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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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**G**ot  
questions?

Please don't hesitate to contact us

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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).**

# Diary of a Burning Woman

## (For the holidays: The Ghost of Christmas Past)

**YEAR:** 1898; England. (OPTIONAL: Christmas Eve). **\*YOU CAN CHANGE THIS TO MODERN DAY (OR ANOTHER ERA) AND/OR TAKE IT OUT OF ENGLAND IF YOU'RE NOT COMFORTABLE DOING ENGLISH ACCENTS.**

**THE STORY:** *\*I've put any Christmas references in green. Remove them if you're not doing this for the holidays.* The Cooked Goose, a fancy tavern, celebrates its grand opening tonight, (Christmas Eve). The establishment's owner, **Ebenezer Pennypincher**, is holding a gala celebration in honor of this momentous occasion. A man called **Tim Tinee** is the former owner. After a tragic fire that allegedly killed one of **Tim's** employees, **Sarah Cratchit**—(on Christmas Day last year)—**Tinee** was forced to flee the town. **Sarah's** body was never recovered from the debris but she kept a small room in the tavern and no one has seen her since the fire – *only in her ghostly form*. **Tinee** would have rebuilt his tavern were it not for the vicious rumor that mysteriously emerged almost immediately after the fire. It was rumored that **Tinee** was providing opium to his patrons who could pay for the pleasure. **Sarah** was alleged to have known about his nefarious dealings and was prepared to approach the authorities. **Tinee** set fire to his own place to destroy all evidence and to kill her. He of course made it look like a tragic accident. That vicious rumor drove **Tinee** out of town. (The constable had no proof the fire was intentionally set and therefore no proof to use against **Tinee** – he was never arrested.) It was then that **Ebenezer** took over the property – he held the note on the property, being a lender, and built The Cooked Goose.

### PRIMARY SUSPECTS

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

**SARAH CRATCHIT:** Now a ghost – although we've set up a bit of a red herring by stating that her body was never recovered in the fire. She has been haunting the place ever since she died hoping that the truth about what happened to her is revealed. Perhaps she's even come back to force her killer to take his life for his malicious act?

**EBENEZER S. (Scrooge) PENNYPINCHER:** The very wealthy owner of The Cooked Goose Tavern. He comes across as Mr. Nice Guy but he is actually miserly, miserable, self-centered and nasty, a man without values or morals. As the town lender (his business would be called a counting house in Victorian England), he wields lots of power.

**TIM TINEE:** Former owner of the establishment. A broken but innocent man who comes back tonight to try to tell the truth about what happened a year ago. **Tim** used to work for **Ebenezer** in his counting house as a scribe until 2 years ago. It was then that **Tim** decided to try his hand at his own tavern he lovingly called The **Tinee** Tavern. The tavern was a grand success from the beginning and the patrons just loved **Tim**. There was no way **Ebenezer** would stand for that!

**CHARLIE DICKENS:** Ebenezer's much abused and insulted henchman and driver. **Charlie** is a rather stupid bully and so he doesn't seem to be aware of how much **Ebenezer** abuses and insults him. He's also volatile due to erratic mood swings. And he's a narcoleptic (he falls asleep during times of high stress or excitement). He loved **Sarah** from afar, never thinking a thug like him would be good enough for an angel like her.

**AGNES PENNYPINCHER:** Ebenezer's wife. A desperate, pathetic shrew craving the attention she doesn't get from **Ebenezer**. She still loves him madly – or at least she loves the wealthy lifestyle - though she suspects he no longer loves her. She is fiercely protective of her "role" as his wife and the prestige and money the position brings to her. She is also fiercely jealous of other women because she's so sure that **Ebenezer** will leave her for someone else. And then what would she do? It's her own private nightmare she hopes never comes true.

**LUCY FLAWLUSS:** A bar wench now employed by **Ebenezer**, formerly employed by **Tim Tinee**; she is also **Ebenezer's** mistress and has been for the last year. **Lucy** is caught up in the other woman syndrome, hoping against hope that **Ebenezer** will leave his wife for her. She is embarrassed by her position as the other woman and at the same time angered by it but money and wealth have the amazing ability to make a girl hold on to something she shouldn't (just ask **Agnes**). She is petrified of the ghost and of what she knows but doesn't know what to do about it so it makes her guilty, jumpy & hysterical. Tonight she will come to know **Tim** knows that she knows the truth about **Sarah's** death and that's too much for her to bear.

