

Generic Radio Workshop Script Library [\(BACK\)](#)**Series: Suspense****Show: Back for Christmas****Date: Dec 23 1948**

This is original script, prior to being changed for broadcast.

In the final broadcast the main character's name was changed to WILFRED, not HERBERT as it is in the script. And on the broadcast, it was always "Back for the holidays" while the original script is the more specific "Back for Christmas."

WILCOX: In just a moment Auto-Lite presents SUSPENSE with Herbert Marshall.

WILCOX: "'Twas the night before Christmas
And in Santa Claus' sleigh
The electrical system was plenty okay.
The ignition was perfect
Worked like a dream,
And the sleigh ran so smooth
It made Santa beam."

HAP: What was Santa's secret Harlow?

WILCOX: "I heard him exclaim as he drove out of sight
It's no secret at all - it's just Auto-Lite."

HAP: Now, Harlow.

WILCOX: You see, Hap, with all the kids in the world depending on old Saint Nick Christmas Eve, he plays safe by replacing old or worn out parts in his Auto-Lite equipped car...eh, sleigh with Auto-Lite original factory parts - resistor spark plugs, Sta-ful batteries, distributors, starting motors, coils, generators, wire and cable -- all famous for their Auto-Lite ignition engineered dependability. Santa does it -
- why don't you?

HAP: Harlow, Harlow, let's switch from Santa to SUSPENSE!

NARR: SUSPENSE!

MUSIC: BRASS CHORD

NARR: Auto-Lite and its 60,000 dealers and service stations bring you Radio's outstanding Theatre of Thrills... starring tonight, Mr. Herbert Marshall in Anton Leader's production of a tell well calculated to keep you ---

MUSIC: WOODWIND CHORD

NARR: SUSPENSE

MUSIC: UP AND OUT,

SOUND: FADE ON... EFFECT OF SHOVEL...RHYTHMICALLY SCOOPING UP EARTH

HERBERT: (FADES IN SIMULTANEOUS, SINGING)
Jingle bells, jingle bells,
Jingle all the way;
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open shay!
OH! Jingle bells --

HERMIONE: (CALLING OFF) Her-BERT!

SOUND: SHOVELLING OUT...STEPS DOWN STAIRS...APPROACHING

HERMIONE: Herbert!

HERBERT: Yes, my dear?

HERMIONE: What on earth are you doing down here in the cellar?

HERBERT: Why, just doing a little digging.

HERMIONE: And why, may I ask, have you chosen this day, of all days, to dig up the cellar floor?

HERBERT: Well, I thought, as the weather has been so damp, this would be a good time to plant that little "devils' garden" I told you about.

HERMIONE: Devil's garden? Whatever nonsense is that?

HERBERT: (APOLOGETICALLY) That was my little joke about it. You see, I've managed to get hold of the spores of several unclassified wild orchids. In their wild state they bloom under damp masses of leaf-mold. The Aurucanian Indians call them devil-flowers because they appear to bloom under the ground.

HERMIONE: Well, I'm sure the Aurucanian Indians will be very interested if you succeed in growing these ridiculous flowers under the cellar floor. Whom else it will interest, I can't imagine. (ABRUPTLY) What's that terrible smell?

HERBERT: That's the leaf-mold -- chemically identical with the earth-blanket they grow under in the wild state. I suppose I should line the pit with concrete so as to prevent seepage from this foreign soil, but I don't suppose there will be much time for it now. And I do want to get these started before we close the house.

HERMIONE: There certainly will not be time for it. Do you realize that we're sailing for America a week from today and you've made no arrangements whatever? Unless you call digging a hole in the cellar making arrangements. I certainly don't. Devil's garden, indeed. Sometimes I think you're going soft in the head, Herbert.

HERBERT: I suppose it's inconsiderate of me. You see, I've been wanting to try this experiment for a long time. But what with my lectures and seminars at the University, there never seemed to be time...

HERMIONE: Well, there certainly isn't any time for it now. I suppose you've forgotten I made an appointment for you at the barber's this afternoon?

HERBERT: Must I shave off my beard, Hermione?

HERMIONE: I thought we'd been all through that. Of course you must. They don't wear beards in America. Go get your jacket on and do as I tell you.

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione.

HERMIONE: And don't forget to take your umbrella. It looks like rain.

