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Dick Branston

A Mysterious Mayan Murder

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

A few simple instructions to help you along:

Firstly: Don't Panic!

This booklet contains all the information you need as a guest to help you act your part throughout the murder mystery party.

The first page provides you with additional background information to help you get into character, however there are no special acting abilities required and you can make as much or as little of your character as you wish.

After that on each page you are given either something to read out (dialogue), questions to ask, or information to help you answer questions you will be asked. These questions and answers are not intended to be read out word for word. Instead read them, digest the information and then ask and answer any questions in your own words. You are encouraged to ad lib, but it is very important you do not lie, so please provide the information contained within your booklet when asked.

Your host for the evening will direct you where necessary and tell you when to move on to the next round when the time is right.

If you are the murderer you will not be told. When you finally come to guess who did it – it could easily be you and feel free to point the finger at yourself if you feel you must!

And lastly: Have fun!

Dick Branston

Background Character Information:

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

You are totally business focussed and constantly on the look out for new ideas and companies to add to your extensive portfolio. You've also invested heavily in several areas of research in the hope that some new idea might make you more millions. You've been a major sponsor of projects like the excavations at Nova Corona in the hope that they might also turn up something sellable.

Try to sell people business ideas or proposals, however odd they might sound. After all, no one would have thought a bag-less vacuum cleaner would sell, so who knows what could be around the corner? Shame that wasn't one of your ideas...

Find out what people want, or need. It doesn't matter what it is that they're looking for, you will have something to suit their needs somewhere in your industrial set-up. You are, after all, a big business person with lots of companies.

You are energetic and full of fun and have a tendency to dominate conversations. Be loud, be expressive and be memorable!

You love new ideas and trying new things, so see if you can get anyone else here interested in breaking a world record. There must be something dangerous to do around the Yucatan...

Dick Branston

Introductions:

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

Dick Branston speaks first using the following dialogue:

Well, what can I say in my defence? I'm just terribly sorry that you've all been caught up in this mess. And despite what the inspector might think of me, it's my good name, the name of Dick Branston, that is being dragged through the mud with this enquiry more than any of the rest of you.

Jimmy? You'll just have to trust me. If I could have avoided this public scandal you can be sure I would have done. These things are much better done out of the public eye. As things stand, we have a roomful of VIP guests and I look like a callous individual at best, potential murderer at worst!

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

Scripted Dialogue Round 1

- Dick Branston** What can I say? I'm sorry. How was I to know that the police would suddenly decide Doug had been murdered?
- Lotta Cacao** You mean you planned to go ahead anyway without even mentioning he'd died?
- Charles Champagne** Seems a bit callous, even for you.
- Erma Dazzle** Oh, leave the man alone. Ignore them Dick. They just hate a millionaire. To them everything is so significant.
- Frank Apprezel** And what's that supposed to mean, Erma?
- Anne De'Chissel** It means, Frank, that she's got so much money *she* doesn't care either.
- Lotta Cacao** Who wants to be a millionaire?
- Erma Dazzle** I do!
- Frank Apprezel** You *are*, Erma!
- Anne De'Chissel** Lotta, you're young. Inexperienced. When you're a woman of the world, you'll realize the truth. You can't do anything without money.

Cont.

Dick Branston You know what they say, money makes the world go round!

Frank Apprezel Ignore them Lotta – money's not important. Quality of life, now that's important. If you enjoy what you do, then it doesn't matter if you're rich or not.

Dick Branston So speaks the famous poverty stricken artist.

Erma Dazzle He has a point though Dick. My dad always said 'if you find a job you enjoy, then you never work another day in your life'.

Lotta Cacao He was a very clever man then, your dad.

Dick Branston Clever. And rich as I recall!

Charles Champagne Look, aren't we supposed to be discussing a murder? We seem to have drifted a little onto social politics.

Lotta Cacao I agree, and surely Doug's death is more important! Look, why don't I get us back on track. I'm sure I have a question for someone.

Dick Branston - First Round

Questions you should ask:

Ask Frank Apprezel about his financial situation in the Yucatan. Is his artwork paying his way here?

Ask Anne what she is doing at the dig site. You've seen her at the site numerous times. Is she helping the archaeological team? And was she there today?

Information you should reveal about yourself only when asked.

You are extremely shrewd and although you like your PR officer to claim you are a philanthropist, in actual fact you sponsor major projects like Nova Corona in the hope that you'll get the inside track on anything profitable. Archaeologists have been searching for Nova Corona for years as they feel it might hold the key to Mayan civilisation. As the Mayan's were very advanced in astronomy and maths, you wanted to be the first to hear about any new discoveries.

You made it part of the funding agreement that you were to be briefed on all the latest finds at Nova Corona. The biggest discovery at the site was uncovered by Doug Oles a few weeks ago. He called the find the Chich. It was an inner predictive wheel of the Mayan Calendar. The Chich was an extremely important find. You have an information sheet which explains a bit about it. (SHOW EVERYONE CLUE 1)

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Scripted Dialogue Round 2

- Erma Dazzle** Oh. How awful! Covered in bruises, did he say? Oh! It makes my stomach turn over to think what state he must have been in.
- Frank Apprezel** I think you'll find that was what you've just eaten. I'm feeling a bit squiffy too.
- Dick Branston** I'll have you know I ordered only the best. The food is completely fresh.
- Anne De'chissel** Then maybe it's just a guilty conscience that's making you both feel sick.
- Lotta Cacao** Or sunstroke. It has been rather bright today.
- Charles Champagne** I'm sure Erma is perfectly innocent – she's too beautiful to have been involved in anything sordid.
- Erma Dazzle** Thank you Charles.
- Frank Apprezel** What about me?
- Anne De'Chissel** I'm sure you're perfectly innocent too, Frank. They're just goading you.

