

Homicide and Seek

Episode 1:

The Disappearance of Regular Medium Customer

Created by Sybil H. Montgomery

SCENE 1

NARRATOR Pandora Lu Huxley sits at her kitchen table, as she often does, a warm candle casting a soft glow across the room. She leans forward, communicating with the spirits on the other side, her fingers resting lightly on the surface of a worn spirit board.

PANDORA Thank you all for being with me this evening, Greig, My ever-faithful spirit guide, My great-grandma Ida and a special thanks to the Archangel Je-Jus-Jeggy-Jegudial. Thank you for filling this space with Love, abundance and gratitude. Let your truth pass through me into this 3D realm.

(Pandora takes a deep raspy breath.)

PANDORA What was that Greig? No, no, speak up... What do you mean pigeons can tell the difference between Picasso and Monet? How do you think that's helpful? Well, if I'm ever in that position sure, but right now it's not what I need. What I need right now is...

(Pandora takes another longer breath.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PANDORA Where is that? That sacred location?

SFX: WRITING ON A PAPER.

PANDORA And you want me to go? But how do I get there?

HOMICIDE AND SEEK EPISODE 1:

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF REGULAR MEDIUM CUSTOMER

BY SYBIL H. MONTGOMERY

THEME SONG - 10 /15 SECS

SCENE 2

SFX: CAFE SOUNDS.

NARRATOR The Neptune Cafe is a small independent cafe on the Isle of Gorsemoor and inside, our dear friends: baristas and BFFs Laura and Orla are having a polite exchange of ideas.

Laura is half detective, half barista and can't carry a tune to save her life, with flowing red locks and semi-competent brain.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Orla is more Irish than a barista and more barista than a homo sapien and is married to the cafe. She trained as a hairdresser but hasn't touched scissors since the incident. And Arron is also there. He's a round-shouldered part-time trainee who can't tell his forks from his spoons. The cafe's owner Simon won't be present for our tale as he is studying bonobos in the Sahara.

Laura and Orla stand together by the counter. Laura prepares a coffee order for their favourite regular customer, who seems to be late—again. She glances at the clock as she measures the grounds. Orla leans against the counter, arms crossed.

ORLA: Pandora's not coming, Laura you're wasting your time.

LAURA: It's good customer service—take care of the regulars and they'll take care of me.

ORLA: She didn't come in yesterday; she's already... two minutes late. She's never late, she'd be here by now.

ARRON: Don't make me drink the mocha again, it makes me feel bad on the inside... and outside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ORLA: Shut up, Arron. You'll drink it or you'll drink it and weep.

SFX: DOOR OPENING. (BELL)

NARRATOR As the door opens, Laura spins around, presenting the mocha, which has been specially made with 47% extra white whipped cream, Pandora Lu Huxley's usual order. She comes to the cafe three times a week (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Fridays) at precisely 10:48 AM.

Laura's professional smile flickers momentarily when the customer she was expecting turns out to be someone else: Nel Winslow, the local florist. Nel, a regular at Pandora's, often comes in for tarot readings. Today, she was supposed to get help with unblocking her root chakra, which has been causing her fatigue for weeks.

NEL: Is Pandora in here? She was meant to be restoring the balance in my spine yesterday, and she never turned up.

LAURA: What? We've not seen her either; she's normally pretty punctual.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NEL: She's not been replying to my messages. I just popped in to see because I know she's normally here about this time.

ORLA: Well, she's not here, and someone has to drink this mocha. Do you want it?

LAURA: Oh, nobody wants that thing, give it to Arron. Nel, have you checked her social media? She's pretty active on TikTok; she sells crystals and does spirit readings in between appointments. I bought a crystal for my... anyway, it didn't work.

ORLA: Arron, come here.

ARRON: Oh God, noooooooooo.

