

BLUE MOON OVER BISBEE

(Original script for the 100th celebration of the
opening of the Copper Queen Hotel in Bisbee, Arizona)

Copyright Alan S. Austin, May, 2002
Alan S. Austin

The play is set in Bisbee in 1902

Time Line

Note: Guests will check into the hotel at varying times. Upon arrival they will receive a package containing a schedule of events; highlights of 1902 Worldwide and 1902 events in Bisbee; a program, an invitation to present at cocktails, a list of possible clues to look for at 4:00 and any other necessary paperwork. They will be instructed to go to the Main Lobby at 4:00 if they wish to see something which will help them with the mystery (if someone is so late so as not to be there by 4:00, they can be filled in at the reception.)

4:00 - Main Lobby

Man is seen to have been checking rooms, knocking on walls etc. Obviously looking for something. (In fact he is the grandson of Simon Butteridge and he is trying to locate the diamond using a letter provided him by his grandfather who hid the diamond in 1902 during a party celebrating the opening of the hotel. He has been checking rooms etc. since about 3:00)

Another man dressed as an Indian (Eastern) is seen skulking about watching the man and the other guests. He appears to work for the hotel as a valet, etc. but we later find out no such person was employed. We also see a woman dressed in a Copper Queen sweatshirt who is named after her grandmother, Lily Montez. Her name is Lolita Montez and she is the manager of the hotel although she is off duty.

At about 4:15, there is a scream in the bar by Lolita and Butteridge's grandson, Christopher, comes out staggering and falls in the center of the Lobby. The police are called. While

we are waiting for the police (they have been instructed to be there by 4:25) the guests will note that the dead man has blue dye on one of his hands and will also compare notes as to the clues they were given to look for. When the police arrive, they do their usual "police" thing . The guests are instructed to leave the scene of the crime and a chalk outline is done of the body. The body is carried away on a stretcher by whoever can help.

6:00 - Guests are instructed to be in the Main Lobby to meet with Mrs. Peasbody who will hand out the parts and take the invitations we gave them in the welcome package. Lily tries to get in without an invitation. Madam Sosostriis arrives. Butteridge is on the second floor landing greeting guests.

6.30-7.30 Cocktail hour... Small scenes...Lady Roxborough arrives with Pinkerton agent--

8:00 - 10:00 Gourmet 4 course dinner, Peasbody delivers any urgent messages, Lily's murdered, Butteridge is hypnotized, interrogation and exposition to date by detective (clues are planted during dinner by Mrs. Peasbody in various guests' rooms.)

10:00 - ? Sing along in lobby and discussion of evening. Ballots to be turned in by 9:00 A.M. in a special box in the front lobby.

9.30 A.M. Sunday - in the bar- denouement, arrest and prize. *Keep Sunday to the minimum.*

Cast of Characters...

Marney.....Lady Roxborough - 1902 (policewoman if necessary in 2002)

Neil.....Madame Sosostris / Moriarty (Sunday)- both 1902

Greg.....Mohammed Willy Pasha Nizam of Hyderabad in 2002 and Inspector McCluff in 1902

Ellen..... Lolita Montez, granddaughter of Lily Montez and Manager of hotel, 2002; Lily Montez in 1902; Hotel maid Molly Parton? In 1902

RichChristopher Butteridge in 2002 and Simon Butteridge in 1902

NancyErnestine Peasbody , Hotel Chatelaine in 1902 and Stage Manager

Alan..... Moriarty at a distance in 1902; Technical Manager for dinner and policeman in 2002 if necessary

Lady Roxborough

Age- 56 - born Susan Smith in London, one of three daughters of a successful nail manufacturer, Robert Smith from Birmingham. Lives on a beautiful estate at Chipping Sodbury. She was presented to Queen Victoria as a debutante. No children - married Lord Roxborough 1870 after a whirlwind courtship in Paris. Adopted her late sister's child Stephen in 1883 . She inherited shares in Phelps Dodge from her father. Educated by a governess, she has been introduced in the best salons in London. She liked George Eliot and is sympathetic toward the suffragette movement. An indomitable lady who endured her husband's unhappy paranoia with a gentle tolerance and good humor.

Lord Roxborough

Hereditary title of dubious origins. Grandfather was the Third Earl of Roxborough who was killed at Waterloo in 1815. His father drank and gambled away the family fortune. Took a commission in India where he was adjutant general of her Majesty's Loyal Hydrebad Cavalry. Returned to England in 1869 under a cloud. A cruel and violent man he was reputed to have stolen the Blue Moon diamond a sacred Hindu stone . He always protested that it had been given to him as a reward for his services by the Nizam of Hydrebad who died in mysterious circumstances. The stone itself (82 carats) when looked at with a eyeglass has the pattern of a blue moon in it. He died supposedly of a heart attack. There was a purple stain on his arm.

Madame Sosostri/ Moriarty (disguised)

Famous clairvoyant with a wicked pack of cards. Tells fortunes ... free for friends ... for a price for clients. Is known to use a Ouija board. Grew up in Boston supposedly. Is an experienced hypnotist. Have in fact been murdered in San Francisco and supplanted by Moriarty who is in pursuit of the Blue Moon. Moriarty has acquired some skills in the fortune telling but is not clear about the Tarot pack. He can hypnotize. He will need a pack of card and gets the names wrong. T he mortal enemy of Sherlock Holmes ... has been pursuing the Blue Moon since hearing of the news of the death of

Lord Roxborough. Has been invited by the manager to the opening of the Hotel. Magically. A diabolical character who has many faces. He is seen as Moriarty but only as a distant cloaked figure.

Inspector McCluff/ Mohammed Willy Pasha, Nizam of Hydrebad

The famous Inspector McCluff of New Scotland Yard.... friend of Watson and Sherlock Holmes, is investigating the death of Lord Roxborough. He has been pursuing Lady Roxborough to arrest her. The disappearance of the stone at the CQ Hotel puts him in charge of the investigation. A clever interrogator, known for his quiet cleverness and Scottish charm. His catch phrases are, "We'll see about that?" "Very interesting, sonny" "There IS a possibility." "Veracity, Sir, veracity."

As Willy Pasha, a mysterious Indian staying at the Hotel who is trying to retrieve the stone. Attempts to murder the Pinkerton Agent guarding the stone fail. He is illusive and is seen about Bisbee. Speaks broken English.

Lily Montez (A Lady of some experience in Bisbee/ Hotel Manager Lolita Montez(2002)/Molly Parton

Rose from the Gulch to a position of prominence in the town of Bisbee because of her gifts, charm, and seductiveness. She supports two charitable houses for the poor in Bisbee as well as the cribs in the Gulch . She is also the mistress of the Mayor of Bisbee and is visited frequently by notable citizens. Regarded as unreasonable by the majority of the guests. She is raising money for a home to protect and look after the women from the Gulch when they fall on bad times, get sick, or get too old. Tired of waiting for contributions which have been promised by her clients, today she has come to collect her money or embarrass them into paying. She gate-crashes the party.

She is in love with Bill Bart, a geologist who has persuaded her to substitute the Blue Moon for a fake stone which he has prepared. Though he got all the dimensions of the stone right, it doesn't have the 'blue moon' fault . Somehow she manages to pull off the

substitution. She is a gentle soul at heart, tough in many ways, intelligent, realistic and good fun. She is slightly consumptive which bodes ill for her future. She coughs a little which of course alarms people given the TB rates. Her aims are both altruist as she is concerned about the pitiable the fate of the girls and in the Gulch and selfish her own. She is planning to use the money to establish The Montez Retreat for Retired Professional Ladies. Lily is shot just before the main course is served.

