

Room 314
A Comedy in Two Acts

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of the requirements for graduation
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Acceptance of Senior Honors Thesis

This Senior Honors Thesis is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation from the Honors Program of Liberty University.

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Abstract

This thesis is an original play consisting of two acts. Using the traditional structure and plot constructs of a murder mystery, the thesis also incorporates elements of comedy to create a unique work. A young couple on their honeymoon hears a strange noise from the room next door and attempts to find an explanation. As they search for a satisfactory conclusion, Emma and Peter meet some of the other guests at the hotel, making new friends and encountering new challenges along the way. This thesis attempts to answer the question “can an actor tell a good story with her own words?” and present a solid working draft of a play that tells such a story.

Room 314

A Comedy in Two Acts

By

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CHARACTERS

TONY WALKER: A waiter at the hotel.

PETER BROWN: A young accountant, who is happily and newly married.

EMMA BROWN: A young former sales girl, who is also happily and newly married.

JACK EVANS: A mystery man who seems uncommonly content to stay tied to a chair.

MRS. CLARICE DAVIES: A well-to-do woman with a flair for the dramatic.

AGNES JONES: A cockney chambermaid at the hotel.

NEVILLE CLARKE: A guest at the hotel who is caring for his ailing wife.

SPECIAL CONSTABLE ALFRED HARRIS: A local “hobby bobby”—a volunteer police officer.

TIME

1950s

SETTING

A resort hotel in Bath, England; Spring.

ACT ONE

AT RISE

A darkened hotel room. There is an entrance to the room on one wall, with a door to a bathroom on the wall opposite. There are double doors in the upstage wall leading to a balcony. Two armchairs sit beside the window with a table between them. A large bed sits against the wall with the bathroom door, with a settee at the foot of it. There is a writing desk with chair, nightstands on either side of the bed, a large armoire, and several lamps. There are rich drapes on the windows leading to the balcony. The overall feel is one of luxury and good taste.

(Peter is sitting on the settee at the end of the bed, dressed in a nightshirt, and clearly waiting for something.)

PETER

(calling towards the bathroom door)

Are you all right, darling?

EMMA

(from offstage)

Oh yes, quite all right! Nearly finished.

(She finally re-enters, rather shyly, in a lacey yet modest negligee and robe.)

Hello.

PETER

(looking at her appreciatively, but not wolfishly)

Hello.

(She doesn't look at him.)

PETER (kindly)

You look lovely.

EMMA

Thank you.

PETER

It's a rather comforting thing to have such a beautiful wife.

EMMA

(turning towards him)

Say it again.

PETER
Which part?

EMMA
Just “wife.”

PETER
Wife.

EMMA
(sighs) I do like that.

(They exchange smiles.)

PETER
I love you, darling.

EMMA
I love you too, Peter.

(He makes a slight move in her direction, and she quickly moves away.)

EMMA
I had such a marvelous time today.

PETER
Did you? I’m glad.

EMMA
I did. Everyone I wanted to be there was there, and there were really only a few people there that I didn’t want. And I managed to avoid those quite handily, I thought.

PETER
You are a marvelous evader when you wish to be.

EMMA (rather proudly)
I am, aren’t I? Comes from years of practice.

PETER
Oh there’s an art to it, is there?

EMMA
Absolutely. One has to be subtle, you know. That is, if one wishes to avoid hurting anyone’s feelings. If someone were to notice they were being evaded, it would defeat the purpose.

PETER

(settling into an armchair)

Fascinating. Have you ever evaded me?

EMMA

(evading eye contact)

Of course not.

PETER (playfully)

Truthfully?

EMMA

Well....

PETER

Ah ha! I knew it!

EMMA

Perhaps once or twice.

PETER

At your mother's birthday last year?

EMMA

Maybe.

PETER

You did. I could tell.

EMMA

If I did, it was because you deserved it.

PETER

Oh? And what had I done?

EMMA

(finally looking at him)

I specifically asked you to wear a pink rose to match my dress, and you arrived with a peach carnation! Horrid.

PETER

They'd run out of pink roses!

EMMA

No self-respecting florist "runs out" of pink roses. You forgot.

PETER

Well perhaps I did. I still don't see what's so horrid about peach and pink. It's not as if *you* had to wear the peach. As I recall, I brought you some sort of white flower, didn't I?

EMMA

You did. Which is one reason I decided to forgive you.

PETER

Yes, well, I'm sure I'm very grateful.

EMMA

As you should be.

PETER

In any event, I enjoyed today as well.

EMMA

I hoped you would. I tried so hard to make it special.

PETER

You succeeded wonderfully. I've never had a better time at a wedding.

EMMA (smiling)

You're sweet.

PETER

Not as sweet as you.

(They exchange smiles: hers shy, his inviting.)

PETER

You can sit down, you know.

EMMA

Oh. Right.

(She crosses to settee and sits primly.)

PETER

(stands and crosses to sit beside her)

Are you tired at all from the trip?

EMMA

A bit, I suppose.

PETER
It has been a rather long day.

EMMA
Yes. Very eventful.

PETER
Mmhmm.

EMMA
Good though.

PETER
Yes.

(She has gone back to not being able to look at him.)

PETER
You seem cold, darling.

EMMA
I'm all right.

PETER
Are you sure?
(puts his arm around her)
Here, let me warm you up.

EMMA
I'm really quite warm already.

PETER
You're shivering.

EMMA
Well I'm not cold.

PETER
Is everything all right?

EMMA
Perfectly.

PETER
You seem...

EMMA
(jumping up)
...Oh!

PETER
What?

EMMA
I forgot to call mother!

PETER
You what?

EMMA
Mother will be worried sick; I was going to call her as soon as we arrived.

PETER
(beginning, just slightly, to lose patience)
I'm sure she's fine.

EMMA
You don't know mother. I must call her right away
(Crosses to phone and lifts the receiver. There is no dial tone.)
The phone's out of order.

PETER
What?

EMMA
It isn't working. I'll just have to go down to the front desk then.

(She moves to the door and unbolts it.)

PETER
(standing)
You're hardly dressed for it.

EMMA
(looks down)
Bother.
(moves towards bathroom)
It won't take me a minute to throw something on.

PETER

(steps between her and bathroom)

Don't be ridiculous. You can call her in the morning, I'm certain the phone will be repaired by then.

EMMA

It will only take me a minute to go down and call her from the front desk. I don't want her to be anxious.

PETER

I'm sure she isn't.

EMMA

Why wouldn't she be?

PETER

Well she knows you're on your wedding trip. I'm sure she doesn't expect you to call.

EMMA

Of course she does. Any self-respecting mother would.

PETER

My mother doesn't.

EMMA

Well that's different.

PETER

And what precisely do you mean by that?

EMMA

I only meant that your mother doesn't have quite the same concern for you that mine does for me, that's all.

PETER

Oh that's all? I'll have you know that my mother has the utmost concern for me.

EMMA

I never said she didn't. I just said that mine is more concerned.

PETER

That's absurd. My mother is just as concerned as yours is. As a matter of fact, she's probably sitting by the phone this very instant, praying I'll call so she'll know I'm still alive.

EMMA

My mother is most likely pacing the floor in a blind panic.

PETER

Mine is just rocking herself in a corner, numb from the pain of her anxiety.

EMMA

Mine is in tears as we speak she's so worried. She's practically inconsolable.

PETER

Mine's having hysterics.

EMMA

Mine's running in circles.

PETER

Mine's in a dead faint.

EMMA

Well there's no need to be dramatic.

(PETER looks at her in surprise and is momentarily lost for words.)

EMMA

A dead faint indeed. No one faints because her daughter hasn't called.

PETER

(finding his voice)

Maybe your mother wouldn't, but mine would.

EMMA

My mother is too sensible to faint like that.

PETER

Oh I see. The woman who's in a blind panic is too sensible to faint!

EMMA

I never said she was in a blind panic.

PETER

You most certainly did.

EMMA

I most certainly did not. That would be ridiculous.

PETER

This entire conversation is ridiculous.

(EMMA opens her mouth to reply, but is stopped by the sound of a crash on the other side of the wall.)

EMMA

Did you hear that?

PETER

Don't try and change the subject.

EMMA

I thought I heard something.

PETER

That's no way to end an argument.

EMMA

No, I really did hear something.

PETER

(Sighs) What kind of something?

EMMA

A kind of thud.

(something thuds again)

There! Did you hear that?

PETER

They probably just dropped something next door.

EMMA

Twice?

PETER

Why not? You've never dropped anything twice?

EMMA

I suppose so.

(Muffled voices can now be heard through the wall)

EMMA

What's that?

PETER

I don't know.

EMMA

It's sounds like people fighting.

PETER

They're probably just picking up where we left off.

(crosses to her)

Let's leave them to it, shall we? I don't want to argue anymore.

EMMA (distracted)

No.

PETER

It's silly to fight over mothers anyways.

EMMA

Yes.

(She crosses to wall just as PETER reaches her.)

PETER

I say we just drop the whole thing.

EMMA

Mhmm.

(She presses her ear against the wall.)

PETER

What are you doing?

EMMA

Trying to hear.

PETER

That's not very polite.

EMMA

Something doesn't seem right.

PETER

Just let them have their argument in private, if that's what they're doing.

EMMA

It sounds ugly.

PETER

Arguments usually are. Why don't you come away from the wall? It's getting awfully late.

EMMA

(looks at him)

Late?

PETER

Yes. Rather time to be thinking about going to bed.

EMMA

(puts her ear back to the wall)

I couldn't possibly sleep with this going on.

PETER

Well, darling, I didn't exactly mean *sleep*.

EMMA

I'm telling you, there's something wrong in the next room.

PETER

There's something wrong in *this* room!

EMMA

What is it?

PETER

I'm standing here in my nightshirt and you're over there with your ear pressed against the wall!

EMMA

Peter, I'm serious.

PETER

So am I. I beginning to feel rather silly, wearing this thing for no apparent reason.

EMMA

Go and put something else on then.

PETER

Go and put...Is that is how you suggest I spend my wedding night? By going and putting something else on?

EMMA

You're the one who said you felt silly. I don't see what's so remarkable about suggesting you put some clothes on.

PETER

(crossing to chair to retrieve trousers)

Very well, Mrs. Brown. If that is what you wish...

EMMA

Oh hush. I'm trying to hear.

