

## **MURDER AT OAKWOOD MANOR**

**Harriet Copeland ©**

Deep inside Oakwood Manor, Cuthbert lit the fire in his study. It had been a cold, frosty day and now he sat at his desk. A sinister smirk spread across his face at the thought of his unwanted visitors battling through the snow desperately trying to get indoors. The doorbell rang, he jumped out of his chair, and walked miserably to the hallway where he greeted his cold guests. As Eggbert the butler led them to their rooms, Cuthbert sat in the drawing room pondering how to get rid of them.

As the clock struck eight, the dinner bell rang and all the guests ambled to the dining table and took their seats. As they were enjoying their meal, the room suddenly fell into darkness! A shrill scream echoed through the room. There was a brief moment of panic before the lights flickered back on. Everyone was relieved and carried on with the dinner party.

Suddenly Cuthbert collapsed.

Everyone ran over to Cuthbert but they soon realised he was not breathing.

"Poison!" Exclaimed James as he sniffed Cuthbert's drink.

"I will find out who did this!" cried Eggbert.

"Call the police," screamed Arthur.

"It's snowing they can't get here," replied Polly, "we should put a sheet over him, no one wants to see him lying on the floor like that."

"Eggbert should interview everyone to find out any motives," suggested Lucy.

"I think we should wait for the snow to clear so the police can get here," disagreed Arthur.

"But it will be ages until the snow clears," argued Polly "let's just let Eggbert interview everyone."

Eggbert sat down with his pen and paper and called his first suspect.

James walked in casually, he was 40 years old, wore a black suit, he had brown hair and a neat moustache.

"How did you know Cuthbert?" asked Eggbert.

"I only knew Cuthbert because Polly was his cousin and I only met him once at our wedding."

"Okay next!" shouted Eggbert realising he had no further questions for James.

Lucy walked in with a tissue up against her eyes. She was 25 years old; she had red wavy hair and a long blue dress.

"How did you know Cuthbert?" questioned Eggbert.

"He was my older brother" replied Lucy quickly.

"Did you get on with each other?" Eggbert enquired.

"Yes we always played together growing up," Lucy replied.

Eggbert thought to himself for a moment, 'why does Lucy have a tissue but no tears?'

"Next!" he shouted.

The door opened and Lucy strode out as the cook, maids and gardener all shuffled in looking apprehensive.

"How long have you all worked here?" asked Eggbert already knowing the answers.

"9 years."

"2 years."

"4 years."

"12 years."

Came the replies. The cook was crying: she had always loved her job. The maids looked terrified and the gardener looked like he might cry. This interview is pointless Eggbert thought he knew none of them would risk their positions at Oakwood Manor.

"You can all go" he said gently.

As they left Polly came in. She looked so sad.

"How did you know Cuthbert?" Eggbert asked once again.

"He was my cousin?" sobbed Polly. She was 33 years old, had blonde hair and wore a green dress. Eggbert sat watching her as she cried, he felt genuinely sorry for her.

"Were you close?" he enquired.

"Yes! We always played together growing up, we were never apart" she replied.

"Oh so you played with Lucy too then?" questioned Eggbert.

"No! They never got along! They had a large age gap and had nothing in common." Polly stated firmly.

Eggbert thought for a moment “Lucy had a tissue but wasn’t crying. Polly didn’t have a tissue but was crying uncontrollably. Lucy said they played all the time but Polly said Lucy and Cuthbert didn’t get on!”

“Thank you Polly you can go now" Eggbert said gently.

As she opened the door Eggbert saw Arthur and called him in. Arthur walked in slowly; he had black hair and wore a monocle, he had a plain black suit on.

“How did you know Cuthbert?” Eggbert asked feeling like he needed a new opening question.

“We went to University together." Answered Arthur.

“Were you close?” probed Eggbert.

“Yes, but when we came up with a business plan Cuthbert did it on his own and made billions.” Replied Arthur bitterly. “We became friends again later on" ended Arthur.

“Alright thank you" Eggbert finished.

Eggbert sat and thought about all he had heard. He knew who did it.

Eggbert called everyone into the drawing room. When they all sat down he began to talk.

“I’ve gathered all the information I could and I have found out who committed this terrible crime.” He paused for dramatic effect and everyone sat in silence.

“Arthur empty your pockets" Eggbert commanded.

Arthur slowly emptied his pockets, out fell a small bottle. It was a bottle of Poison!”

“I only did it because we both came up with that business idea! And Cuthbert did it on his own and got the billions!” confessed Arthur.

Suddenly there was a loud knock at the front door.

“Who is it?” shouted Eggbert. They all waited as they heard the huge front door creak open and footsteps approaching the drawing room. The door swung open.

“Am I dreaming?” asked Polly in a faint voice.

“No!” Answered *Arthur*?

They all looked at the man in the doorway who appeared to be Arthur!

“I am Arthur! That imposter is my twin brother Walter."

Everyone gasped.

Before anyone knew what was happening Walter had pulled out a gun and pointed it at Arthur, "That money was mine! I came up with that business plan! I killed Cuthbert and tried to frame you! You've thwarted my plan and now you must die."

Eggbert and James both pounced on Walter before he could shoot, the gun flew out of his hand and landed by Polly's feet: she screamed.

Once Walter was restrained the police were finally called.