

## A MURDER HUNT.

The first day of Autumn and a lot of excitement was happening in the 3 Bells carpark, a big glossy coach and the driver Joss were waiting for the passenger's to arrive for their next weekend outing of adventure, he paced up and down as the early morning temperature was a bit nippy.

Ben was the first to arrive. "Good morning Joss you look cold, we can go inside for something warm while we're waiting for the others." "Thanks Ben they'll soon find us." After a pot of tea and toast Joss wanted to know. "Where are we off to Ben?" "I've booked us in for a Murder hunt weekend at Frothingham Castle on the Yorkshire Moors."

"That sounds great you know what Penny will ask about the Castle Ben." "I know and I'm not going to tell them till we start moving that sounds like some outside now, we had better go if they come in here we'll never get going." Ben and Joss went outside to see if they had all arrived, the friends all excited.

Ben checked everyone as they got in the coach and sorted out who was sitting where as usual a scramble for the window seats. Ben went outside to help Joss put the luggage in the coach. "That's it Joss we're ready for another mystery trip."

The coach slowly pulled out of the carpark and made its way out of town and on to the motor way. As soon as everyone was settled, Ben went to the front of the coach in the isle a cheer and clapping started, Penny called out "Where are we going Ben?" "I'm just going to tell you Penny we are going on a murder hunt in Frothingham Castle in Yorkshire." That started a lot of muttering in the back of the coach where the girls sat Penny went quiet.

"It should be very interesting and exciting also different from our other trips we will have clues to find things like a treasure trail and mysteries to solve all over the Castle and grounds, that's all the information I have it's a long way so Joss will pull in a service station half way. There was a lot of noise in the coach as some didn't care for the idea.

Ben worked his way to the middle of the coach and tried to calm them down. "I think we'll enjoy the challenge we all had different ideas on our other trips but they turned out great adventures so let's give this one a chance were going to

pull in now for drinks and snacks for about half an hour." Back on the coach they talked amongst themselves Jake and Alec thought it was a good idea "Ben what made you come up with this trip?" "Well I looked on the internet to see what was going most of the others were booked so there wasn't any time to get you all together for a meeting so I took a chance on this one, don't worry about the girls if they don't join in they can enjoy the Castle."

"But they don't like being left out Ben." "If I know the girls their curiosity won't get the better of them." After the long drive on the motorway

Joss turned off and drove through the country lanes, past many farms with sheep on the hills and through small villages. The coach went slowly along the narrow lanes. Now everyone was getting excited when they saw the Castle in the distance. Joss turned off along a private road Kate and Wendy had their noses pressed on the windows as the coach drove through the magnificent iron gates along the gravel drive that crunched under the wheels of the coach and stopped in the carpark.

Now the rush to get off started, Ben stood by the door. "Don't all rush we have to unload the luggage and take it into the hall I will check everyone in and get the list of rooms and the keys and meet again in the hall, Joss has unloaded now collect your luggage." Ben went to the reception desk two rooms for the girls three in each one bigger room for the four men Ben gave them the keys. "Take your luggage then come down there's a meal in the big dining lounge where we'll meet the owner Sir Andrew McFarland."

There was a big WOW! When they walked in the lounge and saw the long table set out and their named places. The door opened and a tall gentleman came in. "Please take your seats I'm Sir Andrew McFarland and welcome you all to my home for a very interesting weekend, this is our first try at mystery hunts they seem very popular and Ben tells me you have been on a few I'll be around so enjoy your breakfast." The door opened and in came waiters with trays of all kinds of food. Joss gave Ben a nudge. "I think you've cracked it Ben,"

They went into a small room, where Ben had a list of objects and clues" Listen up everyone after that marvellous breakfast we have got to settle down and solve the clues

This is a list of places we can search - boating lake and boat house. a large Orangery, shrubbery, summer house, all the grounds woods, treehouse, log cabin, and a derelict old tower near the croquet field." Pheew! That's a lot" called Alec. "There are enough of us we can split up and search I know for a start Penny won't go in the Tower." "Can I go in the tree house Ben." "Alright Penny, Joss and I will make a list of where you are looking so we don't waste time going over the same places,

O.K now back to unpack are you pleased with the rooms?" The girls laughed, "The four poster bed is so big three of us will sleep in it Penny in the middle to stop her sleep walking." "I believe all the rooms have large four poster beds so its early to bed and an early breakfast goodnight girls." "Goodnight Ben."

The next morning they all set off to the different places on the list. Jake and Alec set off with their list for the Boathouse and lake, Ben and Joss to the Old Tower, Penny and Wendy the Tree House, Kate and Ann the Orangery Doris and Jean the Log Cabin in the wood leaving the Summer House last. Sir Andrew and his family had a grandstand view from a balcony to watch their guests running around the grounds.

Searched under flowerpots, bushes for objects, and only stopping for refreshments and the gong for dinner. Then Ben and Joss collected the lists of things found. Sir Andrew asked Ben how they've done. "Very well Sir your men certainly know how to hide the clues, we found the body in the Log Cabin but not the murder weapon." Just then Wendy and Penny came running across the lawn

"Ben we've found it." Everyone went to meet the exhausted pair. "What have you found." "There's a coffin in the Summer house Ben and a wooden hammer with blood on." A cheer went up, and they went in the Summer house to see for themselves Sir Andrew had been following and looked. "Congratulations everyone the local croquet club keep all their mallets, hoops and balls in that old coffin my men took everything out except one mallet with red paint Ben I'm very pleased how it worked out and what a marvellous weekend, there is a meal waiting for you all."

Next morning everyone had breakfast, Joss made sure all the luggage was on board the coach while Ben thanked Sir Andrew and family and wished him luck with his next Mystery Weekends. They were sad to leave such a beautiful

Castle and waved as they boarded the coach for their long journey home back to Wales and the Three bells.