Acting Edition

Cluedo

Based on the screenplay by
Jonathan Lynn

Written by
Sandy Rustin
Additional material by
Hunter Foster and Eric Price

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SAMUEL FRENCH

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Cast of Characters

WADSWORTH, a traditional butler in every sense: uptight, formal and 'by the book.' He is the driving force in the play.

YVETTE, a loyal and sexy 'French' maid.

MISS SCARLETT, a dry, sardonic madam, more interested in secrets than sex.

MRS PEACOCK, the wealthy wife of a member of the House of Lords. A bit batty, neurotic, and quick to hysteria.

MRS WHITE, a pale, morbid, and tragic woman. Mrs White may or may not be the murderer of her five ex-husbands.

COLONEL MUSTARD, a puffy, pompous, dense blowhard of a military man.

PROFESSOR PLUM, an arrogant academic, easily impressed by himself.

REVEREND GREEN, a timid yet officious rule follower. He's awfully anxious.

ENSEMBLE WOMAN:

- THE COOK, a gruff woman with a threatening presence. (Alive and Dead.)
- SINGING TELEGRAM GIRL, a tap dancer with a heart of gold. (Alive and Dead.)
- AUXILIARY SCARLETT, the back of Miss Scarlett during a scene of theatrical trickery.
- BACKUP OFFICER, backup for the Inspector in the very final police entrance.

ENSEMBLE MAN 1:

- MR. BODDY, a slick, Frank Sinatra, film noir-esque type fella. (Alive and Dead.)
- THE MOTORIST, a professional driver. (Alive and Dead.)
- INSPECTOR, a cop who helps to save the day.

ENSEMBLE MAN 2:

- BOBBY, a regular Joe. (Alive and Dead.)
- BACKUP OFFICER, backup for the Inspector.
- AUXILIARY MUSTARD, the back of Colonel Mustard during a scene of theatrical trickery.

PLEASE NOTE: An additional body to play the DEAD MOTORIST in the Lounge during Scene 11 is required. Perhaps an understudy or ASM can fill in for this 60-second moment of comedic razzle-dazzle.

Time

The play begins just before dinner on a dark and stormy night not too far from London, in 1949.

Place

Boddy Manor. A mansion of epic proportions and terrifying secrets.

Set

The interior of Boddy Manor. A grand hallway of a large, imposing, Gothic Victorian house, gloomy and menacing, is the focal point of the play. Doors that lead to the Library, the Study, the Lounge, the Billiard Room, the Conservatory, the Ballroom, the Kitchen, and the Dining Room line the Hall. The set is such that the various rooms of Boddy Manor easily pull out/appear in surprising ways, making transitions from one area of the house to another very fast.

Production Notes

Cluedo is a highly stylised ensemble piece. It is to be played with honesty and truth. The 'life or death' stakes of the situation are more important than comic bits. The pacing of *Cluedo* is intended to be very swift. This script maps out suggested physicality in some cases, but casts are encouraged to embrace the style and find their own moments of comedic physicality, while maintaining a truthful intention throughout.

Please note: UNO WHO should be pronounced 'You Know Who.'

Please note: The play takes place in the difficult post-war years in Britain. Rationing had been worse than during the war and people were fed up of austerity. Also, many people had done things during wartime that they now sought to hide. Everyone had secrets. Some highly placed people had been caught out by the Lynskey Tribunal (published in January 1949) breaking rationing rules and taking bribes, the press and the public were outraged. And demanded blood.

CLUEDO

Based on the screenplay by Jonathan Lynn

Written by Sandy Rustin

Additional Material by Hunter Foster and Eric Price
Based on the Paramount Pictures Motion Picture
Based on the Hasbro board game CLUEDO
With Additional Material by Mark Bell

ACT ONE

Prologue

(PRE-SET: The great Hall of Boddy Manor is only just visible. Occasionally a lightning flash slightly illuminates an area of the stage via the windows. An old valve radio is USL, its grill light on. Walk in music plays in the auditorium—some old standards from the 1940s linked by an old-style BBC announcer (can include the 'turn off your mobile devices…' announcement with appropriate period jokes, e.g. '…if any of you have brought your transistor radios that is! Ha ha ha'). As the house lights go down the music moves from the house speakers and comes only from the onstage radio. As light come up it changes to . . .)