As a chambermaid she has been persuaded by Moriarty for \$50 to search Butteridge's room for the Blue Moon.

Simon Butteridge/Christopher Butteridge

A gentleman's gentleman and the servant and protector of Lady Roxborough. He grew up in the Smith household and transferred to the Roxborough household when her Lady ship got married . Is a lover of the stories of Charles Dickens which he can quote ad infinitum. Is charming and urbane and the source of the Smith and Roxborough family history. He has a dry sense of humor, is of unimpeachable character and an astute reader of human nature. He is the most reliable source of information for the audience. He has a large fob watch which he consults regularly. He makes the travel arrangements and is on hand to answer any questions.

Unfortunately his Achilles heel is a propensity for Napoleon Brandy. He himself was abandoned as a child and grew up in an orphanage . He discovered after much searching that his mother had been forced to go on the game and that he had a sister.

Ernestine Peasbody , Hotel Chatelaine , SM

A fussy, worried woman who complains about nothing being in the right place and how difficult it is to get reliable servants for the hotel. She has all the keys to all the rooms in the building and knows where everything is. She supervises the whole proceedings. She has an unfortunate habit of tripping, a facility which she has developed into a fine art. Brought up by an Irish grandmother she attempts to behave in a sophisticated way. Superstitious, she is

deeply religious. She lords it over anyone she feels is her inferior and is obsequious to those above her.

Storyline for the 4:00 murder of Christopher Butteridge

Sometime on the Saturday afternoon (probably about 3:00), the rather dissolute figure of Christopher Butteridge, his clothes noticeably shabby even by 21st Century standards, enters the lobby of The Copper Queen Hotel. He enquires at the desk whether there have been significant renovations done to the CQ over the past one hundred years and causes something of a stir by his loudmouthed rudeness. He is clutching a set of hotel drawings. He demands to see the plans of the hotel from the Hotel Manager, Lolita Montez. He consults a small notebook. He is then seen for the next hour searching the corridors and knocking on walls and the doors of guests, tapping the walls and the wainscots and asking guests if they have been here before and had they noticed anything strange. When he leaves, he ticks off the number of the room from his list, apparently satisfied. At about 4:00 he is seen looking around the main lobby and then goes into the bar. Lolita screams, he comes staggering into the lobby and dies. (Before the arrival of the police a number of the guests who have been forewarned to search his body for clues. They observe that he has been involved in some sort of struggle, that one of his sleeves is rolled up and dusty. He has some pages of an old book in a pocket, a faded letter addressed to his father Simon Butteridge and postmarked June 1932 which includes a message in some sort of code, some English coins, a Greyhound bus ticket from SF to Tucson. His fingers on one hand are stained a strange blue color like gentian violet and there's a scratch.)

Careful observers will also notice the remains of a small arrow similar to the arrow piercing the bosom of the lady in the painting in the bar. Once the police and ambulance crew arrive the body is removed and the police depart leaving a chalk outline of where the body lay. They remove a list of the guests and take a record of anyone in the near vicinity of the corpse and any other statements.

- EVENING

6 .00 p.m. - audience collecting parts in the lobby, handing in their invitation and getting a "clue" sheet to write clues on. Peasbody in charge. Note: The mayor's and governor's parts and the parts of Alan Wright, Martin Sharp, James Holden and L. A. Nemeck (or substitutes for Wright, Sharp and Holden if a small audience) must be handed out before this scene can begin.

PEASBODY

(Ad-libbing)

Come on everybody. Stop wasting time. Who did you say you were? Is that an English name? OH.. Irish... Well you can't help that. Cocktails are being served on the second floor. Don't forget your clue sheet. Did you have your photo taken? What did you say your name was? Lily Montez.... I'm sorry you're not on my list. Are you on your own?

LILY MONTEZ

Actually yes. I am on my own. I was invited by the Mayor.

PEASBODY

It's not proper, Miss Montez, for a lady to be seen in the evening on her own, unaccompanied so to speak... Anyway, I have strict instructions not allow anyone upstairs without a formal invitation. Perhaps you would like to wait over there. Next please. Have your invitation ready. Thank you.

LILY MONTEZ

I'm not waiting anywhere. Tell Mayor Muirhead that Lily Montez is here.

PEASBODY

I'm sorry. I couldn't possibly interrupt him for the likes of you. The Mayor is far too busy.

LILY MONTEZ

You had better tell him. He will be very upset if he finds out later you turned me away. Believe me. Remember the name, Lily Montez.

PEASBODY

Well if you insist. No need to be unpleasant Miss.
(She goes upstairs)

LILY MONTEZ

Thank you.

(She introduces her self to the guests)

How do you do? I am Lily Montez. So pleased to meet you. Lily Montez.

Lily then goes upstairs and engages in earnest conversations with a number of characters with regard to her grand scheme. Today happens to be the day when various men have promised funds so that she may go ahead with her home for Professionally Retired Women in Naco. She has decided to make them "pay up". She also sees Bill Bart, her lover but they do not acknowledge each other. The guests she is looking for are: (Lawrence) Nemeck, a photographer, Dr. Ralph Pierce, Martin Sharp, a captain in the Arizona Rangers, and "Don Luis" Williams, Mgr. of the smelter at the Queen mine. If for some reason these people are not present, then she should blackmail anyone she can.

PEASBODY

(Returning)

I've talked to Dr. Pierce and he says he can vouch for you. Where did she go? Oh, who cares? Please carry on.

(She resumes checking in the guests until she gets to Madam Sosostris who should be one of the first in line after Lily)

PEASBODY (CONT'D)

Madam Sosostris. I've heard all about you. Ladies and Gentlemen, this is Madam Sosostris, the great clairvoyant,.... With a wicked pack of cards. You will read my fortune won't you?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

You are too kind. My notoriety would appear to have preceded me. I am so charmed to be invited. What a beautiful hotel.

PEASBODY

I read all about you in The San Francisco Chronicle. That man you hypnotised... Doing all those things and not realizing it. Will you be doing that tonight?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

I don't know. Perhaps. I am sure there will be far more interesting things happening.

PEASBODY

Nothing could be more interesting than you, though I hear her Ladyship has arrived and will be exhibiting the Blue Moon diamond.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Oh... A diamond... How interesting.
ummmmmmmmmmm

PEASBODY

Well do go up to the 2nd floor Madam Sosostris. Do you have your cards with you?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

I'm never without them.

PEASBODY

Perhaps you could give me a little reading.. Later on..?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Of course my dear.

(Exits up the stairs)

PEASBODY

You may set up a little table as well. I am sure nobody would mind.

Peasbody continues to check people in and when the person she picks to play the Pinkerton Agent arrives, he is asked to wait for Lady Roxborough (with Butteridge upstairs) to arrive and is given the diamond in the box. She continues to talk about Sosostriis and Lily, praising one and running down the other. The photographer is on hand so guests can have photographs of themselves. She seems oblivious of the difference between 2002 & 1902. She imparts bits of information about the other characters and who will be attending the Opening.

