

# THE HOLIDAY LODGE MYSTERY

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FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNTAIN LODGE - DAY

WILLIAM MARTIN (30) swerves on a snowy road to a remote mountain lodge, while ELLA GARCIA (30) stares at a photo of the lodge. The sky is bluer than blue, the trees are greener than green, and the snow is, well, white.

WILLIAM

This must be it.

William leans from the driver's side and examines the photo. He's overjoyed.

Ella and William step out of the car in top-of-the-line Gen-Z European attire and stare at the lodge.

ELLA

Welcome to our bravest investment  
and our road to riches!

William laughs and points to the sign that reads, "The International Lodge."

WILLIAM

You mean, our new business risk.

ELLA

I wrote the business plan,  
remember? It's a turnkey operation!  
We'll make millions!

WILLIAM

That cost our entire savings.

ELLA

Six guest rooms! If we have only  
33% occupancy, the guests pay our  
mortgage, taxes, utilities, and  
food. With 66% occupancy, we're  
rich!

WILLIAM

You didn't add in upkeep and repair  
costs.

Ella holds up a key ring with two keys on it.

ELLA

Such a worrier. He sent us the  
deed.

(MORE)

ELLA (CONT'D)

Let's check the place out before  
the old guy cashes our check.

WILLIAM

I'll grab the Champagne if he's  
waiting for us like he said.

William grabs the Champagne from the backseat.

Ella tries the door and it swings open without unlocking it.  
Everyone has difficulty pronouncing Lars's surname,  
Svensonson.

ELLA

Lars Sven-son-son! What A trusting,  
90-year-old Swede.

WILLIAM

We better do a quick inventory to  
see if anything's been stolen.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

They see a small registration desk and a comfortable lobby  
with a fireplace, three couches, and two stuffed chairs. The  
walls are decorated in antique Swedish and historic Viking  
motifs.

There is a wooden 2-foot-long model of a Viking warship on  
the fireplace mantle.

A large dining table and chairs are in the back of the lobby  
with a bay window and snowy view.

A staircase leads to the guest rooms.

ELLA

You check the guest rooms upstairs.  
I'll check the kitchen and our room  
down here.

William moves in for a kiss.

WILLIAM

Wait a minute.  
(kisses Ella)  
The kitchen is my domain. You were  
going to manage the guests and  
their rooms, remember?

They kiss again, and Ella heads upstairs while talking.

ELLA  
(points to herself)  
Sheets, towels, and toilets.  
(points to William)  
Brunch, dinner, and dishes.

William heads to the kitchen.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, HALLWAY AND GUEST ROOMS - CONTINUOUS

Ella sees three doors on each side of the hallway and peeks into the first guest room. It's tidy and has an old wooden full bed, a small desk with a chair, and a suitcase holder.

She peeks into a small but clean bathroom.

She flushes the toilet it flushes but keeps running. She shrugs.

ELLA  
Needs a new flapper. Cheap.

She peeks into five of the six guest room doors before she HEARS a JEEP drive up to the house.

She freezes and yells downstairs.

ELLA (CONT'D)  
William, tell them check-in time  
isn't until 3 pm.

Ella races downstairs and William races in from the kitchen in a panic.

WILLIAM  
They got the food delivery all  
wrong unless we plan to serve  
pancakes for every meal!

They hear a KNOCK on the front door and open it together.

CONSTABLE MAGGIE ANDERSSON (40) stands at the door in full police uniform and eyeglasses as thick as Coke bottles.

She speaks in a sweet voice to Ella and William as she moves her head around with a puzzled expression to make out their physical features.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
I'm Constable Maggie Andersson.  
Don't mind the glasses, I have  
minor sight issues. You must have  
bought the Sven-son-son place.  
(MORE)

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)

Better prepare yourselves for  
strange foreigners. That's all Lars  
used to get!

WILLIAM

Yes, I'm William Martin--

ELLA

And I'm Ella Garcia.

They all reach out for a handshake at the same time but the  
Constable's hand ends up between Ella and William.

Ella and William glance at each other before William moves  
his hand to meet the Constable's, and guides her hand over to  
Ella's hand.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

A storm is brewing tonight. I hope  
you're prepared!

ELLA

We're prepared, except for one  
toilet.

WILLIAM

I hope our guests like pancakes.

The Constable ignores the comments.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

I came around to warn you about an  
escaped prisoner in the area.

William and Ella step back. Their eyes open wide.

ELLA

Escaped prisoner?

WILLIAM

A murderer?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

I'm not at liberty to discuss an  
ongoing investigation.

WILLIAM

Do you have a description?

The Constable looks sadly at the ground.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Male, 1.4 to 2.1 meters in height--

WILLIAM  
(interrupts)  
Wait, that's four and a half feet  
to seven feet tall.

The Constable looks back.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
I didn't get a good look at him.  
But he was fuzzier than a hedgehog  
in a snowstorm. He spoke in a  
foreign language. English or Irish,  
I think.  
(Cockney English accent)  
All this "Ello Gov'na" talk.

ELLA  
I'm surprised you confirmed he was  
male.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Let me know if you see him.  
(looks away again)  
Or her.

The Constable turns to her Jeep but quickly turns back.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)  
Better get some wood chopped before  
the snow.

The Constable returns to her car and drives off, swerving  
from one side to the other side of the road.

Ella and William watch curiously.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, KITCHEN - DAY

William panics about the food supplies on the counter.

We see several boxes of generic pancake mix, five loaves of  
French bread, two 10-kg sacks of potatoes, four cases of rosé  
wine, and a case of an eggnog drink called "Rompope."

William picks up and glares at a bottle of rosé and bottle of  
Rompope. He sets them down and stares at the potatoes and  
pancake mix.

He yells upstairs to Ella.

WILLIAM

We've become the starch capital of the world! We have no vegetables or fruit!

He removes a bottle of wine and examines the pink-looking wine. He's angrier.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

And they gave us rosé wine instead of the fine wines I ordered!

He hears Ella SCREAM.

William grabs a spatula and races upstairs.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, HALLWAY AND GUEST ROOMS - CONTINUOUS

Ella is staring at JIMMY REGAN (22; later ALFRED), a smiling, frightened lad dressed like a typical Irish teen with a baggy and well-worn winter coat.

William storms in with a spatula raised like a knife.

WILLIAM

Who are you?

Jimmy speaks with a heavy Irish brogue.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Wait! Don't flip me.

ELLA

How did you get in here?

JIMMY/ALFRED

I helped the store clerk bring in your groceries.

ELLA

You left the front door unlocked?

JIMMY/ALFRED

It doesn't lock. Ya know, you should get a dead bolt lock to keep out the riff-raff and gypsies.

WILLIAM

Why didn't you leave with the grocery clerk?

JIMMY/ALFRED

I'm applying for the job.

ELLA

What job?

JIMMY/ALFRED

The job as a valet-slash-butler-slash-manservant.

WILLIAM

We're not hiring.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Suit yourself, but every lodge and chalet within 1,000 kilometers has one, and if you don't, your guest reviews will go right down the Jacks.

Ella has an epiphany.

ELLA

You're the escaped convict!

William takes a few jabs with the spatula at Jimmy.

WILLIAM

He fits the description.

ELLA

Between four and a half feet and seven feet tall.

William swings the spatula like a sword.

WILLIAM

What were you arrested for?  
Kidnapping? Murder? Terrorism?

JIMMY/ALFRED

Truancy.

William and Ella look suspicious.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

I left a trade school. I thought I was going to learn how to trade things like stolen goods for money, but that wasn't it at all. They wanted me to work for free!

How did the Constable catch you?



JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

She hit me with her police car, and I was way off the road. I explained I was passing through on my way.

ELLA

On your way to where?

JIMMY/ALFRED

To anywhere I could land me a job as a valet-slash-butler-slash-manservant.

(pitiful look)

Anything for room and board with a few bob on the side.

WILLIAM

The Constable says you escaped.

JIMMY/ALFRED

She couldn't see well enough to lock the holding cell. She left it open and I strolled out. I suppose she didn't want to spend Christmas alone, and neither do I.

Jimmy looks sadly at William and Ella.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

I'll be plenty of help. I can chop wood and wash dishes. I'll leave after Christmas and the Constable won't be the wiser.

William makes puppy dog eyes at Ella.

WILLIAM

It's only three days.

ELLA

It's harboring a fugitive.

With a big smile, Jimmy puts his arm around Ella and William and leads them out and down the stairs.

JIMMY/ALFRED

You won't be disappointed. I found Christmas decorations in the closet where I also found a black suit that belonged to the previous owner! You can change my name to Alfred.

William is excited.

WILLIAM

Like in Batman. I like it!

ELLA

Help decorate for Christmas and we'll think about it, but the first sign of trouble, out the backdoor, you'll go!

JIMMY/ALFRED

It's a deal, shake on it.

William extends his arm to shake, but Jimmy shakes like a dog after a bath.

WILLIAM

That's funny, Jimmy.

Jimmy removes a small electric alarm clock from his coat pocket.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Let me put this back then.

He sets the clock on an end table.

ELLA

You stole our clock?

JIMMY/ALFRED

You'll embarrass us if you put this old ting out. We use our phones now. You'll need to add extension cords with USB ports in every room.

WILLIAM

(surprised)

That's good advice.

ELLA

Don't steal anything else or you're out on your ear!

Jimmy ignores the comment.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Well now, let's see. That takes us up to lunchtime. Why don't I fry us up some potatoes?

WILLIAM

(to Jimmy)

I'll cook while you decorate. Guests will be here soon!

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Christmas decorations are everywhere.

Jimmy is now dressed as "Alfred the Butler" in a baggy black suit.

He's stuffing his freshly showered face like he hasn't eaten in weeks.

William wears an apron as he fries more potatoes.

Ella races in wearing a tool belt.

ELLA

I fixed the flapper in the toilet  
of Room #1.

WILLIAM

Now, they can go Number Two.

Jimmy snickers.

ELLA

So... Alfred, how will you greet  
our guests?

JIMMY/ALFRED

As Sir or Ma'am.

(beat)

Or "Sir-or-Ma'am," if I'm not  
entirely sure.

Ella rolls her eyes.

ELLA

I was always better at the handyman  
chores.

JIMMY/ALFRED

(to Ella)

Yes, Sir.

William laughs.

WILLIAM

And offer to bring their bags to  
their room.

JIMMY/ALFRED

(to William)

Yes, Sir-or-ma'am.

