

Crimes at Cartwell
Episode 4

Written by
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Draft Script (16/05/21)

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PROLOGUE INT. CARTWELL MANOR

F/X: DRONE & ODD NOISES

TRIANTA: Ging Dire, Dray Eff, Leow Tsew, Rurr Ffuha, Ging Dire, Dray Eff, Leow Tsew,
 Rurr Ffuha.

F/X: DOOR BURSTS OPEN, WEIRD 'GLOWING' NOISE (IS THAT POSSIBLE),
CHAIRS SCATTER, ANOTHER DOOR OPENS PEOPLE SCRAMBLE TO
LEAVE

TRIANTA: Help!

CHARLOTTE: Aarrgh, a ghost!

WALTER: My god!

VICTORIA: Brian?!

TERRY: Jesus Christ that's a scary trick!

SAFFRON: Argh!

PERRY: Penny!

SCENE 1 – INT. CARTWELL PARLOUR

F/X: ALL THE FOLLOWING TAKE PLACE IN THE PARLOUR, BUT AT DIFFERENT TIMES. EXPERIMENT WITH 'CUTTING' BETWEEN THE STATEMENTS. MIGHT GET ANNOYING. MAYBE WE 'RE-ENECT' IT WITH SOUND?

WALTER: We were all in the drawing room, but we weren't drawing, we were watching some damn fool entertainment. A séance.

SAFFRON: I can't believe it. I just can't believe it, and I believe a lot of things. Like ley lines. I believe in ley lines. But I can't believe this has happened. We shouldn't have meddled in forces we don't understand.

PERRY: Everyone was in the drawing room. No, sorry, that's not right. Grenville, he's the butler, wasn't in the room and nor was the maid. Minnie. But then she had told us before she was to wait outside the service door, but the Great Trianta, that's the medium lady (as in a psychic not a mid-sized lady), she stopped Minnie from saying anything else.

CHARLOTTE: The thing had a face, it was just like... the absolute spit of... no, no, it can't have been. I'm sorry it's all just a bit shocking.

TERRY: I want to do everything I can to help. What do you need? Just tell you what happened? I mean, Jesus, I don't really know what happened. We were all there, there were candles burning and the Great Trianta woman was –

TRIANTA: I invoke spirits. I call them forth from beyond the veil. I also call them first, second and third beyond the veil. But they always speak through me, they're never like that, I've not actually ever seen a ghost. Not in the conventional sense of seeing. But they exist, things move. Candles flutter. And cats! Cats! They see things. With their cat's eyes. Like in the road.

PERRY: We all had to hold on to this golden cord, which was to protect us. But of course, the second that door burst open it was no good. We all dropped it straight away. There was a lot of screaming, and not just the women. I'm not too proud to admit I was screaming too. I mean, I thought it was all a bunch of nonsense and then suddenly – pow, a glowy floaty man, a glafloaty man.

SAFFRON: He didn't seem to touch the ground. He was tall, six feet at least, and he was covered in rags. But he glowed.

- WALTER: He was glowing, and not like that ridiculous lie we tell pregnant women, this fellow was glowing.
- CHARLOTTE: He had a sort of pink and blue light emanating off him. Like the ghost couldn't decide if it was a boy or a girl.
- TRIANTA: He was lit by things called ectophotons, they occasionally show up as little glowing orbs in photographs, but he was absolutely covered in them.
- TERRY: I'm not saying it was a ghost, but the face was Brian's and the thing certainly looked like it could fly, just hovering six inches off the floor like that.
- CHARLOTTE: And the face, I'm telling you it was the living spit of...
- GRENVILLE: I wasn't in the room for the séance. But I was alone. I'd stationed myself nearby, like a good butler, in case any of the guests or Mrs Cartwell were in need of any refreshments. Mrs Cartwell had been most particular that this weekend was to be, what was the phrase she used?
- SAFFRON: I swear he was floating about the floor. I know I'd had a drink, we all had, but still. Floating.
- GRENVILLE: Well lubricated. That's it, the guests were to be kept well lubricated.
- WALTER: So after this spectral bugger has burst in, the first thing he does is throw Lady Tarantula or whatever her name is to the floor.
- CHARLOTTE: Of course, the ghost made sure to incapacitate the medium first, she was the one who had the power to send him back from wherever he came from. From whence he came! That's what they say.
- PERRY: I thought ghosts were supposed to be able to walk through walls and drift through physical barriers, well he came in the door and didn't drift through Trianta. She was flung to the ground with quite a bit of force.
- TRIANTA: It was a horrible shock of course. I didn't really have time to react, or invoke any protective words. Let alone daub a rune or two. He just grabbed me and tossed me aside like I was nothing.
- GRENVILLE: I heard the screams, but of course there had been screams before and that was just when I... the crow got in. I didn't pay it too much mind but opened the door all the same to see what was there.

