

CRIMESCENE CRIMESCENE CRIMESCENE CRIMESCENE CRIMESCENE CRIMESCENE CRIMESCENE CRIME

Merri Mysteries

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Party games for 8 to 100 guests

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presents...

“The Case Of The Missing Matchmaker”

Meet and mingle version
for 17 to 30 guests

(“mystery not murder” version)

*by Stephanie Chambers
and Maggie Lawrence*

Second edition

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The Suspects

Darlene Hickle has gone missing. The fact that she rarely listened to what anyone told her did nothing to improve her matchmaking business. Her success at mis-matching people reached its greatest height when her computer database crashed. Darlene saw no need to tell anyone of this. Instead she randomly matched couples based on a printout she had of their names and addresses. And now – it has been discovered that she has mysteriously disappeared. She had her company insured and the insurance company has sent Eileen Evensong – a private eye – to investigate. The people present are:

Eileen Evensong (not a suspect) (*a private eye*) Although divorce snooping is my specialty, I have also been employed in a number of other cases involving missing persons. Because of my rather unusual career, I am still single. Men don't like the idea that I might find out everything about them. *Dress suggestions:* Dress conservatively in gray, blue or brown tweed. Carry binoculars and a camera have mini-tape recorders in your pockets.

Benson Hickle (*café worker – brother of Darlene*) With six university degrees, not under my belt (as I dropped out of all of them), I can't get a job in any field of any significance and my life has not been very successful so far. I'm certainly not dumb. I just haven't found my true direction yet. *Dress suggestions:* Eccentric clothes (eg colored trousers & dull colored shirt with contrasting shoes & socks). Carry some intellectual books.

Melinda Muscat (*trainee nun*) I am marrying God and I'm wracked with pre-marital doubt. I'm worried I've got too many bad habits to wear this one. *Dress suggestions:* Nun in full habit and gown. A cross on a neck chain.

Clarence Kane (*a park-bench hobo*) I used to collect trash. Now I sleep in it – that is when I'm not sleeping on a park bench in the middle of the city and earning my living from collecting cans. I'm fond of singing the blues. They suit my mood. *Dress suggestions:* Have holes in your hobo clothes & be a bit dirty with face unshaven. Battered hat & some newspapers. Bring a bag full of cans.

Suzie Bamberger (*a psychologist – new wife of Steve*) I'm a very good psychologist. I can calm down a stressed city worker faster than you can boil water. Counseling is my thing and I'm up on all the latest methods. I'm also mad about cats. *Dress suggestions:* Classic suit. Carry some counseling "how to live your life" books.

Steve Bamberger (*a sports instructor – husband of Suzie*) I'm a very good Sports Instructor. I teach young boys basketball, which is very healthy. I love children and in my spare time I help out at an orphanage. *Dress suggestions:* Sports-clothes, basketball.

Jasmine Reid (*music teacher – girlfriend of Shaun*) Although I work in a conservative school teaching bored girls how to blow into recorders, at the weekends I play jazz rock violin in a band with Shaun and we're hoping to release a CD later in the year. I also teach private students. *Dress suggestions:* Modern black clothes. Carry a musical instrument.

Shaun Goller (*bookshop staff – boyfriend of Jasmine*) I can make my synthesizer wail like a whale and I also like singing with my band. I work at a specialist music bookshop. I'm classically trained. *Dress suggestions:* Modern clothes such as black pants, black shirt and brightly colored sunglasses. Carry an instrument.

Sadie Southport (*a TV reporter – girlfriend of Gary*) I'm a very ambitious local TV reporter. I'm constantly networking as I intend to have my own TV show and really do something good for the world. I love reading philosophy. I also enjoy playing the flute. *Dress suggestions:* Wear modern well-cut clothes, possibly a silk blouse and some colorful beads.

Gary Balana (*programmer – boyfriend of Sadie*) My natural talent for numbers and programming landed me a well paid job as an IT computer programmer and my career is going well. But I'm not very socially adept, so I don't have many friends, or to be honest any friends at all. I love watching sport on TV and taking very long baths. *Dress suggestions:* Dress as a nerd. Wear jeans & casual t-shirt & carry a laptop (or replica of one). Have socks that don't match.