PEASBODY (CONT'D)

The mantel piece over the fireplace on the second floor is one of the finest obtainable. Do go and see the ladies parlor, the mahogany is outstanding and the green silk. All the glasses are monogrammed. We even have steam dishwashing machinery. The beds and carpeting come from Marshall Field & Co., All the way from Chicago etc.... Lady Roxborough will be arriving at 7 p.m. So I am told. She is staying in one of our very best rooms. Her niece and nephew are here of course. Rachel Roxborough-Williams married to Ben Williams, the Manager of the Copper Queen mine. And there's that strange Indian gentleman, Silly Pasha or something. Very particular about the room he wanted to stay in. I said, They are all the same. No he said. I

must have 302. Foreign people. There's so many of them in Bisbee. From all over the world.

Guests collect on the second floor. Actors mill around introducing everybody. Madam Sosostri sets up a table for her Ouija board and any other tricks she has and reads the future for people. The photographer has already set up his camera and takes photographs during cocktails. Waiters serve drinks and appetizers are served. When all the guests have arrived, Dr. James Douglas of Phelps Dodge calls for silence.

DR. JAMES DOUGLAS

Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the opening of the Copper Queen Hotel. I am a man of few words so let me just say that I am deeply honored to be able to be here today, along with the cream of society in Bisbee - people who have made the town of Bisbee what it is today, the most thriving, bustling, commercial centre in the whole of Arizona. The demand for copper worldwide is up and we at Phelps Dodge intend to be the leading producers satisfying that demand. That is why we have built this beautiful hotel. We believe in Bisbee. We believe in the future of Bisbee, and we believe that our American society will lead the world in technology and science. Let me now introduce our Governor, Governor Oakes and our Mayor, Mayor Muirhead . They wish to say a few words.

GOVERNOR OAKES

My wife Sarah and I want to thank you for coming this evening. We are very honored today because not only are we opening this wonderful hotel, one of the finest in the United States, but we are privileged to have a lady of great distinction as our very first guest. As requested by Dr. Douglas, I declare the hotel open. Mayor, I believe you have a few words.

MAYOR MUIRHEAD

Yep. Sure do. We are real fortunate to have such fine folks here including our real special guest Lady Roxborough. She isn't here yet but we do have her niece Mrs. Rachel Williams, Ben Williams wife (for you strangers, he is the manager over at the Queen mine) Rachel has been instrumental in getting her aunt out here so let's show our appreciation for Mrs. Rachel Roxborough-Williams. Now I think I better introduce everyone.

(Looks for his list and can't find it.)

Hell, just go along and introduce yourselves to each other. Now I know some of you are a little nervous about the right etiquette, that is how to be introduced to nobility, so I have asked Lady Roxborough's manservant, or whatever he is, Mr. Simon Butteridge to give us a few tips.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Ladies and Gentlemen, this is a great honor indeed to address such a distinguished company. Rest assured, Lady Roxborough is a warm and kind hearted lady who is only too delighted to be here to see her niece,

Rachel and to play her part in the opening of this splendid hotel. She will be quite happy to greet everyone, whatever their rank in society. May I suggest that the Mayor, as chief citizen, introduce everyone to her ladyship and that you yourselves line up according to your social rank, as one would do in the best society in England.

MAYOR MUIRHEAD

Seems all right to me. So why don't you line up according to where you think you fit in Bisbee society... Them's that are uppity like you Governor, come on up first and them's that lower class go to the rear.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

It is quite enough, given the recent death of the Earl of Roxborough for the gentleman to nod when being introduced but only to shake her hand if it is offered. Ladies should curtsy of course. Though her Ladyship is officially in mourning, especially so since the death of her Majesty the Queen, given that we are in the United States, she deemed it inappropriate to dress fully in black or ask others to do likewise.

MAYOR MUIRHEAD

Everybody ready? All in your rightful places? Right, let's go.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

I will see if her Ladyship has returned from town.

Exits and returns with Lady Roxborough

MAYOR MUIRHEAD

Tries to get everyone in a line according to rank but can't manage it even with the Manager's help. (comic bit)

Enter Lady Roxborough, Simon Butteridge, and the Pinkerton Agent carrying a box which contains the Blue Moon. There is polite clapping as she reaches the top of the stairs. Lady Roxborough beams. She goes to the wrong end of the line and starts to introduce herself in reverse order.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Ladies and Gentlemen Lady Roxborough

There is polite clapping

LADY ROXBOROUGH

How do you do? And what do you do?

Lady R tries to find something to say to everyone. Finally she is directed to a special podium on which the Pinkerton Agent has placed on a small blue box containing the diamond.

LADY ROXBOROUGH (CONT'D)

It gives me such very great pleasure to be here among such ...colorful people. I can honestly say that all of the discomforts of the train journey, after the long sea voyage to San Francisco have been worth it. And what a charming site for industry. A little foggy but then so is London. And, not to worry, we soon

get used to those industrial smells. Of course, seeing my niece and Rachel and her husband Ben for the first time since the death of their uncle Lord Roxborough, is poignant under such tragic circumstances. But, as my Butler, Butteridge has said to me often "Grief never mended no broken bones."

I am here today to celebrate not only the grand opening of this wonderful hotel but also my niece's birthday. Though her departure to the United States was a little precipitous, for reasons which we will not mention, in this time of reconciliation, Lord Roxborough's dying wish was that his favorite niece should inherit The Blue Moon Diamond which he himself brought back all those years ago from India. Like his father and grandfather before him he put his life on the line to defend civilization. I have brought the diamond all the way from London and I want to thank Phelps Dodge for allowing me to use this occasion to display this wonderful jewel which for far too long has been locked in the vaults of a London Bank. My late husband, a thoroughly superstitious man, believed that there was some sort of curse on the stone. But we know better. Rachel for you and your husband. The Blue Moon Diamond.

Pinkerton Agent , using Lady R's key,opens the box for all the company to view. There is gasp of amazement at its beauty. Rachel steps forward takes the box and shows the jewel to everyone.

RACHEL

It is worth \$800,000 so I am told. Ben, look.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

How wonderful! What a beautiful jewel!

She attempts to tak it out of the box and drops it. The Pinkerton Agent who has been following the jewel very closely grabs it and replaces in the box.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS (CONT'D)

Silly me. How clumsy.

PINKERTON AGENT

I think I shall have to take care of this. Although the diamond is insured, I have been entrusted by my company to guard it. Lady Roxborough, I suggest that since everyone has seen the jewel, it is placed in the Hotel Safe.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

I am so sorry your ladyship. A slip of the hand. Such a beautiful jewel.

Everyone clusters around the diamond trying to get a look.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

That's what my husband said. Such a beautiful jewel. I hired the Pinkerton agent because I was so frightened it might get stolen. This is the Wild West after all.

Pinkerton Agent takes the box and carefully places it under his arm. Enter Inspector McCluff

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Everyone stand where you are. Are you Lady Roxborough?

Goes up to the wrong character. Character in question naturally says no. McCluff keeps on asking until he gets to the real Lady Roxborough.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF (CONT'D)

Are you Lady Roxborough, wife of the late Earl of Roxborough?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Yes. What do you want?

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

In the name of her Britannic Majesty I arrest you for the murder of your husband, the Earl of Roxborough. Given that we are in a foreign country I have no alternative but to place you in handcuffs.

Handcuffs her

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Me! Handcuffed? Murdered my husband? Good heavens!

She faints and falls into the nearest chair. Simon Butteridge rushes to her side.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Give her air. My lady, give her air.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Oh... Oh....

