

**Side 1- William and Harris**

WILLIAM

Sorry, guv. I don't want her to be riled up.

HARRIS

Of course, of course. I forget about the delicate sensibilities of the womenfolk. We found a bloodstained apron at the Spitalfields murder site. It might well be a lead.

WILLIAM

Brilliant. Do we know where the apron came from?

HARRIS:

Not yet, we're looking into it.

WILLIAM

Where, exactly, in Spitalfields?

HARRIS

Miller's Court. Off Dorset Street.

WILLIAM

Dorset Street. Mostly tailor shops there. There are a couple of cabinet makers with shops still there. A cobbler, too. Any of them would wear leather aprons.

HARRIS

Already proving your worth, eh, Bennet? Check into them tomorrow, would you. *(pulling a few folded papers from coat pocket)* Here. Why don't you keep these notes. You might pick up on something I've missed.

WILLIAM

Will do. I think I'm going to enjoy this job, guv.

HARRIS

Don't get too excited. This city hasn't had one moment of quiet since the Romans placed the first brick in the mud. It'll wear on you soon enough. London's the largest city in the world, which means we have more than our fair share of dirty secrets.

WILLIAM

Well, then I certainly hope we can make it just a little better.

HARRIS

Now more than ever, everyone has something they're hiding from the world. But in this business, there are no secrets. We see the truth most people turn away from. The average Londoner doesn't want to think about how the sausage is made. They just want their comfortable lives. It's our job to make sure that ugly truth stays hidden from the public. Our responsibility, to face down the ugly truth and make the difficult decisions others can't. Think about your lovely Nora. It's your duty to keep that ugliness away from her, correct? Wouldn't you do anything to protect her? It's our job as police to protect the public in just the same way.

## Side 2- Nora and William

*WILLIAM ENTERS the house joyously, home from work, carrying a brown parcel. His sudden entrance startles NORA.*

NORA

William! You scared me half to death!

WILLIAM

Oh! I'm sorry my dear! What were you doing at the front door?

NORA

I just thought I heard the neighbors across the way talking. I believe they have a baby.

WILLIAM

Oh?

NORA

Yes, I thought I heard the dear thing crying.

WILLIAM

Well, to my knowledge, that's a common occurrence for infants.

NORA

It just sounded.. distressed, was all. Ah, well. Women's intuition I suppose.

WILLIAM

I can't argue with that, my love. I invited Albert over for chess later.

NORA

*(Hesitantly)* Eva will be over as well. I'm lending her a novel. You don't think that will be a problem.

WILLIAM

What? Oh, that. No, shouldn't be a problem.

*(Hands NORA a parcel)* For you.

NORA

Oh aren't you thoughtful!

*(Unwraps the parcel to find a small book)*

Oh, thank you! I've nearly finished my current one.

WILLIAM

I thought you almost had.

NORA

*The Seen and the Unseen.* Margaret Oliphant. I don't believe I've read anything by her.

WILLAM

Mr. Parsons at the shop thought you'd enjoy it. Said it's rather... hair raising.

NORA

Yes, I believe you've done alright. Just the sort of story I love.

*(They share a brief kiss)*

WILLAM

You're made of sterner stuff than I. Can't stomach those ghost stories. *(Pause)* You say our neighbors have a child? I'm actually rather excited to hear that.

NORA

Oh? How so?

WILLIAM

Well, our little one might have a playmate right next door when they arrive.

NORA

William, please..

WILLIAM

And we'll invite the neighbors over and watch the children play on the floor.

NORA

You really think so?

WILLAM

Of course, my dear. I'm sure, sooner than you think.

NORA

Do you think we're ready?

WILLIAM

I cannot picture anyone more suited to be a mother than you.

### Side 3- Nora and Eva

EVA

Sorry I'm late, Jeffery needed me to attend to breakfast for the twins whilst Mrs Baker and Mrs Davies prepared for his charity ball later today. It's such a bore, I envy your afternoon-

NORA

Shhh, the baby next door is being put to sleep, listen.

EVA

What? I don't hear anything.

NORA

Oh, he must have fallen asleep, the dear thing.

EVA

If only putting the twins to bed was that easy.

NORA

How are the children?

EVA

Just marvelous, you know how one year olds are.

NORA

Oh, I couldn't imagine.

EVA

They're at home with Ethel, thank God.

NORA

The new governess? How do they like her?

EVA

They're children, Nora. They'll trust anyone who pays attention to them. So long as I can take a moment of rest to visit you here, the price is more than worth it. Have you had the chance to seek out a governess for you and William?

NORA

Not yet.

EVA

Oh, I know of a wonderful woman who just became available. (*NORA looks sad*) What's wrong, Nora?

