

MRS. STILES' BOARDING HOUSE, WHERE'S MY MUMMY?

A Radio Play in Four Acts

By Susan McLellan

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CAST in order of appearance

NARRATOR: male or female

JULES: mid sixties

SAM: mid sixties

ROSE: mid sixties

MARGARET: middle age

AGATHA: mid sixties

SIMON: mid sixties

MAINTENANCE MAN: early thirties

STAN: mid sixties

MRS. STILES: late fifties

INTRODUCTION

NARRATOR: Jules, Sam, Agatha and Rose have been friends since childhood. Now in their senior years, they all reside at Mrs. Stiles' Boarding House, a charming, slate-blue, two-story Victorian home with a wraparound veranda overlooking an expansive well-kept yard.

MRS. STILES' BOARDING HOUSE, WHERE'S MY MUMMY?

(Egyptian theme music, 10 seconds)

Act One

NARRATOR: It is a warm, sunny September morning. Sam and Jules have just parked the car after dropping Rose and Agatha at the entrance to Charlie Bartlett's Orchard Market.

(SFX car engine stops, car doors open and close. Birds chatter occasionally through entire act)

JULES: Hey, Sam, that's an ambulance pulling out of Charlie's driveway.

SAM: It is indeed. We should see if his niece Margaret is working this morning. She'll tell us what happened. You know what they say -

JULES / SAM *(together)*: What Margaret knows, Margaret shares.

SAM: We'd better find Rose and Agatha. They'll want to hear it firsthand. *(SFX walking on gravel)* Rose said they'd be stopping in the garden section.

JULES: The garden section? I hope they're not planning to buy anything!

SAM: Why's that, Jules?

JULES: Because they're always coming up with ideas to beautify Mrs. Stiles's yard, and that always translates into work for us.

SAM: Oh, I see what you mean. They shouldn't try to make the yard look nice. *(SFX walking on gravel stops)*

JULES: No, no, that's not what I meant. It's just...plants mean digging and lifting, and you know how my back complains when I even think about lifting anything heavy.

SAM: I see Rose over there at the checkout. It doesn't look like she has any plants. Come on. *(SFX walking on gravel)* Look at those kids in the funny hats.

JULES: They're garden gnomes, Sam.

SAM: What? Oh, *(laughing)* of course they are. *(SFX 3-4 seconds sounds of walking on gravel)* Hi Rose. There's nothing in your cart. Didn't you get the pears for Mrs. Stiles?

ROSE: Phone orders are kept in the back, Sam. Agatha and Margaret went to get them.

SAM: I hope Mrs. Stiles is going to do some canning. I love canned pears.

JULES: You love canned anything. Come to think of it, Mrs. S. always has a jar of her preserves on hand just for you, Sam. Now why is that, I wonder?

SAM: Because I'm her favorite.

JULES: You can't be, because I am.

ROSE: I saw some lovely hydrangea bushes over in the garden section, do you think we —

JULES: No, Rose. I'm quite sure Mrs. Stiles has enough bushes already. (*SFX walking on gravel*) Besides, there's no time. Here come Margaret and Agatha with the pears. (*SFX walking on gravel stops*)

MARGARET: Good morning, Sam, good morning, Jules. You'll never guess what happened this morning!

JULES: Could it have anything to do with the ambulance at your Uncle Charlie's?

MARGARET: How did you know?

SAM: We saw it leaving his driveway.

ROSE: Did something happen to Charlie?

AGATHA: Yes!

ROSE: What was it?

AGATHA: We don't know. But we think —

JULES: Agatha! Could you let Margaret tell the story?

AGATHA: Oh! Yes, of course. Go ahead Margaret.

MARGARET: Uncle Charlie was eating breakfast, and all of a sudden he was having trouble breathing. My aunt called an ambulance right away.

ROSE: It sounds like an allergy.

MARGARET: But he eats the same breakfast every morning, and it's never happened before.

AGATHA: We think Sonny Jorgensen had something to do with it!

ROSE: You mean Sonny who works here in the orchard?

AGATHA: Yes, but he doesn't work here anymore.

JULES: (*coughs loudly*)

AGATHA: Margaret will tell you. Go ahead, Margaret.

MARGARET: A few weeks ago some of the staff noticed Sonny Jorgenson moving lots of tires in and out of one of the storage sheds. The tires could have been stolen, because Uncle Charlie was talking to Sonny the next day, and then Sonny stormed off and hasn't been back to work. I think he was fired.

SAM: Did you ask your uncle about it?

MARGARET: Oh, no. He would never talk to me about the other staff.

JULES: What does any of that have to do with the ambulance this morning?

AGATHA: Revenge, Jules! Sonny could have put something in Charlie's cereal. He's probably been hanging around, waiting for his chance.

SAM: So you two think Sonny was fired for possibly dealing in stolen property, and he's been waiting to take revenge on Charlie?

