

Extract 1, pp16-17

*Onstage at start - BLACKLOCK, BUNNY, JULIA, PATRICK
MITZI enters, brandishing a copy of the Chipping Cleghorn Gazette.*

MITZI Someone is after me. I am going to be murdered in my bed!

BUNNY Murdered!

MITZI It is here. In the Gazette. They are coming for me.

BLACKLOCK Whoever put that silly advert in the paper obviously did it with the precise intention of sending this house into total chaos!

MITZI There will be blood everywhere. They will cut me up and feed me to the dogs.

PATRICK Poor dogs!

MITZI It will happen. In this very house. If I stay! Tonight! It is here - in this newspaper. They come to get me. At six-thirty tonight! You see - they care nothing for the law. They tell everyone they are coming to murder me... Madness, madness, but they will do it...

BLACKLOCK No-one's going to murder you. It's a joke.

MITZI I not laugh. I go!

BLACKLOCK Nevertheless, I don't think it has anything to do with you.

MITZI You don't know. Once you have escaped - they never let you get away...

BUNNY But I thought you did get away...

MITZI They hound me. Day and night. Night and day. The telephone calls. You wonder what they are - who they are from...

JULIA What telephone calls?

MITZI Agents. From my country. Why? Why do you think they keep phoning me?

BUNNY I expect they want to know how you're getting on over here, Millie.

BLACKLOCK But, Mitzi, I've never heard you get a telephone call.

MITZI They do it in secret. They never leave me alone. They don't like it that I escape from them. Oh! You have no idea what it is like. They interrogate me. For days - weeks - months. The light shining in my eyes My family - they send them to Siberia. But I won't break yet. I won't tell what I know. I will outsmart them and escape into the fields. They are coming after me, but I will go!

BLACKLOCK Mitzi! Do be sensible about this. Nothing is going to happen to you. No-one is going to come after you. No spy. No agent. So calm yourself down - we'll all look after you. Now, this is what I suggest you do. You get that beef out of the pantry and make that special goulash of yours for lunch.

MITZI Oh! You like my goulash - eh?

BLACKLOCK It's simply delicious.

MITZI I make it even more special for you today. I put in some wine - some rich, red wine from Hungary... It makes my mouth water just to think of it!

BLACKLOCK Good. You do that. Incidentally, I expect someone or other might be dropping in around six-thirty this evening.

MITZI To murder me!

BLACKLOCK No, no, no!

Extract 2 - pp21-24

Onstage at start - BLACKLOCK, MARPLE, JULIA, PATRICK

MARPLE has just entered with violets, and BUNNY has just left to put them in water.

BLACKLOCK (to *MARPLE*) Do sit down. I'm so glad you called. I wanted to ask you to Bunny's birthday party on Sunday. I know she'd love you to be here.

MARPLE Thank you. I love parties. Perhaps there is something I can do to help.

JULIA I'll be helping Aunt Letty, Miss Marple.

PATRICK I'll be helping Aunt Letty, Miss Marple.

JULIA Well, you'll be in bed till noon and you'll spend the rest of the day snoring in an armchair - so we can't rely on you for any help!

MARPLE The announcement in the *Gazette*. What does it mean?

BLACKLOCK You've seen that, have you?

MARPLE I should think everybody in Chipping Cleghorn has seen it by now. Has it anything to do with Miss Bunner's birthday?

JULIA We've no idea what it means.

PATRICK Probably some crank who thinks he's being funny.

MARPLE I see. I thought it was an invitation to play some sort of new game or something.

PATRICK The Murder Game. Sounds good, doesn't it?

BLACKLOCK If you're interested, Miss Marple, why don't you come along at six-thirty?

JULIA Oh yes, do, Miss Marple.

MARPLE I'd love to but I have to go into Medenham Wells for my treatment and I'm not sure how long it's going to take. I'll do my best, though.

BLACKLOCK Is your rheumatism better?

