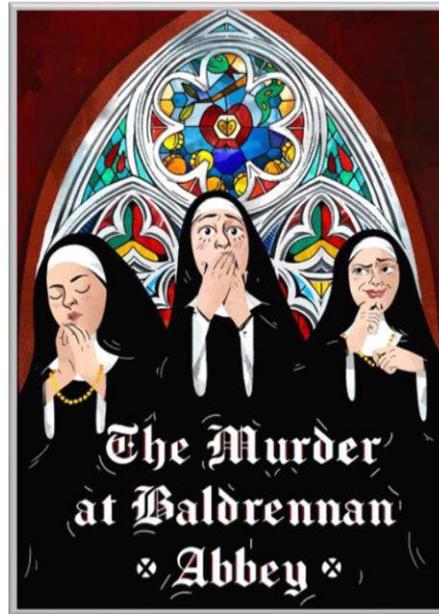




# The Murder at Baldrennan Abbey



Preview

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# Preview

Greetings!

The following pages will give you an insight into how our murder mystery parties work. This example is for an 8-person game. The smaller versions (for 4, 5, 6 and 7 people) work in the same way but have fewer character roles. In this preview you'll see a complete set of instructions and game materials.

Don't worry! The preview doesn't contain any spoilers. That's why some of the passages and descriptions have been edited. In order to prevent any secrets slipping out, we've withheld certain original game documents.

We wish you a *murderously* good time!

Sincerely,

Mysterando Murder Mystery Team



# Thank you very much...

...for choosing a Mysterando Murder Mystery! This version requires eight players. All the players are actively involved and anyone could be the murderer—including the host!

The following pages contain the game materials you'll need, instructions for running the game, and valuable tips for creating an unforgettable evening with friends, family, or colleagues. We trust you'll have loads of fun with this exciting murder mystery party. Enjoy!

## What happened?

A secluded, foggy valley deep in the heart of the Highland wilderness hides the ancient masonry of Baldrennan Abbey from prying eyes. Here, the holy ways have remained the same for hundreds of years, steadfastly resisting history's decadent march. Lately, the group of nuns who call Baldrennan home has become smaller; the abbess struggles to find youthful members to join this life of remote solitude, entirely cut off from the outside world—including the internet—except for a single telephone line.

Despite the Abbess' fervent protests, the Church has recently decided to sell Baldrennan Abbey. For the first time in years the candlelit corridors echo to visitors' footsteps—prospective buyers from all corners of the globe, eager to convert the abbey into some bright new commercial venture. But when real estate entrepreneur Nick Taylor is found dead in the abbey garden on the second day of his visit, nuns and guests alike stare at each other with ice in their veins. There's not a soul for miles and miles in all directions, meaning the killer is one of them!

The police are alerted, but in the meantime the abbess summons everyone into the dining hall. She's convinced the truth will come out long before the law arrives...

## What to expect

Each player is assigned a character. Roleplaying as your character, you'll investigate the mysterious murder through a series of discussions and clues. But be warned—one of you is the killer! This player's aim is to "get away with it" and he or she will actively mislead the investigation. Each player is hiding something. The killer really could be any one of you...

During the game there's space for a meal. The menu is entirely up to you. Takeout, fondue, or a fancy three-course dinner—whatever tickles your fancy! As the game progresses, you'll share hours of laughter and heated debate. At set intervals (the game rounds), new clues come to light and you'll build your case against the perpetrator. In the last round, everyone accuses the person they believe committed the murder. At the finale the identity of the killer is revealed...

Will you crack the case—or will the killer get away?

**How long does a game last?** 2 to 3 hours. The exact duration, of course, will depend on the players. If you're really absorbed in the discussions, the game will last longer.

**How old do players need to be?** For this murder mystery, we recommend ages 15 and up.

**Should I dress up?** Yes! Definitely! While it's not a must, we strongly recommend it. Dressing up makes it easier to slip into character, and makes the evening so much more fun. Even the smallest accessories can make a big difference!



# Preparations

## Send out invitations

While it's certainly possible to play the game spontaneously and hand out character descriptions on game night, we recommend you give your players a few days to prepare. An easy way to do this? Email each player their unique "Invitation and Character Description" from the file package we've provided.

