

# A DAGGER FOR DANGER

A KATHY CHATSWORTH MYSTERY



*One beautiful old dagger.  
Two beautiful young victims.  
Will there be more?*

Jan Davies and Stephen Rayfield

# **A Dagger for Danger**

By  
Janet Davies  
And  
Stephen Rayfield

A Kathy Chatsworth Mystery



Published by:

**ESIL Publishing,**

638 Buchan Avenue, Oshawa, Ontario L1J 3A3

This book is licensed for your personal enjoyment only. This book may not be given away to other people. If you would like to share this book with another person, please purchase another copy.

If you are reading this book and did not purchase it, or it was not purchased for you use only please delete it from your library. Then go to Amazon and purchase your own copy.

All rights reserved. No part of this eBook may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system without written permission from the author, except for inclusions of brief quotes in a review.

The characters and situations portrayed in this eBook are fictional. Any resemblance to persons living or dead is purely coincidental.

This book contains an excerpt from the forthcoming book *Pistol Packing Park*. This excerpt has been developed for this edition only and may not reflect the final version in the forthcoming book.

Davies, Janet and Rayfield, Stephen

eBook ISBN: [978-1-7774557-9-8](#)

Softcover ISBN: [978-1-7774557-8-1](#)

Hardcover ISBN: [978-1-9995550-2-3](#)

Audio Book: ISBN: [978-1-7774557-7-4](#)

Copyright © 2022 by Janet Davies and Stephen Rayfield

*All rights reserved*

Dear Reader,

Thank you for downloading our book a *Dagger for Danger*. We hope you will enjoy the mystery as you join Kathy Chatsworth and Detective Sandy Brampton in tracking down the truth, the lies and the dangers of a family tradition involving a beautiful dagger that has played a part in the betrothal, wounding and killing of women for more than 450 years.

Their investigation into the death of a woman named Shaye grows more bizarre as facts they uncover wrap tendrils around a seemingly unrelated cold case, the murder of a young student named Catrina. What could the brutal stabbing of a 21<sup>st</sup> century vegan have to do with a twisted tradition from the Middle Ages?

Three people, each with a reason for wanting to see Shaye dead, lead Kathy and Brampton to dig deep into the distant, and not so distant, history of a dangerous dagger.

We hope you enjoy reading this tale. Relax and join in their efforts to solve the puzzle. And, if they survive the convoluted twists of this investigation, we look forward to sharing more collaborations of a nosey journalist and a cautious detective with you in the future.

Janet Davies and Stephen Rayfield



## Table of Contents

[Dear Reader,](#)

[1. Emerald Flash](#)

[2. Waiting For Brampton](#)

[3. Dr. MacDugon](#)

[4. History of The Dagger](#)

[5. The Stormont Ritual](#)

[6. Disappearance of The Dagger](#)

[7. Cold Case Coincidence](#)

[8. Suspect Deborah Citlali](#)

[9. Good With A Knife](#)

[10. In The Shower With Deb](#)

[11. What's In A Name](#)

[12. Clever Margaret](#)

[13. Call Me Ken](#)

[14. Catrina's Classmates](#)

[15. Suspect Grant Ashbury.](#)

[16. The Man And The Mask](#)

[17. Grant Remembers](#)

[18. Debrief At Breakfast](#)

[19. Nice Guy Grant](#)

[20. Brampton's Breakfast Surprise](#)

[21. Suspect Madeline Saunders](#)

[22. Suddenly Sisters](#)

[23. Out of the Blue Rich](#)

[24. Another Suspect And A Great Breakfast](#)

[25. Black Pepper and Yogurt](#)

- [26. Stab Wounds On The Screen](#)
- [27. MacDugon Is Impressed](#)
- [28. Dagger and Other Rituals](#)
- [29. Back To Professor Rivers](#)
- [30. Deb Gets Serious](#)
- [31. Kathy Maybe Cursed](#)
- [32. How To Stab Correctly](#)
- [33. Grant's Photographs](#)
- [34. Kathy Keeps Her Focus](#)
- [35. Beating The Curse](#)
- [36. Another Date With Madeline](#)
- [37. Maddy's Good Fortune](#)
- [38. Maddy's Dagger Fingerprints](#)
- [39. Breakfast Debrief](#)
- [40. Autopsies And Curses](#)
- [41. Handing Over Pictures](#)
- [42. Catrina Naked](#)
- [43. Who Owns The Cottage?](#)
- [44. Maddy At The Station](#)
- [45. Love Child](#)
- [46. I'm Not Signing Anything](#)
- [47. Bring In The Big Guns](#)
- [48. Deb's A Liar – In A Good Way](#)
- [49. Deb's Secret](#)
- [50. Off The Record](#)
- [51. Flipping Through Pictures](#)
- [52. Digesting Things At Rosy's](#)
- [53. Look Real Close](#)

[54. Confronting A Killer](#)

[55. Kathy's Training Pays Off](#)

[56. Cold Case Closed](#)

[Epilogue](#)

[Pistols in the Park](#)

[Kathy Chatsworth Mystery 2](#)

[Chapter 1](#)

[About Janet Davies and Stephen Rayfield](#)



## 1. Emerald Flash

Sunlight flashed across her black-rimmed sunglasses and made Kathy Chatsworth blink, stop walking and look down. The light had bounced off a green stone, half hidden in the vines growing in a tangle under a tall cedar hedge.

