125 minutes

THE BAT

A
Play
Of Mystery
In
Three Acts

by

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and

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C H A R A C T E R S

MISS CORNELIA VAN GORDER ..... An elderly spinster.
Act I. Opening in evening gown. Change for finish Act I to negligee. Same used throughout the play.

MISS DALE OGDEN.....(Her niece)
Evening gown and cloak. No change.

LIZZIE ALLEN.....An elderly maid.
Act I. Opening in a black maid's uniform with small black silk apron. Change for finish Act I to showy kimono. Same used throughout balance of play.

WASHINGTON.....Negro butler.
White washable coat, dark trousers, black shoes. Large flat feet.

ANDERSON.....(Detective)
Dark double breasted suit.

RICHARD FLEMING.....(Nephew of late Courtleigh Fleming)
Soft felt hat. Dinner coat. White trousers. Rain coat.

BROOKS.....(A gardener)
Shabby clothes. Blue soft shirt, with soft blue collar. A soft cap.

DOCTOR WELLS.....The local physician.
Dinner coat Act I.
Act II. Dark overcoat. Soft hat.
Act III. Same as Act I.

REGINALD BERESFORD.....A lawyer
Dinner clothes. Soft hat. No change.

UNKNOWN MAN.....
Old trousers. Old shirt. Very untidy appearance. Old shoes, covered with mud.

MAN WHO GOES UPSTAIRS (in dark) ACT I with wrist watch, dark suit, soft felt hat.

* * *

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

Living room in Miss Van Gorder's Long Island home.
Act runs 55 minutes.
Intermission 5 minutes.

ACT TWO

The same.
Act runs 40 minutes.
Intermission 10 minutes.

ACT THREE

The garret of the same house.
Act runs 33 minutes.

ACTION: Takes place same evening. Continuous.

PROPERTY PLOT

ACTS I and II

1 Library table
5 Single chairs
1 Armchair
3 Small stands (two for lamps, and one for telephone up R. 3)
1 Console (or half table)
1 Tall pedestal (with basket of spring flowers)
1 Settee. 4 sofa pillows. Cretonne covers for furniture and pillows.
Fireplace furniture
Fire screen
1 Large rug
Ground cloth or carpet
Carpet on stairs
1 Mantel clock
Six cream colored shades on French doors
Bag golf clubs
Small local telephone book
2 Telephones...On scene (connected up...See Electric Plot)
Piece of broken glass on floor front of window L.C.
Roll of three blue-prints (15 inches by 9) in bookcase, top shelf.
(Up L. above fireplace...hidden behind books)
Small piece of blue-print...On floor inside fire fender L.
Reading glass on center library table
Cloth covered book on center library table
2 door keys with tags attached on library table
Small revolver in table drawer (with fake bullets)
These bullets important, must work easy, fall out when gun broken.
Radio (console)
Dozen real books in top shelf of wall bookcase. Left above fireplace.
Prop books in other shelves, and in wall bookcase down R.1. up R.3 and up center
Door keys in doors and L. 3...
---Belt on terrace door up R.3 in alcove (Carpenter)
---Also strong cord at BOTTOM OF TERRACE DOOR. OFF stage. To work.
Cue near end of Act 2...(Door is open. CUE TO CLOSE IT)
Pane of glass set in one of the frames of French window doors.
(To break from outside on cue...)
Small hammer and flat stone with note tied to stone place outside of French windows...to be THROWN INTO ROOM through broken window ON CUE...
Small proprs off right on Two Prop tables...
Six cheap tin candle sticks and candles. 4 boxes of parlor matches. Box of matches for Dale.
Flashlights (pocket size) for doctor (See Electric Plot)
" " " " Beresford
" " " " Detective
" " " " Unknown Man (See Electric Plot).
" " " " Brooks (In case Cornelia carries end of Act 2 goes out)

PROPERTY PLOT (Cont'd)

1 small and 1 large flashlight for Detective
2 illuminated wrist watches (Small electric covered and placed in leather wrist watch holders)
(One for Beresford, and one for Stage Manager)
Doctor's black bag containing keyring and keys, piece of blueprint, paper powder box
1 revolver for Beresford
2 sure-fire revolvers for stage manager
1 revolver for Detective, pair of handcuffs
Keyring and keys for Richard Fleming
Photographs of Brooks
Coffee pot, half filled with burnt sugar and water
White napkin for Lizzie
Round silver tray with common white plate cup and saucer
Prop. Parker House roll and prop cold meat for Lizzie
Thunder drum (Placed well up stage OFF RIGHT)
Wind machine " " " " " "
Long bamboo stick with padded wooden hammer, attached to end for effect...Noise up stage (supposed to be noise of hammering upstairs)
Electric bell (door bell off R. 2)
Third act solid door braced and set well offstage R.2 for slam
Water bottle (filled with sand) off R. for Lizzie
Large butcher knife off R. for Washington and Lizzie (double on it)
Tray, two water glasses and small water pitcher with water off R.2.
Valance - 11 ft. 7 inches long over French window, 18 in. deep
Cretonne same material used on furniture.
Doors of window must open in and on stage.

ACT II - SAME SET AS ACT I

Discovered: On floor prop Parker House roll (Make to open, Dale hides blue-print in this (Front of table center)
Off on stairs, R.3...Prop rain coat for Dale, pair of lady's rubbers
Envelopes for Brooks, half covered with ink. Supposed to be SOOT.
Black cardboard BAT...with thumb tacks for property man to place on right-hand double doors up R.3 leading to alcove on cue near end of Act 2.
Large white handkerchief for Doctor; used as a gag for detective.
Rubber base telephone, place instead of real phone. Used in Act I. Up center.
Black soft hat for Beresford.
Writing paper and lead pencil up stage center.
Bag and knitting for Cornelia (furnished by character)
Cigarette case and cigarettes for Doctor
" " " " " Beresford
" " " " " Fleming
Detective badge for Detective
Old silver watch for Beresford
Armful of wood for Brooks
Cigar for Detective...

PROPERTY PLOT (Cont'd)

ACT III

Ground cloth
1 Kitchen chair with back
1 Kitchen chair without back
2 old-fashioned small trunks, 1 large hamper
6 old wooden boxes (size soap boxes)
Old fashioned sewing machine
2 old second-hand dress suit cases
Dozen paper boxes (show boxes)
2 paper hat boxes
3 bundles, wrapped in brown paper. On shelf of closets, up R. and R.C
Men's and women's old clothes in hamper
Black handkerchiefs (two) for Detective
Pair of rubbers for Detective
Lighted candle (DISCOVERED front of prop safe U.C. in hidden room)
White canvas bag 18 by 10 inches. With drawstring. Paper money in bundle in bag, discovered in safe.
6 closet keys, discovered in six of the seven closets in room
(CLOSET UP R.C. FACING LEFT...HAS NO KEY...)
KEY in door R.2. (on stage side)
Act 2 revolver with the fake bullets) for Cornelia - off R.2.
Matches on top trunk R.C. (discovered)
Old lady's black satchel, at rise, discovered front of backless chair R.C. contains 2 old lady's shirt-waists, 2 cheap paper-backed novels.
EXTENSION LADDER PLACED OUTSIDE WINDOW UP L. 3. OUT OF SIGHT AT RISE. PLACED IN TRAP OUTSIDE WINDOW. TO COME UP ON CUE GIVEN. (Carpenter Dept.)
Half dozen candles and candle holders off R. Matches.
Tumbler of liquor for Lizzie. Off R.
Piece of sheet iron (roofing tin) six feet long by four for effect of running on the roof)
Crate (wooden box) to break. Effect of breaking through a door (off R
Crackling fire effect (burning wood) Off L.
Handcuffs of Act. 2. Double this act (Unknown Man used them)
Horse whip. Off R. for stage manager (for BAT effect)
Small rug up in hidden room on floor (left in front of sofa)
Small piece of half burned candle on floor back of hamper R.C.

OPP. EFFECT PAGE....I....ACT I....

RUMBLE OF THUNDER. JUST BEFORE CURTAIN RISES...LIGHTS FULL UP...AT RISE.

-- SEE THAT DOUBLE DOORS ARE OPEN. UP R.3
-- PIECE OF GLASS ON FLOOR UP L.C. FRONT FRENCH WINDOWS
-- PIECE OF BLUE-PRINT IN FENDER AT FIREPLACE
-- CLOCK ON MANTEL SET AT 10:30
-- WINDOW SHADES DOWN...
See that small revolver with fake bullets is in table drawer Center.

ELECTRIC PLOT

Use..4 strips...6 lights to strip...60 watt lamps...In foots...
1 blue lamp...4 amber...1 pink...to a strip

In first border...4...3...Light section Delray...100 W. nitrogen lamps

No. 1 Section (R)	1 pink color	2 amber colors	)	
No. 2 Section (r)	2 amber "	1 pink "	)	In 1st
No. 3 Section (C)	1 pink "	2 amber "	)	border
No. 4 Section (L)	2 amber "	1 pink "	)	

COMPANY SWITCH BOARDS...consists of 4 Cutler Hammer interlocking
Dimmers to control foots and first border.
Each section and border light connects together at switchboard
To be controlled separately or together
1 Dimmer Control Brackets on Set (Act 1 and 2)
1 Dimmer for Fireplace Lamp and Log L. 2 (Act I and 2)
and fire Box and Spot Lamps off L.3 (Window Act 3)
2 Dimmers Control Blue Lamps Act 3
Chandelier...Act 3...Switch on company box

Act I: At Rise...Foots and Borders FULL UP. Bracket lamps
2 to a Bracket, placed on wall below door R. 2
2 " " " " " " above " R. 2
2 " " " " " " above C.
2 " " " " " " above fireplace L. 2.
One telephone bell connected up to ring on stage up C.
" " " " " " " " " R.3. above door R.
(See that SOUND OF BELLS DIFFERENT)
(Buttons off R. for Stage Manager to ring)
Electric pushbutton L. of double doors
Electric pushbutton bell L. of double doors (DEAD)
Enough cable to reach from BACK OF FRENCH WINDOWS L.C. (push button)
at window on floor outside set. Small lamp off R.3.

SPOT LIGHT. For flashlight effect. Well off R. 3. to Spot Man
FOOT OF STAIRS. IN ALCOVE. ABOVE R.C. Cue given twice
(Once in Act I...again in Act II)
Small Stand Light off Right for Stage Manager. No Bunches or
Strips used for any entrances throughout performance.
ALL DARK BACK OF FRENCH WINDOWS. Off L.3. Lamp for lighting
Act 1 and 2.
On Set Act I and 2..Stand lamp (connected and to go out on
separate cue in Act 2. Up L.3. at window above door L.3)
Stand lamp on table C. Stand lamp on Stand down R. below door R.2.
(To work with Brackets. Stereoptican with glass slide of a bat
to work across French windows left to right on cue)
SEE CUE SHEET...For Company Electrician...

ACT III: Blue box lamp on window (On at opening)
Red Box lamp on window work on cue
Red Spot lamp on window work on cue

CARPENTER'S PLOT

ACT I - LIGHT INTERIOR

1. Return Right
2. Wing. With Set-in bookcase. 3 feet high 19 inches wide. R.1 with 4 shelves in bookcase.
3. Solid single door. R.2. Hall backing.
4. Wing with set-in bookcase (same size as above) R. 2
5. Double solid door straight across R to L (5 ft. opening)
6. 2 Foot set piece next to doors. With Set-in bookcase. (Extending and forming up and down stage half arch effect)
7. French windows. Straight across R. to L. divided into six small windows. Center two forming window doors opening in and on stage.
8. Door L.3. (Solid) Up and down Stage. Interior backing.
9. Jog. 2 foot. With set-in bookcase, same as above.
10. Fireplace wing 1.2. with Mantel
11. Return left
12. Light ceiling

Alcove back of double doors up R. 7 feet deep
Across the back. 2.. 5 foot 9 wings..and L.3 ft. piece.
(Ceiling over all)
(Backing to Mask End of Stairs off R.4)
Terrace door (solid). Opening in and on alcove. Up and downstage stairs. Showing Newel Post directly in center of the two doors. With stair rail. 5 steps. to platform 3 ft. 6 inches high. 32 inches wide. 8 ft. long. Steps off 4 steps. R. 4. Space left between stairs for entrance below stairs. Back of French windows. Cut wood drop. and behind that a wood drop, showing a drive through the trees. Set Wood row 8 inch high in front of drops to mask in Bottom of Drop.

ACT THREE

1. Return right
2. Solid door. Opening in and on stage
3. Wing. Straight up and down stage.
4. Piece..with closet effect pin hinged. Showing three closets. Practical doors to each.
5. Closet. Facing up and down stage. Opening in and out double doors.
6. Jog straight across back.
7. Fireplace wing with practical fireplace to work like door. Swings on hinges...To left.
8. Plain wing
9. Jog up and down stage.
10. Casement window. Two window frames..opening in and on stage.
11. Plain wing with closet (2) with double doors practical (Raking ceiling...effect)
12. Upstage C. small vault folds up. Represents safe. Ceiling over all. Wooden doors. To safe... In the fireplace wing..When fireplace opens... Showing two canvas doors...Practical.

ACT ONE

SCENE:

A combined living room and library of a country house. Open book shelves (4) in the SET. One down R. below door. In the Set..One up R. above door. One up C. In half arch thickness piece. One up L. above fireplace. Single door down R. 2. Used...to front door...dining room. Use all Solid Wooden doors.
* Double doors leading to alcove, small staircase and terrace door...and exit below the stairs and off to the library.
Up R. 3. All along the back of set... center to L..
** French windows. Six small frames in this (Windows)
Double doors in the center of window to open on stage.
Single door up L.3. leading to Billiard Room.
Fireplace down L.
** The six small windows in French window effect are fitted with long narrow shades. Light in color. Shades remain down throughout Act I and 2.
* Beyond the double doors, a small and supplementary staircase. Showing stair hall, two steps, newel post (Supposed to be newly varnished)
(Platform and steps carry off R.3...
TERRACE DOOR in the alcove at right angle to the French windows. Thus one enters the house from the Terrace past the French Windows and the Terrace door opens directly on foot of small staircase.
Radio beside fireplace L.

DISCOVERED:

CORNELIA VAN GORDER, alone, is knitting by the light of lamp on center table. SHE is seated in armchair left of center table.
WASHINGTON ready off R.2. Distant rumble of thunder. Lights flicker. CORNELIA stops knitting. Looks up. Listens.

ENTER WASHINGTON R. 2. carrying newspaper.

Washington

Evening paper, ma'am.

Cornelia

All right. Put it there.
(Indicates table)

Washington
(Puts down paper on center table)
Excuse me, ma'am, but I'se got to leave. My mother's sick. Powerful sick, she is.

Cornelia
(Eyeing him)
I don't believe it.

Washington
(Looking scared)
She súre is, ma'am. The doctah say...

Cornelia
When did she get sick? After the other servants left? I took you when I rented this house a week ago, and here you stay.

Washington
(More terrified. Rolls his eyes)
If you please, ma'am.

Cornelia
You're not going tonight anyhow. No stay, no pay. Maybe you can understand that.

Washington
(Hopelessly)
Yes'm.

(WASHINGTON exits R.2. CORNELIA reaches for paper. Sharp peal of thunder. Lights flicker wildly. LIZZIE runs downstairs from small staircase in alcove, falls when she gets to bottom. Picks herself up slowly and rubs herself. CORNELIA unmoved. Seems to expect it)

Lizzie
If the Lord ever forgives me --
(Comes down slowly. Looks at Cornelia)
I don't like it here, Miss Neillie. I want to go back to the city.

Cornelia
You'll go to a hospital if you don't watch out. Call up Central and find out what is the matter with the lights.

Lizzie
(Protesting)
And get electrocuted! I wouldn't touch that wire --

Cornelia
Do what I tell you, and stop fussing. You've lived a long time, and you haven't been struck by lightning yet.

(LIZZIE goes up center to telephone on table. It is not a dial telephone. SHE gingerly picks up receiver)

Lizzie
(At telephone)
Hello. Hello.
(More thunder. She drops receiver)
There's -- there's nobody there.

Cornelia
Of course there is. Don't be an idiot.

Lizzie
(Picks up receiver)
Hello.
(Evidently gets an answer)
Say, what's the matter with our lights? They got St. Vitus' dance.
(Listens. Puts down receiver as if it had burned her)
(To Cornelia)
She says it's the storm coming. It burns out the fuses or something. She says maybe they'll go off altogether.
(Leaves phone. Comes down C.)
Please, Miss Cornelia. I want to go back. I don't like this place. I never did. It's got me scared.
(Rubs herself again)

Cornelia
Better ask Washington to bring in some candles.

Lizzie
(Frightened. Moves down to back of table R.C.)
You're not going to ask me to go out into that hall alone?

Cornelia
(Putting down knitting)
What's the matter with you, anyhow, Lizzie Allen? I have rented this house for four months, and four months I am going to stay.

Lizzie
(Listens. Looks upstage at windows. Clutches Cornelia's arm)
There's somebody on that terrace!

Cornelia
(Also nervous and looking over her shoulder)
Don't do that!

Lizzie
(Relieved)
I guess it wasn't anybody. I just plain don't like the country.

Cornelia
You were born on a brick pavement. You get nervous out here at night when the crickets begin to sing, or scrape their legs together, or whatever it is they do.

Lizzie
(R.C.)
It's more than that, Miss Nellie, I --

Cornelia
(Turning to her fiercely)
What did you really see last night?

Lizzie
I was standing right at the top of that there staircase with your transformation in my hand. Then I looked down and I saw a gleaming eye. It looked at me and WINKED. I tell you, this house is haunted!

Cornelia
I don't believe it. If you'd seen anything of the sort you'd have yelled. Why didn't you yell?

Lizzie
I was too scared to yell! And I'm not the only one! Why do you think the help left all of a sudden? Did you really believe that the housemaid had a pain in her side? Or that the cook's sister had twins?
(Moves slowly up and back of table C. to L.C.)
I bet a cent the cook never had any sister, and her sister never had twins.
(Down to L.C.)
They were scared away.
(Impressively)
They saw something. Same as I did.

Cornelia
Fiddlesticks! What time is it?

Lizzie
(Looks at mantel clock)
Half past ten.

Cornelia
(Yawns)
Miss Dale won't be home for half an hour. Now you forget that superstitious nonsense, and tell Washington to bring some candles.

Lizzie
(Moves R. 2)
That Washington, he's scared, too.
(Exits unwillingly R.2. Alone, CORNELIA picks up paper. No thunder, but remote flash of lightning reveals indistinct figure of man on terrace outside windows to terrace. As LIZZIE bolts in R. 2 he disappears)

Cornelia
(Puts down paper)
I see they're going to increase taxes again. Turn on the radio, Lizzie.
(CORNELIA picks up knitting. LIZZIE gingerly turns on radio)

Voice on Radio
Police have again been baffled by the Bat. This notorious criminal, known to the press as the Bat, has long baffled the forces of law and order. The record of his crimes shows him to be endowed with diabolical ingenuity. So far there is no clue to his identity, but Anderson, head of the city detective bureau, said today, "We must cease combing the criminal world and look higher. He may be a merchant, a lawyer, or a doctor -- some one honored in his community by day and at night a bloodthirsty assassin."

(LIZZIE shuts off radio)

Lizzie
(Wilting)
Oh, my God! I'm going to take the butcher knife to bed with me -- if I live to go to bed.

Cornelia
Don't be ridiculous. Why on earth would he come here?
(She does not, however, look too easy herself)

Lizzie
There's been a bat in this house tonight. I saw it, upstairs.

Cornelia
I know where there is a bat. And it's not upstairs. Sit down. Your legs are shaking.

(LIZZIE sits on edge of chair across table from Cornelia. WASHINGTON opens door, carrying tray with pitcher of water, glass, and box of matches. Also unlighted candles. LIZZIE jumps as door opens. WASHINGTON advances to table C. and places tray on it. LIZZIE watches him suspiciously)

Washington, did or did not the cook's sister have twins?

Washington
(Evasively)
I don't know, ma'am. Some folks they do litter pretty free.

Cornelia
Was there any other reason for her leaving?

Washington
She didn't tell me any reason. She jus' pack her things and walk out.

Cornelia
And the others?

Washington
They say the house haunted. Hear people around. Nobody here.

Cornelia
What about you?

Washington
(Grins)
I carries a rabbit foot. No ghos' botherin' me.

Lizzie
Rabbit's foot my eye. He's got a razor.

Cornelia
But you've heard things? Is that it?

Washington
(Shrugs)
Sometimes I find a window open. Nobody there. Door opens, nobody there. Don't worry me none, ma'am.

(Nevertheless he looks around him uneasily. LIZZIE closes her eyes, as if faint)

(A door slams offstage. LIZZIE opens her eyes. Is terrified)

Cornelia
What was that?

Washington
I guess it's just the wind. Maybe not.

Cornelia
Of course it was the wind. How long have you lived in this house?

Washington
It's about four years, ma'am. Ever since Mr. Fleming built it.

Cornelia
This is the first time these things have happened?

Washington
Jus' the last few days.

Cornelia
What about the face you saw last night at the window?

Washington
It was just a face, ma'am. That's all!

Cornelia
A man's face!

Washington
I couldn't jus' rightly say. I shut my eyes, and when I opened them it was gone.

Cornelia
You didn't go out to see what it was?

Washington
(Looking shocked)
What, me? No ma'am. I had business elsewhere.

Lizzie

(Getting up. Stands L.C.)
What did I tell you? There's trouble coming, Miss Neillie. My candle kept going out last night. There's no surer token of death.

Cornelia

Well, now that you've both cheered me up --
(WASHINGTON starts to exit R.2)
Just a minute, Washington.
(WASHINGTON stops)
There's a gentleman arriving on the last train. After he comes you may go to bed. I shall wait up for Miss Dale.
(WASHINGTON starts R.)
Oh, and Washington --
(WASHINGTON stops)
See that all the outer doors on this floor are locked and bring the keys here.

Lizzie

Who's coming?

Cornelia

Never mind about that.

(WASHINGTON exits R.2. CORNELIA stays up R.C. Then works around up stage at R.C.)

Lizzie

(L.C.)
Don't say I didn't warn you. There's going to be a death sure.

Cornelia

(Comes down R.C.)
There certainly will be if you don't keep quiet!
(Knits)
Lock the billiard room windows and go to bed!
(Sits R. of table C.)

Lizzie

(L.C. Angry)
I am not going to bed. I am going to pack up and tomorrow I'm going to leave.
(Pause - look)
I asked you on my bended knees not to take this place, two miles from a railroad. For mercy's sake, Miss Neillie, let's go back to the city.

Cornelia
I am not going. You can make up your mind to that. I'm going to find out what's wrong about this place, if it takes all summer! I came out to the country for a rest, and I'm going to stay and get it.

Lizzie
You'll get your heavenly rest!
(Starts to billiard room L.3)
I've been with you for twenty years. I've got a right to speak my mind. I --

Cornelia
You haven't got a mind. Do what you're told and stop chattering.

Lizzie
That's my teeth that are chattering. I can't hardly keep them in.
(At billiard room door)
Have I got to go in there?

Cornelia
(Sits. Lays out cards)
What did I tell you?
(LIZZIE exits L.3 to billiard room.
A crash, followed by a scream.
CORNELIA gets up hastily)
Lizzie! What is it?

Lizzie
(Returning sheepishly)
Somebody left a billiard cue on the floor. I -- I kinda slipped on it.

Cornelia
Well, stop scaring the daylights out of me.

Lizzie
Look, Miss Neillie, let me sleep in your room tonight. It's only when my jaw drops that I snore.

Cornelia
(Thoughtful and absent-minded)
You might try tying it up now.
(Glances at radio)
It's a queer thing about this Bat. He might be some one I know, like Jack the Ripper.

Lizzie
Did you know him?

Cornelia
(Sharply)
Certainly not.
(Thoughtfully)
"He may be a merchant, a lawyer, or a doctor." If I only had the knowledge the police have about that man I'd -- Well, I might as well tell you, Lizzie, I'm having a detective sent down tonight from police headquarters, in the city.

Lizzie
(Startled, comes down L.C.)
A detective? Miss Neillie, you're keeping something from me! You know something I don't know.

Cornelia
I certainly hope so. I don't know that I need him. But it will be instructive to watch a good detective's methods. I remember reading about this Bat some months ago. In that particular case he cut off his victim's head.

Lizzie
(With a wail - quickly to door R.2)
Why don't you read the funny page once in a while?

(Exits to stairs in alcove. Gives a small yell as lightning flashes across windows. Goes upstairs. CORNELIA plays solitaire a moment, then thinks she hears something, goes up R.C. into alcove, bolts terrace door, then comes into room and pushes light button up R.C. LIGHTS all out. THUNDER distant, flashes LIGHTNING. While the lights are out, CORNELIA crosses over to French windows, slowly pulls one shade aside and looks out. Then she goes back to switch button, pushes it) LIGHTS FULL UP

(Enter WASHINGTON R.2. Stands just inside door)

Washington
There's a man here, ma'am. He says he's the new gardener. Name's Brooks.

Cornelia
(Up R.C.)
Nice hour for him to get here! What's his name?
(Sits down)

Washington

I didn't ask him.

Cornelia

Where is he?

Washington

Outside. I ain't trustin' nobody tonight.

Cornelia

What does he look like?

Washington

He looks all right. Young fellah, pretty wet. Says he walked from the station.

Cornelia

Well, I suppose he's all right. Miss Dale engaged him today. Send him in, Washington. And where are the keys?

Washington

(Takes two keys out of pocket, places on table C. As WASHINGTON Xes Cornelia, he turns around and faces her and points up at terrace door R.3)

That door up there has a spring lock. Jus' shut it and it'll keep out anything. Except ghosts!

Cornelia

All right. I understand.

(Exit WASHINGTON R.2)

(LIZZIE appears on stairs in alcove)

Lizzie

Somebody yelled out in the grounds! Down by the main road.

Cornelia

(Turns to look at her)

What did they yell?

Lizzie

Just yelled a yell.

Cornelia

Listen, Lizzie. I'm a strong woman, but I've had enough. Lock your door and go to bed. And keep your hands off that railing. It's just been varnished.

Lizzie
I never touched it. What about that noise I heard?

Cornelia
It was probably a bird.

Lizzie
Well, if it was, it was some bird!

