



*A Dinner Theatre Murder Mystery*  
by  
**Lynn Rushby and Gordon Lewis**



*Published by Lazy Bee Scripts*

**Customer Taster**

# **Murder at the Micropub**

*Copyright 2024 by Lynn Rushby and Gordon Lewis*

## **COPYRIGHT REGULATIONS**

This murder mystery is protected under the Copyright laws of the British Commonwealth of Nations and all countries of the Universal Copyright Conventions.

All rights, including Stage, Motion Picture, Video, Radio, Television, Public Reading, and Translations into Foreign Languages, are strictly reserved.

No part of this publication may lawfully be transmitted, stored in a retrieval system, or reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, manuscript, typescript, recording, including video, or otherwise, without prior consent of Lazy Bee Scripts.

A licence, obtainable only from Lazy Bee Scripts, must be acquired for every public or private performance of a script published by Lazy Bee Scripts and the appropriate royalty paid. If extra performances are arranged after a licence has already been issued, it is essential that Lazy Bee Scripts are informed immediately and the appropriate royalty paid, whereupon an amended licence will be issued.

The availability of this script does not imply that it is automatically available for private or public performance, and Lazy Bee Scripts reserve the right to refuse to issue a licence to perform, for whatever reason. Therefore a licence should always be obtained before any rehearsals start.

Localisation and updating of this script is permitted, particularly where indicated in the script. Major revisions to the text may not be made without the permission of Lazy Bee Scripts.

The name of the author must be displayed on all forms of advertising and promotional material, including posters, programmes and hand bills.

Photocopying of this murder mystery constitutes an infringement of copyright unless consent has been obtained from Lazy Bee Scripts and an appropriate fee has been paid.

***FAILURE TO ABIDE BY ALL THE ABOVE REGULATIONS, CONSTITUTES AN  
INFRINGEMENT OF THE COPYRIGHT LAWS OF GREAT BRITAIN.***

*Published by Lazy Bee Scripts*

# Murder at the Micropub

## *Organiser's Overview*

### ***About The Pack***

Murder at the Micropub is a scripted murder mystery set in the Drunken Duck micropub, with approximately 45 minutes of scripted dialogue.

The audience, divided into teams or tables, are invited to ask the suspects questions and are then given time to solve the mystery before the guilty party is revealed. The murder evening is designed to be performed by ten actors in a venue with a stage or suitable acting area.

### ***Structure***

This murder mystery pack contains:

- The Organiser's Overview (*Extract here*);
- The Script (*Extract here*);
- Accusation Sheets, to be filled in by the audience.

### ***The Organiser's Overview***

Contains:

- Plot Outline;
- Character Descriptions;
- Guidance for Staging your Murder Mystery Evening:
  - Suggested Timings;
  - The Meet and Greet;
  - Audience Interrogation;
- Production Notes:
  - Set Description;
  - Costume;
  - Music/Sound Effects;
  - Lighting Effects;
  - Props List.

### ***Plot Outline***

Mike and Sandra have been running the Drunken Duck, a new micropub, for four months and business seems to be doing well. However, Sandra has plans to strike out on her own with the help of Giuseppe, their Italian chef, who is in love with Sandra and has ambitions beyond his expertise.

Jack Hill, the landlord of the traditional pub down the road, is unhappy as he is losing trade and is prepared to play dirty. The Drunken Duck's licence extension has been mysteriously delayed and adverse online reviews aren't helping.

It's quiz night, and Jack has arrived to view the competition, along with his teammate, a local councillor. But it's the unexpected arrival of Tanya, Mike's wife, that really sets the cat among the pigeons – and before long, a body is discovered!

## ***Characters***

Sandra Short – landlady of the Drunken Duck micropub, female.

Mike Smith – landlord of the Drunken Duck micropub, male.

Ted Sondheim – a regular customer, male.

Giuseppe Campagnolo – the Italian chef, male.

Jack Hill – the landlord of the Crowing Cock, male.