Ella laughs.

WILLIAM

And I was always better at cooking!

The doorbell RINGS.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I got this.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

A crackling fire burns in the fireplace.

Jimmy runs to the door. Stops as he reaches it, and composes himself before opening the door as a perfect butler.

UTA SCHULZ (24), a cute German college graduate steps in carrying an enormous backpack like it weighed little, even with cross-country skis and poles, and a hunting rifle with a scope strapped to it.

She speaks politely in a sweet German accent.

UTA

I am Uta Schulz. I have a reservation for three nights.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I'm the butler, Alfred.

Jimmy bows, looks up, and they share a moment.

UTA

You're Irish.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Where we have a saying, "When the road rises to meet you, love will be there to greet you."

Uta giggles and carries in her massive backpack.

UTA

I've not heard that one before.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Ms. Ella Garcia, the proprietor, will check you in, while I check you out.

(chuckles)

I mean, get your bags from your car.

UTA  
No car. I skied here, Ja?

Jimmy is smitten with Uta.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
Ja. Ja... Ja! Skis and a rifle?

UTA  
I'm a biathlete.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
Don't worry. Our bathrooms are for everyone.

UTA  
No, a competitor in a biathlon, a sports competition that combines skiing and shooting.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
I knew that.

UTA  
(laughs)  
No, you didn't.

Jimmy can't take his eyes off Uta and shuts the door despite hearing the second guest drive up in a new SUV.

Uta stands at the registration desk with Ella as they all hear a loud KNOCK on the door.

Jimmy turns reluctantly to open the door while gazing at Uta.

TITO MARTINEZ (26), a debonaire Spanish gentleman with the perfect three-day beard, enters and glares at Jimmy.

TITO  
I am Tito Martinez. My P-A made the reservations.

Jimmy turns to Tito with a puzzled look.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
Your Pa made your reservations?

TITO  
(rolls his eyes)  
Personal Assistant, of course.

Tito sees Uta and is immediately smitten.

TITO (CONT'D)

A woman with a rifle. Reminds me of  
my first revolution. I'm going to  
like it here!

He flips his keys to Jimmy.

TITO (CONT'D)

Park the car and get my bags--

JIMMY/ALFRED

Alfred.

Tito ignores Jimmy and slides to the reservation desk with  
Uta and Ella, who can't take her eyes off Tito.

Jimmy looks out to see Tito's new SUV.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

(mumbles)

I'll bring it back next spring.

He shuts the door from the outside.

Tito interrupts Uta and Ella.

TITO

My PA called from Chile.

ELLA

We're new owners and just arrived  
ourselves. I'll be with you in a  
minute.

Tito gazes at Uta.

TITO

Another minute to gaze upon such  
loveliness is all I require.

Uta is taken in by the flattering comment until Tito goes on  
while hitting on Ella.

TITO (CONT'D)

That, and a nice bottle of wine...

Jimmy comes in carrying three suitcases and sees Tito hitting  
on Ella.

TITO (CONT'D)

... Maybe a foot rub, and a sponge  
bath. Will there be appetizers and  
drinks served soon?

(MORE)

TITO (CONT'D)

I'm famished after a long  
helicopter flight and a ten-minute  
drive.

ELLA

You're the Billionaire's son from  
South America.

TITO

Was it that obvious?

Jimmy struggles to get Tito's luggage upstairs.

JIMMY/ALFRED

(laughs)

Based on the weight of the luggage  
alone. I think there's a body in  
this one.

As Jimmy reaches the top of the stairs, there is a KNOCK at  
the front door.

Jimmy drops the luggage and races downstairs to open the  
door.

He sees LILLY CHOU (23), an Asian woman dressed like a  
Hollywood director with a vibrant yellow wool scarf, taking a  
video with a new smartphone and narrating it as she strolls  
in. Lilly wears a gold necklace that reads, "Lilly."

LILLY

This is Lilly Chou, live from the  
International Lodge.

(overly dramatic)

With warnings of the treacherous  
storm approaching, it looks like  
we'll be cooped up in this Donner  
Party adventure for some time.

Jimmy looks outside to see clear blue skies with a perplexed  
look.

Lilly stops filming and looks back at Jimmy.

LILLY (CONT'D)

We filmmakers sometimes embellish  
our stories.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I'm the butler, Alfred. Can I fetch  
your bags?

Lilly races up to Jimmy.

LILLY

The camera is going to love you!  
Alfred. That's rich! Can you say  
that again?

Lilly films Jimmy who sounds nervous as he hides his face,  
turns his back, and speaks with a deeper, less-Irish voice.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I'm the butler, Alfred. Can I fetch  
your bags?

Jimmy escapes out the door.

LILLY

We'll fix it in post.

Lilly stops filming immediately and leaps to the registration  
desk to record additional video.

Both Uta and Tito turn their backs nonchalantly.

LILLY (CONT'D)

Chou, for three days.

TITO

(chuckles)

I'm sure they'll feed us for as  
long as we stay.

Lilly stops filming and glares at Tito.

Ella reassures the group.

ELLA

We'll have wine and appetizers out  
shortly.

She hands a room key to each guest.

Jimmy enters with a battered old suitcase with three wheels  
and a slightly bent handle.

Lilly looks back at Jimmy struggling with her luggage. She  
laughs. I haven't quite made it to A-List in Hollywood.

JIMMY/ALFRED

How low in the alphabet...

Ella interrupts and reprimands Jimmy with a harsh glare.

ELLA

Alfred?



JIMMY/ALFRED

Sorry, Mum.

LILLY

He's fine. In fact, he's kinda cute  
in a Quentin Tarantino way.

Lilly smiles at Jimmy.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

Jimmy answers the door to see AYUSH BRAHMIN (28) saluting him  
and wearing the uniform of the Indian Army Military Police.

Jimmy returns an awkward salute and lets Ayush inside.

AYUSH

My name is Ayush Brahman. I'm in  
the Indian Army Military Police for  
one last week before my discharge.

UTA

What will you do then?

AYUSH

I have no idea.  
(laughs)  
That drives my parents mad!

William walks in with two trays of homemade potato chips.

WILLIAM

I'm William, the co-owner. Welcome  
all.

ELLA

I'm Ella. Let's get you registered,  
Ayush. Have you been applying for  
jobs?

AYUSH

No, I majored in criminal science  
and philosophy. And philosophers  
from India are more common than  
fleas on a camel.

WILLIAM

(laughs)  
Buddha and Gandhi are tough acts to  
follow.

Ayush smiles at William.

AYUSH  
Exactly, Sir.

Lilly is smitten with Ayush. She begins to video him.

LILLY  
I love a man in uniform.

Jimmy brushes off his butler's suit.

AYUSH  
I get to change out of it upon  
entering a residence.

LILLY  
A strip show. Better yet.

Ella sneaks over to William to whisper.

ELLA  
We just hit 66% occupancy on day  
one. We'll be rich!

Ella sneaks a potato chip that is almost woody. She chews and crunches her way back to the registration desk.

William sees she has difficulty chewing and speaking.

WILLIAM  
Why don't you all explore the great  
outdoors before the weather gets  
worse?

Jimmy helps bring the luggage upstairs while Ella struggles to swallow. She coughs as the guests disappear upstairs.

#### SERIES OF SHOTS

-- Uta is fully dressed in cold-weather clothes as she heads out the front door. She sees Jimmy splitting logs.

-- Uta returns as Tito leaves wearing fashionable but not functional cold-weather clothes. He sees Jimmy splitting logs.

-- Tito returns in a short while, acting like he's freezing to death, as Lilly heads out the door with her smartphone taking video. She videos Jimmy splitting logs.

-- Lilly returns with a near-frozen phone as Ayush heads out.

-- Ayush is the least prepared for the snow. He takes a look out the front door and doesn't exit, but he holds the door open for Jimmy who brings in logs for the fire.

AYUSH  
(laughs)  
That was exhilarating.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, LOBBY - EARLY EVENING

The guests stand around the big table often looking at the approaching storm clouds visible through the bay window. Most are dressed in upscale, Gen-Z clothes, trying to impress each other.

Ayush is dressed in clean but common Indian clothes.

They have difficulty chewing the potato chips. The rosé wine in plastic cups helps the chewing but it tastes mediocre. It's a comical scene.

Jimmy enters with two more bottles of rosé wine on a tray.

He places the bottles on the table, pours himself a half-a-glass, and acts like a professional sommelier.

He swirls the wine in the plastic cup, holding it up to the light. He speaks with confidence.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
It looks like a very good month.

He takes a sip and holds it on his tongue. He rinses with it and swallows it making a face like he knows it isn't fine wine.

He turns proud with an heir of sophistication.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)  
It's oaky and yet obtuse.

Everyone laughs and pats Jimmy's back.

Ella enters from the kitchen with a plate of brats.

WILLIAM  
We had a limited grocery delivery due to the approaching storm. The locals cleaned out the shelves before we arrived. We were lucky to find brats in the freezer.

UTA  
We will be fine with anything.

Tito flips his keys to Jimmy.

TITO

(gazes at Uta)

Alfred, would you mind bringing in  
a case of Escherndorfer Lump  
Silvaner. It's my favorite white  
wine from Germany.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Right away, Sir.

(mumbles)

I should have stolen the car when I  
had a chance.

Uta and Lilly laugh and Jimmy exits with a smile.

Ella enters with a giant platter of stuffed baked potatoes.

ELLA

William, our chef, magically put  
these together.

WILLIAM

We're pushing the potatoes at  
supper and pancakes at brunch.

ELLA

It's all they delivered, but Lars  
Sven-son-son left us some frozen  
meats with Swedish labels.

Jimmy returns with the case of wine.

JIMMY/ALFRED

It's snowing lightly.

TITO

The wine should be perfectly  
chilled.

ELLA

This is overly generous of you,  
Tito.

TITO

It is the least I can do.

Tito feels around in his pockets for his car keys.

TITO (CONT'D)

(glares at Jimmy)

Did you give me my car keys back?

Ella glares at Jimmy and he reluctantly returns the keys.

Ella, Uta, and Lilly smile at Tito, but Ayush is worried as he looks out the window.

AYUSH

It is snowing severely, yes?

ELLA

Yes, but will be warm and safe in here.

Jimmy tries to lighten the mood.

JIMMY/ALFRED

So, Ayush, tell us about the Indian Military Police.

AYUSH

(glances at the women)  
They used me like a British detective but paid me like a private.

