

**THREE'S COMPANY'S
ADVENTURE DEPARTMENT**

Episode Three:
Whodundis
or
'The Mystery of Murder Manor'

TRANSCRIPT

PROLOGUE

MUSIC. FOLLOWED BY DINNER TABLE CHATTER AND CLINK OF GLASSES ETC.

YAZ: Hello listeners and welcome to episode three of Three's Company's podcast, an honest look at a life in the theatre.

TOM: We are Yaz, Tom and Michael and today we have a very special podcast as we're broadcasting direct from the 'Barrington-Smythe Theatre Grant Awards', which are being held tonight, in the ballroom of his mansion, Murder Manor.

YAZ: Murder Manor?

TOM: I think it's German.

MICHAEL: As many of you will know, philanthropic millionaire Lord Barrington-Smythe gives a grant to an up-coming theatre company every year and the event has become quite the fixture in the theatrical calendar, between the Edinburgh Fringe and the deadline for tax returns.

YAZ: And we have got our hands on invites to the swanky dinner party where he announces the winner.

MICHAEL: They've just serving the first course... Thank you, thank you... and later in the episode we're going to be interviewing the winners of the grant.

TOM: Which, fingers crossed, will be us.

MICHAEL: Which will make it an easier interview and hopefully we won't be distracted by any adventures for once.

TOM: Haha.

YAZ: Guys, why are there so many knives on the table? Which one do I eat with?

TOM: Yaz there's one for each course.

YAZ: So which knife do I use for this course?

MICHAEL: The soup course?

YAZ: Yeah.

MICHAEL: Well how about that blunt spoon-shaped one?

YAZ: I think you'll find that's a spoon!

TOM: So later on today's podcast we're looking at taking your Fringe show to the next level – dealing with success and securing that perfect West End transfer. Hang on, sorry, Michael, do you know that woman over there?

MICHAEL: Who, what er, do you mean the redhead in the scarlet dress? No I don't think so.

YAZ: She is beautiful.

TOM: She keeps looking at you.

MICHAEL: Hmm?

TOM: I think she likes you.

MICHAEL: No, I don't think so.

YAZ: I think I'm in love.

TOM: Well she keeps looking over you. And smiling. Now she's waving to you

MICHAEL: Nonsense – you're reading too much into it.

YAZ: Yeah, nonsense you reading to much in to it Tom. You might be the nerd and Mike might be good at moving plots forward, but everyone knows I'm the attractive one of Three's Company.

MICHAEL: Not people who only know us from our podcast.

TOM: Actually... download analysis shows there isn't anyone that's listened to the first two episodes that doesn't know us personally.

MICHAEL: Oh.

TOM: And isn't directly related to us.

MICHAEL: Ah.

TOM: And isn't my mum.

YAZ: Hi Margaret!

MICHAEL: Right.

TOM: Oh my god, that woman's coming over.

YAZ: Is she really, I think my heart just popped

MICHAEL: Hang on..? Guys, don't you realise who that is? It's Ruby Claret – the actor. She won the Oscar last year for her role in *Biopic: A Biopic Story*. Maybe she'll be in our Edinburgh Fringe show?

CLARET: Hello there. Are you Michael?

MICHAEL: Er yes, that's right. But you can call me Michael Grady-Hall. It's my Equity name – you're legally required to.

CLARET: I was hoping to talk to you. I'm Lord Barrington-Smythe's niece – he's told me all about your adventuring.

MICHAEL: Oh that's nice, I didn't know word had spread that far. Obviously we know you from all your films. And actually we have a theatre company...

YAZ: And a podcast.

CLARET: Oh I never listen to podcasts.

TOM: Join the club.

MICHAEL: We're actually planning a production at the moment...

CLARET: That's very interesting. But tell me more about this... Adventure Department you call it, is that right? It sounds thrilling.

YAZ: Thank you it is.

CLARET: I've been looking for a hobby myself. With my new television show being commissioned for six series, my one-woman musical off to Broadway and running my sanctuary for ex-offender, ex-addict, rehabilitated rescue tigers, I have some spare time on my hands.

JEEVES: Pardon the intrusion Miss Claret, gentlemen. I trust the meal is so far to your satisfaction?

CLARET: Certainly Jeeves thank-you.

JEEVES: Not at all madam.

YAZ: I don't mean to be rude or anything, Mr Butler sir – but the soup has slightly changed my pallet. Would you mind if I changed the wine?

JEEVES: But of course sir. Perhaps you prefer the '88 *Majordome Meurtrier* to the '87?

YAZ: I was thinking more... diet pepsi?

JEEVES: As you wish sir.

WALKING

JEEVES: Is everything to your liking m'lord, m'lady?

LORD BARRINGTON -SMYTH (B-S): Yes, thank-you Jeeves.

LADY BARRINGTON-SMYTH (LADY): Darling, are you going to carve the pheasant?

B-S: All in good time my dear. Wait a moment.

LADY: What is it floppsy-woppsy.

B-S: Where's the carving knife?

JEEVES: M'Lord?

B-S: The long carving knife for cutting the pheasant is missing.

