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Party games for 8 to 100 guests

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presents...

“Murder On The Prairie”

Meet and mingle version
for 17 to 30 guests

by Stephanie Chambers

Second edition

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The Suspects

Yesterday in Mitchido Richard Woods – a wealthy landowner – was shot down in cold blood whilst he was riding to town. He leaves behind his wife Katherine and daughter Annabel. There is a gathering of his family and the townsfolk to discuss what should be done. The people at the meeting look uneasy. They are not sure who will be arrested as the murderer and they are afraid that the gunslingers that are present might take the law into their own hands if they don't like the verdict. The people present at the meeting are:

Katherine Woods (*widow of the murdered man*) My parents moved to the country. I was annoyed, because I preferred the city where I could go to the opera. The people in Mitchido bored me. They were so uncultured. Joe was the only one who seemed to read. We used to discuss Shakespeare together when we talked after Church on Sundays. When I turned 17, the men came courting me. I liked Joe the best, but my parents said his parents were poor and that he would not be able to provide very well for me. Richard also came a courting. He seemed rougher than a rodeo rider's chaps, but my parents insisted that I marry him. I hated him, but there was no way to escape him. He decided that I was never to leave the ranch for any reason and so I have been kept here like a bear in a trap. He wouldn't even allow ladies to visit me in case they might mention their husbands. His jealousy knew no bounds. I wasn't even allowed to go to Church. *Dress suggestions:* Conservative period wear (eg long skirt with half apron, bonnet, gloves & boots).

Annabel Woods (*daughter of the murdered man*) When I was little, I remember hearing Mummy crying. The next morning she looked sad. I guessed Mummy and Daddy had argued because they weren't talking to each other at all. When I asked Daddy why he'd been mean to Mummy, he said that it was because Mummy didn't love him. When I was growing up Daddy and I spent quite a lot of time together. I was his helping hand. He taught me how to ride and shoot and he called me his little tomboy. Spring Leaf and I also spent time together when I was young. She taught me all sorts of Indian secrets. One time, Spring Leaf and I exchanged blood and swore to be blood sisters for the rest of our lives. I told Daddy and he was very angry with me and with Spring Leaf. When I turned 12, Daddy tried to get me to give up wearing pants. He said it was time I acted like a little lady. I refused but he insisted. After that, I avoided spending time with Daddy. I wore a skirt but I continued to act as if I didn't. *Dress suggestions:* Wear pretty period wear (eg long skirts with long half aprons, bonnets, gloves and boots).

Clyde Williams (*Sheriff*) Richard and I went to school together. He was one of the school bullies and used to beat me up all the time when I was younger. Later, when I had grown up to be taller than him and learned how to box, he stopped beating me up. But the resentment was still there. My father was the town Sheriff and he was grooming me to take over from him. Richard's father was doing the same. He was a landowner. Richard's father and my father were great friends, so we had to be civil to one another. It wasn't till I was about to take over from my Dad, that I realized why he had been great friends with Richard's Dad. It was because Richard's Dad always gave him a supplement to his Sheriff's wages. I protested to my Dad that it was unethical, but he said it was the tradition and that if I wasn't courteous enough to accept Richard's Dad's generosity, then he wouldn't recommend me to become Sheriff when he retired. *Dress suggestions:* Make a cardboard star as a badge.

Joe Calsis (*barber*) When I was at school, Richard teased me and said I was the son of the red and white pole – meaning I was the barber's son. Richard always picked on my weakest points. He knew I was proud of my perfect hair, so he got some other boys to hold me down and then he cut large chunks out of my haircut. I had to wear a hat. My father refused to say anything about it to Richard's father, because he was hoping I would win a scholarship and Richard's father was the main contributor to the school scholarships. Although I had been groomed to be a barber from an early age, I still dreamed of another type of life. My books were my escape. My mother said it was a shame I couldn't be a librarian. I knew I would never be allowed to marry Katherine, but it didn't stop me from loving her. *Dress suggestions:* A barber's apron, carry a small striped barber's pole &/or some scissors.

