



CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT
SCOTLAND YARD

CONFIDENTIAL —
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CABINET №7

THE FINAL CURTAIN

CASE No. 14/37

into the death of
Lillian Frayne

14 May 1937, London

Officer in charge:
Detective Inspector
F. Mallory

THE
MIDNIGHT
GUEST



HOW TO CONDUCT THE INVESTIGATION

the "how to play" page — read this first

YOU ARE THE INVESTIGATION. Before you lies a dossier on a murder committed on stage, in front of a packed house. An actress was killed by a shot from a prop revolver, in which the blank cartridge had been swapped for a live round. Your task is to name the **murderer**, prove the **method** (how the live round got into the revolver) and **when** it happened, and to back up your conclusion with documents. One of them is lying.

The official version — for now. The death has been put down to an **accident**: the coroner is ready to blame it on the properties man's negligence, and the inquest is on Thursday. If you cannot prove intent, the case will be closed, and the guilty party will go free. Your job is to overturn this version, working step by step (see the memo, doc. 3).

Players: 1-6. **Time:** 1-2 hours. **No game master needed** — the solution is sealed. **Difficulty:** ★★★★★.

Golden rule. The obvious in this case is deceptive. Do not trust your first impression — either of who is guilty or of who is innocent. Prove it with paper, not with a hunch.

PARTICIPANT'S MEMO

First, get your bearings: the constable's report (doc. 5), the programme and running order (doc. 8). Then work the case **step by step** – do not grab at everything at once. At each step, read only what is indicated, write your conclusion on the worksheet (doc. 24), and move on to the next step.

STEP 1. Murder or accident? The revolver and the ballistics reports (docs. 19, 21).

→ Once you have decided, open the envelope **"THE SWAP"** (doc. 22).

STEP 2. Who loaded it – and did the weapon leave his hands? The properties log (doc. 15), the statements of Stubbs and Perry (docs. 12, 13).

STEP 3. Who has a motive – and does the alibi hold up? The suspect cards (docs. 11-12), the whereabouts grid (doc. 16). Remember: **motive is not yet guilt**. Many have something to hide, but not every secret is about murder.

STEP 4. Whose hands was the revolver in when the cartridge was swapped?

Reread the log (doc. 15) and the whereabouts grid (doc. 16) again – now they read differently; check them against Combe's statement (doc. 13).

→ Once you understand, open the envelope **"THE METHOD"** (doc. 23).

STEP 5. Could he have obtained a live round – and why? The ballistics on the army .455 (docs. 19, 21), Mercer's card and Combe's statement, the replacement order and Frayne's letter (docs. 17, 18).

→ Fill in the accusation form (doc. 25), then open the packet **"CASE CLOSED"** (doc. 26).

Everything you need for the answer is in the case file – no game master needed. There are **27** documents – before you play, check that they are all present.

THE LONDON EVENING COURIER

London's evening newspaper · founded in 1857

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WEST END SENSATION

TRAGEDY AT THE PREMIERE: MISS LILLIAN FRAYNE KILLED ON STAGE

The shot that was meant to "kill" the heroine turned out to be real. Police have ordered an inquest. The company has been held until morning.

FROM OUR THEATRE CORRESPONDENT



Miss Lillian Frayne as Lady Carrick. The last photograph. Courier photo.

London. — The West End is reeling: yesterday's premiere of *The Midnight Guest* at the Sceptre Theatre turned into a genuine tragedy. In the final scene of the third act, in which Mr. Julian Mercer's character shoots the heroine, Miss Frayne fell and did not rise again: instead of a blank, the revolver had been loaded with a **live round**.

"I thought it was part of the play," said a spectator from the front row. "She fell so naturally that the house applauded."

At first the audience took it all for part of the performance. Only when the curtain failed to come down were the public asked to leave. Police did not release any member of the company until morning. (*Continued on page 3.*)

THE SCEPTRE CLOSED. The management announces that performances of *The Midnight Guest* are suspended until the conclusion of the inquest. Tickets may be returned at the box office.

COURT CIRCULAR. Their Majesties yesterday received at Buckingham Palace a deputation from the Dominions on the occasion of the Coronation.

TONIGHT AT THE THEATRES

The Drury Lane — A Waltz	20:00
The Palladium — Variety	18:30
The Savoy — Charley's Aunt	20:15
The Royal — Operetta	19:45

WEATHER. Cloudy with bright intervals; warm.

DR VIGO'S ELIXIR — for nerves and sleeplessness. At all chemists.

THE AETHER RADIOLA — 114 Regent Street.

IN BRIEF. Ascot races: entries for the Royal Cup close on Monday. — Sea weather: fresh winds in the Channel, small craft advised caution.

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