

Crimes at Cartwell  
Episode 1

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PROLOGUE INT. CARTWELL MANOR

CHARLOTTE: Aarrgh, a ghost!

WALTER: My god!

VICTORIA: Brian?!

PERRY: Penny!

PENNY: Perry!

GRENVILLE: Come quickly!

SAFFRON: She's dead!

TERRY: Murder!

SCENE 1 – INT. P.P.D.A OFFICES

F/X: USUAL PPDA ATMOS

PERRY: Do you fancy a cup of tea Penny girl?

PENNY: Oh, yes please.

After Perry's triumph at Wombledon Tennis Club earlier in the year, things had pretty much returned to normal for us at the PPDA.

PERRY: Good, good. I'll serve. Get it?

PENNY: Other than having to put up with quite a few tennis puns, we'd settled back into our old rhythms. Which was great. I mean, perhaps I'd thought for a moment or two that some feelings had been stirred during the case. Perry had seemed a bit jealous of my brief flirtation with Lord Hugh Knows, and maybe I'd possibly been a bit snippy about his friendship with Jean Samson. But whatever it was appeared to have passed. We'd been walking through the park a day or two after Perry's big win and had a conversation which could have gone in that direction but turned out to be nothing.

F/X: TRANSITION TO EXT. PARK

PERRY: Lovely day isn't it?

PENNY: Yes, very nice.

PERRY: Listen Penny girl, there's something I really want to say to you.

PENNY: Oh?

PERRY: Yes, it's been on my mind since we wrapped up the Wombledon case.

PENNY: Right. What is it?

PERRY: Well I just wanted to, you know, tell you that. Gosh I don't know how those poet chaps do it, it's difficult to avoid cliché isn't it? Actually, speaking of clichés the etymology is fascinating. It's a French word and comes from the sound made when the printers would put together the metal printing blocks. 'Cliché'. After a bit they designed some premade blocks for commonly used words and phrases, you know clichés? Don't you think that's fascinating?

PENNY: I do Perry. But what is it you're trying to avoid cliché while saying?

PERRY: Oh, right, um. Well, I want to thank you I suppose.

PENNY: Thank me?

PERRY: Yes. I never really thanked you properly for getting me out of jail and supporting me on the way to my big win.

PENNY: Oh, well you're welcome.

PERRY: Are you OK? You look a bit disappointed.

PENNY: No, I just thought perhaps you were going to say something else.

PERRY: Like what?

PENNY: It doesn't matter, we should be getting back to the office. A client might be waiting.

F/X: TRANSITION BACK TO OFFICE

PENNY: Now before you start, I know that if I was feeling whatever I might have been feeling, and I'm not saying I was feeling those feelings. But if I was feeling them, I feel like I'd rather have Perry be the one to put the feelers out first. You know? But of course he didn't, and I didn't, and we just fell back into our little patterns and routines.

Perry & I always seemed to be closest when we were forced together on a case, but nothing ever happened because we were on a case. So, when a certain letter addressed to me arrived at the office, it gave me an idea.

F/X: LETTER THROUGH DOOR

PERRY: Oh there's the post. Maybe some more mail from my fan-club, they're starting a magazine apparently Penny girl, called The Per-radicals Periodical. It'll feature interviews with me, and quizzes about me. They sent me one of the quizzes to try out, I scored 7/10.

PENNY: You scored 7/10 on a quiz about yourself?

PERRY: Some of the questions were really hard. How am I supposed to know my ring size?

PENNY: Because it's your hands!

PERRY: But who knows that sort of stuff? What's yours?

PENNY: I'm a 6, I'd guess you were about an eight and half, you've got quite dainty hands.

PERRY: Spot on. Very impressive. Anyway, what was the mail?

PENNY: Just this letter, addressed to me.

PERRY: What does it say?

F/X: PENNY OPENS THE LETTER

PENNY: It's an invite.

GRENVILLE: Dear Penny Pink

You are cordially invited to Cartwell Manor for a hair-raising weekend of spooktacular delights in honour of Halloween. All guests are asked to bring fantastically scary costumes for a parade.

