



ONE SLIGHT HITCH

BY LEWIS BLACK



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One Slight Hitch was produced by the Williamstown Theatre Festival,
Jenny Gersten, Artistic Director, on July 6, 2011.

Seattle premiere produced by A Contemporary Theatre, Seattle, WA,
Kurt Beattie, Artistic Director; Carlo Scanduzzi, Executive Director.

Subsequently produced by George Street Playhouse, October 2, 2012,
David Saint, Artistic Director; Norma Kaplan, Managing Director.

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ONE SLIGHT HITCH was produced by the Williamstown Theatre Festival (Jenny Gersten, Artistic Director) in Williamstown, Massachusetts, on July 6, 2011. It was directed by Joe Grifasi; the scenic design was by Robin Vest; the costume design was by Susan Hilferty; the lighting design was by Rui Ruita; the sound design was by Charles Coes; the production manager was Jeremiah Thies; the production stage manager was Libby Unsworth; and the casting was by Calleri Casting. The cast was as follows:

DOC Mark Linn-Baker
DELIA Lizbeth Mackay
RYAN Justin Long
P.B. Jeanna Phillips
MELANIE Clea Alsip
COURTNEY Megan Ketch
HARPER Ben Cole

ONE SLIGHT HITCH was produced by George Street Playhouse (David Saint, Artistic Director; Norma Kaplan, Managing Director) in New Brunswick, New Jersey, on October 2, 2012. It was directed by Joe Grifasi; the set design was by Bob Dahlstrom; the costume design was by Susan Hilferty; the lighting design was by Rui Ruita; and the sound design was by Christopher J. Bailey. The cast was as follows:

DOC Mark Linn-Baker
DELIA Lizbeth Mackay
RYAN Christopher Tocco
P.B. Lauren Ashley Carter
MELANIE Clea Alsip
COURTNEY Rosie Benton
HARPER Scott Drummond

CHARACTERS

DOC COLEMAN — The father. A general practitioner. A charming, eccentric conservative. Usually straight-up.

DELIA COLEMAN — The mother. In a constant state of panic.

RYAN — Early thirties. Until seven months ago, he had lived with Courtney for two and a half years.

P.B. — Sixteen-year-old daughter. Loosest in family.

MELANIE — Twenty-something daughter. Nurse. Attractive and psychotic.

COURTNEY — Freelance writer. Has just published her first novel which was almost successful.

HARPER — Early thirties. Logical and wealthy. Engaged to Courtney.

PLACE

The Colemans' home in an upper-class suburb.

TIME

It's 11:00 A.M. on Courtney's wedding day. Summer 1981.

ONE SLIGHT HITCH

ACT ONE

The living room of the Colemans in an upper-class suburb of Cincinnati, Ohio. Contemporary colonial style. Warm and neat with classic moulding and floral wallpaper.

Downstage right is a decorative fireplace with brass andirons and fireplace tools in a stand. Facing the fireplace is a low swivel chair. At the center of the stage right wall is a large door that is the formal main entrance into the house. The door has a peephole in the center. Above this on the upstage wall is a large arch behind which we see part of a formal dining room that presumably leads offstage towards the kitchen and into the yard. Just left of the archway is a staircase which leads to the upper bedrooms. Built into the staircase as it rises is a small door to the basement. To the left of this on the upstage wall is the door to the closet. Just downstage of that on the stage left wall is the door to the bathroom and immediately downstage of that is a small table which serves as a bar with glasses and an ample supply of liquor in bottles and decanters. At the downstage left edge of the stage is a window seat in front of a suggested bay window. There is a sofa in the middle of the room and in front of it a long coffee table. Through the archway we can see part of a long formal dining table that extends offstage. The table and chairs around it are covered with boxes and other materials suggesting some process of packing or unpacking. [Note: When seen in the first act, these objects should not appear too specific to wedding preparations.]

At opening, the entire room is dimly lit in an eerie light. Some of the doors are open, allowing shafts of light in. The dining

room table, swivel chair and bar are covered with sheets. The sofa is also covered with a sheet and under it are piled some "objects." [Note: When the lights go to black these "objects" will be replaced by Doc and Delia who recreate a similar shape under the sheet causing us to believe they are still the aforementioned "objects."]

