

Julia Phillipa
Patrick
Craddock
Miss Blacklock

Scene II

(The same. The following Monday morning.)

(As the curtain rises, PATRICK and JULIA are alone in the room.)

JULIA. What are we going to do?

PATRICK. We'll think of something...

JULIA. They're bound to find out - it can't last much longer...

PATRICK. Don't worry...

JULIA. Don't worry? For God's sake, Patrick!

PATRICK. We'll achieve nothing by panicking.

JULIA. You will help me, won't you?

PATRICK. Haven't I - I've done everything you've asked...

JULIA. I know - you've been wonderful.

(They kiss.)

I need you.

PATRICK. Well, there's no way back. Can't stop now.

JULIA. What's done is done.

PATRICK. I did it for you...

(They kiss momentarily, then break quickly.)

(The Main Door opens and MISS BLACKLOCK and INSPECTOR CRADDOCK enter. She looks worn and tired. Clearly, she feels the loss of BUNNY deeply.)

CRADDOCK. Ah. Good morning, Miss Simmons. How are you, Mr. Simmons?

PATRICK. *(warily)* Well - thank you.

JULIA. Have you found out any more?

CRADDOCK. We're making progress - we're not interrupting anything, are we?

PATRICK. *(a shade too quickly)* Oh, no - nothing at all.

JULIA. No...

CRADDOCK. Well...

PATRICK. Oh, I see. We'll go and feed the ducks or something.

(PATRICK and JULIA are about to exit.)

CRADDOCK. Mr. Simmons...

(PATRICK and JULIA stop and PATRICK turns to CRADDOCK. They are quite close.)

PATRICK. *(nervously)* Yes?

CRADDOCK. Did you know you've got lipstick on your collar?

(PATRICK's hand shoots up to his shirt collar. Clearly, he is embarrassed, and JULIA is, too. But she makes a better job of hiding her embarrassment)

PATRICK. I - didn't - I mean - I didn't put a clean shirt on this morning...

CRADDOCK. Well, he can't blame you, can he Miss Simmons?

JULIA. Hardly.

PATRICK. Well - the ducks...

(They are about to move off.)

CRADDOCK. By the way, Miss Simmons?

JULIA. Yes?

CRADDOCK. You work in the pharmacy at the local hospital, don't you?

JULIA. *(warily)* That's right.

CRADDOCK. Thank you.

(PATRICK and JULIA continue on their way to the Main Door and exit without another word.)

There are more urgent things. Now, Miss Blacklock.

MISS BLACKLOCK. I'm really not up to answering a lot of questions.

CRADDOCK. *(sympathetically)* I'll be as brief as I can. But, you've had another lucky escape.

MISS BLACKLOCK. I find it more and more difficult to accept your reasoning, Inspector. How can you possibly suggest that I was the intended victim this time? Any one of us could have eaten that cake first.

CRADDOCK. I know that...

MISS BLACKLOCK. And Patrick's suggestion that Clara's honey could have been poisoned is – it's malicious!

CRADDOCK. I agree.

MISS BLACKLOCK. (*in surprise*) Oh? Then how was the cake poisoned? Did Mitzi--

CRADDOCK. (*interrupting*) It wasn't the cake –

MISS BLACKLOCK. But...

(She breaks off, clearly upset. He takes out a bottle of aspirin.)

CRADDOCK. – it was these.

(She looks at the bottle of aspirin, amazed.)

MISS BLACKLOCK. My aspirin?

CRADDOCK. Exactly. *Your* aspirin. The ones you normally keep by your bed.

MISS BLACKLOCK. (*painfully*) No – no...

CRADDOCK. Someone wants you dead – very, very badly!

(A moment's pause. The tension builds.)

MISS BLACKLOCK. I – I'm frightened, Inspector.

CRADDOCK. At last! Now perhaps you'll help me find the murderer.

MISS BLACKLOCK. (*sharply*) I haven't purposely been non-cooperative. I just couldn't believe anyone would...
(She breaks off.)

CRADDOCK. There's no friendship where money's concerned. Did you know Belle Goedler's condition has deteriorated recently?

MISS BLACKLOCK. I knew she wasn't well...

CRADDOCK. I understand from the Scottish police that she's now seriously *ill*.

MISS BLACKLOCK. I should go to her. Poor Belle...

CRADDOCK. It could be poor Miss Blacklock.

(She looks at him, afraid.)

