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# Merri Mysteries

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Party games for 8 to 100 guests

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presents...

## “Kidnapped By Pirates”

Play version  
for 10 to 16 guests

by Stephanie Chambers

Third edition

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"Merri Mysteries" was formerly known as "Tailor Made Mysteries".

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See the host's guide for further details on the copyright requirements for this kit.

## The Suspects

It's Columbus's third voyage. He'd already sailed the ocean blue and discovered America (although he still thinks he went to part of Asia) and he was being brought back to Spain for investigation when pirates overtook the ship he was on.

The rest of the crew was set off in rowboats for the nearby coast of Spain. Most thought Columbus was with them, but he has just been discovered missing. Your job is to work out which pirate kidnapped him and kept him on board and why they did this or why Columbus pretended to be kidnapped.

**Christopher Columbus** – I am an explorer, colonizer and navigator. The King and Queen of Spain funded my voyages and established me as governor of Hispaniola. But the colonists had complained about my rule, and they had sent an investigator to bring me back and now pirates have kidnapped me. **Dress suggestions: Wear an auburn or blonde wig, a cap and old fashioned clothes. Carry a compass. Add some of the kidnapper's ropes and also carry the blindfold that had been used on you.**

**Captain Blood** – I was orphaned as a child and thus had to learn how to fend for myself. When I'm not pirating, I'm usually stealing or robbing people. Because of the cold exterior I've had to build over the years, I've earned my nickname. **Dress suggestion: Wear traditional pirate gear and don a plastic sword. Maybe smear tomato sauce on your clothes. Add a fake tattoo.**

**Quartermaster Jack** – I am from Britain and I have spent my whole life on various pirate ships. Although I am a thief, I am a kind one and I try to divvy up the bounty as fairly as I can. I am also the one that assigns all the work. I'm the captain's right-hand man. **Dress suggestion: Wear a patch over one eye and other traditional pirate gear and talk in a British accent, if possible. Carry gold coins or other plunder. Add a fake tattoo.**

**Pugwash** – I got this nickname because I am a scaredy-cat. I jump at the dark, when I think I've seen a mouse, etc. Because I am so afraid, I do not wear a patch over my eye as other pirates do. I'm the boatswain, the one who orders all the supplies and I inspect rigging every morning. **Dress suggestion: Wear pirate gear and carry a magnifying glass to see any bugs or mice. Carry a fly squatter.**

**Powder Monkey** – It's my job to bring up the gunpowder from below deck when the cannon crews need it. I do this and other roustabout chores. Sometimes I also help swab the deck. **Dress suggestion: Wear loose clothes so you can move easily. Act like the youngest on board. Don a pirate hat as well. Bring a mop.**

**Clegg** – I am very good at mathematics. I'm in charge of all the maps and help navigate our course across the oceans. Women love me, as I'm very smooth with words and moves. However, although I am good at mental calculations, I am not very good at practical things that involve my hands. **Dress suggestion: Wear pirate gear and eyeglasses. Carry an old map and a compass.**

**Surgeon Grinandbearit** – I was originally kidnapped but I have settled into the pirate lifestyle. Sometimes I have to amputate which is how I got my nickname. **Dress suggestion: Wear clothes that are a bit more stylish than most pirates. Carry a thermometer or a bandage.**

**Minstrel Mike** – I'm the musician on board so everyone loves me. I try to keep everyone's spirits up during the seemingly endless days on board. Sometimes I also dance around a bit while I play – after all we all like to party and that's why we became pirates. **Dress suggestion: Wear pirate gear & carry an instrument & old English folk tunes.**

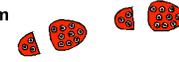
**Cordon Cornbeef** – I'm the cook. Sometimes rations run very low so I have to make a little stretch a long way. It isn't easy. But when we've got new supplies from boats we've plundered I get to make it a bit more fancy. **Dress suggestion: Traditional pirate get-up. Add an apron but make it a messy looking one. Make yourself look plump.**

