

Murder Maker

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Before reading

1. Look at the front cover. Where do you think the photograph was taken? Now read the back cover blurb to see if you were correct.
2. Have you read any books or seen any films whose plots are revenge stories?
3. Look at the maps of Cuba and Norfolk, England on page 5. What do you know about these places?
4. If you have the cassette, listen to Chapter 1.

Check your reading

CHAPTER 1

1. What were the 'four brutal words' that Mark said to Carla?
' _____ '
2. Whose husband ...
 - a left her for a blonde he met on holiday?
 - b emailed from Cuba to say he was leaving her?
 - c had abused her and left her after twenty years of marriage?
 - d left her after a period of depression?

CHAPTER 2

1. Who do the words in italics refer to?
 - a I experienced Havana through *your* eyes.
 - b For a while *he* said absolutely nothing, just looked at me studying every millimetre of my face.
 - c Do you want me to tell you what *your* face says to me?
 - d *She* wants me to find a missing reptile.
 - e She's lost her husband and I gather *he's* a bit of a snake.
2. 'The situation was out of my control' – What do you think Carla will do next?

CHAPTER 3

1. Link up the sentences to make a paragraph about Cartwright.
 - 1 He had small suspicious eyes,
 - 2 Despite his fat, ugly appearance,
 - 3 Although he did not look rich,
 - 4 His disgusting personal habits
 - 5 His contract had been extended,
 - 6 Gina used to have a Cuban boyfriend
 - a made Luis absolutely furious.
 - b which meant he could spend more time with Gina.
 - c and was a man whom Luis could never trust.
 - d before she met Cartwright.
 - e he had found a Cuban girlfriend.
 - f he enjoyed an expensive lifestyle.

CHAPTER 4

1. Fill in the blank spaces.
 - a Carla waited outside the for Cartwright to arrive.
 - b She identified Cartwright from his huge

- c Cartwright and Gina kissed, like real lovers.
- d Instead of going into the, Gina hurried to an apartment building.
- e Cartwright had a, a handsome young Cuban man.
- f Carla realised that would have done exactly the same as Cartwright.
- g Carla knew her bitterness and anger would help when she took her
- h Carla now had enough information to Gina.

CHAPTER 5

1. Carla, Carlos, Diane, Cartwright, Gina or Luis? Complete the sentences with names.
 - a Carla realised that did not agree with her scheme to blackmail
 - b Luis explained that and were exploiting each other in their relationship.
 - c The real cruelty in the situation was to Gina's boyfriend,
 - d In order to ensure Gina and Carlos's happiness, suggested that Carla should remove
 - e Luis arranged a meeting so that could convince that she was making a mistake.
 - f Gina did not know that was still married to

CHAPTER 6

1. Complete the summary.

Gina accepted the from Carla, and agreed to marry and forget about suggested that Gina wrote a note to end the affair. Carla expected to see in Cartwright's face on reading the note. But his face remained He said that Gina's departure was an, not a

CHAPTER 7

1. True or False?
 - a Carla replaced all the mouthwash with weedkiller.
 - b Carla was thinking of Diane as she committed the crime.
 - c Carla took Gina's note from the coffee table.
 - d Cartwright died immediately from the effects of the poison.
 - e Carla realised that she had something in common with Luis.
 - f Carla watched the news reports of Cartwright's death on TV.
 - g Carla left Cuba as soon as possible.

CHAPTER 8

1. Feelings: grief grateful dislike desperation surprise regret bitterness relief loss
 - a What feelings had Diane expressed about her husband before the murder?
 - b What feeling did Carla expect Diane to express about her husband's death?
 - c What feelings did Diane and her family actually express?
 - d What did Carla not feel at all?
 - e How did Carla predict they would feel in the future?
2. Carla thought: 'Their grief was a mystery to me.' Do you sympathise with Carla?

CHAPTER 9

- Complete the sentence with prepositions. 'I never forgot that by taking revenge my friends, I was actually practising taking my revenge you.'
 - Who is *you*?
- Match the characters to the descriptions.
Carla Gemma Sharon Terry men
 - A spoilt child who hasn't got exactly what she wanted for her birthday.
 - She'll turn up to the wedding wearing a low-cut top and short skirt.
 - ... she was almost the same age as Kirsty.
 - The long blonde hair on its own would have made me look completely different.
 - Reality gives you itchy feet. That's because you're all so shallow.
 - Someone who's used to having women falling at his feet.

CHAPTER 10

- Match the questions to the answers.
 - What made Carla feel 'pure hatred' for Terry?
 - What did Carla think of Terry's furnishing?
 - What did Terry argue about with Gemma?
 - When did Carla decide to murder Terry?
 - How did Carla remain sober?
 - What made Terry become vulnerable?
 - How did Carla murder Terry?
 - By pouring her drinks into the pot plants.
 - By drowning him in the swimming pool.
 - After she overheard the telephone conversation.
 - Expensive, fashionable, but not genuine.
 - Their daughter's wedding.
 - His comment that his relationship with Sharon was very casual.
 - The amount of alcohol he drank.

CHAPTER 11

- Read page 80 again. Now complete the sentences.
 - Carla expressed about Gemma's reaction to Terry's death.
 - Gemma's voice was full of and when she phoned Carla.
 - Carla thought that Gemma wasn't being
 - Gemma said Terry was and blamed him for spoiling the wedding by dying.
 - Gemma thought her friends could at least be since she had done them a favour.
- What made Gemma start to change her mind about revenge? Tick the most significant factors, in your opinion.
 - Pete and Ben lived in a pretty country cottage.
 - Ben took after his father rather than his mother.
 - Carla felt included by Ben and Pete.
 - Ben and his father enjoyed a loving relationship.
 - Ben obviously liked Carla.
 - Cathy had been ill and tried to kill herself twice.
 - Pete was young, attractive and nice.

CHAPTER 12

- What information is OLD or NEW?
 - Cathy had a history of depression.
 - Pete had decided to cut the payments to Cathy.
 - Having a child did not help Cathy's depression.
 - Poetry had helped Pete survive the relationship with Cathy.
 - Cathy and Pete were still married.
 - Cathy treated Ben more like a baby.
 - If Pete died, Cathy would inherit everything.

CHAPTER 13

- Carla stated that it was 'your fault that I was a murderer'. How far do you think that Mark was responsible for Carla's actions?
- Can you predict what will happen in the final chapter?

CHAPTER 14

- Who ...
 - realised that she might have made a terrible mistake?
 - did Carla attack on the way to Whitby?
 - removed any evidence from Pete's house?
 - were now grateful for what Carla had done?
 - advised Carla to return to Cuba on her release from prison?
 - inherited all her husband's money?
 - had her little boy living with her?
- What did Carla mean when she said: 'Some rubbish you can get rid of for me?'

After reading

Choose some of these activities.

- Do you think *Murder Maker* could be a good film? Who would you choose to play the main characters?
- What did you learn about life in Cuba from the story?
- Who was your favourite male character? Why?
- 'I had no suspicion of that potential for violence living just beneath my skin.' (page 17). Do you think anyone has such potential?
- Write the goodbye letter from Gina to Cartwright.
- Write a newspaper report of either Terry's or Pete's murders.
- Write a review of *Murder Maker* for the classroom noticeboard. Say what you enjoyed or disliked about the story.
- Create some activities for other students to do, e.g. Write some True or False questions.