

## Helga - Myra - Sidney

MYRA. (*Interrupting him.*) No. I'll stay here, and let you worry that I'll fall apart!

*Sidney eyes her anxiously. The doorbell chimes a third time. Sidney starts for the door.*

SIDNEY. Coming!

*Myra tries to compose herself, moves into view of the door.*

Who is it?

HELGA. (*Off.*) I am your neighbor in house of McBains. Please, will you let me come in?

*Sidney turns, wide-eyed. Myra too is startled and frightened.*

Is most urgent I speak to you. I call the information but the lady will tell me not your number. Please, will you let me come in?

*Sidney turns to the door.*

I am friend of Paul Wyman. Is most urgent!

SIDNEY. (*Opening the door.*) Come in.

*Helga then Dorp comes into the foyer, a stocky, strong-jawed Teutonic woman in her early fifties, in the throes of considerable distress. She wears slacks and a hastily seized and unfastened jacket.*

START

HELGA. I apologize for so late I come but you will forgive when I make the explaining.

*She comes D. into the study. Sidney closes the door.*

Ja, ja, is room I see. Beams, and window like so... (*Holds her forehead, wincing.*) And the pain! Such pain!

*Helga sees Myra and recognizes her as the source of it; approaches her.*

Pain. Pain. Pain. Pain...

*She moves her hands about Myra, as if wanting to touch and comfort her but unable to.*

Pain. Pain. Pain!

SIDNEY. (*Coming nervously D.*) We're neither of us up to snuff today...

*Helga turns, sees the weapons.*

HELGA. Ei! Just as I see them! *Uuuch!* Why keep you such pain-covered things?

SIDNEY. They're antiques, and souvenirs from plays. I'm a playwright.

HELGA. Ja, Sidney Bruhl; Paul Wyman tells me. We make together book.

SIDNEY. My wife, Myra...

MYRA. How do you do...

HELGA. What gives you such pain, dear lady?

MYRA. Nothing. I'm—fine, really.

HELGA. No, no; something you see pains you. *(To both of them.)* Paul tells you of *me*? I am Helga ten Dorp. I am psychic.

SIDNEY. Yes, he did. In fact we were going to ask—

HELGA. *(Interrupting him.)* For hours now I feel the pain from here. And more than pain. Since eight-thirty, when begins the *Merv Griffin Show*. I am on it next week; you will watch?

SIDNEY. Yes, yes, certainly. Make a note of that, Myra.

HELGA. Thursday night. The Amazing Kreskin also. What they want *him* for, I do not know. I call the information but the lady will tell me not your number. I call Paul but he is not at home; he is in place with red walls, eating with chopsticks. I call the information again. I say, "Is urgent, you *must* tell me number; I am Helga ten Dorp, I am psychic." She say, "Guess number." I try, but only I see the two-two-six, which is everybody, ja? So I come here now. *(Looking sympathetically at Myra.)* Because pain gets worse. And more than pain...

*She moves away and wanders the room, a hand to her forehead. Sidney and Myra look anxiously at each other.*

MYRA. More than pain?

HELGA. Ja, is something else here, something frightening. No, it will interfere.

SIDNEY. What will?

HELGA. The drink you would give me. Must keep unclouded the head. Never drink. Only when images become too many. Then I get drunk.

*She goes close to the weapons, one hand to her forehead, the other hand passing back and forth. Sidney and Myra stand motionless as Helga's hand passes over the garrote. She takes up the dagger, turns with it, closes her eyes.*

Was used many times by beautiful dark-haired woman. But only pretending...

SIDNEY. That's amazing! It's from my play *The Murder Game* and it was used every night by a beautiful dark-haired actress!

HELGA. Will be used again. By another woman. Not in play. But...*because of play...* (*Opens her eyes.*) Because of play, another woman uses this knife. **STOP**

*Sidney and Myra stare at her. She replaces the dagger.*

You should put away these things.

SIDNEY. Yes, yes, I think I will. In a month or so I'll sell the whole collection. Tired of them anyway.

HELGA. Maybe too late. (*Looks gravely at Sidney and Myra.*) I do not enjoy to make-unhappy people, but I must speak when I see something, ja?

SIDNEY. Well I don't know actually; you *could* keep quiet. I mean, you're supposed to be resting, aren't you? Not in your own country...

HELGA. Must speak. Is why God gives gift. Is danger here. Much danger. (*To Sidney.*) To you... (*To Myra.*) And to you. Is death in this room. Is something that—involves death, that carries death... Deathtrap? This is word in English, "deathtrap"?

MYRA. Yes...

SIDNEY. It's the title of a play I've been working on. That's where you've got it from. There's a death in the play; I'm sure that's what you're—responding to. I've been working there at the desk...

HELGA. (*Moving around the desk, touching it.*) Maybe... But feels like *real* death...

SIDNEY. I try to be convincing, act everything out as I write it...

*Helga's attention is caught by the chair in which Clifford sat. She goes to it, hesitates, takes hold of its back with both hands, closes her eyes, throws back her head. Myra trembles; Sidney puts a hand to her shoulder.*