

A vintage-style circus poster. At the top, a red banner with gold stars and a sunburst contains the word "CIRCUS". Below this, the title "TOPPED AT THE BIG TOP" is written in large, red, stylized letters. The background features a red and white striped pattern with gold stars. At the bottom, a red and white striped tent is visible, with a small banner in front of it.

**TOPPED
AT THE
BIG TOP**

Koffey the Clown

Congratulations!

You are taking part in a murder mystery by Red Herring Games.

Firstly: *Don't Panic!*

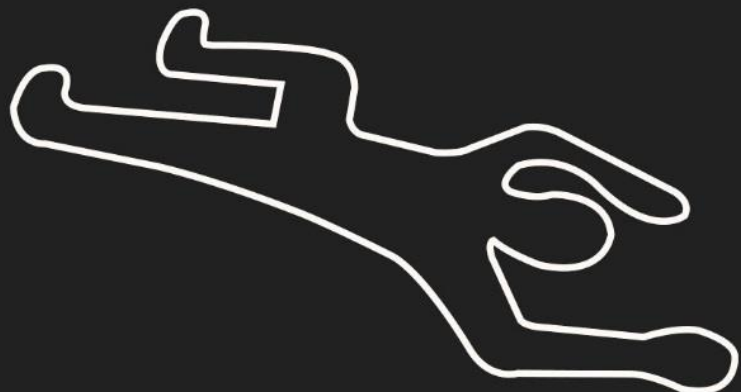
This booklet contains all the information you need to help you act your part throughout the murder mystery; background history, scripted dialogues, questions you should ask and scripted answers to questions you will be asked by the other guests.

You are encouraged to make the most of your part. Feel free to make up new lines and add to your back story or statements if you wish. However, make sure you always provide the information you need to within your answers. We have pre-scripted your statements to make things as simple for you as possible.

Make sure you listen to everyone else's questions and answers.

You won't be told if you're the killer – so feel free to guess yourself at the end – but don't tell anyone else you are! You must protest your innocence until the end!

Lastly: *Have fun!*



Koffey the Clown

Background Character Information

Keep this information to yourself, and use it to help you to act in character throughout the mystery:

You are a typical circus clown, dressed traditionally in multicoloured clothes.

In common with many other clowns and comedians, when out of the ring or offstage you can be very serious and sometimes morose. You are quick to snap at people if they voice an opinion which opposes yours or if they criticise you in any way. Criticism you do not take kindly to as you are fastidious about your craft and believe yourself to be underrated in the eyes of your colleagues.

Koffey the Clown - Introductions

Use the following dialogue to introduce yourself to the other guests, speaking when indicated below.

Koffey the Clown speaks first using the following dialogue:

As you know, I am Koffey the clown, no relation to Coco I hasten to add. I come from a long line of caffeinated clowns, descended from the greatest clown of all time, Max Wellhouse. So, Whiplash is dead! Three cheers! At last I'm free from the miserable tyrant! "Koffey do this", "Koffey do that", "Koffey you are the lowest form of animal life". Well, not anymore. True, Whiplash took me on and gave me a second chance, but he treated me like dirt, just because I was kicked out of my last job for stealing a lousy stick of greasepaint. I only borrowed it really, but the charge stuck. Oh, I suppose it's true that no other circus would touch me with a bargepole. Circus people are very hot on honesty among 'the family'. That's what we call ourselves. One big family.

After you have heard from everyone, please continue reading and begin round 1.

Scripted Dialogue - Round 1

Koffey	Well I don't know about the rest of you, but I'll make no secret of it. I'm not going to lose a minute's sleep over the demise of Ivor Whiplash! As long as Burnham and Barley keeps going, I don't care who the governor is.
Angel Wings	Me neither! Just as long as they don't inherit his cruel streak.
Dirk Hurlitt	You're right, Angel. His cruelty was hard to take, but I don't think we need to worry. If I know Elli, and I think I do, this circus will be a happier place under her direction.
Elli Vated	Thank you for those kind words, Dirk. Rest assured, we're all going to benefit from this awful event. As they say, "It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good."
Angel Wings	Well that's good news as long as it's true. Not that I don't trust you, Elli, but power can sometimes change people for the worst.
Dirk Hurlitt	True enough, but I believe Elli's word is good.
Amy Strate	That's all very well, but my poor Bengie and my fiancé are still dead and nothing can bring them back. (SOB SOB)
Angel Wings	You just have to carry on, Amy, and see what transpires.
Amy Strate	I suppose so. Do you think we'll be here much longer?

