

HATTIE FRAIL

New Beginnings

by

Zoe Hunter

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First Edition

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Synopsis

A very distressed young lady finds a dead man's body on the Bagley Road; he has been raped and brutally murdered, just like last year's unsolved case. The police officers are totally baffled as to who's committing these terrible crimes. Through police friendship connections a local retired psychic lady called Miss Hattie Frail gets invited to the station, and here she's introduced to Detective Inspector Dorking who finally begrudgingly offers her a position in the force, which she gladly accepts. But as the investigation progresses another similar crime takes place; does this turn out to be a copycat killing or not?

Scene 1

It is 11 p.m., Saturday 18th June 2031. Appletown is a small place just outside Canterbury, Kent, England, and it is closing time at the very famous Black Pig pub. The weather is very dry, hot and extremely sticky. A group of six, scruffy-looking, drunken middle-aged customers are tumbling out of the large, dark brown main entrance double doors.

MR G MCKINEY

(Enter right)

Hey! Trevor, I'll walk with ya, I'm g-going your w-way as well!

MR T DOLAN

(Enter right)

Oh, all right, Gavin!

(Turning round, waving and smiling)

Goodnight, see ya all at w-work on M-Monday m-morning, b-bye, Will, Cathy, Kenny and F-Fiona, b-bye.

Scene 2

It's the next day, 10 a.m. The weather is still extremely hot and sticky.

(Enter left DI George Dorking into the Appletown Police Station, holding a black briefcase in his right hand followed by PC Patrick O'Brien)

PC P O'BRIEN

Happy Father's Day, to you, sir. May I have a quick word? It's important.

DI G DORKING

(Yawning)

OK, you know, I really should be at home with my teenage son, Chester. But, no, I must come to work, in all this terrible, stuffy hot weather we've just been having lately. Never mind, hey! Yes, what is it, Patrick? Listen, you can

tell me all about it as we walk to my office.

PC P O'BRIEN

(Sighing)

Yes, sure, sir. Well, we've got a body. He was a young man in his late 20s. We have a lady – she's literally just walked into the station, so she hasn't been questioned fully yet. Apparently, she found him in one of the bushes on the Bagley Road; the ones which are the closest to the town railway car park. And get this ... his trousers and pants were off, so he could've been raped just like the other two were and, as you know, they were also both in their late 20s.

DI G DORKING

(Shouting)

What? Another one! Who is it? Who's killing these young men? And all three bodies were found in and around this area in the last three months! There must be a connection here we've overlooked!

(Placing his briefcase on his desk)

So, we'll need to go over everything once again. We'll have to find this culprit and we must do it right now, before any else get to lose their precious lives. All right, Patrick, no rest for the wicked, hey! We can go and talk to this witness, and I suppose I'll have to make my usual black coffee later.

PC P O'BRIEN

I'll make it for you, sir.

DI G DORKING

Yes, thank you, but before that we'll need a PM report done. I'll ask Karen from forensics, and I'll let her know the exact whereabouts of the crime scene.

PC P O'BRIEN

Oh yes, the witness's name is Lucy Manning. She's waiting in interview room number one and she's a little bit, well, nervous.

DI G DORKING

And she's come into the station? Why didn't she use her Smartwatch?

PC P O'BRIEN

She said she didn't ring us because she said she'd forgotten to put her Smartwatch on.

DI G DORKING

I see, so it looks like I'll have to put my coffee on hold for a while because first we'll need to speak to this witness.

(Exit left)

PC P O'BRIEN

(Mumbling)

Yes, sir.

(Exit left)

DI G DORKING

(Enter left into interview room number 1)

Hello, Lucy.

(Shakes Lucy's right hand and sits down)

I'm Detective Inspector Dorking and this is PC O'Brien. We're going to be working on this case. You must be really upset about this, so please just take your time and tell me everything you know, starting from the beginning.

MISS L MANNING

(Wiping tears and sniffing)

Y-yes, I am and h-hello. My full name is Miss Lucy Manning. I live at 38, C-Cox Street, Appletown. Just a few minutes ago I was walking my spaniel dog, Tilly, and as we were going towards Bagley Road, next to the railway station, well ... Tilly started barking and pulling me on her lead.

(Picking up her hanky, she wipes away her tears)

Oh, I'm sorry, b-but I'm finding all of th-this very difficult.

DI G DORKING

Don't worry, you're doing very well. Would you like a nice hot drink, like a cup of tea, to calm down your nerves, or something?

MISS L MANNING

Thank you but no, I'm fine to carry on. Anyway, I decided to follow her, and I came across this ... poor ... dead young man in the bushes. He was just lying there ... f-facing downwards with h-half of his t-trousers and p-pants removed from his l-legs, and there was b-blood all over his head and bum areas. He was in such a terrible state, it was the most h-horrific I've ever seen in my whole l-life.

DI G DORKING

(Sighing and leaning back on his office chair)

Now tell us, did you touch anything? And whereabouts were you standing?

MISS L MANNING

No, I didn't touch anything, and I suppose I was standing on his left side about two metres away from him.

DI G DORKING

Lucy, thank you very much for your time.

(Turning right to face PC Patrick O'Brien)

PC O'Brien, can you now take down Lucy's written statement for us, please.

PC P O'BRIEN

Yes, of course, sir.

DI G DORKING

Lucy, before I leave you with PC O'Brien here, is there anything else you can think of, anything at all?

MISS L MANNING

No, I don't think so.

DI G DORKING

(Handing over a card)

OK, now if you do think of something, then here are my contact details. Oh, and you may be called up as a witness; would that be all right?

MISS L MANNING

(Slowly taking the card)

Well, I suppose I can do it, although I've never been one of those before.

DI G DORKING

(Shaking Lucy Manning's right hand)

You mustn't worry. If you're to be asked in the future, I'm sure you'll be fine, and thanks for coming in to see us.

Scene 3

It's 11 a.m. DI George Dorking is sitting at his office desk drinking his black coffee and talking to PC Patrick O'Brien and DC Jack Cameron. All are sitting down around the desk.

DI G DORKING

(Leaning forward in his office chair)

So, I'd like you both to join me right now, down at the crime scene.

PC P O'BRIEN

(Sitting down)

Sorry, sir, hmm would it be all right if I could suggest something?

DI G DORKING

(Folding his arms)

What's that then?

PC P O'BRIEN

(Mumbling)

You see ... last night I thought of this idea. My mum has this friend, and she just happens to be, well ... a psychic. She's the kind of lady who's a little bit batty, not owning luxury items such as a TV, radio and doesn't even read the free newspapers that go through her front door once a week either. But according to my mum she's not the sort to go around conning people; she's a good-hearted woman. She lives on her own, but I do believe she has a couple of mongrel cats, Kitty and Blackie, to keep her company. How about ... inviting her into the station to see if she can help us in any way? I think she's in her mid or late 60s, she has short dyed spiky red hair, and her name is Hattie Frail. What do you think, sir?

DI G DORKING

(Shouting)

No thanks! I don't really believe in all that psychic mumbo jumbo stuff. No offence, mind. You do understand?

PC P O'BRIEN

(Leaning forwards in his chair)

I think it'll be worth a try. What do we have to lose? Well, I mean we have hardly anything to go on with these two and now three cases, have we, sir?

DI G DORKING

(Leaning backwards on his chair and sighing) Hmm ... well, if we do ask her and if she agrees, then she'll be able to have access to our records, so she'll have to sign the official secrecy act.

PC P O'BRIEN

I'm sure she wouldn't mind becoming part of the team, sir.

DI G DORKING

(Leaning backwards on his chair)

Oh, go on then ... I suppose we could give it a go, but I wouldn't want the social media to get hold of it, they'll have a field day with this.

PC P O'BRIEN

(Smiling)

Mum's the word. So, I can speak to my mum to ask Hattie if she wouldn't mind popping into the station for a chat, then?

DI G DORKING

(Winking)

Yes, OK, we can talk to her. Like you say, what do we have to lose? You've just gone and persuaded me. Not many people can do that, you know ... Well done. Patrick, please can you stay here instead and see if you can get hold of this psychic woman? Also, look through all these files to see if you can dig up anything. I'll just go to the crime scene with you, Jack.

