

Henrietta Angkatell

“So quick. It can happen so quickly. One moment living - breathing - and - the next - dead - gone - emptiness. Oh, the emptiness. And here we are eating sandwiches and drinking coffee, and calling ourselves alive. And John, who was more alive than any of us, is dead. (*She moves centre*). I say the word, you know, over and over again to myself. Dead - dead - dead - dead - and soon it hasn't any meaning, (*She crosses to the chair down right*) it hasn't any meaning at all. Just a funny little word like the breaking of a rotten branch. Dead - dead - dead - dead - dead - dead... (*regaining control of herself; quietly*) Didn't you know I'd feel like this? What did you think? That I'd sit crying gently into a nice little pocket handkerchief while you held my hand? That it would all be a great shock for me, but that presently I'd begin to get over it?

Sir Henry Angkatell:

“Lucy doesn't realise there are certain things she can't do. She's always got away with things. I don't suppose any other woman in the world could have flouted the traditions of Government House as she did. (*He takes his pipe from his pocket*) Most governors' wives have to toe the line of convention. But not Lucy! Oh dear me, no! She played merry hell with precedence at dinner parties - and that, my dear Henrietta, is the blackest of crimes. (*He pats his pockets, feeling for his tobacco pouch*) She put deadly enemies next to each other. She ran riot over the colour question. And instead of setting everyone at loggerheads, I'm damned if she didn't get away with it...It's that trick of hers - always smiling at people and looking so sweet and helpless. Servants are the same - she gives them any amount of trouble and they simply adore her.

Lady Angkatell/Midge Harvey

Midge: What are you talking about Lucy?

Lady Ang: This weekend, darling. (*she takes hold of Midge's left hand*) It's such a relief to talk it over with you, Midge dear, you're so practical.

Midge: Yes, but what are we talking over?

Lady Ang: John, of course, is delightful, with that dynamic personality that all really successful doctors seem to have. But as for Gerda, ah well, we must all be very, very kind.

Midge: Come now, Gerda Cristow isn't as bad as all that.

Lady Ang: Darling. Those eyes. Like a puzzled cow. And she never seems to understand a word one says to her.

Midge: I don't suppose she understands a word you say - and I don't know that I blame her. Your mind goes so fast, Lucy, that to keep pace with it, your conversation has to take the most astonishing leaps - with all the connecting links left out.

Lady Ang: Like monkeys. Fortunately Henrietta is here. She was wonderful last spring when we played limericks or anagrams - one of those things - we had all finished when we suddenly discovered that poor Gerda hadn't even started. She didn't even know what the game *was*. It was dreadful, wasn't it Midge?

Midge: Why anyone ever comes to stay with the Angkatells, I don't know. What with the brainwork and the round games and your peculiar style of conversation Lucy.

Lady Ang: I suppose we must be rather trying... The poor dear looked so bewildered; and John looked so impatient. It was then that I was grateful to Henrietta...She turned to Gerda and asked for the pattern of the knitted pullover she was wearing - a dreadful affair in pea green - with little bobbles and pom-poms and things - oh, sordid - but Gerda brightened up at once and looked so pleased. The worst of it is Henrietta had to buy some wool and knit one... it was ghastly. No - on Henrietta it looked quite charming - which is what I mean when I say that the world is so very very sad. One simply doesn't know *why*...

Midge: Woah! Don't start rambling again, darling. Let's stick to the weekend.

Midge Harvey/Edward Angkatell

Midge: It's no good, Edward. You're an Angkatell and Henry and Lucy are Angkatells, but I'm only half an Angkatell. My father was a plain little business man - honest and hardworking and probably not very clever. It's from him I get the feeling that I don't like to accept favours. When his business failed, his creditors got paid twenty shillings in the pound. I'm like him. I mind about money and about debts. Don't you see, Edward, it's all right for you and Lucy. Lucy would have any of her friends to stay indefinitely and never think about it twice - and she could go and live on her friends if necessary. There would be no feeling of obligation. But I'm different.

Edward: You dear ridiculous child.

Midge: I may be ridiculous but *I am not a child*.

Edward: But it's all wrong that you should have to put up with rudeness and insolence. My God, Midge, I'd like to take you out of it all - carry you off to Ainswick.

Midge: (*furiously and half crying*) Why do you say these stupid things? You don't mean them. Do you think it makes life any easier when I'm being bullied and shouted at to remember that there are places like Ainswick in the world? Do you think I'm grateful to you for standing there and babbling about how much you'd like to take me out of it all? It sounds so charming and means absolutely nothing.

Gudgeon and Doris:

Gudgeon: *(putting a tray on the drinks table)* Well, fold the papers, Doris, the way I showed you. *(He starts to polish the glasses)*

Doris: *(moving hastily to the left of the coffee table)* Yes, Mr Gudgeon. *(she picks up "The Times" and folds it)* Her ladyship is bats, isn't she, Mr Gudgeon?

