

## Introduction

*The play is set in the lounge of the country seat of SIR MALCOLM SQUIRE and LADY AMELIA SIMPSON-SQUIRE. The lounge is expensively furnished in the manner of a country manor, and is situated in an isolated position on the moors.*

### ACT I

*It is early evening, shortly after dinner. SIR MALCOLM is snoring in the armchair R, an almost-empty brandy glass hanging from his right hand and a copy of "The Times" on his lap open at the crossword. LADY AMELIA is sitting on the settee L writing notes in a jotter on her lap. She is eating chocolates from a large chocolate box by her side.*

*Shortly after the curtain rises, LADY AMELIA looks up and notices the audience.*

**AMELIA:** *(Peering out at the audience)* Oh, hello. I didn't see you there. Welcome to Squire Grange. My name is Amelia... Lady Amelia Simpson-hyphen-Squire, to be precise, and I'm a writer of mystery novels. In case you haven't gathered yet, this play is a murder mystery. And it's *terribly* serious, so no giggling at the back.

*(She indicates Malcolm.)*

*That* vision of loveliness is my beloved husband Sir Malcolm. *(She holds up her hand as if for silence.)* No, don't say it, I know what you're thinking. But he hasn't been murdered. Not yet, anyway. He's always like that after dinner. Inside that strange looking sack of potatoes lies the man I married all those years ago. *Very deep* inside.

*(MALCOLM gives a particularly loud snore.)*

Sir Malcolm used to be a stockbroker - an appropriate name, stockbroker - all the people who bought his stock went broke - but he doesn't work any more. He prefers to live the life of a country squire on the proceeds of *my* novels.

Anyway, back to the plot. As you've probably gathered by now *somebody* is going to be done away with. I shan't tell you who, because that would ruin the plot. And anyway, to tell you the absolute truth, I'm not exactly sure myself who it'll be... Even though I'm the star of this play they haven't told me either.

Confused? Yes, me too. Still, I'm sure we'll find out before too long.