**José** – I'm Spanish. I'm new to being a pirate, so “new to the ropes” as they say. It's more fun than growing corn and I really love learning all there is to learn about sailing and I love being at sea. **Dress suggestions: Wear pirate gear but make it a bit more colorful.**

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## Optional witnesses

**Hammer Harry** – I'm the carpenter on board. It's my job to repair damage to the masts, yards, hatches, and hull, and to keep the ship's leaky seams in check with wooden plugs and oakum fibers. People respect what I do because no one wants to swim home. *Dress suggestions: Wear the usual pirate get up, but also carry a hammer and some wooden plugs and/or nails or other carpenter tools. Add a fake tattoo.*

**Clyde Cannonball** – I'm the gunner. I'm in charge of the canons and other artillery on board. The recoil on some of these can kill you, so it takes a bit of skill to manage them correctly and not to let them overheat. *Dress suggestions: Pirate uniform and carry a black fake cannonball. Add a fake tattoo.*

**Eagle Eyes** – I'm the rigger so I have the most dangerous job on board, as I'm the one that goes up on the higher decks. I'm also the one with the best eyesight so I can spot things on the horizon. *Dress suggestions: Wear simple pirate clothes and carry a telescope, which you can use to spot land and ships ahoy.*

**Sammy** – I'm the cabin boy. I take care of the needs of the captain and bring him his water and meals and so on. I'm pretty low on the hierarchy, which doesn't make it easy. I get ribbed a lot. *Dress suggestions: Wear simple pirate clothes and carry a bottle of water (not a plastic bottle - a glass one).*

**Barry the Barrelnaker** – I'm a cooper – a barrel maker. A lot of important things on board like the gunpowder and the food gets stored in barrels, but because they are always getting tossed about as we roll about on the ocean, they need constant upkeep. *Dress suggestions: Wear simple pirate clothes and carry a tool or two.*

**Ned the Needler** – I'm the sail maker. I also repair the hammocks when they get busted. So I'm good with a needle and thread, but I am in no way a sissy if that's what you're thinking. I'm as tough as the rest of them. *Dress suggestions: Wear simple pirate clothes and carry a tiny sailing ship or some fabric, thread and needles.*

## Name Tags

### The Pirate Suspects

**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS  
(SUSPECT)**

**CAPTAIN BLOOD  
(SUSPECT)**

**QUARTERMASTER JACK  
(SUSPECT)**

**PUGWASH  
(SUSPECT)**

**POWDER MONKEY**  
**(SUSPECT)**

**CLEGG**  
**(SUSPECT)**

**SURGEON GRINANDBEARIT**  
**(SUSPECT)**

**MINSTREL MIKE**  
**(SUSPECT)**

**CORDON CORNBEEF**  
**(SUSPECT)**

**JOSÉ**  
**(SUSPECT)**

The Pirate Witnesses (all are optional)

**HAMMER HARRY**  
**(WITNESS)**

**CLYDE CANNONBALL**  
**(WITNESS)**

**EAGLE EYES**  
**(WITNESS)**

**SAMMY  
(WITNESS)**

**BARRY THE BARRELMAKER  
(WITNESS)**

**NED THE NEEDLER  
(WITNESS)**

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## **“Kidnapped By Pirates”**

by Stephanie Chambers

*The Play*

# Kidnapped By Pirates - Act One

**Note:** *Although this is in play format, you do not have to take to a stage and act it out. You can just sit around a dining table and read out your lines or sit in a circle on sofas etc.*

**Note:** *If it says the line may be said by “Anyone”, we recommend that one of the optional witnesses take a turn to say the line. If there are no optional witnesses, then everyone should take a turn saying one of these lines, however, the person the clue is about should not say it. You may like to work out beforehand who will say each of these “Anyone” clues and write their character’s name next to each one.*

Minstrel Mike: What are you doing here Columbus? I thought we put you in the rowboat with the rest of the crew. Did you come back to hear me play?