ROSE: Agatha just said that, didn't you Agatha?

AGATHA: Well, almost. What I actually said was —

JULES: Oh, for heaven's sake! Never mind that! (*BEAT*) Now, then. Even if Charlie suspected Sonny of some wrongdoing — and I'm not saying he did — and even if Charlie fired Sonny — and that's a big 'if' — I highly doubt that Sonny would be able to poison his cereal, Agatha, it's ridiculous.

AGATHA: Maybe. But maybe not. After all, what do we know about Sonny? We haven't really exchanged more than a "Hello, have a nice day," whenever we've seen him.

ROSE: I know he and his mom moved here from Toronto, and they have family there.

JULES: Margaret, have you actually seen Sonny hanging around here since he was *allegedly* fired?

MARGARET: No. Not really. But I have seen him in town.

SAM: Sounds pretty sketchy to me.

JULES: Me too, Sam. Anyway, we'd better get going. I told Mrs. S. we'd be stopping at the museum to see the Egyptian exhibit, and that we'd be back for lunch. It's already eleven.

AGATHA: Margaret, we're having a sing-along at Mrs. Stiles' boarding house tonight. Why don't you come and join us?

MARGARET: I'd love to. What time does it start?

ROSE: Seven. But come at six. Everyone else will.

MARGARET: Great. See you tonight.

ROSE: *(SFX walking on gravel, stops as 4 car doors open. Bird chatter in background.)*

SAM: You guys buckle up, and I'll put these pears in the trunk. *(SFX 3 car doors close, trunk closes, walking on gravel, car door opens, then closes. Car engine starts)*

JULES: Next stop, the museum. *(SFX car engine fades out.)*

Act Two

(Egyptian theme music, 10 seconds)

NARRATOR: Jules has pulled up to the curb in front of the museum. A large sandwich board sign advertises a new Egyptian exhibit.

(SFX car engine running)

JULES: I'll let you out here before I park the car. *(SFX three car doors open)* I'm going to look at the Art exhibit before I catch up to you.

AGATHA: We'll see you in Egypt, Jules. *(SFX 2 car doors close)*

ROSE: Don't leave your mummy waiting.

JULES: Cute, Rose. (*SFX one car door closes, engine sound 4 seconds, then fades away*)

AGATHA: The Egyptian exhibit is through that door. Follow me.

SAM: We're right behind you, Agatha. (3 BEATS)

AGATHA: Be careful when you first come in, it's quite dark in here.

SAM: Yes. The lights are dim, and they're aimed at the ceiling.

ROSE: It feels like we're inside a real pyramid.

AGATHA: Look at this ancient sarcophagus.

SAM: The wood's well preserved. (*taps on the wood*) Good and solid.

ROSE: This sign says a woman in England had this in her living room for thirty years. How creepy!

AGATHA: It also says her family is loaning it to museums before they auction it off.

SAM: Shouldn't there be a mummy with it?

AGATHA: There's no mummy home.

JULES: BOO!

ROSE/ AGATHA (*together*): JULES!

JULES: Gotcha!

SAM: (*laughing*) Good one, Jules!

JULES: I just ran into Simon Weeks. He'll come and join us in a minute.

ROSE: Simon's here? I haven't seen him since we graduated high school, and he moved to the east coast.

AGATHA: Rose had a crush on Simon in high school.

ROSE: Agatha! (2 BEATS)

SIMON: Hi everyone, it's good to see you all again. If you have any questions about this exhibit, I'm the one to ask.

SAM: Hi Simon. I don't see a mummy with this exhibit.

AGATHA: Maybe it went for a walk.

ROSE: I don't think it would have just wandered off.

JULES: (*sotto voce*) Good grief.

SIMON: Unfortunately, it may have been stolen.

ROSE: Stolen! Who would want to steal a mummy?

SIMON: That's a good question. The Curator's beside himself, and the insurance company is understandably upset. So are the owners, of course.

SAM: You didn't just happen to take the mummy home, did you Simon?

SIMON: Of course not!

ROSE: Sam! Are you calling Simon a thief?

SAM: Not at all. He has his own sarcophagus, but he doesn't have a mummy, so I just wondered...

AGATHA: We'll nickname him the "Mummy Man."

ROSE: You have a sarcophagus, Simon?

SIMON: It's a replica. Not the real thing, like this one.

SAM: He's going to be buried in it.

ROSE: You aren't!

SIMON: Actually, yes, I am.

JULES: I thought you turned it into a liquor cabinet.

SIMON: I did. For now. After all, I'm not dead yet.

AGATHA: How handy. When you breathe your last, we can wrap you up like a mummy, pickle you in booze, and ferment you in your own coffin! All boxed up and ready to go!

ROSE: An Egyptian roll-up!

AGATHA: Sushi for the gods!

JULES: For Pete's sake, you two!

