

HATTIE FRAIL

New Beginnings

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2nd 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's 11 p.m., Saturday 14th June 2031. Appletown is a small, picturesque town just outside historic Canterbury, Kent, England, and it's closing time at the notorious The Black Pig pub. The weather is hot and extremely sticky. A group of six, casually dressed 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!

(turns around, waves and smiles)

What a great night, see you all soon Will, Cathy, Kenny and F-Fiona

UNISON

(shouts)

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 brief case followed by PC Patrick O'Brien)

PC P O'BRIEN

(touches his light-brown beard)

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

DI G DORKING

(touches his short grey hair and yawns)

OK, I would love to be at home with my son, Chester, but no! duty calls so 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, Keith? Listen, you can tell me all about it as we walk to my office.

PC P O'BRIEN

(sighs)

Yes, sure, Sir. Well, we've got a male body. He was a young man in his late twenties. We have a witness – she's literally just arrived at 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 twenties.

DI G DORKING

(shouts)

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

(places 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, Keith, no rest for the wicked, hey! We can go and talk to this witness, and could you get me a black coffee later I think that I'm going to need it this morning!

PC P O'BRIEN

I'll make it for you, Sir. Oh, and just so you know, the incident room is being set up and Karen is leading the forensic team at the scene.

DI G DORKING

Yes, thank you. Let's hope that forensics can give us something this time, but Karen is the best we have so fingers crossed. I will talk to the witness and then get off to the scene and get an early update from Karen.

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

Let's see what Lucy has to say then.

(exit left)

PC P O'BRIEN

(mumbles)

Yes, sir.

(exit left following DI Dorking)

DI G DORKING

(enter left into interview room 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. I can see that you are upset about this, so just take your time and tell me everything you know, starting from leaving home this morning.

MISS L MANNING

(as she touches her long auburn hair she sniffs)

Y-yes, I am and h-hello. My full name is Miss Lucy Manning. I live at 38, C-Cox Street, Appletown. Well, 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.

(picks 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 cup of tea 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 ... young man in the bushes. I think he was Dead! 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. I've never seen a dead body before, it was the most h-horrific I've ever seen in my whole l-life.

DI G DORKING

(sighs and leans 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

Did you see anyone else around there near those bushes or in Bagley Road?

MISS L MANNING

No, I didn't see anyone.

DI G DORKING

Lucy, thank you very much for your time. Lucy, before I leave you, to make a written statement is there anything else you can think of that you noticed, anything at all?

MISS L MANNING

No, I don't think so.

DI G DORKING

(hands over a card)

OK, now if you do think of something, then here are my contact details

Scene 3

It's 10.20 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

(leans 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

(sits down)

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

DI G DORKING

(folds his arms)

What's that?

PC P O'BRIEN

(mumbles)

You see ... last night I thought of this idea. My mum has this friend, and she just happens to be, well ... a psychic. Give her something like someone's watch then somehow, she can tell you all sorts of things about the owner. I know that it seems strange, but I have seen her in action, and it works. She's the kind of lady who is at first seems a bit batty, she doesn't watch TV, radio and doesn't even read the free newspapers that go through her front door once a week either. I think that she is in her mid **or late** sixties, she has short dyed spiky red hair, and her name is Hattie Frail, but my mum is a good judge of people and 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 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? What do you think, Sir?

DI G DORKING

(shouts)

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

PC P O'BRIEN

(leans forward 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

(leans 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 Secrets Act.

PC P O'BRIEN

I'm sure she wouldn't mind helping us Sir.

DI G DORKING

(leans backwards on his chair)

Oh, OK 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

(smiles)

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

DI G DORKING

(winks)

Yes, OK, we can talk to her. Like you say, what do we have to lose? You've just gone and changed my mind. Not many people can do that, you know ... Well done. Keith, please can you see if you can get hold of this physic woman? Also, look to see if you can dig up anything on cctv for last night. 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 have just arrived at the crime scene. A few feet away they notice the SOCO Miss Karen Harvey.

(enter right DI George Dorking and DC Jack Cameron are getting out of the police car)

DI G DORKING

(sighs and frowns)

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

DC J CAMERON

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

DI G DORKING

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

(approaches SOCO Miss Karen Harvey)

Well, Karen, have you found anything new? Go ahead.

Talk us through it, if you have anything.