PETER

(rather pettishly putting trousers on over nightshirt)

Why don't you go out on the balcony? Perhaps they've left their door open.

EMMA

What a marvelous idea!

(She goes to balcony and opens the doors.)

PETER

I wasn't actually serious, you know.

(With the doors open, the voices are louder, but still too muffled to be understood.)

EMMA

(sighs) I still can't make out what they're saying.

PETER

It's probably a sign that you aren't meant to be listening.

EMMA

Don't be loathsome.

PETER

I'm...

(There is a scream from next door.)

EMMA

He's killed her!

PETER

What on earth...?

EMMA

There was a man's voice and a woman's voice, and now he's killed her!

PETER

What could possibly lead you to that conclusion?

EMMA

Why else would she scream?

PETER

I can think of a dozen reasons, none of which include murder. Maybe she saw a spider.

EMMA

In the middle of a row?

PETER

Why not?

EMMA

(She opens her mouth to respond, but pauses and closes her mouth again.
After thinking a moment:)

It wasn't that kind of a scream.

PETER

Oh no? And you're certain you know an "oh help I'm being murdered" scream when you hear one?

EMMA

I just know.

PETER

I think there's a strong possibility that you may be a little overwrought from today's excitement. Maybe you ought to lie down.

EMMA

I don't want to lie down. I want to find out who killed that woman!

PETER

Darling, no one's been killed. Please, come lie down and let me get you a glass of water.

EMMA

I can't just lie down when a woman lies dead in the next room!

PETER

Emma, no one is...

(He is interrupted by the door bursting open. A man staggers into the room, covered in blood. EMMA screams.)

BLOODY MAN

Oh. Sorry.

(He begins to back out of the room. PETER pulls him through the door and shuts it behind him.)

PETER

(as he is grabbing MAN)

Now hang on a minute! What do you mean by barging in like that? Who are you?

BLOODY MAN

Well...you see...there's been some sort of mistake. I seem to have the wrong room, that's all.

EMMA

(notices blood)

Peter!

PETER

Just a minute, Emma.

(to MAN)

Now look here...

EMMA (urgently)

Peter!

PETER

What?

EMMA

(crossing to PETER and whispering in his ear)

It's him!

BLOODY MAN

Pardon?

PETER

What do you mean it's him?

EMMA (loudly)

That's the murderer!

What? BLOODY MAN

Look at all that blood! He did it! EMMA

I don't understand... BLOODY MAN

Get him! EMMA

With what? PETER

I don't know, just don't let him escape! EMMA

Now hang on... BLOODY MAN
(He is cut off, as PETER jumps him.)
Really there's no need for that...

Stop struggling! PETER

I'm not! BLOODY MAN

Hold him, Peter! EMMA

I'm not trying to get away! BLOODY MAN
(PETER punches him.)

Ow! PETER & BLOODY MAN
(The MAN collapses into chair, holding his jaw.)

That hurt! PETER

EMMA
Peter!

BLOODY MAN
I wasn't even fighting you!

PETER
I think I broke my hand.

EMMA
Oh you poor darling, are you hurt? You were so brave.

BLOODY MAN
Brave?!

PETER
I'm all right. We should probably tie him up though.

BLOODY MAN
You must be joking.

EMMA
(untying the belt from her robe)
Here, use this.

PETER
You'd better do it. I don't think I can move my fingers.

(EMMA grabs the MAN's hands and ties them behind the chair.)

BLOODY MAN
You're really making a terrible mistake.

EMMA
There. Now what should we do with him?

PETER
Well now, let's just take a moment to think things through.

BLOODY MAN
Yes, heaven forbid we do anything rash.

EMMA
Was he speaking to you?

BLOODY MAN

Sorry. Don't mind the man in the chair.

EMMA

(turning back to PETER)

What were you saying, darling?

PETER

Perhaps we ought to see what he has to say for himself.

EMMA

I don't see what good that would do. It would be all lies, most likely.

PETER

Still, we might just learn something.

EMMA

Perhaps. (thinks) Very well.

(She turns to MAN and takes on the role of an interrogator.)

How do you explain all this?

BLOODY MAN

As I was trying to say earlier, I was merely looking for my own room and came in here by mistake.

EMMA

Why are you covered in blood?

BLOODY MAN

Blood? (looks down) Oh. I have no idea.

PETER

Were you in some sort of fight?

BLOODY MAN

No, just dinner. I was coming back to my room and opened your door by mistake. It is as simple as that.

EMMA

It seems awfully suspicious to me.

BLOODY MAN

It's the truth, I assure you.

EMMA

Well I don't believe you. I think you killed her.

BLOODY MAN

Why would I come in here if I'd just killed someone? And whom exactly did I kill?

EMMA

I don't know whom, but she was in the room next door. And how should I know why you would come in here? I'm not a cold-blooded killer.

BLOODY MAN

Neither am I.

EMMA

That's immaterial.

PETER

Hold on, Emma, his story seems plausible. After all, it is rather doubtful that a murderer would go bursting into someone else's room just after committing a murder. We don't even know if there's been a murder

EMMA

What about the blood?

PETER

Blood doesn't always point to death.

EMMA

He's a murderer, Peter, I know it.

PETER

I think we ought to go remind ourselves of the facts before we proceed any further. We seem to be finding it difficult to keep a level head.

EMMA

(gives him a look)

Well, fact number one: there's been a murder.

PETER

I thought we've established that we can't reasonably call that fact number one.

EMMA

Why ever not?

PETER

Because that's jumping to conclusions. And conclusions aren't facts.

BLOODY MAN

Very logical.

EMMA

Well what do you call fact number one?

PETER

Fact number one: you heard something next door.

EMMA

An argument.

PETER

Fact number one: you heard something that sounded like an argument.

EMMA

And a thud.

PETER

And a thud. Which came first?

EMMA

Um...the thud.

PETER

Then the thud really ought to be fact number one, and the argument is fact number two.

EMMA

All right, and fact number three is that I heard a woman being murdered.

PETER

Really, Emma. The best you can say is that you heard a woman scream.

EMMA

Yes but she was dying. It was a death scream.

PETER

You can't possibly know that.

EMMA

Couldn't we just assume it? For the sake of the list?

PETER

What good is a list of facts if we include assumptions?

BLOODY MAN

Perfectly useless.

PETER
You see?

EMMA
No, I don't.

PETER
I'd simply feel better if we were only including those facts we ourselves can verify.

EMMA
(sighs) Very well. We'll leave it at a scream. For now.

BLOODY MAN
How very magnanimous.
(to PETER)
You're a very lucky man.

EMMA (flattered)
That's sweet.

PETER
Emma!

EMMA
What?

PETER
Let's return to the list. After the scream, fact number four is what?

EMMA
Should we include our argument about the scream?

PETER
No, let's skip over that.

EMMA
Then I think fact number four is that this man burst into our room.

PETER
Right. And then fact five, you told me to grab him.

EMMA
Fact six, you did.

BLOODY MAN
Rather absurdly.

PETER
Fact seven, I hit him.

BLOODY MAN
Quite unnecessarily.

EMMA
Fact eight, I tied him up.

PETER
And there we are.

EMMA
Where are we, exactly?

BLOODY MAN
Sitting in a room with a man tied to a chair.

EMMA
(shoots him a look)
(to Peter) What should we do now, I mean?

PETER
Well now that we have the facts straight, we can move on to drawing conclusions.

EMMA
Should I be writing this down?

PETER
I suppose you can if you'd like.

EMMA
I would. That would make it more official.

PETER
Go on then.

BLOODY MAN
Yes. Do let's make it official.

EMMA
May I borrow your notebook?

PETER
Certainly. It's in my coat pocket.

EMMA

Thank you.

(She crosses to his coat and retrieves the notebook, along with a pencil.)

This is rather fun, you know.

BLOODY MAN

That's probably because you aren't tied up.

EMMA

You should have thought of that before you went around killing people.

BLOODY MAN

I didn't...

PETER

...Don't bother with him, Emma. Let's return to our conclusions.

BLOODY MAN

I do apologize. So silly of me to muddle up your conclusions with the truth.

(EMMA sits back down on settee, poised with pencil over the notebook.)

EMMA

If you're quite finished, I'm ready.

PETER

To begin, I think we can safely conclude that something unpleasant occurred in the room next door.

EMMA

Good. What else can we conclude?

PETER

Well...I'm not sure. In fact, I'm really not certain we can draw any more conclusions at all with these facts alone.

EMMA

Then what should we do?

PETER

I think it's time we let the police settle this.

BLOODY MAN

Settle what?

PETER

Something isn't quite right about this whole thing. Someone needs to get to the bottom of what happened next door.

BLOODY MAN

Then why don't you go and see?

EMMA

What did you say?

BLOODY MAN

Why don't you go next door and ask what happened?

PETER

I don't wish to impose.

BLOODY MAN

But it isn't an imposition to keep me in this chair?

PETER

That's different; you came in here uninvited.

EMMA

I think we should go next door, Peter.

PETER

Emma, I just said...

EMMA

A simple knock on the door isn't such an imposition. And what if she needs help?

PETER

(sighs) Very well. I will go knock on the door.

EMMA (smiling)

Thank you.

(PETER crosses to the door and exits, leaving it open. EMMA follows him to the door and stays in the doorway, watching him down the hallway. There is the sound of quiet knocking.)

PETER (from offstage)

There's no answer.

EMMA (calling to him in a loud whisper)

Try again!

(Soft knocking is heard from offstage.)

There was no one there.

PETER (re-entering the room)

And the door was locked?

BLOODY MAN

I didn't try the handle.

PETER

You should have.

EMMA

That's breaking and entering.

PETER

Not if the door isn't locked.

EMMA

That's not true. Which is why we can report this man to the authorities.

PETER

You said that before. Must we really involve the police? I want to solve this ourselves.

EMMA

We're hardly qualified to handle this sort of thing, Emma.

PETER

Not that there's anything to handle, since this is a simple case of mistaken room identity.

BLOODY MAN

I really think it's time to call them.

PETER

Oh all right.

EMMA

I'll just go down to the front desk and use the phone there.

PETER

Oh no you won't.

EMMA

Emma, you just agreed we'd call the police.

PETER

EMMA

Yes, but you're not leaving me alone here with a murderer.

PETER

I thought we'd established that there's no way we can know if he's a murderer.

BLOODY MAN

And I'm really not a murderer.