Xavier Fallin

That Inspector Marquee isn't leaving until he solves the case. I think we should start considering our immediate situation.

Angel Wings

Exactly! Let's not forget we're all suspects and at least one of us is a murderer.

Xavier Fallin

She's absolutely right! We should all get to thinking about how we can help the inspector with his investigation.

Dirk Hurlitt

No! Why should I help? I'm not a policeman, or a murderer come to that.

Elli Vated

I have to say I feel the same, but we have to get to the bottom of this sordid mess.

Koffey the Clown - First Round

Questions you should ask:

Amy Strate, you were engaged to Ivor's brother. What did Ivor think about that?

Elli Vated, why didn't you go to the police with the evidence you found?

Answers you should give when asked the right questions.

When asked: Koffey, you show a deep resentment for the way Whiplash treated you. Was it enough to drive you to kill?

Say: There were times when I could happily have killed him, but he did, after all is said and done, take me on when nobody else would employ me.

When asked: Koffey, you told us that you were kicked out of your former job for stealing. Which circus was it?

Say: I was formerly employed at Blondin's Holiday Camp as 'Uncle Koffey, the Children's Entertainer'. I was kicked out for alleged stealing. Blondin's has since closed down.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Scripted Dialogue - Round 2

Dirk Hurlitt	I don't know why you're all looking at me. It might have been one of my knives, but I didn't throw it.
Amy Strate	I can believe that! It's me those knives are aimed at, but not whilst my back is turned. Dirk wouldn't be so cowardly.
Elli Vated	That's a bit pointed, Amy. No pun intended.
Xavier Fallin	No! She's right. A stab in the back is a stab in the back whichever way you look at it.
Amy Strate	If you ask me, none of the men in the circus are cowards. It seems more likely to have been a sudden impulse, but that's just a stab in the dark.
Dirk Hurlitt	Now who's making puns?
Koffey	If somebody's making buns, I'll have one. I feel a bit peckish.
Xavier Fallin	Koffey!! This is no time for jesting! A man has been killed!
Amy Strate	You're right, but I think Koffey was only trying to lighten the situation. He is a clown after all. Light-hearted humour is his job.
Dirk Hurlitt	Speaking of jobs, let's hope we all still have one after this business is finally resolved.
Angel Wings	That inspector isn't giving much away. I wonder whose name he's withholding? I can't believe it's me, but I suppose it could be any of us.

- Koffey** Maybe no one. Policemen use little hints like that to get people rattled. He hopes someone will let something slip.
- Elli Vated** Well one of us has something to hide, that's for sure. The sooner we get to the bottom of it the better.
- Dirk Hurlitt** Talk about stating the obvious. Tell us something we don't know.
- Xavier Fallin** Well I can tell you something we do know. There are a lot of questions that we need to answer before that policeman comes back. I get the feeling he expects us to do his job for him. He didn't seem too happy about having his holiday cut short and I can't say I blame him. Perhaps we should try to oblige him and probe a bit deeper into the evidence.
- Koffey** Fair comment. After all, it's in our interest to get it sorted. Tonight's performance is already cancelled and we can't afford to lose any more.

Koffey the Clown - Second Round

Questions you should ask:

Dirk Hurlitt, somebody commented that you could split hairs with your throwing knives. Are you really that good?

Angel Wings, have you ever had a serious fall from the trapeze? Has Xavier ever failed to catch you?

Answers you should give when asked the right questions.

When asked: Koffey, now that Blondin's Holiday Camp has closed down, have you tried to leave Burnem and Barley now that the slur on your character is gone?