(Sounds of heavy rain and Rottweiler dogs barking. Dimly lit wall sconces and chandeliers reveal an empty, regal foyer and magnificent front Hall. YVETTE *polishes a glass while listening to the news on an old stand-up radio.)*

NEWSCASTER. *(Old-fashioned plummy BBC voice:)* And now the news: One month after the publication of the Lynskey Tribunal's findings, questions continue to be asked in the House of Commons. The Prime Minister Mr Atlee has assured the house that immediate steps will be taken:

(A startling crash of thunder/lightning illuminates the glass-paneled front door, revealing the silhouette of a man holding an umbrella.)

CLEMENT ATLEE'S VOICE. This will not stand. This will not go unpunished. Junior Minister Mr John Belcher and Bank of England director Mr George Gibson have resigned from their posts with immediate effect. And as for Mr Sidney Stanley, if that indeed is his real name, let me say this; He should quit Britain! And furthermore, anyone else with secrets to hide should be looking over their shoulder!

(The front door creaks open, unheard by YVETTE. *Enter* WADSWORTH, *the butler, dressed perfectly, shaking off and stowing his umbrella and hat, a twinkle in his eye.)*

NEWSCASTER. *(Beneath the following dialogue until cut off:)* In other happier news, for the first time since the war, suits, costumes and overcoats are off ration! So it's time to get out there and costume up ladies! Gentlemen, time for a visit to Savile Row perhaps! And now everyone can wrap up warm in a nice new coat! Which brings us to the weather. Storms continue to batter the south of England, bringing danger of flooding and dangerous driving conditions in many areas. Surprisingly the North East of England is basking in the mildest February weather ever recorded! With the small town of Shiney Row in Northumberland setting an all-time record. Now back to the light program.

(Music resumes. WADSWORTH *moves behind* YVETTE.*)*

WADSWORTH. *(Rather intimately:)* Yvette?

*(*YVETTE *yelps, startled!)*

YVETTE. Bleedin' eck. *(Then, off* WADSWORTH*'s look:) Ooo la la* monsieur! I didn't hear you come in! You frightened me half to death!

WADSWORTH. Wouldn't want to do that. There are so many better ways to die. *(Then:)* Please turn off that noise.

*(*YVETTE *turns off the radio—cutting off the news/music.)*

WADSWORTH. Is everything ready?

YVETTE. Oui.

WADSWORTH. Good. *(Calling off:)* Cook?

(In a flash of thunder/lightning, a formidable COOK, *dressed perfectly, appears from the Kitchen.)*

COOK. You called, sir?

WADSWORTH. Everything on schedule?

COOK. Dinner will be ready at 7:30. *(Revealing a butcher knife on a music sting:)* Sharp.

(Just then, the doorbell rings. They look out.)

WADSWORTH. Ah. Right on time. You have your instructions?

COOK. Yes.

YVETTE. Yes. Oui.

WADSWORTH. Very well then.

(He moves to the door. YVETTE *exits with the radio.* COOK *exits to the Kitchen.)*

WADSWORTH. *(Just before opening the door:)* Let the game begin.

Scene 1

(The Hall/The Lounge.)

(Dogs bark. Rain storms.)

*(*WADSWORTH *straightens his jacket, smooths his hair, looks at his pocket watch and grandly opens the front door. Note: These actions repeat with increasing speed each time Wadsworth opens the door.)*

*(*COLONEL MUSTARD*, officious, stands in the doorway, shielding himself from the rain. He wears a decorated Colonel's uniform.)*

*(*COOK *reenters during the following to assist with coats and such.)*

WADSWORTH. Good evening.

MUSTARD. *(Entering fully:)* Good evening. I'm not sure if I'm in the right—

WADSWORTH. Yes, indeed you are expected, Colonel.

MUSTARD. How do you— *(know who I am?)*

WADSWORTH. *(Interrupting:)* It is Colonel Mustard, is it not?

MUSTARD. No, that's not my name. My name is Colonel—

WADSWORTH. I believe it's been recommended that tonight you use a pseudonym.

MUSTARD. Oh, no thank you. I took an antihistamine before I set off.

WADSWORTH. *(Taking his coat:)* May I take your coat?

MUSTARD. Oh. All right. I suppose I . . .

*(*YVETTE*, at the bar cart, now pops open a bottle of champagne, à la gunshot, startling* MUSTARD*, who yelps.)*

WADSWORTH. Not to worry, Colonel. It's just the maid, in the Hall, with the champagne cork.