SIMON: It's all right, Jules, I'm used to being teased about it. Did you see the hieroglyphs inside the sarcophagus? They're pretty interesting.

AGATHA: We'd love to see them but it's too dark in here. Can you do anything about that?

SIMON: Step aside ladies, let me take a look. Hmm...I should be able to make some adjustments but I'll need a ladder. Be right back. (*SFX footsteps fade*)

ROSE: You could fit inside that sarcophagus, Agatha.

AGATHA: Do you think so? Yes, maybe I could. The lid is propped open...

JULES: You're not seriously considering climbing inside that thing, are you? (*SFX footsteps increase then stop*)

SIMON: Excuse me folks, I need to lean the ladder up against this post here. (*SFX metal ladder being extended*) I see maintenance could have done a better job securing this extension cord, someone could trip on it. For safety's sake, I'll have to ask all of you to stand out of the way while I'm on the ladder. (*SFX climbing ladder*)

ROSE: Be careful, Simon, that ladder doesn't look very stable.

SIMON: I'll be fine.

ROSE: Watch your balance. You're pretty high up.

SIMON: No worries, Rose.

MAINTENANCE MAN: (*SFX trolley wheels*) Look out! S'cuse me! Bringing a painting through! Whoops! (*SFX trolley stops, loud crash as ladder falls against the sarcophagus*)

AGATHA: What happened to the lights?

SAM: I don't know! I can't see a thing!

JULES: Does anyone have a flashlight?

ROSE: If you could turn the light on I'll see if I have one in my purse.

JULES: Good grief!

SAM: (*calls out*) Young man with the painting, do you have a flashlight?

MAINTENANCE MAN: Me? Yeah.

SAM: Great! (2 BEATS)

AGATHA: Are you going to turn it on?

MAINTENANCE MAN: Oh. Alright. (*click*)

AGATHA: That's not much better.

SAM: It's better than nothing. Now, can you please turn the lights back on?

MAINTENANCE MAN: I'll have to find the extension cord.

AGATHA: It's on the floor by the post, and the outlet is on the floor right next to it.

MAINTENANCE MAN: (*taking his time*) Okay, I see it. Give me a sec. (2 BEATS)
There. Got it.

ROSE: What was that crashing sound?

MAINTENANCE MAN: Probably the ladder falling.

AGATHA: Where's Simon?

ROSE: Oh my gosh! Can any of you see him?

AGATHA: The painting's in our way.

JULES: Young man, we need you to move the painting. We can't see through it!

MAINTENANCE MAN: All right. (*SFX trolley moves*)

ROSE: I don't see Simon.

JULES: He must have fallen behind the sarcophagus.

AGATHA: There's no body here, just the ladder. And the cover is closed now.

SAM: Good heavens! He must be inside it!

ROSE: He's going to suffocate!

SAM: Calm down Rose, we've got this. On three, Jules. One. Two. Three! (*SFX wood sliding on wood*)

ROSE: He is in there!

AGATHA: Simon, are you alright?

ROSE: Why isn't he answering? Is he dead?

AGATHA: He's unconscious.

ROSE: We need to call an ambulance.

JULES: I left my phone in the car.

SAM: So did I.

ROSE: Agatha and I don't have cellphones.

SAM: Young man, do you have a phone?

MAINTENANCE MAN: Yeah. In the maintenance room.

JULES: Would you please use it to call an ambulance?

MAINTENANCE MAN: Hmm. I'll need to put this painting somewhere first.

JULES: Put it in the maintenance room!

MAINTENANCE MAN: Okay! Okay! (*SFX trolley moves and fades out*)

SAM: Jules, I'll need your help to get Simon out of this box.

JULES: Thank god he's a lightweight, my back is crying from moving that lid!

SAM: We'll sit him up against the post. (2 BEATS)

AGATHA: He's coming around.

SIMON: (*moans*) What happened?

AGATHA: You were trying on the sarcophagus.

JULES: You've got quite a lump on your forehead.

ROSE: You might have a concussion. People have died from concussions!

AGATHA: Rose, you still have a crush on Simon after all these years!

ROSE: Hush, Agatha! (*SFX trolley wheels*)

SAM: The paramedics must have been close by, here they come.

JULES: They'll take him to the hospital and have him checked over. Maybe we can talk to him later.

ROSE: I'm ready to leave now. Two friends going to hospital in one morning is enough excitement for me. (*SFX trolley wheels fade out*)

AGATHA: (*with glee*) A revenge poisoning and a stolen mummy. What's next?

SAM: It's probably best to not ask, Agatha. Let's stop for lunch before we head back so we can all calm down.

ROSE: That's a good idea.

JULES: I'm for that. (*SFX 4 car doors open*)

AGATHA: I ride shotgun!

