

(He shows the club to BATTLE.)

LEACH. What do you think of these dabs? Clear as clear, aren't they?

(BATTLE inspects the fingerprints.)

BATTLE. They're clear enough. What a fool!

(He shows the club to TREVES.)

LEACH. That's so, to be sure.

BATTLE. All we've got to do now, my lad, is ask everyone nicely and politely if we may take their fingerprints - no compulsion, of course. Everyone will say "yes" and one of two things will happen. Either none of the prints will agree, or else..

LEACH. It'll be in the bag, eh?

(BATTLE nods.)

TREVES. Doesn't it strike you as extremely odd, Battle, that the - er - murderer should have been so foolish as to leave such a damning piece of evidence behind - actually on the scene of the crime?

BATTLE. I've known 'em do things equally foolish, sir.

(He hands the club back to LEACH.)

Well, let's get on with it. Where's everybody?

LEACH. In the library, Pollock is going through all their rooms. Except Miss Aldin's, of course, she's still sleeping off the effects of that dope.

BATTLE. We'll have 'em in here one at a time.

(He turns to TREVES.)

Which Mrs. Strange was it who discovered the murder?

TREVES. Mrs. Audrey Strange.

BATTLE. Oh, yes. Difficult when there are two Mrs. Stranges. Mrs. Audrey Strange is the divorced wife, isn't she?

TREVES. Yes. I explained to you the - er - situation.

BATTLE. Yes, sir. Funny idea of Mr. Strange's. I should have thought that most men -

(KAY enters quickly from the house. Upset and slightly hysterical, she makes for the French windows. BATTLE blocks her path.)

KAY. I'm not going to stay cooped up in that damned library any longer. I want some air and I'm going out. You can do what the hell you like about it.

BATTLE. Just a minute, Mrs. Strange. There's no reason why you shouldn't go out if you wish, but it'll have to be later.

KAY. I want to go now.

BATTLE. I'm afraid that's impossible.

KAY. You've no right to keep me here. I haven't done anything.

BATTLE. *(Soothingly.)* No, no, of course you haven't. But you see, there'll be one or two questions we'll have to ask you.

KAY. What sort of questions? I can't help you. I don't know anything about it.

(BATTLE turns to LEACH.)

BATTLE. Get Benson, will you, Jim?

(LEACH nods and exits into the house.)

Now, you just sit down here, Mrs. Strange and relax.

(He indicates a chair at the card table. KAY sits reluctantly.)

KAY. I've told you I don't know anything. Why do I have to answer a lot of questions when I don't know anything?

BATTLE. *(Apologetically.)* We've got to interview everybody, you see, it's just part of the routine. Not very pleasant for you, or for us, but there you are.

KAY. *(Impatiently.)* Oh, well, all right.

(P.C BENSON enters, followed by LEACH. BENSON is a young man, fair and very quiet.)

He nods to BATTLE and takes out a notebook and pencil.)

BATTLE. Now, just tell us about last night, Mrs. Strange.

KAY. What about last night?

BATTLE. What did you do – say from after dinner, onwards?

KAY. I had a headache. I – I went to bed quite early.

BATTLE. How early?

KAY. I don't know exactly. It was about a quarter to ten, I think.

(TREVES interposes gently.)

TREVES. Ten minutes to ten.

KAY. Was it? I wouldn't know to the minute.

BATTLE. We'll take it was ten minutes to ten.

(He signs to BENSON, who makes a note.)

Did your husband accompany you?

KAY. No.

BATTLE. What time did he come to bed?

KAY. I've no idea. You'd better ask him that.

LEACH. The door between your room and your husband's is locked. Was it locked when you went to bed?

KAY. Yes.

LEACH. Who locked it?

KAY. I did.

BATTLE. Was it usual for you to lock it?

KAY. No.

BATTLE. Why did you do so last night, Mrs. Strange?

(KAY does not reply. There is a pause. TREVES gives a little cough.)

TREVES. I should tell them, Kay.

KAY. I suppose if I don't, you will. Oh, well, then, you can have it. Neville and I had a row – a flaming row.

(LEACH looks to BENSON, who makes a note.)

I was furious with him. I went up to bed and locked the door because I was still in a flaming rage with him.

BATTLE. I see. What was the trouble about?

KAY. Does it matter? I don't see how it concerns –

BATTLE. You're not compelled to answer, if you'd rather not.

KAY. Oh, I don't mind. My husband has been behaving like a perfect fool. It's all that woman's fault, though.

BATTLE. What woman?

KAY. Audrey. His first wife. It was she who got him to come here in the first place.

BATTLE. I understood that it was Mr. Strange's idea.

KAY. Well, it wasn't. It was hers.

BATTLE. But why should Mrs. Audrey Strange have suggested it?

KAY. To cause trouble, I suppose. Neville thinks it was his own idea – poor innocent. But he never thought of such a thing until he met Audrey in the park one day in London, and she put the idea into his head and made him believe he'd thought of it himself. I've seen her scheming mind behind it from the first. She's never taken *me* in.

BATTLE. Why should she be so anxious for you all to come here together?

KAY. *(Angrily.)* Because she wanted to get hold of Neville again, that's why. She's never forgiven him for going off with me. This is her revenge. She got him to fix it so that we'd be here together and then she got to work on him. She's been doing it ever since we arrived. She's clever, damned clever. She knows just how to look pathetic and elusive. Poor sweet, injured little kitten with all her blasted claws out.

TREVES. Kay – Kay.

BATTLE. I see. Surely, if you felt so strongly, you could have objected to this arrangement of coming here?

KAY. Do you think I didn't try? Neville was set on it. He insisted.