Your hostess, Victoria Cartwell, has spared no expense and hired noted medium-at-large, The Great Trianta, who will lead the party on a guided séance the first evening, before conducting ghost-hunts throughout the weekend.

The festivities will be lavishly catered, with fine foods and cocktails created especially for the occasion.

Yours,

Grenville Joosthouse, Butler of Cartwell Manor, on behalf of Mrs Victoria Cartwell.

PERRY: Well, that's all a bit grand isn't Penny girl? Who is Victoria Cartwell?

PENNY: Vicky Warner, I was at school with her. We were so close. She married Brian Cartwell.

PERRY: Brian Cartwell, the hair-product mogul?

PENNY: Yes.

PERRY: Wasn't he hit by lightning?

PENNY: Yes, killed instantly. Poor Vicky retreated a bit after that. We've stayed in touch by letters, but I've not seen her since the funeral. Oh hang on there's another note in the envelope.

F/X: PENNY DIGS OUT THE SECOND NOTE

VICTORIA: Hi Penny,

Sorry I've not been in touch as often as I should have been. I have so appreciated your letters though. Exciting to hear you're a detective now and this Perry chap sounds utterly charming and super dishy.

PERRY: You told her I was dishy?

PENNY: What? No, of course not. She'll have seen your picture in the paper from Wombledon.

PERRY: Oh right. Well carry on with the letter then.

VICTORIA: I apologise for the stuffiness of the invite. Grenville insisted. Says that standards at Cartwell mustn't slip. I feel utterly trapped here Penny, which is why you absolutely must come for this weekend. Firstly, it'll be super fun, but secondly; I need your support when I break it to Grenville and Walter that I'm selling the place. It's too big and too filled with memories of Brian. I need a new start, maybe I'll get a little flat in the city near you and we can go out and find husbands for the pair of us. Unless you're still mooning over...

PENNY: I think we get the picture.

PERRY: Mooning over? Who were you mooning over Penny?

PENNY: Did I say mooning over? No, it says moving over to South of the river. She doesn't want to live South of the river. Can be a bit of snob can Victoria. Still though we must go to the party it'll be fun.

PERRY: Yes, enjoy yourself. Sounds delightful.

PENNY: I'm glad you think so, I don't want to go on my own.

PERRY: Ah, right. I'm not sure Penny.

PENNY: Oh come on Perry, is the idea of spending a weekend with me that horrid?

PERRY: Horrid, a weekend with you? No. A weekend with you sounds wonderful, fine, it sounds fine. But I just think I don't know Victoria, I wouldn't want to impose.

PENNY: You wouldn't be imposing. Cartwell Manor is massive, and I just know Vicky would love to meet you. Please don't make me go on my own Perry.

PERRY: Don't you have anyone else you could ask?

PENNY: Perry Pink, you are starting to hurt my feelings!

PERRY: No, please don't. It's not you. It's just, I, well, this is embarrassing.

PENNY: What is?

PERRY: I don't like costume parties.

PENNY: What's wrong with costume parties?

PERRY: Everyone's in costume!

PENNY: That's sort of the point.

PERRY: But you can't tell who anyone is, and then finding a good one is so stressful. Is this obvious enough, is it too obvious, am I going to offend someone with my costume? It's too much Penny, I don't like them. I'm sorry.

PENNY: Well look, you don't know anyone at this party except for me anyway so you can just learn who people are in costume, and I'll take care of our costumes. I know a great place we can go, it'll be fine.

PERRY: I don't know...

PENNY: Is this really about the costumes? Are you sure you're not just scared of Halloween?

PERRY: Me scared? I don't think so! Scared? Of Halloween? Halloween is scared of me more likely! Why would I be scared? Just because everyone goes out of their way to be as creepy and spooky as possible and tempts the fates with things like a séance or a ghost hunt? There is no occult, I know that, I read books Penny. Lots of books. I don't believe in ghosts.