NARRATOR Laura takes out her phone and checks Pandora's social media alongside Nel. They notice that Pandora hasn't posted anything in two days. The last updates mention outdoor crystals at 26.3% off, tarot readings at two for the price of three, and guided spirit energy readings, attuned to the lunar cycle, every second Wednesday of the month for those seeking a boost of cosmic clarity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

NEL: Well, if she's dead I have to check if Cassandra's available.

LAURA: Orla could do it. She's got a degree at astrology.

NEL: That's not the same thing at all.

SFX: PHONE CLICKING.

NEL: It looks like she has an availability in about an hour, her prices are so crazy so she always has space.

LAURA: Do you think she knows Pandora?

NEL: All Mediums have a psychic link to each other. Also, they're sisters.

LAURA: Also, if Pandora's dead we can ask through Cassandra where she's gone and why she ghosted you.

NEL: But first we fix my root chakra. I haven't been able to pee sitting down for weeks.

LAURA: Let's go find Pandora and get you pissing again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

NARRATOR Laura slips off her apron and hangs it on a nearby hook.

LAURA: Orla, I've got a case to solve. if Simon calls, tell him my house flooded...again.

SFX: DOOR CLOSING

SCENE 3

NARRATOR Cassandra is a very tall woman with a cascade of wild, unkempt hair that tumbles in every direction. She wears a flowing shawl, an oversized crystal pendant hanging from her neck, and rings on each of her fingers. Bold black eyeliner and smudged purple eyeshadow make her gaze look intense.

Laura and Nel walk into her parlour, which looks like amateur theatre company production of a witch's hovel. It is a dark room with heavy red curtains, flickering candles and it a heavy smell of damp.

CASSANDRA: Welcome. Payment up front.

NEL: Oh, okay. Do you take cash?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CASSANDRA: Cash or bitcoin. I don't mess with banks.

NARRATOR Nel takes out her purse and hands a stack of money and hands it to Cassandra, who puts it in her bra.

CASSANDRA: What can I do for you?

NEL: Well, I have been very tired lately.

CASSANDRA: Well, have you tried vitamins?

NEL: No, there's no solid scientific evidence they even work, I just need your healin' hands.

CASSANDRA: I don't do energy healing or reiki.

NEL: What? I just gave you £600, make up a fucking spell or something.

CASSANDRA: Maybe you have a dead husband or two I could contact instead?

LAURA: Have you talked to Pandora recently?

CASSANDRA: Who are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NARRATOR Laura pushes the crystal ball on Cassandra's table
 over to her and lays her homemade Private
 Detective ID next to it

LAURA: How about you have a look in here and tell me
 where she is...

CASSANDRA: That's extra fifty pounds.

LAURA: Pay up, woman.

NARRATOR Nel looks at Laura and then draws another bill
 from her purse and hands it to Cassandra. She
 leans over the crystal ball and closes her eyes.
 She keeps moving her hands around the ball feeling
 the energy.

CASSANDRA: Yeah, can't feel anything.

LAURA: Huh? That's it?

CASSANDRA: No-wait. There's something. A letter J.

NEL: That's my husband Jamal!

CASSANDRA: Is he dead?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NEL: Not yet.

LAURA: Pandora's missing and we need to find her. Can you see where she is, in that thing?

CASSANDRA: Nope. Let's get back to the letter J.

LAURA: Well, a fat lot of good you are...

CASSANDRA: Wait, I'm getting a message from Jürgen.

NEL: Not my beloved, impotent Jürgen!

CASSANDRA: Yes, he misses you Nel!

NEL: I didn't think he was dead!

CASSANDRA: He slipped getting out of the shower this morning, he has information about Pandora. He can see her in her white fur coat...I'm losing him, he says he senses 'non-believers' among us.

NARRATOR Cassandra and the wet naked ghost of Jurgen both stare at Laura.

LAURA: What? Just tell me where she is you wet impotent cretin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CASSANDRA: Jurgen feels personally attacked by that.

LAURA: Well, do you have Pandora's number?

CASSANDRA: No, every time she needed me, she would contact me through our dreams and then we'd meet for bubble tea. I like the peach flavour!

NEL: Oh, I like vanilla.

