

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 THREE:

Scene One:

NARRATOR

Last time on Simply to Die For, there’s a killer in the house! First, our lovely singer, Miss Belle Tone stumbled across the body of Doctor Jamison in the office. Strangled and very, very dead. After lots of questions were asked, Tom Collins, the resident drunk-er- brewer, found the body of Terry Bull, the Mayor’s wife at the bottom of the stairs. But what happened? And will there be more deaths?

Grab your snacks and we’ll find out.

MAY

Well, this is certainly unfortunate.

SONNY

Grandmother! The Mayor’s wife is dead.

MAY

So I see.

SONNY

What are we going to do about it?

MAY

We're going to start with-

COLLINS

Mrs. Day?

EDDIE

May? What's this your man is telling me about Terry? She fell?

MAY

Mayor Bull, it seems there's been an unfortunate accident. Mrs. Bull has, well, she's...

EDDIE

Oh god. Terry.

(EDDIE HURRIES DOWN THE STAIRS)

She's dead.

MAY

Yes, it seems so.

EDDIE

What happened?

COLLINS

I found her when I was coming downstairs. Looks like she tripped and fell.

EDDIE

Christ, she was so angry at me. And that's the last thing we said to each other.

SONNY

Angry?

MAY

Hush, Sonia.

EDDIE

Terry didn't like that I was getting into a... debate with Mr. Goodman. She doesn't- didn't like it when I did that.

MAY

What would you like us to do, Mr. Mayor?

SONNY

Why don't we place her in your office? With the doctor?

EDDIE

Yes, that would be good.

MAY

Collins? Fetch someone to help you? Maybe that dandy man?

COLLINS

Yes, ma'am.

SONNY

What will we tell the others? They'll notice she's not around.

MAY

You can tell our guests, Sonia. You always say that you want more responsibilities.

SONNY

Yes, grandmother.

(COLLINS AND SONNY BOTH LEAVE)

MAY

You don't seem to torn up about this, Eddie.

EDDIE

We both know our marriage wasn't good. I'd never wish death on Terry, but it was a marriage for mutual gain. We haven't spoken outside of the public view in almost 15 years since the kids moved out.

MAY

I'm sorry about that.

EDDIE

Don't be. I can stop pretending. Enjoy myself more and do some things for me now.

MAY

Like you weren't already doing that?

EDDIE

I don't have to keep my dalliances in the closet now. Goodness knows that will be nice. Instead of sneaking around in my own damn house.

MAY

Well, I hope it doesn't ruin your run for Congress.

EDDIE

If it does, I'll survive. That was always more Terry's thing than my own.

MAY

She always was politically minded.

EDDIE

That she was.

Scene Two:

NARRATOR

Upstairs, things aren't much better.

ANITA

What do you mean Mrs. Bull's dead?

SONNY

There's been an accident. She fell down the stairs.

VERA

How do you know? What if she was murdered too?

SONNY

There's no reason to think she was murdered. She just fell. It's an unfortunate accident.

VERA

Accident my ass.

MARY

Goodness.

SONNY

I know it's a bit of a shock.

ANITA

A shock? A shock? Finding out your favorite stockings have a run is a shock. This is a nightmare! A horror house that's going to get us all killed! And you're just letting it happen! What's next? My brother? Or worse? Me? How can you all be so calm!

MARY

Anita...

ANITA

Don't you start with me, Mary. *These people* have welcomed murderers into their home. Of course, people are going to end up dead. I don't want to be one of them. No one cares if it's just some little doctor in town that no one really knows. But now it's the Mayor's wife. Who will it be next?

SONNY

Miss Goodman, I assure you that we are taking all the necessary precautions. But it really just looks like Mrs. Bull tripped and fell. No need to worry about anything like that. I have a hard time even trying to figure out who would want her dead. Now, why don't we all relax? I'll see about bringing up more refreshments soon.

NARRATOR

She really is quite calm about everything. Miss Sonny might just be good at being a leader in the future.

Hmmm...

After having to spend some time calming the guests again, May and Sonny gather together at the edge of the parlor, keeping careful eyes on their guests.

Scene Three:

VERA

Lew-ie!