DC J CAMERON

Yes, sir.

PC P O'BRIEN

Will do, sir.

Scene 4

It's 11.40 a.m. DI George Dorking and DC Jack Cameron are at the crime scene walking towards head of forensics Doctor Karen Harvey.

DI G DORKING

(Sighing and frowning)

That's just great! It's drizzling, and to top it all it's quite heavy too! Wonderful!

DC J CAMERON

Yes, goodbye to most of the evidence. Would you like me to stay here with Karen, and after that follow her to the mortuary, sir?

DI G DORKING

Um ... oh yes, that's a good idea, Jack.

(Turning to face Doctor Karen Harvey)

Well, Karen, have you found anything new?

DR K HARVEY

(Removing her white mask)

Well, George, according to SOCO there weren't any belongings taken this time round. Maybe the killer was disturbed in some way. And we think, because of the state of his behind, he was raped, just like the other two men.

(Looking towards the victim's lower torso)

And here, by the lumber area is a fractured spine too, also just like before, so he has most probably been hit, with a heavy stone or something.

DI G DORKING

(Leaning forward to his left side)

Oh, his left hand has a broken nail as well.

DR K HARVEY

Yes, so he must have fought back. Now this wasn't seen in the last two cases.

DI G DORKING

(Leaning forward to his right side)

And there's some blood on the right side in his hair.

DR K HARVEY

(Touching the victim's hair)

Oh yes, it looks like a couple of deep skull fractures, but the other two didn't have that either. Hmm ... now that's interesting.

DI G DORKING

Maybe this could be a copycat murder?

DR K HARVEY

(Handing over a clear Evidence Bag with a dark-brown wallet inside it)

Either that or the attacker could've got disturbed in some way, because we've just found this dark-brown leather wallet, but the other two had nothing like that on them.

DI G DORKING

(Taking the Evidence Bag)

So, was he stabbed as well?

DR K HARVEY

No, there's no sign of any stab wound either.

DI G DORKING

Oh right, well what about a name?

DR K HARVEY

(Looking at the Evidence Bag)

So, according to his bank cards, he's Mr Trevor Dolan. Also, inside the wallet there's an old photograph of a young lady with the name Sharon Maynard on it.

DI G DORKING

(Rubbing his forehead and sighing)

What about time of death?

DR K HARVEY

By looking at the body I can accurately say between 11 p.m. and midnight last night.

DI G DORKING

(Rubbing his chin)

Right, now it's with great reluctance I might add that we may have this psychic lady called Miss Hattie Frail ...

coming in to help us.

DR K HARVEY

(Chuckling)

Ha, ha! A psychic! Really? This isn't like you at all, sir. How on earth did you find out about her then?

DI G DORKING

(Shrugging)

It was Patrick who suggested it. Apparently, she's a close friend of his mum's. Right, I'll have to leave you to get back to your hard work. I'll be leaving Jack here and I'm going back to the station. Once you've finished with the post-mortem, I'll be there at the mortuary as soon as I can make it, thanks.

DR K HARVEY

(Sighing)

Yes, of course, as always.

(Exit left DI George Dorking)

DC J CAMERON

(Winking)

So, Karen, a little bird tells me that you're single again, is it true?

DR K HARVEY

(Laughing)

Ha! In your dreams, matey, in your dreams. Right, you haven't got this from me, you understand, but why don't you try asking Claire? Unlike me, she prefers the slightly older blokes. I'm not sure, but I think she's just broken up with Tom.

DC J CAMERON

(Rubbing his elbow)

No way! You're kidding me, of course, but which one? Claire Roberts or Claire Mills?

DR K HARVEY

(Shrugging)

Claire Mills.

DC J CAMERON

(Smiling)

Oh, right! Thanks for that, I'll try and get to know her a little more before I make my move. Thanks for the tip, Karen.

DR K HARVEY

(Winking)

It's no trouble, no trouble at all. Let's get to work. We wouldn't want old grumpy George on our backs, now, would we?

Scene 5

Meanwhile inside the Appletown Police Station, Miss Hattie Frail enters left and immediately trips over her long flowery dress. She stumbles right into Constable Claire Mills, and a lot of paper and two folders that she is holding goes flying off everywhere all over the floor.

MISS H FRAIL

I'm so sorry! And please let me help you pick everything up. Oh dear, silly me! I do very much apologise for my clumsiness, my love. It's these slippery purple leather sandals of mine. I didn't think it was going to rain when I left my house. I'm a little bit wet here with no coat over my lovely pink cardigan. Oh dear, I don't know about all this terrible weather of ours we've been having recently. It wasn't like this when I was about your age, officer.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Smiling)

I'm fine, you don't have to help me, it's OK ... honestly. Why don't you go to the front desk? The officer over there is PC O'Brien. I'm quite sure he'll be able help you with

any enquires, OK? Thank you.

MISS H FRAIL

(Walking over to the desk)

Excuse me officer....

PC P O'BRIEN

(Looking up)

May I help you, madam? Oh, I'm sorry, but are you my mum's friend, Hattie Frail?

MISS H FRAIL

(Smiling)

Yes, that's me. Ah ha, you must be Patrick. So finally, we get to meet in person at last then. All's well with you and your family, I hope? Now, this is all very intriguing stuff, I must say. I can't wait to hear more.

PC P O'BRIEN

(Shouting)

Hey, Claire, would you mind covering the front desk for a while, please? I've got to take Hattie inside to discuss a few things.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Stopping in her tracks)

Oh, hmm ... I was just about to go on my tea break. Well, can't somebody else, do it?

PC P O'BRIEN

(Pleading)

Please, pretty please.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Sighing)

OK then, but for this you'll have to owe me one.

PC P O'BRIEN

(Winking)

Yes, of course; thanks, Claire, and I'll make sure I'll keep to that.

(Miss Hattie Frail and PC Patrick O'Brien exit left)

So, Hattie, DI Dorking would like to talk to you ... unfortunately he's out at present, but he shouldn't be too long. Now, would you like a drink while you wait?

MISS H FRAIL

Yes, that will be lovely. I'm sure your mum must've told you by now that I'm always partial to a nice hot cup of tea and a biscuit or three; that's if you have any, of course.

PC P O'BRIEN

Yes, I do believe we have. It was PC Russell's 40th birthday yesterday, and to celebrate he brought a few packets of those delicious chocolate biscuits into work.

MISS H FRAIL

(Smiling)

Good old PC Russell! Hmm ... chocolate biscuits are my absolute favourite.

(Hattie and PC O'Brien exit right towards the main office area)

Scene 6

It's 12.30 p.m. PC Patrick O'Brien, PC Leroy Russell and Miss Hattie Frail are sitting at one of the main office desks drinking their hot beverages and eating biscuits.

(Enter left DI George Dorking)

PC P O'BRIEN

(Standing up)

Sir, this is Hattie. Hattie, this is Detective Inspector

Dorking. Now he would like to speak to you about his latest case.

MISS H FRAIL

(Getting up)

Hello, dear, I'm Miss Hattie Frail, but you can just call me Hattie, everybody else does.

DI G DORKING

(Shaking Hattie's right hand)

Yes, nice to meet you, Hattie. Now you'll be a member of our team, when we're not talking to any suspects and victims, you can call me George and the other officers by their first names as well if you wish. Right, let's all go back to my office; and Hattie, you mustn't forget to bring your tea and the half-eaten biscuit with you as well.

(All exit right)

Scene 7

It's 2 minutes later, DI George Dorking, PC Patrick O'Brien, PC Leroy Russell and Miss Hattie Frail are all quietly sitting down around DI George Dorking's tidy office desk.

DI G DORKING

So, Hattie, this is very nice of you to come here and help us with this extremely baffling case.

MISS H FRAIL

Glad to help in any way that I can, George.

DI G DORKING

Right, before we start, we have to record this interview. Will that be all right?

MISS H FRAIL

Yes, of course, whatever you have to do is fine by me.

DI G DORKING

(Switching on the recording device)

Good, we're recording now. So, for the record, Hattie, do you want to know the victim's name, and can you tell us exactly what it is you need?

MISS H FRAIL

(Puts her pink cardigan on the back of her chair)

Oh no, I don't want to know the name. Well about that, so sometimes I can get the full names, addresses, vehicle registrations and so forth, but it mainly comes in as letters and numbers, will that be, OK?