LAURA: Focus you idiots, which bubble tea place is it?

CASSANDRA: There's only one. The Bubble Tea Shop. It's next door, Pandora goes there three times a week. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday at around 1 o'clock. So about now...

LAURA: That cheating witch. I thought we had something special and she's off gallivanting with other gimmicky baristas! I'll never emotionally recover from this.

NEL: Laura...it's ok...

LAURA: C'mon Nel. Let's go bust this coffee whore...and you can buy me a Raspberry iced tea

SCENE 4

NARRATOR Laura and Nel enter the Bubble Tea Shop, owned by Larry and his wife, Hillary Huang. The interior features wooden counters and colourful murals of tea leaves and playful bubbles on the walls. The shop has a relaxed vibe, and it's half empty or half full, depending on whether you think life is worth living or not.

Laura and Nel scan through the people, trying to find Pandora.

HILLARY: Hey, no free standing! Buy drinks or get out!

NARRATOR Laura turns to Nel, who opens her purse.

NEL: I can only afford one.

LAURA: I'd like a raspberry one, thanks.

NARRATOR Nel hands the money over to Hillary.

LAURA: I don't think she's here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NARRATOR After Laura has gotten her bubble teas, they sit down at a little table. Laura angrily blows bubbles into her drink.

LAURA: Pandora can't have just vanished in to thin air...

NEL: Maybe she was taken?

NORMAN: Did you say Pandora?

LAURA: Yeah. She's gone missing.

NORMAN: I only saw her this morning at the farm. How do you like the milk, by the way? Squeezed from teat to tea by me own fair hands.

LAURA: What milk? I thought it was tea.

NEL: It's milk tea.

NARRATOR Laura throws the cup on the floor.

LAURA: Stranger's Tit-juice, gross. For me it's Mama's or nothing.

NEL: You saw Pandora?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NORMAN: Yeah, she's been down in me fields all morning, can't miss her because of that white coat she's always got on.

LAURA: What about the turban?

NORMAN: Oh...I didn't see a Turban. But Shes got a green aura and a weird smell.

NEL: That sounds like Pandora! She always smells like hay!

NARRATOR Laura stands up knocking over the table.

LAURA: To the farm!

NARRATOR Laura and Nel with her blocked root chakra follow Norman to his flatbed truck.

SCENE 5

NARRATOR They drive to the east side of the island, up a slippery green hill toward a mountain, the slight drizzle adding a fresh scent to the air.

SFX: CAR DRIVING SOUNDS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN: Look, I think that's her over there.

NARRATOR In the distance they see a white figure laid out in the grass.

LAURA: drive faster, old man!

NORMAN: You can call me Norman. I'm not old.

LAURA: You look old.

NORMAN: It's years of hard labour. I'm 37.

LAURA: We're getting distracted. Drive faster old looking man.

NARRATOR Norman puts his foot down, the wheels of the truck spin wildly in the mud, before they catch sending the truck speeding off like a bullet.

As they get closer to the white figure, Laura jumps out of the truck, slipping in the mud as she runs over.

LAURA: Pandora!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NARRATOR She grabs the white fur coat and pulls the figure
 over to reveal a terrified sheep, awoken from a
 pleasant afternoon nap.

PANDORA THE Baa?

SHEEP:

LAURA: What the fuck?

PANDORA THE

SHEEP: Baa!

LAURA: This is a sheep! Where is Pandora!

NORMAN: That is Pandora!

NEL: You turned her into a sheep? You sick bastard!

NORMAN: No, she is a sheep. My favourite.

LAURA: We're looking for Pandora Lu Huxley! The Person!

NORMAN: Oh. You never said.

LAURA: I didn't think I'd need too!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NARRATOR Laura tries to throw a punch at Norman, but she slips in the mud and falls to the ground. Norman looks down at her.

NORMAN: Yeah, I'm going to head back now. Do you want a lift?

LAURA: No! Get outta here!

NEL: I do.

LAURA: No, she doesn't we'd rather walk!

