



Murder Mystery Game Sample

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Partial script; some explanations and details are omitted but will be included with your game purchase (such as when to take breaks for optional dinner courses, costuming ideas and samples, how to stage a fight, etc.)

There are 2 versions of the game available to you with purchase. Version 1 is the **Know It All version** wherein the prime suspects get the script/sequence of actions ahead of time and know whodunit. Version 2 is the **Narrator version** where they'll just get their character descriptions ahead of time and you'll add a narrator to tell the story while your prime suspects act out what he/she is saying. In this version they won't need to know whodunit. **YOU WILL RECEIVE BOTH VERSIONS WHEN YOU PURCHASE THIS GAME.**

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G^{ot} Questions?

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----- KNOW IT ALL VERSION -----

Use this version of the game if your prime suspects will know whodunit (We recommend this version for larger groups of 60 or more).

A sample of the **NARRATOR VERSION** follows.

HOW THE KNOW IT ALL VERSION OF THIS MYSTERY GAME WORKS:

You'll need to cast your prime suspects (see character descriptions below). They'll have full knowledge of the script, which means they'll know whodunit.

The rest of your guests will take on the role of detective and it will be their job to actively solve the case by examining evidence, finding clues, following and questioning suspects - whatever it takes for them to solve the mystery.

Essentially, everyone will have a crucial, interactive part in the mystery.

The whodunit will be about 1 1/2 to 2 hours long but you can make it shorter by tightening up the sequence of events (*warning: this means LESS audience participation*) or longer by allowing more time between the scenes/action.

Your guest actors won't have to memorize a lot of dialogue but they will have to be familiar with a sequence of events (see script sample below) or timeline ([see our sample timeline](#)) that will move the mystery through the clues, the murder(s) and the solving of the crime. They'll have to carry out certain actions (like arguments) and suspicious activities to set themselves up as suspects.

All are mystery games are challenging to solve but they're also comedies - a great combination for an unforgettable event.

This will not be a stationary mystery - it will be action-packed; we get people active and involved unlike those mysteries-in-a-box where everyone just sits around reading their part and asking questions they get from a booklet.

NOTE: You can modify any of our mystery games to best suit your needs so long as each suspect maintains a motive to commit the crime(s).

It's a Killer Life

The mystery plot and character descriptions

Year: 1947, 1 year after the movie, "It's a Wonderful Life" aired

Place: Bellows Falls, a very small town in upstate New York

Event: The annual Bellows Falls town holiday party* at Martini's Place, a popular restaurant and bar. *Can be any sort of town event: The Annual Spring Extravaganza or a Halloween party or Valentine's Day Love Fest for example.

The Back Story:

Hatch Manufacturing specializes in the manufacture of men's suits using a custom silk blend. Est. in 1940 by Peter Hatch, Mary (Hatch) Bailey's deceased father, who claimed to have invented the "magic" blend: 60% silk/40% cotton. He used to brag, "real men wear silk." Since Peter's death, Mary has been running the company per her father's wishes.

Eight months ago, Peter Hatch's company was struggling and incurring too much debt to stay in business. He had already exhausted all his resources, but he still needed money to keep up with his competitors or else all would be lost. Peter made a deal with the devil that goes by the name of Mr. Henry Putter. When Peter realized he couldn't get out of his financial woes without help, he took a risky gamble with Putter. It was a gamble he lost. He got the money, but if he didn't pay back the loan within 6 months, then the company would become Putter's. Peter Hatch was dead of a heart attack just as those 6 months came to an end and he missed his last loan payment. Well, actually Uncle Billy lost the last payment. Despite Putter's "generous" extension, Mary hasn't been able to make the payments either and now it's too late.

PRIMARY SUSPECTS

These are the folks who will have full knowledge of the mystery; you'll give them this complete script ASAP.

COSTUMES: All classic 1940s styles. Links to 1940's period male and female clothing included with kit.

1. **Henry Putter, Jr.:** Bellows Falls' very own bully. A mean, vile, greedy man who doesn't give a hoot about people or anyone other than himself. He wants to own this town, lock stock and barrel and Mary's company is first on the list. Check that off. He doesn't want to know you, he doesn't want to care about you; he simply wants to control you. You're a pawn on his chessboard. *(A good bit for Putter is to find guests that are overdue on their loan payments, or owe him something and remind them they owe with interest growing.)*

Don't EVER call him Junior. He hates that. Makes him feel less powerful.

