

THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG (SIDES)

#1

Pg. 12 – 14 – Top of Show.

Characters in the Murder Mystery ‘The Murder At Haversham Manor’. Presented by the Cornley Drama Society.

CHRIS – Director of the play & Inspector Carter.

ANNIE – Stage Manager.

TAYLOR – Sound & Light Operator.

TAYLOR: Good evening, ladies and gentle –

The mantelpiece falls off the wall. Annie emerges from the wing.

ANNIE: *(To the audience member.)* You said that was fine.

TAYLOR: *(Aside to Annie.)* Just leave it, leave it.

Taylor addresses the audience.

Okay, welcome to *The Murder at Haversham Manor*. Can I kindly request that all your cell phones and other electronic devices are switched off and please note that photography of any kind is strictly prohibited. Also if anyone finds a Duran Duran CD box set anywhere in the auditorium, that it is a personal item and I want that back. Please drop it at my tech box at the end of the show. Enjoy the performance.

House and stage lights go down. Taylor exits SL. (On the radio but broadcast to the whole theatre.) Alright, can we prepare for lights up on Act One, note for the cast Winston is still missing, we need to find him before the guard dog scene –

CHRIS: Taylor! Taylor!

TAYLOR: *(Still over the speakers)* – we need him back in his cage as soon as possible. What’s Annie doing on stage? Get her off so Chris can do his stupid speech – oop!

Taylor’s microphone cuts off. Annie and stagehands haven’t finished repairing the mantelpiece. Chris enters from the SR wing in the darkness.

CHRIS: Leave it. Just leave it.

ANNIE: You need it.....

CHRIS: We don't have time.

Annie hurries off into the wings, taking the mantelpiece and tool kit with her. Spotlight comes up on Chris, cutting off his head.

CHRIS: Good evening ladies and gentleman, and...

Chris steps forward into the spotlight.

... welcome to the Cornley Drama Society's presentation of *The Murder at Haversham Manor*. Please allow me to introduce myself; I am Chris, the director, and I would like to personally welcome you to what will be my directorial debut (***pronounced day-boo***) and my first production as head of the drama society.

We are particularly excited to present this play because, for the first time in the society's history, we've managed to find a play that fits the number of society members perfectly. If we're honest a lack of the number has sometimes hampered past productions, such as last year's Chekhov play ... *Two Sisters*. Last Christmas' *The Lion and the Wardrobe*. Or indeed our summer musical, *Cat*.

Of course, this will be the first time the society has been able to stage a play of this scale and we are thrilled. It's no secret we usually have to contend with a small budget, as was evident in our recent production of Roald Dahl's classic *James and the Peach*. Of course during the run of that particular show the peach we had went off, and we were forced to present a hastily devised alternative entitled *James! Where's Your Peach?*

Anyway, on to the main event, which I am confident will be our best show yet! So, ladies and gentleman, without any further ado, please put your hands together for Susie H. K. Brideswell's thrilling whodunit – *The Murder at Haversham Manor*.

#2

Pg. 14 – Top 18 – (Continuation after opening speech by Chris)

Characters in the Murder Mystery ‘The Murder At Haversham Manor’. Presented by the Cornley Drama Society.

THOMAS – Charles’ old school friend & Florences brother.

PERKINS – Charles’ Butler.

TAYLOR – Sound & Light Operator. (1 Line).

THOMAS: (off.) Charley! Are you ready? We’re all waiting downstairs to raise a glass to your engagement. Charley?

knocks on the door.

Come along now, Charley, you’ve been in there for hours now. If I didn’t know better I’d say you were having second thoughts about the wedding. **(Chuckles.)** Charley? Hang it all, Charley, if you won’t come out, we’ll come in.

He tries the handle.

Damn it, he’s locked the door. Hand me those keys, Perkins.

PERKINS: (off.) Here they are Mr. Colleymoore.

THOMAS: (off.) Thank you, Perkins. Let’s get this door open. We’re coming in, Charley! We’re coming in!

Thomas tries to open the door, but it won’t budge. Perkins and Thomas hammer on the door to try and open it.

(Still off.) There we are. We’re in.

