

## MAX 1

*of the upper level.*

DENNIS. It's such a tragedy for a man to die just three months before he is to be married.

ROBERT. I can't stand it. Just look at him lying there.

DENNIS. This is most (*Checks hand.*) morose. (*Pronounced "more-ous."*)

ROBERT. Morose indeed.

Start

*Lights shift downstairs.*

SANDRA. Cecil, we must tread carefully. It would be easy for the two of us to become implicated in Charles' death. If they find out about us, we'll be suspects.

MAX. We were having an affair, so what? It doesn't mean—

*Max slips on a puddle of white spirit.*

It doesn't mean we killed the man.

SANDRA. Of course not, but that's what the Inspector will think.

MAX. It's fine, we'll just carry on as if every-thing!

*Max sits on the chaise longue but feels something hard under the cushions.*

—is just as it was. Except—

*Max lifts the cushions and discovers a ledger underneath.  
Max puts it under the chaise longue.*

Except now you won't be forced to marry my beastly brother.

SANDRA. And soon we can be together and not keep secrets.

MAX. Soon my love, but first, with Charley finally out of the picture I must ask you one question.

*Max goes down on one knee in front of Sandra, D.S. of the upper level. Lights shift to upstairs.*

~~DENNIS. It's so strange to think of Charles being dead.~~

~~*Jonathan opens the upstairs door and creeps in, carrying the stretcher canvas with him. He moves forward to try and take up his position: dead on the floor. The others don't notice him standing behind them.*~~

~~He was such an influence on all our lives.~~

~~ROBERT. It's almost as though he's still alive in the room with us.~~

~~DENNIS. His stillness unnerves me.~~

~~CHRIS. Seeing a cadaver for the first time can be unsettling!~~

~~*Chris sees Jonathan and jumps in shock. Dennis and Robert let out a scream in surprise. Jonathan quietly moves in front of them and lies down on the front edge of the upper level. As he puts his head back, he bangs it on the bottom of the elevator door.*~~

~~Check his pockets, Thomas.~~

~~ROBERT. Inspector.~~

~~*Chris produces a tin of powder and a brush.*~~

~~CHRIS. I need you to pull yourselves together and help me to dust his body for fingerprints.~~

~~*Chris passes Dennis the tin and brush.*~~

~~DENNIS. Yes, Inspector.~~

~~*Robert searches Jonathan's trouser pocket but cannot find the prop letter he is supposed to find. After a few moments, Jonathan reaches into his inside jacket pocket and produces the letter and passes it to Robert. Robert quickly pretends to have taken the letter from Jonathan's trouser pocket and holds it up.*~~

~~ROBERT. A letter?~~

~~*Robert passes the letter to Chris, who puts it in his pocket.*~~

~~CHRIS. Now to dust the body for fingerprints.~~

~~ROBERT. What was that?~~

~~DENNIS. Sir?~~

~~ROBERT. I could have sworn I just saw him breathing.~~

~~DENNIS. Breathing, sir~~

~~*Dennis drops the tin of powder onto Jonathan's face. Jonathan tries to hide his coughing.*~~

~~CHRIS. Nonsense, Colley Moore. This man is dead.~~

~~*Lights shift to downstairs. Robert, Chris and Dennis freeze in a group pose, each with their right hand on their chin.*~~

*Jonathan continues to cough.*

MAX. Florence, will you do me the honour of becoming my wife?  
Marry me!

*Jonathan coughs again, more violently, which causes him to slip off of the upper level. He grabs hold of the edge, his legs dangling down. Robert, Dennis and Chris try to haul him back up. Vamp. After a few moments they lose their grip, and Jonathan falls down to the floor, landing in between Max and Sandra. Robert, Dennis and Chris put their hands back on their chins.*

Charles is dead. He can never come between us again.

*Jonathan slowly gets up, retrieves the canvas, hides behind it and moves back towards the door. Unable to see, he opens the door into his own head and then exits, closing the door behind him.*

Florence, Charles is gone and he's never coming back. **Stop**

*Lights shift to upstairs. Max and Sandra freeze.*

CHRIS. Thank you, gentlemen. Now that I have finished examining the body, perhaps you would take it down to the service quarters for the coroner to collect in the morning.

DENNIS. Yes, Inspector.

*Robert and Dennis mime lifting the body again.*

CHRIS. Check all of the doors are locked, Perkins.

DENNIS. Inspector.

CHRIS. And Colleymoore, perhaps you could fetch me a pencil and my notebook from downstairs.

ROBERT. Naturally.

*Jonathan reenters upstairs, holding up the canvas to hide himself. He peers over the top and sees the others.*

(*Ad libs.*) After you, Charles.

*Jonathan, Robert, Dennis and Chris exit. The lights shift downstairs as they go.*

SANDRA. Oh Cecil, I can't resist you! I shall, I shall marry you.

MAX. Oh Florence, come into my arms.