Frank Reyes (*landowner*) When I was growing up, Richard was in the same year as me. He was always attacking the younger boys. When I married Nancy, I was the happiest man alive. We had a big celebration. I even invited Katherine and Richard. They had been married about a year by then and Katherine was very pregnant with Annabel. Richard came and left his pregnant wife at home to fend for herself. A year after our marriage, Nancy died giving birth to our son. He died too. I was devastated. I could never think of re-marrying – my memories of Nancy are so strong, I could never forget her. Annabel loved to ride. She looked like a princess on her pony and she took to visiting me even though she knew her Dad and I were feuding because he dammed up a river, rendering a fifth of my property useless. *Dress suggestions:* Wear check pants, flannel shirt, bow tie or tie and braces, as you are a farmer you may like to add some straw poking out of your shirt.

Eddie Thomas (*African farm worker*) My parents worked for a family who were very cruel and made them work 7 days a week. They were Richard's parents. When I was 4, my father died. He was only 45. When I was 5, my mother died of a sickness. They put me in the orphanage in town till I was 9 and old enough to work. In the orphanage, I became friends with Luke. We were great buddies and they were fun times in my life. The Nuns in the orphanage were strict but kind. Ever since the orphanage, I have been a devoted Christian. And God has been kind to me. He sent me to work for Mr Frank and he is a good boss. He lets me have Sundays off so I can go to Church. Being black, I only get to stand at the back of the Church, but I'm just happy to be there. Mr Frank lets me ride in the back of the sulky, so I don't even have to walk to Church. I'm very lucky to work for him. *Dress suggestions:* Curly black wig, check pants, plain shirt, bow tie and braces.

Luke Hansen (*farm hand*) My parents were wealthy, but they were killed by Indians when they were coming by wagon to settle the land. I grew up as an orphan in Mitchido. And Eddie was my friend. The Nuns gave me an education. After I finished school, I found work with Mr Woods as a farm hand. I worked hard for him and I enjoyed the work with the cattle. Mr Woods taught me how to ride like a bronco buster and to shoot like a bounty hunter. I felt sorry for Mrs Woods because she was never allowed to leave the ranch or even to speak with us farm workers. Last year Mr Woods sacked me because I had romantic intentions towards his daughter Annabel. Now I work for Frank and he treats me like a son. *Dress suggestions:* Plaid pants rolled up, plain shirt, bow tie/tie & braces. Hay poking out.

Red-Eye Mitchell (*gunslinger*) My parents were killed when I was little by Crow Indians, but I was lucky because one of the Indians liked my red hair and took me back with him. They called me "Red As The Sun". My hair's not as red now though. The Indians taught me how to ride bare-back and hands free. I learnt how to shoot a gun going full gallop. But when I became a man, they said I had to leave because I wasn't one of them. Then I worked as a stockman for a while, but word got around about how good I was with a gun. Being brought up Indian, I haven't been held back by all these Christian ethics. If a man is bad, I have no hesitation in killing him. People pay me to kill for them. The money is good and I can hide well because of my Indian training, so the law never catches up with me. Frank Reyes has brought me to town because he wants someone on his side to help with a showdown. *Dress suggestions:* Bring a toy gun, water pistol or cardboard cutout of a gun (no real guns, please).

Lulu Peachy (*Can-Can girl*) I dreamed of being an opera singer, but my mother was too poor to send me to singing lessons. My father abandoned us when I was little. I suppose that's why I have never really trusted men
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much. After I turned 12, I went to work in a factory. When I turned 17, someone offered me a job as a Can-Can girl. I thought it sounded more fun so I did it. After I had been with the show about a month, they said that they had been offered a permanent spot in Mitchido in the country. Being young, I thought that sounded exciting. The sponsors of the show get a front row seat. Richard was my sponsor and I was his filly – as he liked to call me – for over a year. He felt that gave him the right to tell me what I should perform and how I should live my life. Someday I would prefer to be a singer in a larger town. *Dress suggestions:* A Can-Can girl outfit with lots of petticoats (starched stiff).

Spring Leaf (*Native American girl*) When I grew up – the boy in the next tepee – "Red As The Sun" – was my friend. When the boy became a man, he was told to leave. I was very sad. My parents said it had to be because he was not the same as us. Then the whites decided they wanted our land and they came and killed us. Their leader was General Woods and he killed my parents. He would have killed me too, but he decided to take me back as his maid. I was only 10 and very distressed, because my parents and friends had been killed. I did not talk for over 2 years. I was made to do chores. After I turned 12, I became the maid of General Woods' son Richard. His wife Katherine was nice to me, but Mr Woods treated me very badly. *Dress suggestions:* A Native American squaw outfit including suede shirt & skirt & feathers.