Everyone nods to show they are listening.

AYUSH (CONT'D)

One step above a sarwan.

WILLIAM

What is a sarwan?

AYUSH

A camel driver.

Everyone laughs.

WILLIAM

So, you know about the fleas.

Ayush laughs.

AYUSH

Exactly, Sir.

Everyone turns to Tito.

ELLA

How did your father become a Billionaire, Tito?

TITO

(elusive)  
Various businesses.

Everyone has their phones out checking Google.

UTA

Oooh. This is not good.

LILLY

He would be imprisoned in my country, California.

AYUSH

My country would have made him a camel driver for 100 years.

WILLIAM

And your parents, Ayush?

AYUSH

Both physicians. I am the underachiever in the family.

Uta toasts Tito and Ayush.

UTA

Here's to not becoming our parents!

Everyone drinks and laughs. Tito and Ayush receive several pats on the back.

WILLIAM

Tell us about yourself, Alfred.

Jimmy laughs.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Not much to tell. I didn't have the school scores to go to Uni, so I tried a Trade school.

(looks away)

I quickly learned I had no skill to trade.

TITO

Didn't your parents help you out?

JIMMY/ALFRED

Me mum works in a laundry after me Da was blown up by an old IRA bomb that his tractor ran over by accident when I was three. He was helping a neighbor clear his land.

SILENCE

Every eye in the place is on Jimmy. They gather around him.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

I left home to wander so me Mum  
wouldn't have to feed me.

Ella comes and puts an arm around Jimmy.

ELLA

We couldn't be happier that J...  
Alfred answered our advertisement  
for work.

Lilly raises a glass and smiles at Jimmy.

LILLY

Here's to not knowing what we want  
to do in life!

Everyone cheers loudly and drinks.

WILLIAM

Let's eat!

Everyone sits and immediately begins to eat.

They HEAR a KNOCK at the door.

Jimmy pops up to get the door.

FATHER O'MALLEY (40), a charismatic Catholic priest in a long  
wool coat, black suit, and white "priest" collar, bursts in  
with two large bottles of Irish Whiskey. He's wet, cold, and  
in a panic.

FATHER O'MALLEY

Lars! It's Father O'Malley.  
(looks around)  
Where's Lars?

Ella and William greet the priest. William puts an arm around  
Ella.

WILLIAM

I'm afraid Lars isn't here, and we  
don't know when he'll be back. I'm  
William Martin, this is Ella  
Garcia.

FATHER O'MALLEY

(jokes)  
You're not married in the eyes of  
the Church?

Ella ignores the comment.

ELLA  
 Lars sold the place to us.  
 (points to the guests)  
 These are our first guests.

The priest blesses the group with the sign of the cross.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
 This is awkward.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
 (mumbles)  
 Wait 'til ya try the crisps.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
 Are you Irish? Bless you, my son.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
 (laughs)  
 Protestant, Father.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
 I should have guessed. Nothing's  
 going right today.

WILLIAM  
 I'll get you a plate and a glass of  
 wine.

The Father leaps to the table.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
 I've been punished by the elements  
 enough for one night. Bring me a  
 glass for my whiskey!  
 (laughs as he looks at  
 them all)  
 Will I be able to convert any of  
 you heathens?

Everyone shakes their heads 'No,' and laughs.

The priest unscrews the bottle of whiskey and pours himself a  
 tall glass.

FATHER O'MALLEY (CONT'D)  
 Let me tell ya about my longtime  
 friend, Lars Sven-son-son.

It's as if they are all in a happy fog as the group eats and  
 laughs at the Father's story as he points around the room at  
 various Viking treasures, nick-nacks, and art pieces.

The snow outside is fierce and steady.



During the Priest's comical stories...

The priest stands to point out the wooden replica of a Viking warship on the fireplace mantle. The guests are riveted to the priest's stories and the priest.

Tito tries to seduce Uta by pouring her the fine German wine and whispering into her ear. Uta is partially receptive but glances frequently at Jimmy.

Lilly seduces Ayush by taking his photo and whispering to him. Ayush is shy but is giving in.

Ella and William sip the rose wine smiling at the happy interactions of their guests. Ella glances frequently at Tito.

Jimmy brings in cookies from the kitchen and waves them under the noses of Uta and Lilly.

Suddenly, a strong gust of icy wind blows open the front door. They all turn their heads to see LARS SVENSONSON (90s) standing in the doorway wearing a Viking long coat and heavy snow boots.

His facial expression is frozen and vacuous.

All but the priest stand in shock at the table as Lars mumbles his last words.

LARS  
You found the Christmas decora...

Lars falls forward on his face and into the lobby. He has a butcher knife sticking out of his upper back.

With his last breath, he gasps.

LARS (CONT'D)  
Valhalla.

Ella, Lilly, Uta, and the priest SCREAM.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
It's Lars!

The priest's head spins around before settling slowly on the table, drunk and unconscious.

WILLIAM  
I'll get my phone and call the police.

William races to the back bedroom.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, LOBBY - LATER

The Constable KNOCKS once and enters the door. Lars's feet are so close to the door that she has to squeeze into the lobby. She's covered in snow.

The Constable shuts the door and removes her hat and coat.

Jimmy hides his face as he fetches the coat and hat. He speaks in a less-Irish accent with a deeper voice.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I'll take those for you, Mum.

The Constable squints at Jimmy but doesn't recognize him.

ELLA

Thank God you got here, Constable.

WILLIAM

We didn't know what to do.

The Constable squints her eyes to Ella and William.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

I met you earlier. Ella and William.

WILLIAM

Good memory.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

It makes up for my poor eyesight.

She inspects Lars and sees he has a Christmas pillow under his head.

She takes out her smartphone and takes several photos of the body, knife, and pillow.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)

That's most odd.

ELLA

We added the Christmas pillow to make him seem more comfortable. His last words were, "You found the Christmas decora..." and "Valhalla."

AYUSH

Very odd last words?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
No, I meant that it was odd that  
Lars was supposed to leave town  
after he sold the place.

WILLIAM  
We had no idea he was still around.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
(suspicious)  
Uh-huh! Well, someone did.

The Constable glares at everyone.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)  
Did anybody touch anything?

BEGIN FLASHBACK

Lars mumbles his last words.

LARS  
You found the Christmas decora...

With his last breath, he gasps.

LARS (CONT'D)  
Valhalla.

Lars falls forward on his face and into the lobby. He has a  
large knife sticking out of his upper back.

Ella, Lilly, Uta, and the priest SCREAM.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
It's Lars!

The priest's head spins around before settling slowly on the  
table, drunk and unconscious.

WILLIAM (V.O.)  
I ran to get my phone to call the  
police.

William races to the back room.

AYUSH (V.O.)  
I ran upstairs to get my phone too.

Ayush races upstairs.

Lilly takes out her phone and begins filming.

ELLA (V.O.)  
We did pull him in so we could shut  
the door. Lars was letting in the  
cold!

Uta and Tito pull Lars in enough the shut the door.

ELLA (V.O.)  
Then we just watched him lie there  
dead. That's all.

LILLY  
Check for a pulse! See if he's  
still breathing!

Jimmy checks for a pulse on the wrong spot on the neck.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
I got nuttin'.

Tito and Uta try to find a pulse on his arms.

TITO  
No.

UTA  
What do we do?

Uta grabs the knife handle and freezes.

UTA (CONT'D)  
Shouldn't we take the knife out?

TITO  
No.

Uta releases her grasp on the knife and then Tito grabs it.

TITO (CONT'D)  
It's in there good.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
I don't think you're supposed to  
touch a murder weapon.

Tito whips out a handkerchief and wipes off any fingerprints.

Tito, Uta, and Jimmy back away from the body.

Lilly stops filming, grabs the Christmas pillow from the  
couch, and puts it under Lars's head.

As she backs away, William enters the room and begins to call  
the police.

Ayush races downstairs, sees the pillow under Lars's head, and calmly addresses the group.

AYUSH  
Don't touch anything...  
(glares at the pillow)  
Else!

WILLIAM (V.O.)  
We didn't touch anything.  
(points to the pillow)  
Else!

END FLASHBACK

The Constable strolls slowly past everyone in the room.

She stops at each face, squints, and moves her face around to get a better image of each of them as she speaks.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
(to William)  
It's quite a storm tonight.  
(to Ella)  
The road is treacherous.  
(to Uta)  
There were no other cars or lorries  
on the road.

Jimmy starts to sneak around the group to the other side of William.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)  
(to Tito)  
He didn't own a car.  
(to Lilly)  
If you heard Lars speak, he's only  
been dead about an hour.  
(to Ayush)  
The town won't risk the lives of  
ambulance attendants on a night  
like this.

Jimmy stops on the other side of William and the Constable walks right to him. She still doesn't recognize him.

Suddenly, the priest sits straight up in his chair.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
I saw everything!

The Constable leaps over to the priest and tries to make out his face.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Mike? I mean, Father O'Malley?

The Constable hugs Father O'Malley pulling his face to her breast. The priest remains drunk as a skunk.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
Maggie?

Everyone's eyes open wide.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
I'm so glad you're here!

FATHER O'MALLEY  
Good heavens, why?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Because one of these fine people  
over there is a murderer!

They all look at Lars and then at each other with suspicion.

The Constable strolls over to Lars.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)  
Let's move Lars to the toolshed out  
back.

ELLA  
There's a toolshed?

WILLIAM  
Out back?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
We can't leave him here. He'll  
stink to high heaven.

Everyone hears the priest's head hit the table again.

WILLIAM  
Alfred, grab a blanket from  
upstairs.

The Constable looks around as Jimmy runs upstairs looking away from the Constable.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Who's Alfred?

ELLA  
He's the valet-slash-butler-slash-  
manservant we hired to help us out.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Huh? Lars never had a butler.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LODGE - NIGHT

Heavy snow is falling.

In the bay window, we see the priest fast asleep with his head on the table.

Everyone else trudges through the snow holding a piece of the blanket as solemn as pallbearers, with the Christmas pillow under Lars's head, and the knife in his back.

EXT./INT. TOOLSHED - CONTINUOUS

William opens the door to the toolshed. It's dark and there is no light switch.

They place Lars and the blanket inside the shed, exit, and shut the door.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

They all shake off snow before trudging through the door.

ELLA  
Constable Andersson can have Room  
5, and Father O'Malley can have  
Room 6.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
Hey, that's my room.

ELLA  
Alfred, you'll be on the couch in  
the lobby.

