a fake letter. You claim to be from France but you don't sound French. You don't even have any identification to prove who you are.

**Fi Fi:** *(Starting to get exasperated that no one listens to her)* I never said I was French. I'm an American. I work as a translator for the Louvre. I know I have my passport somewhere. *(Starts searching for it again. Audience is able to see ridiculous things in her luggage and purse.)*

**Buff:** *(Stumbling over the pronunciation)* Louvre. I never heard of no Louvre before. Sounds like something made up *(Abdul "disappears" by unobtrusively exiting).*

**Adonis:** Yes, something made up – I am the expert here, not you. I don't care if you work for famous museum. I don't think you are French either. Even if you're named Fi Fi. Sounds like name for a poodle. *(Pants with his tongue hanging out and puts hands up like a begging poodles paws.)*

**Fi Fi:** *(To Sadie.)* I mean only to help.

**Sadie:** *(To Harry.)* The letter said I'm supposed to pick the sixth item on the inventory. But this can't be right. You say Uncle Buck said the nails but the nails aren't sixth.....

**Harry:** *(With exaggerated concern.)* He probably couldn't remember. He was old, very sick, on his death bed. *(Shakes his head sadly.)* Some lady *(Head jerk towards Fi Fi.)* who speaks French and probably doesn't have good English was writing it down from who knows how far away. She probably wrote the wrong thing, *(Knowingly.)* if she was even there at all.

**Fi Fi:** *(Pauses from searching her purse for her passport.)* I keep telling you, I'm American. I

Speak English!

**Abdul:** Sadie, did you say Uncle Buck used an old typewriter? *(She nods, Abdul turns to Harry.)* Is this the original inventory?

**Harry:** Buff spilled coffee on the original inventory. We had to retype it. It may be out of order, but don't worry. Mr. Adonis here is an expert Greek antiquities dealer and knows all about what is and isn't valuable. *(Using a wave to indicate the audience.)* Plus, all the people here have agreed to help you. You and all the fine people here tonight can look over all the items. *(Curtly.)* Just decide by 8:30.

**Sadie:** *(Helpless like the melodrama girl being tied to the railroad tracks.)* How will I ever pick?

**Fi Fi:** I will help too. I .....

**Adonis:** *(to Sadie.)* She a fake. Fake poodle lady. *(Starts laughing and making high pitched barking noises at her. Fi Fi glares at him, turns and walks away.)*

**HARRY:** *(Calling after Fi Fi.)* We don't need your help. *(Trying to butter up the audience with flattery.)* The audience has agreed to help. And aren't they the finest bunch of intelligent, smart, NICEST people I have ever met. Isn't that right, audience? Show your support of this girl with a round of applause. *(Adonis gets the crowd whipped up if they are slow to respond.)* See, we're all here to help you. *(Putting a slimy arm around Sadie.)* Now just hurry along. You should be able to decide in the next ... *(Checking watches inside jacket.)* Say.... 15 minutes.

**Sadie:** *(Shocked and pulling out of arm.)* Fifteen minutes! I need more time!

**Harry:** Sorry. We don't have much time.

**Sadie:** *(Falling to her knees.)* Please, please... *(Dissolves into tears. Samantha appears with a tissue, helps her to her feet, patting her in a grandmotherly way)*

**Harry:** *(Starting to drop the "nice guy sweet talk and becoming annoyed.)* 8:30 and not one minute past!

**Sadie:** *(Composing herself.)* I need to pray about this. *(To audience.)* Is there a quiet place to pray?

**Adonis:** Yes, yes. I find you quiet place. Come now. *(Tugging her toward exit. As they are about to exit, Abdul enters holding the letter)*

**Abdul:** Take this letter from Uncle Buck with you. I think there is more to this letter than

meets the eye. *(Hands her the letter. Sadie exits and Abdul turns to Harry.)* I think you are a bad, bad man.