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione.

HERMIONE: Oh, don't look so put upon, Herbert. SOMEONE has to plan things in this house, or you'd never even get to the University in time for your lectures, much less make arrangements for a trip to America.

HERBERT: I know. But what about my specimens?

HERMIONE: There'll be plenty of time to plant your precious Devil's Garden when we get home from America. We're not going to be gone forever, you know. We'll be back here for Christmas.

HERBERT: Yes, of course. Back for Christmas I'd forgotten.

HERMIONE: Well, try to remember it. And if you can't do that, just do as I tell you. I've been making the plans in this house for twenty years, and if there's any digging to be done, I'll manage that as well! You understand, Herbert?

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione.

HERMIONE: Good. You have just twenty minutes to clean up this mess down here and keep your appointment at the barber's ~ when you've finished there, I want you to come straight home.

HERBERT: I wanted to stop at Miss Markham's and pick up some books I ordered.

HERMIONE: Well, all right. But don't loiter there the whole afternoon, growling over those old books the way you usually do. Now hurry and clear up this rubbish. Get rid of that smelly stuff. (FADE) And no more digging, mind you!

HERBERT: (VENOMOUSLY) Yes, Hermione.

ORCHESTRA: (MENACING AND UNDER FOR)

HERBERT: (NARRATING) Yes, Hermione. How many years has it been since I've been saying that? Ten years? Fifteen? Twenty? Clear up the rubbish, Yes, Hermione. Don't forget your umbrella. Yes, Hermione. Do this, Do that. Yes, Hermione. Yes, yes! How much longer can I stand this?

ORCHESTRA: (UP AND OUT FOR)

SOUND: DOOR OPENS - SHOP BELL TINKLES

MARION: Good evening, sir.

HERBERT: Good evening, Miss Markham.

MARION: Why -- It is Professor Carpenter, isn't it?

HERBERT: (PLEASED AT HER REACTION) You like me better this way?

MARION: You look ever so much younger without the beard. Twenty years at least.

HERBERT: (MUSING) Twenty years...

MARION: You'll be glad to know those books you ordered have finally arrived.

HERBERT: Books?

MARION: "Phytotomy of Phalloid Gametophytes" and "Coniferous Shrubs of North America." Those are the ones you ordered, aren't they?

HERBERT: Yes. Thank you. Your're very kind, Miss Markham.

MARION: Why kind, Professor Carpenter?

HERBERT: Not many young ladies in bookshops would go out of their way to look up rare books for an old professor of Botany.

MARION: Why, you're not old, Professor Carpenter. Really you look...(BREAKS OFF) And besides, I adore botany. It's my particular hobby.

HERBERT: Oh, really? -- You never told me that before, Miss Markham.

MARION: I was afraid to. You were so imposing with the beard and all.

HERBERT: You might be interested in some specimen of Alpine Polianthes that were just sent to me by a friend in Switzerland.

MARION: Switzerland. I used to go there always for my holidays before the war.

HERBERT: You love Switzerland?

MARION: Every pat of it. The lakes, the mountains, the beautiful spring flowers. Especially the flowers.

HERBERT: It seems we have quite a lot in common, Miss Markham. I'm sorry we haven't talked before.

MARION: I am, too. It was all the fault of the beard, it seems -- (LAUGHING)

HERBERT: Miss Markham, forgive me if this sounds foolish. But I feel that shaving off my beard is the most important thing I've done for ... for twenty years...

MARION: Oh, it is. I'm sure it is. I'm ashamed that I've been so distant with you all this time. Oh, there were times when I AMOST spoke up. Times when you came in here, tired after a day with your students at me University. You seemed so alone the way I'm alone in the world. I'd like to have asked you to stay awhile and talk with me. But some way or other I wound up giving you your change and letting you go on your way...

HERBERT: You say...you're all alone in the world?

MARION: Since my father died.

HERBERT: Did you never think of marrying?

MARION: My father was a very remarkable man. I never found anyone who seemed to measure up to what he led me to expect of men. Then the war came...

HERBERT: Miss Markham.

MARION: It's been so long since anyone called me by my firstname I'd like YOU to, if you want to. It's Marion...

HERBERT: (SAVORING THE WORD) Marion....

MARION: And yours?