In the blackout we hear the last few lines of Ronald Reagan's acceptance speech at the Republican Convention [1984 version]. The sound fades away on crowd applause and a spotlight come up slowly on P.B. sitting ownstage on the window seat.

P.B. As I grow older I find I don't see things more clearly, I am just more comfortable with the blur. This is how I looked thirty-odd years ago, in nineteen eighty-one. I was just sixteen and fancy free. I was christened Plante Ballantine Davis Coleman. Plante Ballantine would have been a wonderful name if I was going to be Scarlett O'Hara's best friend and the owner of a large Southern plantation. So I am called P.B. for obvious reasons. Outside of my name, I couldn't ask for a better upbringing. And this is the house I was raised in. Oh, how I miss the simple life of the nineteen-eighties. I yearn for the eighties, the sheer joy of knowing so little. The comfort it gave. Back then there was a normalcy in the air. I'm a Republican, so normal is real important to me. I like rules. I learned being liberated only means you are opening a whole new can of worms. Liberation is just another word for confusion. I need orderliness in my life. I am much happier when things are black and white. Grey doesn't suit me. And I can remember precisely when I began to feel that way. The day my life changed. No, it was not the day I lost my virginity. Besides, I didn't lose it. I gave it away. It was today. A late summer day in 1981. Ronald Reagan was the president and America was getting back on track. You could smell hope in the air. Real Hope. And there were values. Real family values. It was a great time to be alive. The number one TV show was *Dallas*. The number one movie was *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. The number one song that year was "Bette Davis Eyes." (*A song like "Bette Davis Eyes" comes up softly and the volume increases as she speaks over it.**) It said nothing at all, but it said it so well. It was sexy but not dirty. Made you want to dance. (*P.B. puts her headphones*

* See Special Note on Songs and Recordings on copyright page.

on and it bumps to full volume. She dances around the chair downstage right and pulls off the sheet. Music volume drops briefly for her line.) This is my favorite chair! *(Music up as lights further illuminate stage right. Still dancing, she tosses the sheet out the front door which slowly closes on its own. She dances to the liquor cart and removes the sheet.)* This is our bar! *(Again lights and music as above as she tosses the sheet out the bathroom door which closes. She continues her dance around the sofa and as she peels off the sheet covering the sofa she says:)* And these are my parents! *(She reveals Doc and Delia sitting on the sofa staring out. This brings lights up to full onstage as P.B. dances up the stairs, dragging the sheet behind her. Music fades as she exits. Doc is in slippers and an old robe. Delia wears a stylish housedress and holds a clipboard. After a pause, Delia speaks.)*

DELIA. We've done a wonderful job, don't you think?

DOC. We certainly did. It'll be beautiful.

DELIA. Really?

DOC. Absolutely.

DELIA. Are you sure?

DOC. I'm certain.

DELIA. You're just saying that.

DOC. No, I'm not.

DELIA. Yes, you are. You always do that. You think it calms me down.

DOC. No, I mean it. Sometimes I don't. But this time I do. I really do.

DELIA. Doc?

DOC. I really really really do.

DELIA. Alright, maybe you do, but your standards are always lower than mine.

DOC. What can I say? You are a perfectionist, my dear. I don't know where I'd be without you. Wallowing away in some sty ...

DELIA. Oh Doc, stop!

DOC. Delia, it's going to be a beautiful wedding.

DELIA. I hope so. *(Short pause.)* Not like ours.

DOC. No. Not like ours. But we did the best we could.

DELIA. It was our best but it was so sad.

DOC. Well, if the bills that are rolling in are any indication, Courtney's wedding will be epic.

DELIA. She deserves it. Courtney will have the wedding we never had.