2. **George Bailey:** This George is not like the Jimmy Stewart George. Our George is a follower, not a leader. His wife is the strong one. He works at Hatch Manufacturing as Vice President but it's just a title because he doesn't do much of anything nor does he know much of anything about the company or manufacturing. But it's a man's world, despite the Rosie the Riveters, and Mary put him in the role. She is "the brains behind the uh, brawn" if you will.

George is deaf in his left ear due to saving his brother Harry from drowning when Harry was 9. *(George should use this as a character bit throughout the mystery by asking people to speak up or speak in his good ear. Put a piece of cotton in your ear to remind you.)*

Saving Harry was the last great thing George did. Now that Mary, the love of his life, is threatening to leave him, maybe it's time to change all that because that's the last thing he wants to happen,

George and Mary have 4 Pomeranian dogs named Pete, Janie, Timmy & Zuzu. George LOVES them and enjoys showing folks their photograph (included with kit). If Mary leaves him and takes his babies, he will just die, a fact he shares often with the audience.

- Mary (Hatch) Bailey:** Peter Hatch's daughter and George's wife, or soon to be ex-wife if she has her way. She's sick of providing for the wet noodle. He's been helpless during this company "restructuring" since her father died and she's had to cope all on her own. In addition and without any logical reason, she thinks that all women are after George, especially Violet. Yes, this possible kanoodling could give her grounds for divorce, but it also confuses her. If she wants to leave him, why does she care that so many women desire him?

She's heartbroken, feels like a failure, is confused and just plain devastated. And that makes her an angry, vengeful woman. Alcohol has been a nice escape but, on her last binge, she thought of jumping from the highest bridge she could find in town into her watery grave below. She was set and ready to do it but then some psychotic woman stopped her, claiming to be her guardian angel of all things.

Mary will constantly and crazily accuses women in the audience of flirting with her husband. This is followed by laments such as, "why do I care? I don't care! I'm so confused! But stop looking at him!"

- Clarese Oddbody AS2 (angel, second class):** Clarese thinks she's an angel put on this earth to save Mary. *(In reality, she's escaped from an insane asylum but who's to say she's not an angel???)* She believes she's been allowed to be seen by other mortals than just Mary because she will have a duty to fulfill: To help Mary in whatever way she can to show her that her life is worth living. Bonus points: Clarese will get her wings, wings that she's been waiting 293 years for. It's time and she's desperate because she's the laughing stock amongst the other angels *(goes to motive)*. She has to make Mary believe in her and make Mary believe that her life has value, even if it means Clarese has to kill to do it. She's an angel after all, and therefore above human law. Right?

She claims she has forgotten how to act in a human body so she often fumbles around, getting used to being "human" again.

- Harry Bailey:** George's younger brother and World War II veteran. Since coming home from the war, he's been employed as a bodyguard and stage hand for Clooney Sisters while they tour. This singing duo has become wildly popular with their hit, "If I Had a Million Dollars".

On the tours, he had a reputation for being a hot head and very protective of the sisters. He got into a number of fights during those tours but since meeting and marrying Ruth, he's determined to change his hotheaded ways. More often than not, he doesn't succeed. Once a hothead, always a hothead.

He married Ruth just 2 months ago – just days before Peter Hatch died. (Ruth and he met at a Clooney Sister's show in Buffalo a year ago.) Since getting married, he's been ready to quit the band and find local work in Bellows Falls, a town he loves. Ruth has very, very high hopes that he'll work at her father's glass factory in Buffalo. No thank you! As much as he loves Ruth, but there's no way he wants to move to Buffalo or work in that glass factory.

Harry likes to say – and should say - the military drilled into him that enemies are everywhere and they must be taken care of in short order. He's very protective – bodyguard protective – of his family.

*Harry, a great bit for you is to play the tough bodyguard with people you think need protecting. And also act like 'the enemy' could be lurking anywhere so you're always on guard, whipping around when you hear a suspicious sound or see movement out of the corner of your eye. You can even go so far as to take cover and urge people to take cover with you. **JUST DON'T LET IT INTERFERE WITH THE MYSTERY ACTION!***

6. **Ruth (Dakin) Bailey:** She is newly married to Harry (just 2 months), and her father owns a very successful glass factory in Buffalo. Her dream has always been for her new husband to take over the family business someday so she will always live the life of luxury she deserves. She has made it her mission to convince Harry to work for her father and thus fulfill her every need and desire, just like her daddy always has. Plus she wants to live very close to her mother and father. Bellows Falls is too far away from Buffalo. This is her primary topic of conversation with people. It's boring and tiresome but she sure doesn't think so.

