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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 optional breaks for 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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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 sample below) or timeline (see <http://www.murder-mystery-game.com/timeline.html>) 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).**

Bordello of the Damned

YEAR: 1880 (or you can make it modern day if you wish).

AMERICAN WEST RESOURCE LINK: <http://www.americanwest.com/>

COSTUMES: Cowboy outlaw look for the men and saloon girl look or lingerie (knickers, petticoats, bustiers, peignoirs - layers of sexy undergarments) for the women. Check out your local costume shops for costumes. Undergarments for the ladies (to give you some ideas): <http://www.recollections.biz/undergarments/undergarments.htm>.
<http://www.victorianelegance.com/lingerie.html>.

More for men and women:

<http://shootingstarhistory.com/home.html>

<http://www.costumes.org/pages/victlinks.htm#1880's>

THE PLACE: Deadwood, Black Hills, South Dakota

THE EVENT: Just another night at the Leland Hotel and Saloon, only this time it will be more deadly than usual.

THE STORY: **Jimmy Hayward** rules this downtrodden, almost forgotten town. It once thrived and prospered when folks thought gold was in them thar hills. Them thar hills contained nothing but dirt and so the town lost not only its fortune but also its fame and its population. Now Deadwood is just an occasional stagecoach stopover for folks moving on to better places. And the Leland Hotel is not only a haven for outlaws, it houses the best little whorehouse in South Dakota. **ADAPTATION: You can make it the best dance hall and saloon in South Dakota. The girls become can-can girls and nickel-a-dance girls.**

PRIMARY SUSPECTS

These are the folks who will have full knowledge of the mystery; you'll give them this complete script as well as their prime suspect guidelines ASAP.

Jimmy Hayward: The self-absorbed type whose main concern is, "what's in it for me?" He's shown no remorse or grief over the recent death of his wife **Dotty** and has continued to cruelly manipulate his brother, **Harry**, into doing what he wants him to do by keeping him doped up on laudanum (*also known as opium or morphine; an addictive sedative; symptoms include sleepiness, giddiness, dizziness, unbalanced gait*).

Everyone in town knew that **Dotty** was crazy - she had a penchant for horses, both real and imaginary, and was often seen riding her favorite real horse, Reason, in nothing but her birthday suit. She was also seen many times galloping madly down the street without a horse. **Four months ago**, **Dotty** was killed when Reason reared and then threw her. Everyone said her death was an accident, everyone but **Harry**.

Jimmy wears a small feather on a string, as do all the members of his posse,

which includes **Floyd Hannibal**, a stagecoach driver who helps **Jimmy** set up robberies of his particularly wealthy travelers.

Harry Hayward: A simple, kind man who is now very much on the verge of insanity because he's now addicted to morphine.

Back when folks mined for gold, **Harry** was the only one to strike it rich by opening The Leland for the miners and their families. It was a place you could go for a warm bed and good food. **Dotty** was a big help to **Harry** and was a good friend to him. But then **Jimmy** had his own ideas about the hotel as the miners disappeared for other places. He knew he'd make a fortune if he not only opened a whorehouse but if he made the Leland a haven for outlaws. He started giving **Harry** laudanum (a dose in his coffee every morning) right about the time he wanted to put his plan into action (a year ago).

Miss Iggy: She was a fearsome religious zealot who ruled her flock with an iron ruler - until she met **Jimmy 10 months ago** at a revival meeting she was holding in town. Now she has really taken a fall: She runs the bordello hand-in-hand with **Jimmy** as his partner (gotta have a madam after all) - or at least that's what he tells her.

Iggy is in love for the first time in her life - with **Winking Willie Woodcuff**, a customer.

Iggy carries around a ruler - a memento of her bygone days. She's an odd mix of Catholic nun and madam.

William "Winking Willie" Woodcuff: An outlaw and the bordello's most frequent customer. Of all the girls and even **Madame Iggy** herself, he's taken a real liking to **Freddie** and would like for her to be his wife. How very devastating for **Iggy**, who believes that **Winking Willie** really fancies her.

Winking Willie blinks a lot because he can't see but he refuses to wear glasses thus his nickname.

Good comic shtick for him is to talk to inanimate objects, mistake one person for another and bump into things.

