

POOL PARTY MURDER

By

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Cast:

Martha — Wife, loud, demeaning
Henry — Husband, meek
Mary Ann— Henry's secretary and mistress, a sneaky temptress
George — Work buddy
Jack —Detective, friend
Police Officer—Young rookie

PROPS

Comfortable chair
Foot stool
Foot stool cover that looks handmade
End table
Couch
Fireplace
Large Bathrobe
Gift wrapped gift containing small size fancy robe
Ketchup bottle
Cell phones - 2
Can of beer
Newspaper
Pair of gloves
Bottle of water
Urn
White powder in envelope or paper

Early evening, in a living room with a fire place. An old bathrobe is over the back of a couch. A comfortable chair with an end table on one side and a footstool with a flowered cover, on the other side. A pool party is being held outside on the deck. LAUGHTER (O.S.) can be heard. Maybe music.

HENRY ENTERS front door carrying a GIFT-WRAPPED BOX. As he reaches the middle of the room, MARTHA ENTERS from back door. HENRY quickly tries to hide the gift behind his back.

MARTHA: You're late! You promised you would get here before any guests arrive. There are already 5 people outside.

HENRY: Couldn't help it. I had to work late. I'll go and put out the drinks.

MARTHA: George, that guy you work with already did.

HENRY: He did? Good.

MARTHA: Good? If he starts drinking this early, we will run out of beer. What is that? (irritated, points to the present) I told you not to buy me anything for my birthday. I bought my own!

HENRY: With the money I gave you.

MARTHA: Well, you never listen to any of my hints for what I want. You always get me the wrong thing.

HENRY: Okay, okay I'll return this. Calm down. Maybe it would be a good idea if you just told me what you wanted. I'm no good at hints.

Martha puts on the old bathrobe that is on the couch

HENRY: Why are you putting that thing on?

MARTHA: You have me upset. You know I must wear my mother's robe when I get upset. I feel so peaceful. I can feel her with me.

HENRY: I'm glad I can't feel her. And...she's been dead so long that robe is falling apa

MARTHA: (Mournfully) I'M falling apart. The hamburgers are still frozen, the potato salad has too much onion. And I had to buy my own birthday cake. AND...you were not here to greet my guests. My birthday...once a year... and you're late.

HENRY: You have a pool party every other week. Besides, I think I told you this morning I would be late. ... I'll do better next year.

MARTHA: Oh, go change into your pool clothes. I must get ketchup from the kitchen.

MARTHA EXITS into kitchen

HENRY calls someone on his cellphone

HENRY: Mary Ann,...Sweetheart, don't worry. Other people came to her birthday pool party. Come in. But come in the front door. I have a gift for you. The front door is unlocked. I'll put it on the coffee table. My wife is going outside.

HENRY puts the wrapped gift on the coffee table and EXITS to the bedroom.

MARY ANN soon ENTERS quietly. She walks over to the present and picks it up, admiring it. As she starts to walk towards the front door with it, MARTHA ENTERS back into the room carrying a bottle of KETCHUP.

MARTHA: Who the hell are you? Put that box down! You little bitch! You think you can just walk into someone's house and steal a package? I've heard of front porch thieves but you beat them all.

HENRY ENTERS rushing, still putting on his Hawaiian shirt.

HENRY: What's going on?

MARTHA: Call the police! I caught this porch pirate trying to steal my birthday present! She actually came into our house!

HENRY: Martha, Martha, stop. It's okay. This is my new secretary from our office. I called her to come in and take the present. She...she's going to return it for me.

MARTHA: Boy, you work fast. (to Mary Ann) Give it to me. Next time knock before you come into someone's home. Let me look at it first.

MARTHA tears open the wrapping paper and holds up a long, satin small-sized robe. She takes off her mother's robe and lays it on the couch. She tries to put the new robe on....It does not fit.

MARTHA: A satin robe? I would freeze in this thing, and it's a small. The wrong size as usual. I'm not getting rid of Mom's robe. (Throws gift robe to Mary Ann)

MARY ANN puts the robe back into the box and looks at Henry. As MARTHA reverently puts her mother's bathrobe over the couch, inebriated GEORGE enters, holding a beer and a cell phone.