JEEVES: Oh no.

B-S: Oh no, here it is. My mistake.

JEEVES: Isn't it time for your speech sir?

B-S: Yes, thank you Jeeves.

CHINKING GLASSES,

MICHAEL: Ah here we go listeners, the Lord is taking to his feet. Yaz, point the mic over there.

B-S: Ladies and gentlemen, today is not only my annual theatre award but the 20 year anniversary of Lord Barrington-Smyth senior's passing away. If you don't mind, before I announce my award, I would like to take the chance to say a few words. Seeing you all here, makes me feel my father – *(He chokes)*

THUD

TOM: It makes him feel his father?

YAZ: Well that certainly was just a few words.

MICHAEL: I think maybe he was going to say more.

CLARET: My goodness, uncle?! Why is he on the floor?

TOM: Poor old timer – probably having a nap.

LADY: Somebody help him! He's not breathing.

TOM: And holding his breath – you know what old people are like.

CLARET: Wait, since starring in hospital drama Drama Hospital, I've learnt a thing or two, and... having held my finger against his neck for two seconds I can pronounce with certainty. Lord Barrington-Smyth, my uncle... is dead.

JEEVES: Oh no.

LADY: Oh goodness.

YAZ: Oh gosh.

CLARET: Oh horror.

TOM: Oh crap. Why does this always happen whenever we go out?

MICHAEL: We better take charge and investigate.

TOM: Well, I mean, we don't *have* to. Only Ruby Claret there knows that as well as running a theatre company we're amateur sleuths who have our own new-fangled, highly successful Adventure Department and just happen to be at the meal. I'm sure the police can handle this.

YAZ: And we do have a podcast to record.

MICHAEL: What sort of talk is that? There's a mystery to be solved. *[Louder]* Ladies and gentlemen, fear not. My friends and I have solved many a grisly murder in our time.

TOM: Well, two.

YAZ: And one of them was a hamster.

MICHAEL: Everybody in this room is a suspect but whatever it takes, we will figure out who has done it, as well as hopefully howdunnit, whendunnit, where and precisely why they dunnit.

YAZ: We will not rest until the truth is found.

TOM: And if we finish in time for Newsnight, well that's just a bonus.

MUSIC

NARRATOR: In a small town called London, England, there live three men. By day a fair to middling theatre company, by night... a fair to middling theatre company with an Adventure Department. If you have a perilous mission that requires cunning and skill; if it seems no one will answer your cry for help; if you can cover insurance costs and all reasonable expenses – there's one fair-to-middling theatre company you can count on. So strap yourselves in, keep arms and legs inside the carriage and remove all loose items, such as glasses, because it's time for Three's Company's Adventure Department!

Episode Three: The Mystery of Murder Manor.

SCENE ONE

HARPSICORD

JEEVES: The dining room is clear now sirs.

MICHAEL: Thank-you Jeeves. I'm sorry we have to ruin everybody's evening but none of the guests can leave this house until the murderer is found.

YAZ: Especially not the murderer themselves.

TOM: There were so many people here this evening, that's a lot of suspects.

CLARET: It's the one night of the year when my uncle invites all his staff and closest friends to dine with him. It was a good idea actually, most of the staff have been pretty angry since he cut their wages last week.

JEEVES: And a great deal of old acquaintances suddenly turned up tonight.

TOM: I guess they were all excited to find out who he'd give the theatre grant to. I don't suppose he mentioned to you who was receiving it?

JEEVES: I'm sorry sir. He's been so busy amending his will this last week, he hasn't had much time for a chat.

MICHAEL: Well before we go any further, we ought to contact the police.

CLARET: I don't know if they'll reach us. What with the tide having risen around this headland, the fog which rolls in without warning from the hills around us, and the severe congestion on the A5146 caused by an earlier overturned lorry just off the Shrewsbury bypass by junction 14... we're completely cut off from the outside world!

GASPS

MICHAEL: How about the phone?

LIFTING RECEIVER

MICHAEL: My God – the line is down.

GASPS

No worries, I'll just use the internet.

JEEVES: Certainly sir.

TOM: Shall we take a look at this body then.

CLARET: Poor uncle Quentin. I can't believe this has happened. He was such a good man, I mean he had his faults of course, a short temper, arrogant, kicked beggars, anti-immigration, smelt bad. But a good man. Who could have done this?

YAZ: I will figure this out for you, don't worry.

MICHAEL: Manorhousedude05 – is that your wireless network?

JEEVES: That's correct sir.

YAZ: The first thing is to establish the time of death.

TOM: Well it was just now wasn't it.

YAZ: *[Writing]* Just... now... Good start. Next we need to establish the cause of death.

CLARET: He was poisoned surely?

TOM: Ahh, Miss Claret, to the *untrained* eye, yes, this is may appear to be a case of poisoning. But to the probing eye of the expert detective this is –

YAZ: A case of poisoning. Here, look at the soup.

TOM: My God!

CLARET: What is it?

TOM: He got croutons. I didn't get croutons.

YAZ: Yeah. He also got poison. It's completely dissolved his soup spoon.

