

Scene 1 Horace, Norman, Marguerite, and Clara

HORACE:

Damnable surprise this. No account for the help these days. You treat them fairly. You give them a home and shelter and honest work, and then they go kill a woman in your own parlor. Well, I shall think twice before hiring a butler stronger than myself, I tell you! (*beat*) What does one do with a corpse in one's parlor?

NORMAN:

Leave the crime scene untouched so that the police have all the proof they need that Gilbert did it!

MARGUERITE:

Shall we let the police determine his guilt before we play judge and jury.

CLARA:

Mr. Lowenherz has left to fetch the authorities.

HORACE:

Went out in this storm? Well, a damnable nuisance that. (*stares out at the storm*) I hope we don't have two bodies to deal with come morning.

MARGUERITE:

Things are getting downright morbid.

NORMAN:

There is a dead woman in the parlor, Marguerite.

MARGUERITE:

Well, cheers! Hilda is dead!

CLARA:

One should not speak ill of those who have passed.

MARGUERITE:

You didn't spend much time with her. If I knew who killed her, I'd kiss him on the mouth.

HORACE:

Now, Marguerite!

MARGUERITE:

Don't pretend you don't feel the exact same thing. She was a pain in your backside and as tragic as a death might be, things suddenly get a whole lot easier for you.

A flash of dangerous anger crosses Horace's face, revealing the killer instinct.

CLARA:

What do you mean?

MARGUERITE:

Oh, nothing. Just fun and games with Nero inheritance rights. (*mimicking Horace*) Cracking good decision to get that daughter of hers engaged to your son, wot wot! Are we going to have a shotgun wedding this weekend?