



Audition Sides for *The Play That Goes Wrong*

Please be familiar with all of the following scenes, regardless of your selected character preference. Our director will assign scenes to auditioners at the time of the audition.

If it is available to you, please bring a copy of the sides to your audition (either printed or on your tablet or phone). There will be a limited number of printed copies available at the audition.

If you are reading this with Adobe Acrobat, you can use the Bookmarks to go to a particular side:

- 1. Chris and Max**
- 2. Annie Chris Robert Dennis**
- 3. Chris**
- 4. Chris and Sandra**

1 Chris and Max

CHRIS. I'm merely interviewing Miss Colley Moore, nothing more.

MAX. What's the matter, Florence?

Max turns to see Sandra on the floor.

Calm down! Stop shouting.

Sandra remains unconscious.

ROBERT. She's having one of her episodes. Snap out of it, you're hysterical.

Sandra remains unconscious.

MAX. Florence! Where are you going?

Sandra remains unconscious.

ROBERT. Come back here this instant.

Sandra remains unconscious. Robert looks back to Max and Chris.

She's run off. I'll fetch her back. You stay here, Cecil, I daresay the Inspector has some questions for you. You were Charles' brother after all.

Robert exits.

MAX. I'm sorry about her, Inspector, she's badly shaken, we all are. It's been—

Max almost walks into the pillar again but just avoids it.

—quite the night and it's getting late.

CHRIS. Indeed. Eleven o'clock already.

Chris looks at the clock. The hands are at five o'clock.

MAX. Well do you have any questions for me, Inspector?

CHRIS. Yes, similar questions to those I asked Miss Colley Moore.

MAX. Fire away, Inspector, I'm at your service.

CHRIS. Indeed. You and your brother, did you get along well?

MAX. Up and down. There was rather more strain on our relationship when Father died. And it was no secret that our father cared for Charley more than myself.

CHRIS. I see. This is your father in the portrait, is it not?

Chris turns to the portrait. It is of a dog.

MAX. It is.

CHRIS. He was the spitting image of Charles, wasn't he?

MAX. He was ever since he was quite young, yes.

CHRIS. You were the junior by four years?

MAX. Almost four and didn't I know it.

Jonathan and Robert peer through the curtains to see if Sandra is alright. Then they reach through the window and drag Sandra towards them, her body slamming against the bottom of the flat.

Charles patronised and embarrassed me throughout our entire childhood. He always thought he knew best, and Father always took his side. If he ever didn't get his way he was unbearable.

Sandra's body is hoisted roughly up behind the curtain and then dropped back down.

CHRIS. He sounds far from the ideal brother. In fact it sounds like you hated one another.

Sandra's dress has ridden up, revealing her underwear. Robert's hand reaches down and pulls the dress back over the underwear.

MAX. I won't lie, Inspector, Charles and I never truly saw—

Max turns and sees what is going on behind him as Sandra is roughly lifted and dropped again.

—eye to eye! But if you're suggesting I had something to do with his murder then you're mistaken.

CHRIS. I see. It's a dark night, Cecil.

MAX. Inspector!

Chris pulls the curtains open, revealing Robert, Annie, Trevor and Jonathan. They all freeze and try not to be seen. Sandra is held unconscious, in an awkward position.

CHRIS. You can barely even make out the trees.

Silence. Then Chris and Max turn back D.S. As Max continues with his next line, Robert, Trevor, Annie and Jonathan continue to remove Sandra, but more noisily than before. Vamp shouting at each other, yelling instructions on how best to

carry Sandra out. Max and Chris shout their lines over them.

MAX. What are you saying, Inspector?

CHRIS. I'm saying, Cecil, that tonight would be the perfect night for you to murder your brother.

MAX. Inspector, please, me and my brother had our differences, but deep down we cared for one another.

CHRIS. AND YET YOU HAD AN AFFAIR WITH HIS FIANCÉE?

The group in the window drop Sandra and start again.

MAX. WHAT ON EARTH GAVE YOU THAT IDEA?

CHRIS. THIS LETTER I FOUND IN CHARLES' POCKET FROM MISS COLLEYMOORE TO YOURSELF.

MAX. YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT?

CHRIS. I DO! AS, IT SEEMS...DID...CHARLES!!

The others have managed to get Sandra out of the window. Annie sharply draws the curtains.

MAX. Well bravo, Inspector! You've found out about Florence and I, but it proves nothing.

Panicking, Max begins to mime his speech as he says it, building faster and faster to a climax.