**Harry:** *(When Sadie is out of the room.)* So Harry Snead is the bad guy. Harry Snead the guy who was there when Uncle Buck needed somebody. What about you, Mr. Rich Oil Sheik – you can drive a Bentley but you couldn't help out Uncle Buck?

**Abdul:** Had I known I would have done whatever I could to help Uncle Buck. By the time I got the message he had already left the country.

**Harry:** *(Sarcastic.)* Yeah, yeah, Excuses. Excuses. And what about you *(turning to Samantha.)* You brag about all the money you gave Uncle Buck. Where were you when he was desperate?

**Samantha:** *(Looking miserable and guilt ridden.)* I wasn't home when he called. I was visiting grandchildren in Tennessee.

**Harry:** *(Sarcastic.)* Sure, sure. I'm the one that helped Uncle Buck when the rest of you didn't. And some of you think that Fi Fi who claims to be French and doesn't have any kind of accent brought a *(Makes quotation marks signs with his fingers.)* REAL letter. That letter she claims is from Uncle Buck could be a forgery.

**Fi Fi:** *(Exasperated.)* I'm American!

**Harry:** *(In a calm, smug voice.)* you are lying.

**Hezekiah:** No, *(Moving to the microphone and pointing a finger at Harry.)* You are lying. You paid me to be here and tell people those nails were from the cross of Christ. I saw you get them from a board behind your pawnshop. They are not the real deal. *(Turning to the audience.)* My real name is Michael Page. I'm an out of work actor. I was an extra in the movie "The End of the Spear" about missionaries to the Amazon. Harry thought I could make up stuff and sound like a missionary.

**Harry:** Lies, lies and fabrication.

**Hezekiah:** *(To the audience.)* I'm not fabricating. *(To Harry)* You fabricated most everything here. I know a couple of these items were things Harry just pulled off the pawnshop shelf. They weren't even part of the real inventory. I am ashamed I got mixed up in this. *(Hanging head, then raising it.)* Harry has hired another person to deceive you. I don't know who this other mole is but be careful.

**Adonis:** *(Not knowing what the word "mole" means.)* Mole? What is this mole?

**Withers:** *(Becoming alert for a moment)* A mole is a small mammal. Used to cause all kinds of problems tearing up the ball field. I remember when Buck played second base and I

played third and... Now what was I going to say? *(Falls asleep snoring softly.)*

**Hezekiah:** A mole is a fake, a fraud, planted to fool people. Somebody here is pretending to be someone they are not.

**Adonis:** I no mole. I Greek antiquities dealer. That Fi Fi La Cher, she the mole. She no French. She know nothing at all about these fine artifacts.

**Fi Fi:** I am NOT French. I just work for the Louvre as a translator. But I do wonder about Mr. Abdul Ak Bar. What company did you say you owned?

**Abdul:** I did not say. And I have good reason NOT to say.

**Dr. Racket:** *(A bit suspiciously.)* Eve, if you are a student at Bible College, how come I have never seen you before on campus?

**Eve:** *(Stammering)* I ... Err ... I'm not the mole.

**Adonis:** She no mole. *(Aside to audience)* She a fox. All American fox. *(Winks or blows her a kiss or a cute flirtatious wave)*

**Eve:** Maybe you're not the real Dr. Ratchet. After all, Mr. Withers doesn't remember you. *(Stopping to think a moment.) (Aside.)* Then again that may not be a big surprise. *(Pointing at Sum.)* It could be Sum Jung Dood. I've never seen him on campus before. He could be pretending.

*(Sum goes over to her and begins bowing, flustered she bows back, this continues until finally Eve goes back to her seat, trying to avoid Adonis who is following her like a lost puppy, giving her a little wave.)*

**Fi Fi:** Adonis, I've wondered about you. You don't seem to know much about antiquities. And why are you carrying around a bottle of Windex? That's just weird.

**Adonis:** Never mind the Windex. What would lady named after a poodle know? What about Denise? First she say she is Sadie, then she say she Denise. Sounds fake to me.

