

CHRIS. Push him aside, Colleymoore. Do you want to spend the rest of your life in jail?

*Chris runs up the upper level, grabs Robert's foot for support but slides back down to the floor, pulling Robert with him.*

ROBERT. I will strike you down, Char-ley!

CHRIS. It's useless, Colleymoore, there's no way out.

*Sandra runs back in.*

SANDRA. Brother, I'm surprised at—

*Annie appears in the window with the ledger and hits Sandra in the stomach and then over the head with it.*

ANNIE. Brother, I'm surprised at you. I don't know what you've become!

*Annie jumps in through the window and over Sandra.*

ROBERT. *(Getting to his feet.)* I feel so ashamed. Carter and I found that between the two of us we could steal money from the police's sundry accounts easily. Carter had access and I had the facility to move the money fast and keep it secure, or so I thought until earlier on this evening...

*Robert forgets his line. Trevor emerges from below the collapsed upper level, looking badly injured. He staggers towards the door.*

Line!

TREVOR. This set's a damn death trap!

*Trevor shuffles off through the door.*

ROBERT. This set's a damn death trap!

CHRIS. *(Prompts Robert.)* As for Cecil!

ROBERT. As for Cecil, that was more a crime of passion, simple as that.

Begin

JONATHAN. Now I hold in my hand a written list of every fraudulent transaction Thomas Colleymoore and Inspector Carter made.

SANDRA and ANNIE. No this can't be true, I can't belie—

*Sandra throws the vase at Annie. Annie ducks and the vase smashes against the back wall.*

SANDRA. I can't believe it!

JONATHAN. Florence, your sordid affair made me sick. It broke my heart.

*Annie and Sandra both try and get hold of Jonathan to continue the scene, pulling him to the floor in the process.*

SANDRA and ANNIE. Charley! Look at me the way you used to look at me!

*Vamp. Annie and Sandra each trying to shout the line over the other. Robert and Chris try to pull them apart, but Annie takes Robert out with a swift punch to the groin. She goes to punch Sandra, but Sandra ducks and Annie hits Chris in the chest, sending him down as well. Dennis reappears in the doorway, holding Charles' reading glasses.*

DENNIS. *(Over the shouting.)* Your reading glasses, sir!

JONATHAN. *(Over the shouting.)* Thank you, Perkins!

*Doorbell sounds.*

Get the door, Perkins.

DENNIS. Yes, sir!!

*Dennis exits, still with the chaise longue in tow.*

SANDRA. Charley!

JONATHAN. That will be the police to arrest you both.

*Annie grabs Sandra's ankles and drags her out through the door.*

Silence, Florence, you mean nothing to me now.

SANDRA. *(Managing to stand up.)* This is the worst night of my life!

*Annie punches Sandra in the face; she falls out of sight behind the window.*

ANNIE. *No! This is the worst night of my life!*

MAX. I think this is the worst night of all of our lives.

*Annie goes through the door, appears in the window and stamps on Sandra before ducking out of sight. Max exits.*

JONATHAN. But Thomas, Carter had you fooled, didn't he?

ROBERT. What do you mean?

JONATHAN. He never intended to share the money with you! Let me summarize—

ANNIE. *(Through the window.)* I love you, Charley! *(Ducks down again.)*

JONATHAN. Inspector Carter knew I discovered you and he were both embezzling police money, so you hatched a plan to kill me, planting cyanide in my sherry for me / to drink.

*Sandra appears, holding Annie back.*

SANDRA. I've still got the ring, Charley! We can make it work!

*Annie slaps Sandra, who falls out of sight. Annie fetches the tray and starts hitting Sandra with it behind the window.*

JONATHAN. Then mistakenly believing I was dead, Inspector Carter tried to pin my murder on my brother Cecil and Florence because of their affair. That is until your accomplice Thomas blundered in and shot my brother Cecil. Carter then tried to pin my murder on Perkins instead after finding my will in the ledger.

*Annie appears, tearing a strip of industrial tape off of a roll.*

ANNIE. TAKE ME, CHARLEY! IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU!

*Sandra stands and headbutts Annie. We hear an almighty crack, and they both collapse and fall silent behind the window.*

JONATHAN. Except what you didn't know, Thomas, was that Inspector Carter made a nine-thousand-pound withdrawal from your private accounts this morning and after framing someone for my murder he intended to flee with a one-way ticket to Dover, taking every penny with him! I think it's time to have a look inside your attaché case, Inspector, where we shall find...