When she first met Mr. Putter and he found out what her daddy did, he asked if he was looking for partners or to sell his lucrative glass factory in Buffalo. She scoffed at the idea. And then every time he saw her after that, he reminded her that taking over companies was a specialty of his! Her daddy would never allow such a thing but now she's worried that maybe Mr. Putter has the power to just take the glass factory!

7. **Violet Bick:** Wants to go to New York City to become an actress just like Veronica Lake (*a glamorous femme fatale*). She practices her little heart out by playing at being a temptress with the local boys (*your guests!*).

She has been chasing George since they were kids. If she's said it once, she's said it a million times, "I'd do anything for you George. Always have, always will."

She and Mary were best friends but Violet's desire for George has put a damper on that friendship. Now they flat out hate each other and it shows (goes to Mary's motive to hurt Violet, our second victim).

Putter just had Violet arrested for trying to extort money from him. She knows the charges Putter has brought against her are bogus. He purposely misinterpreted their little conversation. Sure she needed money to help finance her trip to New York City but somehow Putter got the idea that she was extorting it from him. Really she was just asking - nicely. He has promised to see her in jail – for something she didn't do. She knows exactly why he's doing this. He's been aggressively pursuing her for years and she's been turning him down for years. Putter always gets what he wants but in this case he didn't so he's going to make sure she suffers. Of all the nerve!

8. **Uncle Billy:** Peter Hatch's older brother and Mary's sweet, befuddled, loyal, loving uncle. He's been working at Hatch Manufacturing since the beginning. He feels responsible for and is very protective of Mary now that her dad is gone, especially because he lost the last payment they were supposed to make to Putter and his younger brother had a massive heart attack on that same day.

He has numerous bits of string tied around his fingers to remind him to do things only he can't remember what they are. He often and obviously talks to himself.

OPTIONAL Secondary Suspects – see Secondary Suspect Instructions.

Secondary suspects should get their instructions ASAP.

- **Ernie Bishop:** Ernie is a local cab driver with a heart of gold. A good friend of George's. It breaks his heart to see George and Mary's marriage in trouble so he'll take on the roles of therapist and advisor to George. He's great at giving bad advice with the best intentions.
- **Bert the cop:** Ernie's best friend. He'll have the worst theories in the world re: this mystery. Uh, he may be a cop but he ain't necessarily a smart one.
- **Almira Sessions:** Putter's harried, obsessive-compulsive secretary. She is at his beck and call. And she is in love with him. Go figure.
- **Cousin Tilly and**
- **Cousin Eustace:** Tilly and Eustace are two of George's maiden cousins. They work for Hatch Manufacturing. Tilly is a scaredy cat and Eustace is a gossip.
- **Sam Wainwong:** Sam is a New York City playboy, rolling in the Benjamin's. He's also one of George's closest friends. He's kind of a goofball. His signature line: "Hee-haw!" He was originally Mary's boyfriend, he ended up losing her to George. But he's a playboy now so he's moved on to other women.

*****FOR LARGE GROUP MYSTERIES (75 OR MORE):** I'd definitely suggest you cast your secondary suspects and give them this script - just like you'll do with your primary suspects. During the mystery it will be the secondary suspects' "job" to act as general support for the primary suspects. They'll roam the room "gossiping" about the goings-in, quiet the audience down during a main action, answer questions, bring primary suspects to tables for questioning and make sure your guests have seen the physical clues that have been revealed.

THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- I provide some dialogue throughout but it's not necessary to memorize it verbatim; it's mostly to give you an overall idea of what should and needs to be said.

Organizer: Make sure George has the photo of his Pomeranians and Harry has a hanky in his pocket.

To open the mystery, the suspects will mingle and introduce themselves unless they're making their entrance at a later time in the mystery. You can allow as much time as you'd like for this. Be sure they're on hand to welcome people as they arrive.

0:00

Mary dramatically breaks down in tears and keeps apologizing as she tries to get people's attention from a focal point in the room. She's been drinking. She keeps looking around, as if expecting to see a ghost, which makes her even more distracted. Putter orders her to get on with it. When she can't, he pushes her out of the way and announces:

PUTTER: "Happy holidays and all that hogwash. As of midnight last night my company, Putter Enterprises, acquired Hatch Manufacturing. Mary Hatch will be stepping down from her position as president and owner. A woman has no place in my newly acquired company as anything other than an assembly line worker. And because restructuring is necessary to turn this company around, all employees are fired! I will of course provide you with a severance package of 1/8 of your annual salary. And I will of course accept your employment applications if you wish to apply to Putter Enterprises. Also as it's Christmas, I am not completely without a soul (*he laughs evilly*) so enjoy your last dinner as Hatch manufacturing employees. Your termination is effective tomorrow."