WILLIAM  
After you help me get the good  
priest upstairs.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
I'll conduct formal interviews in  
the morning. No one leaves the  
Lodge! I'll need to see all of your  
passports.

The Constable glances at Ella, William, Jimmy, and the priest.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)  
I'll get your passports tomorrow.

The guests drop their passports on the dining table and climb silently upstairs to their rooms.

The Constable scoops up the passports without counting them and follows them upstairs.

William and Jimmy wake the priest who is drunk and groggy.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
Did I miss anything?

JIMMY/ALFRED  
Just the human sacrifice, Father.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
Okay then.

William and Jimmy help the priest upstairs as Ella watches them and sips wine.

WILLIAM  
You'll be fine by morning, Father.  
(to Jimmy)  
I hope they all like pancakes.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
(whispers)  
Who is the smart money on?

WILLIAM  
What?

JIMMY/ALFRED  
Who killed Lars Sven-son-son?

They disappear upstairs in the hallway.

WILLIAM (O.C.)  
I have no idea. I hope it wasn't you.

JIMMY/ALFRED (O.C.)  
For stealing his suit?

WILLIAM (O.C.)  
Shhhhhh!

Ella smiles and sets the wine glass down.



ELLA  
(smiles and mumbles)  
It looks like we'll be at 116.67  
percent occupancy tonight, not  
counting the dead body. We'll be  
rich!

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, HALLWAY AND GUEST ROOMS - NIGHT

In the dimly lit hallway, Jimmy carries a platter of cookies wearing his underwear and the black coat of his butler suit.

He taps lightly on Uta's door.

She answers wearing a short T-shirt and a puzzled look.

Jimmy gazes and whispers.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
The International Lodge is proud to  
offer a late-night snack.

UTA  
(whispers)  
No, thank you, Alfred, but I like  
your...  
(looks down)  
Hospitality.

She shuts the door quietly and with a smile.

Jimmy strolls down to Lilly's room and taps quietly on the door.

She answers wearing a short nightgown and a smile.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
The International Lodge is proud to  
offer a late-night...

She yanks Jimmy into the room and slams the door.

The Constable's door opens. She sticks her head out, squints her eyes, and glares suspiciously down the hallway.

The Constable shuts her door.

Tito quietly sneaks out of his room wearing his underwear and taps on Uta's door.

Uta opens her door, pulls Tito inside, and shuts the door.

The Constable's door opens. She sticks her head out, squints her eyes, and glares suspiciously down the hallway.

The Constable shuts her door.

Father O'Malley opens his door wearing a white T-shirt and undies.

He glares suspiciously down the hallway in random directions in a drunken manner.

He leaves his door open as he takes a few wobbly steps down the hallway.

He spins around and wobbles back to his room and shuts the door.

The Constable's door opens. She sticks her head out and squints her eyes directly at the Priest's room.

She shakes her head, bewildered, as she shuts her door.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, LOBBY - MORNING

SUPER: "Christmas Eve"

The Priest is absent.

Everyone, except the Constable, sits around the table eating pancakes and drinking coffee.

Jimmy races in and out of the kitchen with more coffee or pancakes but he's careful to hide his face from the Constable.

The Constable gets up from the table and rearranges the two single chairs in the lobby to face each other a few feet apart.

She has two new tablet computers with a list of names on one of them. She initiates the "Translation App" on both tablets.

She puts on two EarBuds.

The others look on in amazement.

The Constable stares at the list of names of the people in the house.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Is M-Uta Schulz, here?

Uta walks over and takes a seat opposite the Constable as the others look on and listen in.

UTA

It's Uta Schultz from Ulm, Germany.

The Constable hands Uta one of the tablet computers.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

You may speak in any language you are comfortable with, M-Uta. Our new AI phone app will translate in real-time!

The Constable speaks into her tablet as she stares at Uta's passport.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)

What brought you to this lodge?

The translator on Uta's tablet responds immediately in the Constable's voice.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (V.O.)

Was hat Sie zu dieser Lodge geführt?

Everyone at the table is amazed.

UTA

I skied here.

The Constable is confused but continues.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Did you know Lars Sven-son-son before last night?

Uta's tablet repeats the question in perfect German.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (V.O.)

Kannten Sie Lars Sven-son-son schon vor gestern Abend?

UTA

No. This is ridiculous, ja? I speak English.

The Constable is angry.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

In German, please.

UTA  
Nein, du dummer idiot, und ich  
spreche immer noch Englisch!

We HEAR Uta's voice from the Constable's tablet computer.

UTA (V.O.)  
No, you stupid idiot, and I still  
speak English!

The Constable smiles triumphantly.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Finally, now, we're getting  
somewhere!

Jimmy has his back to the Constable as he mumbles.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
That translator app will take  
forever!

The Constable stands and yells at Jimmy.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
What was that? From the table!

Jimmy speaks without turning around.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
I said, "That translator app is  
very clever."

The Constable calms down and asks another question.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
If you have never been here before,  
why was your name in the guest  
register this past summer?

Uta stands angrily and tosses the tablet computer to the floor.

The Constable stands in anger.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)  
Did you bring a rifle here to shoot  
Lars Sven-son-son?

UTA  
Ich will meinen Anwalt. Ich will  
meinen Anwalt. Ich will meinen  
Anwalt.

Uta's voice comes from the tablet on the floor.

UTA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I want my lawyer. I want Tom  
Sawyer. I want to destroy her.

The tablet computer on the floor sparks, sizzles, and dies.

The guests are stunned as Uta returns to the table.

ELLA  
(mumbles sadly)  
This looks like a blight on  
business.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
(angry)  
What was that?

Ella points to the snow outside.

ELLA  
(loud, uplifting)  
I said, 'It looks like a white  
Christmas.'

The Constable glares at Ella.

Uta collapses in a chair and tosses more pancakes onto her  
plate, and shoves them into her mouth.

The Constable stares at Tito's passport.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Tito Martinez.  
(glares at Uta)  
I hope you speak English.

Tito is nervous as he approaches his seat.

TITO  
Yes. Si. I mean, Yes.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Why are you here?

TITO  
The snow, fresh mountain air, and  
all the forest creatures.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Forest creatures?

TITO  
(not confident)  
Furry little guys, blackish-looking  
birds... three-toed sloths?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Three-toed sloths. I see. Have you  
been here before?

Tito looks away and then glances at Uta.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)  
(accusing him)  
Your name shows up under the name  
Uta Schulz's name on the guest  
register last summer.

Everyone glances at Uta and Tito.

Tito laughs and glares at the Constable.

TITO  
I'm a young, wealthy, international  
traveler and investor. It's my job  
to circle the globe looking for...  
(glances at William and  
Ella)  
New friends and adventures. Si!

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
(glares at Uta)  
Lars refused to sell the place to  
you and your hired assassin!

Jimmy stands abruptly and yells on the way to the kitchen.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
(interrupts)  
I think we need more coffee!

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
(to Tito)  
I think you need a lawyer!

Tito hobbles back to the table and shoves a pancake in his  
mouth.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)  
Lilly Chou?  
(reassuringly)  
This shouldn't take long.

Lilly smiles as she walks to the interview chair.

The Constable stares at Lilly's passport.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)  
Los Angeles, California?

LILLY  
I prefer to say Hollywood.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
East Los Angeles is a long way from  
Hollywood.

LILLY  
I prefer to say Hollywood. I didn't  
say I live there!

Jimmy enters from the kitchen with a pot of coffee he uses to  
hide his face as he listens in great interest.

LILLY (CONT'D)  
Life is full of challenges.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Like the challenge to pay for this  
vacation of yours?

Lilly glances at Jimmy and speaks sadly to the Constable.

LILLY  
I came here looking for work as a  
housekeeper-slash-website manager-  
slash advertising director.

Ella and William drop their chins to their chests.

LILLY (CONT'D)  
But I saw they recently hired a  
valet-slash-butler-slash-manservant  
so I was afraid to ask for work.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
You knew that Lars Sven-son-son's  
guest lodge was going bankrupt  
because he never advertised on the  
Internet.

LILLY  
I had to write him letters because  
he didn't have a computer or email.  
He begged for my help to stay  
competitive with the competition,  
but he had no money.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
But you came anyway.

LILLY  
I ran away from my college loans,  
film school loans, and I was...

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Homeless!  
(beat)  
I checked your address. Your  
building was torn down.

The Constable and everyone else in the room, but Lilly, turns  
sad.

LILLY  
I began my trip here three months  
ago. I hitchhiked from L.A. to New  
York with my suitcase and phone.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
You don't have a phone plan.

LILLY  
(excited)  
No, but the camera works and I had  
a marvelous adventure.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
And from New York?

LILLY  
I worked my way over on a cruise  
ship as a sommelier. I made up  
everything.  
(to Ella and William)  
I thought the rosé wine last night  
was fabulous.  
(to Tito and Uta)  
Don't get me wrong. The  
Escherndorfer Lump Silvaner was  
fine. It's a little pretentious for  
me with its high ABV and bold  
finish but I prefer the Château  
Lagüe Fronsac 2019 from France for  
under \$20 a bottle.

Everyone is astonished.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Did you know Lars sold the place?



LILLY

No. That was quite a shock.

Lilly pulls an envelope from her pocket and carefully removes a letter.

She hands it to the Constable who pulls out an app on her phone that sends it to her EarBuds.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Thank you for crumbling. I need your kelp. I'll make it oops to you. Lars.

LILLY

(to the others)

It reads, "Thank you for coming. I need your help. I'll make it up to you. Lars.

Everyone but Lilly's head drops to their respective chest.

The Constable pats Lilly's leg.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

I don't see how he can help you now, but you might find some comfort when I catch his killer!

Lilly rolls her eyes in disgust.

The Constable glares at everyone at the table as Lilly returns to sit next to Jimmy.

Jimmy pats her hand but continues to hide his face.

Ayush rises and nervously walks to the interview chair.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)

You come from a strong medical family, Private Ayush Bramhin.

AYUSH

They were not proud of me for majoring in philosophy and criminal science.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

(laughs)

I can imagine their disappointment. Maybe you can help me with my case.

TITO  
(laughs)  
What if he's the killer?

Everyone, but the Constable, glances at Ayush with suspicion.  
The Priest groans and moans as he trudges down the stairs.  
Everyone turns to see him holding his head with both hands.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
Don't worry. I found it.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
(to Father O'Malley)  
It's a miracle. Come sit with me,  
Father. I have a few questions.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
If they are difficult questions  
about Bible passages, I won't be of  
much use this morning.  
(to Jimmy)  
Coffee please, I.V. if you got it.

