



A PERSONALIZED MURDER MYSTERY

Manor of Secrets

A solvable three-round case written for this exact circle of suspects.

GAME NIGHT / CAMPY / 6 SUSPECTS

CASE BRIEFING

Your night, staged in three rounds

Welcome the players as thunder gathers over Jordan Manor. Explain that Basil's death happens offstage, the printed facts are immutable, and everyone may embroider only their character's attitude. Give every envelope a little ceremony; the facts are rigorous even when the delivery deserves a velvet curtain.

Place the three round envelopes beside the covered solution and keep the gallery timeline out of sight.

Give each guest only the booklet bearing their name; private pages are never traded or photographed.

Ask players to introduce public identities before opening Round 1, then allow roughly twenty minutes per round.

The storm cuts the lights for one breath. Open the first envelope and establish who could reach the west wing.

The clocks have been compared. Open the second envelope and test every confident story against verified time.

The road is nearly clear. Break the last seal, read every remaining alibi, and prepare a final accusation.

How the rounds land

You are playing tonight as well as hosting. Read this guide up to the round introductions, then stop: do not open the sealed solution page. Hand the sealed page to any guest before you start, or leave it face down until the final vote. Everything you need to run the three rounds is above this line, and your own character file is spoiler-free.

STOP: the next section identifies the culprit. Keep it sealed until every accusation is locked.

ROUND 1

Introduce every suspect and let the first stories collide.

ROUND 2

Open motives and whereabouts. The answer must still remain ambiguous.

ROUND 3

Reveal the decisive facts, collect accusations, then open the solution.

VICTIM DOSSIER

BASIL HARCOURT

The victim is a non-player character. No guest is cast as the victim.

READ ALOUD AS THE NIGHT BEGINS

Tonight, at last

The invitations arrived a week ago on heavy cream paper, sealed in crimson wax: Basil Harcourt requests your company at Ashcroft Manor, for dinner and the unveiling of a portrait no one has been permitted to see. Everyone came - which says more about Basil than about the portrait. Tonight the iron gates swing shut behind the last car just as the first thunder crosses the hills, and in the great hall Priya, observant as ever, takes coats and umbrellas with the timing of a metronome, noting - as always - exactly who arrives with whom, and who arrives alone.

The manor performs for its guests: fires lit in rooms nobody will sit in, a portrait draped in red velvet at the head of the gallery, and a dinner long enough to hold every rivalry at the table at least once. Simone studies the covered canvas the way one studies a rival. Yusuf - curious, and proud of it - has already catalogued three conversations worth remembering. Basil presides over all of it like a man holding a winning hand he cannot wait to show.

Between the roast and the dessert, Basil rises and taps his glass. The room quiets. He promises that at tonight's unveiling, one overdue truth will finally hang where everyone can see it - and he smiles around the table as if daring someone to ask which truth he means. The smiles that answer him hold beautifully. Jordan's knuckles, white around a fork, do not. Outside, the storm settles over the valley and quietly swallows the road home.

At midnight the household gathers in the gallery. Candles down the long wall, the velvet waiting, rain hammering the tall windows in sheets. Basil steps toward the portrait, reaching for the cord - and the storm takes the lights. One breath of absolute dark. A sound that could be a chair, or a door, or nothing. When the chandeliers stutter back, the velvet lies pooled on the floor, the frame stands bare - and Basil Harcourt is not in the room.

It is Andre who follows the corridor toward the old gallery stair, calling Basil's name into the dark, and it is Andre's silence that brings the rest of you running. At the foot of his own unfinished portrait lies Basil Harcourt, quite still. Andre - calm as ever - kneels to check his wrist: the hands are steady, but the single shake of the head that follows is not. The candlelight shows no wound; the storm never got inside. Only a man who left the dinner upright and will not be standing again.

Yusuf closes the gallery doors and turns the key, and for a long moment the only sound in Ashcroft Manor is rain arguing with glass. The telephone line is down. The road is water. Whoever rearranged this evening did it between the soup and the storm - and is standing in this house right now, wearing a face you know. From here the night divides in two: what happened, and what everyone will claim happened.

The house closes ranks around the empty chair. Priya moves through the rooms lighting lamps, because dark corners help nobody now; Mateo, bold and unhurried, bolts the garden doors from the inside and pockets the key in full view of everyone - a courtesy, and a message. Nobody is to leave. Nobody could anyway.

In the drawing room the coffee goes around and sides form fast: who pours whose drink, who sits beside whom, who repeats whose story a little too precisely. An hour ago you were guests together. Now every kindness has a second meaning, and the creative Simone has begun sketching faces without asking permission.

Somewhere between the dining room and the gallery, the evening rearranged itself - and houses like this one keep records. Bell logs. Key hooks. A ledger by the pantry door. The first of those records are about to surface, carried in different hands around this room. Some of you already know what you are holding. The wise thing - the only thing - is to lay it on the table whole, before someone else describes it for you.