## Prepare game materials for Game Host and players

Before the game begins, the host should print and prepare the following materials (some contained in this document, the rest in the provided file package):

- The Clues
- Game materials (Name Tags, Opening Scene, Abbey Floor Plan, bottle labels)
- The Resolution

On game night, you'll use them as important references.

Of course, you could also email each player their clues along with their invitation, allowing players to refer to the info on their phones. However, we don't recommend this approach—using phones during game time is distracting. You'll find that keeping everyone's attention locked into the game greatly improves the atmosphere.

**SPOILER ALERT:** When preparing these materials, as tempting as it may be, don't read the Resolution, Clues, or the other players' character descriptions. Trust us—it's way more fun to keep the outcome a surprise, even from yourself.

## Choose the food

We like the idea of eating together while playing the game. However, this is an add-on to the game and not a must-do. The menu is entirely up to you. If the host (or one of the other players) is responsible for the food, then it's best to go with something quick and easy to prepare. That way you don't have to pause the game for too long—or allow it to carry on while the absent player stresses over food. We've found that tapas, fondue, or takeout work well. If you want to blow your guests away with a three-course meal, by all means, go for it! But we strongly recommend you cook everything in advance so you only need to quickly heat it up when it's yum-yum time.

*Tip: If you serve a meal with courses, don't pause the game. Instead, use the time between courses to reveal clues and read new information. Then allow the resulting discussion to unfold during the next course.*

## Print the character Name Cards

Towards the end of this document you'll find a set of name cards—there's one for each player. Print the page and keep it safe. On game night, cut out the name cards and let each player attach theirs to their clothing. Adhesive tape or a safety pin will do the trick.

## Decorate! Go wild!

A beautifully decorated murder mystery party is twice as fun. Like with the food, the decorations are up to you. In our experience, vibrant decorations add oodles of atmosphere. We've included ready-made bottle labels further on in this document. You can stick these on wine or beer bottles.



# The Characters

During the game, each player takes on the role of a unique character. Before the game begins, you need to assign a character to each player and make sure they receive their Character Description (included in the file package). Further down this page is a list of short teaser descriptions. Get a feel for each one, then decide which character best fits each player.

For new players, we recommend assigning characters that match age, gender, and personality traits. Experienced players (and people with a natural gift for acting) might find it fun to play as characters who bear no resemblance to their everyday selves. Consider mixing up the gender roles, too. This can be highly entertaining. It's your call!

*Tip: When sending your players their Character Descriptions, avoid reading them—that way you keep the suspense alive for yourself.*

## **The Victim (this character is not playable)**

**Nick Taylor (31):** The handsome real estate entrepreneur was eager to buy the abbey until his sudden death. His angelic charm seemed to warm the hearts of everyone he met.

## **The Suspects (assign one of these characters to each player)**

**Abess Agnes McCroy (70):** Old school to the core, Baldrennan Abbey is (and has been) her whole life. The gnarled abbess tries with heart and soul to prevent it from being sold.

**Head Sister Euphemia (34):** She's sacrificed much to uphold the religious customs of the abbey, and she strictly ensures each of the other sisters do the same.

**Sister Margaret (21):** This clever nun has a gentle nature. She's found her shepherd in God and Head Sister Euphemia.

**Sister Emily (25):** Emily is part of a new generation of nuns. Her perky personality and fun-loving nature brings color to the monochrome monotony of abbey life.

**Benedict Walkers (48):** Composing himself with deep-rooted decorum and somber seriousness, this real estate entrepreneur wants to buy the abbey.

**John Clifton (33):** This hotelier rumbles roughly through the abbey—he's the proverbial bull in a china shop.

**Robert Thomson (28):** His reserved, shy demeanor makes him a welcome guest, but as a property developer he wants to take ownership of the abbey just as much as the others do.

**Paul McGreen (47):** The absent-minded and solitary gardener weeds the abbey's flower beds, waters the lawns, and cares for the crooked old trees.



# Game Instructions

## Act I: Introduction Round

When everyone is ready to start, read the Game Rules Reminder out loud to everybody (it's at the end of this document).

Then Abbess Agnes McCroy reads the Opening Scene out loud (it appears after the Game Rules Reminder). Next, have each character briefly introduce themselves. The introduction should cover their name, what they do for a living, and why they're at the abbey.

**Note:** No questions allowed just yet.

## Act II: Clues Round 1

Hand out each player's Clues for this round. Then, each player silently reads their own Clues, ensuring nobody else sees.

