

## Murder in the castle

*Six persons who didn't know each other personally are invited for a treasure hunt. All of them thought it would be a great party but a strange murder created trouble among the guests. The murderer is one of the them, and they will have to find him before they all get killed.*

### Chapter one : A mysterious party

It was a moonless night, and, in a little city localised near Paris, in front of a forest, was a huge and old castle. It was uninhabited, and the last owner had died of cardiac weakness. I ran between the trees to reach this famous castle, which was the emblem of this city. I had come there to participate in a party, where we were going treasure hunting. Among the guests, were five people. I didn't know them particularly, but I had heard several rumors about them. I heard that one of them was a rough drunk man, and another person was a rich and elegant lawyer, for example. I finally arrived in the right destination. The castle was bigger than everyone could think of. At that moment, I was a little bit stressed, but this stress disappeared when I saw a gentle lady smiling at me. She was old, about 60 years old, and had difficulties walking. She welcomed me and started a conversation with me.

-Hello man. You're a bit late : the treasure hunt has begun without you. Do you know the guests are here ?, said the small lady.

-Hmm, I have heard some rumors, but I really don't know them personally.

-Well, if you have the time, we can talk about them, but if you want to start the treasure hunt, you can also go...

-It's nice to meet a new person. To begin with, can you tell me what your name is ?, I said.

-Oh sure, my name is Mrs Robin. And y...

-I've heard you were a really gentle and elegant lady. You helped several families to find a job, didn't you ?

-Oh, yes, it's an old story..., Mrs Robin said, a little embarrassed

-Can you tell me other things about the four other guests ?

-Sure ! First, Charles Howard is a rich and elegant lawyer. He has solved several problems between families, and I've heard all his decisions were great. Secondly, Laurie Lamer is a young lady. She seems dumb, and I don't want to talk with her more, she's like a vulture who has taken hold of the inheritance of her three former husbands. The next person is a gentleman. His name is Bryan Flaming, you'll recognize him : he is tall, handsome, gentle, honest... I like him a lot, but he prefers to flirt with Brigit... The last guy is the most mysterious person here... He has red eyes, blond hair and prefers drinking to finding the treasure... I think he is drunk at this hour.

-What is his name ?

-I really don't know...

-Do you know what he did before coming ?

-Hmm, amazingly not. Well, you seem good. How about finding the treasure together ? It will be more funny than finding it alone !

-Yes, of course ! Have you got any idea where the treasure is ?

-I've heard that it could be in the cellar ! Follow me quietly please.

I followed her for two minutes. I didnt expect the castle to be so big. The atmosphere was dark. Several windows were lighting up some old paintings. All of them represent the same action : a rich man who was standing up in front of a poor woman.

-I'm... the only one who knows what is this castle ?, I asked her.

-Of course not ! It's the emblem of the city !

-No. It's a lie. It's an old jail.  
 -What do you mean ?, said Mrs Robin, a little bit scared.  
 -I found the truth, two years ago. I was right to think this party was a trap.  
 -Wh... what ?!  
 -This jail used to hold the most famous prisoner of the seventeenth century. And recently, all the persons who enter this castle never get home !  
 -I don't trust you...  
 -What is your sin ?  
 -My sin ? I've never...  
 -You're a liar, I can see it in your eyes. If we are all here, it's because we're responsible for an awful crime, and this crime must be paid for. Answer me.

Suddenly, a door slammed. A draught passed through my body. Mrs Robin made a run for it, to the cellar. I followed her, in the darkness. There was an eerie silence in that room. Finally, I found a strange switch in the cellar. Light came on, and I found Mrs Robin, lying on the bloody ground. I couldn't prevent myself from screaming. The four other persons of the party joined me and we all saw that Mrs Robin had been killed with an arrow shot through her, in a cell. But the strangest thing we found here was that we all read on the wall « The party has just begun » with Mrs Robin's blood.