EMMA

Regardless, I do not want to be left alone with someone who could very possibly be a killer. And until someone can prove otherwise, I choose to maintain that he is most certainly a murderer.

PETER

That is most illogical of you.

EMMA

No, it isn't.

BLOODY MAN

Yes, it is. But that's all right.

PETER

Very well then, you go and fetch the police while I stay here with the potential murderer.

EMMA

Certainly not. What if he were to get free and attack you? I could never live with myself.

PETER

Emma, I am perfectly capable of looking after myself.

EMMA

You say that now. Wait 'til you've been murdered.

PETER

I'm the one who put him in the chair!

EMMA

A lucky punch. You can't count on that sort of thing happening twice in one evening.

BLOODY MAN

She's quite right. Lovely woman, your wife.

PETER (to EMMA)

You really are beginning to frustrate me.

EMMA

Why? Because I don't want to see you killed?

PETER

(sighs) Then we shall just both have to go down and call the police.

EMMA

And leave him alone? What if he were to escape? Someone has to stay and guard him.

PETER

(pinching the bridge of his nose and choosing his words carefully)

Emma. Darling. Do you...can you perhaps see how you might possibly be misconstrued as being just a trifle unreasonable?

EMMA

How so?

BLOODY MAN

I believe that's a no.

PETER

Do you mind?

BLOODY MAN

Sorry.

PETER

Emma. You do realize that if neither of us goes to fetch the police, then both of us are by default forced to stay here with a murderer rather indefinitely.

EMMA

I thought you said you didn't think he was a murderer anyways.

PETER

I don't. But I was using your logic.

EMMA

You shouldn't do that. You'll only confuse me.

PETER

Emma...

BLOODY MAN

You shouldn't confuse the poor woman.

PETER (sharply)

Look here, I am going downstairs to call the police, and that is the end of this discussion.

EMMA (hurt)

Peter...

PETER

Enough, Emma.

(softening a bit)

I'll be back soon, there's nothing to worry about.

(He exits.)

BLOODY MAN

Not a very affectionate man, your husband, is he?

EMMA

That's none of your business.

BLOODY MAN

He certainly doesn't speak to you very kindly.

EMMA

That's none of your business either.

BLOODY MAN

Why on earth did you marry him?

EMMA

If you must know, I married him because I happen to love him. Now if you wouldn't mind, I'd rather just sit here quietly.

BLOODY MAN

Suit yourself.

(They sit quietly for an uncomfortable period of time. There is a knock at the door, which causes EMMA to jump.)

EMMA

Who could that be?

BLOODY MAN

I don't know. I can't see through doors.

EMMA

There's no need to be condescending.

(knock)

Still there.

BLOODY MAN

What should I do?

EMMA

See who it is, I suppose.

BLOODY MAN

(knock)

Who is it?

(going to door)

EMMA

(knock)

Who's there?

EMMA

(knock)

Just open it already!

BLOODY MAN

(opening door slowly)

Who is...

EMMA

(The door is thrust open by MRS. DAVIES.)

DAVIES

I'm terribly sorry to intrude, but I need to use your telephone. Mine's out of order and I've just had the most terrible shock.

BLOODY MAN

It seems to be a night for shocks.

EMMA

Ours is out of order as well, I'm afraid.

DAVIES

Oh dear. Then I suppose you will just have to run down to the front desk.

EMMA

For what, exactly?

DAVIES

Well to tell them about the murder, of course.

EMMA

Murder?

DAVIES

Yes! There was a murderer in my bedroom.

EMMA

Oh how awful.

DAVIES

And I simply cannot stay in that room any longer knowing that a murderer has tainted it, so I shall just wait here until the management can move my things.

EMMA

Well you see, the thing is...

DAVIES

It isn't a problem that I remain here, is it?

EMMA

Not at all, it's just that....

DAVIES

Because I cannot bear the thought of being in a room where a murderer has stood, breathing the same air that has passed through his lungs.

EMMA

Of course not. It's only that...

DAVIES

Even to think of it makes me positively ill. Nauseous, to put it plainly.

EMMA

Quite understandably.

DAVIES

So it is simply out of the question for me to return to my room.

EMMA

It's just that he's here.

DAVIES
I beg your pardon?

EMMA
The murderer. He's here.

(EMMA steps aside so DAVIES can see BLOODY MAN. DAVIES sinks into a chair.)

DAVIES
Oh.

EMMA
We caught him.

BLOODY MAN
I'm not actually a murderer.

DAVIES
Don't be ridiculous. Of course you are, I saw you.

EMMA
Saw him? You mean you actually saw the crime?

DAVIES
Well no, not exactly. But I saw him afterwards.
(She gazes off into the distance, as if picturing something.)
He was standing over my bed, silhouetted against the open door, with a knife clenched in his fist, drenched in blood.
(She shudders.)

BLOODY MAN
It wasn't me.

EMMA
What did you do?

DAVIES
I shut my eyes again and just lay there, paralyzed. I could hear him moving about the room but I was too afraid to try and see what he was doing. When I finally gathered strength enough to look again, he was standing in the doorway. But this time, there was no knife.

EMMA
He must have hidden it in your room somewhere! How ghastly.

DAVIES

Precisely.

(to BLOODY MAN)

That was most ill-mannered of you.

BLOODY MAN

But I didn't...

EMMA

Oh hush. Of course you did.

(turning to DAVIES)

Then what did you do, Mrs.? Miss...?

DAVIES

Mrs. Mrs. Clarice Davies.

EMMA

How do you do, Mrs. Davies? I'm Emma Brown.

DAVIES

How do you do? Well I just watched him walk out, closing the door behind him. I've never felt such terror. All I could do was lie there, thinking all the while that he would come back any minute and murder me in my bed. I don't know how long I remained frozen, but finally, after much thought, I concluded that it was my duty to get up. After all, I couldn't let him get away.

EMMA

You're so brave.

DAVIES

So I tried to telephone for help. And when I realized the telephone was out of order, I got dressed and came out into the hall. I heard your voices and came over here.

EMMA

I'm certainly glad you did. My husband left me alone with a murderer.

DAVIES

How un-chivalrous of him.

EMMA

I agree completely. I don't know what's gotten into him. He was almost rude to me!

BLOODY MAN

They're newlyweds, you see.

Are you? DAVIES

Yes, as a matter of fact. EMMA

That explains quite a bit. DAVIES

What do you mean? EMMA
(There is a knock at the door.)
Oh what now?
(calling towards door)
Who is it?

It's me, Emma. PETER

Are the police on their way? EMMA
(crossing to door and opening it)

No, I...(sees DAVIES) who is this? PETER (entering)

Mrs. Davies. DAVIES

She's staying just down the hall. The murderer was in her room. EMMA

I see. And how did she come to be in our room? PETER

Her phone wasn't working, so she came to use ours. EMMA

They must be out in the whole hotel. PETER

What do you mean? DAVIES

Aren't the police coming? EMMA

PETER

No. I tried to phone them, but there was no service at the front desk. I couldn't find the concierge either. No one seemed to be around.

DAVIES

How odd.

BLOODY MAN

Odd indeed.

(There is a knock at the door.)

EMMA

Well now who is it?

(calling towards door)

Who's there?

VOICE

Room service, madam.

EMMA

Room service? We didn't order any, did we?

PETER

With all this chaos I can't remember. Perhaps we did.

EMMA

You'd better let him in, then.

PETER

Right.

(opens door)

Hello. We don't remember ordering anything.

WAITER

(entering with wheeled cart)

You didn't, sir. Compliments of the management. It's hotel policy to offer a dessert tray to those occupying the honeymoon suite.

(EMMA makes a move towards tray, but stops herself so as not to reveal BLOODY MAN)

EMMA

Oh how nice. Thank you so much.

PETER

Yes, thank you.

(A light bulb goes off in PETER's head.)

Emma! We can send him for the police!

WAITER

Police, sir? Is anything the matter?

DAVIES

I should say! There's been a murder!

WAITER

A murder? How dreadful.

EMMA

Isn't it though? It's been awfully exciting.

WAITER

Who's been murdered?

EMMA

We don't really know, actually. It's the woman next door. But we've caught the murderer.

WAITER

(referring to Mrs. Davies) Her, madam?

EMMA

No, no. Don't be silly.

(She steps aside to reveal BLOODY MAN.)

Him.

WAITER

Oh. Well then who is she?

EMMA

This is Mrs. Davies. She's staying just down the hall.

DAVIES

The murder weapon is hidden in my room.

WAITER

Are you his accomplice, then?

DAVIES

I most certainly am not! He hid it there quite against my wishes.

WAITER

Beg pardon, madam.

PETER

Would you mind fetching the police?

WAITER

Certainly, sir.

(BLOODY MAN begins to laugh.)

EMMA

What's so funny?

(BLOODY MAN gives her a look.)

BLOODY MAN

You all are.

PETER

I don't see how.

BLOODY MAN (laughing)

Of course you don't. Which is why, in part, it's so amusing.

DAVIES

You don't make a bit of sense.

BLOODY MAN

You just don't understand in slightest the mess you're all in, and it's terribly comical.

PETER

The way I see it, you're the only one who is any kind of mess.

BLOODY MAN

Am I?

EMMA

What on earth are you talking about? Of course you are. You're the only one who's murdered anyone this evening.

(BLOODY MAN laughs louder.)

PETER

Now look here, pull yourself together.

BLOODY MAN

I can't help it.

DAVIES

You'd better go quickly, young man. It seems that he's beginning to crack. He might become dangerous.

BLOODY MAN

Oh, it isn't me you have to worry about.

EMMA

Just what do you mean by that?

BLOODY MAN

Don't you see? You're all in it now.

PETER

What do you mean?

BLOODY MAN

You're all accessories to murder.

DAVIES

That's preposterous.

BLOODY MAN

Are you certain?

DAVIES

Of course I'm certain! None of us has had anything to do with it.

BLOODY MAN

On the contrary, you've helped to conceal a criminal.

EMMA

No, we haven't. We've captured a criminal.

BLOODY MAN

That's not how the police will see it.

WAITER

What are you talking about?

BLOODY MAN

Can't you see how this looks? You're all implicated in the crime.

BLOODY MAN

You don't think I'd be so stupid as to just stumble in here accidentally, do you?

PETER

Just how exactly do you figure that?

BLOODY MAN

If you go and get the police now, they will enter this room and find a man covered in blood tied to a chair, a young couple, an old woman, and a hotel employee. Just the makings of a ring of jewel thieves.

