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DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS

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FOR RELEASE APRIL 14.....

Can you do it? Hold a newspaper page with one hand --not on a table, but at semi-arms length, in the air over your lap, as if you were reading it --and with the other hand tear off, one by one, whole columns straight-down the column rules?

Well, Dan Dailey, Charleston, must do this in one of the most tensely dramatic scenes of "The Birthday Party," the Harold Pinter play coming to the Fine Arts Theatre, on April 18.

The effect is intended to be horrifying -- to show a man of such twisted mentality that he amuses himself with this trick, which he has obviously practiced for many an hour in the past. It has some of the aspects of a nasty little boy slowly tearing the wings off a fly. And besides, he is destroying the morning paper which furnishes the entire day's conversation each day for John Malkovich and Karen Eubanks, as a pair of oddball boarding house keepers.

Mr. Dailey, playing the part of McCann, couldn't get the hang of tearing exact column strips off newspapers during the first rehearsals, but he's been practicing. By opening night, Friday, April 18, he believes he'll have the trick down fine.