* MARSTON'S DEATH SCENE

ALL BUT MRS R ? NARRA COT

wargrave. En property is there on this island besides ourselves and you and your wife?

ROGERS. Nobody, sir. Nobody at all.

WARGRAVE. You're sure of that?

ROGERS. Quite sure, sir.

WARGRAVE. Thank you.

(ROGERS turns to go.)

Don't go, Rogers. I am not yet clear as to the purpose of our unknown host in getting us to assemble here. But in my opinion he's not sane in the accepted sense of the word. He may be dangerous. In my opinion, it would

be well for us to leave this place as soon as possible. I suggest that we leave here tonight.

(There is general agreement from the group.)

ROGERS. I beg your pardon, sir, but there's no boat on the island.

WARGRAVE. No boat at all?

ROGERS. No, sir.

WARGRAVE. Why don't you telephone to the mainland?

ROGERS. There's no telephone. Fred Narracott, he comes over every morning, sir. He brings the milk and the bread and the post and the papers, and takes the orders.

(MARSTON picks up his drink, raising his voice.)

MARSTON. A bit unsporting, what? Ought to ferret out the mystery before we go. Whole thing's like a detective story. Positively thrilling.

WARGRAVE. (Acidly.) At my time of life, I have no desire for thrills.

MARSTON. The legal life's narrowing. I'm all for crime. (He raises his glass.)

Here's to it.

(He drinks it off with a gulp then suddenly chokes and gasps. He convulses violently and falls, the glass drops from his hand. ARMSTRONG runs over to him and feels his pulse.)

ARMSTRONG. My God, he's dead!

(The others can hardly take it in. ARMSTRONG sniffs the glass then nods.)

MACKENZIE. Dead? D'you mean the fellow just choked and died?

ARMSTRONG. You can call it choking if you like. He died of asphyxiation, right enough.

MACKENZIE. Never knew a man could die like that - just of a choking fit.

EMILY. In the middle of life we are in death.

ARMSTRONG. A man doesn't die of a mere choking fit, General MacKenzie. Marston's death isn't what we call a natural death.

VERA. Was there something in the whiskey?

ARMSTRONG. Yes. By the smell of it, cyanide. Probably potassium cyanide. Acts pretty well instantaneously.

LOMBARD. Then he must have put the stuff in the glass himself.

BLORE. Suicide, eh? That's a rum go.

VERA. You'd never think he'd commit suicide. He was so alive. He was enjoying himself.

(EMILY picks up the remains of a soldier.)

EMILY. Oh! Look – here's one of the little soldiers off the mantelpiece – broken.

(She holds it up.)