

## Audition Notice

### Dangerous Corner by J B Priestley

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| <b>Reading</b>          | <b>Tuesday 13 November, 8pm, in the Studio</b>   |
| <b>Auditions</b>        | <b>Sunday 2 December, 2pm, in the Theatre</b>  |
| <b>Rehearsals start</b> | <b>Wednesday 27 February 2019 in the Studio</b>  |
| <b>Production dates</b> | <b>25 April – 4 May 19 (inc. matinee at 2.30 on 4 May)</b>   |
| <b>Director</b>         | <b>Peter Shore <a href="mailto:petershore01@gmail.com">petershore01@gmail.com</a> 07712 315406</b> |
| <b>PA</b>               | <b>Cas Frost <a href="mailto:casfrost@tiscali.co.uk">casfrost@tiscali.co.uk</a> 0208 763 9343</b>  |

*Contact Cas for audition scripts. If you would like more detail about the parts or cannot make the reading or audition dates but would like to be considered, do contact Peter.*

### **Synopsis**

At their stylish country retreat somewhere in the Home Counties, Freda and Robert Caplan host a dinner party for their colleagues and friends, all executives in a transatlantic publishing company. Young, beautiful and successful they have the world at their feet. Then a cigarette box and an ill-considered remark spark off a relentless series of revelations and other, more dangerous, secrets are painfully exposed. As the truth spills out about the suicide of Robert's clever, reckless brother, Martin, and the group's perfect lives begin to crumble, the cost of professional and social success becomes frighteningly plain.

Written and set in the early 1930s, *Dangerous Corner* is Priestley's first play. He uses what he calls the device of "splitting time into two", to show also what *might* have happened, as an alternative ending, an idea that featured in several of his later and more well known plays.

Each of the characters has their secrets – both about themselves and about others – and, as the story unfolds, so the truth is stripped from each character, layer by layer. It is essentially a play about how we routinely deceive both ourselves and those we care for and the danger that can come from being wholly truthful. *Dangerous Corner* therefore offers great potential for actors to develop the characters involved in the weave of deception and exposure, moving from complacent "drawing room" chit-chat to anger, betrayal, outrage and defiance.

### **Players, Playing Ages & Audition Pieces**

**Freda Caplan (late 20s to early 30s)** "Smart and self-possessed, superficially rather hard, but capable of showing signs of deep emotion". Perceptive. Sees through the secrets of others. Does not truly care for Robert. [From P.37 "I suspect not, Robert" to P.38 "And there are cross-roads and corners ahead"]

**Robert Caplan (30-35).** Husband of Freda, brother of the dead Martin. "Able to suggest honest bewilderment without seeming too stupid". Well meaning but naïve. It is his stubborn search after the truth behind his brother's death that leads to the unstoppable unravelling. [From P.82 "I asked for it" to P.84 "There can't be a tomorrow"].

**Betty Whitehouse (early 20s).** "Petulant in lighter scenes and shrill and hysterical in the emotional passages". Disguises the unhappiness of her sham marriage with Gordon until her dramatic revelations. [From top of P.75 to P.77 "...somebody who wasn't there, simply dead"].

**Gordon Whitehouse (24-25).** Husband of Betty and Freda's younger brother. "An indolent, graceful manner in lighter scenes but with frequent suggestions of underlying hysteria". Reveals a relationship with Martin that shocks his companions. [From P.49 "Why should I lie about it?" to bottom of P.50, plus Gordon's speech at top of P.52]

*Note: the accents, demeanour and behaviour of the Caplans and the Whitehouses should reflect their easy, privileged upbringing, education and social standing.*

**Olwen Peel (late 20s to early 30s).** "Has a pleasant open manner but is just a trifle aloof". An independent and self-confident career woman who harbours an unrequited love. Well educated accent. [From P.67 "It's horrible to talk about" to P.69 "I've gone through that over and over again"]

**Charles Stanton (about 40, but could be older).** "Has a manner that is rather harsh and authoritative". Although a director of the company along with Robert and Gordon, he has, unlike them, worked his way up from the bottom. His accent (a trace of Northern, perhaps) and his approach to life reflect this. He is ruthless in acting in his own interests. [From P.41 "Don't be such a hysterical young fool" to bottom of P.43]

**Miss Mockridge (45-50, but could be older or younger).** "Sophisticated, an authoritative manner and a speculative eye". An author and client of the publishing company. Ability to speak in a slight American accent ("educated New England") would be good but not essential. This is a smaller part and she is an observer of the smart set rather than a participant, appearing only at the beginning and end of the play. [From top of P.90 to bottom of P.92]