MICHAEL: Okay, I got through to the local chief constable on Skype. Have we found any clues?

TOM: There's poison in his soup. *[Sniffs]* It smells like arsenic.

YAZ: What? No it doesn't. And stop calling me Nick?

CLARET: Wait, my uncle's gold pendant and signet ring seem to be missing! He was just wearing them – where could they be?

MICHAEL: I don't know, but look here – in his jacket pocket.

TOM: It's some kind of sea creature.

YAZ: Definitely something fishy about that.

TOM: Nah I reckon it's just a red herring.

MICHAEL: Why would it be in his pocket?

CLARET: It's hardly the place.

YAZ: What is it then?

TOM: I think it's cod.

CLARET: But how did it get there?

YAZ: Cod moves in mysterious ways.

MICHAEL: Yes, if you two have quite finished with the puns...

TOM: Huhuhuh... fin-ished, fin-ished!

MICHAEL: Tom.

YAZ: Yeah, he's just about haddock with you Tom.

MICHAEL: Did you just say haddock?

YAZ: No.

CLARET: Er... shall we get back to the murder gentlemen?

MICHAEL: Yes the murder. It's one sordid cold-blooded case and no mistake.

YAZ: It's a tricky one.

TOM: I reckon it was the butler.

CLARET: How you could you even suggest something like that?

TOM: Well, I mean, it's always the butler isn't it?

YAZ: He has a point.

TOM: Just say it was him and we might still have time for dessert.

CLARET: I don't think you should jump to conclusions like that.

MICHAEL: Miss Claret is right. It looks like we'll have to interview every guest and all the staff.

CLARET: They're a secretive lot.

YAZ: Ha. Don't worry, I know a thing or two about making people to talk! *[Beat]* You make them comfortable, show an interest in them, ask them about things they like...

TOM: What if they make up false alibis.

YAZ: Well then I'll ask them to corrugate them.

MICHAEL: Sorry?

CLARET: Corroborate Yaz. You mean corroborate.

YAZ: Yeah, I'll ask them to corroborate them.

CLARET: Perhaps I should accompany you?

TOM: I guess.

CLARET: I mean, I know all the guests and I have their trust and I did play that single mother, alcoholic, lesbian, robot police officer for three years - perhaps I can be of help.

YAZ: Absolutely Miss Claret. The more the merrier that's what I say! Mike and Tom, you two go that way, leaving the room in the East Wing for Miss Claret and Me.

TOM: You mean "Miss Claret and I".

YAZ: No! Miss Claret and *me*.

MICHAEL: Just a quick word before you go Yaz?

YAZ: *[whispered]* Mike, I know what you're going to say but I'm pretty sure she fancies me – so just give us a bit of space okay?

MICHAEL: *[whispered]* Shh take this.

YAZ: *[whispered]* What's that?

MICHAEL: *[whispered]* It's Lord Barrington-Smyth's pendant, keep it safe.

YAZ: *[whispered]* Why?

MICHAEL: *[whispered]* Trust me, Yaz, keep it safe.

YAZ: *[whispered]* Why are you tapping your nose? Do you want me to keep it in my nose?

CLARET: Come on Yaz, this investigation won't investigate itself.

YAZ: Good luck guys.

TOM: Michael, Lady Barrington-Smyth's just through here.

SCENE TWO

CREAKING DOOR, CHORAL MUSIC PLAYING

MICHAEL: Good evening your Ladyship, thank you for speaking with us. My, this is a beautiful drawing room.

LADY: It was always Quentin's favourite part of the house.

MICHAEL: I'm so sorry to disturb you in your time of grief madam – your husband having been poisoned by arsenic - but we must treat everyone as a suspect.

LADY: I quite understand. Though I don't know how I can help you.

TOM: Maybe some drinks?

MICHAEL: Tom!

LADY: Actually I would kill for a whiskey just now. Well, not *kill* obviously, I mean... I'm just thirsty – I could murder a cup of tea, I mean, I -

MICHAEL: It's okay Lady Barrington-Smythe, you can relax.

TOM: Michael, come and look at this.

MICHAEL: A length of lead piping? How strange. Keep that as evidence Tom.

LADY: What on earth is it doing in the drawing room?

TOM: Quite.

LADY: We usually keep that in the billiards room.

MICHAEL: You didn't come in here to hide it by any chance did you?

LADY: What are you suggesting?

TOM: My dear madam, these are just the ordinary questions of our enquiry.

LADY: You cannot seriously be suggesting I killed my own husband by poisoning him with arsenic?!

MICHAEL: Aha... I don't remember saying he was poisoned by *arsenic* madam...

TOM: Wait, no, you did Michael, when you came in.

MICHAEL: Oh I did. Sorry, my apologies.

TOM: We'll run this lead piping up to the lab then and get a few answers.

MICHAEL: The lab?

TOM: Well, I've brought a few chemicals with me.

MICHAEL: Your Junior Scientist chemistry set?!

TOM: Well, if we pour a little bit of this on... and heat it with this... then brush this off into this dish... then wipe this... we have...

MICHAEL: A cleaner piece of lead piping?

