

A Timeless Tale of Treachery and  
Treason in a Kingdom Far, Far Away

# Once Upon A Murder



After the mysterious disappearance of Cinderella, Prince Charming is throwing a ball to find a new wife. Some of the Kingdom residents question how the prince could move on so quickly, while others are jumping at the chance to earn their spot as the new princess in the castle.

As the evening escalates, a killing occurs in the palace ... leaving you to write the final chapter.

Will you finger a devious dwarf who may know too much? A sinister stepsister who has worn out their welcome. Or perhaps a pouting princess who is plotting to win the heart of Prince Charming.

In a kingdom where jealousy, betrayal and deception are common story lines, it will be up to you to find the felon so that everyone can live happily ever after.

## Host Guide

### Thank you for choosing *Once Upon A Murder*

We are confident that you will find this comprehensive packet to provide everything that you will want and need to run your very own murder mystery party—one that will have your guests talking about it for weeks, if not longer.

This murder mystery experience is designed to be easy to run and fun to play for all the guests involved. The game is played with all of your guests having active roles in the game and each guest having objectives to complete. These objectives keep the party from being pre-scripted and allow your guests to draw their own conclusions as to the motives and the identity of the murderer. This format also allows for great mingling amongst your guests and insures that all of your guests feel included. Before the night is through, each guest will have discovered that they have a motive for killing the victim and be inclined to protect their innocence as well as seek out the murderer. To add to the experience and suspense of the night, the murder happens during the party, not before, as in some other murder mystery games. The victim is also allowed to play along after they 'die', since they have no clue who murdered them. *Once Upon A Murder* is certain to be a hit with all of your guests.

The following pages contain a simple list of things you need to do as host in order to have the party run smoothly. Once the party is going, it is up to the guests to make the most of it—something you will be surprised at how well they do.

### Assigning the Characters

**Guest totals:** With 20+ guests: At least 6 Male characters, 8 Female Characters, 1 Gender neutral characters (roles that can be assumed by either a male or female guest).

With 15-20 guests: 6-7 Male characters, 8-9 Female Characters, 1-4 Gender neutral.

With 10-15 guests: 4-6 Male characters, 6-7 Female Characters, 0-2 Gender neutral.

With 8-12 guests: 3-5 Male characters, 5-6 Female Characters, 0-1 Gender neutral.

- **You, as host, will need to decide upon a character for each of your guests.** The easiest way to assign the characters is to read the character descriptions and match each character with the guest that you feel suits that particular character the best.
- **If you choose NOT to know the murderer,** you can simply choose NOT to read the character descriptions or examine the evidence before the party. While you will be able to play along with everyone else, you will not be able to read the in-depth materials of the party. (You will find a short list of the characters with descriptions on the next page. In the actual mystery, there will be more personality indicators to help you assign guests.)
- **Because this party is dependent on a minimum number of people attending,** you may want to determine ahead of time which guests are attending before assigning characters.
  - It is recommended that you send out the general invite, guest list and the Royal News with an RSVP date of two weeks before the party. After your guests RSVP positive, you can send them their character sheet. You can download an invite at <http://www.nightofmystery.com/invitations.php>.
- **The killer will not know they are the murderer until they open their second envelope at the party.**
- **The victim will not know they are the victim until they get to the party.** The victim will not have a list of objectives for after the murder. If the victim wishes to play along after the murder, they can do so without an identity. If you have an extra identity (that is, a role that is not being played), they can also assume that identity if they so choose.
- **Is this mystery suitable for youths and/or church groups?** At this time, we plan to produce an original and a clean version. Please see the clean version for youths and/or more conservative groups.

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**GRISELDA • Cinderella's Stepsister.** After years of animosity, Griselda has earned Cinderella's trust and her place in castle. Now that Cinderella is gone, will Griselda be next to disappear mysteriously?

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**SNOW • Snow White.** With hopes of moving out of the forest, this princess hopes to soon be known not as the daughter of a queen that is evil, but as the wife of prince that is charming.

**HERB • Dwarf.** Like a brother to Snow, Snow's dependence on Herb is endearing to some and annoying to others.

**NOSY • Dwarf.** Ambitious and inquisitive, this dwarf can't keep their nose out of anyone's business. Be hopeful you are not the murderer, because Nosy will be out to expose you!

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**JINN • Genie.** Put in this world to grant Aladdin's wishes, Jinn can't solve Aladdin's problems single-handedly, but they will try...