YVETTE. *(Offering:)* Champagne?

MUSTARD. *(Taking the glass, flummoxed by her beauty:)* Oh, uh, don't mind if I . . .

YVETTE. *(Interrupting:)* Zis way monsieur.

MUSTARD. *(Following her anywhere:)* Ah. Thank you.

*(*YVETTE *escorts* MUSTARD *to the door of the Lounge. The doorbell interrupts. They look out.)*

MUSTARD. Are you expecting someone else?

WADSWORTH. Indeed. I'll be with you in a moment.

YVETTE. Through there, Colonel.

MUSTARD. With pleasure, my dear.

*(*YVETTE *opens the Lounge door, escorting* MUSTARD *inside.)*

*(*WADSWORTH, *jacket, hair, watch—opens the front door.)*

(Rain storms. MRS WHITE *stands, tragic and morbid, dressed in funeral clothing, guarding herself from the rain. Over her face is a mesh black veil.)*

WADSWORTH. Do come in, madam. You are expected.

(She enters more fully, WADSWORTH *at her heels.)*

WADSWORTH. Welcome.

WHITE. *(With a confident mystique:)* Do you know who I am?

(She pulls back her veil to reveal her face.)

WADSWORTH. Only that you are a socialite to be known this evening as Mrs White.

(She slips off her cloak, black with a brilliant white inside.)

WHITE. Yes.

*(*WADSWORTH *catches it gracefully.)*

WHITE. It said so in my letter. But, why—?

WADSWORTH. *(Interrupting:)* May I introduce you? Mrs White, this is the maid, Yvette.

(Music sting. The women notice each other and flinch.)

WADSWORTH. I see you two know each other.

WHITE. *(Deliberately lying:)* We've never met.

YVETTE. *(Cheekily:)* Champagne?

WHITE. *(Pointedly:)* I think not.

WADSWORTH. Please, warm yourself in the Lounge.

WHITE. Why, do I look cold?

WADSWORTH. A bit. *(Shepherding her into the Lounge—then:)* I'll be right with you.

*(*WADSWORTH *now pulls the Lounge wall open slightly, making the interior of the Lounge partially visible as* WHITE *steps through the door, noticing* MUSTARD.*)*

WHITE. Oh. Hello.

MUSTARD. Hello. Pleased to meet you.

WHITE. I'm rarely pleased to meet anyone.

(Doorbell rings. They look out.)

WHITE. More?

WADSWORTH. Oh, yes.

*(*WADSWORTH *shuts the Lounge door.)*

(Rain storms. YVETTE *opens the front door to a music sting.* MRS PEACOCK*, middle-aged, wealthy, and batty, stands, shielding herself from the rain with a box of chocolates.)*

YVETTE. Bonjour madame. Please, come in from the rain.

(As PEACOCK *enters . . .)*

WADSWORTH. Mrs Peacock, I presume.

PEACOCK. Who? *(Realizing:)* Oh yes! That's me!

WADSWORTH. Cook, will you please take Mrs Peacock's stole.

(With a music sting, the women recognise each other. They flinch!)

WADSWORTH. I see you two are acquainted.

PEACOCK. *(Discarding her stole into the* COOK's *arms:)* Don't be ridiculous, I've never seen this woman before in my life.

YVETTE. *(Offering:)* Champagne?

PEACOCK. My lips belong to the Lord!

WADSWORTH. Please, make yourself comfortable in the Lounge.

PEACOCK. Thank you.

(As WADSWORTH *escorts her to the Lounge, she remembers the lavishly wrapped box of chocolates in her hands.)*

PEACOCK. Oh! For your hospitality . . . *(An aside:)* And there's a . . . 'gift' under the caramels for you, butler.

WADSWORTH. How . . . sticky.

PEACOCK. I expect to be treated like the wife of a . . .

(The doorbell rings. They look out.)

WADSWORTH. Do hold that thought. Right this way. After you, Mrs Peacock.

(He opens the door to the Lounge.)

PEACOCK. *(Enamored by the doorframe:)* Oh my, look at the detail of this moulding; this is quite a magnificent mansion, isn't it . . .

(She screams, startled to find WHITE *and* MUSTARD*.)*

PEACOCK. Who are you?!

WHITE. Welcome to the party.