PENNY: That's good because there is one behind you.

PERRY: Argh!

PENNY: I'm kidding Perry, we're in the office in the middle of the day.

PERRY: Ha! Got you! I was just fooling around.

PENNY: So you're not scared?

PERRY: No. Not at all.

PENNY: And you want to prove it to me by coming to this little weekend party at Vicky's?

PERRY:        You bet I do.

PENNY:        Good then it's settled. We'll go shopping for our costumes tomorrow.

PERRY:        Good! What?



SCENE 2 – INT. HANS & FJIT NOVELTY WEARF/X: DOORBELL TINKLE AS PERRY AND PENNY ENTER

PENNY: Hello?

PERRY: Oh, there's no one here. Oh well, too bad. We can't get any costumes so we can't go to the party such a shame.

PENNY: Just you wait there Perry Pink! Hello?

Just as I was about to give in to Perry tugging on my sleeve and leave, a funny little man with a bald head the colour of an old walnut bumbled around the corner. Appearing behind one of the racks which were groaning under the weight of all the costumes. Every inch of the room was stuffed with exotic looking hats, gaudy fabrics and broaches reflecting and refracting the light. The man himself had on small round gold glasses and was dressed in full white tie outfit, complete with morning coat and tails. He produced a top hat from somewhere and flipped it onto his shiny bald dome, before whipping it straight off to bow flamboyantly.

HANS: Hallo? Oh Ha-llo. Aren't you two a dahling little couplink. Welcommen to Hans & Fjit Novelty Wear. I am Hans Gruberveld, my partner, business partner, Fjit Nordström isn't here today so just me. But don't you worry, you're in safe hands with Hans. Ha! I didn't even mean that! So, what is the occasion?

PENNY: We've been invited to a Halloween party.

HANS: Oh, oh, oh, perfect, perfect. What kind of Halloween party? Are we talking kiddieinks running around getting their candy's stuck in your hair?

PENNY: Something a bit more adult.

HANS: Ah yes, so leather and chains?

PENNY: Perry gripped my arm so tightly, I worried he was going to cut off the blood supply.

PERRY: What?!

HANS: I'll take that as a no.

PENNY: It's a weekend at the house of a friend. She's got quite a big old house off towards the coast. We're having a séance and ghost hunting apparently, but there's a costume parade too.

HANS: Ja, ja, ja, Hans understands. Ooh! This is perfect, perfect. You want something sexy ja? But not too sexy. Scary but not too scary.

PERRY: I'm not sure we want either of those things.

PENNY: We were thinking something historical and fun.

PERRY: But not too fun.

HANS: Aah, I have just the thing for you two adorable little puddy-links. How did I not see it before? Hans, Hans, Hans, you are slipping you are slipping. Are you ready to be wowed?

PENNY: Yes we are.

PERRY: I think we just want to hire some costumes actually.

HANS: Are you ready to be wowed?

PENNY: Perry!

I gave him a backhanded slap across his chest.

PERRY: Ow! Yes, I am ready to be wowed.

HANS: Drum roll please: Anthony & Cleopatra! Isn't it too perfect? You've got the asp for it.

PERRY: Do I say wow now?

PENNY: That is brilliant, but do you have them in our sizes?

HANS: Oh darlink, don't you worry. Many Hans might light work. I will have it altered and fitting like the bug in a rug in no time. Such cosy, much sexy.

PERRY: Nobody said anything about sexy.

HANS: Darlink everything from Hans & Fjit is sexy, we can't help it. It's just who we are. Now, go, go, go I must work, I must work.

PENNY: Don't you need our measurements?

HANS: You insult me, my eyes are more accurate than any tape. I see, I know, now go!

PENNY: The little man shooed us out of his shop, waving his heavily be-ringed hands at us like we were a pair of over-inquisitive seagulls and he was trying to enjoy a sandwich on a bench by the sea.

F/X: DOOR TINKLE

PENNY: Wasn't that fun Perry?

PERRY: Was it?

PENNY: I think Anthony & Cleopatra is fun.

