



# DEATH AT THE DISTILLERY

*A Dinner Theatre Murder Mystery*

*by*

**Molly Rogers**

**co-created with Tom Honey**



*Published by Lazy Bee Scripts*

**Customer Taster**

# **Death at the Distillery**

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## ***About the Murder Mystery Pack***

The full pack provides the full script and guidance to enable you to produce a murder mystery dinner theatre event.

### ***The Pack Contains:***

- A guide for the organiser [*extract here*],
  - Play Overview
  - Character Profiles
  - Dialect notes
  - Event Format
  - Managing Audience Interaction
  - Production Notes (set, costume and props)
- The full script [*extract here*],
- Witness Statement sheets for the audience to formulate their suspicions,
- ‘Non-Disclosure Agreement’ forms for the audience to sign,
- The Stallard and Sons logo, which can be printed and affixed to prizes or props.

### ***Play Overview***

The year is 1921 and the audience have been invited on a tour of the Stallard and Sons whiskey distillery, Birmingham. With Sam recently appointed as the new leader, Stallard and Sons have been moving their business further down south and into London.

This move has angered the Camden Mob and their leader, Lonnie Lockwood. In retaliation to moves the Camden Mob have made, Charlie Stallard kidnaps Rosalie, the only daughter of Lonnie Lockwood. Soon after, a bloodied body is found near the yard. But whodunnit?

Due to the themes and language, it is advised that the audience be made up of those over the age of fifteen. You could encourage the audience to wear era-appropriate costumes.

### ***Characters***

**Sam Stallard:** The newly appointed owner of Stallard and Sons. Brother of Clara and Charlie. Son of Henry and Cece. Secretly in love with Rosalie. Age 24-29.

**Charlie Stallard:** Member of Stallard and Sons. Brother of Clara and Sam. Son of Henry and Cece. Secretly in love with Rosalie. Age 27-33.

**Clara Stallard:** Member of Stallard and Sons. Sister of Charlie and Sam. Daughter of Henry and Cece. In love with Alfie. Age 18-24.

**Henry Stallard:** Former owner of Stallard and Sons. Father of Sam, Charlie and Clara. Ex-lover of Cece. Age 50-60.

**Cece Stallard:** Ex-lover of Henry. Mother of Sam, Charlie and Clara. Age 50-60.

**Roland Finch:** Employee at Stallard and Sons. Age 40-60.

**Alfie Jones:** Employee at Stallard and Sons, Sam’s right hand man. Growing to love Clara. Ladies’ man. Age 20-25.

**Don Di Salvo:** Italian. Secretly married to Cece. Lonnie’s right-hand man. Member of the Camden Mob. Age 40-60.

**Lonnie Lockwood:** Leader of the Camden Mob. Father of Rosalie. Age 50-60.

**Rosalie Lockwood:** Daughter of Lonnie Lockwood. Member of the Camden Mob. Secretly in love with Charlie, but juggling both of the brothers. Age 20-27.

**Agent Margo Clarkson:** Agent of the Crown. Age 30+.

## ***Character Dialect***

Various characters have different accents.

Sam, Clara, Charlie, Alfie, Roland, Henry and Cece have strong Birmingham accents. Sam speaks more slowly, emphasising the pronunciation of the words and making them punchy, whereas Charlie speaks as if he's constantly frustrated, and Clara almost bored.

Agent Clarkson speaks in a posh southern tone.

Lonnie and Rosalie speak in cockney accents; Don has a thick Italian accent. Lonnie, like Sam, speaks slowly, his accent so strong it's almost pantomime-like. For Lonnie, 'th' sounds become 'f' sounds.

## ***Format***

This production is intended to run over a three-course meal, but can be adapted to run over a buffet.

Suggested running order is as follows:

- The audience are given drinks on arrival and taken to their tables.
- Act 1 (20 minutes)
- Cast mingle with audience (10 minutes).
- Starter and main course.
- Act 2 (20 minutes)
- Audience interrogation of suspects (10 minutes).
- Dessert.
- Audience fill in their Witness Statement sheets, which are then collected in.
- Act 3 (3 minutes)
- Cast bows.
- Awards.

## ***Audience Interaction***

At the end of Act 1, Clara, Sam, Henry, Roland and Alfie go around the tables and make sure the non-disclosure agreement forms are signed. They mingle in character with the audience. If guests refuse to sign the forms, play along with it in character. If asked about the murder, characters must deflect and give away nothing, perhaps saying something like "that's not open for discussion at this present time." Ad lib and enjoy the improv element, but reveal nothing. Sam must sign the non-disclosure agreements where it says 'owner'.

At the end of Act 2, there is an opportunity for the audience to interrogate the suspects. The Agent leads this, taking audience questions. The suspects must ad lib based on character and story. The guilty party must lie or deflect to avoid giving away the solution.

Before Act 3 begins, the audience must fill in their Witness Statement sheets. Agent Clarkson should oversee their collection (if there are non-acting members of the company available, they should be drafted in to this task).