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Sir, my name is Harry Wheeler. Now, I may not be one of them new fangled clever detectives but it don't seem to me like a Britisher, which I think is what you are Sir, should come busting in here and start arresting folk. This is Arizona territory and I am the sheriff so that makes me the law around here. And that means that nobody gets arrested, least of all a fine lady, unless I say so. Is that right Mayor?

MAYOR MUIRHEAD

Sure is John!

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

So I suggest you take them handcuffs off this lady right now, before we have to take you outside and examine your credentials.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I meant no offence. I have been in touch with your government authorities and they have promised to forward any necessary paperwork.

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Here in Arizona we are a long way from government authorities. I suggest that instead of interruptin' our celebrations on the opening of this hotel' you wait until later to take care of business.. I too am an observer of human nature, Sir. And this lady is a lady.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I will wait for the proper authorization.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Ladies and Gentlemen there would appear to have been a terrible mistake.

Suddenly there are screams for help from the Main Lobby where the Pinkerton agent went to put the diamond in the safe. In actuality, one of the other actors has instructed the agent as to what to do if it is not possible to play out the next scene.

PINKERTON AGENT

Help, Help! Murder! Murder. Aaaaargh.....

On coming up the stairs the agent is shaking uncontrollably but still guarding the Blue Box cradled in his left arm. There's a richly jewelled dagger in his hand which his assailant dropped.

PINKERTON AGENT (CONT'D)

This man, with a bandage on his head, Attacked me with this knife... He wanted the box.... I drew my gun but.... The Blue Moon? Thank God it's safe.

DOCTOR PIERCE

He is only a bit shaky. He'll live.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Well.... This gentleman

Indicates Sheriff

has been particularly helpful. I would be so obliged if you would you look after this for my niece

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Sure would Ma'am. Would be obliged.

*He takes the Blue Box.... Checks the stone is there.
This box will not leave my sight.*

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Once a gentleman and always a gentleman.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have just been informed that dinner is about to be served. I suggest after all this excitement we retire to the dining room.

General agreement. Everyone retires to the dining room. Inspector McCluff gets out a magnifying glass and examines the site of the attack and the knife with great care.

Guests are seated in the dining room. Inspector McCluff enters.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Oh dear... There's that Inspector McCluff again. I hope he is not going to arrest me...again

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Lady Roxborough, Mr Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen. I must apologize for my overexuberant attempt to detain her Ladyship. I hope you will forgive me. Other more pressing dangers now concern me. I address you now because I feel you should know that you are all in peril. The Blue Moon diamond has left behind it a trail of death and unhappiness. Lord Roxborough, though he claimed it was given to him by the Nawab of Hydrebad, was suspected in certain quarters of having stolen it. The stone is sacred to the God Vishnu. There is a curse on it such that until it is returned to the forehead on the goddess in the Temple of Marabar in Hydrebad. Death and misfortune await the possessor. Lord Roxborough, knowing about the curse, survived two violent attempts on his life. In fact, as he grew older he was convinced someone was trying to poison him. He would consume only fruit and vegetables grown in his own garden, carefully locked away from outsiders. He left instructions that in the event of his death, exhaustive tests should be made on anything he had eaten. The results of those tests took time and last month revealed that someone had regularly painted the apples in his orchard with a form of poison which we have as yet to identify. Chickens fed the apples died within twenty four hours. According to the servants, Lady Roxborough, well aware of the Earl's paranoia, took particular care to select the fruit personally for him. It is that which led

me to believe that she had poisoned her husband. The attack on the Pinkerton Agent, however, leads me to suspect she is innocent and to conclude there are much darker forces at work here. The Blue Moon has been the object of criminal elements for some time. I warn you all to stay on your guard.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Well..... I can now understand Inspector McCluff why you suspected me but I assure you I had no hand in the death of my husband. Though our relationship was a little frigid due to the disparities in our ages, it was nevertheless respectful and warm. And now that I am no longer under suspicion, I must insist that you join us for dinner. We may well need your protection. (she cues Reverend Pogue to say grace)

REVEREND POGUE

I guess we can chow down folks. This is mighty mysterious to me. I hope you law people know what you are doing. Let's eat and after that we can go and have a good old sing song. Now let us say grace. GRACE... Had you there! May the Good Lord bless this meal and the opening of this beautiful hotel and may it always prosper, and we thank him for all the copper in these hills that's made it possible. Amen.

As guests finish their first course. Lady Roxborough gets and shows off diamond, makes switch and goes over to Butteridge and whispers in his ear.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Mr Butteridge. Please be so kind as to go over to that Miss Montez.... and ask her to leave. From what I have heard, she has no business mingling with our kind.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Certainly.

He walks over to Lily. Coughs to gain her attention. She ignores him. Is looking at box and gets it to make the switch. During the evening she has been pestering various members of the audience and has gone outside with them to the balcony and engaged in heated conversations with them. Words like.. You promised...and you are going back on your word....I never thought I would hear that from your lips... Butteridge coughs again. She continues to ignore him.

LILY MONTEZ

You got something wrong with you? Most men cough because either they're dying of the consumption or the doctor thinks they may have a problem. Which one is it in your case?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Madam. Lady Roxborough kindly asks if you would leave.

LILY MONTEZ

You tell her ladyship ain't leaving and that's a fact.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Thank you Madam. I will inform her ladyship.

He returns to Lady Roxborough.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE (CONT'D)

I regret to say the young Lady, Miss Montez "ain't leaving".

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Well you tell her I am the guest of honor and I insist that she leave. She is disturbing the other guests.

Simon goes back to Lily.

LILY MONTEZ

Do you have a problem with hearing? What kind of a man are you anyway, carrying someone else's messages around?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Miss Montez. I have been in service all my life. I have learned to respect the wishes of my elders and betters.

LILY MONTEZ

Elders and betters. There are no elders and betters here. This is America.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

If the lower orders do not set a good example then what is their use?

LILY MONTEZ

Well, it is not to be fed on by those that have the money and desire to get what they want.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Is there some problem?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

No my lady. This young lady was about to leave since apparently she has no invitation. We were discussing a little sociology.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Sociology is what people discuss when they grow tired of living. I would never discuss the subject myself. Now, Miss Lopez? You have been asked to leave. Kindly have the good manners to comply.

LILY MONTEZ

Oh lah di da di dah (shoves Lady R and supposedly gets key from her)

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Excuse me?

LILY MONTEZ

Are all these Brits hard of hearing? I said Lah di dah di dah.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Are you being impertinent?

LILY MONTEZ

No, I am being rude.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

All the more reason to leave.

LILY MONTEZ

I've had about as much as I can take. I'm trying to do something good, something decent, something that will relieve some of the suffering that goes on in this town. You wouldn't understand that with all your airs and graces. How did you get your money Lady Roxborough? Inherit it?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

People in society do not talk about money. It's vulgar.

LILY MONTEZ

Well I am vulgar and most of these people here are vulgar. They are here because of money. They do nothing but talk about money all the time. Do you want me to tell you just how vulgar some of these people are?

The argument has by now hopefully attracted the attention of the audience. The men cry out, "Sit down Lily." "Be quiet" "This is not the time and place." The women, "It's a disgrace." "She should be made to leave." Common Hussy."

LADY ROXBOROUGH

If you truly wish to know, most of my fortune came from my father, who worked extremely hard for it as a nail manufacturer in Birmingham.