***Note to the person playing the Putter role: You don't necessarily have to memorize the above word for word but please make sure you cover all the points (including the insult to Mary as a woman). They are important and set up the rest of the mystery.**

As all react to this news, George is trying his best to see to Mary's needs. He tries to convince her not to leave him because he's sure she doesn't want to lose both a husband and a company all at the same time. She is his lifeline, his rock - he knows that and it's making him a desperate man. (*You can easily move this through the room. Mary can just keep walking away as George pursues her, pleading.*)

He is quick to seek advice from guests when she brushes him off and tells him to leave her alone.

Ruth gossips with guest(s) about what has transpired. She confides that when she first met Mr. Putter and he found out what her daddy did, he asked if he was looking for partners or to sell his lucrative glass factory in Buffalo. She scoffed at the idea. And then every time he saw her after that, he reminded her that taking over companies was a specialty of his! Her daddy would never allow such a thing but now she's worried that maybe Mr. Putter has the power to just take the glass factory! That would be just awful because one day as soon as possible Harry was going to work for her daddy and they were going to live happily ever after in Buffalo.

Uncle Billy has been mostly muttering to himself and to some guests that this is all his fault and he must fix this but he doesn't know how. He will try to soothe Mary by giving her a hug and telling her he's sorry whenever she's in distress.

0:10

Violet makes her dramatic and angry entrance. “Where is he?”, she repeatedly and furiously asks the guests until she sees Putter. She storms over to him, menacingly pointing at him, and says:

VIOLET: “I know what you’re doing, *Junior* and you won’t get away with it! I did not try and extort money from you. You just want to keep me here, close to you. You do not want me to go to New York and become a great actress! Well you won’t stop me! George gave me some money plus what I have saved...”

PUTTER: “You’ll have to spend on a lawyer. You’re a criminal Violet and I’ll see you in jail, if not my bed, even if it’s the last thing I do! By the way, you call me ‘junior’ one more time and I’ll add blackmail to the extortion charges. Don’t underestimate what I can and will do.” He laughs evilly.

MARY: “George, what’s this about giving Violet money? The little hussy! Are you planning to run away with her now that we’re going to divorce and now that I’ve lost my father’s company to Junior?” (*She points to Putter and emphasizes ‘junior’.*)

GEORGE: “Well, I uh, well, Mary, it’s like this, ya see...”

VIOLET: (*as she rushes to and throws her arms around George*) “Oh George you’ve made me the happiest woman in the world! Are you really leaving Mary? Are you really coming to New York with me?”

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----- NARRATOR VERSION -----

Use this version of the game if you **don't** want your prime suspects to know whodunit. They will simply follow instructions provided by your narrator.

HOW THE NARRATOR VERSION OF THIS MYSTERY GAME WORKS:

You'll need to cast your prime suspects. They'll get their character descriptions and the basic premise of the mystery but that's it. You'll also cast a narrator to be the storyteller. Your prime suspects will act out what the narrator says. They'll have to carry out certain actions (like arguments) and suspicious activities to set themselves up as suspects.

The rest of your guests will take on the role of detective and it will be their job to actively solve the case by examining evidence, finding clues, following and questioning suspects - whatever it takes for them to solve the mystery.

Essentially, everyone will have a crucial, interactive part in the mystery.

The whodunit will be about 1 1/2 to 2 hours long but you can make it shorter by tightening up the sequence of events (*warning: this means LESS audience participation*) or longer by allowing more time between the scenes/action.

All are mystery games are challenging to solve but they're also comedies a great combination for an unforgettable event.

This will not be a stationary mystery - it will be action-packed; we get people active and involved unlike those mysteries-in-a-box where everyone just sits around reading their part and asking questions they get from a booklet.

NOTE: You can modify any of our mystery games to best suit your needs so long as each suspect maintains a motive to commit the crime(s).

Prior to your mystery event/party, you'll send your prime suspects complete character descriptions of all the suspects – which are the same as described above, costume suggestions and the following instructions.

THE NARRATOR - This character will narrate the action in the mystery game.

THE PRIME SUSPECTS

As a prime suspect, your instructions are very easy. Your job will be to act out what this narrator says and follow his instructions (*feeling free to ad lib if you are so inspired*). You also need to react – as your character - to what’s going in the mystery so listen well to your narrator and don’t hesitate to interact with your fellow suspects and the audience. Have fun, let loose, and ham it up!