HERBERT: Herbert

MARION: How long have you been alone, Herbert?,

HERBERT: Alone?

MARION: I knew you were a widower, of course, the first time I saw you....

HERBERT: A...widower....

MARION: (GOING ON) I can always tell. There's a certain sadness in a man's eyes...a sweet sadness, I think....when he has been married and then...

HERBERT: A widower -- I never thought of it in quite that way...

MARION: Perhaps I, shouldn't be talking like this. But I've often wondered what she must have been like - your wife, I mean.

HERBERT: Hermione? Not an easy woman to forget. Very strong. Always managing things. The house, my wardrobe, my friends...When we dined at a restaurant she even ordered my food. She was always managing things. You might say -- she managed herself to death!

MUSIC: (MUSIC PUNCTUATE)

MARION: Poor woman. She must have loved you very much. But she needn't have put herself out so. It's plain to see YOU don't need things managed for you. You need companionship, I think, someone sympathetic with your work -- but the last thing on earth you need is a manager.

HERBERT: How well you put it. The last thing on earth.

MUSIC: (BRIDGE)

HERBERT: (NARRATING) That's the first time I thought of it, of course. And suddenly a whole new world opened up before my eyes. Marion - and America - and no more of Hermione's planning my life for me. By the time I got home my mind was working overtime...

HERBERT: (Whistles "Jingle Bells" as:)

SOUND: KEY IN LOCK, DOOR OPENS, CLOSES

HERMIONE: (COMING IN) Well, at last! You certainly took long enough about it. What are you looking so pleased about?

HERBERT: I don't know. Getting rid of the beard, perhaps. I feel twenty years younger.

HERMIONE: You look even smaller. Your face looks triangular or something. I'd forgotten your chin was so weak. But never mind. You can grow it back soon enough - after Christmas. Where are you going?

HERBERT: Down in the cellar. I just bought this electric lantern, and I thought I'd put it away down there.

HERMIONE: Now what ever possessed you to buy a thing like that?

HERBERT: I don't know. I rather liked this lantern. It might come in handy. Who knows?

HERMIONE: Now Herbert, don't start digging down there again. I've a hundred things to do, putting the house in order before we leave. I want you to carry these boxes upstairs for me.

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione.

HERMIONE: And - if you're going down to the cellar, take this along and stuff it into the furnace.

HERBERT: But this is my old bathrobe. I may need it.

HERMIONE: Nonsense, I've bought you a new one. Get rid of it. And don't start puttering down there, with that Devil's Garden, or whatever you call it.

HERBERT: I'm through digging, my dear. I think the pit is quite deep enough now...for my "Devil's Garden."

MUSIC: (BRIDGE)

HERBERT: (NARRATING) It would all have to be carefully planned, of course. Just as carefully planned as Hermione was planning the trip to America. We both went about our arrangements as the days passed. I spent all the time I could with Marion, and finally, she consented. And then it was the last day, the big day, the day we were to sail for America...

SOUND: JIGGLING HOOK OF TELEPHONE

HERMIONE: Operator. Operator -- are you there? I'm still waiting on

that call to Salisbury. Oh? Well, put them on, quickly..
Hello? Is this Paul Holt and Sons? It's Mrs. Herbert
Carpenter. Did you receive my letter? Good. Now, remember,
we'll be back for Christmas, and I want the job done without
fail. What's that? No, I'm sure he doesn't suspect anything.
Send the bill to me in New York as I instructed you,
addressed in my name, of course. Yes, I've already put them
in the mail. You'll get them tomorrow. Thank you. Thank you
so much.

SOUND: PHONE HUNG UP

HERMIONE: Oh, here you are, Herbert. Where have you been?

HERBERT: Back stairs. I dismissed the servants~

HERMIONE: Dismissed the servants? But I've asked some friends of mine
in to a farewell luncheon. Go and tell them it's a mistake.

HERBERT: I'm afraid it is too late now. They've packed and gone.

HERMIONE: You HAVE messed things up properly. How many times have I
told you to leave things to me? I make the plans around
here.

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione.

HERMIONE: You'll have to do better than this when I plan the trip
home, or we'll never in the world be back for Christmas.

HERBERT: Back for Christmas. Back for Christmas. Must you keep saying
that?