The first evidence reaches you now. It will not say who is guilty; it will say something more dangerous - who could have reached the gallery, and who could not. Each holder reads their fact aloud, exactly as printed. Then talk. And while you talk, watch who relaxes.

By midnight Ashcroft Manor has stopped pretending to be a home. It is a floor plan with witnesses. The fire burns low in the drawing room and old grievances against Basil surface one by one over cold coffee: money owed, credit stolen, land promised, loyalty spent. Spoken aloud, each one sounds like a confession - which is exactly why none of them is proof. The portraits along the stair watch it happen with the patience of people who have seen this family argue before.

The house has begun watching its guests. Simone finds the gallery lights burning again though everyone swears no one entered; Andre has quietly noted who stopped drinking their coffee, and when. Jordan stands too long at the window that faces nothing but rain. Nobody says the word yet. Everyone is thinking it.

The second wave of evidence is about time. Clocks, ledgers, signatures - the manor wrote things down all evening, even when its guests did not. Paper is unforgiving: it does not care who is charming, who is grieving, or who is observant. It only cares who was where.

Read the new facts aloud, then set them against every confident story told in the last hour. Somewhere in this room, two accounts of the same ten minutes cannot both be true - and one of the tellers knows it. Hold your neighbor's gaze while their timeline is read back. The innocent check the clock; the guilty check the exits.

Dawn is coming, and the road will open with it. Whatever walks out of Ashcroft Manor at first light walks out as legend - the story everyone will tell for years, true or not. If the truth is to be caught at all, it must be caught tonight, in this room, by the people who ate at Basil's table. The storm gave the killer a stage. It also sealed the audience in with the performance.

Nobody sits anymore. The long table has become a courtroom with dessert still on it, and every polite phrase carries a blade. The final records are unsealed now - the ones someone in this house was counting on the storm to bury. Listen to what is offered unasked: alibis nobody requested, kindnesses arriving suspiciously on schedule. Innocence explains itself once. Guilt keeps explaining.

One of you has rehearsed this hour since before the first course. Listen for the account that arrives too complete: grief stumbles, memory hesitates, but a prepared story walks in a straight line all the way to the door.

Lay every fact end to end and walk the night one minute at a time - the dinner, the toast, the dark, the gallery. When you are done, exactly one chair at this table will have no account of the decisive moment. Look around. Choose carefully.

READ AFTER THE VOTES, BEFORE THE SOLUTION

The votes are cast. The manor is quiet the way a stage is quiet after the last line - not empty, only waiting. The rain has thinned to a whisper on the glass, and the candles have burned to their last inch, and nobody wants to be the one to speak first. Somewhere upstairs a shutter taps out the seconds, and the portrait - unveiled at last - watches the drawing room with eyes that seem, tonight, extremely well informed.

Basil Harcourt collected secrets the way other people collect paintings: carefully, expensively, and with no intention of giving them back. Tonight the collection is opened. Every accusation made in this room is now part of what happens next. Listen closely; some debts in this room are still being paid.

Whatever is said in the next minutes, remember this room as it is now - the low light, the storm exhausted, every face you trusted at dinner arranged around one final question. One of these faces has been performing all night. The performance ends here.

READ AFTER THE VOTES, BEFORE THE SOLUTION · CONTINUED

One truth has been hanging in the gallery all along, wrapped in velvet, waiting for its unveiling. It is time. Break the last seal.

YOU ARE FORMALLY SUSPECTED

Manor of Secrets



Dinner at Jordan Manor — attendance is evidence A storm has closed the road, a portrait waits behind velvet, and Basil Harcourt has assembled a table full of people with excellent reasons to watch one another. Bring your finest entrance, your most suspicious eyebrow, and absolutely no sensible alibi improvisation.

COME READY TO EXPLAIN YOURSELF

FOR JORDAN ONLY

Jordan

playing Rowan Ashcroft

WHAT EVERYONE KNOWS

Jordan plays Rowan Ashcroft, the composed heir with a reformer's streak. Jordan is the estate's poised heir, newly returned with plans to turn a shuttered house into something useful. Carry the burden of the family name as though it were tailored for you. Commit to the entrance, savor the title, and deploy one magnificent pause when questioned.

KEEP THIS QUIET

YOUR SECRET

Jordan learned that the victim had quietly rewritten a codicil and intended to sell the estate before dawn. Let concern for the estate explain your intensity without volunteering the codicil. Guard this secret as though a spotlight has already found you, but keep every claim compatible with the printed evidence. You caused the staged murder using this method: Jordan reset the portrait-gallery counterweight so the ceremonial unveiling would trigger a silent, staged accident. Never contradict a printed token; redirect attention toward the true motives around the table.