GEORGE: Hey, Hey! Happy birthday! Two birthday gals. Oh...wait....wait...a... minute, have to take a picture. Here, Mary Ann, hold my beer.

GEORGE hands his beer to MARY ANN and fumbles with his phone while trying to keep his balance and to take a photo of Martha and Mary Ann.

MARTHA: Oh for goodness sake. What do you mean two birthday girls?

GEORGE: Well, there's you and then there's Mary Ann. It's her birthday today too.

MARTHA: R-e-a-l-ly? (*MARTHA walks over and takes robe out of box then holds it up towards Mary Ann and throws it back down on the box.*) We will talk about this later, Henry. Let's go...party, remember?

GEORGE: Hold it....wait...wait...picture.

As GEORGE tries to keep his balance he takes a picture with cellphone. MARTHA and MARY ANN move together for photo and then quickly separate after they touch.

MARTHA: That's it! Party.....NOW!

HENRY: I, I have to ask Mary Ann a question about a project we've been working on at work today. We'll be right out.

GEORGE takes his beer back and EXITS with MARTHA.

MARY ANN rushes into HENRY'S arms.

MARY ANN: Oh Henry, you are so right about her. She is so, so mean. You deserve better and I'm the one who can do it, Sweetie. When are you going to tell her about us?

HENRY sits down on chair, pulls STOOL in front of chair and puts his feet on it.

HENRY: You don't know her when she gets really angry. She has a gun. She might shoot me.

MARY ANN: She has a gun? Where does she keep it?

HENRY: In her night stand.

MARY ANN: What side of the bed does she sleep on?

HENRY: By the window. She...why? Why do you want to know that?

MARY ANN: Well, maybe we should hide it...before you tell her.

HENRY: Just give me a little more time.

MARTHA "(O.S.)" Henry! We're waiting....

MARY ANN: (taking robe out of box) I love my robe. Honey, maybe it is time to tell her about us.

HENRY: Not tonight! I'll keep the robe here and pretend it was for her, then give it to you tomorrow or whenever. I just don't want her to know I bought it at Nordstroms.

MARY ANN: Nordstroms? Oh...It must have been SO expensive. I...

MARTHA ENTERS and yells

MARTHA: What are you doing?

HENRY: What? Discussing.

MARTHA: Get your dirty feet off that stool. How many times do I have to tell you? Oh, things are going to be different around here.

HENRY: This is what a footstool is for. For foots...feet.

MARTHA: That stool has a handmade cover on it that my mother crocheted herself. It is there for a decorative purpose and a happy memory only. (Looks at Mary Ann) What are you doing with my robe again?

MARY ANN: Just admiring it. Since it doesn't fit you, I could take it and Henry could get you another one.

MARTHA: Like hell you will. You are a thief after all. (puts robe back in box) My friends want to light the candles on my cake. Let's move it!

ALL EXIT

MARY ANN ENTERS back into the living room from pool and quietly looks out the door to make sure no one saw her go into the house. She then sneaks into the bedroom.

END OF SCENE

The Next day. MARTHA is in the living room and takes the new robe out of the box. As she starts examining the ticket attached HENRY enters.

MARTHA: My birthday was a success last night after all. NORDSTROMS! You bought this at Nordstroms? We don't have a Nordstrom store around here. You are a Walmart man. HOLD ON HERE....

HENRY: Martha, Martha, I bought it over the internet. They must have sent the wrong size.

MARTHA: Don't give me that! You bought it for that sexy porch pirate. After all these years of scrubbing and cleaning, cooking for you.

HENRY: You have a cleaning woman.

MARTHA: Well, I have to clean the house a little before she comes. And I cook for you....almost every day. Oh forget it. I'm going out to the pool.

HENRY sits in his chair reading the newspaper when he hears BANG! (O.S) He jumps to his feet. As he tries to go outside MARY ANN ENTERS.

MARY ANN: Oh darling, I just had a terrible, terrible accident. I came in the back way to bring Martha's gun back into the house when I suddenly saw her. I panicked and tried to hide it behind my back and...and... boom! The gun went off. I shot Martha. Accidentally.

HENRY: What? How did you get the gun? Why?

MARY ANN: I was so afraid she would shoot you my darling. I took it to protect you.

HENRY: Oh no. The police will arrest you. Or they will think I shot her.

