

BODDY. Ladies and gentlemen . . .

[MUSIC CUE #23]

BODDY. . . . If you can manage to . . . somehow . . . get rid of Mr. Wadsworth, I'll have no need to increase your blackmail or expose you to the police. As a matter of truth, if you can help me eliminate Wadsworth, who not only knows all of your secrets, but also mine . . . perhaps I can find it in my heart to eliminate your blackmail altogether and be done with this terrible business once and for all.

WADSWORTH. You would never!

PLUM. Why us, Boddy? Why don't you do your dirty work yourself?

BODDY. Why should I, when the six of you are so uniquely motivated?

WADSWORTH. After all I've done for you? This is how you repay me?!

(To GUESTS:)

Don't listen to him! He's a liar!

(Music becomes more dramatic.)

I'm one of you! He's been blackmailing me along with the rest of you.

SCARLET. Oh yeah? What'd you do?

WADSWORTH. That's neither here nor there! The point is—I'm not a butler! I'm an indentured servant!

BODDY. Don't make a scene, Wadsworth. It's over.

(To GUESTS:)

The police are on their way, ladies and gentlemen. Now's your chance. Kill Wadsworth and end your blackmail . . . FOREVER!

(He switches off the lights. Blackness. Thuds. Gasps. Screams. A gunshot. Scuffles. Groans. The lights are switched back on.)

[MUSIC CUE #24]

(BODDY lies on the floor. Prone. Face down. Everyone else remains as they were.)

WHITE. It's Mr. Boddy!

WADSWORTH. (Enormously relieved.) Oh thank God.

SCARLET. Is he breathing?!

PLUM. Stand back!

(They move back. PLUM gives BODDY a cursory examination, checking his neck and his pulse.)

PLUM. He's dead.

WHITE. Who had the gun?

PLUM. I did.

PEACOCK. So you shot him!

PLUM. I didn't!

PEACOCK. Well, you had the gun. If you didn't, who did?

PLUM. Somebody grabbed it from my hand, and the next thing I knew the gun went off.

(WADSWORTH turns BODDY over.)

WADSWORTH. There's no gunshot wound.

WHITE. He's right. There isn't.

SCARLET. (Pointing to a hole in the wall.) Look, there's a bullet lodged here.

GREEN. So how did he die?

PLUM. I don't know. Being unbearably handsome doesn't make me a forensic expert!

WHITE. One of us must have killed him.

(This quiet observation produces a fearful silence. They all look at each other nervously, aware that a murderer is present amongst them.)

GREEN. I didn't do it!!!

PEACOCK. I need a drink.

(PEACOCK goes to BODDY's body, who is still holding the brandy goblet. She pries the goblet from his hand, raises it to her lips and drinks.)

PLUM, Maybe he was poisoned! By the brandy!

(PEACOCK screams, and drops the glass. She continues screaming, hysterically. She runs around. GREEN chases her, trying to calm her down.)

GREEN. It's all right Mrs. Peacock, it's all right, it's all right. Calm down!

(After some moments of continued screaming, GREEN slaps her face and she goes flying onto the couch. Everyone looks at GREEN accusingly.)

GREEN. *(Defensively.)* I had to stop her screaming.

MUSTARD. Was the brandy poisoned?

(PLUM turns the goblet over. It is empty.)

PLUM. Looks like we'll never know.

GREEN. Unless she dies too.

(They all hurry over to the sofa and stare at PEACOCK. Suddenly we hear a scream. They all stand straight up, with terror on their faces.)

[MUSIC CUE #25]

(The GUESTS rush out, nearly tripping over each other. GREEN has the Lead Pipe in his hand.)

PEACOCK. *(Calling after them.)* Wait for me!

(PEACOCK runs after them. The scrim flies as we transition to the corridor—outside the Billiard Room.)

SCENE 4

(The corridor—outside the Billiard Room.)

(WADSWORTH and the GUESTS enter downstage of the scrim. They run stage right to the door of the Billiard Room. WADSWORTH tries the handle. The door is locked. Music ends.)

WADSWORTH. It's locked! *(Into the door.)* Who's in there? Who's screaming?

YVETTE. *(From inside.)* C'est moi!

WADSWORTH. Yvette?!

YVETTE. Oui!

WADSWORTH. *(Into the door.)* Yvette, are you all right?!

YVETTE. *(From inside.)* No!

MUSTARD. Yvette? Are you alive?!

(YVETTE opens the door, revealing herself, in a puddle of tears, fuming!)

YVETTE. Of course I'm alive! *(Turning to WADSWORTH.)* No zanks to you, Wadsworth, you ee-dio! You've locked us up in zis house wiz a murderer!

