



MAGPIE MURDERS

Seven for a secret never to be told...

Episode Two
A Six Part Event Series

by
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Adapted from his bestselling novel

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1 **INT. ABBEY GRANGE/CONWAY'S STUDY NIGHT.** 1

The CAMERA closes in on a COMPUTER SCREEN & KEYBOARD.

The same opening as Episode One - but this is a different part of the book. We see a pair of hands (ALAN CONWAY) typing as the author narrates a murder scene.

CONWAY (V.O.)
"It was half past eight and
darkness had fallen upon Saxby-on-
Avon."

CUT TO:

2 **EXT. PYE HALL (1955) NIGHT.** 2

We have seen Pye Hall in Episode One. It is based on Abbey Grange, Alan Conway's home. The CAMERA drifts ominously over the silent gardens and through a gate in a stone wall.

CONWAY (V.O.)
"At Pye Hall, all was still. But in
the grounds, a soft breeze..."

CUT TO:

2A **EXT. PYE HALL GROUNDS, LAKE (1955) NIGHT.** 2A

And now we see the LAKE.

CONWAY (V.O.)
"...rippled across the lake, the
water as cold and black as murder
itself."

3 **INT. ABBEY GRANGE/CONWAY'S STUDY NIGHT.** 3

The CAMERA closes in as ALAN CONWAY continues to type.

CONWAY (V.O.)
"And that night, the house was to
be witness to murder."

The word MURDER fills the page.

CUT TO:

4 **INT. PYE HALL - ENTRANCE HALL (1955) NIGHT.** 4

SIR MAGNUS PYE has opened the front door. He is late fifties, wealthy, combative. Fancies himself as lord of the manor.

(CONTINUED)

SIR MAGNUS

I think you ought to leave.

CLOSE SHOT. Behind him, a hand draws a sword from a suit of armour, decorating the old-fashioned hall. This is also the place where Mary Blakiston died (Episode One, Scene 47).

Maybe SIR MAGNUS hears the sword. Maybe he instinctively knows something is wrong. He turns.

SIR MAGNUS (CONT'D)

What are you...?

The BLADE sweeps through the air, aiming at his neck.

HARD CUT TO:

OPENING CREDITS

CUT TO:

5 **EXT. TANNER COURT, LONDON (1955) DAY.**

5

ESTABLISHING SHOT. The next day. The block of flats in Clerkenwell where Atticus Pünd lives.

CUT TO:

6 **INT. PÜND'S STUDY/LIVING ROOM (1955) DAY.**

6

PÜND is behind his desk, reading THE TIMES. The door opens and JAMES FRASER comes in with a cup and saucer.

JAMES

Your tea.

PÜND

Thank you, James.

As FRASER puts the cup on the desk, PÜND swings the paper round.

PÜND (CONT'D)

Did you see this?

FRASER

Yes. Dreadful. Poor Lady Mountbatten.

PÜND

I'm sorry?

FRASER

She got her car stolen.

FRASER points.

(CONTINUED)

FRASER (CONT'D)

It says it was in the middle of
Hyde Park.

PÜND

No, no. That's not the story I
meant. Here...

PÜND points to a different headline.

FRASER

(reading)

Baronet Murdered.

PÜND takes the paper back.

PÜND

(reading)

Police were called to the village
of Saxby-on-Avon following the
death of Sir Magnus Pye, a wealthy
local landowner and the owner of
Pye Hall.

FRASER

Sir Magnus Pye. We don't know him,
do we?

PÜND

No. But Saxby-on-Avon is the
village which the young lady came
from. Joy Sanderling. You
introduced her to me recently.

FRASER

Of course!

PÜND

And Mary Blakiston, the mother of
her fiancé, also died at Pye Hall.
She worked for Sir Magnus.

FRASER

That's quite a coincidence.

PÜND

A coincidence? You think so?

PÜND muses to himself.

PÜND (CONT'D)

I told Miss Sanderling that I could
not help her - that there was
nothing I could do. But what she
asked... it was rumour and
innuendo. A suspicion that Robert
Blakiston might have played a part
in his mother's death.

(CONTINUED)

FRASER

Does this make any difference?

A long pause. PÜND considers. He is, after all, seriously ill. He makes his decision and looks up.

PÜND

Yes. This is murder. And murder can be solved.

CUT TO:

7 INT/EXT. FRASER'S CAR/COUNTRY ROADS (1955) DAY. 7

FRASER is driving PÜND to Saxby-on-Avon in his 1950s car.

FRASER

So you think they're connected?
Mary Blakiston and Sir Magnus Pye?

PÜND

She was his housekeeper so the answer is self-evident.

PÜND tries never to lose his temper with his fairly dim assistant. He continues more kindly.

PÜND (CONT'D)

It is my belief that there is no such thing as a coincidence. Everything in life has a pattern and a coincidence is simply the moment when that pattern becomes briefly visible. As such, it must be of great value to the detective - and this is something that I have have written about.

FRASER

Your book.

PÜND

The Landscape of Criminal Investigation.

FRASER

I can't wait to read it.

FRASER doesn't know that PÜND is dying.

PÜND

(ascerbic)

The way things are going, you may end up having to write it.

The last comment addressed mainly to himself. Anyway, it goes over FRASER'S head.

(CONTINUED)

ANOTHER ANGLE. They have reached a crossroads. They continue straight ahead.

At the same time, another car - a RED MG - speeds across the other way. FRASER doesn't see it. But PÜND does and smiles to himself.

CUT TO:

8 **EXT. SUSAN'S CAR/COUNTRY ROADS DAY.**

8

In fact we have cut back to the 21st Century. SUSAN RYELAND is behind the wheel of her RED MG, its ROOF is OPEN, on her way to Alan Conway's house, following on from the end of Episode One.

Music playing. SUSAN in an upbeat mood.

CUT TO:

9 **EXT. SUSAN'S CAR/ROADWORKS DAY.**

9

The music has stopped. SUSAN'S mood has changed as she finds herself in a long traffic jam on a narrow road with temporary lights on red.

WORKMEN are digging up the road. One of them walks past the car. He's pleasant - but slow.

SUSAN

Excuse me. What's happening here?

WORKMAN

Roadworks.

SUSAN

Yes. I sort of got that. It's just that I've been sitting here quite a while...

WORKMAN

There's lights.

SUSAN

Do they ever turn green?

The lights turn green.

WORKMAN

They're green now.

The cars don't move.