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**TEETH • Big, Bad Wolf.** After earlier wishing to devour Red, now he hopes to marry her. Red has other plans for her future, but it is unclear what her beholders intend.

**RUMPELSTILTZKIN • Imp.** Known for trickery, scheming and deception, Rumpelstilzkin's tactics may be just what this kingdom needs to find out who really is behind Cinderella's disappearance...

**HAMLET • Little Pig.** This seasoned realtor knows a thing or two about building and selling houses.

## Inviting Your Guests

**Before the party, each guest must receive four things: (1) the invitation, (2) the scrolled guest list, (3) The Royal Times and (4) their character description.** *Following your purchase of the party, you may also access and use the downloadable character descriptions from our website, which contains all of this information.*

### THE INVITATION

- To make the invitations, fill out the information describing the place, date and time of your party onto invite in editable fields.
- Print out the number of invites that you need onto 8.5 x 11 paper.  
(Printing the invitations on parchment or other specialty paper can add to the special ambiance of your party.)
- Fold each printed invitation in quarters.
- Each invitation should fit nicely into an invitation sized envelope (4 3/8" x 5 3/4").

### THE SCROLLED GUEST LIST

- This will provide information on the other guests at the party.

### THE ROYAL TIMES

- This will provide more background information on the party setting for your guests.

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

- You need to assign each guest a character to play at the party. (See the previous sections.)

Following your purchase of the party, you may also access and use the downloadable character descriptions from our website. Each description is a pdf file containing the above information for each character. This option allows you to email each of your guests their character description without having to print and mail the information. Please remember, the pdf file option does not include a place to enter the date, time or address of the party, so you will have to inform or remind your guests of the party location details in another fashion. For this, we do have downloadable, emailable invitations that can be found at: <http://www.nightofmystery.com/invitations.php>

## Get a coupon and a FREE Party!

Once your party is thrown, please let us know how your party went by posting it on our MURDER MYSTERY MESSAGE BOARD! We will email you a \$5 coupon for posting comments and/or pictures about your party. (If you would like us to post your pictures, please email them to [info@nightofmystery.com](mailto:info@nightofmystery.com) once you have posted your comments.) *In addition to the coupon, each month we will select one posting to be featured in our "Party of the Month" forum and that customer will receive a \$45 gift certificate towards the purchase of a future party.*

## More Ideas On Preparing For Your Party

You can find more ideas on decorations, music, food, etc. in the "Party Tips" section at

[www.nightofmystery.com](http://www.nightofmystery.com) or

[www.onceuponamurder.com](http://www.onceuponamurder.com)

## Initial Timing for the Party

- Most likely, the length of the party will be 2-4 hours. The party length will depend on a number of factors, including the number of guests, if you are serving dinner, how much your guests choose to mingle, etc.
- The party may be longer if you choose to serve dinner, although much of the mingling done during Stage 2 may be done over dinner.
- Because the party is not pre-scripted and set up in stages, as host it is important that you observe the guests' behavior and move onto the next stage when you feel it is appropriate to do so. This should be enough time for everyone to enjoy all aspects of the party, while also moving along at an enjoyable pace.

## Preparing the Materials for the Party

- Make name tags for the guests. (You can print out the name tags onto adhesive label paper, or print out on regular paper and include a pin with the name tags so that the guests can secure them to their outfits.) **Name tag template is compatible with most label paper for 4" x 2" labels. Note: Make sure your printer is set to print at 100% and NOT at "print to fit" or "print to scale".**
- Photocopy onto green paper the printed page of money. You will need as many copies as there are guests attending. Cut and trim the money and bundle them into packages of 10.  
—*To skip this step, you can purchase fake/play money or coins rather inexpensively at a novelty or party store.*
- Cut the objective sheets in half on the dashed lines.
- Label two envelopes with each character's name. Label one envelope with an (A) and one with a (B) for each character. On the (B) envelope, also put "DO NOT OPEN until AFTER the murder".

**In the (A) envelopes, place:** a name tag, safety pin(s) to adhere the name tag, a bundle of money and the left side of the character's objective sheet that has objectives for the beginning of the party.

**In the (B) envelopes, place:** the right side of the objective sheet for each character which has objectives for after the murder happens.

Have the (A) & (B) envelopes on hand to give to the guests as they arrive.