NORA

All this talk of a governess.. It's just William and I - we've wanted a child for such a long time now, and now that we're ready I'm beginning to worry I won't be able to provide us with one.

EVA

What do you mean?

NORA

We've been trying for almost a month now, and... well, I'm starting to believe myself... what if I'm not able to conceive a child, Eva?.

EVA

Nora, dear, don't be ridiculous.

NORA

This isn't a joke, Eva. I'm serious.

EVA

I won't hear of it Nora. You always assume the worst. You've been married only a month and a half and you already think a child is outside of the realm of possibility. I reckon you need to calm down and think rationally for once in your life.

NORA

I don't always assume the worst.

EVA

Nora, do you remember the old story your mother used to read to us?

NORA

*The Ugly Duckling.*

EVA

We would beg her to read it to us everytime I came over. The ugly duckling felt alone and scared, just as you are feeling now. He wandered into the woods and got lost. But remember, the duckling eventually found his family and was alright once again because he never gave up hope.

NORA

Eva-

EVA

I know you're scared and feel lost right now but I promise you are going to be alright. Have hope, Nora.

NORA

But you have to remember Eva, that was a fairytale. Made up. Not real life.

EVA  
But Nora-

NORA  
Please, Eva. Please, just... listen to me.

*(EVA nods)*

NORA  
I just don't know what to do, Eva. I'm so afraid I'm letting him down. After the wedding I felt like I was walking on air. I was just so happy and William was so excited about the new house and the promotion, it was like everything was how it was meant to be! I want to be a mother more than anything, and I love Will so much, he'd be such an amazing father. But now I'm just ruining everything. And now it's all my fault.

*(NORA gets up from the table and starts to pace back and forth)*

EVA  
Nora!  
*(EVA gets up and grabs ahold of NORA's shoulders)*  
Just breathe dear, here, sit down.

#### Side 4- William and Albert

*(WILLIAM and ALBERT sit at table playing a game of chess)*

ALBERT  
Your move.

WILLIAM  
I know.

ALBERT  
Right... Really taking your time.

WILLIAM  
I'm thinking, you just want me to make a bad move.

ALBERT  
Has all that thinking revealed to you the location of your next move?

WILLIAM  
It would if you wouldn't interrupt me.

ALBERT  
Alright!  
*( WILLIAM MOVES )*  
Hah! You didn't see it.

WILLIAM  
See what?  
*( ALBERT moves piece and takes rook )*  
Oh, you bastard.

ALBERT  
No need for name calling Will, it's not sportsmanlike.

WILLIAM  
I'll give you something to be a sport about. *( Moves )*

ALBERT  
Oh, you bastard. Well, like I said, it's scary times we're living in.

WILLIAM  
I know. The murders seem more visceral every day. It's...disturbing, to say the least.



ALBERT

I'm sure. Have you made any leaps in the case yet?

WILLIAM

No. The pressure is to see this resolved before there's another killing.

ALBERT

I'm sure. People say he's not even human-- the devil come back to take us.

WILLIAM

You believe that?

ALBERT

I believe man can come to be evil all on his own without any demonic help.

WILLIAM

I wonder what that says about us.

ALBERT

Why? Do you believe the Ripper is really some - demon?

WILLIAM

It's hard for me to imagine a man doing the things I have seen. It looks like the work of a beast rather than a man, images I've seen may never leave my mind. It's horrid.

ALBERT

You've seen the crimes?

WILLIAM

I've seen hell.

ALBERT

You mean the bodies?

WILLIAM

Yes. No- parts of them yes. I -

ALBERT

Your men seem to know what they're doing though, times are on the mend.

WILLIAM

I'm not sure. I honestly don't know, no one knows who this man is. --- I can't reckon with the things I've seen Bert. I close my eyes and see red. Those girls, their names are in my mind always; and I know that she would never be, but... it's not hard to fall into the nightmare of finding Nora's name along with them.

I feel this heavy weight when I go to work and see these girls and then return home to her, loving and joyful and living and it's like I'm living in two different worlds.

ALBERT

Nora's safe, this is a good area you two live in.

WILLIAM

I know.

ALBERT

You're a good man Will.

WILLIAM

Do you think it's wrong to be occupied with thoughts like this?

ALBERT

I think it is the mark of a responsible man. It is not natural for the human mind to look upon such horrors, and there is no deeper torment than the harm of someone you're trying to protect. Just remember that

Nora is safe, and the murders are far away.

WILLIAM

Yes?

ALBERT

It's enough to break a man, don't let it break you.

**Side 5- Eva and Albert**

*( RISE; ALBERT in the flat sitting on the couch waiting, he is startled when EVA ENTERS through the DOOR )*

ALBERT

Eva-

EVA

Oh, you would- Albert!

