

ACT ONE**SCENE 7**

MONTY is seen in half-light, suggesting mystery.

#8a – Haunting Terror (Underscore)

MONTY (Recorded V-O)

I returned to town late that night, plagued by the haunting terror that I had left a clue and sooner or later someone would come across it. I consoled myself by reading one of Mother's unanswered letters to Lord Asquith, Senior, in which she pleaded with him to take pity on a woman alone with a son to raise. So it was a bit of a shock that not long after I should receive a letter from that very same man.

(Reading, live voice:)

"Dear Mr. Navarro... "

(A spot hits LORD ASQUITH D'YSQUITH, a grief-stricken elderly banker.)

LORD ASQUITH

"Some time ago you wrote claiming a relationship to the D'Ysquith family and asking us to help you to some situation in which you might earn your living. I must apologize for our unsympathetic attitude on that occasion. Should you still be in need of a post I shall be very glad if you will pay me a call..."

LORD ASQUITH & MONTY

" ... Yours very truly..."

MONTY

(Rather amazed:)

"Lord Asquith D'Ysquith." Senior.

SCENE 7A

(D'Ysquith Banking House. LORD ASQUITH D'YSQUITH is revealed to be sitting at his ornate desk.)

LORD ASQUITH

Do come in, Mr. Navarro.

(LORD D'YSQUITH looks at MONTY carefully.)

You are not like the D'Ysquiths, and yet there is something.

(MONTY takes a small photograph out of his breast pocket and hands it to LORD D'YSQUITH.)

MONTY

This is my Mother.

LORD ASQUITH

We were not well acquainted. It is a very sweet face. Have you ever seen the family portraits at Highhurst?

MONTY

(Lying:)

Never.

LORD ASQUITH

Your mother is extraordinarily like some of the women. And some of the men, for that matter. Perhaps you are wondering why I suddenly came to write to you.

MONTY

Yes, frankly, I am.

LORD ASQUITH

I don't know whether you heard that I lost my only son recently under somewhat tragic circumstances. A skating accident.

MONTY

Yes. My sincerest condolences.

LORD ASQUITH

Thank you. You know, of course, I was grooming him to succeed me.

MONTY

I did not.

(This is difficult for his lordship, as HE is not usually given to public displays of emotion.)

LORD ASQUITH

Well, it is over. The past cannot be recalled. I should like to know if you would care to come into my firm.

(MONTY is stunned.)

You could have no greater education in the business of stockbroking. Beyond that, I can make no promises.

MONTY

Lord D'Ysquith, I hardly know what to say.

LORD ASQUITH

To begin with, you shall have two hundred and fifty pounds a year.

MONTY

It is a generous offer, especially since you'd be paying for the trouble of teaching me.