

THE BLACK MUSEUM

Written and produced by

John F. Barber

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International

Re-Imagined Radio
Season 14, Episode 04

Final draft

THE BLACK MUSEUM

A warehouse of homicide

Re-Imagined Radio
Season 14, Episode 04, RiR #96
Final Draft

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Synopsis

Re-Imagined Radio samples from four radio drama series about "The Black Museum," a collection of ordinary objects, each associated with crime and murder, held at Scotland Yard, London, England, to explore how this unusual collection is portrayed through radio storytelling. From our Documentary series.

Established in 1874, The Black Museum provides training opportunities for those investigating murders and other crimes. Closed to the public, a sense of mystery surrounded the collection, a growing interest in crime and police stories, and the reputation of Scotland Yard fostered the chronicling of hundreds of Scotland Yard's cases worldwide in popular crime novels and pulp fiction, and four radio series.

Secrets of Scotland Yard (1949-1951)
The Black Museum (1947)
Whitehall 1212 (1951-1952)
Fabian of The Yard (1952-1953)

Whitehall 1212 was written and directed by Wyllis Cooper and broadcast by the National Broadcasting Company (NBC). The rest were produced and syndicated by Harry Alan Towers, Towers of London, London, England.

Credits

Written, Produced, Hosted by John F. Barber

Post production, original music, sound design by Marc Rose

Project Management and Lead Graphics by Holly Slocum

Graphics and 2D Animation by Evan Leyden

Social Media strategies by Caitlyn Kruger-L'Esperance

Announcing and YouTube strategies by Rylan Eisenhauer

Color Code

Yellow highlighted text = sound effect(s), either pre-recorded or live.

~~text example~~ = text that could be deleted as needed.

~~Magenta highlighted text with strike through~~ = text
deleted for episode timing

MUSIC = pre-recorded

MUSIC = bespoke, created for this episode

COLD OPEN

SFX: SAMPLES FROM "A TAN SHOE, LEFT FOOT," EPISODE OF *THE BLACK MUSEUM*

ORSON WELLES This is Orson Welles, speaking from London.

SFX: BIG BEN CHIMES

WELLES Here in the grim stone structure on the Thames, which houses Scotland Yard, is a warehouse of souvenirs, where everyday objects, a broom, a vase, a lampshade, all are touched by murder.

THEME AND ANNOUNCER

MUSIC: RIR THEME

ANNOUNCER Welcome to Re-Imagined Radio, a program about sound-based storytelling. With each episode we explore how dialogue, sound effects, and music can engage your listening imagination and promote storytelling. Here to tell you about THIS episode is John Barber, producer and host.

HOST OPEN

HOST In 1870, a collection of ordinary objects, each associated with crime and murder, was assembled at Scotland Yard, headquarters for London's Metropolitan Police. It's purpose was to train police officers in the detection and prevention of crime.

An 1877 newspaper article introduced the name "The Black Museum," saying the collection [QUOTE]"describes whatever is darkest in human nature." [UNQUOTE]

Closed to the public, shrouded in intrigue and mystery, The Black Museum inspired the chronicling of hundreds of Scotland Yard's cases worldwide in popular crime novels, pulp fiction, and four radio series that use "The Black Museum" as their subject.

We sample from each of these explore this unusual collection as it is portrayed by radio storytelling.

It's an interesting story. I hope you'll stick around and listen to "The Black Museum."

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

ACT 1, THE SECRETS OF SCOTLAND YARD

HOST

The four radio series focusing on The Black Museum are *Secrets of Scotland Yard*, *The Black Museum*, *Whitehall 1212*, and *Fabian of the Yard*. We'll sample in that order.

Secrets of Scotland Yard was produced by Harry Allen Towers and syndicated internationally as early as 1948 by his company, Towers of London.

Early episodes were narrated by American actor Clive Brook, star of the 1932 Fox motion picture *Sherlock Holmes*. London

crime reporter Percy Hoskins consulted for the series. Learn more about Hoskins and follow along with the script available at the episode page of our website, reimaginedradio [DOT] fm.

Here are samples from "The Bank of England Robbery" episode of *Secrets of Scotland Yard*. Clive Brook narrates. Enjoy listening.

SFX: SAMPLES FROM "THE BANK OF ENGLAND ROBBERY," EPISODE OF SECRETS OF SCOTLAND YARD.

ANNOUNCER

Presenting Clive Brook in *The Secrets of Scotland Yard*.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

CLIVE BROOK

How do you do? Is there such a thing as the perfect crime? If so, it's no place in this program for we're concerned with the majority of crimes, the imperfect ones. And yet, every so often, there comes a crime so very near to perfection that the criminals themselves must have believed at one stage of the game that they would really get away with it. And yet, invariably, they were wrong. Such is our case today. A classic in the annals of the tricksters.

You've heard the expression, "Safe as the Bank of England." For more than a century, that expression has signified the stability of a great British institution. Stability, yes, but

~~invulnerable? I wonder. The title of this program is "The Bank of England Robbery."~~

~~MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION~~

BROOK

Standing on an island site in the heart of the city of London is the home of "The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street." This is the affectionate name by which the Bank of England is known the world over. The stone walls are guarded at night by a company of guardsmen, and the gold and good name are guarded by day by the vigil of the clerks and managers. This is as true today as it was equally true almost one hundred years ago. The time is the year 1873.

~~SFX: STREET SOUNDS~~

~~BROOK~~

~~Strolling along a city street in the summer of that year, there were two men. One was an inspector from Scotland Yard. The other was a famous American detective, Arthur Pinkerton, who was over in England at the time, in connection with some investigations for one of his American clients.~~

~~PINKERTON~~

~~A beautiful day, Inspector Shaw.~~

~~SHAW~~

~~Yes, Mr. Pinkerton, you've certainly brought the fine weather with you.~~

~~PINKERTON~~

~~(INTERRUPTING) Wait a minute. What is it? See those two fellows ahead of us?~~

SHAW What, you mean those two businessmen?

PINKERTON Yeah, and unless I'm very much mistaken, they're in a pretty queer business.

SHAW Oh, can't say I recognize them. Hey, look, they're crossing the road.

PINKERTON Come on, we'll keep on this side, but try to draw level. Come on.

SHAW No, they're strangers to me.

PINKERTON But not to me. Unless I'm very much mistaken, their names are George Bidwell and George MacDonald. Bidwell has been mixed up in crime all his life. MacDonald is a convicted forger. Both of them are well-educated and will stop at nothing.

SHAW Hmm, I didn't know they were in England. Well, thanks for the information. Oh, by the way, Pinkerton, do they specialize in any particular type of crime?

PINKERTON Yeah, robbing banks.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

BROOK Detective Inspector Shaw arranged for the men to be shadowed. For the next few months, Scotland Yard kept a close watch on their movements. As an additional precaution, Scotland Yard sent a circular letter to the London banks, warning them of the presence of Bidwell and Macdonald in Europe. However, the majority of the banks had their own

system of precaution, and the bank managers were not very impressed.

BANK MANAGER

Now, these circular letters from Scotland Yard, I don't know what they take us for. A bunch of fools, I suppose. A couple of American tricksters over here. I suppose they think they can get away with the sort of trickery they use in New York. Oh, they'll get us surprised if they try it over here. I'd like to see them try it.

BROOK

His wish was to be fulfilled. The months went by, and no more news was heard of Bidwell and Macdonald. They both went over to the continent, and Scotland Yard gave up their watch. Then, a few months later, Scotland Yard received an urgent message from the Bank of England.

MAY

Thank goodness you're here, Inspector. Immediately my attention was drawn to this forgery I sent for you personally. I felt that if any man could help us, it would be you.

SHAW

Well, that's very kind of you, Mr. May. Well, now, suppose you give me all the facts of the case.

MAY

This morning, I had a message from Colonel Fraser, who is the manager of our West End branch. Among the bills cleared by him yesterday were two notes to the value of 1,000 pounds each in the name of a very respectable financier, Mr. Blydenstein.

SHAW You mean that these notes were signed by Mr. Blydenstein and were, in fact, promissory notes to the value of 1,000 pounds each?

MAY That is correct. Each note such as these, provided they are genuine and signed by a reputable banker or financier, are accepted by the Bank of England as full security. In fact, just as if they were actual money.

SHAW And in due course, these bills go through to Mr. Blydenstein, who pays them, and the transaction is completed.

SHAW Yes, of course.

MAY Such bills are usually post-dated. In fact, that is the reason they're lodged with the bank. On the date stated, they would go to Mr. Blydenstein, who would pay up.

SHAW And these bills were, I presume, credited to the account of one of your customers at the West End branch?

MAY Yes, the account of a Mr. Warren, a businessman of considerable interest. He's an American.

SHAW Oh, an American. You say he has considerable interest. Has he had the account of the bank for a long time?

MAY Not a very long time. No, I've had a talk with Colonel Fraser, and I gather, in point of fact, he's only had Mr.

Warren's account for about a year. But that, of course, is explained by Mr. Warren being an American. He's over here in connection with the construction of the new Pullman train. He's having a number of these trains built in Birmingham for use in England and on the continent.

SHAW Oh, how did you know this?

MAY He told Colonel Fraser.

SHAW I see.

MAY I... I... I should not want you to think that Colonel Fraser relied on Mr. Warren's words concerning his stability. During the past year, a considerable amount of business has gone through his account. I need hardly add that there's been no grounds for suspicion in connection with Mr. Warren's account. We've had bills against some of the most reputable bankers and financiers in Europe, including Rothschild. And in every case, the bills were genuine, because they've been met.

SHAW Yes, but this one against Mr...

MAY Mr. Blydenstein.

SHAW Yes, this is a forgery?

MAY That is correct. And the awful thing is that we might not have known it for some time if it hadn't been for the mistake.

SHAW

Oh? What mistake?

MAY

~~Well, I told you. These bills were made out to be payable on a certain date.~~

SHAW

Yes?

MAY

Well, on this particular bill, there was no date. It was noticed by one of the clerks, and Colonel Fraser sent it round to Mr. Blydenstein to have the correct date added. It was then we learnt it was a forgery.

SHAW

~~When did Mr. Warren hand this bill into the bank?~~

MAY

~~He didn't actually hand it in. I understand that he's been away in Birmingham for the last few months and he'd been in the habit of sending bills by registered post.~~

SHAW

~~Sending bills? Oh, in fact, you mean that he's made a habit of this sending bills?~~

MAY

Yes.

SHAW

And, ahh, what's the state of his account?

MAY

Well, there's about 5,000 pounds in it. A very considerable amount of money has passed through the account in the past few months, and most of it has been withdrawn through cheques made payable to a Mr. Horton, who has an account at the Continental Bank in London.

SHAW Mm-hmm. And what money has been paid into Mr. Warren's account to make these cheques?

MAY Not much money. Most of it is represented by bills, which will fall due during the next few months.

SHAW Oh! And in the meantime, the Bank of England has credited Mr. Warren. About how much money do these bills represent?

MAY Well, I've only glanced at the figures, but I should estimate it must be something in the neighborhood of ... one hundred thousand pounds.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

BROOK A hundred thousand pounds. Mr. Warren didn't do things by halves. Immediately, Scotland Yard acted. Obviously, the account of the Continental Bank in the name of Horton was the means whereby the criminals were extracting the money. On the very day while Mr. May and the inspector were visiting the Continental Bank, a young man came in to cash one of Mr. Warren's checks.

NOYES Good morning.

WAYNE Good morning, sir.

NOYES I've come to cash this check.

WAYNE Oh, thank you. If you'll just wait one moment, will you, sir? Thank you.

BANKER Yes, that's the account. All right, Mr. May.

~~SFX: GENERAL BANK LOBBY WALLAH~~

POLICE Just one moment, please.

NOYES Yes? Anything the matter?

POLICE I'm a police officer. If you'd accompany me to the manager's office, I'd like a word with you.

BROOK The young man, whose name was Noyse, turned out to be the clerk to Mr. Horton. He denied all knowledge of the plot and said he'd only been in Mr. Horton's employment for a matter of months.

SHAW We've checked up at the lodging house where he's staying and I gather that he talks quite freely of his post with Mr. Horton.

BROOK When did he meet Horton?

