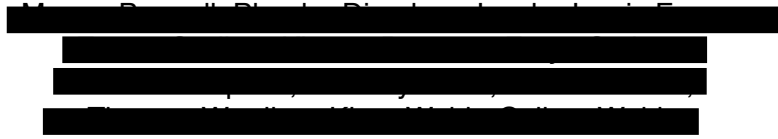


MURDER AT BURTON LIBRARY

by the

Burton Young Writers



Producer/director: William Gallagher

Murder at Burton Library was first performed at Burton Library on Saturday 7 June, 2014

Cast:

Tracey Briggs	as	Detective Inspector Diane Impossible (D.I. Di)
Matt McGreevy	as	George Clooney (no relation) and assorted supporting characters
Hayley Frances	as	Christine Keeler (no relation)
Justina Hart	as	assorted supporting characters
William Gallagher	as	assorted supporting characters

ASSORTED SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

To be divided on the day.

The Book Monster
Rockstar Smillie
The Policeman, "Paul Eeece"

Nun with a Gun
Popstar Lillie
The Evil Teddybear

Props:

1x water bottle
1x notebook or pad
1x book
1x flip chart with writing exercise on front, "Christine Did It" on second page

Sets:

1x table
2x chairs

SC. 1. BURTON LIBRARY – DAY

The parents are seated in the room. There is a flip chart to one side. Two chairs and interrogation table are at the back of the room: characters can enter and exit through the rear cupboards.

As we start, GEORGE CLOONEY and CHRISTINE KEELER are to the front. DETECTIVE INSPECTOR DIANA IMPOSSIBLE is by the door. Everyone else is behind the parents.

Christine is next to a table with a bottle of water.

CHRISTINE:
Hello everyone and welcome to the writing group.

GEORGE:
Yes, thanks there, Christine, hello everyone. I'm George Clooney – no relation – world famous writing superstar –

CHRISTINE:
Yeah, right.

GEORGE:
And I run the Burton Young Writers Group like some kind of all-seeing, all-powerful writing God.

CHRISTINE:
(COUGH)

GEORGE:
Helped out here by Christine Keeler. No relation. She's not bad.

CHRISTINE:
Thanks so much.

GEORGE:
Now, the Young Writers Group has been going so well that from today, we're expanding. As well as the children writers of Burton, you, the parents are now in your own writing group.

CHRISTINE:
We'll call it the Burton Young *ish* Writers.

GEORGE:
You're going to work very hard but I promise it will be lots of fun. And as the regular group would know – <COUGHS> – excuse me, as the regular group would know, the funny scribble on the board is actually supposed to be our starter for this morning.

CHRISTINE:
<READING> "If you were able to write any type of story you like, which would you choose?"

GEORGE:
<READING> Myth or Legend? <COUGHS>

George picks up the water from Christine's table. As she reads, he drinks.

CHRISTINE:
<READING> Sci-Fi or non-fiction? Adventure? Romance? <BIG PAUSE> Crime?

George COLLAPSES and DIES.

DETECTIVE INSPECTOR DIANA IMPOSSIBLE enters. She slams the door behind her.

DETECTIVE:
Everybody stop right where you are. (TO AUDIENCE) I'm Detective Inspector Diana Impossible. Call me D.I. Di. (TO CHRISTINE) You, call an ambulance.

Christine phones for help. DI Di checks George's pulse.

DETECTIVE:
(TO CHRISTINE) Just as I suspected. No pulse. Either he's heartless or he's dead.

CHRISTINE:
I'd call it fifty-fifty.

During the following, the Detective steps forward to the audience – and trips over George's body.

DETECTIVE:
(TO CHRISTINE) It's a good thing I was here. (TO AUDIENCE) I was perusing the library, I like the crime section and I saw you all coming up, I got suspicious. Looks like I got myself a murder – (RE THE AUDIENCE) and a whole lot of suspects.

During the following, Christine steps forward to join the Detective – and trips over George's body.

CHRISTINE:
Surely you don't suspect foul play?

