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Party games for 8 to 100 guests

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presents...

“The Search For The Truth”

Standard version
for 6 females and 6 males

(Christian “mystery not murder” version)

by Stephanie Chambers

Second edition

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The Suspects

A large group is attending a Christian camp. The theme for the weekend is to find the truth. As the weekend progresses the participants find that they are not only on a search for their own personal truth, but also the truth in relation to a crime they didn't think could ever happen – the poisoning of camp leader, Peter Stein. But it is obvious that there was no intention to kill Peter, only to make him sick.

Peter is a hard-working 56-year-old man who is said to look like “a stern garden gnome”. He is a Vietnam vet and retired Lt. Col. in the US Army. His favorite food is Haggen Daaz ice cream and he never turns down dessert. He has a wife who is helping run the camp, two grown children and four grandchildren. He is a counselor for the police department. He has a Masters in counseling, although some people found his counseling style a bit dictatorial.

Kevin Spicer – I'm mad about heavy metal music. I played piano for 11 years but now I prefer to play bass guitar. I received a scholarship recently to do computer science at university. I like chick flicks but never get to see them because I don't have a girlfriend and I'm too embarrassed to go on my own. I hate Tim Allen movies. I was in a car wreck last year that totaled my friend's car. I drive a big red Buick, work at sorting parcels, and still live with my mom. *Dress suggestions:* Black clothes and glasses. Carry a heavy metal CD.

Pamela Marras – I am so sweet – everybody says so. I have a beautiful laugh that is contagious, but too loud sometimes, people tell me. Guys are mad about me and I'm mad about Latin and Psychology (both of which I am studying). I have played in the sea a little bit but I don't know how to swim so I don't go swimming. I wear contact lenses. I've vacationed out of the country to places like Trinidad and Bermuda. I'm vegetarian. I like karate movies and I hate people telling me what I should or shouldn't do. *Dress suggestions:* Pretty feminine clothes. Carry a book on Latin. Flirt and laugh a lot.

Kennie Rosie – I love any movies by Monty Python especially “The Search For The Holy Grail”). I'm a drummer and play the guitar pretty well too. I've written a few songs including “My Two String Guitar” which everybody knows and likes. I love basketball and work at a grocery store. I have a girl for a best friend (Kitty Raymond) and a girlfriend (Renata Beavis). I'm a great skateboarder and a pretty good snowboarder too. I can always make people laugh so I'm good fun to have around. My ambition is to be a radio broadcaster or an actor, because I can do great English and Australian accents. *Dress suggestions:* Carry a guitar. Quote bits from “The Search for the Holy Grail”. Speak with an accent.

Eleanor Hoskins – I am fluent in sign language as both my parents are deaf. I spent last Christmas on a cruise in the Bahamas. I wear braces and I can eat more than anyone else but I never put on weight. Everyone teases me about my appetite. They tell me I'm eating all their supplies but I don't think they're serious. My hair is red right now but I change the color every month or so. I'm mad about a guy named Tyler, but that might change next week. I'm a student and I work at a copy shop part time. I've taken 3 years of German but still struggle with it. I will be attending an elite art school in San Francisco next year. I like to wear clothes that show my flat tummy. At night I go to sleep cuddling my teddy bear. *Dress suggestions:* Wear arty clothes that show your tummy. Color your hair (with a temporary overnight color). Carry a teddy bear. Carry a German translation book and speak a few words of German.

Damien Hoskins – I'm Eleanor's brother. I still live at home with my parents. Like my sister, I am also fluent in sign language. I love country music. I also went on the cruise with my parents. I have a dog and a cat (the cat is also deaf). I always wear a baseball cap, even to bed. The only time I don't wear it is in the shower. I'm really fit because I walk about two miles every day and play football, basketball and do wrestling. *Dress suggestions:* Sports clothes and a baseball cap. Carry a football or basketball.

