

THE MOUSETRAP

TROTTER. Didn't you see them there?

MAJOR METCALF. Can't remember.

TROTTER. You must remember if those skis were there then?

MAJOR METCALF. No good shouting at me, young fellow. I wasn't thinking about any damned skis. I was interested in the cellars. *(He moves to the sofa and sits.)* Architecture of this place is very interesting. I opened the other door and I went on down. So I can't tell you whether the skis were there or not.

TROTTER. *(moving down to left of the sofa)* You realize that you, yourself, had an excellent opportunity of taking them?

MAJOR METCALF. Yes, yes, I grant you that. If I wanted to, that is.

TROTTER. The question is, where are they now?

MAJOR METCALF. Ought to be able to find them if we all set to. Not a case of "Hunt the Thimble." Whacking great things, skis. Supposing we all set to. *(He rises and crosses right towards the door.)*

TROTTER. Not quite so fast, Major Metcalf. That may be, you know, what we are meant to do.

MAJOR METCALF. Eh, I don't get you?

Starts
TROTTER. I'm in the position now where I've got to put myself in the place of a crazy cunning brain. I've got to ask myself what he wants us to do and what he, himself, is planning to do next.

I've got to try and keep just one step ahead of him. Because, if I don't, there's going to be another death.

MISS CASEWELL. You still don't believe that?

TROTTER. Yes, Miss Casewell. I do. Three blind mice. Two mice cancelled out - a third mouse still to be dealt with. *(moving down centre, with his back to the audience)* There are six of you here listening to me. One of you's a killer!

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(There is a pause. They are all affected and look uneasily at one another.)

One of you's a killer. *(He moves to the fire.)* I don't know which yet, but I shall. And another of you is the killer's prospective victim. That's the person I'm speaking to. *(He crosses to MOLLIE.)* Mrs. Boyle held out on me - Mrs. Boyle is dead. *(He moves up centre.)* You - whoever you are - are holding out on me. Well - don't. Because you're in danger. Nobody who's killed twice is going to hesitate to kill a third time. *(He moves to right of MAJOR METCALF.)* And as it is, I don't know which of you it is who needs protection.

(There is a pause.)

(Crossing down centre and turning his back to the audience) Come on, now, anybody here who has anything, however slight, to reproach themselves for in that bygone business, had better come out with it.

(There is a pause.)

All right - you won't. I'll get the killer - I've no doubt of that - but it may be too late for one of you. *(He moves up to centre of the refectory table.)* And I'll tell you another thing. The killer's enjoying this. Yes, he's enjoying himself a good deal...

(There is a pause.)

(He moves round the right end of the refectory table to behind it. He opens the right curtain, looks out and then sits at the right end of the window seat.) All right - you can go.

(MAJOR METCALF exits into the dining-room down right. CHRISTOPHER exits up the stairs left. MISS CASEWELL crosses to the fire and leans on the mantelpiece. GILES moves centre and MOLLIE follows; GILES stops and turns right. MOLLIE turns her back on him and moves behind the armchair centre. PARAVICINI rises and moves to right of MOLLIE.)