



A Murder Mystery Pack
by
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(Customer Taster)

Ding Dong!

A Murder Mystery

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The St Adolphus Campanology Society (SACS) have unexpectedly won a prestigious 8 bell peal competition in Oxford. The peal was a new composition written by a member of SACS and won great acclaim from the Oxford judges.

SACS throw a party to celebrate their triumph, inviting the whole church congregation. The Vicar is delighted and puts on a three course meal for all. During the celebrations the door bursts open and a female bellringer from a rival group barges in accusing SACS of stealing a member from her society, the very member who wrote the successful 8 bell peal. As skeletons tumble from wardrobes and dark secrets are hinted at, somebody decides she just has to go! Enter super sleuth Sherbert Holmes, who hopes his detective instincts will ring true...

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About this pack

The full version of this pack should provide everything you need to stage your own Murder Mystery. It is intended for use at a three course sit down meal where the principle characters will act out a set of events to the assembled guests.

Please remember from the outset that this pack is intended for an **improvised performance** although there are set lines for some characters.

Your cast must use the information provided to develop their characters, their “back stories” and improvise the action when and where the situation arises.

They must stay in character from the moment the guests arrive until the plot is complete and the murderer is unmasked.

This means that your performers are less constrained and restricted, can react and interact with each other and the guests at will and have a lot more fun!

This (Taster) document includes:

A (partial) plot overview

General staging notes

A sample Character overview including **motive** and **opportunity** to murder the victim

A Narrative Arc to show how the event should flow.

A sample of the questions to be put to each character by DCI Holmes

The full pack includes:

The full plot overview

Full set of character overview including **motive** and **opportunity** to murder the victim

A Narrative Arc to show how the event should flow.

Full set of questions to be put to each character by DCI Holmes

Denouement by DCI Holmes

Character Information for the guests

“Whodunnit” sheets for guests to complete are also included with this pack.

Plot Overview

Melanie Marchant was a member of the St Adolphus Campanology Society (**SACS**) and was forced out under very acrimonious circumstances. She has harboured a grudge ever since and has used her position as a police officer to gather information about SACS members with the vague intention of using it at some stage.

When her boyfriend, **Bob Minor**, is lured away (by the delectable **Belinda Bell**) and persuaded to join SACS she sees red.

Melanie Marchant gate-crashes the party and starts to throw around very damaging accusations. Members of SACS become very distressed as more and more information about their private lives is brought to light.

SACS members present at the party are:

Patrick Peal, Conductor and caller

Pauline Peal, Patrick's wife and bellringer

Campbell Clanger, bellringer, womaniser

Clarrissa Chime, bellringer

Belinda Bell, bellringer, seductress

Brian Bell, her husband and bellringer... at least one sandwich short of a picnic

Bob Minor, composer, music nerd.

Also present is the Vicar, **Samuel Seaton**.

Melanie is eventually hustled out by **Patrick** and **Campbell**, shouting obscenities and swearing she will spill the beans to the News of the World. There is consternation amongst the SACS members and **Patrick** calls a short meeting in the Vestry...

Subsequently, there is a murder...

DCI Sherbert Holmes arrives and announces that his forensic staff have found enough evidence to suggest that the death was not an accident ... He proceeds to interrogate the SACS members until he has enough evidence to announce the murderer.

General Staging Notes

Casting / rehearsal

Your chosen performers should be issued with a copy of this entire pack.

You should hold as many rehearsals as required depending on experience of performers

The first rehearsal should concentrate on reading through this pack and getting a feel for how the event is structured and the role that each character has to play in the plot.

Before the second rehearsal the performers should further prepare their back stories using the basic character analysis sheets as a base. At the second rehearsal these should be read out by each performer in character.

As it is impossible to rehearse the whole event without that all-important audience to react to, you should concentrate on cementing motives and relationships within the group. These can be rehearsed by the performers, more to prove they can improvise and keep up a convincing performance than word for word content!

DCI Holmes can use a notepad from which to read the set questions and denouements.

Facilities required for the performers

The performers need a separate private room for their use. They will use this prior to the event to get changed and prepared and will use the room during the event where they can exchange notes and discuss any change of tactics. The murder victims will also use this room once deceased!

It would be sensible to check the facilities before the event to make sure sufficient space is available to stage the "Interrogation" by DCI Holmes.