MARPLE Very much, thank you. The spa waters are so good. Give it another week and I shall be back in St Mary Mead.

PATRICK Chipping Cleghorn won't be the same without you!

MARPLE I shall miss it here. Although I think my niece won't be over sorry when I leave. They've been very patient with me.

JULIA Would they like to come tonight?

MARPLE I'm sure they would have loved to. My nephew's very like me, he loves a mystery, but they're heaving dinner with the Bishop.

JULIA It would have been rather reassuring to have the Vicar here.

MARPLE Knowing your neighbours, you won't be alone. The Colonel and Mrs Easterbrook for a start...

PATRICK No, they're in Bournemouth.

MARPLE Clara Swettenham wouldn't miss an opportunity like this. And young Edmund - with two beautiful young girls staying here.

JULIA There's someone I could do without. And Philippa says he's a layabout.

MARPLE I thought he was a writer.

JULIA He is. But she says it's an excuse not to get a real job and work for a living.

MARPLE Perhaps she's got a point.

BUNNY enters with the violets in a vase.

BUNNY Do thank the Vicar for me, Miss Marple. I'm touched, I really am. So kind of him.

MARPLE He was delighted you noticed them. He brought the original cutting back from Devon - the Dart valley - he was born there.

BUNNY Devon Violets. There's nothing quite like them.

MARPLE Well, I must be going. I hope all will be well this evening.

BUNNY What?

MARPLE The announcement - in the *Gazette*. A murder will take place at six-thirty...

BUNNY Oh - yes...

MARPLE If it wasn't a joke or some sort of game, it would be very worrying for all of you.

BLACKLOCK We're made of sterner stuff than you think, Miss Marple.

MARPLE But, surely, Miss Blacklock, if there's going to be a murder there has to be a *victim*. If I were you the question I'd be asking myself is: who is going to be murdered?

BLACKOUT

Extract 3 - pp40-41

Onstage at start - CRADDOCK and MELLORS

CRADDOCK So, he fires two shots from here - hits the wall - and then shoots himself?

MELLORS If he tripped, he could have done it accidentally, sir.

CRADDOCK Are they all here, now?

MELLORS Yes, sir. Grumbling and moaning...

CRADDOCK *(apparently uninterested)* Oh...

MELLORS And I should watch that Edward Swettenham.

CRADDOCK Why?

MELLORS I should think he's a bit of a left-wing intellectual.

CRADDOCK I didn't get that impression last night.

MELLORS He's been a bit bolshy with me, sir. He was having a go at the Force this morning. Sprouting on about our Gestapo methods.

CRADDOCK Oh - Christ! Why do I always pick the awkward ones?

MELLORS You do seem to attract them, sir.

CRADDOCK Why can't I get a nice, peaceful, law-abiding lot who do as they're told and answer my questions with a certain amount of civility.

MELLORS Not your style, sir.

CRADDOCK Once! Just once! That's all I ask. Somebody up there doesn't like me, Sergeant. And, what's more that lot out there are trying to compound the felony.

MELLORS Shall I wheel them in?

CRADDOCK There's nothing else for it, is there?

MELLORS 'Fraid not, sir. *(He goes to the Locked Door and tries to open it.)*

CRADDOCK Not that door, it's been sealed for years.

[MELLORS opens the Main Door, everyone enters through it, chattering amongst themselves. CRADDOCK's remaining lines are punctuated by pauses in which the chattering continues until he shouts at them.]

Can I have your attention please?

(pause)

(a little louder)

Quiet, please.

(pause)

(shouts)

Perlease!

(chatter dies instantly)

That's very good of you. I do appreciate your co-operation.

Extract 4 - pp69-71

Onstage at start - BLACKLOCK, BUNNY, PATRICK, PHILIPPA

BUNNY It was a lovely birthday present Letty...

BLACKLOCK I'm sorry, Bunny. It would have been a better present if I could have got into the shops yesterday.