- MINNIE: I don't want to get in trouble, so I'll tell you everything I saw. When the screaming started, I was with Mr Grenville. Mrs Trianta said there was no point my waiting by the door now that I'd ruined it. Dunno what there was to ruin mind, alls I was to do was to bang on the door a bit when she asked if anyone was there. Like a knock knock joke in reverse: Who's there? Knock Knock. Knock Knock Who? You'd be going round for ever with that nonsense.
- TERRY: So after the thing, whatever it was, had shoved the psychic (she didn't see that one coming) he made short work of the table. Just flipped it over to one side, the candles slid off but luckily the fall blew them out otherwise we'd have had a house fire to deal with on top of everything else.
- SAFFRON: When it flipped the table, that was really when we all realised the tables had turned and this was no longer part of the show.
- GRENVILLE: All the radios in the house came on, full volume static.
- WALTER: The table went over and that was it. Bedlam. Every man for himself in those situations I say.
- SAFFRON: Walter of course bolted for the door first. Do you know he actually used my shoulder to pull himself out of the chair and force himself forward?
- PERRY: There was terribly loud white noise coming from somewhere. The first thing I did was to look for Penny, no that's not true is it Perry? The first thing I did was scream, like I say, there was a lot of screaming. But then I looked for Penny to make sure she was safe and the pair of us skirted around the side of the thing and got out through the service door he'd just come in from.
- TERRY: When I saw everyone screaming and scrambling to get out of the room, I joined in the ruckus. I threw Charlotte over my shoulder, quite heroically I thought, and got out of there pronto.
- CHARLOTTE: I was agog. I couldn't stop staring at the thing's face, but then Terry the great American oaf, pummelled his shoulder into my stomach and bundled me out of the room. I'll not be surprised if it turns out he's broken a rib or two.
- GRENVILLE: So as I said, when I heard the screaming I wasn't too concerned. But when I opened the door and saw all bedlam breaking loose and a ruddy great glowing ghost in the middle of the room. I'll admit, I was a little shocked. Recognise it? No, how or why would I recognise it?

MINNIE: When Mr Grenville opened the door, his mouth fell stone through the floor.

GRENVILLE: But my training kicked in and I remained stoic, as all butlers should.

MINNIE: He started effing and jeffing so bad a sailor would've blushed. I hadn't heard a few of 'em afore, so's I'm trying hard to keep 'em in mind for when I've next down The Cricketers. That'll make 'em all laugh. He seemed most upset about the damage to the table, but that's Grenville for you: the rod up his watsit has a rod up its watsit. I reckon it's rods and watsits all the way round.

PERRY: Once we'd got out of the drawing room we were in the service corridor, which we followed all the way round to the staircase. We went up there and found our rooms. My room. We both went to my room. For security. The weather outside must've turned because upstairs you could hear thunder over the static that was coming from below.

TRIANITA: Well once I hit the floor it was all a bit of blur. I think I banged my head a bit.

But I saw that horrible man Walter Herbertson-Jones shoving everyone out of his way to be first to the exit.

He was followed by his wife, not that he had even spared a glance her way.

The snotty one in the mummy outfit, what's her name? Charlotte Blakemore, that's right. She just stood there staring at the apparition, I don't think she even blinked.

Then the funny little American scooped her up onto his shoulder, I thought his knees were going to buckle. He's not the biggest of men.

The Pinks had bolted past me and out the back way.

But I didn't see which way Mrs Cartwell left. She did leave though and so did the ghost, I know because after a minute or so I was alone in the room.

WALTER: Look, I got out of there in order to protect the others OK? No, hear me out. A tactical retreat is sometimes the most effective weapon a man has see? I thought I could draw the ghostly blighter out, chasing me, and then double back and attack it mano et ghosto. Any talk of cowardice is a damn lie.