Margaret Read (*shop-owner's wife*) I went to school with Richard and Katherine, but I wasn't friends with them. I was very good with numbers at school, but because I was a woman, I couldn't become an accountant. My husband and I met at school and a few years after we left school, he stammered out a proposal of marriage. I knew he wasn't much of a man, but I loved him anyway. We found we couldn't have children so there wasn't much for me to do except to help my husband manage the store. My husband is a bit timid and if anyone starts to question the price of the goods, he just panics – a bit like a horse when it stands on a rattler. They rear and buck and lose the plot completely. But if I'm around, if there's any trouble about money, I just pull out my gun. That stops most people quibbling over a few oats. *Dress suggestions:* Conservative period wear (eg long skirts with long half aprons, bonnets, gloves and boots).

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Witnesses (optional)

Nicholas Read (*shop-owner*) I also went to school with Richard and Katherine. But they ignored me just like they ignored Margaret. I wasn't particularly good at school, but I got through it. I inherited the store from my parents. They died young of tuberculosis. I met Margaret at school and when it was time, I proposed to her. I knew Margaret was a bit on the bossy side, but I knew she'd be a good wife. I'm not that timid. I just don't like people criticizing the way I run my business. Margaret and I do enjoy our card games. We also hear a lot of talk because of the shop, but I wouldn't call us gossips, just friendly people. *Dress suggestions:* Conservative period wear (eg check pants, plain shirt, bow tie or tie and braces).

Miss Norma Picket: I'm a school teacher. I went to school with Richard and Katherine, but I wasn't really friends with either of them. I was friends with Margaret. We were best friends. We did everything together. I still visit Margaret and her husband quite often. We like to play a hand of bridge or two. They keep me informed on all the town's gossip. My father was a farmer. I loved looking out over our fields with all the wheat waving its heads of grain. There is nothing more beautiful than a prairie, now is there? Although I'm very strict with my students, I do care about their welfare. Annabel and Luke were my students. *Dress suggestions:* Wear conservative period wear (eg long skirts with long half aprons, bonnets, gloves and boots). Carry a ruler or a cane.

Fergie Withers: I have been Mr Reyes maid for many years. I became his maid when he married his wife. I was so upset when Mrs Reyes died giving birth. I was devastated. She had been such a lovely lady. So I stayed on to take care of Mr Reyes. He has always been a good person to work for. I always like it when Miss Annabel visits us. Miss Annabel loves the blueberry muffins I make. I am due to retire soon. *Dress suggestions:* Wear conservative period wear (eg long skirts with long half aprons, bonnets and boots). Carry a feather duster.

Fifi Amouray: I'm a Can-Can girl. I was hopeless at school because all I could think of were the boys. My dad was ill and my mother died early. So I had to work as soon as I could just to survive. I had always loved music and dancing and singing, so I decided to work in a saloon. I thought it would be much more fun than being a maid. I am a dancer at the same bar as Lulu and we are close friends. I can kick my legs higher than any other gal in the chorus. *Dress suggestions:* A Can-Can girl outfit including lots of petticoats (starched stiff).

Dr Conroy Splint: I'm a medical doctor. Richard Woods was a few years ahead of me at school, so I didn't get to know him much. Frank took over the running of the family farm, but I preferred to learn how to help people, so I studied medicine. As a doctor I've seen what some men do to their women and I know how Richard Woods had been treating Mrs Woods. I have never married as my work keeps me too busy, but I have a few friends such as Norma Picket. She's a fine woman. *Dress suggestions:* Wear conservative period wear (eg check pants, plain shirt, bow tie or tie and braces). Carry a black bag possibly with a stethoscope and/or thermometer inside.

Running Stream: I'm a Native American Squaw. Like Spring Leaf, my parents were killed. We came from the same tribe. I came to work for Dr Splint as his cook. He is a good kind man. I am lucky. Spring Leaf and I are friends. We meet up briefly each week when we go to town to pick up the supplies. *Dress suggestions:* Wear a Native American squaw outfit including suede shirt and skirt and feathers.

Wally Finley: I own the saloon. I grew up in Philadelphia, but when my Dad died, I inherited quite a bit of money. I heard "The Lone Star Saloon" in Mitchido was for sale, so I moved here and bought it. It wasn't much of a bar when I took over it, but I have tried to improve it by hiring some dancers like Lulu. They're fine girls and they put on a really good show kicking their pretty legs as high as they can. The only trouble with owning a saloon is that you get some customers you just don't like. Real trouble ones like Richard Woods. *Dress suggestions:* Wear conservative period wear (eg check pants, plain shirt, bow tie or tie and braces). Carry a towel and some empty glasses when you arrive.