SHAW Evidently, he put an advertisement in the newspaper saying that he was seeking a situation and could put up some money as a guarantee of his being trustworthy. He gave Horton £150 to keep in trust. Needless to say, Horton has disappeared.

All the same, I don't quite trust Mr. Noyes. I think he knows more than he's saying.

BROOK Further inquiries revealed that Noyes had come from America and that he'd arrived only six months ago. Pinkerton, the American detective, was now back in New York and acting on behalf of the bank. He helped Scotland Yard with information they urgently needed. Pinkerton advised London that a relative of Noyes had received that same month a draft for a thousand pounds. For a Junior Clark, Mr. Noyes was very well paid.

POLICE It's no use, you know. You'd better tell us the truth. Where did you get this thousand pounds?

NOYSE What thousand pounds?

POLICE Did Horton give it to you?

NOYSE I don't know what you're talking about.

POLICE Where is Horton? I warned you before you'd do well to tell all you know.

SFX: RINGING OF METAL

BROOK But the gang had chosen well. They knew that Noyes would keep his mouth shut. Already, however, the gigantic proportions of the crime had aroused the indignation of the country. It transpired that every one of the bills held by the Bank of England were forged. All the genuine bills that had been passed through the account of Mr. Warren during the previous year, had been used by the gang both to create confidence in

Mr. Warren's stability and to act as a basis for the forgeries they were planning to carry out. ~~The Bank of England, to use an American expression of a different generation, had been taken for a ride.~~ Needless to say, Horton, Warren, and every trace of the money had completely disappeared. The hunt was on.

MUSIC: FADES UP FOR TRANSITION

BROOK

It needed no great feat of detection on the part of Scotland Yard and Pinkerton to identify Horton and Warren as George Bidwell and George Macdonald. ~~And the pity was their previous warning to the London banks was not taken a little more seriously.~~

SHAW

We know for certain that Macdonald left England before the very first forged bill was lodged at the bank. He was taking no risk. He went to France, and so far we haven't picked up his trail. But we've reason to suspect, however, that he's headed for South America.

MAY

~~But what about the money?~~

SHAW

~~Ah, that isn't going to be easy to trace. After Noyes cashed the cheque at the Continental Bank, he took the banknotes to the Bank of England and exchanged them for gold sovereigns.~~

MAY

~~Surely we can find this hoard of gold.~~

SHAW Ah, hold on a minute. I believe they changed the gold back into notes, back into gold sovereigns, and then into American bonds. I really can't help admiring their thoroughness.

MAY I really cannot share your admiration.

SHAW No, Mr. May, I don't suppose you can. Anyway, I'm pretty sure that if Macdonald has got away, Bidwell is still in this country. We're having every port watched, and we're putting our own Scotland Yard men to keep an eye on the American boats. I don't think he'll get away.

BROOK George Bidwell was a man of infinite resource. He actually followed Noyes on his visit to the bank on that ill-fated day. And he'd seen him come out, accompanied by a police officer, and immediately realized that the game was up. To endeavour to get out of England in any ordinary way was out of the question. Although Bidwell was only some forty years old, he'd spent the greater part of his life dodging the police of various countries. Having destroyed all the evidence of his lodgings, he made his way to one of London's great railway stations. He took the precaution of having a porter buy his ticket to Dublin, and then, to quote his own words...

MUSIC: DUCKS UNDER THE FOLLOWING

BIDWELL

I intended taking the 9 p.m. mail train, and as a precaution, I waited until the last moment after the passengers were on board and the waiting room doors shut. As the mail was being transferred from the wagons to the train, I took the opportunity to walk through the big gate unobserved amid the rush and confusion. The car doors were all locked. But on showing my ticket to a guard, he let me into a compartment. No doubt supposing that I had obtained admission to the station from the waiting room and had been loitering about. The same was probably the case with the two or three other men looking out of the waiting room window at the platform, whom I judged to be detectives. The train rolled out of the station. And soon I was leaving London behind at the rate of 50 miles an hour.

MUSIC AND SFX: TRAIN LEAVING STATION

BIDWELL

After midnight, we took the steamer to Holyhead and arrived at Dublin about 7 a.m. I should not have felt so comfortable throughout this night's journey had I known that the telegraph was flashing in all directions.

SFX: TELEGRAM RINGING.

BROOK

Five hundred pounds reward for the capture of George Bidwell, who is supposed to be one of the persons engaged in the Great Bank Forgery. He is an American citizen, about 40 years of

age, a dark complexion, and is alleged to be in Ireland.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC TRANSITION

BROOK

Bidwell went on to Cork, and he left the station followed by two detectives. One of them inquired whether he'd ever been there before. With a haughty yes, he walked slowly away. He made his way to a wharf where a tender was waiting to convey passengers and mail to the liner SS Atlantic.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

BIDWELL

On entering, I found the place crowded and the tugboat ready to convey the passengers to the steamer Atlantic. Before attempting to step aboard the tug, I took a look around and saw my two detectives standing back in one corner with their eyes fixed on me, all with their heads being concealed behind the crowd, waiting to see their friends off for America. Apparently unconscious of their presence, I threw my papers one by one down among the passengers, and as the deck of the boat was eight or ten feet below, the detectives could not see to whom they were being thrown. I stood leaning on the rail for a short time, gazing at the scene, then left the wharf, not even glancing in the direction of the detectives. I felt that any attempt of mine to embark would precipitate their movements. Therefore,

I at once abandoned all ideas of taking passage for Queenstown.

BROOK

Bidwell was luckier than he realized at the time. On that trip, the Atlantic struck a rock off the coast of Nova Scotia, and of the 1,002 people aboard, 560 lost their lives. All the rest of the evening, George Bidwell spent in trying to shake off the detectives who were shadowing him. Quite likely, these men were only acting on a general suspicion and did not care to take any definite action until they were made more sure that he was the wanted man. He stayed that night at a commercial hotel. When he went to the post office, where he'd arranged to collect mail in the name of Bodle, he realized that he was being watched. He hired a jaunting car and set off to the country.

SFX: HORSE AND CARRIAGE ON THE ROAD.

DRIVER

Sure, you're a nervous man, sir.

BIDWELL

Nervous? Why should I be nervous? And why should you tell me in any case?

DRIVER

You need not be frightened of me, sir. There's many a true patriot in Ireland that's nervous these days. I know you are a patriot, sir, and there are many doing what you're doing.

BIDWELL

How do you know I am?

DRIVER Trust in me. There are many in Ireland who will protect you.

BROOK When they reached the small town, Bidwell dismissed the jaunting car and decided to stay the night at an hotel. Glancing at a recent paper in the sitting room, he learned for the first time that his real name was known to the police, that he was suspected to be in Ireland.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

BIDWELL I sat in a hotel, utterly dumbfounded, bewildered, paralyzed. I'd experienced some shocks and takedowns in my time, but never one to compare with this. Arousing myself from the state of mental stupefaction, hereto unknown, I put the paper into the fire and retired to the room allotted to me.

BROOK But in the morning, he was off on the road again, posing as a pennion, an Irish revolutionary. He managed to make his way to Dublin. He put up at a small hotel and might well have escaped attention if he hadn't left behind him his scarf with the initials G.B. This was seen by one of the maids.

MAID I found this in his room, sir. He must have left it out when he was packin'.

POLICE OFFICER Ah, this is our man, all right. I want every man you can spare to watch all the trains from Dublin tonight.

POLICE Very good, sir. He must not get away. He must not get away.

BROOK But he did. To Belfast, where, pretending to be a Frenchman, he managed to get on a boat to Glasgow. From there he went on to Edinburgh, where he posed as a German medical student. For over three months he lived there, corresponding with friends in America and successfully concealing his identity. Every day he went for a brief stroll to buy the latest Edinburgh and London papers. The news agent, not entirely taken in by Bidwell's disguise, felt there was something suspicious about this customer. He happened to mention it to another customer who worked for a firm of lawyers. And among the clients of this firm of lawyers was the Bank of England. By such a slender chain of circumstances of luck, information concerning this mysterious stranger came back to Scotland Yard. Bidwell was followed. He took fright, tried to get away. This time, he did not succeed.

MUSIC: UP, THEN DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING

BIDWELL I tell you, I'm no fanian. I live. Then what do you want me for?

POLICE For forgery.

BIDWELL I don't know what you mean.

POLICE I think you do.

MUSIC: UP FOR CONCLUSION

BROOK

Meantime, the arrest of the other principal in the conspiracy was no less tinged with melodrama. There was a worldwide hue and cry. In America, Pinkerton was leading exhaustive inquiries into the background of the gang. A trail, in the end, led to Cuba, where other members of the gang were found and arrested. As for Macdonald, he fled aboard the liner *Thuringia*, and his arrest was only a few days after a melodramatic boat race in the New York Harbor. And what of the loot?

SHAW

Among the few clues which had not been destroyed by Macdonald and Bidwell was a letter which mentioned a certain Major Matthews. Through this name as our guide, we went through the shipping records of every mail boat company. And at last we found traces of a trunk of clothing which had been sent to the depot of the North Atlantic Express Company in New York to be called for by Major Matthews. Wrapped up in the soiled linen were found three bundles of bonds to the total value of almost \$300,000.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION AND CLIMATE

BROOK

And if those of you are inclined to think that the modern criminals know more tricks than their predecessors, remember this amazing story occurred in 1873. When the various accused came to trial in August of that year, there was such a vast array of evidence against

them that there was little to be said in their defense. It says much for their characters that they were principally concerned in seeing that the innocent did not suffer for their actions. Bidwell spoke of the manager of the West End branch of the Bank of England.

BIDWELL

I should like to say concerning Colonel Fraser that I hope as the years go by his resentment against me will wear away. I know a lot of people have blamed him, but I should like to say that any other man in London, however able, had he been in Colonel Fraser's position, would have been deceived by us. I'd like to say how sorry I am that he was deceived. That is all I have to say.

BROOK

The commercial world was horrified by the revelation that the greatest bank in England could be tricked, deceived and despoiled. In those days of harsh sentences, the criminals could have little hope of mercy. On the eighth day of the trial, after the men had been found guilty, the Lord Chief Justice proclaimed sentence.

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE

You, who now ask for mercy, and who are not restrained by respect for law and honesty, must be met with a terrible retribution. And it should be well known that persons who commit crimes, which only persons of education sometimes commit, will be sure to meet with a very heavy punishment. I cannot see a reason to make a distinction in the sentence I

am about to pass in regard to that sentence. If I could conceive any case of forgery worse than this, I should have endeavored to take into consideration whether such punishment, less than the maximum, might have been sufficient. But as I cannot conceive a worse case, I see no reason for mitigating the sentence. That sentence is: "Let each and all of you be kept in penal servitude for life." And in addition to that sentence, I order that each one of you shall pay one-fourth of the costs of the prosecution.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

BROOK

Twenty years were passed by before the last of these criminals was released. Bidwell lived to write the story of his infamous crime. As for the rest, there's less. Have you noticed one thing about this story? At each stage, the almost perfect crime was spoilt not by the diligence of the bank or the law, but by those little errors which, as we've learned in this series, time after time give the criminals away. If Bidwell had been a little less greedy, he might have escaped.

Remember, those two bills which led to their downfall were not detected because they were forged, but because he'd forgotten to fill in the date. Again, after all Bidwell's ingenuity to avoid arrest, he put the police on his trail in Dublin by forgetting to pack his

scarf. The Bank of England robbery is called "The Crime of the Century." But like most other crimes, it was far from being perfect.

MUSIC: FOR CONCLUSION

BROOK

~~Well, that's all for now. For our next meeting, I hope to be able to tell you more of the secrets of Scotland Yard.~~

HOST

That was "The Bank of England Robbery" episode from *Secrets of Scotland Yard*, a dramatization of the investigation of the 1873 Bank of England robbery by George Bidwell and George MacDonald. If you're interested to know more, check out Bidwell's autobiography, *Forged His Chains*, published in 1888, which provides a detailed account of his activities leading up to and after the bank forgery. There's lots more information at our episode webpage as well, reimagedradio [dot] fm.

MUSIC: FUSEBOX THEME FOR BREAK

THE FUSEBOX BREAK

HOST

This is John Barber. Thank you for listening to Re-Imagined Radio. Another program you might find interesting is "The Fusebox Show." Produced by Marc Rose, Milt Kanes, and Jeff Pollard, each episode features unique conversation and commentary that goes where even late night television talk show hosts fear to tread. Listen to these examples.