**COSTUME SUGGESTIONS:** If you decide to go turn of the century or Dickens era, your local costume shop will dress you. Further suggestions and ideas are provided in the full script.

## **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. Give them their secondary suspect instructions (included) and let them run with it. **\*\*\*FOR LARGE GROUP MYSTERIES (75 OR MORE):** I'd definitely suggest you cast your secondary 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. **Lord Hiram:** A poet and **Agnes'** male friend to whom she turns in her time of need (see script). She should certainly have him recite some poetry.

- Agnes will need to find a Lord Hiram – he can either be pre-assigned or she can pick a gregarious, enthusiastic guest during the mystery. The script will provide further details on his role.
2. **Druella:** She used to work for **Tim Tinee** as a tavern wench. **Ebenezer** promised her a job at his tavern but went back on his word and hired **Lucy** instead. **Agnes** would love to see **Druella** hired in place of **Lucy** so she's **Druella's** staunchest supporter.
  3. **Watson:** A detective helper for **Ebenezer**. **Ebenezer** doesn't care what this woman or man's real name is – he just calls him "Watson". It'd be a funny bit to have this person constantly trying to correct **Ebenezer** on his real name – to no avail of course.
  4. **Marley:** **Ebenezer's** best friend and partner at the counting house. **Ebenezer's** staunchest supporter and defender.
  5. **Robert Bleary:** the Artic Adventurer (Robert Peary really lived and explored the Artic at that time): **Sarah's** betrothed. He was off trekking about the Artic when she died. He and **Charlie** were great friends, which is one of the reasons why **Charlie** only loved **Sarah** from afar. **Charlie's** angry with Robert for not being in town when **Sarah** died so he never has anything good to say about his ex-friend anymore.
  6. **Mollie Brown:** Loud, crass and not afraid to speak her mind or stand up for herself. An American (Southern) who was raised poor but she married the very wealthy Mr. Brown and now lives the good life - in a larger than life sort of way. She wants to teach **Agnes** a thing or two about standing up for herself and constantly tries to "teach" her as the situation warrants it. (By the way, the real Mollie Brown survived the sinking of the Titanic.)
  7. **Walter Klondike:** A London Times writer doing a story on **Ebenezer**. He'd love to find some dirt on the man because he actually sees **Ebenezer** for the nefarious character that he is.
  8. **Eliza Doolittle:** A street urchin who sells flowers and begs for scraps of food. **Lucy** has a soft spot for her and will convince **Ebenezer** to let her stay when she's caught pilfering food (or silverware). She keeps trying to steal things all night long.
  9. **Thomas Gibson:** A painter who wants to paint **Lucy**. He keeps trying to "pose" her and constantly expounds on her beauty. This of course makes **Ebenezer** jealous even though he can't appear jealous.
  10. **Bessie Tinee:** **Tim's** wife. She also likes her liquor and, as she imbibes more and more, suffers through a constant love-hate relationship with her husband and those she feels are responsible for his downfall.

**Motives: MOTIVES INCLUDED IN FULL SCRIPT**

**THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS**

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).

**0:00**

As guests are arriving, **Tim** will be drinking from a bottle or flask and lurking outside muttering about his innocence and proving it (optional but a fun bit).

**0:05**

**Ebenezer** whilst his clinging wife stands by him introduces himself and summarizes the tragic history of the place and why **Tim Tinee** was run out of town.

In general, whatever nasty things **Ebenezer** has to say about people, he does so with a radiant smile, but there is no mistaking how nasty he is.

STRANGE NOISES ARE HEARD ABOUT THE TAVERN AS HE SPEAKS; it is **Sarah**. (She has been dubbed the Ghost of Christmas Past because she died last Christmas.) **Ebenezer** ignores the noises but **Agnes** has a harder time doing so. She is very jumpy and keeps fearfully squealing and grabbing onto her husband as she puts on a brave face.

**Ebenezer** is excessively confident that he will be successful with this tavern and obviously irritated with his wife.

**During the course of the beginning of the mystery (and in between actions), here's what you should be doing:**

**Sarah** will continue to "spook". Have fun **Sarah** – without being caught of course! You'll make an appearance soon enough.

**Ebenezer:** Should be the consummate miserly penny pincher with the guests although he SAYS he has spared no expense for this evening.

