

ROBERT 1

be heard behind it.

ROBERT. (*Off.*) Charley! Are you ready? We're all waiting downstairs to raise a glass to your engagement. Charley?

Robert knocks on the door.

Come along now, Charley, you've been in there for hours now. If I didn't know better I'd say you were having second thoughts about the wedding. (*Chuckles.*) Charley? Hang it all, Charley, if you won't come out, we'll come in. (*Tries handle.*) Damn it, he's locked the door. Hand me those keys, Perkins.

DENNIS. (*Off.*) Here they are, Mr. Colleymoore.

ROBERT. (*Off.*) Thank you, Perkins. Let's get this door open. We're coming in, Charley! We're coming in!

Robert tries to open the door, but it won't budge. Dennis and Robert hammer on the door to try and open it.

(*Still off.*) There we are. We're in.

Start

Robert and Dennis dart around the side of the set to enter.

But what's this? Charles, unconscious?

DENNIS. Asleep surely, Mr. Colleymoore?

ROBERT. Damn it, Perkins, I hope so.

DENNIS. I'll take his pulse.

Dennis takes Jonathan's pulse on his forehead. Jonathan slowly tilts his head to move Dennis' fingers down onto his neck.

ROBERT. Blast! I knew something must have been wrong, it's so unlike Charles to disappear like this.

DENNIS. Sir, he's dead!

Lights snap to red. Dramatic musical spike. Lights snap back to the general state.

ROBERT. Damn it, Perkins, he can't be! He's my oldest friend.

DENNIS. He's not breathing, sir, and there's no hint of a heartbeat.

ROBERT. Well I'm dumbfounded. He was right as—

Robert crosses in front of the chaise longue, treading on Jonathan's outstretched hand.

—rain an hour ago.

DENNIS. I don't understand. He can't be dead. He was as fit as a fiddle. It doesn't make sense.

ROBERT. Of course it makes sense. He's been murdered!

*Lights snap to red again. The same dramatic musical spike.
Lights snap back to general state.*

Good God. Where's Florence?

DENNIS. She's in the dining room, sir. Shall I fetch her?

ROBERT. At once, Perkins, and quickly.

DENNIS. But she's bound to have one of her hysterical episodes.

ROBERT. Damn it, gather everyone in here. Charles! Dead! What a horror.

Dennis rushes to the voice pipe on the wall and calls to the rest of the house. Robert removes his jacket.

DENNIS. (*Into the voice pipe.*) Lounge to dining room. Cecil! Miss Colleymoore! Come to Charles' private rooms at once. Charles Haversham has been murdered.

ROBERT. But do you think it was murder, Perkins?

Robert hangs his jacket up on a hook on the wall.

Or do you think perhaps—

The hook holding Robert's jacket falls to the floor.

—it was suicide?

DENNIS. Suicide? Mr. Haversham? Not possible! Never was there a man with more zest for life than Charles Haversham. He was young, rich and soon to be married. Why on earth would he commit suicide?

ROBERT. But why on earth would anybody want to murder him? Charles was such a gentle fellow.

DENNIS. Generous, kind, a true... (*Reads a word written on his hand.*) philanthropist. (*Pronounced "phill-an-throp-ist."*) He never had an enemy in his life.

ROBERT. Until today it seems.

DENNIS. Shall I telephone the police, sir?

ROBERT. The police? They wouldn't make it out here for days in

this snowstorm.

Robert opens the curtains to reveal falling paper snowflakes.

No.

Robert closes the curtains again.

I'll telephone Inspector Carter, he lives just the other side of the village. (*Picks up receiver.*) He'll be here in next to no time. Hand me the phone, Perkins.

Robert realises he already has the receiver.

Thank you, Perkins.

Dennis sits on Jonathan's crotch.

Good evening. Give me Inspector Carter... I know it's late... Damn it, I don't care about the weather. There's been a murder. Someone's murdered Charles Haversham!

Lights change to red. A musical spike plays again. The lights shift back to the general state, but the music continues. It cuts out briefly.

That's right.

The music continues. Dennis keeps trying to get up, thinking the spike will stop, and repeatedly sits back down on Jonathan until Jonathan pushes him off.

That's right! **STOP**

TREVOR. (*Over the speakers.*) Sound effect error on cue four.

ROBERT. Thank you. (*Hangs up.*) He's on his way.

DENNIS. Inspector Carter?

ROBERT. They say he's the best damn inspector in the district, he'll crack this case and quick.

DENNIS. Very good, sir, and what shall I do?

ROBERT. Lock every door, man.

Robert crosses the stage again. Dennis follows. Jonathan sharply moves his hand out of the way of Robert's foot. Once Robert has passed, Jonathan replaces his hand. Dennis treads on it as he follows Robert past the chaise longue.