

Simply to Die For

Roving Rogue Productions

2021

By CJ Corl

CAST

Narrator	Announcer and narrator who sets the stage for the project
Sonia "Sonny" Day	Granddaughter of May Day and heir to the Day Gang
May Day	Matriarch and leader of the Day Gang, having taken over when her husband died
Tom Collins	Brewer and smuggler for the Day Gang
Millie Graham	Maid for May Day
Lew Scannon	Leader of the West Side Gang
Rick O'Shae	Enforcer and "muscle" along with Lew's second in command
Robin Hyde	Bookkeeper for the West Side Gang
Vera Piercing	Lew's on/off girlfriend and silent film star with an obnoxious voice
Belle Tone	Local Jazz singer who's been hired to sing at the party
Skip Dover	Belle's pianist and manager, along with the owner of the club she sings at
Eddie Bull	Local Politician who's trying to campaign all the time
Theresa "Terry" Bull	Eddie's wife who's increasingly unhappy with her marriage
Noah Goodman	Owner of the local telephone company along with his sister, Anita
Mary Goodman	Wife of Noah Goodman, from old-money who doesn't have money anymore
Anita Goodman	Sister to Noah and technically co-owner of the phone company
Dr. Jameson	Doctor who's struggling and invited in hopes of getting more into smuggling

EPISODE SIX:

Scene One:

NARRATOR

It's truly been an electrifying experience at the Day Annual Gala. First Dr. J. Jameson ended up strangled. Then Mrs. Terry Bull fell down the stairs and broke her neck. I think the jury is still out on whether that was an accident or not. Then, Skip Dover, Noah Goodman, and Lew Scannon all got attacked while outside checking out the fallen tree. The phone line was cut, and then the electric, which our handy Robin Hyde was able to fix for us. Just in time for our two secret lovers, Skip Dover and Noah Goodman, to be caught in a hidden tryst! Oh my! Then they were discovered by Mayor Eddie Bull who was determined to tell everyone about their affair.

Such Drama!

All seemed to be calming down and going better. At least until Anita Goodman flipped the lights off and ended up barbequed faster than... well... that wasn't a good analogy. Cause you know, barbecue is pretty slow.

Either way, Anita's definitely dead. And her hair doesn't look all that great either.

NOAH

I can't believe it. She was just there... and now she's... not.

SONNY

I know, it was rather a shock to everyone.

LEW

Shock might not be the best word to use in this case.

SONNY

Shut it, Scannon.

NOAH

I should go tell Mary. Where is she?

ROBIN

She was upstairs resting. I can check on her for you.

SONNY

Yes, let Robin go check. You don't look like you can stand.

NOAH

Thank you, Miss Hyde.

ROBIN

Sure.

NARRATOR

In the corner, May flags down Millie.

MAY

Bring up some more food and drink. I think everyone could use something to calm the nerves.

MILLIE

Yes, ma'am.

MAY

Although, I shouldn't have to tell you that, stupid girl.

MILLIE

I'm sorry, ma'am. I've never been to a party where this many people ended up dead.

MAY

Then you should be doubly aware that you should be seeing to my guests.

NARRATOR

Oh... here come the claws.

MAY

I do not pay you to gawk at what's happening. You should have brought up food and drinks the moment this happened. After all, I am nothing without my reputation. Do you have any idea how important that is in my line of work? Of course, you don't. You couldn't possibly comprehend running an entire empire when you can't even remember to bring food up to people who are obviously starving.

MILLIE

Yes, ma'am. I'm sorry, ma'am.

MAY

Now go.

And where's Collins?

MILLIE

Not sure, ma'am. I haven't seen him for a while now.

MAY

Well, when you do, tell him I want him working, not drinking away my profits.

MILLIE

Yes, ma'am.

NARRATOR

Millie scurries back downstairs while May starts cracking open some bottles herself.

SKIP

Here, let me help you, Mrs. Day.

MAY

You can do more with your hands than play the piano?

SKIP

Oh, a lot more...

But yes, I invent all our specialty drinks at Over and Down myself. I like to have a bit of time with all of my bartenders to make sure they mix drinks up to my standards.

MAY

I knew you were picky, but that explains so much about your shipments.

SKIP

It does. Here, I'll mix. I'm sure most of us could use a few stiff drinks.

MAY

Thank you, I'm sure we could.

NARRATOR

May collects a few glasses, slowly taking drinks around the room, starting with Noah.

BELLE

You okay, chickadee?

SKIP

I'd much rather be over with Noah. But I can't, so I can at least keep myself useful and busy.

