Room 314

A Comedy in Two Acts

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Acceptance of Senior Honors Thesis

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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

Hannah E. Blough

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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.

Which part?	PETER	
Just "wife."	EMMA	
Wife.	PETER	
(sighs) I do like that.	EMMA	
(They exchange smile	es.)	
I love you, darling.	PETER	
I love you too, Peter.	EMMA	
(He makes a slight move in her direction, and she quickly moves away.)		
I had such a marvelous time today.	EMMA	
Did you? I'm glad.	PETER	
<u> </u>	EMMA was there, and there were really only a few people ged to avoid those quite handily, I thought.	
You are a marvelous evader when yo	PETER ou wish to be.	
I am, aren't I? Comes from years of p	EMMA (rather proudly) practice.	
Oh there's an art to it, is there?	PETER	
	EMMA a know. That is, if one wishes to avoid hurting o notice they were being evaded, it would defeat the	

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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.

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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.

It has been a rather long day.	PETER
Yes. Very eventful.	EMMA
Mmhmm.	PETER
Good though.	EMMA
Yes.	PETER
(She has gone back to	o not being able to look at him.)
You seem cold, darling.	PETER
I'm all right.	EMMA
Are you sure? (puts his arm around Here, let me warm you up.	PETER her)
I'm really quite warm already.	EMMA
You're shivering.	PETER
Well I'm not cold.	EMMA
Is everything all right?	PETER
Perfectly.	EMMA
You seem	PETER

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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.

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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.

P.	Ε'	Γ	E	R

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?

I don't know.	PETER
It's sounds like people fighting.	EMMA
They're probably just picking up wh (crosses to her) Let's leave them to it, shall we? I do	
No.	EMMA (distracted)
It's silly to fight over mothers anywa	PETER ays.
Yes.	EMMA
(She crosses to wall ju	ust as PETER reaches her.)
I say we just drop the whole thing.	PETER
Mmhmm.	EMMA
(She presses her ear a	gainst the wall.)
What are you doing?	PETER
Trying to hear.	EMMA
That's not very polite.	PETER
Something doesn't seem right.	EMMA
Just let them have their argument in	PETER 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

PETER

He's killed her!

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...

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(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!

BLOODY MAN What? **EMMA** Look at all that blood! He did it! **BLOODY MAN** I don't understand... **EMMA** Get him! **PETER** With what? **EMMA** I don't know, just don't let him escape! **BLOODY MAN** Now hang on... (He is cut off, as PETER jumps him.) Really there's no need for that... **PETER** Stop struggling! **BLOODY MAN** I'm not! **EMMA** Hold him, Peter! **BLOODY MAN** I'm not trying to get away! (PETER punches him.) PETER & BLOODY MAN Ow! (The MAN collapses into chair, holding his jaw.) **PETER** That hurt!

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.

You see?	PETER
No, I don't.	EMMA
I'd simply feel better if we were only	PETER including those facts we ourselves can verify.
(sighs) Very well. We'll leave it at a	EMMA scream. For now.
How very magnanimous. (to PETER) You're a very lucky man.	BLOODY MAN
That's sweet.	EMMA (flattered)
Emma!	PETER
What?	EMMA
Let's return to the list. After the screen	PETER am, fact number four is what?
EMMA Should we include our argument about the scream?	
No, let's skip over that.	PETER
Then I think fact number four is that	EMMA this man burst into our room.
Right. And then fact five, you told m	PETER to grab him.
Fact six, you did.	EMMA
Rather absurdly.	BLOODY MAN

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.)

PETER (re-entering the room) There was no one there. **BLOODY MAN** And the door was locked? **PETER** I didn't try the handle. **EMMA** You should have. **PETER** That's breaking and entering. **EMMA** Not if the door isn't locked. **PETER** That's not true. Which is why we can report this man to the authorities. **EMMA** You said that before. Must we really involve the police? I want to solve this ourselves. **PETER** We're hardly qualified to handle this sort of thing, Emma. **BLOODY MAN** Not that there's anything to handle, since this is a simple case of mistaken room identity. **PETER** I really think it's time to call them. **EMMA** Oh all right. **PETER** I'll just go down to the front desk and use the phone there. **EMMA** Oh no you won't.