HERMIONE: Why not? We ARE coming back for Christmas. Aren't we?

HERBERT: Supposing I were offered a professorship in one of those
wealthy American Universities?

HERMIONE: Nonsense. Americans care nothing for botany.

HERBERT: Luther Burbank was an American.

HERMIONE: That's different. What have you ever done except muck around
in the dirt with a lot of roots and tubers?

HERBERT: They asked me to lecture. That means something.

HERMIONE: Of course they asked you to lecture. Americans will pay to
hear any foreigner deliver a lecture - once. Now there's no
use getting yourself in a state about this, Herbert. No
doubt this extra money will come in handy when we arrive ---

HERBERT & HERMIONE: (SIMULTANEOUSLY) Back for Christmas.

HERMIONE: Precisely. And it's no good your making a joke of it. Heaven knows where you'd be today if I hadn't got a sense of time.

HERBERT: Yes, my dear Hermione.

HERMIONE: And as you've been so foolish as to dismiss the servants YOU may empty the ashtrays and straighten up this room while we're waiting for the guests to arrive. I'm going upstairs to change. (FADE) Call me when they get here.

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione.

MUSIC: PUNCTUATE. CONTINUES UNTIL NEXT PUNCTUATE

HERBERT: (ALONE) Yes, Hermione. Yes, Hermione. For twenty years! Hermione - always so right. Thought of everything. Well, not quite everything. (SOUND OF RUNNING WATER WELL OFF STAGE) There! Running her bath now. Safe to call Marlon. If Marion were to change her mind now...after all, we haven't known each other very long for this sort of thing. If she had any idea that I was not a widower -- YET...

MUSIC: PUNCTUATE.

HERBERT: (PHONE LIFTED FROM CRADLE)(SOUND OF DIALING) Marion. It's Herbert, my darling. Nothing's wrong. My plans - are the same, unless YOU'VE changed. No? We'll meet in New York and be married there. I'll explain why, later. You'll have to trust me. Yes. Yes, my darling.

HERMIONE: (OFF) Herbert!

HERBERT: I'm sorry I can't talk any longer. Yes, I'll meet you in New York - without fail. Until then, my darling.

SOUND: PHONE HUNG UP, QUIETLY

HERMIONE: (COMING ON) Herbert! Were you talking on the phone, just now?

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione.

HERMIONE: Whoever was it?

HERBERT: Er -- Freddy -- Freddy Sinclair.

HERMIONE: Didn't I hear you say something about meeting somebody in New York?

HERBERT: Why, yes. Old Freddy said he might possibly get over there before we leave. And I said of course we'd meet him there, if he did decide to go.

HERMIONE: That seems very peculiar.. But then all of your friends are peculiar.

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione.

HERMIONE: And just look at your jacket. Have you been digging in that cellar again?

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione

HERMIONE: Well, there's no need for it. You can't possibly get that Devil's Garden thing finished. Go and change your clothes before the guests arrive.

HERBERT: Yes, Her--

HERMIONE: Never mind. I see somebody coming up the walk now.. Go and let them in.

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione

HERMIONE: Herbert?

HERBERT: Yes, my dear?

HERMIONE: Look out the window. There's Professor and Mrs. Goodenough. But who's that with them?

HERBERT: Why, it's -

HERMIONE: Precisely. Freddy Sinclair. Peculiar you should have been talking to him on the phone not three minutes ago and now here he is.

HERBERT: Yes, isn't it? But then, as you say, Hermione, all of my friends are peculiar.

HERMIONE: Not half so peculiar as you. Digging in the cellar an hour before we leave for America... just look at yourself! And now that I think of it --

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione?

SOUND: DOORBELL RINGING

HERMIONE: Oh, never mind~ Go and let them in.

HERBERT: You were going to ask me something, Hermione, -- about the hole I lm digging in the cellar.

HERMIONE: Oh, good heavens, stop rolling your eyes about that way. One would think you were digging a grave down there instead of a storage bin,

HERBERT: Yes, Hermione.

HERMIONE: What's that?

SOUND: DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN

HERBERT: I SAID YES, HERMIONE.

HERMIONE: Oh, bother. Open the door. And stop saying "Yes, Hermione."

MUSIC: (SNEAK)

HERBERT: I think, my dear, I've said it for the last time.