**Ebenezer**, use some comic shtick here: split dinner rolls amongst the guests, make them share water...

**Ebenezer** and **Lucy** can barely contain their lust for each other.

**Ebenezer** must remember to very callously use and abuse **Charlie** all night long.

**Agnes:** Desperately acts out her part as **Ebenezer's** wife and hostess, ignoring any talk of **Ebenezer** and **Lucy** having a lustful affair. Her mantra and excuse for his bad behavior is "I could not survive in this life without my husband! He is the center of my universe. He is all that I have. How dare you besmirch his name!"

**Lucy** and **Agnes** are always disagreeing and pettily arguing. **Agnes** is clearly frustrated to be shown such disrespect (and with no support from **Ebenezer** who'd rather not have to deal with his mistress and wife together, thank you very much.)

**Lucy:** She can barely contain her feelings for **Ebenezer**. She acts out the bar wench stuff, clearing tables or ignoring tables, whatever. She involves **Druella** (if you're using her as a secondary suspect) whenever she can. Perhaps they can competitively try to outdo each other in "wenching".

**Charlie:** Is always watching over **Ebenezer**, always looking for danger and suspicious

people, even when none exist. Remember, he's dim.

**CHARLIE** MUST ALSO REMEMBER THOSE VOLATILE MOOD SWINGS – ANYTHING CAN SET HIM OFF - AND HE MUST REMEMBER TO F ALL ASLEEP ON OCCASION OR WHEN OUTLINED IN THE SCRIPT.

Everyone has very negative things to say about **Tim** if asked.

**0:10**

**Tim** arrives, flask or bottle in hand (with his wife Bessie?). He is very drunk (*you need to remember to STAY DRUNK Tim!*).

All the suspects are clearly surprised because they haven't seen him since he left town.

**TIM**: Hello everyone. Remember me? **Tim Tinee**. I skulked out of town as if I were a guilty man. Well I'm back because I saw **Ebenezer Pennypincher's** death in a dream. That dream made me realize that **Ebenezer** is not leaving this world with everyone thinking he's an innocent man – not if I have anything to say about it. **Ebenezer** is to blame for my bad luck and I've come back to prove my innocence in the death of **Sarah Cratchit**, God rest her soul.

**Ebenezer** is furious that **Tim** picked tonight to come back.

**EBENEZER**: I am not responsible for any of your bad luck--you brought it on yourself with your nefarious opium dealings that led to **Sarah** Cratchit's murder.

They angrily argue back and forth over who's guilty until **Agnes** hysterically interrupts them. She wants **Tim** out of their tavern--NOW!

**Ebenezer** tells **Charlie** to throw **Tim** out. But as **Charlie** physically tries to remove him, he finds that **Tim** is too stubborn. **Tim** constantly pulls away from him and goes from table to table to drunkenly tell them about how he was framed for a crime he didn't commit.

**Charlie** follows him around trying to get him out, but **Tim** must tell his story to most people so **Charlie** is unsuccessful.

As they move from table to table, **Charlie** should get more and more frustrated - which leads to a lot of muttered angry "discussions" with himself and to angrily telling the guests that he doesn't need their help so they should stop asking thank you very much – even though they haven't offered to help at all.

**0:15 PRACTICE**

**Tim** finally can't stand **Charlie** pulling at him, so he pushes him away. This infuriates **Charlie** and he attacks. A struggle ensues (simply wrestle each other standing up) until **Tim** gets away, pulls out a knife and aims it at **Charlie**.

**Tim** tells **Charlie** to leave him alone--he'll leave when he is ready--in fact, he plans to eat here at this fine establishment that used to be *his* fine establishment AND NEVER AN OPIUM DEN despite the rumors spread by **Ebenezer Pennypincher**.

He once again makes his way through the crowd, pointing the knife at folks and acting like a drunken lunatic as **Charlie** backs off and tells everyone that his plan is to sneak up on **Tim** when he least expects it. "I'll get him then."

An irritated **Ebenezer**, with **Agnes** clinging to him and with an insult directed at **Charlie** about his incompetence, orders **Tim** to give him the knife.

Instead, **Tim** grabs **Agnes** and points the knife at her throat while saying that he is staying for dinner.

By this time, **Charlie** has taken a seat and fallen sound asleep, snoring occasionally so the guests know he's sleeping and not dead. Nothing seems to be able to wake him, not even a hostage crisis. He's a narcoleptic remember.

See end of script for more details on narcolepsy – which Charlie will have to explain to your guests once he wakes up. Other suspects: you need to also explain that Charlie has some sort of sleeping disorder that makes him fall asleep when he least expects it.