SFX: THE FUSEBOX SHOW TEASER

HOST "The Fusebox Show" is available as podcasts. Learn more at their website, thefuseboxshow dot com.

**MUSIC: FUSEBOX THEME, FADE UNDER
AND OUT FOR THE FOLLOWING**

ACT 2, THE BLACK MUSEUM

HOST This is Re-Imagined Radio. We're sampling from four radio series focusing on "The Black Museum," a collection of crime and murder artifacts held at Scotland Yard, headquarters for London's Metropolitan Police.

Next is *The Black Museum*. Often cited as the best of the four series, *The Black Museum* is also produced and syndicated by Harry Allen Towers. Star power is provided by American actor Orson Welles who narrates each episode.

It's an interesting arrangement between Towers and Welles. Learn the details at the episode webpage at our website, reimagedradio [dot] fm.

Instead of famous cases, Towers and Welles take a different approach, focusing on Scotland Yard's unusual collection of artifacts associated with crimes.

Let's listen to samples from "A Tan Shoe, Left Foot" an early episode of *The Black Museum*.

SFX: SAMPLES FROM "A TAN SHOE, LEFT FOOT," EPISODE OF *THE BLACK MUSEUM*

ORSON WELLES This is Orson Welles, speaking from London.

SFX: BIG BEN CHIMES

WELLES Here in the grim stone structure on the Thames, which houses Scotland Yard, is a warehouse of souvenirs, where everyday objects a broom, a vase, a lampshade all are touched by murder.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC STINGER

WELLES Now this tan shoe. It's a brogue, good leather, expensive make, but the dark stain near the heel wasn't put there by the manufacturer.

MUSEUM OFFICIAL A tan shoe, sir. Left foot. What do you make of this stain? It looks to me like blood.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC STINGER

WELLES Today that shoe can be seen in the Black Museum.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC STINGER

ANNOUNCER From the annals of the Criminal Investigation Department of the London Police, we bring you the dramatic stories of the crimes recorded by the objects in Scotland Yard's Gallery of Death: the Black Museum.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC INTRODUCTION

SFX: INTERIOR. DOOR OPENS.

FOOTSTEPS ON WOODEN FLOOR.

WELLES

Well, here we are in the Black Museum: Scotland Yard's Museum of Murder. Here lies death. Violent, unexpected death. Here in the objects that line the shelves and fill the room are the stories of murder. ~~Here's a birthday card. To Margaret, with love. A present went with the card, of course. The present was death.~~

~~This glass a man was drinking from it when he died, most unnaturally. The glass fell from his hands. The murderer jumped forward instinctively to catch it. He caught it and left a fingerprint that sent him to the gallows.~~

Ah, here we are. Here's the tan shoe. A left-foot shoe. The darkish stain near the heel, inside and out, couldn't be disguised with polish, but there was no stain on it that morning of May the 20th, 1930, when the two men, one wearing this particular shoe, walked along the platform at Newcastle Station.

~~It was a few minutes before train time, so they made their way along the platform.~~

SFX: EXTERIOR, SOUNDS OF TRAIN ENGINES AND WHISTLES, FOOTSTEPS ALONG WALKWAY.

WALLACE BENNETT I tell you, John, my firm regard me most highly.

~~JOHN LINKMAN I'm sure they do, my dear chap.~~

~~BENNETT It's not that I care to boast, but, uh, their attitude speaks for itself.~~

LINKMAN In what way?

BENNETT Well, as you know, they allow me to travel with the colliery wages each Friday.

LINKMAN Uh-huh.

BENNETT From the bank in Newcastle to our office at Alnmouth.

LINKMAN Yes, a very responsible task. But come, my friend, admit the truth.

BENNETT What truth, John?

LINKMAN Well, they really don't allow you to travel unescorted with so much money in that black leather bag.

BENNETT Oh, yes, they do.

LINKMAN But there's no guard cunningly posted somewhere else on the train to watch you?

BENNETT None whatsoever.

LINKMAN (LAUGHS)

~~BENNETT You see, they place great trust in me.~~

~~LINKMAN They do indeed.~~

~~BENNETT Mark my words, I'm in line for a colliery managership one day.~~

~~LINKMAN And you deserve it, my dear chap.~~

~~BENNETT Yes, it'll be a fine reward for twenty years' work.~~ Oh, uh, morning, Collins.

COLLINS Oh, good morning, Bennett.

BENNETT Fine, chap. He's a clerk with a neighboring colliery. Now, uh, come on, John, I think this is our carriage.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS INTO CARRIAGE

LINKMAN Oh, it seems to be empty.

BENNETT Splendid. We can have a good talk during the hour journey to Alnmouth. Now, uh, come on, sit down and make yourself at home.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC STINGER

~~WELLES And with these few words, the friends smilingly took their places in the empty railway carriage. It was quite a change for Mr. Bennett to have someone to talk to on his usually lonely courier service. More often than not, he was alone with his small black bag, for it was not his habit to trust strangers when carrying a large sum of money. But this chap seemed a decent sort.~~

SFX: INTERIOR, SOUNDS OF TRAIN
TRAVELING ALONG ITS TRACKS

BENNETT And, John, you . . . you simply must come home to dinner and meet the wife.

LINKMAN Oh, that would be very nice, old chap.

BENNETT That's good. Well, shall we say, uh, Friday night? Delighted.

SFX: INTERIOR, TRAIN WHEELS AND
TRACK SOUNDS FADE AWAY

WELLES Yes, a very decent sort. Bennett didn't take easily to people, but this chap seemed to be his kind. He'd only met him in Newcastle a week ago, but he'd warmed to him at once, and in a way did with few people. And so the train sped along the northeastern line.

SFX: TRAIN RUNNING ALONG ITS TRACKS

WELLES Heaton, Stannington, Morpeth. Small station stops along the line. At Morpeth, the train took up water. Few people got out to stretch their legs. Some passed through the barrier and gave up their tickets. Among them was a man in a gray overcoat.

STATION AGENT Tickets, please. Tickets, please.

LINKMAN Say what?

STATION AGENT Yeah, oh, say, say. Your ticket's for Alnmouth.

LINKMAN Oh, yes, I ... I've changed my mind. I'm getting off here, thank you.

STATION AGENT Eh, right you are sir. Eh, tickets, please.

WELLES Four minutes later, the train left Morpeth and went on its way to Alnmouth. There the passengers alighted. The journey was over. A porter then proceeded to clean the train, as was usual. But in one of the empty carriages, he made a gruesome discovery.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC STINGER

~~PORTER Hey, hey, what's this? Blood on the floor?~~

WELLES A stream of blood running from under the seat. He bent down to look and found the carriage not so empty as he'd imagined.

PORTER Help, please. Somebody's been murdered.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC TRANSITION

WELLES Somebody had indeed been murdered. And the next logical step, after the local police had been hurriedly brought to the scene of the crime, was to send for Scotland Yard.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC TRANSITION

SFX: INTERIOR. DOOR OPENS.

SERGEANT Inspector Morton, sir, from Scotland Yard.

CHIEF CONSTABLE Oh, Inspector, come in. Glad to renew your acquaintance.

INSPECTOR How are you, sir?
MORTON

CONSTABLE Yeah. Oh, thank you, Sergeant. That'll be all.

SERGEANT Yes, sir.

CONSTABLE Uh, sit down, sit down. Well, in answer to your question, I'm worried. Deeply worried.

MORTON About the murder, sir?

CONSTABLE Yes. They all come to the Chief Constable of the county.

MORTON Who?

CONSTABLE The railways, telling me that no one will travel by train unless the killer's caught.

MORTON I see their point.

CONSTABLE Yeah, but that's only one of them. Then there's the colliery, insisting that we find the murderer of their employee and the ... and the man's wife, of course.

MORTON Yes, I know. Well, you can hand all that sort of thing over to me now.

CONSTABLE And I can't, sir. I'm sorry.

MORTON First of all, sir, would you supply me with some preliminary facts? How much do you know about the murdered man?

WELLES The Chief Constable explained it all to the London detective. The dead man's name was Wallace Bennett, a meek and faithful little man. For the past twenty years, he'd worked with a leading collier in the district. For the past five years, he'd been their paymaster, traveling with his cash bag to pay the miners' wages each week in Alnmouth.

CONSTABLE Well, there it is, Inspector. He took the train, as usual, this Friday, but he arrived at Alnmouth dead.

MORTON And the bag in which he carried this money, sir?

CONSTABLE It was missing.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC STINGER

WELLES The inspector wanted to find out first about that missing bag, most of all how much money it contained. He went to the colliery manager.

MORTON Now, sir, I'd like to have your help and connection with the murder of Bennett.

COLLIERY MANAGER Well, anything I can do to help, uh, you can count on me.

MORTON Well, first I'd like to find out how much the bag he was carrying with him contained.

COLLIERY MANAGER Well, the person who can answer that question is Miss Robertson in our accounts department.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

MORTON Well, Miss Robertson, I expect you have a record of the amount that Mr. Bennett drew from the bank on the morning of his death.

ROBERTSON Oh, yes, Inspector. I have a note of it here. The amount is exactly £400, eight shillings, and four pence.

MORTON And how was the money made up?

ROBERTSON In various denominations, Inspector. You see, it was required for paying the men at the colliery, but the greater part in pound notes. And, uh, Inspector, I thought that you'd be making inquiries, so I was in touch with the bank this morning.

MORTON Yes.

ROBERTSON The money was paid out in used notes, and the bank has no trace of the numbers.

MORTON Oh, bad luck. Well, thank you, Miss Robertson. You've saved me a disappointment and a wasted visit.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC STINGER

WELLES Now there were other things and other people to see. Among them, the doctor.

DOCTOR Yes, Inspector. I was called in by the local police when the body was discovered.

MORTON And what did you determine as the cause of death, doctor?

DOCTOR Well, there were four bullets in the body, one of which entered the left lung and one the heart.

MORTON Yes.

DOCTOR The other two were lodged in the brain.

~~MORTON~~ ~~Hmm. Our killer took no chances.~~

~~DOCTOR~~ ~~Hmm, none at all. The skull was also fractured by a heavy blow, such as might be made by the butt of a revolver.~~

~~MORTON~~ ~~I see. Well, thank you, doctor.~~

WELLES The motive was clear enough: robbery. Somewhere was a bag and £400, and there also was a murderer. But where? Who was it? Morton found it hard those first few days, hard because there were no leads. There was a body, a missing cash bag, and four bullets. That was all. ~~The bullets were duly tested and traced.~~

~~MORTON~~ ~~Nickel-capped bullets, sir. Unusual style. Fired from a .32 revolver.~~

~~CHIEF INSPECTOR~~ ~~Any hope of tracing that gun, Morton?~~

~~MORTON~~ ~~Well, we're working on it now, sir. The train was thoroughly searched. No sign~~

of the gun, but I'm having a very thorough search made along the railway track to see if we can uncover anything there.

CHIEF INSPECTOR Good.

MORTON I should think it's likely that the killer might have thrown the gun out of the window.

CHIEF INSPECTOR Well, uh, let me know as soon as you're in the report, won't you?

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION, CROSS FADE TO TELEPHONE RINGING.

MORTON Inspector Morton. What's that? You found a gun! All right, send it along as quickly as possible, and we'll have it examined by the experts.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

TECHNICIAN Yes, sir. It's the murder weapon, all right. I've compared it with the bullets, and they were fired from this same revolver.

MORTON I suppose there's no means of identification on the revolver. Number removed and all the usual precautions?

TECHNICIAN Oh, no, sir. The number can be distinguished. What's more, I've made inquiries, and we've traced the owner.

MORTON Good. Sounds a little too simple, though. Where is the owner?

TECHNICIAN Well, uh, he's a foreign gentleman, sir, living here in Newcastle. They are getting hold of him now.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

MORTON Now, Mr. Rossini, I want you to identify this revolver. According to the gun license, it's one that belongs to you.

ROSSINI Uh, let me see. Yes, that's my revolver, all right. Oh, I can't tell you how grateful I am to you, Inspector, for getting it back. Oh, my wife will be pleased. I never expected to see it again.

MORTON You mean it was stolen?