MUSIC: COMES UP BIG, SWELLS OUT, DOWN TO BACKGROUND

NARR: For Suspense, Auto-Lite is bringing you Mr. Herbert Marshall in radio's outstanding Theatre of Thrills - SUSPENSE!

MUSIC: (THREE CHORDS AND OUT)

WILCOX: Well, Hap, what kind of presents are you giving your car this Christmas?

HAP: My car? Now be sensible, Harlow.

WILCOX: I am being sensible, Hap, because the most sensible thing every car owner can do is treat his car to Auto-Lite preventive service and Auto-Lite factory parts now - right now, like Santa does...For with an Auto-Lite checkup now, your car won't let you down later.

HAP: Here we go!

WILCOX: Auto-Lite parts are original factory parts on many makes of our finest cars -- the same as those put in the car the day it was made. Resistor spark plugs, Sta-ful batteries, generators, distributors, starting motors, coils, wire and cable - your car uses them all, Auto-Lite makes 'em all. You know, Auto-Lite parts and your Auto-Lite equipped car go together, like Damon and Pythias, like Duncan and Phyfe, like Chip and Dale - what's one without the other? So don't accept parts that are supposed to be as good. Get Auto-Lite parts for Auto-Lite parts are built for your car, Santa's car, everybody's car.

HAP: Harlow, you're wonderful! Why you've got Santa and everybody switching to Auto-Lite.

WILCOX: So, friends, follow the footsteps of Dasher, Dancer, Donder, and Blitzen, and whip on down to your nearest Auto-Lite Service Station or the dealer who sells your make of car and ask for original factory parts and service.

HAP: Okay, Harlow. Right now, here's SUSPENSE.

NARR: And now, Auto-Lite brings back to our Hollywood Sound Stage, Mr. Herbert Marshall starring in a gripping tale well calculated to keep you in

MUSIC: (CHORD)

NARR: SUSPENSE!

MUSIC: (RESOLVE INTO SECOND OVERTURE)

HERBERT: Back for Christmas... Hermione was so positive we would be back for Christmas. That last afternoon, pouring tea for a few friends who had come in to say last-minute farewells, she kept reiterating it.

MRS.HEWITT: Now, mind you, Hermione, don't let those Americans lure your husband with one of their fat university jobs. We absolutely must have you with us for Christmas.

HERMIONE: He will be back. I promise you.

HERBERT: It's not absolutely certain, of course...

HERMIONE: Herbert! What do you mean it's not certain? Of course it's certain.

SINCLAIR: After all, Herbert old boy, you've contracted to lecture for only three months.

HERBERT: Quite right. But then, of course, anything may happen.

HERMIONE: Herbert adores being unpredictable. Now what other man would decide the day, the very day, mind you, before leaving for America to dig a great hole in the floor of the cellar?

MRS.HEWITT: In the cellar?

HERMIONE: Yes He's going to put some unclassified -- wild orchids down there. A "Devil's Garden" if you please. Sounds mysterious! That's Herbert, though. It's really quite simple, once you find out what he's up to. Now take that telephone call he put through to you a few minutes before you arrived, Freddy....

SINCLAIR: To ME?

HERMIONE: Of course.. Herbert wanted to surprise me about your plan to meet us in New York next month. Wasn't that why he called? To ask you not to mention it?

SINCLAIR: But my dear Hermione, Herbert couldn't possibly have telephoned me within the past hour.. I've been walking in the park since three.

HERMIONE: He didn't telephone you?

SINCLAIR: How could he? And as for my going to America-

HERBERT: Now, come, come, Freddy, you may as well own up. Hermione has found me out again.

SINCLAIR: But, Herbert, old chap, I really don't -

HERMIONE: You see what a poor liar Herbert makes? He's as red as a beet root!

MRS.HEWITT: Aren't you ashamed of yourself, Professor! Stringing poor Hermione along like that. And as for you, Freddy, I'm furious you said nothing to US about going to America.

SINCLAIR: But look here, old girl. I've been trying to tell everyone here that--

HERMIONE: Oh, stuff and nonsense, the game's gone on long enough. Besides, we must start getting ready. It was marvelous of all of you to come in to say goodbye. And don't worry about Herbert's little jokes. I will bring him back for Christmas. You may rely on it!