NARRATOR

-groans-

VERA

Lew-ie! I want to go home. I don't like it. What if they try to bump me off next?

LEW

Why would anyone want to kill you?

NARRATOR

I can think of a few reasons.

VERA

They always go after the famous, pretty girl!

BELLE

So then you'll have a tragic story.

VERA

Yes! But I won't be around to enjoy the fame from it.

SKIP

Sorry, doll, but I don't think we'll be leaving any time soon.

VERA

Why not?

SKIP

When Belle and I pulled up, a tree came down on the drive.

VERA

Lew-ie!

LEW

Calm down, Vera. It's fine. Nothin' gonna happen to any of us.

VERA

Nothing will happen to you! No one would kill a guy like you. But I'm just a poor actress who can't do anything to protect herself. What am I going to do?

LEW

You'll just stay here and not cause a fuss.

VERA

I am not fussing! I'm scared, Lew-ie! What if I'm next?

BELLE

Then maybe we'll get some peace and quiet.

VERA

Shut it, Chippy.

SKIP

Oh damn.

BELLE

I'm not the one who's been on and off with the same man for the last few years, Chickadee. Don't think that just cause I'm in music that I don't know all about you. Does your boy? Or shall I tell him all you've been up to? That might ruin your ticket to the good life, right?

VERA

Well, I never-

LEW

Vera, cut it out.

VERA

But-

LEW

Vera.

VERA

You're going to let that little tramp talk to me like that?

BELLE

Don't start the fight if you can't handle it, chickadee.

LEW

She's got a point, Vera. You threw the first punch.

VERA

But-

LEW

No buts. In my line of business, you don't throw the first punch unless you can handle the returning one.

VERA

That's what I've got you for.

LEW

I'm not dumb enough to get between two cats with their claws out.

VERA

Ugh, fine then. I want a drink and some better company.

-stomps off-

LEW

Alright, I'll see ya around.

BELLE

Why do you keep bringing her around? I know you don't like her.

LEW

Eh, she's not too bad. At least she's not a boring flat tire. Besides, I haven't been able to lure you away from your man yet. I'm just pining over here for you.

SKIP

You're gonna have to do a whole lot better than that to get my Belle away.

BELLE

Besides, I like where I am. Skip lets me have total control of the music at Over and Down. Why would I give up that and having the best pianist in town? I mean, look at those long, talented fingers...

SKIP

Aww... and why would I let you go, bearcat?

LEW

You two are too much. I don't know what we'd do without your club.

SKIP

Get into a whole lot more trouble?

LEW

Ain't that the truth.

COLLINS

Dover? Can I borrow you for a moment?

SKIP

Collins, right? What for?

COLLINS

Mrs. Day wants to move Mrs. Bull to her office. I could use some help.

BELLE

What? So you figured you'd just ask the black man?

SKIP

Belle...

BELLE

No, it's not fair.

COLLINS

I'm just doing what's I was asked, Miss.

BELLE

I'm sure.

SKIP

Stop, LB.

I can help, as long as I don't crush my fingers.

LEW

What about Rick?

COLLINS

What abouts him?

LEW

Take Rick. He's ah, used to assisting with this type of work. Then we don't have to worry about Mr. Dover's hands. Besides, Miss Tone here has been clinging to him since we heard about Mrs. Bull. I'm sure she'd much rather stay with her companion right now, to calm her nerves.

O'Shea!

RICK

Yeah?

LEW

Can you help Collins here? With Mrs. Bull?

RICK

Only if we get a nip while we're down there.

COLLINS

Not a problem.

RICK

Hey, lass. I'm gonna go down and help Day's man.

ROBIN

Need me to come too?

RICK

Sure, can grab a drink with us when we're done.

ROBIN

Good. Between Vera's voice and Anita's wailing, I need a drink.

LEW

There? All set. And I'll continue to see if I can lure this lovely lady away from Mr. Dover for the evening.

BELLE

You best hope you're not too successful.

COLLINS

Come on, we's heading down the back stairs.

NARRATOR

Wonder if they'll grab me a drink while they're down there...