DI G DORKING

Yes, that's fine with us.

MISS H FRAIL

So, all I need is touch a photograph, or any other personal belongings that you might have. And then maybe I'd like to visit the crime scene later, if I can do that?

DI G DORKING

Yes, that's fine too.

(Hands over a dark-brown wallet to Miss Hattie Frail)

Right, what I've got here is a dark-brown leather wallet with a photograph of a young lady inside it. Now, the forensics hasn't been done it yet, so we'll have to take your fingerprints before you leave the station.

MISS H FRAIL

Of course.

DI G DORKING

Hattie, tell me what you get from this.

MISS H FRAIL

(Touches the wallet)

Hmm, straight away I'm sensing a pub – The Black Pig.

It's quite late, closing time in fact. I'm just coming out of the double entrance doors. I'm a little drunk and saying goodbye to my mates. And one of them has joined me, it's a male, but that's all I have on him. Moving on, so for my first name, all I'm hearing is the letter c, no sorry it's t... and for his second name I can see the first letter being p, no... wait a minute, I'm wrong it's d, yes, it's the letter d, hang on a minute, now I think I can also see the last letter too, which is the letter n.

DI G DORKING

Oh, that's right, it'll be Trevor Dolan.

MISS H FRAIL

Yes, thank you for that, Trevor Dolan. Now he's turning round and saying goodnight and goodbye to some other drunken people. I think they might be all working together.

PC L RUSSELL

(Leaning forward)

Hattie, can you take us to the actual crime?

MISS H FRAIL

Yes, moving on ... so now I can no longer see the other male. Right ... he's walking down Bagley Road and he can hear a train stopping nearby.

DI G DORKING

Would you say he's approaching Appletown train station?

MISS H FRAIL

Yes, he is close to the train station, but I quite sure he's walking away from it, but I could be wrong on that. And you might be able to get a couple of witnesses, as I can see a couple of people approaching me from the opposite direction. There's a man and woman; they're a young-looking couple and they're holding hands. The man is a little taller than me and has shoulder-length, wavy blond

hair. The woman is about the same height as me and has brunette hair. Moving on ... so now I'm being Trevor. So, I'm very hot and sticky, yes, and now I'm starting to feel very uneasy, as I can hear heavy footprints coming towards me. I think I'm being followed. I'm getting very worried. Hmm ... it's very dark, the streetlamps aren't working. I'm starting to walk faster... I'm running now, I'm terrified I'm scared for my life...

PC P O'BRIEN

What about the attack?

MISS H FRAIL

(Shrugging)

Oh, right, yes ... I'm now being the murderer. I'm sensing I'm in my mid-20s; the first name has the letter l and has a nnnn sound on the end. And for my second name it's ... something beginning with b and has a ch sound on the end. Let's see, I'm about 5 foot 10 inches tall, or something like that, and I have very broad shoulders. My eyes are deep-set and are dark brown in colour. I have big black bushy eyebrows and short stubble around my massive square chin. On my head I'm wearing a black helmet. I also have a black motorcycle leather jacket and trousers and my boots are about shin high. Wait a minute ... I can see underneath my jacket and the white plain short-sleeved T-shirt that I'm wearing is medium-sized; I also have a silver Jesus cross chain necklace. I can see the number 24 and letters p, l, w and a black motorbike. This number and letters could come from the registration number plate.

PC L RUSSELL

(Clasping hands)

Is he holding anything?

MISS H FRAIL

Yes, I'm holding a short, very sharp, serrated kitchen knife in my right hand. Each step I'm taking is getting quicker.

Yes, I'm moving quite fast now. I'm getting extremely angry inside. He must be taught a lesson. I need to get my revenge ...

DI G DORKING

(Folding his arms)

So, he knew the victim then?

MISS H FRAIL

Yes, he knew him for sure. I'm getting a love triangle here between himself, the victim and his girlfriend. Moving on: I've just passed a man and a woman and now I'm running, I'm getting very close to Trevor ... Gotcha, I've got hold of him! I'm now back to being Trevor. Hmm yes, so from behind he's pulling me down. I'm not hearing the murderer talking, and I'm being dragged down, and I'm being dumped into the bushes. He has his left arm around my neck, it's very tight, ouch! That really hurts! Painful! Yes, I'm really struggling to breathe! Oh no! What's happening to me? He's just stabbed me! I'm bleeding heavily, it's pouring out from the upper left side of my back. And now I'm on the ground, I'm in absolute agony. He's let go and now I'm being bashed with something heavy. It's on the right side of my head, and again and again ... hmm. Yes ... I've gone all cold, very cold in fact... I'm seeing a bright light it's right in front of me... Hmm. Yes, I'm dead.

PC P O'BRIEN

(Rubbing his forehead)

Where's the knife?

MISS H FRAIL

(Sighing)

Right, I'm being the murderer again. I've just killed and raped Trevor. I've still got one of my serrated kitchen knives. I've wiped it clean with a black handkerchief. Both items have been put back into my black leather trousers. I'm taking it to my house. Moving on, I've just arrived, parked my heavy black bulky-type motorbike with the

initials h and d in the driveway. I can see the door number, it's 80 ... no, sorry, it's 81 and the street has the letters r and c.

DI G DORKING

(Unfolding his arms and placing them on his desk)

Well, the only place I can think of in Appletown is Russet Close, right? About the motorbike, now that sounds like a Harley Davidson. And is he living with his family?

MISS H FRAIL

Yes, Russet Close and a Harley Davidson, yes, of course. And he's not with his family, he's living alone. May I have something else, please?

DI G DORKING

(Handing over the old photograph)

Yes, here's a photo of a young woman. And before you say anything else, this has been a real eye-opener, especially for me, Hattie, I can tell you.

MISS H FRAIL

(Touching the old photograph)

Good, I'm glad this is helping you with your enquiries. Right, straight away I'm picking up on her emotions. Hmm ... strange ... yes, hmm ... I'm ... now ... being ... a ... little ... annoyed. Ah, I see, yes that's why ... I don't know where my boyfriend is, but I'm not that worried just yet, because he's done a few all-nighters like this before.

PC L RUSSELL

So, what can you tell us about this woman?

MISS H FRAIL

Yes, it starts with the letters s and the second name starts with the letter n, no sorry...it's m. Anyway, she's young I would say only 21 or 22 years old, I can see the number 37 and three letters, p, l and a.

DI G DORKING

(Smiling)

Yes, that sounds like Pink Lady Avenue. And yes, the lady in the photo is called Sharon Maynard. But I'm going to have to finish you there. Now, I've just stopped the recording and after a much-needed bathroom break for me ... and after we've taken your fingerprints, I'd like to drive you to the crime scene, if that's OK with you.

MISS H FRAIL

(Shaking DI George Dorking's right hand)

Yes, I'd very much like that.

(All exit left)

Scene 8

It's 1. 05 p.m., DI George Dorking and Hattie Frail are in a police car looking at a muddy crime scene.

MISS H FRAIL

(Smiling)

Oh good, it looks as if the rain is nearly stopping. Oh dear.

DI G DORKING

(Turning round)

Yes, Hattie, what is it? Have you got something?

MISS H FRAIL

(Placing her hands over her eyes and sighing)

Yes, I have and it's not good, not good at all. I'm sensing a couple of other murders and I do believe they were also male. Yes ... both were around a similar age as the first victim and they were found behind that massive old oak tree, the one that's just behind you, George. Yes, and they were killed a couple of months ago.

DI G DORKING

Oh yes, OK. Well, I'm quite impressed, because I've heard from Patrick that you're not interested in the news or anything like that. Blimey ... wow! Now, just over there on your right is Karen Harvey; she's the head of forensics, so let's see if she's found anything new, shall we?

Scene 9

It's 2 minutes later DI George Dorking, Miss Hattie Frail Dr Karen Harvey are talking at the crime scene.

DI G DORKING

(Turning round)

Karen this is Hattie she's our resident psychic. So far, she's given us a description and a name. Hattie, this is Dr Karen Harvey.

MISS H FRAIL

(Interrupting)

I'm sorry Karen, I'm picking something up.