**Abdul:** *(Taking charge)* Accusing each other isn't going to help Sadie. I think we ought to share what we know and let the good people gathered here tonight weigh what we say and draw their own conclusions to help Sadie make the right choice.

**Harry:** *(Disgusted.)* I wash my hands of this mess. Get dessert served and let's get out of here before I have to pay a late fee

**Abdul:** I think each table should get a copy of the letter Fi Fi brought to see if anyone can discover any clues Uncle Buck left.

**Harry:** *(Smugly.)* I don't have any copies. Sadie took the only copy with her.

**Abdul:** *(Opening his briefcase. Adonis notices, panics and drops to the ground, his hands over his head.)* I have a copier in my Bentley, which I used to make a few copies. *(Asks audience to help distribute them).* Now I for one have something to say in tribute to Uncle Buck. *(Moves to microphone).*

**Eve:** *(To Adonis)* What are you doing on the floor?

**Adonis:** The briefcase. *(Conspiratorial stage whisper.)* Could be dangerous contents. *(Eve rolls her eyes.)*

**Eve:** Let me help you up. *(Rolls eyes again as she helps him to stand. Adonis beams blissfully as she takes his arm.)*

**Adonis:** *(Aside to audience.)* Adonis fall more often.

*(Harry stands to the side, arms crossed, tapping his foot impatiently with Buff copying him. Glances at his watches then exchanges disgusted looks with Buff.)*

**Buff:** *(Bragging.)* I would have caught a bomber long before now. Believe you and me. But I bet he's the mole. *(Sarcastic.)* Whoever heard of Muslims in Asia? Everyone knows they are all Buddhists. *(Pointing at Abdul.)* I think you are a fake. I think you just made all that up. You have a flimsy excuse for not telling us the name of your company. Probably just made that part up too, boss.

*(Abdul ignoring him moves to the mic. He is poised and commands attention. Adonis flirts outrageously with Eve. Eve excuses herself to the people around her explaining she needs to make an urgent call. She moves to the main entry, taking out a cell phone, talks briefly, then hangs up)*

**Abdul:** *(At the mic)* For reasons that will become apparent later on I will not share many details. Indonesia is not a safe place for Christians but I must help those I can behind the scenes, as you Americans say. I met Uncle Buck and after many conversations, most of which were secretive, I became a Christian. I had planned to leave immediately so I would not come to the attention of some of the radicals of my previous faith. But before I left, three girls were beheaded by Shiite radicals on their way to their Christian school. The families were to be punished for allowing them to associate with infidels. *(Cell phone starts ringing)* Uncle Buck



asked me to help.

**Eve:** *(Eve's cell phone rings again.) She answers phone, listens, speaks briefly into the phone. Speaking aloud with great surprise)* Excuse me, Mr. Abdul. Bill Gates is calling you. *(With even greater bewilderment.)* On my cell phone.

**Abdul:** If you would be so kind to tell him I will get back with him.

**Eve:** *(To audience, still bewildered and shocked.)* How does Bill Gates know where I am? Or what my phone number is?

**Adonis:** *(Calling across the room)* You give Adonis your phone number and I call you too, pretty lady.

**Abdul:** The Lord works in mysterious ways. I digress. Uncle Buck's story must be shared. *(Eve nods, speaks into phone, then closes it, returning to her seat. During the course of the evening she marvels to audience members about Abdul getting a call from Bill Gates. On her cell phone.)*

**Abdul:** Together Uncle Buck and I were able to smuggle both families into Thailand, where Uncle Buck had Christian friends who would take care of them. The Shiite authorities put a price on their heads. This kind of thing happened more than once. Uncle Buck and I worked together to get Christians to safety. In America you cannot imagine what it is like, not knowing if you will face torture imprisonment or death should you follow Jesus. Soon Uncle Buck had a price on his head as well.

He was arrested but the American embassy intervened and he was released but barred from ever returning to Indonesia. Uncle Buck was one of the bravest men I ever met - willing to risk his life to save others. Jesus I have not seen face to face. But I have seen him many times in Uncle Buck and I believe he was willing to die in our place. In the Koran we are told to have our sons die for Allah. In the Bible we are told God sent his son to die for us.