ROSE: I haven't heard that in years! (*2 BEATS, SFX car doors close, engine starts*)

JULES: I'll call Mrs. Stiles to let her know we'll be eating in town

SAM: And Stan said he'd meet us at the boarding house at two o'clock, so if we're a little late she can ask him to wait.

JULES: Got it. (*SFX punching cell phone buttons, phone rings a few times and fades out*)

Act Three

(Egyptian theme music, 10 seconds)

NARRATOR: As the foursome finish their lunch in town, Stan arrives at the boarding house.

(SFX bird chatter on and off to the end of the act, a dog barks on occasion)

MRS STILES: Good afternoon, Stan. Isn't it a lovely day?

STAN: Every day is a lovely day, Mrs. Stiles. Are Sam and Jules around? I said I'd come by to help set up for the sing-along tonight.

MRS STILES: They should be back anytime, and asked that you wait.

STAN: Is there anything you need help with?

MRS STILES: Yes. You can help me set up these tables for the refreshments. *(1 BEAT)* I heard Simon Weeks will be joining us tonight.

STAN: My dear Mrs. Stiles, where did you hear that?

MRS STILES: At the hairdresser's. Why?

STAN: It was supposed to be a surprise.

MRS STILES: I was surprised! And don't worry, she told me not to tell anyone. After all, the florist told her it was all hush, hush.

STAN: The florist! How did the florist know?

MRS STILES: She heard it from Mrs. Williamson.

STAN: Mrs. Williamson!

MRS STILES: Well she *is* the postmaster's wife after all, so of course he told her.

STAN: It's not going to be much of a surprise if everyone in town knows.

MRS STILES: Oh Stan, I don't think everyone in town knows. Margaret didn't say anything this morning when I called to order my pears, and I certainly didn't mention it. Between you and me, she just can't keep a secret.

STAN: Really.

MRS STILES: And today is Simon's birthday so I ordered a special cake from the bakery. Ah, here comes the gang. *(SFX 4 car doors close)*

STAN: Now, remember, don't say anything about Simon.

MRS STILES: Mum's the word. *(BEAT. Calling out)* You're just in time everyone, your Band Meister is here!

JULES/ROSE/AGATHA/SAM: *(call greetings over each other)*

SAM: Where would you like me to put these pears, Mrs. Stiles?

MRS STILES: Come with me, Sammy. I have a perfect spot in the pantry. *(SFX door closes)*

JULES: If you're ready, Stan, we can start setting up the chairs.

STAN: Absolutely. Do you have a plan?

JULES: Sam wants the guests in a semicircle facing the house, and the musicians on the veranda overlooking the guests. He thinks everyone will hear the music better. What do you think?

STAN: I think it's a great idea. Glad I thought of it.

ROSE: Oh, Stan!

STAN: Lead the way, Jules.

AGATHA: Simon just pulled up.

ROSE: He's here? *(SFX car door closes)* I didn't expect to see him again today. *(Calls)* Hi Simon. Are you feeling all right? Do you have a concussion?

SIMON: I don't have a concussion, but the Doc wants me to take it easy for a couple of days. I came by to thank all of you for helping me this morning.

AGATHA: We were happy to.

ROSE: We're having a sing-along tonight, would you like to come?

SIMON: Yes, that sounds like fun.

ROSE: It starts at seven, but come at six like everyone else.

SIMON: I'll be here. And I'll even bring an instrument. I'd better get home now and freshen up. Give the fellows my thanks, would you?

ROSE: *(excited)* Yes. See you later. *(SFX car door closes)*

AGATHA: Did I hear Simon say he's bringing an instrument?

ROSE: Yes. I wonder what it is...

AGATHA: Remember how hopeless he was in music class?

ROSE: He wasn't hopeless...

AGATHA: *(Sings quietly – tune of 'the muffin man')* Rosie likes the Mummy Man, the Mummy Man, the --

ROSE: Agatha! *(SFX door closes)*

MRS STILES: Thank you, Sammy, you're always a great help.

SAM: My pleasure, Mrs. Stiles. I love your canned pears.

MRS STILES: I'll can some extra jars, just for you.

SAM: Great! That will show Jules I'm your favorite.

MRS STILES: You're both my favorites.

SAM: Don't tell him that!

MRS STILES: *(laughing)* Oh Sammy! I'll make extras for him, too.

SAM: I'd better go help with the chairs. *(1 BEAT)*

AGATHA: Mrs. Stiles, did you hear Charlie Bartlett is in the hospital?

MRS STILES: Yes, Margaret told me this morning when I ordered my pears. She just seems to know everything about everything, doesn't she? Now, I have to go to the bakery so I'll stop by the hospital and see how Charlie's doing.

ROSE: Say hello from us.

AGATHA: Let's go see how the men are getting on, Rose. They might need our advice.

ROSE: They won't want our advice.

AGATHA: We'll give it to them anyway. (2 BEATS)

STAN: Ladies, what do you think? Should we group the chairs together like this, or have an aisle down the center?