(Exit left and walks over to the police tape)

They're smoking cigarettes in an alleyway outside behind a gay bar, could be the Pink Unicorn. It's later he's changed, and he's dressed not as a man, but as a ... woman, and he's performing on stage with dancers. I think ... they call themselves the um Mystical Queens. It's very recent, last Friday. Just before the latest.... Oh dear!

DI G DORKING

What are you picking up, Hattie?

MISS H FRAIL

(shrugging)

I think there's been similar murders, am I right?

DI G DORKING

Yes, there's been two unsolved cases. So, how...

MISS H FRAIL

It was the other guy! I think he was involved in both cases!

DI G DORKING

Really?

MISS H FRAIL

Yes, I believe so.

DI G DORKING

Oh, right! So, what can you see?

MISS H FRAIL

Right, so I'd say he has short ginger hair, in his early 20s, either 22 or 23 years old. He's about 5 foot 8 or 9 inches tall, has broad shoulders and his eyes are blue grey in colour. I'm sensing the letter e. I think maybe he's not happy with his latest job or something. Oh dear, well I'm sorry, but I'm tired and quite hungry, so I think I'll have to call it a day.

DI G DORKING

(Shaking Hattie's right hand and smiling)

Yes, of course, Hattie. You've been extremely helpful to our investigation. But before you go, we'll have to settle your bill; and I'll be in contact if we should need your valuable services again soon.

Scene 10

It's 3.15 p.m., and PC Leroy Russell, PC Richard Thomas and DC Jack Cameron are all sitting at their desks in the busy major incident room listening to DI George Dorking's briefing who is standing next to a light-brown board with many pictures on it.

DI G DORKING

(Standing up)

Right, listen up everyone, so what do we have?

(Turning round to face the board then points to a
Photograph which is on his left side)

So, this is the victim he's Trevor Dolan. He's 22 years old, and as you can see has brown hair and eyes, and worked at the Ship Inn Hotel, Appletown. Address 35, Pink Lady Avenue. A good, hard-working, law-abiding person. Hattie believes that it was a love triangle involving himself, the attacker and his girlfriend, Sharon Maynard. It happened either late last night or in the early hours of this morning. He was stabbed in the back just underneath his left shoulder, has a fractured skull on the right side of his head, and after being killed he was then brutally raped. Claire is currently with Sharon.

(Looking to his left side)

Here's Leighton Bench we are treating him as our prime suspect. Well, Leroy and I have done some digging around and we have found a person who we think matches our psychic's description. He's not known to us, but what we do have is his address – it's 81 Russet Close, Appletown. He's 26 years old and lives on his own. We've just been to his house, but he wasn't in. We were told by Hattie that she believes he was in the Pink Unicorn night bar on Friday just gone, and that he was working as one of their Mystical Queens performers.

PC R THOMAS

What about witnesses?

DI G DORKING

(Smiling)

Well, Hattie also told us about a couple who were walking in the opposite direction on the night of the murder. So yes, Richard, there's a possible chance for witnesses.

(Looking upward towards his left side)

For those who don't know this is Reggie Robertson, he's

the first victim, age 23, he died on Thursday the 15th of May 2031 between 9 and 10 p.m.

(Looking downward towards his right side)

This is the second victim he's Kevin Whitbread. Also, a good, hard-working, law-abiding person, age 21 years old. He died on Thursday the 3rd of April 2031, between 8 and 9 p.m. As you can recall, their bodies were found in the same place, which is underneath the oak tree that's close to the train station. And they were killed in similar ways, but with one difference: they were both robbed. They were gay, and were regulars of the Pink Unicorn night bar, but no member of the Robertson family has heard of the Whitbread's, and vice versa. But they could've known each other, because of this night bar. Reggie was a tennis coach and Kevin worked in an office at the Appletown's sweet factory. I think a trip to the Pink Unicorn is in order and it'll have to be this evening, I'm afraid. So, Richard, I'll need you to meet me there dead on 7.30 p.m. and wearing ordinary clothes, as we wouldn't want to scare them all into oblivion now, would we? Good listening, everyone! Right, and I'll see you later then ... Richard.

PC R THOMAS

(Sighing)

OK, will do, sir

Scene 11

It's 7.30 p.m., DI George Dorking and PC Richard Thomas O'Brien are inside a very busy Pink Unicorn night bar. They approach a barman.

DI G DORKING

(Shouting and holding up his police ID badge)

Excuse me, but have you seen Leighton Bench? We believe he was in this place last Friday night. You wouldn't just happen to know if he's in here today, would you?

BARMAN

(Shouting)

No! No, I don't! But Mack Salvin, his mate, is in he's the one with short ginger hair and that light blue, denim waistcoat. He's sitting with some of his mates: they're over there, just near to the toilets.

DI G DORKING

(Shouting)

Thank you. Phew! It's so hot in this place, and I've never seen so many happy-looking people dancing away on a dance floor.

PC R THOMAS

(Smiling)

Oh, I absolutely love this Barry Gibb's *In the Now* song, blimey ... it must be at least 15 years since I heard it last.... Oh sorry, mate.

MALE DANCER

(Winking)

Hey ... you can bump into me any time, matey.

Scene 12

It's 2 minutes later DI George Dorking and PC Richard Thomas O'Brien are speaking to Mike Salvin.

DI G DORKING

(Shouting)

Excuse me! But is your name Mack Salvin?

MR M SALVIN

(Shouting)

Well, that depends on who wants to know?

DI G DORKING

(Holding up his ID badge)

I'm Detective Inspector Dorking and this is PC Thomas. We'd like to talk to your mate Leighton Bench; it's concerning his whereabouts last night. Do you know where he is?

MR M SALVIN

(Shouting)

Oh, right. So, my real Christian name is Mike, Mack is my nickname, and my Mystical Queen Tribute Act is Cher, but I would like you to call me Mike just to know where we stand.

DI G DORKING

(Shouting)

Yes, that's fine, so can you tell us then Mike?

MR M SALVIN

Hmm ... the last time I saw Leighton was on Friday night just gone; it was outside this very building, in fact. Funnily enough, we were just talking about Trevor as well.

DI G DORKING

Oh, so you knew Trevor then.

MR M SALVIN

Yes, he worked here in the evenings as a part-time barman and a part-time performer. Anyway, with the performers we're currently short on staff, and tomorrow at 3 o'clock in the afternoon we'll be auditioning people, so if you know of anyone who might be interested in joining us, that'll be great. So, where was I? Oh yes, going back to Leighton, a few days ago he told me he was finished with his present girlfriend, Sharon Maynard. Thinking about it, I do believe it was last Thursday, which was when he found out that she'd been cheating on him with Trevor, and he wanted to know if I knew anything about him. I said yes, I do know him, but he shouldn't really worry

about it, because for his poncey parents' sake he's just pretending to like girls, but he's really ... well ... gay.

PC R THOMAS

(Shouting)

Maybe he just couldn't pluck up the courage to tell his parents about his secret life, knowing how upset they'd be?

MR M SALVIN

(Shouting)

Yes, I suppose that could be it. So anyway, could Leighton be a witness to Trevor's murder then?

DI G DORKING

(Shouting)

We just need to eliminate him from our enquiries.

MR M SALVIN

(His Smartwatch starts beeping)

Excuse me.

(He shouts into his Smartwatch and puts it on FaceTime)

Oh ... it's ... Leighton. Hi Leighton, it's very loud in here, so you'll have to speak up a bit, so where are you?

MR L BENCH

(Shouting)

I'm at Sharon's house, number 37, Pink Lady Avenue, why?

MR M SALVIN

(Shouting)

Well, the police would like to come and speak with you. Hang on a minute, let me just pass you over to Detective Inspector Dorking.

DI G DORKING

(Shouting into Mr Mike Salvin's Smartwatch)

Leighton Bench, we'd like to talk to you and to Sharon about the recently deceased Trevor Dolan. We can't really

do this over the phone, so we'll have to come to Sharon's house right now, if that's all right.

MR L BENCH
(Shouting)

Yes, I suppose so.

DI G DORKING
(Shouting)

OK, good, we'll be there in about 20 minutes' time then.

PC P O'BRIEN
(Smiling and shouting)

Thank you for your time, Mike.

