



Your First Time in Here?

by the Semi-Shitfaced Fart on the Stool by the Blackboard



Is that a Robinson College tie you're wearing? No? Well, I think it is. Officially, you shouldn't be wearing it if you weren't at Robinson College, Cambridge. It's gold and blue and silver stripes, which are the colours of the Robinson Boat Club.

Reason I know is I was at Robinson College. Best time I ever had. But I didn't do any boating shit myself. I was too busy doing pre-law. Though I decided against law in the end. And our crew was always beat by the colleges that had Yanks with muscles.

Reason I say it was the best time I ever had was because of the intelligent women. You could always get a snappy remark from them, and that could lead to a thought-provoking experience. I'm trying to remember about one of those. Wait a minute...

Oh yeah. Germaine Greer, not to namedrop. She was a grad student at Girton when I was at Robinson. I saw her in a Footlights production of *Oh What a Lovely War*, and I admit that I was smitten. She was very good looking in those days, and she certainly could carry a tune. I went round to the stage door afterwards and asked her for a date. So we went out a couple of times. S'truth! I'm not telling you if we ever did it because it might get back to her, and you know she's pretty poisonous these days.

Some students she knew were having a house party at their digs one weekend. And Germaine said to us all, 'Let's play Murder.' So we played it.

The way it works is everyone draws slips of paper out of a hat or something. One says 'detective' and another says 'killer,' and the rest are blank. Then everyone goes about their business like at a normal party, except everyone is really waiting, and watching. Know what I mean? Time

passes. There is stuff like, someone says, 'I'm just going into the kitchen. Anyone want to come with me?' And everyone is sort of afraid to go, in case she is the murderer.

So at the party, after a few hours we noticed a guy slumped mysteriously on the sofa. As we watched he rolled onto the floor and said, 'I've been murdered. Someone poisoned my beer.' And someone else said, 'I'm the detective. What's been going on here?' and asked questions to try to solve the crime. Usually the criminal gives himself away.

On the second or third round of Murder some of us went to sleep, but others were too excited and just stayed up talking. Lovely. I wonder if we could play it here in the pub?

Anyway, by the following day, the suspense was terrible. There hadn't been a murder in about 13 hours. If anyone spoke, everyone else would go silent, but listen carefully. It was like a radio play. Sometimes someone would say, 'Where's Ted?' and everyone would get on edge. Then we'd hear a toilet flush and Ted would come out of the bathroom. Our nerves were in tatters, but no one wanted to leave.

Finally there is a big crash upstairs. Everyone jumps. Then Germaine leaps down the stairs with a broomstick under her arm like it's a submachine gun. 'Dah! Dah! Dah! Dah! Dah! Dah! Dah!' she goes. 'I'm a paranoid schizophrenic, and you're all dead!'

'But you're not the killer. I am,' says some guy. Do you get the thought-provoking part? Germaine had taught us the game, then broken the rules. We all decided to go home after that unique climax.

Later Germaine let me read her doctoral thesis on Shakespearean Comedy, but it had very few laughs.

So that's how I twigged your unsanctioned non-Robinson College tie. Cheerio!