

**Christopher Bundy**  
**Men and Women of the Jury**

*Juror #4*

*Jennifer Blank*

knew that her cell phone was against the court's rules and probably bothering the other jurors, some of whom glanced her way like they wouldn't do the same thing, even though she kept it in her lap and hidden under the conference table. But she didn't have the luxury of decorum—her business day went on regardless of her jury service. Her clients could care less if she was doing her civic duty. They wanted it done yesterday, which is what she promised. As an event planner, she did the best she could remotely, but she needed to be on site. Jennifer didn't trust her young team to get the oxygen bar right. She had a hospitality suite scheduled for the Georgia Chiropractors Association Convention opening. Her company, An Affair to Remember, had won "Best in Show" for their oxygen bar at The Spring Gift, Accessories and Holiday Market Convention. Signage and custom color bubble walls for each bubbling station, power sources with USB ports, bartenders, oxygen generators, this would have to end soon. Another text from her assistant Ashley, poor girl seemed incapable of making any decisions on her own. *110v otlts? 110 volts or 110v outlets?* Jennifer had to sort it out, had to do everything herself. The foreman had already admonished her for texting during deliberations, but she'd likely be up through the night simply catching up on the dozens of e-mails piling up as she sat there with the salt of the earth and debated whether some black guy killed a child. She knew how this would go and didn't see the point in dragging it out all week. He'd killed a child, for Christ's sake. What was there to think about? Black man shoots white kid equaled easy conviction in this town. And the man just *looked* guilty in his zoot suit or whatever they called those oversized outfits. Didn't the defense attorney see that? Didn't everyone see it? And she'd still be behind once the trial had finished. So much crime in the city these days, and who got to do their civic duty because of it? The paper had recently reported that fifty percent of people called to jury duty didn't even bother showing up. Yet, here she was while her business fell apart. The man beside her winked when her phone beeped with a new text message. With him Jennifer believed she'd developed a rapport, one based on age, certainly—he looked to be in his mid-thirties too—and position. The Tag Heur, the casual but pricey pressed shirt, the leather slides with jeans. There was money in that casualness. He had an easy smile, too, like a man who has reason to smile. All this made him convincing—he'd change a few minds, she guessed. And no ring on his finger. She hoped he wasn't gay, seemed like they were all gay these days. Jennifer worried too that she'd come on too strong, introducing herself with a comment about his offhand answers during jury selection. She always came on too strong, scaring men away. But he'd exhibited such a casual response to his own history of violent encounters, as if he didn't blame the individuals for their crimes against him, as if he'd chalked it all up to *just a part of life*. He must've been a favorite of both lawyers. When he'd revealed (to her and secretly, at first) his certainty that the defendant was guilty, Jennifer felt confident of her own decision.