Ideally, the Witness Statement sheets need to be assessed during Act 3. The only cast member available to do this is the corpse however there is not much time, therefore if there are non-acting members of the company available, they should be drafted in to this task.

After Act 3, awards can be given out. (For example, the audience member whose witness statement was closest to the truth could be presented with a small bottle of whiskey with the Stallard and Sons logo printed and stuck on top of the label.) This could be another job for Agent Clarkson or the corpse could step up.

# Death at the Distillery

[Script excerpt]

## Act 1

(Charlie enters. Henry follows after him. They look at one another, at the audience, then back at one another. They shrug the audience off and pour themselves a drink, sitting at the table. Sam enters semi-frantically. He approaches the table.)

**Sam:** Pour me a drink, Charlie. We've had a shipment go awry at the docks. An important one that's just arrived from Shanghai. If we lose this, we lose ten thousand pounds. Do you know anything about it? Dad?

**Henry:** Perhaps it was Lonnie's boys who...

(Charlie slaps his hand onto Henry's chest, shutting him up. He reminds Sam of the audience by gesturing towards them. Sam stands up properly, adjusting his shirt before approaching the audience.)

**Sam:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Sam Stallard, the newly appointed owner and business director of Stallard and Sons Distillery, Birmingham. I'd like to personally welcome you to our private quarters, the final stop on the tour tonight. This right here is the beating heart of the business. This is where the real magic happens. As part of our positive publicity campaign, you will be dining with us this evening, which we very much look forward to.

(Roland enters and pulls at Sam to get his attention. Sam pushes him away.)

**Sam:** On your tables, you will find a non-disclosure agreement and some writing instruments. It is vital due to the unpredictable nature of our business that you sign these. If you do not, I will cut your tongues from your mouths without a hint of hesitation. Understand?

**Roland:** (Panicking.) Sam, you need to come with me.

**Sam:** I am addressing our guests, Roland. Now is not the time.

**Roland:** But it's Clara, Sam Sir. She's locked herself in the bathroom again. She's not answering to anybody, Sir.

**Sam:** Perhaps she's just not answering to you. Charlie, have you tried her?

**Charlie:** Fella's right, she won't speak. Nothing. Said she's feeling unwell.

**Henry:** We thought it best to leave her be, let her rest.

**Roland:** After last week? With all due respect, Sir, I was moppin' chunks of beef off the floor for hours. Put me off my dinner. I haven't eaten much since. I think it's best you go and see to her, Sir.

**Sam:** Right, okay. You lot have a drink then, and you (to Roland) remember we have guests.

(Sam exits. Roland turns to the audience.)

**Roland:** We are so pleased you've decided to take part in the tour. It's important we show ourselves in a good light, especially following the episode with...

(Lonnie and Don enter through the audience. Lonnie begins shouting as soon as he enters.)

**Lonnie:** Henry Stallard! How dare that imbecile son of yours take business in London! You know London's my ground, I run London! I have London and below and your scummy lot have the dirty midlands and above! How has he not wrapped his fucking head around that?

(Alfie enters from the same entrance as Lonnie and Don. He is out of breath.)

**Alfie:** I tried to stop him, Henry! He just came out of nowhere, no warning!

**Lonnie:** Sounds like you lot. (To Henry.) My business was flying till you stepped down. If you don't take your dealings back to pikeyard, I will make you disappear like yesterday's fucking paper. You will be the shit on a tramp's shoe and I will smile as you stink and rot into the Earth.

**Charlie:** (Squares up to Lonnie.) You ought to pipe down, mate. You've got some nerve coming in here acting like the big man. (Spits at Lonnie's feet.) Look at you. Pathetic!

**Henry:** Do you know anything about our shipment, Lonnie?

**Charlie:** Sounds about fucking right.

**Lonnie:** What we do with your ship...

(Don stomps on Lonnie's foot dramatically.)

**Don:** Watch it, Popeye. If you want to keep your... *business*... you will stay out of London.  
Simple as that.

**(Charlie gets in Don's face. Sam enters with Clara; he has her by the arm. Clara is bored, Sam is unamused. When Charlie notices Sam, he backs down from Don.)**

**Sam:** When did they arrive?

**Henry:** Not long ago.

**Sam:** **(To Lonnie.)** What do you want?

**Henry:** He's told us what he wants and now I think he should leave.

**Sam:** Go. Before I cut you a new smile each.

**(Lonnie and Don exit. Sam sits Clara down. During the following dialogue, Sam paces and Charlie drinks.)**

**Sam:** I've got some news about our Clara. **(Turning to Clara.)** Would you like to tell them or shall I?

**Clara:** You're going to tell them anyway.

**Charlie:** Well, what is it?

**Clara:** I'm fucking pregnant.

**Henry:** Who's the father?

**Roland:** Will the baby call me Uncle Roland?

**Charlie:** Babies can't talk, Roland.

...

*[Continued in the full script.]*