TOM: Well it might help.

MICHAEL: Is there anything you think could help us your ladyship? Anything you think we should know?

LADY: Well I've not noticed anything suspicious. I mean yesterday I did see that one of our shotguns had been taken and put back in the wrong place, all the clocks in the house had curiously been set back two hours, 'Murder And Deception For Beginners' was missing from our library and a fresh grave had been dug in the churchyard with a headstone bearing my husband's name – but nothing out of the ordinary really.

TOM: Your ladyship, it pains me to ask this, but I think the most serious question that arises out of this terrible situation and urgently begs to be answered is - do you know if we're getting the theatre grant?

MICHAEL: Not the best time Tom.

TOM: Sorry.

MICHAEL: Do not worry your ladyship. We are professionals and you can count on us to get you answers. Tom, stop peering at me through the lead piping like a telescope and follow me.

TOM: Sorry.

DOOR

MICHAEL: *[whispered]* Oh, Tom, before I forget, here, look after Lord Barrington-Smyth's signet ring.

TOM: *[whispered]* Stealing from the dead Michael, you know what we've told you about that.

MICHAEL: *[whispered]* We can't risk the murderer getting their hands on it.

TOM: *[whispered]* What's so important about it?

MICHAEL: *[whispered]* That's for me to know, and you to find out.

TOM: *[whispered]* When?

MICHAEL: *[whispered]* Right after I've been to the bathroom.

TOM: *[whispered]:* Okay. I'll keep it in my favourite pocket.

LIVELY MUSICAL STING

SCENE THREE

YAZ: Yeah, I mean the three of us work together but I'm the leader really.

CLARET: Strange – I hadn't got that impression.

YAZ: Yeah, I try not to flaunt it. But if I wasn't in charge, would Mike have given me this vital piece of secret evidence to look after, huh?

CLARET: That's a nice pendant... mind if I have a look?

YAZ: Sure here you go.

CLARET: Hmm...

YAZ: So er, Miss Claret, after the shocking murder of your uncle is solved and the bloodthirsty killer has been taken away, you fancy getting a drink sometime?

CLARET: [*Dryly*] Oh Yaz. I bet you say that to all the girls.

YAZ: Most of them yeah.

CLARET: And hows that working out for you?

YAZ: Um... define working out.

CLARET: Ah, here's the study. Reverend Pious often retires here after meals and unexpected murders. Be warned he's a grumpy one and no mistake.

DOOR BEING OPENED

PIOUS: Hello there. Do come in Miss Claret. And you are?

YAZ: Yeah, alright, cut the evasive tactics punk -

CRASH

YAZ: We need answers -

CRASH

YAZ: And we aren't leaving without them.

DOOR

CLARET: Yaz, I don't think that's necessary.

PIOUS: This is indeed a sad occurrence. Though not entirely unexpected.

YAZ: God damn it man, get a hold of yourself, explain what you mean?

PIOUS: Lord Barrington-Smyth, God rest his soul and deliver him unto heaven with the angels and their saintly throng, was a right twat. There must have been many wanted him dead.

CLARET: Yourself included Reverend?

PIOUS: Oh but I could never kill a man. Break a leg maybe...

YAZ: Yeah, and where were you at the time of the murder?

PIOUS: In the dining room with you!

CLARET: What about before?

PIOUS: I was in here, reading Philippians 14.

YAZ: Yeah? Can anybody corroborate that?

CLARET: Corroborate Yaz.

YAZ: Sorry yeah, can anyone corroborate that?

PIOUS: I'm afraid nought but the lord himself. However, when I was in here, I found this open envelope, addressed to a Miss Sue Denim. There's nobody of that name that lives here.

YAZ: Miss Sue Denim. Let's take a look.

OPENING ENVELOPE

CLARET: What does it say?

YAZ: There's a note inside. It just says "Sorry, I mean poison"

PIOUS: What does that mean?

YAZ: Oi! I'll ask the questions Vic.

CLARET: Well go on then.

YAZ: Hmm? What does that mean?

PIOUS: I don't know.

YAZ: Who did the murder?

PIOUS: I don't know.

YAZ: What other things can you tell us about?

PIOUS: I guess there is this revolver.

CLARET: What?

PIOUS: I found it in here as well.

YAZ: Revolver in the study. Seems a little odd.

CLARET: We'll take that as well.

PIOUS: Do you mind if I put the radio on? It's time for my programme.

YAZ: Yes okay – but no funny business.

RADIO TUNING IN

ANGRY MAN ON RADIO: I swear, you talk to me like that again, I'll ave you! I'll bleedin' well 'ave you!

RADIO 4 PRESENTER: We interrupt our broadcast of Desert Island Discs for an urgent news story. The notorious gangster and noted disguise artist known only as Tricky Ricky has escaped from custody. Police say he has been missing a week but they hadn't realised as they thought he was disguised as a chair. The nation is warned to stay calm and to suspect everyone and everything. And now we return you to Desert Island Discs.

ANGRY MAN ON RADIO: And that's why I've chosen Coming Home by the Kaiser Chiefs for my next song.

