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Once upon
a murder

Old King Cole

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!

Old King Cole

Background Character Information:

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

A merry old soul, you are always ready with a joke. You do expect people to laugh, however, and if this doesn't happen, you are apt to sulk.

Speak in a loud voice and expect everyone to agree with you no matter what opinion you happen to hold - and you change your mind frequently!

You are a king and therefore your opinion is always the correct one!

Remember, you are royal. Command others to fetch and carry for you. Insist that you are the first served and that everyone stands if you stand. No one sits when royalty is standing! If there are other crowned heads present, insist that you have precedence. Being 'Old' has its advantages.

You are very taken with Contrary Mary. Insist everyone is quiet when she wishes to speak.

Old King Cole

Introductions:

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

Old King Cole speaks first using the following dialogue:

I am so saddened to hear of Humpty's fall. I was made aware of it last night, when I sent all of my horses and all of my men to Humpty's aid. I'm sure each of them did all that they could. Of course, I'm sure it is completely unnecessary for me to introduce myself, but I understand the patterns of ceremony. I am Old King Cole, known for my merriness and my patronage of violin trios - or, you might say, my fiddlers three!

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

Scripted Dialogue Round 1

Old King Cole:

Well, I'd like to call for my pipe and call for my bowl and call for my fiddlers three, and since I'm the oldest King here, I think I should get what I want! I'm finding this situation very stressful.

Dread Pirate:

Sometimes even royalty can't get what they want, Your Majesty. I think we're all marooned until the murderer is discovered. It's too bad someone isn't wearing a big 'x' on their back.

Alice:

Being marooned can be exciting! Some of my very best adventures happened when I couldn't find my way home. Not that I'm recommending falling down a rabbit hole, you understand.

Contrary Mary:

If you're feeling tense, Your Majesty, may I suggest a spot of gardening? Unless, of course, you're one of those who doesn't like getting their hands dirty.

Cont.

Jack:

You'd know all about dirty hands, wouldn't you Mary? I've done a fair amount of digging in my time, and every time I get magical results. Count on me, everyone, to dig us out of this mystery!

Queen Grimhilde (QG):

We carry a marvelous lotion for gardeners' hands at The Fairest of Them All. It's called Soil Salve. I'll send you a free sample, Your Majesty. Relieving stress is very important. Stress is terrible for the complexion.

Old King Cole - First Round

Questions you should ask:

Contrary Mary seems to have been a fan of Humpty's radio programme. Ask Contrary Mary if she knew Humpty in person or just through the radio.

Ask Queen Grimhilde if Humpty ever refused to endorse a Fairest of Them All product.

Information you should reveal about yourself only when asked.

The arrangement for you sending all of your horses and all of your men was made many years ago. Humpty was your tutor when you were studying for your C levels – that's Crown levels. In return for his academic help, you promised you would dispatch all of your horses and all of your men if he were ever to fall off his wall. Humpty was well-loved.

You've only had to send out all your horses and all your men twice before now. The first time was many years ago, when Humpty was new to his wall and had insisted on sitting up there even though he'd spent most of the night sampling Giant wine. The second time was two days ago.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Scripted Dialogue Round 2

Queen Grimhilde (QG): Broken bottles of lotion were found near Humpty's wall? Were they bottles of my lotion? Who would waste my lotion? Now that *is* a crime!

Alice: Maybe they were broken accidentally. Accidents do happen, you know. Did they have a label reading 'Do Not Drop'? I've always found labels very instructive.

Dread Pirate: You ladies need to stop talking about lotion. It's a slippery subject, leading nowhere. Much like the plank on my ship!

Jack: The Dread Pirate is right. We need to concentrate on another slippery subject; discovering which of us pushed Humpty off his wall.

Old King Cole: Don't look at me. I'm looking at *you*. Anyone who carries magic beans is suspicious, in my opinion.

Cont.

Contrary Mary:

He was killed at midnight, wasn't he? I'm not surprised, then. All sorts of evil pests emerge in the dark. The damage I've seen in my gardens is shocking.

Old King Cole - Second Round

Questions you should ask:

Alice has said that she knows the story behind Humpty ending up floating in a fountain. Ask Alice to share this story with you.

Jack has a beanstalk and Contrary Mary is a gardener. Ask Jack if he and Mary have any joint projects in store.

Information you should reveal about yourself only when asked.

Last night you were hosting a concert celebrating your Silver Jubilee! Tradition demanded that there be some sort of celebration - you knew that your people would be so disappointed if you didn't do anything! You're not known as a merry old soul for nothing!

You try to be merry all the time and can usually see the humour in most situations. When QG threw Humpty into the fountain, you thought it was hilarious! Poor old Humpty! He did look surprised! No harm done of course, just good fun. QG has a wicked sense of humour. Humpty was well-loved by all. He told you that his pocket watch was a gift from a loving fan - that's why it was engraved with a heart. Or so he said.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Scripted Dialogue Round 3

Jack: We're getting close, I can feel it. It's as if I'm about to reach the top of my beanstalk. Reach for it, everyone! I know this mystery is going to crack wide open any minute now.

Queen Grimhilde (QG): Humpty is already cracked wide open, thanks to one of us pushing him off of his wall. And speaking of reaching, I'm reaching the limit of my patience.

Dread Pirate: Egg-sactly. We need to lay this mystery to rest very soon. I want to watch the guilty party walk the plank! Please note I said watch. It won't be me making that fateful walk.

Alice: I'm very confused by all of this. It's like trying to understand backwards poetry. Perhaps if I could look at each of you through a looking glass, it would be clearer.

Queen Grimilde (QG): I have a looking glass very much like the one you're talking about, Alice. I don't lend it out. Ever.

Cont.

Contrary Mary:

We can't be discouraged! We simply need to dig a little deeper. This is a double-dig case. I'm sure we'll see our investigations flower into a solution very soon!

Old King Cole:

Contrary Mary is right. You're so clever, my dear. We need to put our heads together and dig out the villain. And that's no yolk!

Old King Cole - Third Round

Questions you should ask:

Jack has said he knows all about the danger of falling from a great height. Ask him if he talked to Humpty about safety measures.

Ask the Dread Pirate why he wears a mask.

Information you should reveal about yourself only when asked.

It is impossible for you to travel incognito amongst your people, nor would you want to! Half the fun of being King is being recognised! Besides, even if you could change your appearance, your voice would be the same.

As King, you get approval over everything heard on the radio. Humpty was failing to provide his script for your approval. People don't realize that the reason this is Happily Ever After is because there is someone – you - firmly in control.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Old King Cole

Concluding Statement

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

Old King Cole speaks first using the following dialogue:

It is true that Humpty was not submitting his radio scripts for my approval, but as King, I don't feel I need to defend myself. I did not push Humpty. If I had, why would I have sent all my horses and all my men to his aid?

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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