It doesn't take too long to move the definitely dead Mrs. Bull, and her purse, carried by Robin who is also making sure that the woman's skirt stays down. Mrs. Bull is laid on the sofa in May's office, with the group carefully stepping over the body of the Doctor.

RICK

Two down.

ROBIN

Wonder how many more will be in here by the end of the night.

COLLINS

I don't know. But I needs a drink after all that heavy lifting.

ROBIN

And before we head back to that crowd?

RICK

Aye, please. I don't think I can stand being around Anita or Vera.

COLLINS

Why does your man like that woman? Her voice...

ROBIN

Is like nails on a chalkboard? We don't know. He can't stand her voice either. She must be a good lay or something.

COLLINS

It's always the girls like that whos are the most high maintenance.

RICK

Your Miss Day the same?

COLLINS

Thankfully not. But I thinks it's 'cause her granny wouldn't let her be that way. She has no patience for stupidity, that woman. Although Miss Day does have a like of pretty bobbles.

ROBIN

I noticed her jewelry today.

COLLINS

Yeah, heard they were froms her parents.

ROBIN

Nice to have something to remember them by.

COLLINS

Sure is. Whiskey or beer?

RICK

Whiskey for us both.

COLLINS

A few glasses then I'll takes up more for the group. Cheers, to still being alive.

ROBIN & RICK

Cheers

(GLASSES CLINKING)

NARRATOR

Clink!

-takes a drink and sputters a bit-

Oh, right. Uhhh... let's go back upstairs.

Scene Four:

MILLIE

Mrs. Day?

NARRATOR

Oh, poor little Millie. I do like her.

MAY

Where have you been, girl?

MILLIE

I'm sorry, ma'am. I was helping Miss Goodman. She's in a bit of a state.

MAY

I'm sure she is.

SONNY

What is it, Millie? Were you able to get through to the police?

MILLIE

That's just it, miss, ma'am. The phone's dead.

MAY

What do you mean it's dead?

MILLIE

I can't get through. Someone picked up and then there was nothing. I'm guessing the storm blew out the lines.

MAY

Guessing?

SONNY

Why don't we go and talk to Mr. Goodman? He runs the telephone company, after all. I'm sure he can tell us what's happened.

MAY

Of course. But why didn't you tell me this immediately?

MILLIE

I'm sorry, ma'am. Miss Goodman just was a bit hysterical. I was trying to calm her down so she didn't faint. I thought-

MAY

That's exactly the problem. You thought. Your job isn't to think, it's to do.

MILLIE

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

MAY

Now, we need some food and drinks taken to our guests. Do you think you can handle that?

MILLIE

Yes, ma'am. Right away.

(MILLIE LEAVES)

SONNY

You don't have to be so mean to her.

MAY

You have to be firm with your staff or they'll walk all over you. The same with the gang. If you don't toughen up, you'll get stabbed in the back.

SONNY

I think I'm a pretty good judge of character. Surely we don't always have to be cruel to those who work for us.

MAY

The only way to get people to do everything you say is to make sure they fear what you'll do if they don't.

SONNY

That sounds like an awfully lonely way to live.

MAY

Yes, my dear, it can be. But it's how you keep a hold of power. Especially in this line of work. And as a woman. Best you learn that now while I'm still here than later when someone has pulled a gun on you.

You understand that I'm only tough on you because I know you can do this, and do it well.

SONNY

I understand that, grandmother.

MAY

Good, then we'll go see to our guests. I take it everything is alright?

SONNY

Yes, they were in a bit of a shock, but overall it seems like they took the news in stride.

MAY

And what was this about Miss Goodman?

SONNY

She seems to think there's a killer in our midst.

MAY

It wouldn't surprise me. And honestly, I think it's Scannon.

SONNY

Maybe if he'd gone after Dr. Jameson. But what gain would he have with Mrs. Bull?

MAY

I don't know. But I don't trust him. You stay away from him and his cronies. Mark my word, it's him who's behind all this.

SONNY

I'll be careful, grandmother. As long as you are too. I don't know what I'd do without you.

MAY

You'll survive. That's what we Day women do, survive.

NARRATOR

Well, that certainly sounds ominous.

