

The Play's the Thing - Scene 3

Scene 3 is set in the walled garden. Freddy and Wil are standing stock still, staring at the scene in front of them. Michael has tethered his goats, and is making his way over.

Freddy: I can't believe it. She was here just a minute ago, and now...now...

Wil: Has...has someone called the police?

Hardy: (arriving from round the corner of the garden, and talking into a mobile phone) Yes, I've just called them, they'll be here in a minute.

Michael: But...but...I don't understand.

There is a screech of tyres from outside the garden. A policeman appears, wheeling a bicycle

Policeman Mr Andrews: (out of breath) I got here... as soon as I could...

Hardy: On a bike? We need cars, ambulances, the fire brigade, the boy scouts! (he talks quietly into his phone)

Policeman Mr Andrews: Now look here, young man, you leave this all to me. I'm in charge now, and I don't want anybody to move!

Freddy, Wil and Michael stand transfixed by the scene in front of them. Hardy paces around. The policeman pulls out a notebook and flips it open.

Policeman Mr Andrews : Hello, hello, hello...! (he looks around at the four people standing close to him)...and...hello! What have we got here then? (he licks his finger and turns over a new page in the notebook)

Hardy: (whispering) Get on with it!

Policeman Mr Andrews: What was that? Your name, young man, is going in my little book! (he smiles triumphantly and writes something in the notebook). Now, first we need to secure the scene! You lot, don't move!

The policeman struggles with his utility belt, looking for something.

Policeman Mr Andrews: (talking quietly to himself) Trunchion...no don't need that! Radio...no...doesn't even work. Piece of string...yes...could be useful. Bullet proof vest...nah...too hot! Aha...handcuffs...yes...I might need those for you lad (he turns to Hardy)...two pound coins...a rolled up newspaper...a three-day-old sandwich...now...what else have I got in here?

The policeman proceeds to remove several more items from his belt and clothing. In his confusion, he removes his belt, then his jacket, his shirt and his string vest. There is a small pile of items on the floor in front of him.

Policeman Mr Andrews: Ah, yes, now where was I? Cold. It's cold!

Hardy: Well, you're half naked, man! I'm leaving.

Policeman Mr Andrews (rumaging around on the floor): You're going nowhere. Alonso!

There is a clumping sound from outside the garden, some mild mannered baa-ing, and then light footsteps. A goat, wearing sunglasses, saunters into view round the wall.

Policeman Mr Andrews: Thank goodness you're here. Could you take over please, I'm looking for something.

XabiAlonso (slowly walking round the garden) Yes...very interesting...I must say. Do you want me to interrogate the suspects, sir, or shall I just carry on munching this grass here?

Policeman Mr Andrews: Interrogate them! Secure the scene! Use your initiative, man! Draw lines round the body!

XabiAlonso (walking over to the body, which is covered in a white sheet. He chews the corner of the sheet absent-mindedly, then pulls it back with his teeth and peers underneath) Oooh! Nasty!

The sheet twitches slightly, then settles back down. Freddy turns to Michael and Wil, and smiles. Hardy looks on anxiously. The goat, a small piece of sheet hanging from the corner of his mouth, turns to the group in front of him. Then he turns back to the policeman.

Policeman Mr Andrews: Oh for heaven's sake, Alonso. If you can't do it, I'll have to do it myself.

(The policeman has put his jacket back on. He takes his notebook and pen from his jacket pocket. He drops the notebook)

XabiAlonso eats the notebook.

Policeman Mr Andrews: I knew we should never have employed animals! (He wrenches the last quarter of the book from the goat's mouth, and starts to write).

XabiAlonso: Sorry, Sir, I was a bit hungry.

Policeman Mr Andrews (moving over to the suspects) So, you, you and you, were you in the house? And you, where were you? With him and him...and him? Or were you actually with him over there? And you (turning to the body in front of him), why are you just lying there?

(The body twitches again, and the curtain comes down)