ALBERT

*(Say at same time)* Hello. How are you-

EVA

*(At same time)* I was just looking for- Oh you go first.

ALBERT

No, you first, I insist.

EVA

Oh, well, I was just about to say that I'm looking for Nora, is she here?

ALBERT

She and Will are out at the moment, I'm waiting for him to return.

EVA

Oh, I see.

ALBERT

They should return any minute now.*(EVA crosses to the table)* How are you?

EVA

I'm well yes, and you?

ALBERT

I am very well. It's been a while, yes?

EVA

It has, you've changed a bit.

ALBERT

You haven't.

EVA

Is that a good thing?

ALBERT

Perfect. It's been a while since we've talked.

EVA

I believe it has, yes. How's Will?

ALBERT

Oh he's good, yes. And Nora?

EVA

She's well, yes. *(Sitting down)*

ALBERT

I hear she's been nervous lately.

EVA

Yes, the pregnancy has been getting to her.

ALBERT

What?

EVA

What?

ALBERT

I meant the squatters... Nora's pregnant?

EVA

Oh my goodness - I shouldn't have told you that.

ALBERT

Why not? That's fantastic news!

EVA

You can't tell a soul!

ALBERT

That explains her nervousness about the squatters!

EVA

Listen, she hasn't told Will yet, it's supposed to be a surprise for him.

ALBERT  
Will doesn't know?

EVA  
Not yet. Please Albert, it's a surprise.

ALBERT  
Of course I completely understand, I'll have to go out and buy some flowers for the happy couple!

EVA  
Don't you dare.

ALBERT  
A joke! It's a joke! I'd never.

**Side 6- Mrs. Parker, Eva, Nora**

PARKER

Good morning. This parcel was left for your husband, but I wasn't able to catch him on his way out. You don't mind if I barge in do you?

NORA

Not at all, Mrs. Parker. Eva, this is our landlady, Mrs. Mildred Parker.

PARKER

A pleasure my dear.

EVA

It's lovely to meet you too, Mrs. Parker. Nora tells me that the flat is quite comfortable thanks to you.

PARKER

Oh well, that's too kind of Mrs. Bennet. Something troubling you, dear?

EVA

Nora was just telling me about her concerns about (*looking to NORA*)... about well...

NORA

About having a child, Mrs. Parker. Will and I would like to start a family.

PARKER

Oh, I see. My daughter was so excited when she found out she was with child. But the pregnancy was such a difficult one. She really did struggle with it.

NORA

Oh, I'm so sorry.

EVA

Well, I'm sure Nora will do just fine.

PARKER

Of course, dear. I have no doubt she will, someone so young and healthy. (*PARKER reaches to take NORA's hand and squeezes it*) Now make sure you are eating enough and getting good rest. Oh, you know what I love? Naming them. I wish I had the opportunity to think of a good name again.

NORA

Honestly, I've just been so preoccupied with wanting a child that I haven't stopped to consider that yet. I'm sure William's got many names for a little boy already in consideration.

EVA

Well you should definitely get started on that. It took me and Jeffery months to agree on a name.

NORA

I'm sure I'll like almost anything that William chooses, although he has mentioned the name Bartholomew and I simply must put my foot down. Poor lad would get bullied in school.

*(EVA, NORA, and MRS. PARKER all laugh)*

EVA

Imagine! "Bartholomew Bennet." He'd certainly be remembered.

PARKER

Have you thought about any girl names?

NORA

Well, there are a couple that would be just lovely, but I feel that we are getting ahead of ourselves.

EVA

Nora, I'm sure everything will be fine. You have Mrs. Parker and I to help you along the way.

NORA

Yes, and I'm ever so grateful for that.

## Side 7- Harris monologue

HARRIS

We could use more young doctors in the field, Albert, what with the Whitechapel murders wreaking havoc in the city. You know, I'm under strict orders not to disclose this highly secretive information, but you seem like a man of quality and I'll tell you something. As we examine these women, we find patterns.

He's an artist, he arranges their bodies with elegance. Every victim is just a project for him, another painting in his museum from hell. And so we start thinking. No common factory man or chimney sweep knows how to string around organs or bones like he does. No, this man must be a surgeon. *(slowly approaching ALBERT)* I have seen the peasant murder, and it is nary out of passion, but instead of desperation. Many suspect a noble, but I have seen the wealthy man murder too, and they would not let a body be found, let alone leave its guts splattered on the wall. Now a man of science, however, they murder with purpose. Is it not paradoxical, Albert, for the man who has given his life to the pursuit of man to turn around and harm him. No, for a doctor to kill, he must be completely out of his mind. Tell me Doctor, what inspired you to take up the field?