

## **Eliza**

*My aunt died of influenza, so they said. But it's my belief they done the old woman in. Yes Lord love you! Why should she die of influenza when she come through diphtheria right enough the year before? Fairly blue with it she was. They all thought she was dead. But my father, he kept ladling gin down her throat. Then she come to so sudden that she bit the bowl off the spoon. Now, what would you call a woman with that strength in her have to die of influenza, and what become of her new straw hat that should have come to me? Somebody pinched it, and what I say is, them that pinched it, done her in. Them she lived with would have killed her for a hatpin, let alone a hat. And as for father ladling the gin down her throat, it wouldn't have killed her. Not her. Gin was as mother's milk to her. Besides, he's poured so much down his own throat that he knew the good of it."*

## **Dotty**

*“It’s no good you going on. I can’t open sardines and answer the phone. I’ve only got one pair of feet. Hello.... Yes, but there’s no one here, love.... No, Mr. Brent’s not here...He lives here, yes, but he don’t live here now because he lives in Spain... Mr. Philip Brent, that’s right.... The one who writes the plays, that’s him, only now he writes them in Spain... No, she’s in Spain, too, they’re all in Spain, there’s no one here... Am I in Spain? No, I’m not in Spain, dear. I look after the house for him, but I go home at one o’clock on Wednesday, only I’ve got a nice plate of sardines to put my feet up with, because it’s the royal what’s-it’s called on the telly — the royal you know — where’s the paper, then? And if it’s to do with letting the house then you’ll have to ring the house-agents, because they’re the agents for the house.... Squire Squire, Hackham and who’s the other one...? No, they’re not in Spain, they’re next to the phone in the study. Squire, Squire, Hackham, and hold on, I’ll go and look. Always the same, isn’t it. Soon as you take the weight off your feet, down it all comes on your head.”*

## Gwendolyn

*“Oh! It is strange he never mentioned to me that he had a ward. How secretive of him! He grows more interesting hourly. I am not sure, however, that the news inspires me with feelings of unmixed delight. [Rising and going to her.] I am very fond of you, Cecily; I have liked you ever since I met you! But I am bound to state that now that I know that you are Mr. Worthing’s ward, I cannot help expressing a wish you were—well, just a little older than you seem to be—and not quite so very alluring in appearance. In fact, if I may speak candidly— [...] Well, to speak with perfect candour, Cecily, I wish that you were fully forty-two, and more than usually plain for your age. Ernest has a strong upright nature. He is the very soul of truth and honour. Disloyalty would be as impossible to him as deception. But even men of the noblest possible moral character are extremely susceptible to the influence of the physical charms of others. Modern, no less than Ancient History, supplies us with many most painful examples of what I refer to. If it were not so, indeed, History would be quite unreadable.”*

## FRANCIS

*I've got two jobs, how did that happen? You got to concentrate ain't ya, with two jobs. Kaw! I can do it, long as I don't get confused.*

*But I get confused easily. I don't get confused that easily. Yes I do. I'm my own worst enemy. Stop being negative.*

*I'm not being negative. I'm being realistic. I'll screw it up. I always do. Who screws it up? You, you're the role model for village idiots everywhere.*

*Me?! You're nothing without me. You're the cock up! Don't call me a cock up, you cock up! (He slaps himself.)*

*You slapped me!? Yeah, I did. And I'm glad I did.*

*(He punches himself back.) That hurt. Good. You started it.*

*(A fight breaks out, where he ends up on the floor.)*

## **SIR PETER**

*When an old Bachelor takes a young Wife—what is He to expect—'Tis now six months since Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men—and I have been the most miserable Dog ever since that ever committed wedlock. We tift a little going to church—*

*and came to a Quarrel before the Bells had done ringing—I was more than once nearly chok'd with gall during the Honeymoon—*

*and had lost all comfort in Life before my Friends had done wishing me Joy—yet I chose with caution—a girl bred wholly in the country—*

*who never knew luxury beyond one silk gown—nor dissipation above the annual Gala of a Race-Ball —*

*Yet she now plays her Part in all the extravagant Fopperies of the Fashion and the Town, with as ready a Grace as if she had never seen a Bush nor a grass Plot out of Grosvenor-Square!*

*I am sneered at by my old acquaintance—paragraphed—in the newsPapers—She dissipates my Fortune, and contradicts all my Humours —*

*yet the worst of it is I doubt I love her or I should never bear all this. However I'll never be weak enough to own it.*

**Chris**

Good evening, ladies . . .(He steps into it) . . . and gentlemen and welcome to the Cornley Polytechnic Society's spring production of *The Murder at Haversham Manor*.

*I would like to personally welcome you to what will be my directorial debut, and my first production as head of the drama society.*

*We are particularly excited to present this play because, for the first time in the society's history, we have managed to find a play that fits the company's numbers perfectly.*

*If we're honest, a lack of numbers has hampered past productions, such as last year's Chekov play; *Two Sisters*.*

*Or last Christmas's *The Lion and the Wardrobe*, and of course our summer musical, *Cat*. This will be the first time the society has been able to stage a play of this scale and we are thrilled.*

*It's no secret we usually have to contend with a small budget, as we had to in last year's presentation of Roald Dahl's classic, *James and the Peach*.*

*Of course, during the run of that particular show the peach went off and we were forced to present a hastily devised alternative entitled *James! Where's your Peach?**

*Finally we've managed to stage a play as it should be, and cast it exceptionally well. I'm sure no one will forget the problems we've faced with casting before,*

*such as 2010's Christmas presentation of *Snow White and the Tall, Broad Gentlemen*, or indeed our previous year's pantomime, another Disney classic: *Ugly...and the Beast*.*

*But now, on with the main event, which I am confident will be our best show yet! So without any further ado, please put your hands together for*

*Susie H.K. Brideswell's thrilling whodunit – The Murder at Haversham Manor.*