## Chapter two : A strange investigation.

« -Wh.. what the hell is that ? Said Laurie.  
 -I can't believe that ! Damn ! Where is the murderer ?, said the strange drunk man  
 -Stay calm, please. The murderer can hear us, said Bryan.  
 -I was sure we were five at this party ! How could a murderer infiltrate the castle so easily ?!, said the rich lawyer, Charles.  
 -I want to leave this castle immediately !, begged the young lady.  
 -Shut all your mouth and listen to...  
 -We will die ! We will all die !, interrupted Laurie.  
 -We must group up for survive !, cried Bryan.  
 -Well ! Listen to me. You all know that the murderer is present in the castle, I said.  
 -Obviously... , said Charles.  
 -Let me finish, please. As I said, the murderer is actually here with us, but how could he infiltrate the castle ?  
 -He probably stayed in the castle for two weeks to wait for some visitors..., suggested Bryan.  
 -He couldn't. A human being can't leave without light or food, said Laurie.  
 -And why would he kills us ? It makes no sense..., said Charles.  
 -No. The murderer is among us, I said, with a deep voice.  
 -What ? Ok, I'm leaving this castle... bye..., said Laurie, scared and who made a run for it  
 -We should follow her, said Bryan.

When we left the room, I heard Charles who was asking the drunk man for his name. He told him his name was « Oliver », and just after that, Charles held out his arm by saying he knew Oliver was the murderer.

After this strange conversation, they ran to the castle's door, by leaving Mrs Robin in the dark cell. All these events had unsettled the group, but it allowed me to know them more. The group finally arrived to the castle's door, but, surprisingly, they saw a mysterious white writing on it. After trying to open the door, when they saw it was blocked, they read the shiny writing, which said « Find the murderer, or die ».

-What the hell is that ?, said Bryan.

-No problem, I will destroy it, said Oliver, a little bit angry.  
 -Don't do that, you retarded !, I said. You all know what this writing means !  
 -But... I don't want to play this stupid game ... I want to get home !, said Laurie.  
 -Is it better to die ?, said Charles.  
 -Of course not ! But why is there a murderer in this castle, among us ? Damn it !, said Laurie, worried.  
 -It's simple, we must find the murderer to survive, said Oliver.  
 -Yes, and how ?!, replied Bryan.  
 -It's simple... the murderer is you, Oliver, said Charles.  
 -You haven't got proof to accuse me ! It's you, the murd....  
 -Shut up ! First, we have to stay together, I said.  
 -But, I want to find this treasure !, said Charles.  
 -There is no treasure. It was a trap, since the beginning of the party, I said.  
 -What the... there isn't any treasure ? And what about the money ?, said Charles, sadly.  
 -There isn't. We have to kill the murderer before he kills us.  
 -But... You have forgot that the murderer is among us ! Why did you say all this ?, said Bryan, worried.  
 -If we stay as a group, the murderer will not kill us, said Charles.  
 -I'm tired of these lies. I'll find the murderer, alone.  
 -Wait Bryan ! I'll come with you !, said Laurie.  
 -What the fuck are they doing ?, I said, seeing Bryan and Laurie going back into the castle.  
 -They're fucking up the plan ! What will become of us?, mused Charles.  
 -Stay calm. Listen to me. I'll try to join and persuade them. You both stay here and don't move !  
 -No ! Oliver will kill me!, said Charles.  
 -I'm not this damn murderer ! You're trying to make me guilty !

I was already gone. I had to find where Bryan and Laurie were. I went upstairs to the second floor of the castle, where Mrs Robin's dead body was. On each side of the corridor there were a lot of cells. There weren't windows on this castle's room, then it was very dark. The wall was strangely narrow. After running for ten minutes, I heard a scream through the castle. It was Charles'. I ran the fastest I could to join him. After making out his silhouette in the dark, I saw the bloody bodies of Bryan and Laurie's naked one.

### Chapter three : You're the murderer !

-Damn ! This is a double murder !, I said. Why... why did you leave Oliver ?  
 -He... scared me ! I made a run for it before he could kill me !  
 -You are so stupid ! If you had stayed with Oliver as I had told you , nobody would have been killed !  
 -Why ?  
 -Because if you had stayed with him, nobody could have moved to kill anybody, idiot !  
 -You're right... But he could kill me too ! »

Oliver suddenly appeared.