Jimmy pours a cup of coffee and meets him at the bottom of  
the stairs. Jimmy keeps his back to the Constable.

The priest chugs the coffee.

FATHER O'MALLEY (CONT'D)  
Keep 'em coming, Alfred. You make  
good coffee for a Protestant.

The priest walks unsteadily but makes it to the interview  
chair.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
What brought you here last night,  
Father?

FATHER O'MALLEY  
This is like a confession, I see.

The priest glances back at the table to see everyone is  
listening in.

FATHER O'MALLEY (CONT'D)  
I was bringing an annual bribe to  
my dear friend, Lars. Irish  
Whiskey. It's the only way he'll  
come to Christmas morning mass.  
(to the Constable)  
He's a true Viking pagan!

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
And, yet, for you, he comes to a  
Catholic mass?

FATHER O'MALLEY  
Sits in the back pew, drunk as a  
skunk.

The others giggle.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
How long have you known Lars?

FATHER O'MALLEY  
Twenty years. Since I took the  
reigns of the Parrish.  
(glances back)  
Our Lady of Perpetual Guilt.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
You brought him two bottles of  
whiskey?

He looks back at the group.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
I confess. One was for me. My  
congregation is shrinking faster  
than my wool underwear in a dryer.  
The Bishop may shut me down.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Did you know of anyone in the  
community who would have wanted to  
kill Lars?

FATHER O'MALLEY  
Just the tax collector.

William and Ella's eyes open wide.

FATHER O'MALLEY (CONT'D)  
He owes a bundle in back taxes.

WILLIAM  
He failed to disclose that to us!

ELLA  
That could sink us in our first  
year!

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
And that's a motive for murder.  
(to Father O'Malley)  
(MORE)

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)

Thank you, Father.  
(to Ella and William)  
Could you two come down here,  
please?

Jimmy holds out a cup of coffee for the priest as he gets to the table.

Ella and William squeeze into the interview chair. They are uncomfortable.

WILLIAM

He told us he was going to meet us  
here and tell us everything we  
needed to know.

ELLA

He lied to us.

FATHER O'MALLEY

(mumbles while sipping  
coffee)  
Damn pagans!

William and Ella glare at the priest thinking his comment was directed at them. The group sees their anger.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

He told me that he mailed you the  
deed after he received your bank  
note.

WILLIAM

That's right. We waived any  
inspections.

ELLA

We didn't know that meant financial  
inspections.

TITO

Rookie mistake.

UTA

Dummkopf.

William and Ella turn to the table in anger.

WILLIAM

This is our first business!

ELLA

How were we to know?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
 Maybe you did meet Lars yesterday.  
 Maybe he told you about the back  
 taxes.

The Constable stands angrily and yells.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)  
 Maybe you killed him for it!

William and Ella calmly exit the chair and head toward the  
 kitchen.

WILLIAM  
 More pancakes, anyone?

ELLA  
 I'll bring more maple syrup.

William and Ella disappear in the kitchen.

The Constable pulls Ayush aside and whispers to him.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
 What do you make of our case so  
 far, Detective?

Ayush stands and paces. All eyes are on him.

AYUSH  
 The TOD is precise and COD is  
 obvious.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
 (to the others)  
 TOD is the time of death. COD is  
 the cause of death.

The Constable begins to slowly sneak her way to the table.

AYUSH  
 But many questions remain. Where  
 did he walk from? How far can you  
 hike with a butcher knife in your  
 back?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
 Good questions.

AYUSH

As for Opportunity, all but Ella, William, and I walked around outside for a while, but anyone here could have snuck out the back door for a minute sometime before Lars crashed through the door.

Everyone nods and looks suspiciously at each other.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

That doesn't narrow it down much.

Ayush glares at the people around the table.

AYUSH

Someone had a secret and sinister motive! What do you think, Constable?

William returns to the table with more pancakes, and Ella brings more syrup. All eyes are on the food.

The Constable makes her way directly behind Jimmy.

She grabs Jimmy's arms, pulls them behind the chair, and slaps handcuffs on him.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

I think the butler did it! Come with me, Jimmy Regan!

LILLY

(shocked)

Your name isn't Alfred? Damn! That would have been so lit!

TITO

The Butler did it?

ELLA

I don't think so. Butlers rarely kill people these days.

WILLIAM

The butler didn't do it in the movie "Clue."

Everyone nods in approval at Jimmy.

Ayush glances at Jimmy with a hand signal that says, "You have nothing to fear."

AYUSH

Also, the first person arrested in American and British detective shows is rarely the killer.

The Constable sits across and glares at Jimmy.

She surprises Jimmy and pulls out his passport.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

James Dean Regan.

LILLY

Much cooler than Alfred.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Belfast, Northern Ireland.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I'm proud to be Irish. Let's leave it at that.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

I confiscated your passport for being a vagrant.

WILLIAM

He told us it was for truancy.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I did drop out of my trade school in Belfast and I thought it sounded better than vagrancy. Homelessness shouldn't be a crime.

(turns to Ella and William)

I told you the truth. I quit school and left home so my poor single Mum wouldn't feel obliged to feed me. I knocked on the door and it edged open when the grocery clerk drove up so I helped him unload the groceries into the lodge which was still warm from the fire in the hearth. I waited for the owner to return but I got scared and hid in a room upstairs. I fell asleep and that's when Ella found me.

TITO

It all sounds dodgy to me, Jimmy.

UTA

Ja, but he would have frozen to death out there!

Everyone looks sadly at Jimmy.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

I picked him up the day before. I knew a big storm was on the way and he'd be warm and safe in jail for a few days.

JIMMY/ALFRED

You didn't lock my cell.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Homelessness shouldn't be a crime, Jimmy.

Jimmy and the Constable share a moment until she turns angry.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)

Until Lars Sven-son-son saw you sneaking into the place so you killed him!

Everyone but the Constable gasps. Father O'Malley makes the sign of the cross.

TITO

Sounds good to me.

UTA

Sorry, Jimmy.

AYUSH

With all do respect, Constable Andersson, I think we should take a look at the body and around the grounds before we make any further accusations.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

(glares at Jimmy)

I like to trust my gut feelings.

AYUSH

I'd like to give my other senses a try.

WILLIAM

I have some warm clothes and boots for you, Ayush.



AYUSH

That would be most kind, William.

Minutes later, Ayush walks slowly down the stairs in many layers of clothes under his MP uniform, snow boots, two wool caps, and a scarf.

TITO

He looks like he'd be comfortable on Mars.

Uta stands, laughs, and looks around.

UTA

MP for Mars Police. Funny, Ja?

No one laughs so Uta sits down and looks away.

WILLIAM

I didn't say you'd have to wear all my winter clothes.

AYUSH

Yes, Sir. But it looks very, very cold outside and it has never snowed in Mumbai. No, Sir.

They all watch as Ayush heads out the door with the Constable in uniform with a coat and winter hat.

The guests watch Ayush and the Constable curiously from the windows.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LODGE - CONTINUOUS

Ayush tries to be strong, but he's not used to the icy cold conditions in deep snow.

He takes short steps and struggles with his balance.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

We'll examine the body first.

AYUSH

His or mine?

Ayush looks around.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Keep up. The toolshed is a short distance away.

AYUSH  
I thought we would see more blood.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
His or yours?

AYUSH  
His.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
A lot has snow has fallen since  
last night. We'd have to dig to see  
any blood.

AYUSH  
Out of the question. I can't feel  
my hands.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Hurry to the toolshed then!

EXT./INT. TOOLSHED - CONTINUOUS

The Constable reaches the toolshed first and opens the door.

Ayush arrives a few dreadfully short steps later. His eyes,  
lips, and nose are starting to freeze.

The Constable removes her winter gloves and puts on latex  
gloves.

She offers latex gloves to Ayush.

His eyes open wide in fear as he shakes his head 'no.'

She laughs, takes out a plastic evidence bag, steps into the  
toolshed, pulls the knife out of Lars's back, and puts it in  
a bag.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
This should tell us something.

AYUSH  
It's an ordinary butcher knife  
found in every kitchen.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
True.

AYUSH  
(sarcastic)  
And don't most people wear gloves  
in the winter, particularly when  
they're stabbing somebody?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Also true.

Ayush turns his head toward the road. He's shivering more and  
looks frozen.

AYUSH  
Someone could have come by on snow  
skis and stabbed Lars on the road  
and he would have the strength to  
struggle to the Lodge.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Or someone in that lodge snuck out  
and stabbed him as he approached  
the lodge.

AYUSH  
Do you think the snow covered up  
any footprints?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
It was the perfect murder!

AYUSH  
I'll be next if I don't get inside.

They begin to trudge back to the Lodge.

AYUSH (CONT'D)  
We have nothing! I hate snow.

The Constable stops to put the evidence in her police  
vehicle.

AYUSH (CONT'D)  
We have no solid leads.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
We'll get them all talking and ease  
out a confession.

Ayush shakes his head in doubt.

AYUSH  
On Christmas Eve?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
One or more of them will be in pure  
anguish from guilt.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The Constable and Ayush enter the Lodge with serious faces only to find everyone hanging up more Christmas decorations, smiling, and laughing.

Christmas music plays on Tito's phone and a portable speaker. The guests dance, including Jimmy who remains handcuffed.

The Constable and Ayush whisper.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
What are they hiding?

AYUSH  
The pure anguish from guilt?

William carries in the case of Rompo from the kitchen.

WILLIAM  
(to Ayush and the  
Constable)  
What did you find out?

Ella enters with a plate of Christmas cookies.

ELLA  
Can you let Jimmy out of those  
awful handcuffs so he can enjoy the  
party?

The Constable stomps to the table and turns off Tito's phone.

The Christmas music stops and she glares at the crowd.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
We bagged the murder weapon and  
discussed many scenarios that could  
have led to the poor man's horrible  
death.

AYUSH  
The Constable thinks one of you  
will have fingerprints on the  
knife.

Everyone ignores them and they keep decorating and laughing.

Father O'Malley makes the sign of the cross before taking a bite from a Christmas cookie.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
I'll attend to Lars's Last Rights soon. Still, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ should not go without celebration.

The Priest grabs his coffee cup and takes a sip. He grimaces and shakes his head like it is whiskey.