YOUR PRIVATE MISSION

Learn who else knew the estate sale was planned and secure the staff's future.

CUT ALONG THE DASHED LINES

Jordan's clue cards



ROUND 1 - EVIDENCE

red herring

With the gravity of a chandelier choosing this exact moment to flicker: Priya argued with Basil Harcourt in the estate office about missing household wages at 8:54 PM. Read it boldly; melodrama may decorate the evidence, never rewrite it.

FACT Priya argued with Basil Harcourt in the estate office about missing household wages at 8:54 PM.

FOR PRIYA ONLY

Priya

playing Ellis Bellweather

WHAT EVERYONE KNOWS

Priya plays Ellis Bellweather, the unflappable steward who notices everything. Priya runs Ashcroft Manor with immaculate timing, discreet authority, and an unnerving memory for misplaced objects. You know where every key belongs and which guest has failed to return one. Commit to the entrance, savor the title, and deploy one magnificent pause when questioned.

KEEP THIS QUIET

YOUR SECRET

Priya has been hiding evidence that the estate accounts were manipulated to blame the household staff. Protect the staff-account evidence until someone proves they can use it responsibly. Guard this secret as though a spotlight has already found you, but keep every claim compatible with the printed evidence. You did not commit the murder. Share your printed evidence honestly while deciding whom you trust.

YOUR PRIVATE MISSION

Build a precise movement log and expose the manipulation of the household accounts.

CUT ALONG THE DASHED LINES

Priya's clue cards



ROUND 2 - EVIDENCE

alibi

The second envelope enters, impeccably late and carrying this fact: Yusuf was signing the east-library register beside two fresh ink witnesses at 9:17 PM. Read it boldly; melodrama may decorate the evidence, never rewrite it.

FACT Yusuf was signing the east-library register beside two fresh ink witnesses at 9:17 PM.



ROUND 3 - EVIDENCE

alibi

At last, the seal breaks and the room must reckon with this: Andre was treating a scalded hand in the morning room in view of the footman at 9:17 PM. Read it boldly; melodrama may decorate the evidence, never rewrite it.

FACT Andre was treating a scalded hand in the morning room in view of the footman at 9:17 PM.

FOR YUSUF ONLY

Yusuf

playing Marlow Quill

WHAT EVERYONE KNOWS

Yusuf plays Marlow Quill, the charming archivist with inconvenient receipts. Yusuf catalogs the manor's letters and legends, making dusty facts sound like the evening's best gossip. Offer dates and documents with the sparkle other people reserve for scandal. Commit to the entrance, savor the title, and deploy one magnificent pause when questioned.

KEEP THIS QUIET

YOUR SECRET

Yusuf found a sealed ledger proving that the victim took credit for a discovery that belonged to someone else. Keep the sealed ledger hidden until its provenance cannot be challenged. Guard this secret as though a spotlight has already found you, but keep every claim compatible with the printed evidence. You did not commit the murder. Share your printed evidence honestly while deciding whom you trust.

YOUR PRIVATE MISSION

Identify who searched the archive and restore the stolen scholarly credit.

CUT ALONG THE DASHED LINES

Yusuf's clue cards



ROUND 1 - EVIDENCE

alibi

With the gravity of a chandelier choosing this exact moment to flicker: Simone was mixing a numbered batch of varnish in the winter studio during a timed exposure at 9:17 PM. Read it boldly; melodrama may decorate the evidence, never rewrite it.

FACT Simone was mixing a numbered batch of varnish in the winter studio during a timed exposure at 9:17 PM.

FOR ANDRE ONLY

Andre

playing Dr. Avery Lark

WHAT EVERYONE KNOWS

Andre plays Dr. Avery Lark, the reassuring physician with a precise eye. Andre is the village physician, equally skilled at calming nerves and spotting details everyone else waved away. Stay composed, listen for impossible timings, and make precision feel reassuring. Commit to the entrance, savor the title, and deploy one magnificent pause when questioned.

KEEP THIS QUIET

YOUR SECRET

Andre knows the victim staged a recent illness to pressure the family and kept the unused medicine vial. Do not reveal the staged illness until it helps separate theater from physical fact. Guard this secret as though a spotlight has already found you, but keep every claim compatible with the printed evidence. You did not commit the murder. Share your printed evidence honestly while deciding whom you trust.

YOUR PRIVATE MISSION

Test the claimed time of death and clear one person with medical timing.

CUT ALONG THE DASHED LINES

Andre's clue cards



ROUND 2 - EVIDENCE

access

The second envelope enters, impeccably late and carrying this fact: Only Jordan and Priya opened the west-wing service door during the pre-dinner inspection. Read it boldly; melodrama may decorate the evidence, never rewrite it.

FACT Only Jordan and Priya opened the west-wing service door during the pre-dinner inspection.