PRIME SUSPECTS, WHEN THE MYSTERY STARTS HERE’S WHAT YOU’LL NEED TO DO:

Mingle and introduce yourself. Work the room! Get into the fun of playing your character.

Use the character bio we’ve provided to tell your story and to gossip about your fellow suspects.

Engage in conversations with guests and answer their questions. Any time the narrator is not narrating the story you should be mingling and playing up the story as it unfolds.

Any additional character notes/actions are inserted here in the full Narrator version.

YOUR PRIME SUSPECTS WON’T GET THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION; ONLY YOU AND YOUR NARRATOR WILL. This is what he/she will read during the mystery:

ORGANIZER NOTES - There are notes to the organizer preceding any scene that requires props or some sort of prep work (like making up the victim).

Narrator Guidelines:

1. To establish who they are, your prime suspect will mingle with your guests for about 10 minutes before you start.
2. You are the storyteller here so put on your best story telling voice and get ready to engage your guests with this fascinating mystery. The more fun you have with your role, the more fun everyone else will have.
3. Like any good storyteller, you'll always need to get everyone's rapt attention **before you start reading.**
4. **MOST IMPORTANTLY:** As you read, realize the suspects will be acting out what you say so **pause and allow them to do so** and then pick up where you left off. If you need to make notes in your script with reminders about pausing for the action, please do so.

Organizer: Give Putter his cue card with his opening takeover speech – SEE CLUE DOCUMENT.

You'll also need to have the characters that will be making their entrances ready to go: Violet, Clarese and Harry.

Narrator, after the suspects have mingled for about 10 minutes + all the guests have arrived, please give this welcome speech to get the action started. Throughout the mystery, get everyone's attention however you can and remember the suspects will be acting out what you say so allow them to do so then pick up where you left off.

NARRATOR: Welcome Ladies and Gentlemen. **My name is Bert (Berta) Beetlejuice** and I am here to lead you through this mystery. I hope by now you've met George, Mary, Uncle Billy, Ruth and Mr. Putter. If you haven't yet had the chance, don't worry you will. Do feel free to get up and mingle, talk to people who interest you. Examine any evidence that may be revealed; question suspects and be sure to read your program. You get to play detective this evening and solve the mystery that's about to unfold. Now as I understand it, Mary Bailey has an announcement to make. Mary...oh my! I see that Mary is clearly very upset and crying so perhaps this is not a good time for her to make her announcement. **[PAUSE TO ALLOW THIS ACTION]** It does appear the Mr. Putter would like to speak. Mr. Putter....

Putter will read from a cue card

PUTTER: Happy holidays and all that hogwash. As of midnight last night my company, Putter Enterprises, acquired Hatch Manufacturing. Mary Hatch will be stepping down from her position as president and owner. A woman has no place in my newly acquired company as anything other than an assembly line worker. And because restructuring is necessary to turn this company around, all employees are fired! I will of course provide you with a severance package of 1/8 of your annual salary. And I will of course accept your employment applications if you wish to apply to Putter Enterprises. Also as it's Christmas, I am not completely without a soul (*he laughs evilly*) so enjoy your last dinner as Hatch manufacturing employees. Your termination is effective tomorrow.

NARRATOR: As we all react to this horrible, horrible news... [PAUSE TO ALLOW THIS ACTION + REPEAT IF NO ONE IS REACTING] George begs Mary not to leave him because he's sure she doesn't want to lose both a husband and a company all at the same time. [PAUSE TO ALLOW THIS ACTION]

ORGANIZER, CUE VIOLET TO ENTER. She should look for Putter, angrily asking, "where is he?"

NARRATOR: Ahhh, we have a new guest arriving, a clearly angry Violet Bick. [PAUSE TO ALLOW THIS ACTION] She storms over to Mr. Putter, menacingly pointing at him, as she tells "Junior" that he won't get away with accusing her of extorting money from him. She just wanted his help to get to New York City. George gave her money after all. She thought Mr. Putter would be just as generous. [PAUSE TO ALLOW THIS ACTION] Alas, Putter sees it differently. He calls her a criminal and reminds her not to underestimate what he can and will do, including see her in jail for extortion. [PAUSE TO ALLOW THIS ACTION]* He laughs evilly.

***NARRATOR NOTE:** Now that we've given you an idea on when to pause, please do this for the rest of the mystery.