The Constable glares at the priest.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Father, are you drinking before lunch?

FATHER O'MALLEY  
This, my dear friend, is lunch!

AYUSH  
Do any of you want to confess?

FATHER O'MALLEY  
That's my line, Ayush!

He takes another sip of his "coffee."

UTA  
(laughs to Ayush)  
One more pancake and I'll flip.

WILLIAM  
(serious to the Constable)  
If you're not charging Jimmy, you should remove the cuffs.

The Constable shakes her head in anger but removes the cuffs from Jimmy.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
I'm free again!

Jimmy dances to the cookies and holds up a bottle of Rompope.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)  
What in the bleedin' hell is this stuff?

Father O'Malley's eyes open wide.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

It's a Protestant expression,  
Father.

TITO

Rompope is a recipe for eggnog  
developed by the ancient Mayans in  
Central America.

LILLY

Eggs, milk, and vanilla flavoring?

TITO

Authentic vanilla beans. Spanish  
ships brought it all around the  
world where, in many countries,  
it's still a beverage of choice at  
Christmastime.

ELLA

In Chile, too?

Tito fights back tears and smiles softly.

TITO

At home in Chile, we mix it with  
cola de mono, a coffee drink. It  
wouldn't be a Novena on Christmas  
Eve without it.

The Constable leans and whispers to Ayush.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Tito's too arrogant. I don't trust  
him.

AYUSH

(uncertain)

You think Tito is your killer?

Lilly excitedly holds up a bottle of Rompope and shows it to  
Jimmy.

LILLY

Christmas is complicated and  
exhilarating for Chinese Americans.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Because they don't know what  
Rompope is either?

Lilly playfully slaps Jimmy's arm.

LILLY

Because it depends on how  
Americanized the family is.

(proudly)

My family drinks warm eggnog with  
nutmeg every Christmas around the  
tree.

Jimmy and the others look perplexed.

LILLY (CONT'D)

The Chinese are far more joyful  
than the media shows them. We  
celebrate Chinese New Year with  
fancy dinners, celebrations in the  
streets, and gifts. It's the  
biggest celebration every year by  
far. Now Christmas gave us another  
reason to celebrate with family,  
friends, and gifts.

(looks away sadly)

It's all about family and I miss  
them so much.

Jimmy hugs Lilly.

The Constable leans and whispers to Ayush.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Lilly may be Jimmy's accomplice. I  
don't trust her.

AYUSH

(uncertain)

You think Lilly is a killer?

All eyes turn to Uta on the far side of the room. She  
fashions an advent wreath from garland and places four  
candles on it.

ELLA

What's that, Uta?

Uta fights back tears also.

UTA

In Germany, we light a candle on  
each of the four Sundays before  
Christmas. I learned to count to  
four when I was two years old.

TITO

Because Santa Claus was coming?

UTA

St. Nicholas is a man who resembles a bishop and carries a staff. He goes from house-to-house to bring small gifts to the boots of children who leave them out the night before.

(sadly)

I will leave my ski boots out tonight.

The Constable leans and whispers to Ayush.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Uta is acting too calm for a rifle owner. I don't trust her.

AYUSH

(uncertain)

You think Uta is your killer?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Maybe with Tito as her accomplice.

Ayush looks unconvinced.

William turns to Jimmy.

WILLIAM

What were your Christmases like, Jimmy?

Jimmy smiles.

JIMMY/ALFRED

There was no school. I didn't have to read out loud. It was the grandest time.

ELLA

Was reading difficult for you?

JIMMY/ALFRED

It was Hell.

(to Father O'Malley)

Sorry, Father.

(to Ella)

The letters of each word would dance around like ferries in the night. It gave me a bugger of a time.

WILLIAM

Were you tested for Dyslexia?



Jimmy makes a joke out of the question and laughs.

JIMMY/ALFRED

They tested me for "dis" and "dat,"  
called me an idjut, gave me Ritalin  
for ADD, and sat me in the back of  
the room.

Jimmy looks around to see no one is laughing and the smile  
abandons his face.

Ella pours everyone small glasses of Rompope.

Jimmy smiles again.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

Listen to me, blokes. I was named  
after a famous American movie star,  
James Dean, and me Da saw more  
promise in me than the moon. I'll  
never let anyone tell me I'm not  
good enough or I'm not smart enough  
to be the next King of Ireland  
after me travels!

William raises his glass of Rompope.

WILLIAM

Here's to the future King of  
Ireland! Sláinte!

ALL

Sláinte!

Jimmy glances at Father O'Malley who raises his "coffee mug"  
and smiles at Jimmy. They share a brief moment.

The Constable leans and whispers to Ayush.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Jimmy remains my top suspect. He  
acts too honest. I don't trust him  
at all!

AYUSH

(uncertain)

So we're back where we started?

The Constable pulls William and Ella into the kitchen. Ayush  
follows. They all whisper.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
We have a problem.

William laughs.

WILLIAM  
We have back taxes to pay.

ELLA  
And, maybe, a business to  
liquidate. How can we help you?

AYUSH  
We have no strong leads and  
everyone remains on our list of  
suspects.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
The roads are too treacherous and  
even the Coroner can't reach us  
tonight.

WILLIAM  
Everyone is welcome to stay here  
for potatoes and pancakes.

AYUSH  
We'd like to look at anything that  
Lars might have left behind: files,  
notes, a diary perhaps?

ELLA  
We found one box of business-  
related papers.

WILLIAM  
We went through them last night and  
didn't find a single tax document.

ELLA  
It's how we knew we were in  
trouble.

William leads them back to their bedroom.

WILLIAM  
But if you find something damning,  
keep it to yourselves. It's  
Christmas Eve, and we will  
celebrate one way or another.

ELLA  
(sadly)  
We'll talk about it after  
Christmas. Our guests deserve the  
best Christmas ever!

The Constable and Ayush sadly follow William to the bedroom.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ayush and the Constable find the box of papers at the foot of the bed.

They hear laughter and loud Christmas music from the Lobby.

The Constable holds up a ledger for occupancy.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
The lodge only shows a 25%  
occupancy rate. Ella and William  
said they were told by Lars it was  
over 40%.

AYUSH  
Why would he lie to them?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
He was in a hurry to sell.

She holds up a record of the sale of the International Lodge in 1962.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON (CONT'D)  
Lars bought the place in 1962.

Ayush stares at the map for the record of the sale.

AYUSH  
Huh? His toolshed is not on his  
property. Neither is the pond  
behind the toolshed.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
He never talked to me about that  
either. Mike and I used to fish in  
that pond when we were younger.

The Constable looks away sadly.

AYUSH  
Maybe he was a private person.

Ayush looks under the bed.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
What are you doing?

AYUSH  
Private people have hiding places.

He pulls out a shoe box and opens it up.

AYUSH (CONT'D)  
They are all from Lilly.

Ayush skims a few letters.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
I bet she was after his money.

AYUSH  
It looks like they are harmless  
letters: sweet, sensitive, and  
honest.

The Constable grabs a few of the letters out of Ayush's hand.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
She wanted to help him advertise on  
the web to increase his occupancy,  
but he never used a computer.

AYUSH  
She was trying to teach him about  
computers in her letters and it  
wasn't working.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Lars could be stubborn.

AYUSH  
But she never gave up, until she  
decided to come show him how to  
work her laptop computer.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
For free?

AYUSH  
For room and board. Anything to get  
out of her parent's home in Los  
Angeles.  
(glares at the Constable)  
That doesn't sound like a killer to  
me. It sounds like Jimmy's story.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
What else is under the bed?

Ayush reaches under the bed and pulls out another shoe box.  
He searches for the oldest letters.

AYUSH  
Letters from Ella and William. I'm  
looking for their first letter.

He finds it and holds the letter so they both can see it.  
We see a photo of Ella and William smiling.

AYUSH (CONT'D)  
The letter is sweet. No wonder he  
sold it to them.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
He says he had several offers for  
the property and theirs was the  
lowest price offered, but he had a  
"good feeling about them."

AYUSH  
Maybe they were the only ones who  
believed the occupancy numbers he  
lied about.

She reads the most recent letter.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
He said he would meet them here.  
Ella and William were telling the  
truth.

AYUSH  
He did for a few seconds.

The Constable and Ayush listen to the laughter and music in  
the lobby.

Ayush picks up a small scrap of paper that looks out of place  
in the box of letters.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
That looks like hospital  
stationery.

AYUSH  
With a phone number on it.

He dials the number and speaks like Lars would speak.

AYUSH (CONT'D)

Ya, Dis is Lars Sven-son-son and I  
forget when my next appointment is?  
Important, Ya?

He listens, not expecting an answer.

Ayush's chin drops to his chest in sadness as Ayush ends the  
call.

Ayush fights back tears.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

What is it, Ayush?

AYUSH

His last chemo treatment was three  
months ago, and the news was--

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

He didn't tell me. I wonder if he  
told Father O'Malley.

AYUSH

Or anyone.

Their chins drop to their chests as they hear more music and  
laughter from the lobby.

AYUSH (CONT'D)

It doesn't sound like anyone is on  
the verge of confessing out there.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

We have a dead body in the  
toolshed. What do we do?

AYUSH

Enjoy the Christmas Eve party and  
hope for the best tomorrow.

They trudge from the bedroom toward the kitchen.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Ella smiles at the Constable and Ayush as she removes a large  
baked YULE HAM from the oven.

ELLA

Welcome back to the party.

Elle sets it on the counter.

AYUSH  
That's what smells so good!

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
(smiles)  
I know that smell.

ELLA  
Lars left us a ham with a note on  
the back of it in the back of his  
refrigerator.

She hands the note to the Constable. It reads, "Maggie and Mike will understand. Merry Christmas."

The Constable looks away sadly.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Lars cooked a Yule ham for Mike and  
me every Christmas. We had no one  
else.

William looks out at Father O'Malley in the lobby who has tears in his eyes.

WILLIAM  
Father O'Malley is Mike. That's why  
he brought the Irish Whiskey.

ELLA  
You two were his best friends.

AYUSH  
(to the Constable)  
And you knew he was dying.

The Constable looks down and trudges out of the kitchen and into the lobby.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The Constable moves to hug the sobbing priest. Tito stops the music and everyone gathers around the table.

The table is set for a Christmas Eve dinner second to none. Elegant china, full table settings, a beautiful centerpiece, and crystal wine glasses.

Jimmy is dressed in the shabby clothes he arrived in. Lars's black suit is on the arm of a couch.