Penny Forthem – a local councillor, female.

Tanya Hyde – Mike’s ex-wife, female.

Geoff Knowall – Ted’s friend, male.

Inspector Hagley – the local police, female.

Constable Racy – the local police, female.

As scripted, there are 5 male and 5 female characters. However, with a few changes to the script, Hagley and Racy, and perhaps Ted and Geoff, could be played as any gender.

## **Guidance for Staging your Murder Mystery Evening**

### ***Suggested Timings***

This event has been designed to incorporate a two-course meal, giving the audience time to discuss the clues and suspects and to make their accusations.

The timings below are suggested for an event that runs for two hours, but this may vary depending on factors such as audience size and type of meal, as well as other elements you may wish to include, such as a raffle or best team name competition.

**The Meet and Greet** – 15 mins.

The audience arrives. Unscripted interactions as the cast greet them.

**Act 1** – 35 mins.

Scripted action, ending in the murder.

**Interval** – 25 mins.

A chance for the audience to discuss the event. Main course served.

**Act 2** – 5 mins.

Scripted scene, in which Hagley and Racy interrogate the suspects.

**Audience Interrogation** – 10 mins.

Unscripted session. Led by the detectives, the actors improvise responses to the audience’s questions/comments.

**Interval** – 20 mins.

The audience consider the suspects and fill in their accusation sheets, which are then collected by the detectives. Dessert served.

Whilst the audience scoff their dessert, the cast review the accusation sheets and select the winner based on the best answer and, if necessary, the tie breaker questions. (It may also be worthwhile to identify ingeniously wrong answers.)

**Act 3** – 5 mins.

All is revealed! Scripted denouement scene, with final statements and a confession.

**Conclusion** – 5 mins.

The winner is announced and prizes awarded.

### ***The Meet and Greet***

In the unscripted Meet and Greet, the cast will mingle with the audience to set the scene and provide some background information, without giving too much away. The actors must stay in character throughout, even if they know some of the guests. The members of the audience will be treated as if they've come for the Drunken Duck quiz night.

The actors could discuss the upcoming quiz and, depending on their character, comment on how the micropub is doing and their views of the other characters. Jack, for example, would be critical, whereas Ted would discuss the merits of the beer. Sandra and Giuseppe could do some discreet flirting and Mike could complain about costs.

The actors leave when the pop music starts, signalling the start of Act 1.

### ***Audience Interrogation***

In this session, the audience have the opportunity to ask the suspects questions.

Hagley and Racy should lead the session, taking questions and repeating them if necessary for everyone to hear. You could take a question from each table, and then depending on time, use discretion as to whether you go around the room a second time. You don't want the cast to have to answer too many each, so you might open it up to any table that has questions for those who haven't answered as many.

The murderer is the only one who is allowed to lie, and even then, only about not being the murderer. For questions you don't know the answer to, you can make something up that fits with your character's backstory.

Rehearsing will help you get a sense of your character and the answers you can give. So, you can question each other at a rehearsal using the example questions (*provided in the full pack*) – though you should also expect the unexpected, as who knows what the audience will ask on the night!

# Murder at the Micropub

## *Script Extract*

### Act 1

(A micropub. Two or three tables are downstage. A bar upstage, with two small kegs on it and optics etc. behind. A door to the right leads to a kitchen. To the left of the bar, a passageway leads to the storeroom, cold room and out to the backyard, car park and outside toilets. SFX: Banging and drilling from the yard; a radio plays loud pop music.)

(Sandra is behind the bar, polishing glasses, wiping surfaces, etc. She sings along and dances to the music as she works.)

(Enter Mike, with various papers.)

**Mike:** For heaven's sake, Sandra, turn that bloody row off. I can't hear myself think.

**Sandra:** Oh, stop being such a misery guts.

(Sandra reluctantly turns the radio off. SFX: Music stops.)

**Sandra:** I'm trying to drown out the noise that so-called plumber is making. I thought he was supposed to have finished by now.

