DENNIS. On the contrary—

ROBERT. *(Off.)* Of course they didn't notice.

DENNIS. —I've barely—

ROBERT. *(Off.)* I improvised!

DENNIS. He was such a kindly, charming man.

CHRIS. It's true.

DENNIS. You met him?

CHRIS. Once at the local police station. He was a consultant on a fraud case I was working on.

DENNIS. I see.

CHRIS. How long have you been working at Haversham Manor?

DENNIS. Eighty years.

CHRIS. Eighty / years?

DENNIS. *(Corrects himself.)* Eight years! Eight / years.

CHRIS. Eight years. And have you enjoyed your time here?

DENNIS. My time with Mr. Haversham has been nothing but a joy. I feel that since I've come here I have been seen not only as a butler but also as a friend and a confidant. If you need me I'll be in my quarters. Exits.

Chris stares at him furiously.

Exits!

Start

Dennis realises and turns to go. He gathers up the props Annie dropped on the floor.

CHRIS. *Thank you, Perkins!* If you'd be so kind as to send in Florence Colleymoore on your way out.

Sandra bursts in, followed by Robert. Dennis exits.

SANDRA. No need, I'm already here. Don't ask too much of me, Inspector, I feel fragile as glass.

Sandra slams the door. We hear a huge crash as Dennis drops all of the props behind it.

CHRIS. At last, Colleymoore, you managed to find me a pencil?

ROBERT. Yes…Inspector.

Robert holds out the keys. Pause. Chris takes them.

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CHRIS. And my notebook?

Robert holds out the vase. Pause. Chris takes it.

I knew I'd left them somewhere. I'm going to have to speak to your sister alone.

ROBERT. Very well. I'll be in the library, Florence.

Robert opens the door. Dennis is knelt down in the doorway, having collected all the props. Robert walks straight into him, causing Dennis to drop them all again as Robert closes the door behind him.

Dennis!

CHRIS. Don't fret, Miss Colleymoore, my questions will be brief and to the point and then you can get some rest. Firstly, how old are you, Miss Colleymoore?

SANDRA. Twenty-one.

CHRIS. I'll make a note of that.

He tries to make a note by dragging one of the keys across the side of the vase. It clinks as it goes across the cut glass.

And when were you engaged to be married?

SANDRA. In the new year.

Chris writes on vase again.

CHRIS. And when did you and your fiancé first meet?

SANDRA. Only seven months ago, but my brother has known him since school, he introduced us at a local gala and it was love at first sight. I knew from the very first moment I saw him that he was the man I wished to marry.

Pause.

CHRIS. *(Ad-libs.)* Ah, I've run out of paper.

Chris puts the keys into the vase and puts the vase down on the S. R. table. Sandra comes in a line too early, causing the lines to go out of sync. The two become more frantic as they try to get back on track.

SANDRA. When you love someone there's no such thing as rushing, Inspector.

CHRIS. Did you ever think you were rushing into this marriage?

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SANDRA. Why wouldn't I love him?

CHRIS. Did you love him, then?

SANDRA. How could anyone have benefitted?

CHRIS. Can you think of anyone who might have benefitted from your fiancé's death?

SANDRA. Cecil?

CHRIS. Not even Cecil?

SANDRA. I wasn't having an affair! Don't raise your voice to me, Inspector!

CHRIS. YOU WERE HAVING AN AFFAIR!

SANDRA. *(Slaps Chris.)* Don't tell me to calm down!

CHRIS. Calm down, Miss Colleymoore. *(Reacts to slap.)*

SANDRA. But where did you find it?

CHRIS. I found your letter; the one addressed to Cecil, written in your hand, declaring your love for him and saying that the thought of marrying Charles repulsed you.

SANDRA. Charles read it—

CHRIS. *(Does Sandra's line for her in a high voice.)* But where did you find it? *(Back to his normal voice.)* I'll tell you where I found it: in Charles' pocket!

SANDRA. Charles read it?! Then it was suicide!

CHRIS. *Indeed! (Returning to a calmer delivery.)* Or a murder, conceived by yourself and Cecil Haversham so you could run away together.

SANDRA. You diabolical beast. How can you? I won't stand for this, Inspector. Accuse me again and you'll be sorr… **Stop**

Robert bursts in, followed by Max; the door hits Sandra sharply on the head and she collapses, unconscious. Trevor picks up a first-aid kit and heads out of his box.

ROBERT. What's all this shouting?

MAX. What is this, Inspector?

Robert and Chris see that Sandra is on the floor. Max looks at Chris and doesn't see what's happened to Sandra.

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