Cont.

- Charles Champagne** Isn't that what the inspector wants? He asked us to get information out of people.
- Erma Dazzle** Yes, but I'm sure he didn't mean we had to use hard interrogation techniques.
- Dick Branston** Why use hard ones when soft ones will do?
- Lotta Cacao** What do you mean by that?
- Erma Dazzle** He means flattery, Lotta. Dick knows just how to get information out of people – that's why he's so rich.
- Charles Champagne** You mean he seduces the ladies?
- Frank Apprezel** Maybe I could do with some lessons. Not that I'm interested in getting information out of people... but a date would be nice.
- Lotta Cacao** You only have to ask in the right way. A little bit of romance goes a long way.
- Dick Branston** A bit of blood does too... shall we crack on?

Dick Branston - Second Round

Questions you should ask:

You saw Erma Dazzle up at the dig site yesterday arguing with Doug Oles. You didn't realise they knew each other. What were they arguing about and what is the relationship between them?

Ask Lotta where she was this afternoon? Was she up at the dig site helping as a volunteer?

Information you should reveal about yourself only when asked.

You arrived at Nova Corona before the other guests this evening. You wanted to make sure that Doug Oles had arranged the Preview Dinner correctly. When you arrived, Doug was very agitated. He said that something had happened to the inner wheel. He showed it to you, but you couldn't see anything wrong with it. However he insisted on checking something at the site before the meal so you let him go. You hoped a bit of jungle air might calm him down and planned to find him a little later before the guests arrived. Sadly you didn't see him alive again after that point.

You were called over to the bottom of the acropolis by one of the site personnel just before the guests arrived. It was then that you found out that Doug was dead. You assumed he must have slipped at the top of the pyramid. The sides of the pyramid are quite steep and solid stone. You expect the fall broke his neck, as well as a few other bones. Doug had nothing in his hands or about his person when you found him. Anything he might have been carrying would have fallen separately to himself.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Scripted Dialogue Round 3

- Erma Dazzle** So... it's the Chich that's missing. Well, that puts another light on this investigation.
- Lotta Cacao** How so?
- Erma Dazzle** Wouldn't you want to know the future, Lotta?
- Frank Apprezel** But we already DO know how to predict the future using the Mayan calendar, Erma. The Chich was just the physical representation of the mathematical model.
- Lotta Cacao** Does that mean we've narrowed it down to someone that isn't good at maths and doesn't know enough archaeology to know that the Chich is actually worthless?
- Charles Champagne** Worthless? Oh, it's hardly that, Lotta. People don't want mathematical theories, they want practical applications. The Chich gives people a quick and easy way of predicting things without struggling for hours with pen and paper.
- Anne De'Chissel** But it's probably only about as reliable as astrology.

Cont.

Frank Apprezel My horoscope said I'd be up to my neck in it this week.

Lotta Cacao I don't put much faith in the stars. It's what drives us inside that counts.

Dick Branston Money drives me.

Anne De'Chissel Yes, I think we had actually all realized that, Dick. And I still haven't forgiven you for embroiling us all in this murder enquiry as yet.

Erma Dazzle Look, I don't know about any of you, but I have places I'd rather be this evening. Auditions to do – that sort of thing.

Dick Branston You don't have the monopoly on appointments you know.

Lotta Cacao No, but she has a point. Shall we crack on?

Frank Apprezel Me first this time I think. I have a question for one of you.

Dick Branston - Third Round

Questions you should ask:

You overheard Lotta and Doug arguing yesterday afternoon at the dig site. Can Lotta recall the argument and would she be able to explain what it was they were fighting about?

Ask Charles where he was this afternoon. Was he at the dig site, or was he somewhere else? Does he think anyone can verify where he was at the time Doug died?

Information you should reveal about yourself only when asked.

You recognised the value of the inner wheel of the calendar as soon as Doug Oles briefed you of the find. If the wheel was a good as he claimed then it would give you a predictive power you could sell. You tried to persuade Doug that the existence of the wheel should be kept a secret. You got into quite an argument about it when you were planning the Preview Dinner. Needless to say Doug refused to keep it a secret.

After you found his body you were concerned that he may have been carrying the inner wheel of the calendar when he fell, and so you did a quick search of the base of the pyramid and found the inner wheel broken into two sections. Rather than taking it back to the archaeological team you decided to keep it for your own purposes. You had thought you could keep its continued existence a secret and therefore keep it for yourself, however you fear someone may have seen you bundling it into your jeep as a few cars arrived at the site while you were packing it away.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Dick Branston

Concluding Statement

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

Dick Branston speaks after Anne De'Chisell using the following dialogue:

And I suppose we just have to believe you didn't think that his request was a little odd? Let's not forget you've been paid for your services and I'm sure you have no intention of ripping up that little cheque! As for me... well, I certainly didn't kill Doug and that ring of stone in my boot is worthless to me now.... though... perhaps I can sell it back to you Charles? You did, after all, commission the statue and the way I see it, La France will want something to show for their investment.

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

Tell the others.

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