Powder Monkey: He was in the line to get in the rowboat. He must have ducked out of it somehow.

Pugwash: You’re as sneaky as a cut snake Columbus. I certainly don’t trust you.

Columbus: I was kidnapped and taken below deck. These ropes didn’t get here by magic.

Captain Blood: Well which of my crew kidnapped you? I didn’t tell anyone to do this.

Columbus: I don’t know. They came at me from behind and blindfolded me. They then dragged me below and tied me up to a post.

Cordon Cornbeef: I have enough mouths to feed. Can’t we use him as fish bait?

Clegg: We can’t spare another rowboat. Plus we’re too far off shore now. So we’re stuck with him.

José: I think we should torture him, just like he did to me when I was a colonist under his command.

Surgeon: Yes. I heard that Columbus deliberately didn’t baptize the natives because he knew that if he did, that Spanish law wouldn’t permit him to then capture them as slaves. Anyone who treats people as slaves should be treated as a slave himself – that’s what I say.

Minstrel Mike: I’ve come up with this handclapping ditty about him:

Columbus sailed the ocean blue blue blue  
To see what he could see see see  
But all that he could see see see  
Was the bottom of the deep blue sea sea sea.

Clegg: He got all of his calculations wrong and he just discovered land by mistake. Why he thinks he reached Asia! That’s absurd. He’s an embarrassment to all serious explorers.

Cordon Cornbeef: He’s very mysterious about where he’s from. He’s led everyone to believe he’s Italian. But my mother is from Italy and he doesn’t have the right accent. He must have a very shady background that he’s hiding.

Pugwash: Columbus has a lot of friends in high places and he always seems to be able to talk them into giving his boats and so on.

Captain Blood: If I treated my crew the way I heard you treated your crew Columbus, I’d have a mutiny on my hands. Because of your reputation, they were shipwrecked for over a year because no one liked you enough to bother rescuing you or your crew.

Quartermaster Jack: You've made a pretty penny or two from setting up the colony and stealing gold and other things from the natives. Maybe you can tell us where you've got your gold stashed so we can steal it off you.

Anyone: There wasn't much of any value found on board this vessel.

Anyone: Apparently Columbus was on this ship as a prisoner and as he sets foot in Spain he will be put in chains and brought to trial for his mistreatment of the colonists.

Anyone: I heard he even auctioned Spaniards into slavery. That's what he did to a young boy caught stealing. This man thinks he is above the law and that he himself sets the laws. Well we have our own laws here, don't we me hearties?

Anyone: From what I've heard Columbus didn't care about the colonists. He only cared about how much money he'd make from the whole venture. He's far worse than any penny pincher.

Anyone: José was a colonist in Hispaniola under Columbus's control. It was so bad there that he escaped to become a pirate with us.

Anyone: Powder Monkey's mother was an African slave until his father helped her escape. She made him swear he'd find a way to stop the slave trade.

Powder Monkey: Aye that's true. And Columbus was so sneaky. He'd say he wanted to convert the natives to Christianity, but secretly he just wanted the proceeds from selling them into slavery.

Anyone: You encouraged the colonists to take the natives as slaves, didn't you Columbus?

Anyone: Minstrel Mike has some gypsy blood in him and he's heard talk among the gypsies that Columbus was one of them until he went to Spain and pretended to be a shipwrecked Italian. Minstrel Mike thinks Columbus should be proud of his gypsy blood, not hide it.

Anyone: Did you kidnap him Powder Monkey?

Powder Monkey: No. I'm only a kid. I'm not old enough or big enough to kidnap someone even though I admit I hate him because of his part in slavery.

Surgeon: Before I was made to be a pirate, I'd treated a few people who had returned from the colonies. Some of them had scars from run-ins they had with Columbus. He'd had his henchmen torture them into paying taxes even when they didn't have enough money to feed their families. And we all know what it's like to be poor, don't we lads?