MISS K HARVEY

(speaks through her white mask)

Well, Sir, there weren't any belongings taken this time round. Maybe the killer was disturbed in some way. And we think that the victim was raped, just like the other two men.

(looks toward 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 something really heavy.

DI G DORKING

(leans forward to his left side)

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

MISS K HARVEY

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

DI G DORKING

(leans forward to his right side)

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

MISS K HARVEY

(notices 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?

MISS K HARVEY

Either that or like I said before that the attacker could've got disturbed in some way, because I haven't found any cigarette butts, like at the other two crime scenes and I've just found a brand-new, dark brown leather wallet, but the other two had nothing like that still on them.

DI G DORKING

So, was he stabbed as well?

MISS K HARVEY

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

DI G DORKING

Oh right, well what about a name?

MISS K HARVEY

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

(rubs his forehead and sighing)

Yes, thanks for that. What about time of death?

MISS K HARVEY

By looking at the body, I estimate the time to be between 11 p.m. and midnight last night.

DI G DORKING

(rubs his cheeks)

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. Ah! Hang on a minute, I'll take that bag for her, as this just might come in useful.

MISS K HARVEY

(chuckles)

Ha, ha! A psychic! Really? This isn't like you at all, Sir. We go by scientific evidence, we don't believe in that kind of stuff. What on earth made you consult her?

DI G DORKING

(shrugs)

It was Keith who suggested it. Right, I'll leave you to get

back to your hard work. I'll be leaving Jack here and I'm going back to the station. You and Jack can escort the body to the pathologist. I'll be at the mortuary as soon as I can, thanks, Karen. If you find anything new, then let me know.

MISS K HARVEY

(sighs)

Yes, of course, as always.

(exit left DI George Dorking)

DC J CAMERON

(smiles)

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

MISS K HARVEY

(touches her shoulder length, brown-black hair and laughs)

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

DC J CAMERON

(rubs his hands)

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

MISS K HARVEY

(shrugs)

Blondie.

DC J CAMERON

(smiles)

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.

MISS K HARVEY

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

Scene 5

Meanwhile inside 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 purple leather sandals of mine they are slippery in the wet, but 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 your age, officer.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(smiles)

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

(walks over to the desk)

Excuse me officer....

PC P O'BRIEN

(looks up)

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

MISS H FRAIL

(smiles)

Yes, that's me. Ah ha, you must be Keith. 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

(shouts)

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

(stops in her tracks)

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

PC P O'BRIEN

(pleads)

Please.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(sighs)

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

PC P O'BRIEN

(winks)

Thanks, Claire, and I'll make sure I'll keep to that.

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

So, Hattie, Detective Inspector 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 fortieth birthday yesterday, and to celebrate he brought a few boxes of those delicious cream cakes into work.

MISS H FRAIL

Good old PC Russell! Hmm ... cream cakes, excellent!

(Miss Hattie Frail and PC Patrick 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 in interview room 3 drinking their hot beverages and eating cream cakes.

(enter left DI George Dorking)

PC P O'BRIEN

(stands 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

(gets up)

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

DI G DORKING

(shakes Hattie's right hand)

Yes, nice to meet you, Hattie.

MISS H FRAIL

Likewise. And I can't wait to hear how you want me to help you, detective. It's all very exciting.

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, detective.

DI G DORKING

So, Hattie, do you want to know the victim's name, and can you tell us exactly what it is that you need?

MISS H FRAIL

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

Oh no, I don't want to know the victim's name. I do sense letters and numbers, but tend to struggle with picking out full names and addresses; and complete car registrations can be another problem, will that be OK?

DI G DORKING

Well, that's better than nothing at all, so that's fine with us.

MISS H FRAIL

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

DI G DORKING

(gets out a few items from the forensic bag)

Yes, that'll be fine. Right, what I've got here is a brand new, dark-brown leather wallet. All that was in it was a photograph of a young lady. So, when you're ready, Hattie, you can start.

MISS H FRAIL

(touches the smooth 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.

DI G DORKING

Now Hattie how good are you at sensing people's full names?

MISS H FRAIL

Hmm... now about that. Yes, I can detect full names, but only on a few occasions, it mainly comes in as letters. So, 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'sd, 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

(leans 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. They're getting faster ... yes, I think I'm

being followed. I'm getting very worried about it. Hmm ... it's very dark just here, the streetlamps aren't working. I'm starting to walk faster ... Oh, and now I'm running, I'm getting a little out of breath. I'm really scared ... scared for my l...