DETECTIVE:
A sudden death and twenty minutes left in the story? You bet I do. (TO AUDIENCE) The victim was alive when he came to the library, he was alive until he met you. It's the perfect cover. A lot of people in one place. The murderer knew they couldn't use anything too obvious because there are a lot of people around here on a Saturday morning.

CHRISTINE:
What if we worked out how he was killed? That would lead us to the weapon and that would give us the murderer.

DETECTIVE:
(IGNORING HER) So they decided to be super-smart and use you as cover for their escape. Except I was in the way. I was in the door. I've trapped the killer. All I've got to do is question the suspects and break them.

SC. 2. INTERROGATION TABLE – BURTON LIBRARY (CONTINUOUS)

CHRISTINE:
Am I a suspect?

DETECTIVE:
You're suspect number one.

The Detective goes to the table – tripping over George – and pulls out a chair for Christine.

(During the following, Matt to join the supporting players. Everybody to pretend he's still dead on the floor and keep tripping over his body there.)

DETECTIVE:
Take a seat.

Christine does.

DETECTIVE:
Now I made a list of particularly suspicious people on my way in. (GETS OUT A LIST) I like making lists. Comes in handy with my job. If the murderer isn't on this list, the play is over. Everybody, if I call out your name, I want you to queue up by my interrogation room.

As she calls out their names, the cast identify themselves. There are a lot of duplicate roles. Make as much noise about rapidly changing jackets or coats as you can to be clear we've few actors and a lot of characters.

Notice that there is no Steve Nasa, exciting and hunky astronaut scientist.

DETECTIVE:
(CALLING) The Nun With a Gun. The Book Monster. Popstar Lillie. Rockstar Smile. The Evil Teddybear. The Policeman. And Steve Nasa, exciting and hunky astronaut scientist. I think we'll save him for last.

The Detective sits opposite Christine at the table.

DETECTIVE:
Name.

CHRISTINE:
Christine Keeler.

DETECTIVE:
So the victim, I understand he claims to be a great writer.

CHRISTINE:
He would say that, wouldn't he?

DETECTIVE:
You don't agree.

CHRISTINE:
He was terrible. I'm much better. I should be running this group.

DETECTIVE:

(TO AUDIENCE) The first rule of detective work is to look for a motive. Could someone kill to take over a once-a-month writing group? Nah. (TO CHRISTINE) You can go. Send in the policeman.

Christine leaves, the Policeman enters and sits down.

DETECTIVE:

What is your name?

POLICEMAN:

Paul Eeeeece.

DETECTIVE:

And your job?

POLICEMAN:

Policeman.

DETECTIVE:

And as a policeman, would you say you've committed any crimes?

POLICEMAN:

Not today.

DETECTIVE:

Good enough. Send in the Nun with the Gun.

Policeman exits. Nun with the Gun enters.

NUN WITH THE GUN:

I'm the Nun with the Gun and you'll never break me!

DETECTIVE:

Can I call you Nun for short? Nun, did you see anything suspicious in Burton library this morning?

NUN WITH THE GUN:

Such as a nun, maybe with a gun? Yes.

DETECTIVE:

And if our victim was shot, I'd be taking you down the station. Send in the Book Monster.

NUN WITH THE GUN:

Can I shoot it?

DETECTIVE:

Next!

The Nun with the Gun exits. The Book Monster enters and sits down.

THE BOOK MONSTER:

<HICCUPS> Hic!

DETECTIVE:

I understand you're a Book Monster.

THE BOOK MONSTER:

That's correct.

DETECTIVE:
What does that mean exactly?

THE BOOK MONSTER:
I wait in the library and then I eat people who read the books.

DETECTIVE:
Really.

THE BOOK MONSTER:
Hic. Really.

DETECTIVE:
Nutter.

THE BOOK MONSTER:
Pardon?

DETECTIVE:
Nothing! Call back the policeman, I want him to take you down the station.

The Book Monster doesn't move.

DETECTIVE:
Well? Get the policeman.

