

ELIMÄÄ
BOOKS

THE WOODPERRY MURDER

DAVID JANIK-JONES

COMPLETE



UNABRIDGED

50p

THE WOODPERRY MURDER

THE GAME

In which a group of friends will create a murder scenario together set in the England of the 1930s or 1950s. The Woodperry Murder is based on the game The Murder of Mr. Crow by Rickard Elimää.

For this 1–2 hour role-playing game of murder you require: paper and pencil, one six-sided die, 3–5 friends, and a hat.

THE DETECTIVE

Everyone will take turns, in clockwise order around the table, playing the part of the *Detective*, who has already figured out who the murderer is. {Optionally you may have a single player take on the role of the Detective.}

The game is set in the final moments of the Detective’s “reveal,” when the killer is going to be dramatically unmasked. Through the interaction of the player’s characters we will have fun by recounting the Detective’s solution and contribute ideas to the narrative following these three steps: creating *Suspects*, revealing *Motives*, and revealing the *Murderer*.

THE ASSISTANT

Every detective has an *Assistant* who unfailingly helps with his investigation. At any time in the game, the Detective can turn to another player and say “Assistant, please ...” and let a volunteer take this role. The Assistant then gives two suggestions, and the Detective picks one. An Assistant may call for another Assistant.

THE SETTING

Murder always happens somewhere. In the England of the 1930s or 1950s this could be a country manor house, a small county village, the office of a factory or bank in Manchester or London, or the isolated fishing towns along the south coast. The players should establish a location, time and weather the game takes place in—that they all agree on—which will be referred to as the *Setting Name*.

THE SUSPECTS

Take a sheet of paper. Everyone will take turns, in clockwise order around the table, to create a Suspect by adding him or her to the paper. Write the Suspects down across the top of a piece of paper so each creates an individual column. A limit of *five* Suspects is recommended for a standard one-hour game.

Create a Suspect by picking: a *Title*, a *First Name*, a *Last Name*, and a *Role or Occupation*. A Title + First Name + Last Name + Role/Occupation = Suspect.

Title might include: Mister, Misses, Miss, Lord or Lady, Sir, Major {or other officer ranks}, Doctor, Vicar, &c.

Depending on class, common names for men in the England of the 1930–1950s include: James, Edward, Richard, Theodore, Charles, Thomas, William, Reginald, Kenneth, Lawrence, Franklin, Harold and Walter.

Women's names include: Mary, Elizabeth, Caroline, Katherine, Colleen, Sharon, Jane, Helen, Janet, Ruth, Ella, Emma, Alice, Francis, Gloria, Rose, Geraldine, and Evelyn.

Finally, Roles or Occupations for each Suspect should be selected to suit the Setting that has been established. For example: gardener, banker, lawyer, clergyman, gentleman, military officer, butcher, servant, clerk, shop owner, chemist, professor, fisherman, Lord or Lady of the manor, author, actress, artist, gadfly, Aunt, distant relative, long-lost sibling, business partner, &c.

THE VICTIM

The players should establish *who* was murdered. Similar to Suspects the victim should have a Title, First and Last Name, and a Role or Occupation that the players all agree on. The victim will be referred to as the *Deceased*.

“IMPORTANTANTS”

When the quota of Suspects is filled, everyone will now take a turn, in clockwise order around the table, and create clues {*Importantants*} by adding them to the bottom edge of the paper. Each player should add 2–3 of these. They should be: Small Objects or something Heard or Noticed by a character that *might* play an important role in the story that will unfold. Some will simply turn out to be red herrings.

For example: a cross or medal, a necklace, a silk scarf, a letter, an overheard phone conversation, a delivery of goods, a missing document, the theft of something important, footprint, noises in the night, an unlocked door, a howling on the moors.

Players may ask for an Assistant to help.

{You are now ready to begin to play the game, and solve a murder most foul.}

WHEN & WHERE

{Have a player read this out loud.}

“I have called you all here to shed some light on the most wicked murder that has occurred in our {Setting Name}. However, there is no longer a time for tears or lies or deceptions, but a time to discover the truth. Look around you—in this room right now is a murderer! You are about to find out who committed this most terrible crime.”

MOTIVES

The player who just read the *When & Where* now puts on the hat. They begin the game as the Detective.

Point at someone and assign that person to play a Suspect. The Suspect will have to answer up to three questions posed by the Detective.

Before questioning begins, the Suspect rolls the die in the open. When answering the Detective’s questions, the Suspect will follow the guidelines determined by this roll:

If the roll was 1–3 then: Listen carefully, and agree with every question. You *may* make things difficult for the Detective by involving other Suspects or answering evasively.

If the roll was 4–6 then: Listen carefully, and agree with every question. You *may* help the Detective by adding one or two details to the story.

{The Suspect may ask the Detective to elaborate if a question is too vague.}

THE QUESTIONING

Now the questioning begins. The Detective will ask two or three questions, in an accusing way, and must take previous answers into account.

The **first question** must link the Suspect to something else on the paper.

Did you hear noises from the staircase one night?

Is it true that you know Mr. Hastings?

Have you ever seen this necklace before?

The **second question** must state a fact; something that connects the Suspect to the previous question and is relevant to the murder. This is new information that the current Detective will make up, based on the previous answer.

And you said that it was Mr. Hastings arguing about a gambling debt?

Have you ever had a love affair with Mr. Hastings?

Did you obtain this necklace at Chalmers in London?

The **final question** is optional and suggests a Motive as to why the Suspect murdered their victim. This question should insinuate, but **not** literally accuse.

Did Sir Reginald help you, Mr. Hastings, to pay off your gambling debt?

And Sir Reginald was your first husband?

Isn't it true that the jewellery store is owned by Sir Reginald's brother?

{Anyone may look at the paper for inspiration.}

Put the hat on the table. The next player in clockwise order around the table then takes the hat and becomes the Detective. Continue questioning Suspects as above.

THE NOTEBOOK

During each round of questioning:

The previous person to be Detective writes the facts that the new Detective reveals.

Write the facts about each involved Suspect in their own column.

Do not forget to write down the key points of what the Suspect says.

THE REVELATION

Continue until each suspect has *a motive and at least two facts* that tie them to other things on the paper.

Each player now writes a small note with their {real} name and the Suspect they choose to be the Murderer, and places it in the hat.

The last to finish shakes the hat, draws a note, and calls out both names. The author of the note will describe how and why the chosen Suspect could have killed the Deceased. New information may be added to this explanation.

Continue drawing names and adding explanations, taking the previous ones into account. If the same Suspect appears more than once during the draw, it's also allowed to describe how another Suspect helped out. When there are two notes left, the next drawn note reveals the murderer. That participant does the whole explanation, with or without the aid of the Assistant.

{Fin. Discuss what was accomplished and what to change for next time.}

THE SUSPECT

Must listen carefully, and agree with every question.

1-3

Make things difficult for the Detective.
Involve other Suspects or answer evasively.

4-6

Help the Detective during questioning.
You may add one or two details.

THE DETECTIVE

Ask, accusingly, up to three questions:

First question

Link the Suspect to something else on the paper.

Second question

Make up new information that may be relevant to the murder, linked to the results of the previous question.

Final question {optional}

Without quite accusing them, insinuate the guilt of one of the people mentioned in the questioning.

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