



HAVEN'T A CLUE  
BY  
GARY CLAPPERTON

Extract

A SMITH SCRIPT

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# Haven't A Clue

A play

by

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## *Characters (in order of appearance)*

- Marion: Female. A young pretty maid. Speaks with a lower class accent.
- Much: Male. A middle-aged butler. Reserved and solemn. He has an aloof air and speaks with authority and confidence.
- Mr Little: Male. A young upper-class twit.
- Mrs Dale: Female. A middle-aged femme fatale, with an upper-class accent, which sometimes slips. Tartily dressed and wearing too much makeup.
- Reverend Tuck: Male. A middle-aged, comical vicar. Wears spectacles and an ill-fitting wig.
- Herr Scharlach: Male. A middle-aged German. Has an upright, military bearing and a sinister hint. Has a Hitler-style moustache.
- Mr Holmes: Male. A young private detective. Incompetent but does not know it.
- Miss Gordon: Female but could be played by a man. A large, middle-aged spinster. Very outspoken and loud. Speaks with Lancashire accent. Slightly deaf. Dressed in a mannish way i.e. tweed two-piece and hat, brogues, shirt and tie.
- Doctor Hood: A female GP. Smartly dressed.

# Haven't A Clue

## ACT ONE/SCENE ONE

PLACE: THE LOUNGE OF A COUNTRY HOUSE, SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND.

Time: The Autumn of 1936/afternoon.

*The door, centre, leads to the hall. Stage right of the door is a sideboard; on which are drink bottles, a jug of orange juice, a tray and glasses. Stage left of the door is a small table with a telephone and a bible. To one side of the telephone table hangs a print of "Flatford Mill" by Constable and on the other a picture of the greyhound, Mick the Miller.*

*Stage right is a secret door, which swings both ways and leads to the library. Stage left is a window, with heavy curtains, which looks out onto the garden. The curtains are open and show that it is day. A sofa is L of centre, with a coffee table in front of it and two armchairs are R of centre. R of stage, against the wall, is a small table and a hard chair is next to it. L of stage, next to the wall is another hard chair. A newspaper is on the centre armchair. Marion, the maid, is arranging glasses and bottles of drink on the sideboard. She is young and pretty.*

*Much, the butler, enters door C. He is reserved and solemn. He has an aloof air and speaks with authority and confidence.*

**MUCH** *(Inspecting the room.)* Have you nearly finished in here, Marion? The guests will be arriving shortly.

**MARION** Yes, Mister Much. Has Mr Sharif arrived yet?

**MUCH** No. He phoned a short time ago to say he had been delayed.

*Loud, deep and scary doorbell rings.*

**MARION** *(Jumps.)* Ooh! I don't think I'll ever get used to that doorbell.

**MUCH** That will be the first guest. *(Exits and closes door behind him.)*

*Marion finishes arranging the drinks, smooths down her apron, adjusts her hair and cap and stands by the sideboard. After a short pause she glances at the door and opens the drawer of the sideboard, takes out a piece of cutlery and examines it closely until the door opens and she quickly puts it back in the drawer and closes it. Much shows Mr Little into the room. Mr Little is young and a typical upper-class twit.*

**MUCH** *(To Mr Little.)* If you will excuse me, Mister Little, I still have a few matters to attend to in preparation for the weekend. The maid will look after you. *(Exits and closes door.)*

**MARION** *(Shyly.)* What would you like, sir?

**MR LITTLE** *(Turns and takes a step towards Marion.)* Oh, I say!

MARION What would you like to drink, sir? Sherry?

MR LITTLE Oh, yes, of course, a drink would be spiffing. *(Eyes Marion up and down, moves to armchair C, picks up newspaper on it, sits in chair, glances at newspaper and then tosses it onto sofa.)*

*(Marion pours a sherry, walks to R of Mr Little and hands it to him.)*

MARION Here you are, sir.

MR LITTLE A pretty little thing like you can call me Jonathon.

MARION *(Coyly.)* Why, sir?

MR LITTLE *(Puzzled.)* Because that's my name.

MARION I'm not sure if I should, sir. My employer might not approve. I've only worked here a few days and don't want to lose my job.

MR LITTLE What's your employer, Mr Sharif, like?

MARION I don't know, sir. I've never met him.

MR LITTLE But you must have met him when he hired you.

MARION Mr Much, the butler, hired me, sir. Mr Sharif is away on business.

MR LITTLE Away on business! But I'm supposed to meet with him.

MARION Oh, he'll be here soon, sir.

MR LITTLE I've never met him either. Just got an invitation out of the blue.

MARION I see, sir.

MR LITTLE *(Stands.)* Now look, my dear, you're still calling me sir.

