

A Taste of Wine & Murder: audio transcript

Note, the last page has the identity of the murderer!

Take care if you do not want to have the ending spoiled!

Track 1 (To read to introduce the game)

Bridget Bordeaux:

Hello, how is everyone today? I'd like to welcome you all to the Underwood Wine Estates. My name is Bridget Bordeaux and I'll be your tour guide as we walk through this mystery.

First let me tell you that Underwood Wine Estates is one of the finest wine producing facilities in the state of California. Our wines are renowned worldwide. Last year, our chardonnay won awards here in Napa Valley, and also in Paris and Rome. We have 457 acres under cultivation in our vineyards, employ 85 people seasonally, and produce more than 1 million bottles of wine each year.

Underwood wine Estates has been an operation since it was established in 1937 by the late Bob Underwood and his wife, Stella. Mr. Underwood's son, Samuel and his wife, Margaret took over the winery in 1967 and managed it until, tragically, they were killed in a plane crash in 1985.

At that time, the third generation of Underwood's, Barry Underwood, became the manager. In 1992, Barry mysteriously disappeared during Napa Valley's annual wine festival, and the operation has been managed by Ralph Rottengrape, and his wife, Tiny Bubbles, since then. Barry Underwood's disappearance has remained a mystery for the past five years. It happened after midnight on Saturday, September 19, 1992. A search of the area was conducted during the following week, but failed to turn up any clues about Mr. Underwood's disappearance. The FBI investigated but we're unable to solve the mystery and the case has been in their unsolved files until today.

You see, at 11:37 PM last night, a minor earthquake shook the Underwood mansion, causing an old wooden floor in the wine cellar to upheave. A short time later Barry Underwood's well preserved body was discovered under the buckled cedar planks. An autopsy was done this morning, and the cause of death with a laceration across his throat with a ring knife – a tool used to harvest grapes.

We've asked you here today because you were all present five years ago when Barry Underwood disappeared. You are his family and friends - and in all likelihood one of you was responsible for his death. I ask you now to refresh your memories about what happened on that faithful night five years ago, and let's see if we can solve the mystery surrounding Barry's death.

Now start the "First Dialogue".

Track 2 (summarizes and wraps up Round 1, after the Round one Questioning)

Bridget Bordeaux:

As I sat and listen to all of you I couldn't help but think of that song "I Heard It Through the Grapevine". It seems so appropriate after the revelation of so many secrets.

Let me review what's been revealed. Otto Van Schnapps? You certainly are a man who knows the value of a dollar ... or should I say Mark? It is amazing how you've been able to stretch an average salary into a considerable fortune! Maybe the reason Barry Underwood sent you that note telling you to meet him at his home was to get investment advice.

Tiny Bubbles, such a strange coincidence that your fiancé went from having cold feet about the wedding to being killed by a cold-blooded killer. Thank goodness you were able to get over his disappearance so quickly and marry Ralph! I am curious though about the FBI agents observations that you had no alibi and that type O blood was found on your shoe.

Ralph Rottengrape, let me congratulate you on the outstanding job you've done managing Underwood Wine Estates, especially with the limited experience you had before taking over! It is incredible how you went from prison convict to field laborer to manager of this multi-million dollar business in such a short time. You could be a role model for prison rehabilitation!

Marilyn Merlot, please don't leave today without giving me an autograph. I just love your movie, Fatal Flaw, especially the romantic scene at Lover's Lane - it must've felt like déjà vu after the evening you spent with Barry on Lucky Bluffs. It's a shame you don't get home to Napa Valley more often, but I guess with all your newfound fame you've had to *bury* the past.

Papa Vito it's a shame you've never had your own vineyard. You are so talented at growing and harvesting the grapes! Underwood Wine Estate has been very lucky to have you here all these years, and you seem to enjoy sampling the wine as much as you do growing the grapes.

Hedy Shablee - I love what you've done with Shablee vineyards since that tragic fire nearly destroyed it - it's like a picture postcard now! I wonder who could have lit that terrible blaze? You must've been so angry! By the way I didn't see you come in the front door. Did you use the secret passage?

This is also interesting. Usually I am the one telling the stories, but now I'm content to just sit and listen! Please continue with your conversations and see if we can harvest some more answers to this mystery!

Now start the "Second Dialogue"

Track 3 (summarizes and wraps up Round 2, after the Round Two Questioning)

Bridget Bordeaux:

I must say I'm somewhat overwhelmed by what I've heard - it's hard to keep track of it all. Let's see if I have it straight...

Papa Vito, let me commend you on keeping the wine cellar in tiptop shape for the past five years. It's a shrine to your dedication. I've always wanted to try cutting grapes from the vine with a ring knife. Maybe you could teach me, Papa Vito! You know how to use so well!

Marilyn, you are so bold a pose for that centerfold. I must confess I am envious. Also, I should tell you I have read some of the Hollywood gossip about your temper. Did you really chase the load off the set with a machete? I certainly would not want to make you angry!

Otto. I'm curious how much cash was in the briefcase you left with Barry? it seems odd that such a shrewd manager as yourself would conduct a business deal in that manner, but then you are a man of many secrets. I love the one about you and Hedy, having a midnight rendezvous in your hotel room - intriguing!

Hedy, you had the worst luck with your venture into viticulture haven't you? You barely got back on your feet from that disastrous fire, then someone sabotaged your entire crop of grapes! It's enough to really make you mad! Thank goodness your silent partners were so patient.

Ralph, or do I call you Dario now? Whoever you are, you certainly like to live dangerously! Under the circumstances, I take back my compliments about the success of your prison rehabilitation. Cheating with Barry's fiancé and using the identity of his long-lost cousin to get a job at the winery... tisk tisk!

Tiny, you and Ralph seem to have a lot in common - dishonesty! Playing the field with both Barry and Ralph... it gives me the impression that not very sincere in

your relationships with men. But I understand your fear of basements, though. I have the same problem with heights.

You are certainly an entertaining group of people, and I think we are getting close to solving this mystery.

Now start the “Third Dialogue”

Track 4 (After Round Three Questioning, and Optional Final Statements and Accusations, this will reveal the murderer!)

Bridget Bordeaux:

It's been quite an enlightened tour! In the end it is safe to say that all of you had the motive and opportunity to kill Barry Underwood five years ago, but there is only one murderer and he is Papa Vito Santini.

He did it to get Underwood Wine Estates for his grandson, Dario Santini.

Of course you know Dario better as Ralph Rottengrape. Many years after the war, Papa Vito discovered he had a grandson name Dario living in Italy. Papa Vito used the Internet to contact his brother there and arrange for Dario to be convicted of a minor crime and sent to the same prison where Ralph Rottengrape was serving time. Prison officials were bribed to put Ralph and Dario in the same cell so that Dario would get to know Ralph and learn about his past. Then just before Dario's release, Papa Vito had Ralph murdered under contract, and got his brother to convince Dario to take Ralph's identity and moved to California to start a new life.

Dario had no idea he was Papa Vito's grandson when he arrived at Underwood Wine Estates posing as Ralph. After Dario, Ralph, was excepted as legitimate Underwood heir, Papa Vito murdered Barry, leaving his grandson as the sole beneficiary to the Underwood Wine Estates. Papa Vito had planned to keep Dario in the dark about his relationship to him, until after Barry was declared legally dead by the state of California. Then Papa Vito could retire back to Italy, knowing that his life's work would now benefit his grandson and future generations.