Thomas and Perkins dart around the side of the set to enter.

But what’s this? Charles, unconscious?

PERKINS: Asleep surely, Mr. Colleymoore.

THOMAS: Damn it, Perkins, I hope so.

PERKINS: I’ll take his pulse.

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

THOMAS: Blast! I knew something must have been wrong, it's not like Charles to disappear like this.

PERKINS: Sir, he's dead!

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

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

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

THOMAS: Well I'm dumbfounded. He was right as –

Thomas crosses in front of the chaise longue, treading on Charles' outstretched hand.

-rain an hour ago.

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

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

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

THOMAS: Good god. Where's Florence?

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

THOMAS: At once, Perkins, and quickly.

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

THOMAS: Charles! Dead! What a horror.

Thomas crosses the stage and steps on Charles' hand again. He removes his jacket.

But do you think it was murder, Perkins?

Thomas hangs the jacket up on a hook on the wall.

Or do you think perhaps – ***(The hook holding the jacket falls to the floor.)***

- it was suicide?

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

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

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

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

THOMAS: Until today, it seems.

PERKINS: Shall I telephone the police, sir?

THOMAS: The police? They wouldn't make it out here for days in this snowstorm.

Thomas opens the curtains to reveal falling paper snowflakes.

No. ***Thomas closes the curtains again.***

I'll telephone Inspector Carter, he lives just the other side of the village.

He picks up receiver.

He'll be here in next to no time. Hand me the phone, Perkins.

Thomas realises he already has the receiver.

Thank you, Perkins.

Perkins sits on Charles.

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

Lights change to red. A musical spike plays again.

That's right.

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

That's right!

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

THOMAS: Thank you.

He hangs up.

He's on his way.

PERKINS: Inspector Carter?

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

Thomas crosses the stage, stepping on Charles' hand again.

Perkins: Very good, sir, and what shall I do?

THOMAS: Lock every door, man. Lock every door. Not a soul gets out of Haversham Manor until the killer is found.

PERKINS: At once, sir.

#3

Pg. 18 – 20 – (They call for Charles' fiancée Florence)

Characters in the Murder Mystery 'The Murder At Haversham Manor'. Presented by the Cornley Drama Society.

THOMAS – Charles' old school friend & Florences brother.

PERKINS – Charles' Butler.

FLORENCE – Charles' fiancée & Thomas' Sister.

CECIL – Charles' Brother

THOMAS: Good God! Charles Haversham murdered at his own engagement party!

What a grim, grim night. *He turns sharply to the door.* Florence!

We hear a bang as Florence tries to get in through the SR door.

FLORENCE: *(off)* Charley! No! I can't believe what I'm seeing.

Thomas goes to try and open the door. Florence appears in the window, holding apart the curtains.

My God, he looks so frail lying there. His skin is cold to the touch.

THOMAS: Don't touch him Florence.

FLORENCE: I must.

THOMAS: You mustn't!

FLORENCE: You controlling brute, unhand me! Oh, who could do such a thing? The night of our engagement party. Cecil, quick! Your brother's dead.

Thomas pretends to release Florence's hand.

PERKINS: This way, Mr. Haversham.

CECIL: *(Off.)* I'm coming, Miss Colleymoore!

We hear three loud bangs on the door.

On the third, the door suddenly bursts open, revealing Cecil, Annie and members of stage crew who had all been attempting to open it.

THOMAS: Get out, you idiots.

They all quickly run off.

CECIL: My brother? Dead? It can't be!

Florence now enters through the door.

THOMAS: Calm yourself, Cecil. Pour him a stiff drink, Perkins.

PERKINS: Right away, sir. Charles always kept his scotch right there on the side table.

CECIL: You know my brother had the finest collection of scotch in all the county.

THOMAS: Don't you think I know that, Cecil? He was my best friend.

CECIL: Well he was my brother, Thomas.

THOMAS: Hang it all, Charley dead.

FLORENCE: My fiancé dead, I can't bear it.

THOMAS: You aren't to leave my sight this evening, Florence.

Perkins goes to the DSL table and produces the full bottle of scotch.