AGATHA: (*sotto voce*) You see, Rose? They always need our advice. (*normal voice*) There should always be a center aisle, Stan. We'll help you make one.

STAN: Great! How's your ukulele practice coming along, Rose?

ROSE: I've memorized the C chord, but I can't get my fingers around any others yet. Maybe I should play the spoons. Like Jules.

AGATHA: (*sotto voce*) You don't want to play the spoons like Jules.

JULES: I heard that! Of course you want to play like me, Rose. With a steady, rhythmic beat.

SAM: You're beat is steady all right, and your leg is rhythmically turning black and blue.

JULES: Not anymore. I switched to my other leg!

STAN: How about your chording skills, Agatha?

AGATHA: I've got it covered. I just don't play the same chords as everyone else. Before I forget – Simon stopped by a few minutes ago to say thanks for helping him this morning.

STAN: What happened to Simon?

ROSE: He fell off a ladder. But he's all right, and he's coming to the sing-along tonight.

STAN: He is?

ROSE: Yes. I invited him, and he said yes.

STAN: He didn't mention he was already invited?

ROSE: No. Was he?

STAN: He wanted to keep it a surprise because he has a new instrument to try out.

AGATHA: Surprise! Do you know he's tone deaf?

SAM: He could never keep a beat in the high school band.

JULES: He has no musical talent!

STAN: He doesn't need any. Besides, it's his birthday today, and what better present could he possibly receive than to play with us?

SAM: Hearing aids?

JULES: Music lessons?

AGATHA: Canopic jars for when he's ready to leave this world. We could throw in some extra spools of mummy wrap.

SAM: Speak of the devil. He just pulled into the drive.

JULES: What is the new instrument he's going to play? (*SFX car door closes*)

STAN: You'll have to ask him. (2 BEATS.) I hear you had a fall this morning, Simon. Glad to see you're all right.

SIMON: Thanks, Stan. Uh, would you come and help me get something from my Jeep?

STAN: Absolutely. (2 BEATS)

ROSE: Maybe he needs help carrying his new instrument.

AGATHA: I hope it's not a drum set.

JULES: It doesn't look like a drum set.

SAM: Thank you, lord.

ROSE: They're helping someone out of the car.

SAM: Can you see who it is?

ROSE: No, but whoever he is, he can't walk on his own. (*SFX car door closes*)

JULES: They're carrying him. The poor fellow must be ill.

AGATHA: I'll hold the door so they can bring him inside.

SAM: Who have you got there, Simon?

JULES: Good god, man!

ROSE: What is it? What's wrong? (*SFX door closes*)

SAM: He's dead!

SIMON: He certainly is.

AGATHA: Oh my gosh!

SAM: Wait a minute, is that - that's a mummy!

SIMON: No, it's my brother, Seymour.

ROSE: He doesn't look anything like you.

JULES: It's a mummy, Rose!

SAM: Is it the one from the museum?

SIMON: Unless you know of more mummies that are out and about.

ROSE: Why is he wearing a hat and coat?

AGATHA: Either it's a clever disguise, or Simon didn't want him to catch a chill.

ROSE: You know, he's the spitting image of my uncle Arnold.

AGATHA: Really? Was Arnold grey and pasty looking?

JULES: Girls! For heaven's sake!

SAM: So you really did steal him, Simon!

SIMON: NO! I did not! I found him. This afternoon at my house. When I got home from the hospital there he was, in my sarcophagus!

STAN: Are you saying someone broke into your house and hid a stolen mummy?

SIMON: They didn't have to break in. The lock on my patio door's been broken since I moved in.

STAN: But why —

SIMON: I just haven't gotten around to fixing it yet.

STAN: No, no, not that. Why would someone hide a stolen mummy in your house?

SIMON: I was thinking about it on the drive over here, and

SAM: And what?

SIMON: And I have no idea.

ROSE: Who would have done such a thing?

AGATHA: Whoever it was picked a fitting place to hide it. Someone around here has a grudge against you. Does anyone come to mind?

SIMON: No one. (*1 BEAT*) From around here, anyway.

JULES: What do you mean?

SIMON: I mean, not from around here. But there was an incident back east a few years ago with a fellow named Henry Turner. We both worked at a big museum, I was in charge of art exhibits and he transported paintings for cleaning and restoration.

STAN: And what happened?

SIMON: I learned from a friend in investigations that the museum had hired a restorations expert who was previously an art forger. We put two and two together and called the police. They set up round-the-clock surveillance, and caught the culprits before the originals could be sold.

JULES: (*Whistles*)

AGATHA: Did Henry know about the forgeries?

SIMON: Heaven's yes! Not only did he know, he was blackmailing the forger to cut him into the deal. But his plan backfired. The forger spilled the beans and they both went to jail.

AGATHA: So Henry Turner holds a grudge against you.

SIMON: Yes, I believe he does.