MUSIC: (IN AND BACKS NARRATION)

HERBERT: They all believed her. For years she had been promising me for dinner parties, garden parties, committees; and the promises had always been kept. This time they wouldn't be. I'd seen to that. The servants were gone for good.. The farewells all said. I had timed to the minute how long it would take to fill in the hole in the cellar -- my "Devil's Garden." Upstairs in the bedroom, I undressed, folded my clothes over a chair, and put on my old bathrobe. Then I (SOUND: OF DOOR OPENING) opened the door into Hermione's room.

HERBERT: (IN SCENE) Hermione! Have you a moment to spare?

HERMIONE: (OFF) Of course, dear, I'm just finished.

HERMIONE: Then come in here for a moment. There's something rather extraordinary here.

HERMIONE: (COMING ON) Good heavens, Herbert! What are you lounging about in that filthy old bathrobe for? I told you to put it into the furnace.

HERBERT: I'll do it today. Yes, I really will. I promise.

HERMIONE: Well, high time. Now what is it you want to show me?

HERBERT: In the bathroom here. (REGISTER FOOTSTEPS) Just look. Who in the world do you suppose dropped a gold chain down the bathtub drain?

HERMIONE: Nobody has, of course. Nobody wears such a thing.

HERBERT: Then what's it doing there?

HERMIONE: I don't see anything.

HERBERT: Here. I'll hold this flashlight for you. If you lean right over, you can see it shining, deep down.

HERMIONE: Such a lot of nonsense, just as we're -- I don't see it, Herbert.

HERBERT: Go on looking, Hermione. In just a moment--

HERMIONE: Herbert, I absolutely refuse to -- Herbert, what are you doing? Take your hands off my neck.

HERBERT: I will, Hermione, just as soon as I've finished the arrangements for my trip to America.

HERMIONE: What are you talking about?

HERBERT: You thought you were the only one who could plan things, didn't you, Hermione. Well, I've been making some plans of my own this past week. In exactly 1 minute and 45 seconds you'll be dead, Hermione. You see, I've planned it very accurately.

HERMIONE: (CLENCHED TEETH) You'll never get away with it.

HERBERT: I thought you'd say that, Hermione. But I will get away with it. You won't mind the smell of the leaf-mold down in the cellar when I take you down there today. Yes, that's where you're going, Hermione. Into my "devil's garden" that annoyed you so much. The solid is full of clay; it won't settle much. In a month or so, it won't even look dug up.

HERMIONE: My friends - the all expect me back for Christmas. If they

don't here from me, they'll wonder. And if I don't come back, they'll start asking questions.

HERBERT: No they won't. Because you'll write them letters, Hermione, on the typewriter as you always do. They'll be signed "H", in that neat cryptic way you always sign you notes to your friends.

HERMIONE: Let me up now....

HERBERT: No.

HERMIONE: It won't work, Herbert. You were never any good at planning things...

HERBERT: Hah, but I've changed. I've learned from watching you all these years.

HERMIONE: The lecture people in America. They'll be expecting you to be travelling with your wife.

HERBERT: I WILL be travelling with my wife - but not my present wife, Hermione. Fortunately, they've never met you. I'll write a few letters home for you. Then fewer, and fewer. Write letters signed with my own name -- always expecting to get back, never quite able to. Keep the house one year, then another, then another; they'll get used to it. I might even come back alone in a year or two and clear it up properly. Say you died in America. Nobody will ever suspect that you are lying under the floor of the cellar in this very house!

HERMIONE: Herbert! It won't work, I tell you. That pit you dug in the cellar--

HERBERT: I can assure you, my dear Hermione, it will serve its purpose well.

HERMIONE: Herbert!

HERBERT: Sorry, my dear. I've got to get this done on schedule. You have just five seconds to say your prayers...

HERMIONE: Herbert -- you must listen -- the cellar --it.. don't do it, Herbert! Herbert! (SCREAMS)

MUSIC: (SOCK IN, SWELLS, TO BACKGROUND)

HERBERT: The water--cut off at the main as I knew she would order it. She was so thorough. So was I -- a clean blow at the base of the skull -- nothing to wash up. The electric current shut off at one o'clock, just as she ordered it. She thought of everything. So did I. My nice new electric lantern -- plenty

of light to work by in the cellar. The old bathrobe she wanted me to throw away came in handy now, if there should be any chance bloodstain. (SOUND: DIGGING) Then in the fire with it afterwards -- the last evidence of my "devil's garden". It was going well, still an hour till I had to leave for the boat, the hole was almost filled...

