

Head First or Feet First?

Douglas Campbell



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ArtAge Publications

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HEAD FIRST OR FEET FIRST?

by

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CAST

EMILY THROCKMORTON: Sister of the deceased

MILLIE THROCKMORTON: Wife of the deceased

ELWOOD THROCKMORTON: Brother of the deceased

GRETA FIREFLY: A famous detective

POLICE OFFICER: A female or male officer of the law

Place

The Copa Coconut, a residential hotel catering to seniors.

Time

The late 1940s.

Setting: The game room of the Copa Coconut Hotel. The main entrance to the game room is Up Right. There is an entrance to a balcony Up Left. A chair can be seen on the balcony. (The balcony could be suggested by a small wood fence panel.) Near Center Stage is a game table with chairs. Down Right is a telephone table. A bookcase could be placed Stage Right and a potted palm Down Left. A sign could be placed on the telephone table or on top of the bookcase saying, 'Copa Coconut Hotel Game Room.'

At Rise: The stage is dark. (SOUND CUE: A man's scream and a loud crash.)

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Scene 1

EMILY: *(off)* What was that?

MILLIE: *(off)* It sounded like someone screamed and knocked over a lamp.

(SOUND CUE: Door opening. The lights come up. EMILY and MILLIE enter.)

EMILY: Or it might have been Elwood trying to sing again and someone threw a vase at him.

ELWOOD: *(entering)* I resent that, Emily!

EMILY: Elwood! I didn't know you were behind us.

ELWOOD: *(looking around)* Nobody is in here.

EMILY: Millie? Was Malachi drinking on the balcony again?

MILLIE: Let's look and see. *(They cross Up Left to the balcony and look down.)* It's Malachi! He's fallen off the balcony!

EMILY: Good grief! Is he all right?

ELWOOD: What do you mean, "Is he all right?" If you fell head first, three stories, would you be all right?

EMILY: How do you know he fell head first? Maybe he fell feet first.

MILLIE: I think he's fallen on the trash can. We better go down and—

ELWOOD: Stay here. I'll go down. You and Emily come back inside. I don't want either of you falling off the balcony.

(Elwood exits Up Right. Millie and Emily return to Center.)

MILLIE: Maybe we should call an ambulance.

EMILY: That's a good idea, Millie. You sit down, and I'll call the hotel operator.
(She crosses to the telephone table.)

MILLIE: *(sitting down at the game table)* Poor Malachi! I don't know how many times I've told him not to drink on the balcony.

EMILY: *(picks up the telephone)* He should definitely lay off the beer.

MILLIE: At least it's better than drinking gin.

EMILY: Hello? Hello? Operator? Operator? Are you there? Oh, thank goodness. This is Emily Throckmorton calling from the game room. Could you call an ambulance? I think my brother, Malachi, has fallen from the game room balcony. No, this is not a prank call. This is a matter of life and death. Yes, right away, please! *(hanging up)* Inefficiency. *(She shakes her head in disgust and crosses to Millie.)*

MILLIE: I hope they come soon, Emily! I'm a bundle of nerves!

EMILY: If the driver doesn't stop for coffee and a donut, the ambulance should be here in ten minutes.

MILLIE: Malachi just won't listen to reason. That balcony rail is simply too low. He must have had too much beer and fell.

EMILY: Let's just hope he's all right.

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!