LILY MONTEZ

That's the first bit of honesty I've heard here tonight.

Lily proceeds to impugn the morality and reputations of many of the characters present with titillating

details and as the crescendo of protests grows louder, she storms off.

LILY MONTEZ (CONT'D)

So much for the upper classes.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

I do apologize your Ladyship if I was in any way responsible for the young lady's outburst.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

It had nothing to do with you Butteridge. The girl is clearly unhinged and hysterical.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Do sit down everyone. Her ladyship insists everyone sits. A most unfortunate... The kitchen tells me they are ready to serve the second course.

The meal resumes.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Excuse me ladies and gentlemen but I have had second thoughts about that young lady. Miss Montez. Only last month I went to a talk by a remarkable woman, Lady Emily Pankhurst and she convinced me that women are indeed an oppressed nation, that we need to stand up, "stand up she said " for our rights . And I must admit that young lady certainly stirred up a few feathers. Butteridge, go after her and tell her

Lady Roxborough insists that she return and have dinner with her.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Yes ma'am

He departs. Madam Sosostris also leaves the room. Towards the end of the second course, Peasbody enters and scrapes her way up to Lady Roxborough. She is horribly subservient.

PEASBODY

Your ladyship, your majesty..

In bowing she trips over and falls awkwardly

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Do stand up woman. What do you want?

There's the muffled sound of two shots being fired. It might have been a car backfiring.

LADY ROXBOROUGH (CONT'D)

What was that?

PEASBODY

It's explosions your majesty, in the mines.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Don't call me majesty, that is reserved for the royal family.

PEASBODY

I am so sorry, your maj.. whatever.. but there's an urgent message for a member of this extinguished company. Is it permissive for me to

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Speak up will you. Who are you?

PEASBODY

Miss Peasbody, chatelaine of the Copper Queen, ma'am. I keep the keys.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Well Miss Peasbody, you don't need to be so nervous. Just wait a minute and you can hand out as many messages as you want.

PEASBODY

I do apologize, it's just that it has been so exciting, the opening and then Madam Sosotris reading my cards. She said I was to meet the one true love of my life tonight so I was thinking that perhaps I was about to...

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Miss. Peasbody, who is this Madam Sosotris you were speaking of, the name rings a bell?

PEASBODY

She's a famous clairvoyant ma'am. She's just come in the door. She can hypnotise people and read cards.

Leaves backwards and falls over again and stands near a wall. Lady Roxborough calls over Madam Sosotris

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Fascinating. Madam Sosostris?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Yes your ladyship.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

I hear you are something of a clairvoyant, you hypnotise people and read cards.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Indeed I do.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

How incredible. I've always wanted to see someone hypnotised.

Simon Butteridge returns.

LADY ROXBOROUGH (CONT'D)

Oh Butteridge, did you see the young lady.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Yes your ladyship but I am afraid she was feeling indisposed and did not wish to return.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Would you care for a demonstration?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

That would be very exciting though what with my arrest and the opening of the hotelI am not sure whether we need more excitement. But it would be interesting. Can you hypnotise anybody?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Only if the person is willing.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Can you do it here?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Providing we have the right lighting.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

This sounds wonderful. Everyone... This is Madam Sosostris. She is going to hypnotise someone... Lights please...Butteridge... You can be hypnotised

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Me Madam?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Why not. You haven't got any deep dark secrets have you?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

I do assure you... No deep dark secrets... But..

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Yes?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

I may on occasions have been the victim of circumstances beyond my individual control.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Well that doesn't sound too bad. Carry on.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Very well.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Mr Butteridge if you would take a seat.

He positions a bar stool in the middle of the room under a light.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS (CONT'D)

I hope you are feeling relaxed.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Well not entirely. Given the circumstances. Normally when I wish to relax I rely on a few chapters of Mr Dickens.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

How charming. Think of Mr Dickens by all means. Now I want you to close your eyes and I want you to relax.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

He closes his eyes and then suddenly starts up and rises

This is in order Madam, isn't it? I would hate to say anything untoward or embarrassing.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Don't worry Butteridge. It will be perfectly all right. We won't hold you responsible for anything you say while you're hypnotised.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

I have always known my station in life.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Sit back and relax. You are feeling very tired. I am going to count to ten. Close your eyes and relax. Ten, nine, eight, seven six, five

Butteridge takes a deep sigh and there's a small shudder that goes through his body, then another shudder.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS (CONT'D)

Ladies and Gentleman, Mr Butteridge is now under my complete control. Let me demonstrate. Mr Butteridge, raise your left arm. Lower it.

He performs every action meticulously.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS (CONT'D)

Mr Butteridge. Where are you?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

He speaks in a strange voice with a working class accent.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE (CONT'D)

'A'm wiv her ladyship in Arizona, at the opening of a great 'otel

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

And what are you doing?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

'Aam... there are such problems

He has to wrestle with himself and shows signs of great distress

SIMON BUTTERIDGE (CONT'D)

The diamond.... The diamond... Oh no, NO! My lordship. Stolen... Stolen... Death and sorrow... Do other men before they would do you... Madam's diamond. I only ask for information. Women like you 'as needs of protection.

He calms

SIMON BUTTERIDGE (CONT'D)

My mother and sister unfortunately knew the game. Went to America. No other way. 'Ad to. 'An I went into service. Never saw them again. Saved me. 20 pounds was what it cost. Look after it. Look after it she said God Bless us everyone. God Bless us everyone. Tiny Tim? What are you doing 'ere?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Listen to me Mr Butteridge. I will start counting down from ten and when I get to five you will wake up as if from a very good sleep. One, two three, four, five...

He wakes

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Goodness... What?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

You are perfectly safe, Mr Butteridge. There is nothing to fear.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Did I say anything?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

You spoke rather commonly. Quite unlike you. And you went on about the diamond being stolen. Which is nonsense. It's perfectly safe. Isn't it Mr Sheriff?

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Yup. Why I can show it to ya'll right now if you give me the key.

(Lady R. Cannot find the key and the sheriff realizes the box is open - to everyone's amazement the diamond has disappeared and its place is a common rock.)

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

(CONT'D)

What in tarnashin... I've had it next to me to the whole time.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

It's been stolen. What on earth are we going to do?
(To Peasbody who has been standing there with her message)

LADY ROXBOROUGH (CONT'D)

What are you standing there for? Go and do something. Fetch the sheriff - oh yes, well, do something. The Blue Moon has been stolen.

PEASBODY

But I have to give this message....
(She begins crying)

LADY ROXBOROUGH

All right, just don't stand there blubbering, give your message out.

Peasbody gives a message to Mr. Wright. The message will tell him to leave the room. Madam Sosostris goes up to Wright who has been told to go the bar and hypnotizes him rapidly and he then walks out of the room in a trance like state, goes to the bar and fires two shots in the wall with his gun as per his instructions.

LADY ROXBOROUGH (CONT'D)

Mr Sheriff, if you have stolen my diamond... the consequences will be where's Mr Wright - the Pinkerton Agent?

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Ma'am, I am Harry Wheeler. My reputation is without peril in this territory. Everyone here will vouch for John Slaughter.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Perhaps we should hypnotise him to see if he's telling the truth.

