

FIVE ALARM by Kristen Da Silva Co-Directed for the Bank Theatre by Sharon and David Light

SYNOPSIS

A fairground in Killaloe, Ontario is home to the annual Wayne Rose Memorial Chili Cook Off, where Killaloe residents come each year to compete both for the honour of winning and the cash prize. The most determined of these is Ava Rose (Wayne's daughter), who has tried (and failed) to win for sixteen years. This year, with the " help" of a new assistant (Ellen), Ava returns to battle her former childhood friend and now-rival (Connie). Unfortunately, her father's famed chili recipe exists in only incomplete form, part of it (containing the elusive secret ingredient) having disappeared long ago under mysterious circumstances. If she can piece together her late father's Five Alarm Chili recipe, she might also begin to piece together the mysteries of her past, including the fate of a long-lost high school love and the secret of Connie's resentment.

CHARACTER OVERVIEW: **Ava Rose** (*late 30's - early 40's*)

So kind-hearted and positive that she's lousy at trash talk (according to Ellen), Ava comes across as "Little Miss Perfect" (according to Connie). One-time boyfriend Caleb considers her "really hot". A farm girl who has never left Killaloe, Ava is focused and determined, but positive and affirming. A really nice girl, but no pushover. Her grannie has a spot on the mantle waiting patiently for Ava's victory trophy.

CHARACTER OVERVIEW: **Caleb Seaton** (*late 30's - early 40's*)

Ava's one-time stuttering boyfriend from their teen years, Caleb is doggedly working to overcome his awkwardness and poor self-image, finally making a go of life as a (hopefully) successful television reporter, his life-long career goal. Beaten down but fiercely determined, Caleb soldiers on. When fate brings Caleb and Ava together at the chili cook off, the scene is set for the eventual resolution of the long-standing conflict in which Ava, Connie, and Caleb have been embroiled since high school.

CHARACTER OVERVIEW: **Ellen Pellham** (*late 20's-early 30's*)

Armed with her trusty asthma puffer and a complete lack of guile, Ellen is one of Life's well-meaning but inept victims, given to bad luck and poor choices. Having suffered so much conflict and failure in her young life, she strives to be genuinely affirming in her outlook for the contest, in spite of her total lack of cooking skills. A natural peace maker, Ellen is damaged but accepting of people wherever they are in life.

CHARACTER OVERVIEW: **Connie Gardiner** (*late 30's-early 40's*)

"The kind of person you'd want on your side in a fight", Connie has won the chili cook off the past five years running and, with the help of hired-chef Tucker, plans to humiliate her rival Ava once again. She has fed her bitterness and jealousy of Ava and mocking resentment of Caleb for the past several decades, and she comes across for most of the play as not only brazenly self-confident but also selfish, scheming and openly hostile to everyone, including poor Tucker.

CHARACTER OVERVIEW: **Tucker Dell** (*late 20's-early 30's*)

Ostensibly Connie's professionally-trained assistant in the chili cook off, Tucker worships the memory of Ava's father Wayne. Although he falls for Ellen pretty much on first sight, he strives to maintain objectivity when it comes to the contest, openly offering assistance to Ava (much to Connie's displeasure). Like Ava, he is focused and determined but, unlike Connie, he isn't cruel toward others.