PERKINS: Oh my God! He's drunk the whole bottle, sir. There's not a drop left.

Realizing his mistake, he goes to the coal scuttle and empties the bottle into it.

There's not a drop left!

The bottle is now empty.

THOMAS: Hang it all, there's another on the table.

Perkins produces the empty bottle he should have got the first time.

PERKINS: Yes, sir, of course you're right, this one's full.

Perkins puts the bottle onto the tray of short glasses on the DSL table and carries the tray past the window. As Perkins passes the window, Annie leans through and exchanges the empty bottle for a full plastic bottle labeled "PAINT THINNER" with a large flammable symbol on it. Perkins doesn't see the switch.

THOMAS: This is horrifying. I mean who on earth would have a motivation to murder Charles Haversham?

FLORENCE: I can't imagine!

CECIL: It's madness! My brother was a good man. Who would kill him? I'm in shock, Thomas.

THOMAS: As am I, Cecil. As am I.

CECIL: My brother, murdered in his own home! This is unthinkable!

FLORENCE: This is more than my nerves can take. I simply can't stand it. Thomas, I think I'm becoming hysterical!

THOMAS: No, Florence! Not another one of your episodes. Calm yourself. Here, take one of your pills.

CECIL: Oh Florence, this is unbearable.

Florence begins to scream and pound Charles' chest. Charles flinches.

Thomas, I feel I shall pass out.

THOMAS: Perkins! Pour that man a stiff drink!

Perkins arrives at DSR and offers a glass to Cecil.

CECIL: Thank you, Perkins.

THOMAS: There, there, Florence, well done, deep breaths.

Perkins pours the paint thinner into Cecil's glass. Florence becomes calmer.

FLORENCE: This is terrible, just a week after our engagement.

CECIL: Well here's to a good brother.

Cecil raises his glass and drinks the paint thinner. He quickly spits it back out.

That's the best whiskey I've ever tasted.

THOMAS: Have another, to calm your nerves.

CECIL: Make it a double!

#4

Pg. 22 – 25 – (Inspector Carter has arrived.)

Characters in the Murder Mystery ‘The Murder At Haversham Manor’. Presented by the Cornley Drama Society.

INSPECTOR CARTER – Local Inspector.

PERKINS – Charles’ Butler.

FLORENCE – Charles’ Fiancée & Thomas’ Sister.

CECIL – Charles’ Brother.

THOMAS – Charles’ Old School Friend & Florence’s Brother.

INSPECTOR CARTER: What a terrible snowstorm. Good evening, I’m Inspector Carter. Take my case.

PERKINS: Yes, Inspector.

Inspector Carter hands his case to Perkins, who places it on the floor by the table.

INSPECTOR CARTER: This must be Charles Haversham. I’m sorry. This must’ve given you all a damn shock.

FLORENCE: It did, we’re all still reeling.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Naturally. Tell me, are any of you the deceased’s immediate family?

CECIL: I’m Cecil Haversham. I’m his brother.

FLORENCE: (Smiling.) I’m Florence Colleymoore. I’m his fiancée. Tonight was our engagement party.

INSPECTOR CARTER: I take it everyone is assembled here?

THOMAS: Yes. The only other member of staff is Arthur the Gardener, but I saw him and Winston leaving for the weekend hours ago.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Winston?

THOMAS: His guard dog.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Very well. Have you poured everyone a stiff drink?

PERKINS: Yes, Inspector.

Perkins holds out the tray and they all take a glass.

CECIL: Well then let's all take a glass –

As the glasses are lifted, Perkins lowers the tray, hitting Charles on the head.

To a man we all loved, to Charles.

ALL: Charles!

They all raise their glasses and drink the paint thinner. They all spit it out and try to recover. Cecil holds the paint thinner in his mouth.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Delicious.

FLORENCE: Excellent.

THOMAS: Lovely. That's a damn fine bottle, Perkins, what's the vintage?

PERKINS: *(Reads the label.)* Flammable and corrosive, sir.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Listen! You all must be distraught, but forgive me, the sooner I can begin my enquiries –

Inspector Carter deposits his notebook on the SR table.

The sooner we can get to the bottom of this ghastly business.