**Buff:** This ain't no religion lesson. Are you done yet?



**Abdul:** *(Pointedly ignoring Buff's rudeness.)* Uncle Buck will be sorely missed. Sadie wishes to continue with his work and I am in a position to help her with that financially should she be cheated out of her inheritance by a man of low moral character. *(Harry starts to protest but is cut off by ...)*

**Samantha:** *(Jumps up and excitedly interrupts Harry.)* I will too. I'll help Sadie all I can.

**Dr. Racket:** And I as well. I'm sure many of the people here would like to help Sadie. We can all contribute. But *(Voice changes to stern as she glares at Harry.)* I can't stomach the thought of that man *(Stabs her finger at Harry.)* cheating the girl. I suggest we all try to figure out what the one item is, if for no other reason than to keep it from Harry Sneed! *(Rest of the cast, nod their heads and ad lib agreement).*

**Samantha:** *(Coming forward.)* Please, I have to say something. Maybe what I know could help these people help Sadie. *(As Samantha delivers her eulogy Harry and Buff stand upstage. They parody her using their hands like hand puppets opening and closing their mouths and in general poke fun at how much she talks. They stop, quickly looking innocent every time she turns to see what is going on.)*

I can't tell you what a blessing Uncle Buck has been to me and my family. I met him soon after he was discharged from the navy and was preparing to go back to the Philippines as a missionary. He was making the rounds of the churches looking for support. I had wanted to become a missionary but I got married, had children... you know how it *is.* *(Harry clears his throat and Samantha turns to look back.)* My husband, Bert, *(gets a far off look that is abruptly ended by Buff clapping his hands impatiently.)* made a good living and we supported Uncle Buck in the Philippines where he started several churches and most recently we helped his work in Thailand. Uncle Buck always said even though we never left America we were part of the mission's team. He said we all have different gifts and the gift of giving was as needed as the gift of speaking. *(Buff makes a noise and she turns to look back.)*

I was very surprised he never retired. I thought when he came back to the states when he was 72 or 73 he'd teach a semester, and then retire. But not Uncle Buck. He just kept going and going and going like that Energizer Bunny. *(Imitates the robot-like motion of the Bunny very poorly, then grabs and rubs her hip like it was hurt from her movement. Buff and Harry*

*both imitate her imitating the Bunny and giggle silently.)* Now me, with my arthritis, I could never have done that. If it isn't my hip, which I have had replaced, it's the knees. Although lately I think my fingers are getting stiffer than my knees. *(Buff steps closer and glowers while Harry throws his hands up at her rambling)* Yes, yes. Back to Uncle Buck.

I was visiting great-grandchildren in Tennessee, my daughter Shirley's grandchildren... Their mother ... *(Buff steps up again.)* I was gone when Uncle Buck called. I don't have one of those fancy cell phones and I didn't find out until I got home. I would have been happy to give him the money if I had only known. Uncle Buck never had much money - he was always giving it away. He was a generous man. He always said God would find a way if he needed anything. *(Starts to sniffle.)* He was truly an inspirational man. *(Is overcome and has to sit down. Buff and Harry make faces to show how happy they are she finally quit talking. Harry gives a head nod to Buff who escorts her back to her seat.)*

**SUM:** *(Comes up, bowing to Harry who returns the bow 2 or 3 times until he catches himself looking like a fool) Sum begins speaking in Thai. He hands his letter to Buff and motions for him to read it for him.)*

**Buff:** I can't read. *(Catching himself, quickly adds.)* That's because I don't have my reading glasses. *(Buff glances at it again.)* It's not even in English! *(Holds in front of Sum's face and points to the writing. Sum bows in apology three times, and then Buff, not knowing what else to do, bows back. They bump heads)* Watch what you're doing! Read your own letter! *(Buff walks away scowling and rubbing his head. Sum puts Thai letter away and gets out English letter. He beckons for an audience member to read it for him. When the letter is finished Sum begins quoting scripture in Thai.)*