NEL: No, I'd really prefer the lift.

LAURA: Fine but you're taking both of us.

NORMAN: That's what I was asking!

LAURA: Well, speak gooderer English next time. Seriously, Jesus.

NARRATOR Laura and Nel climb into the back of Norman's truck.

LAURA: I'm just going to go to Pandora's house when we get off this fucking mountain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

NEL: Oh...Why didn't we think of that earlier!

SCENE 6

NARRATOR Laura screeches her bike to a halt outside Pandora's house. It is a compact, worn-out bungalow with whitewashed walls and a black spirit cat weather vane that rusted into place several years ago. Laura jumps from the bike, saunters to the door and rings the doorbell. After several minutes she gives up and is ready to go home and forget all this silliness when Pandora's next-door neighbour Albert McKenzie arrives home with some bags of shopping.

ALBERT: I don't think she's home. I've not seen Dora for two days.

NARRATOR From her pocket, Laura pulls out her laminated homemade detective ID card and flashes it at him quickly so he can't see the spelling mistakes.

LAURA: Sir, I'm a detective. I'm here to investigate a possible missing person case. Have you noticed anything unusual?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALBERT: Nothing unusual, except now that you mention it, her turban. You know, the one with the big jewel in it, has been on her kitchen table for a while. I don't think I've ever seen her without it.

LAURA: Dear God. I need to get into that house. Stand back, I'm going to kick the door down.

ALBERT: Oh, you don't need to do that. I've got a spare key. She gave it to me in case of emergency or so I could feed her spirit cat if she was late at work.

NARRATOR Albert grabs the key from his house and lets Laura in. They make their way into Pandora's French Country style kitchen with honey-stained cabinets and a large selection of books about herbs that have healing properties. As promised, on the table is Pandora's blue turban as well as a half-eaten, ant-covered sausage roll and a half-burned incense stick that has been stubbed out in an ashtray. Under the sausage roll is what looks like a grease-covered child's drawing of odd-shaped objects, making a semi-circle.

LAURA: There's no sign of Pandora. I don't think she's been here for a while.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NARRATOR Laura holds up the drawing to Albert.

LAURA: What do you think this is?

ALBERT: It reminds me of the Blue Mountains or it could be toenails. I don't know if I've been drinking for hours.

LAURA: Could they be teeth?

ALBERT: I suppose. But I'm not a doctor. I know someone who is, though.

LAURA: There's only one dentist on the island, we all know her. Well, thanks for everything, Albert...

NARRATOR Laura walks out of the kitchen with the drawing.

ALBERT: I meant James the palaeontologist, but the dentist should be fine too, I guess.

NARRATOR Laura steps out, hops onto her push-bike, and pedals hard, the cool air nipping at her cheeks. She weaves around parked cars, her grip firm on the handlebars, aiming straight for the dentist's office.

SCENE 7

NARRATOR Laura paces impatiently around the dentist's waiting room, her pink bicycle helmet still strapped to her head. She keeps glancing over at the receptionist, Hank Tillman, who hasn't taken her eyes off of Laura since she came in.

LAURA: This is technically police business; you've got to let me in there!

HANK: Until this is actual police business, you're not getting in there without an appointment. We can fit you in, in six months.

LAURA: A woman is Missing! And I assume near death, or at least some kind of unconsciousness. I'm the only person on this damn island who can save her! If you don't let me in there, and she dies HANK, there'll be blood on your hands and it won't wash off, it'll be there for ages, and everyone will say 'Ooh what's Hank got on his hands, it's the blood of that woman he killed' WHERE WERE YOU ON THE NIGHT OF TWO NIGHTS AGO?

HANK: Laura, it's ok to be afraid of the dentist, but do we have to go through this every time?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAURA: Just let me in that goddamned room!

HANK: Shan't

LAURA: Well then...

NARRATOR Laura launches herself at the reception desk

LAURA: Expect the unexpected!

NARRATOR Hank bats her away with minimal effort, Laura falls to the floor, crestfallen and rubbing her bruised ego.