Father O'Malley waves his hands over the decorative table.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
I've seen all this other stuff  
every year, but the Yule Ham made  
me cry.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
(to the others)  
We have a confession to make, don't  
we, Father?

FATHER O'MALLEY  
Bless me Father for I have sinned.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
We both did.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
You've both been here every  
Christmas for how many years?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
At least ten.

Father O'Malley rises from his chair.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
(sadly to the Constable)  
Last week, Lars told us both two  
things.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
(to Ella and William)  
One was the new owners would arrive  
two days before Christmas.

Father O'Malley looks out at the snow.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
And the second thing was that all  
he wanted out of life was a Viking  
funeral in death.

Ayush moves to hug Ella and William.

AYUSH  
It was clear from the notes and  
letters that Lars left behind under  
the bed.

Ella and William are stunned.

ELLA  
Under the bed?



WILLIAM  
We didn't look--

AYUSH  
He wasn't searching for buyers for  
his lodge, he was recruiting nice  
people who would--

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Treat us like friends--

FATHER O'MALLEY  
When he was gone.

The Constable is angry with herself.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
And all we did was accuse all of  
you of his murder.

The Priest makes the sign of the cross.

AYUSH  
I should have known. None of you  
could have killed him.

TITO  
Who stabbed him with the knife?

AYUSH  
I think I know who did it and the  
motive. Put on your winter clothes  
and boots and come with me.

Everyone RACES to get dressed.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LODGE - AFTERNOON

Ayush marches everyone to the street for a great view of the  
lodge.

AYUSH  
After meeting you all, I--  
(smiles at the Constable)  
we... had a hard time believing any  
of you could be a murderer.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Part of me wanted to believe that a  
stranger drove by and stabbed Lars  
in the back.

AYUSH

The knife was in an area of the back that ruled out a self-inflicted injury. But come with me to the toolshed.

They stomp in the snow to the toolshed.

JIMMY/ALFRED

The killer was waiting for him in the toolshed?

AYUSH

Yes... and no.

EXT./INT. TOOLSHED - CONTINUOUS

They enter and crowd into the small toolshed.

Ayush puts his back against milk crates stacked from the floor to the roof. Each crate contains heavy power tools and automotive toolsets.

He reaches one arm past his neck and down his back as far as he can reach.

He reaches his other arm behind his back from the side.

He shows the group where his hands do not meet.

He turns to examine the heavy boxes to find a snow glove wedged between two heavy boxes of tools.

He points to the glove.

AYUSH

He was days away from dying of brain cancer. He sold his International lodge to the two nicest people he could find from the seven bids he considered to buy the place. He made his peace with his God, Odin.

(to the Constable and priest)

And to his dearest friends.

Ayush puts his head down as he backs into the glove trapped between the boxes at just the right height.

Ayush struggles to the door and trudges to the front door of the lodge.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LODGE - CONTINUOUS

AYUSH

It must have taken all his strength  
to reach the front door.

JIMMY/ALFRED

He wanted to say goodbye.

FATHER O'MALLEY

He knew he made the right decision  
when he saw all the Christmas  
decorations up.

ELLA

Hence, his last words.

WILLIAM

And that's why I couldn't find a  
carving knife for the ham.

UTA

What do we do now?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

I call the Coroner. And we will all  
swear we found him dead in the tool  
shed.

TITO

No problemo!

The others nod 'Yes' in agreement.

JIMMY/ALFRED

It's the least I can do for him not  
reporting me for the break-in. And  
for borrowing his black suit to be  
Alfred.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, LOBBY - EVENING

They have finished dinner and the mood is sullen.

William gazes at his wife and then toasts Jimmy.

WILLIAM

Jimmy, we discussed it in the  
kitchen and you can stay with us as  
long as you'd like.

Jimmy smiles.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I do have me butler uniform.

LILLY

I think Jimmy made a fine butler.

FATHER O'MALLEY

A fine butler would have refilled  
my coffee cup.

Jimmy leaps up, grabs the bottle of Irish whiskey, and fills  
the priest's cup.

Everyone cheers.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Don't you have Midnight Mass  
tonight?

FATHER O'MALLEY

It's canceled because of the  
weather, but 9 AM Christmas Sunday  
Mass is on and the Bishop will be  
there to count heads.

Jimmy slaps the priest on the back as he begins to take a sip  
of whiskey.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I'll be there, Father.

UTA

Me too, Reverend.

TITO

Count me in, Padre.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

As will I, Mike.

(winks)

I mean, Father O'Malley.

LILLY

Me too-- and we could put the word  
out on Social Media that Taylor  
Swift might be there.

ELLA

That would be a lie.

WILLIAM

She said might be there.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
(smiles at Lilly)  
Indeed, she did, now.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
(fighting back tears)  
That's kind of you all, but what  
will we do about Lars's last wish  
for a Viking funeral?

The guests get all excited.

UTA  
We'll need one Viking longboat.

TITO  
And several gallons of petrol.

LILLY  
And a lake.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
And a bow that shoots flaming  
arrows.

UTA  
And a Viking Horn to blow.

Ayush stands and calms them down.

AYUSH  
Hold it. Hold it. Hold it. That  
won't work. A petrol fire would be  
lucky to reach a 400 degrees C. The  
average cremation is 4,000 C for  
two hours.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
The petrol fire would leave him  
partially burned and floating on  
the lake for seagulls to eat.

ELLA  
That's not what Lars would have  
wanted.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
Besides, I ordered the cremation.

WILLIAM  
Won't the Coroner be curious about  
the knife wound in his back and all  
that blood?

FATHER O'MALLEY

No. Lars taught the Coroner how to fish and hunt when he was a child.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

And I told him we had six witnesses that saw him die of brain cancer.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Okay, but I feel bad about not fulfilling his final wish.

The Priest makes the sign of the cross.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, HALLWAY AND GUEST ROOMS - NIGHT

In the dimly lit hallway, Jimmy carries a platter of cookies wearing his underwear and the black coat part of his butler suit.

He strolls down to Lilly's room and taps quietly on the door.

She answers wearing a short nightgown and a smile.

Jimmy reaches into his pocket and pulls out Lilly's gold necklace with a sheepish smile.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I wanted to return the necklace I found--

LILLY

(whispers angry)  
Around my neck?

JIMMY/ALFRED

Old habits are tough to break, me mum says.

Lilly laughs, shakes her head in disgust, yanks Jimmy into the room, and slams the door.

The Constable's door opens. She sticks her head out, squints her eyes, and glares suspiciously down the hallway.

The Constable shuts her door.

Tito quietly sneaks out of his room wearing his underwear and taps on Uta's door.

Uta opens her door, pulls Tito inside, and shuts the door.

The Constable's door opens. She sticks her head out, squints her eyes, and glares suspiciously down the hallway.

The Constable shuts her door.

Father O'Malley opens his door wearing a white T-shirt and undies. He steps across the hall and raises his hand to knock on the Constable's door.

He looks up to Heaven and freezes.

He spins around and wobbles back to his room and shuts the door.

The Constable's door opens. She sticks her head out and squints her eyes directly at the Priest's room.

She shakes her head, bewildered, as she shuts her door.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, LILLY'S ROOM - LATER

Lilly and Jimmy are in bed whispering.

LILLY

I should warn you, Jimmy. I'm a bit of a gypsy.

JIMMY/ALFRED

(smiles)

That's what me mum calls me.

LILLY

I'm looking for someone who won't stop me from becoming a famous Hollywood film director.

JIMMY/ALFRED

As long as they're truthful, like the Irish movie, "The Commitments."

Lilly gets excited.

LILLY

Lit music too! Mustang Sally.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I know, right?

(Jimmy plays air guitar)

Better slow your Mustang down!

They giggle a little too loud and they hear a light knock on the door.

AYUSH (O.C.)  
(whispers)  
Keep it down in there?

JIMMY/ALFRED  
That's been a problem all night.

Lilly slaps Jimmy's shoulder and they cover their mouths and laugh.

They hear Ayush's door shut.

LILLY  
We should make a pact that if  
either of us strikes it rich,  
they'll look up the other and toss  
them a bone.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
Deal!

LILLY  
And no more stealing!

JIMMY/ALFRED  
(smiles)  
From now on, I'll only be stealin'  
kisses.

They hug and kiss.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ella and William lay in bed reading the letters in the shoe boxes.

ELLA  
Only 25% occupancy and back taxes  
to pay. We'll be as poor as church  
mice.

WILLIAM  
But happy! And Lars knew it. That's  
why he sold the place to us instead  
of those rich corporations.

Ella nudges closer to William for a kiss.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
That was the most fun Christmas  
dinner we've had in years.

Ella jumps on top of William.



ELLA

The fun has just begun.

They giggle.

INT. MOUNTAIN LODGE, LOBBY - MORNING

SUPER: "Christmas Day"

It's a clear, bright Christmas morning out the dining room window and everyone is in their Sunday-best clothes. Father O'Malley isn't present.

Jimmy serves coffee in Lars's black suit.

A decorative Christmas candle is unlit in the center of the table.

Ayush glares at Jimmy and Lilly.

AYUSH

I was lucky to get any sleep last night.

LILLY

(laughs)

Me too.

JIMMY/ALFRED

(laughs)

Same here, what a coincidence.

UTA

(curious)

Me too.

TITO

(laughs)

Must be the mountain air.

Ayush shakes his head and laughs.

Uta jumps up with excitement.

UTA

I forgot to check my boots outside to see if Saint Nicholas had come.

Uta races to the door like a child and opens it wide with everyone straining their necks to look on.

She picks up an urn and tucks it under her arm, and then picks up her ski boots in the other hand. She laughs.

UTA (CONT'D)

St. Nicholas brought me Lars in an urn.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Our favorite Viking in a vase!

The group cheers.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

The Coroner must have come by to drive Father O'Malley to the church to get ready for mass.

TITO

Is there anything else in your ski boots? Isn't Saint Nicholas supposed to leave you a toy?

Uta sets the urn down in the lobby. On the urn is a leather strap with a safe deposit box key that is hidden from view.

Uta thoroughly checks her boots.

She digs her hand in one boot and finds nothing.

She puts her hand in the other boot and pulls out a red velvet jewelry box.

She turns to Tito and smiles.

Tito leaps to her and gets on one knee.

TITO (CONT'D)

Will you marry me?

UTA

Ja, ja, ja!

They kiss madly while the others look on with envy.