Now it's time to share what you've learned! Everyone is free to discuss their clues and ask questions of each other. During the discussion, each player must truthfully share the information in their Clues. However, if certain parts of your Clue incriminate you (or another player you want to protect), you may avoid sharing those details. This does not mean you can lie—it's essential that only true information is shared.

**Important Rule:** If, during the discussion, someone asks you a direct question, you **must** truthfully reveal what you know (unless you are the murderer). However, if someone asks you an imprecise question, you can give an imprecise, but truthful answer. Here's an example:

**Example 1:** *Your Clue says: "Last night at 7 PM you were stuck in the office, working late. At 8 PM the victim phoned you, angrily demanding you repay your debt to him...or else! At 9 PM, exhausted, you drove home."*

*Now, if Player 1 asks you: "What did you do last night?" (An imprecise question.)*

*You can answer: "I was forced to work late. Then I went home." (An imprecise, but truthful, answer).*

*But then Player 2 asks: "Did you speak to the victim last night?" (A direct question.)*

*You must answer: "Yes." (The truth. But you don't have to volunteer details like the time or what the victim said. Unless you're asked.)*

**Example 2:** *Your Clue says: "Your wife (one of the other players) is plagued by financial difficulties." After reading this, you realize that if the other players know this, they'll suspect you committed the murder to help your marriage. In this case, it's best if you avoid letting the other players know this fact. The other players might also suspect your wife. Now, if your wife is your dearly beloved, you're compelled to avoid this information coming to light. However, if you hate the old bat you're married to, you might want to tell everyone in the hopes they pin the murder on her...*

**Note on Game Rules (for the Murderer only):** There is one huge exception to the rule about always telling the truth, and that is: *the Murderer may tell lies!* If you are the Murderer, you may purposefully try to mislead the others, diverting attention away from yourself. Just keep in mind—webs of deceit are sticky indeed!



Finally, if you're asked a question and you can't answer it based on the facts in your Clues or your Character Description, then you may (and must) invent something. Improvise, you have full creative license here. For example:

*Fact, based on information in Player One's Character Description: Last year, Tom robbed a bank. The victim, now dead, was their accomplice.*

*During the game, someone asks Player One: "So, where did you meet the victim?"*

*Player One replies: "Oh, I know him from when I was training to be a butcher."*

*This reply is totally fictitious, but it's allowed. Nothing in Player One's Clues or Character Description details how they met the victim, so an invented answer to this question is allowed. If someone else asks Player One, "Did you and the victim ever commit a crime together?" then Player One must, according to the rule about truthfully answering direct questions, reply: "Yes, I did."*

Now, due to the nature of the game, new information is revealed in each new round. Something you said earlier might be contradicted by something you read in your Clue for the next round. If this happens, you must correct your previous statement with the truth as soon as possible.

The round ends when all the Clues have been discussed and nobody has any further questions.

### **Act III: Clues Round 2**

Distribute the Round 2 Clues then follow the same procedure as Clues Round 1.

### **Act IV: Clues Round 3**

Distribute the Round 3 Clues then follow the same procedure as Clues Round 1.

### **Act V: Final Round a.k.a. the Big Reveal**

Keep your wits about you—this is the showstopper!

Make sure each player has a piece of blank paper. Then, in secret, each player writes down the name of the person they believe committed the murder. Once done, go in a circle and allow each player to reveal the name they've written—and make their case against this person.

Once everyone has made their accusation, read the document titled "The Resolution".

And that's it! With the killer revealed, we conclude this murder mystery party. Did you catch the killer? Or did the villain manage to mislead you? Either way, we hope you and guests had a blast playing *The Murder at Baldrennan Abbey*, and that you'll be laughing about the plots and ploys for many moons. Feel free to let us know how it went, we'd love to hear both criticism and praise! You can reach us at: [info@mysterando.com](mailto:info@mysterando.com)

**One final note:** If during the game one of your players makes a mistake or doesn't strictly follow the rules—that's fine! As Host, it's best to allow the rules to be bent. Keep your focus on maximizing entertainment value. Because, at the end of the night, that's what your guests will remember—just how much fun it was!

## Name Cards

Abbess  
Agnes McCroy

Head Sister  
Euphemia

Sister  
Margaret

Sister  
Emily

Robert  
Thomson

Benedict  
Walkers

Paul McGreen

John  
Clifton



# Game Rules Reminder

**Right before you start playing, remind everyone of these game rules:**

At the start of each round, hand out the Clues for that round.