Scene Five:

NARRATOR

The Days finally join the rest of their guests in the parlor. The whole group is back upstairs, with the exception of Millie, who's been fetching more food.

LEW

So, I heard the phones are out.

SONNY

How do you know that?

LEW

I have my ways, Sunshine.

SONNY

Were you necking with Millie?

LEW

Nah, she's not really my type of doll.

SONNY

Yes, she's much too soft-spoken for you.

LEW

Something like that. But that's not why I brought it up.

MAY

So why did you?

LEW

Well, Mrs. Day, I figured I could offer my services. Mr. Dover and I were just talking about the tree that's down. We figured maybe a few of us could go out and take a look. See if it could be moved or something?

MAY

I was actually going to have Mr. Goodman take a look at the phone line and see if he could repair it to call out.

NOAH

Me, Mrs. Day?

MAY

You are the owner of the telephone company, correct?

NOAH

I am, but I'm afraid my knowledge of actually fixing telephone lines is rather limited. However, I do have knowledge of felling trees. Perhaps I can help you, Mr. Scannon?

LEW

The more help, the better.

MAY

But Mr. Goodman-

LEW

Perhaps I can recommend Robin to go look at the phone? She has a knack for all this new technology. I don't know if she'd be able to help, but it can't hurt to look.

Robin?

ROBIN

Yes?

LEW

Take a look at the phone lines outside? While Mr. Dover, Mr. Goodman, and I go out to see about the tree down across the drive?

ROBIN

I suppose so.

MAY

Ah, yes, so one of your cronies can snoop around my home?

NOAH

If you don't trust them, perhaps you could send someone with her?

ROBIN

Your maid would know where the wires are, yes?

MAY

Yes, I suppose she would be the only one here today who might know. Usually, our groundskeeper takes care of these things. But he's gone for the weekend visiting family.

NOAH

Then that settles it. Miss Hyde here can go outside with your maid's assistance. I trust there's no problem with that?

MAY

... No, I suppose not. I believe she was fetching more food from the kitchen. I'm sure you can find her there.

ROBIN

I'll find her and we'll see to it.

(ROBIN LEAVES)

LEW

Well then, let's grab some coats and see if we can't find a way out around this tree.

NARRATOR

Armed with flashlights and coats with collars pulled up to protect them from the rain, Lew Scannon, Skip Dover, and Noah Goodman all head out into the storm.

SKIP

Damn, I swear the rain is coming at us sideways.

NOAH

I don't know if we'll be able to move anything with how strong this storm is.

LEW

Then let's make it quick and get back to the warmth of the house. Perhaps there will be something there to warm us all up.

SKIP

I wouldn't say no to a hot toddy when this is all over.

NOAH

I'd be happy with anything hot.

LEW

Say that again. Look, here's the tree. Oh...

SKIP

Damn.

LEW

Yeah...

NOAH

I don't think we're moving that one easily.

NARRATOR

If you haven't guessed it by now, the tree is huge. Like, really big. Big as a damned redwood or something.

NOAH

Let's look around it first. Maybe there's a way we could cut back some branches. At least for a path to get out.

LEW

Sounds good. I'll head down towards the roots.

NOAH

I'll head the opposite way. Mr. Dover, why don't you take a look around here. Sometimes the trunks crack. We might be able to get through if it did.

SKIP

I may be a pianist now, but I grew up out on a farm. I know what I'm looking for.

NOAH

Good. Meet back here?

LEW

Sounds good.

NARRATOR

All three men start inspecting their respective parts of the tree, slowly walking up and down it, flashlights lighting up small areas. Skip finishes first, although he spies a space between some branches. Just large enough for him to fit.

SKIP

Maybe I can get over it. Or at least for a look...

NARRATOR

The limbs are slick and, in retrospect, Skip's dress shoes probably aren't the best for climbing trees...

LEW

Hey, Skip? Noah?

NARRATOR

A flashlight beam dances a bit in the distance.

LEW

You guys see anything? I don't know too much about trees falling in the woods, but this one looks a bit weird.

(CRACKING OF A BRANCH BREAKING)

LEW

Hello?

(LEW GETS HIT WITH A BRANCH AND KNOCKED OUT)

NARRATOR

Well, shit.