WORKMAN (CONT'D)

Nobody's moving though.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN
(gritted teeth)
Yes. I've noticed.

Slowly, the cars move forward. SUSAN puts her car in gear.

CUT TO:

10

EXT. KATIE'S HOUSE - SUFFOLK DAY.

10

SUSAN'S sister, KATIE, lives in a modern, comfortable house. Perfect lawns and flower beds. A contrast to SUSAN'S own chaotic life.

As SUSAN parks her MG, KATIE comes out to greet her. KATIE is five years younger, a mother-of-two, smart and seemingly in control.

The two of them have a close relationship but even they are unaware of the long-buried tensions between them.

KATIE
Hello, you!

SUSAN
Hello, Katie.

They embrace.

KATIE
This is a surprise.

SUSAN
I told you I was coming!

KATIE
But you actually turned up.
(smiling)
Come on in.

CUT TO:

11

INT. KATIE'S HOUSE - GUEST ROOM DAY.

11

KATIE is at the door.

KATIE
I'll put the kettle on.

SUSAN
Thanks.

SUSAN puts her case on the bed. The room is immaculate. Too immaculate for her taste. She looks around. Sees a PHOTOGRAPH on a sideboard. She picks it up.

(CONTINUED)

CLOSE SHOT. Two children: Susan (13) and Katie (9). Posing with their parents: MAX and his wife - SAMANTHA. A seaside shot.

SUSAN feels mixed emotions. A dead mother. A father who betrayed her. Was the photo put there deliberately?

She turns it face down.

CUT TO:

12 INT. KATIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN DAY.

12

KATIE is making coffee in the showroom, gleaming kitchen.
SUSAN comes in.

KATIE
How's the room?

SUSAN
Perfect. Of course.
(Beat)
Are you sure you don't mind me
staying?

KATIE
I'm happy to see you - but it's
just going to be the two of us, I'm
afraid.

SUSAN
Where's Gordon?

KATIE
New York conference.

SUSAN
New York! You didn't want to go?

In fact KATIE wasn't invited.

KATIE
I couldn't take that much time off.

SUSAN
The garden centre.

KATIE
They made me manager.

SUSAN
I know. Congratulations.

KATIE
Thank you. Actually, what I am is
Horticultural Manager. One under
General Manager.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN
But you enjoy it.

KATIE
Keeps me busy.

She puts two mugs on the table and goes to get biscuits.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Jack's in Amsterdam getting up to
God knows what and Daisy's with
friends. So it really is just you
and me against the world. Like we
always were.

Is KATIE joking? SUSAN is puzzled.

SUSAN
You mean...?

KATIE
When we were children!

SUSAN
Yes. I saw the photo.

KATIE
(playing dumb)
Which photo?

SUSAN
In the bedroom.

KATIE realizes. She's a little defensive...

KATIE
It's only there because that's
where it is. I didn't put it there.

SUSAN
(not so sure)
I know.

KATIE
It is funny looking at it though,
isn't it. We were inseparable.

SUSAN
We were.

KATIE
Until we separated.

SUSAN
I'm not sure we did, did we?

KATIE
Well, you in London. Me here.

(CONTINUED)

KATIE sits down with the biscuits.

SUSAN

I'm sorry. I know I haven't been in touch very much recently. But I've been so busy. With the company and now this business with Alan...

KATIE

I was sorry to hear it.

SUSAN

Yeah.

(Beat)

Look. I know you hate it. But do you mind if I smoke?

CUT TO:

13

EXT. KATIE'S HOUSE - GARDEN DAY.

13

SUSAN is smoking. KATIE with her. Coffee brought outside.

KATIE

You never liked him, did you.

SUSAN

He was a complete pain in the arse. Every dot. Every comma. A lot of authors are protective of their work but with Alan it was as if I was trying to rewrite the bible. He took against me at our very first meeting and after that we only ever communicated by email.

KATIE

It was my fault. Maybe I should never have introduced him to you.

SUSAN

Are you kidding? 18 million copies sold. He was the making of Clover Books. Maybe the trouble was that he knew it.

KATIE

So are you here for the funeral?

SUSAN

No. That's next weekend. I know it's going to sound crazy but I'm looking for the last chapter of his new book. Magpie Murders.

KATIE

It's missing?

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN

We don't even know if he wrote it
but he certainly never sent it and
now he's dead.

(Beat)

We really need it, Katie. If we
don't find it, we could go out of
business.

KATIE

Seriously?

SUSAN

Seriously. Yes!

(a thought)

When did you last see him?

KATIE thinks. She is a little nervous about replying.

KATIE

About two years ago I think. I used
to bump into him in Woodbridge.

SUSAN

Well, he must have shown the book
to someone. Maybe he even gave
someone a copy.

KATIE

Where are you going to start?

CUT TO:

14

EXT. KHAN'S OFFICE - SUFFOLK DAY.

14

ESTABLISHING SHOT. Susan's gets out of her MG and rings the
doorbell of a large house converted into an office. WESLEY &
KHAN on the door.

KHAN (V.O.)

I was a great fan of his books, you
know. I have to say, it was a great
shock.

CUT TO:

15

INT. KHAN'S OFFICE DAY.

15

SAJID KHAN is a cheerful man in his 40's, at ease with
himself. Sports jacket, elbow patches, club tie. His office
hasn't quite lost its origins as a converted bedroom. Digital
photos swipe across a frame on his repro desk.

SUSAN is sitting opposite him.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN

You found him.

KHAN

On the Sunday morning, yes. It was really horrible. To start with, I had no idea what I was looking at. I thought someone had thrown some old clothes onto the lawn. I really did! It was only when I got closer that I realised.

(Beat)

It was horrible.

SUSAN

I'm sorry.

KHAN

Thank you. It has taken me quite a while to recover.

SUSAN

How well did you know him?

KHAN

I had been his solicitor for many years. I acted for him when he bought Abbey Grange and of course in the matter of his divorce from his wife, Melissa.

SUSAN

Did you know that he was ill?

KHAN

He never mentioned it to me. No.

SUSAN

So you had no idea that he intended to kill himself.

KHAN

Of course not. Although...

SUSAN

What?

KHAN

Well, he had decided to make a new will. That was the reason I was there at the house.

SUSAN

So it wasn't social.

KHAN

No. No. We did not have that sort of relationship.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN
And the will...?

KHAN
Obviously I cannot disclose any of
the contents.

SUSAN
(annoyed)
I wouldn't dream of asking.

A pause. SUSAN waits for more.