BELLE

I know... I wish I knew more piano than that little bit you've been showing me. I think we could all use some distractions right now.

SKIP

Yeah, those upbeat tunes we were working on aren't really great for this.

BELLE

You'll find time to talk with him.

SKIP

Thanks.

NARRATOR

Belle slips away, helping to deliver more very strong drinks to the remaining guests. Most are already a little tipsy from the amount of alcohol and the lack of food.

You know, that's kind of odd. May is always sending Millie for more food, but little of it seems to be showing up. Wonder why that is...

VERA

I just can't believe this is happening! If someone can kill Anita, then why wouldn't they want to kill me?

BELLE

Don't know what anyone would get out of killing you. Besides maybe some peace and quiet.

NARRATOR

Ouch...

VERA

How- I-

-sputtering-

SONNY

I assure you there's nothing to worry about. We'll get this sorted out.

VERA

You keep saying that, but nothing changes!

SONNY

Well, none of us can exactly force the killer to come forward.

VERA

Lew-ie can. He'd never allow something like this to happen at his parties.

SONNY

I'm sure he wouldn't.

VERA

Exactly! He would make sure whoever is trying to kill me is captured.

BELLE

Well if they're gonna shut you up, it would be nice if they'd hurry up now.

VERA

You're just jealous because you're not as famous as I am.

BELLE

I don't want to be your kind of famous. Besides, I'm a singer. People actually want to hear me.

VERA

I'll have you know that I started on the stage! I was even in the play *Sherlock Holmes!*

BELLE

I'm sure you were, as the victim, right? No one would want to listen to you through an entire play.

VERA

You little-

LEW

Girls! Please.

VERA

Lew-ie! She-

BELLE

She isn't worth my time. Excuse me.

(BELLE LEAVES)

LEW

-imitating Sonny-

Thank you, Mr. Scannon, for stepping in.

SONNY

I did not need you to step in. Everything was well in hand.

LEW

Sure it was.

SONNY

And I do not sound like that.

LEW

Oh, but you do, Sunshine.

SONNY

You are being presumptuous and much too familiar with me, Mr. Scannon.

LEW

Perhaps. But it's fun to get a rise out of you.

SONNY

-makes a noise of disgust and stalks away-

VERA

Lew-ie! That... that... ugh I don't like her.

LEW

Who? Miss Day?

VERA

No, although she's a bit too prim and proper for my liking. I mean that glorified canary. If my uncle knew the way she spoke to me, he'd put her back in her place.

LEW

Your uncle still lives down in Alabama, Vera. I don't think he's ready for big city life. Or the mixing of races.

VERA

Still-

LEW

Come on, Vera, let's get a drink and you can relax a bit.

NARRATOR

I wonder if she's a quiet drunk. That would be nice.

With my luck, she probably isn't.

Millie finally comes back up with a small tray of appetizers, slowly making her way around the room. But there doesn't look to be much on the tray.

Scene Two:

MILLIE

Appetizer, sir?

RICK

Oh, uhh... sure. Thanks.

MILLIE

Of course, sir.

RICK

You don't need to call me sir.

MILLIE

I do according to Mrs. Day.

RICK

That old slag?

NARRATOR

Rick's gaze is on the other side of the room where his boss is trying to calm Vera, still convinced that she'll be next. Then, his eyes flicker over to where May's standing with a drink. She's been bouncing around from guest to guest, trying to keep everyone calm. Mostly, it's working... so far.

MILLIE

She is my employer.

RICK

Your family works for hers? That how you ended up here?

MILLIE

Oh, no. But I knew one of the gardeners. He recommended me for the job.

RICK

So you don't have any loyalty to her?

MILLIE

Sir, are you asking... ?

RICK

I'm asking why in the world you'd stay with her.

MILLIE

She treats me well.

RICK

I've heard what she says about the help.

MILLIE

No worse than other employers.

RICK

Well, if you ever want to get out from under the thumb of a tyrant, let me know.

MILLIE

What? I'd join a gang?

RICK

Only if you want to. But there are other jobs out there.

MILLIE

... Why would you offer something like that?

RICK

Cause I can sense you're a hard worker. We appreciate that over on the West Side. Besides, our men are better. We're better at taking care of our own there.

MILLIE

Are you saying I can't take care of myself?

RICK

Have you seen my girl? I know lasses can take care of themselves. I'm just saying, it's nice to have a family so you don't have to always take care of things on your own. You've got people to rely on.

MILLIE

Like a man.

RICK

If you want one.

MILLIE

Does your girl know you're saying this to me?

RICK

Are you kidding? It was her idea.