ROSSINI Yes, over three months ago. I ... I must phone my wife and tell her it's back. Oh, she was so upset, poor Annunziata. You see, my house was burgled, and this was missing, among other things. I reported it to the local police.

MORTON I see. Uh, just one other question, Mr. Rossini. Can you give me some indication of your own movements during the last seven days?

ROSSINI Oh, well ... that's very simple, Inspector. I only arrived home this morning, uh, uh, on a business trip from the continent. You see, I ... I ... I've been in Paris for the last fortnight.

~~But, but please, don't ... don't let my wife know that. If ... if you want any witnesses, that's very easy. I ... I've been working in the Paris office of my company all the time. Uh, don't be suspicious of me, you know.~~

~~MORTON~~

~~All right, Mr. Rossini. Just as a matter of routine, we'll check your statement, but I don't think we'll need to see you again.~~

MUSIC: DRAMATIC STINGER

WELLES

Dead ends. Wherever they looked, dead ends. ~~With the inquest pending, it looked as if a verdict of murder by a person or persons unknown would be certain. And yet that was not to be.~~ A twist of fate, a new chance witness, was to revive the investigation, set it back on the trail which led to the murderer, and the bloodstained shoe, that same tan shoe, which can be seen today, in the Black Museum.

MUSIC: TRANSITION

WELLES

The witness came in on the third day, the morning after the funeral. He was a short, dark-haired man whose name was Collins. He asked to see the Inspector in charge of the case.

~~MORTON~~

~~Come in here, Mr. Collins. We can talk without interruption.~~

~~COLLINS~~

~~Oh, uh, thank you, Inspector.~~

SFX: INTERIOR. DOOR OPENS.

FOOTSTEPS ON FLOOR.

MORTON Now, what was it you wished to see me about?

COLLINS Well, uh, uh, about Bennett, sir, uh, about his murder.

MORTON Yes.

COLLINS I ... I met him on Newcastle station that morning before he boarded the train.

MORTON You saw him then? Was he carrying his cash bag?

COLLINS Uh, yes, he was. I've seen Bennett travel down to Alnmouth every Friday for years, but this morning I particularly noticed him because ...

MORTON Why?

COLLINS Because he usually traveled alone.

MORTON Wasn't he alone last Friday?

COLLINS No, he had someone with him. They were walking along the station together. I ... I saw them get into the same compartment.

MUSIC: STINGER, DUCKS UNDER THE FOLLOWING

WELLES Now, for the first time, Bennett's train companion entered the case. Inspector

Morton wanted to know more, a lot more. Was the man a friend of Bennett's? Did he, Collins, know him?

COLLINS No, uh, I ... I didn't know the man, Inspector. He was a stranger to me.

~~MORTON And it sounds like he'd be a close friend of Bennet.~~

~~COLLINS I think so. Of course, his wife, uh, I mean, widow, wo ... would be the one to tell you about that.~~

~~MORTON I'll check with her. Now, Mr. Collins, you've been very helpful, but can you help a little more?~~

~~COLLINS Yes, uh, how, Inspector?~~

MORTON Can you give me a description of this man?

COLLINS Well, uh, uh, I ... I noticed he was shortish, uh, about my height. Uh, that's, uh, 5'7".

MORTON Yes. Anything else?

COLLINS Uh, he was fair, small mustache.

MORTON Good. And his clothes?

COLLINS Uh, he ... he was wearing a gray overcoat, a gray soft felt hat, and a dark gray suit. At least, uh, I could see his dark gray trousers, a red tie, I

think. Oh, oh, yes, and tan brogue shoes.

MORTON You're very observant, Mr. Collins. Did you by any chance notice when he left the train?

COLLINS Uh, yes, at Morpeth.

MORTON You're sure of that?

COLLINS Certain. Uh, I got out to stretch my legs when the train took up water there. I saw him go through the barrier and give up his ticket.

WELLES Out of the blue, a witness and a lead at last. It happens that way. A person remembers some incident, some unusual detail, and the trail begins.

MORTON Mrs. Bennett?

MRS. BENNETT Yes?

MORTON I'm from the police. I'm sorry to trouble you at a time like this, but, uh, Inspector Morton, I'd like you to answer a few questions.

MRS. BENNETT I'll do it.

MORTON Thank you, Mrs. Bennett. Now, uh, your husband left home at the usual time on that particular morning?

MRS. BENNETT Yes.

MORTON Carrying the black bag containing the money?

MRS. BENNETT Yes. I was always worried about that bag.

MORTON Yeah. Uh, do you recall on this particular morning whether your husband was planning to meet a friend or anybody in particular?

MRS. BENNETT Well, if he ... if he was, he never mentioned it to me. He always traveled by himself as far as I know.

MORTON Ah. Well, amongst your husband's acquaintances, is there any man you can recollect, uh, shortish, five foot seven, fair hair, small mustache?

MRS. BENNETT Hmm. No. No, I can't think of anybody like that. He definitely wasn't a close friend of my husband's, of that I'm sure.

WELLES Inspector Morton hurried to Morpeth and interviewed the ticket collector.

TICKET COLLECTOR Uh, aye, a man in a gray overcoat? Last Friday, you said, sir?

MORTON Yes, a short, fair man, dark gray suit, a small mustache. Do you remember him?

TICKET COLLECTOR Oh, yeah, I do remember him. He had a ticket to Alnmouth.

MORTON But he gave it up here?

TICKET Uh, yes. He said he, uh, changed his
COLLECTOR mind or something.

MORTON Did you notice if he was carrying a
small black bag?

TICKET Uh, I couldn't say what it was. See, he
COLLECTOR had it inside his coat, covered up. It,
uh, it looked bulky.

MORTON Inside his coat? Thank you. Thank you
very much.

WELLES A casual question had brought an
encouraging, unexpected answer. The man
who had left the train at Morpeth was
concealing something bulky beneath his
overcoat. The black cash bag was
missing, and this man had traveled in
the same train, according to a witness,
in the very same compartment. All they
had to do now was find him.

MUSIC: STINGER

WELLES ~~The thought was not too comforting. Find
one man who might be anywhere in
England, one man who had left almost no
trace behind him.~~ And then fate,
strange, incredible fate, intervened. Or
was it fate? Perhaps it was stupidity or
the unconscious urge to brag that lies
hidden in every murderer. Anyway, it
happened that same week, at a hotel bar
in London.

SFX: INTERIOR. PUB WALLAH.

~~BAR PATRON Come on. Have another, George.~~

~~GEORGE BLAKEY~~ ~~No, no, thanks, maybe. I've got to be going.~~

~~BAR PATRON~~ ~~Come on, Auntie.~~

~~BLAKEY~~ ~~But you've already paid for three.~~

~~BAR PATRON~~ ~~What's that matter? I've got money. Look.~~

~~BLAKEY~~ ~~Blimey.~~

~~BAR PATRON~~ ~~£1 notes. Hundreds of them. I'll tell you, I'm rich. Come on. Have another.~~

WELLES
Two men drinking in a bar, two casual acquaintances. It might never have happened, but it did happen. And when one of them, his mind filled with misgivings and doubts, went to the police the next morning, Scotland Yard was speedily informed.

MORTON
Now, let's hear the story. Your name's Blakey, is it?

BLAKEY
Ah, that's right, sir. I'm a bus driver. Uh, this fellow I was drinking with, he used to work for our company once.

MORTON
Do you know him well?

BLAKEY
Well, no, 'ardly at all. I met him in the pub last night, and he kept on buying me drinks. Then he brought out this great fistful of money.

MORTON
How much money would you say?

BLAKEY Oh, two or three hundred quid, I should think.

MORTON Hmm.

BLAKEY Well, maybe I'm misjudging him, sir, but, uh, well, I heard about the murder in Newcastle and the money being pinched.

MORTON You did the right thing, Blakey. Don't worry about that. What's the man's name?

BLAKEY Linkman. John Linkman, I think it is.

MORTON Do you know where he lives?

BLAKEY No, I've not the faintest idea about that. But you'll find him most nights down at the Roundhead Arms, sir, uh, in the bar there.

WELLES The Roundhead Arms, a small pub on a London side street, a long way from the scene of the murder. But here, that same evening, went Inspector Morton.

SFX: INTERIOR. PUB WALLAH

RUBY What'll it be for you, sir?

MORTON I'll order in a minute, miss. Thanks. I'm waiting for a friend.

RUBY Okay.

MORTON You might happen to know him. He's one of your regular customers, John Linkman.

RUBY Johnny Linkman? Oh, yes, I know 'im.

~~MORTON~~ ~~Hmm. Funny thing. I came in here last~~
~~Friday to have a drink with him and~~
~~seemed to miss him.~~

~~RUBY~~ ~~Oh, that's no wonder. You should have~~
~~asked me. Johnny was away. He was away~~
~~about a week.~~

~~MORTON~~ ~~Oh, that explains it.~~

~~RUBY~~ ~~Yes, some, uh, business trip, he said.~~
~~Must have done all right too, 'cause~~
~~he's pretty flush now.~~

~~MORTON~~ ~~Nice to hear of an old friend doing so~~
~~well.~~

RUBY There he is now, just coming in. Hello,
Johnny love.

LINKMAN Hello, Ruby. Pint a bitter.

RUBY Better make it two. You've got a friend
waiting for you.

LINKMAN Oh.

MORTON Never mind the drinks, miss. John
Linkman?

LINKMAN Uh, yes. Who are you?

MORTON Inspector Morton from Scotland Yard.

RUBY Scotland Yard?

LINKMAN What do you want with me?

MORTON There are one or two questions I want to ask you. Outside.

WELLES With a firm grip on his quarry's arm, Morton left the hotel bar. Outside, a car was waiting. Morton and Linkman were driven [to Scotland Yard].

SFX: INTERIOR. DOOR OPENING

MORTON In here, Mr. Linkman.

LINKMAN My dear inspector, you must be out of your mind. What's the meaning of this treatment?

MORTON Where were you last Friday, Mr. Linkman?

LINKMAN Minding my own business.

MORTON Oh, come, sir. That attitude's only wasting our time.

LINKMAN Oh, I was on a business trip, if you must know.

MORTON Where?

LINKMAN In the Newcastle district. I'm a salesman.

MORTON What firms did you deal with there? And what firm do you represent?

LINKMAN I'm a private trader. I saw no firms while I was there.

MORTON None?

~~LINKMAN~~

~~No, my trip was a failure.~~

MORTON

And where did you get the very large sum of money you've been carrying with you lately?

LINKMAN

Money? What money?

MORTON

I think you know to what I'm referring. May I see the contents of your pockets?

LINKMAN

Certainly not.

MORTON

Then you'll force me to go through the formality of a search warrant.

LINKMAN

Oh, oh, all right. Here. A pen.

MORTON

Yes.

LINKMAN

Some silver, and, and this.

MORTON

One pound notes. At a guess, about three hundred of them.

WELLES

Linkman was held in custody. Meanwhile, Morton and a Sergeant went to search his home.

~~SERGEANT~~

~~I'm sorry, ma'am, but we have a search warrant. Shall I start on the bedroom, sir?~~

~~MORTON~~

~~Yes, Sergeant.~~

~~MRS. LINKMAN~~

~~But what has my husband done? Why are you here?~~

~~SERGEANT We're just making a preliminary investigation, ma'am. There's no cause for alarm yet.~~

WELLES They searched the bedroom, a cramped lounge room with its fading wallpaper, the bathroom, the kitchen, ~~pursued and harassed by a distraught Mrs. Linkman.~~ Then, in the second bedroom.

SFX: INTERIOR. DRAWERS BEING OPENED AND CLOSED.

~~MRS. LINKMAN But what has he done, inspector? You've got to tell me.~~

~~MORTON I'm sorry. There's nothing I can tell you yet, Mrs. Linkman.~~

~~MRS. LINKMAN This is awful. Awful.~~

SERGEANT Uh, I've got something, Inspector. A tan shoe, sir, left foot. What do you make of this stain?

MORTON It looks to me like blood. We'll take it back with us and have it tested.

MUSIC: QUICK STINGER

WELLES In the laboratory at Scotland Yard, they found out it WAS blood. The bank in Newcastle identified the notes. In a police lineup, Collins identified Linkman as the man who had shared a compartment with Bennett that fatal Friday morning. And then the game was up.