- GRENVILLE: I tried to turn the lights on, but of course none of them were working. The first one past me was Walter. He's always been a coward since he was a boy. Oh he's got a reputation as a fighter, and one hell of a temper on him that's true, but you look at who he's fighting and when.
- MINNIE: Mr Herbertson-Jones, bolted out right quick and disappeared into the Great Hall I think. Then his wife came out and she went upstairs.
- TERRY: The adrenaline got me to the door with Charlotte but pretty soon I felt like my legs might fail me. She's like a beautiful marble sculpture is Charlotte and weighs it too.
- CHARLOTTE: As if it wasn't bad enough, he'd practically bisected me with his shoulder, the second we got out the door Terry flings me onto the flagstones like he's trying out positions for a new rug.
- SAFFRON: I could hear a great commotion behind me and I just ran to my room and locked the door. I'm so ashamed. I was just in a blind panic. Maybe I've spent too long with Walter and his horrible selfishness has rubbed off on me. Or maybe I've just spent so long being ignored and belittled I've learned to look after myself because no one else will.
- MINNIE: After I saw Mr Warner throw Miss Blakemore on the floor like that, I thought maybe they were having one of the wild fornicator parties where anything goes. I've heard about them. My cousin, Maisie, worked for this bloke Redwood once and they used to have these parties where they did unspeakable things to one another with root vegetables. I thought maybe this was like that, so I hopped it down to my room sharpish, grabbing all the parsnips out the kitchen on the way just to be safe. I've no idea how that decanter of gin ended up down with me, I must have grabbed it as a weapon on reflex like. But that's all I know. If I knew anything else I'd say. I don't want to get in trouble. Until the screaming started again.
- TERRY: After I gently lowered Charlotte to the floor, I suggested we go to my room so I could protect her. But, typical Charlotte, she jumped to the wrong conclusions.
- CHARLOTTE: So after he'd tossed me down like a caveman Terry clearly thought he was on to a winning strategy and tried to get me into his room with him. He's such a creep. I told him no in no uncertain terms and went to my own room which thankfully is the other end of the corridor to his.
- WALTER: So I'm in the Great Hall, and I've realised by now that my plan hasn't worked. Viz, I'm not being followed by the ghostly intruder. Clearly,

that was a disappointment. I had to weigh up what the right thing to do would be. You know re-chivalry/gentlemanly behaviour. But that's a tough situation, not the sort of thing one can just consult Debrett's on is it? Above the door to the Great Hall there is a shield with cross swords, so I grabbed those down and laid in wait. I might have had a scotch or two as I waited, you know, just to settle myself.

TRIANTA: I didn't know what to do or where to go, so I just stayed put in the drawing room. The butler, Grenville, came in and quickly checked on me before heading out the service door.

GRENVILLE: Walter had barrelled past me, and then Saffron who went straight up the stairs, then Terry Warner carried Miss Blakemore out. I want it on record that while everyone else was running out, I ran into that room. I'd been buffeted out of the doorway by all the exiting guests and by the time I made it in only Ms Trianta was left. She was on the floor and a bit shaken, but fine, so I left her and exited via the service door assuming that must be where the ghost and Mrs Cartwell had gone they couldn't possibly have made it past me without my seeing them.

CHARLOTTE: It was only once I'd got back to my own room and bolted the door that my brain made sense of what I'd seen. The face of the ghost could only have been that of dear Brian. I've known Brian Cartwell since we were children. I'm sure of it. Here we all were playing at summoning the dead, in his house, the grounds of which is where he died. And just as I'm having this realisation, I hear the roar of thunder. I look out the window and there's no lightning, no rain. It was a clear sign. Brian was killed by lightning strike and now he had come back to put things right.

PERRY: Penny & I stayed in my room for about ten minutes, until the movement seemed to have stopped. Then we very carefully went out to investigate, there had to be a rational explanation for what we had seen.

SAFFRON: After about ten minutes of cursing myself for being such a selfish coward I took a letter opener from the writing bureau in my room and headed out.

TERRY: I couldn't believe Charlotte would accuse me of being a creep at a time like this. She just couldn't see me as anything other than that little boy who used to follow her around all day, that kid was a creep. But I'd grown up now. I decided if I wanted her to see me as something different, I'd need to give her a different way to see me. I grabbed my pocket-knife and headed downstairs.