Just think on it, alright?

MILLIE

... Alright...

NARRATOR

Hmmm... wonder what that's about. Maybe the West Siders are here for more than just good food.

Although... I still haven't seen much. What Millie brought up was pitiful.

ROBIN

Mr. Goodman?

NOAH

Yes? Oh my gosh, is Mary okay?

ROBIN

Yes. Yes, she's fine. She was still asleep when I went to check on her. I thought it best to let her get some rest while she can.

NOAH

Oh, yes, yes, that's smart. Thank you. I just-

ROBIN

Of course. I understand. This must be very difficult for you.

NOAH

Yes. I... Anita and I didn't always get on. But she was my sister. The last bit of my family left.

ROBIN

I can understand that.

NOAH

You've lost someone suddenly?

Wait, that was a foolish question. Of course, you have.

ROBIN

Why would you think that?

NOAH

Because you're in a gang. You probably have to face the fear of not seeing someone every day.

ROBIN

The fear becomes a bit normal when you've lived with it as long as I have. But yeah, I've suddenly lost people in my life. The streets are a rough place.

NOAH

That they are.

ROBIN

So, I know this must be difficult.

NOAH

Yeah... 'Nita was a pain at times. But she was still my sister. We disagreed on almost everything and I was constantly an embarrassment to her, but...

ROBIN

But still family.

NOAH

Yeah...

ROBIN

Well, I'm sorry about that. I wish we could just all get out of here.

NOAH

So do I... So do I...

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, Skip's finishing up a few more cocktails. He swirls the liquid around in the glass, gazing at it intently for a moment before he nods.

Wow, he really is a perfectionist when it comes to his drinks. No wonder they're so good. Send another my way, Skip!

SKIP

Mayor Bull, would you like another drink?

EDDIE

Not from the likes of you.

SKIP

You just had to say no-

EDDIE

Knowing your kind, you probably poisoned it. Like you killed Miss Goodman.

SKIP

Why in the world would I kill Miss Goodman?

EDDIE

You know exactly why.

NARRATOR

Is it just me, or Eddie's voice getting louder? It's probably safe to say that he's had a few drinks and is definitely feeling... maybe good isn't the best word. But alcohol is definitely flowing freely through his veins.

SKIP

Mayor-

EDDIE

Don't try to sweet-talk me, you degenerate. I know exactly what you are and what you're capable of.

BELLE

Skipper, is everything okay?

EDDIE

And you have your little girl here to defend you, I see.

SKIP

I don't need to be defended. I didn't do anything but offer you a drink.

EDDIE

Lies! We all know you killed her!

NARRATOR

-gasp-

SKIP

Why the hell-

BELLE

Shhhh!

NARRATOR

Belle, being the smart woman she is, pulls both men out the door they're standing near, into the hall. For a more... private conversation. Or she tries to.

EDDIE

Don't you manhandle me, tramp!

BELLE

I will do whatever I like to you when you're being a drunken fool.

NARRATOR

She really only succeeds in the Mayor getting more upset and gaining the attention of the others in the room.

EDDIE

I am not drunk! I want this man arrested. He murdered Miss Goodman. He's the only one who had a reason to see her dead.

SKIP

I had no reason to see Anita dead. She was one of my regulars at the club.

EDDIE

She'd seen-

BELLE

Absolutely nothing that concerns you. Now, why don't you stop sticking your nose in where it doesn't belong?

LEW

Now, wait, I think I'd like to know what Miss Goodman saw. I mean, maybe it will help us figure out who the killer actually is.

BELLE

And you think you'll figure that out by sticking your nose in our business?

LEW

Mostly in Miss Goodman's business. If we know that she knew something about someone, then wouldn't it be obvious who killed her? So how about it, Skip? Why's the Mayor all hot and bothered about you?

EDDIE

He's a s-

BELLE

Don't you dare!

SKIP

Belle, it's fine.

BELLE

Skip...

SKIP

No, it's fine. Look, it's not a big deal. I didn't kill Miss Anita. But she caught me in a... compromising position.

VERA

Oh, this should be good.

LEW

What kind of compromising position?

SKIP

With my lover. Who I will not name, to protect them.

EDDIE

Well, I don't have an issue with naming-

SONNY

Mayor Bull, I think that's enough. I can respect Mr. Dover's decision to not want to share his personal life with everyone around him.

LEW

Does this person's identity have to do with why the Mayor thinks you killed Miss Goodman?

SKIP

I'm sure he thinks it does. But it doesn't. I think Miss Anita was in a bit of a shock, but I have no issue with her knowing.