WAITER

Jewel thieves?

DAVIES

Old woman?

EMMA

Oh dear.

BLOODY MAN

In the next room, the police will find a woman in an evening dress, but with no jewelry. The obvious implication is of a jewel theft gone wrong. And now you're all implicated.

PETER

I don't see how.

BLOODY MAN

Oh it's all perfectly straightforward. You two were here to take the jewels after I stole them. I passed them to you to avoid suspicion.

EMMA

No, you didn't.

BLOODY MAN

You, Mrs. Davies, are my cover. I told the people at the front desk I was here visiting my grandmother. You conveniently allowed me to hide the knife in your room after the robbery went sour.

DAVIES

Grandmother, indeed!

BLOODY MAN

And you, were the inside man. You scoped out the guests to choose the perfect target and arranged all of our rooms.

WAITER

I never!

EMMA

Peter, what can we do?

PETER

Calm down, darling. This whole thing is too bizarre. I can't believe the police would fall for something like that.

BLOODY MAN

You might be surprised. I've often seen this sort of thing.

EMMA

You see, Peter? We're all going to be arrested.

WAITER

I shouldn't think so. We'll most likely be questioned, but there's no reason for any of us to be arrested.

BLOODY MAN

Never underestimate the incompetence of the judicial system.

DAVIES

He's right. Everyone knows inspectors only make a muddle of everything.

EMMA

Peter, I don't think we can risk it. We'd better just let him go.

PETER

We can't let a murderer go free, Emma. That wouldn't be right.

EMMA

But I don't want to be arrested!

PETER

We aren't going to be arrested.

DAVIES

How can you be so certain?

EMMA

Exactly. You can't be sure of that. I say we just let him go, and when the police find her in the morning we tell them that we were asleep and didn't hear a thing.

PETER

But that would be an actual crime. We could be convicted of lying to the police and withholding evidence.

EMMA

But if we all keep our mouths shut, there won't be anything to tie us to the crime, and no one would ever know. Please, Peter. This isn't fun anymore.

PETER

I know. We'll figure something out.

DAVIES

Come to think of it, letting him go does seem to be the best option. He did hide the knife in my room, and I certainly don't want to be implicated.

WAITER

I won't say anything. I've my job to think about.

BLOODY MAN

I think it's an excellent idea, Peter.

PETER

Now hold on a minute, something's not right. If we let him go, what's to stop him from just killing us all?

EMMA

Oh dear. I hadn't thought of that.

BLOODY MAN

I wouldn't do that.

PETER

But we've only your word for that. And I don't mean to be rude, but your word isn't worth much.

BLOODY MAN

Now look here...

(Someone screams outside the door.)

DAVIES

Another murder!

EMMA

Peter!

PETER

Now, Emma, we don't know that...

EMMA

Well go and see!

PETER

Do we really need something else to deal with?

EMMA

What if someone calls the police?

PETER

You may have a point.

(PETER opens the door and exits into the hall. A moment later he re-enters, bringing with him a rather frightened looking CHAMBERMAID who is clutching a stack of towels. He leads her to a chair, and EMMA closes the door behind them.)

PETER

Just take a few deep breaths, try to calm down. That's it.

CHAMBERMAID

'Orrible. Oh it was 'orrible!

PETER

There, there. I'll get you a glass of water.

(He exits to the bathroom.)

DAVIES

Now what was so horrible? Has someone else been killed?

CHAMBERMAID (shudders)

All that blood! It was everywhere!

DAVIES

You see!

WAITER

Try not to think about it.

CHAMBERMAID

'Ow can I 'elp it? I'll never forget it. Never.

EMMA

Oh, this is awful.

WAITER

Come on, now. Buck up. It'll be all right.

CHAMBERMAID

Tony? What are you doing mixed up with all this?

WAITER

Just delivering room service. What were you doing?

CHAMBERMAID

She'd called down for towels. I was just bringin' 'em up.

BLOODY MAN

Of all the rotten luck, eh?

(PETER enters from bathroom with glass of water.)

PETER

Here you are, drink this.

CHAMBERMAID

(taking the glass)

Thank you, sir.

PETER

Don't mention it.

(EMMA has been pacing agitatedly while listening to all this. She is clearly distraught.)

EMMA

Peter, what are we going to do? What are we going to do?

PETER

It's all right, Emma.

EMMA

No! No it isn't all right! Now we have another accomplice!

CHAMBERMAID

What do you mean?

EMMA

Don't you see? They were in it together!

DAVIES

Of course!

PETER

Who was?

EMMA

The waiter and the maid! They were both inside men!

BLOODY MAN

Now you're thinking.

WAITER

Now look here...

CHAMBERMAID

I didn't do nothin' ...

PETER

Now, Emma...

EMMA

It all makes sense! He was going to take her body away on the cart, and she was going to clean it all up with the towels!

DAVIES

Precisely!

WAITER & CHAMBERMAID

No, I wasn't!

EMMA

But the police will think you were!

PETER

Really, darling, I don't know about that. It's so farfetched.

EMMA

Yes, but don't you understand? The truth is always farfetched when it comes to theft and murder! Otherwise they wouldn't put it in the newspapers!

DAVIES

She's absolutely right.

EMMA

Of course I am! The police will believe his story and we'll all be hanged for murder!

(She bursts into tears)

DAVIES

Well, now, I don't know that I'd go quite that far.

PETER

Emma, now you're just getting hysterical.

EMMA (still sobbing)

Of course I'm hysterical! I'm going to be arrested on my wedding night in nothing but a nightgown!

PETER

Would you like to go and change?

EMMA (wails)

No!

PETER

All right, all right. Just a suggestion.

BLOODY MAN

Rather an insensitive one.

EMMA

Most insensitive.

DAVIES

Haven't you any tact?

PETER

Of course I have!

(There is a knock at the door.)

EMMA (wailing again)

Now who is it?

PETER

I don't know!

BLOODY MAN

There's no need to raise your voice at her.

EMMA

Is the *whole* hotel going to come in here?

WAITER

Highly unlikely. We're pretty full up at the moment. I don't think everyone would fit.

(EMMA sobs.)

PETER

That wasn't funny.

WAITER

I thought she was serious.

(knock)

DAVIES

I don't think we can just ignore the fact that there's someone at the door. We shall have to open it at some point.

PETER

(sighs) Very well. Everyone just...stay where you are!

(He crosses to door and opens it. An unassuming MAN is on the other side, wearing pajamas, bedroom slippers, a bathrobe and large spectacles. It is DR. CLARKE, but they don't know that yet.)

CLARKE

Excuse me, I don't mean to be rude, but would you mind keeping the noise down? My wife and I are trying to sleep.

PETER

Oh. Yes, well, I'm terribly sorry about that. Of course we'll be quiet.

CLARKE

Thank you. Normally I wouldn't've come over, it's just that my wife has been ill and she needs her rest.

PETER

(starting to close the door)

Perfectly understandable. We didn't realize we were being so loud.

CLARKE

You weren't really, but her ears are much more sensitive since she's been ill.

PETER

How unfortunate. Please accept our apologies.

CLARKE

No, no. No need for that, I'm really dreadfully sorry to interrupt.

(He peers into the room.)

Are you having some sort of party?

PETER

(trying harder to close the door)

Something like that.

CLARKE

Here now, why is that man all bloody? And why is he tied to a chair?

EMMA

It's no use, Peter. He shall just have to come in.

PETER

(dragging the MAN inside)

I'm terribly sorry about this.

CLARKE

What do you think you're doing?

EMMA

He tried to keep you out of it. You shouldn't have peeked. It's rude. Now we have another accomplice.

CLARKE

Accomplice? To what?

WAITER

Murder.

CLARKE

Murder? Now see here...

DAVIES

It's no use. We've looked at it from every possible angle. We're all deliciously in it, I'm afraid.

(Everyone begins to speak over everyone else.)

CLARKE

But I haven't done anything...

None of us has...

DAVIES

I don't like this; I don't like this at all....

CHAMBERMAID

I would work the nightshift today....

WAITER

Peter, I want out of this...

EMMA

I know, dear, I know...

PETER

I really ought to get back to my wife...

CLARKE

No one's going anywhere until we figure this out....

PETER

There's nothing to figure out! We're all going to hang!

EMMA

Hang?!

CHAMBERMAID & CLARKE

Emma, don't be hysterical...

PETER

This is too much...

DAVIES

I want to leave, let me out....

CHAMBERMAID

You can't keep me here against my will...

CLARKE

(To BLOODY MAN)

WAITER

This is all your fault!

BLOODY MAN

You should've let me go...

Everyone try and calm down... PETER

I can't! EMMA

Blood...so much blood... CHAMBERMAID

There's no need to panic... PETER

I'm not panicking! EMMA

I should teach you a thing or two... WAITER

Go ahead and try it... BLOODY MAN

Get away from him! PETER

I think I may need to lie down... DAVIES

'elp! Oh someone 'elp! CHAMBERMAID

Someone get me out of this! EMMA

Everyone just CALM DOWN! PETER

(There is a knock at the door. They ALL freeze.)

Open up! Police! VOICE

Peter! It's the police! EMMA

I heard, Emma. PETER

Open this door!

VOICE

What should we do?

EMMA

I don't know. Let me think.

PETER

We can't just let him in; we haven't worked out our stories yet.

DAVIES

What do you mean, 'stories'? Shouldn't we just tell the truth?

WAITER

'oo would believe that?

CHAMBERMAID

(knock)

Police!

VOICE

We have to do something!

EMMA

I'm thinking, I'm thinking!

PETER

I really don't see why we don't just let him in.

CLARKE

We've been through all that!

CHAMBERMAID

Maybe you should just ask him to leave.

BLOODY MAN

Perfect! What a marvelous idea.

DAVIES

Let's go out on the balcony!

EMMA

Emma! Don't be ridiculous!

PETER

EMMA
Don't shout at me, Peter!

BLOODY MAN
Yes, Peter, don't shout at her.

PETER
You keep quiet!

(knock)

VOICE
Open the door this instant!

CLARKE
Would someone just open it already?

DAVIES
Maybe we should. It could be exciting.

EMMA
I've had enough excitement!

BLOODY MAN
Oh come now, Emma. Where's your adventurous spirit?

PETER
That's Mrs. Brown to you!

WAITER
We can't just leave him out there.

CHAMBERMAID
And why can't we?