-What... What is this shit ?!, said Oliver, scared.  
 -Don't overact, you bastard ! You made this kill !, said Charles, angrily.  
 -You... you left me ! You left me to made this kill ! You are the murderer ! And... why the hell is Laurie naked ?  
 -How I'm suppose to know it ?, said Charles.  
 -You made this kill, you know the reason for it.  
 -Well, stop this stupid fight and listen to me. The murderer is one you two, that's for sure.

-And why aren't you the murderer ?, said Charles  
 -Well, I was sure someone suspected me at a moment but, recently, an event proved I was innocent. I told you to stay together on the first floor to wait for me. If I had wanted to kill Bryan and Laurie, I would not have told you to stay as a group, because if they were both killed while you were together, the murderer was the other person : me. But, as I saw, you all went your own way.  
 -It's true. Trust me. The murderer is Oliver.  
 -It's a lie. Obviously, it's Charles.  
 -Well... just let me think about this.

I returned to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. Something happened when I left Oliver and Charles alone.

-You... I'll kill you, murderer !, said Oliver.  
 -W... wait a secon...

Oliver hit Charles on his head. Charles fell into a little wet cellar. Faster, he raised up and got Oliver's arm. He slashed at him and kicked him violently, until the time I appeared. I closed the cellar where they were and, after seeing the surprise in their gaze, told them the truth.

#### Chapter four : The truth.

-What are you fucking doing ?!, said Charles.  
 -My name is Sheld Brand.  
 -You...  
 -Yes, I am. Sorry, but since the beginning, I've manipulated you.  
 -Why ? Just... why ?  
 -You're all guilty of a sin. And I'm the man who will purge it.  
 -What ? Which sin ?  
 -Don't lie about your life, Charles. You're a lawyer, who defended persons who deserve to go to jail. You are greedy, too greedy so you paid the judge to win the trial.  
 -It's my job !  
 -Your job made you a monster. You bribed a judge to defend bad guys like pedophiles, didn't you ?  
 -...  
 - About Mrs Robin, she was a good lady. But around her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, she became a monster. She took advantage of the families she helped before to take their money. She persuaded them to trust her but these families became very poor and died. Bryan Flaming now: he is a very famous and rich guy, who was actually a member of the Russian Mafia. He paid an assassin to kill his opponent and to get more influence and power in his country. Laurie Lamer was a young girl, near her 30<sup>th</sup> birthday, who had married more than two rich old persons. That girl took advantage of their money to have a good life. She didn't have a single diploma and lived only thanks to their fortune. Actually, she had three different husbands at the same time. And about Oliver... he is simply the man who made a bomb attack into three different countries : the United States, Brazil and Germany. And the next country was France.  
 -Why did you come to this party to kill us ?  
 -I made you endure hell. You were all the time worried you'd die. It was funny to see the fear in your eyes. All the persons whom you've betrayed now will get their revenge.  
 -That's stupid ! And how did you commit these crimes ?  
 -Oh. That was really simple. Mrs Robin had told me to come with her to the cellar. I had followed her. We were alone. It was simple to make her run for it. Then, I killed her in the cellar, and I simulated a scream to attract your attention. After our discussion, I saw that you thought Oliver was the murderer, then I had made an enemy. After it, I prevented Oliver from breaking the door, and I manipulated all of you. None of you had thought I was the murderer. After Bryan had left and Laurie followed him, I found them kissing in a cellar. Laurie had started to undress, then I spread

gas into the cellar. Laurie, who was weak, suddenly died and Bryan got out of the cellar. I just had to kick him violently to kill him. After that, you were alone. You hated Oliver, and Oliver hated you. I left the room where you were for a second, and waited for your fight. It finally happened, and you are here, in a trap. Now, look. »

I lit up the cellar, and behind Charles, were ten rotten dead bodies in a circle.

-They've all committed bad crimes in their lives. They paid for that. And you're the next one.

-You are a murderer !

-No. I'm not. All of these guys were bad persons, who deserved their death. I'm just a righter of wrongs, I said, before shooting a bullet into Charles's head. Excuse me now, I will receive new guests for another party.»

THE END

Arthur Guillot