ROUND 3 - EVIDENCE

alibi

At last, the seal breaks and the room must reckon with this: Mateo was closing the glasshouse vents while the rain gauge camera was running at 9:17 PM. Read it boldly; melodrama may decorate the evidence, never rewrite it.

FACT Mateo was closing the glasshouse vents while the rain gauge camera was running at 9:17 PM.

FOR SIMONE ONLY

Simone

playing Sage Pembroke

WHAT EVERYONE KNOWS

Simone plays Sage Pembroke, the magnetic portrait artist who reads a room. Simone was commissioned to paint the manor's final family portrait and has become the dinner's unofficial social weather vane. Study the room as a portrait whose most interesting subject keeps moving. Commit to the entrance, savor the title, and deploy one magnificent pause when questioned.

KEEP THIS QUIET

YOUR SECRET

Simone painted over a tiny background detail after realizing it exposed the victim's secret midnight visitor. Protect the painted-over detail until you know why the visitor was concealed. Guard this secret as though a spotlight has already found you, but keep every claim compatible with the printed evidence. You did not commit the murder. Share your printed evidence honestly while deciding whom you trust.

YOUR PRIVATE MISSION

Recover your unpaid commission and determine who altered the gallery display.

CUT ALONG THE DASHED LINES

Simone's clue cards



ROUND 2 - EVIDENCE

opportunity

The second envelope enters, impeccably late and carrying this fact: The portrait-gallery latch could be reached without crossing the ballroom only from the route used by Jordan and Priya. Read it boldly; melodrama may decorate the evidence, never rewrite it.

FACT The portrait-gallery latch could be reached without crossing the ballroom only from the route used by Jordan and Priya.



ROUND 3 - EVIDENCE

forensic

At last, the seal breaks and the room must reckon with this: A chip of Jordan's distinctive silver sealing wax was pressed beneath the portrait-gallery counterweight screw. Read it boldly; melodrama may decorate the evidence, never rewrite it.

FACT A chip of Jordan's distinctive silver sealing wax was pressed beneath the portrait-gallery counterweight screw.

FOR MATEO ONLY

Mateo

playing Finch Alder

WHAT EVERYONE KNOWS

Mateo plays Finch Alder, the resourceful groundskeeper with quiet confidence. Mateo knows every hedge, service door, and stubborn hinge on the grounds, and speaks only when the fact will land. Treat the manor's routes as a map you can see even with your eyes closed. Commit to the entrance, savor the title, and deploy one magnificent pause when questioned.

KEEP THIS QUIET

YOUR SECRET

Mateo discovered that the victim planned to clear the old orchard and had already marked the rare trees for removal. Hold back the orchard markings until the land scheme becomes relevant. Guard this secret as though a spotlight has already found you, but keep every claim compatible with the printed evidence. You did not commit the murder. Share your printed evidence honestly while deciding whom you trust.

YOUR PRIVATE MISSION

Track service-route footprints and prevent the old orchard from being erased.

CUT ALONG THE DASHED LINES

Mateo's clue cards



ROUND 1 - EVIDENCE

access

With the gravity of a chandelier choosing this exact moment to flicker: Access to the west-wing service door was limited to Jordan, Priya, Yusuf and Andre. Read it boldly; melodrama may decorate the evidence, never rewrite it.

FACT Access to the west-wing service door was limited to Jordan, Priya, Yusuf and Andre.



ROUND 3 - EVIDENCE

alibi

At last, the seal breaks and the room must reckon with this: Priya was seen resetting the linen-passage clock with both hands occupied at 9:17 PM. Read it boldly; melodrama may decorate the evidence, never rewrite it.

FACT Priya was seen resetting the linen-passage clock with both hands occupied at 9:17 PM.

Your suspects, on record

◆ TONIGHT I AM

Rowan Ashcroft

Jordan

◆ TONIGHT I AM

Ellis Bellweather

Priya

◆ TONIGHT I AM

Marlow Quill

Yusuf

◆ TONIGHT I AM

Dr. Avery Lark

Andre

◆ TONIGHT I AM

Sage Pembroke

Simone

◆ TONIGHT I AM

Finch Alder

Mateo

HOST EYES ONLY

Sealed solution

Do not open until every final accusation is recorded.

MANOR OF SECRETS

OPEN ONLY AFTER FINAL VOTES

The final redaction falls

The culprit is Jordan (playing Rowan Ashcroft).

The gallery mechanism answers to evidence rather than reputation. Read the reconstruction slowly, then let the culprit finish the scene in character. Jordan used knowledge of the family latch to enter the gallery, adjusted the counterweight, and returned by the blue corridor. Priya looked equally capable until the late linen-clock evidence fixed Priya elsewhere. A flake of Jordan's private silver sealing wax on the adjustment screw independently confirms the conclusion.

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