(CORNELIA looks at door R. 2, waiting for gardener. LIZZIE remains at foot of stairs, watching, as WASHINGTON opens door R.2. Unseen. BROOKS enters. BROOKS is a handsome young fellow, shabbily dressed, but very neat, and carries a cap in his hand. WASHINGTON closes the door behind him. BROOKS is smooth shaven)

Cornelia
I understand you are the new gardener?

Brooks
(R.)
Yes, madam. The butler said you wanted to speak to me.

Cornelia
(Pause. Looks at him)
Come in.
(BROOKS comes forward two steps. Faces Cornelia)
You're the man my niece engaged this afternoon?

Brooks
Yes, madam. Brooks is my name.

Cornelia
(Knitting)
I couldn't verify your references, as the Brays are in Canada.

Brooks
I am sure, if Mrs. Bray WERE here --

Cornelia
(Turns in chair. Looks at Brooks)
WERE here?
(She eyes him with quick suspicion)
Are you a professional gardener?

Brooks

(Doubtful)
I've had some experience.

Cornelia

I see. Know anything of hardy perennials?

Brooks

Yes, they...they're the ones that keep their leaves during the winter...aren't they?

Cornelia

Come over here!
(BROOKS steps over to R.C. CORNELIA scrutinizes him carefully)
Have you had any luck with rubeola?

Brooks

Oh, yes...yes...indeed.

(LIZZIE stands. Watches Brooks. She is L.C. up)

Cornelia

And...alopecia?

Brooks

I'm afraid I don't know the -- er -- botanical names. But I think --- Yes, it takes a lot of water, doesn't it?

Cornelia

Most things do, in a garden. What about urticaria? Any trouble with it?

Brooks

(Shrugs)
I suppose you have to thin it quite a lot.

Cornelia

(Rises. Faces him across the table)
Scratch it, you mean. Young man, urticaria is hives, rubeola is measles, and alopecia is baldness.
(Slight pause. She Xes front of table to Brooks at R. C. Suspiciously)
Why did you tell me that you were a professional gardener? Why have you come here at this hour of the night, pretending to be something you are not?

Brooks

(Suddenly smiles at her, boyishly)
I know I shouldn't have done it. You'd have found me out anyhow! I don't know anything about gardening. The truth is, I was desperate! I HAD to have work.

Cornelia

(R.C.)
Work! These days! With men wanted everywhere! Why aren't you in the army?

Brooks

(R.)
I'm sorry. I've been turned down. I hurt my knee in football.

Cornelia

Oh? You played football?

Brooks

(Embarrassed)
In high school, of course.

Cornelia

(Eyes him. Is somewhat amused)
I see. Well, young man, how do I know you won't steal the spoons?

Brooks

(Turns body to Cornelia. Lightens up)
Are they NICE spoons?

Cornelia

Beautiful spoons.

Brooks

(Again engagingly boyish)
Spoons are always a great temptation to me, Miss Van Gorder. But if you'll take me, I'll promise to leave them alone!

Cornelia

(With grim humor)
That's extremely kind of you!
(Goes up to bell up R.C. Pushes button)

Lizzie

(Quickly downstage and to Cornelia)
I don't trust him! He's too smooth!

(CORNELIA to window over L.C.
LIZZIE following her, then backs
to BROOKS who is R.C.)

Cornelia

(Irritably)
Good heavens, are you still here?

WASHINGTON READY
OFF R.2

Lizzie
You're just as bad as all the rest of 'em. A good looking man comes in the door and your brains fly out the window!

(During this, BROOKS has a chance to make a stealthy survey of the room. He does this in such a way that from that time on it is perfectly plain to the audience that his interest in the house is not that of a gardener only. He even takes a step or two toward alcove, but when CORNELIA turns he is back where he was)

Cornelia
(X Lizzie. Back to R.C. upstage)
(Speaks to Brooks)
Have you had anything to eat lately?

Brooks
Not since this morning.
(WASHINGTON enters R.2 in response to bell)

READY DISTANT THUNDER
READY TO BLINK FOOTS

Cornelia
Washington, give this young man something to eat, and then show him where he is to sleep.
(To Brooks, holding out candle and matches. HE takes step up to her)
I'm going to have you sleep in the house tonight. And take these with you. The local light company crawls under its bed every time there is a thunder storm. Good night, Brooks.

Brooks
Good night, Miss Van Gorder.
(Over to door R.2)
You're being mighty good to me.
(CORNELIA smiles at him as BROOKS exits R.2. WASHINGTON exits closing door)

Lizzie
(Up L.C.
Haven't you any sense? Taking strange men into the house! How do you know that isn't the Bat?
(She squeals)
There go the lights.

DISTANT THUNDER
LIGHTS BLINK

Cornelia
(Ignoring her)
Better fix the blue room before the lights go out.
The detective will sleep there.

Lizzie

You mean he's going to bed? What's the use of having him?

READY
DOORBELL
OFF R.2

Cornelia

And Lizzie.

(LIZZIE stops. Looks at Cornelia)

Nobody is to know that he is a detective. Not even Washington.

Ready
WASHINGTON
DALE AND
DR.WELLS R.

Lizzie

What'll I say he is?

Cornelia

(Sits L.C. at table)

Just for once you might try saying nothing.

Lizzie

(Near door R.2)

A detective! Tiptoeing around with his eyes to all the keyholes. A body won't be safe in the bathtub.

(Exits R.2. Pause)

DOORBELL
OFF R.

(CORNELIA turns and looks at door R.2. Stops knitting. Enter WASHINGTON)

Washington

(As he comes on and goes to table C. for key)

I needs that front door key, ma'am.

Cornelia

Find out who it is before you unlock the door.

(WASHINGTON gets key off table C and exits R.2, leaving door open. CORNELIA rises, looks towards door R.2)

Dale

(Off R.2)

Won't you come in for a few minutes?

Doctor

(Off R.2)

Oh, thank you.

(CORNELIA again sits with knitting, L.C. Enter DALE OGDEN. She is a beautiful young girl of about twenty-two. She wears a pale colored charming evening frock and evening wrap. She enters quietly and without animation)

Cornelia

Aren't you back early, Dale?

Dale

(To chair above door R.2. Throws off her wrap)

I was tired --

Cornelia

Not worried about anything?

(DALE comes down R.C. to chair R. of table C. Lights cigarette)

Dale

(Sits. Unconvincingly)

No, but I've come out here to be company for you, I don't want to run away all the time.

Doctor

(Off R.2)

How have you been, Washington?

Washington

(Off R.2)

I gets around all right, doctah.

Cornelia

(On stage to Dale)

Who's out there, Dale?

Dale

Doctor Wells. He brought me over from the club. I asked him to come in for a few minutes. Washington's just taking his coat.

Cornelia

Your trunks have come.

Dale

(Listlessly)

That's good.

(Rises, turns, goes up back of table)

Cornelia

I hope this country air will pick you up. I promised your mother before she went to Newport that I'd take good care of you.

(DALE leans over, kisses CORNELIA. Then Dale goes L.C. Sits on settee, which is up and down stage L.C. Faces fireplace

L.2. Doctor Wells enters. HE is in dinner clothes, good-looking man in his early forties, with a shrewd, rather aquiline face. WASHINGTON enters, goes to top of table C., puts key on table, then exits R.2. Closes door)

Doctor
(Xes to table R.C. Shakes hands with Cornelia)
Well, how are we this evening, Miss Van Gorder?

Cornelia
Very well, thank you, doctor. Would you like something to drink?

Doctor
No, thanks. I have a call or two to make later.
(DOCTOR sits)

Cornelia
(Knits)
Many people at the country club?

Doctor
Not very many. The war, of course.
(He looks around room)
Funny to be here again. I used to know this house very well. When Courtleigh Fleming was alive, of course. Poor fellow, perhaps it's as well he was gathered to his fathers. Before this scandal broke.

Cornelia
I've wondered about it. Just what happened?

Doctor
Oh, the usual thing, only on an enormous scale. Men are scarce, and a new fellow, a young chap named Bailey, was made cashier. He got away with a million dollars.

(CORNELIA surprised)

Dale
(Visibly agitated)
How do you KNOW the cashier did it?

Doctor
Well, he's run away, for one thing. The Bank Examiners found the deficit this morning. Bailey, the cashier, went out for lunch and didn't come back. The method was simple. Blank paper substituted for securities, negotiable bonds and so on. Probably turned into cash by this time.

Dale
Couldn't somebody else have done it?

(CORNELIA looks at Dale, then looks at Doctor)

Doctor
Of course the president of the bank had access to the vaults. But as you know, Courtleigh Fleming, the late president, was buried last Monday. I was with him at the time, and
(He smiles)
I assure you he left no such sum. In fact, outside of this property he left very little.

Cornelia
Dale dear, didn't you know this young Bailey?

Dale
(Controlling herself with an effort)
Yes...slightly.

Cornelia
(Resumes her knitting. To Dale)
I rented this house from Richard Fleming, you know. Just last week. I suppose he needed the money.

Doctor
As a matter of fact, Dick Fleming had no right to rent you this property before the estate was settled. He must have done it the moment he received my telegram announcing his uncle's death.

Cornelia
You say you were with him when he died?

Doctor
Yes... In Colorado... It was very sudden. A great shock to me, of course. We were old friends.

Cornelia
Doctor, I think I ought to tell you something. Last night and the night before, attempts were made to enter this house. Once an intruder actually got in, and was frightened away by my personal maid at the top of that staircase.
(Indicating rear)
And twice I have received anonymous communications threatening my life if I did not leave this house.

READY FOR WINDOW TO BE BROKEN FROM TERRACE AND STONE THROWN IN

Dale

(Startled)
I didn't know that. How dreadful!

Cornelia

Don't tell Lizzie! She'd yell like an air raid siren. It's the only thing she can do like a siren, and she does it superbly!

(At this moment pane of one of the French windows up L.C. is smashed in, shade is jerked up and stone with a note tied to it with a piece of string is thrown into the room. ALL rise quickly and look up at windows)

Dale

What's that?

Cornelia

Somebody smashed a window pane.

Dale

And threw in a stone.

Doctor

Wait a minute. I'll --

(Hurries up to alcove and terrace door R.3)

Cornelia

(Follows up a few steps R.C.)

It's bolted at the top.

(DOCTOR unbolts door leading to terrace, and goes out and off, passes French windows to L. Meanwhile DALE has gone up L.C., picked up stone and has come down L.C., unties string off the stone and hands note to CORNELIA after she has closed terrace door after Doctor. DALE drops stone on settee. DOCTOR leaves terrace door open when he exits. CORNELIA to top of table, unfolds the note and reads it)

"Take Warning. Leave this house at once! It is threatened with disaster, which will involve you if you remain!

READY DOOR
BELL OFF R.2

Dale

(L. of Cornelia)

How awful! Who on earth wrote it?

Cornelia

Whoever did is a jackass. Let him bray all he wants. I'm staying right here.

Dale

But...something may happen.

Cornelia

(Comes down L.C.)

I hope so! That's the reason I...

(DOOR BELL OFF R.2 rings)

Dale

(Startled)

Oh, don't let any one in.

(Down a step below Cornelia)

(WASHINGTON enters R.2)

Washington

(Xes. Gets key before he speaks. Grins)

Front door key, ma'am. Kind of busy tonight, ain't we?

Cornelia

(Xes in front of table to R.C.)

See that the chain is on the door. And get the visitor's name before you admit him.

(Xes to Washington)

If he gives the name Anderson, let him in and take him to the library.

(WASHINGTON exits R.2. Closes door)

Dale

(L.C.)

Anderson... Who is...?

Cornelia

(Pauses, thinks -- to C front of table)

Dale dear... Perhaps you'd better go back to the city.

Dale

(Surprised)

Tonight?

Cornelia

(Impassively)

There is something <u>behind</u> all this disturbance...something I don't understand. But I mean to.

(Looks R. and up to see if Doctor is returning. Then moves step L. close to Dale. Lowers voice)

The man in the library is a detective from police headquarters.

Dale
(Unaccountably aghast)
Not...the police!

Cornelia
Sh... Be careful.
(Steps to R. Then back to Dale)
It's not necessary to tell the doctor. He's a sort of perambulating bedside gossip.
(Slight pause)
If it's known that the police are here we'll never catch anybody.

(DOCTOR enters, comes down R.C., trifle out of breath. Takes out handkerchief, shakes off rain)

Doctor
He got away in the shrubbery.

Cornelia
(Steps from front of table to Doctor, hands him note)
Read this.

(DALE sits settee L. Stares front, clearly terrified)

Doctor
(U.R.C. Reads, pauses, then looks at Cornelia)
Were the others like this?

Cornelia
Practically.
(Xes to L. front table)

Doctor
(Places letter on table C)
Miss Van Gorder, may I speak frankly?

Cornelia
That depends on what you have to say.

Doctor
(Still R.C.)
I think you OUGHT to leave this house.

Cornelia
(Takes it lightly)
Because of that letter?

Doctor

(Seriously)
There is some deviltry afoot. You are not safe here.

Cornelia

I have been safe in all kinds of houses for sixty years. It's time I had a bit of a change.

(Rises, starts up L.C. as she speaks)

Anyhow, we are safe enough. The doors and windows are locked, and --

(She glances toward library where detective waits)

I have taken other steps.

Doctor

(Alert)
What steps?

Cornelia

I've had Washington put an extra bolt on that door to the terrace.

(Looks up to door)

By the way, did you fasten it as you came in?

(She is about to go up to terrace door R.3. DOCTOR takes a step up, to stop her)

Doctor

(Up R.C.)
Yes, I did.

(CORNELIA stops)

Miss Van Gorder, I confess I'm anxious about you. This letter is ominous. Have you any enemies?

Cornelia

(Up C.)
Don't insult me! Of course I have. Enemies are an indication of character.

Doctor

Why not accept my hospitality in the village tonight? It's a little house, but I'll make you comfortable. Or if you won't come, let me stay here.

Cornelia

Thank you, no, doctor. I'm not easily frightened.

(DOCTOR looks at letter)

And tomorrow I intend to equip this entire house with burglar alarms on doors and windows.

(She goes up into alcove and to terrace door. Pushes bolt)

I knew it!

(Triumphantly)

Doctor, you DIDN'T fasten that bolt!

Doctor
(R.C. facing up stage)
Oh, I'm sorry --

Cornelia
You pushed it only part of the way.
(Sees door is bolted, comes down,
Xes above table to L.C.)
The only thing that worries me now is that broken window.
Anyone can reach a hand through it and open the latch.
(Goes down L. to settee. DALE rises,
and stands well down L. Faces up to
see what Cornelia intends to do)
Please, doctor, will you help?

Doctor
What do you mean to do?

Cornelia
I'm going to barricade that window. At least we can make
it harder to get in.

(DOCTOR comes over above table C. and
down L.C. to end of settee facing down
stage. DALE makes gesture to Cornelia
to stand aside. CORNELIA takes a step
back towards fireplace. DOCTOR and
DALE push up settee L.C. until it is
against center of French windows L.C.)

Doctor
(Shrugs)
Not very effective. Still it may answer.

Cornelia
(Comes up L.C. DALE goes down L.)
Well, doctor, now I'll say good night, and thank you very much.
(Xes Doctor above table to R.C.
Then turns, faces Doctor, who is up C)
Don't keep this young lady up too late. She looks tired.

Doctor
I'll only smoke a cigarette. You won't change your mind?

Cornelia
(Smiles)
I've a great deal of mind. It takes a long time to change it.
(She exits R.2. Closes door)

Doctor
(Rather nettled)
It may be mind...but...I think it is foolhardly stubbornness.

Dale
(Steps over and up L.C.)
Then you think there is really danger?

Doctor
(Up above table C.)
Well, those letters mean SOMETHING...Here you are...isolated... the village two miles away...and enough shrubbery around the place to hide plenty of trouble.

Dale
(L.C.)
But what enemies can she have?

Doctor
(Takes cigarette from case. Steps to C.)
Any man will tell you what I do. This is no place for two women, practically alone.
(DALE walks away to fireplace down L. back to Doctor. Unseen by her, he steps down R. of table, takes match box and slips it into his side pocket. Then with assumed carelessness)
I don't seem to see any matches.
(Looks up at stand C.)

Dale
(Turns, faces him)
Oh, aren't there any? I'll get you some.
(DALE quickly Xes front of table and exits off R.2. Closes door. DOCTOR watches her off, then swiftly runs up into alcove R.3. Unfastens bolt on terrace door. Quickly comes back to same position top of table up C. Picks up a book off table and opens book. Enter DALE with matches R.2. She Xes to him, gives him matches)

Doctor
Sorry to trouble you, but tobacco is the one drug every doctor forbids his patients and prescribes for himself.
(DALE smiles at his little joke. Then she Xes front of table to L.C. DOCTOR works around table and down to L.C. Lights cigarette)
By the way, has Miss Van Gorder a revolver?

Dale
(Turns, faces him)
Yes, she fired it off this evening to see if it would work.

Doctor

If she tries to shoot at anything, for God's sake stand behind her! Well, I must be going.

(Starts to go R. Looks at wrist watch)

Dale

If anything happens, I shall TELEPHONE you at once.

(Doctor stops on word "Telephone")

Doctor

(Hesitates, then)

I'll be home shortly after midnight. I'm stopping at the Johnsons'. One of the children is sick.

(A step to R. Then turns back, faces Dale)

Take a parting word of advice. The thing to do with a midnight prowler is...let him alone. Lock your bedroom doors, and don't let anything bring you out until morning.

(Goes to door)

Dale

Thank you. Washington will let you out. He has the key.

Doctor

(At door R.2)

By Jove, you <u>are</u> careful, aren't you!

(Looks around)

Well, good night, Miss Dale.

Dale

Good night.

(Exit R.2. DOCTOR. Pause. DALE is left alone. Stands motionless. Takes out handkerchief, dabs eyes. She is distressed for some unknown reason. Xes to fireplace L. WASHINGTON counts five, then enters R.2. DALE picks up book)

Washington, has the new gardener come?

(WASHINGTON puts door key on table C.)

Washington

Yes, ma'am. He's eating in the kitchen. He was shuah hungry.

(Exit Washington R.2. leaving door open. Stands in sight, while they enter. CORNELIA sweeps in, followed by ANDERSON. He is a man of probably fifty, an aggressive person with a loud voice. Not at all the typical stage detective)

Cornelia

Dale dear, this is Mr. Anderson.

Detective

(To R.C.)
How do you do?

(DALE bows, does not speak. Looks nervous)

Cornelia

(Up C.)
This is the room I spoke of. All the disturbances have taken place around that door.
(Indicating terrace door up R.2)

Detective

(Up to alcove, pointing up R.3)
This is not the main staircase?

Cornelia

No, the main staircase is out there.
(Indicating R.2)

Detective

(R.C. Looking over at French windows)
I think there must be a conspiracy between architects and the House Breakers Union these days. Look at all that glass. All a burglar needs is a piece of putty and a glass-cutter to break in.

Cornelia

(Up C.)
But the curious thing is that whoever got into the house evidently had a key to that door.
(Indicating terrace door up R.C. in alcove)

Detective

Hello...what's this?
(Sees broken window and glass on floor up L.C. in front of settee. Moves up and over to window. CORNELIA comes down to R. of table, faces up, watching DETECTIVE. DETECTIVE picks up piece of glass off floor front of settee. Places glass on settee)

Dale

(Over L.)
It was broken from the outside, a few minutes ago.
(DTETECTIVE pulls aside one of the blinds, looks out)

Detective
The outside, eh?

Dale
And then that letter was thrown in.
(Points to table C. Detective comes down to top of table C. CORNELIA hands him the note that was thrown in. DETECTIVE pauses, looks at letter)

Detective
(Calm. Self-assured)
Humph! Coy, isn't it? Somebody wants you OUT of here all right!

Cornelia
(Facing him across table. She is R. of table C.)
There are some things I haven't told you yet. This house belonged to the late Courtleigh Fleming.

Detective
(Interested)
Fleming, eh?

Cornelia
Yes. I rented it for the summer from his nephew, and moved in last Monday. I have not had a really quiet night since I came. The very first night I saw a man with an electric flashlight making his way through that shrubbery.
(Points. Detective is at window)
And ever since there have been determined efforts to enter the house.

Dale
You poor dear! And you were here alone?

Cornelia
Not at first. I had a cook whose sister has since had twins. A housemaid who was immediately threatened with appendicitis, and a kitchenmaid who got toothache. I still have a butler, but his mother is in bad shape. And of course I have Lizzie.

Dale
Lizzie's a lot of help!

Detective
It's a good thing you sent for me.

Cornelia
Well, I wasn't entirely helpless. I had this.

Cornelia (Cont'd)
(She opens drawer right side of table C. and takes out small revolver)
I can fire it all right. I'd be sure to hit somebody.
(Looks into the barrel, then waves it about carelessly. DETECTIVE turns, faces Cornelia. Sees revolver, starts)

Detective
Look, put that way, will you? I like to get in the papers as much as anybody, but not where it says "Omit flowers."
(CORNELIA places revolver in drawer, closes it. DETECTIVE goes R. and up facing doors R.3)
You don't think anybody has got upstairs yet?

Cornelia
(Moves around front of table to L.C., turns, looks up R.C.)
I don't believe so. I'm a very light sleeper, especially since the papers have been so full of the exploits of this criminal they call the Bat.
(Sits L. of table)

Detective
(Comes down R.C. professional manner)
Yes. He's contrived to surround himself with such an air of mystery that it verges on the supernatural.
(DALE sits L. DETECTIVE looks R.2)

Cornelia
The radio tonight said he might be anybody.

Detective
Well, he's somebody. That's sure.

Cornelia
I confess I have thought of him in this connection.

Detective
(Laughs)
Why? Got any extra food stored around here?

Cornelia
Only a few pounds of sugar. For preserving.

Detective
(Drily)
He's not after that sort of sugar. Anyhow, you can always tell when the Bat has had anything to do with a crime. When he's through he signs his name to it.
(Sits. Plays with box of matches)

Cornelia
His name? I thought nobody knew his name.

Detective
That was a figure of speech. The newspapers named him The Bat, because he moves with incredible rapidity...always at night...He seems to be able to see in the dark.

Cornelia
I wish I could. These country lights are always going out.

Detective
Within the last six months he's taken up the name himself... pure bravado...sometimes he draws the outline of a bat, at the scene of the crime. Once, in some way, he got hold of a real bat and nailed it to the wall.

(Shudder from DALE and CORNELIA)

He seems to have imagination.

(Slaps knee. Rises, takes step R. determinedly)

But I've got imagination, too.

(Stands second, stared to front, then with effort brings himself back to present situation)

How many people in this house, Miss Van Gorder?

(DALE starts to X to R. above table. She does this slowly)

Cornelia
My niece and myself, Lizzie Allen, who has been my personal maid for twenty years...the colored butler, and the gardener. The cook, kitchenmaid and housemaid left yesterday, frightened away.

(Smiles. DALE picks up her wrap on chair above door R.2 and exits R.3. DETECTIVE glances at her as she goes)

Detective
Well, you can have a good night's sleep tonight. I'll stay right here in the dark and watch.

Cornelia
Would you like some coffee to keep you awake? Lizzie can leave a tray here.

Detective
Thank you. Do the servants know who I am?

(Xes to R. of table)

Cornelia
Only Lizzie...my maid.

Detective
Tell her to keep her mouth shut.

Cornelia
(Smiling)
You don't know Lizzie.

Detective
And it isn't necessary to broadcast that I'm going to be around all night.

Cornelia
Surely you don't suspect my household?

Detective
Better not take any chances.

(Enter LIZZIE R.2. Standsat door. Inspects Detective disapprovingly. To Cornelia, ignoring Detective)

Lizzie
His room's ready.

Cornelia
(Knitting. L.C. at table)
Lizzie will show you where to go. I hope you will be comfortable.

Lizzie
(Coldly)
He'll be all right. It's the rest of us I'm thinking of.
(To Detective)
You keep out of my room, mister. I'm warning you.

Detective
(Grinning)
That won't be difficult.
(DETECTIVE goes over R. to Lizzie)
(To Cornelia)
I suppose this is the woman you referred to.
(LIZZIE stiffens)
What's your name?

Lizzie
Elizabeth Allen.

Detective
How old are you?

(LIZZIE looks across at Cornelia)

Lizzie

Have I got to answer that?
(CORNELIA nods her head. LIZZIE is coy)
Thirty-two.

Cornelia

She's forty.
(LIZZIE gives a start)

Detective

Now, Lizzie, do you ever walk in your sleep?

Lizzie

I do not.

Detective

Don't care for the country, I suppose?

Lizzie

I do not.

Detective
(Facetiously)
Or detectives?

Lizzie

I DO NOT.

Detective

All right, Lizzie. Be calm! I can stand it!
(Goes to table C. Picks up note that was thrown through window. Xes back beside Lizzie, holds out note so Lizzie can read it. Quick)
Ever see this before?

Lizzie
(Reads it. Is horrified. Makes gesture with arm, nearly hitting the detective in face)
Mercy on us!

Detective
(Watching her)
Didn't write it yourself, did you?

Lizzie
(Angrily)
I DID NOT!

Detective

You're sure you don't walk in your sleep?

Lizzie

(Strong)
When I get into bed in this house I wouldn't put my feet out for a million dollars.

Detective

Well, that's more money than I'm worth.

Lizzie

I'LL SAY IT IS.
(She flounces out R.2. Slams door behind her. CORNELIA laughs)

Detective

(Turns, goes R.C. to table, puts note back on table)
Now, what about the BUTLER?

Cornelia

Nothing about him...except that he was Courtleigh Fleming's servant.

Detective

Do you consider that significant?

(DALE enters from below stair alcove up R.3. Stands watching and listening to detective)

Cornelia

Only in this way. Isn't it possible that there is some connection between this colossal theft at the Union Bank and these disturbances?
(DETECTIVE looks at DALE)

Detective

(Pause)
Just what do you mean?
(DALE slowly moves X to L. above table C.)

Cornelia

Suppose Courtleigh Fleming took that money from his own bank and concealed it in this house?

Detective

That's the theory you gave headquarters, isn't it? But I'll tell you how I figure it out! In the first place, Fleming is dead, and the cashier is missing. In the second place, if he had hidden the money in or around this house, why did he rent it to you?
(DALE is over L. by this time)

Cornelia
But he didn't. I leased this house from his nephew...his heir.

Detective
Well, I wouldn't struggle like that for a theory. The cashier's missing...that's the answer.