(DI George Dorking and PC Patrick O'Brien exit right)

Scene 13

It's 8.05 p.m. DI George Dorking and PC Patrick O'Brien are knocking on Sharon's front door; Mr Leighton Bench opens the front door.

MR L BENCH

Oh yes, please do come in, but I'm telling you that Sharon's exhausted and extremely upset right now.

DI G DORKING

Actually, Leighton, it's you we'd like to speak to. We want to know of your whereabouts last night. So, we can ask you right here in front of Sharon, or we can take you to the station. It's your choice.

MR L BENCH
(Shouting)

I haven't done anything!

PC P O'BRIEN

We can see about that, can't we?

MR L BENCH

I won't be saying anything unless I can have a duty solicitor with me.

DI G DORKING

Yes, that can be arranged for you.

MR L BENCH

(Turning round and shrugging)

OK, just wait a minute while I tell Sharon. I won't be long.

Scene 14

It's 8.40 p.m., Leighton Bench, DI George Dorking, PC Patrick O'Brien and duty solicitor Mr Tim Hayles are all sitting in interview room number 2.

DI G DORKING

(Folding his arms on his desk and looking towards Mr Leighton Bench)

The time is 8.52 p.m. on the 20th of June 2031. So, for the record, we've decided to interview you under caution, so Leighton can you say your name and your current address, please?

MR L BENCH

(Looking downwards)

Yes, my name is Leighton Bench, and my current address is number 81, Russet Close, Appletown.

DI G DORKING

Right, Leighton, can you tell us where you were around 11. p.m. last night, please?

MR L BENCH

(Looking upwards and shrugging)

I was in my bed fast asleep, why?

PC P O'BRIEN

(Leaning forward)

There's been a murder on Bagley Road at the train station end. So, I'm asking you again, Leighton Bench, where were you between 11 p.m. last night?

MR L BENCH

(Looking away)

No comment.

PC P O'BRIEN

Why don't we move away from this just for a moment? Leighton, can you tell us if you had anything to do with the other two murders?

MR L BENCH

(Looking straight at PC O'Brien)

No! I haven't anything to do with those killings either, nothing what-so-ever!

DI G DORKING

Well, they were found in and around the same area. They were killed and raped too. Are you certain you haven't anything to do with these men? Let's just remind ourselves of the dates and the times again. We have the 15th of May 2031 between 9 and 10 p.m., and the 3rd of April 2031 between 7 and 8 p.m.

MR L BENCH

(Shrugging)

So, what are the days of these dates then?

PC P O'BRIEN

(Leaning backwards)

Funnily enough, they both happened on a ... Thursday.

MR L BENCH

(Laughing)

Ha! I haven't anything to do with the other two murders. And I can tell you why: it's because every Thursday I'm in The Black Pig playing darts. I've never missed a match, and we always play right up to closing time. Ha! Go ahead, you can check it all out with The Black Pig right now, if you want to.

DI G DORKING

Yes, PC O'Brien, would you like to do the honours, please?

(Exit left PC Patrick O'Brien)

For the record, PC O'Brien has just left the room. Right, Leighton, coming back to yesterday's murder.

(A knock on the door)

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Enter right)

Sorry to interrupt you, sir, but I've been speaking to a couple of witnesses: a man and a woman, and they've just given us a description of a man who looks very similar to you, Leighton.

DI G DORKING

(Smiling)

Thank you for that, Constable Mills.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

Thank you, sir.

(Exit left)

(Enter right PC Patrick O'Brien)

DI G DORKING

For the record, PC O'Brien has just come back into the room.

PC O'BRIEN

(Sitting down on his chair and sighing)

I've just spoken to the manager of The Black Pig, a Mr Paulson, and he has confirmed that Leighton Bench was in his pub on the dates we just mentioned. So, coming back to these other murders just for a minute, can you think of anyone who would want to kill these two men, anybody?

MR L BENCH

(Shrugging)

Um, no, I can't think of anyone, I'm sorry. Yes, OK ... I did it. I killed ... Trevor. We fought each other first. But then close to me I noticed a heavy stone, so I picked it up and knocked him out with it. And to make sure he'd die, I decided to do it twice. Then once he was on the ground, I raped him. He deserved it. You see it was his fault; he took Sharon off me. She's the love of my life! I know I shouldn't have done it, but there you go: what's done is done. What the hell was he doing with her? Besides, he was gay. I tried to warn Sharon, but she wasn't having any of it, she didn't believe me. Anyway, I've seen all the news reports about the other two murders, and that person hasn't been caught yet, so I thought, well, if they can get away with it then ... SO CAN I!

DI G DORKING

(Getting up from his chair)

Leighton Bench, I'm arresting you on suspicion of murder. You killed Trevor Dolan on the 18th of June 2031. You do not have to say anything, but it may harm your defence if you do not mention, when questioned, something which you rely on in court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence. OK, I'm terminating this interview; it's 9.54 p.m. on the 19th of June 2031. PC O'Brien, you can do the honours in handcuffing him and taking Leighton to one of

the prison cells, please ... thank you.

MR L BENCH

Yes, if it wasn't for those stupid witnesses coming forward, I might've got away with it.

(All exit left)

Scene 15

It's 9.a.m. on Monday 20th of June 2031. DI George Dorking and PC Richard Thomas are outside the Appletown Police Station getting out of their vehicles.

DI G DORKING

Good morning, Patrick. What about that terrible thunderstorm we had last night then? Did you hear the news this morning? They mentioned about a couple of trees coming down in Woodsfield Park and in Bramble Street.

PC R THOMAS

Yes, it was a good job no one was hurt or even worse, killed. Oh, I and my youngest daughter Sophie really hate thunderstorms. She did her usual thing, which is hiding under her bed with Teddy. You know it's quite hard being a single parent and a police officer at the same time.

DI G DORKING

(Shrugging)

Look, Patrick, I bet it won't take long until you'll find somebody else.

PC R THOMAS

(Smiling)

Actually, I do have a date tomorrow evening – with Claire.

DI G DORKING

(Shrugging)

Claire, really? But you're only 28. I always thought she went for the slightly older man, well, well, well.

PC R THOMAS

(Shrugging)

Oh?

DI G DORKING

(Smiling)

Don't worry about it, I'm sure you'll have a good time with her. Anyway, at least the air is a lot fresher now ... which is such a relief for me, I can tell you.

PC R THOMAS

So, I think we need to talk to Hattie again; what do you think, sir?

DI G DORKING

You've just read my mind, Richard.

(Enter right Miss Hattie Frail)

Oh Hattie, just the person! I was about to phone you, so what brings you back here?

MISS H FRAIL

(Smiling)

Hello, George, but please excuse me. Well, yesterday I forgot to pick up my cardigan ... I'm terrible at leaving things. So, have you caught this murderer then?

DI G DORKING

Well, yes and no is your answer. Hmm ... I don't suppose you have a few minutes so we can have a little chat ... do you?

MISS H FRAIL

(Donning her cardigan)

Well, that depends.

DI G DORKING

On what?

MISS H FRAIL

(Shrugging)

On how many of those lovely biscuits you have left.

DI G DORKING

(Winking)

We've got plenty.

MISS H FRAIL

(Removing her cardigan)

Oh good, I'm all yours for the next hour, then.

DI G DORKING

Oh, Richard, if you wouldn't mind asking Patrick, Leroy, Jack, Richard and Claire to join us in my office now, thank you. Also, can you ask Claire to bring in the other two case files of the other two murders with her, thank you.

PC P O'BRIEN

(Pushing the front door open)

Will do, sir. We'll see you in a minute, and I won't forget the coffees and of course your usual tea, Hattie, and there you go, ladies first.

MISS H FRAIL

(Smiling)

Thank you.

(All exit left)

Scene 16

It's 9.21 a.m. and DI George Dorking, DC Jack Cameron, PC Leroy Russell, PC Patrick O'Brien, Constable Mills and Miss Hattie Frail are all sitting in DI George Dorking's tidy office surrounded by four coffees and one tea, and a medium-sized, flowery, round plate piled with chocolate biscuits.