MORTON Well, Mr. Linkman, have you anything to say?

LINKMAN This is all a ridiculous mistake. I can explain everything.

MORTON Can you explain this?

LINKMAN Uh, uh, yes. You must have found it in my flat. It's one of my shoes.

MORTON And can you explain this stain? Here, just by the toe cap. Somebody seems to have been trying to cover it with shoe polish, not very successfully, I'm afraid. Oh, come along, Mr. Linkman. Can you explain that?

LINKMAN I've never noticed the stain before. It's probably some oil or something.

MORTON No, Mr. Linkman, it's not oil. I have the laboratory report here. It's a blood stain.

LINKMAN All right. You know everything, don't you?

MORTON Not everything, Mr. Linkman, but enough. Would you like to make a statement now?

LINKMAN Very well. I'm glad it's over. Glad I can tell somebody the truth at last.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC STINGER

WELLES Confronted with all this and the evidence of the stain on the shoe he'd vainly tried to cover up with shoe

polish, Linkman confessed to his crime. And today, that same shoe can be seen occupying a place, in the Black Museum.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC STINGER

ANNOUNCER

~~Orson Welles will be back with you in just a moment.~~

WELLES

(VOICE ECHO) The trial was held at Newcastle with an eminent counsel retained to defend the prisoner. But inevitably, the sordid details of the crime emerged. Linkman being out of a job and needing money, a chance to make the acquaintance of Wallace Bennett in Newcastle, learning his new friend carried large sums of money by train every Friday, Linkman carefully planned his crime.

But he learned, much to his eternal sorrow, that care must be preserved both before and after murder. A moment's lapse, a few drinks, and it meant the thirteen steps and the rope one morning not long afterwards. As the Lord Justice said in sentencing the prisoner, "The scales of justice are now balanced." And now, until we meet next time in the same place and I tell you another story about the Black Museum, I remain, as always, obediently yours.

SFX: INTERIOR. FOOTSTEPS WALKING AWAY. DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC CLOSE

HOST That was "A Tan Shoe, Left Foot," an episode of *The Black Museum*, the second of four radio series about the unusual collection of crime and murder artifacts housed at Scotland Yard, London, England.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

ACT 3, WHITEHALL 1212

HOST You're listening to Re-Imagined Radio. I'm John Barber. Thanks for joining us as we explore four radio series, each focused on The Black Museum.

The third radio series is *Whitehall 1212*, written and directed by Wyllis Cooper, noted for writing *Lights Out* and *Quiet Please*.

Looking to separate *Whitehall 1212* from the other radio series about The Black Museum, Cooper took an intellectual approach to solving the mysteries of the crimes. He used an all British cast. And maintained a consistent narrative point of view: that of the police investigating each crime. Episodes were hosted by Chief Superintendent John Davidson.

Let's listen now to samples from "The Blitz Murder Case," a true crime story and the first episode from the radio series *Whitehall 1212*.

SFX: SAMPLES FROM "THE BLITZ MURDER CASE" EPISODE OF *WHITEHALL 1212*

ANNOUNCER

Scotland Yard reveals a true crime case from July 1940 during the Blitz, involving the triple murder of Mrs. Ames, her daughter Jessica, and their servant Margaret Evans in Matfield, Kent. Chief Superintendent Carruth and Detective Sergeant Small investigate with local police, uncovering key evidence such as a fourth teacup, a glove, and shotgun pellets. The motive centers on John Ames, estranged husband of Mrs. Ames, seeking divorce to marry farm manager Viola Masterson. Although Ames is initially suspected, forensic evidence and witness accounts implicate Miss Masterson, who is arrested, found criminally insane, and imprisoned. The case exemplifies Scotland Yard's thorough investigative work amid wartime challenges.

SFX: INTERIOR. TELEPHONE RINGS.

SPEAKER

This is Scotland Yard.

ANNOUNCER

For the first time, Scotland Yard opens its secret files to bring you the authentic, true stories of some of its most celebrated cases. These are accurate records drawn from these files by special permission of Sir Harold Scott, Commissioner of Scotland Yard. They're true in every respect, except for the names of the participants, which, for obvious reasons, have been changed. The research has been done by Mr. Percy Hoskins, Chief Crime Reporter for the *London Daily Express* and the

stories for radio are written and directed by Willis Cooper.

MUSIC: FANFARE FOR INTRODUCTION

ANNOUNCER

New Scotland Yard, the London headquarters of the Metropolitan Police, is situated near the Embankment on Whitehall, hard by 10 Downing Street and almost in the shadow of Big Ben.

Here also is the headquarters of the CID, the Criminal Investigation Department. The body of men whose exploits for more than a hundred years have made the name Scotland Yard synonymous with the brilliant detection of crime and unrelenting pursuit of the criminal. And the presentation of the painstakingly acquired evidence that assures his eventual punishment.

On the lower ground floor of New Scotland Yard is the famous Black Museum, where its present custodian is Chief Superintendent James Davidson, a Scotland Yard veteran. Behind this door...

SFX: INTERIOR. DOOR OPENS, THEN CLOSES.

CHIEF
SUPERINTENDENT
JOHN DAVIDSON

Good afternoon. This Black Museum of ours is rather unique. Everything in it was at one time connected with the successful solution of a crime, or was closely involved in the crime itself.

~~We possess an imposing collection of lethal weapons here, each carefully docketed to indicate its origin.~~

~~Here are half-empty bottles of almost every poison known to man, together with a statement of particulars concerning its use.~~

~~Here are the bloodstained garments on which the solution of a crime of violence depended.~~

~~Among the Black Museum's relics are disguises used by famous criminals, death masks of notorious men and women whose ends Scotland Yard encompassed, and a great many other more gruesome mementos of man's inhumanity to man.~~

Among the exhibits are other seemingly incongruous objects that in their time served well in the undoing of desperate criminals.

Such an exhibit is this one, the fragments of a set of teacups. This collection of shards, was the first step in the solution of a frightful crime which occurred during the Blitz of July 1940.

SFX: INTERIOR. BUZZER.

POLICE
CONSTABLE

Yes, sir?

DAVIDSON

Will you please bring me file number 302 MR 651, Constable?

CONSTABLE 302 MR 651, sir? Yes, sir. Once, sir.

DAVIDSON In July 1940, the Battle of Britain was at its height. ~~The Luftwaffe hits us at all hours, and from advanced defense fields of the RAF the weary Spitfires rose day and night to do battle.~~ Thousands of British people died in Britain as a result of enemy action. But in the midst of the very present war, murder went on as usual. Chief Superintendent Peter Carruth received a telephone call at Scotland Yard on the morning of the third of July, a Wednesday.

SFX: INTERIOR. DOOR OPENS,
FOOTSTEPS INTO OFFICE

CONSTABLE 4302 MR 651, sir.

DAVIDSON Thank you.

SFX: INTERIOR. FOOTSTEPS ENTER
OFFICE THEN EXIT. DOOR CLOSES

DAVIDSON The call's from Chief Constable at Matfield, a Kentage village near Tunbridge.

The Chief Constable reported the finding of the bodies of three women shot to death and requested the assistance of the CID.

~~The services of Scotland Yard are available to the provincial police at all times if requested. The Home Office assuming all expenses if the request is~~

~~made within 24 hours of the discovery of the crime. At their own expense if we're called in after that.~~

Chief Superintendent Carruth ~~was gratified that the request came at the very beginning of the case and he~~ drove to Matfield at once, with a medical examiner from the Home Office and Detective Sergeant Small also Scotland Yard. They were met at the scene of the crime by Matfield Chief Constable Thomas Bennett.

~~CONSTABLE BENNETT~~ ~~It's good of you to come so quickly, all of you. It's all quite beyond the ears, sir. What with the blitz and all.~~

~~CARRUTH~~ ~~I'm sure. Had a bad time, emm?~~

~~BENNETT~~ ~~Having it, sir.~~

~~CARRUTH~~ ~~Yes, I have no doubt.~~

~~SPEAKER~~ ~~Those are ours Mr. Bennett. Spitfires.~~

~~SPEAKER~~ ~~Jerry must be up again.~~

BENNETT Well, here's what happened. In the house there's Miss Evans, the servant.

DR. BERNARD Is she dead?

BENNETT Two 'oles in 'er 'ead. ~~Pla ... place, so ransacked. All tore up.~~

CARRUTH Where are the others?

BENNETT Mrs. Ames and her daughter Jessica is lying down there in the orchard. Also shot.

~~BERNARD Yes I ... I see.~~

~~BENNETT Where you want to start, sir?~~

~~CARRUTH Ahmm, the house I think first.~~

~~BENNETT Well, come in then sir. Uh ... gentleman.~~

~~VOICES Thank you. Thank you.~~

CARRUTH They've lived here in Matsfield a long time? Have they, Bennett.

BENNETT Miss Evans, the servant, has always lived here. Mrs. Ames and her daughter moved here a year ago.

SMALL Mrs. Ames a widow?

BENNETT No. Estranged from 'er husband, though they're quite friendly. He lives at Pittington.

DR. BERNARD Oh, yes, I know. I've been there.

BENNETT Owns a farm.

CARRUTH Does he know about this?

BENNETT My station Sergeant telephoned him this morning, sir. He was in London, but he'll be home this evening.

~~Shall I go first, sir? She's lying right by the door, and you might trip over her.~~

~~CARRUTH~~ ~~By all means.~~

SFX: INTERIOR. DOOR OPENS. VOICES
DISCUSSING THE CASE

~~BENNETT~~ ~~These is the gentleman from Scotland Yard, Constable.~~

~~CONSTABLE~~ ~~Yes, sir.~~

BENNETT Here, this is her. Miss Margaret Evans, sir, age sixty one. Settled. Living in.

CARRUTH Ah. See what you can find out, Bernard.

BERNARD Right you are, sir.

CARRUTH Small, get started looking for fingerprints.

SMALL Yes, sir.

SFX: INTERIOR. FOOTSTEPS ABOUT
ROOM.

~~CARRUTH~~ ~~Place has really been ransacked, hasn't it?~~

~~BENNETT~~ ~~Uh-huh.~~

~~CARRUTH~~ ~~What's missing?~~

~~BENNETT~~ ~~Haven't checked yet, sir. Haven't touched anything.~~

CARRUTH

Good.

SPEAKER

~~Well, not much chance of finding out if anything is gone, though. Everybody who lived here is dead.~~

CARRUTH

I'd like to see the others.

SPEAKER

Right, sir. If you'll come with me.

CARRUTH

Oh, what's that over there?

BENNETT

Tea things?

SMALL

Yes, sir. Looks as if she dropped the tray when she saw the murderer.

CARRUTH

Have a look at them too, Small.

SMALL

All right, sir.

SFX: INTERIOR. DOOR OPENS.

BENNETT

Down this path, sir. The orchard there, that's where they are.

CARRUTH

Mrs. Ames?

BENNETT

And her daughter, Jessica.

CARRUTH

~~They have many visitors?~~

BENNETT

~~Very few, sir. And the place is back from the road, 'idden a bit by the roses. 'ard to tell they do have. (PAUSE) There she is.~~

CARRUTH

This is the daughter, I suppose?

BENNETT Right sir.

BENNETT Mother's over there ... off the path.

CARRUTH Daughter was running away toward the house. Mother was facing the other way. Shot in the back too.

BENNETT Aye.

CARRUTH Found anything here in the grass? Cartridge cases, anything?

BENNETT Ehh, No sir. Oh, wait, we did find this glove though sir. Sorry, I had it in my pocket. Almost forgot it.

CARRUTH Ahh. Woman's glove. Size six, I'd say. Hogskin. Shops sell thousands a week. Left hand. Whose is it?

BENNETT Isn't Mrs. Ames, sir, too small. Or Miss Jessica's either. Too large, I'd say, wouldn't you?

CARRUTH Yes . . . Yes, I think so.

BENNETT Maybe the murderer, sir.

CARRUTH We'll see. All you found?

BENNETT All so far, sir.

CARRUTH Where was the glove?

BENNETT Over there, sir. I marked the spot with those two sticks.

CARRUTH Uh, huh. Alongside the mother's body?

BENNETT Yes, sir.