Cecil spits out his paint thinner behind the couch. He turns back looking as casual as he can but then gags, giving himself away.

Miss Colley Moore, Mr. Haversham, please wait in the study as I examine the body.

Florence and Cecil exit through the SL door.

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

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

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

THOMAS: Morose indeed.

PERKINS: His stillness unnerves me.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Seeing a cadaver for the first time can be unsettling. Check his pockets, Thomas.

THOMAS: Inspector.

Inspector Carter produces a tin of powder and a brush.

INSPECTOR CARTER: I need you to pull yourselves together and help me to dust his body for fingerprints.

Inspector Carter passes Perkins the tin and brush.

PERKINS: Yes, Inspector.

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

THOMAS: A letter?

Thomas passes the letter to Inspector Carter, who puts it in his pocket.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Now to dust the body for fingerprints.

THOMAS: What was that?

PERKINS: Sir?

THOMAS: I could have sworn I just saw him breathing.

PERKINS: Breathing, sir –

Perkins drops the tin of powder onto Charles' face. Charles tries to hide his coughing.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Nonsense, Colley Moore. This man is dead.

Charles coughs.

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

PERKINS: Yes, Inspector.

Over the next few lines, Perkins brings in a stretcher. Thomas and Perkins lay the stretcher on the floor in front of the chaise longue.

INSPECTOR CARTER: *(Goes to door and shouts.)* Miss Colley Moore and Mr. Haversham, if you could please return.

Florence and Cecil enter.

CECIL: Any ideas as to the cause of death, Inspector?

INSPECTOR CARTER: Could be a number of things. Strangulation, suffocation, poison. Before the coroner fully examines the body I wouldn't like to say.

FLORENCE: Poison, Inspector? Surely not.

#5

Bottom 42 – 45 – (Florence has been hit on the head and is unconscious. Annie takes her role.)

Characters in the Murder Mystery ‘The Murder At Haversham Manor’. Presented by the Cornley Drama Society.

THOMAS – Charles’ Old School Friend & Florence’s Brother.

PERKINS – Charles’ Butler.

INSPECTOR CARTER – Local Inspector.

ANNIE - Stage Manager.

TAYLOR – Sound & Light Operator. (1 Line).

CHARLES - Owner of Haversham Manor & supposedly dead. (1 Line).

THOMAS: Inspector! Inspector! Where’s Inspector Carter?

Inspector Carter struggles with the SL door; we hear banging. The door finally opens and Inspector Carter pushes past stagehands.

There you are, Inspector. I don’t know how you manage to look so calm and collected in a situation such as this.

INSPECTOR CARTER: It comes from years of experience.

THOMAS: Indeed.

INSPECTOR CARTER: It is important we remain calm and we don’t let each other out of our sight. Where’s your sister, Colleymoore?

THOMAS: She’s coming now. Get in here, Florence.

Charles opens the SR door and pushes Annie on stage. Annie is wearing Florence’s dress over her own clothes and clutches a script.

Florence, you don’t look yourself this evening.

ANNIE: (Reading each word slowly from her script.) Thomas I’m frightened.

THOMAS: Don't worry , Florence; you're safe here with me.

PERKINS: What's happening, sir?

INSPECTOR CARTER: Isn't it obvious? Cecil has lost control.

ANNIE: Oh no not Cecil. (*Pronounced "ke-sill."*)

INSPECTOR CARTER: He killed Charles tonight, driven mad by his lust for you and now he knows we've found him out.

ANNIE: I cannot bear it. Cecil (*Again pronounced "ke-sill."*) would not do such a thing.

PERKINS: Well this is a fine mess. The worst night I've seen in eighty – (*Corrects himself.*) eight years of service.

ANNIE: Save me, brother.

Annie goes to Inspector Carter, who pushes her back to Thomas.

Ooh, save me, brother.

THOMAS: Don't worry, Florence. I shan't let anyone hurt a hair on your head.

ANNIE: I'm panicking.

Annie does a physical action to show she is panicking.

I can't believe ... Cecil – (*Still pronounced "ke-sill."*)

INSPECTOR CARTER: Cecil!