To keep the game going, everyone must tell the truth about the contents of their Clues.

However, if your Clue directly implicates you in the murder (or implicates someone you want to protect) then you may choose to keep quiet and hide the information. But if another player confronts you and demands an answer to a specific question, then you have to share what you know, and share it truthfully.

There is **ONLY** one exception to this rule: the murderer! The dastardly villain may always lie.

All the other players must tell the truth at all times. That said, nobody's forcing you to share the whole truth...

If you're asked a question you can't answer based on the known facts inside your Clues or Character Description, you can (and must) invent an answer.

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## Opening Scene

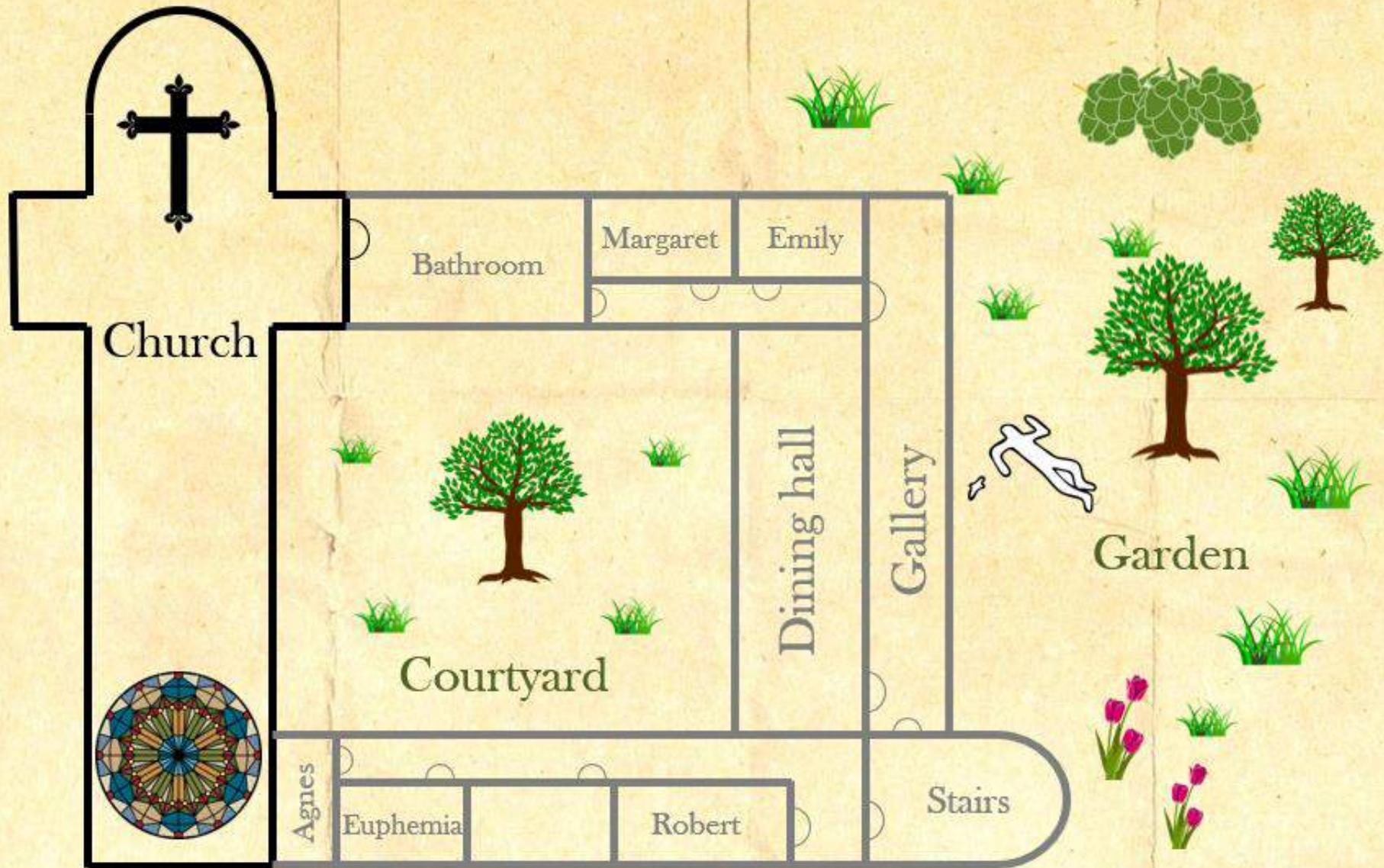