PETER

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

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) **BLOODY MAN** Still there. **EMMA** What should I do? **BLOODY MAN** See who it is, I suppose. (knock) **EMMA** (going to door) Who is it? (knock) **EMMA** Who's there? (knock) **BLOODY MAN** Just open it already! **EMMA** (opening door slowly) Who is... (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.

For what, exactly?	EMMA
Well to tell them about the murder, or	DAVIES of course.
Murder?	EMMA
Yes! There was a murderer in my be	DAVIES edroom.
Oh how awful.	EMMA
And I simply cannot stay in that rooms o I shall just wait here until the mar	DAVIES many longer knowing that a murderer has tainted it nagement can move my things.
Well you see, the thing is	EMMA
It isn't a problem that I remain here,	DAVIES is it?
Not at all, it's just that	EMMA
Because I cannot bear the thought of breathing the same air that has passe	DAVIES Solution between the being in a room where a murderer has stood, and through his lungs.
Of course not. It's only that	EMMA
Even to think of it makes me positiv	DAVIES ely ill. Nauseous, to put it plainly.
Quite understandably.	EMMA
So it is simply out of the question fo	DAVIES r me to return to my room.
It's just that he's here.	EMMA

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

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.

DAVIES

Are you? **EMMA** Yes, as a matter of fact. **DAVIES** That explains quite a bit. **EMMA** What do you mean? (There is a knock at the door.) Oh what now? (calling towards door) Who is it? **PETER** It's me, Emma. **EMMA** (crossing to door and opening it) Are the police on their way? PETER (entering) No, I...(sees DAVIES) who is this? **DAVIES** Mrs. Davies. **EMMA** She's staying just down the hall. The murderer was in her room. I see. And how did she come to be in our room? **EMMA** Her phone wasn't working, so she came to use ours. **PETER** They must be out in the whole hotel. **DAVIES** What do you mean? **EMMA** Aren't the police coming?

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.

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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.

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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	
Well go and see!	EMMA
Do we really need something else to	PETER deal with?
What if someone calls the police?	EMMA
You may have a point.	PETER
enters, bringing with	or and exits into the hall. A moment later he rehim a rather frightened looking CHAMBERMAID ck of towels. He leads her to a chair, and EMMA d them.)
Just take a few deep breaths, try to ca	PETER alm down. That's it.
'Orrible. Oh it was 'orrible!	CHAMBERMAID
There, there. I'll get you a glass of w	PETER vater.
(He exits to the bathro	oom.)
Now what was so horrible? Has som	DAVIES eone else been killed?
All that blood! It was everywhere!	CHAMBERMAID (shudders)
You see!	DAVIES
Try not to think about it.	WAITER
'Ow can I 'elp it? I'll never forget it.	CHAMBERMAID Never.

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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!

What do you mean?

CHAMBERMAID

	EMMA
Don't you see? They were in it toget	her!
Of course!	DAVIES
Who was?	PETER
The waiter and the maid! They were	EMMA both inside men!
Now you're thinking.	BLOODY MAN
Now look here	WAITER
I didn't do nothin'	CHAMBERMAID
Now, Emma	PETER
It all makes sense! He was going to t clean it all up with the towels!	EMMA take her body away on the cart, and she was going to
Precisely!	DAVIES
No, I wasn't!	WAITER & CHAMBERMAID
But the police will think you were!	EMMA
Really, darling, I don't know about t	PETER hat. It's so farfetched.
Yes, but don't you understand? The murder! Otherwise they wouldn't pu	EMMA truth is always farfetched when it comes to theft and it it in the newspapers!
She's absolutely right.	DAVIES

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)

PETER I don't know!

