

# *B-I-N-G-O SPELLS MURDER*

*An Interactive Dinner Theatre Mystery*

By Robert Mattson

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### **DEDICATION**

*To Wally and Jean Mattson, parents who taught me that being silly can be a very good thing.*

### **STORY OF THE PLAY**

Father O'Sullivan is desperate. But who wouldn't be? The bank is about to foreclose on his church buildings and orphanage. He's got young people struggling with questions of love, developers struggling to turn the house of God into the Condos of God, a gangster struggling with the English language, and a bookkeeper who's just a struggle for everyone. Plus, he's hosting a Bingo night as a last chance to raise enough money to get himself out of this mess. So, what happens when his bookkeeper is killed and the money is stolen? It's time for Father O'Sullivan to "forgive-and-forget" nothing as he struggles to solve the crime. Full of great characters, humor, and rapid-fire dialog, "B-I-N-G-O Spells Murder" has been a favorite of dinner theatre audiences throughout the U.S. and Canada.

### **ORIGINAL PRODUCTION**

This play was originally produced by the Northborough Music Theatre, Northborough, MA, under the original title, "Death With Father -- A Mystery of Biblical Proportions;" Saturday, February 1, 1992. The original cast included:

Christopher Connell as Father O'Sullivan  
Paul Champlin as Greg Arlington  
Donna Parry as Jennifer Boyleston  
Ceil d'Entremont as Judy Tremont  
R. C. Jacobs as Joey Verricone  
Liz Mitchell as Bunny DeVaine  
Rod Davis as Claude Chandam

## **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(4 m, 3 w)*

**Father O'Sullivan:** The head of the financially-challenged Our Lady of Almost Lost Causes Orphanage.

**Greg Arlington:** Grew up in the orphanage, fiancé of Jennifer.

**Jennifer Boyleston:** Fiancée of Greg, anxious to marry.

**Judy Tremont:** The orphanage's anal-retentive bookkeeper.

**Joey Verricone:** Sent to the orphanage to do a job for the Don.

**Bunny DeVaine:** New Yorker with big plans for the building and grounds.

**Claude Chandam:** Bunny's spineless husband.

## **PROPS**

**Set Props:** Whodunit sheets, Bingo game, phone, scissors, letter opener, screwdriver, Bingo card with bloody fingerprints.

**Judy:** Reading glasses on a cord; watch; papers, receipts and bills; paper money; stage blood.

**Joey:** Switchblade, paper angels, cell phone.

**Bunny:** Purse with cell phone and broken calculator.

**Claude:** Foil-wrapped dish; eye glasses in pocket.

**SCENE 1**

*(The scene opens with FATHER O'SULLIVAN, GREG, JUDY and JENNIFER assisting everyone in audience at their tables and welcoming them. A desk CS holds typical office items and Bingo paraphernalia. As FATHER speaks, JUDY retires to a corner.)*

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Welcome all to the Our Lady of Almost Lost Causes "Bingo Till Ya Burst" night. I think I know most of you, but for those whom I'm not familiar with, I'm Father Patrick O'Sullivan. *(To audience member.)* Oh, Mr. Harlow! I checked in to that matter that we were talking about the other day. As it turns out cheating on your taxes is not officially a sin. But the Cardinal does frown on intentionally losing in bridge to Mrs. Harlow so that you can watch the football game. It's strange, we seem to get a larger crowd on bingo night than on Sunday. Well, never mind. I'm sure that most of you know Greg Arlington and Jennifer Boyleston. These two wonderful children are to be married here next month. As long as there is a "here" to get married in. Greg was the first child to come to the orphanage 25 years ago. And Greg can testify to the improvements we have made over the years, can't you Greg?

GREG: Why yes, Father. I remember—

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Thank you, Greg. Do you remember Sister Mary Louise?

GREG: Why yes, Father. I remember—

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Of course you do. She used to give you your baths when you were a baby. Oh, I remember how you used to cry and fuss when she was trying to get you into the bath.

GREG: That was because she always used to drop me, Father.

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Really? You always said she had the hands of a surgeon.

GREG: No, Father, I said "the hands of a sturgeon."

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Oh. Is that why you had that problem with your memory?

GREG: What problem is that, Father?

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: The problem you've had with ... never mind.

JENNIFER: Father?

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Yes, Jennifer?

JENNIFER: Isn't it time that we bring our guests up-to-date on our fund-raising?