She reached down to pick it up and gasped. The stone was attached to a dagger – a long dagger, it looked old, *like something from a film*, she thought, *or an overly ornate thing you find at a costume store*. But this was no toy. It lay heavy in her hand, eight inches from the wicked point to the carved handle where the green stone glinted. Could it be an emerald?

She saw blood on the blade, wet blood, deep red and sticky, with a small, pale green vine leaf trapped on the edge where it had started to congeal.

Kathy's own blood pounded in her ears. *Someone's in trouble*, she thought as a crimson drop fell from the dagger to the ground. She looked about wildly and saw a break in the hedge and a path to a cottage with a beautiful old oak door. The door stood open to a dark hallway. She stopped for a single beat then ran up the path.

Pausing in the hallway she waited for her eyes to catch up, then stepped through a door to the left to a small living room, almost as dim as the hall, with brocade curtains blocking the sun. A figure was curled on the floor. A woman lying on her side, hands clutched at her chest where a deep terrible stain oozed through her fingers, a ragged red flower blooming around them. Kathy ran to her, the bizarre thought springing to her mind *bloodstains are hell to get out of a carpet!* She knelt down, heedless of her own pale blue skirt, and cradled the dying woman in her arms.

The face was ashen, but warm brown eyes fluttered open and stared into Kathy's. Her breath was ragged, her voice no more than a sigh as she

stammered “Channel Lane ... Point.” Kathy bent closer, cupping the small face, pressing her ear to the bruised lips. “Channel Lane,” she whispered again. “His secret ...” The short sentence ended abruptly, no more breaths, no more words, but the eyes stayed open, staring at Kathy, silently pleading.

## 2. Waiting For Brampton

Kathy held her, rocking slightly. She couldn't think what to do next. Lay the body down? Keep holding it? Shout for help? *Snap out of it!*

Still kneeling, she grabbed a pillow from the couch, placed it on the ruined carpet and tenderly lowered the brunette head. Her eyes filled with tears as the finality of the moment sank in, then she stood up, brushed at her red knees, pulled out her phone and called Sandy.

Detective Sergeant Sandy Brampton and Kathy had known each other for 11 years and she had worked with him on a case or two. They were good friends, had occasionally come close to being more, and they had a mutual appreciation. As the phone rang, she rubbed a palm over her wet eyes thinking *I've made a mess of this. I've touched too much. I should know better.* She felt both relief and trepidation when he picked up.

“Sandy? It's Kathy. I'm okay, but somebody here is not. I'm at 27 Marsh Lane, it's a white cottage behind a cedar hedge. I need you here, and you'd better bring the coroner, but there's no rush. There's a woman, she was alive when I found her but she died in my arms.”

Brampton listened patiently, assured her he was on his way and disconnected. *Not a good start, he thought. Messy. She knows she's contaminated the scene. I wonder if she has the murder weapon?”*

As he gathered his jacket and keys and walked to his car, he couldn't help thinking *I wonder if she's free for dinner?*

\*\*\*

Kathy stood silently in the hallway waiting. The dagger lay on a dainty half moon table, painted white with pink cabbage roses. She winced at the red stain beneath the blade and wondered just how much she had contaminated evidence. How could she have known the green stone glinting in the sun was part of a murder weapon?

Her mind wandered to her friendship with Sandy Brampton. He was a homicide detective, she was a journalist – his and her tribes were not famous for having great relationships.

Kathy had enjoyed earning her degree in English Literature but felt aimless in her final year. She thought about teaching. She thought, of course, about writing a novel, but in the end she knew her strengths were research and reporting. Ms. Chatsworth had done stellar work on school newspapers since grade school.

She had an analytic approach to fact gathering and a gift for telling good stories. School newspapers, plus a bit of lucrative ghost writing for lazy but rich kids at school, had honed her natural talents and taught her how to dig and discover, honestly report and imaginatively speculate – and people enjoyed her writing.

The first case she had worked on with Brampton was one she had named *A Death in the Country Inn*. She smiled in the dim hallway, forgetting for a moment the body in the next room. She gave whimsical titles to even the lousiest news stories but her irreverent headlines rarely appeared in print.

It was a murder at a luxury inn and everything pointed to a hapless waiter – motive, evidence and prejudice. But Kathy had uncovered information that exonerated the boy and led to the real killer. Her involvement in the case had been unofficial, so Brampton got the glory – but she got the story.