*Mr Little moves closer to Marion. During the following conversation Marion backs away, round back of armchairs, and then to L of telephone table, and Mr Little follows, until he is in front of telephone table.*

MR LITTLE Jonathon would be much friendlier. But what's your name?

MARION Marion, sir.

MR LITTLE Marion! What a lovely name.

MARION It's not my real name. My real name's Dorothy.

MR LITTLE *(Puzzled.)* Why is that?

MARION Because that's the name my parents chose.

MR LITTLE No. What I meant was, if your name is Dorothy, why are you called Marion?

MARION Mr Much told me that Mr Sharif is not very good at remembering names, so he calls all his maids Marion.

MR LITTLE Do you not mind?

MARION Not if it means I can keep my job, sir.

MR LITTLE *(Seductively.)* And how far would you go to keep your job? *(Leans forward as if to kiss Marion. Doorbell rings. Mr Little and Marion jump away from each other.)*

MR LITTLE Leaping lizards! What's that?

MARION The doorbell, sir.

MR LITTLE It's enough to scare a chap to death.

MARION It might be one of the other guests, sir. *(Pretends to tidy phone table.)*

*Mr Little inspects paintings intently. After a few moments, Much shows in Mrs Dale and Reverend Tuck.*

*Mrs Dale is a middle-aged femme fatale. Although past her best, she is still attractive but tartily dressed and wearing too much makeup. She is very confident, flirtatious and outspoken.*

*Reverend Tuck is middle-aged and wears a black suit and vicar's dog collar. He has steel-rimmed spectacles and an obvious, ill-fitting wig.*

*Mrs Dale moves to behind armchair R and Reverend Tuck moves to behind armchair C. Neither notice Marion or Mr Little.*

MR LITTLE *(Quietly to Marion.)* I didn't know it was a Tarts & Vicars fancy dress.

MARION *(Quietly to Mr Little.)* It isn't, sir.

MR LITTLE Oh!

MUCH *(Takes a step forward.)* The Reverend Tuck and Mrs Dale. *(Exits.)*

REV. TUCK *(Turns and sees Mr Little.)* Pleased to meet you, dear boy. *(Offers hand.)*

MR LITTLE *(Shaking hand.)* Jonathon Little.

REV. TUCK No. I'm Timothy Tuck.

MR LITTLE I know. I am Jonathon Little.

REV. TUCK Indeed. *(Moves to L of sofa, picks up newspaper, flicks through it and becomes engrossed.)*

*Mrs Dale moves L to Mr Little.*

MRS DALE *(Seductively.)* Hello, my dear. *(Offers hand.)*

MR LITTLE *(Shakes her hand.)* Oh, I say! It's a pleasure to meet you.

MRS DALE *(Seductively.)* It certainly is.

MR LITTLE I'm Little.

MRS DALE Do not worry about that, dearie.

MARION Would sir and madam care for a sherry?

REV. TUCK *(Flustered.)* Er, no, no, nothing for me.

MRS DALE Have you any gin?

MARION Yes, madam. What would you like with it?

**MRS DALE** Just a glass, my dear. And I would prefer a large one. *(To Mr Little.)*  
No offence, dear. *(Sits R end of sofa.)*

**Reverend Tuck sits L end of sofa. Marion goes to sideboard and pours a gin. Mr Little sits in armchair C.**

**REV. TUCK** *(To Mr Little.)* Is this newspaper yours, dear boy?

**MR LITTLE** No, it was here when I came in.

**REV. TUCK** Only there's a partly finished crossword. I cannot get enough of them. I don't suppose the person who started it will mind.

**MR LITTLE** I'm sure they wouldn't. Go ahead.

**Reverend Tuck takes fountain pen from pocket and studies crossword. Marion hands drink to Mrs Dale and returns to sideboard during the following conversation.**

**MR LITTLE** Do you two know each other?

**MRS DALE** Not before today.

**MR LITTLE** I thought as you arrived together you must be ... together.

**REV. TUCK** No, we met at the railway station.

**MRS DALE** We went to get in the same taxi. When we found out we were both coming here, to Lincoln Green, we decided to share the taxi.

**REV. TUCK** But not the fare. *(Looks pointedly at Mrs Dale.)*

**MRS DALE** *(Ignoring Reverend Tuck.)* We got to know each other rather well.

**REV. TUCK** Indeed!

**MR LITTLE** So, what brought you here?

**REV. TUCK** *(Looks at Mr Little strangely.)* A taxi!

**MR LITTLE** I meant, why are you here?

**REV. TUCK** Not quite sure, dear boy. The invitation from Mr Sharif was rather vague but I think he might want to make a donation to help with my charity work. I believe he's quite a philanthropist.