Renata Beavis – Some people think I'm a bit fanatical because I carry a toothbrush and mouth wash with me wherever I go. I make lists for everything, keeping track of every food group I eat during the day on a chart, which I keep in my purse. I always match the color of my top with my socks. I'm an avid scrapbooker so I'm always taking photos. I'm Kennie's girlfriend and I have a little white Maltese dog named Angelo, but they call him “Angel”, because he is one. *Dress suggestions:* Carry toothbrush and mouthwash and a notebook and pen. Wear green socks that match your green top and wear green nail polish.

Kitty Raymond – I'm a gymnast. I no longer compete but I am still as limber as ever. If you notice my lisp, I would prefer you not to mention it. I like to have something in my mouth to chew on. The guys don't seem to like me very much. My socks never match. I think it's a waste of time to worry about that. My parents are always off traveling somewhere. I've been to every state in the Union but Alaska and also traveled to Germany, Italy, England, and France. I don't eat breakfast, and some people think I'm a bit ditzy. I wear contacts and when I spend the night somewhere without having my contact solution, I sleep with my contacts in my mouth. I swallowed them once. *Dress suggestions:* Wear mismatched gymnastic type clothes with odd socks. Chew gum, speak with a lisp and behave a bit ditzy.

Theresa MacGregor – I am a teenager and I’m in love with a 21 year old named John Mark Harrison and have been for at least a year (he used to go to our church but moved to Wisconsin). I’ve never been kissed by a boy and I like to mother everyone, even my own mother. I play the violin, am very ticklish and I’m very good at saving money. I have a purple and green bedroom; I’m great at foos ball, love the Green Bay Packers and talk very loudly when I’m excited. I love any movie from Saturday Night Live (eg “Wayne’s World” etc.) and simply adore the actor Heath Ledger from “The Patriot”. I love the ocean. In fact I love almost everything except my big feet! *Dress suggestions:* Purple clothes, big shoes, blond wig. A violin.

Langley Weaver – I am a student. I play electric guitar (in a band with Kennie and Kevin), and am gaga over Donna Glover! I drive a black Cougar and I’m VERY protective of Donna. I’ll do anything she wants. I sing back up in the band and I have a little brother. Though I like heavy bands, I’m usually very mellow. I’ve just started working at a grocery store on weekends. It’s not much fun but it helps to pay my student fees. *Dress suggestions:* Modern clothes with glasses and bleached hair.

Donna Glover – I’m a student and I’m gaga over my boyfriend Langley. I’m teaching myself how to play the piano and I work at a department store. I adore short shirts and hipsters but my parents won’t let me wear them. With my blonde hair everybody says I look like Britney Spears. I know a lot about horses. I plan to be a vet and I don’t intend to have any kids. I prefer animals. I love anything that’s pink. My whole room is pink. I also sing in a choir. They tell me I have a lovely singing voice. I pretend to be ditzy (but I’m really not). *Dress suggestions:* Pink clothes. Blond wig. Sing a little.

Keld Henderson – I work as a draftsman for an electrical firm. I’m a youth leader. I’m getting married this fall to my girlfriend Rose, which is very exciting. I’m usually quiet except when in a competition of some sort. They say I’m very competitive. I love to ride jet skis. I really want one! I drive a little white truck and love anything that has to do with the “Indiana Jones” series, whether it is the movies or the TV show. *Dress suggestions:* Modern clothes. Carry an Indiana Jones video.

Investigator: Detective Sam Cummings – a police officer. I knew Peter from the police station. But we weren’t friends. *Dress suggestions:* Mock police uniform. © copyright Acture Pty Ltd 2005

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Kevin
Spicer
(suspect)

Pamela
Marras
(suspect)

**Kennie
Rosie**
(suspect)

**Eleanor
Hoskins**
(suspect)

**Damien
Hoskins**
(suspect)

**Renata
Beavis**
(suspect)

**Kitty
Raymond**
(suspect)

**Theresa
MacGregor**
(suspect)

**Langley
Weaver**
(suspect)

**Donna
Glover**
(suspect)

**Keld
Henderson**
(suspect)

**Detective Sam
Cummings**

Merri Mysteries presents...

“The Search For The Truth”

by Stephanie Chambers

These are the clues for:

Detective Sam Cummings

(Speak first) “As you all know, Peter Stein has been poisoned. Fortunately, he’s only got severe diarrhea and a bit of nausea. From the nature of the poison used, we can tell that there was no intention to kill Peter, only to make him ill.