JIMMY/ALFRED

You had this planned all along! I wish I was that smart.

LILLY

(to Jimmy)

I wish you were too!

Jimmy laughs.

Ella elbows William.

ELLA

That's how it's done. Take a hint,  
William.

WILLIAM

We're as poor as church mice,  
remember?

Everyone laughs as Tito places the ring on Uta's finger and they kiss again.

Jimmy turns to Ella and William.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Even church mice have babies, ya  
know.

William points to the Christmas candle on the table

WILLIAM

Jimmy, light the Christmas candle.

Jimmy reaches into his pants pockets and can't find a match.

He reaches into the outer pockets of his coat and finds  
nothing.

He has an epiphany and opens his coat to reveal an inner  
pocket.

He finds an envelope folded in half and takes it out.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

What's that?

Jimmy carefully opens the envelope and pulls out three items.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I bet it's Lars's Last Will and  
Testament. That's why he didn't  
name a killer when he died. And  
that's why he asked about the  
Christmas decorations. If we found  
the decorations, we'd surely find  
his Will in his coat.

WILLIAM

Smart thinking, Jimmy!

Jimmy examines the contents of the envelope.

JIMMY/ALFRED

The first thing is a check.

ELLA

That's our cashier's check to buy  
the lodge.

Everyone's eyes open wide.

WILLIAM

He never cashed it?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

I told you he was a rascal!

ELLA

This will pay his back taxes with  
much to spare.

William hugs Ella.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Dis second ting looks like his Last  
Will.

Ayush looks over Jimmy's shoulder.

AYUSH

Signed by his lawyer, the Coroner  
as a witness, and certified. It's  
legit.

Lilly looks upon Jimmy compassionately.

LILLY

I could read it for you.

JIMMY/ALFRED

(smiles back)

No. I gotta learn sometime.

Jimmy takes his time reading the will. He reads one line at a  
time, thinks about it, and then paraphrases it.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

I, Lars Sven-son-son-son, being of  
sound mind and body...

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

(laughs)

That part's questionable, but go  
on.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Here's the good part.

(beat)

(MORE)

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

To the new owners of the lodge, the unmarried heathens, Ella Garcia and William Martin, I leave their certified check for the bill of sale.

(pauses and reads)

Which will more than cover the back taxes and penalties.

(laughs)

From here on end, you're on your own.

Ella holds up the check and looks up to Heaven as Jimmy reads on.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

To my dear friends, Father Mike O'Malley and Constable Maggie Andersson.

Ella and William hug the Constable.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

I leave the safe deposit box of apples at the bank. The key is around my neck.

Uta leaps to the urn and brings it back to the table.

The key shines in the sunlight through the window.

UTA

The Coroner must have found it.

JIMMY/ALFRED

(reads)

I bought \$10,000 of Apple stock in the 1980s. I didn't know what a Google was until recently from Lilly. Sorry.

AYUSH

That will be worth millions today.

The Constable fights back tears.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

He knew I would have to leave my job soon because of my eyes.

(laughs)

Mike will have to rescind his vow of poverty.

JIMMY/ALFRED

And maybe his vow of chastity.

Everyone glares at Jimmy.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

I'm fookin' wit ya. Once a priest,  
you're always a priest!

Jimmy reads and fights back tears before he can continue.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)

The last ting in here is this deed  
for the property next door.

Lilly is stunned as she moves to read the will as Jimmy wipes  
a tear from his eyes.

LILLY

To my dearest Lilly Chou who  
traveled like a brave Viking  
adventurer for a low-paying job, I  
leave the toolshed... and the  
property that it rests on that was  
my father's. He has a nice cottage  
on the far side of the property  
which is also yours free and clear.  
There are no back taxes on it.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

I know that cottage! It's a  
beautiful home worth more than the  
lodge.

Lilly fights back tears.

LILLY

I offered to help him learn how to  
use a computer for reservations and  
to advertise on the Internet to  
build up his business.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

He wouldn't stop talking to Mike  
and me about how kind you were to  
him. He thought of you as the  
granddaughter he never had.

LILLY

Right before he died, I saw him  
look at me and smile. I'll remember  
that moment forever.

Ella looks at her watch and races to put on a coat.

ELLA

Hurry, we have to get to church.

There is a mad rush to get coats and boots on.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

The parking lot is so full at the church, that William, Tito, and the Constable can't find parking spaces.

They pull over to the side of the road and hop out of their cars. Jimmy rides with Ella and William, Ayush rides with the Constable, and Uta rides with Tito.

They see a dozen "Swifties" with autograph books and pens trying to get into the church but it's too full.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I'd love to see the look on the Bishop's face.

LILLY

I said she might be there, not she will be there.

WILLIAM

Do you think the Bishop will know who Taylor Swift is?

TITO

Not a chance.

UTA

Our work is done here.

JIMMY/ALFRED

I'd like to stay, but I have a Viking funeral to plan.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

I'll stay and bring Mike back to the Lodge after the Mass.

AYUSH

(to the Constable)

You'll have to break the news to him that he's a millionaire.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

(to Ayush)

And that I'm putting your name in to replace me as Constable.

Everyone cheers.

Ayush joins William's car for the ride back.

EXT. POND - NOON

Behind the toolshed is a small pond where Jimmy and Tito attach a small pouch to the replica Viking warship that Lars had on his mantle.

William, Ella, Uta, and Ayush look on with smiles.

ELLA

I'm sure Lars would have loved this, Jimmy. Great idea.

AYUSH

Is this legal?

JIMMY/ALFRED

No, it's Viking.

The Constable walks up with Father O'Malley linked arm-in-arm.

FATHER O'MALLEY

I can't thank you enough for your help today. The Bishop was most impressed with the turnout.

(laughs)

He asked me what everyone was doing with autograph books. I told him my sermons were quite a hit with the younger generation.

The group cheers.

The Constable sighs as she gazes at the pond.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Remember when we used to fish in this pond when we were younger?

FATHER O'MALLEY

We did more than fish here.

(sighs)

Lars would have to bait our hooks.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

He'd make us traditional Norwegian lunches of fresh whole-wheat bread and cheese.



FATHER O'MALLEY  
 (to the Constable)  
 Always open-face. He was a  
 traditionalist.  
 (to the group)  
 That's why I could never leave the  
 priesthood. I'll keep preaching as  
 long as there's one person in the  
 pews to listen.

The Constable raises her hand and everyone giggles.

FATHER O'MALLEY (CONT'D)  
 I'm turning my inheritance over to  
 Maggie to the sick and the poor in  
 the village, and maybe get her a  
 new pair of eyes.

The group cheers.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
 (winks at Ayush)  
 And a small cottage for my  
 replacement.

William presents Father O'Malley and the Constable with the  
 urn and the safe deposit box key.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
 My friend will have the finest  
 gravesite and headstone in all the  
 land.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
 The rest of us would like to see  
 his urn and his knife be placed in  
 his casket.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
 His knife?

JIMMY/ALFRED  
 The sword he bravely battled cancer  
 with.

The Priest turns to Jimmy and smiles until he sees the  
 replica of the Viking warship on the shore of the pond.

FATHER O'MALLEY  
 What's going on here?

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON  
 I didn't tell him.

WILLIAM

We all know this was his final wish.

ELLA

And we're going to honor it.

Tito points to the pouch on the warship as Jimmy squirts a lot of lighter fluid on the ship.

TITO

There is a tablespoon of Lars's ashes in the pouch.

UTA

We will light the ship on fire and it will sail Lars to Valhalla. It is his version of Heaven, ja?

The priest looks around to see all eyes are on him.

FATHER O'MALLEY

(chuckles)

Valhalla is, in Norse mythology, a palatial hall where Viking warriors go after death. A place of food, drink, pleasure, and battle. However, we must remember that primitive people will believe almost anything.

Everyone glares at the Priest.

FATHER O'MALLEY (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay, There are similarities with Heaven.

(smiles)

Gaining entrance to Valhalla was dependent on your good and brave deeds on earth.

Father O'Malley sees everyone gazing at him warmly.

CONSTABLE ANDERSSON

Lars told me the proof of how much you were loved was shown by others telling your stories and of your bravery long after you were gone.

William points to the Viking Ship.

WILLIAM

He fought cancer like a true  
warrior, giving his life so that we  
could prosper in ours.

Ella fights back tears as Tito plays a Viking funeral song on  
his smartphone.

Lilly takes video on her phone.

Jimmy takes out a new lighter from his pocket.

TITO

(whispers to Jimmy)  
Is that my new lighter?

JIMMY/ALFRED

I couldn't exactly steal your car!

They all stare at the Viking warship.

William hugs Ella.

LILLY

Lars was the bravest and most  
unselfish man we've ever known.

FATHER O'MALLEY

I'll tell his stories forever so  
he'll never be far away.

AYUSH

We all will.

Jimmy lights the boat which goes up like a bonfire.

He pushes the boat out into the pond.

He hands the lighter back to Tito who chuckles.

They all fight back tears.

JIMMY/ALFRED

If I can offer an Irish prayer me  
Mum said when me Pa died.

FATHER O'MALLEY

Of course, Jimmy.

JIMMY/ALFRED

Death leaves a heartache no one can  
heal;  
Love leaves a memory no one can  
steal.

The Viking funeral song plays louder as they watch the ship burn.

Jimmy turns with a smile on his face.

JIMMY/ALFRED (CONT'D)  
Good send-off, mates. Who's up for  
Christmas dinner?

They all cheer and follow Jimmy.

Lilly hooks her arm in Jimmy's arm.

LILLY  
Maybe I can talk my Irish gypsy  
into settling down with me in my  
new cottage.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
Only if I can plant me own potatoes  
to steal later.

Lilly turns to Ella and William.

LILLY  
I'll build you a website,  
reservation system, and advertising  
platform.

Jimmy turns to them too.

JIMMY/ALFRED  
I'll turn back into Alfred whenever  
you're booked.

ELLA  
Thanks, you guys.

WILLIAM  
I'll double your salary, as long as  
you'll be here every Christmas.

Everyone laughs as Jimmy kisses Lilly.

Uta kisses Tito, Ella kisses William, and the Constable  
kisses Father O'Malley on the cheek.

AYUSH (O.C.)  
Don't worry about me. I'll make  
sure the fire goes out.  
(mumbles)  
They can all be so irresponsible.  
(MORE)

AYUSH (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
That will change when I'm the  
Constable!

FADE OUT.

**THE END**