DI G DORKING

(Sighing)

Well, Hattie, you were spot on with this love triangle involving the Leighton Bench character. Only yesterday he admitted to killing Trevor Dolan. But unfortunately, Leighton has cast-iron alibis for the other two murders.

MISS H FRAIL

(Shrugging)

Oh, so what do we need to do now? And before you start to suggest something, there's something you'll need to know.

DI G DORKING

(Leaning forward)

What's that then?

MISS H FRAIL

Well, from tomorrow morning I'll be going away to visit my sister in Edinburgh for a while. Charlotte's not very well, you see. I haven't even packed my suitcases yet and I wouldn't want to be disturbed, so my Smartwatch will mainly be turned off. Anyway, I should be back by this coming Sunday afternoon, so if you did manage to get anything for me, then I wouldn't be able to help you until then.

DI G DORKING

(Sighing)

Oh, right. Thank you for that.

PC P O'BRIEN

(Rubbing his elbow)

Leroy, a little bird told me once that you're quite the performer – singing, dancing and all that. You could go undercover and be one of the Mystical Queens at the Pink Unicorn night bar.

PC L RUSSELL

(Glaring)

Hmm, yes, I've been in a couple of shows, but that was

over a decade ago, Patrick.

DI G DORKING

(Leaning forward)

Great idea! Never mind about how long it's been. Yes, surely someone who goes in there must know something. And Patrick, Jack and Claire, you can go in plain clothes. Hang on a minute! I think I remember Mike mentioning about some audition taking place at the bar at 3 p.m. today. Right, Leroy, during your tea break you can start practising for your audition.

PC L RUSSELL

(Shouting)

But sir, I don't have any women's clothes in my wardrobe!

DI G DORKING

(Sighing)

Ah, good point!

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Rubbing her chin)

I'm sure I'll be able to find you something.

PC L RUSSELL

(Sighing)

Oh, thank you.

DI G DORKING

Well done, Claire. Right, I'll need you all to meet me at 7.30 p.m. just outside the Pink Unicorn night bar. But in your case, Leroy, I'd like you to be dressed up in some of Claire's clothes, so you'd better get that job! Now, Hattie, if you don't mind, I'd like to give you some photos. One is of a Reggie Robertson and the other is Kevin Whitbread, and they were both murdered. Right, I've just switched on my tablet. Which photo would you like first, Hattie?

MISS H FRAIL

(Placing her cardigan on the back of the chair)

Oh, I'll have Kevin Whitbread's, thank you.

DI G DORKING

(Switching on the tablet)

The time is 9.45 a.m. and it's the 20th of June 2031. Hattie Frail is in my office and is helping us with our two recent unsolved murders. Right now, she's concentrating on a portrait photograph of the deceased, Kevin Whitbread. So, Hattie, what can you tell me about this victim, anything?

MISS H FRAIL

I'm sensing Kevin, and I've just been stabbed. I have a black denim jacket on, I'm quite cold and it's dark, but there are a few streetlights on. I've just come out of The Black Pig and I'm heading for the Bagley Road, I'm on my own and I'm walking to the Pink Unicorn night bar.

DI G DORKING

Hattie, please can you take us to the crime scene now, thank you.

MISS H FRAIL

Yes, of course. I can see two people, they're both smoking. They're walking with me and seem to be chatting me up. Oh no, sorry, I can see a third person, but he's walking slightly behind the other men, he's not smoking. They've got black woolly hats on their heads and scarfs around their necks.

DI G DORKING

(Touching his forehead)

Oh, that's interesting, so there are these men then? Can you get any names at all?

MISS H FRAIL

(Pausing, then sighing)

Oh right, funnily enough, for all the men I'm hearing the letter e. One of the men, well ... he has short, ginger hair with blue-grey eyes. He's either 22 or 23 years old. Yes ... it's the same person who I saw in the other reading. For his mate, I'm sensing that he's got a black beard and has recently been in prison, possibly for armed robbery. And for the last man, he also has a black beard. Now the two men who were smoking, well ... they've just discarded their cigarette butts. Phew! Right, I'm now Kevin; I've been hit on my head by a hard object, maybe a very big, heavy stick by one of the bearded men. I'm dazed ... oh, no ... I'm being raped by the closest bearded man. It's now a few minutes later and I've been stabbed in my back, just below my left shoulder. I'm in such terrible pain ... I'm dying. Yes, and here comes the white light, I'm reaching up for it, and now there's nothing, yes, I'm dead.

DI G DORKING

(Rubbing his hands)

Ah! This could be the very famous Leighton's Bench's mate, Mike Salvin. What a surprise, and I don't think we have anything on him. And I wonder if it's Markus Thompson; he's been in and out of jail for armed robbery and other things since he was 16 years old. And about the other man, hmm ... I haven't a clue ...

CONSTABLE C MILLS

Sir, about Markus: where would the letter e come in for him?

DI G DORKING

Ah yes, well, his middle name's Lee, so that's most probably it.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Smiling)

Oh yes, that's right, sir, I'd forgotten about that.

DI G DORKING

Anyway, for the record, I'm showing a photograph. So, Hattie, what about this person, Kevin Whitbread?

MISS H FRAIL

(Touching the photograph)

That's all right. Yes, I'm being Reggie. It's very similar to Kevin's murder. I'm walking with the same three men. We're coming out of the Pink Unicorn night bar.

DI G DORKING

(Rubbing his eyes)

This is brilliant stuff, thank you very much, Hattie. Now, what you've just revealed will keep us busy for the next couple of hours, so I don't think we'll go to the crime scenes today, if that's OK with you, Hattie.

MISS H FRAIL

(Smiling)

Yes, of course. I have a hairdresser's appointment in about an hour's time anyway. Now you need to catch these men, because I'm sensing they will want to attack again. I think it'll happen quite soon; I'd say sometime next week. Before I go, would you mind if I borrowed your loo?

DI G DORKING

(Switching off the tablet)

And now we're finished. Yes, of course, Hattie. It's down the corridor on your left side, and don't forget to pick up your cardigan this time. Sorry to hear about your sister too, we do hope she gets well soon.

MISS H FRAIL

Oh yes, my cardigan, and thank you ever so much for believing in me.

DI G DORKING

(Shaking Hattie's right hand)

That's fine, Hattie, you've been very helpful to us, and

please, ladies first.

(All exit left)

Scene 17

It's 9.30 p.m. It's very cloudy and slightly spitting. DI George Dorking, Constable Claire Mills, DC Jack Cameron, PC Leroy Russell and PC Richard Thomas are all inside an old, battered, slightly rusty, medium-sized, dark blue van parked just across the road from the Pink Unicorn night bar.

DI G DORKING

(Smiling)

So, you managed to get the job then, Leroy!

PC L RUSSELL

(Sighing)

Well yes, most probably it was because I was the only person who bothered to turn up.

DI G DORKING

Right, I've finished wiring you up underneath your sparkly red dress, Leroy.

PC L RUSSELL

(Sighing)

Hmm ... this bra of yours and your black, high-heeled boots are very uncomfortable, and putting on this make-up of yours took me absolutely ages. I'm so glad I was born a boy.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Sniggering)

Well, I'm all wired up. Oh, and Leroy, just to let you know that I absolutely hate wearing bras too, horrible things.

PC R THOMAS

Yes, I'm all wired up as well.

DI G DORKING

(Looking down at his Smartwatch)

OK, everybody, it's 9.45 p.m., are we all agreed?

PC L RUSSELL

Yes, sir.

DC J CAMERON

Will do, sir.

PC R THOMAS

Yes, sir.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

Agreed, sir.

DI G DORKING

(Opening the van's side-door)

Right, so don't forget to use your undercover nicknames, and try to get something. Oh, and before you go, just to let you know, I've just had a telephone conversation with Karen: she said that SOCO has just found a bloody heavy stone, hidden in the undergrowth where Trevor was murdered.

(PC Richard Thomas, Constable Claire Mills, DC Jack Cameron and PC Leroy Russell exit left).

CONSTABLE C MILLS

Oh, that's brilliant news. Good old SOCO, what would we do without them?

DI G DORKING

(Closing the van's side-door)

See you in a few hours' time, everybody.

DC J CAMERON

(Smiling)

So, Claire, how's Tom these days?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Shrugging)

I don't know, and I don't practically care anymore.