Apparently he left your spiritual meeting this morning saying that he wasn’t feeling well and he was going to lie down in the men’s cabin. Keld found him collapsed and lying outside the door to the other cabin when you all had your morning break. He took him home to recover.

We have taken all the food to be analyzed as we suspect that Peter was poisoned during breakfast. We are also conducting a search of your belongings.”

Ask each question to the group, going around the circle:

- 1 Have any of you seen Peter lately in the past few weeks or months? What happened last time you saw him?
- 2 Did Peter speak to you since you came on this camp? What did he say? Did you hear Peter say anything to anyone else at the camp? What did he say?
- 3 Apparently Peter made a short speech on Friday night that put a few people offside. We found his notes for this speech. This is what he said:

“I have been really saddened, as I am sure you all have been, by the spate of youth killings over the past few years. I have been giving it a lot of thought. I have decided, for reasons I will discuss over the weekend, that we all need to lead even purer lives, free from the influence of violence and closer to God. Even though I have led a pretty violent life myself having been in the army as I was, I think we all need to give up things such as:

- *Wrestling, football and competitive sports and games in general. Even things like foos ball.*
- *Participating in karate and other martial arts or watching martial art films. (see the next page)*

- *Playing rock music and heavy metal. Only classical music is truly uplifting.*
- *Watching violent films and other films such as Monty Python films and Austin Powers's films.*
- *Eating mind-altering substances such as chocolate.*

Instead we should all focus our efforts on being more loving.

I don't want to discuss all this now however as it is time for us all to watch a video. I will discuss it with you all over the weekend."

- 4 What was your reaction to that speech and how did your friends react to it?

Detective Sam Cummings - Act Two

During this act, you must ask everyone present the following questions. You should ask these to each person but have everyone present so that everyone can hear the answers:

- 1 Did you get on well with Peter?
- 2 Is there anyone you know wasn't getting on well with Peter? Is there anyone you think may have been involved in Peter's poisoning?

During this act, you should also say:

- 3 Peter's wife, children and grandchildren are nominated as beneficiaries in his will. He has also stipulated that some money be given to the Hagen Daaz corporation to help them develop a new licorice flavored ice cream to be called "Peter's Black Jellybean Ice Cream".
- 4 Peter's will also states that he wants the youth band to play Kennie's "*My Two String Guitar*" song at his funeral.
- 5 Renata, you were seen talking to the cook in the kitchen yesterday and making notes in a notebook. Were you trying to find out what Peter usually ate for breakfast so you could poison it?

Detective Sam Cummings - Act Three

(say this early on) “Peter was poisoned by a drug called Cuibono. This is a new pharmaceutical, which has recently been developed in Trinidad for tinea. It is designed to be applied externally and is poisonous if taken internally in a large dose. This drug produces a very distinctive fishy smell in the body as it takes effect. That is how we were able to identify it so soon. Some of you are panicking a bit about whether you’ve been poisoned. This drug is fairly fast acting, so if you had been poisoned you would know it by now.”

During this act, you must ask everyone present the following questions. You should ask these to each person but have everyone present so that everyone can hear the answers:

- 1 What time did you get up this morning?
- 2 What were you up to this morning before the meeting? Is there anyone who can vouch for your whereabouts?
- 3 Who did you sit next to at breakfast?
- 4 We have conducted a search of all of your belongings and your cars. We would like you to listen to this unsent letter we found in Peter’s belongings. We appreciate whatever help you can give us in our investigation.

Regarding Kevin Spicer’s university scholarship:

A copy of an unsent letter to the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) Administrators from Peter Stein:

“I would like to inform you as Kevin Spicer’s camp leader and counselor that I feel he isn’t emotionally mature enough for the challenges of university life.

For example, Kevin has not had a girlfriend, which demonstrates his lack of emotional development.

Although he is good at computer science, he has always lived at home and I think he is not capable of taking care of himself (eg doing his own washing etc). (see the next page)

Kevin may be ready in a few years time, but he definitely is not psychologically prepared for the demands of university life at present. I would, therefore, urge you to retract your offer of scholarship to your university.