Fredericka "Freddie" Fontaine: **Winking Willie's** favorite girl, despite what **Iggy** believes. Being a prostitute was not her first choice in life but her daddy, **Ollie Fontaine**, didn't leave her much of a choice when, about **8 months ago**, he bet her in a poker game against **Jimmy** and lost. Now she's part of **Jimmy's** stable for 2 years or her father will most certainly meet his untimely death. **Freddie's** mother died of the yellow fever so she only has her father, thus her devotion to him despite what he did to her. (*Ollie keeps a low profile these days - the humiliation and the guilt are too much to bear.*)

Floyd Hannibal: The stagecoach driver who takes a detour through Deadwood when he has a particularly rich group of travelers that need to be robbed of their worldly possessions. **Floyd** wears a small feather on a string tied around his neck, just as **Jimmy** does.

Floyd is not only a bit dim but he's an extremely volatile man with a very short fuse. He keeps what he thinks is a tight reign on his wife, **Kit**. That reign is looser than he could ever imagine thanks to **Jimmy**.

Kit Hannibal: **Floyd's** wife. She swears she isn't one of **Iggy's** "girls" but we all know better. **Floyd** is out of town a lot and a girl gets lonely after all. Besides when he is home, he won't let her have any fun.

She's **Jimmy's** favorite...for the moment. **Kit** has taken their physical relationship much further than **Jimmy** has: she's madly in love with him (he's fun and he lets her do what she wants - so different from **Floyd**). Unfortunately for **Kit**, she'll find out tonight how unrequited that love is.

Mary Elizabeth Flanagan (Marti): Allegedly she is a poor and destitute yet beautiful girl looking for work. **Iggy** hired her immediately despite her clearly compromised mental capacity (the cowboys ain't lookin' for smart women after all). **Mary Elizabeth** is definitely not right in the head. She acts like a 3 year old which immediately attracts **Harry** to her when they meet because in his now constant state of befuddlement, he too acts like a 3 year old. It's a match made in heaven (or hell??)

SECONDARY SUSPECTS (optional).

Remember, EVERYONE will be actively involved in this mystery because it will be their job to solve the case and because you'll be encouraging them to come in costume and in character. Use any or all of these secondary suspects if you have "extra" cast members you want to use or if you have some guests who want to take on a character but not take on the full responsibility of a primary suspect. You will **NOT** give them a script but you will give them a description of their character and let them run with it.

*****FOR LARGE GROUP MYSTERIES (75 OR MORE):** I'd definitely suggest you cast your secondary suspects and give them a 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.

There's a separate document included with this kit that contains instructions for these guests.

1. **Paris Barrows:** The town gossip and tough girl (sort of like their Calamity Jane) - she's in the saloon every night and can keep up with the best of the men. The drunker she gets, the more she gossips.
2. **Tom Bowfeather:** (*You can make him an Indian if you want.*) Provides his special moonshine liquor to **Jimmy**. He's also part of **Jimmy's** posse so he wears a feather on a string around his neck. **Jimmy** owes **Tom** money from the last robbery and he owes **Tom** for the last batch of moonshine. **Tom's** getting impatient...
3. **Alice Arthur:** The bordello's housekeeper. A real mother hen to the girls. She'd love it if just one customer looked her way so she tries her best to look

- like one of the girls despite **Iggy** reminding her of her place (as housekeeper).
4. **Experience McCoy**: The town's doctor. You can call on him to declare the victims dead and to expound on the details of their deaths to your guests.
 5. **Sam Bogart**: The piano player (*with a broken hand if you don't have a piano or he can't play*). Sam was hired by and is completely devoted to **Harry** and that's why he stays in Deadwood - for his friend **Harry**. He's taken a fancy to Miss **Iggy**.
 6. **Aurora Borealis**: The can-can girl who sings and dances for the Leland patrons. She's even been known to take off her clothes if you get her in a good mood. Last week **Experience** accused her of stealing his money pouch so **Jimmy** is threatening to fire her and she and **Experience** are feuding.
Note: You can give her a sprained ankle if she can't dance.
 7. Add as many girls to your flophouse as you want. (*Your guests will be invited to be outlaws and saloon patrons.*)
 8. Suggest to some of your male guests that they wear a feather on a string around their neck but don't tell them why. They'll see **Jimmy** and **Floyd** wearing one and know they're part of something. **Jimmy** and **Floyd** should keep everything they say to their fellow posse men very cryptic to keep it fun for these guests.
 9. We also include a list character names for your guests

MOTIVES - included in full script.

THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

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

0:00

Jimmy and **Iggy** (*ruler in hand but dressed like the sexy madam she is*) make their larger than life entrance. **Jimmy** and **Iggy** greet everyone and mingle.

JIMMY & IGGY, please find guests who clearly want to be ladies of the evening and send them to where **Marti** and **Freddie** are waiting to make their entrance. Ladies, please fill your guests in to what happens with your entrance at 0:10 so they can participate.

Iggy meanwhile speaks enthusiastically to her regulars (*your guests*) about her new girl, **Marti**, who reminds her of someone but she can't quite think of who it is. She is quick with the ruler when she feels someone is "misbehaving"

NOTE: any and all "nun activities" should be used for the entire show.

Jimmy talks cryptically to the men wearing feathers about your next robbery*. Tell them to talk to **Floyd** when he arrives.

***Floyd** and **Jimmy**, remember to keep it cryptic - like you're speaking in code.

0:05

Floyd makes his entrance with **Kit** in tow. He doesn't let her out of his sight and is constantly all over her to prove to other male predators that she belongs to him. She clearly has eyes only for **Jimmy** and constantly tries to sneak away, only to have **Floyd** stop her, much to her frustration. If anyone asks if **Kit** works at the Leland, she should be overly quick to deny it.

Willie also enters at this time and establishes the fact that he can't see well and that he's in love with **Freddie**.

0:10 PRACTICE

Harry makes his entrance. He truly looks and acts addicted and out of it.

Jimmy rushes to him and tries to pull him out of the room.

Harry plunks himself down, right on the floor and starts to sing "Oh Susannah" (*or he at least hums some tune*). He then dozes off, his head resting against an audience member's legs, which he is using as a pillow.

Jimmy apologizes to the guest just as a big commotion begins.

Ladies, wait a beat AFTER **Harry** stops singing before entering.

The girls (all but **Marti**) enter, looking sexy and stunning - and they are all furious.

NOTE: If you can't get any volunteers from the audience, then just **Freddie** enters madder than a hornet.

Jimmy and **Willie** lead the men in catcalls and a lot of hootin' and hollerin'.

Floyd is nuzzling his wife and only has eyes for her. **Kit** keeps trying to pull away and clearly wants to be with the other girls getting all the attention.

After the girls preen a bit, **Freddie** angrily says that **Harry** locked them in their rooms upstairs. How many times is **Harry** going to do that before **Jimmy** does something?

FREDDIE, GET THE FEMALE GUESTS IN ON THIS OUTRAGE AND ASK THEM TO FOLLOW YOUR LEAD DURING THIS SCENE.

HARRY (*now awake*): I thought if they couldn't come downstairs maybe everyone would just leave the Leland and I'd have my hotel back for when the nice miners and their families return, except it won't be the same without **Dotty** - she was a nice lady only now she's dead **Jimmy** and you know why....

Jimmy quickly interrupts **Harry** before he can say any more to loudly calm the girls down and pair them up with some of the male guests. He promises to take care of **Harry** once and for all so he doesn't bother the girls anymore. He then introduces the girls as he's pairing them up.

MAKE UP NAMES FOR THE FEMALE GUESTS IF YOU NEED TO. JONATHAN WINTERS, THE COMEDIAN, USED TO DO AN EGG COMMERCIAL IN WHICH HE NAMED THE EGGS IN A CARTON: "THIS IS JANE, PAULA, JIGGLES, NERFENAMEN, POOPYJUGGS..." HIS NAMES GET MORE AND MORE RIDICULOUS AS HE GOES ON.

0:15

After which, **Iggy** introduces "our newest member of the family, **Marti**." She looks

around and sees that **Marti** is not in the room.

She calls for her again just as the **Dolly** (AKA **Marti**) enters OBVIOUSLY leading her imaginary horse, **Swiftly** into the room with her.

Jimmy and **Iggy** both scream at the same time, "Noooooo!"

Harry is confused and thinks she's **Dotty** come back from the dead.

HARRY: **Dotty**, is that you, come back to visit me from your grave?

