

The play is set in the present and allows for topical references to be inserted where marked. The set remains the same for the entire play and music may be added or omitted as required. Schultz should have some sort of German accent and his sister Gretchin (could be played in drag) needs to be able to speak a comic form of pigeon German.

The usually uneventful summer season at the Alpine Ski Lodge in the Blue Mountains is about to take on a new dimension. The local council has employed three lady judges to present awards for a summer festival. The staff are on their best behaviour to impress the judges, but Murphy's law prevails. The cook breaks a leg, the tour bus lands in the lake and two feral bikies arrive on the scene to further provoke the owner, Baroness Von Clapp.

The lovable gardener, Schultz, tries to save the day by inviting his sister, Gretchin, to help out with the cooking. He neglects to warn everyone that she doesn't speak English. The staff and judges all agree that Gretchins Strudel is out of this world, which could have something to do with the fact that the bikies have misplaced some angel dust.

The tour bus driver, Karl, Marlina Von Clapp, and the milk maid, Heidi, enter into the spirit of the festival with some slap dancing, complete with lederhosen and national dress. Also a chicken stuffing and a whip cracking competition, with the help of volunteers from the audience, of course.

The hilarious conclusion to the play sees the bikies, the staff and the lady judges combine to effect a mutually satisfying solution to the usually slow summer season...Strudelfest!

Ideal for theatre restaurant or high school production.

Cast required. Eight females and three males.

The Staff



By Judith

BARONESS VON CLAPP	Widow, Owner of the Alpine Lodge
MARLENA VON CLAPP	Her daughter, Uni Student.
HEIDI	The housemaid, pleasant country girl.
SCHULTZ	Farmer, wine maker helps out at the Lodge.
KARL	Bus Driver, Mechanic.
GRETCHIN	Sister of Schultz, speaks little English.

The Guests.

MONA	Comedy role. Slightly deaf, widow.
CARMEL	Older lady has grown-up children. Is divorced.
VERA	Spinster.

The Bikies.

(Minor roles could be played by teachers in a school production.)

REV	Bikie leader.
NEV	Not very bright follower.
BEV	Rev's Girlfriend

SUGGESTED MUSIC..

1. German Medley (Instrumental only)
2. Sixteen Ton or any song about working.
3. I was Really Only Foolin'. (Music, Battle Hymn of the Republic.)
4. Walk Right In. or a song about welcome.
5. She Taught Me How to Yodel or a farming song.
6. Ach Du Lieber Augustine (The Slap Dance.)
7. Down by the Riverside, or a song about a holiday
8. It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo, or a song about rain..
9. The Happy Wanderer or a song about mountains.
10. As No 9.
11. As No 8.
12. Birdie Song Birdie Dance.
13. As No 9.
14. Congratulations, or Happy Days Are Here Again.

N.B.

All music listed is suggestions only as to the type of song suitable. Music is of your own choosing and copyright permission and appropriate licences should be sought.

ACT ONE

Setting. *Summertime in an old Ski Lodge in this country. A Counter with tourist maps, travel brochures, pamphlets, etc, upstage. Perhaps a distant snow covered mountain peak can be seen through the window. A small table and three chairs downstage. The cast is dressed in period costume, but the play is set in the present..*

MUSIC No 1. THE OVERTURE

(Enter the Baroness and Marlana.)

BARONESS. *(Looking about critically.)* Have all the rooms been dusted and aired, Marlana?

MARLENA. Yes, Mother!

BARONESS. Good! Everything must be absolutely perfect for the festival. If we don't get a good share of the summer season this year, we may as well close the doors.

MARLENA. The recession has really hit the tourist industry hard up here in the mountains, hasn't it?

BARONESS. And then some. We only just managed to keep afloat with the ski season; I hope this summer isn't as slow as last year.

MARLENA. It's bound to be better this year. We're in recovery now; the recession or depression or whatever it was is over. Isn't this supposed to be as good as it gets?

BARONESS. I certainly hope not! Marlana, a recession is when your friends lose their jobs. A depression is when you lose your job. And it's a recovery when... *(Treasurer or prime minister)* loses his!