As a grandparent and a youth counselor (I have a master’s degree in counseling) I feel I am qualified to offer my opinion on Kevin.

Yours sincerely

Peter Stein

Merri Mysteries presents...

“The Search For The Truth”

by Stephanie Chambers

These are the clues for:

*Kevin
Spicer*

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 I saw Peter at church. And last week I saw him with his family at the ice cream parlor. He told me pralines 'n' cream was his favorite. I noticed he had a much bigger ice cream than anyone else in his family.
- 2 I can't remember Peter speaking to me personally at the camp. But he was always barking orders to everyone. I think the only "camps" he'd ever been on were "boot-camps" in the army so he had no idea how to run the camp as a "fun event". He ran it like "boot-camp" and it wrecked the whole camp for everyone.
- 3 Peter's speech on Friday night didn't worry me. I just thought he'd gone bananas and ignored it.
- 4 I was a bit depressed last night so I went for a drive. Driving out in my beautiful Buick and having my stereo playing full blast always makes me feel better.
- 5 People at the camp lost respect for Peter because they felt he was being too bossy.

Kevin Spicer - Act Two

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 I got on okay with Peter, but I think he was jealous of my car. His wife wouldn't let him have a red car. She thinks it's too bright for an old man to drive. Maybe he was going through a mid-life crisis and that's why he gave that stupid speech.
- 2 A few people were disgruntled about Peter's speech on Friday night. I heard a few people say they weren't sure whether he was joking or not. But what is worrying me is whether we might all have been poisoned? How do we know it just hasn't taken effect yet? Shouldn't we all be going to have our stomach's pumped or something?
- 3 There was a strange smell coming from the girl's dorm this morning. It wasn't a soap or perfume smell. I wonder if Renata was concocting some strange poison while she was pretending to paint her nails.
- 4 Eleanor was seen in the kitchen yesterday looking in the food cupboard. When someone came in she pretended she had lost something.
- 5 Kitty was showing Donna how to do a handstand and Peter told them it was very unladylike and that they must stop. I heard Kitty was furious.

Kevin Spicer - Act Three

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 I got up this morning at around 7:30. The birds were still singing and people were snoring.
- 2 I sat in the dining area of the men's cabin and played computer games on my laptop. Peter talked to Kennie and me for a bit. Then Peter went outside. I think I heard him talking to someone.
- 3 I sat at the end of the table next to Donna at breakfast. Langley was opposite me.
- 4 Peter developed a bright purple tongue. Theresa, you are obsessed with the color purple, aren't you? You even painted your room that color. Was this your doing? Of course this is pure speculation. You don't have to answer this yet.
- 5 Donna Glover wants to be a vet, so she is probably already researching drugs and poisons and things like that. She probably tells her parents she is just researching animal husbandry, but she could have other plans for these drugs.

Merri Mysteries presents...

“The Search For The Truth”

by Stephanie Chambers

These are the clues for:

*Pamela
Marras*

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 Peter lives near me so I see him quite a bit. Recently I saw him at church and at the local store. He was buying binoculars so he could spy on his neighbors.
- 2 Peter said to me on the camp: “I will have to teach you how to swim when we get back. Just because you wear contact lenses doesn’t mean you should shirk from things like swimming. And what’s this about counseling victims rather than the criminals when you become a psychologist? The criminals are the real ones who need psychological help. Believe me, I know. I work with them.”
- 3 Peter’s speech on Friday night didn’t worry me. I’ve never liked what he’s said about anything, so I just ignored it.
- 4 Some people have been giving Peter the cold shoulder on this camp. Actually it’s been more like a freezer, than just refrigerator-type “coldness”.
- 5 Some people at the camp thought Peter wasn’t the angel or the quiet gnome he pretended to be.