*The abbess reads the following aloud:*

Dear abbey sisters and guests, the devil's terrible shadow has fallen upon our home. Nick Taylor, the real estate entrepreneur, is dead. May God tend mercifully to his soul. Each of us has seen the body in the garden, lying beneath the gallery. I've alerted the police—they're on their way with all haste, but it will be some time before they arrive. I propose that we waste no time in solving this crime. Seeing as we're the only people for many miles, we must accept the terrible truth that the murderer is among us. Now, we're not all very well acquainted, so let us begin there. I ask that each of you introduce yourself briefly. With God's help, let us catch the culprit!

*Now begin Act I, in which each character briefly introduces themselves.*

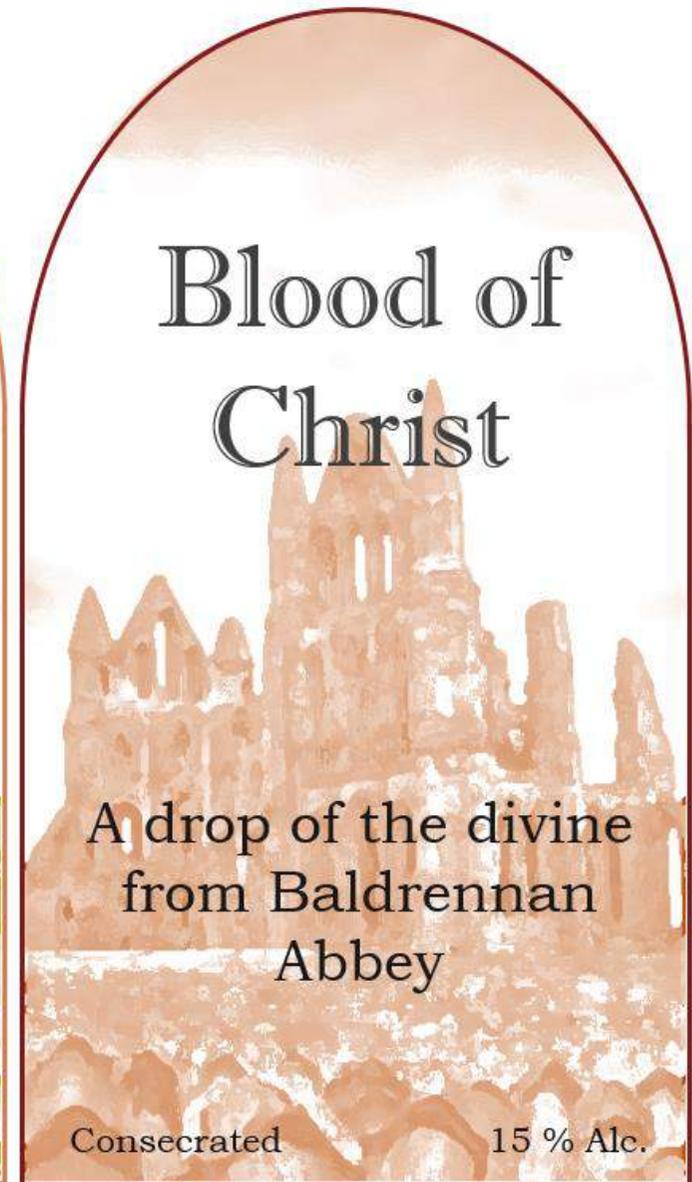
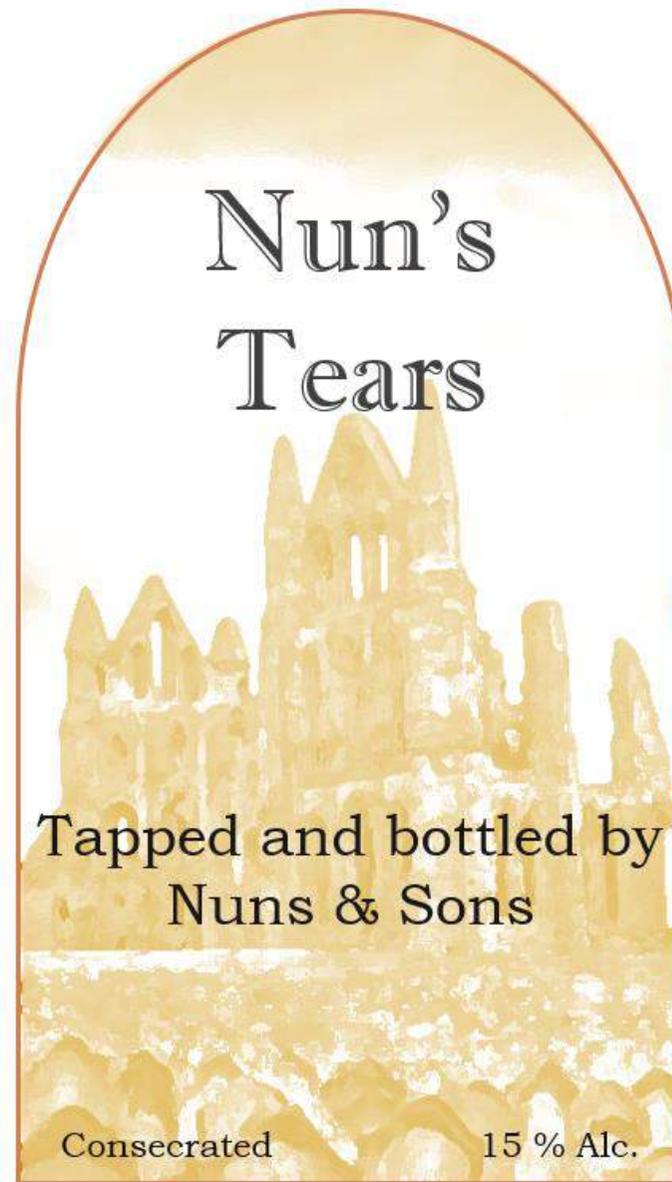
# Map of Baldrennan Abbey