LAURA: Oh, you're in for a world of hurt now, Hanky boy!

NARRATOR As the words leave her mouth, the door opens and Ikea Johansson, Laura's arch-rival floats out into the waiting room, bathed in divine light and accompanied by a choir of angels (composed by Hans Zimmer), her long dark hair, her perfect skin and her three detective of the year awards all made Laura want to vomit blood and on a molecular level, all the atoms in the tips of Laura's hair, raged with the white hot intensity of a thousand suns.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Doctor Deerlove, the only dentist on the island, a diminutive woman with a black bob and thick rimmed glasses, looks down at Laura on the floor.

DEERLOVE: Laura, you know there are chairs... please get off of my floor, you're ruining the feng shui

LAURA: Oh, I'm sorry. Hank and I were just having a slight difference of opinion. I need to speak with you about a private matter.

DEERLOVE: I'll be with you shortly. Ikea, as always, your molars are perfect, as though chiselled by God himself, keep up with the flossing, and try to lay off of the kladdkaka otherwise you'll get plaque buildup, which in turn will lead to inflammation, it won't kill you, but it won't make you stronger either. Remember to floss and repeat, always Floss and repeat.

NARRATOR Ikea nods and flashes her perfect smile. Laura is momentarily blinded by the shine off of them. Hank swoons as Ikea leaves.

HANK: (Whisper) I love you

NARRATOR Ikea exists the office.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SFX: SOUND OF DOOR CLOSING.

DEERLOVE: Where were we?

LAURA: I need to speak with you about a missing woman.

DEERLOVE: You better come into my office. Hank, hold my appointment.

NARRATOR As Laura enters the dentist's office, she turns to face Hank and gives him the middle finger.
In the dentist's office, everything is unmistakably dentist-y. Scientific posters of teeth and gums cover the walls—molars, incisors, canines from every angle, each one meticulously labelled. It's clear the dentist has been collecting these images for years, picking them up on travels around the globe, as if teeth were exotic treasures. Laura sits awkwardly on the treatment chair.

DEERLOVE: So, tell me about this missing woman, what are her teeth like? Do you need dental records to identify someone? I've got them all.

LAURA: Oh no nothing like that, I just need you to have a look at this picture.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

NARRATOR Laura pulls a drawing from her pocket, unfolding it with a quick flick. Doctor Deerlove's face falls—she'd clearly hoped for actual teeth—but with a resigned sigh, she takes the picture and examines it carefully.

DEERLOVE: Where did you get this? It's a terrible drawing, there are no incisors, it's not a good look. Also, no molars...this person would look like a real medieval creature, medically speaking, that is. But are you sure you're looking at teeth here?

LAURA: I thought so, look at the curve and that bit there, it looks like a tongue.

DEERLOVE: I think, and this is 45 years of dental experience talking, it's not teeth at all. It looks like The Ol' Grave site on the north of the island. You see here...

NARRATOR The doctor pulls out a magnifying glass

DEERLOVE: This tooth here, it says 'R.I.P, gone but never forgotten' on it. Teeth tend not to have inscriptions, or not at least teeth like these, that's big money.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

LAURA: Wah! How did I miss that? That place is an awful sewer. I went there once on a school trip and it was terrible. There was this kid, called Ryan and he threw a water bottle at me and it split my head open and I had to miss the school dance. I was going with hunky Trevor but I had to get stitches and I'll never forgive him.

DEERLOVE: Well, isn't that something--

NARRATOR Doctor Deerlove pushes Laura out of the door.

LAURA: But what do I do now?

DEERLOVE: I know about teeth, Laura. I don't know anything about graves. Perhaps they have a phone number you can call. By now, Laura.

NARRATOR Deerlove forces Laura out and goes to check on the next patient.

SCENE 8

NARRATOR After being unceremoniously kicked out by Doctor Deerlove, Laura had called The Ol' Graves tours number, asking to speak with anyone who knew about the graves.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)