**Mike:** He's promised he'll get the toilets sorted by opening time tonight.

**Sandra:** Well, he's got another ten minutes then. Have you finished the quiz?

**Mike:** Almost, but I was trying to make sense of these food bills. Quails' eggs at six pounds per dozen? What's wrong with sodding hens' eggs? I'm going to talk to Giuseppe about this.

**Sandra:** No, leave that to me. You'll only wind him up and you know how temperamental he is. We can't afford to have him walk out on us.

**Mike:** Well, we can't afford to keep him on either, not with the way he spends money. We only needed a basic cook to provide a simple pub menu, but he thinks he's at the Ritz. I don't know what you were thinking taking him on in the first place.

**Sandra:** He was the only one who replied to the advert. There's a shortage of catering staff everywhere. And we need something special if we're going to compete with the Cock.

**Mike:** Yes, but we're only a micropub. We're already offering something different to the Cock with all our craft beers. We've only been open four months and we've already poached half their customers. But we won't last another four months if we're not profitable.

**Sandra:** Well, I still think that quality food is a draw, but I'll speak to Giuseppe about budgets. And while we're talking about the future, we won't be open in two months if we don't get the licence extension. Have you written that letter to the head of the council?

**Mike:** Yes, I've got it here. (Shows her the letter.) I've asked for a full investigation.

**Sandra:** Well, I hope that does the trick. Right, I'll go and change before we open.

**Mike:** Okay.

(Sandra exits to the rear.)

(Enter Ted from the main door, with a newspaper. SFX: Drilling stops. Mike, distracted by the papers, doesn't initially notice Ted. Ted coughs to get his attention.)

**Mike:** Oh hello, Ted, I didn't know there was anyone in.

**Ted:** Oh yes, six o'clock on the dot. You know me, eighteen hundred hours precisely. Not a minute before and not a minute after. Mr Prompt, that's me.

**Mike:** Ah yeah, of course. Now what can I get you, Ted? The usual?

**Ted:** Oh yes, the usual please, Michael, a pint of good old Tummy Tickler if you don't mind. Same as I have had every day since you opened. Well, that is every day except that Thursday when you had that little problem and I had to make do with that other stuff. Not that I am complaining, you understand. It's just that I know what I like and like what I know. I was unsure as to its origin or its specific gravity.

(Mike passes him his pint. Ted pays by card and examines his beer carefully.)

**Ted:** It's a little cloudy, don't you think?

**Mike:** (Focused on one sheet of paper.) I don't know, Ted, I haven't been out today.

**Ted:** No, not the weather, the beer. It just looks a little cloudier than usual.

**Mike:** Well, perhaps leave it to settle for a minute.

**Ted:** I don't normally have to. Is the cold room at the right temperature, I wonder? I was in a pub once where the beer was two degrees colder than recommended and it really tasted funny. I wrote to the brewery and complained. I never even got a reply.

**Mike:** What's the capital of Azerbaijan?

**Ted:** Azerbai-what?

**Mike:** It's this bloody quiz. I still haven't finished the geography round and we start in an hour or so.

**Ted:** Well, if you stick to local geography instead of this foreign stuff, I can help you. Here's one for you. What's the difference between a Man of Kent and a Kentish Man?

**Mike:** No idea. What is it?

**Ted:** Well, you see, it all depends which side of the Medway you were born. I am a Kentish Man as I was born in Chislehurst, but my friend Geoff was born in Canterbury so he's a Man of Kent. And his sister, of course, is a Maid of Kent. And here's another one; how many cathedral cities are there in Kent? Or how about asking what year the Channel Tunnel opened?

**Mike:** Er, are you doing the quiz, Ted?

**Ted:** Yes, I'm looking forward to it.

**Mike:** Well, I can't use your questions then, can I? That would be cheating.

**Ted:** Oh, I never thought of that. But if I were you, I'd keep it local. Will Giuseppe be doing some food to go with this quiz?