PC P O'BRIEN

What about the attack?

MISS H FRAIL

(shrugs)

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 five-foot-ten 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 twenty-four and letters p, l, w and a black motorbike. This number and letters could come from the registration number plate.

PC L RUSSELL

(clasps 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 me re...revenge ...

DI G DORKING

(folds his arms)

So, he knew the victim?

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.

DI G DORKING

Can you him talking?

MISS H FRAIL

No, I'm not hearing him talking, but 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

(rubs his forehead)

Where's the knife?

MISS H FRAIL

(sighs)

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

(unfolds his arms and places 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

(hands 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

(touches 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 twenty-one or twenty-two years old, I can

see the number thirty-seven and three letters, p, l and a.

DI G DORKING

(smiles)

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. So, after a short break, I think should take drive to the crime scene, what do you think?

MISS H FRAIL

(shakes DI George Dorking's right hand)

Yes, good idea.

(all exit left)

Scene 7

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

(smiles)

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

DI G DORKING

(turns around)

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

MISS H FRAIL

(places her hands over her eyes and sighs)

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, Sir. Yes, and they were murdered 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 Miss Karen Harvey; she's the SOCO, who is standing close to the exact spot where the body was found.

Scene 8

It's 2 minutes later and DI George Dorking has introduced Miss Hattie Frail to SOCO Miss Karen Harvey, who is standing close to the crime scene.

DI G DORKING

(turns around)

Hattie, this is our SOCO Karen Harvey; and Karen, this is the psychic lady, Hattie Frail. So far, she's given us a name, and she has also told us about the other two relatively recent killings.

MISS K HARVEY

(shakes Hattie's right hand)

Nice to meet you, Hattie ...

MISS H FRAIL

(interrupts)

I'm sorry for interrupting, but I'm picking up something about the killer. This area is very bad. I can see the murderer being with somebody. They're both smoking a cigarette and they're outside in an alleyway by a gay and lesbian night bar ... the one down the road, it's a kind of night bar with the letters t, p and u.

DI G DORKING

Yes, that'll most probably be The Pink Unicorn.

MISS H FRAIL

Oh, right. Yes, that'll most probably be The Pink Unicorn.

Now they're getting rid of their cigarettes and are going inside. Moving on and now he's all dressed up, not as a man, but as a ... woman, and he's performing on the stage. He's with the other dancers and I think ... they ... have the letters t, m and q connected to them, I do believe. This was very recent, I'd say last Friday.

MISS K HARVEY

(shrugs)

Oh, they're what you call The Mystical Queens. Can you describe this other male?

MISS H FRAIL

(paces the ground)

Yes, I'd say the other man has short ginger hair, in his early twenties, either twenty-two or twenty-three years old. He's about five foot eight or nine inches tall, has broad shoulders and his eyes are blue-grey in colour. I'm sensing the letter e. With this character I'm finding it quite hard to sense things, maybe he's not happy with his latest job or something. Yes ... I suppose that could be it. 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

(shakes Hattie's right hand and smiles)

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 9

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

(stands up)

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

(turns 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 twenty-two 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.

(looks 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 twenty-six 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 she thinks he has a relation working as one of their performers. I think they're called the Mystical Queens, or something like that.

PC R THOMAS

What about witnesses?

DI G DORKING

(smiles)

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.

(looks upward towards his left side)

For those who don't know this is Reggie Robertson, he's the first victim, age twenty-three, he died on Thursday the 15th of May 2031 between 9 and 10 p.m.

(looks downward towards his right side)

This is the second victim he's Kevin Whitbread. Also, a good, hard-working, law-abiding person, age twenty-one 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

OK, will do, Sir

Scene 10

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

DI G DORKING

(shouts and holds 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

(shouts)

No! He isn'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 over there, just near to the toilets.

DI G DORKING

(shouts)

Thank you.

(turns to face PC Richard Thomas)

Phew! It's so hot in this place, and I've never seen so many happy-looking people crammed onto a dance floor.

PC R THOMAS

(smiles)

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

(bumps into a tall, lean male dancer)

Oh sorry, mate.

MALE DANCER

(winks and touches his shoulder-length blond hair)

Hey ... you there, with your gorgeous black hair you can bump into me any time, matey.