DOC. The weather is perfect. It's all falling into place.
DELIA. It's going to be a marvelous day.
DOC. Our Courtney deserves the best.
DELIA. It's her day, too.
DOC. She's a lovely bride, the image of you, my dear.
DELIA. She's a vision in that dress. (*Staring at her clipboard.*) Oh my God, Doc! I almost forgot the bug bombs.
DOC. For my azaleas. Where is Courtney?
DELIA. Off somewhere, counting her blessings, I imagine.
DOC. I don't think her generation counts blessings.
DELIA. (*With clipboard in hand, she stands and moves away, checking the room to be sure that everything is in order.*) Did the florist call?
DOC. Not that I know of.
DELIA. He's really one of the best there is. I can't wait to see what he's done. He did a centerpiece with daisies and Rit dye for the Lancasters that was no less than spectacular. It's all falling into place, Doc. The caterer is even bringing the Civil War punchbowl I wanted. Now does your tux ...
DOC. It fits, Delia. Just another one of life's little miracles.
DELIA. I've still got to call the photographers. I can't believe it, Doc, but I just found out ... they are lesbians ... but their work is impeccable.
DOC. Lesbians! I didn't know. I can't even tell when I meet one. And I'm a doctor!
DELIA. Well, I am sure it makes them better photographers. (*Back to her clipboard.*) I'll have P.B. tidy up that hall closet, and do the breakfast dishes.
DOC. You've done a hell of a job, Delia.
DELIA. It's not over yet. (*She yells up the stairs.*) P.B.!
DOC. It wasn't easy.
DELIA. There are rewards. I think she's going to be very happy with Ryan.
DOC. Harper.
DELIA. What?
DOC. You meant Harper.
DELIA. What did I say?
DOC. You said Ryan.
DELIA. I did?
DOC. Yes.
DELIA. I have to watch that.

DOC. It wasn't that long ago that they were a couple.
DELIA. That wasn't a relationship. It was just a phase all women go through.
DOC. That's all in the past, Delia.
DELIA. Thank God. Ryan was such a mess.
DOC. Well, you won't have to think about Ryan again.
DELIA. Harper.
DOC. Harper.
DELIA. Harper. He's such a nice boy. A real gentleman.
DOC. He's certainly a snappy dresser.
DELIA. They make a lovely couple. (*Returning to her clipboard again.*) Now. We need at least a magnum of Chianti for Father Capatello and his entourage. I do hope the caterer remembers to bring a few extra tables for the gifts. Oh yes, and some Tab for the diabetic side of your family.
DOC. Is there anything else I can do, Delia, really, please.
DELIA. You can relax. (*Beat.*) After you get the bug bombs.
DOC. You take it easy, too. We're ahead of schedule.
DELIA. Yes. Just a few more odds and ends and everything will be perfect. (*She starts up the stairs.*)
DOC. You look beautiful, Delia.
DELIA. You bring out the best in me, Doc. (*Doc crosses to the bar and makes a drink, Delia shouts upstairs while going off.*) P.B.! The closet's a mess! (*With P.B.'s entrance we hear a song like "Jessie's Girl" blaring as colored lights dance disco-style throughout the song.* She dances downstairs twirling a pink rain slicker and tosses it into the closet. Doc is oblivious to her music and he mouths a few calm words to P.B. which she doesn't hear. She dances back up the stairs and exits as the disco music and lights fade. The doorbell rings loudly. Offstage.*) Doc, the door!
DOC. P.B.!
DELIA. (*Offstage.*) Doc! (*The doorbell rings again.*)
DOC. ALRIGHT! I GOT IT! (*Doc calmly crosses towards the front door as the doorbell rings again.*)
DOC. I'M COMING!
DELIA. (*Offstage.*) It's the flowers, Doc. It's got to be the flowers. (*Doc opens the door. He stares for a beat.*)
RYAN. Hey, Doc. (*Doc closes the door.*)

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ONE SLIGHT HITCH

by Lewis Black

3M, 4W

It's Courtney's wedding day, and her mom, Delia, is making sure that everything is perfect. The groom is perfect, the dress is perfect, and the decorations (assuming they arrive) will be perfect. Then, like in any good farce, the doorbell rings. And all hell breaks loose. So much for perfect.

"There's more than a touch of Neil Simon in the morose Mr. Black."
—**The New York Times**

"If you think of Lewis Black solely as a curmudgeonly comedian whose default setting is a state of apoplexy at the imbecility of his fellow man, you might be surprised by ONE SLIGHT HITCH. It's not unexpected that HITCH should abound in snappy wisecracks and keen social observation. Those, after all, are hallmarks of Black's stand-up act and his appearances on The Daily Show with Jon Stewart. But what is that we detect on Black's sleeve at the end of his play? Is that his ... heart?"
—**The Boston Globe**

"If sustained laughter is the best measure of a comedy, ONE SLIGHT HITCH makes the grade."
—**New York Magazine**

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