ROSE: But you weren't the one who sent him to jail. The forger was the stool pigeon!

SIMON: That's true, but Henry knew I was the one who called the police. His whole family held me responsible for his prison time, and probably still do.

AGATHA: Is it possible that Henry is living here now?

SIMON: I don't even know if he's out of jail yet. But I think his sister's family moved out this way, so if he is out he could be staying with her.

SAM: Maybe you should find out.

JULES: I agree. But right now we have stolen property to deal with! Why on earth did you bring the mummy here to the boarding house?

SIMON: I couldn't leave him in my house. I mean, eventually someone would recognize him. And I can't take him back to the museum because then it will really look like I stole him.

JULES: Why didn't you just leave him at your house and call the police?

SIMON: I just —I panicked!

SAM: You could take him to the police now. Just explain to them that you didn't steal him--

SIMON: But don't you see? Now that I've got him, I don't think they'll believe me. I was hoping you could help me hide him somewhere until I can figure out what to do. I don't want to go to prison.

JULES: Simon. Our friends and neighbors are coming here tonight for a sing-along.

SIMON: Yes, I know, Jules. I'm one of them.

JULES: So, what do you think? Should we sit him in a lawn chair and pretend he's one of the gang?

ROSE: We could find some trousers to fit him.

AGATHA: We could lean him against a maple tree in the yard.

ROSE: Like a big garden ornament.

JULES: You two are not helping!

STAN: Mrs. Stiles is back. Maybe she can help.

JULES: We can't let her see him! She could have a heart attack!

SAM: We need to hide him before she comes in!

AGATHA: Bring him over to the sofa!

STAN: Okay. I'll get his head.

SIMON: I've got his feet. (*SFX shuffling over to sofa*) Put his head at that end.

STAN: Okay. Now what?

AGATHA: Now I'll cover him with this afghan.

ROSE: Tuck it underneath his feet.

JULES: Yes, we don't want his feet to get cold.

AGATHA: There. How does that look?

JULES: Like there's a stiff lying on the couch.

SAM: Quick! Sit at the table, she's coming in! (*SFX door closes*)

MRS STILES: (*footsteps coming closer and stop*) Hello everyone, I'm back, and I brought Chinese food for dinner.

SAM: That sounds great!

JULES: Is it that time already?

MRS STILES: Yes, it is.

AGATHA: I'll help you open the bags.

ROSE: Mm, mmm. (*SFX paper bags rustling*) Chinese food smells so good, don't you think?

MRS STILES: Oh yes, and I hope you're all hungry. Stan, Simon, you'll stay, won't you? I brought more than enough for everyone.

STAN: I sure will. Thanks.

SIMON: Count me in, Mrs. Stiles. I'm famished.

MRS. STILES: Sam, will you please get the plates and cutlery from the sideboard?

SAM: Okay.

MRS STILES: Who's that man, sleeping on the couch?

SAM: Him? Oh, uh, that's Rose's uncle Arnold.

ROSE: That's not my--

JULES: Of course it is! —

AGATHA: And he's very tired.

JULES: Very old, and very tired.

ROSE: Oh! Yes. Yes, he is.

MRS STILES: Now I'll have none of that. You go and wake him, Rosie. He's welcome to join us too, and he'll want to eat while it's hot.

STAN: I don't think that's a good idea.

MRS STILES: Why not, Stan?

JULES: Like we said, he's very old —

AGATHA: And very tired.

ROSE: Dead to the world, even.

MRS STILES: Now no one can be that old and that tired. And you all know I don't let anyone go hungry at my boarding house. (*SFX dishes being set*)

SAM: You don't have to worry about him going hungry.

MRS STILES: Now, Sammy, he certainly won't. You all help yourselves. I'll go wake him —

SIMON / AGATHA / JULES: (*Over each other*) No! Wait! Don't do that!

MRS STILES: (*Scream followed by a loud thud*)

ROSE: Mrs. Stiles!

SAM: She fainted.

AGATHA: I'll get some brandy.

MRS STILES: (*Moans*)

JULES: Take my arm, Mrs. S. (*BEAT*) I'll help you back to the table. Here we are.

AGATHA: Have a sip of this brandy, Mrs. Stiles.

MRS STILES: (*SFX Sips the drink*) Thank you, Agatha

AGATHA: That should help you feel better.

MRS STILES: Wait. Wait. Maybe one more sip. (*SFX Sip*) Now, is that really a dead man on my couch?

SAM: I suppose in the larger sense...

AGATHA: He could be a woman.

SIMON: Yes, Mrs. Stiles. There is a dead man on your couch. He's a mummy.

MRS STILES: A mummy!? What is he doing here?

AGATHA: Nothing really.

ROSE: Just lying around.

JULES: He was stolen from the museum.

MRS STILES: Stolen! Who stole him? And how did he get here?

SIMON: I brought him here.