BLOODY MAN
Maybe if we all keep very still, he'll think we've gone to sleep and go away.
(They all turn to him.)
No? Just a thought.

CLARKE
I think we're going to have to let him in.

PETER
This is my hotel room, I'll let him in when I see fit!

(knock)

VOICE

For the last time, open this door!

PETER

Emma, I think we're going to have to let him in.

EMMA

Oh dear.

(PETER crosses to the door, and grabs the handle)

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT

ACT TWO

AT RISE

Everything is exactly as it was at the end of Act One. Everyone is in the same position.

(knock)

VOICE

Open the door this instant!

CLARKE

Would someone just open it already?

DAVIES

Maybe we should. It could be exciting.

EMMA

I've had enough excitement!

BLOODY MAN

Oh come now, Emma. Where's your adventurous spirit?

PETER

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WAITER

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And why can't we?

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(They all turn to him.)

No? Just a thought.

CLARKE

I think we're going to have to let him in.

PETER

This is my hotel room, I'll let him in when I see fit!

(knock)

VOICE

For the last time, open this door!

PETER

Emma, I think we're going to have to let him in.

EMMA

Oh dear.

(PETER crosses to the door, and grabs the handle. The knocking at the door becomes more insistent.)

VOICE

Open this door!

PETER

I am, I am!

(He does)

(A police CONSTABLE has been leaning against the door, attempting to force it open, causing him to stumble into the room rather than enter. This is not the entrance he was planning, so he must take a moment to gather himself before speaking. His first words are therefore flavored with overcompensation.)

CONSTABLE

Now what's all this?

(PETER hits him on the back of the head with a lamp, and the Constable collapses to the floor. All react at once.)

EMMA

Peter! ...

DAVIES

Good hit! ...

WAITER

There's no need to destroy hotel property...

CLARKE

Why did you do that? ...

BLOODY MAN

That seems highly unnecessary...

PETER

(stopping them)

Everyone be quiet! I've had enough!

(Everyone stops and looks at him. Peter drags the Constable to a chair and struggles to get him into it. He finally succeeds, and looks around for something to tie him up with. Not finding anything, he takes off his trousers and uses them to tie the Constable's hands behind his back. Slightly out of breath by this point, he turns back to the group.)

PETER

Now.

EMMA

Why did you do that, Peter?

PETER

Well we couldn't just leave him in the hall, but we didn't know what to say to him. It seemed like the best option.

DAVIES

It was at the very least decisive.

PETER

Thank you. As I was about to say, the fact is that we appear to have a dead woman in the next room. And we have eight people in this room. I think it's just about time we sort a few things out.

EMMA

What sorts of things?

PETER

Who we all are, why we're all here, things like that.

CLARKE

And just what gives you the authority to take charge of everything?

PETER

This is my hotel room, and my honeymoon, and I give myself the authority!

BLOODY MAN

That hardly seems democratic.

(PETER crosses to BLOODY MAN.)

PETER

That's enough from you.

(Peter takes off BLOODY MAN's tie, and uses it to gag him.)

Much better.

(He crosses to settee and sits)

CONT.

Let's start with a round of introductions, shall we? My name is Peter Brown. I am an accountant, I live in London, and I am here on my honeymoon.

(to Mrs. Davies)

And you?

DAVIES

Oh. Well. My name is Clarice Davies. I currently reside in Axbridge, Somerset, and I'm a writer. Serial fiction in ladies' magazines, that sort of thing. I am here because it is the anniversary of my husband's death, and I always come here on the anniversary of my husband's death.

WAITER

Antony Walker. Originally from London, but now a proud resident of Bath. I'm a waiter here at the hotel.

CHAMBERMAID

I'm Agnes Jones. I'm from right here, and I work as a chambermaid 'though I'm trainin' to be a secretary.

CLARKE

My name is Neville Clarke. I am a physician, and I am here with my wife for a rest cure.

EMMA

Well my name is Emma Brown. I used to work at a perfume counter, but now that I'm married I shall be a housewife.

PETER

I know who you are, Emma.

EMMA

Yes, but they don't.

DAVIES

And now we do. Pleased to meet you.

EMMA

Likewise.

PETER

Now that we've all been properly introduced, it's time for some tougher questions.

CHAMBERMAID (nervous)

What sort of questions?

PETER

All we have to go on at the moment is some vague idea about a dead woman and blood and things of that sort. But what do we really know?

CLARKE

Nothing whatsoever.

PETER

Exactly. And I for one would like to know a bit more than nothing. Now, who has actually seen the body?

(BLOODY MAN makes noises behind his gag)

CHAMBERMAID

I s'pose I did.

PETER

Good. What exactly did you see?

CHAMBERMAID

I don't know...there was so much blood.

WAITER

We know about the blood, Agnes. Did you see anything else?

CHAMBERMAID

No, not really. I stopped just in the doorway, and she was lyin' there in 'er evening dress...

EMMA

Oh the poor thing. What if she had planned on going out?

DAVIES

What sort of evening gown?

CLARKE

I hardly see how that matters.

DAVIES

I thought you wanted to know things.

PETER

Important things.

EMMA

Evening dresses are extraordinarily important.

WAITER

Not to murder investigations.

DAVIES

You don't know that. What if she was killed for it?

WAITER

Killed for an evening dress?

PETER

No one would kill for an evening dress.

EMMA

That isn't true. There've been evening gowns I would've killed for.

PETER

Emma!

EMMA

No, not really!

CLARKE

Well then how was that relevant?

EMMA

I just think evening gowns are important!

PETER

Very well. Agnes, do you remember what sort of gown it was?

CHAMBERMAID

It was green. Some sort of shimmery material.

DAVIES

Sounds lovely.

EMMA

Was her hair done?

(BLOODY MAN makes more noises.)

WAITER

How could that possibly matter?

EMMA

It tells us if she was coming in, or going out.

CHAMBERMAID

It was all done up, I think. The way she was lyin' it was 'ard to see.

CLARKE

So what does that tell us?

EMMA

I don't know, now that I think about it. She could have been on her way out, but then, she could have just come in and been killed before she had a chance to take her hair down.

PETER

Does either choice seem more likely?

EMMA

It's difficult to say. Clarice? Oh. May I call you Clarice?

DAVIES

Of course.

EMMA

Thank you. What do you think, Clarice?

DAVIES

I would need to see her before I said anything conclusively.

(The Constable begins to stir.)

CHAMBERMAID

I think 'e's comin' to!

EMMA

What do we do now, Peter?

PETER

I haven't thought that far ahead.

DAVIES

Oh splendid! We shall all have to improvise! I should be writing this down, it would make such a wonderful story.

PETER

Everyone just try to stay calm and let me do the talking.

(ALL adlib their assent.)

(The Constable wakes up and looks around painfully. He blinks at them all a few times and then tries to move his arms. When he finds that he can't, he speaks.)

CONSTABLE

What is the meaning of this? Let me out of this chair at once!

PETER

I'm afraid we can't do that just yet.

CONSTABLE

Who are all of you? What's going on?

PETER

Well you see, Inspector...

(And it begins. The following monologues are spoken one on top of another. The chaos ends with all saying the word "murder.")

PETER

My wife and I are here on our honeymoon. And I can't honestly explain how this has all happened. I suppose it started when my wife heard a scream, which she insisted was a woman being murdered, well you know how women are. So inclined to be dramatic. I had just about calmed her down when that man over there showed up. And what with the blood and all, well, things did look a bit suspicious. The point is that now I'm a bit more inclined to believe there's actually been a murder.

EMMA

Well the first thing is I heard a dreadful scream, and I just knew the poor woman had been killed. I mean, one can just sort of sense these sorts of things. And after all, I wasn't looking to be involved with a crime of any sort; I'm on my honeymoon. But when one hears a murder one has to find out what happened. But then this man came in here, all covered in blood and he's been saying the most dreadful things and then all these other people showed up and now we're all mixed up in murder!

DAVIES

I have suffered a shock. I am not accustomed to being woken to find a man standing over me with a knife. Nor am I accustomed to having my hotel room used as a storage facility for murder weapons. It is extraordinarily unseemly. But regardless of the inconvenience, not to mention the risk, to myself, I attempted to seek out the authorities. Now this rather impertinent young man has had the audacity to imply that we may all be implicated, and I assure you I have no intention of being accused of murder!

CLARKE

There's been a dreadful mistake. I was just minding my own business, trying to get a few hours of sleep when my wife and I were awakened by a dreadful noise coming from this

CONT.

room. Now I'm not usually the sort of man who seeks out confrontation, but my wife has been terribly ill and she must have rest. So I came over here simply to ask them to try and lower their voices, and instead find myself dragged into the room, forced to stay here against my will, and accused of murder!

WAITER

I don't have the slightest idea what's going on in here. I showed this couple to their room earlier, and seeing as it's their honeymoon the manager told me to bring up these desserts and champagne. Simple drop off he said. Then out of the blue comes bloody men tied to chairs and people getting hysterics and who knows what else and I'll tell you one thing, this was not part of my training. Nobody ever said anything about dealing with lunatics, and only lunatics go around yelling about murder!

CHAMBERMAID

This has got nothin' whatever to do with me. I was just doin' what I was told. Bring up clean towels he says, all right says I, up I go. And then when I get there, 'ow was I supposed to know there'd be blood all over the floor, hmm? Nobody told me to bring a mop. The lady just wanted towels. So naturally I screamed, I mean, who wouldn't've? And next thing I know I'm getting dragged in 'ere and that woman's saying I'm an accomplice and I've never had nothin' to do with murder!

PETER

What happened to letting me do the talking?

CONSTABLE

Murder? What murder?

PETER

I beg your pardon?

CONSTABLE

Why is everyone talking about a murder?

EMMA

You mean, that's not why you're here?

CONSTABLE

No. I haven't heard anything about a murder. Who was murdered?

DAVIES

We haven't figured that part out yet.

EMMA

All we know is it's the woman next door.

PETER

Why are you here, if it's not about the murder?

CONSTABLE

We had a complaint about the noise.

PETER

Oh.

CONSTABLE

I was called in to get to the bottom of it.

EMMA

I don't want to be hanged!

CONSTABLE

Who said anything about a hanging?

EMMA

You did!

PETER

Emma...

CONSTABLE

I did not.

WAITER

She's a bit overwrought. Wedding day excitement and all.

CONSTABLE

Oh.