Clem "Bubba" Longneck: I'm a farmhand. I grew up in the heart of Texas right below the Hill Country in Goat Neck. But me and my hat and my horse, well we decided to travel a bit, so we crossed the Medina and kept on riding and that's how we ended up in Mitchido. I took the only job I could find which was to be a farmhand for Richard Woods. I took Luke's job after he'd been sacked for liking Annabel. I told Mr Woods that I didn't care for tomboys like Annabel and he was fine with that. Can't say I liked Mr Woods much, but I liked his long horn cattle real well. *Dress suggestions:* Wear real cowboy gear and a big ten-gallon hat.

Charlie Hashbrowns: I'm a cook at the saloon. I've lived in this town since I was a small boy and I've seen more gunfights than potatoes in a barrel. Anyone complains about my cooking, they get out of town real quick, I can tell you. I don't give them a chance to wipe the grease off their face. *Dress suggestions:* Grubby shirt with short or rolled up sleeves and grubby trousers. You're overweight so you may want to add some padding.

Sami Suds: I'm a young boy working as a kitchen-hand at the saloon. My dad got me this job. It's not a bad job but when Charlie the cook gets mad, like when someone says they don't like his cooking, pots and pans get thrown all over the place and I get out of there real quick before he starts on the knives. *Dress suggestions:* Stained white shirt and trousers.

Gordon Grimly: I run the funeral parlor. Some people might think this is a depressing job but somebody's got to do it. I'm the body who puts the body in the box, you might say. You bring 'em in an' I'll lay 'em out. I've seen some blood spilt and some tears shed in this town I can tell you. *Dress suggestions:* Dark suit with a waistcoat, black polished shoes and a black top hat made out of cardboard.

Bruce Brownloaf: I'm the town baker. I might look like I'm rolling in dough but it ain't the kind you can spend. I'm up before the birds are awake firing up the ovens and kneading the dough. It's hard work but it keeps me warm in winter and I give any leftover bread to the orphanage. I haven't got any kids myself so I like to help those who don't have parents. *Dress suggestions:* White trousers, white shirt and white apron. Have flour in your hair and on your hands and arms. Carry a loaf of bread.

Chad Moneybags: I'm the manager of the Mitchido Bank. I love the smell of money, that's why I became a bank manager. I started off as a teller and worked my way up and now I get to handle lots and lots of bank notes. I don't even care if it's not all mine. But I make a good living and I'm very well respected in town. At night I spend hours polishing my coins before I go to bed. *Dress suggestions:* A business suit, with a waistcoat and a western string tie with a gold toggle, and polished shoes. If possible have a fob watch in your waistcoat pocket. Have coins in your pocket that you jingle constantly.

Ellie Finework: I make the prettiest lace in town. My fine lace collars can make any dress look a million dollars. My small delicate fingers can tat quicker than a trap can catch a mouse in a barn. My grandmother taught me how to do it and I will teach my daughters how to make lace when they're old enough. *Dress suggestions:* A plain colored dress with a lace collar and cuffs, a pretty hat with flowers and dainty shoes.

Dorothy Dolittle: They call me the town gossip and I admit I love to gossip. I think it's important to know what everyone is doing and to let others know. Otherwise what would we have to think about? If anyone knows anything they must tell me so I can tell others. Who needs a daily newspaper when they've got me? They also say I'm a tittle-tattle but I just like to make sure everyone is doing the right thing. *Dress suggestions:* A not so new flowery dress, apron and hat.

Thomas Forge: I'm a Blacksmith and I may look kinda grubby but that's because I work hard all day over a hot furnace beating bits of iron into shape. I'm big and I'm strong. In fact I'm so strong I can lift a horse clear off the ground if I have to. *Dress suggestions:* An old dark short sleeve shirt and grubby and/or torn dark trousers. Put a smear or two of black boot polish on your face and arms and be unshaven or bearded. Pad out to emphasize your size.

Mary Williams (Sheriff's wife) When I was growing up, Clyde seemed to me to be one of the only boys at school that wasn't a bully. At school, Richard was always playing nasty pranks on the girls like leaving gum on the seat so your skirt stuck to it – that sort of thing. Clyde and I became boyfriend and girlfriend from an early age. He was so much fun in a gentle sort of way. Katherine came to town when I was 15 and we became friends. I was and still am – madly in love with Clyde – he reminds me of a big huggable Clydesdale – tough and reliable. *Dress suggestions:* Conservative period wear (eg long skirts with long half aprons, bonnets, gloves and boots).