DC J CAMERON

(Turning round)

Oh, really? That's interesting, because I'm currently looking for someone to go out with. Do you know of anybody who might be interested in me at all?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Turning round)

Yes, Lorraine she's single, maybe you could try her?

DC J CAMERON

(Shrugging)

No, she's not my type, she's a brunette. I've always preferred blondes.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Looking straight ahead)

Oh well, if you mean me, then I'm afraid I don't really go for the bald types ... no offence, sorry. But we can still be mates though, can't we? Anyway, I don't think I'm available anymore.

DC J CAMERON

(Shrugging)

None taken, yes still friends. Oh, so you're going out with somebody then.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Smiling)

It's early days, but you'll find out soon enough, I expect. You'll find somebody one day, just give it some time. Anyway, let's get in this pub, I'm gasping.

(DC Jack Cameron, Constable Claire Mills, PC Leroy Russell and PC Richard Thomas enter The Black Pig)

Scene 18

It's 10 p.m. and PC Russell is looking at an untidy desk with a tangled-up mess of make-up, hairbrushes and wigs.

MR M SALVIN

(Shouting)

Hey, what do you think you're doing? This desk isn't yours; this is my place, I always sit here, nobody else can touch any of my stuff, you understand!

PC L RUSSELL

(Taking a step backwards)

Oh, I'm so sorry, I'm new here, you see. So where should I sit then?

MR M SALVIN

(Pointing over to the far-right corner)

Over there is Reggie Robertson's old place. Poor bloke, he was murdered back in May, ooh, very creepy! Who's going to be his next victim, I wonder?

PC L RUSSELL

(Turning round and sighing)

Oh, OK, I'll just go and park by bum over there then.

MR M SALVIN

(Calming down)

Yes, sad business about that, very sad business.

PC L RUSSELL

(Turning back round to face Mr Mike Salvin)

Yes, and I agree with you. Well, he was my younger sister's personal tennis coach actually; and he was brilliant at it. But I didn't know he did this type of work as well.

MR M SALVIN

(Shrugging)

No, you wouldn't know; only the people at this bar knew

about it, and that was how he wanted it. Anyway, I'm going to be singing two songs on stage in a minute: the first one will be *It's in His Kiss* and then after that it'll be *Believe*. Just copy the others, I'm sure you'll be fine. And by the way we like to call ourselves after old famous pop singers. I'm Cher, and over there are Kyle, Minogue Whitney Houston, Lady Ga Ga, Celine Dion, Tina Turner, Spice Girls; and you are?

PC L RUSSELL

(Fetching out his long black wig and placing it on top of his head and smiling)

Oh right, so I'm Diana Ross.

Scene 19

Meanwhile Constable Claire Mills and DC Jack Cameron are sitting down next to a south-facing window on a comfortable, black leather sofa. They're making polite conversation with siblings Guy and Zara Sullivan. PC Richard Thomas is being served drinks at a very crowded bar.

DC J CAMERON

(Looking at Constable Claire Mills)

Oh good, it looks like they have a real live band and they've got a few dancers here too. This night bar has such a happy atmosphere, doesn't it, Zara?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Smiling and PC Jack Cameron)

Yes, it's fantastic, Guy, and apparently that brunette lady over by the bar has just told me that Cher's going to be performing that *Believe* song soon.

MR G SULLIVAN

(Smiling)

Zara and Guy, is this your first time in here then?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

Yes, it sure is, Guy.

MR G SULLIVAN

Well, that's Linda, and I'm telling you that she only talks to ladies she fancies, so you could be in there if you're interested.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Embarrassed)

Right, thanks for that, Guy.

MR G SULLIVAN

(Shouting)

And here comes Cher and the dancers! Oh, and at last they've got a new dancer! Wow, he's gorgeous with those lovely long legs of his and that bum is just to die for. He must be poor old Reggie Robertson's replacement. Now we've only got to find someone to replace good old Kevin Whitbread.

DC J CAMERON

What's this?

MR G SULLIVAN

(Shrugging)

Didn't you know? It's been in the news? Well, there were these two gays who used to be known as Tribute Acts Madonna and Paloma Faith. Well, a few months ago, in April and in May, they were both murdered on the Bagley Road; sad business, terrible.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

Oh well, we've all been away visiting our friends in Italy, and we've only just got back yesterday, so any ideas on who did it then?

MISS Z SULLIVAN

(Leaning forward)

No, but I have heard rumours that Markus Thompson could be the killer.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Leaning forward)

Why's that?

MISS Z SULLIVAN

Right, everybody knows Markus Thompson is a well-known criminal around these parts. The police have had dealings with him, and he's also served time in the juvenile and adult prisons and all that. Also, just lately he's been hanging around the bus station. And, apparently, he's been seen chatting up a few of us gays. Well, this is very unusual, because everybody knows he's totally into women, very strange behaviour indeed, so maybe he's the killer. And anyway, who else could it be?

Scene 20

It's 10 minutes later Cher and the dancers are entering the dressing room.

MR M SALVIN

(With both fists punching the air)

Yes, brilliant! That was so much better than our yesterday's performance. Well done, everyone. Diana, it's you're going next. You've got a few minutes before you go on, so if you want the loo, now's the time.

PC L RUSSELL

Yes, that's a very good idea, thanks.

(Exit left)

Scene 21

It's 9. 15 a.m. Monday 22nd of June 2031. Dr Karen Harvey has just placed two clear Evidence Bags onto DI G Dorking's untidy office desk one has a big stick inside it and the other has a hair strand.

DI G DORKING

So, what can you tell me Karen?

DR K HARVEY

(Points to Evidence Bag number 1)

Well, this stick was found at Kevin Whitbread's crime scene and there's a few traces of his blood on it.

(Points to Evidence Bag number 2)

And this here is Mike's hair strand that Leroy managed to get last night. It matches with the cigarette butts which were found at both crime scenes. On and before I forget, I've just received this text from Joe, sir.

(Turning on her Smartwatch and reads the message)

Karen found a penknife at Reggie Robertson's crime scene. Wiped cleaned, found thumbprint on handle, came back inconclusive.

DI G DORKING

(Rubbing his hands together and smiling)

Yes, this is fantastic news, well done! Oh, and don't forget I'll need that penknife at some point.

DR K HARVEY

Yes sure, I'll ask Joe to do that as soon as possible. I must go now, bye sir.

DI G DORKING

Yes, that's great, OK Karen, bye
(A knock is heard at the door)

DI G DORKING

(Shouting)

Come in!

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Peeping her head round the door)

May I have a quick word, sir?

DI G DORKING

Yes, Claire, how may I help you?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Enter right)

I've just received a phone call from my informant, Stacey Brent. She told me that two people are committing these attacks and they are Mike Salvin and Markus Thompson. And guess what, they intend to attack again tonight and in the same place: close to the oak tree on the Bagley Road. I've also been told that Mike and Markus are meeting up behind The Black Pig pub tonight, and it's going to happen between 10.15 and 10.30. Right, Stacey also said that there's going to be a fun quiz night playing against the Pink Unicorn nightclub team, and apparently these quiz nights always finish at around 10 p.m.

DI G DORKING

(Rubbing his hands and smiling)

Well, this is interesting news. And Karen has just told me how we can link Mike to both the crimes: it was his hair sample that Leroy collected for us yesterday which finally did the trick. Also, in Karen's possession is a big stick with traces of Kevin Whitbread's blood on it. And she's got a penknife, though unfortunately the thumbprint has come back as inconclusive. Anyway, excluding that, what a great day this is turning out to be. Excellent stuff! We all know where that pub is, so I'd like you, Leroy, Jack, Patrick and Richard, to go undercover and set up there at precisely 9.30 this evening. Good work, Claire.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Smiling)

Will do, sir, I'll go and let them all know now.

(Exit left)

Scene 22

It's 10.15 p.m., a cool dry evening, and five exhausted plain clothes officers have all just finished eating their fish and chip suppers. DC Jack Cameron, Constable Claire Mills, PC Leroy Russell, PC Patrick O'Brien and PC Richard Thomas are hiding behind selected big bushes with the oak tree in their view.

PC L RUSSELL

(Whispering into his radio control)

Hey, I think I can hear people coming towards us, over.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Whispering back into her radio control)

Yes, you're right, there are three of them, over.

