

Praise for

**EVERYONE
IN THE
GROUP CHAT
DIES**

‘With biting, mordant humor, Chilton sends readers on a serial killer hunt for our disassociated, true-crime-obsessed social media age. I laughed out loud, I gasped at twists, and I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of this ride. Highly recommend!’ **Ashley Winstead**

‘This novel does exactly what it says on the tin! A funny, twisty, bloodthirsty murder mystery. Great fun!’
Julie Mae Cohen

‘A darkly humorous and suspenseful tale that masterfully intertwines modern technology with classic thriller elements. L.M. Chilton delivers a compelling narrative that kept me turning the pages late into the night. Fabulous!’
Joanna Wallace

‘A funny, inventive murder mystery that is a real page turner. Fabulous!’ **Victoria Dowd**

‘A lovely escape... Features a twist that I never saw coming.’
Tasha Coryell

‘*Everyone in the Group Chat Dies* starts with the brilliant premise of receiving WhatsApp messages from a corpse. It’s twisty, pacy and devilishly funny. I loved it.’
Katie Marsh

‘An absolute joy of a thriller: fast paced, full of suspense, and laugh out loud funny. L.M. Chilton provides a deft skewering of flatmate culture and revels in the true horror of the group chat.’
Sarah Bonner

ALSO BY L.M. CHILTON

Don't Swipe Right

**EVERYONE
IN THE
GROUP CHAT
DIES**

L.M. CHILTON



An Aries Book

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This is a work of fiction. All characters, organizations, and events
portrayed in this novel are either products of the author's
imagination or are used fictitiously.

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ONE

PRESENT DAY

They say there are three sides to every story: mine, yours and the truth.

So, which one do you want?

Most of you will plump for the truth, right? That's the obvious choice. But before you make your final decision, hear me out. Because I'm telling you, my version is pretty damn hard to beat.

I mean, maybe not this bit, obviously. Because right now, I'm fishing half-empty beer cans out of an over-chlorinated hotel swimming pool, wearing a bright orange baseball cap with 'Hot Mess And Doin' My Best' emblazoned across the front.

Casual observers might tell you that slogan is fairly accurate, and my boss would probably say it's something I should be aiming for. But, from my point of view, while 'hot mess' is arguable, I can assure you, I am resolutely *not* doing my best.

The baseball cap is part of the standard-issue 'SUNKISSED & SINGLE' uniform and, contrary to the label's wild claims that it's 100 per cent polyester, on a day like this, it feels more like wool. Despite the early hour, the sun has very much got

his hat on too, and is already beating down relentlessly on the white plastic sun loungers dotted around the pool.

SUNKISSED & SINGLE HOLIDAYS (yes, the capitalisation is mandatory) is the number one Magaluf travel company for singles. At least, that's what they told me – repeatedly – during the two-week intensive training boot camp in Bolton (aka the second worst fortnight of my life). I shouldn't whinge though. I mean, where else could one learn both the full dance routine to Beyoncé's 'Texas Hold 'Em' and the most effective way to remove sun-baked vomit from under a sun lounger?

My task this morning is getting the area ready for tonight's 'Tidal Rave' pool party. Thankfully, it'll be a good couple of hours before any of last night's revellers emerge from their rooms, meaning at least I can get on with it in peace. Galling as it is to be cleaning up after them, what makes it worse is that, at almost thirty-one myself, I was just over the age threshold for a 'SUNKISSED & SINGLE UNDER THIRTIES VAY-CAY PAR-TAY'. Those mere months of difference meant that while the guests partied, I polished; while they drank, I daydreamed; and while they slept off their hangovers, I searched the deepest depths of my black-hearted soul. But hey, with free board and unlimited access to the hotel continental breakfast buffet, things could be worse. And, crucially, I'm a thousand miles away from anyone who knows who I am.

Or what I did.

As I attempt to net the final elusive beer can, an inflatable unicorn floats across the pool, cutting a lonely figure in the morning sunshine. He seems to be giving me the eye, as if to say 'come, weary Cinderella, let me carry you for a while'. And frankly it would be rude to turn such a generous offer

down, right? So, slipping off my plimsolls, I pop my phone and hotel key card in the heel and clamber onto Mr Sparklefarts* (*name of unicorn subject to workshopping).

Pulling the brim of the cap over my eyes, I lie back and try to block out everything but the soft lapping of the water against the tiles. In the distance, I can hear the faint beat of dubstep drifting over from The Strip as the bars prepare for the lunchtime crowds.

I know I can't lie out here forever. For one, I think Horny McPointyface* (*hmm, we can do better, people) might be slowly deflating, and two, I can feel my pale, English skin beginning to fry under the boiling Mediterranean sun. But I reckon I have at least two more blissful minutes before my overly officious team leader emerges from the hotel, yelling his favourite catchphrase: 'Kirby Cornell, this isn't a holiday, this is an opportunity!'

And then, because the universe hates me, I hear my phone buzz from the side of the pool, lighting up the inside of my shoe like a shit disco.

I paddle Princess Glitterhoof* (*ladies and gentlemen, I think we have a winner) over to see what world-shattering news requires my immediate attention. Turns out it's just a WhatsApp notification from an ancient group chat that I could've sworn I'd muted a long, long time ago. I swipe the notification to open the chat and read the message.

Despite the heat, the words send a shiver through me. I stare at the screen, rub the chlorine out of my eyes, then read it again.

Esme
miss me?

It's the first message anyone has written in this group chat for ages, but that's not the really weird thing.

The *really* weird thing is, Esme died twelve months ago.