SOUND: (RINGING OF DOORBELL OFF..DIGGING STOPS ABRUPTLY)

HERBERT: (TO HIMSELF) (HYSTERICALLY) Oh, no! Not now! Go away, whoever you are! Go away!

SOUND: (BELL AGAIN)

HERBERT: Did I leave the front door unlocked? If it's the Wallingfords -- no, no! Go away! Go away!

SOUND: (DOOR OPENED FAR OFF)

HERBERT: After that, it was easy. Put the finishing touches on the "devil's garden," dress fast, get out of the house before six-thirty, take the boat-train to Southhampton and board the ship for America, all according to plan. Hermione's plan...

ORCHESTRA: (UP AND GOES OUT ON)

SOUND: (SHIP'S WHISTLE)

HERBERT: Oh, Steward.

STEWARD: Yes, sir?

HERBERT: My wife is indisposed. She'll be taking her meals in our stateroom.

STEWARD: For the whole voyage?

HERBERT: Yes, for the whole voyage.

MUSIC: (UP AND DOWN)

STEWARD: I trust your wife is feeling better this morning, Professor Carpenter.

HERBERT: A little. Not yet well enough to leave her cabin.

STEWARD: I'm sorry. By the way, here's a copy of the radiogram you sent for your wife last evening.

HERBERT: Oh, thank you. I'll just check it over -- But look here -- (PAUSE) (MUSIC PUNCTUATE) --

STEWARD: What is it? Did the typist make a mistake?

HERBERT: No. No, nothing important. She can correct it later.

MUSIC: (UP, AND THEN TO BACKGROUND)

HERBERT: For a moment I had a feeling that Hermione had been leaning over my shoulder again, correcting what I had written, as she always did. I had written a radiogram to Professor Goodenough and his wife: "Haven't been out of my cabin the whole beastly trip. Herbert well. Doubt will be back for Christmas." The copy read "NO doubt will be back for Christmas." Exactly what Hermione would have written. (PAUSE) Well, the rest of the voyage was uneventful. And Marion and I met in New York, just as we had planned (RUEFULLY) Just...as we had planned.

MUSIC: (BRIDGES UP AND OUT...DOWN)

SOUND: (FOOTSTEPS...AND REVOLVING DOOR)

HERBERT: Professor and Mrs. Carpenter. We have reservations, I believe.

CLERK: Oh, yes. We've been expecting you, sir. Boy! Take Professor and Mrs. Carpenter's luggage up to their suite. You know, Mrs. Carpenter, you're quite a surprise. Your letter reserving the rooms was so thorough -- I was expecting an older, more forbidding sort of person, frankly, Ma'am.

MARION: No - as a matter of fact, we are just married....but -- my letter reserving the rooms?

HERBERT: Ah - I wrote the letter, my dear, and signed it Mrs. Carpenter, just as a joke.

MARION: What a cunning old fox you are, Herbert...

HERBERT: Now that I think of it, I am, rather.

CLERK: Oh, I almost forgot. There's a letter for you Mrs. Carpenter.

MARION: That's peculiar. I wonder who on earth? --

HERBERT: Well, we shall find out in good time. Come along, my dear, we're keeping the boy waiting.

MUSIC: (BRIEF BRIDGE)

SOUND: SHOWER RUNNING...HERBERT SINGING IN THE BATH...BATH CUT OFF...HE HUMS...

HERBERT: Ha! Nothing like a cold, brisk shower to put a man to

rights.

MARION: Herbert, this letter.....

HERBERT: Oh yes, the letter...Dry my hair, will you, dear?

MARION: It seems to be a bill of some sort...from a building contractor in Salisbury.

HERBERT: (SENSUOUSLY) Mmmmmm.

MARION: Oh bother, dry your own hair.

HERBERT: Thank you, my sweet. Let's see this bill or whatever it is.

MARION: It's very puzzling, Herbert -- you were a widower, weren't you? I mean -- Hermione isn't still alive?

