Synopsis and Characters of *Frederick’s Demise*

*Frederick’s Demise* is a whodunit that follows a chauvinistic and cruel nineteenth century man to his early death. There is a long list of murder suspects: his wife, stepmother, mistress, prostitute, maid, caretaker, and business associate are all motivated to murder Frederick. The first scene sets up the catastrophe when a beautiful and “kept” prostitute, Mary, tells a friend that she is pregnant. Mary hopes to get the father Frederick to help her, but instead he informs her that she will have to move back to the brothel. A short time later, Mary is accused of Frederick’s homicide. During the trial scene, both the defense attorney and the prosecutor try to convince the jury to acquit or convict Mary of the crime. Feeling desperate at the end of the trial, Mary makes a passionate appeal for a stay of execution until she can give birth to the child she is carrying. Mary and her unborn child are saved from the hanging by an unusual turn of events. Then the audience finds out exactly what happened on the night of Frederick’s demise in the last few tragic yet titillating scenes. Presented as a dinner theater, the audience will have opportunity to work a puzzle, to discuss the homicide, and to vote on who murdered Frederick.