MISS BLACKLOCK. Pip and Emma...

CRADDOCK. Yes. They are uppermost in my mind, but it could be a combination of them and their parents who are trying to kill you. The father. Dimitri Stanfordis. You said he was a rogue. Would he go as far as murder to *get* money?

(A moment's pause.)

MISS BLACKLOCK. *(fearfully)* I'll do anything you say.

CRADDOCK. Good. You must try to remember everything you can about him – Sonia – and Pip and Emma. Anything and everything. But, the son and daughter in particular. They're uppermost in my mind. Have you any photographs of them?

MISS BLACKLOCK. Well – Belle Goedler is more likely to have photographs of them than I am.

CRADDOCK. I'm afraid we drew almost a complete blank with her. They allowed the police up there to look all over the house – they found nothing. Have you anything? What I'm hoping is that Pip may take after his father – or Emma her mother...

MISS BLACKLOCK. Or the other way round...

CRADDOCK. Exactly.

MISS BLACKLOCK. There was an old album. I haven't seen it for years. It should be in the house somewhere...

CRADDOCK. Find it!

MISS BLACKLOCK. It might take a little while.

CRADDOCK. Would you like some help?

MISS BLACKLOCK. Let me try first! (MISS BLACKLOCK opens the Main Door.)

(PHILLIPA is standing there. She enters. MISS BLACKLOCK waits a moment, then exits, closing the door behind her.)

PHILLIPA. I believe you want to see me?

CRADDOCK. Yes, Mrs. Haymes. Do sit down.

(PHILLIPA sits rather hesitantly.)

PHILLIPA. Oh, dear – this sounds serious.

CRADDOCK. *(after a pause)* If you lie about something, Mrs. Haymes – you have to cover your tracks very, very carefully.

PHILLIPA. I – I don't...

CRADDOCK. Yes, you do understand. Don't lie any more. You know what I'm talking about.

(A moment's pause. During this and the following, PHILLIPA clenches and unclenches her hands.)

PHILLIPA. *(bitterly)* Everyone says we have more freedom nowadays – the world is – more understanding – than it ever was. Well, Inspector Craddock, you try being an unmarried mother...

CRADDOCK. I don't think it would work!

(She smiles in spite of herself.)

PHILLIPA. It isn't easy in a small village.

CRADDOCK. So, you invented a husband!

PHILLIPA. How do you think Letty Blacklock would react if she Knew the truth?

CRADDOCK. She strikes me as being a sympathetic and understanding person. What's more, she's no fool. I've a sneaking suspicion she may have guessed the truth.

(PHILLIPA's hand goes up to her mouth.)

PHILLIPA. So, that's why...

CRADDOCK. What?

PHILLIPA. She's so kind to me – there aren't many like her.

CRADDOCK. Does your son know the truth?

PHILLIPA. He believes – his father died...

CRADDOCK. Silly. He'll find out sometime.

PHILLIPA. Maybe.

CRADDOCK. My advice to you is to tell him – and everyone else.

PHILLIPA. Will you tell the others if I don't? It isn't a crime.

CRADDOCK. I couldn't live with it. But, it's up to you.

PHILLIPA. How did you find out.

CRADDOCK. We do a lot of routine work.

PHILLIPA. You've been checking up on me?

CRADDOCK. Sort of.

PHILLIPA. You make it sound very casual.

CRADDOCK. It isn't, But it *is puzzling*.

(A moment's pause.)

PHILLIPA. Puzzling?

CRADDOCK. It's only a small thing – but I'm sure you can help. It's about your son's birth certificate.

PHILLIPA. *(warily)* Yes?

CRADDOCK. It gives the mother's name as – Phillipa Haymes.

PHILLIPA. *(nervously)* Well – that's me.

CRADDOCK. Ah, well – in that case, there is a problem.

(PHILLIPA drops her head.)

You see – we can't find a birth certificate – for anyone with your name – well, not one that corresponds with what we know about you.

(PHILLIPA looks up at him and bites her lip.)

(The Main Door opens and MISS BLACKLOCK enters, carrying a photographic album.)

MISS BLACKLOCK. I've found it... Am I interrupting?

CRADDOCK. Your timing is perfect. Mrs. Haymes and I have just finished. *(He pauses.) For the time being!*

(PHILLIPA gets up, her mind cleanly in a whirl, and exits without a word. Closing the door behind her.)

Are there any photos of Sonia and her husband?