MRS STILES: Simon? Why did you steal a mummy and bring him here?

SIMON: I didn't steal him! I found him in my sarcophagus! And then I brought him here.

MRS STILES: He scared me a lot!

SIMON: I am sorry for that, Mrs. Stiles. I didn't mean to scare you, but I needed a place to hide him.

MRS STILES: On my couch!?

SAM: We were trying to think of a better place when you came home and surprised us.

MRS STILES: Surprised you!? I was surprised! I am still surprised! Why didn't you hide him in the root cellar?

STAN: You have a root cellar?

MRS STILES: Yes, of course. It's not the old-fashioned kind, all damp and musty. It's a cold room in the basement. I had it specially built so I could store my preserves.

SAM: Do you really want a dead body in with your preserves?

SIMON: He won't hurt them, Sam, he's preserved too.

MRS STILES: I'd rather have him down there where our neighbors won't see him.

SIMON: I really appreciate your helping me, Mrs. Stiles. I'll move him right away. How do I get down there?

MRS STILES: You'll see a door in the kitchen beside the pantry. Everyone thinks it's a broom closet, but it really opens onto stairs. The light switch is just inside the door. Go down and it's the door on the right.

SIMON: Stan, Sam, would you mind giving me a hand?

STAN: I'll hold his feet.

SAM: And I'll get the doors for you. *(SFX footsteps fade out)*

JULES: Would you like another sip of brandy, Mrs. S.? You're still looking pale.

MRS STILES: Thank you, Jules, yes. To calm my nerves. *(SFX sip.)*

ROSE: I hear the men coming back. *(SFX footsteps 3 seconds, then stop)*

MRS STILES: Did you find a good spot for your mummy, Simon?

SIMON: He's lying comfortably on top of the strawberry jam.

SAM: It's perfect down there. Nice and dry. Like a tomb.

MRS STILES: I've never thought of it quite like that. Now, come on everyone, start in before this food gets cold. (*SFX background sounds of dishes and cutlery*)

AGATHA: Mrs. Stiles, is this picture on the calendar taken at Charlie Bartlett's orchard?

MRS STILES: Yes. There's Margaret standing at the door with Charlie. And there's Sonny Jorgensen, pushing the wheelbarrow.

AGATHA: Speaking of Charlie, did you get to visit him in the hospital?

MRS STILES: I did! And you won't believe what made him choke.

ROSE: Sonny poisoned him?

MRS STILES: What a funny thing to say. No, Sonny didn't have anything to do with it.

AGATHA: He didn't?

MRS STILES: Of course not. Charlie was eating his cereal when he suddenly got itchy, and then he broke out in hives and felt like he was choking. It's a good thing his wife called an ambulance right away. You see, he tried soy milk for the first time and had a severe reaction. Now he knows he's allergic to it, he won't use it again. Luckily, he's going to be fine.

SIMON: Rose, why would you think Sonny poisoned Charlie? He seems like a nice young man.

JULES: You know Sonny?

SIMON: Yes. He's our new maintenance man and transport driver. You saw him at the museum this morning.

ROSE: I didn't see him.

SIMON: Maybe you didn't recognize him with his new beard. He was pushing the trolley when he bumped into my ladder.

SAM: So that's why you fell.

SIMON: Of course. Didn't you see what happened?

SAM: Everything happened so fast we didn't really see anything. There was a loud crash and the lights went out. And when the lights were turned back on, we found you inside the sarcophagus.

AGATHA: So Sonny is a transport driver for the museum. Simon, what day did the mummy go missing?

SIMON: Last Monday.

MRS STILES: That was the day of Violet Sugarloaf's funeral. I saw you there, Simon. You were standing by the buffet table, and I thought you were — Oh!

SIMON: What? You thought I was, what?

MRS STILES: You were looking very uncomfortable, maybe even guilty about something. I was going to ask if anything was wrong, but you put your plate down and ran out before I had the chance.

SAM: What were you feeling guilty about, Simon?

SIMON: I wasn't feeling guilty!

STAN: Then why did you run off so fast?

SIMON: I didn't run off! I ... hurried out.

JULE: Okay. What was your hurry?

SIMON: If you must know, I was embarrassed! I spilled apple juice down the front of my pants, so I hurried home to change.

AGATHA: The police would have been looking for the mummy that day. Did they search your house?

SIMON: Yes, they checked my house that day. I'm sure they checked up on all the museum's employees. And I did not have the stolen mummy.

AGATHA: No, you didn't have it then. But you do now.

SIMON: What are you getting at, Agatha? Are you accusing me of theft?

AGATHA: No, Simon, I'm not. But I think I know who hid the mummy at your house, and why.

MRS STILES: Good heavens, it's a quarter to six! Everyone will be arriving soon! We have to set out the refreshments!

ROSE: I'll start brewing coffee!

AGATHA: I'll set out the desserts.