MUSTARD. *(Tickled pink:)* This is turning out to be quite the crowd.

(As YVETTE *closes the Lounge door, dogs bark. Rain storms.* WADSWORTH *opens the front door.)*

*(*REV. GREEN*, straight as an arrow, stands in a trench coat, holding an umbrella. He does not enter, but remains in the doorway, anxious.)*

GREEN. Is this the right address to meet a . . . Mr Boddy?

(The dogs bark wildly.)

WADSWORTH. *(To dogs:)* Sit!

*(*GREEN *frantically sits. Dogs stop barking.)*

WADSWORTH. No. Not you, sir.

*(*GREEN *stands sheepishly.)*

GREEN. Sorry, sorry.

WADSWORTH. Please, come in.

GREEN. *(Entering more fully:)* Excuse me, I suppose this letter has me rather anxious.

WADSWORTH. You must be Reverend Green.

GREEN. *(Painfully lying:)* Yes. That's exactly who I am.

WADSWORTH. Welcome, sir.

*(*GREEN *hands his umbrella to* YVETTE *as he steps into the Hall.)*

GREEN. *(Noticing the interior:)* Oh my! This isn't at all what I expected.

WADSWORTH. I find if you expect nothing, you're never disappointed.

GREEN. *(Not to be misunderstood:)* Oh, I'm not disappointed . . .

(The doorbell rings, interrupting. They look out.)

WADSWORTH. Pardon me, sir.

*(*WADSWORTH *opens the door [music sting] to find* PROFESSOR PLUM *[smoking a pipe] with* MISS SCARLETT *[smoking a long, thin cigarette] standing behind him.)*

WADSWORTH. Good evening.

PLUM. *(Reading authoritatively from his letter in the doorway:)* 'Please arrive at 7:30 sharp on Saturday evening.' *(A glance to his watch:)* Well, here I am . . .

WADSWORTH. Professor Plum.

PLUM. If you say so.

SCARLETT. *(Stepping in more fully:)* Well, well, well. And I thought I'd seen everything . . .

WADSWORTH. Miss Scarlett. Welcome. I didn't realise you and the Professor were acquainted.

SCARLETT. We're not.

*(*SCARLETT *continues as* PLUM *gives his coat to* COOK.*)*

SCARLETT. The bridge is washed out from the rain. My car broke down, and this Professor offered to give me a ride.

PLUM. *(Smarmily to* GREEN*:)* I'm hoping she'll return the favour one day.

SCARLETT. You couldn't afford it. *(Back to* WADSWORTH*.)* I didn't realise we were headed to the same place until . . . we arrived.

(Dialogue continues as SCARLETT *gives her coat to* COOK. GREEN *also tries to hand his coat to* COOK. *He tries to hang it somewhere and she eventually, reluctantly takes it.)*

WADSWORTH. *(To* PLUM*:)* How was your drive?

PLUM. It's a long haul.

WADSWORTH. Indeed, it is a long hall. But then, it's a very large house. *(Then:)* This way please.

*(*WADSWORTH *points the way to the Lounge.* SCARLETT *absorbs the grandeur of the manor.)*

SCARLETT. Heavens . . . what is this ghastly old place anyway?

WADSWORTH. This old place? Oh, this . . . is Boddy Manor.

(Thunder/lightning. They jump. GREEN *more so than the others.)*

WADSWORTH. Cook. Dinner?

COOK. Directly.

*(*COOK *moves to the Kitchen.)*

WADSWORTH. *(Showing* SCARLETT, PLUM, *and* GREEN *to the Lounge:)* Appetisers in the Lounge. After you.

*(*WADSWORTH *opens the Lounge fully to reveal the interior.)*

PLUM. Hors d'oeuvres. Good, I'm starving.

GREEN. Funny. I haven't much of an appetite at all.

SCARLETT. *(Entering the Lounge and noticing the others)*: I say, this really is a party.

PLUM. *(As he enters the Lounge:)* Well, greetings all. It's a pleasure for you to meet me. *(Noticing drinks, he helps himself.)* Oooh, cocktail hour!

GREEN. *(As he enters the Lounge:)* There are so many of you—I didn't realise . . .

WADSWORTH. *(Interrupting:)* Right. Good then. You're all here.

(Then, swiftly paced:)

WADSWORTH. Colonel Mustard.

MUSTARD. Present.

WADSWORTH. Miss Scarlett.

