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The Great-West Life Assurance Company

**Great-West Life**  
ASSURANCE COMPANY  
STRONGER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER™

**NOV. 22 - DEC. 27, 2009**

Book by Jeffrey Lane | Music and Lyrics by David Yazbek | Based on the film Dirty Rotten Scoundrels written by Dale Launer & Stanley Shapiro & Paul Henning | Directed and choreographed by Max Reimer

**A PLAYHOUSE THEATRE COMPANY PRODUCTION**

# PLAY GUIDE

## PART 2: LESSONS AND ACTIVITIES

Narrate and Play Read | Grade 9 and up

Created by Dr. Warren McKinnon, UBC Continuing Studies, PTAB\* Member

**DOWNLOAD OTHER PARTS (GLOSSARY, QUOTES, LINKS)**

**AND MORE LESSONS AND ACTIVITIES AT [VANCOUVERPLAYHOUSE.COM](http://VANCOUVERPLAYHOUSE.COM)**

Created to provide you with explorations and insights into this production beyond the actual performance, this Play Guide includes information on its creators and characters, notable quotables and more:

**You can download additional suggested practical lessons and activities at [vancouverplayhouse.com](http://vancouverplayhouse.com)!** As a teacher, you can adapt these to your classroom activities before or after your performance. As a parent, you can draw on some activities to enhance your child's theatre experience. And, as a patron at large, these activities might stimulate your own exploration or offer a new insight into the production.

**\*Playhouse Teachers Advisory Board**

# NARRATE AND PLAY READ

**Type:** pre-viewing or post-viewing | **Suitability:** grade 9 and up

## **SIX SIGNIFICANT SCRIPT SEGMENTS**

**Each script segments can be downloaded at [vancouverplayhouse.com/education-outreach](http://vancouverplayhouse.com/education-outreach).**

### ***Dirty Rotten Scoundrels - 1<sup>ST</sup> Script Segment*** - Act 1, Scene 1 (pp. 2 – 5)

This segment's theme, "Giving them what they want" offers a sense of legitimacy to the swindling operation. The assistance of Andre, the chief of police in the casino resort, also gives the scam legitimacy. As Lawrence and Andre state, swindling success comes from applying "dignity and weight to the illusion you create," and giving visiting, wealthy American women what they want - "an adventure of their own...[who resolve] to cut loose...escape from ennui...a bore [a 94 year old husband, as well as]... grey hair in the mirror."

### ***Dirty Rotten Scoundrels - 2<sup>nd</sup> Script Segment*** – Act 1, Scene 1 (p. 16, 17)

This segment has elements of the classic Sleeping Beauty being reawakened by the noble Prince. Her whole purpose in life is "to help my dreamy royal boyfriend." In return, she gets "romance and the feeling I was young again."

### ***Dirty Rotten Scoundrels - 3<sup>rd</sup> Script Segment*** – Act 1, Scene 3 (pp. 24 - 28)

In this segment, Freddie asks Lawrence to help him move from being a petty thief to a big-time operator. The big-time, punctuated by the phrase "Great Big Stuff", is a parodied portrayal of the extravagant lifestyle of the rich and famous – in and out-of-country winter/summer mansions, servants, stylish clothes, exotic foods, gambling, wild parties/sexual escapades, anti-suicide pill-popping, hummer/personal Zamboni, unnecessary surgery, and gout! To gain access to all this, Lawrence advises Freddie to not try to develop any particular talent but to "charm" his way into these circles by using his "imagination", expressing "supreme confidence", and having the appearance of "classic good looks."

### ***Dirty Rotten Scoundrels - 4<sup>th</sup> Script Segment*** – Act 1, Scene 9 (pp. 65 – 67)

Highlighted in the segment's theme "Nothing is too wonderful to be true," are the similarities between the scam artist's trading on the hope for miraculous winnings and the faith healer's exploiting of the belief in miraculous healings – "the age of miracles comes every hour on the hour."

### ***Dirty Rotten Scoundrel 5<sup>th</sup> Script Segment*** – Act 2, Scene 6 (pp. 105 – 108)

In this segment, Lawrence, the scam artist describes the feeling of being scammed by Christine – "The Player has been nicely played...The Mocker's now the mocked...The Master's now the Mark." Lawrence, the charmer, has allowed himself to be charmed by Christine's compassion for Buzz (Freddie) – "I never knew people like you existed. You are genuine, sincere..." On reflection, Lawrence admits to himself his mistake – "Your famous self-possession's vanished from your repertoire...You're out of luck if love sneaks in on you."

### ***Dirty Rotten Scoundrel - 6<sup>th</sup> Script Segment*** – Act 2, Scene 9 (pp.117– 121)

In this segment, Christine's scam is completed on both the Master, Lawrence, and his competing apprentice, Freddie. By so doing, Christine takes advantage of Lawrence's brutish, vulgar view of Freddie's character – "You're the kind of man that gives swindling a bad name." He has no respect for a fellow thief.

## **PLAY ACTIVITY:**

**(1) Read before class the Six Significant Script Segments.**

**(2) Read silently the fourth, fifth, and sixth script segments as preparation for individual learners' participation in play reading. Narrate and play read the scripts.**