KHAN
I was a great admirer of his work.
I've always liked a good murder
story and Alan always kept you
guessing until the end.

SUSAN
So you read all his books.

KHAN
Absolutely. He told me he was going
to base a character on me in the
new book. I'm very much looking
forward to that. And he would
always sign a first edition for me
and my wife.

A picture of ALAN and KHAN appears in the frame, KHAN proudly
holding a copy of "Atticus Pünd Abroad".

KHAN (CONT'D)
That's the two of us. At a charity
dinner.

SUSAN
I don't suppose he ever showed you
the manuscripts before they were
finished?

KHAN
If only. I would have been honoured
- but no. He never really talked ab-
out his work.

SUSAN
And he didn't give you a copy - or
anything like that - for safe keep-
ing?

KHAN
No.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN

Mr Khan, I need to get into Abbey Grange to find something. Can you help me?

KHAN

I'm afraid I don't have a key and if I did I couldn't possibly let you in. But I understand that his partner, James Taylor, is in residence.

SUSAN

Permanently?

KHAN

So I believe. Abbey Grange is a splendid house. A remarkable place. It'll be hard to imagine it without Alan there...

SUSAN stymied.

CUT TO:

16

EXT. PYE HALL (1955) DAY.

16

WIDE ANGLE. We might think that we are entering Abbey Grange but in fact we have cut back to 1955 and the Pünd story.

First we see FRASER - then PÜND. The two have just arrived at the scene of the crime. There is a (1955) POLICE CAR parked outside. They are met by DETECTIVE INSPECTOR CHUBB who is played by the same actor as DETECTIVE SUPERINTENDENT LOCKE. But in his fifties guise he is much less capable, softer, unthreatening.

He's pleased to see PÜND. They worked together before.

Two MAGPIES watch the scene from the bough of a tree.

CHUBB

Herr Pünd!

PÜND

My dear Detective Inspector Chubb. It is a great pleasure to see you again.

CHUBB

It still baffles me how you did it last time. A dead body in a locked room, the key in a butter dish. It made no sense to me at all.

(CONTINUED)

PÜND
(amicably)
I was aware of that.

CHUBB
I can't imagine what brings you to
this neck of the woods a second
time. Did you know Sir Magnus?

PÜND
We had never met. But there was a
housekeeper who also died in this
place...

CHUBB
Mary Blakiston. Yes. A very
unfortunate accident.

PÜND
It has been suggested to me that
there might be more to her death
than might appear.

CHUBB
Let me put your mind at rest, Herr
Pünd. I looked into it myself and
it was absolutely straightforward.
She was vacuuming at the top of the
stairs. She tripped and she fell.

PÜND
And what of last night?

CHUBB
Come in!

CHUBB leads them into the house.

As they go, they are observed by a gardener, hard at work.
His name is BRENT: 40's, sinister, unattractive. He gazes at
them with dark, secret thoughts.

CUT TO:

17

INT. PYE HALL - ENTRANCE HALL (1955) DAY.

17

The murder scene. A body outline has been drawn on the floor
where Sir Magnus was found along with a large, dark burgundy
stain. A circle representing his head is nearby. CHUBB
explains to PÜND and FRASER.

CHUBB
The murder took place at about
nine o'clock last night. Sir Magnus
was decapitated.

(CONTINUED)

PÜND

So I see.

CHUBB

(Pointing)

The sword was taken from that suit of armour. A single blow.

(grimacing)

A lot of blood.

PÜND

If you will forgive me, Detective Inspector, could we perhaps begin at the beginning Let us go back to the first death.

CHUBB

You're still on about that house-keeper?

PÜND

Was Sir Magnus at home at the time when Mrs Blakiston died?

CHUBB

No. He was away on holiday with his wife, Lady Pye. They got home two days after the funeral.

CUT TO:

18

INT. PYE HALL - ENTRANCE HALL (1955) NIGHT.

18

FLASHBACK. SIR MAGNUS has just come into the house with his wife, FRANCES PYE. A few years younger than him, she endures an unhappy marriage. LUGGAGE surrounds them.

CHUBB (V.O.)

There was an unpleasant surprise awaiting them...

SIR MAGNUS

I need a drink.

As SIR MAGNUS and his WIFE move further into the house, CHUBB continues.

CHUBB (V.O.)

Sir Magnus had a collection of Roman antiquities - but only two nights before, it turned out they'd been burgled.

CUT TO:

19

INT. PYE HALL - LIVING ROOM (1955) NIGHT.

19

FLASHBACK. SIR MAGNUS examines a smashed display case. It is empty. LADY PYE is with him, more irritated than concerned.

SIR MAGNUS

I can't believe it. It's all gone!

FRANCES

How did they get in?

SIR MAGNUS

I have no idea. Mary Blakiston should have been here.

FRANCES

How irritating of her to die.

SIR MAGNUS

(disdainful)

For God's sake!

FRANCES

I told you. We should have come back.

SIR MAGNUS

I wouldn't go to a housekeeper's funeral. Anyway, what difference would it have made?

FRANCES

We would have been here when this happened.

SIR MAGNUS

Where was Brent? That's the question you should be asking. Dithering about in the garden. Bloody useless. Where was he?

CUT TO:

20

INT. PYE CALL - ENTRANCE HALL (1955) DAY.

20

Back to the present. CHUBB with PÜND and FRASER.

PÜND

What had been taken?

CHUBB

A collection of Roman silver. Coins and jewellery. It was part of a treasure trove that had actually been found in the grounds - it had been in the family for generations.

(CONTINUED)

PÜND

Sir Magnus did not attend the funeral of his housekeeper.

FRASER

I don't suppose they were close.

CHUBB

Actually, you'd be wrong there. By all accounts, Mary Blakiston was devoted to Sir Magnus. She thought the world of him.

PÜND goes over to the suit of armour. He examines it. He looks at the door leading to the study. Now he walks towards the front door - acting out the role of Sir Magnus showing a visitor out.

CHUBB (CONT'D)

(Quietly)

What's he doing?

FRASER

What he does.

PÜND has reached the front door.

PÜND

Sir Magnus knew his killer.

CHUBB

How do you work that one out?

PÜND

From the position of both the door and the armour, Detective Inspector. It is evident that Sir Magnus was showing someone out of the house and they were behind him when the blow was struck.

CHUBB

Funny you should say that. Follow me.

CHUBB leads the way.

CUT TO:

21

INT. PYE HALL - STUDY (1955) DAY.

