

Theft at Eagleton Manor Part 1

Detective Inspector Samms (enjoy) his tea when the phone (ring). "Someone (steal) Lady Eagleton's priceless sapphire necklace" (say) his boss. "I (remember) you live in the village near Eagleton Manor, so I (decide) that you should investigate the theft." Samms (sigh). After a hard day's work in Scotland Yard, there (be) more work to do now... It (be) a beautiful late spring evening - of course, English weather (be) always unpredictable: after a hot and muggy morning, it suddenly (rain) in the afternoon. Then the sun (appear) again and everything was lovely. As Samms (get) out of his car, the butler (come) to meet him. "Dreadful business, sir! Please, do come in. Everyone is ready for you."

(question) everybody in the house: Sir Charles Eagleton, the Lord of Eagleton Manor; his wife, Samms. (question) their daughter, Sophie; their guests for the weekend, Mr and Mrs Appleby; and the Manor's staff: the butler, the housekeeper, the cook, the kitchen maid, the chauffeur, the gardener and the lady's maid. Here's what they (tell) him:

What

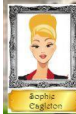
(you/do) between 5 and 6 o'clock?



I (sit) in the library with Mr Appleby. We (talk) and (smoke) cigars. He is the nephew of my friend Sir Nigel Aston. He was abroad with his wife for a long time and now they're back in England. George Appleby seems an excellent fellow. At 5 we (go) together to the drawing room for tea. I never (leave) the room and neither did he.



The last time I (see) my necklace was just before 5 o'clock. Mrs Appleby and I (be) upstairs in my bedroom. I (show) Alice the necklace when we (leave) the necklace on my dressing table and we both (run) down the stairs to greet Sophie. Then, of course, it (be) time for tea. We all (have) tea in the drawing room. Alice (go) to her room to put on a shawl because she was cold at about 5:20. Her room is nowhere near mine, however. At six I (go) to my bedroom because I (want) to lock the necklace in my jewellery case, but it (not be) on my dressing table any more. Somebody (take) it! So I (call) the police. I don't know what to think, our guests are respectable people and I trust all our servants.



I (arrive) at the Manor just before 5. I was very glad I (get) here before the rain and just in time for tea! I (not go) to my room and I (not change) my clothes. I (die) for some tea and scones! I (find) the Applebys pleasant enough, but to be honest, I (think) Mrs Appleby's reputation as one of the best dressed women in Britain undeserved. She (take) ten minutes to choose a shawl and she (pick) that orange one?! Her purple dress was most elegant and her shoes (be) adorable, but the shawl (not go) with her outfit at all! Such a horrid combination!



From 5 to 6 I (have) tea in the drawing room with everyone else. Sir Charles and I (talk) about fox hunting and the ladies (discuss)... clothes or hats. I suppose I (stay) in the drawing room the whole time. I (look) at an interesting painting when I (hear) Lady Margaret shouting about the theft. So unpleasant. I hope you catch that scoundrel criminal soon, Detective Inspector.



I (admire) Lady Margaret's necklace when Sophie (get) here and we (go) downstairs to welcome her. Then we all (have) tea. It (be) chilly while it (rain), so I (go) to my room to fetch a shawl. It (take) me a few minutes because I couldn't make up my mind which one looked best, and then I straight back to the drawing room again.



I am afraid I cannot be of much help, sir. From 5 to 6 o'clock I (be) in the drawing room. I (serve) the ladies and the gentlemen their tea. Yes, Mrs Appleby (leave) the room from 5:20 to 5:30 to get a shawl. I (offer) to get it for her, naturally, but she (decline) as she (not know) which one she (prefer). At six I (go) to the kitchen to have supper with the rest of the staff.



Well, it (be) my day off today. Harry (drive) me to my sister Beth's house in the village in the morning. From 5 to 5:45 we (have) our tea. We (clear) the table and from 6 until supper we (knit). Beth's daughter just (have) a baby, as you know, and we (make) baby clothes for her.



I (cook) the family's dinner and the servants' supper in the kitchen. At around 5:35 I (go) to the cellar to get a jar of mint jelly for the lamb. I (flick) the switch but the light (not come) on. I (think) the light bulb was burned out and I (try) to find a new one. I (look) for the light bulbs for ages because (not know) where we keep them and I couldn't ask Mrs Winston, she (be) out. Anyway, I (find) some in the hall cupboard. I (notice) a wet mackintosh and pair of wellies, but I have no idea who (use) them to go out. I (return) to the cellar and (discover) that the light bulb wasn't burned out after all - it just wasn't screwed all the way in! I (waste) 10 minutes for nothing! I (get) the mint jelly and (make) my way back to the kitchen quite annoyed. I must say.



At that time I (help) the cook in the kitchen. First, I (wash) and (peel) all the vegetables. Then I (boil) and (mash) the potatoes, and (start) making the marinade for the meat. While I (cut) onions, the cook (go) to the cellar to bring mint jelly for the roasted leg of lamb and (return) 10 minutes later, at about 5:46. She (find) me alone and in tears in the kitchen, but she (not worry). She (know) I (cry) because of the onions!



I (wash) the car. I (know) we wouldn't need it until tomorrow morning, so I (decide) it was a good time to get it clean. I (finish) a little before six and I (go) to the kitchen for supper.



Lady Margaret (ask) me to mow the grass and trim the rose bushes, so I (work) in the garden when the rain (begin) at two minutes past five. I (not see) anyone come out of the house or go into it, as I (not face) the Manor. While it (rain), I (tidy) up the garden shed. Then at 6 o'clock I (go) into the house to have supper in the kitchen.



I (be) in Miss Sophie's bedroom. I (get) it ready because we (expect) her to come from London before dinner. Yes, sir, you can see the west lawn from her bedroom window. I (fluff) the pillows when I (look) outside and I (see) Harry, the chauffeur. He (wash) the car. At six I (go) downstairs to the kitchen for the servants' supper.

Liar's!

While the witnesses (talk), Detective Inspector Samms (listen) carefully and he (take) notes. Then he (write) 3 names in his notebook. "These three people (lie), I'm sure of it," he (say) to himself.

Can you find the three liars?

Who do you think is the thief?
Why?

to be continued...