Scene 11

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

DI G DORKING

(shouts)

Excuse me! But is your name Mack Salvin?

MR M SALVIN

(shouts)

Well, that depends on who wants to know?

DI G DORKING

(holds up his ID badge)

I'm Detective Inspector Dorking and this is PC Thomas so I will ask you again are you, Mike Salvin?

MR M SALVIN

(shouts)

Yes! But 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

(shouts)

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

Hmm ... the last time I saw Leighton was on Friday night just gone; it was outside this very building, in fact.

DI G DORKING

Do you know Trevor Dolan?

MR M SALVIN

Funnily enough, Leighton and I were just talking about him as well on Friday night.

DI G DORKING

Oh, so you knew Trevor.

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 three 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

(shouts)

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

(shouts)

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

DI G DORKING

(shouts)

We just need to eliminate him from our enquiries.

MR M SALVIN

(his Smartwatch beeps)

Excuse me.

(shouts into his Smartwatch and puts it onto 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

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

MR M SALVIN

(shouts)

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

(shouts into Mr Mike Salvin's Smartwatch)

Leighton Bench, we'd like to come over to Sharon's house to talk to you about the recently deceased Trevor Dolan. Will this be OK?

MR L BENCH

(shouts)

Yes, I suppose so!

DI G DORKING

(shouts)

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

PC P O'BRIEN

(smiles and shouts)

Thank you for your time, Mike.

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

Scene 12

It's 8.05 p.m. DI George Dorking and PC Patrick O'Brien are knocking on Miss Sharon Maynard'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

(shouts)

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 solicitor with me.

DI G DORKING

Yes, that can be arranged for you.

MR L BENCH

(turns around and shrugs)

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

Scene 13

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

DI G DORKING

(folds his arms on his desk and looks toward 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, you will be under caution, so Leighton can you say your name and your current address, please?

MR L BENCH

(looks downward)

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

(looks upwards and shrugs)

I was in my bed fast asleep, why?

PC P O'BRIEN

(leans forward)

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

MR L BENCH

(looks 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

(looks 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

(shrugs)

So, what are the days of these dates then?

PC P O'BRIEN

(leans backward)

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

MR L BENCH

(laughs)

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 is heard on DI George Dorking's office door)

Come in!

(enter right Constable Claire Mills and hands over a small note to DI George Dorking)

Thank you, Constable Mills. For the record Constable Mills entered the room and handed me a note. She has now left the room.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

Sir.

(exit left)

So, Leighton, we've had a couple of witnesses that have just come forward.

MR L BENCH

(shrugs)

No comment.

(enter right PC P O'Brien)

DI G DORKING

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

PC O'BRIEN

(sits down on his chair and sighs)

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, can you think of anyone who would want to kill these two men, anybody?

MR L BENCH

(shrugs)

Um, no, I can't think of anyone, sorry.

MR L BENCH

(shouts)

Yes, 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! And, if it wasn't for those bloody witnesses coming forward, I might've got away with it!

DI G DORKING

(gest up from his chair)

Leighton Bench, I'm arresting you on suspicion of murder of Trevor Dolan. 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 15th of June 2031. So, PC O'Brien, Leighton can go back to the Custody unit please.... thank you.

(all exit left)

Scene 14

It's 9.a.m. on Monday 16th of June 2031. DI George Dorking, and PC Richard Thomas have just parked their cars and are now heading straight towards Appletown Police Station.

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 Brambley Street.

PC R THOMAS

Yes, it was a good job no one was hurt or even worse, killed. Oh, 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

(shrugs)

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

PC R THOMAS

(smiles)

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

DI G DORKING

(shrugs)

Claire! Really? But you're only twenty-eight. Tom is in his mid-forties, and you're only twenty-eight! Well, well,

well.

PC R THOMAS

(shrugs)

Oh?

DI G DORKING

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

(walking away from the station and heads towards DI George Dorking)

Hello, detective, 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

(dons her cardigan)

Well, that depends.

DI G DORKING

On what?

MISS H FRAIL

On how many of those lovely biscuits you have left.

DI G DORKING

We've got plenty.

MISS H FRAIL

(removes 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, 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 R THOMAS

Will do, Sir. We'll see you in a minute.

(exit left)

MISS H FRAIL

Actually, as we've got a few minutes spare would you mind if I can borrow your loo?

DI G DORKING

(enter right)

Yes, of course. Come with me, and I'll show you where it is.