MARY ANN: No, they won't. They will think she committed suicide. Her fingerprints should be on the gun. You didn't touch it did you? (Henry shakes his head no.) And my hands were all dried up today so I put hand lotion on...and gloves... to make them soft again. My prints won't be on the gun either...or gun powder residue. And...I wore a scarf in case it was windy...like the cleaning lady wears, so if any neighbors saw me, they will think it was her coming into the house.

HENRY: You know a lot. How did you get the gun? Where is the gun?

MARY ANN: It fell into the pool...when she did.

END OF SCENE

Later that day, a DETECTIVE is looking at his notes. HENRY and MARY ANN are close by. POLICEMAN ENTERS with a pair of GLOVES in his hands.

POLICEMAN: Sir, we got the woman out of the pool. Looks like she shot herself in the head before she fell into it.

As detective speaks, MARYANN moves vexingly next to POLICEMAN and starts to flirt silently with him, touching and looking at gloves. He is all smiles.

DETECTIVE: Good work. So, Henry, sorry about all this. And we're going to miss all those pool parties she used to put on. Musta cost you a pretty penny.

HENRY: Jack, whatever Martha wanted I was happy to do. She's been depressed ever since her mother died.

DETECTIVE: Yeah, she still had an empty chair for mother out by the pool. Your neighbor said that Martha and her mother would sit out by the pool all day long. OH, and a neighbor saw someone going towards your pool not long before they head the gun shot.

HENRY: Oh, that was the cleaning lady. I told her we didn't need her and she left.

DETECTIVE: Okay. Ah...why is your secretary here? I saw her at Martha's party.

HENRY: She came here to pick up my wife's birthday present and return it.

DETECTIVE: Fine. Officer, what do you have in your hands?

POLICEOFFICER: Sir, I found these gloves outside in the garbage.

DETECTIVE: Henry, whose gloves are these?

POLICEOFFICER:	HENRY:	MARYANN:
They're Martha's gloves!	They're Martha's gloves!	They're Martha's gloves.

HENRY: Martha always wore gloves when putting chemicals in the pool.

DETECTIVE: Well, I guess that wraps it up. Gonna miss those parties.

POLICE EXIT. HENRY sits and puts head in hands.

END OF SCENE

Days later, after the funeral, HENRY is sitting in his chair holding the Urn containing Martha's ashes. A bottle of water is on the end table by the chair. He grabs the footstool and puts each foot down on it slowly.

HENRY: Well....I can finally use this thing, this precious stool, and relax. (Looking at urn) Where am I going to put you, Martha? As you said, things are going to be different around here.

MARY ANN ENTERS

HENRY: Mary Ann, I told you we shouldn't see each other for a while.

MARY ANN: I couldn't wait, Darling. I had to see you. Why are you holding Martha?

HENRY: I'm thinking about where I should put her...or spread her... out somewhere. We never talked about things like this.

MARY ANN: (Looking around) The pool would be good...but she'd float. I know where...the fire place. That's where ashes should be. No one will know the urn is empty.

HENRY: I don't know. I was thinking, somewhere outside by the pool.

MARY ANN: (pretending to cry) Oh, maybe I should just go back to my first husband. I cannot be here with you knowing that that woman is so close by.

HENRY: Okay, okay. Whatever you think.

MARY ANN grabs the urn. Goes over to the fireplace and dumps the ashes. She starts to cough violently. When she turns around, white ash dust is all over her face.

MARY ANN: (coughing) Oh, oh....The ashes went in my mouth, my nose, my eyes...(blah...cough.) Give me some water. I have to rinse my mouth.

HENRY hands her the water bottle and she drinks from it.

MARY ANN: Oh no! I swallowed her. (Hands the urn to Henry) Henry, I swallowed Martha. Oh, I have to wash these ashes off. (Cough, cough, blows her nose)

MARY ANN goes to the bedroom. HENRY just sits, shaking his head. Puts the urn on the end table. MARY ANN, still with a white face, walks back into the room with Martha's mother's old ROBE on. It is very large and hangs crookedly.

MARY ANN: Henry! Get your dirty feet off that footstool! You're going to ruin that pretty cover. Why are you just sitting there? Get up! Go clean out the pool. I'm going to plan a party. A pool party. Things are going to be different around here.

HENRY: No....oh no-o-o.

END OF PLAY