*Jonathan throws the case to Robert, who opens it and produces a small green bottle.*

The bottle of cyanide.

*Robert produces a bundle of banknotes.*

Thomas Colley Moore's nine thousand pounds.

ROBERT. And of course, your one-way ticket to—

*Robert produces a Duran Duran CD box set from the attaché*

*case. Robert angrily turns to Trevor, who has reappeared in his tech box.*

*Duran Duran!!*

JONATHAN. He allowed you to take all the risk by storing the stolen money in your private accounts. Isn't that right, Inspector?

CHRIS. Alright, it's—

*Annie triumphantly makes it back onstage and poses.*

Alright, it's—

*Sandra appears in the window, tied up with tape.*

Alright, it's true! I forged your signature at the bank and took out every penny. I had intended to flee after I'd managed to frame someone for the murder. I hadn't bargained on your accountant catching on this quickly and telephoning you so soon.

*Robert runs at Chris, seizes his gun and points it at him.*

ROBERT. You rogue! I trusted you, Carter. You made a mistake there and I'm afraid it's your last.

CHRIS. No!

*Robert fires the gun. It doesn't fire. Robert tries the gun again, nothing.*

BANG!

*Chris falls to the floor. Robert lowers the gun to his side, where it explodes loudly, hurting his hand.*

ROBERT. ARGH!!

DENNIS. The officers are waiting in the hall, si—

*Dennis enters through the downstairs door, knocking over the whole door flat with the chaise longue. Robert moves back, colliding with the fireplace flat, sending that over as well. The s. l. flat falls, and Chris just manages to roll out of the way. Lastly the window flat falls down as well, leaving Annie standing in the window frame and revealing Max standing on a small stepladder, holding a bucket of snow. Silence. Stillness. Max throws a handful of snow.*

\* If music by a different band is used on pages 45 and 78, change the CD box set prop and the line "Duran Duran!!" appropriately.

JONATHAN. Excellent. Perkins, if you could please escort Miss Colley Moore downstairs. I wish to have a word with Thomas in private.

DENNIS. Yes, sir.

*Dennis and Annie stay, trapped in by the fallen flats. Chris stares blankly at the devastation.*

JONATHAN. *(Whispers to Chris.)* You're dead.

*Chris remembers where he is, lets out a thin cry and drops down dead.*

*(To Annie.)* Downstairs, Florence, downstairs.

*Annie and Dennis pretend to walk downstairs on the spot where they are standing.*

Thomas! You're not the man I knew at Eton, you've become greedy and jealous.

ROBERT. *(Traumatised.)* I'm sorry, Charles, my nerves are in shreds.

JONATHAN. There's a glass of sherry by the telephone.

ROBERT. Thank you, Charles. Ever the kind host.

JONATHAN. Drink it up.

ROBERT. Most kind.

*Robert drinks the sherry.*

JONATHAN. Tell me, Thomas, one last thing.

ROBERT. Anything, Charles. I'll tell no more lies.

JONATHAN. The glass of poisoned sherry the Inspector left out for me; what do you suppose I did with it?

ROBERT. Well, I don't...know. What do you mean? You don't mean you gave me... Charley? Charley, no! *(Forgets his line.)* Line!

TREVOR. *(From the tech box.)* Just die already!

ROBERT. Just die ahead—how dare you!

*Robert dies. A large, flamboyant death that takes him quite a way away from the table. Just as he is almost finished, Robert realises he is still holding the empty sherry glass and groans and crawls back in the other direction so he can put it down on the table. He places down the glass and drops*

*down dead. Max throws a handful of snow. Jonathan moves centre. The lights fade and a spot comes up on Jonathan.*

JONATHAN. Oh how I wish this could have ended differently. Thomas, your lies and deceits have led you inexorably to this end. If men allow their conscience to be governed by avarice then death and destruction shall prevail. Betrayed by my brother—

*A short burst of an English new wave song like "Rio" by Duran Duran plays.\**

TREVOR. *(Back in his box.)* Oh come on!

*Trevor hits a button on his computer and the correct dramatic closing music plays.*

JONATHAN. Cuckolded by my fiancée and almost murdered by my oldest friend. Let us hope we never again see...a murder at Haversham Manor.

*The chandelier hanging above the space suddenly sparks and crashes down onto Jonathan. The lights black out just before it hits him.*

— End

**End of Play**

\* See Note on Songs/Recordings at the back of this volume.