YAZ: That'll do Pious, turn it off.

RADIO OFF

PIOUS: That sounds pretty nasty.

YAZ: Yeah they haven't been any good since Nick Hodgson left the band have they?

PIOUS: I mean about the escaped fella!

CLARET: And a strange letter with a gun.

YAZ: The thick plottens. Oh, you know what I meant.

LIVELY MUSICAL STING

SCENE FOUR

MICHAEL: You see, if you look at the inscription on the ring.

TOM: "Circle Of Elders?"

MICHAEL: That's right. And

TOM: What are they?

MICHAEL: It's a super-secret organisation that keep all the crime syndicates of the country at bay. I only know because my mate Sarah, her brother knows a guy who used to know this guy that was once the personal assistant of this lady who had a cleaner that used to work for... no wait, Sarah's brother knew a cleaner who had a personal assistant who used to work for lady that, no... Sarah's brother liked to be cleaned by a personal assistant who worked for... anyway. Based on the tattoo I glimpsed on his arm, I realise now Lord Barrington-Smythe must have been their leader. I think this is bigger than we realise. So we should keep the ring and pendant separately – we don't want them falling into the wrong hands!

DOOR OPENING

MICHAEL: Oh hello there.

HEDGES: My name is Roger Hedges, I'm the gardener.

TOM: What are you doing in the library then?

HEDGES: Oh, here we go... Just because I'm a gardener I must not enjoy a good book, is that it? Surprised I can read are you? Do you know what? I happen to be a big fan of literature, and philosophy, I go to the opera regularly – I was unlucky enough to see one of your terrible adaptations not so long ago, what was it called again? Oh yeah, Wagner's Spin Cycle?

MICHAEL: Yes, not our finest hour.

HEDGES: *Three* hours more like.

MICHAEL: Umm. Do you have any idea who might have done this murder?

HEDGES: I'm damned if I know.

TOM: And who do you think has won the theatre grant?

MICHAEL: Tom!

HEDGES: I don't know that either, but look, I have found this.

TOM: A French dictionary?

HEDGES: It's recently been taken down off the shelf. You see I'm often in here in the afternoon. I like a bit of Proust after tending the roses. But I weren't in here this afternoon as I'd been mulling over a particularly interesting problem addressed by Emmanuel Kant in his Critique of Pure Reason whilst spreading some manure.

TOM: Hang on, in the corner. There's a rope and a candlestick.

HEDGES: But that's my rope for tying off the branches – why's it in here?

MICHAEL: Very mysterious.

TOM: And what use would a candlestick be in a murder?

HEDGES: You'd better solve this, you had. It's made me so troubled I can't even settle down to a good Tolstoy.

MICHAEL: Can you run a test on these with your kit?

TOM: Okay, just a little drop of this on the rope and...

CHEMICALS REACT

TOM: Ah... well... that wasn't a very important piece of evidence anyway.

MICHAEL: For God's sake.

MUSICAL STING

SCENE FIVE

YAZ: It's probably about time we checked the kitchen.

CLARET: That's where the murderer would have poisoned the food before it was brought through.

YAZ: I was thinking of the profiteroles but good point – the murder.

DOOR OPENING

BRIDGES: Oi, get out of here. I've got my weapon out!

YAZ: Oh crap. Get back Miss Claret. *[Gun loading]* I'll protect you. You're outmatched mate, I'm the best shot in South London. Step out slowly and keep your hands where I can see them.

DUMPLING: Oh dear.

YAZ: I said, keep your hands where I can see them.

BRIDGES: Alright.

YAZ: *[Gasps]* Oh god, put them back where they were.

CLARET: Wing Commander Bridges! And Miss Dumpling.

DUMPLING: Umm...

CLARET: What are you two doing in here? And where are your trousers Wing Commander.

BRIDGES: None of your business.

DUMPLING: I was just... finishing the dessert, and he was helping me.

RUNNING

MICHAEL: Yaz, Miss Claret? We heard shouts.

TOM: Yeah, we definitely weren't coming here anyway to steal food. Definitely not.

YAZ: *[gritted teeth]* Guys! You promised if you were going to interrupt you'd give me a ring!

TOM: This ring?

MICHAEL: *[gritted teeth]* Not that ring Tom, keep that out of sight in your favourite pocket.

CLARET: You rank your pockets?

MICHAEL: Can we get back to the task in hand?

YAZ: We just found the cook and the Wing Commander here engaging in a little post-murder consolation – if you know what I mean...

TOM: Not really, no. Do you mean consolation?

BRIDGES: Okay so I'm in love with Miss Dumpling.

DUMPLING GASPS.

BRIDGES: What of it? We didn't do anything

DUMPLING: Yeah er no! Er, yeah.

MICHAEL: But you prepared the meal this evening did you not Miss Dumpling?

DUMPLING: Well... yeah.

YAZ: Why is that window over there broken?

TOM: And what's this spanner doing on the floor?

BRIDGES: Enough of your infernal questions.

MICHAEL: Wing Commander, what do you have to say for yourself?

BRIDGES: I was in the Drawing Room before the meal – when the murderer must have broken in here to get at the food.