**Mike:** Don't talk to me about food. Look at these bloody bills! Who does our so-called chef think he is? Gordon bloody Ramsay? I ask him for sausage rolls and he starts making volley-vonts and sodding amuse-bouche, whatever they are. And Sandra's no better, encouraging him to make all this fancy stuff. She'll bankrupt us at this rate.

**(Enter Sandra.)**

**Sandra:** Talking about me, were you?

**(Ted takes his beer, sits at a table, and starts to read his newspaper.)**

**Mike:** Ah, there you are. I need you to take over here while I change that barrel, finish this sodding quiz and then sort these bloody food bills out.

**Sandra:** Oh, you're such a bloody cheapskate. I'm not surprised Tanya left you.

**Mike:** You leave my ex-wife out of this. You never met her so you don't know what a nightmare she was. I'm well rid of her.

**Sandra:** And talking about bills, Giuseppe says we're going to need a new oven. That second-hand one you bought is already knackered.

**Mike:** A brand new oven? Dream on! This is a micropub, not some fancy gastropub.

**(Mike grabs his quiz sheets and cigarettes and exits.)**

**Sandra:** What's rattled his cage?

**Ted:** Well, he seemed to be upset because he didn't know the capital of Azerbai-whatsit. Do you know what it is, Sandra?

**Sandra:** Him and that bloody quiz! I wish he'd never started it. Last month we only had two teams and there's not exactly many booked tonight.

**Ted:** Two teams was good last month. Me and Geoff came second. Now, are you doing a prize for the best team name again? We won it last time with Quizteama Aguilera. Tonight, Matthew, we're going to be Quiz Tarrant. Get it, Sandra? Like him off that Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? programme. Only that might not work anymore now that Jeremy Paxman from Top Gear has taken over.

**Sandra:** I think you've got your Jeremys a bit muddled there, Ted, and who the hell is Matthew?

**Ted:** You know, Sandra. He did that Stars in Their Eyes singing show. Matthew Wright.

**Sandra:** I think your Wright is wrong. You mean Matthew Kelly. Well, let's hope you get your Jeremys and Matthews sorted out before the quiz, whatever team name you call yourselves.

**(Ted picks up his newspaper again.)**

**(Enter Giuseppe from the kitchen.)**

**Giuseppe:** Ciao, Sandra. **(Grabs her hand, kisses it.)** Bella, bella, bella!

**Sandra:** **(Loud whisper.)** Stop it, Giuseppe. **(Indicates Ted.)** Walls have ears!

**Giuseppe:** I can't help it. I can't wait to be with you. I want the whole world to know how much I love you.

**Sandra:** Well, you'll just have to wait. We've got to sort the money out first. I've got to be careful at the moment, as Mike's starting to question the food bills, and if he takes a really close look at the accounts, I'll have some explaining to do. So that means keeping him sweet for the time being. In a few weeks, we'll have enough to start our very own bistro and I can say goodbye to misery guts.

**Giuseppe:** I can see it now – Cucina Campagnolo – the best Sicilian restaurant in the whole world.

**Sandra:** Well, let's aim for being the best in Bromley [*or local area*] first.

**Giuseppe:** But Sandra...

**Sandra:** We have to be realistic, my darling. We'll only have enough money for a small bistro to start with, but once word spreads about your wonderful food the punters will come flocking.

**Giuseppe:** But Sandra...

**Sandra:** And this time next year we'll move to bigger and better premises and in five years time...

**Giuseppe:** (**Loudly.**) But Sandra, cinque anni, five years!

**(Ted looks up from his newspaper.)**

**Sandra:** (**Whispers.**) Shh! We'll talk about it later when we're alone. (**In her normal voice.**) Now, Giuseppe, what culinary delights have you got for us tonight?