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Yes Ma'am. I will willingly submit to anything.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Madam Sosostris, would you oblige.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Certainly. Mr Wheeler, would you sit over here. Where the light is good. Now... Please relax. Close your eyes. You are feeling very tired. I will count down from ten, when I get down to five you will be asleep. Ten nine, eight, seven, six five four.....

She puts her hand across his eyes.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS (CONT'D)

Now, Sheriff. Where is the diamond?

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Don't know. Disappeared.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Did the box ever leave your possession?

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

No Sir

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Are you sure the diamond was in there to begin with ...?

Two shots are heard out side.

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Darn me. If someone ain't shootin' Where am I?

Peasbody rushes into the room, screaming hysterically and falls over.

PEASBODY

The horror, the horror. Someone's been shot. Help. There's a murderer. I saw him. Sheriff Wheeler. Please come with me. Arrest him.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Wake up Sheriff, you have work to do.

PEASBODY

Doctor? Doctor? Where's the doctor?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Now I understand why they call it the Wild West. This sort of thing never happens in Chipping Sodbury.

Everyone troops out of the dining room and into the bar only to find Mr. Wright standing there with the agent's gun in his hand. Someone has opened the wine closet and the body of Lily with two bullet holes in her fell to the floor. Close observation reveals very little blood around the holes. There are red marks around her neck, however, and signs of a struggle. There are two bullet holes near the ceiling. She has blue on her hands and the key to the box is in her purse.

GUEST - MR. Wright

I didn't mean to do it. I don't remember firing the gun. I was eating my dinner one minute and then I was here. It was an accident.

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

You are under arrest Mr. Wright.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

She may be still alive. Doctor Pierce?

(CONT'D)

LADY ROXBOROUGH

It's my key. That wicked woman stole the diamond
and you Sir

*(to the guest still holding the
gun.,)*

have saved the day. What a hero. Please a round of
applause.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Ladies and Gentlemen. Once you have visited the
scene of the crime please return to the dining room.
Dinner is served.

*Inspector McCluff re-enters the room and examines the
body of Lily very carefully. He gets out a magnifying
glass and looks carefully at the marks on her neck. He
discovers Madam Sosostris' scarf slightly hidden if no
one else discovers it.*

The meal is under way and towards the end Inspector McCluff comes in.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I have your attention. Governor Murphy has asked me to take control of the investigation into the death of Lily Montez. I have spoken to Sheriff Wheeler and he is in agreement. To prevent the further loss of life we need to find the perpetrator of this deed. May I remind you we are all still in danger. There is a killer among us and he may strike again. Someone is after the Blue Moon and is prepared to murder to get it.

(CONT'D)

I have made a careful examination of the crime scene and there are a number of questions I should like to ask. Lady Roxborough would you be so kind as to stand.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Of course, inspector. I have nothing to hide.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

You are quite certain that when you arrived this afternoon the diamond was in the box?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Yes. I checked it myself. I had instructions from my husband's solicitors to give it personally to my niece.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

You had never met Miss Montez before I assume.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Of course not.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

What was your argument with her about?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

She was rude to my butler and apparently had not been invited. I asked her to leave. Several guests will vouch for me. There. You see. Afterwards I felt some remorse. Largely because I did not want to spoil the proceedings but also because I understood the lady does do some charitable works. I told Butteridge to find her and invite her back. She never returned and well you know the rest.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

What do you know about the history of the Blue Moon?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Not much except it has been nothing but trouble. My husband kept it in the bank. He was subject to a number of attacks by foreigners. Why, once an east Indian gentleman attacked him in Hyde Park. Almost cut his foot off. It was terrible. I never understood why.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Lord Roxborough feared for his life. Is that true?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Yes. He was terrified of being poisoned for some reason. We had to lock up the garden at Chipping Sodbury. We only let the gardeners in under supervision.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

And who supervised them?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Apart from myself there was Butteridge and the Housekeeper, Mrs. Beekins, who sadly passed away a year ago. The consumption. Terrible. She sounded a bit like that poor Miss Montez toward the end.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Thank you Lady Roxborough. By the way you weren't wearing a scarf this evening, were you?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Scarf? Goodness heavens no. I prefer a muff and a fur collar. They are much warmer.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Mr William Bart would you rise please. You are a locksmith, am I right?

BILL BART

I am a locksmith yes but I had nothing to do with anything.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I noticed you in earnest conversation with the late Miss Montez. Actually more than earnest. She was embracing you and you seemed very interested. Did you have a serious relationship with her?

BILL BART

We were just good friends and I had nothing to do with anything.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

You were having an affair with Miss Montez. Is that not true, Mr. Bart?

BILL BART

We were just good friends and I had nothing to do with anything.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Mr Bart, I have a letter here which was found on the person of Miss Montez. I will read it. "Do it my love and we will be free forever . No one will ever know. Don't fail me! Next week we will be in Vancouver and then the Far East. And we will be rich. Your ever faithful and constant lover, Mr Billikins. You don't seems overcome by her death... Mr Billikins.

BILL BART

I had nothing to do with anything.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I am sorry Mr Bart but I think you lots to do with everything. After I retrieved that letter, I went to your room. You would appear to be a collector of keys.

BILL BART

I am a locksmith. So what? They are part of my profession.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

And you have an iron cutter, if I am not mistaken.

BILL BART

Part of the job.....

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

You don't wear dresses do you Mr Bart?

BILL BART

No Sir. Hardly.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Then why were there dresses in your wardrobe?

BILL BART

All right. Miss Montez and I were friends, well, actually, lovers.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

And why the little pile of odd keys ?

BILL BART

I was trying to find one that would fit the box. Oops.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

The box containing the Blue Moon?

BILL BART

All right. I confess. Lily and I planned to switch the Blue Moon diamond for a rock which it seems she was able to do. But then someone killed her. I had nothing to do with... that.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

But once she had switched the stone and gave it to you, you were planning to leave her weren't you? Your bags were packed.... but her dresses were still in the wardrobe. Is that not right?

BILL BART

All right. I am sorry . Do you know what a locksmith makes? IT's miserable. This was my one chance and the girl was crazy about me. Besides, she was dying of the consumption so I couldn't take her with me.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

You sir are a rogue. Using a woman who is ill. Please take your seat but do not leave this room.

Inspector McCluff

Miss Peasbody.

PEASBODY

Yes Sir.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I understand Miss Montez did not have an invitation to tonight's celebration. Is that correct?

PEASBODY

Yes Sir.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

How did she get in then?

PEASBODY

She said the Mayor was expecting her. That he would vouch for her but when I went upstairs to ask him she came upstairs behind my back and joined the reception. Nothing more was said. The Mayor didn't want a scandal.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

You didn't like Miss Montez did you, Miss Peasbody.

PEASBODY

Frankly I didn't care one way or the other... You see, I knew where she came from. She was nothing but a common little whore.. I mean horror... I mean

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Quite. Did you actually see Agent Wright fire his gun.

PEASBODY

No... I was at the front desk when I heard two shots and raced through into the bar and.. there she was... and... the Pinkerton man was just standing there. Looking at the body with a gun in his hand. I knew that woman would come to no good.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Did anyone go near the body while you were there?

PEASBODY

No Sir, not so far as I could see.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Was the door to the wine cubbard open or closed.

PEASBODY

Open I think. And that's not allowed. I closed it immediately. I did notice a string attached to the door handle though...strange.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Thank you Miss Peasbody. The message you delivered. Who was it for and what was in it?

PEASBODY

I cannot reveal that Sir.