ANNIE: Cecil ... is doing this.

PERKINS: Try to relax, Miss Colley Moore.

ANNIE: I shall faint.

THOMAS: You shan't faint –

Annie falls back without warning. Perkins just catches her.

-confound it! What a devil of a situation this is. Now –

Charles bursts in, holding his gun.

CHARLES: Not so fast, Insp ... *(Realises.)* oh for God's sake!

Charles realises he is still too early and exits.

THOMAS: Now we're –

Charles walks past the window, his head in his hand. He slowly realises the audience can see him. Mortified, he lowers himself out of view.

Now we're all going to survive tonight, you hear me?

Inspector Carter peers out of the door.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Take cover!

THOMAS: Great Scott!

PERKINS: Good Heavens!

ANNIE: Ay me!

INSPECTOR CARTER: Don't panic, Cecil is crossing the landing. We must lock him out.

THOMAS: Quickly, where are the keys to the door, Perkins?

PERKINS: Here they are, sir.

Perkins pulls out the Inspector's notebook from his pocket. Inspector Carter runs to the keys on the SR table, tosses keys to Perkins, who then throws them back to Inspector Carter.

Here they are, sir.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Hand them to me quickly, Perkins, before Cecil bursts in –

The door bursts open and Cecil staggers inside. Still doing the blood with the red streamers.

PERKINS: No!

THOMAS: No!

Cecil shuffles forward a few paces and then flops dead onto the chaise longue.

Good Lord!

Lights shift to red and the short musical spike plays. Then the lights shift back.

ANNIE: Cecil's dead?

Lights shift to red again. The same short musical spike plays. The lights shift back.

PERKINS: A double murder!

The lights turn to red and a short burst of an English new wave song like "Girls on Film" by Duran Duran plays. Then the correct musical spike cuts in. The lights shift back.

TAYLOR: Found the Duran Duran.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Time of death: quarter to mid ...

Inspector Carter looks at the clock. It still reads five o'clock.

Five o'clock.

ANNIE: Cecil! No. No. No. I loved him. I loved him. I know it was wrong. I know I was engaged to Charles.

She makes a noise of realization – Annie was unaware of this bit of the story.

-but Cecil was mine and.

Silence. Inspector Carter turns the page in her script.

... I was his .

PERKINS: There, there, Miss Colleymoore.

ANNIE: How will I go on? Sobs.

INSPECTOR CARTER: You! Take this body outside.

PERKINS: Yes, Inspector.

#6

Bottom 63 – 67 (Florence has been knocked out again & Arthur gives Taylor the script to become Florence & read her role.)

Characters in the Murder Mystery ‘The Murder At Haversham Manor’. Presented by the Cornley Drama Society.

ARTHUR – The Gardener.

THOMAS – Charles’ Old School Friend & Florence’s Brother.

PERKINS – Charles’ Butler.

INSPECTOR CARTER – Local Inspector.

ANNIE - Stage Manager. (1 Line).

FLORENCE – Charles’ Fiancée.

TAYLOR – Sound & Light Operator.

.....

TAYLOR: (*Reads*) But Arthur, how can you resist me? I’m a beautiful woman.

ARTHUR: Stop, Miss Colleymoore. You are using your powers over men as you always have.

TAYLOR: (*Reads*) You can’t pretend your feelings aren’t real.

ARTHUR: Very well, perhaps it is true that I have admired you.

TAYLOR: (*Reads*) Then kiss ... ohh! Then kiss me Arthur. You know you want to.

Beat. Arthur approaches Taylor. Taylor breaks away.

Thomas, Perkins and Inspector Carter enter and see them.

THOMAS: What on earth is

Silence.

What on earth is going on?

ARTHUR: I can explain.

THOMAS: I don’t think you can.

PERKINS: Miss Colleymoore in Arthur’s arms?

INSPECTOR CARTER: A second affair?

THOMAS: Florence, you've changed.

TAYLOR: (*Reads*) Your wild accusations have driven me to this. I feel dizzy. I feel like I'm about to pass out!

INSPECTOR CARTER: I suggest you settle down, Miss Colley Moore.