Recommended event format

The evening works best if structured round a sit down meal. If the event is being staged in hotel this may be a formal, served, multi-course meal, but if the event is staged in a hall or private venue you could lay-on a simpler meal or even a table buffet. Ideally there should be a table free area in which cast and guests can mix (Pre dinner drinks) before sitting down to the meal in an area set aside for that purpose. If this is not possible guests can be shown to their tables immediately.

Suggested timetable

7.00 - 7:30 PM Guests arrive and are greeted by the Vicar and MC at the door. Pre-dinner drinks.
8.15 PM First course served... cast circulate round tables.
8.40 PM Main course served... arrival of DCI Sherbert Holmes
8.50 PM Interrogation by Holmes during meal
9.30 PM Questions asked by guests
9.40 PM Cast leave, guests complete "Whodunnit" forms. Dessert served
10.00 PM Cast return... denouement during dessert
10.30 PM End

Taster - Character Overview, Motive and Opportunity

Patrick Peal

Founder member of SACS. Married to Pauline. Upright member of society, churchgoer, ex army Major and apparently a very solid citizen.

Extremely competitive, embarrassingly so in fact. Chief bellringer and caller for SACS but is not liked by the other members because he has a fierce temper and is not afraid to lose it when people make mistakes during bell ringing practice.

Ran a chicken processing plant (Cluck Cluck Chicks Ltd) when he left the army which he sold for a small fortune and retired forthwith for a life of semi-luxury. Unfortunately, Patrick was duped into investing heavily in a dot com business which turned out to be a scam. He lost almost all of his fortune and is now on the point of having to declare bankruptcy.

His wife Pauline has no idea of this, and is blissfully unaware that in a very short space of time she will be homeless and penniless.

Patrick is having an affair with the delectable Belinda Bell whom he thinks is in love with him. In fact she does it just for the hell of it and doesn't give a fig. Some years ago he also had an affair with Clarissa Chime and she never lets him forget it!

Made life hell for Melanie Marchant when she was a member of SACS. Melanie was a top class campanologist and was SACS caller, a post coveted by Patrick. His bullying of her was a causative factor in her leaving SACS and joining their rivals St.Herbert's Campanologists where she was welcomed with open arms.

It was Brian's idea to get Belinda to meet and seduce Bob Minor (not difficult, as she would view it as a challenge) so that SACS could get their hands on his new peal and perform it at Oxford.

Wears a plain gold band wedding ring.

Motive: Melanie knows of his affair with Belinda Bell and that he is on the point of bankruptcy.

Opportunity: Left the room to talk to Melanie in the bell tower, wears a ring.

Melanie Marchant

A very determined woman. Talented campanologist who was top dog at SACS until she was driven out by a very jealous clique of St.Adolphus' bellringers... *and much more in the full pack*

Narrative Arc

(Please note that non-guilty parties *must* tell the truth although they do not have to volunteer information if not asked for it.)

Guests (the audience!) are regarded as friends and family of SACS members and/or church congregation members.

Meet and Greet (30 mins)

(As guests arrive they are given a brief written resume of each character and are then greeted by the vicar and SACS members who identify themselves and their position within the society. It is vitally important that the characters assume their identities immediately and stay strictly in character throughout.)

(After everybody is in the room an announcement is made by the MC.)

MC: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to this celebration of St.

Adolphus' Campanology Society's success in the 8 bell peal competition at Oxford. In case any of you haven't heard, SACS won the event with a new composition composed by our very own Bob Minor. Please feel free to enjoy your drink and mingle with the victorious members of SACS. This is your opportunity to question the members. Please remember that any information gleaned now may be invaluable later in the evening as certain events take place. These pre dinner drinks will last for approx. 45 minutes and this will be followed by dinner. Remember, look and listen to what is going on around you. Above all - enjoy yourselves! Thank you.

Pre-dinner drinks (Approximately 45 mins)

(The cast circulate and chat with the guests, allowing guests to ask questions about their lives, the society, and anything else they wish to talk about.)

(The following actions should take place after about 15 mins:)

(The Vicar, Samuel Seaton, welcomes everybody with a short speech.)

Vicar: Welcome! Welcome everybody to this joyous occasion. Many many congratulations to our victorious campanologists who have really put St.Adolphus' on the bell ringing map. Shall we all give them a round of applause?

(Guests respond)

Vicar: It is not often that I am able to preach to such a large congregation so I am going to take this opportunity to ask you all to bow your heads and ask the good Lord to forgive all our sins.