“Hello Kathy.” She jumped as Brampton bent his head and squeezed through the 100-year-old doorway. “You’ve stumbled on another one,” he said, giving her shoulder a quick squeeze. He briefly wondered if that was still acceptable but felt her lean into him before he pushed past to the living room.

“I don’t go looking for trouble,” she said to his back. “I’ll tell you everything I know but it’s not much.” The woman’s last words echoed in her mind, but she would save them until Brampton and the coroner had done their work.

“Do you know who she is?” he asked.

“No. I was on my way to work when I saw something shining in the hedge out there.” He was turning slowly to take in every corner of the room. “I picked it up and saw it was some kind of gemstone in the handle of a dagger.”

He turned. “A dagger? You mean a knife?” She shook her head and pointed to the half-moon table. “No, I mean a dagger, like in a horror movie or something, and it had blood on it.” Her breath caught. “I knew something awful had happened, the blood was wet.” She gulped back a sob.

He put his arm around her. “It’s okay Kath, you’ve had a shock. Take a breath. What happened next?”

She pulled air into her lungs and let it out slowly. It wasn’t the first time she’d seen a dead body, but it seemed more shocking, somehow obscene, in this pretty little place with roses and brocade and someone bleeding out their life on a peach paisley carpet.

“What happened next? I saw a gap in the hedge, and I came in and found this horrible scene. She was dying Sandy, there was nothing I could do.” She took another big breath. “I went to her and held her, I know that was wrong, but it was instinct, and she died in my arms.”

He reached for her again but she backed away and went to stand in the sunlight on the flagstone path. He stared after her, then wrote everything she had said in his police notebook.

### 3. Dr. MacDugon

Dr. Linda MacDugon arrived and knelt by the corpse. The district coroner said nothing, just nodded to Brampton and ignored Kathy. After a few moments she rose.

“Single stab to the chest with that weapon you’ve got in the evidence bag Sandy,” she said. “The bang on her lip is where she fell and hit her face on the coffee table. I’ll do some swabbing and sampling to confirm it but that’s what it looks like.” Dr. MacDugon turned back to the woman lying on the floor and began writing her own notes. Kathy frowned. Would a single blow wreak so much havoc on a woman’s breast? She looked again at the dagger in the baggie and shuddered.

“The angle of the blade will help tell if the attacker was taller or shorter,” Brampton said and Linda nodded once thinking, *tell me something I don’t know*. She turned to Kathy.

“Sorry but we’ll need your blouse,” she said, not sounding sorry at all. “There’s probably blood on your bra, so give me that, too,” she strode out of the room, saying over her shoulder, “When I heard it was you, I figured this would happen.” She spoke matter-of-factly, but Kathy bristled anyway. “So I came prepared. I haven’t got a spare coverall but I’ve got a T-shirt and sweater you can change into.”

Kathy groaned. She liked the blouse she was wearing and feared she might never see it again. The thought of wearing one of MacDugon’s t-shirts without a bra did not appeal either. The coroner was annoyingly petite.

The forensics crew arrived and Kathy and Brampton got out of their way. The doctor returned and handed her a large evidence bag, a small blue t-shirt, and a suspiciously flouncy pink sweater. In the bathroom at the end of the hall, Kathy carefully removed her blouse and bra and stuffed them into the bag, but

didn't seal it. Brampton would do that and record the details. She struggled into the T-shirt, tugged it down over her breasts and frowned at her reflection. Adding the cardigan helped a little, but she felt ridiculous and also guilty for caring what she looked like at a time like this. She fingered the frills on the cardigan. She'd never seen Linda MacDugon wear anything like this. She tugged at the frilly edges, trying to make them meet over her bosom, then sighed and stepped back into the hall.

MacDugon nodded to one of her guys to take the evidence bag from Kathy. She was watching the team in their billowing suits and booties meticulously examine the living room. Kathy touched her arm to get her attention. "I'll bring the sweater and t-shirt to the station later today." It would take her 20 minutes to walk home and change, about 19 minutes longer than she wanted to be seen in that get-up. MacDugon gave her a nod and a smile, then waved her away.

As she walked down the stone steps to the path, Kathy thought *what happened here?* And why? Who was the young woman going down her path for the last time, a sad, small bundle on a metal gurney, and what had she been trying to say with her dying words and those pleading eyes?

#### 4. History of The Dagger

*Forest of Dean, England, 1560 AD*

A cool morning fog spun around his feet as the young woodcutter strode through the forest, looking for a perfect oak log to take back to his father, the carpenter, for a new table. The cry of a grey wolf made the hair on the back of his neck stand up. It was the sound they made when they had a fresh kill.

A hundred yards ahead, the forest floor fell away to his right. The howl came again and he saw at the bottom of the slope a big grey wolf standing over a man who was lying very still. One arm was bent beneath him and appeared

## Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

