



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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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).**

YEAR: 1979. (Alternatives: modern day or the 1950's).

PLACE: The Rushmore Beauty Academy for Women, Staffordshire, England.

ALTERNATIVE: you can have this take place in the U.S., perhaps somewhere in the south, if you choose.

EVENT: A social for graduating students.

THE STORY OF RUSHMORE ACADEMY: Rushmore was established in 1899 in Staffordshire, England. Traditionally it was a finishing school. Its purpose was to teach young women the fine art of being a proper lady and wife: manners, social graces, sewing, cooking and the like. It evolved into a beauty school in 1959, but it has still maintained its long-standing tradition of an elite all-girl's academy. Women who graduate from Rushmore will go on to work at the finest of salons anywhere in the world. Why, one of the girls from the graduating class of 1970 is now the exclusive stylist of Rosalyn Carter, the wife of American president Jimmy Carter.

PRIMARY SUSPECTS

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

All are English (or southern). All are well groomed and dressed except for **Olivia**.

COSTUME NOTE: See costume illustrations provided with this kit.

BERNICE RUSHMORE: Chairwoman of the Board of Regents (the governing board at an educational institution). Her family started this school in 1899 and a family member has *always* been on the Board of Regents. Now she's the last in her family line. The Rushmore family's money has held this school together for more years than anyone can remember, but **Bernice** sees the writing on the wall in terms of finances. She's ready to pull all financial support and retire from the Board.

Bernice is a very odd and lonely woman. She seems to have nice connection, perhaps even a friendship of sorts, with **Kat Overton** but otherwise, she seems to have no other friends. She acts more like a man than a "proper" woman; prefers pants to dresses and is gruff and very stiff in her composure. It's like she's very uncomfortable in her body.

OPTION: *Change Bernice to "Bernie". Bernie is trying to blackmail Kat into getting her mom to date him. He has had a "thing" for Kat's mom since high school - sort of the one thing his money could never buy for him. Kat despises him, and doesn't want anyone like him near her mom. **Our thanks to our customer Zoe Zuest-Beck for this adaptation.***

COSTUME: A conservative, wealthy-looking but very masculine outfit.

HER RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SUSPECTS: Included in full version of the mystery.

MAUDE GREENFIELD: Chancellor of Rushmore and a former student. She was appointed chancellor 4 years ago. She loves her job, she loves Rushmore. She's planning to admit male students for the first time in Rushmore's history. She doesn't like the idea very much but what choice does she have if **Bernice** withdraws funding? She couldn't bear for her beloved Rushmore Academy to shut its doors!

She's a women's libber at heart despite her love for the school and its traditions. Personality-wise, she'd be the life of the party if this weren't a school function. When she attended Rushmore, she was very popular and well-liked. Even today she's a beautiful woman, not afraid to show off her sexy side.

COSTUME: A well-fitted but fairly conservative suit or dress (perhaps on the sexy side?) –appearances are important after all.

HER RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SUSPECTS: Included in full version of the mystery.

JANE DODGET: A classmate of **Maude's** and the Dean of Students for the past 7 years. **Jane** is the very definition of a "lady," however she is not without her faults. She has borne an intense but well disguised hatred for **Maude** ever since their freshman year at Rushmore. **Maude** was top student of her class and **Jane** was second for the graduating class of '49 when it was still a finishing school. Now **Maude** is the Chancellor, selected over **Jane** herself. Anything **Jane** can do, **Maude** can definitely do better. So, **Jane**, in her current position, opposes anything the Chancellor hopes to accomplish and she will use anything or anyone in her power to disrupt **Maude's** plans for Rushmore.

Jane is staunchly against admitting male students. The mere thought of it causes her to become faint. **Jane** believes females are intimidated, distracted by the opposite sex, and unable to stand up for themselves if a man is studying in the same room. Men cause women to present themselves as sex objects, leading to befuddled thinking.

COSTUME: A prim and proper suit complete with the little white gloves and proper hat. She is a throwback to the 1950's.

HER RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SUSPECTS: Included in full version of the mystery.

OLIVIA DODGET: She certainly does not fit the bill for a "typical" Rushmore girl. She's too athletic and gawky, too unfeminine and too uncomfortable in a dress. She's also very unsure of herself, except when she's competing in sports or perhaps when she's giving an invigorating scalp massage. Frankly, she's rather dim. She allows anyone and everyone, especially her mother, to walk all over her. That's why she's here at this school getting a degree her mother wanted her to get it. She doesn't have the courage

to stand up for herself and state that she really wants to be a roller-derby queen just like Raquel Welch in the movie, "Kansas City Bomber".

COSTUME: An ill-fitting, conservative dress that her mother clearly picked out for her. Her hair should be uncombed. No jewelry and very little or no make-up. She should be very sloppy looking overall.

