

*(The aunts turn to Rooney questioningly.)*

MORTIMER. *(Making it as easy as possible.)* Aunties—the police want Teddy to go there, today.

ABBY. *(Crossing to R. of chair.)* Oh—no!

MARTHA. *(Behind Abby.)* Not while we're alive!

ROONEY. I'm sorry, Miss Brewster, but it has to be done. The papers are all signed and he's going along with the Superintendent.

ABBY. We won't permit it. We'll promise to take the bugle away from him.

MARTHA. We won't be separated from Teddy.

ROONEY. I'm sorry, ladies, but the law's the law! He's committed himself and he's going!

ABBY. Well, if he goes, we're going too.

MARTHA. Yes, you'll have to take us with him.

MORTIMER. *(Has an idea. Crosses to Witherspoon.)* Well, why not?

WITHERSPOON. *(To Mortimer.)* Well, that's sweet of them to want to, but it's impossible. You see, we can't take *sane* people at Happy Dale.

MARTHA. *(Turning to Witherspoon.)* Mr. Witherspoon, if you'll let us live there with Teddy, we'll see that Happy Dale is in our will—and for a very generous amount.

WITHERSPOON. Well, the Lord knows we could use the money, but—I'm afraid—

ROONEY. Now let's be sensible about this, ladies. For instance, here I am wasting my morning when I've got serious work to do. You know there are still *murders* to be solved in Brooklyn.

MORTIMER. Yes! *(Covering.)* Oh, are there?

ROONEY. It ain't only his bugle blowing and the neighbors all afraid of him, but things would just get worse. Sooner or later we'd be put to the trouble of digging up your cellar.

ABBY. Our cellar?

ROONEY. Yeah.—Your nephew's been telling around that there are thirteen bodies in your cellar.

ABBY. But there are thirteen bodies in our cellar.

*(Rooney looks disgusted. Mortimer drifts quietly to front of cellar door.)*

MARTHA. If that's why you think Teddy has to go away—you come down to the cellar with us and we'll prove it to you. *(Goes U.S.)*

ABBY. There's one—Mr. Spenalzo—who doesn't belong here and who will have to leave—but the other twelve are our gentlemen. *(She starts U.S.)*

MORTIMER. I don't think the Lieutenant wants to go down in the cellar. He was telling me that only last year he had to dig up a half-acre lot—weren't you, Lieutenant?

ROONEY. That's right.

ABBY. *(To Rooney.)* Oh, you wouldn't have to dig here. The graves are all marked. We put flowers on them every Sunday.

ROONEY. Flowers? *(He steps up toward Abby, then turns to Witherspoon, indicating the aunts as he speaks.)* Superintendent—don't you think you can find room for these ladies?

WITHERSPOON. Well, I—

ABBY. *(To Rooney.)* You come along with us, and we'll show you the graves.

ROONEY. I'll take your word for it, lady—I'm a busy man. How about it, Super?

WITHERSPOON. Well, they'd have to be committed.

MORTIMER. Teddy committed himself. Can't they commit themselves? Can't they sign the papers?

WITHERSPOON. Why, certainly.

MARTHA. *(Sits in chair L. of table as Witherspoon draws it out for her.)*

Oh, if we can go with Teddy, we'll sign the papers. Where are they?

ABBY. *(Sitting R. of table. Mortimer helps her with chair.)* Yes, where are they?

*(Witherspoon opens briefcase for more papers. Klein enters from kitchen.)*

KLEIN. He's coming around, Lieutenant.

ABBY. Good morning, Mr. Klein.

MARTHA. Good morning, Mr. Klein. Are you here too?

KLEIN. Yeah. Brophy and me have got your other nephew out in the kitchen.

ROONEY. Well, sign 'em up, Superintendent. I want to get this all cleaned up. *(He crosses to kitchen door, shaking his head as he exits and saying:)* Thirteen bodies.

*(Klein follows him out. Mortimer is to the L. of Abby, fountain pen in hand. Witherspoon to R. of Martha, also with pen.)*