Cornelia
(Resents, with pride)
I've read a great deal on the detection of crime, and --

Detective
(Interrupting her)
Look, Miss Van Gorder. Anybody as smart as the Bat isn't running around leaving clues. And criminals read crime books too. They've learned a lot from them.
(Two step up)

Cornelia
Then YOU don't think there's a chance that the money from the Union Bank is in this house?
(Puts knitting away)

Detective
Very unlikely.

Cornelia
(Stubbornly)
But possible.
(Rises)
If you'll come with me, I'll show you to your room.
(Xes front of table to R. DETECTIVE steps back to let her pass, then follows her toward door R.2)

Detective
Well, I suppose I might as well see where I don't sleep tonight.
(CORNELIA exits R.2. followed by DETECTIVE. DALE is now seen to be in a state of violent excitement. She goes R. to door R.2. double door upstage quick to C. door R.3. opens cautiously and the new gardener, BROOKS, enters)

Dale
Sh! Sh! Be careful! That man's a detective!
(BROOKS looks quickly off R. then closes door, and goes to C. front of table. DALE follows him over)

Brooks

(C.)
Then they've traced me here!

Dale

I don't think so.

Brooks

I couldn't get back to my rooms. If they've searched them --
(Pause)
as they're sure to...they'll find your letters to me.
(Pause)
Your aunt doesn't suspect anything?

Dale

No, I told her I'd engaged a gardener. That's all.

Brooks

Dale --
(Steps L. Then turns and faces
Dale R.C.)
You KNOW I didn't take that money.

Dale

Of course! I believe in you absolutely.
(He catches her in his arms, kisses her,
then breaks and holds Dale's hands)

Brooks

(Steps L.C. Drops Dale's hands)
But -- a detective here...what does that mean?

Dale

Aunt Cornelia sent for him. She says people have been trying to break into this house the last day or two. At night.

Brooks

(Sharply)
What sort of people?
(Steps back)

Dale

She doesn't know.

Brooks

(A step to L.C.)
That proves exactly what I have contended right along.
(Turns, looks at Dale)
Courtleigh Fleming took that money and hid it here. And somebody knows that he did.

Dale
The detective thinks you're guilty because you ran away.

Brooks
Ran away?
(Turns front, smiles)
The only chance I had was a few hours to myself, to try to prove what actually happened.
(X L. two steps)
I have only tonight. I'm off tomorrow for camp. Or I was -- unless I'm arrested first.

Dale
Why don't you tell the detective what you think? That Courtleigh Fleming took the money, and that it is still here?

Brooks
He'd take me into custody at once...
(Looks L.)
and I'd have no chance to search.
(Xes up L.C.)

Dale
Why are you so SURE it is here?

Brooks
(Xes to Dale)
Fleming was no ordinary defaulter. He had no intention of being exiled to a foreign country. And he didn't expect to die. He meant to come back here and live off that money, while I was in the pen.

Dale
But even then...

Brooks
(Interrupting)
Listen, sweetheart...
(DALE U.R.3 when Brooks goes up to door L.3. Closes it, comes down slow to L.C. Quietly)
The architect who built this house was in college with me. We played football together.
(BROOKS comes down L.C.)
He told me a year or two ago he had built a hidden room in it.

Dale
(Pauses. Looks up R. Then speaks)
Did he say where it was?

Brooks
No. And he's a Jap prisoner now. But I remember what he said. "You watch old Fleming. If anything happens to me it won't break his heart."

Dale
Why on earth --

Brooks
Don't you see? He didn't want any living being to know about that room.

Dale
Then you think the money is there?

Brooks
I do. I don't think Fleming took it west with him. He knew the minute this thing blew up he'd be under suspicion.
(Looks)
Only, if he left the money here, why did he rent this house?

Dale
He didn't. His NEPHEW rented it to us.
(Pause. She takes a step R. Looks and then back to C. and Xes to Brooks)
Jack, could it be the NEPHEW who's trying to break in?

Brooks
(Xes to her at T)
He wouldn't HAVE to break in. He could make an excuse and come, at any time.
(Goes over L. Looks around)
If I could only get hold of a blue-print of this place.

Dale
(Crossing front of table, and X Brooks to fireplace L.2)
Oh, Jack, I'm scared to death.

READY THUNDER... LIGHTNING AND TO BLINK FOOTS AND BORDER

Brooks
(He follows her, hands on shoulders in effort to cheer her. Pause. Down to Dale L.)
Now listen...this isn't as hard as it sounds! I've got at least tonight to work in...and as true as I'm standing here, that money's in the house.

Dale
(Smiles faintly)
Or so you hope!

Brooks

(Still trying to cheer her up. Hands on her shoulders, turns her around so she faces front. He goes down stage in front of her. His back to audience)

Cheer up. That's my girl. It has to be here.
(Looks around room)
For that matter, The Hidden Room may be behind these very walls.
(BROOKS sees golf clubs in bag, leaning against small table up C. Quickly up and gets one club. Comes down to fire-place. DALE watches him, gives way to L.C. BROOKS taps wall above fireplace)

Dale

The lights are going out again.

ROLL OF THUNDER
LIGHTS BLINK
LIGHTNING

Brooks

Let them go! The less light the better for me. The only thing to do is to go over this house room by room.
(Indicates door L.3)
What's in there?

Dale

The billiard room!
(BROOKS starts as if to exit L.3)
Jack! Perhaps Courtleigh Fleming's nephew would know where the blue-prints are!

Brooks

It's a chance, but not a very good one.
(Exit Brooks and Dale into room L.3. leaving door open)
(BROOKS raps with golf club on ladder off L. Pause, then raps again. Enter LIZZIE R. 2 with white table napkin. As soon as she gets inside, LIGHTS BLINK QUICKLY SEVERAL TIMES. LIZZIE looks nervously about)

THUNDER
LIGHTNING

(SHE shows she is scared, to table with napkin, spreads it on upper end of table. Brooks repeats raps. Lizzie starting for R.2. looking back)

(LIZZIE over to door R.2.)

Lizzie

Oh, my God!
(Looking back and scared to death, she exits door R.2)

(Enter BROOKS and DALE)

LIGHTS OUT
ALL DARK

LIGHTNING AND
THUNDER STOP

Brooks

Lights do this often?

Dale

(To C. up stage)
There's a candle on the table, if I can find the table. Here it is.

(Finds candle on small table U.C. against wall)

Brooks

LIGHTS COME UP
IN 2nd STRIP
IN FOOTS AND
2nd RAY LIGHT
IN BORDER. I
CANDLE EFFECT.

(L. of Dale)
I have matches.

(He lights candle. Places candle on table C.)
Well, that room's out. Nothing there.

Dale

RAPPINGS HEARD
OVERHEAD - 4
DULL RAPS.
EFFECT SUPPOSED

(Suddenly interrupting. Backs R.)
What's that?

Brooks

TO BE FROM FLOOI
ABOVE

(In tense voice and looking up at ceiling)
Some one else is looking for the Hidden Room.

Dale

FOUR DULL RAPS
HEARD AGAIN

(Looking up at ceiling. Steps toward C.)
Upstairs!

Brooks

Who's in this house besides ourselves?

Dale

Only the detective...Aunt Cornelia...Lizzie and Washington.

Brooks

That the colored fellow?

Dale

Yes.

Brooks

Belong to your aunt?

Dale

No, he was Mr. Fleming's butler.
(BROOKS looks up at ceiling)

FOUR RAPS
UPSTAIRS

Brooks

He was, eh?
(Quickly puts down candle and Xes to double doors R.3. and into alcove)
It may be the darky. If it is, I'll get him.
(BROOKS exits R.2. quickly but quietly. Closes door behind him. DALE left alone stands thinking. Her distress and anxiety are evident. Xes to L.C. At last, she forms a resolution. Goes up to City phone U.C.)

FOUR MORE RAPS UPSTAIRS

Dale

(At phone)
1-2-4.
(She looks around before calling number. Her voice is cautious)
Is that the country club? Is Mr. Richard Fleming there?
Yes -- I'll hold the wire.
(Moment's pause. She looks around nervously)
Hello -- Is this Mr. Fleming?...This is Dale Ogden...do you remember? My aunt has rented your house, Cedarcrest. I know it's rather odd my calling you so late, but...I wonder if you could come over here for a few minutes. Yes...tonight. I wouldn't trouble you but...it's awfully important. Hold the wire a moment.
(She puts the receiver down, glances up the small stairs, goes R.2., listens at door, then back again to phone)
Hello, I'll wait outside the house on the drive. It...it's a confidential matter...thank you so much.
(She hangs up phone, goes L.C. A moment's pause, then DETECTIVE enters R.2. with unlighted candle in his hand)

Detective

(Coming C.)
Spooky sort of place in the dark, isn't it?

Dale

(Moves table and chair down L.C.)
Yes...rather.

Detective

(R.C.)
Left me upstairs without a match. I found my way down by walking part of the way, and falling the rest. I don't suppose I'll ever find the room I left my toothbrush in!
(Lights his candle from the lighted candle on C. table)

Dale

(Anxiously)
You're not going to stay up all night, are you?

(L.)

LIGHTS COME UP IN SECTIONS FOOTS AND BORDER* TWO CANDLE LIGHT. STAGE MANAGER READY TO RING CITY PHONE.

Detective

(Up C. above table, takes cigar our)
Oh, I may doze a bit. What's your opinion of these intrusions your aunt complains of?

Dale

I don't know. I only came today.

Detective

(Moves little L.)
Is she a pretty nervous temperament usually? Imagines she sees things and all that?

Dale

(Steps down L.)
I don't think so.

Detective

(L.C.)
Know the Flemings?

Dale

I've met Mr. Richard Fleming once or twice. He's the nephew.

Detective

(Turns to table)
Ever know the cashier of the Union Bank?

Dale

(After a barely perceptible pause)
No.

(Moves to fireplace)

Detective

Fellow of good family, I understand. Played football at Harvard. Probably been living beyond his means.

Dale

(With an effort)
I wouldn't know.

Detective

(Complacently)
Playing the society game. Betting on horses. Maybe keeping a girl somewhere. So he --

PHONE RINGS UP C.

(DETECTIVE starts for house phone
up R. 3 above door)

Dale
No. The other one; that's the house phone.

Detective
(Looking at house phone)
No connection with the outside, eh?

Dale
No, just from room to room, in the house.

Detective
(Goes to phone up C.)
Hello! Hello!
(Pause. Hangs up phone)
This line sounds dead.

Dale
It was all right a few minutes ago.
(Sits down L.)

Detective
You were using it a few minutes ago?

Dale
(Hesitates, then)
Yes.

CITY PHONE UP C RINGS AGAIN

Detective
(Picks up phone)
Yes...yes...THIS is Anderson...go ahead.
(Rather impatiently)
...you're sure of that...are you?...I see...All right! 'Bye!
(Hangs up phone, turns and looks at
Dale intently)
Did I understand you to say that you are not acquainted with the cashier of the Union Bank?
(Down to back of table C. Pause.
DALE stares ahead. Does not reply)
That was headquarters, Miss Ogden. They have found some letters in Bailey's room which seems to indicate that you were not telling the entire truth just now.

Dale
(Faintly)
What letters?

Detective
(L.C.)
From you to Jack Bailey...showing that you are engaged to marry him.

Dale

Very well. That's true.

Detective

Why didn't you say so before?

Dale

(Frankly)
It's been a secret. I haven't even told my aunt yet.
(Rises)
How can the police be so stupid? He's engaged to be married. He's about to go into aviation, to fight for his country. Why would he wreck his future like that?

Detective

Well, some folks wouldn't call it wrecking a future to lay away a million dollars.
(To L.C. Speaks slowly and ominously)
Do you know where he is now?

Dale

No.

Detective

Miss Ogden, in the last minute or so, the Union Bank case and certain things in this house begin to tie up pretty close together.
(Steps a little nearer to her L.)
Bailey went out to lunch today and hasn't been seen since. Have you heard from him?

Dale

(Still determinedly lying)
No.

LIZZIE READY OFF R.2 WITH TRAY.

Detective

You used the telephone a few minutes ago. Did you CALL him?

MAN READY OFF L. WITH WRIST WATCH.

Dale

No.

READY LIGHTNING ACROSS WINDOWS L.C.

Detective

I'll ask you to bring Miss Van Gorder here.

Dale

Why do you want her?

Detective

(Suspiciously)
Because this case is taking on a new angle.

Dale
You don't think I know anything about that money?

Detective
No, but you know -- somebody who does.
(DALE hesitates about to reply, then finding none goes right Xes front of table, taking a lighted candle with her, gets it off center table, exits R.2)

LIGHTS DOWN TO 1 CANDLE EFFECT

(DETECTIVE left alone, reflects for a moment, then he picks up lighted candle from table C. proceeds to make a systematic examination of walls. After this he exits to billiard room L.3)

ELECTRICIAN - watch him as he goes up into alcove FOLLOW TO R. IN FOOTS. DIM AWAY DOWN AS HE GOES INTO ALCOVE... CATCH HIM AS HE COMES OUT OF ALCOVE AND CROSSES TO L. FOLLOW CANDLE UNTIL HE EXITS INTO ROOM OFF L.3. ALL DARK. LIGHTS OUT.

(MAN appears from L. outside windows. His shadow shows on shades. He then disappears R. to terrace door. At same time LIZZIE appears at door R.2 with tray of dishes, and prop food, two Parker House rolls, cold meats, plate, cup and saucer. She walks slowly with her head turned to look behind her. R. The faint light of a candle from the hall off R.2 gives her enough light to advance. As she gets to center above table, she hears key turn in terrace door. Registers fright. She has tray poised over the table. MAN who passed the windows now enters terrace door in alcove up R.3. He closes the door, reaches out his left arm, as if feeling his way to stairs. On his wrist he has a wrist watch with

LIGHTNING EFFECT ON WINDOW SHADES UP L.C.

a luminous face. (See Electric Plot). It glows in darkness. LIZZIE stands galvanized with fright. MAN about to go to staircase. LIZZIE drops the tray on top of the table with a crash. She makes three attempts to scream before her voice responds. Then she SHRIEKS. The MAN quickly runs up the stairs and off R. CORNELIA runs on R.2. She is carrying a lighted candle.

CORNELIA also carries a coffee pot, half filled with burnt sugar and water (coffee) spills it at every step. At same time DETECTIVE enters L.3. with candle lighted.

ONE CANDLE LIGHT COME ON AND FOLLOW HER TO R.C.

ELECTRICIAN CATCH BOTH these candle effects, one R.2. One L.3. Follow the lights to C.

(CORNELIA R.C. DETECTIVE L.C.)

BRING LIGHTS UP CENTER IN FOOTS AND BORDERS TO 2 CANDLES EFFECT

Cornelia

(R.C.)

For the love of heaven, what's wrong?

(CORNELIA R. of LIZZIE. LIZZIE on dropping the tray works around R. to front of table C. and is looking up R. 3 when others enter. Cornelia holding the coffee pot inclined, the coffee pours out of the spout on Lizzie's foot)

Lizzie.

(Screams. C.)

Oh, my foot! My foot!

Cornelia

(R.C.)

My patience! Did you yell like that because you stubbed your toe?

Lizzie

(Wildly)

You scalded it! It went up the staircase.

Cornelia

Your toe went up the staircase?

Lizzie

(Stands on one foot)

No, no! An eye...as big as a saucer! It ran right up that staircase.

(CORNELIA puts pot and candle on
table center and candle up R.C.
With DETECTIVE's candle and CORNELIA's
the room is now fairly illuminated)

Detective
(Sternly. L.C. down stage)
Now, see here. Stop this checkon-on-one-leg business, and tell me what you saw.

Lizzie
(C. Still holding up one leg)
A ghost! It came right through that door and went up the stairs!

(DALE and BROOKS with lighted candle
come on from R.2 followed by WASHINGTON)

Dale
Who screamed?
(Up R.C. above others. BROOKS
stands above door R.2. WASHINGTON
down R. below door R.2)

Lizzie
I did. I saw a ghost.
(Then to Cornelia)
I begged you not to come here. I begged you on my bended knees. There's a graveyard not a quarter of a mile away.

Cornelia
(R.C.)
Yes, and one more scare like that, Lizzie Allen, and you'll have me in it.
(Puts candle down)

Lizzie
(Holding foot)
Oh, my foot! If anything tries to get me now, I won't even be able to run.

(BROOKS up with candle. CORNELIA
goes up to terrace door in alcove)

Detective
(Sore)
Now, Lizzie ... what did you really see?

Lizzie
I told you what I saw.

Detective
(Rather threateningly)
You're not trying to frighten Miss Van Gorder into leaving this house and going back to the city?

Lizzie
(Grimly)
Well, if I am, I'm giving myself a good scare too, ain't I?

Cornelia
(Coming down R.C. from terrace door. Annoyed)
Anybody who had a key could have got in here, Mr. Anderson. That door's been unbolted from the inside.

Lizzie
(Hysterically)
I TOLD you so! I KNEW something was going to happen. I heard rappings all over the house tonight.

Detective
(Still L.C.)
I think I see the answer to your puzzle, Miss Van Gorder! An hysterical and not very reliable woman ...
(LIZZIE glares at him)
anxious to go back to the city, and terrified by the shutting off of the electric light.

Cornelia
I wonder.

Detective
I recommend a good night's sleep and ... if I might suggest, some sleeping tablets for both of you.

Lizzie
(Interrupting, aghast)
We're not going to <u>bed</u>, are we?

Detective
(Kindly to Lizzie)
You'll feel better in the morning. Lock your door and say your prayers and leave the rest to me.

Cornelia
That's very good advice. You take her, Dale.

(CORNELIA puts arm around Lizzie. DALE comes down R. of Cornelia. LIZZIE is passed along by Cornelia to DALE who puts arm around her shoulder, leads her toward door R.2)

Lizzie
(Does not want to go, but does)
I'm not going to bed! Do you think I'm going to wake up in the morning with my throat cut?

(DALE and LIZZIE exit R.2)

Detective
Where were you while this was going on?

Washington
Me? I was in the kitchen, suh, making coffee. Seems to me folks around here eatin' all the time.

Cornelia
That's correct. I was with him.

Detective
(Speaking to Cornelia)
There are certain things I want to discuss with you, Miss Van Gorder, but they can wait until morning.

Cornelia
(Looks off R.)
Do you think all this is pure imagination?

Detective
(Close to table C. left)
Don't you?

Cornelia
I'm not sure.

Detective
(Laughs a little)
I'll tell you what I'll do.
(Puts candle down)
You go upstairs and go to bed comfortably. Lock yourself in, if you like. I'll make a careful search of the house before I settle down.

Cornelia
(Looks at Detective, turns, picks up coffee pot off table C.)
I'm afraid Lizzie has ABSORBED most of your coffee. Washington can make you some more.

Washington
Me? You want me to go back to that kitchen?

Cornelia
That's what I said.

Cornelia (Cont'd)
(Hands coffee pot to WASHINGTON, who takes it unwillingly. Exits R. 2)
Well, I hope we're at the end of our troubles.
(She Xes to table, DETECTIVE hands her candle)

Detective
Sure you are. Now you go upstairs.
(CORNELIA has started R. with candle) ELECTRICIAN FOLLOW LIGHT TO R. 2.
(DETECTIVE goes up L. C. and then R. back of table)
Get your beauty sleep. I'm sure you need it.
(Earnestly without intention, then realizing what he said)

Cornelia
(Has reached door R. 2. Turns, smiles caustically at him)
I begin to understand why you haven't yet caught the Bat.
(She exits R. 2 with dignity)

Detective
(Takes out handkerchief, mops his face)
Whew!
(Then looks at BROOKS who stands above door R. 2. DETECTIVE comes over R. C., puts handkerchief away. BROOKS about to exit R. when DETECTIVE speaks up C.)
Who are you?

Brooks
The gardener, sir.

Detective
(Eying him)
Oh, you are, are you? Well, I don't need any gardening done just now.. you can ...
(Looks attentively at BROOKS. Step R.)
Wait a minute. I've seen you somewhere.
(There is a little threat in his voice)
Not in the portrait gallery at headquarters, are you?

Brooks
(Resentfully)
Not yet.

Detective
Well, we slip up now and then. But I've seen you before. Never forget a face. Where do you sleep?

Brooks
In the house just now.

Detective
All right. Go to bed and stay there. If you're needed you'll be called.

Brooks
Very well, sir.

(BROOKS exits R. 2. Closes door)
(DETECTIVE watches him off with expression of suspicion. With noiseless step, DETECTIVE goes to door R. 2. Listens. Opens door suddenly. Then closes door. Takes revolver from hip pocket. Goes to table center, picks up candle, goes up R. 3.)

(DETECTIVE PROCEEDS TO MAKE a careful search of the entry. Floor, walls, stair and stair rail. He looks up staircase, then bolts terrace door, comes back into room)

ELECTRICIAN FOLLOW CANDLE AND DIM DOWN WHEN DETECTIVE GOES INTO ALCOVE UP R. 3.

(DETECTIVE exits R. 2)

(Pause)

WIND AND THUNDER — ALL DARK LIGHTNING

(DALE comes down the stairs holding a lighted candle high. She carries a rubber slicker (raincoat) and a pair of rubbers. She is cautious. She unbolts the terrace door and comes into the room from alcove)

ELECTRICIAN CATCH HER CANDLE AND FOLLOW TO TABLE C.

(This makes room lighted with one candle. She places the candle on table C. She sits R. of table, places coat on back of chair. She is about to put on her rubbers when she hears a knock on terrace door. FLEMING knocks. She starts at the sound, terrified as she opens drawer right side of the table, takes out Cornelia's revolver. Steps up stage C. of table center. With revolver pointed up at alcove R. 3. FLEMING makes noise as if opening terrace door with key. DICK FLEMING enters, terrace door, closes it. He steps into room from alcove, stands there a moment. He is a man of perhaps

thirty....rather dissipated, as to face, foppish in dress, with collar of his dinner coat turned up against the rain)

Dick
(Up at double doors R. 3)
Did I frighten you?

Dale
Oh, Mr. Fleming...yes!
(She puts revolver on table. She goes R. towards him)

Dick
You weren't outside, so I used my key.

Dale
You're pretty wet.

Dick
That's all right. Only way I like water.
(Takes off cap, places on stand below door R. 2. Takes off rain coat, places on back chair R. 1. Comes down R. 1. Puts cap on chair R. 1)
Reggie Beresford brought me over in his car. He's waiting down the drive.
(DALE goes up R. 3. Closes double doors to alcove)
(As she turns)
Well, what's up? You sounded excited.

Dale
(Steps down a few steps R. C.)
Mr. Fleming. I'm in an awful jam.

Dick
(Steps over a few steps to R. C.)
You don't mean it!

Dale
You know about the Union Bank trouble?

Dick
I do. I didn't have anything there but an overdraft.

Dale
Your uncle was president, wasn't he?

Dick
Yeah, but he never let me further inside than the policeman at the door.

Dale
You're his heir, aren't you?

Dick
All I got was this house. He'd spent all he made.
(Takes out cigarette case. Gives Dale a cigarette. Lights one himself, both from candle)

Dale
Mr. Fleming, I'm going to say something rather beastly. Please don't mind. I'm desperate! You see, I happen to be engaged to the cashier...Jack Bailey.

Dick
(Whistles and sits on edge of table)
I SEE! And he's beat it with the cash!

Dale
He has not! He's here now, in this house. My aunt thinks he's a new gardener. He is here, Mr. Fleming, because he knows he didn't take the money, and the only other person who could have done it...was...your uncle.
(DICK drops cigarette on tray. Pause. DICK steps back, looks at Dale, then slowly Xes front of table to L. Turns, faces her)

Dick
(L.)
If he did, where the hell is it?

Dale
You don't know where it is?

Dick
Do you suppose I'd be here if I did?

Dale
Would you be willing to help find it?

Dick
(Excited now)
Find it? Where?

Dale
(Turns, goes R. C. to make sure no one is listening, then back to L. C. Faces Fleming)
If anybody comes in.. you've just come to get something of yours.
(Comes close to him)
Do you know anything about a Hidden Room, in this house?

Dick

A Hidden Room...that's good.

(Laughs)

Never heard of it. Now, let me get this straight. The idea is... A Hidden Room... and the money's in it... is that it?

Dale

(Nods "yes")

The architect who built this house told Jack Bailey he had built such a Room in it.

(DICK's expression has changed. A slowly growing look of avarice and calculation has taken the place of his smile. He no longer looks at the girl. His eyes are shifty and uncertain. They open and close as though already he has them on the treasure)

Do you know where there are any blue-prints of the house?

Dick

(Starts, restrains himself)

Blue-prints?

(It is evident to the audience that he does know)

Why, there may be some...

(He formulates, one can almost see the plot growing in his mind)

I'd have to think. How about a highball to think on?

Dale

(Eagerly)

I'll get you one. Think hard!

(She exits R. 2. closing door. DICK quickly looks around room, then runs to bookcase over right, below door R. 2, then looks up R. 3. Goes up to bookcase above door R. 2., then another pause. Then to bookcase up L. C. Turns, looks around room again. Pause. Decides to try the other bookcase above fireplace, and just below door L. 3. All these moves are quick. He takes out the books in TOP shelf and puts them quickly on mantel at fireplace. Reaches behind books on shelf, and pulls out a roll of three blue-prints. They are about 15 x 12 inches. He leans over to see what they are at fireplace. Then over to table center, shoves back arm chair L. of table C. Holds blue-prints close to candle on table. Looking

carefully at each blue-print, finds the THIRD ONE is the one he wants. He tears off a corner of it. DALE enters, closes door behind her R. 2. Carries highball)

(Quickly over to him, front of table C. Rejoiced)

Dale

Oh, you've found it!
(Puts down glass on table)
Let me see it. Quick.

READY ELECTRICIAN for FIRE GRATE EFFECT Fireplace L. 2.
READY STAGE MANAGER to open and close double door up R. 3.

Dick

(L.C. His manner changed)
Just a moment.
(He steps away from her. Picking up candle and looks at the piece of blue-print in his hand, then turns, looks at Dale)
Do you suppose, if that money is actually here, that I can simply turn this over to you..and let you give it to Bailey? Every man has his price. How do I know that Bailey's isn't a million dollars?
(He inspects piece of blue-print closely)

Dale

(Alarmed)
What do you mean to do with it?

Dick

(Turning over blue-print in his hand. Pause)
I don't know.
(Puts candle down on table. Looks at Dale)
What is it you want me to do?

Dale

Aren't you going to give it to me?