We had nothing to do with Charles' murder, but Thomas Colley-moore does. Oh Inspector, he's a dangerously unhinged man, with a devil of a temper and Florence is his sister. Now I've said it once before and I shall say it once again: He couldn't stand the idea of giving her up to any man, let alone his old school chum. He saw them together at tonight's engagement party and he lost control and he lashed out at Charles. A crime of passion perhaps, but there it is!

Max strikes a pose.

CHRIS. Thank you, Mr. Haversham, you've been most helpful.

If Max's speech gets a round of applause, Max takes a bow and vamps, bowing as many times as he can and clapping himself until Chris bellows, "Thank you, Mr. Haversham," and stops him.

Thank you, Mr. Haversham!...you've been most helpful. Perhaps

2 Annie, Chris, Robert, Dennis

Start

poles. Max grins at the audience; Robert and Dennis quickly lower him out of view. Max stands up in the window and grins at the audience again. Robert grabs him and pulls him out of sight; Max smacks his head on the edge of the window as he goes.

ANNIE. Oh Inspector, my fiancé and my lover killed on the same eve.

CHRIS. Remember your breathing, Miss Colley Moore, now is not the time for another of your episodes.

ANNIE. *(Calm.)* I am having an episode, Inspector. I cannot help it.

CHRIS. *(Under his breath.)* Have an episode. Have...an...episode. *(Loudly.)* Have an episode.

Annie tries to scream and shake as she has seen Sandra do in rehearsals. Vamp. Annie builds the episode bigger and bigger until it reaches a climax and she flops onto the chaise longue.

No, Miss Colley Moore.

Robert and Dennis reenter.

ROBERT. Florence, control yourself girl.

DENNIS. She's having another one of her hysterical episodes.

ANNIE. *(Calmly reads.)* They're dead. They're gone and they're never coming back.

ROBERT. I will not tolerate another tantrum, Florence.

ANNIE. *(Calm.)* Get away from me, Thomas. You don't understand my grief.

ROBERT. That's enough, take one of your pills.

ANNIE. No. Not more pills.

Annie takes a pill with no hesitation.

Oh, they're mints.

ROBERT. But who could have killed...

Annie upstages Robert by sinking back onto the chaise longue, pretending to be knocked out by the pill.

But who could have killed him?

DENNIS. That's a good question, Mr. Colley Moore.

CHRIS. ...and one we need to answer quickly if we're going to get out of this house alive.

ANNIE. Oh Inspector, you've given me a chill.

CHRIS. Perkins, pour us all another scotch.

DENNIS. Of course, Inspector.

Dennis pours more white spirit for everyone.

CHRIS. Now, tell me, is there anyone else that you know of in the grounds other than the four of us?

ANNIE. Not a soul.

ROBERT. The gardener left at six, the only other member of staff is Perkins. *(Drinks and spits out the white spirit.)* Good God, I needed that.

CHRIS. Does anyone have access to the grounds?

ANNIE. No one, Inspector.

DENNIS. I'm the only one with a master key and as instructed I locked and bolted the doors as soon as you arrived.

ROBERT. Then who could have killed him?

DENNIS. That's a good question, Mr. Colley Moore.

CHRIS. ...and one we need to answer quickly if we're going to get out of this house alive.

ANNIE. Oh Inspector, you've given me a chill.

CHRIS. Perkins, pour us all another scotch.

Chris and Robert start to realise that they have been here before.

DENNIS. Of course, Inspector.

Dennis pours white spirit again.

CHRIS. Now, tell me, is there anyone else that you know of in the grounds other than the four of us?

ANNIE. Not a soul.

ROBERT. The gardener left at six, the only other member of staff is Perkins. *(Drinks. Spits it out again.)* Good God, I needed that.

CHRIS. Does anyone have access to the grounds?

ANNIE. No one, Inspector.

DENNIS. I'm the only one with a master key and as instructed I locked and bolted the doors as soon as you arrived.

ROBERT. (*Pointedly, hoping Dennis will say the correct line this time.*) Then who could have killed him?

Dennis knows something is wrong but not what, and the loop of dialogue goes around again.

DENNIS. That's a good question, Mr. Colley Moore.

CHRIS. ...and one we need to answer quickly if we're going to get out of this house alive.

ANNIE. Oh Inspector, you've given me a chill.

CHRIS. Perkins, pour us all another scotch.

DENNIS. Of course, Inspector.

Dennis pours white spirit again.

CHRIS. Now, tell me, is there anyone else that you know of in the grounds other than the four of us?

ANNIE. Not a soul.

ROBERT. The gardener left at six, the only other member of staff is Perkins. (*Drinks. Spits.*) Good God, I needed that.

CHRIS. Does anyone have access to the grounds?

ANNIE. No one, Inspector.

