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Party games for 8 to 100 guests

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presents...

“The Love Letter”

Standard version
for 9 females
and 1 male

by Stephanie Chambers

Second edition

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The Guests

It is 1807 and Lady Mazzing has invited eight young ladies to her mansion for high tea, as she would like their advice about the next Ball she is planning to hold. Her one and only son Lord Edward Mazzing will briefly greet the guests, but he will not be joining them for dinner as he has other work commitments. Since his father's death two years ago, the young Lord has taken over the responsibility of managing their large estate. Secretly Lady Mazzing views this social event as an opportunity to acquaint herself with young ladies who may be suitable marriage partners for her son.

Lady Marion Mazzing – I am a dignified lady of very particular tastes. Since my poor dear husband died two years ago from a goose bone stuck in his throat, I have never been able to bring myself to serve goose at the table. I am a handsome woman who knows what it is like to be born into wealth and opulence. I have no close friends and nor do I want any. Since my husband died, my only real interest is my son. *Dress suggestions:* A long dress and gloves.

Lord Edward Mazzing – people say I am a very charming, handsome man, but I do have the reputation of trifling with women's feelings. The fact is some women bore me so terrifically I have to move on to another one. I am very wealthy and somewhat arrogant. My mother loves me very much and is my greatest admirer. *Dress suggestions:* Very conservative clothes. Add a cummerbund.

Miss Prunella Braithwaite – I am a refined and gentle young lady of somewhat delicate disposition but when the weather is fine I love to sit outside and capture the beauty of flowers with my watercolors. I spend a lot of time doing good works for the poor and people say I am a very kind hearted person. My father has extensive business investments in Virginia. *Dress suggestions:* A long dress adorned in flowers. White gloves and a bonnet (if available).

Miss Bethany Chesterfield – I am fond of riding sidesaddle and love the outdoors. My parents worry that I am somewhat more forthright than a lady should be and that I am apt to be quarrelsome in nature. My parents own a gunpowder factory. I like to ignore the constraints of civilized society. *Dress suggestions:* A long-sleeved shirt and a long skirt and gloves. Wear riding boots. Strap one ankle and pretend as if you have twisted it.

Miss Wilma Winterflood – I am a lady skilled in all the social graces and excel at tapestry and singing. My parents are very well respected and we are an influential family in the community. Although I appear to be gentle and quiet, my brothers say I am rather headstrong and stubborn. I often take the buggy for a ride by myself much to my parents' dismay. *Dress suggestions:* A long dress and gloves. Carry some tapestry to work on.

Miss Hyacinth Huntington – I am an only child and I am of a somewhat shy disposition. I am very skilled at lacework and I love Shakespeare, especially the tragedies. Sadly my father recently made some unfortunate investments and my family is facing economic ruin. I am terribly embarrassed by my situation as I am used to wealth and all the luxuries it affords. *Dress suggestions:* A long dress with lace on it & gloves. Carry a Shakespeare play.

Miss Charmaine Chamberlain – people say I am very gracious and I love to read poetry. My favorites are Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth. I am also a skilled pianist. My father owns numerous cotton plantations. I traveled abroad with my family when I was younger and I yearn to travel again especially to London. I miss the operas and plays dreadfully. *Dress suggestions:* A long dress and gloves. Carry a book of Coleridge or Wordsworth's poetry.

Miss Emily Stratford – people say I am rather intelligent. I must say, I do love puzzles and am very fond of writing. There are some false rumors going about that I have been secretly writing mystery novels under the nom de plume of James Ridley. I am very polite, but prefer to observe rather than talk. My father is a highly respected surgeon. My mother is afraid that my mental abilities will frighten men away so she tries to make me appear a silly little girl in public. She insists I wear pink and lots of frills and bows in my hair to make me look more feminine. *Dress suggestions:* A long pink dress with lots of frills and gloves. Add a bow to your hair. Carry a puzzle to do.

Miss Elizabeth Montgomery – I am just back from finishing school in Paris where I was greatly admired by all. I have a definite flair for fashion and am terribly fond of dancing. At the Paris Balls all the men wanted to dance with me. I also have a beautiful singing voice. At the moment, I am passionate about the color mauve and I wear it a lot. It's so fashionable. My father runs a merchant shipping company. *Dress suggestions:* A long mauve dress and gloves. Talk about yourself all the time in a conceited way.

Miss Clorinda Rosemonde – my father is a Duke and loves me so much he had one of his gardeners plant a rose garden for me, which I treasure. My mother died when I was young and my brother is a General in the army. I am fond of entertaining and my father encourages me to hold tea parties and the like. I play the flute admirably. Although I have no particular interest in getting married myself, I like to play matchmaker whenever I can. *Dress suggestions:* A long dress and gloves. Carry a flute (if available). © copyright Acture Pty Ltd 2004

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Merr Mystery

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Name Tags

Lady Marion
Mazing

Lord Edward
Mazing

Miss Prunella
Braithwaite

Miss Bethany
Chesterfield

Miss Wilma
Winterflood

Miss Hyacinth
Huntington

Miss Charmaine
Chamberlain

Miss Emily
Stratford

Miss Elizabeth
Montgomery

Miss Clorinda
Rosemonde

Merri Mysteries presents...