EMMA

You want to get to the bottom of it all, and at the bottom of a murder is a hanging and I don't want to hang!

CONSTABLE

That's only for the murderer. Are you saying you've killed someone?

EMMA (beginning to get completely hysterical)

No!

PETER

That's not what she meant at all.

CHAMBERMAID

Careful or she'll faint.

DAVIES

Here, Emma. Sit down and try to take a few deep breaths.

(DAVIES leads EMMA to the settee)

EMMA

This is too horrid!

WAITER

Maybe she ought to lie down.

PETER

Yes, Emma. Put your feet up.

EMMA

I don't want to! I just want everyone to go away!

DAVIES

Be a good girl now and lie down.

CONSTABLE

Will someone let me out of this chair?

PETER

Wait just a minute, won't you?

EMMA

I can't breathe.

DAVIES

Just calm down.

WAITER

Think of pleasant things.

CHAMBERMAID

Like kittens!

EMMA (sobbing)

I'm allergic to cats!

WAITER

Well done, Agnes.

CHAMBERMAID

How was I s'posed to know?

WAITER

Just go and sit down somewhere, you're not helping.

CHAMBERMAID

Fine.

(She frowns and sits angrily in a chair.)

PETER

(sitting by EMMA)

Darling, you really must try and calm yourself.

EMMA

I can't! I can't!

(MRS. DAVIES leans over and calmly slaps her. EMMA stares at her in shock and then lies there quietly, sniffing from time to time.)

WAITER

Why didn't we think of that?

DAVIES

(taking out a handkerchief and handing it to Emma)

I don't know. It seemed perfectly obvious to me.

PETER

Are you all right, darling?

EMMA

Mhmm.

CONSTABLE.

I insist you untie me at once!

PETER

Not just yet. We have things to think through first.

CONSTABLE

This is unheard of.

DAVIES

Is it? Are there standards for murders and such?

CONSTABLE

(hesitates) I don't rightly know. Murders are usually left to our inspectors.

WAITER

You aren't an inspector?

CONSTABLE

No, sir. I am Special Constable Alfred Harris.

PETER

Special Constable?

DAVIES

A hobby bobby?

CONSTABLE (frowning)

Now then, I can't say as I'm partial to that particular expression. This country relies heavily on her volunteers.

DAVIES

I meant no offense. I was just asking.

CONSTABLE

It's a sensitive subject.

CLARKE

Is this really the time to discuss that?

PETER

No. We need to get back to our inquiry.

CONSTABLE

Then you must untie me so I can begin.

PETER

Not your inquiry. My inquiry.

EMMA

Peter, hadn't we better let the police take over?

PETER

No. I want to finish what I started.

(Emma looks at him, surprised, but pleasantly so.)

CONSTABLE

I must insist...

(Peter takes the handkerchief from Emma and stuffs it in the Constable's mouth.)

PETER

Now where were we?

DAVIES

We were discussing the significance of the dead woman's hair.

PETER

Right. And what can we conclude?

EMMA

We can't conclude anything without seeing her.

PETER

Then we shall have to move on to another line of inquiry.

DAVIES

Why?

PETER

Because we can't come to a conclusion on the hair business.

DAVIES

Not without seeing her.

PETER

As you said.

DAVIES

But we could if we saw her.

PETER

I don't see...

EMMA

Why didn't we think of that before?

WAITER

Think of what?

It's really the next logical step.

DAVIES

What step?

PETER

We must have a look at her.

EMMA

Out of the question.

PETER

(The Constable makes noises behind his gag.)

How else are we to solve this puzzle?

DAVIES

We should have indentified her ages ago.

EMMA

I don't want you looking at dead people.

PETER

It's the only way to move forward.

DAVIES

I'll be fine, Peter.

EMMA

I would like to know who she is.

WAITER

Yes, and maybe Dr. Clarke could tell us something.

DAVIES

Me?

CLARKE

Of course! You're a doctor, aren't you?

EMMA

Yes of course, but I'm not a coroner.

CLARKE

EMMA

You'll still be able to tell us more than we could discover ourselves. Let's all go and look at the body.

PETER

(gesturing to BLOODY MAN and CONSTABLE)

We can't just leave these two in here alone.

(BLOODY MAN speaks behind his gag.)

DAVIES

Let's bring the body in here then.

EMMA

Excellent. We can use the room service cart!

CHAMBERMAID

(pacing)

I don't like this. I don't like this one bit.

WAITER

Oh calm down, Aggie. There's nothing to get so worked up about.

CHAMBERMAID

I don't want to look at that body again.

WAITER

Then you just wait in the toilet.

CHAMBERMAID

By myself?

WAITER

Well, you're the only one who has a thing about corpses.

CHAMBERMAID

I think you're being perfectly 'orrid, Tony. I never asked to get mixed up in all this.

WAITER

You're not mixed up in anything yet, so be a good girl and wait in the other room!

CHAMBERMAID

Fine.

(She exits into the bathroom and shuts the door.)

WAITER

Now about the body.

PETER

Oh very well. Help me with the cart.

(They empty the cart of its desserts, and start to wheel it out of the room.
CLARKE makes a move to go with them.)

PETER

If you wouldn't mind, doctor, I think someone should stay here with the ladies.

CLARKE

Oh. Of course.

EMMA

Hurry back, Peter.

PETER

I shall. Be sure to lock the door after us.

(PETER and WAITER exit. EMMA crosses to the door and bolts it.)

EMMA

I hate waiting.

DAVIES

So do I. (looks at desserts) Seems a shame to let all this go to waste.

EMMA

A terrible shame.

(They sit on the settee with a plate each and begin to nibble on the
desserts.)

DAVIES

You've been awfully quiet, Dr. Clarke.

CLARKE

I'm still rather confused by this whole business.

DAVIES

I don't see what's so confusing about it. We're trying to solve a murder mystery.

CLARKE

Yes, I'm aware of that. However, I don't know how I've managed to get involved.

EMMA

You came and knocked on our door.

CLARKE

Well yes, I now the *actual* manner...

DAVIES

It's all quite simple when you think about it.

CLARKE

(sighs) Would you mind terribly if we just waited quietly? I'm developing the most terrible headache.

DAVIES

I suppose a little quiet could do us all some good.

(They all sit in silence as the women continue munching.)

DAVIES

I came here on my honeymoon, you know.

(CLARKE sighs again.)

EMMA

Did you, Clarice?

DAVIES

I did. My husband never enjoyed particularly good health, poor thing. About the time of our wedding he was practically a convalescent. We decided to combine a rest cure and a honeymoon, and the hot springs at Bath seemed a most logical option.

EMMA

It doesn't sound as though it would be a pleasant trip.

DAVIES

It was miserable. Rained the entire time. And along with the terrible weather, I had to learn to be a wife and nursemaid all in one dreary week.

EMMA

How awful.

DAVIES

I certainly thought so at the time. But I don't know. Sometimes I think misery bonds people more surely than happiness. After surviving our honeymoon, nothing seemed to be able to shake my husband or I. For the thirty-one years of our marriage, no matter

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what went wrong, we only had to say “Bath” and we’d remember what we could overcome.

EMMA

How beautiful.

DAVIES

We weren’t always happy, but we were always sure of each other. And I think that counts for something.

EMMA

I think that’s wonderful, Clarice. It’s almost as though you wrote it.

DAVIES

I did. I put it in one of my stories.

EMMA

Oh.

DAVIES

It’s true though.

EMMA

I believe you. And you said that is why you’re here now?

DAVIES

It is. Ever since Nigel passed away, I’ve come back here every year on the anniversary. Just to remember.

(EMMA takes DAVIES’ hand.)

EMMA

No matter how horrid everything else may be, I’m glad to have met you.

DAVIES

As am I.

(They exchange smiles. There is a knock at the door. The woman start and look to the door.)

EMMA

Do you suppose that’s them?

DAVIES

I do hope so.

EMMA

(getting up and crossing to door)

Who is it?

PETER

It's me, Emma. You can unlock the door now.

(EMMA unlocks the door and opens it. PETER and the WAITER enter with the cart, across which lies a form under the tablecloth.)

DAVIES

Whatever took you so long?

WAITER

It was quite a job getting her on the cart.

EMMA

How ghastly.

PETER

I warned you, Emma. Corpses are dreadfully unpleasant things.

EMMA

Oh, I'm all right, Peter. Let's have a look at her.

WAITER

It isn't a very pretty sight.

DAVIES

Of course it isn't. She's dead.

WAITER

I just didn't want you to be taken unawares.

DAVIES

And we certainly appreciate that.

EMMA

Do let's get on with it.

PETER

I didn't realize you were capable of such morbid curiosity.

EMMA

I imagine I'm capable of more than you might think.

DAVIES

You two can discover the depths of each other's personalities later. That's what marriage is for after all. Right now we have a murder to solve.

(She crosses to the cart and removes the tablecloth. A woman who was clearly beautiful in life is draped over the cart, dressed in a bloodstained evening gown. EMMA gasps and buries her head in PETER's shoulder; DAVIES stares at the body in surprise.)

PETER

(holding EMMA)

It's all right, Emma.

EMMA

It's horrible!

PETER

I know. I do wish you hadn't looked.

EMMA

(picking her head up to look at him)

No, it isn't that. We know her!

PETER

We what?

EMMA

Don't you recognize her?

DAVIES

I certainly do.

CLARKE

What?

EMMA

You know her too?

DAVIES

Yes, I do. I had dinner with her last night.

PETER

You did?

DAVIES

Well, in a manner of speaking. We were both in the restaurant at the same time.

EMMA

(to WAITER)

Then you must know her as well!

WAITER

I'm afraid not. I haven't worked since Thursday.

CLARKE

Then she must have checked in sometime after that.

DAVIES

Clearly. How do you know her, Emma?

EMMA

We saw her in the lobby when we registered.

PETER

Did we? I can't recall.

EMMA

Yes, we did. I distinctly remember it.

DAVIES

What was she doing?

EMMA

She looked as though she was waiting for someone.

WAITER

Waiting?

EMMA

Yes. She was dressed to go out, and it seemed as if she was waiting for someone to pick her up.

DAVIES

Maybe it was that man she was dining with yesterday!

PETER

What man?

DAVIES

I haven't the faintest idea. I only know that I saw them at dinner together.

EMMA

Well, what did he look like?

(The door opens, and a man in an expensive suit stumbles into the room. Everyone looks at him in shock. Almost instantly, he falls on his face. There is a knife in his back.)