DENNIS. I'm the only one with the master key and as instructed I locked and bolted all the doors as soon as you arrived.

ROBERT. *Then who could have killed him?*

Pause. All look at Dennis.

DENNIS. That's a good question, Mr. Colley Moore.

The script loops again. Much faster this time.

CHRIS. ...and one we need to answer quickly if we're going to get out of this house alive.

ANNIE. Oh Inspector, you've given me a chill!

CHRIS. Perkins, pour us all another scotch.

DENNIS. Of course, Inspector.

Dennis pours white spirit again.

CHRIS. Now, tell me, is there anyone else that you know of in the grounds other than the four of us?

ANNIE. Not a soul.

ROBERT. The gardener left at six, the only other member of staff is Perkins. *(Drinks again. Spits out again.)* Good God, I needed that.

CHRIS. Does anyone have access to the grounds?

ANNIE. No one, Inspector.

DENNIS. I'm the only one with a master key and as instructed I locked and bolted the doors as soon as you arrived.

ROBERT. *THEN WHO COULD HAVE KILLED HIM?*

Pause. Tense, everyone desperate that Dennis will get it right this time.

DENNIS. That's a good question, Mr. Colley Moore.

ROBERT and CHRIS. *Argh!!*

CHRIS. ...and one we need to answer quickly if we're going to get out of this house alive.

ANNIE. Oh Inspector, you've given me a chill.

CHRIS. Perkins, pour us all another scotch.

DENNIS. Of course, Inspector.

Dennis pours white spirit again.

CHRIS. Now, tell me, is there anyone else that you know of in the grounds other than the four of us?

ANNIE. Not a soul.

ROBERT. The gardener left at six, the only other member of staff is Perkins. *(Throws the white spirit in Dennis' face.)* Good God, I needed that!

Chris throws his white spirit in Dennis' face as well.

CHRIS. Does anyone have access to the grounds?

ANNIE. No one, Inspector.

DENNIS. *(In pain, the white spirit burning his skin.)* I'm the only one with a master key and as instructed I locked and bolted all the doors as soon as you arrived.

Chris and Robert grab Dennis.

ALL. Then who could have killed him?

DENNIS. (*Realises.*) No one! YES! No one could have killed him, except for the people who are in this room.

CHRIS. Good God, you're right, it's one of us.

All gasp.

ANNIE. (*Reads.*) This is a disaster! Blackout. Intermission.

Annie realises her mistake.

Oh.

Blackout. Tabs fly in. Music.

End of Act One

INTERVAL ACTIVITY:

Robert appears in auditorium/foyer in a robe and joins the queue for ice creams. Chris appears and sends him backstage.

Stop

3 Chris

The mantelpiece falls off the wall. Annie emerges from the wing.

ANNIE. (To the audience member.) You said that was fine.

TREVOR. (Aside to Annie.) Just leave it, leave it.

Annie starts to try and repair the mantelpiece. Trevor addresses the audience.

Okay, welcome to *The Murder at Haversham Manor*. Can I kindly request that all your cell phones and other electronic devices are switched off and please note that photography of any kind is strictly prohibited. Also if anyone finds a Duran Duran* CD box set anywhere in the auditorium, that is a personal item and I want that back. Please do drop it at my tech box end of the show. Enjoy the performance.

House and stage lights go down. Trevor exits s. l.

(On his radio but broadcast to the whole theatre.) Alright, can we prepare for lights up on Act One, note for the cast Winston is still missing, we need to find him before the guard dog scene—

CHRIS. Trevor! Trevor!

TREVOR. (Still over the speakers.) —we need him back in his cage as soon as possible. What's Annie doing onstage? Get her off so Chris can do his stupid speech—oop!

Trevor's microphone cuts off. Annie hasn't finished repairing the mantelpiece. Chris enters from the s. r. wing in the darkness.

CHRIS. Leave it. Just leave it.

ANNIE. You need it...

CHRIS. We don't have time.

Annie hurries off into the wings, taking the mantelpiece and tool kit with her. Spotlight comes up on Chris, cutting off his head.

Start

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and...

Chris steps forward into the spotlight.

...welcome to the Cornley Drama Society's presentation of *The Murder at Haversham Manor*. Please allow me to introduce myself; I am Chris, the director, and I would like to personally welcome

* If music by a different band is used on pages 45 and 78, change "Duran Duran" appropriately.

you to what will be my directorial debut (*Pronounced "day-boo."*) and my first production as head of the drama society.

Firstly I would like to apologise to those of you involved in our little box office mix-up. I do hope the six hundred and seventeen of you affected will enjoy our little murder mystery just as much as you would have enjoyed *Hamilton*.