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Yes, Jennifer, you're right, as usual. Ladies and gentlemen, for an update on our progress, may I present Miss Judy Tremont.

*(Standing at the side of the room is JUDY TREMONT. She is the most anal-retentive person in the world. Throughout the night, she will straighten anything and correct anyone's grammar that is in the least bit incorrect. She is wearing glasses with a string that allows them to hang when she is not wearing them.)*

JUDY: Well hello, uh. Uh. I didn't realize there would be so many of you. Father, you didn't tell me there would be so many of them. Well, uh, as you all know, we have been raising money for the last *(SHE checks her watch.)* one month, three weeks, two days, six hours and *(Waits a few seconds, looking at HER watch.)* twenty-three minutes. The "Absolution Car Wash" made \$849.43. The "Sweat for Father O'Sullivan" aerobics marathon brought in \$689.98. And the men's dart tournament made \$7.50. We didn't realize that the tournament conflicted with "Monday Night Football." Right, Mr. Harlow? That brings our total to \$1,546.91. So we need to raise \$3,453.09 more to pay off the final payment of the existing loan. Uh, thank you. *(SHE runs off the stage and the second she is off, starts walking again. Retires back to her corner.)*

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Thank you, Judy. *(Leads applause.)* As you can see, our need is still great, but with your help we can make it happen.

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FATHER O'SULLIVAN: *(Cont'd.)* Later on in the evening we will be coming around and selling lottery tickets with half the proceeds going to the lucky winner and the other half going to your favorite charity. Us. Well, I'm going in the back and get those lottery tickets organized. If you have any questions, or want to make a donation, please feel free to talk to Greg and Jennifer as you would me. But, Jennifer?

JENNIFER: Yes, Father?

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: I don't want to find out about you hearing confessions again.

JENNIFER: Yes, Father.

*(EXIT FATHER O'SULLIVAN.)*

JUDY: But, Father O'Sullivan, what about the Bingo? We're running eight minutes behind schedule. *(EXIT JUDY.)*

GREG: Well, why don't we get down to some serious Bingo playing? Does everyone have a card in front of them? Good. Jennifer, would you like to call the numbers?

JENNIFER: I would love to, dear.

*(ENTER JOEY VERRICIONE. He is a classic "gangster" type.)*

JOEY: *(To audience member.)* You Father O'Sullivan? *(To another audience member.)* You Father O'Sullivan? Do you speak English? What is this, the remedial table? Any of youse guys know Father O'Sullivan?

JENNIFER: Can I help you?

JOEY: I know that I haven't been to church in a while, but I don't think youse is Father O'Sullivan.

JENNIFER: No, I'm Jennifer Boyleston. Father O'Sullivan has stepped out. Can I help you?

JOEY: I don't think so.

GREG: Is it about a matter of faith?

JOEY: Well, if I don't see him soon, some people around here are going to be real concerned about the afterlife. *(Patting jacket pocket.)* If you know what I mean.

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GREG: I'll get the Father. Jennifer, entertain our guest.

*(EXIT GREG.)*

JENNIFER: So, have you known Father O'Sullivan long?

JOEY: What are you, a cop?

JENNIFER: No, just curious.

JOEY: I had an uncle who was curious.

JENNIFER: You did?

JOEY: Yeah. *(PAUSE.)* I did.

JENNIFER: Oh.

*(ENTER FATHER O'SULLIVAN, GREG and JUDY.)*

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Can I help you?

JOEY: You Father O'Sullivan?

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Yes.

JOEY: My name is Joey Verricone.

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Joey "The Snail" Verricone?

JOEY: You heard of me?

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: Only in confession.

JOEY: Yeah, well, "The Family," as you well know, has purchased the mortgage to this fine establishment. The Don didn't think that the institution that was holding the paper was stable enough.

GREG: What institution was that?

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: *(Insert the name of any failed or troubled bank.)*

JOEY: So the Don purchased the aforementioned mortgage.

JENNIFER: Father! He isn't talking about that mobster from Hawaii, is he?

JOEY: No, that's Don Ho.

JUDY: Is it that senior citizen gangster from Chicago?

JOEY: Don Ameche? No.

GREG: Oh no! Not that crime boss from Newark. Don't you remember, Father? The one that always ties a string around the wrist of anyone he kills?

JOEY: Yeah, you got it right, kid, it's—

FATHER O'SULLIVAN: *(Knowing this is a very bad joke.)*  
Please don't say it.

JOEY: Don Knotts. *(ALL groan.)*

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