BLOODY MAN

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

Now who is it?

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'n afraid.

(Everyone begins to speak over everyone else.)

CLARKE

But I haven't done anything...

DAVIES None of us has... **CHAMBERMAID** I don't like this; I don't like this at all.... WAITER I would work the nightshift today.... **EMMA** Peter, I want out of this... **PETER** I know, dear, I know... **CLARKE** I really ought to get back to my wife... **PETER** No one's going anywhere until we figure this out.... **EMMA** There's nothing to figure out! We're all going to hang! CHAMBERMAID & CLARKE Hang?! **PETER** Emma, don't be hysterical... **DAVIES** This is too much... CHAMBERMAID I want to leave, let me out.... **CLARKE** You can't keep me here against my will... WAITER (To BLOODY MAN) This is all your fault! **BLOODY MAN** You should've let me go...

Everyone try and calm down	PETER
I can't!	EMMA
Bloodso 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
	he 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	DAVIES worked out our stories yet.
What do you mean, 'stories'? Should	WAITER In't we just tell the truth?
'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 l	CLARKE et him in.
We've been through all that!	CHAMBERMAID
Maybe you should just ask him to lea	BLOODY MAN ave.
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

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. 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.

65

Why are you here, if it's not about the	PETER ne murder?
We had a complaint about the noise.	CONSTABLE
Oh.	PETER
I was called in to get to the bottom o	CONSTABLE f it.
I don't want to be hanged!	EMMA
Who said anything about a hanging?	CONSTABLE
You did!	EMMA
Emma	PETER
I did not.	CONSTABLE
She's a bit overwrought. Wedding da	WAITER ay excitement and all.
Oh.	CONSTABLE
You want to get to the bottom of it a don't want to hang!	EMMA ll, and at the bottom of a murder is a hanging and I
That's only for the murderer. Are yo	CONSTABLE u saying you've killed someone?
No!	EMMA (beginning to get completely hysterical)
That's not what she meant at all.	PETER

CHAMBERMAID

EMMA (sobbing)

WAITER

ROOM 314	
Careful or she'll faint.	CHAMBERMAID
Here, Emma. Sit down and try to tak	DAVIES e a few deep breaths.
(DAVIES leads EMM	IA to the settee)
This is too horrid!	EMMA
Maybe she ought to lie down.	WAITER
Yes, Emma. Put your feet up.	PETER
I don't want to! I just want everyone	EMMA to go away!
Be a good girl now and lie down.	DAVIES
Will someone let me out of this chair	CONSTABLE :?
Wait just a minute, won't you?	PETER
I can't breathe.	EMMA
Just calm down.	DAVIES
Think of pleasant things.	WAITER

Like kittens!

I'm allergic to cats!

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, sniffling 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 Mmhmm.
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?

DAVIES It's really the next logical step. **PETER** What step? **EMMA** We must have a look at her. **PETER** Out of the question. (The Constable makes noises behind his gag.) **DAVIES** How else are we to solve this puzzle? **EMMA** We should have indentified her ages ago. **PETER** I don't want you looking at dead people. **DAVIES** It's the only way to move forward. **EMMA** I'll be fine, Peter. **WAITER** I would like to know who she is. **DAVIES** Yes, and maybe Dr. Clarke could tell us something. **CLARKE** Me? **EMMA** Of course! You're a doctor, aren't you? **CLARKE** Yes of course, but I'm not a coroner.

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

CONT.

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 lets 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

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

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?