~~CARRUTH Well, as soon as Bernard's examined the bodies, I think you'd better have all this grass scythed down and see if you can find anything else. Cartridge case or anything.~~

~~BENNETT Right, sir.~~

CARRUTH Shall we walk back to the house?

~~BENNETT Yes, sir.~~

~~SFX: EXTERIOR. SPITFIRE AIRPLANE PASSES OVERHEAD.~~

~~BENNETT Blessings lad.~~

~~CARRRUTH Beg your pardon?~~

~~BENNETT Talking to the fighter chap up there. I hope he shoots some Jerry's bloody ears off.~~

~~CARRUTH He probably will.~~

~~BENNETT I've got a son in the RAF. Flight Sergeant of the coastal command.~~

~~CARRUTH Good man.~~

~~BENNETT Nineteen years old. When I was nineteen, I was a farm man for good old Uncle Tom Cobbley. Hey, what if they've found anything yet in there, sir?~~

~~CARRUTH We'll see.~~

SFX: EXTERIOR. DOOR OPENS.

CARRUTH Ah, here's Bernard. Anything yet?

BERNARD Nothing yet. I want to see the other bodies first. Discovered a little so far. Where are the ... em ...

BENNETT Down the path back there, sir. We've touched nothing.

CARRUTH Except this glove.

BERNARD Is this one of theirs?

CARRUTH Wrong size.

BERNARD All right. You can remove the bodies as soon as I finish, Chief Constable.

BENNETT Yes, sir. I'll have the van here at once. (TO POLICEMAN) Ahh, see to it, please.

POLICE OFFICER Yes, sir.

SFX: INTERIOR. FOOTSTEPS ON FLOORING OF HOUSE

CARRUTH What are you doing, Small?

SMALL I'm trying to fit these cups together, sir.

CARRUTH (UPSET) Well, what about fingerprints? I wanted you to...

SMALL I found a good many, sir. They all checked with hers.

CARRUTH Well, how did you know they were hers?

SMALL Oh, I took hers. I wish live people's were as easy to take.

CARRUTH No others?

SMALL Well, I'm not sure yet, sir. As soon as I get the others down there, I'll make a very thorough check.

CARRUTH These cups and saucers ... She dropped them when she saw the murderer, probably.

SMALL Oh, quite. But why should there be four cups, sir?

CARRUTH Four? One for the mother. One for the daughter. One for the maid ...

~~BENNETT Evans was more a companion than a servant, sir. Here in Matfield we ...~~

~~CARRUTH Ah, ah, yes. And one for the murderer.~~

SFX: CYMBAL GONG.

BENNETT She must have known the murderer!

SMALL People don't usually offer a cup of tea to a perfect stranger.

~~CARRUTH You can make up a list of their friends, Chief Constable ...~~

~~BENNETT They are very few friends, sir. Kind of standoffish like they was. And the~~

~~parson, the grocer, postmistress. No ordinary or close friends, so to speak.~~

~~CARRUTH Make up a list and check where they all were yesterday.~~

~~BENNETT Yes, sir.~~

CARRUTH What about this estranged husband of Mrs. Ames? Would he have a motive?

BENNETT Uh ... I don't think so sir. Used to come visit 'er I know ...

CARRUTH Oh he did aye? And he's in London now you said?

BENNETT Went down yesterday morning they said sir.

CARRUTH Where did he live you say?

BENNETT Pittington, sir. In Oxford.

CARRUTH Uh... you take over Sergeant Small. You and Mr. Bernard. I'll call you from Pittington.

~~BENNETT Pittington sir? You think ...~~

CARRUTH ~~I think~~ I'd like to know whether our friendly ex-husband was really in London yesterday, or elsewhere.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

CHIEF At Pittington that afternoon, 70 miles
SUPERINTENDENT away from Matfield, Jamie Davis, the man
JOHN DAVIDSON of all work, explained to Chief
Superintendent Carruth that John Ames
had not yet returned from London.

Miss Viola Masterson, the manager of the
Ames farm, however, was at home,
recovering from an accident. Carruth
spoke to her in her sitting room. Her
left arm was in bandages, and she was
obviously in slight pain. Carruth
sympathized with her.

CARRUTH I am so sorry to disturb you, Miss
Masterson.

MASTERSON It's quite all right. I'll be up and
about in a day or so. It pains a little,
though, now.

CARRUTH I suppose you've heard about the former
Mrs. Ames and her daughter?

MASTERSON I'm so dreadfully sorry. I knew them
slightly, you know.

CARRUTH Oh, did you?

MASTERSON I'd have gone over to Matfield if I
hadn't been so stupid as to fall off my
bicycle and injure my arm. I'm afraid
I'm not a very good cyclist. Oh, do you
have any clues as to the ... the...

CARRUTH Murderer? Very few at the moment. Very
few, I'm afraid.

MASTERSON Oh, what a pity.

CARRUTH Mr. Ames went to London yesterday, hmm?

MASTERSON Yes. He was probably in London while his former wife and daughter were murdered. He often stops in to see them on his way... If he'd stopped there yesterday, he might have prevented it.

CARRUTH Yes, yes. I suppose he can account for his movements yesterday.

MASTERSON I'm quite sure he can, Superintendent. I expect him at any moment.

CARRUTH You were here at the farm all day.

MASTERSON I rode about the farm all day in my bicycle until I had the accident.

CARRUTH Ah.

MASTERSON I'm sure Jamie Davis can confirm that. And the bicycle is still where I left it when I fell off, unless Jamie's brought it back.

CARRUTH I see. Ah. By the way, have you ever seen this glove before?

MASTERSON Oh, let me see it. No, I'm afraid not.
~~Did it belong to...~~

~~CARRUTH We're not quite sure.~~

~~MASTERSON Well, it's not mine. But it's too big for me, I'm sure, Superintendent.~~

CARRUTH You've never seen it before?

MASTERSON Never.

CARRUTH Thank you, Miss Masterson.

MASTERSON Is that all you wanted? Aren't you going to wait for Mr. Ames?

CARRUTH Oh, I don't like to disturb you, Miss Masterson. I'll wait out there with Jamie. It is Jamie, isn't it?

MASTERSON By all means, talk to Jamie. I'm sure he'll confirm everything I've said.

CARRUTH Good day, Miss Masterson.

~~CARRUTH You'll know where to find Jamie?~~

~~MASTERSON He was sitting alongside the stable door cleaning a shotgun, and I last saw him.~~

SFX: INTERIOR. DOOR CLOSSES.

CHIEF Jamie Davis was a simple-minded man. He
SUPERINTENDENT didn't realize that he was talking much
JOHN DAVIDSON too freely to the friendly Scotland Yard
man.

JAMIE Well, it'd be a terrible thing, I
expect, but I don't shed no tears for
'em. I didn't like her, nor her
daughter, neither.

CARRUTH Hated them?

JAMIE It ain't none of my business, sir. But
now, Mr. Ames, ahh, he be a real fine
man. And she, ah she treated him awful
bad.

CARRUTH How?

JAMIE Dog in the manger. Kicks him out, she does. And then when he finally meets a woman he loves, and that woman loving him, she won't give him no divorce.

CARRUTH You seem to know a lot about Mr. Ames' affairs, Jamie.

JAMIE Heh! Him and me, we be just like that. I do anything for that man. Her, too, for that matter.

CARRUTH Who?

JAMIE Miss Masterson. There. Well, that's pretty clean, ain't it?

CARRUTH Let's see. Huhmm. Clean as I'd ever want a gun to be.

JAMIE Had it for years. Old-fashioned, like me. Ah, but she'd be a good shotgun. He uses it all the time for rabbits.

CARRUTH Mr. Ames?

JAMIE He buys his own shells, too. Miss Masterson, she's scared of it. Tried to teach her how to shoot it. But she was scared. You couldn't kill a person with this here gun, I says to her. Not unless you got up real close. Funny thing, though. She shot a rabbit with it yesterday. You know, it made her so sick at her stomach when she shot the poor little fella. "Never again," she says to me.

CARRUTH Did you see the rabbit, Jimmy?

JAMIE Well, what were left of it. She were too close. Well, not worth bringing back to cook. (LAUGHS) You know, I think that's why she fell off her bicycle, thinking about it.

CARRUTH Where did she fall?

JAMIE Well, she was in the meadow yonder. The wheel slipped on the grass.

~~CARRUTH Jamie, did you ever see this glove before?~~

~~JAMIE Huh? No, sir. Well, can't say it's all I have.~~

~~CARRUTH Sure?~~

~~JAMIE No, sir. Whose is it?~~

~~CARRUTH I found it.~~

~~JAMIE Well, finders keepers.~~

CARRUTH ~~That's what they say.~~ So you don't think Mr. Ames and Miss Masterson will be upset by Mrs. Ames' death?

JAMIE Lord bless you, no, sir. Now they can get married. That dog in the manger, wife of his. He must have been the last one to see her alive.

CARRUTH Oh? How's that?

JAMIE When he stopped to see 'er on the way to London yesterday.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC TRANSITION

~~JAMIE Why, I thought you was going to wait for him to come back, sir.~~

~~MUSIC: ENDS~~

CHIEF Chief Superintendent Carruth hurried to
SUPERINTENDENT the local police station where he put
JOHN DAVIDSON through a trunk telephone call to Matfield. Detective Sergeant Small, the Scotland Yard man, answered the telephone at the murder house.

SMALL Small here.

CARRUTH Small, I want you to check at once on something.

SMALL Yes, sir.

CARRUTH I want you to make the most diligent inquiries. Get that chief constable there to inquire of every person in Matfield if necessary at once to discover if this man Ames was seen in Matfield yesterday. You got that?

SMALL He was seen, sir.

CARRUTH He was?

SMALL The Postman, sir. We've been making inquiries all over the village of Mrs. Ames' known friends, and we've come across several curious things, sir.

CARRUTH Well?

SMALL Well, the Postman observed Mr. Ames walking toward this house yesterday afternoon.

CARRUTH He's sure?

SMALL He positively identified him, sir. Known him for years. Spoke to him, called him by name, and Ames replied.

CARRUTH What else?

SMALL He was carrying a shotgun, sir.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC MUSIC, DUCKS UNDER
THE FOLLOWING

CARRUTH Oh. I discovered here that he intended to visit them. But the gun!

SMALL Well, looks as if he's our man, doesn't it?

CARRUTH What else did you discover?

SMALL Well, there's a bicycle belongs to Mrs. Ames is missing.

CARRUTH Oh?

SMALL And the porter at the railway station reports a strange woman carrying a parcel arrived in town yesterday but so far we've been unable to trace her.

~~And the local police have picked up a deserter from an Army camp near here. He's being questioned now.~~

CARRUTH

Oh.

SMALL

And a lorry driver for the gas company in Oxford reports picking up a woman on the highway near here yesterday afternoon. She was wearing one glove.

CARRUTH

Oh?

SMALL

Now he thinks her bare hand was scratched and bleeding.

CARRUTH

Yes.

SMALL

She explained she'd fallen off her bicycle and was trying to catch a train. He took her to the railway station.

SMALL

And then... (OFF MIC) What did you say, sir?

CARRUTH

I didn't say anything.

SMALL

(TO CARRUTH) Oh, I was speaking to Dr. Bernard. I'll put him on. He wants to speak to you.

BERNARD

(TO SMALL) Thank you. (TO CARRUTH) You there, Carruth?

CARRUTH

Yes, Bernard.

BERNARD

I've discovered why you didn't find any spent cartridges, Superintendent.

CARRUTH

Yes?

BERNARD

The women were killed with a shotgun, probably a .410 shotgun.

~~CARRUTH~~

~~Yes, yes, I know.~~

~~BERNARD~~

~~The murderer had to pick the discharged shells out of the breech of the gun by hand.~~

~~CARRUTH~~

~~Yes, but...~~

~~BERNARD~~

~~He probably carried them away and disposed of them elsewhere.~~

CARRUTH

Did you recover any of the shots from the bodies?

BERNARD

Yes, quite small pellets, a birdshot.

CARRUTH

Mark it in evidence and hold it for me. I think those little lead pellets are going to hang someone, Bernard.

MUSIC: UP AND OUT

CHIEF

SUPERINTENDENT

JOHN DAVIDSON

Back at the Pittington farm, Chief Inspector Carruth found that Ames had returned in his absence. Jamie, the garrulous man of all work, was just leaving. He was going to fetch Miss Masterson's abandoned bicycle, he said.