BUNNY No, no. A box of handkerchiefs was just what I wanted.

PATRICK I'll, er - get you something on Monday, Bunny.

BUNNY I don't want you to put yourself to any trouble, Patrick.

PATRICK If only the Inspector had let us get away earlier - I really am sorry...

BLACKLOCK So am I, Bunny - about the party as well...

PHILIPPA But, we couldn't have gone ahead with it, could we?

BUNNY No. That's what I said. "I'll have to cancel my birthday party after this dreadful business." I don't mind - it doesn't upset me...

PATRICK I don't see why we couldn't have gone ahead with it. I mean, a man none of us knew - came here - tried to rob us and almost killed Aunt Letty - and just because he got what he deserved, you decide poor Bunny has to suffer.

PHILIPPA I can't believe that even you can be so insensitive, Patrick.

PATRICK Oh, I'm quite sensitive sometimes - I mean, I have noticed the way you and Edmund Swettenham look at each other.

PHILIPPA What's wrong, Patrick? Are you jealous?

BLACKLOCK Whatever's this? Lovers' tiff?

PHILIPPA It most certainly isn't that!

PATRICK Careful, darling. You know what they say about the lady who doth protest too much.

BUNNY Oh dear, oh dear. Please don't argue. I have such a headache. But what with that dreadful shooting - and all those questions - well, the pain - is quite devastating...

BLACKLOCK Why don't you take something for it?

BUNNY No, no, I shall be all right.

BLACKLOCK Don't be silly.

BUNNY I can't find my aspirins anywhere, Letty.

BLACKLOCK There's a bottle on my bedside table.

BUNNY Thank you, I'm quite capable of withstanding it...

BLACKLOCK Of course you are - but why suffer?

BUNNY Well...

BLACKLOCK Shall I go?

BUNNY No, no, no - the least I can do is get them myself. *(BUNNY exits)*

PHILIPPA You really do know her well, don't you.

BLACKLOCK She surprised me this time. Holding out so long before mentioning her 'headache'.

PHILIPPA But you said she'd develop a stinker - and you were right.

PATRICK It's a pity we couldn't have the party. She's been looking forward to it so much.

BLACKLOCK I'm glad it was her suggestion we cancel it.

PATRICK I mean, where's the harm...

BLACKLOCK *(to PHILIPPA)* If we had her cake with tea - and turned it into a small - party - just for the family?

PATRICK It'd cheer her up no end. Only a teeny-weeny party...

PHILIPPA Oh, blast you. You're making me feel dreadful.

PATRICK I'll buy you a milk stout down at the One Tun...

PHILIPPA Oh, go away. Well, we've got to have tea anyway. So, why not?

BLACKLOCK Oh good. Get Julia, and tell Mitzi we're going to have the cake after all.

PATRICK Right-ho.

(PATRICK exits)

Extract 5 - pp73-75

Onstage at start BLACKLOCK and PHILIPPA. MITZI enters with MARPLE, MRS S, and EDMUND

MITZI Here are Miss Marple, Mrs Swettenham, and Edmund Swettenham. Thank you, you're welcome. (*exits*)

BLACKLOCK Miss Marple, Clara. This *is* a surprise... There's nothing wrong, is there?

MRS S Wrong?

MARPLE I suppose when the three of us turn up these days it *does* seem as if trouble isn't far behind!

MRS S Well, I certainly hope it is! I've had enough for one weekend!

MARPLE It's all my fault. Dropping in like this. I called round to Clara and Edmund to suggest it - hope you don't mind. It seemed such a shame. Miss Bunner having to cancel her party.

MRS S We thought we'd bring her a little present each. I'm afraid we haven't got anything very exciting.

BLACKLOCK But how kind.

MRS S We won't stay, of course.

BLACKLOCK Oh, but you must stay to tea. Mitzi's made a beautiful cake - and Bunny will be so pleased.