Gudgeon: Certainly not. Her ladyship has a very keen intellect. She speaks five foreign languages, and has been all over the world with Sir Henry. Sir Henry was governor of one of the principal provinces in India. He would have been the next Viceroy most probably if it hadn't been for that terrible Labour government doing away with the empire.

Doris: *(putting the newspaper on the left arm of the sofa)* My dad's Labour. *(There is a pause as Gudgeon looks almost pityingly at Doris)*

(She takes a step back. Apologetically) Oh, I'm sorry, Mr Gudgeon.

Gudgeon: *(tolerantly)* You can't help your parents, Doris.

Doris: *(humbly)* I know they're not class.

Gudgeon: *(patronizingly)* You are coming along quite nicely - although it's not what any of us have been used to. Gamekeeper's daughter, or Head Groom's daughter, a younger girl who knows her manners, and has been brought up right.

(Doris picks up the "Daily Graphic" and folds it)

That's what I like to train.

Doris: Sorry, Mr. Gudgeon.

Gudgeon: Ah well, it seems those days are gone for ever.

Doris: Miss Simmonds is always down on me, too.

Gudgeon: She's doing it for your own good, Doris. She's training you.

Doris: Shan't get more money, shall I, when I'm trained?

Gudgeon: Not much, I'm afraid.

Doris: Doesn't seem worth being trained then, does it?

Gudgeon: I'm afraid you might be right, my girl.

Edward Angkatell/Henrietta Angkatell

Edward: I wish you'd come to Ainswick more often, Henrietta. It's a long time now.

Henrietta: I know. One gets tangled up in things.

Edward: Is that the real reason?

Henrietta: Not Quite.

Edward: You can tell me, Henrietta.

Henrietta: *(turning; feelingly)* You are a dear, Edward. I'm very fond of you.

Edward: *(crossing to Henrietta, with drinks).* Why don't you come to Ainswick? *(hands drink to her)*

Henrietta: Because - one can't go back.

Edward: You used to be happy there, in the old days.

Henrietta: Yes, happy in the loveliest way of all - when one doesn't know one is happy.

Edward: (*raising his glass*) To Ainswick.

Henrietta: (*raising her glass*) Ainswick.

(*They both laugh, then sip their drinks*)

Is it the same, Edward? Or has it changed? Things do change.

Edward: I don't change.

Henrietta: No, darling Edward. You're always the same.

Edward: Same old stick in the mud.

Henrietta: Don't say that.

Edward: It's true. I've never been very good at - doing things.

Henrietta: I think perhaps you're wise not to do things.

Edward: That's an odd thing for you to say, Henrietta. You, who've been so successful.

Henrietta: Sculpture isn't a thing you set out to do and succeed in. It's something that gets *at* you - and haunts you - so that, in the end, you just have to make terms with it. And then - for a while - you get some peace.

Edward: Do you want to be peaceful, Henrietta?

Henrietta: Sometimes I think I want to be peaceful more than anything in the world.

Gerda Cristow/John Cristow

John: I don't care about them. Just hand out Faith, Hope and probably a laxative. Oh, good Lord, I'm tired.

Gerda: John, you work too hard. You're so I'm selfish. I'm always telling the children how a doctor's life is almost a dedication. I'm so proud of the way you give all your time and all your energy and never spare yourself.

John: Oh, the heaven's sake, Gerda. You don't know in the least what you're talking about. Don't you realise I enjoy my profession? It's damned interesting and I make a lot of money.

Gerda: It's not the money you do it for, dear. Look how interested you are in your hospital work. It's to relieve pain and suffering.

John: Pain is a biological necessity and suffering will always be with us. It's the techniques of medicine that interests me.

Gerda: And - people suffering.

Oh for God's sake! I'm sorry, Gerda. I didn't mean to shout at you. I'm afraid I've been terribly moody and bad-tempered lately. I'm - I'm sorry.

Gerda: It's quite alright, dear. I understand.

John: You know, if you weren't so patient, so long suffering, it will be better. Why don't you turn on me sometimes, swear at me, give as good as you get? Oh, don't look so shocked! It would be better if you did. No man likes being drowned in treacle.

Gerda: You're tired, John

John: Yes, I'm tired.

Gerda: You need a holiday

John: I'd like to go to the south of France - the Mediterranean, the sun, the Mimosa in flour.

Gerda: Why shouldn't we go, then? Oh, I don't quite know how we should manage about the children. Of course Terence is at school all day, but he's so rude to Mademoiselle. She really has very little authority, even over Zena. No, I don't think I should be very happy. Of course, they could go see Elsie at Bexhill period or perhaps Mary Foley would take them...

