

A festive Christmas scene featuring a lit white candle, red holly leaves, and wrapped gifts. The candle is lit, casting a warm glow. The gifts are wrapped in white paper with red and green floral patterns. The background is filled with red holly leaves and berries, creating a classic holiday atmosphere.

Paula Kracker

**A Christmas
Cracker
*Killing***

Congratulations!

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

Firstly: *Don't Panic!*

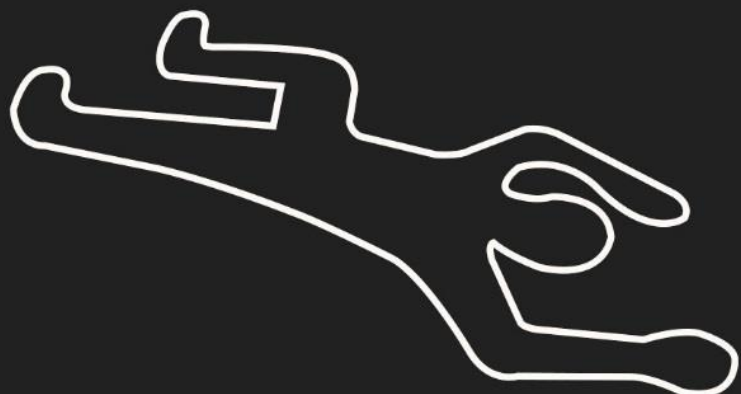
This booklet contains all the information you need to help you act your part throughout the murder mystery; background history, scripted dialogues, questions you should ask and scripted answers to questions you will be asked by the other guests.

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!*



Paula Kracker

Background Character Information

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

You are in your 40s, have a bubbly and entertaining nature and have always enjoyed circulating with high society.

Your recent loss has not hampered your ability to act as the perfect hostess, so circulate, keep glasses topped up, entertain people with short anecdotes and witty conversation, and generally have a ball. Remember to dab at the eye occasionally to show you are still grieving your loss.

Ava Kracker is your daughter from your first marriage to Hugh Garland - a disaster of a relationship with only one redeeming feature - Ava. Ava is currently in a relationship with Phil Stockins, someone of whom you don't particularly approve. Make that very clear and try to matchmake her with any other eligible male at the party. She's sure to see sense one of these days!

You think Frank Incense might be attracted to you. Encourage him!

Paula Kracker - Introductions

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

Paula Kracker speaks first using the following dialogue:

What is he talking about? Murder? Buster wasn't murdered! He died of natural causes - the coroner said so! And surely Christmas is not the time to bring up such things? What letter? What conspiracy? The man's a fraud I tell you! Buster always loved Christmas. It was 'his time to shine' as he put it. He left me, Paula, his wife, to arrange this last party in his honour, not as some sort of personal vendetta!

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

Scripted Dialogue - Round 1

Phil Stockins	I don't know about 'rocking around the Christmas tree'. This news has left me reeling!
Ava Kracker	If that was meant to be a joke, Phil, it wasn't funny.
Frank Incense	I agree. Now is not the time for silly quips.
Angel Shayre	You could say it was 'snow' laughing matter.
Felice Navidad	Angel! Really! I know it's Christmas and you want everyone to be full of festive cheer -
Angel Shayre	So long as they've purchased it from me.
Felice Navidad	Am I allowed to finish a sentence?
Angel Shayre	Oh Felice, you really are boring! Lighten up! It's Christmas! Buster's been dead for six months. He's not going to mind.
Frank Incense	And it was him who organised the party, remember? He planned a party, not a wake.
Phil Stockins	A party yes, but one with ulterior motives, in case you've forgotten. We've all come because of a polite invitation, only to be presented with an impolite accusation!
Ava Kracker	Are you sure he wasn't just playing a prank on us? It was his way...
Phil Stockins	And he died of natural causes. His obituary said as much.

- Frank Incense** His obituary was quite long as I recall, and like you say, it didn't mention anything about suspicious death.
- Phil Stockins** Just the usual achievements and accolades if I remember correctly.
- Frank Incense** Why don't we just simply ask his wife? Surely she'd know if he died of anything other than natural causes. Paula?
- Paula Kracker** I believe I've already said as much, Frank, and if there's one thing I hate more than being accused of murdering my husband, it's repeating myself over and over again.
- Phil Stockins** Then it's a joke, it has to be.
- Angel Shayre** I suppose it wouldn't hurt to ask each other a few questions. We could try to make it part of the Christmas festivities! You know, like those conversation cards you get sometimes.
- Frank Incense** In that case, who'd like to ask me a question? Just don't make it anything embarrassing...

Paula Kracker - First Round

Questions you should ask:

Frank Incense, do you know if Buster went to any of your concerts?

Felice Navidad, was Buster a regular visitor to your stables?

Answers you should give when asked the right questions.

When asked: Paula, what did Buster die of?

Say: Chronic heart failure. His heart just got too weak to pump the blood around his body in the end. He was on a waiting list for a replacement, but hearts don't come around all that often. They couldn't find a replacement in time. His death was entirely natural. I can't understand why the police inspector has been called in to investigate it now.

When asked: Paula, is it true that Buster wrote all the jokes for his crackers?