“The Love Letter”

Dearest

With this letter I confess to a love I cannot hide from you any longer. You must believe me when I say that I passionately adore you. If I were a poet, I would adorn this letter with sonnets expressing my love, but alas, although I have been blessed with good fortune, I lack the talent of lyrical wordsmanship. But please believe me when I say how sincere my love is for you. It is true, that I have expressed interest in a number of ladies, but that was a mere breeze of affection on my part, whereas, the love I feel for you is more closely aligned with a prevailing wind that shall never die.

My dearest love, if you care for me in even a small way, please let me know. I shall count the moments until I hear from you.

I pledge my unabating love for you,

Edward

Merri Mysteries presents...

“The Love Letter”

by Stephanie Chambers

These are the clues for:

*Lady
Mazzing*

Lady Mazing - Act One

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 *(after Prunella suggests yellow roses at the Ball)* I agree that yellow roses are beautiful Prunella, but surely we should avoid flowers with thorns as symbolically, if not physically, they suggest pain.
- 2 *(after Bethany suggests ivy)* Oh my dear, I do not think that ivy on its own will suffice. It is a little plain, is it not?
- 3 *(after Wilma suggests paper flowers)* Yes paper flowers if presented correctly can be rather lovely especially in a ring decorating a doorway.
- 4 *(after Hyacinth suggests floral lattice)* I too am a great lover of the silhouette effect of lattice and floral patterned lattice would be pretty.
- 5 *(after Charmaine suggests an exotic theme and peacock feathers)* The plumage of peacocks is exotic, isn't it? But don't their feathers bring bad luck?
- 6 *(after Emily suggests games and a treasure hunt and masks)* I think you are right that a game or two would add to the entertainment, however, I think our guests are a little old for a treasure hunt, but masks are worth considering.
- 7 *(after Elizabeth suggests gold masks)* Gold masks do sound beautiful.
- 8 *(after Clorinda suggests rose petals)* Rose petals are romantic and so soft in nature, aren't they? I think that would be lovely.

Lady Mazing - Act Two

(Eat something made of chocolate and don't clean your sticky chocolate hands. Then take Edward a glass of water and scream as you discover his body. Examine the body and take the love letter from the dead man's hands – smearing it with chocolate. Take the love letter with you.)

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 *(weeping violently you must rush in and tell the girls of the Lord's death)* I can't believe it, but my poor dear sweet Edward is dead! I found him in his room when I took him a glass of water. He had this letter in his hand. Oh my dear son, my only son. I cannot believe he has had his life taken from him when he was so young and vital and handsome.
- 2 When I found Edward there was white foam around his mouth and it smelt quite horrible, which is strange because he always had such a sweet breath.
- 3 A doctor has been summonsed. I would ask you all to wait until he arrives.

Lady Mazing - Act Three

Enter the room where the girls are seated. Put the love letter on the table and ask the girls the following questions:

- 1 I saw you out riding this afternoon Miss Chesterfield. You were unchaperoned, which I definitely don't approve of. Do you often go riding unchaperoned?
- 2 Miss Chesterfield – rumor has it that your parents don't approve of Matthew Beadmont as a marriage partner because he is not of sufficient means. Is it true that you remain besotted with this most unsuitable young man?
- 3 Miss Rosemonde – I have inspected the documents on Lord Mazing's desk and I have seen your family's name mentioned in some documents relating to his family tree. Why would your family have been mentioned in His Lordship's family tree?
- 4 *(after Miss Montgomery says Lord Mazing did not like chocolate)* In picking up the letter, my hands were still covered in chocolate after I had eaten a ginger chocolate so I am afraid I created the chocolate marks on the outside of the love letter. I was in quite a state, as you can understand.

Merri Mysteries presents...