Dick

I'll have to think about that.
(Picks up highball. Takes a drink)
So the missing cashier is in the house posing as a gardener?

Dale

If you won't give it to me.. there's a detective in the house.
(She makes a turn to R. as if to call him. Then to Dick)
Give it to him -- let him search.

Dick
(Quickly, facing her - startled. Puts down glass)
A detective? What's a detective doing here?

Dale
People have been trying to break in.

Dick
What people?

Dale
I don't know.

Dick
(To himself, looking out front)
Then it IS here.
(At this moment the on stage door of the double doors up R. 3 opens, noiselessly, just an inch or so; evidently some one is listening)
I'm not going to give it to the detective.
(DICK picks up the roll of blue-prints. Quickly goes to fireplace over L. 2. Throws in the roll of blue-prints)

ELECTRICIAN WORKS
FIREGLOW UP AND DOWN

(DICK takes the small piece of blue-print from pocket, watches papers burn. DALE has followed him over to fireplace)

Dale
(Distressed, as she follows Dick over L.)
Why did you do that? You can't mean to keep that money!

Dick
(Turns and faces Dale. Near fireplace L.)
Let's suppose a few th ngs, Miss Ogden. Suppose my price is a million dollars....suppose I need money very badly....and my uncle has left me a house, containing that amount in cash... Suppose I choose to consider that that money is mine. Then it wouldn't be hard to suppose, would it, that I'd make a pretty sincere attempt to get it!

Dale
(Close up to him)
If you go out of this room with that paper, I'll scream for help!

Dick

To carry on our little game of supposing.. suppose there is a detective in this house.. and that if I were cornered I should tell him where to lay his hands on Jack Bailey. Do you suppose you would scream?

(DALE stands helpless. He quickly crosses her, front of table C. stops R. of table, looks up at double doors a moment, then he hurries up and opens double doors, makes for stairs in alcove. DALE follows him over to table C. When he starts for double doors, She picks up revolver off table and hurries up after him. Speaks as she goes)

Dale

(Suddenly desperate)

No! No! Give it to me! Give it to me!

(DALE up to Dick at foot of stairs in alcove. He turns and waits for her. He snatches the revolver from her.. A very short scuffle in the darkness of the entry in effort to secure the revolver, he unguards the piece of blue-print, which she tears from him, leaving only a corner of it in his grasp)

A LIGHT..SPOT FLASHES ON FROM THE TOP OF STAIRS OFF R. 4. COVERS HIM FROM POCKET FLASH AT FOOT OF STAIRS (SUPPOSED to be a pocket flash, held by an invisible hand, light shows him poised ready to come down after the girl, his face shows distorted with fury)

STAGE MANAGER FIRES SHOT

S H O T

(DICK falls forward dead. The revolver Dick carries falls between them. DICK lies with head just inside the double doors into the room proper, face downward. DALE backs away into room L. and above table, hides the blue-print in dress)

Dale
(With a little whimpering cry of horror)
Oh, no, no! - - -

THE STORM DIES OUT

(Pause. Count 15, then VOICES off R. 2 heard ad lib)

Voices
The noise came from this room... I think it is in here, etc.

LIGHTS FLASH ON FULL UP...FDOTS BORDER.. LAMPS AND BRACKETS

(Count 5)

(GENERAL ENTRANCE (1) DETECTIVE. He goes well on, sees body up R. 3. (2) BROOKS, he goes up R. C. beyond double doors. (3) WASHINGTON, stands above door R. 2. (4) CORNELIA, comes in and down R. below door R. 2. LIZZIE enters last and stands in doorway R. 2. NOTE: CORNELIA has commenced undressing and is in a dressing gown and LIZZIE is in old flannelette wrapper. They all perceive DALE and the body. A tense silence. DETECTIVE turns and looks at Dale)

Dale
(Stepping back, until she is almost to door L. 3)
I didn't do it! I didn't do it!

WARN CURTAIN

Detective
(Goes to body R. 2. Examines it, takes plenty of time)
He's dead.
(Pause. Picks up revolver, looks at it, then turns and goes to C. above table, looks at Dale curiously)
Who is he?

Dale
(Hysterically. L.)
Richard Fleming. Somebody shot him!

Detective
(Takes a step toward her)
What do you mean by somebody?
(CORNELIA sinks into chair down R. 1)

Dale
Oh, I don't know.
(Hysterically)
Somebody on the staircase.

Detective
Did you see anybody?

Dale
No.. there was a light from somewhere.. like a pocket flash.

Lizzie
(In doorway R. 2. Hysterically. Points up at stairs R. 3)
I TOLD you I saw a man go up that staircase.
(Pause. DETECTIVE has turned from facing Dale. He looks at LIZZIE and CORNELIA over R.)

Cornelia
(Down R. 1)
That's the only explanation, Mr. Anderson.

Detective
(Turns, looks R. Up C. Turns R. from Cornelia, who is down R.)
I've been all over the house. There's nobody there.

(CORNELIA rises. Slight pause. CORNELIA takes one step up R. Then turns)

HOUSE PHONE RINGS OVER R.E.S. ABOVE DOOR R. 2.

Cornelia
The house phone..
(Looks at the other characters)
But we're all here.
(They all stand, pause, aghast...THEN CORNELIA goes up to phone)
Hello...Hello!...
(THEY ALL STAND listening rigidly. She gasps. An expression of horror comes over her face)

THE CURTAIN FALLS SLOWLY

STAGE MANAGER'S NOTE

FOR ACT TWO

NOTE: LIGHTS FULL UP . . . O P E N I N G

Prop bread roll on floor ... for Dale to hide blue-print in.

Prop bread roll front of table center ...

**Candles on table ... not lighted ... blow out after Act One.

****Replace real phone up center with rubber phone for fight. DOCTOR and DETECTIVE.

See that cigarette DICK puts on ash tray (Act One) is not removed. Also highball.

See that piece of blue-print ... in fender of grate ... Fireplace.

Remove Dale's coat ... rubbers ... Newspaper.

****Note. For movement of characters in this act.

Switch arm chair from L. of table to left near fireplace.

Switch single chair from fireplace to L. of table C.

****Sweep up glass broken at French windows up L. C.

****See that KEY is in door. Up left 3.

****See that writing paper and pencil are up stage stand above library table center.

ACT TWO

SCENE: Same as Act One.

DISCOVERED: ALL characters ... as end of Act One. The action being continuous, they are staring aghast at CORNELIA, who still stands clutching the phone.

Only exception. LIZZIE seated down R. 1. face up stage as if she cannot stand.

Cornelia
(Gasps)
Somebody groaning. It's horrible!

(DETECTIVE Xes over from above table C. to Cornelia R. 3. SHE gives him the phone. SHE steps down R. C. of table)

Detective
(Listens in phone)
I don't hear anything.
(Slight pause)

Cornelia
I heard it! I couldn't IMAGINE such a dreadful sound! I tell you somebody in this house is in terrible distress.

Detective
Where does this phone connect?

Cornelia
Practically every room in the house.

Detective
(Puts receiver to ear again)
Just what did you hear?

Cornelia
Dreadful groans, and what seemed to be some one trying to speak.

Lizzie
(Trembling violently)
I'd go somewhere, if I had somewhere to go!
(Rises)

Cornelia
(Faces up Detective)
Won't you send these men to investigate? Or go yourself?

Detective
My place is here ... you two men ...
(To BROOKS. Up R. L. of Detective. To WASHINGTON R. above door R. 2)
Take another look through the house.

(WASHINGTON opens door R. 2)

Don't leave the building ... I'll want you pretty soon.

Brooks
If you'll give me that revolver.
(Indicating Cornelia's revolver, which DETECTIVE still holds in his hand, but carefully, as though to preserve finger-prints)

Detective
This revolver will stay where it is.

(Exit WASHINGTON first R. 2)

(Exit BROOKS second R. 2. Closes door)

(As BROOKS goes reluctantly, puzzled and anxious glance at Dale. DETECTIVE goes step R. Looks at Body, then turns quickly on Dale. Steps over up L. C. to Dale)

Now I want the real story. You lied before.

Cornelia
(Down to L. C. indignantly)
That is no tone to use! You'll only terrify her.

Detective
(Turns, looks at Cornelia)
Where were you when this happened?

(DALE moves down L. a little)

Cornelia
Upstairs in my room.

Detective
(To Lizzie)
And you?

Lizzie
(R.)
In MY room ... And alone, if you please. Like a decent woman.

Detective
(X to table. Breaks revolver and looks at it)
One shot has been fired from this revolver.

Cornelia
(Looking over shoulder)
I fired that myself, this afternoon.

Detective
(Comes down R. C.)
You're a quick thinker.
(Places revolver on table C.)

Cornelia
I demand that you get the sheriff here. And the coroner, or medical examiner, or whatever he is.

Lizzie
Doctor Wells is the coroner. The sheriff's sick. He's got the mumps.

Detective
(Goes up to phone)
I'll call the doctor. What's his number?

Dale
He's not at his office. He was going to the Johnsons'.

Cornelia
(Goes up to phone. Takes phone from detective)
I'll call the doctor. Do you mind covering that body?

(DETECTIVE eyes her in a rather ugly fashion, then gets Fleming's raincoat on chair down R. Goes up to body R. 3. Throws coat over it)

(CORNELIA with small local telephone book)

Detective
(To Dale)
Now, what was Fleming doing here?

(DALE down to chair L. at fireplace)

Dale

I don't know.

Detective

Well, I'll ask that question another way. How did he get into the house?

(CORNELIA at phone up C....l...4)

Dale

He had a key. He used to live here.

Detective

A key to what door?

Dale

To that door over there.
(Indicating terrace door up R. 3)

Cornelia

(At phone)
Hello ... Is that Mr. Johnson's residence? Is Dr. Wells there? No?

(DETECTIVE turns during this, watches Cornelia, and sees piece of blue-print in fireplace. CORNELIA pauses, listens in on phone)

All right, thank you, good night.
(Hangs up phone, puzzled. SHE comes down to R. table C. Same time DETECTIVE registers, sees ashes of blue-prints in fireplace over L. back of Dale)

Detective

(Steps back to L. C. To Dale)
When did you take that revolver out of the table drawer?

Dale

When I heard him outside, on the terrace. I was frightened.

Lizzie

(Tiptoes over to Cornelia, R. C.)
You wanted a detective! I hope you're happy now you've got one!

(CORNELIA gives Lizzie a look. LIZZIE goes back to R. 1)

Detective

(To Dale)
When he came in what did he say to you?

(CORNELIA sits)

Dale .
Just ... something about the weather.

Detective
You didn't have any quarrel with him?

Dale
(After hesitation)
Certainly not.

Detective
He just came in that door ... said something about the weather ... and was shot from that staircase? Is that it?

Dale
(After a moment's hesitation)
Well, more or less.

Cornelia
(R. C. at table)
Are all these questions necessary? Youncan't for a moment believe that Miss Ogden killed that man?

(DALE sits armchair at fireplace)

Detective
(Looks at Dale)
I think she knows more than she's telling ... she's concealing something. The nephew of the president of the Union Bank, shot in his own house on the day the robbery is discovered. That's queer enough.
(HE turns, looks at Cornelia)
But when the only person present at his murder is the girl who is engaged to the guilty cashier ...
(Looks at Dale)
I want to know more about it!
(Picks up cigarette Dick put on ash tray Act One)

Cornelia
(Rises)
Is that true, Dale?

Dale
Yes.

Cornelia
Even so. What has THAT got to do with this?
(To Detective)

Detective
(Turning to Cornelia)
I'm not accusing this girl. I say she had the chance, the weapon and the motive. I say he didn't just come in and get shot. I say he was here long enough to smoke this cigarette -- no lipstick on it -- and to drink part of that highball.

ELECTRICIAN READY TO WORK BAT LIGHT. L TO R. ACROSS WINDOWS UP L. C.

(DALE's hand instinctively goes to her bosom where she has concealed the blue-print. Her expression shows that she realizes that her having the blue-print is damaging evidence against her. DETECTIVE who has been facing CORNELIA, now turns on Dale)

What papers did he burn in that grate?
(Slight pause)

Dale
Papers!

Detective
(Up L. C.)
Papers! The ashes are still there.
(HE goes to fireplace L. above Dale, picks up small piece of blue-print from the fender. Back to left C. Looks at Dale)
A fragment of what is technically known as a blue-print. What were you and Richard Fleming doing with a blue-print?

(DALE hesitates)

Now think it over! The truth will come out sooner or later! Lies won't help.

(BROOKS runs on from R. 2 followed by WASHINGTON. BROOKS up to R. 3. WASHINGTON R. 2 above door)

Brooks
(Breathlessly)
Nobody in the house, sir.

Washington
(Eyes rolling)
Not unless he got in the furnace and burnt hisself up.

(BOTH start for door R. 2, as if to continue search)

Detective
You men stay here! I want to ask you some questions.
(Then to Dale)
Now, what about this blue-print?

Dale
(Listlessly. Is still seated at fireplace)
I'll tell you just what happened. I sent for Richard Fleming and when he came I asked him if he knew where there were any blue-prints of the house.

Detective
WHY did you want blue-prints?

Dale
Because I believe old Mr. Fleming took the money himself, from the Union Bank, and hid it here.

Detective
Where did you get that idea?

Dale
I just -- thought so. I'd heard there was a hidden room here.

Detective
I see. A hidden room. Did you locate it?

Dale
(Hesitates)
No.

Detective
Then why did you burn the blue-prints?

Dale
HE burned them. I don't KNOW why.

Detective
Then you didn't locate this hidden room?

Dale
No.

Detective
Did he?

Cornelia
What's that?
(DALE rises)

Detective
What's what?

Cornelia

I heard something.

ELECTRICIAN. BAT LIGHT ON WINDOWS

(THEY ALL turn, look up stage at windows L. C. BROOKS up R. C. near window. WASHINGTON R. of him. CORNELIA R. C. at table down stage. DETECTIVE over L. DALE down L. at fireplace)

(Suddenly from outside a circle of brilliant white light is thrown on the window shades up stage. In the center of the light area is seen a vivid black shadow resembling a gigantic Black BAT. For an instant it glows there, travelling from L. to R. and disappears)

Lizzie

(Over R. 1. Wails)
Oh, my God ... it's the Bat ... That's his sign.

(BROOKS starts up R. 3 for the terrace door)

READY DOOR BELL

Cornelia

Wait, Brooks!
(Then to Detective)
Mr. Anderson, you are familiar with the sign of the Bat. Did that look like it?

Detective

(Puzzled and evidently disturbed)
Well ... it looked like the shadow of a bat ... I'll say that.

(ALL look at door R. 2)

DOOR BELL RINGS OFF

Brooks

I'll answer that!

Cornelia

(Gives him key off table C. SHE is R. C. above chair)
Don't admit any one until you know who it is.

(BROOKS exits R. 2. THEY all stand and wait. CORNELIA, hand ready to pick up her revolver on table where Detective has laid it. BROOKS and WELLS' VOICES heard off R. 2, raised in angry dispute. Some evidence of a slight scuffle ad lib. "What's all this about a flashlight?" "Take your hands off me.")

(Then WELLS enters R. 2. hat on, followed by BROOKS. HE comes downR. faces Cornelia who is R. of table C. HE is ruffled and enraged. BROOKS close behind him, and then to L. of him, vigilant and watchful. CORNELIA relieved, takes hand from revolver)

Doctor

My dear Miss Van Gorder. Won't you instruct your servants that even if I do make a late call, I am not to be received with violence!

(Takes off hat, bag on chair)

Brooks

(Strong)

I asked you if you had a pocket flash about you. If you call a question like that violence ...

Cornelia

It's all right, Brooks.

(BROOKS places key on table and goes up stage R. C.)

You see, Dr. Wells, just a moment before you rang the bell a circle of white light was thrown on those window shades.

Doctor

(Down R.)

Why ... that was probably the headlights from my car ... I noticed as I drove up that they fell directly on that window.

Lizzie

(Done R. 1. R. of Doctor. With deep suspicion)

"He may be a merchant, a lawyer, or a doctor - - - "

Cornelia

(Suspiciously watching the doctor)

In the center of this ring of light there was an almost perfect silhouette of a bat.

Doctor

A bat? Ah ... I see ... the symbol of the criminal of that name ...

(Laughs)

I think I can explain what you saw ... quite often my headlights collect insects at night. A large moth spread on the glass would give practically the effect you speak of. Just to satisfy you ... I'll go out and take a look.

(HE turns and is about to go up R. C. when he sees body on floor. At same time CORNELIA to front of table L. C. turns and faces up to Doctor)

Doctor (Cont'd)

Why ...

(Startled, stares at covered body. Then he glances from covered boy on floor to the faces of the others)

Cornelia

(L. C. at table facing DOCTOR who is up R. C.)

We have had a tragedy here, doctor.

Doctor

(Turns, looks at Cornelia)

Who?

Cornelia

Richard Fleming.

Doctor

(Pause, horrified)

Richard Fleming! Good God!

(Bends over body, turns raincoat back)

Cornelia

Shot and killed, from that staircase.

Detective

(Up L. C.)

Shot and killed, anyhow.

Doctor

(On knees, L. of body. HE has been blithe and gay up to that moment, seems almost instantly to become aged. His face is stricken. HE repeats)

From that stairway.

(Rises. Straightens up and glances up the stairs)

What was Richard Fleming doing in this house at this hour?

Detective

That's what I'm trying to find out.

(DOCTOR looks over at Detective. DOCTOR is puzzled)

Cornelia

Doctor ... this is Mr. Anderson.

(DOCTOR Xes to Detective L. C. above table. THEY shake hands)

Detective

(To Doctor)
Headquarters.

Lizzie

(Xes from R.1to table C. Loud whis per to Cornelia)
Don't you let him fool you with any of that moth business. He's The Bat!

(SHE sees remainder of highball table C. Drinks it. Sits R. C. of table C.)

Cornelia

(To Doctor)
I didn't tell you, doctor. I sent for a detective this afternoon.

(Then suspiciously)
You happened in very opportunely.

Doctor

(Pulling himself together)
After I left the Johnsons, I felt very uneasy. I determined to make one more effort to get you away from this house. As this shows, my fears were justified.

(CORNELIA sits L. C.)
(Takes off muffler, puts in pocket of overcoat. Takes off overcoat, throws it up stage on settee, front of French windows. HE takes out handkerchief, mops face and neck as though under great mental excitement. Looks over at body, then looks at Cornelia)
Died instantly, I suppose.

(Looks L. at Detective)
Didn't have time to say anything?

READY TO RING HOUSE PHONE

Detective

(Looking at Dale)
Ask the young lady. She was here when it happened.

(DOCTOR looks at Dale)

Dale

(Pitifully)
He just fell over.

(L. There is no question but that the DOCTOR is relieved. He draws a long breath)

Doctor

(Looking at body. Speaks as HE moves to R. C. Xes above table)
Poor Dick has proved my case for me better than I expected.

Doctor (Cont'd)
(Stops R. C. Turns, looks at Detective, who stands up L.)
Mr. Anderson, I ask you to use your influence to see that these two ladies find some safer spot than this for the night.

Lizzie
(Half rises. SHE is seated R. of table C.)
Two? What about me? If you know any safe spot, lead me to it.

Cornelia
(To L. of table C.)
(Shivers)
I feel as though somebody is watching me. Some one I can't see.

(LIZZIE hiccups loudly. ALL turn to look at her)

(WASHINGTON up to window, scared, pulls shade aside, looks out, then quickly to table C. Gets key, and quickly tiptoes out R. 2. Closes door. WASHINGTON has seen something outside when HE looks out window. Moves down while the others are not looking at him. Pretending to straighten the tray which LIZZIE brought on Act One. HE gets possession of front door key table C. and exits R. 2. LIZZIE speaks on word cue, does not wait for WASHINGTON's business)

Lizzie
(Voice slightly thick, clutching at Cornelia across table)
I wish the lights would go out again. No, I don't either!
(LIZZIE Xes to door R. 2. Stands there)

Detective
(Steps to C. above table. To Doctor)
You say, doctor, you came back to take these women away from the house? Why?

Doctor
(Up R. C. back of chair)
I'm sure Miss Van Gorder has explained. That body is the answer.

Detective
(To Doctor)
You expected a murder?

Doctor
Certainly not. Nevertheless - - -

Cornelia
Mr. Anderson believes Dale did it, doctor.

(DOCTOR looks shocked)

Detective

(Up L.)
I haven't said that.

(HOUSE TELEPHONE rings. ALL CHARACTERS startled. Turn, look at phone, CORNELIA and DALE rise)

Dale

(Down L.)
The house telephone...Again!

(CORNELIA makes movement as if to answer it)

Detective

(Going to phone across above table. Takes up phone R.3)
I'll answer that! Hello! Hello!
(The DOCTOR's face is a study in fear. HE clutches the back of chair R. of table C. to steady himself)
There's nobody there!
(Hangs up phone)
Where's that darky?
(Looking at door R.2. DALE relieved. Sits down L. LIZZIE sits R.1)

Cornelia
He just went out.

Detective

(Leaves phone. Comes down R. of Doctor)
(To Doctor)
You see, doctor, Miss Van Gorder believes this murder is a part of what has been happening here the last few days. I do not.

READY BERESFORD and
WASHINGTON R.2.

Cornelia
Then what is the significance of the anonymous letters? Of the man Lizzie saw going up the stairs, of the attempts to break into the house? Of the ringing of that house telephone bell?

Detective
(Deliberately)
Terrorization. That's all.

Doctor
(R.C. back of chair. Moistening his dry lips)
By whom?

Detective
(R. With cold deliberation)
I imagine, by Miss Van Gorder's own servants. By that woman..
(Points at LIZZIE who is R.1. LIZZIE rises)
Who probably writes the letters..by the gardener, who may have been the man Lizzie saw slipping up the stairs.. by the negro butler, who can ring the telephone from anywhere in the house.

Cornelia
And just why would they do all this?

Detective
That's what I'm going to find out.

Cornelia
Absurd... the butler was in this room when the telephone rang the first time.

(Ad lib, noise between BERESFORD and WASHINGTON off R.2. Violent scuffle. ALL turn at door R.2. Door opens and REGINALD BERESFORD is catapulted into the room by WASHINGTON. BERESFORD falls to floor well down R.C. WASHINGTON stands in doorway. Is pleased with himself. Grins. BERESFORD speaks as he picks himself up. Brushes clothes off. Carries hat)

Beresford
(Turning on Washington)
Damn it, what the hell do you mean by attacking me?

Washington
What you-all doin', hangin' around here?

Beresford
(To Washington)
Give me that flashlight.
(Takes flashlight from Washington. Looks at others)
What's all this about, anyhow?

Washington
He was on the terrace outside there with that flashlight.
(HE points upstage)
Trying to get in the house.

Beresford
That's a lie. It's dark out there. I was trying to find a door bell.

Detective
(Comes down)
Why did you want in?

Beresford
Why shouldn't I want in? Who are you?
(DETECTIVE shows him his badge, inside wallet, which he takes from his pocket)
H'm.
(Takes out gold cigarette case. Is very nonchalant)
Very pretty...nice, neat design...very chaste!
(HE takes a swift glance around room. Sees DALE over L. Suddenly senses a situation, without suspecting a tragedy)

Detective
If you've finished admiring my badge, I'd like to know why you wanted to enter this house.

Beresford
(Hesitates, glances at Dale, then)
Well, I've had some trouble with my car down the road.
(Looks again at Dale)
I came to ask if I might telephone.

Cornelia
(Suspecting the bat they had seen before doctor's entrance might be on flashlight)
(To Detective)
You might examine that flashlight, Mr. Anderson.

(DETECTIVE jerks flashlight from Beresford. Examines it. BERESFORD puzzled)

Beresford
See here, what's going on?

Detective
Who are you? What's your name?

Beresford. Reginald Beresford.

Detective
What's your business?

Beresford
What's my business here?

Detective
How do you earn your living.

Beresford
Well, for what it's worth, I'm a lawyer.

Lizzie
(Hiccups)
He may be a lawyer!

Detective
What brought you here?

Beresford
I told you. My car - - -

Dale
(Suddenly)
Oh, don't you see... He's trying to protect me ... It's no use, Mr. Beresford.

(CORNELIA turns and steps L. beyond chair L. of table. DALE comes over to L. of table. CORNELIA places Dale in chair L. of table, placing her hand on Dale's shoulder)

Beresford
(R.)
I see... Well, the plain truth is... I didn't know the situation.. and I thought I'd play safe, for Miss Ogden's sake.

Dale
(To Detective)
He doesn't know anything about - - -
(Pause)
this. He brought Mr. Fleming here in his car. That's all.

Detective
(To Beresford)
Is that true?

Beresford
Yes ... I got tired waiting and so I ...

Detective
(Breaks in curtly)
All right ... Let it go.
(Turns, takes a step up R.C.)
Now, doctor.
(Nods toward body. BERESFORD turns, follows Detective's glance, stands rigid)

Beresford
(Tensely)
What's that?
(DOCTOR uncovers body and kneels beside it. Faces right, left side of body, up R.3)
(Thickly)
That's not ... Fleming... is it?
(Looks at DETECTIVE who is up R.C. DETECTIVE nods head. BERESFORD paralyzed with shock)

Doctor
(To Detective)
If it's all right, I'll move the body to where I can have a better light.

Beresford
(Takes another step up and says, with force)
Do you mean to say that Dick Fleming...

(DOCTOR takes paper from Dick's hand. BERESFORD throws cigarette to floor as HE starts up)

Detective
(Interrupting, eyes on Doctor, silences Beresford with an uplifted hand. Then, menacingly, to Doctor)
What have you got there, doctor?

Doctor
(On knees beside body)
What do you mean?

Detective
You took something just then, out of Fleming's hand.

Doctor
I took nothing out of his hand.

Detective
I warn you not to obstruct the course of justice. Give it here.

Doctor
(Gets up and hands Detective small piece of blue-print he took out of Fleming's hand)
It's a scrap of paper .. Nothing at all.

(DOCTOR Xes around body to R. side)

Detective
(With blue-print, down to back of table C. Eyes the Doctor)
Scraps of paper are sometimes very important.
(Looks at Dale)

Beresford
(Angry. Xes few steps over and up to Detective R.C.)
Look here ... I've got a right to know about this thing. I brought Fleming over here ... and I want to know what happened to him.

Lizzie
(Down R.1. Overcome)
You don't have to be a mind-reader to know that!

Beresford
(To Detective)
Who killed him ... that's what I want to know.