Pamela Marras - Act Two

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 I get on okay with Peter. I just hope Peter's poisoning wasn't like Agatha Christie's "Sparkling Cyanide" where the wrong person was poisoned because people were sitting at the wrong spot at the table. In that case, the villain may try again to poison the person they really want to poison. I'm not sure that I want to stay here. Can we go home now if we want to?
- 2 I haven't seen any strangers near the cabins, but you never know. Thieves can be quick and so can poisoners I guess.
- 3 When Kitty came into one of the rooms yesterday she heard Peter speaking to some of the girls with a lisp. She thought he was imitating her. She was furious and stormed out.
- 4 Peter told Kevin he should forget computers and become a pastor because he was never likely to get married. This made Kevin feel depressed and insecure.
- 5 Langley told Peter if he didn't leave Donna alone he'd make sure he never ran another camp.

Pamela Marras - Act Three

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 I got up this morning at six. I couldn't sleep. I'm not used to sharing a room with other people. I sat in the girl's dining room and read my book till the others got up. I have to read certain books for the literature course I'm doing.
- 2 Donna, I heard you were trying to lure Peter into the forest this morning to show him a tree. I wonder why you wanted to be alone with him.
- 3 I sat between Damien and Peter at breakfast. Kennie sat opposite me.
- 4 I feel sorry for Peter's wife. She's really lovely and she is totally devoted to Peter. She'll be so shocked when she hears he's been poisoned.
- 5 Donna's parents rang the camp to say Donna was a bit overwrought and to keep an eye on her.

Merri Mysteries presents...

“The Search For The Truth”

by Stephanie Chambers

These are the clues for:

Kennie Rosie

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 I saw Peter at church and I also saw him last weekend at the movies. He was there with his wife and they'd just seen “Meet the Parents”. I was going to see “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon”.
- 2 Peter told me that he'd chosen a really good video for the camp. When he told me what he'd chosen, I almost died in horror. It was the kind of movie six year olds watch. It was about birds or something. Fortunately, he and his wife left us and went to bed after the first fifteen minutes, so I was able to swap it for a murder mystery video that I had in my bag because I was going to return it on the way home.
- 3 I thought Peter had gone a bit off his rocker with his speech. Fancy telling people not to watch Monty Python movies or to play in rock bands. I was a bit irritated. I don't see why we have to give up things like listening to rock music. It isn't fair. I thought Peter needed to chill out – badly.
- 4 Maybe it was a delayed poison that one of Peter's police clients gave him for some crazy reason.
- 5 Peter kept complaining that the music was too loud. He kept telling people to turn it down. He made everyone feel uncomfortable. People were getting grumpy about it.

Kennie Rosie - Act Two

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 I got on pretty well with Peter as long as we didn't talk about movies.
- 2 Peter wasn't someone I thought would ever be poisoned. That's a bit drastic. I thought that everyone would just not let him run any more camps. At breakfast I ate fruit loops just like Peter did. How do I know, as Kevin said, that I wasn't also poisoned and it just hasn't hit me yet?
- 3 *(after Kitty says you threatened Peter)* I always try and look on the bright side of life, but having a 'friend' like you Kitty, saying that I threatened Peter, makes it hard. How could you say such a thing? I'm a pacifist Kitty – you know that. You're a betrayer Kitty. You're just as bad as Judas.
- 4 *(say the rest of these points in response to what Renata says to you)* Beside's me.
- 5 Now steady on Renata. He worked at the Police Department as a counselor. Maybe it was some criminal gone a bit crazy.
- 6 Maybe they slipped in and out without being noticed.
- 7 What have you noticed that's so strange?
- 8 Sounds like pretty normal behavior if you ask me. In fact, the only person behaving strangely was Peter himself. Do you think he meant what he said about giving up karate and chocolate?
- 9 Here, have a cry on my shoulder Renata. You'll feel better for it.

Kennie Rosie - Act Three

During this act, you must reveal the following points:

- 1 I rocked out of bed this morning at eight. I'm always energetic in the morning.
- 2 I cleaned my teeth and had a shower. I talked to Kevin in the men's dining room. Then it was time for breakfast.
- 3 Renata sat on one side of me at breakfast and Kitty sat on the other. Pamela sat opposite me, but I didn't really talk to her.
- 4 Peter was very hard on Keld. Peter told him he should be more responsible and set a good example because he is a youth leader. I don't think he approved of Keld watching Indiana Jones and riding jet skis.