Shirley: I am a Can-Can girl. I am the one that's always giggling while she kicks up her heels. *Dress suggestions:* Bright colored short dress with fishnet stockings and high heel shoes.

Rose Berry: I am just a young woman who tries to make a simple living by picking wild berries and making them into jam. I also make lovely cactus pickles and sell them to the chef at the saloon. He puts them in his beef and pickle sandwiches. When I make enough money I'm going to buy a handcart so I can sell my jams and pickles door to door. *Dress suggestions:* A simple dress, apron, flat shoes and a hat. Carry a jar of jam or pickles.

Name Tags

Suspects

Katherine Woods
(suspect)

Annabel
Woods
(suspect)

Sheriff Clyde
Williams
(suspect)

Joe
Calsis
(suspect)

Frank
Reyes
(suspect)

Eddie
Thomas
(suspect)

Luke
Hansen
(suspect)

Red-Eye
Mitchell
(suspect)

Lulu
Peachy
(suspect)

Spring
Leaf
(suspect)

Margaret
Read
(suspect)

Witnesses

Nicholas Read
Miss Norma Picket

Fergie Withers

Fifi Amouray

Dr Conroy Splint

Running Stream

Wally Finley

Clem "Bubba"
Longneck

Charlie Hashbrowns

Sami Suds

Gordon Grimly

Bruce Brownloaf

Chad Moneybags

Ellie Finework

Dorothy Dolittle

Thomas Forge

Mary Williams

Shirley

Rose Berry

Merri Mysteries presents...

“Murder On The Prairie”

by Stephanie Chambers

These are the:

Clues

Merri Mysteries presents...

“Murder On The Prairie”

Clue page for the witnesses

Print as many copies as you need.

Staple a copy of their name tag here

What I can reveal

Staple their extra clues here

Merri Mysteries presents...

“Murder On The Prairie”

Katherine Woods

What I can reveal

Whenever we had guests, I offered to play piano. But Richard told me that he didn't want me to do that. He said I was becoming like an actress or performer and that people would think less of me because of it. I protested, but he insisted. As time went by, Richard even stopped me from practicing the piano. He said he hated the sound of it. From then on, I could only practice when he was on a trip away from town. I made the servants swear not to tell him what I had been up to. When I found myself pregnant with Annabel, I was happy about it. But Richard became even more jealous and he made me go to my room whenever we had visitors. Richard wanted more children, but for some reason God didn't answer his prayers. That made Richard even angrier towards me. He told me that I was never to leave the ranch not even to attend Church. I had become a prisoner in my own home. After a few years, I got used to never going out. Richard spent more time in town watching the dancers. I was relieved to have him out of my hair. Luke was a sweet lad. When Richard sacked him because he liked Annabel, I protested and said Annabel would be lucky to marry a man like Luke. Richard got angry. He said he would decide who Annabel would marry. On the night before the murder, Richard came home early and told Annabel that she would have to marry Harold Edgert, the new young lawyer in town. Annabel burst into tears, because she doesn't like him.

(see next page)

What I need to do

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

What I need to do

- 1 If anyone asks about you and Joe, say: "Sometimes Annabel would tell me if she saw Joe. He always used to ask after me and to send his regards to me via Annabel."
- 2 If someone asks what happened this morning, say, "We had breakfast in silence. Spring Leaf wasn't there because it was her day off, so I served the meal. The farm hand Bubba wasn't there as he'd gone away for a few days to see his sick mother. Annabel wasn't there. She had gotten up early and gone for a ride. At 8 am Richard got on his horse and said he was going to round up some cattle in the bottom paddock and then he would be heading to town to see Harold."
- 3 If someone asks why you used a gun this morning say, "After Richard left a rattlesnake came up by the house and I got the gun out and shot it. I don't know where the gun is now. One of the farm hands must have taken it."

Merri Mysteries presents...