- In a separate envelope place the Investigation sheet and Exhibit A and label it as "Investigation".
- In a separate envelope place the Evidence Presentation and label it as "Evidence".
- Place the solution in a sealed envelope and label it "Solution".
- Keep the "introduction", the "investigation envelope", the "evidence envelope" and the "solution envelope" in a safe and convenient location so you can hand them out throughout the night as guests need them.
- Make enough copies of the 'Who Dunit?' voting sheets for the number of guests attending. Cut the pages along the dashed lines.
- Make copies of the 'smoking gun award', as there may be multiple people who guess the identity of the murderer.

# Party Schedule

## Stage One: The Guests Arrive

- Have the guests' name tags, bundle of money and their (A) and (B) envelopes available for them.

## Stage Two: Introduction

- After all of the guests have arrived, assemble them for the Introduction. Hand Prince Charming the Introduction and ask him to read it aloud to everyone.
- Provide time for guests to mingle and complete their objectives.
  - This may require 30-60 minutes depending on how well your guests know each other.
  - If you are providing dinner, this will be a good time for dinner to be served.

## Stage Three: Murder & Investigation

- When guests start to settle down, and you are certain the victim has completed all of their objectives, you will arrange for the lights to go out.
- When the lights come back on, the victim will have fallen down "dead".
- After the victim has "died", hand Nosy the masking tape or chalk, so they can outline the position of the body on the floor or ground.
- Have Nosy read the Investigation sheet explaining what will happen next.
- The guests will open their (B) envelopes, which contain new information and objectives for each of the guests to complete now that the murder has occurred.

## Stage Four: Evidence Presentation

- Allow time for the guests to settle down and for Nosy to collect all of their evidence.
- When your guests have completed their objectives, hand Nosy the evidence packet. With everyone assembled, Nosy will present the crime scene evidence/findings to the guests.
- It works well to place all of the evidence on a table, so that it can be seen and inspected by everyone.
- Give your guests additional time to review the evidence. You may want to make multiple copies of the evidence, so that it can be seen by everyone.
- Hand out the 'Who Dunit?' answer sheets and ask everyone to complete them and return them to you during this time.

## Stage Five: The Solution

- When all the 'Who Dunit?' sheets are collected, calculate who the winners are using the tally sheet included.
- Ask Nosy to read aloud the solution.
- Using the tally sheet included, calculate who the winners are and award the certificates.
  - You can electronically input the names of the winners onto the certificate before printing.

End of Host's Guide

# Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

You are formally invited to attend the annual Grand Ball being thrown at the castle in the kingdom of happily Ever After. Those expected to be in attendance include:

**PRINCE CHARMING • Prince.** The leader of the kingdom and heartthrob to many, this dashing young man will have numerous decisions to make - all of which will affect the outcome of the night.

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I look forward to seeing you  
all at the ball!

-Prince Charming

# Royal Times

Keeping You Current

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On Kingdom News

## MISGINC



Since last spotted asleep in her bed over a month ago, the kingdom has not slept while trying to uncover the whereabouts of Cinderella who mysteriously disappeared! Upon completing a comprehensive investigation throughout the kingdom, Prince Charming has ruled the disappearance a kidnapping and believes that such a crime could not be committed without seasoned expertise. Additionally, the prince has warned anyone who may be spending ample time in the forest to be on the lookout. Before her abduction, Cinderella had devoted much of her time to frolicking in the woods and the prince believes the culprit may be linked to the forest.

## Grand Ball Excitement!!!

This year's annual Grand Ball has something that no one ever anticipated – a proposal from Prince Charming! Among those who are said to be in the running for the hand of the prince are: Snow, Red and Rapunzel. The Prince must have a thing for single-named maidens!

### Housing Market Updates:

Have a woodland cottage or a secluded tower you need help selling? A candy cottage you want to list on the market? We're your company. Please see us for all your housing needs! **Brought to you by OINK! Realty, your number one housing specialists in the kingdom.**

**WANTED:** Seeking women who are devoted to making their masters happy. Greatly compensated. Please see Aladdin for more details.

## REWARD



Prince Charming is offering 500 gold pieces to anyone who has information on the disappearance of Cinderella. Please see the Prince with your information and be sure not to share it with others, if you truly expect to be rewarded.