DAVIES

Like that.

(They all stand in stunned silence. CLARKE crosses to the body to check his pulse. DAVIES turns away, and the WAITER crosses to the settee and sits. EMMA quietly takes PETER's hand.)

EMMA

Peter?

PETER

Yes, Emma?

EMMA

I don't think I want there to be another murder.

PETER

I completely agree with you.

EMMA

This is not the sort of thing I had planned for.

PETER

Of course not.

EMMA

One does not take into account the possibility of murder when one is setting an agenda for one's honeymoon.

PETER

Certainly not.

EMMA

I think the whole business is just awful.

PETER

I'm not arguing with you.

(EMMA thinks for a moment, and then looks at PETER.)

EMMA

You should have let me go and telephone mother.

PETER

(dropping her hand)
What's that got to do with anything?

EMMA

If you had just let me go and telephone mother like I wanted, I wouldn't have been in the room to hear her scream.

PETER

I don't see...

EMMA

And if you had come with me, like any self-respecting gentleman would have, then neither one of us would have been here to see the murderer, and we wouldn't be in this mess at all.

PETER

I hardly think that's fair, Emma. As we established earlier, it wasn't necessary for you to call your mother.

EMMA

We established no such thing! It was very necessary to call her. I hate to think what she'll say now when she finds out about all this.

PETER

(to himself)
Something most unkind, I shouldn't wonder.

EMMA

What was that?

PETER

Nothing. I was only wondering what my own mother will say.

EMMA

She'll probably be too hurt that you haven't called sooner to say much of anything.

PETER

I doubt that. My mother is too sensible to hold a grudge.

EMMA

Well so is mine! Infinitely too sensible!

PETER

Oh no, I am not getting involved in another comparison of mothers. The last one ended in a murder.

EMMA
You're impossible.

PETER
Possibly.

DAVIES
That's quite enough, both of you. All this talk of mothers and murders. Really, we have more important things to deal with.
(turns to CLARKE)
Dr. Clarke? What can you tell us?

CLARKE
Well, this man is dead.

DAVIES
Something we don't already know, I mean.

CLARKE
There is no need to be rude. It could have been a flesh wound.

WAITER
With a knife in his back?

CLARKE
One never knows.

DAVIES
Never mind. Is there anything else you can tell us?

CLARKE
As I said before, I am not a coroner. The only thing I can say with any measure of certainty is that he was stabbed very shortly before he died.

EMMA
Then the murder must not be very far away!

DAVIES
You're right; he hasn't had time to get far.

WAITER
Perhaps we should go and look for him.

PETER
I don't think that's very wise. What if that's what he wants?

EMMA

Do you mean he might want to kill us, too?

DAVIES

What a horrid idea.

PETER

I don't know, I simply think we must consider the possibility.

EMMA

What should we do then?

PETER

I think for the time being, we must stay here and see what else we can puzzle out.

CLARKE

What else can we possibly discover on the little facts we have?

DAVIES

Oh lots of things, I'm sure. We just have to find a good place to start.

WAITER

Such as?

DAVIES

Suppose we start with the man in the chair.

EMMA

He was the start of all this, after all.

PETER

I believe you're right. Yes, let's see what he has to say for himself.

(He crosses to BLOODY MAN and removes the gag from his mouth. BLOODY MAN reacts to its absence, possibly stretching his mouth or trying to swallow properly.)

EMMA

Well, Mr. Evans?

BLOODY MAN (frowning)

Well, what?

DAVIES

What do you have to say for yourself?

BLOODY MAN

Nothing, until you let me out this chair.

PETER

I'm afraid that's not possible just yet. We need to get a few details straightened out first.

BLOODY MAN

I am in no frame of mind to have a good chat while I've lost all feeling in my hands.

PETER

The sooner you answer my questions, the sooner you might be able to get up.

BLOODY MAN

Why don't you let the constable ask me the questions? I've no obligation to answer to you.

EMMA

Now look here, Mr. Murderer Evans. This is Peter's investigation. And you will answer his questions, or...

(She stops to think.)

Or...we'll never let you go.

BLOODY MAN (smiling ever so slightly)

That's quite a threat.

EMMA

And I couldn't be more serious.

WAITER

You know, I don't think that's a very logical threat.

EMMA

Of course it is.

PETER

Emma, your logic is...your own.

EMMA

Who else's would it be?

PETER

Never mind.

(EMMA gives him a puzzled look, but turns to BLOODY MAN.)

EMMA

Well, Mr. Evans? Are you going to answer his questions, or no?

BLOODY MAN

I don't think I will.

EMMA

I don't think you're a very nice man.

BLOODY MAN

That's not a very kind thing to say. You don't know a thing about me.

EMMA

I know you're the sort of man who burst into rooms without knocking and involves innocent people in murders. That's something.

BLOODY MAN

If that's what you wish to believe.

EMMA

But that's exactly what you've done! It doesn't require what one might call a stretch of the imagination. I don't think I could have imagined something so horrible.

BLOODY MAN

I'm not so sure. You seem to have an exceptionally vivid imagination.

EMMA

It's all so unpleasant. You've completely spoilt my honeymoon.

BLOODY MAN

I wouldn't go so far as to say that. After all, this is just the first day, isn't it? You have plenty of time to make up for this evening.

EMMA (starting to tear up)

Not if we're in prison.

DAVIES

Let's try not to think about prison, hmm?

EMMA (sniffing)

It's rather hard to think of anything else. And I don't see how we can avoid it if we can't figure anything out.

BLOODY MAN

(sighs) You needn't cry about it. I'll answer your husband's questions. I'm tired of this chair, anyways.

EMMA (brightening immediately)
Thank you.

BLOODY MAN
Go on, Mr. Brown. What do you want to know?

PETER
To start off, what is your occupation, Mr. Evans?

BLOODY MAN
I seem to find myself unemployed at the moment.

PETER
Then what was your last position?

BLOODY MAN
Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that I am habitually unemployed.

PETER
Somehow I don't find that surprising. Do you have any particular trade at all?

BLOODY MAN
No. Not particularly.

PETER
Very interesting. Where is your permanent residence?

BLOODY MAN
Nowhere, I'm afraid.

PETER
Something of a nomad, are we?

BLOODY MAN
Yes, I rather like the sound of that.

PETER
Do you indeed? What brings you to Bath?

BLOODY MAN
Nothing in particular. Just sightseeing I suppose.

PETER
Sightseeing. Really?

BLOODY MAN

I like sightseeing. One sees so many sights.

PETER

I am beginning to think you're being intentionally difficult.

BLOODY MAN

What makes you think that?

PETER

Just an impression.

BLOODY MAN

I assure you that nothing could be further from the truth. I just happen to be one of those unfortunate fellows who have nothing particularly distinguishing about them.

PETER

For you, that may prove to be unfortunate indeed.

BLOODY MAN

How ominous that sounds.

PETER

It was open to interpretation.

BLOODY MAN

And I interpreted it ominously.

DAVIES (quietly to EMMA)

This is fascinating. Rather like watching a tennis match, isn't it?

EMMA (completely focused on PETER)

Shh. I'm trying to listen.

PETER

How do you explain your presence here this evening?

BLOODY MAN

Quite easily.

PETER

Oh come off it, Evans. We'll never get anywhere at this rate.

BLOODY MAN

Very well. I'm a guest in the hotel; my room is just down the hall. I was coming back from a late dinner and I saw the door to the next room open. I stopped to see if anything

CONT.

was the matter, and when I looked in the door I saw a woman lying there, covered in blood. I rushed in to see if there was anything I could do. I knelt to feel for a pulse, but she was already dead. I went to the phone to call the police, but it was out of order, so I rushed in here to use yours. Then I was attacked and tied to this chair.

PETER

That's not at all the story you gave us earlier.

EMMA

Immensely suspicious. Besides, what about the story you gave us afterwards, about being a murderer?

DAVIES

Yes, I'm most interested in hearing that particular story.

BLOODY MAN

Oh that. Well when you insisted on keeping me captive, I was forced to spin an elaborate tale of murder and theft in an attempt to intimidate you into letting me go. I'm afraid it rather backfired, as it seems to have just made you insist on making everyone a prisoner.

EMMA

A convenient story!

DAVIES

If it was in fact just a story, you certainly seemed to revel in it.

BLOODY MAN

Of course I did. You all were such fun to take in.

CLARKE

I find that offensive. Taking advantage of peoples' agitated state. Bad form, I should say.

BLOODY MAN

Oh do try and grow up, Clarke. This isn't secondary school. You are going to be lied to at some point. Facts of life I'm afraid.

WAITER

The point is, Mr. Brown, what are we going to do about him?

PETER

Do?

DAVIES

Yes. Do. What are we going to do with him now?

PETER

I'm afraid I haven't the foggiest idea.

EMMA

What?

PETER

I'm sorry, darling. This *is* a bit past my experience, you know. I thought something he said might point us in a new direction, but I'm not really sure what comes next.

DAVIES

For pity's sake, Peter.

WAITER

Does anyone else have any suggestions?

BLOODY MAN

I suggest you let me go.

CLARKE

Perhaps the constable has something to say.

EMMA

(to CONSTABLE)

Do you?

(The CONSTABLE tries to say something. DAVIES crosses to him and takes out the handkerchief)

DAVIES

What was that?

CONSTABLE

You're all a lot of lunatics!

EMMA

That isn't helpful at all.

WAITER

Maybe we ought to gag him again.

CONSTABLE

Oh no you don't!

(General pandemonium. All talking at once, trying to decide what to do next, ad lib, etc. The CONSTABLE tries to talk over them, get them to let him go, etc. In the middle of the chaos, there is a sharp knock on the door. ALL snap their heads to the door and freeze.)

There's always something. DAVIES

Who is it? PETER

Room service! VOICE

Room service? But I already brought the room service. WAITER

Let's see who it really is then. EMMA

Emma, don't! PETER

(She has already gone to the door and is opening it.)

Who is it really? EMMA

(She is forced back into the room by a food cart pushed by a woman in a waiter's uniform.)

Everyone stay where you are! WOMAN
(Releases the cart and pulls a gun. She speaks with an American accent)

That's the best entrance line you could come up with? DAVIES

Shut up! WOMAN

Who are you? EMMA

It doesn't matter. WOMAN

(She crosses to the female corpse and bends over it, still covering the room with her gun.)