(to WAITER) Then you must know her as well!	EMMA
I'm afraid not. I haven't worked sinc	WAITER te Thursday.
Then she must have checked in some	CLARKE etime after that.
Clearly. How do you know her, Emn	DAVIES na?
We saw her in the lobby when we re	EMMA gistered.
Did we? I can't recall.	PETER
Yes, we did. I distinctly remember it	EMMA
What was she doing?	DAVIES
She looked as though she was waitin	EMMA g for someone.
Waiting?	WAITER
Yes. She was dressed to go out, and her up.	EMMA it seemed as if she was waiting for someone to pick
Maybe it was that man she was dinin	DAVIES ag with yesterday!
What man?	PETER
I haven't the faintest idea. I only kno	DAVIES by that I saw them at dinner together.
Well, what did he look like?	EMMA

(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.	.
PETE Possibly.	R
DAV That's quite enough, both of you. All this t more important things to deal with. (turns to CLARKE) Dr. Clarke? What can you tell us?	IES alk of mothers and murders. Really, we have
CLAI Well, this man is dead.	RKE
DAV Something we don't already know, I mean.	
CLAI There is no need to be rude. It could have b	
WAI With a knife in his back?	TER
CLAI One never knows.	RKE
DAV Never mind. Is there anything else you can	
CLAl As I said before, I am not a coroner. The or certainty is that he was stabbed very shortly	lly thing I can say with any measure of
EMM. Then the murder must not be very far away	
DAV You're right; he hasn't had time to get far.	IES
WAI Perhaps we should go and look for him.	TER
PETE I don't think that's very wise. What if that'	

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.)

ROOM 314

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 (sniffling)

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.

ROOM 314

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	ì.
What?	EMMA
	PETER my experience, you know. I thought something he n, but I'm not really sure what comes next.
For pity's sake, Peter.	DAVIES
Does anyone else have any suggestion	WAITER ons?
I suggest you let me go.	BLOODY MAN
Perhaps the constable has something	CLARKE g to say.
(to CONSTABLE) Do you?	EMMA
(The CONSTABLE t takes out the handker	ries to say something. DAVIES crosses to him and chief)
What was that?	DAVIES
You're all a lot of lunatics!	CONSTABLE
That isn't helpful at all.	EMMA
Maybe we ought to gag him again.	WAITER
Oh no you don't!	CONSTABLE

(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 brough	WAITER t the room service.
Let's see who it really is then.	EMMA
Emma, don't!	PETER
(She has already gone	e to the door and is opening it.)
Who is it really?	EMMA
(She is forced back in waiter's uniform.)	to the room by a food cart pushed by a woman in a
(Releases the cart and Everyone stay where you are!	WOMAN I pulls a gun. She speaks with an American accent)
That's the best entrance line you cou	DAVIES ald come up with?
Shut up!	WOMAN
Who are you?	EMMA
It doesn't matter.	WOMAN

ROOM 314

(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.

Shut up, Jenny.	BLOODY MAN (in an American accent)
You know her?	EMMA
What do you mean, "shut up, Jenny hide. You shut up.	WOMAN "? Don't you tell me to shut up. I'm here to save your
You're going to ruin the whole thing	BLOODY MAN g. Just get out of here!
I'm not leaving without the jewels,	WOMAN Jack. I don't care what you say.
But we really don't have them!	EMMA
Do I look stupid to you?	WOMAN
We're telling the truth, we don't know	DAVIES ow about any jewels.
I'm going to give you just three mor	WAITER re seconds
Wait a minute!	EMMA
What?	ALL
He has them!	EMMA
Who?	ALL
Evans!	EMMA
Me?	BLOODY MAN

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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)

WOMAN

(to BLOODY MAN)

I was only asking.

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

(wheeling around to face the couple)

Give them to me!

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.

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.

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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.)

WAITER Who is it, Agnes? **CHAMBERMAID** My husband. **EMMA** Oh no! But who killed him? PETER (quietly) I think she did, Emma. EMMA (genuinely) How horrible. CHAMBERMAID (through her tears) 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. **DAVIES** No. CHAMBERMAID (wearily) 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. **CONSTABLE** (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.) **CLARKE** Passed time, if you ask me. WAITER More than happy to oblige.

(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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