**Harry:** Get this babbling idiot... *(Starts to push him off stage, Sum just smiles and starts bowing. Harry can't seem to help himself and bows back 2 or 3 times before catching himself, angry at himself for falling for it once again.)*

**Eve:** He's not babbling. He's quoting John 3:16. I recognize it. Uncle Buck taught us all that verse before we went to Thailand on the summer internship. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life"

**Adonis:** *(Heart smitten, to audience.)* Don't she say so nice? *(To Eve.)* You want say again, pretty lady?

**Harry:** Not now Adonis. Buff, serve dessert.

**Dr. Racket:** *(Ignoring Harry.)* Mr. Withers has something to share. *(As she wheels him forward he clutches his heart, grimaces.)*

**Eve:** He's having a heart attack!

**Dr. Racket:** He has heart problems. This might have been too much for him. *(Dr. Racket starts to attend to him, loosening his collar, taking a pulse, maybe using a stethoscope.)*

**Harry:** *(Stage whisper to Buff.)* Great, the old guy has to have a heart attack. With police and all that I'll end up paying two late fees.

**Dr. Racket:** *(Holding up a fork.)* No need to worry folks, It was just a fork. Somehow he got a fork in his bathrobe and it was poking him.

**Harry:** *(Put out, but relieved.)* Scared us all to death. You shouldn't have brought him with his heart.

**Withers:** *(Loudly, in a moment of lucidity, sitting up straighter.)* At least I have a heart. I don't think you do, sonny.

*(Withers scoots back into his slumped down position in his wheelchair. Harry hands him the mic to hold. Withers first talks into the wrong end. Harry, obviously frustrated, grabs it from him, turns it right side up and hands it back. Withers fumbles it and gets the wrong end up a second time and tries to talk into it. Harry impatiently fixes it once again, rolls his eyes and mutters something to Buff. They both chuckle.)*

**Withers:** I've known Buck McCrady since we were in high school together. We played baseball. We loved it. Played every chance we could get. I was short stop and Buck was on

second.

**Harry:** *(Looking at his watches, aside to Buck.)* Great, he'll probably have to go through the whole line up starting with first base....

**Withers:** *(sidetracked, looking around for a first baseman.)* Who's on first?

**Buff:** Nobody. This ain't no ball game. It's a memorial service for a dead guy and yer supposed to say something about Uncle Buck then shut up. *(Aside to Harry.)* Don't get him started boss, he might do that thing about who's on first, what's on second and I don't know whose playing third base. *(Stupidly grins over his "joke".)*

**Withers:** I do so know who played third. It was Sam Marutsky. Couldn't catch a ball all that well but boy, could he swing. One game we were down by two when old Sam came up to bat. Bases were loaded....

**Buff:** *(Gruffly.)* Just stick to the Uncle Buck part. We haven't got all day. *(Looks to Harry for approval. Harry is ignoring him, staring at the ceiling. Buff scowls at not getting noticed.)*

**Withers:** Uncle Buck never played third base. Where were you? Sleeping out in right field? You don't look like any kinda baseball player to me. Where was I...?

*(Cast ad-libs to get him back on track if the audience doesn't.)*

**Withers:** As I was saying, old Buckaroo and I played us some baseball. *(Starting to digress)* He liked collecting baseball cards - we all did - but one time he got an autographed ball. *(Really off on Memory Lane now.)* I think we were at a Yankee game.... Maybe it was Boston... Coulda been the Cubs. They lost more games that season ....