Authorities (optional)

Judi Wurtzel (*director of a business – new wife of Ian*) I run my own baby equipment hire business and I'm extremely conscious of my role in the community and on the power of word of mouth recommendations. I love making my place look homely. I also enjoy cooking. *Dress suggestions:* Conservatively such as a striped or floral dress with lace.

Ian Wurtzel (*architect – new husband of Judi*) I'm a well-respected architect – the best in town. I love classical music and relaxing in the fabulous hot tub I designed. *Dress suggestions:* Flamboyant clothes such as a silk neck cravat.

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Osborn Wilbursmith (*Police officer*) I'm a tough no-nonsense cop. I love the power that comes with my position. I also love solving puzzles. That's why I became a police officer. I'm also great at cryptic crosswords. I am annoyed that Eileen Evensong is playing such a main role in all of this – after all she's only a paid snoop. *Dress suggestions:* Wear a mock police uniform. Carry a notepad and pencil.

Dr Perdita Perry (*Police forensic specialist*) I love the thrill of finding needles in haystacks. I won't give up till I uncover every clue. I am a scientific whiz kid. I know all the tricks of my trade. *Dress suggestions:* Wear a lab coat and wear white gloves. Carry some clear plastic bags to collect evidence in.

Cecil Triter (*Accountant*) I am Darlene's accountant. Darlene wasn't a really honest businesswoman, I admit, but she knew how to make money. She felt it was justifiable to rip off her clients, because, as she said, "they are all so pathetic". *Dress suggestions:* Wear a conservative business suit and some reading glasses.

Fulvia Farlane (*Lawyer*) I have gained respect and admiration in my profession. I have been Darlene's lawyer for many years but I still can't say I like her. I don't think she has any "ethics". *Dress suggestions:* Wear a conservative suit and look very serious.

Aubrey Withers (*Newspaper journalist*) I am very ruthless and pushy. I'm also always hassling the police for tip-offs. There's nothing I won't do to get a story. I'll solve this puzzle and make the front-page headlines as well. *Dress suggestions:* Business clothes. Carry a notepad and pen.

Hedda Evans (*TV reporter*) I'm an extrovert and very friendly. I report what the people will want to hear which is not necessarily the actual the truth, but near enough. I thrive on the adrenalin of reporting the news on camera. My mom watches me every night. *Dress suggestions:* Business clothes. Carry a notepad and pen.

Witnesses (optional)

32 additional roles (ie other mismatched couples)

Group 1

Couple 1

Mathew Ashford (*professional basketballer – Darlene matched him with Collette*) I am extremely tall, quick and cool. I also love partying. *Dress suggestions:* Wear stilts under long trousers or high platform heels in order to exaggerate your height. Carry a basketball. **Try and find the person who knows the answer to this question:** “Which sport employs more tall people than any other?”

Collette Baynard (*document archiver – Darlene matched her with Mathew*) I am very short and extremely shy and reticent. I love staying home and doing tapestry. I love horses. *Dress suggestions:* Wear very low heels or no heels or no shoes at all in order to minimize your height. Carry some tapestry you are working on. **Try and find the person who knows the answer to this question:** “Which animal is raced the most?”

Couple 2

Hamish Clohesy (*jockey – Darlene matched him with Julia*) I am very thin and light. I love horses and I strongly dislike music of any kind. *Dress suggestions:* Jockey clothes such as a cap and shirt with a number pinned on the back. **Try and find the person who knows the question that has this answer:** “The horse”.

Julia Dempsey (*blues singer – Darlene matched her with Hamish*) I am large and loud and extrovert. I love the city and I never go to the country as I’m allergic to large-scale grass and all farm animals. And besides it’s so boring. But I love watching basketball. *Dress suggestions:* Add padding so you appear very large. Wear a glamorous dress & high heels. **Try and find the person who knows the question that has this answer:** “Basketball”.