THE BOOK MONSTER:
There's a bit of a problem there.

DETECTIVE:
Yes?

THE BOOK MONSTER:
I ate him. Hic.

The Detective leads the monster away and calls for her next suspect.

DETECTIVE:
Popstar Lillie. I want a word with you.

Both Popstar Lillie and Rockstar Smillie enter together.

This pair are constantly fighting. Think girly hand-slapping rather than, you know, full-on domestic violence. This is a family show.

LILLIE:
(TO SMILLIE) She said me! (HITS HIM)

SMILLIE:
No, she said me. (HITS HER)

DETECTIVE:
I said her.

(THEY HIT EACH OTHER)

DETECTIVE:
Have we got a domestic problem here -

LILLIE:
No, just a – (HITS HIM)

SMILLIE:
– professional rivalry. (HITS HER) I’m rockstar Smillie, the one who’s talented.

LILLIE:
(HITS HIM) I’m popstar Lillie, the one who’s talented

DETECTIVE:
(HITS THEM) I’m the detective, the one who isn’t impressed. What were you doing at the time of the murder?

SMILLIE/LILLIE:
(SIMULTANEOUSLY) Fighting.

DETECTIVE:
Of course. Have you ever thought of just reading? Much less dangerous than hitting each other.

LILLIE:
Okay.

SMILLIE:
We’ll give it a go.

LILLIE:
Not promising anything.

SC. 3. BURTON LIBRARY – DAY (CONTINUOUS)

They exit – but on the way, they start hitting each other again. They knock against the flip chart and tear a page off.

It reveals the words “CHRISTINE DID IT” written really blatantly.

The Detective doesn’t notice that and steps toward the audience – and trips over George

DETECTIVE:
(TO AUDIENCE) So we’ve got a delusional religious figure with a weapon. A nutter Book Monster. Two B-list celebrities. A fight for control of a writing group and policeman who looks relieved he hasn’t done anything criminal today. I thought Burton was a nice place.

The next suspect enters. It’s the Evil Teddybear.

EVIL TEDDYBEAR:
Hello. I’ve come to confess.

The Detective returns to the table – tripping over George.

DETECTIVE:
So who are you?

EVIL TEDDYBEAR:
I'm the Evil Teddybear.

DETECTIVE:
Right. Of course you are. Listen, I don't mean to be rude, but I'm looking for a murderer. Not a stuffed toy.

EVIL TEDDYBEAR:
I run this Library. I run this town. Nothing goes down that I didn't order, that I don't know about.

DETECTIVE:
Do you know who murdered George?

EVIL TEDDYBEAR:
Well. No. (RE THE FLIP CHART) I think that's a clue –

DETECTIVE:
Thanks for coming. Go back to your Teddybear crime ring and send in Steve Nasa, exciting and hunky astronaut scientist.

The Evil Teddybear leaves.

Beat pause.

No sign of Steve Nasa, exciting and hunky astronaut scientist.

Eventually the Detective calls out for him.

DETECTIVE:
Steve Nasa?

Nothing.

DETECTIVE:
Exciting and hunky astronaut scientist?

THE BOOK MONSTER:
Hic.

The Detective steps forward – tripping over George.

During the following, Christine enters. She's carrying a book and a bottle of water.

She takes down the incriminating flip chart page.

DETECTIVE:
(TO AUDIENCE) The first rule of detective work is: suspect the first witness. But the other first rule of detective work is: suspect the suspect who doesn't turn up.

CHRISTINE:
You've been very busy, Detective.

DETECTIVE:
Call me D.I. Di.

CHRISTINE:
Have a drink of water, D.I. Di.

Christine hands her the same bottle George drank from.

D.I. Di drinks – and collapses, dead.

CHRISTINE:
(TO AUDIENCE) Finally. Now we can all get some real writing done.

She opens her book.

The Book Monster appears behind her.

CHRISTINE:
I'll just read you this great writing exercise from this book I found.

The Book Monster ROARS – AND HICCUPS – AND ROARS

Christine falls down, eaten, killed.

THE END.