**Giuseppe:** I have something very special for you tonight, Sandra. Issa hot and cold canapés.

**Ted:** (**Looks up from his newspaper.**) A can of peas? What's so special about that?

**Giuseppe:** Not a can of peas, you silly man. Canapés – how you say? Tittibits!

**Ted:** I beg your pardon!

**Sandra:** So are all the canapés ready? The quiz is starting soon.

**Giuseppe:** Dio mio! I have not put the hot ones in yet. When will the new oven arrive?

**Sandra:** I'm afraid that old miser is refusing to order a replacement.

**Giuseppe:** E incredibile! That oven! One day too hot, next day too cold. Merda! How can I produce fantastico food with that piece of shit?

**Ted:** Pizza? I thought we were having peas?

**Giuseppe:** I give up! (**Exits.**)

**Sandra:** I can just tell it's going to be one of those nights.

**(Enter Jack through the main door.)**

**Sandra:** (**Under her breath.**) And speaking of which... (**Aloud.**) Hello, Jack. What brings you in here tonight? A quiet night at the Cock then, is it?

**Jack:** Oh no, no. Business as usual there. No, I came for the quiz. Thought I might need to come early to get a table, but it looks like that won't be a problem.

**Sandra:** People tend to leave it till after EastEnders has finished. You'll see there won't be a spare seat in the place come eight o'clock. What can I get you?

**Jack:** (**Looking at the board.**) I've never heard of any of these. Medway Mule?

**Sandra:** Might be a bit strong for you. It's six percent and got a hell of a kick.

**Jack:** Bickley Bite? Swanley Swallow? And what's that one at the bottom? Gnat's Piss?

**Sandra:** It's our non-alcoholic local brew for anyone driving.

**Jack:** So what would you recommend?

**Sandra:** I think a pint of Viper's Venom would be right up your street.

**Jack:** Not at six pounds forty, thank you very much. Think I'll just have a draught Coke. Need to keep a clear head for the quiz.

**Sandra:** Would that be a pint or a half?

**Jack:** Just a half, please.

**Sandra:** If you're sure you can afford that. I heard business was slow at the Cock since we opened.

**Jack:** Don't you worry about us. We've been going for nearly thirty years and have seen off plenty of these flash in the pan competitors. Here today, gone tomorrow once the novelty wears off. (**Sandra hands him his drink. He takes a sip and looks round the pub.**)



**Jack:** Last time I was in here, it was a wine bar. Lasted less than six months. Remind me, how long have you been open?

**Sandra:** That'll be two pounds sixty, please. I was reading in the Publican last week that many of the big breweries were planning to close a lot of their less profitable outlets. So we'll see who's here in a year's time, shall we? Enjoy your Coke.

**(Jack pays with several coins, takes his drink, and sits at a table. He takes his iPad out and starts to type.)**

**(Enter Mike.)**

**Mike:** I don't believe it! That bloody plumber promised he'd get the job finished today. He said he'd stay till it was done but he's bugged off and left his tools and a pile of rubbish behind. Calls himself a plumber – I think he's taking the piss!

**Sandra:** So are the loos working or not?

**Mike:** Only the ladies'. We'll have to make it unisex for tonight.

**Ted:** **(Looks up from his paper.)** That's not very convenient. Women are always complaining men don't put the seat down but they never leave it up for us. **(Indicates his newspaper.)** Mind you, if this article is right, it won't be long before you'll need a lot more loos with all this gender identity going on.

**Sandra:** **(To Mike.)** Typical of you. I told you not to go for the cheapest quote. "Bogs and Bristles"! Surely the name should have warned you that quality wasn't high on their agenda.

**Mike:** That's all very well. Did you see the other quotes? I'd expect a jacuzzi, hot tub and bidet at those prices, not a simple toilet repair. No wonder plumbers have got holiday homes in the Caribbean.

**Sandra:** You never bloody learn, do you? If you pay peanuts...

**Mike:** **(Sees Jack.)** What's he doing here?

**Sandra:** Says he's here for the quiz, but I'm not so sure.

**Mike:** He seems to be making a lot of notes on that iPad. I wouldn't be surprised if he wasn't behind those dodgy reviews we've had. **(Goes over to Jack.)** Evening, Jack. I hear you've come for the quiz.