There could be a number of red herrings here if desired

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

We will look into that later. Mr Butteridge.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Yes Sir.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

You are, I understand, a great fan of Mr Dickens.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Oh Yes Sir. He was a great observer of human nature.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Did you observe Miss Montez?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Oh Yes Sir. Indeed. A warm hearted lady. Friendly.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Did you observe her being "friendly" with anyone in particular?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

No one in particular and... everyone in general. I did observe she was... most animated... if I might say, with Mr Bart. With other gentlemen there would appear to have been some sort of quarrel going on.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Would you identify these gentlemen?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Must I? They were discussing things of a... personal nature. Unless you insist...far be it for me to...

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I insist.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Well there was Mr Nemeck, the photographer, Mr Sharp from the Arizona Rangers, Mr Williams, Miss Rachel's brother-in-law and manager of the Queen smelter, ... and the good Doctor.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

And what were they discussing?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

As far as I could make out. It was something to do with funds which had been promised for some project or other.

This line of questioning should reveal if needed, Miss Montez' plans to collect money for charitable causes - depends on timing of show.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Mr Butteridge. What do you know of the Blue Moon diamond?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

A cursed object Sir. Always trouble. Always grief. His Lordship gained no pleasure from it. I would have been glad to see the back of it.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

You are not a rich man are you Butteridge?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

I am in service Sir and well provided for. I have always lived under the precept of the financial genius of Mr. Micawber, "*income a 100 dollars per annum , expenditure 99 dollars result happiness. Income 100 dollars, expenditure one*

hundred and one dollars ...result misery." I have lived my life Sir, according to that principle.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Thank you.

Mr. Wright would you stand up. You are employed by the Pinkerton Agent to protect Lady Roxborough's Blue Moon, is that true?

MR WRIGHT

Yes Sir. I didn't mean to kill her.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I am sure you didn't. The diamond was in your possession until you handed it over to Sheriff Wheeler. Am I right?

MR WRIGHT

Yes Sir. Always. Except when ... The lady

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

What Lady?

MR WRIGHT

The Lady that did the hypnosis.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Madam Sosostris?

MR WRIGHT

Yes... She grabbed it during the reception and dropped it...but she gave it straight back.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

What about when you were attacked?

MR WRIGHT

Oh yea, that foreign gentleman... Wearing a headdress... Tried to stab me. I was going to draw my gun but to seize his arm I would have had to have let go of the box so I struggled and kneed him.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Kneed him?

MR WRIGHT

Where it hurts a gentleman. Part of my training. Self defence.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I see. This is the knife?

MR SHARP

Yes Sir.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

And that is when you gave the diamond to Sheriff Wheeler?

MR WRIGHT

Yes Sir. I was told to and to tell you the truth, I was badly winded.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Thank you Mr. Wright, you may take a seat. Sheriff Wheeler. Would you stand up.

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Yup.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Did the diamond ever leave your sight after you received it from Mr Sharp?

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Nope.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Did anyone touch the diamond in any way?

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Miss Montez tried to persuade me to let her have a look. She grabbed the box, playing like, but I grabbed it back before she could open it. Next think I know the jewel was gone.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Sheriff. Did you hear any gunshots this evening.

SHERIFF HARRY WHEELER

Not sure. I thought I heard two when I was being hypnotised. Earlier on I thought I heard something... But it could have been from the gulch... sort of a muffled sound..

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Thank you Sheriff Wheeler. Madam Sosostris. Would you stand? You are a clairvoyant I understand?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

The best in the country.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

And you tell people's fortunes?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

I do.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

If someone is hypnotised, he or she cannot be forced to do something against their will.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

That is usually correct.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Do you have a gun?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

I do keep a small revolver for my own protection. You understand. I travel a great deal.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Have you ever been to London?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

No, never.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

That is strange because I observed one of your pieces of luggage and there was the name of the S S Lusitania and the label clearly mention the Curzon Hotel in Belgravia.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

I believe I bought that piece of luggage second hand... in San Francisco. I economize where I can. I seem to remember it still had a label on it. I must have forgotten to remove it.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Do you normally travel with six pieces of luggage.

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

A lady must prepare for any eventuality.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Is this your scarf Madam Sosostris?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

Why yes.... So it is. I must have dropped it. I know it is a very common scarf...why, I noticed two ladies tonight wearing the same one. But I do like it. I suppose this is mine.

Thank you. Miss Peasbody. You must tell us what was in the message to Mr. Wright or I shall hold be forced to have you spend the night in Sheriff Wheeler's jail...a fate worse than death from what I hear.

PEASBODY

Yes Sir. Oh alright. He had to meet a gentleman in the bar. Something to do with a robbery at the mine.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Did you see him leave directly?

PEASBODY

No. Not straightaway. He was talking with Madam Sosotris. She is so wonderful!

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Thank you Miss Peasbody. Mr Wright. Do you remember getting that message?

MR WRIGHT

Yes. I do.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

And who did you meet in the bar?

MR WRIGHT

... I don't remember... I was talking to Madam Sosotris and then I was standing there... in the bar... over the body.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

You don't even remember firing the gun?

MR WRIGHT

No... Nothing... She just fell. I remember that.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Do you remember if she was holding anything?

MR WRIGHT

No. Well, not then. Later, when you were all there, we found the jewel in her hand, remember? And mighty relieved I was...

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

If I may interrupt here. I did observe, Sir, apart from the two bullet wounds... Miss Montez had suffered some abrasions around her neck.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I noticed that too. I also found a scarf close by. Did you notice that Mr Butteridge?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

No Sir. Indeed I do not.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Tell me Mr Butteridge. When you were out of the room pursuing Miss Montez, did you find her?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

I did indeed sir.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Did you convey the message given to you by Lady Roxborough?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Yes Sir.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

How long were you out of the room?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Difficult to say Inspector.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

How long was Butteridge away Lady Roxborough.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

I don't know. A short while.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

The young lady wished to speak with me, your ladyship.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

What about?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

It was of a personal nature.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

What could be of such a personal nature Mr. Butteridge that her ladyship should not be informed?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

It is not a matter which I care to discuss. Nevertheless, because of the circumstances... I have to confess that I have been making various inquiries as to the whereabouts of my mother, Agnes Butteridge who because of desperate circumstances was forced to abandon me and come to America. She was expecting a small child, my sister and the last I heard they were in Arizona. I had hoped Miss Montez might be able to help me discover something of their whereabouts. A whimsical idea I confess. It brings me much embarrassment and I would prefer not to discuss the matter further. Needless to say, the young lady was of no help, though she promised to make enquiries in certain quarters.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Oh, Butteridge... I think that's enough Inspector. The poor man is quite overcome.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Indeed.

Miss Peasbody, who has been out of the room, returns with a paper for the Inspector.

PEASBODY

From the telegraph office. Urgent.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Thank you. *(reads it and seems satisfied)* Ladies and Gentlemen. We are all observers, in Mr Dickens words, of human nature. What did you see tonight? What... during the last three hours has troubled you? Were you witness to incidents which you wish to share with us? Please feel free to ask your questions and tell us your revelations.

Opportunity for audience to come up with informations, clues which are duly sifted by the Inspector.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF (CONT'D)

(When he is ready)

I believe I now have enough evidence...