HER RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SUSPECTS: Included in full version of the mystery.

KAT OVERTON: The "bad girl" of the academy disguised as a sweet, generous and popular woman. **Kat**'s a bombshell with a heart of concrete who will lie, cheat, blackmail and do whatever is necessary to get what she wants. As a result, she is the top student in her class. She is graduating with First Class Honours (*In most English universities, First-Class Honours is the highest honours which can be achieved, with about 10% of candidates achieving a First nationally*). Her secret is that she only became the top student by cheating her way through school using **Bernice** almost every step of the way. She saw that **Bernice** was a lonely and odd woman and she took advantage of that by pretending to find her interesting. She pretended to like her. **Bernice**, indeed very lonely, glommed on to **Kat**'s gestures of friendship. Coffee dates, the occasional movie and such things and **Bernice** was soon under **Kat**'s spell. She provided **Kat** with copies of exams as she could. **Kat** used her time and time again until she didn't need her anymore (and she also tried to kiss her!). Now she just makes excuse after excuse to **Bernice** as to why she can't get together with her. **Bernice**, first confused and hurt is now angry and hurt – really angry. She's threatening to tell **Maude** everything. That won't bode well for **Kat**...

COSTUME: A totally hip and sexy 70's outfit.

HER RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SUSPECTS: Included in full version of the mystery.

GABRIELLE STEELE: **Gabrielle**'s secret is that she's not **Gabrielle Steele** at all; she's **Callie Chippendale**, a writer. If all goes according to plan, her book, "*The Ugliness behind the Beauty: the Secrets of Rushmore*" will be published and on the best seller lists shortly after Rushmore's graduation ceremony. She's already received a hefty sum of money for the book and will receive much more once it's published. She's sure she'll be famous. Unfortunately, **Bernice** accidentally uncovered this secret and has passed the information on to **Maude**, who has, unbeknownst to **Gabrielle**, has put into play a gag order on her little tell-all. **Gabrielle** is a pushy, nosy girl if there ever was one in her quest to get the dirt on Rushmore. She's always in the midst of every conversation, argument or fight. She takes notes about everything – which will make her look very suspicious and very odd. She covers this by saying life is about learning and she writes down anything and everything she's thinks adds to her knowledge.

COSTUME: A hip 70's outfit.

HER RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SUSPECTS: Included in full version of the

mystery.

MOTIVES: Included in full version of this mystery.

THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

0:00

The prime suspects mingle with guests and speak of the fate of Rushmore with Bernice. Rushmore's decision to pull her funding/support and thereby force the Academy to admit boys.

As you mingle this is a good time to tell the guests who you are, who the other characters are, and what sort of school Rushmore is.

While chatting with the guests, Jane politely and apologetically criticizes Maude and Bernice for compromising the school's tradition and integrity. Bernice is stepping down as Chairman of the Board of Regents and withdrawing her financial support of the school despite the fact that her family founded the school. This will compromise the financial integrity of the school, but Jane says Chancellor Greenfield's solution of breaking with tradition and admitting men is definitely not the answer. Jane informs the guests that females are intimidated, distracted by the opposite sex, and unable to stand up for themselves if a man is studying in the same room. Men cause women to present themselves as sex objects, leading to unclear thinking.

Also, remember that Jane is a suffocating and demanding (in her lady-like way) mother hen to her daughter. Olivia meekly and immediately complies with every request or order. Jane constantly reminds Olivia that her roller derby queen dream awaits her: "Remember our little bargain, Olivia!"

This is also a good time for Olivia to practice her skills or lack thereof on guests.

Gabrielle is acting like the undercover reporter she is, asking guests what they know about the other characters. She's covertly taking notes – which will truly make her look suspicious.

0:10 PRACTICE

Maude welcomes everyone to The Rushmore Beauty Academy for Women and thanks them for attending tonight's social for students graduating next week. She requests that Kat, Olivia and Gabrielle lead everyone in singing the Rushmore song (*song included with full version of the mystery*).

After the song, Maude urges all students to mingle with their guests in the fine Rushmore tradition.

If there are men present, Kat heads straight for them and makes a flirting spectacle of herself.

SERVE SALAD/1ST COURSE.

0:15 PRACTICE

Jane approaches Bernice.

JANE: You know, Bernice, I would highly suggest that you reconsider your decision so our beloved Rushmore isn't forced to change its traditions. You are, after all, so wealthy and the school was, after all, started by your family, and you should, after all, see your family's money well spent while you are alive rather than after you are dead.

Bernice takes offense to this.

BERNICE: I will do what I want with my money. As much as I appreciate our sex, a beauty school for women is outdated. Women's Lib is in although I doubt you'll ever burn *your* bra Jane.