HEIDI. *(Entering.)* Sorry I'm late. We were late finishing the milking.

MARLENA. The cows sleep in again, Heidi?

HEIDI. Oh no, Marlana. Our cows are always up early. But today we had some trouble with the chickens. Two of them have stopped laying.

MARLENA. How do you know they've stopped laying?

HEIDI. 'Cos me dad just ran over them with the tractor.

BARONESS. (*Running finger along counter.*) Yes, well someone should run over here with a duster. Just look at that! (*Makes an X in the dust.*) I could write my name in the dust on this counter.

HEIDI. Oooh! So you can! My, ain't education a fine thing!

BARONESS. Will you see that this counter is dusted, Heidi?

HEIDI. Oh, right away Baroness! (*Vigorously dusts counter with skirt*)

BARONESS. Not with your costume, please!

HEIDI. Sorry. (*Beats dust from costume.*)

MARLENA. Do we really have to wear these silly costumes, Mother?

HEIDI. I don't think they're silly.

MARLENA. I do! I feel like something left over from the first fleet.

BARONESS. Nonsense! You both look lovely. The tourists appreciate the trouble we go to for the summer season. Atmosphere is what they expect and the costumes set the mood. Never forget, Marlena...the customer is always right!

MARLENA. Yes mother.

HEIDI. (*Nodding.*) The customer is always right!

(*A mobile telephone Rings....The Baroness locates it and answers.*)

BARONESS. Hello! Hello. Yes, Alpine Lodge Guest House, Baroness Von Clapp speaking,...Von Clapp...Clapp! With an l...Yes, quite a few people have already told me that...Now what was it you were after? ...Oh, no!...When?Oh dear! And she'll be laid up for several weeks you say? ...Yes!...Yes, tell her we all send our love and not to worry. We'll be able to manage...Yes, thank-you for calling. (*Hangs up and replaces phone.*)

HEIDI. What is it?

BARONESS. The cook has been involved in a rock climbing accident on the mountain. She fell from the face.

MARLENA. Oh, how dreadful!

BARONESS. How dreadfully inconvenient! The festival starts this weekend and we're to be without a cook! What am I going to do?

SCHULTZ. (*Entering carrying a basket of fruit and vegies,happily singing and yodeling.*) High on a hill lived a lonely goatherd. (*Or something similar.*)

BARONESS. Oh, shut up, Schultz!

SCHULTZ. Und, what's the matter with you Baroness? You look worried.

BARONESS. That's because I am worried.

MARLENA. The cook's broken her leg.

HEIDI. She's off her face!

SCHULTZ. The cook is usually off her face.

MARLENA. She had a fall while rock climbing.

SCHULTZ. Rock climbing! Cook's much too old for rock climbing!

BARONESS. Exactly! She'll be on crutches for several weeks. Most annoying. I was counting on her to win the strudel-baking competition for us this year.

KARL. (*Entering from the kitchen.*) I've oiled and greased the tour bus. I knocked the wasps' nest off the exhaust and got most of the mice out of the upholstery, and I give 'er a good wash down. Do you want me to go down to the station and see if there's anybody waiting' to be picked up?

BARONESS. Yes Karl, the train should be in soon.

MARLENA. And for goodness sake, be careful. The mountain road is very dangerous; the potholes are even worse than last year.

KARL. Aw, I never complain about the potholes. After all, they're one of the few things I see on the roads today still made in this country.

SCHULTZ. You still have the old tour bus, Baroness? I thought you were going to get a new one this season.

BARONESS. With the tourist industry the way it is we can't possibly afford a new bus, Schultz; besides, it's not really all that old.

KARL. Ha!

SCHULTZ. What year model do you reckon it would be, Karl?

KARL. I don't know, but it's the only vehicle I've ever seen with bifocal headlights and orthopaedic brake shoes.

BARONESS. Speaking of which, you did thoroughly test the braking system, Karl? As I remember we had some trouble in that area last season...that unfortunate incident on the river bend.

KARL. Yes, well I think I've solved the problem; I'll give it a good tryout on the way down to the station.