LEW

Still not a good time to use shock...

EDDIE

Bull! You have all the reason in the world to see her gone.

SKIP

I really don't. So she knew who I'm screwing? I'm sure she was more startled than I was about the revelation.

LEW

So, Mayor, you think that Skip killed Miss Goodman because she found out who his lover was?

EDDIE

He'd want to keep it secret, the degenerate. We can't trust filth like him!

SKIP

Are you calling me that because I'm black or because I'm a fairy?

VERA

-gasps dramatically-

SKIP

Oh, shut it, Vera. It's not like half the people in my club don't know my preferences.

So, Mayor, which is it? Because either way, I'm certain I can get past people finding out about me. But can you get past people thinking that you killed your wife while we were here? After all, she was one of the first ones dead. Wouldn't it be convenient that the politician whose money all belonged to his wife is now the heir to a nice fortune?

EDDIE

I didn't have any reason to kill anyone else.

SKIP

Maybe not, but all it takes is the rumor that you off-ed your wife to tank your political career.

EDDIE

And all it takes is one word from me to ruin your lover's life.

NARRATOR

Oh damn...

SKIP

Then we're in agreement. Mutual destruction and all that. I won't say anything as long as you don't say anything.

BELLE

I don't think-

SKIP

I know, LB. But that's what I can offer right now. I didn't kill Anita. But as long as the Mayor keeps his mouth shut about my lover, I won't feed any stories to my journalist friends.

EDDIE

... This really does make you a degenerate.

SKIP

No, it makes me better at playing politics than you. Obviously it was your wife who was the brains behind your operation.

So do we have a deal or not?

EDDIE

... Deal.

SKIP

I won't make you shake on it. Wouldn't want you to have to touch a fairy like me. You might catch it.

SONNY

Alright, if the two of you are done.

Skip, can you show me how you were making those drinks? I can help you mix up some more.

MAY

Yes, Mayor Bull, why don't you go sit down. Girl!

MILLIE

Yes, ma'am?

MAY

Where is Collins?

MILLIE

The light was on in the cellar. I asked him to bring some more drinks up.

MAY

Well, see that he does instead of just asking him.

MILLIE

Yes, ma'am. Right away, ma'am.

MAY

Good.

Now Mayor, why don't you sit with me and tell me more about your plans for when you're elected.

Scene Three:

NARRATOR

The Day ladies lead the two men to opposite sides of the room, while the rest of the group settles back again. Belle checks in on Skip before going over to Noah, bringing another drink to him as they sit together. Millie glances around before quickly disappearing down the servant's stairs. She takes the steps carefully, not wanting to fall and end up with a crooked neck like Terry Bull.

MILLIE

Tom?

NARRATOR

The kitchen is quiet but the door to the wine cellar is still open and the light on. Millie immediately starts pulling more food out for the guests.

MILLIE

Of course, Cook had to leave this evening. "Just put these in the oven," she said. "Even an idiot could do it."

Apparently, I'm an idiot, because I burned them to a crisp.

Tom! Mrs. Day wants you to bring some more drinks. She's in a real mood, so I'd hurry.

-mutters-

Before she really turns into a bitch.

Okay... so... brown bread sandwiches? What the heck are those? Obviously sandwiches with brown bread, but what goes inside? ... There has to be something in the pantry I can use. Although, I don't think I want to put anything in the oven again. Oh, there's some of those fancy olives. And some nuts? Okay, this can work.

NARRATOR

Millie struggles out of the pantry, her arms heavy with boxes and jars of a variety of sizes.

(MILLIE SCROUNGING UP SOME FOOD, PUTTING DOWN JARS AND BAGS, ETC)

MILLIE

Tom? Good lord, you better not be drunk down there!

-mutters-

I'll kill you myself if you are...

NARRATOR

Millie starts down the stairs to the wine cellar.

MILLIE

Tom, come on. Mrs. Day's madder than a cat dunked in water. You're going to get us both in trouble-

NARRATOR

There is no one in the cellar. Just rows of large kegs of beer and barrels of wine.

Mrs. Day is apparently holding out on us.

MILLIE

Tom?

NARRATOR

Oh, right.

MILLIE

Tom?

NARRATOR

She creeps through before spying another pair of shoes in the next row over.

MILLIE

Oh Lord, Tom...

NARRATOR

She rounds the corner, stopping short at the sight of the figure on the other side.

MILLIE

-screams-

(MILLIE RUNS UPSTAIRS, THROWING OPEN THE DOORS)

SONNY

My god, what is it?

MILLIE

It's Tom. He's dead.