

The Gold Locket by Ana Holmes

Scene 1 -

On stage, on the Right hand side - 2 tombstones, (Only one visible to audience). Plus other tombstones in background, with no visible writing to the audience.

LIGHTS GO ON RIGHT HAND SIDE OF STAGE.

A young girl and her sister approach tombstone 1,

Cindy *Child like, “Jack and Jill went up the hill, to put some flowers in water. TWITCH. Change character to Adult, ”Poor Grandma Fanny, I miss her so much!” sniff’s*

Sally **“Me too. At least she is in a better place, according to everyone else.” Pause, “Grave yards are so morbid and they give me the creeps.”**

Cindy **“I also feel creepy” Shivers down her spine, she looks around, “Poor Grandma, she died so suddenly, it was almost like she died of a broken heart.” Pause “She was always so full of fun, playing games with us as we grew up, singing lullabies to put us to sleep and....”**

Sally **“Opinionated about all my boy friends!” moves forward.**

Cindy **“Well, you do bring home a strange bunch!”**

Cindy bends down to put flowers in the vase on the grave, when she notices a gold locket on the grave.

Cindy **“Look, a gold locket,” she picks it up.**

Sally **“I wonder who that belongs to?” She looks around the graveyard.**

Cindy open’s the Locket.

Cindy **“It’s Grandma Fanny’s photo of when she was a young girl, I recognize that photo, we have the same one on the mantel piece.”**

Sally **“Let me see. Hmmm, it’s definitely Grandma Fanny but who is the guy,” Pause, “It’s definitely not Grandpa Cecil?”**

Cindy **“It must be Grandpa Cecil. Hum... He was very handsome in his youth.” Giggles**

Sally **“No, that’s definitely not him.”**

Cindy **“How can you be so sure?”**

Sally **“Cause Grandpa has a permanent frown on his forehead and he’s mean!” pause, “Come, bring the locket and lets go look at the family photos in the attic. I wonder if it’s Grandma Fanny’s lost brother.”**

Cindy **“Grandma’s lost brother?”**

Sally **“Yes, the one that died in the war. They never recovered his body.”**

Cindy **“Oh!”** *Pause, Cindy Points to the grave, “I wonder how the locket got there? Come let’s go show Mom.” Moves around to leave.*

Sally **“No, let’s first go to the Attic, before we show it to anyone.”** *Grabs her arm pulling her back.*

Cindy **“I love a good mystery! Don’t you?”** *excited*

Sally **“Yes, nothing like the unknown.”**

Cindy Child like, **“Imagine Grandma had a secret knight in shining armour. And he came riding on a white horse, ready to rescue her, away from the beast that kept her a prisoner…”** *Moves forward pretending she has a sword in her hand.*

Sally *Laughing* **“How can you say that about Grandpa?”**

Cindy **“Because he’s scary.”** *Giggles.*

Sally **“Come, let’s go investigate.”** *Sally and Cindy start walking off stage. SLOWLY*

Cindy TWITCH. *Singing the nursery rhyme, “Jack bents down to look around, and Jill took the locket to look it over.”*

LIGHTS OFF BY TOMBSTONES AND ON CENTER STAGE

Scene 2

Kitchen – Helen walks in with feather dust in hand and goes to chops carrots and Grandfather Cecil enters to read his newspaper at a table.

Cecil **“Helen…”**

Helen *Helen smiles sweetly* **“Hello father, how are you feeling?”** *ignored by Cecil*
Cecil sits down at the table.

Helen **“It’s comforting to know that mother went peacefully in her sleep, here at home. No hospital beds, drips stuck all over her thin arms, and Doctor’s giving us false hope for days on end.”** *Pause, “Are you feeling okay?”*

Cecil **“I’m fine Helen,”** *rolls his eyes under his breath* **“Just trying to get some intellectual stimulation from reading the newspaper,”** *Turning the paper to hint that something may be inside of it. Speaks to the audience “in peace and quiet…”*

Helen *Helen setting up a tray for tea.* **“I notice you are sad! Maybe we can go on holiday for a week to the coast. The kids will be on holiday soon and I can arrange leave from work. I know it’s a busy time, but Jenny owes me for the last time she**

went on holiday. I had to put in all those extra hours doing 2 people's work.”
Pause “Really father, how are you holding out?”

Cecil “I’m okay, Helen.”

Mutters under his breath to the audience “Yack, yack yack.”