BARONESS. Good! Now let's see what we can do about a replacement for Cook. (*Produces telephone and exits dialing number.*)

SCHULTZ. (*Deposits basket on counter.*) Here we haf the fruit for the festival, best apples, best radishes, best grapes, best pears, etc, in all the land.

MARLENA. It certainly looks delicious. (*Takes a pear from the basket.*) My, what a perfectly formed pear.

KARL. (*Looking over her shoulder at cleavage.*) Ahrrr! I was just thinkin' the same thing meself.

HEIDI. Did you grow all this yourself, Schultzie?

SCHULTZ. Everything! Ya, all local produce! Straight from my own farm just up the road from the lodge.

KARL. Schultz grows the best fruit and vegetables for miles around.

SCHULTZ. (*Proudly.*) That's right Karl.

MARLENA. (*Admiring fruit.*) Have you always been a farmer Schultz?

SCHULTZ. Oh no, not always! When I first came to this country, I didn't have a farm. Oh no! I couldn't even get a job!

HEIDI. Why not?

SCHULTZ. I couldn't get a job because I couldn't read or write English.

MARLENA. But surely you could have tried manual labour?

SCHULTZ. I heard about Manuel Labour, but I think he only finds work for Spanish migrants. Anyway I did get a job in a candle factory for a little while.

HEIDI. Did you like working there Schultz?

SCHULTZ. No, not really...they expected me to work every Saturday and Sunday.

KARL. What, and all during the week too?

SCHULTZ. Oh, no! At the candle factory I only worked on wick ends!

KARL. Sorry I asked!

SCHULTZ. I tried everywhere to get another job. But always the same, must read, must write English. Then one day I got a job on (*Local city council.*)

MARLENA. Doing what?

SCHULTZ. (*Proudly.*) Driving night cart.

KARL. Driving the night cart?

SCHULTZ. (*Defensively.*) Ya! The night cart! A job is a job!

HEIDI. Was it a good job?

SCHULTZ. (*Shrugs*) It had it's ups and downs! But, ya, I liked it! All night I drive around und pick up the full cans und slide in the empty vuns...Und in the day time I grow my flowers und fruit und vegetables.

KARL. How long did you work for the...(local name)... City Council, Schultz?

SCHULTZ. About two years.Und then I had to leave.

HEIDI. Why? What happened?

SCHULTZ. Couldn't do the paperwork.

MARLENA. How much paperwork can there be on a night cart?

SCHULTZ. The Council put in an administration manager, und somebody decided we haf to haf time sheets, und rosters, und log books, und quality control, und stock takes...

KARL. Stock takes? No I won't ask!

MARLENA. So you lost your job Schultz?

SCHULTZ. Ya, I quit! Und I start gardening in my backyard. Und pretty soon I haf many customers to buy my fruit und vegetables. Make a lot of money und so I buy more land und produce more fruit und vegetables. Und I bought a cow und a few pigs and planted a small vineyard und pretty soon I start making wine from my grapes. Und pretty soon I am successful businessman.

MARLENA. That's wonderful. And what do you think is the real secret of your success, Schultz?

SCHULTZ. Pig manure! Pig manure for tomatoes, pig manure for cabbages, pig manure for grapes. You can't beat pig manure for making things grow.

MARLENA. I do wish you'd say fertiliser, Schultz, instead of manure.

SCHULTZ. Ha! It took my sister twenty years to get me to call it manure!

KARL. And now Schultzie makes a living from the tourists visiting the valley and buying his fruit and vegies and wines.

SCHULTZ. Ya, Und German sausage, und wurst! Und sometimes in the summer I do a bit of gardening around here, for the Baroness.

MARLENA. Yes I know. And in return Mother has us save the table scraps from theLodge to feed your pigs.

SCHULTZ. That's right.

HEIDI. I think that's just wonderful, Schultz! To work your way up to owning your own farm and without even an education. Only in this wonderful country could this happen.

MARLENA. Absolutely! You should be very proud of yourself, Schultz. Why just imagine where you might have been today if you had been able to read and write.

SCHULTZ. Ya! Driving the night cart for the (*Local city Council !*)