John: What were you saying?

Gerda: The children.

John: What about them?

Gerda: I was wondering how we could manage about them if we went to the South of France.

John: Why should we go to the south of France, what are you talking about?

Gerda: Because you said you would like to.

John: Oh that! I was daydreaming.

Gerda: I don't see why we couldn't manage it, only it's a little worrying if one feels that the person left in charge isn't really reliable, and I do sometimes feel...

John: You never stop worrying about something or other. The heaven's sake let's relax and enjoy this weekend. At least you have a respite from domestic bothers.

Veronica Craye/John Cristow

Veronica. Can I have a cigarette please?

John. Yes, of course.

Veronica. I sent you because we've got to talk. We've got to make arrangements. For our future, I mean.

John. Have we a future?

Veronica. Of course we've got a future. We've wasted 10 years. There's no no need to waste anymore time.

John. I'm sorry, Veronica. I'm afraid you've got this worked out the wrong way. I've enjoyed meeting you again very much, but you know we don't really belong together - we're world's apart.

Veronica. Nonsense John. I love you and you love me. We've always loved each other. You were very obstinate in the past. But never mind that now. Look, our lives needn't

clash. I don't mean to go back to the United States for quite a while. When I finish the picture I'm working on now, I'm going to play a straight part on the London stage. I've got a new play - Elderton's written it for me. It will be a terrific success.

John. I'm sure it will.

Veronica. And you can go on being a doctor. You're quite well known, they tell me. I'm a fairly well known consultant on certain diseases, if it interests you, but I imagine it doesn't.

Veronica. What it means is we can both get on with our own jobs. It couldn't it worked out better.

John. You really are the most interesting character. Don't you realise that I'm a married man. I have children?

Veronica. Well I'm married myself at the moment. But these things are easily arranged. A good lawyer can fix anything. I always did mean to marry you, darling. I can't think why I have this terrible passion for you, but there it is.

John. I'm sorry, Veronica. It's out of the question.

Veronica. But I tell you a good lawyer can easily fix...

John. No good lawyer is going to fix anything. Your life and mine have nothing in common.

Veronica. Not after last night?

You are not a child, Veronica. You had two husbands and, I've no doubt, a good Many Lovers. What does last night mean exactly? Nothing at all, and you know it.

Veronica. If you seen your face - yesterday evening - when I came through that window, we might have been back in the South of France all those years ago. I was back in the South of France. Try to understand, Veronica. You came to me last night straight out of the past. I've been thinking about you. Wondering whether I've been is why is a young man as I thought myself - or whether I'd been simply a coward. And, suddenly, there you were - like a dream. Today I'm back to the present, a man ten years older. A man you don't know and probably wouldn't like very much if you did know him.

Inspector Colquhoun:

Actually anyone could have shot him. There are no alibis in this case. No times or places to check. Just look at the entrances and exits. You could shooting from the terrace, pop around the house and In by this window. Or through the front door and hall and in by that door, and if you say you've come from the farm or the kitchen garden or from shooting in the woods, nobody can check that statement. There are shrubs and undergrowth right up to the house. You could play hide and seek there for hours. The revolver was one of those used for Target practice. Anyone could have picked it up and they all handled it, though the only clear prints on it are those of Mrs Cristow and

Henrietta Angkatell. It all boils down to what sort of man John Cristow was. If you know all about a man, you can guess who would have wanted to murder him.

Detective Sergeant Penny/Inspector Colquhoun

Sgt. Get anything useful out of her?

Inspector. She was Cristow's mistress. She told me that accounts for his saying "Henrietta" before or he died.

Sgt. That seems fair enough.

Inspector. If it's true.

Sgt. What other the reason could he have for saying her name?

Inspector. It could have been - an accusation.

Sgt. You mean she might have done him in?

Inspector. It's possible.

Sgt. My money's on the wife. If Mrs Cristow had found out about her husband and this Henrietta, if gives us what we want - a motive.

Inspector. Henrietta Angkatell says she didn't know.

Sgt. You can't be sure of that. Somebody tipped Mrs Cristow off, as like as not.

Inspector. She couldn't have hidden her feelings for long. She's not that kind of woman.

Sgt. What about the others? They're in the clear, I suppose.

Inspector. There doesn't seem any reason why any of them should have wanted John Cristow dead. But there's a good deal we don't know yet. They're all watchful and cagey about what they say.

Sgt. I can't see how Sir Henry or Lady Angkatell could have any reason for wanting Cristow out of the way.

Inspector. Nor the little girl - Miss Harvey. But remember that statement of Edward Angkatell's: "Did John Cristow say anything before he died? Nothing at all". A flat denial, that, of what we know to be true. Both Sir Henry and Miss Harvey say that John Cristow said "Henrietta" in quite a loud tone.