21

A door opens and CHUBB, PÜND and FRASER are in the study. PÜND takes in the details. Two chairs facing each other across the desk. Scattered letters and envelopes on the surface including one addressed to Sir Magnus Pye, handwritten.

(CONTINUED)

Note: the handwriting is very distinctive with a circle over the i, not a dot, and swirling letters.

A wall safe is open. There are ashes in the fire.

CHUBB

From what we can work out, Sir
Magnus met someone in here last
night.

He points at the fireplace.

CHUBB (CONT'D)

The ashes were still warm. A second
chair had been brought over to the
desk.

PÜND

The safe.

CHUBB

It was open when the body was dis-
covered.

PÜND

Who discovered the body?

CHUBB

That was Lady Frances Pye. She got
home at a quarter to eleven. It was
a nasty shock.

PÜND examines the safe.

PÜND

There is money in here. And also
bonds and certificates.

CHUBB

Yes. Interesting, isn't it. It
looks as if nothing has been taken.

PÜND goes over to the fire.

PÜND

Why the fire?

FRASER

Why not?

PÜND

It was not cold last night.

PÜND produces a pair of tweezers and rummages in the ashes.

PÜND (CONT'D)

Let me see now. Ah yes...

(CONTINUED)

With the tweezers, he takes out a blank scrap of paper with a muddy fingerprint.

PÜND (CONT'D)

You see this, Detective Inspector?

CHUBB examines the scrap of paper. It's a corner of a page with a stain.

CHUBB

Blank.

PÜND

There is no writing - but this stain may be of interest.

CHUBB

Coffee?

PÜND

(gently)
Or perhaps blood.

CHUBB produces an envelope and PÜND drops the piece of evidence inside.

CHUBB

(annoyed with himself)
I suppose the question is - whose blood?

PÜND

That is also what I would like to know.

CHUBB

I'll look into it. But if you're looking for really incriminating evidence, you should take a look at this.

CHUBB shows PÜND a (typed) letter on the desk. The envelope is with it, addressed (handwritten) to Sir Magnus Pye. No address. FRASER reads:

FRASER

"You won't get away with it. The village was here before you and it will be here after you've gone. Think again if you want to live here. Think again if you want to live."

(Beat)

Unsigned.

CHUBB

And hand-delivered.

(CONTINUED)

PÜND examines the envelope.

PÜND

It's strange. The envelope is hand-written. And yet this letter is typed.

CUT TO:

22

INT. PYE HALL - ENTRANCE HALL (1955) DAY.

22

PÜND, FRASER and CHUBB come back into the hallway.

PÜND

Where is Lady Pye?

CHUBB

Upstairs in her room. Her son is with her - back from school. Do you want to talk to her?

PÜND

If that is possible.

CHUBB

She's not exactly the grieving widow, Mr Pünd. Take care on the stairs...

FRASER

This is where Mary Blakiston...

CHUBB

Yes. ...fell down and broke her neck.

FRASER

Unless she was pushed.

PÜND glances at his assistant, annoyed that he has given away private information. They begin to climb up.

CUT TO:

23

INT. PYE HALL - BEDROOM (1955) DAY.

23

LADY FRANCES is in bed, languishing in elegant grief. Her son, FREDERICK, is with her. Prissy, spoilt, public school - he is played by the same actor who played FREDDY CONWAY. There is a telephone on the bedside table.

FREDDY

When will I have to go back to school?

(CONTINUED)

FRANCES
After the funeral, darling.

FREDDY
I don't like funerals.

FRANCES
Nobody does.

There is a knock at the door and CHUBB enters followed by ATTICUS PÜND and FRASER.

CHUBB
Lady Pye. I wonder if we might have another word?

FRANCES
Really, Detective Inspector? We have been through it all.

CHUBB
This is a Atticus Pünd. He's a well-known investigator.

The telephone rings downstairs - but not beside the bed.

FRANCES
(to FREDERICK)
Will you take that, darling?
Whoever it is, tell them I'm not well.

As FREDERICK hurries out of the room...

FRANCES (CONT'D)
The phones don't work upstairs.
Nothing does in this house. It's just one thing after another!

PÜND sits down next to the bed.

PÜND
This must have been a great shock for you, Lady Pye.

FRANCES
To come home and find your husband has been decapitated? You could say that. Yes.

PÜND
What can you tell us about last night?

FRANCES
Not very much. I was in London.

(CONTINUED)

PÜND

And you were also away when your housekeeper died.

FRANCES

Mary? She wasn't murdered. She fell down the stairs. What could you possibly want to know about her?

PÜND

Two violent deaths in the same house in such a short space of time. You do not consider that there may be a connection?

FRANCES

I can't say it had occurred to me.

PÜND

What was the relationship between your husband and Mrs Blakiston?

FRANCES

She was the housekeeper! There wasn't one!

A car engine is heard in the distance.

PÜND

You are expecting visitors, Lady Pye?

FRANCES

Not unless it's a delivery.

FRASER

I'll go down, if you like.

PÜND

Thank you, James.

FRASER leaves the room. PÜND stays at the window.

FRANCES

If you want the truth, Mrs Blakiston was a little obsessed with my husband. She'd worked for him for twenty years. She thought he was a pillar of wisdom, a mentor, someone who'd look after her.

PÜND

And?

(CONTINUED)

FRANCES
Of course he wasn't.

CUT TO:

24 INT/EXT. ABBEY GRANGE - ENTRANCE HALL DAY.

24

A HAND rings the doorbell.

The door opens and JAMES TAYLOR looks out. Played by the same actor as JAMES FRASER but very different. Leather jacket, white T-shirt, ruggedly handsome, gay. This is Alan Conway's former partner.

Behind him, the hallway is now in its present day guise.

JAMES
Yes?

SUSAN RYELAND is facing him. Her MG parked behind.

SUSAN
James Taylor?

JAMES
Yes.

SUSAN
My name's Susan Ryeland. I worked with Alan Conway. I wonder if I can come in.

CUT TO:

25 INT. ABBEY GRANGE - LIVING ROOM DAY.

25

JAMES TAYLOR opens a can of Coke for himself. SUSAN is looking around

JAMES
You're sure I can't get you anything?

SUSAN
No. I'm OK, thanks.

JAMES
I can't believe I'm finally getting to meet you. Alan often used to talk about you - not that he ever had anything nice to say. You were the tricky editor. The one that stood between him and his genius.

SUSAN
He never mentioned you.