**Agnes** is sure that she is going to die! She pleads with **Ebenezer** to save her.

**Ebenezer** tells her to just be quiet for once in her life – he's thinking!

**AGNES:** But you're my loving husband **Ebenezer!** You are my whole world! And everyone is watching! How would it look if you didn't save me?

**Ebenezer** glares at her, obviously weighing his choices: let **Tim** kill the albatross that is his wife or look like a hero in front of his guests. He starts to rush at **Tim** but **Tim** stops him when he nudges the knife into **Agnes'** throat at **Ebenezer** backs off.

**EBENEZER:** All right **Tinee**, stay for dinner if that is what you wish. See if you can find anyone who will want to converse with a murderer and an opium purveyor!

**Tim** immediately releases **Agnes** and contentedly but drunkenly lurches off to find a place to sit (or continues to roam and asks to sample food in between sips from his flask).

**Agnes** rushes to **Ebenezer** for comfort but he just rudely pushes her aside as he sees **Lucy** "covertly" beckoning to him.

**Agnes** pastes on that fake smile of hers and makes excuses her **Ebenezer's** behavior towards her.

**0:20**

**Sarah** appears, wailing and moaning to get everyone's attention and acting ever so ghostly. She stands there, arms raised, scary & menacing, speaking but no one can hear what she says yet (you can just see her lips moving).

**Lucy** is scared to death. **Ebenezer** tries to shut her up - afraid that she's going to be frightened into telling everyone the truth.

Finally, **Sarah** moans aloud, "truth or consequences! Truth or consequences!" and leaves once she is sure everyone heard her.

Everyone should ask the guests what **Sarah** meant by her message and you should all look guilty, like you're hiding something and you're hoping they won't figure out what it is....

## ----- 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:** *(Get everyone's attention however you can and during your dialogue realize the suspects will be acting out what you say so allow them to do so and then pick up where you left off).* 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. Perhaps Ebenezer will take this opportunity to welcome you and to perhaps tell you a bit of history about this place. His devoted wife Agnes will surely not be far from his side. Ebenezer...

**Let Ebenezer have the floor at this time...**

**0:10**

**ORGANIZER:** Instruct Tim to make his drunken and dramatic entrance. Make sure he has his fake knife hidden on his person.

**NARRATOR:** Well look who's here. Remember Tim Tinee who skulked out of town as if he were a guilty man? Tim has apparently seen Ebenezer Pennypincher's death in a dream, haven't you Tim? That dream made Tim realize that Ebenezer is not leaving this world with everyone thinking he's an innocent man – not if Tim has anything to say about it, isn't that right Tim? Ebenezer is to blame for Mr. Tinee's bad luck and he's come back to prove his innocence in the death of Sarah Cratchit, God rest her soul. Well I'm sure that everyone here is not too happy to see the man and may have a thing or two to say to him so I'll let them have the opportunity...

**0:20**

**NARRATOR:** Ebenezer has clearly had enough of Mr. Tinee and orders Charlie to throw Tim out. But as Charlie physically tries to remove him, he finds that Tim is too stubborn. Tim constantly pulls away from him and goes from table to table to drunkenly tell them about how he was framed for a crime he didn't commit. As they move from table to table, Charlie gets more and more frustrated - which leads to a lot of muttered angry "discussions" with himself and to angrily telling the guests that he doesn't need their help so they should stop asking thank you very much – even though they haven't offered to help at all. Tim finally can't stand Charlie pulling at him, so he pushes him away. This infuriates Charlie and he attacks. A struggle ensues until Tim gets away, pulls out a knife and aims it at

Charlie. Tim tells Charlie to leave him alone--he'll leave when he is ready--in fact he plans to eat here at this fine establishment that used to be *his* fine establishment AND NEVER AN OPIUM DEN despite the rumors spread by Ebenezer Pennypincher. An irritated Ebenezer, with Agnes clinging to him and with an insult directed at Charlie about his incompetence, orders Tim to give him the knife. Instead, Tim grabs Agnes and points the knife at her throat while saying that he is staying for dinner. By this time, Charlie has taken a seat and fallen sound asleep due to his little sleeping disorder. That's quite a snore the man has! Nothing seems to be able to wake him, not even a hostage crisis. Meanwhile, Agnes is sure that she is going to die! She pleads with Ebenezer to save her. To which Ebenezer gives a huge, frustrated sigh and tells Tim he can stay for dinner. Tim immediately releases Agnes and contentedly but drunkenly lurches off to find food. Agnes goes to her husband for a comforting hug only to find him walking away from her. Poor Agnes.