"Murder On The Prairie"

Annabel Woods

What I can reveal

When I was young, I used to ride over to our neighbor Frank's. He would give me a large glass of lemonade and I'd ride back. I never told Daddy about it because I knew he hated Frank. One time Frank told me what Daddy was doing – that he was damming the river so a fifth of Frank's land would be useless. I cried. I didn't want to lose my friend. Frank comforted me and told me that we would always be friends no matter what my father did. Another time, Daddy followed me and saw me visiting Frank. He stopped me and beat my poor horse with a whip. He made me swear never to visit Frank again. That's when I started to hate Daddy. I kept going to visit Frank, but only when Daddy was away on one of his business trips.

When Luke came to work for us, I was only 16. He was very shy and never came up to the house. Gradually Luke and I became friends. I was always out riding in my spare time and he would see me and ride up for a chat. Our horses trotted along together like circus ponies. Daddy thought Luke was a good worker, but as Luke and I became even more close friends, he came to dislike him. I thought it was jealousy at first, but later I realized it was because he wanted to marry me off to someone he considered suitable. Eventually Luke got up the gumption to ask Daddy if he could marry me. Daddy was furious and told Luke he was nothing but a farm hand and his daughter deserved better. Daddy told Luke that he wanted him to leave our place and never to talk to me again. I cried and cried and pleaded with Daddy but he would not back down.

(see next page)

What I need to do

- 1 If anyone asks if it is true that you and your father argued the night before he was killed, say: "Yes. Harold Edgert's so ugly I feel queasy just looking at him. Daddy ignored my tears and told me that he would tell Harold that his offer of marriage had been accepted and that he would bring him back to the house for a celebration lunch. He told me to dress up for it."
- 2 If someone asks where you were this morning, say, "I didn't want to see Daddy so I got up early and went for a ride on my horse. I didn't come back until around noon."

Merri Mysteries presents...

"Murder On The Prairie"

Clyde Williams

What I can reveal

Richard's Dad helped finance me as the town's sheriff. The financial arrangement was fine until Richard's Dad died and then I had to accept money from Richard. Initially Richard reduced the amount of money. And he threatened that if I didn't do what he wanted, he would reduce it even further. I would have told Richard to go jump in the muddy river, but that was just when my wife was expecting our first child and we really needed the money to fix the roof which was leaking badly.

My first run in with Woods came when I found out that he was telling one of the dancers in town – Lulu Peachy – that she wasn't to sing any songs. I told him it was just not appropriate. He told me to shut up or he would cut my supplement even more.

Everything went along relatively smoothly, until recently when Richard accused poor little Eddie of killing his cattle. Frank and I had always been friends. I told Richard that he was stupid to pick on Eddie just because he was black. That made Richard angry and he even tried to hit me. That guy thought he could do anything. I didn't do anything in return. I just told him to get out or I'd lock him up for assaulting an officer of the law. We decided we'd rather give up the supplement than have to put up with this kind of thing. When I told Richard, he said that I'd better reconsider or he would arrange with the authorities in Washington to make sure I lost my job. He said he had enough connections in high places to make it happen.

(see next page)

What I need to do

- 1 If someone asks what you did this morning say, "I decided to ride out to Richard's place to try and reason the whole Eddie case out with him. Because of the supplement business, I went alone rather than with a deputy as I usually did."

Clues for the witnesses

You should divide up these 92 clues amongst the witnesses (if you have any). The witnesses should get 4 or 5 clues each. You may like to staple the clues to the clue pages for the witnesses. Please make sure they are all given out. If you don't have any witnesses, divide these clues up amongst your other guests.

Margaret Read has been more generous with credit than she should have been. She let Richard run up large bills and now she's in financial difficulties.

You shouldn't fire shots in your store Margaret. You're getting holes in the ceiling and it's starting to make the roof leak.

Mr Woods used to go to the store and buy gifts like perfume. I learnt from Lulu that they were for her – not for his poor wife.

Mrs Woods occasionally was allowed to buy a dress, but not very often. He was quite stingy towards her even though they were rich.

Mr Woods was so far behind in paying his bills at the store that Margaret was getting quite desperate about being paid.

Margaret said she and her husband were on the brink of bankruptcy because Richard wasn't paying his bills and her creditors were getting angry. And he was still insisting she give him more credit.

Margaret's husband has an ulcer because of the financial stress apparently and it's getting worse lately. Margaret is really worried about him.

I heard Margaret's husband was upset because Margaret rode out to meet Mr Woods. He told her it was dangerous because Mr Woods was a bad tempered man.

When Annabel was fourteen, she came to school looking so upset.

When Miss Picket – Annabel's teacher – realized Annabel's father had been treating Annabel badly, she took him aside and told him not to treat her that way any more.