Detective
Well, you're not alone in that.

Doctor
(Uneasily)
Can't we get this body away? These ladies - - -

(DETECTIVE up to body, turns body half over, then lets it fall back on face. Same as before, DETECTIVE steps back. Glances from blue-print in his hand to Doctor. DETECTIVE takes off the overcoat from body. Drops it up R.C.)

Detective
All right.
(Comes down little R.C.)

Cornelia
Into the library, please.

(CORNELIA goes over to fireplace L. 2. While body is being moved. DALE watches Detective. DOCTOR in alcove. Takes hold of body by legs. BERESFORD right side, hands WASHINGTON his cap. Takes body under arm. BROOKS left side, under arm. DOCTOR going off first below stairs and R. WASHINGTON comes up R. DETECTIVE L. of WASHINGTON also comes up. DETECTIVE follows body off R. 3. As body disappears, LIZZIE up to double doors. Then WASHINGTON picks up the coat up R. C. where Detective dropped it. WASHINGTON exits with coat. DALE gets piece of blue-print from front of dress and gets roll from floor, front of table, center. SHE puts blue-print in the roll, replaces roll on floor. WASHINGTON returns from R. 2 door. Enters, goes to table, picks up tray. Adds highball glass. Sees roll on floor, places it on tray, turns with tray, takes a step R.)

Cornelia
Put that tray in the dining room, Washington.

(DETECTIVE enters and steps down, in front of WASHINGTON R. C.)

Detective
Wait, I'll look at that tray.
(DETECTIVE makes a thorough search of the tray, even examines the napkin, lifts the dishes, etc. DALE sits tensely apprehensive. DETECTIVE fails to find anything)
All right, take it away.

(WASHINGTON exits R. 2 with tray)

Cornelia
(Xes to R. C.)
Lizzie, go out to the kitchen and make some fresh coffee ... I'm sure we'll all need it.

Lizzie
Go out in that kitchen ... alone?
(Down R.)

Cornelia
(Sits L. C.)
Washington is there.

Lizzie
He's got a razor. He's got it in his shoe.

Cornelia
Well, don't annoy him!

(LIZZIE Xes to door R. 2. Gives Cornelia an appealing look. Exits)

Detective
(To back of table C. Looks at piece of blue-print in his hand, and then at Dale)
Now, Miss Ogden. I have here a scrap of blue-print, which was in Dick Fleming's hand when he was killed. I'll trouble you for the rest of it.

Dale
(Is seated L. of table C.)
The rest of it?

Detective
Don't tell me that he started to go out of this house holding a blank scrap of blue paper in his hand. He didn't start to go out at all!

Dale
(Rises and goes L. one step)
WHY do you say that?

Detective
His hat is there on that table. His coat - - -

Cornelia
(Is seated R. C. of table C. Disturbed)
If you're keeping anything back, Dale, tell him.

Detective
(Xes down L. C.)
She's keeping something back all right. She's told part of the truth, but not all.
(To Dale)
You and Fleming located that room by means of a blue-print of the house. He started ... not to go out, but to go up that staircase. And he had in his hand the rest of this!
(HE holds out the scrap of blue-print)
(Lights a cigarette. Tries to look nonchalant)

Dale
(Slight pause)
He was going to take the money and go away with it!

Cornelia
(Alarmed)
Dale!

Dale
(Xes to L. of table)
He changed the minute he heard about it ... he was all right before that, but afterwards ...
(SHE closes her eyes, Xes to L.)

Detective
(Turns triumphantly to Cornelia)
She started in to find the money ... and save Bailey, but to do it, she had to take Fleming into her confidence, and he turned yellow. Rather than let him get away with it ... she ...
(HE makes expressive gesture, hand on hip pocket. DALE registers. HE indicates revolver. Then to Dale)
That's the fact, isn't it?

Dale
(Step down L.)
No. I didn't kill him.

Detective
Why didn't you call for help? You knew I was here.

Dale
(Hesitates. Puts down cigarette)
I couldn't.
(Step toward him, then step back L.)

Cornelia
(Agitated, rises)
Dale! Be careful what you say!

Detective
(Advances step to Dale)
Now I mean to find out two things. WHY you didn't call for help, and WHAT you have done with the blue-print?

Dale
Suppose I could find that piece of blue-print for you? Would that establish Jack Bailey's innocence?

Detective
If the money's there ... yes.

Cornelia
(Rises, Xes to L. and to Dale, between Dale and Detective, turns on Detective)
But her own guilt, too. No, Mr. Anderson ... granting that she knows where that paper is ... and she has not said that she does,

Cornelia (Cont'd)
I shall want more time, and much legal advice, before I allow her to turn it over to you.

(Enter from R. 3 below on stairs, DOCTOR, BERESFORD and BROOKS silently. BROOKS stands well up R. C.)

Detective
(Turns and looks up at them)
Well, doctor?

Cornelia
(Over L.)
Were there any powder marks?

Doctor
No ... and the clothing was not burned. He was apparently shot from some little distance, and I should say, from above.
(Comes down R. 1)

Detective
Beresford, did Fleming tell you why he came here tonight?
(DOCTOR well down R. BERESFORD Xes over and up to R. C. DETECTIVE over to back of table up C.)

Beresford
No. He seemed to be in a great hurry, said Miss Ogden had telephoned for him, and asked me to drive him over.

Detective
Why did you come up to the house?

Beresford
Well!
(Looks over at Dale, who is L.)
I thought it was putting rather a premium on friendship to keep me sitting out in the rain all night, so I came up the drive and, by the way!
(Suddenly remembering)
I picked this up, about a hundred feet from the house.
(Pulls out a man's battered open face silver watch from pocket, holds it out on his hand)
A man's watch. It was partly crushed into the ground, and you see it's stopped running.

Detective
(Taking it, and examining it)
Yes!
(Thoughtfully)
At ten-thirty ...

Beresford
I used my pocket flashlight to find my way, and what first attracted my attention was the ground torn up. Any one here recognize the watch?

(DETECTIVE shows watch, holding it up, so all can see it. No one replies)

You didn't hear any evidence of a struggle, did you?

Cornelia

(L. C.)
Just about ten-thirty, Lizzie heard somebody cry out, in the grounds.

(DETECTIVE looks Beresford over)

Beresford
I don't suppose it has any bearing on this case, but it's interesting.

(DETECTIVE having finished his examination of the watch, slips it into his pocket)

Cornelia

(Suspiciously)
Do you always carry a flaghlight, Mr. Beresford?

Beresford
Always at night in the car. With the country either dimmed out or blacked out -- yes.

Detective
This is all you found?

Beresford
Yes.

Cornelia

(Sits L. of table C.)
Some day I hope to meet the real estate agent who promised me that I would sleep here as I never slept before! He's right! I've slept with my clothes on every night since I came!

(Enter WASHINGTON hurriedly, R. 2. HE carries a butcher knife in one hand. His face is excited)

Washington
(Comes on to R. C. to Cornelia)
Gimme the kitchen door key, please, ma'am.

Cornelia

Key? What for?

Washington

Somebody's trying to get in. I saw the knob turning.
(Illustrates by turning hand)
I was lookin' straight at it. It went like this. Ain't no ghos' turn a door knob.

(THEY are all startled)

Detective

(Quickly puts hand to revolver in pocket)
You're sure of that, are you?
(Roughly to WASHINGTON)

Washington

What you think I'm doin'? Scarin' myself to death?

Detective

(Looks at CORNELIA, who is L. C.)
Where's that hysterical woman, Lizzie? She may get a bullet in her if she's not careful.

(DALE sits)

Washington

She seen it too. She's shut in the closet.

Detective

Doctor, have you a gun?

Doctor

(Down R. 2)
No.

Detective

How about you, Beresford?

Beresford

(Hesitates)
Yes ... always carry one in the country.

(CORNELIA registers this)

Detective

(Up R. C.)
Beresford, will you go with the butler here to the kitchen?
(Exit WASHINGTON R. 2 leaving door open)
If any one's working at the knob, shoot through the door. I'm going around to take a look outside.
(Starts up for double doors R. 3)

Beresford

(To Detective)
Better not turn any knobs yourself.

Detective

Much obliged.
(Exit DETECTIVE terrace door up in alcove. Closes door. At same time BERESFORD exits R. 2)

Brooks

(To Beresford)
I'll go with you if you don't mind.
(Exit BROOKS R. 2 closing door)

(DOCTOR Xes up to below staircase)

READY OPERATOR ON SPOT. SET FOR STAIRS. UP AND OFF R. 4

Cornelia

(L. C. at table. To Doctor)
Doctor.

READY ELECTRICIAN

Doctor

Yes?

Cornelia

Have YOU any theory about this occurrence, tonight?
(Watching him closely)

Doctor

(Down R.)
None whatever ... it's beyond me.

Cornelia

And yet you warned me to leave the house.
(Stops knitting)
You had no reason to believe that the situation was as serious as it has proved to be?

Doctor

I did the perfectly obvious thing when I warned you.
(Sits. Lights cigarette)
Those letters made a distinct threat.

Cornelia

(Pause)
You said he'd probably been shot from above.

Doctor

Yes, apparently!

Cornelia

(Suddenly)
Have you a pocket flashlight, doctor?

Doctor
(Hesitates. Then smiles)
Why ... yes ... a flashlight is more important to a country doctor than castor oil.

Cornelia
(Turns to DALE who is over L.)
Dale, you said you saw a white light shining down from above?

Dale
Yes.

Cornelia
(Xes front of table C. to Doctor over R. C.)
May I borrow your flashlight?
(Rises. DOCTOR gives her his pocket flashlight)
Now when I've got that fool detective out of the way I want to do something ...
(Xes to R.)
Doctor, I shall ask you to stand at the foot of the small staircase facing up.

Doctor
(Puts down cigarette)
Now?

Cornelia
Now, please.

(DOCTOR walks up R. and into alcove, takes position foot of stairs. CORNELIA Xes to R. 2. Turns, looks at Dale)
And Dale ... when I give the word, put out the lights there, and then tell me when I have reached the point on the staircase from which the flashlight seemed to come. All ready ...

(DALE moves up L. at door, ready to turn out stand lamp. CORNELIA at door R. 2)
I shall go up this way and down the other.
(Exit CORNELIA R. 2 closing door. DOCTOR looking up staircase. His face changes, showing surprise and apprehension. HE glances back into room, and over to L. to see if Dale can see him. SHE cannot. To somebody, evidently at top of stairs, HE makes an insistent gesture, "Go back, go back."

(DALE turns out stand lamp up L. DALE then walks by the French windows, to electric button up C. Stands with finger on button, SHE faces right. DALE Xes to button, and stands there for cue from CORNELIA)

LIGHTS COME DOWN LITTLE

(THE UNKNOWN reaches hand in through the broken window pane in French window, turns knob on window, unlocking the window door. Then the window door is pushed inward, evidently to admit a crouching figure. When UNKNOWN is in and behind couch, which he pushes down to make room for his body, HE closes the door in window. Only HIS HAND seen during this business.

When UNKNOWN is on stage back of settee and window closes, UNKNOWN pushes button of signal light cable, which runs from center of window off stage to end of stairs off R. 4. Small light on (R.4)

Cornelia
(Speaks from top of staircase R. 4)
All right! Put out the lights!

(DALE pushes button on wall up C. Lights out. ALL DARK)

(DALE steps just inside alcove, looks up and off stairs. SHE leans heavily against the double door)
(CORNELIA off)
Was it here?

SOFT FOCUSES ON DOCTOR'S FACE

(DOCTOR stands at foot of stairs looking up)

Dale
Come down a little.

Doctor
(To Cornelia with an attempt at jocularity)
I hope you have no weapon.

Cornelia
(OFF)
How's this?

LOWER SPOT VERY SLIGHTLY

Dale

That's about right.

Cornelia

(Off)
Lights, please.

(DALE pushes the wall button)

SPOT OFF
LIGHTS UP
FOOTS, BORDER AND BRACKETS AND LAMPS FULL ON

(CORNELIA has evidently left the staircase. DALE back into room. SHE goes down L. C. to table C. DOCTOR backs into room. HE comes down R. C.)

Dale

(L. table, sits)
Doctor, I'm so frightened!

Doctor

(Down to her L.)
Why, my dear child? Because you happened to be in the room when a crime is committed?

Dale
But he has a perfect case against me.

Doctor

That's absurd!

Dale

No.

Doctor

YOU DON'T MEAN - - - ?

Dale

(Horrified)
I DIDN'T KILL HIM. But, you know the piece of blue-print you found in his hand?

Doctor

(Tensely)
Yes?

Dale
That was another piece ... a larger piece ... I got it from him just before ...

Doctor

(Trying to control his excitement)
Why did you do such a thing?

Dale

Oh, I'll explain that later. It's not safe where it is ... Washington may throw it out, or burn it without knowing ...

Doctor

Let me understand this. The butler has that paper now?

Dale

He doesn't know he has it. It was in one of the rolls that went out on the tray.

Doctor

(Slight pause)
Now don't you worry about it. I'll get it.
(HE starts right, stops, turns to Dale)
But you oughtn't to have it in your possession.
(Comes L. a step, toward her)
Why not let it be burned?

Dale

(Startled)
Oh, no! It's important ... it's vital!

Doctor

The tray is in the dining room?

Dale

Yes.

(DOCTOR to door R. W. exits, closing door. UNKNOWN back of settee up L. C. front of window. Raises himself, just for a second. Is wet. (Audience just sees top of his head) Moves settee, slightly. DALE Xes slowly to fireplace L. 1. Enter BROOKS R. 2 closes door behind him. HE carries two logs of wood for fire. DALE turns, sees him, SHE comes a few steps R. BROOKS Xes over to L. C. front of table)
(As soon as BROOKS is on)
Oh! Things have gone awfully wrong, haven't they?

Brooks

Be careful!
(Turns, looks R. and around room. Xes to L. C.)
I don't trust even the furniture in this house tonight!
(Moves L. to Dale. Kisses her, then Xes back of her to fireplace, L. 1. Raises his voice very formally)
Miss Van Gorder said to keep the fire going.

Brooks (Cont'd)
(Drops wood, turns back to Dale, speaks in undertone)
Play up!

Dale
(Distinctly)
Because Mr. Anderson is staying here tonight.
(Then, undertone, facing R. away from him)
Jack, I'm nearly distracted!

(BROOKS drops wood at fireplace, and quickly comes up behind her, puts his arms around her)

Brooks
Dale, pull yourself together. We've got a fight ahead of us.
(As HE releases her and starts back to fireplace)
These old-fashioned fireplaces eat up a lot of wood.
(Drops on knees, places wood inside fender)

Dale
(Turns and goes toward him, leans on arms of armchair, which is between them)
You know why I sent for Richard Fleming, don't you?

Brooks
(On knees, turns and faces her)
Yes ... but who in God's name killed him?

Dale
Jack, you didn't, did you?

Brooks
Use some sense. Why would I? How about the fellow Lizzie saw going upstairs?

Dale
Then where is he?
(Is conscious that some one is coming. To Brooks)
Be careful!
(BROOKS turns to fireplace, works with logs. CORNELIA enters R. 2 closes door behind her. SHE carries her knitting bag. SHE sees Brooks at fireplace as soon as she enters. Coming R. C. to table C.)

Cornelia
(Briskly)
Well, Mr. Alopecia ... Urticaria ... Rubeola ... Otherwise Bailey.

Cornelia (Cont'd)
(BROOKS rises with a start, faces her. Stares at her. Look between DALE and BROOKS)
I wish you young people would remember that even at sixty the mind still functions.
(SHE reaches into her knitting bag and brings out a cabinet photograph of Brooks)
His photograph ... sitting on your toilet table!
(DALE Xes over to L. C. across table from Cornelia. To Dale, as CORNELIA holds out the photograph toward her)
If that detective hasn't seen it yet he's blind.

Dale
(Takes photograph, but continues to stand facing Cornelia. Then glances at Brooks, and back at Cornelia)
Then ... you knew?

Cornelia
(Sitting R. of table C.)
My dear child, I have employed many gardeners in my time, and never before had one who wore silk socks, who talked like Harvard condescending to Yale ...
(BROOKS registers this by looking down)
and who regards baldness as a plant instead of a calamity.
(DALE Xes to fireplace, throws photograph in fire)

Brooks
(At the same time, Xes to L. C. facing Cornelia)
Do you know why I'm here?

Cornelia
I do ... and a pretty mess you've put me in by coming here. If that detective was as smart as he thinks he is, he'd have had you an hour ago.
(SHE rises, Xes Brooks to L. toward Dale, then DALE becomes very grave)
Now, I want to ask YOU something. Was there a blue-print and did you get it from Richard Fleming?

Dale
(L.)
Yes.

Brooks
(L. C. facing Cornelia and Dale)
Dale! Don't you see where this places you? If you had it why didn't you give it to Anderson when he asked for it?

Cornelia
(L. between them)
Because she didn't want to go to the electric chair. Don't be an idiot.

Brooks
But she could have no MOTIVE.

Cornelia
Couldn't she? Mr. Anderson thinsk she could ... to save you!

Brooks
(Takes step back. Slight pause)
Good God!

Cornelia
(Close to Dale)
Where is the paper now?

Dale
The doctor is getting it for me.

Cornelia
WHAT!

Dale
It was on the tray Washington took out.

Cornelia
(Puts hands up ... depressed)
Well, I'm afraid everything's over.
(SHE Xes to R. C. front of table C.)

Dale
(Plaintively, follows to L. C. BROOKS
same time Xes Dale to L.)
I didn't know what else to do.

Cornelia
(R. C. looks door R. 2)
One of two things will happen now. Either the doctor's an honest man, in which case he will hand that paper to the detective, or he is NOT an honest man, and he will keep it for himself. I don't think he's an honest man.
(Sits. Turns to Dale)
Now let's be clear about this. Had Richard Fleming actually learned that there was a concealed room in this house?

Dale
Yes. He said so. He was starting up to it when - - -

Cornelia
Just what did you tell him?

Dale
That I believed there was a hidden room in the house, and that the money from the Union Bank might be in it.

Cornelia
Could any one have overheard?

Dale
I don't know ... we were very cautious.
(Goes up L. C.)

Cornelia
Then the money ... is ...

Brooks
(Breaking in, irritable, L.)
What does the money matter now? We've got to save her.
(Indicating Dale)

Cornelia
The money matters a great deal. Someone who was in this house knew about this room. After all, the course of reasoning that you followed, Mr. Bailey, is not necessarily unique.
(Rises X R.)
Somebody else may have suspected that Courtleigh Fleming robbed his own bank.
(Rises, turns R. Looks at Doctor's bag on chair down R. 1)
Find the man who followed <u>your</u> course of reasoning, and you have found the murderer.
(Goes to chair R. 1. Touches Doctor's bag)

Brooks
(L.)
With that reasoning, you might suspect ME!

Cornelia
(Turns, looks at Brooks)
I have.
(DALE turns, looks at Brooks)
However I now suspect somebody else.
(CORNELIA quickly goes up R. C. SHE rings bell, pushes button on wall up C.)

Dale
(Goes up L. C. Meets Cornelia back of table C.)
Then you think the Doctor may give the paper to Mr. Anderson?

Cornelia
He may, or he may not.

Cornelia (Cont'd)

(Enter WASHINGTON R. 2. CORNELIA takes a step toward Washington)

I want to know the moment ANYBODY GOES UPSTAIRS. I want to know ... immediately.

(WASHINGTON is about to exit R. 2)

Oh, Washington.

(SHE steps up, looks up at stairs, then)

Where is the doctor?

Washington

(Grins)

He's eating that detective's supper in the dining room.

Cornelia

And Mr. Beresford?

Washington

(Grins again)

He's sittin' on the kitchen floor, with a gun.

(CORNELIA motions Washington to go. HE exits R. 2)

Cornelia

(To Dale)

Dale, watch that door.

(Indicating door R. 2. DALE XES down to door R. 2)

And warn me if any one is coming.

(CORNELIA goes down to chair R. 1., gets doctor's bag, carries it to table center, places it on table, up stage end, turns to Brooks)

Get some soot.

Brooks

(L. C.)

Soot?

Cornelia

Yes, soot, from the back of that fireplace.

(BROOKS takes envelope from pocket, goes to fireplace, reaches far in, scrapes back of fireplace -- envelope blackened. At same time CORNELIA steps up C. to stand, gets piece of writing paper, places it with lead pencil on table)

Brooks

(To L. C. at table)

Is this all right?

Cornelia

Yes ... Now rub it onto the handle of that bag.

(Indicating doctor's bag. BROOKS blackens the handle)

Dale

Somebody's coming!

(BROOKS quickly to fireplace, pretends to work at fireplace. DALE goes up R. C.)

Cornelia

(Pretending to carry on conversation and carries the bag back to chair R. 1. SHE does not touch the handle of bag)

We all need sleep and I think ...

(Motions to others. Enter WASHINGTON just inside of door R. 2)

Washington

(Cautiously)

The doctor's gone upstairs. Says he wants to wash his hands.

(Exit WASHINGTON, leaving door open)

Cornelia

(Steps to door R. 2. Looks off. Calls)

Oh, doctor! doctor!

Doctor

(Off R. Apparently from stairway)

Yes?

(CORNELIA back to R. down stage. A moment's pause. DOCTOR enters R. 2. HE takes a furtive glance around the room, then down to R. C. Faces Cornelia - just about to speak)

I was going up to wash. Do you want anything?

Cornelia

(Pleasantly, down R.)

There's a lavatory in the hall. Washington should have told you.

Dale

(Coming down R. to Doctor)

Doctor, did you - - - ?

(DETECTIVE ANDERSON knocks on terrace door. On the knock DOCTOR moves center, half turns, looks up stage)

Detective

(Off R. 3. Outside on terrace. Muffled voice)

It's Anderson.

Brooks

(Xes from L. up to terrace door R. 3)

All right. Coming.

(Unbolts door for Detective)

Dale
(Following Doctor to C. below table C.)
Did you get it?

Doctor
(C. Turns, looks at Dale)
My dear child, are you SURE you put it there?

Dale
(Dismayed)
Why, yes, I ...
(SHE looks at him, suddenly distrusts him. DALE turns, exchanges looks with CORNELIA. BROOKS stands up L. C. near window. DETECTIVE comes in terrace door, slams it behind him, comes down R. C. DOCTOR over to L.)

Detective
(Stays up in doorway irritably)
Nobody out there. That nigger's crazy.

Doctor
(Getting coat on, over L. from settee)
Well, I think I've fulfilled all the legal requirements ... I'll notify the sheriff's office -- for all the good it will do.

Detective
(Turns, takes steps U. R. C., faces Doctor)
Doctor, did you ever hear Courtleigh Fleming mention a hidden room in this house?

Doctor
(Does not look directly at Detective)
No -- and I knew him rather well.

Detective
You don't think, then, that such a room and the money in it could be the motive of this crime?

Doctor
I don't believe Courtleigh Fleming robbed his own bank, if that's what you mean.
(Double X. DOCTOR Xes above table to R. 1. to get his bag. DETECTIVE Xes above table C. Stands up C. DOCTOR, to Cornelia)
Well, I can't wish you a comfortable night, but I can hope it will be a quiet one.
(DOCTOR gets bag in right hand, cap in left)

Cornelia
(Xes to Doctor. SHE goes R. C. up to top of table C. DALE goes L. C.)
What about a prescription for some sleeping tablets?

Doctor
Why certainly. It's a good idea.
(HE comes toward table, reaching in his pocket for prescription blanks)

Cornelia
(Hastily)
Here's paper and a pencil.

Doctor
(Taking the paper in right hand)
I don't generally advise these drugs, but ...
(Then stopping short)
What time is it?

Cornelia
(Looks at clock mantel L. 1)
Half past eleven.

Doctor
Then I'd better bring you the tablets. The drug store in the village closes at eleven.

(CORNELIA takes the paper from Doctor, puts it down on table C. without looking at it. From the blackened handle of the bag, his fingers have made clear impressi on on the paper.

CORNELIA picks up the paper, with apparent carelessness, glances at it, and lays it with the print down. SHE picks up a key off table. DOCTOR GOES R.)

Cornelia
Dale will let you out, doctor...

(DALE Xes front of table L. to R.C.
Gets key from Cornelia as she Xes)

Doctor
(Stops, turns, smiles at Cornelia)
That's right. Keep things locked up. Discretion is the better part of valor.

(DALE waits just in doorway for Doctor)

Cornelia
(Up C.)
I've been discreet for sixty years, and sometimes, I think it was a mistake.

(DALE exits R. 2. DOCTOR follows her off)

Detective
(L. C. Stops, looks with angry eye on Brooks, who is up R. C.)
I guess we can do without you!

Brooks
All right, sir.
(Exits R. 2. Closes door)

Detective
(Comes over to table L. C. to Cornelia)
Now, I want a few words with you!
(His tone is surly)

Cornelia
(R. C. beside table C.)
Which means that you mean to do all the talking. Very well! But first I want to show you something. Will you come here, please?
(She starts up R. 3. for alcove)

Detective
I've examined that staircase.

Cornelia
Not with me! I have something to show you.
(DETECTIVE follows her up. THEY exit up the staircase R. 3. The room is now empty. LIZZIE enters R. 2. carrying hot-water bottle (filled with sand) and a large butcher knife)

(UNKNOWN opens the door in French windows up L. C. He is getting out of the room by the window, unseen. LIZZIE after closing door R. 2. sees the French window move. It closes. She gives a wild screech. Drops the hot-water bottle on chair above stand. Just above door R. 2. CORNELIA and DETECTIVE run down the stairs. When LIZZIE sees them, she points at window. DALE enters R. 2.)

Lizzie

That window! It closed...without human hands.

(Wildly. CORNELIA goes up to window L. C. Looks out. DETECTIVE stands in double door opening R. 3. Looks at Lizzie)

Detective

(Speaks to Cornelia, but looks at Lizzie)

Can't we get this howling hyena to bed?

Lizzie

(Agitated)

You'd howl yourself if you saw what I saw.

(LIZZIE collapses, into chair, sits on water bottle. She gives a scream, jumps up and points to water bottle on chair)

I'm scalded again! I can't walk and now I can't sit.

(DETECTIVE takes her by the shoulder, and pushes her off R. 2. They exit. Close door)

Dale

(Starting over cautiously to R. C. to Cornelia)

It isn't there...the doctor says he didn't see it and I've looked. It's gone.

Cornelia

(Up R. C.)