“The Love Letter”

by Stephanie Chambers

These are the clues for:

Lord Mazing

Lord Mazing - Act One

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 *(after Prunella asks about your horse)* Thank you Miss Braithwaite. It turned out that my horse was only lame because a stone had wedged itself into one of his horseshoes. He is fully recovered now.
- 2 *(after Bethany mentions about your cousin Matthew Beadmont)* You are right Miss Chesterfield, Matthew and I are very close indeed. As you know, I do not have a brother, so to me, Matthew is my brother. I have willed a large portion of my estate to him, just as you would a brother.
- 3 *(after Wilma asks why you weren't at her brother's engagement banquet)* Do forgive me Miss Winterflood, but I could not attend due to business commitments. I have been very busy since I have taken over the running of the estate. There have been so many matters to attend to and that is why I will also not be joining you and the other ladies for dinner. Please excuse me, I must discuss something with my mother. *(go and talk to your mother briefly, as a way of getting away from Wilma whom you detest.)*
- 4 *(after Hyacinth asks if you enjoyed Hamlet)* Yes Miss Huntington. "Hamlet" is a thought-provoking play which always makes one think about one's responsibilities to one's family and one's duty. I enjoyed it immensely.
- 5 *(after Charmaine asks why you won't consider moving to a larger city)* Dear Miss Chamberlain, why would I ever consider moving away from such a lovely country estate as this? If I am in need of opera, I can pay for one of the traveling operetta groups to perform. If there is a particular play or opera that you would like to see, please let me know, as I may be able to arrange for them to visit our town. I would be happy to be of service.
- 6 *(after Emily asks you if you like Sir Walter Scott etc)* Miss Stratford I must admit I am fond of good literature, although I have no skills in that area myself. Sir Walter Scott obviously has a great gift and I find him a fine writer. *(see next page)*

- 7 *(after Elizabeth asks about your not completing your studies)* Dear Miss Montgomery, the interruption to my studies does not particularly worry me. I am learning a lot now that I have this responsibility on my shoulders. As they say, life is the greatest educator of all.
- 8 *(after Clorinda asks if you have discovered anything interesting about your family tree)* Dear Miss Rosemonde it has been a fascinating investigation, absolutely fascinating. My great grandfather apparently led the troops to war in the Battle of Walter.

Lord Mazing - Act Two

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These are the clues for:

*Prunella
Braithwaite*

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 You must collapse and appear dead with the love letter in your hand. Lady Mazing will find you in your room when she brings you a glass of water.
- 2 Stay there until you can sneak away unnoticed by the others.

Prunella Braithwaite - Act One

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 Lady Mazing and Lord Mazing, it is such a privilege and delight to visit your enchanting abode. It truly is a pleasure.
Dear Lady Mazing, I am so anxiously awaiting the Ball you are planning. I know it will be such fun even though I may not have enough energy to dance all night, being the delicate creature that I am. However I have asked my seamstress to make me a simple pale yellow gown for the event.
In terms of decorations for your Ball, may I suggest yellow roses on the tables? Roses always lend a classical elegance to any occasion, don't you agree?
- 2 Dear Lord Mazing, during a recent game of polo, I noticed that your horse appeared lame at the end of the game. I hope that it has since recovered?
- 3 Miss Montgomery is it true that in Paris the ladies are now wearing little peaked hats?

Prunella Braithwaite - Act Two

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 *(have a general discussion about the Lord's death)* I really cannot believe that Lord Mazing is dead. The thought of it makes me feel quite queasy. He was such a vibrant free-spirited young man and he seemed so capable in managing the estate. How will Lady Mazing cope without him?
- 2 *(have a general discussion about who the love letter was intended for)* I cannot believe that Lord Mazing would have written a love letter like this to myself. Certainly he had never showed me any indication of such affections.
- 3 *(say to Miss Huntington)* This distressing affair has all the hallmarks of a tragedy by Shakespeare. Miss Huntington, you are one of the Bard's greatest admirers. Are you sure you haven't tried to emulate Lady Macbeth here? Or one of his other femmes' fatale?
- 4 *(after Miss Chamberlain asks about Lord Mazing not being on good terms with Mr Grandoaks)* I am sure Mr Grandoaks would certainly not settle his differences with Lord Mazing in so barbaric a fashion.
- 5 *(after Miss Huntington says you faint at the sight of blood)* Yes Miss Huntington. The sight of blood does make me feel quite woozy.

Prunella Braithwaite - Act Three

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 Miss Chamberlain, whenever I mentioned Lord Mazzing to you in the past you have always told me how much you disliked and despised him. Did your dislike turn into loathing?
- 2 Miss Huntington, during the afternoon tea, I noticed you were standing more towards the back of the group. Was that so you could prepare some nasty poisonous concoction without being observed?
- 3 *(in response to Miss Montgomery's question)* Yes it is true. I was most upset by it I assure you. I have been trying desperately to dissuade Mr Grandoaks from going ahead with it. Now of course, the matter has resolved itself, however, unfortunately in Charles' favour.
- 4 *(after someone accuses you of poisoning the cucumber sandwich you passed to the Lord)* Poison the cucumber sandwich? You must be joking surely. I am not in the habit of killing people. I prefer to help people than hurt them, as everybody knows.
- 5 *(after Miss Stratford accuses you of murder)* Miss Stratford I am stunned that you would think me capable of murder. Naturally, I did not want Charles and His Lordship to fight a duel, but I had hoped that there was some rational way they could settle their differences, without bloodshed. Killing one of the parties involved was the last thing on my mind.