**Buff:** No one wants to hear about the Cubs or some autographed ball or baseball cards.

**Harry:** *(Craftily.)* Let's not rush the man. I think the baseball he is speaking about is one of the valuable artifacts on a table somewhere. Can someone hold up that baseball? *(Waits for someone to do so.)* That autographed baseball could be very valuable. It might be the one

item, the one Sadie should pick. *(Harry will go over to the table with the ball, examine it and make a few quiet comments like "This might be worth a lot more than my suggested retail price.")*

**Withers:** I never autographed a ball. I wasn't a real baseball player. Buckaroo was. Thought he'd go into the minors after we graduated from high school but instead we joined the navy. Buck and I joined the navy. Got sent to the Philippines. Buck started a church while he was there but we all got kicked out. Remember when General McArthur said "I will return." Buck said it too. But he meant as a missionary. He promised God he would go back during peacetime and make sure the church was doing alright. That's what he spent the rest of his life doing. Not just in the Philippines either. He almost got eaten by cannibals once....

**Harry:** *(Trying to move things along.)* Take him back to his seat, Buff.

**Withers:** *(Batting Buff away.)* Ain't done yet, young fella. *(Sitting up straighter.)* Buck McCrady was a straight up guy. He coulda been some kind of baseball player. He coulda traveled all over being famous. But he didn't. Instead of baseball he took Jesus to people. I admired him then and I admire him now. *(Looking toward heaven and removing his baseball cap.)* Buckaroo, congratulations on crossing home plate. *(Replacing cap on head, slumps back down.)* Now, speaking of home plate, I can't see a lick of the game from here. Young fella, *(Indicating an audience member.)* give me a hand back to the bleachers. I'm over by third base. Just put me next to Maude. *(Pointing to the back. Persists as needed to get audience member to push him back there.)*

**Harry:** Finally!

**Dr. Racket:** I was running a clinic in Cho Mai, Thailand when I met Uncle Buck. Dysentery was epidemic. People were dying for lack of clean water. First the babies and older or frail or sick. Then adults. It was awful. Uncle Buck brought in a 7 year old girl from the village where he was preaching. She was very sick but we were able to save her. Uncle Buck stayed on for over a week helping out. He washed bedding, boiled water, all sorts of menial tasks and never complained - not even when the goats struck. *(Starts to chuckle.)*

He'd hung some bedding he'd just washed on the make shift clothesline. A couple of goats wandered by long enough to chew through the twine dumping all those sheets he had just

washed into the mud. Uncle Buck said something about he understood why the goats were going to be separated from the sheep then smiled, boiled more water and washed them over again. I don't know how we would have gotten through that crisis without Uncle Buck.  
*(Pauses and smiles about her memories.)*

I came back to the states to teach at the Bible College and a few years later Buck McCrady joined the faculty. He was in his 70's and said he knew he wasn't going to keep going forever so he thought he better help train a new bunch. He was 86 this year and he was still taking students over for summer internships. He was one of the most dedicated, remarkable men I have ever met. He will be missed

**Harry:** *(Sarcastically.)* Can we finally serve dessert? *(Stage whisper to Buff.)* I can't believe how long this is taking.

**Adonis:** Maybe pretty lady *(Indicating Eve with a hand gesture.)* want to speak. You come speak pretty lady. I listen all night.

**Harry:** *(Angry with almost a growl.)* Adonis!

**Adonis:** *(Jumping fearfully at his remark.)* OK. I have pretty lady just tell me. *(Going to Eve.)* You want talk to Adonis?

**Eve:** *(Being gracious yet obviously bothered by his flirtations at this point.)* Ummm, err no. *(Getting an idea.)* I better sit with Mr. Withers here and make sure he's ok. *(Moves to the back by Withers and positions wheelchair to keep Adonis from sitting next to her.)*

Harry: I think we better get dessert served. *(Glances at watches.)* Look at how late it is! *(Shakes head.)*

*(Dessert is served. Characters encourage the audience to look carefully at the letter, examine the artifacts and decide which one is genuine. They ask who the audience thinks is the mole)*

## The One Item Scene 3

*(Harry goes to the mic and gets everyone's attention.)*

**Harry:** Now folks, it's getting late. I suppose you all want to be getting home.

**Samantha:** But we have to help Sadie pick an item.

**Eve:** We can't leave without helping her.

**Harry:** *(Throwing his hands up for the millionth time.)* Yes, yes. Go get her, Buff. And be quick.

**Adonis:** I think we should see what the audience thinks. Every table decide! Quick! Quick! Pick someone who will speak for table when Denise gets back.