**MR LITTLE** Oh, I used to collect postage stamps as well!

**REV. TUCK** *(Looks at Mr Little strangely.)* Indeed.

**MR LITTLE** I'm a merchant banker and might be able to advise you on investments for your charities. What are they?

**REV. TUCK** I have one that is trying to alleviate famine in Africa and another, based in this country, which helps fallen women.

**MRS DALE** All the fallen women I have known have been pushed. By men!

**REV. TUCK** And of course we always need money for the church. At the moment we are trying to raise money to repair the church hall. Would you like to buy a raffle ticket?

**MR LITTLE** What are the prizes?

**REV. TUCK** Cakes made by some of our lady parishioners.

MR LITTLE Sorry, old chap, but I have left my wallet in my car.

REV. TUCK *(Disappointed.)* Maybe later.

MR LITTLE Maybe.

MRS DALE He tried to give me one in the taxi.

MR LITTLE *(Shocked.)* I beg your pardon?

MRS DALE Reverend Tuck tried to get me to buy a raffle ticket on the way here.

MR LITTLE Oh, a raffle ticket! Of course.

MRS DALE But I don't eat cakes. I have to keep an eye on my figure.

MR LITTLE *(Looking at Mrs Dale's figure.) (Dreamily)* Yes. *(Pause.) (Looks up at Mrs Dale.)* Oh, sorry.

MRS DALE I don't mind if you want to keep an eye on it as well, dearie.

MR LITTLE *(Nervously.)* Oh! Thank you. *(Tugs at collar.)* Well, er... And why are you here?

MRS DALE Not sure, either, dear, but I never turn down an invitation.

MR LITTLE Have either of you met Mr Sharif before?

REV. TUCK I haven't.

MRS DALE I don't think I have but then, I have met many men.

REV. TUCK Indeed! *(To Mr Little.)* Have you, dear boy?

MR LITTLE Met many men?

REV. TUCK No! Met Mr Sharif.

MR LITTLE Oh! No.

REV. TUCK So, why are you here?

MR LITTLE I have some investment propositions I would like to discuss with him.

REV. TUCK So none of us have met him. Strange.

MRS DALE Sharif sounds foreign to me.

REV. TUCK I think it might be an Egyptian name.

*Much enters and stands between the armchairs.*

MR LITTLE Ah, Much. Is Mr Sharif from Egypt?

MUCH No, sir. Nottingham.

REV. TUCK But he is a foreign gentleman?

MUCH I could not say, sir.

REV. TUCK You cannot say! Have you seen him, Much?

MUCH I have not seen him at all, sir. I have never met him.

MRS DALE Never met him?

**MUCH** No, madam. All I know is that he recently moved here to Lincoln Green from Nottingham. I was employed through an agency and have received instructions from him by letter, telegram and telephone.

**MRS DALE** Surely, you were curious to find out more about him.

**MUCH** I did not consider that any of my business, madam.

**MRS DALE** That don't impress me, Much.

**REV. TUCK** Where is he now?

**MUCH** He should be arriving shortly. *(Doorbell rings and everyone, apart from Much, jump.)* That might be him now. If you will excuse me. *(Exits and closes door.)*

**REV. TUCK** *(Reads from newspaper.)* Heavy weights round neck, grinding you down. Ten letters.

**MR LITTLE** I beg your pardon.

**REV. TUCK** It's a clue in this crossword. *(Reads.)* Heavy weights round neck, grinding you down. Ten letters.

**MR LITTLE** *(Thinks.)* Mmm. Joe Louis!

**REV. TUCK** Joe Louis?

**MR LITTLE** Yes. He's a heavyweight boxer.

**REV. TUCK** It begins with M.

**MR LITTLE** Oh. *(Thinks.)* Max Schmeling! He's a German heavyweight.

**REV. TUCK** How do you spell it?

**MR LITTLE** *(Laughing.)* With great difficulty, old bean. Spelling's not my strong point.

*Much shows in Herr Scharlach. He is smartly dressed, with an upright, military bearing and a sinister hint. He has a monocle and small Hitler-type moustache and speaks with a German accent.*

**MUCH** Herr Scharlach. *(Exits and closes door.)*

**SCHARLACH** *(Walks between armchairs and sofa.)* Guten Tag. *(Clicks heels.)*

**REV. TUCK** *(Stands and walks in front of coffee table to C.) (To Herr Scharlach.)* Reverend Tuck. Pleased to meet you, Mr Scharlach. *(Offers hand.)*

**SCHARLACH** Herr.

**REV. TUCK** Oh! *(Backs away, turns L and adjusts wig.)*

**MR LITTLE** *(Stands and comes to R of Herr Scharlach.)* Mr Little. *(Holds out hand.)*

**SCHARLACH** *(Turns R to face Mr Little.)* Heil. *(Gives Nazi salute.)*

*Mr Little raises his arm as Herr Scharlach lowers his for handshake. Mr Little lowers his arm for handshake as Herr Scharlach raises his for salute. This goes on for some time until Herr Scharlach grasps hand of Mr Little and shakes it.*

MR LITTLE You're not English, are you?