PERRY: They both die at the end!

PENNY: But they have a lot of fun first.

SCENE 3 – INT. HANS & FJIT NOVELTY WARE

PENNY: A few days later we picked up the costumes and Perry was even less happy.

F/X: SWISH OF A CHANGING ROOM CURTAIN

HANS: Oh you look absolutely stunning! Stunning!

PERRY: Where's the rest of it?

PENNY: Perry had swept back the changing room curtain to reveal he was wearing imposing Centurian-esque shoulder pads, and that funny little skirt/belt thing they wear, they're called Pteruges apparently. But he was most upset about the fact that his chest was bare.

HANS: Oh so manly, much sexy!

PERRY: Penny I can't wear this to meet new people!

PENNY: But you look great Perry. All that training you did for the tennis really shows up.

PERRY: Really? Do you really think so?

PENNY: Absolutely. You look very rugged and handsome. You'll be a big hit.

PERRY: If you say so.

HANS: Yes, yes, of course. You have to listen to your girlfriend Perry, she is very wise.

PERRY: Oh she's not...

PENNY: We're not...

HANS: OK, OK, ja sure, I understand. Bye bye then.

PERRY: Actually, I'll just get changed first. I don't want to travel down like this, it'll ruin the surprise.

PENNY: Oh I'm staying in mine, I want to get the most out of it as possible.

Hans had whipped me up the most amazing outfit. I had a golden snake curled around the jet-black wig he'd given me, and enough kohl on my eyes to heat a house for a week.

PENNY CONT'D OVER

PENNY: The outfit itself was sumptuous golds, blues, and violets with a skirt shorter than anything I'd dare to wear as Penny. But as Cleopatra, I didn't hate it. From the deep red blush that washed over Perry when he saw me, I think it had caught his attention too. Yes, this was the outfit for me.

HANS: Good you look absolutely spectacular darling. Doesn't she look gorgeous Perry?

PERRY: Very nice Penny.

HANS: Nice? Nice? Look at those legs Perry, such sexy legs no?

PERRY: Oh her legs, I hadn't noticed, I, is it through here?

F/X: CLATTER

PERRY: Who put that shelf there?

PENNY: I wasn't at all hurt by Perry's protests, the fact he had walked straight into a floor to ceiling shelving unit was quite the compliment.

Come on then Perry, get changed quickly. We need to hit the road.

SCENE 4 – INT. PERRY’S CAR

F/X: CAR NOISES

PENNY: After Perry recovered himself and got changed, we set off down to Cartwell Manor. Unusually for us Perry had insisted on driving and was keeping his eyes firmly on the road.

PERRY: Tell me about this Victoria then.

PENNY: I met her at school. She and her brother Terry were sent over from America by their parents to ‘class them up a bit’ apparently. It certainly worked for Vicky, she bagged herself Brian Cartwell and was all set for life as the lady of the manor until... well you know.

PERRY: The lightning.

PENNY: The lightning. We hit it off straight away back in school. I thought she was incredibly glamorous, being from America, and she found me to be funny and charming. For some reason.

PERRY: You’re very charming Penny girl. And funny.

PENNY: Really?

PERRY: Absolutely.

PENNY: Thanks Perry.

PERRY: Will her brother be there?

PENNY: Terry? The letter didn’t say. Gosh I’ve not seen Terry since our leavers do. Oh I hadn’t thought about that for years. I was his first kiss!

PERRY: What?!

F/X: TYRE SQUEEL/SKID

PENNY: The car lurched across the road, luckily nothing was coming the other way or we might have had an accident. The shock was enough that I came close to having an accident all of my own.

Perry! What was that for?

PERRY: Nothing, nothing. Just I didn’t realise I was heading off for a weekend potentially with your ex-boyfriend!

PENNY: Terry isn't my ex-boyfriend Perry.

PERRY: You just said you kissed him. Did you used to go around just kissing every Tom, Dick and Terry then?