MISS H FRAIL

Thank you.

(DI George Dorking and Miss Hattie Frail exit left)

Scene 15

It's 5 minutes later DI George Dorking, PC Richard Thomas, PC Leroy Russel, PC Patrick O'Brien, DC Jack Cameron, Constable Claire Mills are in DI George Dorking's office they are talking about a potential undercover stint taking place in The Pink Unicorn night bar as well as eating biscuits and drinking coffee.

PC P O'BRIEN

(rubs his hands)

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

(glares)

Hmm, yes, I've been in a couple of shows, but that was over a decade ago, Patrick.

DI G DORKING

(leans 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

(shouts)

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

DI G DORKING

(sighs)

Ah! Good point!

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(rubs her chin)

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

PC L RUSSELL

(sighs)

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!

(enter right Miss Hattie Frail; places her cardigan on the back of her chair, sits down, drinks some of her tea then takes a biscuit off from the plate)

DI G DORKING

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. So, which photo would you like first?

MISS H FRAIL

(finishes her biscuit and tea)

Right, I'm ready now. So, I think I'll have Kevin Whitbread's, thank you.

DI G DORKING

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

(touches his forehead)

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

MISS H FRAIL

(pauses then sighs)

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 around twenty-two or twenty-three 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

(rubs 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 sixteen 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

(smiles)

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

DI G DORKING

(presents Miss Hattie Frail another photograph)

So, Hattie, what about this person, Reggie Robertson?

MISS H FRAIL

(touches 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

(rubs 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

(smiles)

Yes, of course. I do have a hairdresser's appointment in about an hour's time anyway. Now you need to catch these men, because I'm sensing they'll want to attack again. I think it'll happen quite soon, I'd say sometime next week. So, are we finished for today?

DI G DORKING

Yes, we are, Hattie. And thank you, you've been very helpful to us.

(picking up Miss Hattie Frail's pink cardigan)

Oh, and don't forget to pick up your cardigan this time. And sorry to hear about your sister, we do hope she gets

better soon.

MISS H FRAIL

(takes her pink cardigan from DI George Dorking)
Oh yes, my cardigan, and thank your kind words about sister and for believing in me too. Oh....oh dear. I think that tea has gone right through me. May I?

DI G DORKING

Yes, that's fine, Hattie. Anyhow, from now on please feel free to use the loo whenever.

MISS H FRAIL

(shakes DI George Dorking's right hand)
Yes, of course. 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 untidy office surrounded by four coffees and one tea and a medium-sized, flowery, round plate piled with chocolate biscuits.

DI G DORKING

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 an alibi for the other two murders.

MISS H FRAIL

(shrugs)
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

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

(sighs)

Oh, right. Thank you for that.

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

(smiles)

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

PC L RUSSELL

(sighs)

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

(sighs)

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

(sniggers)

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

(looks 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

(opens 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: apparently there's 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 Karen, what would we do without her?

DI G DORKING

(closes the van's side-door)

See you in a few hours' time, everybody.

DC J CAMERON

(smiles)

So, Claire, how's Tom these days?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(shrugs)

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

DC J CAMERON

(turns around)

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

(turns around)

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

DC J CAMERON

(shrugs)

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

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(looks straight ahead)

Oh well, if you mean me, then I'm afraid I don't really go for the balding 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

(shrugs)

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

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(smiles)

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

(shouts)

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

(takes a step backwards)

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

MR M SALVIN

(points 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

(turns around and sighs)

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

MR M SALVIN

Yes, sad business about that, very sad business.

PC L RUSSELL

(turns 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

(shrugs)

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, Whitney Houston, Lady Gaga, Celine Dion, Tina Turner, the Spice Girls; and you are?

PC L RUSSELL

(from his big, brown bag he gets out a long black wig and places it over his short dark-brown afro hair and smiles)
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 Saunders. PC Richard Thomas is being served drinks at a very crowded bar.

DC J CAMERON

(looks 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
(smiles at 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 SAUNDERS
(smiles)

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

CONSTABLE C MILLS
Yes, it sure is, Guy.

MR G SAUNDERS
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 SAUNDERS
(shouts)
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 SAUNDERS
(shrugs)
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 SAUNDERS

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

CONSTABLE C MILLS

Why's that?

