

Brindlebirth Day

A Mysterie for Brindlewood Bay
by Rollenspielblog.net

Complexity 6

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Presenting the Mystery

One of the Murder Mavens is celebrating her birthday. She is having a party at her home. Some of the guests are already here. Presently, the other Mavens are arriving.

Establishing Questions: How did you prepare your home to accomodate all the guests?

And: What presents do you give your friend?

Make sure all the guests have enough time to get to know each other. The last guest to arrive at the party is the local Sheriff. (If he has not been suspected in a previous case, Sheriff Dalrymple is suitable, otherwise whoever succeeds him).

Shortly after the sheriff has handed over his gift, one of the non-birthday-Mavens will visit the bathroom. There she'll find the stabbed corpse of Violet Focker.

Not long after the discovery of the body, the mail carrier will ring the doorbell. She has not seen anyone leave the house in the last few minutes. This suggests that the murderer is still on site.

Violett Focker, the Neighbor

Intrusive. Doesn't respect personal space. Leopard pattern leggings.

Quote: "I'd love to join your little book club sometime. Do you listen to audio books as well?"

Present: A voucher for a joint visit to the sauna. Also, a coffee mug with Violet's face on it.

Suspicious party guests

A child of the Birthday-Maven

Name:

Easily moved to tears. Smells of roses. Self-knitted sweater.

Wants to persuade their mother to slow down a bit and stop her dangerous activities.

Quote: *"You're getting to an age now where you should take better care of yourself. There are so many other topics besides murder. I know an excellent romance series that I could recommend."*

Present: An expensive shower gel that smells like chocolate. The price tag is still on it.

Paint the Scene: With which party guest are they having a private conversation?

If the Maven has other children: How do they excuse themselves this year?

A child of another Maven

Name:

Irritated and tense. Frequently clenches his fists. Wrongly buttoned shirt.

Constantly gets calls from their partner. Leaves the room regularly to talk on the phone.

Quote: "Your neighbor told me – Ah, not again. Sorry, I'll have to take this. – Yes?! What now?"

Present: A box of schnapps pralines, lovingly packaged.

Paint the Scene: How do they know the Birthday-Maven well enough to have been invited to the party?

Billie Rose Cooper, a friend

Uneasy. Forced smile. Wears black.

Her Dachshund Dodo died recently. She tries not to let her grief show, so as not to depress the good mood. Regularly withdraws in order to weep somewhere discreetly.

Quote: *"No, that's really great. It reminds me of my... Oh, excuse me, I have to step out for a minute."*

Present: A tea set with penguins on it.

Paint the Scene: How did you become friends?

Celine Chadwick III

Hungry. Buzzed. Second-hand clothes.

Celine invites herself to all the birthdays in the neighborhood. When she's not having a mouthful of cake, she talks about how she won a prize for the most beautiful garden four years ago.

Quote: *"I wasn't expecting it either, but it happened: the yuri called my name! I still have the 'most beautiful garden in Brindlewood Bay' badge at home on my fridge."*

Present: A bottle of wine, which she will take back later.

The Sheriff

Shows up spontaneously with a small gift to pay respect to the Birthday-Maven.

Quote: "We don't always see eye to eye, but on behalf of the police department, I would like to express my respect and gratitude. So here, take this token of appreciation."

Present: An Escape Room game to play at home.

Other suspects

Roberta Rodriguez, the mail carrier

Slouching shoulders. Has mentally resigned from her job. Gladly accepts an invitation to a cake break.

Quote: *"I have to go now... Well, if you insist... Two pieces please, then."*

Paint the Scene: What unpleasant letters can be found in the mail for the Birthday-Maven?

Professor Dr Abigail Reed, a neighbor

Assertive. Outspoken. Glasses, plaid robe, carries a newspaper under her arm.

Hates cops and the Fockers. Make no secret of either.

„Terrible woman. Came by with an unsolicited present once: A shower curtain with her oversized face on it. Can you imagine?"

Captain Scarlet Focker, Violet's daughter

Can only be contacted by phone. Swears a lot.

Captain of the freighter *BB Glockenspiel*. Left Brindlewood just yesterday. Destination is the port of Billerhookstrand in northern Germany.

When she is not at sea, Scarlet lives with her mother.

Quote: *"What's with my mother? The connection sucks so bad."*

Locations

Crime scene: The bathroom

Blood. A lot of blood. A locked window. And a dead body covered with stab wounds.

Paint the Scene: This scene triggers a memory for you. What is it?

Violet's home

Significantly smaller than the Birthday-Maven's home. She lives alone most of the year. Numerous framed photos of her and her daughter adorn the walls.