(CONTINUED)

JAMES

Why doesn't that surprise me? Alan was very private about that side of things. He didn't even admit he was gay until we'd been together a couple of years.

SUSAN

How did you meet?

JAMES

Internet. There was a website he used. Rentboys. I charged three hundred quid an hour. I hope that doesn't shock you.

SUSAN can't help liking JAMES.

SUSAN

Not at all.

JAMES

He was still married at the time and I was just a commodity. Then one thing led to another.

SUSAN

And now you get everything.

JAMES

Did Khan tell you that?

SUSAN

He mentioned that Alan was thinking of changing his will.

JAMES

That's outrageous. Whatever happened to client confidentiality?

SUSAN

He didn't say anything else.

JAMES

(amused)

Well, why should I deny it? Yes. I get everything. Do you think that's why I pushed Alan off the tower? To stop him signing the new will?

(Beat)

I suppose I could have done that. I'll show you if you like.

A challenge. SUSAN isn't so sure. But at the same time, she's not going to be cowed.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN

Sure.

CUT TO:

26

EXT. ABBEY GRANGE - TOWER DAY.

26

JAMES and SUSAN are on the tower, high over the grounds. There is a low parapet. It's quite vertiginous.

JAMES

They say that on a clear day you can see as far as Norfolk - and there's nothing of interest the entire way.

SUSAN

You don't like living here?

JAMES

Darling, I'm selling the moment I get probate. I can't wait to get out.

SUSAN notices the lodge house and the house owned by Jack White (Episode One, Scene 37). Alan's closest neighbour.

SUSAN

Who lives there?

JAMES

Jack White. He's a property developer. Alan hated him.

SUSAN

Why?

JAMES

He needed a reason?

(Beat)

I don't know. Alan just took against him. Access. Hedges! I don't know...

SUSAN looks down, quite near the edge. She doesn't notice JAMES getting closer to her.

SUSAN

This is where he was found.

JAMES

Yes. He often came up here. He liked the view.

SUSAN

It's a very low wall.

(CONTINUED)

JAMES

Too low.

JAMES reaches out. SUSAN turns - thinks he's going to push her. A moment of shock. But in fact JAMES grabs hold of her.

JAMES (CONT'D)

There you are, you see. It's easy to lose your balance. You're lucky I'm here.

He smiles at her - playing a game.

CUT TO:

27

INT. ABBEY GRANGE/SPIRAL STAIRCASE DAY.

27

JAMES leads the way back down a narrow, twisting staircase.

JAMES

I'm sorry to disappoint you but I couldn't have pushed Alan off the tower. I wasn't on the premises.

SUSAN

Where were you?

JAMES

London. I was going out of my mind stuck here. We were spending more and more time apart until we decided - he decided - it was better not to be together at all.

CUT TO:

28

INT. ABBEY GRANGE/CONWAY'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS.

28

The spiral staircase leads into the study. Everything modern, neat, expensive. Alan's computer in pride of place.

SUSAN

Alan put you in his books.

JAMES

Nice of you to notice. Yes. I'm James Fraser, the thick assistant. He did that to everyone - and not in a nice way. He liked to play with people. Actually, that's how it was with him. Writing. It was all a game.

SUSAN

Did you read Magpie Murders?

(CONTINUED)

JAMES

He never let me read anything until he'd finished.

SUSAN

Had he finished?

JAMES

Oh yes. I saw the finished manuscript.

SUSAN

It's missing the last chapter.

JAMES

Really? The last chapter of a whodunit? I can see that might be a problem.

SUSAN

That's why I'm here.

JAMES

Well, if it was anywhere, this is where it'll be.

SUSAN

Do you have the password for his computer?

JAMES

"Cat up nudist". One word.

A look from SUSAN.

JAMES (CONT'D)

It's an anagram of Atticus Pünd.
Alan loved anagrams.

SUSAN keys in the password. Meanwhile, JAMES has opened a cupboard.

JAMES (CONT'D)

That's funny.

SUSAN

What?

JAMES

This is where he kept his notebooks. But they don't seem to be here.

SUSAN

Has anyone else been in the room?

(CONTINUED)

JAMES

Only the police. You know he always wrote his first drafts by hand.

SUSAN

Yes.

JAMES

He liked expensive pens.

JAMES rummages through the pad.

JAMES (CONT'D)

They've all gone.

SUSAN

(distracted)

The pens?

JAMES

The notes.

SUSAN has booted up the computer.

SUSAN

There's nothing on the computer either. No files. Nothing.

JAMES

Maybe you should talk to Claire.

A look from SUSAN.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Claire Jenkins. His sister. She used to help him with the manuscripts. Typing. Photocopying. I'm not sure she did anything on Magpie though. They had a falling out.

SUSAN

God. Was there anyone Alan didn't argue with?

JAMES

No. And if someone really did push him off that tower, well, put it this way. There'd have been plenty of volunteers.

CUT TO:

29

EXT. ABBEY GRANGE - DRIVE DAY.

29

JAMES waves as SUSAN drives away from the house.

(CONTINUED)

But as she follows the drive to the main gate, she notices something and stops. She gets out of the car. The two MAGPIES are back and watch her from a tree.

SUSAN has noticed tyre tracks in the grass. A car has parked close to the house but out of sight, behind a shrub. She looks back, taking in the view of the tower and the house itself.

She stops. There is a man looking at her from an upstairs window. He is too far away to be certain. But even so, we know. It is ATTICUS PÜND.

CUT TO:

30

INT. PYE HALL - BEDROOM (1955) DAY.

30

ATTICUS PÜND is with FRANCES PYE, DETECTIVE INSPECTOR CHUBB and JAMES, who has returned from the front door. He turns away from the window. It's as if the 1955 scene (Scene 23) has continued without a break.

PÜND

Lady Pye. Can you explain why the safe in your late husband's study should have been open?

FRANCES

He must have opened it.

JAMES

Did anyone else know the combination?

FRANCES

(considers)

No, He was the only one.

PÜND

There was also a letter that we found on the desk. It would seem to be of a threatening nature...

(CONTINUED)

CHUBB has the letter. He hands it to FRANCES PYE.

CHUBB

Here...

She reads it.

FRANCES

(reading)

"You won't get away with it. The village was here before you..."

She lowers the letter.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

Oh. This is about Dingle Dell.

CHUBB

Dingle Dell?

FRANCES

It's part of the estate. A wild meadow. Magnus didn't have any use for it and he was planning to build houses. A lot of new houses. Of course the village was up in arms.

Languidly, she hands the letter back.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

He got quite a few of these.