Then the doctor...

(She stops, hears door knob move R. C. DALE back to R. 1. Sits chair. Enter DETECTIVE R. 2. Closes door)

Detective

(R. C. to Cornelia)

Now, your point about those fingerprints on the stair rail is very interesting. But just what do they prove?

Cornelia

(C.)
They point down.

Detective

They do. So what?

Cornelia

Nobody in this household made them. They all knew the rail was freshly varnished. Whoever made them stood there for some time, listening to my niece and Richard Fleming, here in this room.

Detective

All right, I'll grant that to save argument. But the moment that shot was fired the lights came on. If somebody on that staircase shot him, and then came down and took the blue-print, Miss Ogden would have seen him.
(He turns to Dale)
Did you?

Dale

(R. 1)
No. Nobody came down.

Cornelia

(Takes a step R. Protesting)
Now, Mr. Anderson...

Detective

(R.)
I'm not hounding this girl... I haven't said yet that she committed this murder, but she took that blue-print, and I want it!

Cornelia

(R. C.)
You want it to connect her with the murder.

Detective

(Savagely)
It's rather reasonable to suppose that I might want to return the funds to the Union Bank, isn't it? Provided they're here.

Cornelia

I see... Well, I'll tell you this much, Mr. Anderson, and I'll ask you to believe me as a gentlewoman, granting that at one time my niece knew something of that blue-print, at this moment we do not know where it is or who has it.

(CORNELIA Xes front of table
to L.C.)

Detective
(R. C.)
Damnation...
(Mutters)
That's the truth, is it?

Cornelia
That's the truth.
(She sits L. of table C. Takes out knitting. Knits. Pause. To Detective)
Did you ever try knitting when you wanted to think?

Detective
No.

(He Xes over to table R. C. Takes out cigar, lights it. Matches on table)

Cornelia
You should sometimes! I find it very helpful!

Detective
I don't need knitting, to think straight!
(Starts to walk up R. C.)

Cornelia
I wonder! You seem to have so much evidence left over.

(DETECTIVE turns, looks at her)

Did you ever hear of the man who took a clock apart... and when he put it together again he had enough left over to make another clock.

(DETECTIVE comes down R. C. looking at Dale. DALE seated R. 1.)

Detective
(Ignoring Cornelia. To Dale)
What do you mean by saying you had that blue-print and lost it?

Cornelia
(Quickly)
She hasn't said that.

(DETECTIVE walks up R. C. Impatient movement)

Do you believe in circumstantial evidence?

Detective

It's my business.

Cornelia

While you have been investigating, I haven't been idle myself.

(DETECTIVE gives a laugh, Xes R. again)

To me it is perfectly obvious that one INTELLIGENCE

(DETECTIVE stops, looks at Cornelia)

has been at work. Behind many of the things that have occurred in this house.

Detective

Who?

Cornelia

I'll ask you that! Some one person who, knowing Courtleigh Fleming well, probably knows of the existence of a hidden room in this house... and who, finding us in occupation of the house, has ltried to get rid of me in two ways. First, by frightening me with anonymous threats, and second, by urging me to leave. Some one who very possibly entered this house tonight shortly before the murder, and slipped up that staircase.

Detective

(Startled)

The doctor?

(Step down)

Cornelia

(Still knitting)

When Doctor Wells said he was leaving here earlier in the evening for the Johnsons, he did not go there. He was not expected to go there. I found that out when I telephoned.

Detective

(Moves head, eyes narrowing)

The doctor!

Cornelia

As you know, I had a supplementary bolt placed on that door,

(Refers to terrace door)

earlier this evening, Doctor Wells said that he had bolted it. Instead he had left it open, purposely as I now realize, in order that later he might return. You may recall that Doctor Wells took a scrap of paper from Richard Fleming's hand and tried to conceal it. Why did he do <u>that</u>?

Cornelia (Cont'd)

(Slight pause. Changes tone)
May I ask you to look at this?

(SHE picks up from the table the paper containing Doctor Wells' thumb-print)

Detective

(Over to table R. C. Takes the paper)
Fingerprints, eh?

(Looks at it)
Whose are they?

Cornelia

Doctor Wells'.

(She picks up reading glass and offers it to DETECTIVE. HE takes it, looks through it at paper)
They say fingerprints never lie.

Detective

(Slight pause, looking at paper, sarcastically)
You don't really think you NEED a detective, do you?

Cornelia

(Quietly ironical)
I'm a humble follower in your footsteps.

Detective

(Ironically bows to her, then she bows)
Well, I'll bite! Anything to help a sister in the profession.

Cornelia

(Calmly)
You'll find that the same hand that made that, left the imprint on the staircase.

(DETECTIVE looks at Cornelia, then up. Goes up R. to double doors, and to foot of staircase in alcove. He turns and surveys the two women. Then he goes slowly up the staircase - off R. 3.)
(DALE half rises, as if to speak to Cornelia. CORNELIA makes a warning gesture. DALE sinks back into chair R. 1.)

(Enter BERESFORD R. 2. Closes door, comes down R. C. Faces Cornelia)

Beresford
Miss Van Gorder, may I ask you to make an excuse and call your gardener here?

(DALE starts violently. CORNELIA betrays no emotion, save that she knits a trifle more rapidly)

Cornelia
The gardener? Certainly....if you'll touch that bell.

(BERESFORD goes up R. C. Pushes button on wall. Stands there. DALE is in agony of suspense. The DETECTIVE comes quietly down the stairs into the room)

Detective
(Down R.)
It's no good, Miss Van Gorder. The prints are not the same.

Cornelia
Not the same!

Detective
(Smoking cigar. Lays down the reading glass and paper on table)
If you think I'm mistaken, I'll leave it to any unprejudiced person or your own eyesight. Fingerprints never lie. Did you ever try a good cigar when you wanted to think?

Cornelia
I still believe it was the doctor.

Detective
And yet the doctor was in this room tonight, according to your statement, when the anonymous letter came through the window.

(WASHINGTON enters R. 2.)

Beresford
(Steps down a little and to R. To WASHINGTON)
Tell the gardener Miss Van Gorder wants him..and don't say we're all here.

(Exit WASHINGTON, R. 2)

Detective
(Up C. to Beresford. Rather grimly)
I seem to have plenty of HELP in this case!

Dale
(Rises. To Beresford)
Why have you sent for the gardener?

Beresford

(Grimly)
I'll tell you that in a moment.
(DALE Xes below table to L. Enter BROOKS R. 2. Takes a swift survey of the room. He closes door. Slight pause)

Brooks

(R. of Cornelia)
You sent for me?

Beresford

(Up R.C. With eye on Brooks, speaks to Cornelia)
How long has this man been in your employ?

Cornelia

(Still seated L. of table C.)
Why does that interest you?

Brooks

(R.)
I came this evening.

Beresford

Exactly.
(To DETECTIVE, who stands up C.)
I've been trying to recall this man's face ever since I came tonight ... I know now who it is...

Detective

Who is he?

Brooks

(Straightening)
It's all right, Beresford. I know you think you're doing your duty, but I wish to God you could have RESTRAINED your sense of duty for about three hours more.

Beresford

To let you get away?

Brooks

No ... to let me finish what I came here to do.

Beresford

Don't you think you've done enough?
(Turns to Detective)
This man has imposed on the credulity of these women. I am quite sure, without their knowledge. His name is Bailey, of the Union Bank.

Detective
(Puts cigar on ash tray)
(To Brooks)
That's the truth, is it?

READY DOOR BELL
OFF R.2.

Brooks
It's true, all right.

Beresford
I accuse him not only of the thing he is wanted for, but of the murder of Richard Fleming.

Brooks
(Fiercely to Beresford)
You lie!

Detective
(Turns, goes down a step L.C. toward Dale)
You knew this?
(To Cornelia)
Did you?

Cornelia
Yes.

Detective
A conspiracy, is it? All this case against the doctor!
(Wheels on Brooks)
What did you mean by that ... "Three hours more"?

Brooks
I could have cleared myself in three hours.

DOOR BELL RINGS
OFF R.2

Cornelia
(L.C.)
It's probably the doctor. He was to come back with some sleeping tablets.

(Enter WASHINGTON R.2. HE goes to table, upper end C. Gets key)

Detective
(To Washington)
If that's the doctor, let him in. If it's anybody else, c all me.

(WASHINGTON exits R.2. leaving door open)

(To Brooks)
Have you got a gun on you?

Brooks

No.

Detective
(Xes above table to R.C.)
I'll just make sure of that.
(To Brooks)
(BERESFORD Xes above table to L.C. above chair. DETECTIVE turns Brooks to face R. Frisks him. Then takes pair handcuffs out of pocket)

Dale
(At sight of handcuffs - over L.)
Oh, no! I can't bear it! I'll tell you everything!
(ALL the CHARACTERS turn and face Dale. DOCTOR enters R.2. leaving the door open behind him. In the intensity of the scene, the DOCTOR'S entrance is ignored. DALE continues)
He got to the foot of the staircase..Richard Fleming, I mean.
(To Detective)
And he had the blue-print you've been talking about. I had told him Jack Bailey was here as the gardener, and he said if I screamed he would tell that. I was desperate. I threatened him with the revolver, but he took it from me. Then I tore the blue-print from him, and --- he was shot ... from the stairs.

Beresford
(Up back of chair L.C.)
By Bailey!

Brooks
(Strong, over R.)
I d idn't even know he was in the house.

Detective
What did you do with the blue-print?
(DOCTOR is listening intently)

Dale
I put it first in the neck of my dress. Then, when I found you were watching me, I hid it.
(SHE glances over at the Doctor. HE is apprehensive and anxious. It is evident that he would make his escape, but WASHINGTON, at that moment, enters with key)
(HE crosses in front of Doctor and behind the other characters to table, upper end places key there. Xes to R.2. and exits)

(Does not wait for this business)
I put it somewhere else.
(Again SHE glances at Doctor)

Detective
Did you give it to Bailey?

Dale
No ... I hid it, and then I told where it was ... to the doctor.

(ALL turn in surprise to DOCTOR, who is at door R.2. CORNELIA rises)

Doctor
(Smiles grimly. Then slowly comes down into scene R.)
That's rather inaccurate. You told me where you had placed it, but when I went to look for it, it was gone.

Cornelia
(L.C. Strongly)
Are you quite sure of that?

Doctor
(Gaining courage)
Absolutely.
(Then to Detective)
She said she had hidden it inside one of the rolls that were on the tray.
(HE crosses to table C. front of the others, takes out a box of sleeping tablets from overcoat pocket and places them on table)
On that table. She was in such distress that I finally agreed to look for it.
(DETECTIVE has come down behind Doctor)
When I found them there was nothing in either of them.

Detective
(To Doctor)
Did you realize the significance of this paper?

Doctor
(Turns to Detective)
Nothing beyond the fact that Miss Ogden was afraid it linked her with the crime.

Detective
(Considers a moment, then to Cornelia)
I'd like to have a few minutes with the doctor alone.

READY LIGHTNING...THUNDER

(CORNELIA and DALE cross front of table toward door R. CORNELIA with arm around DALE upstage side. BROOKS stands below door R.2. as DALE passes him SHE puts out her hand to him. BROOKS grasps Dale's hand. Exit CORNELIA and DALE R.2.)

Detective (Cont'd)
(As CORNELIA and DALE are Xing L. to R.)
Beresford, take Bailey to the library and see that he stays there.

(DOCTOR has Xed to L. Takes off his overcoat and places it on settee up L.C. BROOKS and BERESFORD exit R.2. BERESFORD closes the door behind them. DETECTIVE up to doors R.3. Closes them. Then HE comes down a few steps, facing DOCTOR, who stands over L.C. upstage)
Now, doctor, I'll have that blue-print.

Doctor
(L. Eyeing him warily)
I've just made the statement that I didn't find that blue-print.

Detective
(R.C. Drily)
I heard you! Now this situation is between you and me, Doctor Wells. It has nothing to do with that poor fool of a cashier. He didn't take that money and you know it. It's in this house, and you know that too.

Doctor
In this house?

Detective
In this house! Tonight when you claimed to be making a professional call, you were in this house ... and I think you were on that staircase when Richard Fleming was killed!

Doctor
No, Anderson, I'll swear I was not!

Detective
I'll tell you something.
(Steps up R.C.)
Miss Van Gorder very cleverly got some fingerprints of yours tonight. Does that mean anything to you?

Doctor
Nothing. I have not been upstairs in this house in three months.

(Up to this point HE is obviously telling the truth. DETECTIVE is puzzled)

Detective
Before Courtleigh Fleming died, did he tell you anything about a hidden room...in this house?

Doctor
(His air of honesty lessens. HE becomes furtive)
No.

Detective
You haven't been trying to frighten these women out of here with anonymous letters so you could get in?

Doctor
No...certainly not.

(Slight pause. DETECTIVE walks down sideways R. Looks at doors)

Detective
Let me see your keyring.

(DOCTOR unwillingly produces keyring. DETECTIVE over few steps to C. DOCTOR steps R. and hands out keys to DETECTIVE, who takes them. DETECTIVE, with revolver in hand, goes out into alcove, unlocks terrace door, goes out, leaving terrace door open. DOCTOR glances upstage to see if the Detective is out of sight. HE gets piece of blue-print out of his pocket, and tiptoes to the fireplace with it. HE throws paper toward grate but it falls on floor outside of grate. A flash of lightning reveals through the broken pane in window the DETECTIVE who is on terrace, and has drawn the shade aside)

SLIGHT RUMBLE OF THUNDER..
LIGHTNING, WHILE DETECTIVE ON
TERRACE LOOKING THROUGH WINDOW

(DETECTIVE sees Doctor throw the paper to floor. With noiseless swiftness, the DETECTIVE is back in the room, and has the DOCTOR covered with revolver)

Detective
(Up R.C.)
Pick that up...
(DOCTOR does pick it up)
and put it on the table.
(DOCTOR slowly to table with paper)
Now...stand away from the table...

(DOCTOR backs away to L.C. upstage)

A LOW RUMBLE OF LIGHTNING..THUNDER

(DETECTIVE lowers revolver, puts keys on table and stands back of table center, looking at blue-print, lays revolver on table R. side, upper end of table. Looks up at Doctor with a half sardonic smile, then examining blue-print)
Behind a fireplace, eh? What fireplace? In what room?

Doctor
(Up L.C. Sullenly)
I won't tell you!

Detective
(Above table center)
All right ... I'll find it, you know.
(Consulting blue-print again...leaning over table the DOCTOR maintains a furious silence. DOCTOR now stands with back to audience up L.C. Slight pause. Then with a leap the DOCTOR is on top of the DETECTIVE. There follows a silent furious struggle. DOCTOR pins Detective's arms behind him. DETECTIVE bends down, gets one arm (R.) free. Gets revolver off table, but HE drops it to floor. Then DOCTOR gets Detective's both arms pinned behind him, and reaches back to stand up C. and gets hold of telephone. (NOTE: Phone of Act One replaced by property all rubber phone) DOCTOR hits the DETECTIVE over the head with base of phone, rendering DETECTIVE insensible)

(DETECTIVE falls over L. upstage, his head toward door up L.3. DOCTOR straightens up, listens tensely. There is no sound from the rest of the house. Only the thunder and lightning. DOCTOR picks up the revolver, puts in pocket,

LOUDER THUNDER AND LIGHTNING. WIND

gets the blue-prints, puts in pocket. Now gets down on his knees below DETECTIVE. Rapidly gags him)

NOTE: A very efficient gag can be made by tying several hard knots in the middle of a handkerchief, forcing the knots into the mouth, and then tying the ends of the handkerchief behind the head.

(DOCTOR then takes his own muffler and wraps it around head of DETECTIVE. (After the handkerchief gag is on) DOCTOR listens and looks R. and L. Then he gets the handcuffs off the table. (DETECTIVE left them there in scene with BROOKS)
DOCTOR now locks the handcuffs on DETECTIVE's wrists, not behind his back, but in front of him. DOCTOR opens door L.3. billiard room, looks in. Then HE puts arms under Detective's arms and drags DETECTIVE off L.3. Comes into the room again. Closes and locks the door L.3. And then cautiously crosses up stage L. to R. HE starts to go up into alcove, R.3. HE makes a dash for the staircase. There is a knock on terrace door behind him, in alcove, directly in front of the foot of the stairs. HE backs down quickly, registers door, where the knocks come from. Backs into room. Then HE is about to start up into alcove again when BERESFORD enters, from below staircase from R.3. Goes to door (terrace) BERESFORD looks at DOCTOR. DOCTOR points at door, and backs into room. DOCTOR goes L.C. upstage. DOCTOR away to L.)

Beresford
(Speaking through the door) (4 knocks)
Who's there?

(No answer. BERESFORD draws revolver from pocket. The UNKNOCN off outside terrace door repeats knocks on terrace door. All the other characters now enter door R.2. CORNELIA (1), LIZZIE, DALE, BROOKS and WASHINGTON. WASHINGTON closes door R.2. behind him)

Cornelia
(As SHE enters and goes up toward double doors, sees Beresford)
What was that noise?

Doctor

Someone at the door.

Beresford

(Still in alcove at door)

Sh! Sh! Shall I open it?

THUNDER WIND AND LIGHTNING ALL THE WAY THROUGH THIS SCENE

(CORNELIA, up to double doors, stands R.C.)

Lizzie

(R.2. With a low wail)

If it ain't human, it's dead! If it IS human, we're dead!

(Raps repeated by UNKNOWN)

Cornelia

(Up R.C.)

Be careful, Mr. Beresford.

CLAPS OF THUNDER.. LIGHTNING...LIGHTS BLINK

(BERESFORD very cautiously opens the terrace door. As he does so, a MAN (UNKNOWN) who has been leaning against the terrace door, falls into Beresford's arms. BERESFORD drops his revolver and catches the man, so he does not fall to floor in alcove. The MAN straightens himself up, achieves a certain measure of action and balances himself, staggers into room)

(NOTE. He is rather good looking. It is seen that there is fried blood on his forehead. His feet and hands have been tied, and pieces of rope still dangle from his wrists and ankles. Clothing torn)

(UNKNOWN staggers left above table. DOCTOR on upper and L. side of him. BERESFORD on R. side. When clear of table and L.C. UNKNOWN goes a couple of steps forward and falls prone on his face, well down L.C.)

Lizzie

It's The Bat!

Beresford

(Beneath his breath)

Good God!

Cornelia

(Comes down R.C.)

(General movement when UNKNOWN fell)

Doctor!

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING
WIND STOPS...DIES OUT

(DOCTOR stoops down over prostrate man, turns him over, puts hand over heart. CORNELIA R.C. DALE and LIZZIE R. of her. WASHINGTON, BROOKS, U.C. back of table)

Doctor

(L.)
He's fainted! Struck on the head, too.

Cornelia

Who is it?

Doctor

I never saw him before. Does anyone recognize him?

(ALL look at UNKNOWN. Slight pause. No one recognizes him)

Cornelia

Is he badly hurt?

Doctor

It's hard to say ... I think not.
(UNKNOWN moves, and makes effort to sit up. BERESFORD and DOCTOR assist him)
A chair...
(WASHINGTON quickly steps forward from table and places the chair, that is L. of table, more left C. UNKNOWN collapses into chair)
You're all right now, my friend.
(In professional cheerful voice)
Dizzy a bit, aren't you?

(UNKNOWN makes no answer, stretches his arms, rubs his wrists. Looks blank and dazed)

Unknown

Water!

Cornelia

(To Washington)
Bring some water.

(WASHINGTON turns, Xes front of table and Cornelia and others)

Doctor
Brandy would be better.

Cornelia
Get some brandy, Washington. It's up in the hall closet upstairs. You know where.

Washington
(Grins)
Yes, ma'am.
(WASHINGTON exits R.3. Goes upstairs in alcove)

Doctor
(To Unknown)
Now, my man, you're in the hands of friends. Brace up.

Beresford
Where's Anderson?

(UNKNOWN starts, then controls himself, from this point on. It is evident to the audience that the UNKNOWN is not as dazed as he seems to be)

This is a police matter. He's been attacked.
(Makes a movement L., as if to go)

Doctor
(Raises hand to stop Beresford)
He was here a moment ago. He'll be back presently.
(Gives Unknown a little shake)
Rouse yourself, man! What has happened to you?

Unknown
(Seated L.C. Slowly and apparently with difficulty)
I'm dazed ... I don't remember!

Cornelia
What a night!
(Front of table C. Turns to Dale, R.C.)
Richard Fleming murdered in this house...and now...this!

(The UNKNOWN is sitting well down stage L.C. so that his face is visible to the audience but not to those on the stage. HE gives a swift stealthy glance at Cornelia. This his eyes fall again)

(CORNELIA breaks the habit of a lifetime. SHE turns to Dale)

Cornelia (Cont'd)
Give me a cigarette. Maybe it will settle my nerves.

(DALE gives her one. Lights it.
CORNELIA takes a puff. Chokes.
LIZZIE stares at her, shocked)

Lizzie
I never thought I'd see the day - - -

Dale
(R.C.)
Why doesn't somebody ask him his name?

(BROOKS Xes from above table to R.
of Unknown down L.C.)

Beresford
Where the devil is that detective?
(HE rushes R. and off R.2. leaves
door open)

Brooks
(To Unknown)
What's your name?

(UNKNOWN makes no reply)

Cornelia
Look at his papers.

(BROOKS looks in his pockets, UNKNOWN's
R. side. DOCTOR, L. side. Trousers only.
HE has no coat or vest on. Slight pause)

Brooks
Not a paper on him.

(Crash at head of alcove stairs, as of
bottle breaking. WASHINGTON rushes down,
stands back of stage, looking up. Registers
terror)

Cornelia
(Puts down cigarette)
(Sharply)
Washington! What happened?

Washington
(Turns. Is trembling)
Nothing, ma'am. I guess I broke the bottle.

(BERESFORD on R.2. Stands staring)

Dale
What made you drop the bottle?

ELECTRICIAN READY
LIGHT CUE
MAN READY TO WORK
TERRACE DOOR

Washington
(Moistens his dry lips with his tongue)
It jus' drop, out of mah hands.

(UNKNOWN sinks back into his chair, and resumes his pose of immobility)

Beresford
(Xes down and over to Washington, catches him by the shoulders, swings him around to face him)
Now, see here! You've seen something! What was it?

Washington
I thought I seen Miss Lizzie's ghost.

Cornelia
What did it look like?

Washington
Jus' like a ghost. One minute it's there, then it ain't.

Cornelia
He knows something. Look at him!
(Over R. and looking up R.3. To Brooks)
Brooks, close that door.
(Points up at terrace door in alcove. BROOKS quickly up into alcove. Terrace door is slammed shut in his face. At same time,

LIGHTS GO OUT.
A L L D A R K.

Brooks
(In alcove)
This door's locked...the key's gone.
(To Beresford)
Where's your gun, Beresford?

Beresford
I dropped it, in the alcove. When this fellow fell in.

Brooks
(From alcove)
I can't find it.

Cornelia

Never mind. I have one.
Quick, there's a candle on the table. Light it, somebody.

READY WITH BERESFORD's TRICK WATCH

Beresford

(To L. of table, quickly)

Righto.

(HE tricks light in his wrist watch (On) LIZZIE sees wristwatch light, points at it)

Lizzie

(Screeches)

The eye! The eye!

(BERESFORD strikes match and lights candle)

(LIZZIE and WASHINGTON back away toward door R.2. to get out. BROOKS has come down to door R.2)

ELECTRICIAN COMES UP ONE CANDLE LIGHT IN STRIP - IN FOOTS AND BORDER.

Brooks

This door's locked.

(NOTE: As soon as BROOKS comes down from alcove, props tacks the paper BAT to the double door that opens to alcove up right)

Cornelia

(Taking the candle off table C. - and revolver)

I know there's somebody upstairs. We'll go this way.
(SHE starts up R.3)

(OTHERS all turn and take a step toward double doors. BROOKS up to doors R.3. Doors are closed and locked)

Brooks

Locked!

Cornelia

(Holds up the lighted candle)

A BAT!

(Black paper Bat is tacked to the door R.3. The UNKNOWN rises and stands looking up at doors R.3. ALL the characters are facing up toward R.3. doors. LIZZIE screams)

C U R T A I N

ACT THREE

SCENE: The trunk room on the third floor.

The walls of room except fireplace U.C. window L.2. and door down R. 1. are lined with high closets, with practical doors in each. Up C. rear, a wooden fireplace (mantel).
Instead of the grate, there is an iron fireplace fastened in, making the mantel, when it moves, as solid as a door. Mantel-piece swings open on concealed hinges, revealing behind it a room, perhaps 6 feet by 6 feet, in which is a tall iron safe. The mantel is opened by pushing aside a panel in a row of drawers. Up L. C. and left of the mantel, revealing a knob, which when turned, swings the mantel out like a door.

In room, down R. is a large wicker hamper. Right of this two small old battered trunks. Set up and down stage, one on top of the other, R.C. Next to hamper, a kitchen chair without back.

Over L. a kitchen chair with back. Two old boxes up stage R. 2. behind door. Some paper bundles up on high shelf above closets up R. Old sewing machine, over L. 1. against wall. A Box Pin hinged to set below the casement window, for characters to step on, getting in and out of window. Two old dress suit cases, to dress scene.
IMPORTANT: Woman's satchel, on floor, front of hamper, matches on top of trunk.

See Property Plot.

AT RISE: Stage Dark, BLUE ON WINDOW

DISCOVERED: MASKED MAN (ANDERSON) at safe, up stage C. Back of the open mantelpiece. He is working at the knob of safe. After a moment, MASKED MAN swings open the safe. He takes out the money bag, shuts safe. Blows out the candle on floor beside

safe. Shuts off his pocket flashlight. Closes the mantel.

Remote hammering heard off Right. MASKED MAN to door Right L. about to open door. Crash of splintering wood heard off Right. Ad lib. off Right.

Beresford

(Off R.)
You go this way. I'll go that.

Brooks

(Off R.)
Have that revolver ready.
(During this ad lib, MASKED MAN darts back, drops the money bag into hamper R. C. and closes lid of hamper. He runs to window, over L.2. Gets out of window, catches roof above him, swings himself up)

THIS CAN BE DONE BY HIS EDGING TO ONE SIDE, TO WHERE HANDHOLDS ARE PROVIDED

(Footsteps heard coming upstairs off R. Door flung open R. BROOKS rushes on, stands a second, then runs to window L. 2)

Cornelia

(Suddenly enters R. 2. with revolver and dead candle)
Hands up...or I'll shoot!