**Jack:** **(Hastily closes iPad.)** Yes. I was just reminding myself of the USA state capitals and stuff.

**Mike:** Really? I thought you might be reminding yourself what it's like to be in a decent pub.

**Jack:** Very funny. You should have been a comedian.

**Mike:** Is Jill not joining you tonight? Isn't she the brains of the family?

**Jack:** Oh no. Someone's got to hold the fort.

**Mike:** Really? I would have thought your bar staff could manage a quiet Thursday night at the Cock. But then rumour has it that you've had to let some of your staff go. Financial troubles?

**Jack:** You don't want to listen to local gossip. We're busier than ever. And there's a darts match tonight, so Jill will be rushed off her feet. I might have to pop back to help out.

**Mike:** That's a surprise. One of our regulars was in your place this time last week and said it was like being in a morgue. Jill was watching the telly and there was only one old boy on the slot machine.

**Jack:** We all have quiet times towards the end of the month, just before payday. Anyway, I thought I'd come and see how an amateur quiz works. The brewery uses a professional company to provide ours, but I don't suppose you can afford that.

**Mike:** We find our regulars prefer a more informal quiz. So who is on your team then?

**Jack:** You may remember Penny. She's on the licensing committee for the local council – and here she comes now.

**(Enter Penny from the main entrance.)**

**Penny:** Hello, Jack. Good, you've saved us a table.

**Mike:** Evening, Councillor. I gather you're here for the quiz.

**Penny:** Hello, Mike. Yes, it's always nice to support local businesses.

**Mike:** Good to hear that. Sandra, can you get Penny a drink please? On the house, of course.

**Penny:** That's kind of you, Mike, but I'd rather pay for my own. Can't have any hint of corruption, can we, not while you've got a licence application in. **(Laughs.)** Jack, can I get you one?

**Jack:** Very kind of you. I'll have a large scotch please.

**(Penny moves to the bar.)**

**Sandra:** Evening, Councillor Forthem. What can I get you?

**Penny:** G and T please, and a large scotch for Jack.

**Sandra:** I see he doesn't mind having a proper drink if someone else is paying. So much for keeping a clear head for the quiz! **(Prepares the drinks.)** Actually, I'm glad you've popped in. I was going to contact you this week about our licence extension. We applied for it weeks ago and haven't heard a word. The thing is, we've doubled our turnover in the last couple of months. The customers are really enjoying the variety of local ales, and since Giuseppe arrived, we've now got people coming in for the delicious food. He's an amazing man and we've got big plans to develop this place into a proper gastropub.

**Mike:** **(Under his breath.)** Gastropub? More like gastroenteritis with him in the kitchen. **(Aloud.)** One step at a time, Sandra. But she's right. We were told we'd hear the result of our application within three weeks and it's been six. I wouldn't want you to take this personally, Councillor, but clearly something's not right here. I'm sure you're above board, but I think something dodgy's going on to delay it this much.

**Penny:** Oh, I don't think so, Mike. I know the licensing officers have been inundated with applications recently. Give it another two or three weeks and I'm sure it will get sorted then.

**Mike:** We haven't got that long. Our licence expires at the end of next month. We can't do anything, plan anything or order anything until we know. Our livelihood's at stake here, so I've written to the head of the council asking for an urgent meeting to find out what's going on. **(Waves letter in the air.)** It's going in the post first thing tomorrow.

**Penny:** No need to go that far, Mike. Tell you what, I'll look into it tomorrow as a matter of urgency for you.

**Mike:** Thanks, that's very kind of you, but I'm still sending this. Something's not right. That'll be thirteen pounds fifty, please.

**(Penny pays by card, takes the drinks over to Jack, and sits down.)**

...

**[Continued in the full Murder Mysery Pack.]**