MARPLE We'd love to stay. Thank you.

EDMUND Yes. Is that all right with you, Philippa?

PHILIPPA Oh - well - yes, of course...

BLACKLOCK Good. *Enter PATRICK and JULIA*

JULIA Well, it looks as if we're going to have a party after all.

BLACKLOCK Well, we won't have the party - just tea.

MRS S By the way, Letty, did you find the honey?

BLACKLOCK Oh, Clara. I am sorry, I forgot. Thank you very much.

MRS S I came in the back door and couldn't find you anywhere. How silly of me forgetting to leave it in the first place. We got all the way home before we noticed, didn't we, Edmund?

EDMUND I'm sure we could have left it until some other time.

MRS S But, it was your idea...

BLACKLOCK Actually we did need it. Mitzi always uses honey in her special cake.

MRS S (to *EDMUND*) You see.

EDMUND Well, Miss Marple, looks like this time you'll be in at the kill.

MRS S Don't say things like that, Edmund. That's something we all want to forget.

EDMUND How can we? It's by no means over.

PHILIPPA I'm afraid you're right, Edmund.

MRS S I'm sure the Inspector is satisfied...

JULIA I don't think he is.

PATRICK He thinks someone paid Rudi Scherz to kill Aunt Letty - and they'll try again.

BLACKLOCK You shouldn't have mentioned that, Patrick.

EDMUND Good God. That puts all of us under suspicion.

MARPLE I'm afraid Inspector Craddock has to include all of us here now.

PATRICK Yes. How long were you out in the hall, Miss Marple? We only have your word for it that you were coming up the drive when the shots were fired.

MARPLE My dear boy. I'm sure I'm *very* high on his list.

PHILIPPA Really? And you seem to get on so well with him.

MARPLE I think he finds me mildly amusing...

BLACKLOCK Patrick, why don't you see if Bunny's coming.

MRS S Surely there's not going to be any more... unpleasantness?

EDMUND By that d'you mean any more *murders*, Mother?

MRS S Do you have to?

BLACKLOCK Well, I think that it's all over, too. So, let's forget it, shall we? And try to enjoy ourselves.

PATRICK She's coming.

Extract 6 - pp96-98

Onstage at start - CRADDOCK, JULIA, BLACKLOCK, PHILIPPA, PATRICK
Enter MITZI, MRS S, EDMUND

MITZI Mrs Swettenham and her son Edmund. Thank you. You're welcome.

MRS S What is it now, Inspector?

CRADDOCK All in good time.

MRS S Well, I don't like policemen turning up on my doorstep and asking me to accompany them. My neighbours will be tittle-tattling for weeks.

EDMUND I shall be writing to the newspapers about this.

CRADDOCK That'll keep you busy for a change, won't it? (He turns to Mitzi) Now, Mitzi. You have something to tell us?

BLACKLOCK Mitzi?

MITZI Yes. I will tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth. When I first saw what happen on Friday I not do that.

JULIA Huh! We all know what a little liar she is!

CRADDOCK *Per-lease!*

MITZI I am in the dining-room. Like I say. When I hear the gun go off. I look through the keyhole and in the little moonlight - I could see - I could see Miss Blacklock.

BLACKLOCK Me? Oh, Mitzi...

EDMUND That's absurd, she couldn't possibly have seen Miss Blacklock...

CRADDOCK Go on, Mr Swettenham. Why stop now? Why? Why couldn't she have seen Miss Blacklock? It was because she saw you, wasn't it?

MRS S Edmund - that's not possible.

CRADDOCK If Miss Blacklock dies before Belle Goedler two people stand to benefit. Emma Stamfordis...

EDMUND And you think I'm Pip? Tat's too fantastic for words.

CRADDOCK Who told you about Pip, Mr Swettenham? I certainly haven't, and neither has anyone else in this room.

PHILIPPA You're wrong Inspector. I've told him... He isn't Pip! I am.