Group 2

Couple 3

Lachlan Fetter (*trainee religious minister – Darlene matched him with Hilda*) I am very pious and a true believer in Christianity. I never miss a Church service even when I’m ill, which unfortunately is pretty often. *Dress suggestions:* Dress conservatively and carry a bible. **Try and find the person who knows the answer to this question:** “Who is the son of God?”

Hilda Gilmore (*leader of a women’s rap band – Darlene matched her with Lachlan*) I am a staunch atheist and I have lots of nose rings and tattoos. I love music man. *Dress suggestions:* Wear clothes such as torn black jeans and a torn black t-shirt. Add fake tattoos and nose rings. **Try and find the person who knows the answer to this question:** “In rap, what do the words do?”

Couple 4

Jamal Hirati (*classical musician – Darlene matched him with Maryanne*) I play the clarinet as my main instrument and I love all aspects of music including modern music. I’m not as conservative as I look. *Dress suggestions:* Carry a clarinet or other instrument. Dress in black jacket and pants and white shirt. **Try and find the person who knows the question that has this answer:** “Rhyme”.

Maryanne Jones (*sign language instructor – Darlene matched her with Jamal*) She was born deaf and is an expert in all aspects of sign language. She is also a writer and goes to Sign Church each Sunday. *Dress suggestions:* Wear conservative clothes and practice your sign language before you come. **Try and find the person who knows the question that has this answer:** “Jesus”.

Group 3

Couple 5

Markus Lovic (*artist – Darlene matched him with Brittany*) I’m an artist. I mainly do abstract oil paintings. I also love classical music and I always have it playing while I paint. It moves me. *Dress suggestions:* Carry some paint brushes and/or a drawing pad. And carry a Walkman with a classical CD in it. **Try and find the person who knows the answer to this question:** “What is the name of an elaborate instrumental composition (usually in several movements)?”

Brittany Morris (*accountant's assistant – Darlene matched her with Markus*) I was born blind and I have a great aptitude with numbers. I love country and western music and animals of any kind. *Dress suggestions:* Carry a cane and wear conservative clothes. **Try and find the person who knows the answer to this question:** “Which slender animal is sometimes venomous?”

Couple 6

Trev Walker (*snake charmer – Darlene matched him with Francine*) He is very at home with the slippery creatures. He has ten snakes that live in his house. *Dress suggestions:* Wear safari khaki type clothes and carry a fake snake in your pocket and bring it out occasionally and talk to it. **Try and find the person who knows the question that has this answer:** “The snake”.

Francine York (*pharmacist – Darlene matched her with Trev*) I love city life. Chemical smells delight me. And so do classical concerts. I am terrified of snakes ever since one tried to share my tent on a camping trip. *Dress suggestions:* Wear a white laboratory gown over your clothes. **Try and find the person who knows the question that has this answer:** “Symphony”.

Eileen
Evensong
(investigator)

Benson
Hickle
(suspect)

**Melinda
Muscat
(suspect)**

**Clarence
Kane
(suspect)**

**Suzie
Bamberger
(suspect)**

**Steve
Bamberger
(suspect)**

**Jasmine
Reid
(suspect)**

**Shaun
Goller
(suspect)**

Sadie
Southport
(suspect)

Gary
Balana
(suspect)

Judi
Wurtzel
(suspect)

Ian
Wurtzel
(suspect)

Authorities

Osborn Wilbursmith

Dr Perdita Perry

Cecil Triter

Fulvia Farlane

Aubrey Withers

Hedda Evans

Witnesses

Mathew Ashford

Collette Baynard

Hamish Clohesy

Julia Dempsey

Lachlan Fetter

Hilda Gilmore

Jamal Hirati

Maryanne Jones

Markus Lovic

Brittany Morris

Trev Walker

Francine York

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*Clue page for an authority or witness
Print as many copies as you need.
Staple a copy of their name tag here*

What I can reveal

Staple their clue(s) here

Clues

What I need to do

- 1 Talk to everyone, not just the suspects and tell them what you know and find out what they know.