PERKINS: Quickly, where's her medication?

THOMAS: Blast, I must have left it in the study.

Thomas exits through the SL door.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Miss Colley Moore, you are a vile criminal.

PERKINS: And to think we took you in!

ARTHUR: You have manipulated me. I have let my master down tonight.

INSPECTOR CARTER: And all the time you were plotting your fiancé's demise!

TAYLOR: Oh Inspector! All these accusations, I feel an episode coming on.

Taylor protests at having to do this.

INSPECTOR CARTER: (*Snarling under his breath.*) Have an episode.

Taylor reluctantly begins to have an episode. He/She then starts to enjoy it. He/She builds it until his/her episode becomes ridiculously large and invades Inspector Carter's personal space. Inspector Carter pushes him/her aside, and he/she trips, hitting the chaise longue and passing out behind it.

Settle down, Miss Colley Moore! An adulteress and a cold-blooded killer!

FLORENCE: (*Within the clock.*) I'm not, Inspector!

All turn to face the clock. Florence tries to get out. Inspector Carter tries to open the front, but she is stuck inside.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Yes you are Miss Colley Moore!

FLORENCE: (*From within the clock.*) Oh Inspector! I can't take it anymore, I shall faint.

Inspector Carter lowers the clock onto one side. Beat.

PERKINS: She's fainted.

Perkins, Inspector Carter and Arthur point to clock.

ARTHUR: It's all become too much for her.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Quickly, lie her down on the chaise.

Beat. Arthur, Perkins and Inspector Carter lift the clock on the chaise longue.

That's better.

Thomas enters with a pillbox and a glass of water.

THOMAS: I found Florence's – ***(Sees the clock and freezes.)*** ... medication ... what's happened?

INSPECTOR CARTER: Florence has fainted.

Inspector Carter, Arthur and Perkins all gesture to the clock in unison.

ARTHUR: There, there, Miss Colley Moore.

Perkins, Arthur and Inspector Carter all stroke the clock.

THOMAS: Good Lord. I'll wake her up. ***Throws the water onto the clock face.***
She's out cold.

INSPECTOR CARTER: But Arthur, is this the same person you saw outside the window this evening?

ARTHUR: I cannot tell, Inspector. Mr. Colley Moore, please move her hands from her face.

Thomas slowly looks at the clock, then swiftly tears the hands off the clock face and pockets them.

It was not her, Inspector. Besides, the figure I saw was that of a man.

Annie slowly stands up in the window.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Of course it was, you were taken in by a handkerchief planted outside the window to frame Florence. She and Cecil both have plausible motives for murder, but the true motive belongs to Perkins!

Annie enters through the window, getting in between Inspector Carter and Perkins as Inspector Carter points to Perkins. Thomas and Perkins fix the problem.

To Perkins!

PERKINS: Me, Inspector?

INSPECTOR CARTER: You, Perkins! It appears Charles made Perkins the sole beneficiary....

He produces the will. Annie picks up the script.

...of his inheritance.

PERKINS: This is all a mistake.

INSPECTOR CARTER: Save your....

Annie climbs on top of the clock to resume playing Florence. She flops down, pretending to be unconscious.

Save your pleading for the police station.

Inspector Carter throws a pair of handcuffs to Thomas, who cuffs Perkins to the chaise longue.

Thomas, handcuff him to the chaise longue lest he escape before I can drive him there.

ARTHUR: That won't be for hours, the snow is at its peak.

A single weak handful of snow is thrown in the window.

PERKINS: It's not true, I tell you.

Annie pretends to wake up.

ANNIE: What happened? I must have fainted! Curse my delicate....

Florence opens the door of the grandfather clock, hitting Annie.

FLORENCE: What happened? I must have fainted! Curse my delicate constitution.

#7

Bottom 68 – 70 (Inspector Carter is now accused of murdering Charles and we discover that Charles is not really dead.)

Characters in the Murder Mystery ‘The Murder At Haversham Manor’. Presented by the Cornley Drama Society.

CHARLES: Owner of Haversham Manor.

THOMAS – Charles’ Old School Friend & Florence’s Brother.

INSPECTOR CARTER – Local Inspector.