SCHARLACH Nein. German.

REV. TUCK Ah! **(Picks up newspaper and sits on sofa.)** Do you know a German heavyweight?

SCHARLACH Ya. Herman Goering.

MR LITTLE I think Reverend Tuck wants to know how to spell Max Schmeling.

REV. TUCK Does it have ten letters?

SCHARLACH Nein.

MR LITTLE That cannot be the answer then. Nine is not enough.

MRS DALE **(To Mr Little.)** Nein is German for no.

MR LITTLE Oh.

MRS DALE **(To Herr Scharlach.)** Mrs Dale. Guten Tag, Herr Scharlach. **(Offers hand.)**

SCHARLACH **(Crosses L to Mrs Dale.)** Ah, Sprechen Sie Deutsch? **(Takes hand and kisses it as he clicks his heels.)**

MRS DALE Ein bisschen.

SCHARLACH Very interesting. **(Sits in armchair C.)**

MR LITTLE **(Sits armchair R.)** What are you doing in England, Herr Scharlach?

SCHARLACH I am viz zer German embassy. I am a cultural attaché.

REV. TUCK And what are you doing here at Lincoln Green?

SCHARLACH I voz invited by Mr Sharif.

MRS DALE May I ask why?

SCHARLACH I am sorry but I am unable to say.

MRS DALE Secret, eh? Well, we all have our little secrets.

REV. TUCK Indeed!

MRS DALE It all sounds very cloak and dagger. **(Laughs.)** You're not a spy, are you?

SCHARLACH Nuzing as exciting, I am afraid. But I would not refuse if I vere asked to spy on you.

MRS DALE Naughty boy!

MR LITTLE I say, you do't have a drink, Herr Scharlach. What would you like?

SCHARLACH Schnapps.

MR LITTLE Oh! Well, maybe we can play cards later.

MARION **(To Herr Scharlach.)** I'm afraid we have no schnapps, sir. Would you like a sherry?

**SCHARLACH** Ah, you English and zer sherry. If you are not drinking tea, you are drinking sherry. Ya, I will have a sherry.

**Marion gives Herr Scharlach a sherry and returns to sideboard.**

**SCHARLACH** Where is Mr Sharif?

**REV. TUCK** He's not here, yet, but the butler said he would be arriving soon.

**SCHARLACH** Vot is he like?

**MR LITTLE** Miserable looking chap. Dressed like a butler. He just showed you in.

**SCHARLACH** I meant vot is *Mr Sharif* like?

**REV. TUCK** None of us have ever met him, but we know he is from Nottingham.

**MR LITTLE** And I think he likes dogs.

**REV. TUCK** Dogs? How do you know that?

**MR LITTLE** *(Indicating picture of Mick the Miller.)* He has a picture of one on his wall.

**SCHARLACH** Ah, zoh! *(Goes and looks at picture.)* Zat is not a dog.

**MR LITTLE** It looks like a dog to me.

**SCHARLACH** Zat is a hound. A greyhound.

**MR LITTLE** Oh.

**SCHARLACH** *(Returns to armchair.) (To Reverend Tuck.)* Tell me, Reverend, vhy do you vant to know how to spell Max Schmeling?

**REV. TUCK** Do you know anything about crosswords?

**SCHARLACH** Damn.

**REV. TUCK** I beg your pardon.

**SCHARLACH** Is zat not an English cross vord? I could give you some German cross vords, if you like.

**REV. TUCK** No, no. I wanted some help with a crossword puzzle.

**SCHARLACH** Ah, zoh!

**MRS DALE** Knowing how to spell Max Schmeling won't help you. That's one boxer. The clue says, "Heavyweights." That's more than one.

**SCHARLACH** Ah, brains as vell as beauty.

**MUCH** *(Enters.)* Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen. Dr Hood phoned earlier to apologize for being delayed but there has been no message from the other two expected guests. I suggest that, rather than wait for them, you go to your rooms to unpack.

**SCHARLACH** Vot about Mister Sharif?

**MUCH** I am afraid I have no more news of him, sir. Your rooms are on the first floor. If you would all like to follow the Marion, she will show you to them.