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Eileen Evensong

What I can reveal

From what I have gathered from chatting with others at this gathering, it appears that Darlene had a lot of enemies. Only a real snoop like me can get to the bottom of cases like this. That is why her insurance company is employing me to find out if she really has disappeared in a suspicious way or if she is just avoiding her responsibilities and her angry clients.

From what I have heard, there were so many complaints about her business that the authorities were thinking of shutting her down.

Darlene did pack, but she left in a real hurry, judging from the state of her apartment. She even left her bedroom cupboard doors wide open.

I think you are an undervalued talent Clarence. You are more like a counselor than a hobo. I am sure there is a good job waiting for someone like you in welfare. And thank you for the card. It was very sweet of you. We must keep in touch after all of this is over.

For Gary’s Matching Game, your question is: “What does this city need more of?”

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Benson Hickie

What I can reveal

Darlene kept telling me what a failure I was. She knew how to rub her success right up your nose. I don’t consider myself a failure. I learnt many things at university and I am still pursuing knowledge. I’m happy because I am still expanding my mind and that is more important than expanding your wallet in my opinion. I saw Darlene the week before last and she was her usual nasty bossy-big-sister self. But this Friday there was no answer when I rang to confirm dinner. Last weekend I was working at my new job at a coffee shop in the city. Steve came in and bought a cappuccino from me. I also saw Gary come into the shop, but I didn’t serve him so he probably didn’t notice me. Gary was carrying one of those travel brochures about exotic places. That’s why I remember him. I was jealous of him planning a trip somewhere. I can’t believe that Darlene would leave town without telling me. She always told me even if she was only going on a daytrip somewhere. My week hasn’t been very eventful – just an endless line of cappuccinos and lattés. Probably the only highlight has been meeting Sadie. She is almost as well read as I am and she has some real insights into the meaning of some early Greek texts. I’m looking forward to talking to her more.

For Gary’s Matching Game, your question is: “What is the quote “For God mingles not with man; but through Love” taken from?”

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Melinda Muscat

What I can reveal

When I was working as a Church assistant I found it hard to meet men. I mean – how can you successfully chat up a man when you’re in Church and God is watching? So I filled out one of Darlene’s matchmaking application forms. But she rejected my application. She said I wasn’t pretty enough and that I was too religious and boring and that most men would find my profession off-putting. So I decided to marry God. I am about to take my vows shortly. Although I enjoy being a nun, I would have preferred to have had children. Not much chance of that now I suppose. But at least I get to work with children. Last weekend I was at a camp in the country run by the school. Before I left for the country on Saturday morning, I did see Judi coming out of Darlene’s office as I happened to be passing it. You looked very distressed Judi. I think you’d been crying. As Judi was leaving, Darlene was playing Ravel’s Bolero very loudly on her office’s music system. I thought that rather odd. It has been lovely meeting people at this gathering. And Gary has said he will show me a few things on his laptop so that I can impress the children at school. He is a very knowledgeable man and a bit quiet like I am. He thinks that because Darlene has wrecked so many people’s lives, that it would be immoral to let her continue to run her business.

For Gary’s Matching Game, your question is: “What is God’s vehicle to us?”

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Extra clues

You should divide these 44 clues up amongst however many guests you are having. Try and divide them up evenly amongst the people not playing main roles. Give the authorities slightly more clues (eg two clues instead of one) to make up for their not getting to participate in the matching game. If you don’t have many people who aren’t playing main roles, divide them up amongst the suspects as well. Please make sure they are all given out. Staple them to each person’s clue sheet.

Darlene preferred to live alone and had never been married or had any boyfriends. Darlene said that she preferred to live alone because her work was all the romance she could take. She liked her reclusive private life. I don’t think she ever really cared about people – just money.

Apparently the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) of the United States of America had received so many complaints of late about Darlene’s business that they were thinking of closing her down anyway.

Darlene moved a large amount of money into traveler’s checks on Monday morning. She didn’t go to work that Monday morning and hasn’t been seen since.

Darlene’s computer, computer disks and printout of her database were stolen from her office on the Thursday night before Darlene was last seen. Darlene had been very upset about it and had reported it to the Police but the thief had not been found. Fortunately she had another printout of her client list at home.