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

(She rises and pulls out a gun and speaks in a strange accent)

Inspector, this is loaded and I will use it. Stay where you are ...all of you.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

So you knew what was in my telegram.... Who are you... really?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

That is something you will never know Inspector. You are all fools. My regret is that I have unfinished business. Stay where you are? Should you dare to follow me, a certain young lady will die. Your niece ... Lady Roxborough... and that would be such a shame.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

How dare you? Who are you?

MADAM SOSOSTRIS

I warn you. If someone dares set foot outside this room in the next five minutes, Lady Roxborough's niece is... dead.

They exit.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Inspector? What shall we do. Who was that?

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I fear that was none other than the dreaded... Moriarty, the mortal enemy of my friend, Sherlock Holmes. If I am right, your niece is in deadly danger. He will stop at nothing.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

But what does he want?

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

The Blue Moon.

Let us all remain calm. In order to protect the life of Lady Roxborough's niece we must remain here for a short while. It would assist me if you could help me corroborate my findings as to the true murderer of Miss Montez, the motives and the whereabouts of the Blue Moon.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Rachel - my darling niece!

RACHEL

Auntie, Auntie. I thought he was going to ravish me!

LADY ROXBOROUGH

He? But SHE was a woman.

RACHEL

No Aunt SHE was a HE.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Butteridge. That man... woman.. attempted to ravish my niece. After him. Remember... you are British. For the Empire and the Queen!!!

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Yes Madam.

Exits post haste.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I do not think we should corner him. He is known to be very dangerous. My friend Sherlock Holmes warned me in this telegram. Ladies and Gentlemen, I think it will calm us all greatly if you were to put your suspicions down on paper (*cast hands out whodunit forms*).

AFTER dessert is served. Enter Butteridge dragging a squealing Molly Parton.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Madam, I regret the lady ...er... gentleman disappeared. I followed him to my own room of all places where he seemed to disappear into nowhere. I did find this young lady going through my things. She was hurling them this way and that.

MOLLY PARTON

I didn't do nothin'. Ow!. Let go ov me.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

All in good time. What were you doing in my room?

MOLLY PARTON

I was tidying it. It's me job.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

I regret to say your notion of tidying bears little relation to the pandemonium you were in the process of creating.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Miss. What were you doing? This is a serious matter.

MOLLY PARTON

This man, in a long coat - like a vampire sorta. He asked me ..well he gave me money... \$30.... To find a marble, blue he said it was and he said to go to the penguin's room... That's you Sir, sorry. If I found the blue marble he was goin to give me another \$50 and me bein a poor working girl with nowhere to go but the street....I...

LADY ROXBOROUGH

You don't have any marbles, do you Butteridge.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

No madam!

LADY ROXBOROUGH

This is very strange. What do you think Inspector?

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

I have my theory but let us wait and use the collective minds of all here tonight.

Time for all to guess. Once all the guesses are collected, the guests finish dessert, etc. and show stops until about 10 minutes into the sing along - maybe after the first 2 songs.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Ladies and Gentlemen, Inspector McCluff has informed me that he has come to understand who our murderer is. Detective?

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Thank you Lady Roxborough. I have been reviewing my notes and it seems obvious to me that Mr. Holmes was correct. Our murderer was indeed the infamous Moriarty. Apparently he attended tonight's celebration in disguise as the famous clairvoyant, Madam Sosostri, in order to steal the Blue Moon Diamond. You see, my earlier telegram was actually from Mr. Holmes who advised me that Madam Sosostri is dead! It was then that I traced back the events of the evening. I had seen an Eastern gentleman earlier but assumed he worked for the hotel until, in checking this out with the management, discovered that had no one fitting his description employed at this time. I had done some research into the story behind the Blue Moon diamond and surmised that there were people interested in retrieving the diamond so that it might be returned to its rightful place in a religious statue in India. Apparently it was stolen many years ago when Lord Roxborough was in service there. Also, what was apparent is the assailant who attempted to stab Mr. Wright was one in the same as the Indian gentleman I saw earlier. Sadly, he is not much use to us as he has disappeared. Next, I noticed that Miss Montez was very friendly with Mr. Bart who mentioned something about a "diamond" in conversation near me.

I discreetly inquired about him with several guests and found out that he was a locksmith and out-of-work actor. Of course, at that time, none of this mattered. I was merely entertaining my quizzical mind while waiting until I had clearance to further question Lady Roxborough about her husband's demise. It was only after the murder of Miss Montez and the

seemingly magical disappearance of the diamond that I began to put two and two together. Here is what I think happened. During the reception Miss Montez was reminding certain gentlemen that they had promised to contribute to a retirement home for women of the night. She, herself, did not plan to live there but knew of the position many of the women were in. She was also present for not such an altruistic reason. She had been convinced by Mr. Bart to substitute a rock of the same weight for the Blue Moon diamond so that they could run away together. As we know, he had no intention of taking Miss Montez with him. Unfortunately for her, Lady Roxborough insisted that Miss Montez leave the room after she had palmed the real diamond (sorry Sheriff) and replaced it with the rock. She dropped the diamond on her way out and knew that Madam Sosostris had seen her. She then feared for her life, went to the lobby, hid the diamond and then met up with Mr. Butteridge who was looking for her to invite her back in. She suggested to him that as two in service, they take care of each other and told him where she had hidden the blue moon. She proceeded to the bar to get a drink of sherry for her cough. It was then that she was cornered by Madam Sosostris (alias Moriarty) who struggled with her, strangled her and looked in her purse and realized she no longer had the diamond. She (he) knew then that the night was not over and that he had to continue to look for the real diamond. He decided to hypnotize Mr. Wright to that he would go to the bar and appear to shoot Miss Montez. In actuality, Moriarty shot her twice and affixed a string to the door to the wine cabinet so it would appear that Miss Montez had fallen out from

being shot just as we arrived. (*Produces the string*)
It was at this time I also discovered the scarf and noticed the red marks around Miss Montez' neck. She had been strangled and THEN shot. But not by Mr. Wright. You will note in the ceiling of the bar, there are two holes where Mr. Wright fired above his head.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

So, now we know he killed that poor unfortunate woman but what about the diamond Butteridge?

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Yes, what about the diamond Mr. Butteridge?

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

Once I realized that the poor girl had been murdered I started to go to Lady Roxborough to tell her about the diamond. And then...I decided to protect your ladyship and Miss Rachel by leaving the diamond where no one will ever find it.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Butteridge, you must tell me where the diamond is.

SIMON BUTTERIDGE

No your ladyship. Too many have been hurt by that stone. I Shall go to my grave knowing its whereabouts.

LADY ROXBOROUGH

Perhaps you are right Butteridge. IT has brought nothing but death and disaster. Maybe a hundred years from now someone will find it and return it to

its rightful owners and relieve us of the curse it has held over my family.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

How would you like me to proceed Lady Roxborough?

LADY ROXBOROUGH

I think you should pursue that Mr. Moriety for the murder of that poor woman but as to the diamond, let it rest. I will file no charges against Mr. Butteridge. Rachel, do you agree? After all, it is your diamond.

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

Miss Rachel?

RACHEL

Ben and I have done quite alright without the diamond and I suspect we will be happier if it stays where it is...

INSPECTOR McCLUFF

There you have it ladies and gentlemen. I do not think I shall be able to catch up with our murderer until sunrise so for now...let's sing! *(draws name of winner and awards prize) Marney introduces cast and explains premise of afternoon murder and thanks guests.*