SCARLETT. Hmm.

WADSWORTH. Mrs White.

WHITE. Yes.

WADSWORTH. Professor Plum.

PLUM. Right.

WADSWORTH. Reverend Green.

GREEN. That's me.

WADSWORTH. Mrs Peacock.

PEACOCK. *(With a rather formal, yet floppy curtsey:)* How d'you do?

WADSWORTH. Greetings. I am Wadsworth, the butler. *(Then:)* Tonight, as you may have surmised, nobody is being addressed by their real name. A courtesy your host has provided to ensure your privacy. I suggest you follow his lead and refrain from revealing too much about yourselves this evening. You never know when—

*(*COOK *strikes a gong, interrupting. They jump!* GREEN *spills champagne all over himself.)*

WADSWORTH. *(Calmly, as always:)* Ah. Dinner.

GREEN. *(Wiping himself up:)* Oh, sorry. Sorry. I'm a bit clumsy, I suppose.

PLUM. Dinner? That was more like a cocktail minute.

SCARLETT. Mr Wadsworth, you were saying . . . 'You never know when' . . . what?

WADSWORTH. What?

SCARLETT. What?

WADSWORTH. Hm? *(Then—showing the way:)* This way please.

*(*YVETTE *has handed* GREEN *a fresh glass of champagne just in time for* COOK *[who has reentered] to hit the gong again. They jump!* GREEN *spills his drink again.)*

WADSWORTH. We really oughtn't keep her waiting. Cook can get tetchy. Ladies and gentlemen, follow me. The Dining Room is right this way.

(Transition music. The cast follows WADSWORTH *from the Lounge to the Dining Room. Behind them, as the Lounge closes,* YVETTE *and* COOK *each push on the Dining Room table. Chandeliers fly in.)*

Scene 2

(The Dining Room.)

(The GUESTS *arrive to find a beautifully set table with seven places. There are no chairs. The* GUESTS *stand around the table looking lost.)*

COOK. *(Yelling at them:)* Well get a chair then!

(Chairs are brought from various parts of the Hall in a hasty, scared way. Lights change to only light the Dining Room downstage.)

WADSWORTH. You'll find your names beside your places.

ALL. *(Ad-libbing:)* Do you see my tag? / Is that me? / Is that you? / Oh, here you are, Reverend Green. / This looks lovely. *(Etc.)*

(They take their places, MUSTARD *next to* SCARLETT *next to* GREEN *next to* PEACOCK *next to* WHITE *next to* PLUM.*)*

WADSWORTH. Please be seated.

MUSTARD. *(Not yet seated:)* This place—at the head of the table—is that for you?

WADSWORTH. Indeed no, sir. I don't sit. I am merely a humble butler.

MUSTARD. What exactly do you do?

WADSWORTH. I buttle, sir.

COOK. *(Presenting the meal grandly:)* Dinner is served.

WADSWORTH. Thank you, Cook.

(As the GUESTS *settle in their seats,* YVETTE *and* COOK *serve them soup.)*

*(*PEACOCK *taps her knife against her glass to get the* GUESTS' *attention. [The waving of her knife is a bit threatening to* GREEN *beside her.])*

PEACOCK. *(Tucking a napkin in at her neck à la a bib:)* All right then, what's all this about, butler; this dinner party?

WADSWORTH. 'Ours not to reason why,
Ours but to do and die . . . '

GREEN. *(Anxiously:)* Die?

WADSWORTH. Merely quoting, sir, from Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

SCARLETT. I prefer Kipling myself. *(Offering a basket of dinner rolls to* MUSTARD*:)* Do you like Kipling, Colonel?

MUSTARD. *(Helping himself:)* Oh yes, I'll eat anything. *(Then:)* So, who is our host? Is this where he sits?

WADSWORTH. *(Pouring wine:)* All in good time, sir.

(As YVETTE *serves soup to* PEACOCK*–)*

PEACOCK. What is that smell? It's something . . . familiar.

YVETTE. Soupe d'ailerons de requin. Shark's fin soup.

PEACOCK. *(Gleefully:)* My favourite!

COOK. *(Deliberately:)* I know.

*(*COOK/PEACOCK *exchange a sinister glance.)*

YVETTE. Bon appetit!

*(*YVETTE *and* COOK *exit. The* GUESTS *sip their soup.* PEACOCK *slurps.)*

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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