CHUBB

But you have no idea who wrote them.

FRANCES

(obvious)

They didn't sign their name.

PÜND

There was no one person in the village who was vocal in their opposition to this scheme?

FRANCES

Actually there was.

(Beat)

You should talk to his twin sister. Clarissa Pye...

CUT TO:

31

EXT. CLARISSA PYE'S HOUSE (1955) DAY.

31

CLOSE SHOT: CLARISSA PYE opens the door of her small, village house. Glimpsed in Episode One, Scene 56, she is played by the same actress as Claire Jenkins. (Alan Conway's sister).

CLARISSA is on the edge of grotesque. Broke, a local school teacher, a snob, desperately keeping up appearances. Dressed in black - mourning. A sign outside reads: SAVE DINGLE DELL!

CLARISSA

Yes?

REVERSE ANGLE: PÜND and FRASER are on the doorstep.

PÜND

Miss Pye?

CLARISSA

Yes.

PÜND

My name is Atticus Pünd. I wonder if we might have a word?

CUT TO:

32

INT. CLARISSA PYE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM (1955) DAY.

32

PÜND, FRASER and CLARISSA in a room that's almost too small to hold them. A large TYPEWRITER prominent. Lots more PROTEST SIGNS and petitions relating to Dingle Dell.

CLARISSA

Dingle Dell is a much loved part of the village, Mr Pünd. A precious resource! Wild flowers. Butterflies. Wonderful birdlife. To build houses on it would be an act of vandalism and I told Magnus in no uncertain terms.

PÜND

Did you write to him, Miss Pye?

CLARISSA

I had no need to write. I told him to his face.

PÜND

It must be strange for you being on opposing sides, as it were, as brother and sister.

(CONTINUED)

CLARISSA

Twin brother and sister. Had I been born just five minutes earlier, there would be no argument.

FRASER

Why is that?

FRASER has missed the obvious.

CLARISSA

Because Pye Hall, all the land - including Dingle Dell - would have been mine!

CUT TO:

33

EXT. SUFFOLK VILLAGE - MEADOW DAY.

33

SUSAN is walking through a beautiful meadow in a village that doubles as Saxby-on-Avon in Alan Conway's books.

She meets TOM ROBESON, the local vicar, who is walking the other way.

ROBESON

Hello.

SUSAN

Excuse me - could you tell me something? Does this meadow have a name?

ROBESON

I'm sorry?

SUSAN

It's not called Dingle Dell?

ROBESON

No. I don't think it's called anything. It's a lovely place, don't you think? Very peaceful.

SUSAN

Yes...

ROBESON

Enjoy it!

The vicar walks on. SUSAN continues on her way.

CUT TO:

33A **EXT. SUFFOLK VILLAGE - MAIN STREET DAY**

33A

SUSAN emerges from the meadow and walks up the road

34 **EXT. SUFFOLK VILLAGE - CLAIRE JENKIN'S HOUSE DAY.**

34

SUSAN RYELAND crosses the road, and heads for a pretty thatched cottage, identical to CLARISSA PYE'S HOUSE.

SUSAN arrives at the door and rings the bell. A pause and then it is opened by CLAIRE JENKINS.

CLAIRE

Yes?

SUSAN

Are you Claire Jenkins?

CLAIRE

Yes.

SUSAN

My name's Susan Ryeland. I wonder if I might have a word?

Almost a word for word repeat of Scene 31.

CUT TO:

35 **INT. CLAIRE JENKINS'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM DAY.**

35

The room is almost identical to the 1955 version (Scene 32) but of course it has been modernised for the 21st Century. CLAIRE is also a much less exaggerated character even if the brother/sister dynamic is similar.

CLAIRE

I can't help you, I'm afraid.

REVERSE ANGLE. Revealing SUSAN sitting opposite her.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

I helped Alan with all eight of the Atticus Pünd novels. I typed them for him. I did the proof-reading, the binding and the copying. But then he decided he didn't need me any more.

SUSAN

Why was that?

CLAIRE

I prefer not to talk about it.

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN

So you never saw Magpie Murders.

CLAIRE

No.

CLAIRE is lying, of course. She stole a copy of the manuscript in Episode One, Scene 58.

SUSAN

Did you know that he based a character on you?

CLAIRE

(lying - obviously)

No. What character would that be?

SUSAN

The sister of Sir Magnus Pye. The man who gets murdered.

CLAIRE

(gritted teeth)

Well, that doesn't surprise me at all, really. He could be quite cruel.

SUSAN

What makes you think that the portrait wasn't a flattering one?

CLAIRE

I'm just assuming. Have you read it?

SUSAN

Yes.

CLAIRE

And?

SUSAN

Well, it's humorous.

CLAIRE

(icy)

I suppose that depends on your sense of humour.

SUSAN

I'm sure he didn't mean anything by it, Claire. Although it does make me wonder how close the two of you were...the fact that he didn't show it to you.

CLAIRE struggles to find an answer.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE

We were close...once.

SUSAN

But then?

CLAIRE

After Alan became famous - as a writer - it was as if I didn't really know him any more. I thought success would make him happy. It was what he'd always wanted.

SUSAN

But...?

CLAIRE

Do you know why he killed himself? Do you know why he jumped off that tower? It wasn't because he was sick. It was Atticus Pünd!

SUSAN

What do you mean?

CLAIRE

Atticus Pünd was never the book he wanted to write. And all that money - all that success. The simple truth is that it drove him mad!

CUT TO:

36

EXT. CLAUDE JENKINS'S HOUSE DAY.

36

SUSAN leaves CLAUDE'S house. At that moment, a car draws up - parking aggressively right in front of her. DETECTIVE SUPER-INTENDENT LOCKE gets out. He is played by the same actor who plays CHUBB - but he's much less genial.

LOCKE

Miss Ryeland.

SUSAN

Detective Superintendent Locke. You can call me Susan!

LOCKE

Can I ask what you're doing here?

SUSAN

Can I ask if I need to tell you?

LOCKE

I've asked you a simple question, "Susan"...and I asked it nicely.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LOCKE (CONT'D)

If I feel you're obstructing an officer in the performance of his duty, we can do this down at the station.

SUSAN

So you're investigating Alan's death.

LOCKE

I didn't say that.

LOCKE waits for her to answer.

SUSAN

I'm trying to track down some missing pages in his last book because without them I can't publish and if that happens, my entire company, the staff I employ and fifteen years hard work will all go down the drain. That's why I'm here.