YAZ: Can anybody consummate that?

CLARET: Coronate Yaz.

TOM: No it's collaborate. No, corroborate.

CLARET: Sorry, corroborate.

YAZ: Yeah, corroborate, can anybody corroborate that?

BRIDGES: Well no.

DUMPLING: You don't think either of us was involved do you!?

CLARET: Well you have to admit, it is pretty suspicious – what with you being the cook and my uncle being poisoned.

YAZ: She has a point.

DUMPLING: But..?

CLARET: And now we find out you're having an affair with Wing Commander Bridges. Which would have given you easy access to his wide supply of antique guns.

DUMPLING: But the Lord was poisoned – why would I need a gun?

CLARET: Don't try the innocent act with me Dumpling. You've got guilt written all over you.

DUMPLING: That misjudged tattoo has got nothing to do with this!

CLARET: Gentlemen, I think we have our culprit here.

MICHAEL: I'm, I'm sorry Miss Claret, if I could interrupt you there.

TOM: My two friends and I have been consulting and, I think you'll find we have actually reached our own, rather different conclusion.

YAZ: If everyone would follow us to the drawing room.

MICHAEL: We'll soon put this whole sordid matter to bed.

SIRENS, SCREECHING OF TIRES

TOM: Sounds like someone's a little late.

YAZ: Sounds like police cars.

DOOR OPENING

SHORT: Evening all, I'm Detective Inspector James Short of Scotland Yard. I hear there's been a murder.

YAZ: (*Off mic*) Who it it?

TOM: Just Short of the Yard!

SHORT: That's enough jokes about the name m'laddo.

TOM: Sorry.

SHORT: Where's the body.

TOM: Yes, we've already solved the murder actually. If you'd like to join us in the drawing room...

SHORT: Well I don't know about that. I'd have to file an accusation application and head office will need a dénouement form in triplicate and hang on, who are you anyway?

MICHAEL: We are Three's Company and we're about to catch a killer...

SHORT: If there's some consultant detective-ing to be done I'd prefer to use someone police-approved.

MICHAEL: Damnit man! There's no time. The killer is in this house right now, we have no time to lose.

SHORT: I suppose you're right. Sergeant -

SERGEANT: Yes guv?

SHORT: Go tell the Belgian and the Little Old Lady to stay in the car.

SERGEANT: Yes guv.

SHORT: Right, where's this drawing room then? Lads, put your permission slips down and follow me.

POLICEMEN: Yes Guv.

LIGHT MUSIC

NARRATOR: Will our heroes get the killer, will Three's Company get the theatre grant, will Yaz get Miss Claret to go on a date with him? Find out after these messages:

BEEP

VOICE1: Yaz mate, give me a call back when you get this.

BEEP

VOICE2: Hi Mr Grady, your compare-the-budgie.com order is ready for collection.

BEEP

TOM'S MUM: Hi Tom, it's your mum, just wanted to say that dad and I are really enjoying the podcast.

BEEP

SCENE SIX

MICHAEL: Yaz, are you still recording?

YAZ: Oh yeah, sorry.

MICHAEL: No, no it's great. I think this is about to makes us look really good.

YAZ: Ok.

JEEVES: Everyone has gathered, sirs, for what I'm sure will be a truly impressive denouement.

MICHAEL: Thanks Jeeves.

JEEVES: I'll just stand over here...

MICHAEL: Sure.

JEEVES: You won't even notice me

TOM: Right.

JEEVES: You wouldn't even notice if I disappeared.

YAZ: OK, but don't.

JEEVES: Of course, sir.

MICHAEL: Good evening ladies and gentlemen, theatre professionals, assorted servants and staff, members of the constabulary, and podcast listeners...

YAZ: Hi Margaret!

MICHAEL: You may be wondering why we've gathered you all here in the drawing room.

LADY: Not really. You told us you were going to reveal the murderer.

MICHAEL: Er yes. Quite right Lady Barrington-Smyth.

TOM: This was certainly a twisted web of lies and deception but we've finally unwound it.

YAZ: It was a dark mire of double crossing and back-stabbing but we've finally... got our feet out of the mire.

MICHAEL: And we can reveal that the murderer of Lord Barrington-Smyth was –

TOM: Hang on, you said we were going to lead up to it.

YAZ: At least show our working.

MICHAEL: Alright.

CLARET: Oh do tell us Gentlemen, I'm dying to hear what conclusion you've come to.

MICHAEL: Well our suspicions were first aroused –

YAZ: When Lord Barrington-Smyth dropped dead.

MICHAEL: Indeed. It was clear something was not right. Arsenic in the soup, a fish in the pocket but another thing everyone else seemed to miss.

TOM: A mark on the deceased's right arm which held the key to this whole mystery.

BRIDGES: You mean his Circle Of Elders tattoo?

MICHAEL: Sorry?

LADY: Yes, everyone knew about that – he was the most senior member.

MICHAEL: Right.

HEDGES: Yeah, even I knew that, the lad what trims the primroses told me.

MICHAEL: So everybody knows about the Circle of Elders?

