

CRADDOCK. Valuables?

MISS BLACKLOCK. Nothing.

CRADDOCK. Jewellery? Silver?

MISS BLACKLOCK. Nothing worth a great deal. Little bits and pieces. The silver's reasonable – nothing more. Mitzi was cleaning it last night...

(MITZI instantly springs to life.)

MITZI. I not touch it! It is nothing to you Secret Police officers. You come here. You blame me all the time. It was the same where I come from. Torture. Interrogation. But, I do not crack. You understand. I do not break. I tell them nothing. *(She stamps her foot and stands there defiantly with her hands on her hips.)* Yah!

(CRADDOCK stands there for a moment, long-suffering, then appeals to the others.)

CRADDOCK. Is she always like this?

MITZI. Torture me! You get nowhere! I am innocent! Innocent! I was locked in the dining-room. That – is my hundred-percent alibi – as you say!

CRADDOCK. And a very good alibi it is. Perhaps too good on the surface. Now just sit down. And try to remember that I'm not too keen on the histrionics...

MITZI. *(still furious)* I will not...

CRADDOCK. Ah – ah – ah! *(Firmly.)* Sit!

(MITZI sits, like a lamb.)

CRADDOCK. Let me say this to all of you. I don't want to be here anymore than you do. There's a very good football match on at Milchester this afternoon I'd very much like to see. But, other things are more – pressing. *Please.* Can we continue this interrogation without any more interruptions? Miss Blacklock. We've established that you knew Rudi Scherz.

MISS MARPLE. Excuse me, Inspector. I'm sorry to interrupt. I knew him, too.

(CRADDOCK looks along the length of his nose at her. Another interruption! MISS MARPLE smiles sweetly at him.)

CRADDOCK. You didn't mention this last night.

MISS MARPLE. I did – but, you weren't here at the time. And, well – when you arrived you rather neglected me.

CRADDOCK. Did I Oh...!

MISS MARPLE. Probably because I didn't arrive until after the, er – action – took place.

CRADDOCK. Hm – rather like turning to the end of the book to see who the killer is, eh?

(This is the start of their relationship. A rapport which builds as the story unfolds.)

MISS MARPLE. As analogy it doesn't work. Because that's cheating. I usually guess who it is without resorting to those tactics. Do you turn to the last page?

CRADDOCK. *(sniffing)* If only I could. You, er – knew Rudi Scherz, you said?

MISS MARPLE. I stayed at the Royal Spa whilst I was having intensive treatment – for rheumatism. He made up my bill.

CRADDOCK. *(knowingly)* Ah.

MISS MARPLE. There were one or two – discrepancies – which I couldn't fail to notice, of course.

CRADDOCK. Of course.

MISS MARPLE. It was clear to me that he was "on the make," as they say in the trade. Naturally, when the errors were pointed out he apologized profusely. But, we both knew.

CRADDOCK. Did you report him?

MISS MARPLE. There was nothing I could actually *prove.*

CRADDOCK. He does seem to have been a bit of a villain. I'll know more soon. The Swiss police are running a check on him. *(pause)* I'd like you all to take up the exact positions you were in last night as far as possible, that is – when the shots were fired.

MISS MARPLE. Do you want me to leave? I was coming up the drive.

CRADDOCK. So you were outside when you heard the shots were you?

MISS MARPLE. I was, Inspector. As you will realize I came in through the back door. Mitzi was banging about in the dining-room. I let her out and then we both came in here.

CRADDOCK. Tell you what you can do. Keep an eye on her. I don't want her banging about again.

MITZI. *(bristling)* I am not banging about – *(she carries on in Hungarian)* – *mindig en vagyok a hibd's...*

CRADDOCK. Shush – shush – shush...!

MITZI. Ah...

CRADDOCK. And shush again!

(MISS MARPLE takes MITZI by the arm and leads her to the sofa by the window.)

MISS MARPLE. Come and sit down, Mitzi...

CRADDOCK. Now come along everyone, please.

(The others now start to take up their positions.)

Thank you. Thank you very much. *(He goes to the Main Door.)* The lights go out – and a flashlight comes on, then lands on – you! *(He points to JULIA.)*

JULIA. My hands weren't up. I thought it was a joke. Then he – barked at me. I was so frightened I put my hands up so high – like this... *(She demonstrates.)*

CRADDOCK. He couldn't complain at that, could he?

(JULIA drops her hands.)

JULIA. I thought he was going to shoot me.

CRADDOCK. You're Miss Blacklock's niece. Right?

JULIA. *(puzzled and hesitant)* Well – yes...

CRADDOCK. That's the sort of answer I like. Full of confidence. You *are* Miss Blacklock's niece?