Say: Yes, it's true. He was always a practical joker and thought he was terribly funny. He wasn't. Everyone knows how banal cracker jokes can be and although he wasn't funny, he was an expert in banality! This 'incident' with the police inspector tonight is very typical of Buster's sick sense of humour and to be honest, I'm really not impressed.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Scripted Dialogue - Round 2

Angel Shayre	It's all a bit tenuous if you ask me. Chronic exposure to arsenic and now a murder enquiry. What do you think, Robin?
Phil Stockins	Very tenuous. Arsenic is a naturally occurring compound.
Ava Kracker	But mummy isn't sick, remember? Surely if it was natural, she'd be ill too?
Frank Incense	Which rather implicates someone in the house, don't you think?
Paula Kracker	Do you really think I'd have asked you all here if I'd killed Buster? Honestly - what sort of a fool do you take me for?
Frank Incense	I'd take you for anything, anytime, Paula, but I guess that's not what you mean.
Phil Stockins	Don't you know a rhetorical question when you hear one, Frank?
Frank Incense	I'm not sure. Was that rhetorical or not?
Angel Shayre	Well, I don't know about any of you but I want to find out who killed Buster, because it sounds like the inspector thinks it's one of us.
Felice Navidad	Well, I know it wasn't me, which reduces the suspect pool a little.
Angel Shayre	If we were to take a bet on picking the right person, we'd probably get better odds at the bookies than I do each year betting on a white Christmas.

Felice Navidad	This is all assuming we trust Dr. Watt's diagnosis of course.
Candy Cane	Dr... who?
Paula Kracker	No, Dr. Watt! Dr. Who is on the television! Dr. Watt is the new doctor at the practise.
Frank Incense	I didn't mean Dr Who, I meant Dr... who? I'd not heard the name before. Is he reliable?
Paula Kracker	He's always accurately diagnosed my problems.
Felice Navidad	[Polite cough] Er... before things get too personal perhaps we should continue with the enquiry.
Angel Shayre	Ever the diplomat, Felice. Are you offering to start us off this time?

Paula Kracker - Second Round

Questions you should ask:

Frank Incense, is it true that you compose as well as conduct?

Felice, is it true that Buster owned a horse at your stables?

Answers you should give when asked the right questions.

When asked: Paula Kracker, would you say that you were happy in your marriage to Buster?

Say: No. I'm afraid to say I was not. He was a very boring man. Rich but boring. I like the razzle-dazzle, he didn't. Our marriage was one long exercise in boredom. Fortunately, Buster was happy so long as I seemed happy, so he let me spend as much as I wanted, and I could see whom I liked. There was no romance though. We simply shared a house, a surname and a bank account. We had very little in common at the end.

When asked: Paula, your gardens here at Trimming Mansion are enormous! Does your garden shed contain a lot of pesticides that might contain arsenic?

Say: To tell you the truth I don't know. I know the gardener uses pesticides occasionally on some of the plants that were suffering with blackfly. I've heard that some pesticides contain arsenic, so I guess there would have been some arsenic on the property in Bob's shed. Bob and I have spent many hours together in the garden - and in the shed! Believe me, he's always been very good with his hands and can get any number of things to grow!

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Scripted Dialogue - Round 3

Frank Incense	Developing skills in interrogation? I don't want to develop skills in interrogation – I want to be proved innocent!
Paula Kracker	Me too! And I don't feel like we're any closer to solving the case.
Frank Incense	No, but I feel a bit closer to you.
Ava Kracker	Not now, Frank. Honestly! You do pick your moments. Can't you see mummy's upset?
Phil Stockins	I know what he means though, Ava. I feel like we've got to know each other a little bit better.
Paula Kracker	Yes. She's found out you're a coward.
Angel Shayre	A coward maybe, but at least he's persistent.
Felice Navidad	Yes, I'm sure he'd have won Buster around eventually. Though I have to say, marriage is getting less common these days.
Frank Incense	Some people don't even get married.
Felice Navidad	Still, Phil doesn't have to wait any longer now!
Frank Incense	Indeed not! I take it we'll be hearing news of a New Year engagement, Phil?
Phil Stockins	Shhh! Don't ruin the surprise!
Felice Navidad	Oh! Have you bought a ring?

Paula Kracker

Don't tell her, darling! Let it be a surprise!
Trust me, Ava. It's always much more romantic
when it's a surprise.

Angel Shayre

I have some very good Dom Perignon stored in
the cellar here, and I'm prepared to cut you a
good rate.

Frank Incense

So long as he doesn't mention your little re-
labelling scam to the papers no doubt!

Angel Shayre

It wasn't MY re-labelling scheme if you
remember. It was Buster's.

Phil Stockins

Still, I'm sure it wouldn't hurt to keep your
name out of papers when it comes to this
murder enquiry.

Paula Kracker - Third Round

Questions you should ask:

Angel Shayre, did you and Buster ever return to good terms after the wine relabelling incident?

Phil, what do you know about my husband Buster's dietary tastes?

Answers you should give when asked the right questions.

When asked: Paula Kracker, did you and Buster ever socialise together whilst he was alive?

Say: I was often left to socialise on my own. In fact, the only party Buster ever regularly attended was our yearly Christmas one we held here at Trimming Mansion - much as we're doing tonight. It has to be said, tonight's was much easier organising without him! However, Buster always supplied special crackers for the Christmas party.

When asked: Paula, is there anything that you ate or drank that was different to what Buster consumed?

Say: Buster and I rarely ate together and we actually had very different tastes. He drank whisky, red wine and bottled water - not all in the same glass! I didn't drink any of those in the house. He also liked muesli for breakfast - ugh! - used different toothpaste - we didn't share a bathroom - and took different medication. It would have been fairly easy to poison one of us and not the other.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Paula Kracker - Concluding Statement

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

Paula Kracker speaks first using the following dialogue:

Something to say? Something to say?! Of course I've got something to say! This is just typical of Buster! Him and his practical jokes! Well I don't find it very funny at all. In fact, I think it's in very poor taste. Here am I, a grieving widow and now with a murder accusation slung at me, for a man who died of heart failure!

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.

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