WHITE. So the murderer is here?

YVETTE. Oui!

GREEN. Where?

YVETTE. Where? Here! We're all looking at him.

(PEACOCK enters, out of breath.)

YVETTE. Or her . . .

MUSTARD. What took you so long?

PEACOCK. *(Winded and hysterical.)* I'm an old woman in an aggravated state of shock! It's amazing I'm anywhere!

YVETTE. *(Back to her point.)* I heard you in ze Study—one of you is ze killer!

PLUM. How could you hear us in "ze" Study . . .

YVETTE. I was listening! I have a tape recorder in ze Billiard Room! Monsieur Boddy asked me to tape-record your conversation.

PLUM. Why would he ask you to record our conversation?

YVETTE. For more evidence, of course! When Wadsworth revealed your secrets in ze Study, zey were all recorded.

PLUM. What a snake! I've got to destroy them! Where are the tapes?

YVETTE. Ze tapes? What about ze body?!

MUSTARD. What body?

ALL. Boddy's body!!

WHITE. But, Yvette, why were you screaming in there, all by yourself?

YVETTE. Because I was frightened! I also drank ze Cognac. Maybe I am poisoned too! Mon Dieu! *(She starts to weep.)* I can't stay in zere alone.

(PLUM goes to comfort her.)

PLUM. There's safety in numbers. Don't worry, I'll protect you. I'm very strong.

(He puts his arm around her. She throws him off.)

YVETTE. But one of you is ze killer! Monsieur Boddy is dead!

GREEN. (To YVETTE:) And we have to figure out which one of them did it!

PEACOCK. What do you mean "which one of them"?

GREEN. Well, I didn't do it!

WADSWORTH. Well, one of us did. We all had the opportunity. And the motive. Mr. Boddy was a bully and a liar to us all. I would have killed him myself, but I didn't have access to a weapon. Only the six of you had the means to do it.

SCARLET. Don't look at me! All I got was a Candlestick!

PLUM. Maybe it wasn't one of us!

WHITE. Who else could it have been?

PEACOCK. Who else is in the house?

WADSWORTH/YVETTE. Only the/ze cook.

ALL. THE COOK!

[MUSIC CUE #26]

(WADSWORTH leads the GUESTS in an elaborate choreographed sequence which moves them from stage right to stage left just as we transition to the Kitchen.)

SCENE 5

(The Kitchen.)

(WADSWORTH, YVETTE, and the GUESTS enter the Kitchen. A kitchen rack of pots and pans flies in. A freezer appears in the stage left door.)

(GREEN no longer has the Lead Pipe.)

GREEN. The Cook's not here.

(The door to the freezer starts to open. The COOK's body, Dagger in her back, tumbles out onto a quite unsuspecting GREEN, who can barely stand under her weight. PEACOCK screams!)

SCARLET. There's a Dagger in her back!

GREEN. (Descending to the floor under COOK's weight) I didn't do it!

(GREEN lands on the ground beneath the COOK. Nobody moves.)

GREEN. Will somebody help me, PLEASE?!

MUSTARD. (Ignoring GREEN, turning to WADSWORTH:) I think you'd better explain yourself, Wadsworth.

WADSWORTH. Me? Why me?!

MUSTARD. Who else would want to kill the Cook?

SCARLET. (A little laugh:) Dinner wasn't that bad.

MUSTARD. How can you make jokes at a time like this?

SCARLET. It's my defense mechanism.

MUSTARD. Some defense! If I were the killer I'd kill you next.

(EVERYONE GASPS!)

MUSTARD. I said "if" "if" That's all. There's only one admitted killer here, and that's not me. (Pointing to WHITE:) It's Mrs. White!

(EVERYONE GASPS!)

WHITE. I've admitted nothing.

MUSTARD. You paid the blackmail. How many husbands have you had?

WHITE. Mine or other women's?

MUSTARD. Yours.

WHITE. Five.

MUSTARD. Five?

WHITE. Yes, just the five. Husbands should be like Kleenex—soft, strong and disposable.

MUSTARD. Well, if it wasn't you, who was it? Who had the Dagger?

PLUM. It was Mrs. Peacock!

(EVERYONE GASPS!)

PEACOCK. Yes. But I put it down.

MUSTARD. Where?

PEACOCK. In the Study.

SCARLET. When?

PEACOCK. I don't know! Before he slapped me, after I was assaulted, who knows? But any of us could have picked it up. It must have been

... Mr. Green!

(EVERYONE GASPS! They turn to where GREEN ought to be. He's not there.)

MUSTARD. Where is Mr. Green?