Say: I applied for a job with Willie Slick's Circus, but Willie told me that he had more than enough clowns already.

When asked: Koffey, have you ever been inside Ivor Whiplash's caravan?

Say: No! I was never invited into Whiplash's caravan and had no desire to go in there.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Scripted Dialogue - Round 3

Elli Vated	Well I don't know about you, but I don't feel we are any nearer the answer than when we started. Perhaps we've been asking the wrong questions.
Koffey	Or getting the wrong answers!
Angel Wings	I'm not sure I want to be answering any more questions. I find it all very upsetting.
Dirk Hurlitt	The whole thing is upsetting. After all, it's not every day we find ourselves investigating a murder. We are circus performers, not detectives. I think we should leave it to the police to solve.
Koffey	I think he has a point. On the other hand, if we don't help the inspector to sort it out, we could be here for days.
Elli Vated	I have to agree. We all need to rack our brains and come up with the sort of questions that'll lead us to the killer and do it quickly. Then maybe we can get back to normal.
Koffey	It's a nice thought, but I don't see us ever getting back to normal. We circus folk are very superstitious. We've had two suspicious deaths in three years. I'm beginning to wonder if there's a jinx on this place.
Dirk Hurlitt	You could be right! Maybe it wouldn't be such a bad thing if Willie Slick did take us over. It might break the spell.

Elli Vated

Jinx or no jinx, it was no ghost or gremlin that murdered our boss. Unfortunately, it was one of us and I'm beginning to have my suspicions. Only time will tell if I'm right.

Xavier Fallin

I need to be up there on my trapeze where everything is calm and beautiful. Just me and Angel, gliding like two eagles in a cloudless sky.

Elli Vated

Very poetic, but it doesn't get us any closer to the answer.

Dirk Hurlitt

That's true. I guess we're all in the same boat. No one wants to get back to work more than me.

Amy Strate

What can I say? I think we've said it all. We must just keep probing.

Koffey the Clown - Third Round

Questions you should ask:

Dirk Hurlitt, you are very good with your knives but rather careless about their whereabouts. Do you keep track of the knives you are using?

Xavier Fallin, do you possess one of Dirk Hurlitt's knives?

Answers you should give when asked the right questions.

When asked: Koffey, you seem unconcerned at Ivor's death. What were you doing when Ivor was killed?

Say: After the matinee performance, I went back to my caravan and chopped firewood using one of Dirk Hurlitt's discarded knives. They are still very sharp, and I cut my right hand quite badly and went to the First Aid tent to get it dressed.

When asked: Koffey, how did you come to discover Ivor's body?

Say: On returning from the First Aid tent, I was gathering up the wood I had chopped when I heard two whipcracks and a sharp scream. They seemed to come from the Big Top. A few moments later I heard a groan and a thud. I thought that I'd better investigate and on entering the Big Top I found Ivor Whiplash lying face down in the ring with a knife in his back. No one else was in there, but I did catch a glimpse of somebody disappearing out of the rear exit. Unfortunately, I couldn't see who it was. I ran out of the Big Top and called for help.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Koffey the Clown - Concluding Statement

Use the following dialogue to summarise your position, speaking when indicated below.

Koffey the Clown speaks first using the following dialogue:

Well, I've told you before and I'll tell you again. Ivor was already dead when I found him. Anyway, I left the knife I was using outside my van after I cut my hand on it. Yes, I'm glad the man is dead, but it was not my doing.

After you have heard from all the guests make a prediction as to who the murderer is and why.

Tell the others.

Notes

[illegible]

We hope you enjoyed playing this Red Herring Games murder mystery and will visit us again to try out our other games.

Red Herring Games have a collection of experienced authors, who are continually producing new games for your enjoyment.

Red Herring Games are constantly on the lookout for more authors to add to our portfolio, giving you more choice.



10% OFF YOUR NEXT PURCHASE

Thank you for playing a Red Herring Game.
In order to receive a 10% discount on future purchases simply enter code: **RHG777** when you visit:

www.red-herring-games.com