Helen *Helen stirs bowl.* “Did you like the tombstone I brought for Mother? Mr. Jones gave it to me at a very special price as I told him you were paying, he’s a good friend isn’t he? And he assured me it was the nicest one he had, we wouldn’t want the neighbors to think you were cheap, now would we.”

Cecil “Yes, Helen.”

Says to the Audience “Spending all my money” *turns to Helen* “Who cares what the neighbours think.”

Helen “You do father, you do!” *Pause* “You can talk to me about mother you know, I don’t mind.”

Cecil *Says to Audience* “I do”. *Turns to Helen* “I would prefer not to, if you don’t mind. When are those 2 girls of yours coming in for lunch?”

Helen “They will be here soon.” *Shaking her head, puts pot on the stove.* “You are so stubborn. You would feel a lot better if you spoke about mother, you know, it will help you heal.”

Cecil “Your mother and I had a great life together. Now, can I read my paper in peace while I wait for my lunch?”

Helen “It’s okay to admit that you are lonely, and that you miss her. After all it’s only been two weeks.” *Helen stirs bowl again,* “Do you know, I phoned her the night before and said good night, so I feel like I got closure. At least you also got closure, by kissing her good night... You did kiss her good night, didn’t you? Or were you fighting with her again?”

Cecil *Moment of hesitation* “I am not lonely. You and your brats moved in so quickly, that I didn’t get a chance to catch my breath.” *Sarcastically.*

Helen “Well, you can’t cook or do washing, and it’s only while Simon is abroad on contract.” *Pause putting bowl down,* “You were home that night, weren’t you?”

Cecil “You didn’t give me a chance to make a different plan, now did you?”

Helen “What do it yourself? Ha ha. But I see you’re avoiding the question. Were you home that night?” *suspiciously*

Cecil “No.” *Irritated.*

Helen “No? Why? Where were you?” *Leaning on the counter.*

Cecil *Cecil gets up and walks across the stage,* “It’s none of your business! I don’t need to explain myself to you. And just so you know, your mother was quite a silly

woman, not as bad as your daughter, of cause.“ *Helen is shocked,* “But, she didn’t know much about life and she certainly didn’t know how to make a man happy.”

Helen *Gasps,* “Cindy has a Bipolar disorder, she goes into her own imaginary world in a split second, she is very different to mother.... So what are you talking about?”

Cecil **“In the bedroom Helen, in the bedroom.”**
Cecil has regained control and heads back to the table.

Helen **“I don’t want to hear this.”** *Starts cutting carrots again.*

Cecil **“Of cause you don’t. All you women live with your heads in the ground, like Ostriches, and you don’t know how to satisfy a man!”**
Look at you? Where is your husband? Working overseas... Ha!”

Helen **“Father!”** *Burst into anger,* **“How can you be so cruel, you know it is only for a little while to make some money. He will be home soon”** *Smiles in remembrance of her husband.*

Cecil **“No wonder men have affairs!”**

Helen *Screams,* **“What? Did you have an affair while mom was alive?”**

Cecil *Smiling* **“No, Helen.”**

Helen *Walks to Cecil with a knife in hand,* **“You are lying.”** *She accuses, angrier.*
“Oh my gosh! You were with someone, the night Mom died!”

Cecil *Big smile*

Helen **“You bastard! How could you?”** *shakes her head,* **“This is shocking...shocking”**

Cecil **“Watch your language Helen,”** *Pause* **“it’s not like a man could have lived with one naive woman. For all of one’s married life. You women really don’t know how to make a man content, Look at you! Your husband couldn’t wait to go work overseas.”**

Helen *Furiously sticks the knife into a breadboard on Cecil’s table,* **“Don’t you dare turn the tables. This discussion is not about me, but you and your infidelity. How could you? If you where so unhappy why didn’t you end your marriage to mother? You could both have gone and pursued your own happiness.”**

Cecil **“What do you mean? Your mother was happy!”**

Helen *Put the knife out,* **“No she wasn’t, but she loved the family enough to do anything for us. Even if it meant sticking around in an unhappy marriage.”**

Cecil *Enjoying the situation* **“Rubbish, she just didn’t have the balls to divorce me,”**
wicked grin, **“or have an affair.”**

Helen **“Remember she had morals - unlike you. Why oh why, didn’t you just divorce her?”** *almost in tears.*

Cecil **“I couldn’t.”**

Helen **“Why?”**

Cecil **“Socially it wouldn’t have been the right thing to do, with my job...”**

Helen **“Your job.... Your job? You wouldn’t have had “the Job” in the first place if it hadn’t been for Mother’s family connections. You couldn’t live without the social limelight and Mother’s family name. We have lived in modern days for a long time father, where divorce is acceptable”** *Helen walks back to counter to chop carrots,* **“What you should have done, is discussed it with mother, so that both of you could have gone your own separate ways, rather than live unhappily together.**

