THE CRAZY QUILT CLUB

By Pat Cook

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SYNOPSIS

Veronica Blather is a sweet little old lady who spends most of her time knitting and solving murders, most of which occur whenever she shows up. Understandably, she has a problem finding a place to live.

When her niece, Dr. Lydecker, invites her to stay at a retirement home for old knitters, it seems ideal - until one of it's members dies from drinking bad punch. Or was it poisoned? Who did it? Was it Matilda, the president of the Crazy Quilt Club? Or Clara, who's a compulsive liar? And what about the wise-cracking Sarafina who doesn't trust anybody and carries a rifle just to be sure?

Clues drop as fast as corpses as Lieutenant McCoy shows up, just to muddle the waters more. Add in a black widow spider, a drafty old cave, a gold nugget, and an ominous phone call and light begins to dawn on Veronica. That is, before the storm knocks out all the lights.

Dialogue races along at breakneck speed and keeps the audience guessing till the last minute in this ferocious mystery comedy.

CHARACTERS

MATILDA THIBEDEAUX: President of the Crazy Quilt Club; late 50s.

MYRTLE IPSWITCH: A bit of a snoop, late 50s.

CLARA QUINTEN: Another senior citizen, a compulsive liar.

SARAFINA LITTON: Early 60s, thinks crabbiness is a virtue.

VIOLA UNDERWOOD: Early 50s, has a telltale allergy.

LYDIA THORNEDYKE: Late 50s, likes to die on Tuesdays.

DR. JOYCE LYDECKER: A young doctor who looks after this cantankerous group; niece of Veronica.

VERONICA BLATHER: Early 50s, has published several whodunits, thinks best when she is knitting.

***LT. JACK McCOY**: A police officer who's determined to solve this case.

**(May be played by a woman, "Jackie," making it an all woman production.)*

Time: The present.
Place: The living room of the Blanche Kendall retirement home.

PROPS

ACT I, Scene 1
A gavel for Matilda, on stage.
Pad of paper and pen for Myrtle, on stage.
Suitcase for Veronica.
Tray with cups of punch for Viola.
Book - Veronica Blather Mystery for Myrtle.

ACT I, Scene 2
Knitting and knitting needles for Veronica on stage.
Note pad and pen for McCoy.
Book - "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" for Myrtle.
Cloth bag, twist tie, and glittering rock for Joyce.
Rifle, camouflage suit, and helmet for Sarafina.
Kleenex for Viola.
Box of assorted candles, matches for Joyce.
Several cattails, cord around Viola neck.

ACT II, Scene 1
Large butcher knife for Lydia.
Ax for Myrtle.
Hammer for Matilda.
Rubber spider in cloth pouch for Joyce.
Man's hat, trench coat, large handkerchief, and pistol for Masked Figure.

SFX: Storm, phone, door slam, rifle shots.

SET DESIGN

The setting for our murder mystery is the Blanche Kendall Home for Old Knitters. Actually set up as a retirement home, it now houses seven women - all, except Dr. Lydecker, somewhere past fifty and all past masters in the art of knitting, embroidery, needlepoint, and quilting.

The living room is very comfortably furnished with a sofa, DSL, a wing chair next to it and a love seat near the SR wall. There is also a dining table and chairs, USR, where the ladies carry on their meetings of the Crazy Quilt Club. The rest of the room is rounded out with various other end tables, chairs, and plants such as are usually found in such surroundings. On the walls are several framed pieces of knitted and woven art. A fireplace is on the DSL wall.

There are three practical doors. The first, or the front door, is located on the SR wall and leads to the outside. The second door is located on the US wall. It leads to the kitchen and back door. Near it is a flight of stairs leading to the second floor. The third door is located on the SL wall and leads to Dr. Lydecker's office.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: A meeting of the Crazy Quilt Club is just about to begin. All the LADIES (except Lydia, Joyce, and Veronica) are sitting at the dining table and talking loudly as MATILDA raps her gavel.)

MATILDA: Okay, okay, settle down. I'm trying to talk here.
CLARA: We were just chatting about Miss Blather.
MATILDA: Fine. Sit down and shut up.
CLARA: *(Quickly sits.)* I AM sitting down.
MATILDA: And you figure one out of two is good? You're still talking?
CLARA: I wasn't talking, I was explaining.
MATILDA: Excuse me. It sounded like talking. Can I continue now?
CLARA: What were you saying?
MATILDA: I don't know, you WERE TALKING!
CLARA: *(To MYRTLE.)* But I wasn't standing, was I?
MYRTLE: *(Stands up.)* Madam President?
MATILDA: What?
MYRTLE: *(Hurt.)* Don't I get recognized?
MATILDA: What, MYRTLE?
MYRTLE: I can personally vouch for the fact that Clara wasn't standing.
MATILDA: Yeah, but YOU are.
MYRTLE: *(Realizes it.)* Oh. *(SHE sits and turns to CLARA.)* Dang, it's contagious!
MATILDA: *(Almost whining.)* No, Myrtle. NOW you stand and read the minutes of the last meeting.
MYRTLE: *(Stands.)* You mean I was supposed to write all that stuff down?
MATILDA: Why do you think we gave you that nice pen and paper set?
MYRTLE: Good attendance?
VIOLA: What does THAT mean?
MYRTLE: I'm always at the meetings.
VIOLA: We're ALL always at the meetings.

End of Freeview

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