Second floor. There are more rooms on the first floor.



## Wine bottle labels

Simply print these out and stick them over the original wine bottle labels.

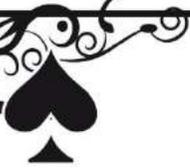


# Beer bottle labels

Simply print these out and stick them over the original beer bottle labels.



On the following pages you can find a spoiler-free example **from a different (unpublished) game**. You can safely read it without learning any secrets. That said, this is what to expect from a character description and a set of Clues for one game round.



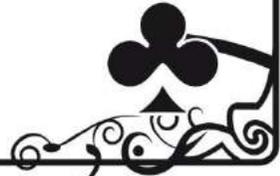
# Character Description Eddie Example

## What happened?

It's already been a week since the start of the Black 'n White Casino annual poker tournament—the biggest one in the world. Of the hundreds of bidders and bluffers, only the top eight remain. The winner-takes-all final round is about to start, and the tension is unbearable. TV cameras ring the room, capturing every flicker of emotion flitting across the faces of the finalists: most are notoriously well-known, but a few upstarts and underdogs have made it to the final, too. As the players take their seats around the table, eyeing the prize money in a huge glass jar overhead, one of the seats remains mysteriously empty...

## Character Description

They call you the “Robin Hood of Poker”. You're highly unusual, a super wealthy superstar with an altruistic streak. Unlike many of your peers, you're not decked out in a thousand-dollar pinstripe suit, you're not wearing croc skin boots, and your belt buckle isn't the tiniest bit bling. Nope. Not you. You're wearing a colorful thrift store jacket and scuffed sneakers, casually picked from the single cupboard wardrobe in the modest two-bedroom apartment you call home. Since the start of your poker career, you've donated most of your prize money to charities and international aid projects—you've supported thousands of people. Your appearance always creates a stir. You're still not used to the media hype you attract, but you're proud of the way you conduct your career and hope to inspire others to model themselves after your example. But around the poker table, you're an affront to most. Poker pros usually mock you mercilessly, trying to undermine your reputation so their own overinflated egos don't have to acknowledge the alternative you represent. Recently, Thomas Danzer's been urging you to give up poker, saying that every particle of your being damages poker culture. Danzer proposes you instead become a kindergarten teacher. This made you furious. You're eager to wallop your rival in the final round of the tournament. That'll put him in his place! It didn't ever cross your mind that the brash Thomas Danzer wouldn't even make it to the table that night...