STAN: What can I do to help?

MRS. STILES: Thank you, Stan. Would you and Sam bring out the plates and napkins? Sam will show you where they are.

SAM: Come with me, Stan.

STAN: Lead the way.

MRS STILES: I'll bring out the cream and sugar. And we'll need forks and spoons!

JULES: We'd best stand out of the way, Simon. They seem to have everything covered.

SIMON: I really want to hear Agatha's theory.

JULES: You probably won't get a chance until later. People are starting to arrive. (*car doors, subdued voices*)

AGATHA: There's no time to explain right now, Simon, but I want you to find Sam and have him help you get the mummy back into your jeep without anyone seeing. Take it to the police and explain to them how you found it in your house.

SIMON: But won't they think I really was hiding it? I don't want to be arrested!

AGATHA: They won't arrest you. Trust me.

SIMON: I hope you know what you're doing, Agatha.

AGATHA: Everything will be fine. You'll see.

Act Four

((Egyptian theme music, 10 seconds))

NARRATOR: The evening is coming to a close after a successful sing-along and the guests have just left.

MRS STILES: I'm glad to see that everyone enjoyed themselves, but where is Simon? I haven't seen him all evening.

JULES: Agatha sent him to the police station with the mummy just as people started arriving.

MRS STILES: I hope they don't arrest him tonight. He'll miss out on his birthday cake.

SAM: Have no fear, Mrs. Stiles. If he goes to jail, I'll let him know how good it was.

MRS STILES: *(Laughs)* Oh, Sammy! *(car door closes)*

ROSE: Simon's back!

JULES: So you didn't get arrested, Simon. What happened at the police station?

SIMON: Agatha talked to them before I got there. I don't know what you said, Agatha, but they listened to my story and said I was free to go!

SAM: What did you say to them, Agatha?

AGATHA: I told them Sonny Jorgensen stole the mummy and hid it at Simon's.

ROSE: How do you know it was Sonny?

AGATHA: You see, Rose, the first question to answer, is why put the mummy in Simon's house? The only answer that makes sense, is to frame Simon. And the only person that would want to frame Simon is Henry Turner.

SAM: But we don't know if Henry is out of jail.

AGATHA: He doesn't have to be. In fact, he's probably still in jail. But he is getting his revenge on Simon because Sonny is helping him.

SAM: Why would Sonny help him?

AGATHA: Remember that Simon told us Henry's whole family held him responsible for Henry's jail time?

SAM: Yes.

AGATHA: Simon, you also said Henry's sister and her family might be living here.

SIMON: Yes, that's true.

SAM: Sonny is Henry Turner's nephew!

AGATHA: Yes! Think about it. Henry was the courier for the forger back east, and Sonny is the transport driver for the museum here. Henry could have talked Sonny into framing Simon by putting the mummy in Simon's house.

STAN: Why didn't he take the mummy to Simon's the same day he stole it? After all, the longer he kept it, the higher the risk of getting caught.

AGATHA: I'm positive he did take it there the same day. Remember, that was the day of Violet Sugarloaf's funeral, and in all likelihood Sonny knew Simon would be there, and away from home for a few hours.

SIMON: But I went home early to change.

AGATHA: Right! He was lucky that day that you didn't catch him, and he had to wait for another opportunity.

MRS STILES: But why do you think he chose today?

AGATHA: Ah! I think bumping into the ladder this morning at the museum was an accident, but when Simon had to be taken to the hospital, Sonny had the perfect opportunity to set the frame-up.

STAN: Now I see. Simon was cleared of the theft on the day the mummy was stolen, so putting it in his house today would make it look like he had it hidden somewhere all along.

SAM: And he'd have a much harder time clearing himself a second time around!

AGATHA: Yes, and that would make Henry Turner all the happier.

SIMON: I don't know all the facts, but I know Agatha's right about at least one thing. Sonny is Henry Turner's nephew, and the police sent someone to arrest him. So thank you, Agatha. I owe you.

JULES/ROSE/SAM (*over each other*): Good job, Agatha! / Well done! / Good thinking!

MRS STILES: I'm so glad you weren't arrested, Simon. I had this cake made specially for your birthday and I wouldn't want you to miss out.

SIMON: Wow, Mrs. Stiles, that's impressive. It's shaped like a sarcophagus! It even has a mummy inside!

ROSE: I'll light the candles so we can sing Happy Birthday.

ALL: (*Sing a version of happy birthday*)

ROSE: Make a wish, Simon.

SIMON: I'll make it a good one, Rose. (*Blows out candles - Applause*)

AGATHA: Simon?

SIMON: Yes, Agatha?

AGATHA: Try not to fall into any more mummy cases, okay?

SIMON: Don't worry. I'm going to seal up the lid to my sarcophagus until I need it. You can say that for now, this mummy case is closed!

(*Egyptian theme music*)

THE END