Quartermaster Jack: Columbus was only supposed to take a percentage of profits, not a percentage of nothing. It's like when you guys want a percentage of a gold goblet. It just can't be done.

José: Columbus promised us colonists that we would get rich, but it ended up being quite the opposite of that thanks to his mis-management.

Cordon Cornbeef: There are rumors about that Columbus was an escaped murderer and that's why he hid his past and why he found it so easy to hurt people.

Clegg: Columbus didn't just hurt people – he hurt science as well. Everyone told him his calculations were wrong but he just ignored them. And if people now use his calculations they will all end up in the wrong place and for them it might not turn out as well. It could be dangerous.

Captain Blood: Some of Columbus's crew did take me aside and they asked if they could join us as pirates. They said anything would be better than being under Columbus's command. But I told them we didn't need any more crew.

Quartermaster Jack: Even when he could see the colonists were starving, he flaunted his own wealth and expected them to give him money in taxes. We pirates despise unfairness.

José: My neighbor's widow begged for mercy. She had two children to support and her husband had died of disease. Columbus had her publicly flogged because she could only pay two-thirds of her taxes. Columbus doesn't deserve any mercy from us.

Surgeon: I heard disease was rife in the colony and Columbus ignored it. He refused to pay for any doctors to treat the sick and dying. The only doctor that was there was swamped and couldn't cope.

Minstrel Mike: We gypsies have our own religion and I think that Columbus only pretended to be a Christian. Surely a true Christian wouldn't have been able to be so cruel. And we gypsies aren't usually cruel either because we keep each other in line. But he didn't have any one to keep him in place.

Columbus: The King and Queen of Spain are my controllers and they planned to put me in chains and before a court of judges. You've got to save me from that. I don't deserve it. All these stories about me are unfounded and untrue.

Pugwash: Cordon Cornbeef and I discussed this at length and we think that even if Columbus is convicted for his mistreatment of the colonists, he will find a way to talk his way out of it. He has the gift of the gab in a big way.

Anyone: You are a liar and a cheapskate Columbus. You promised a reward of gold to whoever saw land first. A sailor named Rodrigo saw it on October 12<sup>th</sup> 1492, but you then pretended you'd seen it yourself the night before and you didn't pay up. You're a stingy scoundrel.

Anyone: Yes you were a hopeless captain Columbus. Your flagship Santa Maria ran aground and you returned to Spain empty-handed and without the best of the three ships entrusted to you.

Anyone: And you're a deluded man Columbus. On this your third voyage, when you saw Orinoco River empty out into the Atlantic Ocean, you became convinced you had found the Garden of Eden. I think there are a few bats in your bell-tower.

Anyone: Columbus brought back natives as slaves after his first and second voyages. But he was devastated when Queen Isabela decided that the New World natives were her subjects and therefore could not be enslaved.

- Anyone: Yes Columbus you're a fool. You kept insisting that Japan and China were close by the lands you had discovered. And we all know that's not the case, don't we lads?
- Anyone: Yes Columbus proposed a ridiculous theory that the Earth was shaped like a pear and that he had not found Asia because of the part of the pear that bulges out towards the stem. He is a laughingstock in Europe.
- Anyone: Columbus came upon a long dugout-trading vessel, which had weapons, and tools made of copper and flint. But he didn't bother investigating further and went the other way instead. So he missed the entire Mayan civilization.
- Anyone: Some believe that in his early days Columbus was a pirate himself and that he had attacked ships belonging to the Moors.
- Anyone: Columbus's second voyage brought fifteen hundred men and sixteen ships to the New World.
- Anyone: Spain sent Fancisco de Bobadilla to investigate the Spanish settlements and is the one that put Columbus on this vessel and sent him back to Spain. When he lands in Spain, Columbus is going to be put in prison irons.