LOCKE

You were visiting Claire Jenkins.

SUSAN

Yes. She used to be his secretary. She did all his typing for him. I thought she might have a copy. How about you?

LOCKE

I'm sorry?

SUSAN

If you're so sure Alan Conway committed suicide, why are you still investigating?

LOCKE

I'm not.

(Beat)

I'm here because Mrs Jenkins used to work at Ipswich Constabulary.

SUSAN

(disbelieving)

She was a police officer?

LOCKE

She was married to a police officer. She worked in HR.

SUSAN

Did you ever meet Alan Conway?

(CONTINUED)

LOCKE
(reluctant)
Yes.

SUSAN
You never mentioned it in London.

SUSAN thinks for a moment. And then she realizes.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Locke and Chubb. That's you, isn't it. In three of his books. He based a character on you. The dim detective. That's why you're so angry.

LOCKE
Listen to me, Ms Ryeland. I'm here because Claire is on her own and she's just lost her brother in the worst circumstances. All right? Did you tell her your suspicions? That Conway didn't write that letter or that someone forced him to write it?

SUSAN
No.

LOCKE
I'm glad to hear it. Because this is the real world and I don't need some fancy editor from London poncing around pretending to be some sort of private detective. Find your chapter if that's really what you're here for - but once you've done that, stay out of my way.

LOCKE walks towards CLAIRE'S house. SUSAN stands there, wounded by the encounter.

CUT TO:

37

EXT. KATIE'S HOUSE - GARDEN DUSK.

37

It's only later that SUSAN can release the emotion following from her meeting with the aggressive Locke. She is a little shaken, talking on her mobile with ANDREAS.

SUSAN
He was just so... aggressive.

38

INT. KHANS'S OFFICE - SUFFOLK DUSK

38

INTERCUT WITH:

Tight on ANDREAS who has taken the call on his mobile - but we do not see where he is just yet.

ANDREAS

Why did you let him get to you?

SUSAN

Because he did!

ANDREAS

Do you want me to come up?

SUSAN

Yes! No. You can't.

ANDREAS

I'll tell them I'm sick.

SUSAN

No, Andreas. I'm not staying here much longer. There's nothing for me to do.

ANDREAS

You didn't find the chapter.

SUSAN

Nothing.

(Beat)

I'm missing you.

ANDREAS

You've only been gone a day.

SUSAN

Locke hates me because I published Alan. Alan turned him into a character...or a caricature. You know what's odd? He seems to have hated being a successful writer. He treated it like some sort of unpleasant joke.

ANDREAS

It made him rich.

SUSAN

It didn't make him happy.

From the PATIO DOORS.

KATIE (O.S.)

Sue! Supper!

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN
(calling)
Coming! (Then - to ANDREAS) That
was Katie. I've got to go in.

ANDREAS
How is she?

SUSAN
Same as ever. I'll see you
tomorrow.

ANDREAS
Give her my love.

SUSAN hangs up.

CUT TO:

39

INT. KHAN'S OFFICE - SUFFOLK DUSK.

39

ANDREAS puts his PHONE away.

KHAN (V.O.)
She doesn't know.

ANDREAS
No.

KHAN (V.O.)
You should tell her.

ANDREAS
I can't.

ANOTHER ANGLE. Revealing that ANDREAS is not in London. He is sitting opposite SAJID KHAN in the same office that SUSAN visited in this episode, Scene 15.

KHAN
You will forgive me for saying, Mr Patakis, that Alan Conway's death could not have been more...timely, where you were concerned.

A hint of suspicion in the air? ANDREAS is off-hand.

ANDREAS
I was lucky.

KHAN produces an official-looking, A4 envelope. He passes it to ANDREAS.

KHAN
Here you are.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREAS

Thank you.

ANDREAS looks guilty...of something.

CUT TO:

40

EXT. THE QUEEN'S ARMS, SAXBY-ON-AVON (1955) DAY.

40

We might think for a moment that we're still in the modern era as the vicar we saw in Scene 33 passes the pub.

LOCAL

(Banter)

No time for a quick one, vicar?

OSBORNE

No, no. Thank you. Must get back to my sermon.

But the vicar is called ROBIN OSBORNE - played by the same actor who played TOM ROBESON.

The CAMERA follows him as he passes. At the same time, we find JAMES FRASER bringing drinks to the outside table where PÜND is waiting for him. A sherry for PÜND. Beer for himself.

FRASER

Here you are.

PÜND

Thank you, James.

FRASER sits down.

FRASER

Cheers.

He drinks.

FRASER (CONT'D)

So how long do you think we'll be staying here?

PÜND

Your room is not to your liking?

FRASER

Well, the bed's a bit lumpy and as for the plumbing...!

PÜND

You have no hot water?

FRASER

I have some hot water. Just not enough.

(CONTINUED)

PÜND is amused. FRASER rows back.

FRASER (CONT'D)

I suppose I shouldn't complain.
It's nice to be out of London. I'm
surprised you haven't let Miss
Sanderling know you're here.

PÜND

Ah, Miss Sanderling, who first drew
my attention to Saxby-on-Avon. I
have to ask myself, James, if I had
agreed to her request, might it
have been possible to prevent the
death of Sir Magnus Pye?

FRASER

So you do think the two are
connected.

PÜND

It is self-evident. On the face of
it, three crimes may have taken
place at Pye Hall one after the
other.

FRASER

(puzzled)
Three?

PÜND

First, Mary Blakiston is threatened
by her son, Robert. The next day
she is found dead at the bottom of
a flight of stairs.

FRASER

Do you think someone gave her a
push?

PÜND

Inspector Chubb is of the opinion
that it was an accident.

FRASER

But she may have been killed by
Robert Blakiston.

PÜND

That is what the village believes.
Then, almost immediately after
she's laid to rest there is a
burglary. A collection of ancient
Roman silver is taken.

FRASER

Quite a coincidence.

(CONTINUED)

PÜND

You know my views on coincidence.

(Beat)

And then, after returning home and discovering he's been burgled, Sir Magnus is decapitated.

FRASER

He doesn't seem to have been short of enemies. There's that Dingle Dell business and his wife didn't seem too keen on him.

PÜND

Is it not strange that evil should find its roots so easily in an English village? A place of beauty and of tranquillity and yet it is here. I see it, as it were, converging from all sides and at the end, when it could no longer be contained...violence and death.

A pause. PÜND takes his glass.

PÜND (CONT'D)

We will see Robert Blakiston soon enough.

