

Milden Manor Murder by Tom Hitchcock

Lord Milden: My lords, ladies and gentlemen. My good wife and I thank you for attending our gala evening to raise funds for the new community centre. As you know my family, along with many others in the village, have been the foundation of the Parish for many generations. It is so lovely to see so many of you here tonight to support the cause to erect the greatest monument to our society. This is our last attempt to raise the final twenty thousand pounds needed to finish the build.

The new community centre will benefit all in the Parish and surrounding areas as it provides not just a centre for entertainment and external activities, but also a hub to support and house those in their time of need.

The East Wing will allow those in need to seek shelter and the volunteers will be there to administer to their needs. We are the blessed ones of the Village, who should use our power and money to help those less fortunate. We must stand united to continue the tradition of our great village –

“Unus pro omnibus, omnes pro uno” (*Latin for: All for one and one for all*) I thank you all for coming tonight and I hope that you all have a splendid evening. Don't forget the grand auction will be held at nine o'clock and our head chef from the Manor will be preparing our exquisite feast. I ask you to raise your glasses for a toast to the Village (*Slight Pause*) and (*Slight Pause*) to the future!

All: The Village and the future.

SFX - A roaring applause

Lady Milden: You missed a bit out about the garden I was designing for the Community Centre.

Lord Milden: I can't honestly be expected to remember everything darling. You should have written it down for me.

Lady Milden: Well, if you'd only let me help you then I would

Lord Milden: Oh, don't start this all again. I have told you a thousand time that I may be getting older, a little plumper, and balder, it may take me a little while to find the General first thing, but I can do things for myself. I don't need you there to help me every step of the

way. I am quite capable of sorting myself out. I will not let this get the better of me.

Lady Milden: One day you'll need me to help you and I will not do it; I'll refuse - that will teach you

Lord Milden: You already do refuse!

Lady Milden: I beg your pardon! I do everything I can to please you, you...

Lord Milden: (*Getting irate*) Will you keep quiet Woman!

The cast look on at Lord and Lady and a stunned silence descends upon them all. There is a brief pause before Mrs Hughes speaks.

Mrs Hughes: My Lord and Lady, I have word from the kitchen that the food will be ready shortly, but the head chef would like to come out to meet you.

Lord Milden: To meet me? Whatever for?

Mrs Hughes: It appears he has never met a peer of the realm before; let alone cooked for them.

Lord Milden: Well, I'm hardly royalty...

Lady Milden: You act like you are sometimes – might as well run around the estate shouting “Orf with his head” with the foul tempers you get into.

Lord Milden: Ignore my wife. As a lady of leisure, her brain doesn't get as much exercise as her mouth does and so it gets sloppy - which in turn transfers upon her mouth.

Lady Milden throws Lord Milden the foulest look she could.

SFX – Cutlery being thrown down.

Lady Milden: You swine!

Lord Milden: Yes, your father did keep a few of them – till they were all slaughtered.

Lady Milden: It's all about you isn't it you ungrateful Bas...

SFX - Sound of kitchen doors swinging open

Tom Ato-Bolognaise: (*In an Italian accent*)

My Lord and Ladies. It is indeed an honour to meet you,

English knobs. Your nobility is well renowned the world over for being most proper. It is a pleasure to tantalise your taste buds and tickle your salivating mouths with my great big treats for you. I promise every mouthful will satisfy. Every crumb will fill your tum.

Lord Milden: I say young man. Are you allowed over here after Brexit?

Tom Ato-Bolognaise: Scusi?

Lady Milden: *(Going to Tom Ato-Bolognaise)* Ignore my husband. He hasn't risen from the dark ages yet and if he's not careful he will forever stay in the dark ages. Oh Tom, it is marvellous to see you once again.

Lord Milden: You've met before?

Lady Milden: Husband, of course I have. I had to vet the man... I mean the food *(She giggles a little to herself, as does Tom Ato-Bolognaise.)* before we employed him.

Lord Milden: I see.

Lady Milden: In fact, both myself and Jane met up with Mr Ato-Bolognaise before agreeing to have him... *(She giggles and Tom Ato-Bolognaise gives a wink)* to have him cook our meal for the gala night. Isn't that right Jane darling.

Jane: Oh yes. We had a good nibble. Some ate a little more than others; if I remember rightly *(She gives a little knowing giggle)*.

Dianne: That's why you joined the Tennis club then?

Reverend: Dianne, do not lower yourself.

Dianne: Reverend Exodus, I am not lowering myself. In fact, I am taking a higher plane and this is just the start of it. I was merely placing together pieces of the puzzle. It would appear some stuff their faces on the English and Italian cuisine!

Jane: I beg your pardon?

Dianne: You know what I mean!

Jane: I'm afraid I don't. Please explain yourself, or if you'd prefer not to, then just drink some more wine.

Dianne: Oh, you really wouldn't want me to explain myself in front of all these posh knobs and members of the village dear – imagine the tittle tattle!

Reverend: Dianne, I think it would be wise if you...

Dianne: Oh, don't you start with all that "Repent your sins" claptrap - I'm not interested.

Reverend: Mrs Toomeetyou! If you'd care to listen - I was going to suggest that any issues you currently wish to get off your chest are best removed in a different manner. The good Lord will always win through with the justice deserved by those who need it.

Tom Ato-Bolognaise:

My lord Milden. As I wasa saying: I have madea delicious evening meal for you all. I have made the best Italian dish I can. The recipe was handed down from my great, great, great, grandmother – once removed.

Lord Milden: Removed from what?

Tom Ato-Bolognaise:

I don't know my Lord; I never asked. Anyway, yourself and the lovely ladies here will love my dish. (*Making almost seductive gestures*) Plenty of spice ... plenty of pepper ... plenty of juicy meat and saucy sauce.

Lord Milden: Yes, yes, I get the idea. Why do you Italians have to make everything an innuendo? My mouth is watering and my stomach is rumbling. Please bring out the food. Plenty of pepper, I hope.

Tom Ato-Bolognaise: Always the pepper! Mumma Mia!

SFX - Telephone ringing

Tom Ato-Bolognaise whispers to Lady Milden and she gives a coy giggle.

Mrs Hughes: My Lord, there is an urgent phone call for you in the drawing room.

Lord Milden: Who is it?

Mrs Hughes: Sir Cornelius Flinders.

Lord Milden: I shall take it in my study right away.

Lady Milden: The food will be out in a moment and you need to circulate amongst your guests. Mrs Hughes; tell Sir Flinders that Lord Milden will call him back tomorrow

Lord Milden: Mrs Hughes, Lord Milden will do no such thing. Woman - this is important; And I would like you to butt out of what doesn't concern you.

Lady Milden: All I try and do is be the best wife I can be to you!

Lord Milden: Well, you're doing an awful job at it. (*He turns and talks to Mrs Hughes*)

There is a brief pause, as we see Lady Milden well up and boil over.

Lady Milden: You BRUTE. You horrid, horrid brute!

SFX - Footsteps running off as *Lady Milden breaks down into tears*

SFX - Door slamming shut

SFX - Kitchen Doors opening

Tom Ato-Bolognaise: My Lord. Your dinner is served.

Lord Milden: Just put it on the table will you.

Tom Ato-Bolognaise: Mumma Mia - It'll get cold!

Lord Milden: Just do as I say, damn you!

SFX - Footsteps walking off

Tom Ato-Bolognaise: Bloody Nobility!

Copyright Hitchcock Scripts - Sample