Brooks

(Is seen silhouetted against window L. He turns, faces Cornelia, throws up his hands)
Don't shoot! It's Bailey!

Cornelia

(To front of trunk R. C.)
What brought you up here?
(She lights candle)

ELECTRICIAN COMES UP ON STRIP (NO.2) IN FOOTS. FOR 1 CANDLE

Brooks

The others are searching downstairs, Miss Van Gorder, you mustn't run over the house by hourself! Don't you realize that the man who locked us in was the Bat?

Cornelia

(Xes to center of L.)
That's why I'm running! Anyway, where would a body BE safe? When eight of us could be locked up together in one room and have to break out. It's a pretty kettle of fish!

ELECTRICIAN FOLLOWS MOVEMENT OF CANDLE WITH STRIPS IN FOOTS

Brooks

(R. C.)
He might have got out that window.

Cornelia

(L.C.)
It's a good forty feet to the ground.

Brooks

(R. C. Looks around room)
Well, he isn't here. I'll take a look over the rest of this floor.

(He gets to door R. 2.)

Cornelia

(Suddenly looks at floor, and sees candle grease, near window)
Candle grease!

(BROOKS stops, turns and looks at CORNELIA. CORNELIA touches grease on floor with finger)
Fresh candle grease.

(Goes L.)
Now, who do you suppose did that? Do you remember how Sherlock Holmes - - -

(Voice trails off, she stoops down, follows the candle grease marks, to fireplace U.C.)
It leads straight to the fireplace!

(She stands erect and surveys the mantel up C.)
It's been going through my mind for half an hour. No chimney flue runs up this side of the house!

Brooks

(R. C.)
Then why the fireplace?

Cornelia

That's what I'm going to find out!

Dale

(Off R. 2.)
Jack! Jack!

(Cautiously, CORNELIA raps mantel)

Brooks

(Xes over R. Beckons Dale. She enters)
Come in. Lock the door behind you.

(BROOKS back to R. C. up stage)
DALE closes and locks door R. 2.)
Where are the others?

Dale
(Up R.)
They're searching the house. There's no sign of anybody.

Brooks
(Up R.C.)
Where's Anderson?

Dale
(Xes down and to R. C.)
I haven't seen him.

Cornelia
(Up C. at mantel. Raps on wall above mantel, with her revolver)
It sounds hollow.

Brooks
(Comes over to her)
It does. Do you suppose - - -

Cornelia
(She carefully examines the painted small drawers to L. back flat..L. of mantel)
Some of these ought to slide or push, or something.
(She works practical small drawer. It slides slowly to Right (panel) revealing a white door knob. Behind the panel. She turns knob)
Merciful powers! It's moving!
(DALE backs away to R. down stage)

Brooks
(Up to Cornelia)
Give me the revolver, and stand back.
(BROOKS backs down C. CORNELIA backs down to L. Pause. BROOKS up to open panel, turns the knob further. Mantel opens slowly swinging L. and up against back flat, L. C. BROOKS steps down L.)
(Faces mantel as it moves. BROOKS has Cornelia's revolver)

Dale
Look!
(The black aperture of the room beyond revealed. BROOKS takes candle from Cornelia and goes up)

(BROOKS gets well up C.)
Jack! Be careful!

ELECTRICIAN: CUE..FOLLOW CANDLE AND AS BROOKS GOES INTO SMALL ROOM BACK OF MANTEL UP C. DIM OUT. LEAVES STAGE DARK.

Brooks

(Goes in. A pause)
Nobody home!
(Then triumphantly)
We've got it. We've found the money!
(Stoops, turns lever and opens safe. Stands a moment, comes out of safe with candle)

ELECTRICIAN CATCH CANDLE, COMING UP 1 CANDLE LIGHT

(BROOKS comes down C.)

Cornelia

Well!

Brooks

(Flatly)
It's gone. The safe's empty.
(For a moment no one speaks, the disappointment is so great)
Well, that settles me!
(With forced laugh)

Cornelia

(Over to him. She takes candle from him)
Nonsense! The location of this room..the very presence of that safe..are enough to establish the facts. Whoever has it now, that money was here.

Dale

(R.C.)
Jack, get Mr. Anderson and show him.
(Violent hammering on door R. 1. and a loud scream from LIZZIE off right)

Lizzie

(Hysterically off R.)
Let me in! For the love of God, let me in!
(BROOKS runs R. unlicks and opens the door, LIZZIE staggers in, her candle hanging down in her hand. Almost immediately she gives a cry, and candle goes out. Candle light burns her. Her movement puts it out)

ELECTRICIAN CATCHES LIGHT OF HER CANDLE AS SHE ENTERS IN STRIP R IN FOOTS

Cornelia

(L. C.)
Good heavens, what's the matter?

Lizzie
(Over R. front of hamper. Hysterically)
I saw him! I saw the Bat! He dropped through that skylight out there..
(Points R.)
and ran along the hall. He knocked me down.

Brooks
He was on the roof!

Cornelia
What did he look like? Did you see his face?

Lizzie
He didn't have any face. He was eight feet tall and he ran right over me.

(BROOKS, carrying Cornelia's revolver, Ses to door R.)

Dale
Was it a mask?

Lizzie
(Xes to Dale L.)
How do I know? I wasn't feeling it, was I?

(Cornelia starts after Brooks to door R., carrying lighted candle) ELECTRICIAN FOLLOWS THE MOVEMENT OF CANDLE IN FOOTS
(LIZZIE turns R., sees Cornelia going toward door R.)
(LIZZIE steps quickly after Cornelia)
Where are you going, Miss Neillie?
(BROOKS stands at open door waiting for Cornelia)

Cornelia
(R. C. turns to LIZZIE)
For mercy's sake, let me alone. Don't stick to me.

Lizzie
It's not you I'm sticking to. It's the candle!

Cornelia
(To Lizzie as she starts for door R.)
Go back and stay with Miss Dale!
(CORNELIA and BROOKS exit R. 1. with lighted candle) ELECTRICIAN LIGHTS OUT ROOM IN DARKNESS

Lizzie
(Out of the dark)
He'll come back and kill us both. There was murder in his face.

Dale
I thought you said he didn't have a face. Behave yourself, Lizzie. You're a big girl now! Give me your candle.
(LIZZIE Xes over to Dale, gives her the candle and matches)

Lizzie
(Terrified)
If he comes in that door I'll jump out the window.

Dale
Well, see if I care! Sit down and keep quiet.

Lizzie
(Starts for door R.)
I'm going. If I've got to die, I'm going to die in my bed. Or under it.
(She bolts out R. Closes door after her. DALE tries to light candle, striking matches on box. They do not light)
(NOTE: to have this business seen, ELECTRICIAN bring up strip in foots L. C. Just a little)
(Slight pause)

(DALE looks around the room, the door R. very slowly opens about an inch - at first a thread of light, from flashlight gradually widening, then it is extinguished. DALE sees this. She is frightened. She darts up to hidden room, goes in, closes the mantel noiselessly but not entirely)

STRIP OUT ALL DARK

(MASKED MAN, overcoat on, arge flash, opens door very slow - backs in - flash off. Sweeps room with flashlight. It is the man who was discovered at safe opening of THE ACT. HE locks the door R. 1. Goes to hamper R. C., puts flash for a moment on satchel, front of hamper, picks satchel up, empties contents into the hamper (old clothes and two paper backed novels). Thrusts bag of money into satchel (Use Flash) works with feverish haste. Closes the grip, turns to go to door, hears footsteps off R.

(STAGE MANAGER)

(He uses flash sparingly. With satchel in hand he starts for window L. 2. as he nears window, extension ladder comes up and leans against window. He drops satchel up stage above window. He is plainly trapped. He darts for mantel room. Closes the mantel behind him. There is absolute silence. Pause. Then ladder moves, as some one climbs in. Stealthily.. A MAN'S silhouette is seen outside. The figure on the ladder, as he is about to step through the window into the room, is heard to hiss cautiously. It is the doctor)

Doctor

SSSSST!

(Receiving no reply, with infinite caution, he crawls in through window. Then he goes C. and starts for mantel. Uses flash - off - on)

SSST!

(Door knob R. 1. heard turning, DOCTOR starts)

Brooks

(Off R.)

Dale!

Cornelia

(Off R.)

Dale! Dale! The door's locked...

Brooks

(Off R.)

Dale!

(BROOKS rattles knob, pounds on door, tries to break in)

Doctor

(After a moment)

Wait a moment!

(He goes to door, unlocks it. BROOKS hurls himself into room, Xes Doctor to C. He is followed by CORNELIA with candle. LIZZIE stands in doorway)

ELECTRICIAN COMES UP ONE CANDLE LIGHT IN FOOTS

Brooks

(Turns on DOCTOR, who stand R. C.)

Why did you lock that door?

(BROOKS takes a look around the room, and realizes the amazing fact that Dale is not there)

Doctor

But I didn't.

Brooks
(Turns on doctor furiously)
Where is Miss Ogden? What have you done with her?
(CORNELIA up above hamper R.C.)

Doctor
Done with her! I don't know what you're talking about. I haven't seen her.

Brooks
(Threateningly)
You didn't lock that door?

Doctor
Absolutely not. I was coming through the window, when I heard your voice at the door.

(BROOKS, puzzled, lays revolver on top of hamper, where Cornelia has placed candle)

Brooks
But I left her here.

Lizzie
I'll bet he threw her out the window!

Doctor
I saw lights up here from outside, and I thought - - -

Cornelia
(Interrupting)
That mantel's closed again!
(DOCTOR starts, as he discovers their knowledge of the hidden room)

Doctor
What do you mean -- the mantel?

Brooks
(To Doctor)
Did you close it?

Doctor
Does it open?

Brooks
You know damned well it does.
(He starts up to mantel)
I'll see whether you closed it or not.
(Leans against mantel. Speaks loud)
Dale! Dale!

(DOCTOR turns front of hamper. Back to audience. Picks up candle from hamper where Cornelia placed it. BROOKS starts to open mantel; as it begins to swing out, DOCTOR deliberately extinguishes candle)

ELECTRICIAN LIGHTS OUT DARK STAGE

(DOCTOR drops the candle to the floor, front of hamper. MASKED MAN rushes out of hidden room, back of hamper to door right. Bumps LIZZIE in doorway. SHE falls to stage, as MASKED MAN exits R. CORNELIA is up C. As the lights go out CORNELIA speaks)

Lizzie

Help! Help!

Cornelia

Doctor, why did you put out that candle?

Doctor

I didn't....I....

Cornelia

You did -- I saw you do it.

(DOOR slams R.)

Lizzie

(On floor at doorway)

He did it again! He tramped on me.

Doctor

(Above hamper R. C.)

Awfully sorry. I assure you it dropped out of the holder...

(Stoops down, gets candle)

Here it is!

(BROOKS to Doctor, strikes match, lights candle as DOCTOR holds it)

ELECTRICIAN COME UP ONE CANDLE EFFECT IN FOOTS

(CORNELIA takes the candle after BROOKS lights it. BROOKS up to mantel room, DALE is seen on floor in hidden room, in front of the safe. BROOKS carries DALE down L. to chair. DALE's eyes are closed)

Brooks

(As he comes out of hidden room with Dale)

Doctor!

(DOCTOR Xes to chair over L. Feels Dale's pulse. CORNELIA holds up candle)

Cornelia
Lizzie, get some whisky. She's fainted.

Lizzie
(As she gets up off floor)
I wish I could!
(At door R.)
How do I know he isn't out there, waiting for me?

Cornelia
(Going L. C. with candle)
He's not waiting for anybody.
(LIZZIE turns to go out door R.)
(Sees DETECTIVE in doorway. DETECTIVE a grim and menacing figure. HE carries a lighted candle)

ELECTRICIAN FOLLOW MOVEMENT OF CANDLE

Lizzie
(Facing DETECTIVE in doorway)
That's right! Come in when everything's over.
(DETECTIVE steps in. LIZZIE exits)

ELECTRICIAN CATCH HIS CANDLE FOOTS RIGHT.
2 CANDLE LIGHT EFFECT NOW ON STAGE

Doctor
(With back turned toward Detective is facing L. looking at Dale)
She'll be all right in a moment.

Detective
(To Doctor)
You took my gun from me downstairs.
(DETECTIVE places lighted candle on trunk R. of hamper. DETECTIVE Xes across to L. C. DOCTOR turns and faces him)
I'll trouble you for it.
(The OTHERS are startled. DOCTOR sullenly gives up automatic to DETECTIVE who examines and puts it in his hip pocket)
I've something to settle with you pretty soon, and I'll settle good and proper.
(Xes below Doctor to L. over to Dale)
Now, what's this?
(Indicating Dale. Meanwhile DOCTOR walks slowly and quietly toward door R.)

Cornelia
(A little up stage L. C.)
She's coming to... We found her shut in there, Mr. Anderson.
(Indicating hidden room)
(DETECTIVE goes U. C. Looks at open mantel room. As DOCTOR is about to exit R. Detective turns and sees him)

Detective
(Sharply, hand on gun)
Wells!

(CORNELIA and BROOKS work over Dale. BROOKS rubs her hands. He is L. of her. CORNELIA above Dale)

(DOCTOR turns and faces Detective. DETECTIVE U. C. then comes down a few steps C. Faces Doctor)

Where were you when she was locked in this room?
(Points up at hidden room)

Doctor
(Front of hamper R. C.)
I didn't shut her in..if that's what you mean!
(Takes a step toward C.)
There was some one SHUT IN THERE ---
(Points up at hidden room)
with her. Ask these people here.
(Indicating Cornelia and Brooks over L.)

Cornelia
(Angry)
The fact remains, doctor, that we left her alone. When we came back you were here. That door was locked...
(Indicates door R.)
and she was in that room.
(DETECTIVE goes in hidden room. Indicates hidden room up C. Pause. CORNELIA up with candle)
Unconscious!
(Bus)
As we opened that door...
(Indicates mantel)
The doctor deliberately extinguished the candle and some one escaped.

Detective
(Up C. wheeling on DOCTOR, comes down a step. CORNELIA comes down L.C.)
Do you know who was in that room?

Doctor
(Sullenly)
No ... I didn't put out the candle. It fell! And I didn't lock that door.
(Indicates door R.)
I found it locked!

(DALE seated L., opens her eys and sits up. SHE looks around, suddenly realizes where she is and what is happening. SHE looks over her shoulder, sees open mantel room. DALE shudders, half rises)

Dale
Please close that awful thing. I don't want to see it again!

(DETECTIVE goes up, closes mantel door to hidden room)

Brooks
(Gets down on his knees beside Dale)
What happened to you? Can you remember?

Dale
I was here alone in the dark ... then that door opened ...
(Indicates door R.)
and I saw a man come in. I hid in there.
(Indicates mantel room)
It was the only thing I could think of.

Detective
(C. Facing Dale)
And then ...

Dale
He came in too, and closed the door. I think he heard me gasp, for he turned a flashlight on me and said, "If you make a sound I'll kill you!" That's all I remember.

Detective
(Looks at Doctor, then looks at Dale. Suspiciously)
Do you KNOW who that man was?

Dale
No.

(DETECTIVE looks at Doctor)

Cornelia
Of course we know. It was the Bat!

Detective
(Turns on her rather sardonically)
Ha! Still harping back to the Bat!

Cornelia
I have every reason to believe he is in this house.

Detective
(Jeeringly)
And that he took the Union Bank money out of that safe, I suppose? No, Miss Van Gorder!
(Turns, faces Doctor)
Ask the doctor who took the Union Bank money out of that safe... Ask the doctor who attacked ME downstairs in the drawing-room, knocked ME senseless, and locked ME in the billiard room!
(To Doctor. Pause. Walks down to D.R.)
The next time you put handcuffs on a man, be sure to take the key out of his vest pocket!
(An astounded pause, then CORNELIA speaks)

Cornelia
(L.C.)
Perhaps I am an obstinate old woman, but the doctor and all the rest of us were locked in the drawing-room not ten minutes ago!

Detective
(Sneeringly)
By the Bat, I suppose!

Cornelia
(Obstinately)
By the Bat!

(DETECTIVE LOOKS at Doctor)

He went to the trouble to leave his visiting card fastened to the door!

Detective
The Bat, eh?
(Confronts the Doctor)
You knew about this room, Wells?

Doctor
(R. C. looking up at Detective)
(Reluctantly)
Yes.

Detective
And you knew the money was in the room?

Doctor
Well, I was wrong, wasn't I?

Detective
You were up in this room, earlier tonight.

Doctor
No. I couldn't GET up.

Detective
You know where that money is, Wells, and I'm going to find out!

Doctor
(Goaded beyond endurance)
Good God! Do you suppose if I knew where it is I'd be here? I've had plenty of chances to get away ... No, you can't pin anything on me, Anderson! It isn't criminal to have known that room is here!

Detective
Don't be so damned virtuous! Maybe you haven't been upstairs, but unless I miss my guess, you know who was!

(DOCTOR'S face changes. Xes to Doctor)

What about Richard Fleming?

Doctor
(Impressively)
I never killed him! I don't even own a revolver!

Detective
(Xes down stage and front of Doctor to R. As HE does so)
You come with me, Wells... This time I'll do the locking up.
(DETECTIVE stands above door R. looks at Cornelia. Takes lighted candle off trunk as HE Xes R.)
Better get the young lady down to bed ... I think I can promise you a quiet night, from now on.

Cornelia
(Sardonically. To C.)
I'm glad you think so, Mr. Anderson!
(DOCTOR Xes past Detective. Xes R. DETECTIVE follows. DOCTOR out door R.)

(CORNELIA swiftly Xes over to door R. Closes it. When SHE turns SHE faces DALE and BROOKS)

ELECTRICIAN CATCH MOVEMENT OF CANDLE DOWN TO ONE CANDLE LIGHT. NOW... IN FOOTS.

Dale
(L. with force)
I can't believe the Doctor killed Richard Fleming.

Cornelia
(Xes back to C. with lighted candle. Swiftly moves to C.) ELECTRICIAN FOLLOW MOVEMENT OF CANDLE
Of COURSE he didn't. He's just guilty enough to look more guilty than he is.
(SHE moves up C. little. Stands for a moment, then says to Dale)
But the man who was shut in the mantel room with you ... was the man who KILLED Richard Fleming and took the money from here.

(BROOKS moves step out to L.C.)

But what brought him back?
(Pause. Looks at door R., then down at floor)
It's clear enough in some ways. He heard me coming, got out on the roof, climbed down,
(Points L.)
through the skylight
(Points R.)
and back here again.
(To verify her theory about the roof, SHE goes up to window L. Looks out. BROOKS follows and stands U. C. watching her. SHE then faces into room again, s tands looking around. Up C.)
BUT WHAT BROUGHT HIM BACK?
(BROOKS Xes over L.)
(Pause, while CORNELIA, candle in hand, moves qickly, now stooping to examine floor. Now straightening, looks about her. SHE also makes a careful search of the hidden room)

(As SHE comes out of hidden room, SHE partly closes the two iron doors)

ELECTRICIAN FOLLOWS MOVEMENT DIMS AWAY DOWN IN FOOTS WHEN CORNELIA GOES UP INTO HIDDEN ROOM WITH CANDLE. CATCH LIGHT AS CORNELIA COMES OUT OF HIDDEN ROOM.

Brooks
(Over L., watching her, as SHE comes down C.)
You'd have made a good hunting dog, wouldn't you?
(HE smiles)

Cornelia
(Moves R. C. to hamper. Sharply)
That's more than I can say for anybody else in this house.
(At last with an air of great satisfaction, SHE sets candle on hamper R.C. Evidently SHE has made some important discovery)
I know very little about bank currency. Could such a sum be carried away in a man's pocket?

Brooks
(LC.)
Even in bills of large denomination it would make a pretty sizable bundle.

(Enter LIZZIE R. with tumbler of whiskey in one hand, and a lighted candle in the other)

(CORNELIA pursues her search of the room up R. C.)

ELECTRICIAN CATCH LIGHT ON HER ENTRANCE. FOLLOW HER. THIS MAKES 2 CANDLE LIGHT IN FOOTS...

Lizzie
Say, that assault and battery case is wandering all over the second floor. Think he's out of his head. I ran into him in the dark. I raised a whole new crop of goose pimples.
(SHE goes back to door, kicks it shut with her foot. SHE Xes to C. CORNELIA Xes with candle front of hamper)

ELECTRICIAN FOLLOW MOVEMENT OF THE TWO CANDLES.

(LIZZIE toward DALE, who is seated L.)
I think there's a whole gang of crooks in this house ... That Beresford and that assault and battery case - - -
(Sits hamper)
Everybody pretending to be somebody he isn't!
(Remembers whisky for Dale. Starts)
Oh! Here's your drink, Miss Dale.

(DALE shakes her head. SHE doesn't want it)

Brooks
(Down to Dale L. 1. Puts his arm around her)
Better take it, darling.

Lizzie
(Stares astounded. Looks over at CORNELIA R.C.)
The gardener's calling HER darling.

Cornelia
Oh, be still! He's NOT a gardener.

Lizzie
My God! Another one!
(Then SHE raises whisky to her lips, drinks it. CORNELIA with lighted candle is working over R. below hamper, looking around room. As SHE gets near door, SHE hears something. SHE makes gesture to others. BERESFORD gets cue sight hole in door. Door R. opens in on stage. The other characters stand and watch. The door is suddenly thrown open and BERESFORD stands in doorway, crouching ready to spring. Sees them. His attitude relaxes, HE looks rather sheepish)

Beresford
(Smiles. In doorway)
Oh ... it's you!

Cornelia
(R. C. Suspiciously)
Who did you THINK it was?

Beresford
(Relieved)
I've been making a rather hectic search for the man who locked us in. But I didn't find a sign ...
(HE shuts door. His eyes travel to BROOKS. HE Xes over to C. In ugly tone)
Oh, still at large, Bailey?

Brooks
(Up close to him, L.C.)
I am, but the Doctor is not. Now see here, Beresford, the situation has changed in the last few minutes ...

(CORNELIA R. C. puts candle on hamper)

Doctor Wells is under arrest! I didn't mind your recognition of me. That was your duty. But I do object to the implication in your tone that I am a criminal. You've done your damnedest ... Now cut it!

(WASHINGTON off R. turns door knob. CORNELIA lifts up candle. CORNELIA faces door)

Cornelia
That door knob's moving.

(ALL turn and look at door)

Beresford
(In whisper to Cornelia)
I'll open it.

(HE Xes front of Cornelia to door. Jerks open door. WASHINGTON who has hold of the offstage side of door knob is jerked into room. Pause. WASHINGTON evidently very nervous. Then turns, steps back to door. Looks off, then turns, faces others in room)

Washington
Lemme come in, will you, folks? I got a bad case of the jitters.

Cornelia
(R. C.)
What is it, Washington?

(Steps forward a step or two)

Washington
(Nervously)
That fellah that can't talk, he's off his head.

Cornelia
Why, what's he doing?

Beresford
(Near door R.)
The man who fell into the room, downstairs?

Washington
Yessir. He's sneaking all over the place.

Beresford
(To Cornelia)
I was watching him downstairs. I didn't think he was as dazed as he pretended to be.

Cornelia
(To Washington)
Bring him up, Washington. I want to talk to him.

Washington
What? Me? Alone. In the dark?

Cornelia
(Gives him lighted candle)
You can manage him all right.

(WASHINGTON turns reluctantly R. to exit. SHE stops him)

Washington, what did you see when you ran down the stairs? Before we were locked in.

Washington
I guess Miss Lizzie here, she just got me scared.

Lizzie
(Hiccups. Feels whisky somewhat)
I never made you drop a bottle of whisky.

Cornelia
(Persists, to Washington)
You said you saw a ghost.

Washington
I just made up a ghost, cause I dropped the bottle.
(HE exits R.)

Lizzie
He's a liar.
(Sets down glass. By Mistake puts it on top of candle beside her. It goes out. Room is dark)
ELECTRICIAN CATCHES THIS CANDLE OUT. ALMOST AT SAME TIME WASHINGTON DISAPPEARS OFF DOOR R. WITH LIGHTED CANDLE. STAGE DARK.

Beresford
Can't we have a light?

Brooks
Wait. I've got some matches somewhere.

(STAGE MANAGER with whip does BAT EFFECT. Strange flapping sound is heard, first in one part of room and then the other. Hits back of scene near ceiling on cues)

Cornelia
(Sharply, after a moment R.C.)
What's that?

Lizzie
(L.C. Plaintively)
If you hear anything, it's my teeth chattering.

Cornelia
Take them out and put them in your pocket.

(BAT EFFECT AGAIN)

(After a moment)

Beresford
That's queer! There IS something moving around the room.

(BAT EFFECT AGAIN)

Brooks
(C.)
It's up near the ceiling.

Lizzie
(Slow wail)
Oh ... h ... h ....

(BAT EFFECT AGAIN)

Beresford
Good God! It hit me in the face.
(HE slaps hands together)

Lizzie
I'm going! I don't know where, but I'm going.
(SHE quickly Xes R. and up above hamper)

(BAT EFFECT AGAIN)

(SHE screams)
It's in my hair! It's in my hair!

Brooks
(VOICE in the dark, X R then back to L.)
I've got it! It's a Bat!

(Scream from LIZZIE)

(BROOKS goes up quickly to window over L. Throws something out. There is a pause)

Cornelia
(Down L. C. facing up stage)
Lizzie ...
(Pause)
Lizzie, where are you?

Lizzie
(On her knees back of hamper up R.
VOICE out of the gloom)
Trying to crawl under the floor ... I'd go down a rat-hole if there was one!

(Door right slowly opens and WASHINGTON, with candle and leading the UNKNOWN MAN, enters. WASHINGTON upstage side, UNKNOWN down stage side. WASHINGTON leads him to C.)

(NOTE: LIZZIE gets rid of her glass and dead candle as she kneels behind hamper. SHE places them on floor behind hamper)

ELECTRICIAN CATCH CANDLE WASHINGTON CARRIES. ENTERS R. FOLLOW MOVEMENT TO C.

Beresford
Come in.
(Steps to R. C. end of hamper, gets chair without back, places it well down C.)
Sit down.
(BERESFORD steps back. S tands above UNKNOWN C.)

Cornelia
(L. C. to UNKNOWN who sits down)
Are you better now?

Unknown
(Slowly)
Somewhat.

Cornelia
Lizzie, give him some of that whisky.