HERBERT: Good heavens, no! Let's have that. Mmm. "Dear Madam;" (that's a good one!) "This is to acknowledge your order, together with the keys to your house in Launceton Place, Our men (BEGINNING TO BUILD IT) had no difficulty in finding the place where your husband had begun the excavation in the cellar, but apparently he changed his mind at the last moment and filled it in again.

MARION: (FRIGHTENED BY HIS FACE) What is it, Herbert?

HERBERT: Our men will begin digging tomorrow and you may rest assured that it will be a professional job, and will be completed in ample time for your surprise Christmas present to your husband. (MKUSIC: SNEAKS UNDER BUILDING WITH HIM) We are happy to be conspirators with you in this thoughtful gesture and hope that Professor Carpenter will be pleased at the results of our work that he so quaintly calls his "Devil's Garden." Very truly yours, Paul Holt and Sons, Contractors.

MUSIC: PUNCTUATES ON SEMI-CLIMAX

MARION: What does it mean, Herbert?

HERBERT: It means that Hermione was right, I will be back for Christmas... (BEGIN TO SHOUT) Back for Christmas.... Back for Christmas..... Back for Christmas... Back for Christmas!

MUSIC: (SWALLOWS HIM UP...UP TO CURTAIN)

NARR: Thank you, Herbert Marshall, for a splendid performance. Mr. Marshall will be back in just a moment.

HAP: (SINGING) Jingle Bells,
Jingle Bells,
Jingle through the snow.
Your car's all hep
It's full of pep
With Auto-Lite, you know!

WILCOX: Right! And by Cornelius, electrical problems won't keep your car down when you stop at the shop that features Auto-Lite parts and service. Sure as Kris Kringle means Christmas, Auto-Lite original factory parts and service top the town....So, friends, stop in tomorrow at your friendly Auto-Lite service station or the dealer who sells your make of care and ask for original factory parts and service.

OPERATOR: (ON FILTER) Auto-Lite -- You'll find Auto-Lite Service Stations listed in your classified telephone directory under Automotive Electrical Equipment. And remember, your Auto-Light ignition system is the life-line of your car.

WILCOX: Yes, friends, and remember, too....

MUSIC: PUNCTUATION

ANNCR: AUTO-LITE means Spark Plugs!

VOICE: Ignition engineered Resistor Spark Plugs!

MUSIC: PUNCTUATION

ANNCR: AUTO-LITE means Batteries!

VOICE: Sta-ful Batteries!

MUSIC: PUNCTUATION

ANNCR: AUTO_LITE means Ignition Systems!

VOICE: The life-line of your car!

MUSIC: ORCHESTRA SWEEPS TO TAG

NARR: An now, here again is Mr. Herbert Marshall.

MARSHALL: It has been my pleasure to appear tonight on Suspense -- and it is my pleasure to extend to all of you -- for Auto-Lite, Tony Leader and his Suspense cast and crew and myself --

best wishes for the Holiday Season. Next week on radio's outstanding theatre of thrills -- you will hear William Bendix in _____ another gripping study in --

MUSIC: (CHORD)

NARR: SUSPENSE!

MUSIC: (FADES FOR)

ANNCR: Herbert Marshall will soon be seen with Margaret O'Brien in the Metro-Goldwyn Meyer production of "The Secret Garden". Tonight's Suspense play was dramatized by Robert Tallman from a story by John Collier -- music was composed by Lucien Moroawek and conducted by Lud Gluskin. Then entire production was under the direction of Anton M. Leader. In the coming weeks, SUSPENSE will present such stars as Ethyl Barrymore, Dana Andrews, Robert Montgomery, Danny Kay and many others. Make it a point to listen each Thursday to SUSPENSE -- radio's outstanding theatre of thrills. And next Thursday, same time, hear William Bendix in _____.

MUSIC: (TO FILL)

SOUND: TELEPHONE RINGS

OPERATOR: (ON FILTER) This is the Auto-Lite SUSPENSE show. While we in America are enjoying an abundant Christmas, millions of people in Europe are still hungry. Your \$10 sent to CARE, C-A-R-E will go a long way towards putting some more unfortunate European family back on the road to health, happiness, and freedom. Goodnight...Merry Christmas from Auto-Lite! THIS IS CBS...THE COLUMBIA BROADCASTINZG SYSTEM!