Jimmy rushes to **Marti**, shakes her and asks her if she thinks her little act is funny? **Marti** retorts that she doesn't know what he's talking about! **Harry** forcefully pulls **Jimmy** away from **Marti** and tells him not to hurt his very own wife that way!

JIMMY: Wife, what are you talking about **Harry**? My wife is dead, remember?

DOLLY: But her sister isn't. Hello everyone, my name is **Dolly Damsel**; I'm the Dead **Dotty's** sister.

She kneels him*; he goes down for the count. **Harry** applauds her bravado.

*INSTRUCTIONS: Included in full script.

After which, **Dolly** throws herself in **Harry's** arms for no apparent reason other than she's happy he applauded her.

HARRY: Hello **Dolly**, I'm **Harry**.

DOLLY: So you're **Harry**. Well hello **Harry**. Nice to meet you. **Dotty** liked you and I like you. Thank you for writing to me. Meet my horse, **Swiftly**.

HARRY: Hello **Swiftly**. He pets the imaginary horse.

JIMMY: This is a nightmare!

----- 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 (see character descriptions below). 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.

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: 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 everyone. If you haven't yet had the chance, don't worry you will. I'm going to give the floor over to Madame Iggy who would like to introduce you to the newest girl... Madame Iggy...

Let Iggy introduce Marti. Marti/Dolly will enter on her imaginary horse when Iggy calls for her a second time to announce she's Dolly, Dead Dotty sister (Jimmy's wife's sister).

Narrator: Everyone reacts to this dramatic turn of events! (Pause to allow them to react.) Jimmy rushes to Marti, I mean Dolly, shakes her and asks her if she thinks her little act is funny? (Pause for action.) Harry becomes enraged and forcefully pulls Jimmy away from Dolly telling him not to hurt his very own wife that way! (Pause) Dolly announces once again that she is Dead Dotty's sister and Jimmy is Dead Dotty's murderer. As Jimmy vehemently denies killing his wife, Dolly throws herself in Harry's arms for protection and comfort or something. (Pause) While still in their embrace, they introduce themselves to each other and then Dolly pulls away to introduce Harry to her horse Swifty. He pets the horse and gives it an imaginary carrot or apple or something. (Pause) Jimmy tells Harry it's his bedtime and his medication is long overdue. Harry, like a young boy having a temper tantrum, plunks himself down again, holds his hands over his ears and hums loudly. (Pause) Dolly likes the game and joins him. She and Harry then pet Swifty the horse who has apparently sat down as well – I think. Well, let's take some time to absorb the turn of events shall we?

Let the suspects mingle for a few minutes.

0:25

Narrator: (Don't forget to pause for actions!) Kit finally breaks away from Floyd and rushes to Jimmy. Jimmy coldly tells her to go back to

her husband. He's decided he's through with her just like he's through with his brother's shenanigans. Kit is taken aback for a moment and she lets him walk away while what he said sinks in. Then she rushes after him telling him he can't mean that. She goes down to her knees to plead with him not to end it. Floyd now gets into the picture and asks what is going on between Jimmy and his wife. Jimmy says nothing – not anymore. Kit starts to cry hysterically as she grabs onto Jimmy's legs and won't let go. Floyd pulls her up from the floor and asks her if she's been keeping Jimmy company in the way that a man and wife should only keep each other company? Jimmy says she keeps more than just *his* company. Floyd pushes Kit away from him and rushes Jimmy in a fit of rage. He takes him by the lapels screaming that being partners doesn't mean sharing his wife! He threatens to kill Jimmy who just laughs at Floyd. Floyd grabs the feather around his neck, rips it off and shoves it at Jimmy saying he's through doing Jimmy's dirty work and he's done with being part of Jimmy's gang. He demands Jimmy pay him for the last job. Jimmy insists he doesn't owe Floyd or the boys anything but sarcastically confesses he will miss Kit - she brought in some nice money. Jimmy laughs as Kit rushes him and beats on him screaming out how much she hates him and how much she loved him. She turns and pleads with her husband to forgive her. She blames everything on Jimmy saying if she didn't do what he wanted Jimmy threatened to get him fired from Wells Fargo AND turn him in for certain stagecoach robberies. She pleads and begs and pleads and begs until Floyd, who can't help but love her, relents and forgives her. This show of true love inspires Winking Willie who approaches a guest. ...