CUT TO:

41

INT. KATIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN NIGHT.

41

SUSAN and KATIE having dinner together. Perfectly cooked food, perfectly presented, a good bottle of white wine.

KATIE

So how did you get on?

SUSAN

I went to Abbey Grange. Did you ever see it?

KATIE

He never invited me to his home.

SUSAN

God...all those royalties. He certainly put them to good use.

KATIE

Abbey Grange. That's a Sherlock Holmes short story.

SUSAN

He renamed it. I think he wanted to be more like Conan Doyle.

(CONTINUED)

KATIE

Loved.

SUSAN

Revered.

KATIE

This morning you said he was miserable.

SUSAN

It didn't stop him having a high opinion of himself. You knew him before me. What was he like?

KATIE

As a teacher? I didn't really see him that often. The kids didn't like him.

SUSAN

Because...?

KATIE

He was strict.

SUSAN

Andreas never liked him either.

KATIE

You haven't said anything about Andreas. How is he?

SUSAN

He's fine.

KATIE

Is that it?

SUSAN

He's fine!

KATIE

How long have you been together now?

SUSAN

We're not together. Not exactly.

(Beat)

We're loosely connected.

KATIE

You know that's not true.

SUSAN

We don't even live together!

(CONTINUED)

KATIE

Because you won't let him.

SUSAN

It's easier for him. The school provides accommodation. And I'm miles away.

KATIE

I've never really understood you, Sue. I don't know why you can't just commit yourself.

SUSAN

Why would I want to?

KATIE

It might make you happier.

SUSAN

I am happy!

A pause.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Andreas is going back to Crete.

KATIE

Since when?

SUSAN

He's fed up teaching. He's thinking of buying a hotel. With his cousin.

KATIE

You never mentioned this before.

SUSAN

He only told me the other day.

KATIE

What about you?

SUSAN

He wants me to come with him.

Another pause. KATIE considers.

KATIE

You might like Crete.

SUSAN

Katie, don't be ridiculous! What would I do in Crete? I've got a job. In fact we've got new investors and they want me to be CEO.

(CONTINUED)

KATIE

You told me. In your last email.
You only ever talk about your work.
Never about yourself.

SUSAN

That is about myself!

KATIE realizes she should change the subject.

KATIE

I saw dad last week.

SUSAN almost sighs. She knew this was coming.

KATIE (CONT'D)

He was asking about you.

SUSAN

(gritted teeth)
That's nice.

KATIE

He wants to see you.

SUSAN

Did he say that?

KATIE

Yes.

(Beat)

He's not well, Sue. He's already
had an aneurysm. That could lead to
a stroke.

SUSAN

(stopping her)
Please, Katie.

(Beat)

I don't want to see him. I'm sorry.
But I don't.

CUT TO:

42 **EXT. KATIE'S HOUSE - WOODBRIDGE NIGHT.**

42

ESTABLISHING SHOT. The middle of the night.

CUT TO:

43 **INT. KATIE'S HOUSE - GUEST ROOM NIGHT.**

43

SUSAN is asleep in bed. It's after midnight. We are aware
that someone has entered the room.

And she becomes aware of it too. She slowly wakes up...

(CONTINUED)

...to discover ATTICUS PÜND, partly in silhouette, standing at the end of the bed.

SUSAN isn't sure if she's awake or asleep and dreaming.

SUSAN
What do you want?

PÜND
To speak to you.

SUSAN
You're not really here. Go away.

SUSAN covers her head with the blanket. A pause. She looks round again. PÜND is still in the room. He speaks almost to himself.

PÜND
There are three possibilities - and only three possibilities - that you have to consider. The first is that Alan Conway slipped and accidentally fell to his death. But if that were the case, how to explain that the computer has been emptied and the notebooks are gone? There was, to be sure, another party involved. Suicide, then. But alone and at night without first drinking alcohol and when he had sleeping pills at hand?

SUSAN
There was a letter.

PÜND
You were told it was a suicide letter and that is how you read it. Perhaps you should read it again.

SUSAN
But if it wasn't an accident and it wasn't suicide...

PÜND
He argued with his neighbour. He was about to change his will. He insulted his sister. He left his wife for a young man. Everyone who read Alan Conway loved him. Everyone who met him did not.

SUSAN
(drowsy)
So...

(CONTINUED)

PUND

Just three possibilities. Consider
the third.

CUT TO:

44 **EXT. KATIE'S HOUSE - SUFFOLK DAY.**

44

The next day. SUSAN comes out of the house with her overnight bag. KATIE with her.

SUSAN

Don't change the sheets! I'll be
back soon enough... If you'll have
me.

KATIE

Of course.

They kiss. SUSAN gets into the MG and drives off.

CUT TO:

44A **INT/EXT. SUSAN'S CAR/COUNTRY ROADS DAY.**

44A

SUSAN drives through the countryside, deep in thought, with the roof of her MG closed. She comes to a realisation, changes gear and puts her foot down on the accelerator.

CUT TO:

44B **OMITTED**

44B

44C **EXT. ROUNDABOUT DAY.**

44C

SUSAN'S CAR takes the slip road signposted 'A12 LONDON'

44D **INT. CLOVER BOOKS - CORRIDOR DAY**

44D

SUSAN strides down the corridor

45 **INT. CLOVER BOOKS - CHARLES'S OFFICE DAY.**

45

SUSAN charges into the office. CHARLES CLOVER is working at his desk.

SUSAN

He was murdered.

CHARLES

What?

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN

Alan Conway. I've re-read the letter.

CHARLES

Susan...

SUSAN

Listen.

SUSAN takes out a copy of the letter.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

"By the time you read this, it will all be finished. I have achieved great success in a life that has gone on long enough."

CHARLES

He's telling me he's decided to kill himself.

SUSAN

No. The book is finished. It's his last book because he's dying. He knows that. But he's accepted it. That's all he's saying.

CHARLES

Well, that's one interpretation.

SUSAN

It's the only possibility.

CHARLES

What about this section?

CHARLES takes the letter.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

"I have left you some notes with regard to my condition and the decision I have made."

SUSAN

He had cancer. And the decision might have been not to have treatment. He didn't need to kill himself. He was dead anyway.

CHARLES

So...

SUSAN

So somebody killed him. And don't you see? His last novel. Magpie Murders.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Everyone he knew was in it and
that's why the last chapter was
taken. Because it reveals the
secret!

(Beat)

The answer's in the book.

END OF EPISODE

END CREDITS

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