JAMIE

I be going out to fetch Miss Masterson's bicycle, sir?

CARRUTH

Look here, Jamie. Would you like a half a crown?

JAMIE What for?

CARRUTH That rabbit Miss Masterson shot. Is it near where she left the bicycle?

JAMIE Oh, far along or two, sir.

CARRUTH Fetch it back, for me.

~~JAMIE What for, sir? It ain't fit to eat. She were too close.~~

~~CARRUTH I'd have a fancy to see how that gun of yours works, Jim.~~

~~JAMIE That old gun of mine, she be a very good gun, sir.~~

~~CARRUTH Show me. Here.~~

~~JAMIE Well...~~

~~CARRUTH Good man. Now, is Mr. Ames in the house?~~

JAMIE Aye, sir. Now, I'll fetch the rabbit and show you. But the poor thing will be all full of bird shots, sir.

CARRUTH That'll be all right, Jamie. ~~I'm very interested in bird shots.~~

SFX: INTERIOR. KNOCKING AT DOOR,
FOOTSTEPS ON FLOOR OF HOUSE.

AMES Yes.

CARRUTH I'm Chief Superintendent Carruth of Scotland Yard. You're John Ames, hmm?

~~AMES Yes. Now, you're the gentleman who was here this afternoon?~~

~~CARRUTH Yes. May I come in?~~

~~AMES Do.~~

SFX: INTERIOR. FOOTSTEPS INTO HOUSE, DOOR CLOSES.

AMES You've come about the murder of my wife and daughter?

CARRUTH Yes.

~~AMES I'm sorry, Mr. ... Carruth, you said?~~

~~CARRUTH Yes.~~

~~AMES I cannot pretend any great grief, although I am shocked at the tragedy.~~

CARRUTH May I sit down? I, um, I spoke to Miss Masterson, your manager, this afternoon.

AMES She said you were here.

CARRUTH Perhaps if Miss Masterson was strong enough ...

MASTERSON Here I am.

AMES Oh, sit down, my dear.

CARRUTH Please, sit down.

MASTERSON Don't hurt my hand, John. I'm all right. Well, sir?

CARRUTH Am I correct in assuming that, ah ... with the death of Mr. Ames' estranged wife, you and he ...

MASTERSON We can be married, yes.

CARRUTH Mr. Ames?

AMES That's true. My wife has consistently refused to give me a divorce. Although we were on fairly good terms ...

MASTERSON She and I weren't. I'm glad she's dead.

AMES Viola.

MASTERSON And that horrid daughter of hers, too. Now we're rid of them once and for all.

AMES Viola!

CARRUTH Do you share Miss Masterson's views, Mr. Ames?

AMES I ... I'm afraid ...

MATERSON Perhaps he's not as ferocious as I am, but he shares my views all right. Don't you, John?

AMES I ... Yes.

CARRUTH And what were you doing with a shotgun on the way to her home yesterday, Mr. Ames?

MASTERSON John, you didn't ... You didn't ...

CARRUTH Mr. Ames!

MASTERSON You didn't tell me. Oh, John! John, now you ... spoiled everything.

CARRUTH Your wife and your daughter were murdered with a shotgun, Mr. Ames.

AMES I didn't do it.

MASTERSON He didn't, he didn't, I say.

CARRUTH What gauge is your shotgun, Mr. Ames?

AMES This is absurd, Mr. Carruth.

MASTERSON Yes, of course it's absurd.

CARRUTH Why do you ... why do you think it's absurd?

AMES My dear sir, my gun, which incidentally is an American-made Remington over and under 12 gauge, has been broken for four weeks.

MASTERSON You see?

CARRUTH Broken?

AMES The sear spring is broken. It's quite impossible to fire the gun. You can examine the gun at your leisure at Henny McGovern's, the gunsmith. On High Horburn in London, where I took it yesterday.

CARRUTH We'll check that. Why did you visit your wife yesterday, carrying your broken gun?

AMES I dropped off in Matfield on my way to London to have the gun repaired. I begged her again to give me a divorce.

CARRUTH She refused?

AMES She refused again.

MASTERSON (LAUGHING) For the last time. And we're going to be married now, at last. Don't expect us to weep for her. Whoever killed her should be given a medal.

AMES Viola!

MASTERSON Oh, stop it. You're just as glad as I am. Aren't you?

SFX: INTERIOR. TELEPHONE RINGS.

AMES Excuse me. The telephone.

SFX: INTERIOR. FOOTSTEPS TO THE TELEPHONE, TELEPHONE PICKED UP

AMES Yes. Yes, he's here. One moment. It's for you, Mr. Carruth.

CARRUTH Thank you. (PAUSE) Chief Superintendent Carruth here.

SMALL Small here, sir. We found Mrs. Ames' missing bicycle.

CARRUTH Oh.

SMALL Yes, sir. It was discovered in a ditch close to the place where the lorry

driver picked up the woman with one glove.

CARRUTH Oh, good.

SMALL And there were numerous fingerprints on the handlebar, sir. But of the right hand only.

CARRUTH Most interesting.

SMALL And the strange woman whom the railway reporter observed was carrying a parcel, do you remember?

CARRUTH Yes, yes, of course.

SMALL It was a long parcel about the length of a gun, he says, wrapped in brown paper.

CARRUTH I see. Have you taken the things you spoke about?

SMALL Things, sir?

CARRUTH Yes.

SMALL Oh, oh, the fingerprints on the bicycle?

CARRUTH Yes, quite.

SMALL Yes, sir, I've taken them.

CARRUTH How soon could I see them and the people you spoke of?

SMALL Up there, sir?

CARRUTH Yes.

SMALL Well, there's another train that we can have someone at Pittington leaving here in half an hour, sir.

CARRUTH I think you'd better come then if you can find the others you mentioned. I'll meet you at the Pittington station.

SMALL Right, sir.

CARRUTH Goodbye. (TO AMES AND MASTERSON) I'm very sorry.

AMES Could I ask? You haven't uncovered some other evidence, sir?

MASTERSON You're not going to arrest John, then? He won't be charged with ... murder?

CARRUTH I think I can almost assure you that you will not be charged with murder, Mr. Ames. I'm sorry, I ... I must go meet my colleagues. Quite important.

MASTERSON Will you be coming back?

CARRUTH I probably shall. I shall want to be able to assure Mr. Ames that he will not be held.

SFX: INTERIOR. KNOCK AT DOOR.

MASTERSON Oh, John. (LAUGHING).

JAMIE Is the Scotland Yard man still here, Mr. Ames?

AMES Why, I ...

CARRUTH I'm here, Jamie.

JAMIE Well, I fetch you the dead rabbit, sir.
With your half-crown's worth of
birdshot.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC TRANSITION

CHIEF They met him at the railway station two
SUPERINTENDENT hours later. Detective Sergeant Small,
JOHN DAVIDSON Chief Constable Bennett, the lorry
driver who had picked up the woman with
the bloody hand and the one glove, and
the railway porter who had observed the
woman carrying the brown paper parcel
the size of a gun.

Leaving Chief Constable Bennett at the
station to make a telephone call, the
party proceeded to the Ames farm.

SFX: INTERIOR. KNOCK AT DOOR. DOOR
OPENS.

AMES Oh. Good evening, Mr. Carruth.

CARRUTH May we come in, please?

~~AMES Why, this is quite a delegation.~~

~~CARRUTH May we come in, please?~~

AMES I suppose. Do come in, although.

CARRUTH Thank you. Where's Miss Masterson?

AMES (CALLING OUT) Viola?

MASTERSON Yes, dear? Why, what ...

CARRUTH Miss Masterson, do you recognize any of these people?

MASTERSON Why? Why, no, of course not.

CARRUTH Patterson, do you recognize this woman?

PATTERSON Aye. She's the lady in blue slacks I picked up in my lorry on the road in Matfield yesterday. The lady that said she fell off a bike. Her hand was all bloody and she had one glove on.

CARRUTH Like this one?

PATTERSON Yes, sir. Exactly like that.

CARRUTH O'Connor?

O'CONNOR Yes, sir?

CARRUTH Have you ever seen this lady before?

O'CONNOR I've seen her yesterday, sir. Gettin' off the 1206 train that passes through Pittington before it gets to Matfield. She was wearing blue slacks and carried a brown paper parcel about the size of a gun, sir.

AMES Now, look here. What's the meaning of all this?

SFX: INTERIOR. KNOCK AT DOOR.

CARRUTH Come in. Well, Bennett.

BENNETT Just like you thought, sir. I telephoned the doctor who treated Miss Masterson, and he informs me that he treated her left hand for multiple lacerations, removing particles of road gravel and stains of tar from the palm. Miss Masterson, there is no gravel or tar at the meadow.

CARRUTH Thank you. Mr. Ames, I'm extremely sorry for you.

MASTERSON John? Now we won't get married.

CARRUTH Viola Masterson, I arrest you on the charge of willful murder.

MASTERSON I wanted to get married and she stood in our way.

CARRUTH And I must warn you that anything you say will be taken down and may be used in evidence against you.

MASTERSON John, what have I done?

MUSIC: CYMBAL GONG

CHIEF The evidence deduced by Chief
SUPERINTENDENT Superintendent Carruth, the
JOHN DAVIDSON identifications by the lorry driver and the railway porter, the shotgun pellets which proved identical with those Miss Masterson had fired into the unfortunate rabbit, the glove which was identified as hers by the store which had sold it to her, the gravel from the road in her wounded hand, and the motive, which was all too plain, proved sufficient

evidence to convict Viola Masterson of the murders of Mrs. Ames and her daughter and of the servant Margaret Evans, who provided the first clue, the fourth cup. Miss Masterson had determined to murder the servant to eliminate the only witness to the murder of the others.

In a trial marked with frequent air raid alarms caused by an enemy whose depredations could not prevent murder from going on as usual, she was found criminally insane and is now in prison, in the asylum, Broadmoor.

John Ames was tried as an accomplice, but acquitted. He joined the First Battalion of the Rats, and was reported missing in action in the Italian Campaign.

SFX: INTERIOR. BUZZER.

CHIEF Constable, you may return the File 302-
SUPERINTENDENT MR 651, The Blitz Murder Case, to the
JOHN DAVIDSON records room. Good afternoon.

MUSIC: FLOURISH AND CONCLUSION

ANNOUNCER You've just heard the first case in the
series Whitehall 1212, drawn from the
official files of Scotland Yard by
permission of Commissioner Sir Harold
Scott. All names were changed in this
story for obvious reasons, but
everything else is true. It occurred.

~~Whitehall 1212 is written and directed
for radio by Willis Cooper.~~

~~MUSIC: TO CONCLUSION~~

HOST "The Blitz Murder Case" exemplifies Scotland Yard's thorough investigative work amid wartime challenges. If you'd like to learn more about the London Blitz, listen to Edgar R. Murrow reporting in our "Proximity Report" episode. You can find it at our website, reimaginedradio [DOT] fm

~~THE RIR BREAK~~

HOST This is Re-Imagined Radio, a program about sound-based storytelling. I'm John Barber, producer and host. With each episode, we explore classic and contemporary audio drama, re-examining radio's rich storytelling traditions and re-introducing listeners to forgotten or overlooked works that continue to resonate today. Here are some examples from previous episodes.

~~SFX: RE-IMAGINED RADIO AUDIO~~

~~TRAILER~~

HOST More information about listening opportunities, including our YouTube channel, is available at our website, reimaginedradio DOT fm.

~~MUSIC: TRANSITION~~

ACT 4: FABIAN OF THE YARD

HOST

Fabian of the Yard is the fourth radio series about Scotland Yard's "Black Museum." Produced 1952 to 1953 by Towers of London in Sydney, Australia, the series starred Guy Dolman and Ron Roberts.

~~Robert Honey Fabian (1901-1978) was a real-life Detective Superintendent in the London Metropolitan Police, more commonly known as Scotland Yard.~~

~~After retirement in 1949, he published a memoir of his experiences, *Fabian of the Yard*, which became the basis for the radio series, and a BBC television series.~~

Four episodes of the radio series are known to survive. One is titled *The Man Who Escaped from Hell*. It's a true story about Thomas Edward "Eddie" Guerin, famous for his escape from the French penal colony of Maroni, near Devil's Island, French Guiana, 1904.

