

## Stamp and Deliver: Act I

A small fringe theater company solicited short theatrical pitch concepts built from a common seed: the prompt “A Letter with No Stamp” and the thematic modifier “detour.” Eight pitches were submitted, each offering a very different dramatic take on the same creative starting point.

Those eight illustrated pitches were assembled in the accompanying selection packet and handed to five judges.



## Stamp and Deliver: Act II

Here are the eight pitches.

### Too Late to Send



*In a quiet house after a funeral, a long-ignored letter with no stamp is finally opened, revealing a painfully belated truth from someone now gone.*

### The Parade of Yes



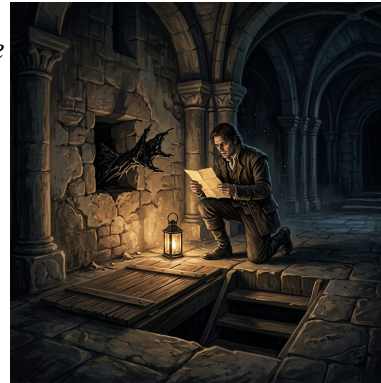
*When an unstamped letter blows through a bakery door and calls a wrong turn the best day of a life, an ordinary passerby is swept into a gleeful parade of paper crowns, music, and reckless delight.*

### Grandma's Scenic Route



*Summoned by a stern handwritten note and sent the long way across a thistle-ridden pasture, a city visitor arrives at a grandmother's porch to find pie, a shovel, and family business waiting.*

### What Knocked Beneath the Chapel



*A hidden letter inside an old chapel wall warns of ancient stairs below and a door that must never be named, but by the time the warning is read, something under the floor has already begun to waken.*

### Minutes of the Extremely Secret Order



*After receiving an invitation hidden inside an electric bill, an unsuspecting recruit follows absurd directions behind a bowling alley and finds a secret-society initiation involving a borrowed cape, solemn vows, and a cheese platter.*

### Instructions from the Kidnappers



*A driver speeds through a fog-choked back road with a ransom note on the passenger seat and no safe way forward, while a line of looming mailboxes turns the forced detour into a corridor of pure fear.*

### The Orchard Beyond the Dead Zone



*While scavenging a ruined diner in a radioactive wasteland, a survivor discovers a sealed letter and a hand-drawn map pointing around the dead zones toward one impossible promise, an orchard.*

### The Long Way Home



*A lone traveler follows a broken-road detour into the pines and climbs a rusted fire tower, where a letter with no stamp opens onto a hidden valley and a message seemingly written by the traveler's future self.*



## Stamp and Deliver: Act III

Those eight illustrated pitches were assembled in the accompanying selection packet and then judged in a three-round single-elimination bracket: four quarterfinals, two semifinals, and a final. In every matchup, each of the company's five judges cast one vote for the pitch they wanted to advance. Using the clues below, determine which pitch won the tournament. (You do *not* have to determine the bracket!)

Answer and explanations on next page.

1. One entry was received each day, over a period of eight consecutive days.
2. Six of the eight submissions came in the mail. "Too Late To Send" was hand-delivered on Sunday, April 5th, two days before one of the submissions that received just one first-round vote arrived via fax.
3. Across the three rounds, the winning submission and the runner-up each earned the same total judges' votes.
4. "What Knocked Beneath the Chapel" arrived the day after "Instructions from the Kidnappers", which was not the first submission. Both submissions received exactly one vote apiece.
5. The judges were unanimous just once throughout the tournament, awarding five first-round votes to the submission that arrived the day before "Grandma's Scenic Route", which lost in the second round.
6. In the second round, each submission received a number of votes equal to the day of the month on which it was received.
7. The four submissions eliminated in the first-round only received three total votes from the judges.
8. These three submissions arrived in the mail some time after "Grandma's Scenic Route": "The Orchard Beyond the Dead Zone", "Minutes of the Extremely Secret Order" and "The Parade of Yes", the sixth submission, which lost in the first round.
9. The fax submission arrived three days after "Minutes of the Extremely Secret Order".

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_



## Stamp and Deliver: Epilogue

a. The most useful clue is #6. Since there are five judges, the only possible outcomes are 4-1 and 3-2 (5-0 doesn't make sense and is ruled out anyway, by clue #5.) The first submission arrived on April 1st. So, after just one clue, four submissions are eliminated in round 1: day 5 through day 8.

b. Since "Grandma's Scenic Route" lost in the second round and was not the first submission, (clue #5) it was submitted on day 2. "Too Late To Send" was hand-delivered on day 5 (clue #2). "The Orchard Beyond the Dead Zone", "Minutes of the Extremely Secret Order" and "The Parade of Yes" arrived after day 2 (clue #8.) Clue #4 eliminates both "What Knocked Beneath the Chapel" and "Instructions from the Kidnappers" from day 1. By elimination, "The Long Way Home" arrived on day 1.

c. Since neither "What Knocked Beneath the Chapel" nor "Instructions from the Kidnappers" could have arrived on day 3 or day 4 (clue #4 states that each received exactly one vote), and since "The Parade of Yes" arrived on day 6, Only "The Orchard Beyond the Dead Zone" and "Minutes of the Extremely Secret Order" were submitted on days 3 and 4, in some order.

d. The fax transmission arrived two days after the 5th (clue #2) and three days after "Minutes of the Extremely Secret Order". This means that "Minutes of the Extremely Secret Order" arrived on day 4. By elimination, "The Orchard Beyond the Dead Zone" arrived on day 3.

e. The second round winners were "The Orchard Beyond the Dead Zone" with 3 votes and "Minutes of the Extremely Secret Order" with 4 votes. From clues #5 and #7, the results of the first round were 5-0, 4-1, 4-1 and 4-1. So, after two rounds, "The Orchard Beyond the Dead Zone" had 7 total votes and "Minutes of the Extremely Secret Order" had 8 total votes.

f. Clue #3 stated that the finalists wound up with the same total votes. The only possible outcome for the third round was "The Orchard Beyond the Dead Zone" with 3 votes and "Minutes of the Extremely Secret Order" with 2 votes. (7+3 and 8+2)

"The Orchard Beyond the Dead Zone" won the tournament.



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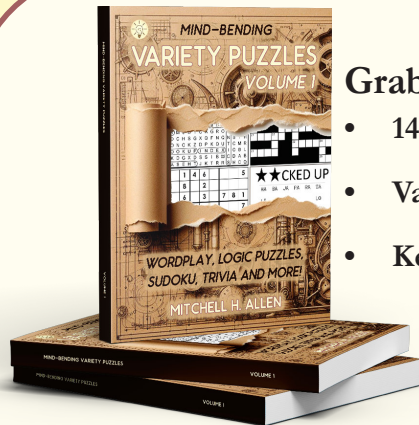
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