Lizzie
(Back of hamper R. C. Head just in sight)
Somebody drank it.

Cornelia
(Speaks to Washington)
Washington, you can go.

Washington
(Who is R. C. turns, goes a few steps R. Then turns back to Cornelia. His tone is fairly pitiful)
Lemme stay. Please lemme stay.

Brooks
(L. of Cornelia. Watches Washington suspiciously, then to Cornelia)
Anderson intimated that the doctor had an accomplice in the house.
(Xes to R. C. and WASHINGTON, front of other characters. BROOKS Close up to Washington, on his L.)
Why isn't this the man?
(Takes the candle from Washington)

Washington
(R. C. Cringing)
I ain't done nothin'. No, sir.

Brooks
(Puts candle on hamper, catches Washington by the shoulders and half turns him to look up at the hidden room, up stage C.)
Did you know that room was there?

Washington
(Staring at room)
No, sir.

Cornelia
(L. C.)
He couldn't have locked us in. He was WITH us.

Brooks
He may KNOW who did it.
(To Washington)
Do you?
(WASHINGTON shivers)
Who did you see at the head of the small staircase?
(BROOKS swings the negro in half circle round R.)
Now we're through with nonsense. I want the truth!

Washington
I seen a face, that's all.

Brooks
(Strong)
WHOSE face?

Washington
(Evidently lying)
I don't know.
(Looks down)

Cornelia
Never mind, Washington.
(Looks at Unknown Man)
Solve the mystery of THIS man, and we may get at the facts.

(BERESFORD below holds lighted candle up C. above Unknown. BROOKS has turned when CORNELIA speaks. Takes eyes off Washington, who has started on tiptoes for door R. Just as HE gets to door, BROOKS turns and sees Washington trying to get away)

Brooks
(Takes a step or two toward WASHINGTON R.)
You stay here.

(WASHINGTON stops and stands below door R.)

Beresford
This chap ...
(Indicating Unknown - BERESFORD picks up candle from top of hamper)
claims to have lost his memory. I suppose a blow on the head might do that. I don't know.

Lizzie
(Back of hamper R. C.)
I wish somebody would knock ME on the head. I'd like to forget a few things!

Cornelia
(To Unknown)
Don't you remember even your name?

Unknown
(Shakes head)
Not ... yet.

Cornelia
Or where you came from?

(UNKNOWN shakes his head)

Do you remember how you got into this house?

Unknown
(With difficulty)
Yes, I remember that all right.
(HE puts hand to his head)
My head aches ... to beat the band.

Cornelia
How did you happen to come to this house?

Unknown
(Slowly)
Saw the lights.
(NOTE ... DALE is still seated L.)

Brooks
(R. C. Quickly)
Where were you when you saw the lights?

Unknown
I broke out of the garage.

Beresford
(Up C.)
HOW did you get there? In the garage?

Unknown
I don't know.

Brooks
(With keen suspicion)
Had you been robbed?

Unknown
Everything gone ... out of my pockets.

Brooks
(Stepping closer to Unknown)
Including your watch?

Unknown
If I had a watch, it's gone. All my papers - are - gone.

Cornelia
(Suspiciously)
How do YOU know you HAD papers?

Unknown
(Looks front. Haltingly)
Most men - carry papers, don't they? I'm dazed, but my mind's all right. If you ask me - I think I'm d-d-damned funny.

(BROOKS and BERESFORD exchange glances)

Cornelia

(L. C.)
Did you ring the house 'phone? From the garage?

(BROOKS and BERESFORD change places)

Unknown

Yes.

(A start from CORNELIA and BROOKS)

I leaned against the button ... then I think, maybe I fainted. That's not clear.

(DALE rises)

Dale

(Leaning over and looking at Unknown)
You don't remember how you were hurt?

Unknown

No. The first thing I remember, I was in the garage, tied. I was gagged, too. That's what's the matter with my tongue now. Then I got myself free ... and got out a window.

(CORNELIA makes a movement as if to speak. BERESFORD lifts his hand and speaks to stop her)

Beresford

Just a moment, Miss Van Gorder ... Anderson ought to be here for this.

(On word "Anderson" DALE sits again L.)

ELECTRICIAN FOLLOW MOVEMENT CANDLE.

(BERESFORD starts for door R. HE gets to R. C. when DETECTIVE enters, R. Closes door after him)

(NOTE: On word "Anderson" UNKNOWN'S face shows intense alertness. THE UNKNOWN gets to his feet. DETECTIVE has closed the door, before he catches sight of the Unknown. HE stands rigid, his hand still on the knob of the door. It is to be remembered the DETECTIVE has not yet seen or heard of the Unknown)

Cornelia

(Raises voice. Watching ANDERSON)
A new element in our mystery, Mr. Anderson.

Cornelia (Cont'd)
(Slight pause. DETECTIVE and UNKNOWN look at each other for a moment. THE UNKNOWN's face is a blank, and expressionless)
He's quite dazed, poor fellow.

(UNKNOWN sways)

Brooks
(R.C. Xes behind chair to L. C. Catches UNKNOWN and lowers him into the chair C.)
He's going again!

Beresford
(Over R. to Detective)
He doesn't remember what happened to him. Curious, isn't it?

Detective
(Slowly)
How did HE get into the house?

Cornelia
He came through the terrace door some time ago, just before we were locked in.

Detective
(Drily)
Doesn't remember anything, eh?
(Xes to R. C. to Unknown. BERESFORD Xes over same time with candle, stands U. C. DETECTIVE speaks roughly. Puts hand under Unknown's chin, jerks his head up)
Look up here!
(UNKNOWN looks up at Detective with a blank face)
Look up, you - - -
(Same business)
This losing your memory stuff doesn't go down with me!

Unknown
(Weakly)
It doesn't go down very well with me, either!

Detective
Did you ever see me before?

(BERESFORD holds candle a little nearer Detective's face)

Unknown
(Looks at Detective -- slight pause - haltingly)
You're the doctor I saw downstairs, aren't you?

Detective
(Takes watch of Act Two from his pocket, holds it out toward Unknown)
Does this watch belong to you?
(Looks suspiciously at Unknown)

Unknown
(Looks at watch)
Maybe ...
(Falls back against Brooks)
I don't know.

Cornelia
(L.C.)
He has evidently been attacked. He claims to have recovered consciousness in the garage, wher he was tied, hand and foot!

Detective
He does, eh? If you'll give me five minutes alone with him, I'll get the TRUTH out of him!
(DETECTIVE while they move up R., keeps UNKNOWN in eye. A look of alarm passes over the UNKNOWN's face. A general move-ment on the part of OTHERS to go out R. CORNELIA Xes to R. C. just beyond Detective. WASHINGTON steps up R. above door. BROOKS Xes above hamper to door R. with candle. BROOKS takes candle from Beresford)

Cornelia
(Half turning back to detective)
Do you believe that money is irrevocably gone?

Detective
There's no such word as "irrevocable" in my vocabulary, I believe it's out of the house, if that's what you mean.

Cornelia
Suppose I tell you that there are certain facts that you have overlooked.

Detective
(Sardonically to Cornelia, but looks at Unknown)
Still on the trail!

Cornelia
I was right about the doctor, wasn't I?
(Goes to door R.)

Detective
Just fifty per cent right, and the doctor didn't turn the trick alone! Now, if you all go out and close that door.

(CORNELIA looks off R. Takes candle from BROOKS, SHE starts out R.)

Cornelia

Quick! A man just went through that skylight and out onto the roof.

Detective

Out onto the roof!
(Exits)

Brooks

Come on, Beresford!

ELECTRICIAN ALL OUT WHEN CORNELIA EXITS R.

(CORNELIA exits. BROOKS (2) DETECTIVE (3) BERESFORD (4) WASHINGTON (5) and closes door behind him. Ad lib from the MEN as THEY run off R.)
"A man on the roof," etc.

(Talking and excitement, and noise of running. As the DETECTIVE goes off R. HE draws his revolver)

Beresford

Righto - - -

(DALE, LIZZIE and UNKNOWN remain in room. In the DARK except for light from doorway R.)

Lizzie

(Goes over to Dale L. C.)
I'd RUN if my legs would!

Dale

Hush!

Lizzie

(Wails)
How do we know THIS FELLOW RIGHT HERE isn't the BAT?
(Indicating the UNKNOWN who has half risen. HE drops back into chair as CORNELIA re-enters with lighted candle) ELECTRICIAN CATCH CANDLE RIGHT
(CORNELIA comes in very cautiously, looks over her shoulder, and quietly closes the door)

Dale

(L.)
What did you see?

Cornelia

(R. Calmly)
I didn't see anything! I had to get rid of that damned detective before I assassinated him.

(SHE Xes over to L.C.)

Dale
Nobody went through the skylight?

Cornelia

(Few steps to R.C.)
They have now ... the whole outfit.
(Up a step L. C.)

Dale
Then why did you ...

Cornelia

(Interrupting)
Because that money's in this room! If the man who took it out of the safe had got away with it, why did he come back? He got it out of the safe and that's as far as he DID get it! There's a HAT behind that safe ... a man's soft felt hat.

Lizzie

(Up L.)
Well, I wish he'd take his hat and go home.

(UNKNOWN listens intently)

Cornelia

(Disregarding LIZZIE, she goes over R. C. up stage in front of closets, back of hamper, on floor, SHE picks up a half burned candle)
A half burned candle. Another thing the detective overlooked.
(SHE steps back to C. SHE looks from candle to closet. Suddenly at the window BROOKS quickly lowers himself in from room on down stage side of window L.)

Lizzie

(Horrified, runs down L. C.)
He's coming in! The Bat!

(CORNELIA gets her revolver, points at the figure of BROOKS - revolver on top of hamper)

Dale

(Recognizes Brooks, puts her hand up, so Cornelia won't shoot)
It's Jack.

(DALE is now up L. C. then over to BROOKS as HE comes in through window. CORNELIA on seeing that it is Brooks, lays her revolver on top of hamper, R. C. UNKNOWN sees her do this)

Brooks

(Up at window L.)
The man Lizzie saw drop from the skylight, probably reached the roof from this window. Easiest thing in the world.

Cornelia

(R. C. upstage, looks at closets R. C.)
Never mind the window! When that detective comes back, I may have a SURPRISE PARTY for him!

(DALE Xes toward Cornelia to L. C.)

Lizzie

(Morosely L. C.)
I don't want any more surprises. I've had plenty.

Dale

(Up L. to Brooks)
Aunt Cornelia thinks the money's still here.

Cornelia

(Over to closet up R. SHE opens the three closets, up R. to R. C.)
I KNOW it's here.

(BROOKS Xes to Cornelia -- Xing Dale)

(CORNELIA moves opening and closing the closets, BROOKS Xes R. of Cornelia)

ELECTRICIAN WATCH MOVEMENT OF CANDLE. AS

(LIZZIE sits still, her eyes riveted on the UNKNOWN who is looking overR. at revolver on hamper. DALE looks at LIZZIE, then steps down L. to LIZZIE)

Dale

(Nervously)
Lizzie ... what are you looking at?

Lizzie

(Points at Unknown - in a sepulchral tone)
What's HE looking at?

(UNKNOWN is sunk again in apathy)

(CORNELIA resumes trying the closet doors. SHE is now at closet R. C. that is placed up and down stage)

Cornelia
This one is locked, and the key gone.

Lizzie
(Seated L. Crying)
If there's anything locked up in that closet, you'd better let it stay! There's enough running around loose in this house as it is.

(There is no question about the interest in the UNKNOWN'S FACE. BROOKS up and stands back of Cornelia C. CORNELIA hands BROOKS the candle)

Cornelia
Lizzie, did you ever take that key?

Lizzie
(Seated L.)
No'm.

Cornelia
It may be locked from the inside.

(DALE up beside BROOKS watches CORNELIA at closet R. C.)

I'll soon find out.

(CORNELIA TAKES from her hair a wire hair pin and runs it through the keyhole)

There's no key inside.

(BROOKS shakes the door of the closet, but it does not yield)

I want to see the inside of that closet.

Lizzie
(Seated up L.)
If you could see MY insides, you wouldn't recognize them!

Cornelia
Bring me the other closet keys.

(DALE with the candle goes to closet up L. then down to closet L. below the window. Gets key. LIZZIE follows DALE and the candle)

ELECTRICIAN GETS THE
MOVEMENT OF THE CANDLE

(DALE up to Cornelia and gives her key. LIZZIE follows her. Meanwhile BROOKS goes to closets against back wall R.C. gets keys)

Cornelia

(During this action, UNKNOWN commences a curious piece of business. With infinite caution HE moves his chair over R. toward revolver CORNELIA has left on top of hamper R. C. HE reaches out, gets revolver, moves back chair to C. and sits same as before. After letting audience see revolver HE partly covers it.)

(C.)
There! That unlocked it!

Brooks

(Up R. C.)
I'd keep BACK a little. You don't know WHAT may be inside.

(CORNELIA and DALE draw back, stepping down and L.)

Lizzie

(Shivering, speaks as she Xes front of Unknown over to front of hamper R. C.)
Mercy sakes, who WANTS to know!
(LIZZIE sits on the hamper)

(BROOKS takes the candle, and slowly and cautiously opens the door of the closet. HE stands for a moment and stares appalled at something on the floor of the closet)

(BROOKS looks into closet. Stoops as if to touch body. BROOKS closes closet. Pause. BROOKS comes down few steps C.)

ELECTRICIAN DIM AWAY DOWN WHILE THIS BUSINESS BEING DONE

Dale

(Over L. Aghast)
What is it? What did you see?
(Staring at Brooks)

Brooks

(Does not answer, then pulling himself together)
Miss Cornelia, I think we have found the ghost Washington saw. How are your nerves?

Cornelia

(Holds out her hand)
Give me the candle.

(BROOKS does. Xes over L. to Dale. THEY stand and watch Cornelia. Cornelia up to closet door. Stands staring)

ELECTRICIAN FOLLOW AND DIM IN FOOTS AS CORNELIA GOES UP AND AWAY DOWN WHEN SHE OPENS CLOSET DOOR COME UP AGAIN IN FOOTS WHEN

(SHE closes door of closet and comes down again. UNKNOWN half turns and watches the others out of the corner of his eye)

(SHE faces Brooks and Dale. It is a tense moment)
It is Couetleigh Fleming.

Brooks

(Up L. C.)
It WAS Courtleigh Fleming.

Dale

(L. with hand on back of chair)
Then he did not die in the West!

Brooks

(Up L. C.)
He died in this house ... within the last hour. The body is still warm. And Doctor Wells killed him.

Cornelia

(Comes down L. C.)
I wonder!

(Then to Brooks, as SHE Xes to Dale L.)
Please look and see if Courtleigh Fleming wore a wrist watch with a luminous dial.

(BROOKS up to closet, opens door down stage door, gets on his knees, puts arm in closet. Time for brief examination. Rises, closes door closet, comes down L. C.)

Brooks

Yes.

Cornelia

(To Dale)
The EYE Lizzie saw was the wrist watch.

(The UNKNOWN sinks down in chair but listens intensely)

Brooks

Isn't it clear, Miss Van Gorder? The doctor and old Mr. Fleming formed a conspiracy ... Fleming to rob the bank and hide the money here. Wells to issue a false death certificate in the WEST and bury a substitute body, secured God knows how. It was easy ... it kept clear the name of the president of the Union Bank ... and it put the blame on me.

(Comes down C. Turns quickly and looks up at Cornelia)

Only something happened they didn't expect. Dick Fleming leased the house to you. The money was here, but they couldn't get it.

Cornelia

(Quickly)

Then you think that tonight Courtleigh Fleming broke in, with the doctor's assistance, and that he killed Dick, his own nephew, from the staircase?

Brooks

Don't you?

Cornelia

(L. C.)

No.

Brooks

(C. Up a step facing Cornelia)

It's as clear as crystal... Wells tried to get out of the house tonight with that blue-print. WHY? He knew the minute we got it, we'd come up here, and Fleming was here.

Cornelia

(L.C.)

Perfectly true, and then?

Brooks

Old Fleming killed Dick, and Wells killed Fleming.

(Xing over to L. to Dale. Below her, down stage)

YOU CAN'T GET AWAY FROM IT!

Cornelia

No. No, the doctor is not a murderer! He's as puzzled as we are about some things. He and Courtleigh Fleming were working together, but remember this -- Doctor Wells was locked in the drawing room with us. He's been trying all evening to get up the stairs and failed.

Brooks

(Down L.)
He was here ten minutes ago, locked in this room.

Cornelia

I grant you that. But at the same time an unknown masked man was locked in that mantel room with Dale. The doctor put out the candle when you opened that hidden room. WHY? Because HE THOUGHT COURTLEIGH FLEMING WAS HIDING THERE... But at this moment, he believes that Fleming has made his escape! No ... we haven't solved the mystery yet ... There's another element ... an UNKNOWN element ... and that element is ... THE BAT!

Dale

(As SHE xes quickly to R. down stage.
Front of UNKNOWN and well over to R.
Half hysterically)
Oh, call the detective! Let's get through with this thing! I can't BEAR any more.

Cornelia

(C.)
Wait. Not yet. Nobody can help Courtleigh Fleming, and I'm not finished.

(Goes well up C.)

Lizzie

(Seated on hamper R. C.)
Well, I'm through all right!

Cornelia

(Over to R. C. looks and sees hamper)
Open the lid of that hamper.
(Indicates hamper which Lizzie is sitting on)
And see what's inside.

(LIZZIE rises from hamper)

(BROOKS Xes over to R. C. Back of hamper, opens lid, looks inside)

Brooks

Nothing here but some clothes and books.

Cornelia

(L. of Brooks)
Books? I left no books in that hamper.

Brooks

(Reading titles of cheap paper novels)
"True Tales Of Love," "The Other Woman" - - -

Lizzie
(Down below hamper)
I told you this house was haunted. I left those books in my satchel, along with - - -

ELECTRICIAN READY FOR RED FIRE LIGHT ON WINDOW L. 2.

Cornelia
(Quickly and impatiently)
Where is your satchel?

(BROOKS drops lid of hamper)

Lizzie
(Looks around front of hamper and leans over hamper, looks behind it and around on floor R. of hamper)
Where's my satchel ... My satchel ... My satchel's gone.
(Over hamper at end)

(CORNELIA holds candle high. Gets candle from Brooks. SHE goes L.)

ELECTRICIAN FOLLOW MOVEMENT OF CANDLE

Cornelia
(At last sees satchel, above window L. 2. on floor, where Masked Man left it when he darted into the hidden room, earlier in Act. Indicating it)
Isn't that it, Lizzie?

(LIZZIE quickly over to Cornelia, then X to above window. Looks scared, then looks at Cornelia)

Lizzie
Yes, ma'am.

Cornelia
(Points to chair down L.)
Put it there.

(LIZZIE stalls, scared. CORNELIA continues to point at chair)

Lizzie
I'm scared to touch it. It may have a bomb in it!
(SHE reluctantly gets the satchel, carries it very slowly between thumb and forefinger as she might carry a loaded gun. SHE deposits the satchel on chair down L. and backs away up L. near window)

Cornelia
Do as I tell you. Put it on that chair.

Cornelia (Cont'd)
(Starting over C. up stage looking at
Brooks and Dale over R. behind hamper.
BROOKS R. of her. To Brooks)
You open it. If the money's there you're the one who ought to find it.

(BROOKS looks at Dale, then with a smile Xes front of Cornelia. DALE follows him. CORNELIA with candle follows them to L.C. BROOKS fumbles at catch of satchel on chair down L. DALE beside him. While they are occupied with this business, UNKNOWN rises and quickly gets to door R. 1. faces the others. His back to door with hand behind him, he locks the door, and takes the key out. PUTS IT IN HIS POCKET. Meanwhile BROOKS has succeeded in opening the bag. BROOKS and DALE show they are delighted as they see the canvas bag with the packages of money in it)

Brooks
The money is here.

Dale
Oh, thank God!

(Watch window. As red glare fills room)

ELECTRICIAN RED GLOW STARTS FAINTLY OUTSIDE WINDOW INCREASES AND GOES UP AND DOWN. FLAME EFFECT. CRACKLING OF BURNING WOOD HEARD OFF L. ALL STAND.

Lizzie
Fire!

Beresford
(Off R.)
The garage is burning!

(Sound of MEN'S VOICES, and running of feet on tin, supposed to be the roof. CORNELIA, BROOKS, DALE and LIZZIE all turn toward door R. Suddenly their attention is riveted on the UNKNOWN who is standing in front of door R. His back to door, facing the other characters, he has the revolver he got off hamper, in his hand)

Unknown
(Savage tone)
This door is locked and the key is in my pocket.

Unknown (Cont'd)
(LIZZIE opens her mouth to scream. HE looks at her, and in an ominous tone)
Not a sound out of YOU.
(To Brooks)
Close that bag ...
(Referring to satchel)
and put it back where you found it.

Brooks
(L. C. Starts toward him, a step)
YOU!

Dale
(Up L. C.)
Jack!

Cornelia
(R. C. to Brooks)
Do what he tells you!

(BROOKS closes bag, and puts it up above window L.)

Lizzie
(Horrified whisper. R. of Dale)
It's the Bat!

Unknown
(At door R.)
Blow out that candle!

(CORNELIA after a moment's hesitation blows out candle)

(Only light in room now is the flicker of fire outside window L.)

ELECTRICIAN LIGHTS ALL OUT

Lizzie
(C. Hysterically)
I'm going to scream! I can't keep it back!

Unknown
(Over R. at door. Savagely)
Put that woman in that mantel room.
(Points up C.)
And shut her up.

(BROOKS pushes Lizzie up to mantel)

Lizzie
(As SHE goes up C.)
Don't shove. I'm damned glad to go.
(SHE goes in hidden room. BROOKS closes the iron doors behind her)

Unknown
(Unlocks the door, R. Opens it a little, listens, closes it, without locking it)
Not a sound, if you value your lives.
(Xes over to L. C. up stage)
In a moment or two a man will come into this room, either through the door or by that window.
(Step toward window. Then back to C.)
The man who started the fire to draw you out of this house.

Brooks
(Up L. C. one step toward Unknown)
For God's sake don't keep these women here!

Unknown
Keep them here where we can watch them! Don't you understand. There's a killer loose!

(UNKNOWN steps down L.)

ELECTRICIAN...THE RED GLOW DIES OUT. ONLY THE BLUE LIGHT OUTSIDE WINDOW NOW...

Cornelia
(U. C. To Unknown)
I have understood very clearly for the last hour! The man who struck you down and tied you in the garage, the man who killed Dick Fleming...and stabbed that poor wretch in the closet, the man who locked us in, downstairs, and removed the money from the safe...the man who STARTED THAT fire outside is ....

Unknown
(As if hearing some one outside window, puts out his hand)
Sh!
(HE runs quickly over to door R. 1., locks it and hurries back to C. up stage)
Stand back out of the light. The ladder!

(DALE and CORNELIA stand back R. C. BROOKS up stage above window L. UNKNOWN flattens his body against wall up L. beside BROOKS. The ladder is seen to shake, outside the window, a breathless pause, then outside on the ladder THE BAT is faintly outlined coming up ladder, in cap and black silk handkerchief disguise. HE steps in window, and backs up to get the grip. As HE does this UNKNOWN and BROOKS grab him, just as BAT focuses flash-light on the satchel. There is a struggle in the dark. BROOKS and UNKNOWN overpower THE BAT)

Unknown (Cont'd)

(To Brooks)
Get his gun.
(Pause)
Got it?

Brooks

Yes.

Unknown

(Up above the Bat. BROOKS below the Bat)
Hold out your hands, Bat, while I put on the bracelets!
(Puts on handcuffs on Bat's wrists)
Sometimes even the CLEVEREST BAT comes through a window at night and is caught! Double murder...burglary, and arson... That's a good night's work even for you, Bat!
(UNKNOWN turns flashlight on the Masked Man's face)
Take off that handkerchief.

(BROOKS does this business revealing ANDERSON, THE DETECTIVE. UNKNOWN above ANDERSON, BROOKS below him. DETECTIVE is covered with two revolvers. The storm being over, the LIGHTS flash on)

ELECTRICIAN: YOUR FOUR STRIPS IN FOOTS COME UP FULL

Dale

(Up R. C. with Cornelia)
It's Mr. Anderson.

Unknown

(Without taking his eyes off the Bat)
I'm Anderson. This man has been impersonating me ... You're a good actor, Bat, for a fellow that's such a BAD actor! How did you get your cops on this case? Did you tap the wires to headquarters?

The Bat

(With sardonic smile)
I'll tell you that when I ...
(With swift movement, though handcuffed, he jerks the gun by the barrel from the real ANDERSON, wheels on Brooks with lightning rapidity, brings down the butt of gun on Brooks' wrist, BROOKS' gun drops to floor. THE BAT swings to R. C. keeping the characters covered with gun. Speaks as HE moves or backs away to R. C.)
Hands up, everybody!

(CORNELIA has not raised her hands)

Hands up ... you!
(Savagely to Cornelia)

Cornelia
(Coming down C.)

Why? I took the bullets out of that gun two hours ago.

(THE BAT throws the gun toward her. It drops in front of her on the floor. As soon as THE BAT drops gun, the UNKNOWN picks up the other gun, and Xes. Runs back of Cornelia and blocks the Bat's get-away R. C. UNKNOWN covers BAT with gun)

Unknown
(To Bat)

Don't move!

(CORNELIA picks up her gun from the floor)

You see, you never know what a woman will do!
(Tauntingly at BAT, who turns R. and growls at Unknown)

Cornelia
(Opens the gun and the loaded shells fall to floor. The BAT wheels and looks at her, and bullets on floor)

As it happened, I didn't. The first lie of an otherwise stainless life!

CURTAIN FALLS

(On 2nd Curtain, LIZZIE sticks her head out of hidden room, scared, and disappears into hidden room again)

THE END

(Alternative and more real ending)

Bat
Hands up ... you!
(Savagely to Cornelia)

Cornelia
(Coming down C.)
Why? I took the bullets out of that gun two hours ago.

(Nevertheless THE BAT pulls the trigger.
Nothing happens. HE drops gun on floor)

Unknown
Hands up, Bat. It's all over.

(BAT raises his hands)

Miss Van Gorder has outsmarted you.

Cornelia
(Sits abruptly. LIZZIE emerges from hidden room)
Where's that whisky Lizzie brought?

Lizzie
I guess I drank it.

CURTAIN FALLS