

ALEX: Welcome to the Murder Mystery Weekend, sir, madam. I am the butler.

TERRY: Blimey! We've got a butler an' all! What's your name?

ALEX: Hampson, sir.

TERRY: Proper posh that, innit, eh? What do you think kids?

REGAN: I think he looks rubbish.

DAMIEN: He isn't real, is he?

TERRY: 'Course he is. He's the real thing, aren't you mate? Look, watch this. *(He adopts a 'posh' voice)* Hampson.

ALEX: Yes sir?

TERRY: Be an awfully good chap and fetch me my gun and wellies and start the Land Rover up, I wish to go shooting grouse on the moor.

ALEX: Ah, I'm afraid your saintly offspring were not mistaken and I am, indeed, not real. I am merely a thespian pertaining to be a character, namely a butler.

JULIE: So you're not a butler, then?

ALEX: In a word, madam, no. Here are your keys. Room 13 up the stairs and turn left.

ALEX hands over a set of keys. TERRY and JULIE wait expectantly. ALEX smiles benignly.

TERRY: Flippin' marvellous! Looks like we're carrying our own bags, then. Come on, kids.

TERRY and JULIE exit, carrying their suitcases and bags.

DAMIEN kicks ALEX on the shin.

ALEX: Why you little...I'll wring your common little neck!

DAMIEN: *(To REGAN)* He's a rubbish actor, too. Grumpy old...

JULIE: *(Shouting offstage)* Damien!

DAMIEN and REGAN exit.

ALEX: *(Rubbing his leg)* Oh my God.

FATHER BRIGGS and SISTER HAMILTON enter, carrying small travel bags.

FATHER: I hope you're not taking His name in vain.

ALEX: No, there was a reason for it. *(Pause)* Father Briggs, I presume, and this must be Sister Hamilton.

FATHER: I don't know. Does she look like a nun to you? *(He laughs excessively)*

ALEX: *(Mystified)* Yeeesss. You look familiar to me - do I know you?

FATHER: *(Flustered)* I don't think so.

ALEX: *(Hands him a set of keys)* Room 3, just along that corridor. I assume you don't mind sharing?

FATHER: Oh, no, Sister Hamilton and I have no secrets do we Sister?

SISTER HAMILTON shakes her head sadly.

ALEX: Are you sure we haven't...

The doorbell screams.

ALEX: Excuse me.

ALEX exits.

FATHER: Sister.

SISTER: Yes, Father?

FATHER: Can you smell that? *(He sniffs)*

SISTER: Oh, sorry, Father, it's the long journey. It always gets to my stomach.

FATHER: No, not that, Sister. It smells like ghosts. I knew it! I knew this would be the right place.

SISTER: Do you think so?

FATHER: Sister Hamilton, I know so. Come on, let's unpack then get to work.

FATHER BRIGGS and SISTER HAMILTON exit, carrying their travel bags.

ALEX returns with PROFESSOR JENKINS, his wife, MAUREEN, and ROBOTA, a young robot woman. PROFESSOR and MAUREEN each carry a small travel bag.

ALEX: *(Wearily)* Professor Jenkins, Mrs Maureen Jenkins and Robota.

PROFESSOR: *(He has an electric scanner in his hand which he moves up and down ALEX's body)* Hmmm, actor masquerading as a butler, yes?

ALEX: Yes.

PROFESSOR: Height 6 foot 1. Yes? Yes? Yes?

ALEX: Why, yes.

PROFESSOR: 62 years old. Am I right or am I negative?

ALEX: You're right.

PROFESSOR: Chronic alcoholic, gambler and an eye for the ladies?

ALEX: Hey, come on now.

PROFESSOR: An irrational fear of forests or other small collections of trees? Yes/no? Yes/no?

ALEX: Turn it off! Turn it off, I warn you!!