**Harry:** *(Cheerfully.)* And remember everything else is on sale at Harry Sneed's Pawnshop. *(Harry checks his watches, taps his toe, obviously impatient for Sadie to enter. They finally do.)* Finally. Time is up. What's your pick?

**Eve:** Give the audience a chance to advise her.

**Adonis:** Yes, yes. You table - you there. What you advise? *(Adonis continues to call on the tables until each has advised Sadie.)*

**Sadie:** *(Calm, cool and collected to audience.)* Thank you all for helping. Thank you especially for being here to honor my uncle. He was such an inspiration to so many. After praying and carefully examining this letter I had a few questions of my own. Why was hope capitalized? Maybe to bring to mind the Hope Diamond? Why did he talk about the infield? Maybe to make me think of a baseball diamond? This IS a hard decision to make and a diamond is the hardest substance known to man. *(Turning to Harry.)* Mr. Sneed - I'll take the diamond necklace you mislabeled as rhinestones from the Rhine.

**Harry:** *(Flabbergasted and horrified.)* No, NO!!!

**Adonis:** *(Realizing Harry will kill him, goes to Sadie to stop her from getting the necklace.)* Diamond necklace fake. Not real. You pick this *(grabs closest thing and holds it up. Hezekiah gets the necklace and brings it to Sadie despite Harry and Adonis's attempts to stop him.)*

**Harry:** *(Grabbing Adonis by the collar and shaking him.)* I paid you good money to fool everyone. I'll notify immigration where you are and have you and your bottle of Windex deported. I should have hired another actor, not some guy standing on the corner of



Kempsville and Third Street wiping windshields for a dollar each!

**Dr. Racket:** You reap what you sow, Harry.

**Adonis:** No, NO, NO! Not deported! *(Goes to hide behind Eve.)*

**Harry:** Throw him out, Buff.

**Buff:** Throw them out yourself. *(Harry is wide mouthed with shock.)* I'm going to look into this Christianity thing. I confess - I don't need reading glasses. *(Embarrassed.)* I just say that so people won't know I can't read. Maybe there is something to this Christianity thing and if there is, I'm glad Sadie is trying to help people that can't read to learn about this guy named Jesus. *(Harry puts his hands over his head. Adonis throws himself to his knees, begging Eve with his hands clasp together. The rest of the cast starts moving into their final position surrounding the tables in a circle.)*

**Eve:** *(Emphatically to Adonis.)* No, I will not marry you so you don't get deported.

**Withers:** *(As if just waking up from a nap, loudly, to Dr. Racket)* Is it over yet? Who won the game? Is it time to go?

**Dr. Racket:** We'll go right after these closing remarks.

*(Cast drops character and speak as themselves in this optional ending)*

**Sadie:** Some of what you heard tonight is fiction. Uncle Buck is a fictional character. The diamonds are only glass. But some of the stories are based on the lives of actual missionaries.

**Dr. Racket:** Dysentery and Ebola are real diseases that take the lives of hundreds of thousands of people each year.

**Sum:** There are thousands of people who do not have the Bible available in their language.

**Buff:** And there are millions of people who cannot read even if the Bible were available in their language.

**Fi Fi:** Millions who need Jesus Christ.

**Abdul:** Persecution is real. In 1998, five hundred Christian churches were burned down in Java, Indonesia. On Oct 29, 2005 three girls from the Central Sulawesi Christian Church were beheaded on their way to class.

**Samantha:** We all cannot go abroad but we all can be part of missions and support those willing to sacrifice so much, sometimes even their lives. One way is to pray. Another way is to give.



**Hezekiah:** For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16

**Withers:** He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. Mark 16: 15-16

**Harry:** "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? Romans 10: 13-15

**Fi Fi:** Thank you and Bon Voyage! *(Rest of the cast says good night in other languages if they choose)*