- WALTER: The restorative scotches had rather failed to restore. In fact my eyes were beginning to feel a bit heavy, so I allowed myself to take the weight of my feet and sat at the table. That's where I was when they burst in.
- PERRY: The first room we checked was the Great Hall, I don't know why we didn't go straight to the drawing room, but we didn't. In the hall we found Walter Herbertson-Jones. At first, I feared he'd been victim to a spectral attack, he was slumped forward over the table but when we got a bit closer we could see an almost empty bottle of whisky; he'd just drunk himself to sleep.
- WALTER: I'd concocted a subtle ruse with which to lure my prey. I thought that if I pretended to be drunkenly asleep the intruder would let down their guard and I could pounce. Like a coiled spring. But when I recognised it was simply the Pinks there was no need for my spring to uncoil and so I gave myself up to blissful sleep.
- TERRY: I didn't see anyone else as I made my way down the stairs and made a beeline for the drawing room, if it was still there I was going to challenge this ghoul and impress Charlie for good. I only wish I'd made that decision sooner, maybe I'd have been able to do something.
- TRIANTA: The next person I saw was the American boy, Terry, he wasn't carrying Charlotte anymore. He was carrying a knife.
- Was it clean? I think so, I couldn't say for sure. The electric lights weren't working so we had only the candlelight.
- He burst in, asked where the ghost was. I told him the truth, I didn't know, it had disappeared.
- He was so sad, he told me all about his great love for Charlotte and how she spurned him at every turn. I offered to read his cards or his palm, and this is what we did while we waited for something else to happen.
- GRENVILLE: I couldn't find Mrs Cartwell anywhere in the servant's quarters, and there was no sign of the apparition either. I went to the fuse box to see if I could get the lights working, something had tripped a fuse. Easy to fix. Then I swung by the kitchen and picked up a knife, you know just in case, and made my way upstairs to check the bedrooms.
- SAFFRON: After I left my room I wanted to check on Victoria. Why Victoria? I knew Terry was looking after Charlotte, the Pinks were going to stick together, and I couldn't care less what happened to Walter. But there was no answer when I knocked. I unlocked it, she gave me a key for

safety you see, but she wasn't there. As I was coming out of her room I bumped into Grenville who had a knife.

GRENVILLE: The first thing I saw when I made the head of the service stairs was Mrs Herbertson-Jones exiting Mrs Cartwell's bedroom armed with a small dagger.

SAFFRON: I think we both frightened each other, Grenville turned the air blue.

GRENVILLE: Obviously I was surprised but dealt with it without fuss like any good butler. We decided we would pool resources to find my mistress.

TERRY: I allowed Trianta to prattle on about her silly superstitions for a bit, she was scared and had suffered a fall remember. But then I told her I needed to keep searching and she should come with me.

TRIANTA: I wasn't sure whether I should trust Terry. But just as he suggested I went with him, the lights flickered back into action which I thought was a good sign. But I drew out a long hair pin just in case.

PERRY: Penny and I left Walter sleeping in the Great Hall, we took one of his swords off him just in case, and went back into the entranceway where we were confronted by Terry Warner, the Great Trianta, Grenville and Saffron Herbertson-Jones. And they were all armed.

PENNY: Those were the movements everyone told me the following day, the movements prior to this moment. The six of us exchanged information on where we'd been so far, and it became clear the only room left was the parlour.

Even though the electric lights were blazing away and the radio static had stopped, there still hung a taste of fear and dread in the air. As a group we edged towards the door slowly.

F/X: SLOW FOOTSTEPS (6 pairs) THEN A DOOR OPENS SLOWLY

PENNY: Grenville opened the door, slowly pushing it open. What was revealed was awful. Perry instantly threw up.

F/X: PERRY THROWS UP

PENNY: Victoria, my old school friend, was lying face down in the middle of the room with a puddle of blood growing all around her. Grenville rushed to the dinner gong and started banging it wildly, hollering to anyone who would listen.

GRENVILLE: Come quickly!

PENNY: Saffron screamed and rushed to her friend's side, frantically feeling for a pulse.

SAFFRON: She's dead!

PENNY: Terry Warner let out a blood curdling scream.

TERRY: Murder!

PENNY: I couldn't argue with his assessment. I had hoped this weekend would give me a chance to spend some time with Perry away from work, but the work had found us. My old friend Victoria Cartwell had been murdered in her own home. Apparently by a ghost. Possibly the ghost of her deceased husband.