(Lords prayer, Guests respond)

Vicar: Thank you. Now then, I'm sure there will be no more interruption so please go ahead and enjoy yourselves!

(At this point, Melanie bursts in and causes chaos with the following speech...)

Melanie: Traitors! Liars! Thieves! Hypocrites! Listen to me everybody, these beasts only won this competition because they stole my man, Bob Minor from me and from St. Herberts. Why did they do that? Because they wanted his new composition. **(Pointing)** They set that slut Belinda Bell on him, her with the wanton body and bosoms and my man is so naïve he thinks she loves him! Loves him? Ha, the only person she loves is herself and let's face it she'll chase anything in trousers! In fact the notches on her bedpost include most of the males in here. I used to be a member here so I know all these ... these... Animals! **(Whirling and pointing again)** Snotty, snooty Patrick Peal, God's gift to bellringers I don't think. How's your financial situation paddy? Well into Dot-Coms are you? And your love life... Told anybody whose bed you're keeping warm? Well, well, stupid little Clarissa. You can't possibly believe that he will marry a drab little mouse like you can you? You're his bit on the side for use when he can't find anything better! **(Turning to Campbell)** Campbell! St Adolphus' very own Lothario. How's the hacking? My colleagues in Thames Valley police have been following your online career with great interest... as have I. Do all your lovers in here know about each other? I will soon make damn sure they do! **(Turning again)** Prissy Pauline Peal! Butter wouldn't melt would it? How's the accountancy? Making lots of cash are you? Giving it all to your lover? You won't get much more from your old man's account I can assure you. **(to Vicar)** And you Vicar, how can you allow these hypocrites into your church? Still, maybe you should re read the seventh commandment; it seems you may have misunderstood it! Bob? Bob where are you? If my lover isn't outside with me in ten minutes I'm taking all I know to the News of the World!

The situation develops and someone leaves...

(...tells the guests that a dreadful accident has occurred and that the police have been called.)

First Course (Approximately 25 mins)

(After food is served, cast return and circulate amongst the tables. They reiterate all the previous clues and misinformation whilst expressing sorrow at the accident and all stating quite clearly that it had nothing to do with them. Police sirens are heard in the background as the course draws to a close. When the food is finished and plates are being cleared Detective Chief Inspector Sherbert Holmes enters. Holmes calls for quiet and then speaks as follows...)

Holmes: Ladies and Gentlemen please remain seated, and nobody leave the room. I have to tell you that ... is dead. On the face of it, it looked like suicide - or an accident - but my forensic team have found a large contusion on the left side ...
... It looks like the murderer or murderers tried to make it look like an accident. They have failed and I, Sherbert Holmes am on the trail...

(Departs and returns with SACS members who sit in a semi circle behind him.)

Main Course is served (Approximately 10 mins)

(Holmes may walk in and out or receive information from his aides, played by additional cast members if wished, as the course is served.)

Interrogation (40 mins, takes place during the main course)

Holmes: Ladies and gentlemen, I am now in a position to interrogate the suspects. Clarissa Chime, if you please.

(Clarrissa comes forward.)

Holmes: I see you do not wear a ring, does this mean you are not married?

(Response.)

Holmes: How long have you been a campanologist Miss Chime?

(Response.)

Holmes: I understand that the deceased - ... - was once a member here?

(Response.)

Holmes: I am told that you did not have a particularly good relationship with..., why was that?

(Response.)

Holmes: Did you leave the room at all this evening?

(Response: Yes.)

Holmes: Where did you go?

(Response: To the bell tower to see...)

Holmes: Was your discussion fruitful?

(Response.)

Holmes: I am told that you also left the room on a second occasion in company with several other members of SACS. What was that about?

(Response: To decide how we could persuade ... to see reason.)

Holmes: ... said something about your having a relationship with another member of SACS. Is there any truth in that? Please remember this is a police investigation and I expect the truth.

(Affirmative response.)

Holmes: Who is this person please?

(Response: Campbell.)

Holmes: Do you have any other hobbies apart from bellringing?

(Response: Karate. I am a black belt.)

Holmes: Thank you Miss Chime... Please take your seat. Pauline Peal please.

(Pauline Peal comes forward.)

It continues...

Dessert (Approximately 10 minutes)

MC: Ladies and Gentlemen, please complete your "Whodunnit" forms which I will collect.

(Guests complete the forms which are collected by the MC. When dessert has been served DCI

Holmes returns with the dishevelled SACS members.)