DUMPLING: Yep.

JEEVES: Yes sir.

SHORT: Me too I'm afraid.

MICHAEL: I bet you don't all know what connects that tattoo, the fish, a mysterious letter, a broken window in the kitchen and a series of not-really-household items scattered around the house?

LADY: Got me.

DUMPLING: Nope.

CLARET: No idea.

MICHAEL: Or that the pendant Lord Barrington-Smyth always wore actually contains top secret plans that could topple the country and that his signet ring contains a secret key to open said pendant. Anybody other than me know about those?

DUMPLING: No, that's, no.

LADY: Not a clue.

CLARET: Not until now...

MICHAEL: Right. Well. Good. Tom?

TOM: You had plenty of reasons to want your husband dead didn't you Lady Barrington-Smyth, and you knew where the arsenic was kept.

LADY: Me?

TOM: Yes you. But the way you folded your napkin at dinner clearly revealed that you could not have broken the kitchen window with the item the murderer used, having had a terrible fear of spanners ever since you were at Primary School in America. What do they call that there?

YAZ: Elementary my dear Tom.

TOM: Yes, that's it.

MICHAEL: Which puts you in the clear madam.

TOM: We now realise, the revolver in the study had been used to shoot a rat which was then taken to distract the Lord's dog.

YAZ: Which was tied up and lightly burned using the rope and candlestick in the library. This drew the attention of the kitchen staff.

MICHAEL: Which of course distracted attention away from the head cook herself as a suspect. Didn't it, Miss Dumpling?

DUMPLING: Me!?

YAZ: Yes, you.

DUMPLING: Cheese and Rice! You're not saying I'm the killer!?

MICHAEL: No you're quite right we're not.

DUMPLING: Well butter me parsnips, thank goodness for that.

MICHAEL: You were tending to the distraught dog when someone broke into the kitchen.

TOM: And then poisoned Lord Barrington-Smyth's meal. A time when you Mr Hedges, had no alibi.

DUMPLING: Mr Hedges!

HEDGES: What? Are you saying I'm a suspect?!

DUMPLING: Well boil my broccoli.

HEDGES: Am I heck-as-like.

TOM: No. The murderer hid in the fish-tank in the drawing room using the lead piping to breathe through. And it was clear from your interest in Tolstoy that you are allergic to water.

HEDGES: It's more of an intolerance really.

LADY: May I ask who did do it then?

MICHAEL: We're getting there.

TOM: We were bemused by the fish in Lord Barrington-Smyth's pocket until we realised it was linked to the French dictionary taken from the library. Clearly the killer had confused poison with *poisson*.

YAZ: Strange isn't it, Reverend Pious, that only *you* knew of the letter which arrived today, clearly addressed to an interloper in the house – a Miss quote-in-quote Sue Denim, un-quote. Which was in fact a pseudonym for the terrifying disguise artist Tricky Ricky.

DUMPLING: Goodness Graters!

PIOUS: I don't believe it. You can't be saying I'm the killer?!

YAZ: Yes we could be, but we're not. It was clear from your terrible temper that you, Reverend, cannot read.

PIOUS: It's true! I confess it.

TOM: Which pointed to you, Wing Commander.

DUMPLING: Huh! Curds and No Whey!

MICHAEL: We knew the killer had been instructed from outside by someone who mistyped *poisson* for poison. The way that you hastily pulled your trousers on spoke to me of a man with many friends who make typing errors.

BRIDGES: I don't deny it.

YAZ: But it can't have been you. Your moustache gives away your proficiency for languages whereas our killer had to consult a French-English dictionary to translate 'poisson'.

MICHAEL: Which of course just leaves...

TOM: An imposter, disguised as a staff member.

YAZ: Someone who wanted the leader of the Circle Of Elders dead.

TOM: Exactly as I predicted.

MICHAEL: Yes, alright Tom. None other than Jeeves the Butler!

GASPS

DUMPLING: Cheese on Toast!

TOM: Or should we say... Tricky Ricky in disguise. Isn't that right R- ! Hang on, where is he?!

YAZ: He was just there a second ago.

LADY: Well maybe if you'd got there a little quicker?!

PIOUS: You mean he's got away?

SHORT: You fool!

MICHAEL: Hang on a minute. This chair wasn't in here before. You don't think we can fall for that again Ricky!

SMASHING CHAIR

YAZ: No Mike, I think that was a chair.

DUMPLING: Well salt the strawberries!

PIOUS: Would you please shut up Miss Dumpling, for the love of my Boss.

DUMPLING: Oh no. Was I doing it out loud again?

TOM: Wait, that window's open.

HOWLING WINDS

YAZ: *[Shouting]* There he is, running over the moors.

RICKY LAUGHING

SHORT: *[Shouting]* The fog's rolling in again – you'll never catch him out in that.

MICHAEL: Damn! At least he can't do any more damage, not without the pendant and the ring.

GENTLE PERIOD DETECTIVE MUSIC

MICHAEL: Don't worry everyone, they are both safe.

SHORT: Wait, I can see someone with him?

MICHAEL: Ruby Claret?! She can't be...