Sample Character Description  
(taken from another mystery)

## Banker Bob

As the banker in the town of Deadwood, you do business with many of the people in the town and also some of the participants of the Deadwood Poker Tournament. One of your foremost clients is Harry High-Stakes, the owner of The Deadwood Saloon. In order to get the saloon established and operating in its first year, you have loaned Harry a substantial amount of money. Although the saloon appears to be doing very well, you are uncertain why Harry is continually delinquent and sometimes misses his payments on his loan. Just last month, Harry was late again on his payment and you warned him that you will have to put his saloon into foreclosure if he cannot repay the money he owes on the loan by next month. You suspect that Harry is throwing the Deadwood Poker Tournament in order to get enough money so that his saloon will not go into foreclosure. This will be an important week to see if you will gain your money back from Harry's loan or if you will gain control over the saloon.

Because Harry is such a difficult and delinquent client, you hope that you will gain control over the saloon. If the saloon becomes the bank's property, you speculate that you may have a very wealthy buyer in Montgomery Money, an investor from the East. Because of Montgomery's wealth, you are certain that you will make a healthy profit off of selling the saloon to Montgomery. In addition, Montgomery will be consistent and reliable when making his loan payments.

Along with all the excitement of the tournament this week there has also been excitement in your bank. Earlier in the week, your bank was held up at gun point while your wife was watching the bank over the noon hour. Ordinarily, Bonnie does not watch the bank, but you were meeting with Harry about his payments. Because of the high ante for the poker tournament, you are convinced that the robber must have been a gambler who was trying to accumulate enough money to enter to the poker tournament. Since you view Sheriff Sam, the sheriff of Deadwood, as a very lazy individual, you plan on taking matters into your own hands when it comes to finding the culprit of the bank robbery and bringing them to justice!

As the Deadwood Poker Tournament Party quickly approaches, you are looking forward to attending for a few reasons. The party will be a perfect place for you to talk business with Montgomery Money about his intentions on investing in the saloon if your bank gains control of it. In addition to your dealings with Montgomery, you plan to figure out which one of the poker players may have robbed your bank and you plan to bring them to justice!

**Acting and Dressing Your Part:** As the banker of Deadwood, you are a businessman first. Your bank and your money come before everything, including your wife, Bonnie. Since you will be using the party to for business matters, you will want to dress dignified for the night. *For more ideas on how to dress and a glossary of wild western words and phrases to use at the party, please see [www.nightofmystery.com](http://www.nightofmystery.com)*

Sample Objectives Sheet For Beginning of Party  
(taken from another mystery)

Party Objectives

Maid Victoria

Objectives At The Start Of The Party:

These are things that are in your best interest to do  
before  
the evening goes much further. Be aware of what others  
around you are doing as well!

- Assure XXXX that you do love him and no one else.
- Declare toXXXX that you wish only to marry the man that you love. If he refuses, plead with XXXXX to have her husband change his mind.
- Find out from XXXX if there is any news on who you are to marry. If not, ask her again later.
- Once you find out whom you are to marry, relay that information to XXXXXX.
- Find out from XXXXXX how well she knows Sir XXXX.

Sample Objectives Sheet For After The Murder  
(taken from another mystery)

Party Objectives

Maid Victoria

Things You Know:

This is information not known to many—and possibly only YOU. Use it wisely in your scheming and bribery or hide it to help maintain your innocence.

- Lord Taylor (the lord) arranged for you to marry XXXX before XXXXX was brutally murdered.
- You fear that your mother may have harmed XXXXX in order to help you.
- You are in love with XXXXXX.
- Earlier tonight, XXXX told you that she was upset with XXXX for not keeping a promise to her.

Objectives After The Murder:

These are things that are in your best interest to do to help solve the murder. Be aware of what others around you are doing as well!

- If anyone is happy that your fiancé, XXXXX, be suspicious of their motives. Then assure them that you are very happy with how the evening turned out.
- Tell XXXX that there is nothing that is standing between the two of you now.
- Discreetly inform XXXX that you think XXXX may have gone too far this time.
- Deflect guilt from XXXX by accusing XXXX of murder. Insist that XXXX's jealous anger drove XXXX to murder!
- Console XXXXX. It must be difficult having someone murdered on your wedding day. Find out who she blames.