MISS Z SAUNDERS

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 he punches the air)

Yes, brilliant! That was so much better than our yesterday's performance. Well done, everybody. Now, Diana, it's Kyle's turn to perform tonight. We've got a few minutes before she goes on to do her hour's stint, so if you want to go to the loo, now's the time.

PC L RUSSELL

Yes, that's a very good idea.

MR M SALVIN

(points with his right hand)

The toilet is down the corridor on your right. It'll take a while, so when you get back, we'll most probably be backstage waiting to go on.

Scene 21

It's 9. 15 a.m. Tuesday 17th of June 2031. SOCO Miss Karen Harvey has in her possession two forensic plastic bags in one there is a big stick and in the other a few hair strands talking to DI George Dorking in the murder room.

MISS K HARVEY

(holds up one plastic forensic bag)

So, as you can see, I've got Mike's hair strands which I managed to get last night. I have matched them with the cigarette butts from the other two crime scenes.

(holds up the other forensic bag)

And the other good news is that we've found a few traces of Kevin Whitbread's blood on this stick!

DI G DORKING

(rubs his hands together and smiles)

Yes, this is fantastic news, Karen, well done!

(Karen's Smartwatch rings)

MISS K HARVEY

Oh sorry, but I must answer this call, it's from Joe. Yes, Joe, what is it? What? You've found a knife ... oh good ... and ... really? Oh, that's interesting, I'll let Sir know, thanks, Joe. See you in a few minutes, bye. Well, Sir, we've got a penknife. Joe says it was found at Reggie Robertson's crime scene. It had been wiped clean, but he managed to find a part thumbprint on the handle; but again, it has come back as inconclusive.

DI G DORKING

(shakes Karen's right hand)

Brilliant work! Ladies first.

MISS K HARVEY

(gathers up the stick)

Bye, Sir. I should be in touch later.

(exit left)

(a knock is heard at the door)

DI G DORKING

(shouts)

Come in!

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(peeps 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. They said 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, they 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

(rubs his hands and smiles)

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 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 part 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

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

(whispers into his radio control)

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

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(whispers back into her radio control)

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

PC P O'BRIEN

(whispers into his radio control)

At last! I can see Mike, Markus, an unknown young man and is that Guy Saunders walking behind them not in the far distance? Yes, I do believe it is, over.

CONSTABLE C MILLS
(whispers into her radio control)

I can see, over.

PC R THOMAS
(whispers into his radio control)

I can see all of them too, over.

DC J CAMERON
(whispers 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
(whispers into his radio control)

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

CONSTABLE C MILLS
(whispers into her radio control)

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

PC P O'BRIEN
(whispers into his 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
(whispers into his radio control)

Yes! All go! Go! Over!

(shouts 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

(turns around)

Guy! What on earth is HE DOING HERE?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(stops in her tracks and shouts)

Guy's running away!

PC R THOMAS

(turns around)

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

MR M SALVIN

(points towards Marcus Thompson)

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

(takes hold of 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

(looks down at the victim)

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

VICTIM

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.

(looks up and shouts over to PC Patrick O'Brien)

Guy's been caught! They're walking back, you take PC
Russell, PC Thomas, Guy and Mike.

(turns 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 Saunders.

MR M SALVIN

(looks toward 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 on-going.

PC P O'BRIEN

Really?

DS B MELLOR

(switches on his Smartwatch)

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

PC P O'BRIEN

Yes, I shall have to do that.

DS B MELLOR

(sighs)

Of course.

Scene 24

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

DI G DORKING

(presses 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 17th of June 2031. So, for the record, Guy, can you tell me your full name and present address, please?

MR G SAUNDERS

(looks straight down at the table)

Guy Stuart Saunders and my address is 23, Cox Street, Appletown.

CONSTABLE C MILLS

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 SAUNDERS

(sighs)

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

(stands up and takes Guy Saunder's arms)

Guy Saunders, I'm arresting you on suspicion of murder. You killed Mr Kevin Whitbread and Mr Reggie Robertson. 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 17th 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

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

(shrugs)

What's that then?

CONSTABLE C MILLS

(holds 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

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

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

DI G DORKING

(smiles)

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

CONSTABLE C MILLS

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

(shrugs)

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

(sighs)

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

(laughs)

Good night, Sir, see you on Wednesday!

(exit left)

(enter right PC Patrick O'Brien)

PC R THOMAS

(sighs)

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

DI G DORKING

(yawns)

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