

**ALEX:** Welcome to the Murder Mystery Weekend, sir, madam. I am the butler.

**TERRY:** Blimey! We've got a butler an' all! What's your name?

**ALEX:** Hampson, sir.

**TERRY:** Proper posh that, innit, eh? What do you think kids?

**REGAN:** I think he looks rubbish.

**DAMIEN:** He isn't real, is he?

**TERRY:** 'Course he is. He's the real thing, aren't you mate? Look, watch this. *(He adopts a 'posh' voice)* Hampson.

**ALEX:** Yes sir?

**TERRY:** Be an awfully good chap and fetch me my gun and wellies and start the Land Rover up, I wish to go shooting grouse on the moor.

**ALEX:** Ah, I'm afraid your saintly offspring were not mistaken and I am, indeed, not real. I am merely a thespian pertaining to be a character, namely a butler.

**JULIE:** So you're not a butler, then?

**ALEX:** In a word, madam, no. Here are your keys. Room 13 up the stairs and turn left.

*ALEX hands over a set of keys. TERRY and JULIE wait expectantly. ALEX smiles benignly.*

**TERRY:** Flippin' marvellous! Looks like we're carrying our own bags, then. Come on, kids.

*TERRY and JULIE exit, carrying their suitcases and bags.*

*DAMIEN kicks ALEX on the shin.*

**ALEX:** Why you little...I'll wring your common little neck!

**DAMIEN:** *(To REGAN)* He's a rubbish actor, too. Grumpy old...

**JULIE:** *(Shouting offstage)* Damien!

*DAMIEN and REGAN exit.*

**ALEX:** *(Rubbing his leg)* Oh my God.

*FATHER BRIGGS and SISTER HAMILTON enter, carrying small travel bags.*

**FATHER:** I hope you're not taking His name in vain.

**ALEX:** No, there was a reason for it. *(Pause)* Father Briggs, I presume, and this must be Sister Hamilton.

**FATHER:** I don't know. Does she look like a nun to you? *(He laughs excessively)*

**ALEX:** *(Mystified)* Yeeesss. You look familiar to me - do I know you?

**FATHER:** *(Flustered)* I don't think so.

**ALEX:** *(Hands him a set of keys)* Room 3, just along that corridor. I assume you don't mind sharing?

**FATHER:** Oh, no, Sister Hamilton and I have no secrets do we Sister?

*SISTER HAMILTON shakes her head sadly.*

**ALEX:** Are you sure we haven't...

*The doorbell screams.*

**ALEX:** Excuse me.

*ALEX exits.*

**FATHER:** Sister.

**SISTER:** Yes, Father?

**FATHER:** Can you smell that? *(He sniffs)*

**SISTER:** Oh, sorry, Father, it's the long journey. It always gets to my stomach.

**FATHER:** No, not that, Sister. It smells like ghosts. I knew it! I knew this would be the right place.

**SISTER:** Do you think so?

**FATHER:** Sister Hamilton, I know so. Come on, let's unpack then get to work.

*FATHER BRIGGS and SISTER HAMILTON exit, carrying their travel bags.*

*ALEX returns with PROFESSOR JENKINS, his wife, MAUREEN, and ROBOTA, a young robot woman. PROFESSOR and MAUREEN each carry a small travel bag.*

**ALEX:** *(Wearily)* Professor Jenkins, Mrs Maureen Jenkins and Robota.

**PROFESSOR:** *(He has an electric scanner in his hand which he moves up and down ALEX's body)* Hmm, actor masquerading as a butler, yes?

**ALEX:** Yes.

**PROFESSOR:** Height 6 foot 1. Yes? Yes? Yes?

**ALEX:** Why, yes.

**PROFESSOR:** 62 years old. Am I right or am I negative?

**ALEX:** You're right.

**PROFESSOR:** Chronic alcoholic, gambler and an eye for the ladies?

**ALEX:** Hey, come on now.

**PROFESSOR:** An irrational fear of forests or other small collections of trees? Yes/no? Yes/no?

**ALEX:** Turn it off! Turn it off, I warn you!!