Cecil **“That job paid for your education dear, and your mother wasn’t unhappy! If I had left her she would have been lost, as she had no experience in the work environment.”**

Helen *Stop chopping,* **“Yes! That’s because you made sure she became a housewife after you married her. You didn’t let her work, or start her career after she qualified.”**

Cecil **“It was unheard of in those days, to let your wife work. Socially I would have been an outcast. Men worked and provided for their families and the wives stayed home and looked after the children.”**

Helen **“Pregnant and stripped of dignity in the kitchen. UM!! How selfish! And then on top of everything you went and had an affair.”** *Shakes her head in disgust.*

Cecil *smiles wickedly*

Helen **“What!! You had more than 1 affair? How could you do that to mother. She was a softhearted, loving person, unselfish enough to give up everything for you and the family.”**

Mrs. Gill **“Hello, anyone home?”** *Shout from behind the curtains.*

Helen **“Oh, no!”**

Cecil **“Bollocks...what does she want? You'd better behave and not say a word.”**

Helen **“Why, because she’s the town gossiper?”** *Pause,* **“And watch your language or I might just tell her about your...”**

In bursts Mrs. Gill carrying a basket full of fruit from the market talking over the top of Helen.

Mrs. Gill **“There you all are, hum.... something smells nice”** *Sitting in the nearest chair;*

taking her shawl off and putting down her basket.

Cecil **“I hope it’s my lunch”**

Cecil turns his back to both Mrs. Gill and Helen. Helen turns her back on Cecil

Mrs. Gill **“Is something wrong?”***Pause, “I have just walked all the way from the West side of town.” Takes a deep breath. “How are you, love?” Nods at Cecil, “Cecil.”*

Cecil Grunts

Helen *Helen is staring at Cecil in disgust when she says: “Make yourself comfortable, Mrs. ...” stops when she realizes that Mrs. Gill has taken over and is already sitting down. “Can I pour you a cup of tea, or would you like something stronger?”*

Mrs. Gill **“Tea please, love.”** *She is puzzled.*

Helen *Helen pours the tea from the teapot; “I need a drink!” goes to pour a drink.*

Mrs. Gill **“Why love, what’s wrong?”**

Cecil *interrupting “Nothing she is just P.... um P... that monthly thing. Is my lunch nearly ready? Pour me a drink.”*

Helen sneers at Cecil ignoring him and goes to give the tea to Mrs. Gill.

Helen **“So, what’s new in town?”**

Mrs. Gill **“The town has grown and grown. When my poor Albert was alive, he used to drive me every where, but now...”** *Sniffs*

Gives Mrs. Gill her cup of tea and Helen has a drink in her hand.

Helen **“There, there! Have your tea. It will make you feel much better.”**

Cecil walks up to the counter to pour himself a drink.

Mrs. Gill *Recovering miraculously quickly, “Well I was speaking to the butcher... I got some nice steak from him at a low price. You must go see him next time you need meat...”*

Helen **“Yes Mrs. Gill...”** *Helen sits down*

Mrs. Gill **“Are you okay, love? Hm.... Where was I?”**

Cecil *Cecil heads back to his table saying “By the Butcher.” & starts reading the newspaper again.*

Mrs. Gill **“Oh yes, do you know the Johnsons? They live in the West end.”**

Cecil jerks up from his newspaper and then hides behind it again.

Helen **“No, I don’t know them... Father?”** *Looks for a cigarette.*

Cecil *Replies suspiciously, “No”*

Mrs. Gill **“Well, it’s quite a scandal. My Albert use to say that all families have skeletons in their closets....”**

Cecil *Shouts, “What about the Johnson’s?”*

Mrs. Gill **“I thought you didn’t know them?”** *Thinking turns to Helen, “Come to think of it, I am sure I saw your mother that side of town, not so long ago...”*

Cecil *Talking down to Mrs. Gill. “Fanny didn’t know any one on the West side of town, so get on with it, or my Sunday lunch will be late again...”*

Helen and Mrs. Gill stare at him disgusted. Mrs. Gill turns to Helen

Mrs. Gill **“Well! I could have sworn I saw her come out of their gate about a month ago.”**

Cecil **“Impossible, We never went to the west end and Fanny would have told me if she had gone there, she was incapable of keeping secrets.”**