

INSPECTOR RAGLAN. Begging your pardon, Doctor! I'm well aware of Mr. Poirot's sterling reputation. But the police are more than -

POIROT. Ah, yes! I admire enormously your English police -

INSPECTOR RAGLAN. I know of your remarkable successes of course. But you see, this is my responsibility and -

POIROT. Yes! You are responsible! Of course! And I am retired. You understand I can only assist you. And would be most flattered to do so.

INSPECTOR RAGLAN. You want to assist? Me?

POIROT. But, I beg, if I am able to contribute, my name may not be mentioned. I have a horror of the publicity. The glory must be yours.

INSPECTOR RAGLAN. ...Very well, sir. Perhaps we can find a way to work together.

POIROT. Yes, I am sure you will be most helpful.

INSPECTOR RAGLAN. Right, then. Now, I know the Doctor filled you in, but -

POIROT. A moment.

(**POIROT** walks the room. **INSPECTOR**

RAGLAN and **SHEPPARD** watch, fascinated.)

POIROT scrutinizes the doors, the writing room, the fireplace, the curio table, and then momentarily exits through the French doors before quickly returning to the room.)

Tell me of the fingerprints.

INSPECTOR RAGLAN. None of them match the ones of the murder weapon.

POIROT. And what of those of Captain Ralph Paton?

INSPECTOR RAGLAN. I see you don't let the grass grow under your feet, Mister Poirot. We're going to take the

young gentleman's fingerprints - if we can lay hands on him.

SHEPPARD. What have you got against Ralph?

INSPECTOR RAGLAN. A pair of shoes, for one thing! We found them at The Three Boars. Shoes with rubber studs! And they match the footprints on the window sill.

POIROT. Oh, I have seen the footprints.

INSPECTOR RAGLAN. Paton's. That's what I'm thinking.

POIROT. Thinking is an admirable exercise. Who have we here?

(**PARKER, URSULA** and **MISS RUSSELL** enter.)

INSPECTOR RAGLAN. The staff. Parker, the butler, Ackroyd's secretary, Miss Russell, and the maid, Ursula Bourne. This is Hercule Poirot.

URSULA. Poirot? The detective?

POIROT. Just so.

URSULA. I've read about you.

MISS RUSSELL. That's quite enough, Ursula.

PARKER. You wished to see us, sir?

INSPECTOR RAGLAN. Yes. Where to begin?

POIROT. With the murder, of course. I would like to confirm. That room is where the body was found?

SHEPPARD. Yes, in the desk chair.

POIROT. Now, Monsieur Le Docteur, would you kindly tell me the exact position of the dagger in Mr. Ackroyd's neck? Where was it?

SHEPPARD. Just so.

POIROT. And Parker, you and the Doctor could see it plainly from the door?