PC P O'BRIEN

(Whispering into his radio control)

At last! I can see Mike, Markus, an unknown young man. Hmm... and isn't that Guy Sullivan walking behind them? Yes, I do believe it is, over.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Whispering into her radio control)

I can see, over.

PC R THOMAS

(Whispering into his radio control)

I can see all of them too, over.

DC J CAMERON

(Whispering into his radio control)

I can see them too, and Mike and this young man are now starting to undress each other, over.

PC L RUSSELL

(Whispering into his radio control)

What's Markus doing? I can't see him from where I'm standing, over.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Whispering into her radio control)

He's searching in the undergrowth. Ha, right! He must be looking for his cosh, over.

PC P O'BRIEN

(Whispering into her radio control)

Yes, you're right, Claire. He's got a cosh and he's carrying it on his right shoulder. He's heading towards the other two. Shall we go? Over.

DC J CAMERON

(Whispering into his radio control)

Yes! All go! Go! Over!

(Out loud to the boys)

Hey, stop! Markus, Mike, Guy ... it's the police. Throw that stone away, Markus. Let go of that man, Mike. And step back, Guy. All of you, put your hands behind your backs and lie down on the ground, RIGHT NOW!

MR M SALVIN

OK! OK! You've got us!

MR M THOMPSON

(Turning round)

Guy! What on earth is HE DOING HERE?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Stopping in her tracks and shouting)

Guy's running away!

PC R THOMAS

(Turning round)

Hey, Guy, stop! I'll go after him! He's just chucked something away! Don't worry! I'LL CATCH HIM!

MR M SALVIN

(Pointing at Marcus)

He did the hitting and the rapes of the two men. He only

lightly knocked them out with a cosh on their backs – no way did he kill them!

PC P O'BRIEN

(Taking Mr Markus Thompson's arms)

Is that right, Markus?

MR M THOMPSON

Yes, OK, I did do that, but I always made sure they were still breathing before I left, so I'm quite confident I didn't kill them.

PC P O'BRIEN

Marcus Thompson, I'm arresting you on suspicion of assault and rape. You do not have to say anything, but it may harm your defence if you do not mention, when questioned, something which you rely on in court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence.

DC J CAMERON

Mike Salvin, I'm arresting you on suspicion of perverting the cause of justice. You do not have to say anything, but it may harm your defence if you do not mention, when questioned, something which you rely on in court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence.

DI G DORKING

(Looking down at the victim)

I'm sorry, but I don't know your name.

VICTIM

I'm Oliver Green.

PC R THOMAS

(Talks into his radio control)

Sir, I've got Guy! We're not far, so we're walking back, over.

DI G DORKING

(Talks into his radio control)

Got that, over.

(Looking up and shouting over to PC Patrick O'Brien) Guy's been caught! They're walking back, you take PC Russell, PC Thomas, Guy and Mike.

(Turning to face Constable Claire Mills and DC Jack Cameron)

Constable Mills you take Oliver Green here and DC Cameron we shall have Marcus.

Scene 23

It's 10.34 p.m., PC Patrick O'Brien and Mr Mike Salvin are sitting in the back seat of the police car. PC Leroy Russell is walking towards the police car as well as PC Richard Thomas and Mr Guy Sullivan.

MR M SALVIN

(Looking towards the crime scene)

Right, before the others get here, there's something I need to say. I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but I'm not Mike Salvin. It's really an undercover name. I'm Detective Sergeant Brett Mellor and I'm really with the Thames Valley Police. For about four months now we've been receiving a few reliable tip-offs about Markus and his gang doing yet another burglary, but this time he's planning to visit one of the major jewellers in London. I can't tell you anything else about it, as the investigation is still ongoing.

PC P O'BRIEN

(Smiling)

Really?

DS B MELLOR

(Switching on his Smartwatch)

Yes, really, you can talk to my handler if you want to.

PC P O'BRIEN

No, it's OK, I believe you. Well, I shall have to inform everyone in due course.

DS B MELLOR
(Sighing)

Of course.

Scene 24

It's 11.10p.m, DI George Dorking, Constable Claire Mills, Mr Guy Sullivan and duty solicitor Mr Tim Hayles are in interview room number 1.

DI G DORKING
(Pressing the tablet button on)

I'm letting you know that right now you are under caution. So, it's 11 p.m. on Tuesday the 22nd of June 2031. So, for the record, Guy, can you tell me your full name and present address, please?

Mr G SULLIVAN
(Looking straight down at the table)
Guy Stuart Sullivan and my address is 23, Cox Street, Appletown.

CONSTABLE C MILLS
(Leaning forward)

Guy, PC O'Brien came across your penknife in the bushes. We think you stabbed those two men. Please can you tell us where you were on Thursday the 3rd of April 2031 between 8 and 9 p.m.; and on Thursday the 15th of May 2031 also in the evening between 9 and 10 p.m. Let's start with the 3rd of April first, shall we?

MR G SULLIVAN
(Sighing)

OK, and actually I'm quite relieved that you've caught me. You see, he doesn't know this, but I'm in love with Mike. One evening a few months ago I saw him chatting up Kevin Whitbread. I got quite jealous, and so at that moment I decided to follow them. Then I saw him and Markus, which was a surprise: him being not into men and

all that. In any case there they were attacking Kevin. I couldn't believe what I had just witnessed. I watched everything, and when they'd gone, I went to have a look. Kevin was still breathing. But then I just couldn't let Kevin identify them, so with one of my penknives ... I stabbed Kevin. Then I suspected Marcus and Mike would attack us gays again, so I started following them around. And sure enough, about a month later, it happened to Reggie Robertson, so I just had to kill him too. You see I'm in love with Mike that I would do anything to stop him getting into trouble.

DI G DORKING

(Standing up and taking Guy's arms)

Guy Sullivan, I'm arresting you on suspicion of murder. You killed Mr Kevin Whitbread on Thursday the 3rd of April 2031 and Mr Reggie Robertson on Thursday the 15th of May 2031. You do not have to say anything, but it may harm your defence if you do not mention, when questioned, something which you rely on in court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence. OK, I'm terminating this interview; it's 11.58 p.m. on the 22nd of June 2031. Constable Mills, you can do the honours please, thank you.

Scene 25

It's 11.30 p.m. and Constable Claire Mills is talking to DI George Dorking.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Smiling)

Oh, what a night! Well, we got them, sir. We've done it at last. But there is one thing that I've only just realised about Hattie. She was right about everything really.

DI G DORKING

That's right. So, I must let her know when she gets back

from visiting her sister this Sunday.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

And guess what you'll need to take with you?

DI G DORKING

(Shrugging)

What's that then?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Holding up a pink woolly cardigan)

One of the cleaners just handed me this, and it belongs to Hattie. Apparently, she came across it on the floor of the ladies' toilets, no less.

DI G DORKING

(Sighing)

Yes, of course, what is she like? I don't know, I'm so tired. Good night, Claire, and I'll see you tomorrow morning.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Smiling)

Ah no, you won't, because Leroy and I have booked the day off together.

DI G DORKING

(Smiling)

Oh, I didn't know anything about this. So how long has this been going on then?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Smiling)

Well, it'll be our first proper date together, so watch this space, sir.

DI G DORKING

Oh, wait a minute, so you're not going out with Richard tomorrow evening then?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Shrugging)

Sorry? Richard, no, he's far too young for my liking. What made you think I was going out with him, sir?

DI G DORKING

(Sighing)

Oh, it must be Claire Roberts from forensics then, oh damn it. Silly me, I'll go and see him in a minute. OK, Claire, lucky for some. Hey, how I wish I could have some time off; I sure do need it. Anyway, I'll see you both on Wednesday then. Good night.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(Laughing)

Good night, sir, see you on Wednesday!

(Exit left)

(Enter right PC Patrick O'Brien)

PC P O'BRIEN

(Sighing)

Excuse me, sir, may I have a quick word? It concerns Mike Salvin.

DI G DORKING

(Yawning)

Yes, OK, but I've just got to go and see Richard before he finishes his shift. I'll be there in a minute.

(DI George Dorking and PC Patrick O'Brien exit right)

The End