PENNY: Calm down. Terry was my best friend's little brother, hardly an object of lust. He was totally besotted by this girl Charlie; she'd known Brian and his family for years. Terry was a couple of years younger than her and so at that age, totally invisible, so Vicky and I dreamed up a scheme for he & I to share a dance at the leavers do at the end of which he'd give me a kiss. It was supposed to make this Charlie wild with jealousy and desire for little Terry.

PERRY: I see. Did it work?

PENNY: Not a chance. I don't even know if she saw it happen to be honest, but it made me and Vicky howl with laughter. Poor Terry. Still he'll be all grown up now, I doubt he remembers it at all.

PERRY: I don't see how a chap could forget kissing you Penny girl.

PENNY: Thanks Perry, that's sweet.

PERRY: Is it? Good. You're not going to leave me alone at the party are you Penny? I'm not scared or anything, but I just think its best we stick together.

PENNY: I'll be glued to your side, I promise.

SCENE 5 – INT. CARTWELL MANOR HALL

F/X: CAR PULLS UP ON GRAVEL, P&P EXIT, KNOCK ON CARTWELL MANOR DOOR, WHICH IS OPENED

PENNY: I really did mean to keep my promise to Perry but ended up breaking it almost as soon as we arrived. We were met in the entrance by Grenville, the Butler at Cartwell. He'd been hired by Brian's father when the hair-product business had first started doing well and stayed on ever since. He looked like he'd been born to butle. People sometimes call a tuxedo a penguin suit, well they should see Grenville in his uniform. The waistcoat was a deep orange and with his ramrod straight back, outward curving belly, and prominent nose which was turning pink with gin, he looked just like an Emperor penguin.

GRENVILLE: Welcome back Ms Pink. I trust I do hope I won't have to reprimand you for sliding down the banisters on this visit?

PERRY: Sliding down the banisters? Was that the sort of hijinks you got up to at school Penny?

PENNY: Before I could answer old Emperor Grenville stuck his beak in.

GRENVILLE: At school? No sir this was on Ms Pink's last visit. About six months before the master of house's terrible accident. She and Mrs Cartwell polished off a goodly amount of white wine and took turns. I'm certain that finial still isn't straight.

PENNY: Yes, well, thank you Grenville. Vicky and I were just having a bit of fun Perry, it wasn't as wild as Grenville here would have you believe. Grenville is old fashioned and thinks women should be seen but not heard.

GRENVILLE: In an ideal world I'd not see them either ma'am.

PENNY: Perry opened and closed his mouths a few times, not quite sure what to make of the exchange. I think he wanted to give Grenville a piece of his mind for speaking so bluntly but was a bit intimidated by the old steward. Luckily for Perry, no intervention was required, as Grenville's stern penguin face cracked into a warm smile.

GRENVILLE: Although that would be a dull life wouldn't it Ms Pink?

PENNY: Indeed Grenville it would.

GRENVILLE: Maybe just for special occasions then. Such as this weekend. You must be Mr Pink?



PERRY: Yes, that's me.

GRENVILLE: But you two aren't married? It'd be handy if you were that way inclined though. No need for new stationary for you Ms Pink.

PENNY: And that is the number one concern when choosing a husband. Where's Vicky, Grenville?

GRENVILLE: Mrs Cartwell is with the other ladies in the parlour ma'am. The gentlemen are all in the drawing room. Mrs Cartwell didn't want the two sides to see each other before the costume parade which begins the festivities. Now sir, if you'll follow me, I'll convey you to your room so you can get changed. I take it you're already in costume Ms Pink? Or have fashions taken a historical turn of which I was unaware?

PERRY: Can't I stay with Penny?

GRENVILLE: Not unless you want to disrobe in front of a room full of women sir, and I'm afraid this isn't that kind of house. Not with me around. This way, I'll carry your bags.

PENNY: Perry cast me a beseeching look over Grenville's shoulder but there was nothing I could do. Besides, I was quite looking forward to a quick girly catch up with Vicky. I'd see Perry and all the other guests at this costume parade, what fun I thought. Little did I know...