PERKINS – Charles’ Butler.

ARTHUR – The Gardener.

ANNIE - Stage Manager.

FLORENCE – Charles’ Fiancée.

PERKINS: I know your secret, Inspector. What will you do? Kill me too?

Chris starts to draw a gun.

INSPECTOR CARTER: I will, confound it.

The gun gets caught in its holster; Inspector Carter points the gun in its holster.

FLORENCE and ANNIE: What a devil of a situation this is!

Charles enters through the SR door, again holding his gun.

CHARLES: Not so fast, Inspector!

All gasp.

THOMAS: Charles!

INSPECTOR CARTER: Haversham!

PERKINS and ARTHUR: Sir!

ANNIE: Charley! I –

FLORENCE: (*Pushes in front.*) Charley! I thought you were dead.

INSPECTOR CARTER: You're alive? It's not possible.

CHARLES: Oh, I'm afraid it is. You couldn't kill me that easily.

INSPECTOR CARTER: How did you survive?

CHARLES: I simply didn't drink the poisoned sherry you left out for me this evening.

ANNIE: Charley –

Florence stamps on Annie's foot. Florence and Annie fight throughout the next lines.

FLORENCE: Charley, this is all more than I can bear!

CHARLES: Ever since we last spoke at the police station it was clear you thought I was on to you. It was at this point I became afraid you might try to kill me. For months now I've had my guard up and tonight you fell into my trap.

PERKINS: You've been hiding in the grounds ever since this afternoon when you planted the poison.

ARTHUR: It was you that I saw. You were the mysterious figure!

FLORENCE and ANNIE: I thought it was strange....

Annie pushes the bookcase, which swivels and swallows Florence. Annie then blocks Florence from coming back in.

ANNIE: I thought it was strange you got here so quickly in such terrible weather!

Florence gives up on the bookcase and falls silent. Annie wanders over to the window, picking up a tray.

ARTHUR: But what about the handkerchief bearing Florence Collymore's initials?

CHARLES: Perhaps you should ask Inspector Carter, or should I say Inspector Frederick Carter.

ALL: F.C.

ARTHUR: The same initials.

PERKINS: Precisely, and after committing the crime you found Charles' will in his ledger and tried to pin the whole thing on me.

Florence appears through the window.

FLORENCE: You damned –

Annie hits Florence with the tray. Florence falls out of sight behind the window.

ANNIE: You damned crafty devil!

CHARLES: Crafty indeed. Perkins here is as innocent as I am. Remove those handcuffs this instant!

THOMAS: Of course, Charles, I have the key.

Thomas goes to release Perkins, but he doesn't have the key. Thomas searches his pockets for the key. Perkins remains handcuffed to the chaise longue. Thomas and Arthur try to pull the handcuffs off.

Florence is seen getting up behind the window and running to the door, but Annie gets there first and holds it shut.

CHARLES: Drop the gun, Inspector.

FLORENCE: *(Entering, but Annie pushes the door shut on her.)* Ay me!

ANNIE: Ay me!

INSPECTOR CARTER: Never! I came here to kill you, Charles, and I won't leave until the job's done.

CHARLES: It's over, Inspector. I could prove your guilt in a second. I have the evidence in my study. Fetch the papers, Perkins.

PERKINS: Yes, sir.

Thomas, Perkins and Arthur all look up. Perkins is still handcuffed to the chaise longue. Perkins drags the chaise longue to the SL door and struggles to get it through the door; stagehands come on and help maneuver it if needed.

CHARLES: Lower your weapon, Inspector. It's over.

INSPECTOR CARTER: What are you going to do, Charles? Shoot me in front of a room full of witnesses?

CHARLES: Don't think I wouldn't do it, Carter. You tried to kill me; I'd merely be returning the favour.

ANNIE: Please, Inspector, you're frightening me!

Florence screams and bursts out of the window.

FLORENCE: Please, Inspector, you're frightening me!

Annie is furious.

INSPECTOR CARTER: You ought to be frightened!

CHARLES: Arthur, hold everyone in this room. I'll send a wire to the local police.

ARTHUR: Yes, sir.