DAVIES

Just what do you think you're doing?

WOMAN

None of your business.

PETER

You're threatening us at gunpoint, which would seem to make it our business.

WOMAN

(waving the gun around)

Everyone just shut up!

CLARKE

I suggest we do what she says.

EMMA

Peter, I don't like this.

(The WOMAN points the gun at EMMA.)

CONSTABLE

Emma, it would probably be best if you kept quiet for now

EMMA (quietly)

All right.

PETER

Now, let's everyone just keep calm.

(to WOMAN)

Why don't you put the gun down?

WOMAN

No! And I'll thank you to keep quiet, just like this Emma person. I don't want anyone trying to give me orders. So you just sit tight!

PETER

Very well. There's no need to get so upset.

WOMAN

Everyone just stay still and keep your hands where I can see them.

EMMA

This is like a scene from the cinema. A horrible cinema.

PETER

Emma!

EMMA

I can't help it.

WOMAN

(to EMMA)

Don't think I won't use this. I know what I want and I'm prepared to get it.

DAVIES

What do you want?

WOMAN

(wheeling around to her)

What do you think I want?

DAVIES

I have no idea, which is precisely why I asked.

WOMAN

Don't play stupid with me. I want the jewels!

EMMA

What jewels?

DAVIES

What in heaven's name are you talking about?

WOMAN

I want the jewels from the body!

SEVERAL VOICES

What?

WAITER

Nobody took any jewels off the body.

WOMAN

Well then how come they aren't there? Hmm? She was wearing them earlier, and now they're gone.

BLOODY MAN (in an American accent)
Shut up, Jenny.

EMMA
You know her?

WOMAN
What do you mean, “shut up, Jenny”? Don’t you tell me to shut up. I’m here to save your hide. You shut up.

BLOODY MAN
You’re going to ruin the whole thing. Just get out of here!

WOMAN
I’m not leaving without the jewels, Jack. I don’t care what you say.

EMMA
But we really don’t have them!

WOMAN
Do I look stupid to you?

DAVIES
We’re telling the truth, we don’t know about any jewels.

WAITER
I’m going to give you just three more seconds...

EMMA
Wait a minute!

ALL
What?

EMMA
He has them!

ALL
Who?

EMMA
Evans!

BLOODY MAN
Me?

PETER

Emma, what are you talking about?

EMMA

Don't you remember? When he told us the story about the murder? He mentioned jewels! Well how would he know about them unless he took them?

BLOODY MAN

I didn't take them!

WOMAN

Oh you didn't? Well then who has them, Jack?

BLOODY MAN

How should I know? I've been tied up in here for hours!

WOMAN

It was your job to take them. You really mean to tell me that you didn't?

EMMA

His job?

BLOODY MAN

Would you just get out of here, Jenny?

PETER

Wait just a minute, I want to hear this. What do you mean it was his job?

WOMAN

That's what he does. I find the mark, he takes the jewels. Only he botched it up wonderfully this time.

EMMA (making a discovery)

You're jewel thieves?

WOMAN

What else would we be?

EMMA (slightly crushed)

I was only asking.

WOMAN

(to BLOODY MAN)

Do you have them or not, Jack?

BLOODY MAN

I can't believe you, Jenny.

WOMAN

(pointing the gun at him)

Answer my question, do you have them or not?

BLOODY MAN

Don't you point that thing at me! I taught you how to shoot it!

DAVIES

(to CONSTABLE)

Do something!

CONSTABLE

What do you want me to do? I'm tied to a chair!

(DAVIES crosses to CONSTABLE and unties him.)

DAVIES

There. Now shoot her!

CONSTABLE

I don't have a gun!

DAVIES

What?

CONSTABLE

I left it at the station. I've never needed it before.

DAVIES

And you call yourself a constable!

CONSTABLE

Well I am just a volunteer!

WOMAN

You two! Shut up!

BLOODY MAN

That's enough, Jenny! Put the gun away.

WOMAN

Not until I get the jewels.

BLOODY MAN

I have them.

WOMAN

Why didn't you say so?

BLOODY MAN

Because you came in waving that thing around! I didn't want to give them to you while you were being so ridiculous.

WOMAN

That is the dumbest thing I've heard in my entire life.

BLOODY MAN

Just untie me.

WOMAN

I don't think I want to.

BLOODY MAN

Jenny, come untie me so we can get out of here. I'll make it up to you later.

WOMAN

(crossing to him)

You bet you will.

EMMA

Peter, stop them! We can't just let a couple of murderers walk away!

WOMAN

(turning back to EMMA)

What do you mean, murderers?

WAITER

Do you not see the two bodies in the room?

WOMAN

Of course I see them. But I didn't have anything to do with them.

EMMA

A likely story.

BLOODY MAN

It doesn't matter. Just untie me, Jenny.

WOMAN

(crossing to BLOODY MAN and untying him)

You have some explaining to do, Jack. I don't know how you managed to ruin everything.

BLOODY MAN

(standing rather unsteadily and trying to shake feeling back into his limbs)

We didn't exactly allow for murders.

WOMAN

(moving to help him stand)

We'll just have to think of that next time.

(They start to cross towards the door.)

EMMA

Peter, do something!

(PETER takes a step towards them, somewhat hesitantly.)

WOMAN

(pointing the gun at him)

Not another step. Everyone just stay where you are.

(PETER stops. The WOMAN and the BLOODY MAN continue towards the door. It is thrown open from the hall by the CHAMBERMAID. She bursts into the room, holding a gun of her own.)

CHAMBERMAID

No one move!

WAITER

Agnes?

CLARKE

What is going on?

EMMA

Peter?

PETER

I have no idea, Emma.

DAVIES

I thought she was in the toilet!

CHAMBERMAID
I was. But I left.

WAITER
I thought it was too quiet in there.

PETER
What do you want, Agnes?

CHAMBERMAID
I want the jewels!

CONSTABLE
Not this again.

CHAMBERMAID
They're mine, and I want them back.

EMMA
What do you mean, they're yours?
(pointing to the dead woman)
Aren't they hers?

CHAMBERMAID
No. They're mine. She took them from me.

CLARKE
I am so confused.

DAVIES
Now I think we all are.

PETER
Can we please put the guns away?

CHAMBERMAID
Not until I get what's mine.

WAITER
(gesturing to BLOODY MAN and WOMAN)
Well then you're going to need to speak to them.

CHAMBERMAID
(wheeling around to face the couple)
Give them to me!

WOMAN

Not on your life.

BLOODY MAN

Do you know what we went through to get them?

CHAMBERMAID

I don't care. They're mine!

DAVIES

Well they are thieves. I'm not sure that makes much of a difference.

CHAMBERMAID

(still to couple)

Don't make me shoot you for them.

CLARKE

Haven't we had enough killing? We already have two dead bodies.

PETER

Exactly. Which seems to increase the odds of there being another one if we aren't careful.

EMMA

Don't say that! We don't even know who the man is, we can't add another.

DAVIES

I told you, it's the man she was having dinner with.

EMMA

No, you just said he looked like the man she had dinner with.

DAVIES

I meant that it was him.

CHAMBERMAID

What did you say?

DAVIES

The second dead body had dinner with the first dead body last night.

CHAMBERMAID

That isn't possible.

DAVIES

Of course it's possible. It's true.

CHAMBERMAID.

No. No it isn't.

(She rushes to the dead man and turns him over onto his back.)

DAVIES

I assure you that it is.

(The CHAMBERMAID crumples to the floor in tears. PETER quickly goes to her side and takes the gun from her limp hand. The BLOODY MAN and WOMAN attempt to sneak out the door, but PETER levels the gun at them and the CONSTABLE uses his Billy club to hit the gun out of the WOMAN's hand and quickly retrieves it from the ground.)

CLARKE

What is going on here?

EMMA

Be careful with that, Peter.

PETER

I'm being careful, Emma.

WAITER

(referring to CHAMBERMAID)

I think she knew him.

DAVIES

I think you're right.

CHAMBERMAID (crying)

Jerry! Jerry!

CONSTABLE

(to BLOODY MAN and WOMAN)

You two have a seat.

BLOODY MAN

Oh please. Couldn't I just stand?

CONSTABLE

Fine.

(to WOMAN)

But you sit down.

(She does.)

Who is it, Agnes?

WAITER

My husband.

CHAMBERMAID

Oh no! But who killed him?

EMMA

I think she did, Emma.

PETER (quietly)

How horrible.

EMMA (genuinely)

I thought it was one of you. I just wanted the jewels. He gave them to me, but he took them back to give to her. The tramp.

CHAMBERMAID (through her tears)

No.

DAVIES

I didn't mean to kill her. If she'd just given them back to me I would have left her alone. But she laughed. Said she'd earned them. I couldn't help myself.

CHAMBERMAID (wearily)

(crossing to her)

You'd better not say anything else until we get you to the station.
(He uses EMMA's belt to tie her hands.)

Come along now.
(He ushers the CHAMBERMAID towards the door. To CLARKE and the WAITER)

If you two wouldn't mind bringing our jewel thieves along, I think it's time we brought in an inspector.

(CLARKE crosses to the thieves.)

Passed time, if you ask me.

CLARKE

More than happy to oblige.

WAITER

(CLARKE and WAITER each take a thief by the arm and lead them out the door.)

CONSTABLE

(tso DAVIES)

Madam, if you'd be so kind as to come along and give a statement.

DAVIES

Certainly.

(DAVIES exits after the men and the thieves.)

CONSTABLE

And if you two wouldn't mind coming as well, after you change of course.

PETER

We'd be glad to.

CONSTABLE

Thank you.

(to CHAMBERMAID)

This way, madam.

(CONSTABLE and CHAMBERMAID exit. PETER and EMMA stand looking at each other.)

PETER

Well that was unexpectedly eventful.

EMMA

Yes. I suppose we'd better change.

(She starts towards her suitcase.)

PETER

(stopping her)

Emma. Come here.

(She goes to him and he embraces her. They stand like that for a moment.)

EMMA

Do you know what Clarice said while you were gone?

PETER

What?

EMMA

She said that misery bonds people more surely than happiness.

PETER

Did she?

EMMA

She did. And if that's true, then I think we shall be very well bonded after tonight.

PETER

I certainly hope so.

(EMMA tilts her head back to look at him.)

EMMA

I do so love you, Peter.

PETER

And I love you more.

(He kisses her.)

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT

END OF PLAY

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