Sample Evidence  
(taken from another mystery)

## EXHIBIT A

Description: **The murder weapon-- a dagger in the heart**

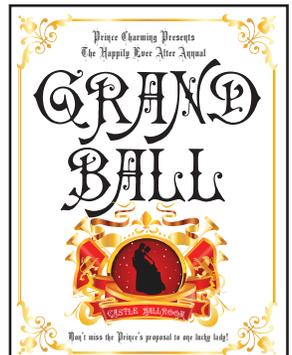
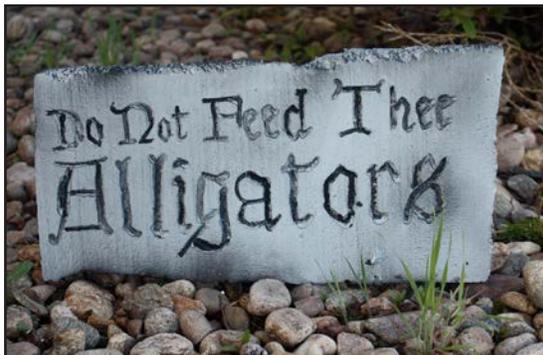
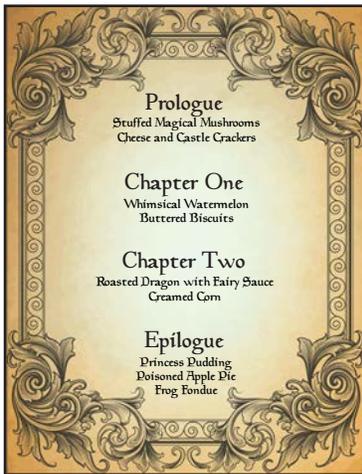
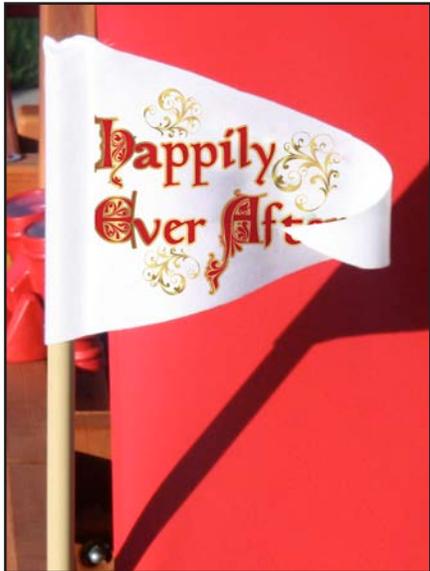
Notes: **Found to be the cause of death.**



Once Upon A Murder

# All The Extras

Included in the purchased mystery are ideas and designs to help you decorate your castle with fun and authentic materials that are easy to make.



This has been just a sampling of what you  
will receive when you purchase

# Once Upon A Murder

The complete package includes:

- **A Host Guide**— A complete how-to of throwing your party which includes directions on preparing the invitations, assigning characters and preparing for the party.
- **A Schedule of the Night**— A step-by-step breakdown of how the night will go.
- **An Introduction**— to be read to the guests upon arrival.
- **Designed Invitations**— that you can customize with the details of your party.
- **Scrolled Character List & Royal Times**—to be sent with the invitations, it includes background information on the other guests that will be at the party.
- **Character Sheets**— full descriptions of the characters, including costuming and acting tips.
- **Character Objective Sheets** —includes objectives for each character to try to achieve at each stage of the game.
- **Name Tags**
- **Fake Money**— to be distributed to guests and used in the party for scheming and bribery.
- **Evidence** — more clues that will be presented towards the end of the night. This evidence will help your guests solve the mystery and find the murderer.
- **Solution**— a detailed description of the what and why the murder happened including WHO is the murderer.
- **“Who Dunit” Cards**— to allow your guests to guess the murderer and to vote for the most animated character and best outfit.
- **Award Certificates**— to be awarded to the best costume, the most theatrical guest, the player with the most money at the end of the night and to each of the guests that solve the murder.
- **Party Printables and Extras**— directions, templates and designs to help you plan for your party. (Pictured on previous page. **Included are:** how to make a scrolled invite, how to make a castle wall, templates for flags and menus, and designed signs for you to print!

All of our parties come in the form of a professionally designed pdf. Immediately after completing your order, you will be able to re-login to your account using the username and password you established in the purchasing process. Once in your account, you will have the ability to download your party (including optional emailable invitations for your guests) for fourteen days after your purchase. If you forget your password, you can request a new password be sent to your email. By having our games online as instant downloads, we are able to satisfy even the most urgent need for a party.

Please log onto: [www.nightofmystery.com](http://www.nightofmystery.com)  
to purchase your mystery today.