

(GUDGEON enters left.)

GUDGEON. You rang, sir?

INSPECTOR. Yes. Can you tell me to whom this bag belongs?

GUDGEON. *(crossing to left of the INSPECTOR)* I'm afraid not, sir. I don't recollect ever having seen it before. I could ask her ladyship's own maid, sir. She would probably know better than I should.

INSPECTOR. Thank you.

(GUDGEON turns, moves to the door down left, then hesitates and turns.)

GUDGEON. It's just occurred to me, sir, if I might make a suggestion?

INSPECTOR. By all means.

GUDGEON. *(moving left centre)* It might possibly be the property of Miss Veronica Craye.

SERGEANT. *(moving to left of GUDGEON)* Veronica Craye? The film star? Is she in this part of the world?

GUDGEON. *(giving the SERGEANT a dirty look; to the INSPECTOR)* She occupies the cottage a hundred yards up the lane. Dovecotes, it's called.

INSPECTOR. Has Miss Craye been here?

GUDGEON. She was here yesterday evening, sir.

INSPECTOR. And she was carrying this bag?

GUDGEON. No, sir. She was in evening dress and was carrying a white diamante bag. But I think it possible Miss Craye was here earlier this morning for a short time.

INSPECTOR. When?

GUDGEON. About midday, sir.

INSPECTOR. You saw her?

GUDGEON. I didn't see her myself, sir.

SERGEANT. Well, who did?

GUDGEON. *(with an angry glance at the SERGEANT)* The underhousemaid observed her from one of the bedroom windows, sir. The girl is an ardent movie fan. She was quite thrilled.

SERGEANT. I'll have a word with that girl.

(He exits left.)

INSPECTOR. Lady Angkatell didn't mention that Miss Craye had been here this morning.

GUDGEON. I don't think her ladyship was aware of Miss Craye's visit.

INSPECTOR. Who did she come to see, then?

GUDGEON. As to that, sir, I couldn't say.

(The INSPECTOR crosses above the sofa to right of it.)

H'm! *(He coughs.)*

INSPECTOR. *(turning to GUDGEON)* Yes?

GUDGEON. A note was brought over from Dovecotes for Dr. Cristow earlier in the morning. Dr. Cristow said there was no answer.

INSPECTOR. I see. What happened to that note?

GUDGEON. I think I could produce it for you, sir. I picked up some crumpled paper by the waste-paper basket.

INSPECTOR. Thank you, Gudgeon - I should be extremely obliged if you will bring it to me at once.

GUDGEON. *(turning and crossing to the door left)* Very good, sir.

INSPECTOR. I gather Dr. Cristow knew Miss Craye?

GUDGEON. It would seem so, sir. He went over to see her last night - after dinner. *(He waits expectantly.)*

INSPECTOR. When did he return?

GUDGEON. As to that, sir, I could not say. Acting on Sir Henry's instructions I left the side door unfastened when I retired to bed at twelve-fifteen A.M.
(The INSPECTOR puts the bag on the writing table.)
Up to that time Dr. Cristow had not returned.
(VERONICA enters up centre from left.)

old friend.

INSPECTOR. He called on you yesterday evening, I believe?

VERONICA. Yes, I asked him to come over after dinner if he could manage it. We had a delightful talk about old times and old friends.

INSPECTOR. *(crossing to the fireplace)* What time did he leave?

VERONICA. I've really no idea. We talked for quite a while.

INSPECTOR. About old times?

VERONICA. Yes, of course a lot had happened to us both.