## Costume

Poker is your thing; fashion trends are not. Your usual outfit (a colorful jacket, sneakers, and flowery pants) acts as a statement against expensive branded suits and designer clothes. You remain 43 years young.

## Your role

You are not the murderer. You are not allowed to lie. Your goal is to find out who the murderer is and what their motive was.

## What you know about the others

### Michele Benyamine (35):

The Frenchman has all sorts of unexpected tricks up his sleeve. Besides a great hand, looks like he's able to read his opponents accurately.

### Charlotte Stripe (39):

This woman has a keen, cool intelligence. She doesn't let her past success interfere with the game she's playing right now. Instead of trusting her gut, she carefully analyzes each of her opponents—starting before they've even sat down at the table.

### Victoria Heinz (28):

She's got talent, that's for sure. But she plays her hand in wildly unusual ways. Others stick to the probabilities presented by their cards and chips, where she focuses on how her play will affect the media. She's a virtuoso of this strange approach.

### Alexander "Nibbles" Nibbleman (21):

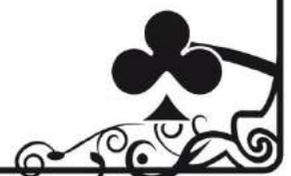
This young chap is more than a little green behind the ears. Seems to you he's learned poker from the computer, with little experience against real people. It won't be long before he realizes an in-person tournament is nothing like its digital counterpart.

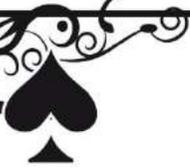
### Christina Venus (35):

As far as you know, she rarely competes in big tournaments. Her game as erratic as a beginner's. She must've had an incredible streak of luck to make to the final.

### Inspector Ernst Clutch (41): **(Note: not a suspect)**

The police inspector started the investigation immediately after the victim's body was found. Thanks to his quick detective work, the circle of suspects is narrowed to just the tournament finalists.



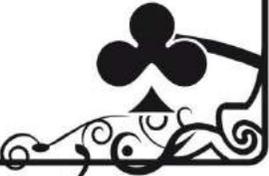


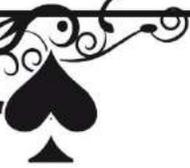
# Clues for Eddie Example

Hello Eddie Example, the following pages contain your Clues for each game round.

You're not allowed to look at the Clues for a future round. However, you're welcome to revisit any of the information already revealed in previous rounds. It's important for you to share and discuss the contents of each of your Clues with the other players. To advance the investigation, try using trick questions to catch out the perpetrator—but remember, only the Murderer is allowed to lie!

Hint: When sharing your Clues with other players, work them into the conversation—that is, be natural, and try not to just read them out. This is the chance to roleplay!





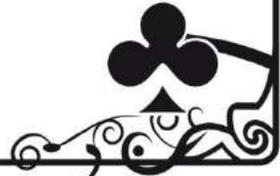
# Clues for Round 1 – Eddie Example

When you got off the bus in front of Black 'n White Casino, the cameras swiveled to focus on you. It was drizzling—you had to smile at the press armada, all elbows and microphone booms, furiously jostling each other for a dry spot under the small bus shelter. Then you saw the reporter who interviewed Thomas Danzer last week. That wiped the smile from your face. Danzer! What was it he said? Cultureless? A kindergarten teacher!?! Suddenly angry, you hurried into the casino.

Around 17:00 the final round's seating arrangement was announced. Victoria would be directly opposite the camera, with you as far away from her as possible. Naturally. At the time, you had no idea the seating arrangements would change...frankly, you're still in shock from the day's events. You've never experienced anything quite like this before.

Shortly after the announcement, pro poker player Richard Hamilton announced he was leaving immediately and would be forfeiting the final round. You asked Richard why he left the casino in such a hurry, but his answer was nothing more than a deep sigh.

Richard's odd departure sparked discussion during the poker game. Somewhere around 19:00, you were having dinner, and Thomas was ranting about Richard. At first, his inexhaustible flow of invective was amusing. But you soon grew tired of it. Perhaps it was the stress of the day finally catching up to you. You left and went to your room. You noticed the door of Room 505 was slightly ajar, but didn't think anything of it at the time.



We hope you have a blast with this Murder Mystery!