During this argument, Jane remains dignified and lady-like as she reiterates what men do to woman (see character description). She knows people are watching and appearances are everything to her.

Olivia stands by her mother and dimly and annoyingly summarizes everything her mother says.

When Jane makes a particularly insulting remark about all feminists like Bernice being abnormal, Bernice raises her hand to slap Jane but she is immediately intercepted by Olivia, who takes Bernice's arm and bends it behind her back telling her not to touch her mother. Ever!

Bernice yelps in pain and Jane instructs her daughter to let Bernice go. She does so immediately. Bernice tells Jane to keep her daughter under control and storms off while Olivia tends to her mother's needs. *"You all right mum? What can I do mum? Happy to do whatever you want mum? Want to make you proud mum."*

0:20

ORGANIZER - Have a disco song ready to play.

Kat wants to dance - this is a social after all. Gabrielle enthusiastically agrees.

Everyone dances. If there are male guests, Kat dances “inappropriately” with a man. If there are no males present, Kat should still be dancing wildly, once again making a spectacle of herself.

Bernice is mesmerized; Jane is horrified; Maude is moving to the beat despite herself.

When Olivia tries to dance, Jane physically stops her and says that she can dance, or roller-skate as the case may be, when this is all over.

After a moment or two, Bernice starts dancing – if you can call it that - toward Kat. Soon Bernice loses herself in the music and is wildly dancing with Kat. After giving Bernice some time to get into the dancing, Kat throws a temper tantrum.

KAT: Stop it! Stop it right now Miss Rushmore. I know what you’re doing and I’m not interested. Everyone, including me, only pretended to like you because you gave the school money. No one, especially me, likes you! Leave me alone!

Bernice forcefully grabs Kat by her arms.

BERNICE: Fine. If you wish to play it this way, just know that I know how you’ve managed to get such good grades! It would be my last great deed as Chairman of the Board of Regents to take away your degree. I will tell the Chancellor all that I know about your study habits!

Kat stares at her for a minute then goes to her to whisper in her ear. Bernice looks hopeful, like Kat will say something nice. But her face quickly changes because Kat is threatening to kill her if she says anything. Your guests won’t hear any of this so it all needs to play out on Kat and Bernice’s faces. Kat storms out of the room.

----- 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).

0:10

Narrator: Welcome Ladies and Gentlemen to The Rushmore Beauty Academy for Women. Thank you for attending tonight's social for students graduating next week. My name is Berta **(Bert)** 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. You will note that in your program there are instructions regarding the conduct of the evening, please take particular note of these. It is suggested that during the night you get up from your seat and move around, making acquaintance with your fellow guests. After all this is a social is it not? The staff and students of Rushmore will, naturally, circulate as well so make sure that you meet and talk to all of them. But now if Kat, Olivia and Gabrielle would please lead everyone in singing the Rushmore song.

ORGANIZER - Make sure the girls have the words to the Rushmore song – *SEE RUSHMORE CLUES DOCUMENT*. Also please put a copy of the song in each program - or you can pass out copies now.

After the song, **Narrator** please urge the students and staff to mingle with their guests in the fine Rushmore tradition.

SERVE SALAD/1ST COURSE.

0:15

Narrator: Jane, with Olivia by her side, approaches Bernice and asks her to reconsider so Rushmore won't be forced to change. She wonders if Bernice doesn't want to see her vast wealth well spent while alive than after she's dead. **(Pause to allow Jane to do this.)** Bernice refuses stating that a beauty school for women is outdated, Women's Lib is in and it's time for her to move on. **(Pause to allow Bernice to do this.)** Then Jane makes the mistake of calling Bernice abnormal. **(Pause)** As Jane elaborates on her insult, an angry Bernice pokes Jane in the chest and tells her that she's not the lady she pretends to be. **(Pause)** She is immediately intercepted

by Olivia, who takes Bernice's arm and bends it behind her back telling her not to ever touch her mum! (Pause) Bernice demands that Olivia let her go immediately and that Jane keep her daughter under control. (Pause) Jane nods at Olivia who lets go. Bernice storms off rubbing her arm, commenting that the girl is very strong.

0:20

ORGANIZER - Have a disco song ready to play.

Narrator: Ah, I see the music is starting up. Disco will last forever I'm sure. Kat and Gabrielle are the first to dance. They urge others to get up and boogie with them. Kat is dancing wildly, not caring who might be watching. Bernice is mesmerized; Jane is horrified; Maude is moving to the beat despite herself. After a moment or two, Bernice starts dancing – if you can call it that - toward Kat. Soon Bernice loses herself in the music and is wildly dancing with Kat.