Paint the Scene: How can you tell that the neighbor was a cinephile?

Scarlet's bedroom

Blue walls. Bleak. Few personal items.

Paint the Scene: What in this room makes you think that Scarlet managed to keep her mother at a distance?

A hidden room behind a false wall

Paint the Scene: What tells you that the owner of the apartment didn't know about this room?

A beautiful garden

Paint the Scene: What tells you that a lot of money went into maintaining this garden? And: What flaw does this garden have nevertheless?

Clues

- ☐ A bloody kitchen knife in an obvious location
- ☐ A smashed bathroom mirror. Blood on the shards
- ☐ Suspicious stains on clothes
- ☐ A dead animal, disemboweled
- ☐ Entry confirmation for the "Most beautiful garden in Brindlewood Bay" competition - \$1000 prize money
- ☐ A second entry for the "Most beautiful garden in Brindlewood Bay" competition
- ☐ An insistent notice for an unpaid bill of \$700. Issued by a suspect
- ☐ A secret compartment. Inside: Family photos of a Maven. Her face has been scratched out
- ☐ A forgotten photo. Shows Violet arm in arm with a Maven's deceased partner
- ☐ The words: "She is not my mother", whispered or written down in a hidden place
- ☐ A kinship is revealed
- ☐ Archived newspaper articles about an art heist
- ☐ An object turns out to be unexpectedly valuable
- ☐ A crime caught on video
- ☐ Bootleg of an upcoming blockbuster
- ☐ Screenplay by the late B-movie director Cedric di Corsa: "A Corpse for Your Birthday"

- ☐ A brochure reveals plans to build an office building on an already inhabited location
- ☐ A business card reveals a previously undisclosed employer (construction company, film studio, private detective agency, debt collection company)
- ☐ A rumor about a criminal record
- ☐ A confession of wishing someone harm

Void-Clues

- ☐ A Maven has a nightmare: she sees herself running into the sea at night without resurfacing. The Maven wakes up soaking wet
- ☐ A gift box. Inside: A rag doll stuffed with popcorn. It has the facial features of a person close to a Maven
- ☐ A tentacle grows out of a drainpipe. If she allows it, the tentacle caresses the face of a Maven almost lovingly. It then withdraws
- ☐ A house in the neighborhood disappears. Nobody but the Mavens can remember it
- ☐ A television turns on by itself. It shows only white noise. A cry for help is heard. Then the TV burns out
- ☐ Only static can be seen when looking through all the windows. Abruptly, as if switched to another channel, the outside world is back. But a significant detail of the town has changed

Designer's Notes

The idea behind Brindlebirth Day is to have a mystery that is **as personal** for the Mavens **as it can possibly get**.

So what's more personal than a birthday party in your own home, where beloved characters like your own children mingle?

This idea does come with some costs, though:

- The mystery demands some **pre-requisites**. You need a Maven with at least one child, at least one neighbor, and a residence that is suitable for a party
- It takes more time to **prepare** than other mysteries. This is because each Keeper has to fill in some blanks themselves (for example, the Mavens' children, or figuring out whether Violet lives in the same building or on her own property)
- Brindlebirth Day is **not** well suited for a **standalone** or oneshot. In order to prepare it you need to know the Mavens involved, where they live, and what children they have

In return, you'll get a case that's **tailor-made** for your Mavens. Use it to get to know the mavens' personal lives better, and at the same time to create some havoc in these lives.

Tips & Tricks

The first question the Mavens will need to ask themselves is: **Who do they tell about the murder?** Do they cancel the party? Or do they try to conceal the crime for the time being in order to investigate freely?

Of course, the mail carrier might bring **letters for the Fockers**. If the mavens take the liberty of violating mail secrecy and don't cut themselves on the paper, I recommend the following clues:

- A dead animal, disemboweled
- Entry confirmation for the "Most beautiful garden in Brindlewood Bay" competition
- An insistent notice for an unpaid bill of \$700. Issued by a suspect
- A crime caught on video
- Bootleg of an upcoming blockbuster
- Screenplay by the late B-movie director Cedric di Corsa: "A Corpse for Your Birthday"
- A brochure reveals plans to build an office building on an already inhabited location

One of the **Mavens** is very much in **the spotlight** of this mystery. To balance that out, I invited the child of another Maven. If you want to balance things out even more, you can move the party to another Maven's cozy place. In that case, you should expand the establishing question to: Why did you decide to throw the party here?

If you feel generous, you can allow the **birthday presents** to work as one-time **items** for this mystery.