We are particularly excited to present this play because, for the first time in the society's history, we've managed to find a play that fits the number of society members perfectly. If we're honest a lack of members has sometimes hampered past productions, such as last year's Chekhov play... *Two Sisters*. Last Christmas' *The Lion and the Wardrobe*. Or indeed our summer musical, *Cat*.

Of course this will be the first time the society has been able to stage a play of this scale and we are thrilled. It's no secret we usually have to contend with a small budget, as was evident in our recent production of Roald Dahl's classic *James and the Peach*. Of course during the run of that particular show the peach we had went off, and we were forced to present a hastily devised alternative entitled *James! Where's Your Peach?*

Stop
Anyway on to the main event, which I am confident will be our best show yet! So ladies and gentlemen, without any further ado, please put your hands together—

If the audience start to clap too early, Chris can say "not yet."
—for Susie H. K. Brideswell's thrilling whodunit—*The Murder at Haversham Manor*.

Chris exits into the s. r. wing. Spotlight down. Trevor takes up his position in his tech box. Darkness. Music.

Jonathan (playing Charles Haversham) enters through the darkness from the s. r. wing. He trips and falls over. The lights suddenly come up on Jonathan on the floor. He freezes. The lights go out again. Jonathan takes up his position: dead on the chaise longue, with his arm outstretched onto the floor. The lights come up again just before he's fully in position.

Knocking at the downstairs door. Robert (playing Thomas Colley Moore) and Dennis (playing Perkins the Butler) can

4 Chris and Sandra

CHRIS. And my notebook?

Robert holds out the vase. Pause. Chris takes it.

I knew I'd left them somewhere. I'm going to have to speak to your sister alone.

ROBERT. Very well. I'll be in the library, Florence.

Robert opens the door. Dennis is knelt down in the doorway, having collected all the props. Robert walks straight into him, causing Dennis to drop them all again as Robert closes the door behind him.

start

Dennis!

CHRIS. Don't fret, Miss Colleymoore, my questions will be brief and to the point and then you can get some rest. Firstly, how old are you, Miss Colleymoore?

SANDRA. Twenty-one.

CHRIS. I'll make a note of that.

He tries to make a note by dragging one of the keys across the side of the vase. It clinks as it goes across the cut glass.

And when were you engaged to be married?

SANDRA. In the new year.

Chris writes on vase again.

CHRIS. And when did you and your fiancé first meet?

SANDRA. Only seven months ago, but my brother has known him since school, he introduced us at a local gala and it was love at first sight. I knew from the very first moment I saw him that he was the man I wished to marry.

Pause.

CHRIS. (*Ad-libs.*) Ah, I've run out of paper.

Chris puts the keys into the vase and puts the vase down on the s. r. table. Sandra comes in a line too early, causing the lines to go out of sync. The two become more frantic as they try to get back on track.

SANDRA. When you love someone there's no such thing as rushing, Inspector.

CHRIS. Did you ever think you were rushing into this marriage?

SANDRA. Why wouldn't I love him?

CHRIS. Did you love him, then?

SANDRA. How could anyone have benefitted?

CHRIS. Can you think of anyone who might have benefitted from your fiancé's death?

SANDRA. Cecil?

CHRIS. Not even Cecil?

SANDRA. I wasn't having an affair! Don't raise your voice to me, Inspector!

CHRIS. YOU WERE HAVING AN AFFAIR!

SANDRA. *(Slaps Chris.)* Don't tell me to calm down!

CHRIS. Calm down, Miss Colleymoore. *(Reacts to slap.)*

SANDRA. But where did you find it?

CHRIS. I found your letter; the one addressed to Cecil, written in your hand, declaring your love for him and saying that the thought of marrying Charles repulsed you.

SANDRA. Charles read it—

CHRIS. *(Does Sandra's line for her in a high voice.)* But where did you find it? *(Back to his normal voice.)* I'll tell you where I found it: in Charles' pocket!

SANDRA. Charles read it?! Then it was suicide!

CHRIS. *Indeed!* *(Returning to a calmer delivery.)* Or a murder, conceived by yourself and Cecil Haversham so you could run away together.

SANDRA. You diabolical beast. How can you? I won't stand for this, Inspector. Accuse me again and you'll be sorr...

Robert bursts in, followed by Max; the door hits Sandra sharply on the head and she collapses, unconscious. Trevor picks up a first-aid kit and heads out of his box.

ROBERT. What's all this shouting?

MAX. What is this, Inspector?

Robert and Chris see that Sandra is on the floor. Max looks at Chris and doesn't see what's happened to Sandra.