Let's listen to samples from "The Man Who Escaped from Hell."

~~MUSIC: FOR OPENING, DUCKS UNDER THE FOLLOWING.~~

~~ANNOUNCER~~

~~Fabian of the Yard. Stories of the war against crime as told by the detective of the century, ex-superintendent Robert Fabian.~~

MUSIC: UP AND HOLD, THEN FADE DOWN
AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER

Here is another true crime detection
story drawn from the personal records of
ex-detective Superintendent Fabian of
Scotland Yard.

FABIAN

I remember seeing some years ago a
motion picture in which the leading
character was a gangster who was a hero
to the youngsters of his neighbourhood.
At the end of the film, the gangster who
had sworn to show no fear in the face of
death was persuaded to pretend to lose
his nerve and scream for mercy on his
way to the electric chair, the result
being that he was no longer a hero to
the children.

The note struck was not entirely a bad
one, because it certainly is unfortunate
that so many youngsters are built up
through, or gangsters rather, are built
up through fiction as heroes. But in
point of fact, there is no such thing as
an heroic gangster, and indeed if the
public only knew of the tragic end most
crooks come to, it would be far less
glamorizing of crime and its unusually
bad effect on the minds of young people.

In a moment, you're going to hear a
story that will show you something of
what I mean. The story of the man who
escaped from hell.

MUSIC: UP FOR DRAMATIC INTRODUCTION

NARRATOR It was 1928, and although Robert Fabian had passed his examination for Detective Sergeant three years before, they hadn't yet promoted him.

MUSIC: FADES OUT

NARRATOR He was spending his leisure hours prowling the foyers of London hotels, seeking crime. He became interested in the behavior of a white-haired old man who was acting furtively whilst pretending to read a newspaper. From behind a potted palm, probably appearing no less furtive than the old man, the detective watched him as he got up from his seat and picked up an expensive-looking suitcase belonging to a guest and moved it over near his seat.

~~A prosperous-looking man came seeking the suitcase, casting angry looks around the vestibule. The old man lowered his newspaper as the man approached and indicated the suitcase which the owner promptly claimed. In a few minutes, the old man had done the same thing again, this time with a pigskin traveling bag, and this led to the same result. He had two more attempts before Detective Fabian accosted him.~~

~~YOUNG FABIAN Oh, come on, Dad. You want to give up crime before it becomes a habit.~~

~~EDDIE GUERIN Eh? What's up?~~

~~FABIAN You've been making several attempts to steal somebody's suitcase. And~~

~~obviously, you were going to keep trying until you happened to pick up a bag nobody claimed. It's just about the clumsiest method of stealing anything I've ever come across.~~

GUERIN

~~I don't know what you're talking about. I'm not doing anything. Why can't you leave a man alone?~~

FABIAN

I'm arresting you on a charge of lodging with intent to steal. I'm sorry, old chap. But it's as much for your own good as anything else.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

NARRATOR

Fabian took the old man's thin arm as gently as he could and escorted him to Vine Street Police Station. When they walked in, the Station Sergeant's eyes widened with surprise.

STATION

Hello. What's he been doing?

SERGEANT

FABIAN

Lodging with intent, Sarge. Why, do you know him?

STATION

(LAUGHING) I thought everybody in the force knew him. That's Eddie Guerin you've got there, my boy.

SERGEANT

FABIAN

Guerin? Not THE Eddie Guerin?

STATION

That's right. A man who escaped from Devil's Island.

SERGEANT

FABIAN

Good Lord!

NARRATOR

The amazement in Fabian's voice was profound, for like most people, he'd heard of the famous case of Eddie Guerin, who had robbed the American Express Company's offices in Paris and taken £40,000 from the safe. He was sentenced to life imprisonment and shipped to Devil's Island. The tale of his escape, his hardships and endurance is one of the classics of criminology.

~~Fabian was glad when, after his sentence of three months was done, Eddie Guerin came to see him again at Vine Street. The old man looked a little paler, and if possible, a little thinner.~~ Fabian took him for a meal and watched him as he cautiously tackled a plate of bacon and eggs.

FABIAN

~~What, ahh, what made you come to see me, Eddie?~~

GUERIN

~~Oh, I don't know. I was just wondering if maybe you didn't owe me a drink, Mr. Fabian, after putting me in for that stretch.~~

FABIAN

~~Perhaps I do. But a meal will do you more good than a drink.~~

GUERIN

~~Umm, I suppose so.~~

FABIAN

Why don't you give it up, Eddie? You've got a good story behind you. You could sell it to a magazine or a newspaper and

that would give you a lump sum of money to make a new start.

GUERIN Do you suppose I could have a beer, Mr. Fabian?

FABIAN (TO GUERIN) Why not? (TO WAITER) Waiter, let's have a bottle of beer, would you? (TO GUERIN) What about it, Eddie? Why don't you get a job?

GUERIN You're a queer kind of boy to talk like that. How old are you?

FABIAN Twenty-seven.

GUERIN Well, I'm sixty-eight. They don't give you jobs when you're that age. And when you've got a record like mine.

FABIAN Here's your beer.

GUERIN Thank you.

SFX: BEER POURED INTO A GLASS

GUERIN I've got no family, you see, Mr. Fabian. At least none to live with. Wherever I go, I'm alone. I've got no trade. Only crime. But I don't want to die in prison, son. Would you?

FABIAN There's only one answer to that. Here, have a drink.

GUERIN Thanks. (PAUSE) Funny, isn't it? The first drink you have after you get out

of prison. There's nothing like it in this whole world.

FABIAN Look, Eddie, I think I can help you to sell this story of yours. I know people who pay good money for it.

GUERIN It's no good, Mr. Fabian. I can't do it. There'd be reprisals.

FABIAN Oh, not against you, Eddie. The French can't touch you in England.

GUERIN No, no, it's not that. You see, there's a girl. She's still there in that damned green frying pan. They could get at her and hurt her, too. You know what they do? They chain your wrists and ankles. They put you in a steel cell in a steel corridor on the French prison train. It shunts and jolts all over France from jail to jail until it's filled with men. Or women.

FABIAN Women too, eh?

GUERIN Yes, yes. They used to send women. They sent a girl named Thomasine. She was 23 years old. Can you imagine that?

FABIAN Pretty grim, isn't it?

GUERIN Then you march, chained in batches of four, to the little seaport where the prison ship waits. You go below in the steel cages. Fifty men to each cage. At first they're hazy with steam, and you wonder why. Well, the warders have been

testing the steam pipes. They can squirt scalding steam into those cages, stew the meat off your bones at the first sign of a riot.

FABIAN Eddie, let's not talk about it. Wait until you're feeling better.

GUERIN It doesn't make you feel very human. The voyage goes on about three weeks. One hour on deck each day, that's all. At night, men twitch and cry in their sleep. It's funny. By the inspection lamp you can see big bearded men fast asleep with tears running out of their shut eyes. Some men go overboard during exercise hour. They don't stop the ship. The waters just shrug. He's better where he is, they say. That's encouraging, isn't it?

NARRATOR Fabian murmured something but the old man didn't seem to hear. His eyes were nearly closed, his mind making that painful journey back through time. The cracked voice took on a new vibrant quality as it told of the mainland prison in French Guiana, of the bit of rock out to sea known as Devil's Island, holding only about two dozen men, mostly political prisoners. ~~Dreyfus had lived on the rock itself and had been liberated only two years before Guerin arrived. His hut made of wood, driftwood and palm leaves was still there.~~ The warders had given Guerin some tools and said, "You've got a week to build yourself a hut, my little brave one. If

you can't do it, we'll find you a hole in the rock on St. Joseph Island."

GUERIN

That was the worst place, that St. Joseph. Those holes. You couldn't quite stretch out full length. There was no sunlight. Just a plank to sleep on. After a few weeks in darkness, your eyes get gummy and sore and sealed up.

The insects were thick in them because they weren't often cleaned out. I don't mean just mosquitoes, son. You understand? Sometimes poisonous centipedes two feet long. I've known men chuckle like kids on Christmas morning to find a giant centipede in the hole with them. They'd pick it up and flail themselves with it, then scream for the guard as the poison puffed out their skin like necklaces of red sausages. You see, that way they got a spell on the hospital island, St. Royal.

FABIAN

How long were you on Devil's Island, Eddie?

GUERIN

I couldn't say, son. A couple of years, maybe. I was well behaved. I didn't intend to stay there and rot to death. So at last they sent me to the mainland, to St. Laurent, on the edge of the jungle, on the Moroni River across to Dutch Guiana.

FABIAN

Was that the escape route?

GUERIN Escape route? You've seen the alligator pool at London Zoo? Well, the Moroni River was like that. Shiny logs on red mud banks, except that when you ripple the water, those logs will blink their eyes and slide in after you. And beyond that was just jungle for four hundred miles.

FABIAN Steady on Eddie. Steady, old chap.

GUERIN Yes, you're quite right, son. It was all a long time ago. Let's forget it, eh?

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

~~STATION~~ 'Ehh? ello, Bob, what's up?

~~SERGEANT~~

~~FABIAN~~ Oh, nothing, Sarge. I've just been talking to Eddie Guerin.

~~SERGEANT~~ Oh, I see. Makes you think, doesn't it?

~~FABIAN~~ Yeah. What a story! He stole 40,000 pounds and as a result spent years in the hell they call Devil's Island. Now he's a broken old man no use to himself or society.

~~SERGEANT~~ Yes. And they laugh when you say crime doesn't pay.

~~ANNOUNCER~~ In a moment, you will hear from ex-superintendent Fabian a footnote to the story of the man who escaped from hell. And something of our next story. And here is Mr. Fabian's footnote.

FABIAN

On that day so many years ago when I talked with that old man, I think I came as near as any living man has been to extracting the true tale of the epic escape of Eddie Guerin from Devil's Island. Nobody knows the details of the escape and nobody ever will because Eddie himself died on December the 5th, 1940 in a public institution at Barrie in Lancashire. He was 80 years old.

~~Before he was evacuated to the country, he'd lived at a men's lodging house in Vauxhall District of London drawing an old-age pension. A sad ending for a man with strength enough to escape from hell. But speaking on the subject of crime not paying, reminds me of another story in which fate stepped in with admirable irony to punish a criminal when the hands of the law were tied. I will tell you of this next week in the story of Coco Marquis.~~

HOST CLOSE

HOST

That was a sample from "The Man Who Escaped from Hell," an episode of *Fabian of the Yard*, the final of four radio series we're exploring about The Black Museum, a collection of ordinary objects associated with crime and murder held at Scotland Yard, headquarters for London's Metropolitan Police.

~~"The Man Who Escaped from Hell" is the true story of [Thomas Edward] "Eddie" Guerin, a bank robber who won notoriety when he escaped from the French prison~~

~~at Maroni, near Devil's Island, in 1904.~~

If you'd like to know more about Eddie Guerin, check out his memoir, titled *I Was A Bandit*, published in 1929, and the episode page at our website, reimagedradio [DOT] fm.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

HOST CREDITS

HOST This episode of Re-Imagined Radio samples from four different radio series focusing on Scotland Yard's collection of everyday objects associated with crime and murder, widely known as "The Black Museum."

MUSIC: RIR THEME FADES IN

HOST Re-Imagined Radio is produced in collaboration with The Electronic Literature Lab at Washington State University Vancouver.

Our programs are broadcast and streamed by partner community radio stations KXRW-FM (Vancouver, Washington), KXRY-FM (Portland, Oregon), KNOM-AM (Nome, Alaska), and beginning with this episode, Galloway's Star 24 Internet Radio (Galloway, New Jersey). Welcome to all you new listeners. Enjoy listening, and send your comments to info [AT] reimagedradio [DOT] FM

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I'm John Barber, producer and host. It's a pleasure sharing this episode with you. Thank you for listening.

MUSIC: RIR THEME UP, THEN DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING

ANNOUNCER CLOSE

ANNOUNCER

This is a production of Re-Imagined Radio. To learn more, visit our website, reimagedradio (all one word, no punctuation) DOT fm.

Please join us for another episode of Re-Imagined Radio as we continue our exploration of sound-based storytelling.

MUSIC: RIR THEME UP, AND TO END.