YAZ: Oh crap.

MICHAEL: What!?

YAZ: I was going to ask her out.

MICHAEL: Oh.

YAZ: Also, I gave her the pendant to look after.

MICHAEL: What!?

TOM: Well at least one of us has done our job. I kept the ring safe in my favourite pocket... Oh crap.

MICHAEL: What?

TOM: It's gone!

MICHAEL: What!?

TOM: But it's been replaced by this note...

MICHAEL: It's signed by Miss Claret. *[Reading]* "That's right boys. I was in league with Tricky Ricky all along."

CLARET: *[Her voice taking over]* Thanks for letting me know how to get to the secret plans and where they were hidden, it's all I needed. Now we shall destroy the Circle Of Elders once and for all and spread crime across the nation. After all I did say I'd been...

MICHAEL: ...looking for a hobby?"

SHORT: You amateurs! This is all your doing.

TOM: Wait, here, on the other side... "PS. Tom, I won the theatre grant..."

CLARET: *[Her voice taking over]* ...and I will use it not for theatre as it was intended but for evil."

TOM: Oh bugger.

MICHAEL: What have we done!

YAZ: Wait, there's another page. "PPS. You'll never catch us..."

CLARET: *[Her voice taking over]* ...And yet, I have a feeling we may meet again, perhaps in a different time, or a different place, or a different genre. Until then, I'll just leave you with this."

MUSIC ENDS

MICHAEL: With what?

TOM: Is there another page?

YAZ: What's that under the table?

LION GROWLING

TOM: Where on earth did she get a lion from?

MICHAEL: I don't think that's really important now.

YAZ: Run!

LION GROWLS, MUSIC BUILDS, RICKY LAUGHS

NARRATOR: To be continued – in Episode Four: A Case of Claret.

CREDITS

NARRATOR: Next Time on Three's Company's Adventure Department...

SAD NOIR MUSIC

MICHAEL NARRATION: Two months had passed since Murder Manor.

TOM: NARRATION: No-one wanted to employ the boys who couldn't deliver.

YAZ NARRATION: Ricky ran the underworld now, and no-one even wanted to listen to our podcast.

STELLA: *[On phone]* I hear you've been asking after Tricky Ricky.

MAFIA GANGSTER: I ain't tellin' you nuffin'.

LONDON GANGSTER: The Arsenic is ready to be disseminated.

MICHAEL: My god, it's the same plot only with higher stakes!

TOM: Must be a sequel.

BASS GUITAR MUSIC

GOON: It's those stupid Three's Company lads again.

GOON2: Come to give us a show have you boys?

YAZ: He's dead.

MICHAEL: Oh my god.

GUY: I see you got the message.

TOM: Quick after them.

MICHAEL: Wait!

GUY: Pretend your watching the film.

YAZ: I am watching the film.

MICHAEL: Just be careful you don't get caught, Short.

SHORT: *[On phone]* No worries, I've already been to the bathrooms twice.

RICKY: Suprise!

YAZ: It's him.

TOM: Damn his incredible disguise abilities.

MICHAEL: There he was, smoking a cigar with one hand and strangling a baby kitten with another.

KITTEN

YAZ: Why you...

MICHAEL: Yaz, nooooooooooooo!

RICKY: Hahahahahaha.

FIGHT, GUNSHOT, MYSTERIOUS MUSIC

CLARET: Not so fast.

YAZ: Hang on, is that..?

TOM: Miss Claret!

GUNS COCKING, MUSIC COMES TO A CLOSE

CLARET: Gentlemen.

CREDITS MUSIC

MICHAEL: You have been listening to Three's Company's Adventure Department Episode Three: 'The Mystery of Murder Manor' Or 'Whodundis'.

Visit AdventureDepartment.uk for more information and don't forget to subscribe, we don't want you missing out on what happens next in Episode Four: Pitch Noir.

Adventure Department was written, performed and created by Three's Company.

Guests this episode were Joanna Bending, Mariam Bell, Paul Dodds, Rosie Jones, Ashlea Kaye, Daniel Millar and Greg Snowden.

With Youssef Kerkour as The Butler... Or should I say, Tricky Ricky?

TOM: Yes.

MICHAEL: Alright, Youssef Kerkour as Tricky Ricky.

And of course, Tom's Mum as Tom's Mum.

Edit and sound design by Yaz with Chris Sharland who also mixed and mastered it. The artwork for this episode is by Lucy Dearden. Special Thanks goes to Hamish Nicholls and Alan Fielden.

Full credits, music listings, transcripts and more in the show notes at AdventureDepartment.uk

If you enjoyed the podcast, do please rate and subscribe in your favourite podcast app, and tell people that you enjoyed it. Of course, if you didn't enjoy it, why not tell people you hate, that you did... You know as a mean joke.

On Twitter we are @ThreesCompany, we're ThreesCompanyUK on Instagram, our Facebook is ThreesCo and our website is AdventureDepartment.uk

Three's Company are Yaz Al-Shaater, Tom Crawshaw and me Michael Grady-Hall... Good, can you just let me do one take without interrupting.