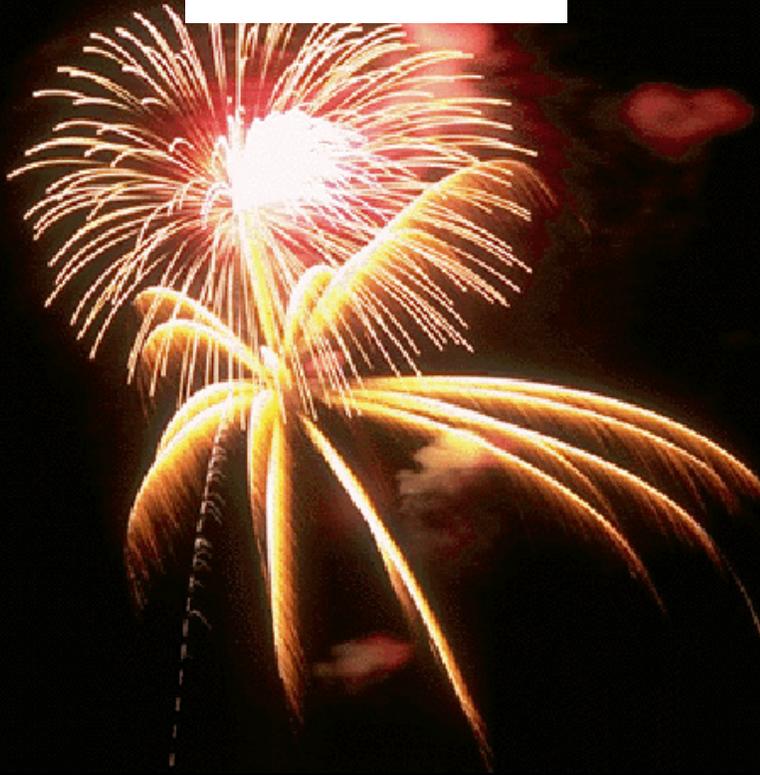


I Loathe A Parade

An Original 4th of July Murder Mystery



Preview



Discover who
killed Mayor
Joe Possumz at
the Fourth of
July parade!

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How to Organize “I Loathe A Parade”

Thanks for purchasing this murder mystery. You and your guests will enjoy the challenge of solving a crime that will test everyone’s powers of deduction. Here is what you should do to coordinate your murder mystery event

STEP 1: Review the materials in this mystery packet. But ... please do it in a very specific way. Remember - you have ALL of the information, *including the solution to the mystery*. If you decide to participate in the mystery as a role player or an investigator, you’ll want to keep yourself in the dark about WHO DONE IT.

All page numbers in this packet are in the upper left-hand corner of the pages as you look at them vertically. That way you can run off the material without having the page numbers interfere with the format. The entire packet includes:

- **Instructions on how to organize the event.** They’re on pages 2 through 5. (You’re reading them right now.)
- **Instructions for the person who will facilitate the event.** Information for the person who will take charge of the murder investigation is on page 6. *If only 6 people are invited to the event, you may want to assign this duty to Rocky the Clown, who is also Alderman Rockwell Kenmore.*
- **Role Player Information.** These pages serve as a “cover letter” for the information you’ll send to the *six individuals* who will be in character as the suspects. Run off six copies of pages 7 and 8 back to back. You may want to use better quality stationery for this letter.
- **The Roles.** Pages 9 through 20 contain the information you’ll send with the cover letters. Each role is designed as a two-sided two-fold document. Again, run off this information back to back. *Each role player gets only the information that applies to the role that he or she is playing. Your role players should know ONLY what’s in their individual packets.*
- **The Invitation to the Celebration.** The invitation on page 21 will be sent to each guest. It is designed to be run off as a two-fold. Or, if you decide to use heavier stock, the left side of the page can be run off back-to-back with the right side of the page.
- **Police Chief’s Letter.** The letter on page 22 will be given to each guest by the facilitator upon arrival. Run off enough copies so that each person receives one.
- **Clues about the Crime.** You’ll find 24 clues about the mystery on pages 23 through 25. Cut them out. *Since each guest receives a clue, you can invite up to 24 investigators.*
- **The newspaper account of the Fourth of July parade.** Everyone will receive a copy of the Special Edition of *The Elmtown Graphic News* on pages 26 and 27. Run the pages off back to back..
- **The Answer Sheet.** Run off one answer sheet on page 28 for each investigative team.
- **The Last Chapter.** *This is the solution to the crime.* Run off pages 29 through 32. The facilitator will read these pages at the end of the evening.

STEP 2: Plan your event. Pick a date on which to conduct the murder mystery event. **The “action” takes place on the afternoon of the Fourth of July**, but, if you choose, you can pick another day for your event. *I Loathe A Parade* will take two to two-and-a-half hours to solve using the recommended format. A buffet meal is recommended.

STEP 3: Select your role players. Review the scenario and the brief descriptions of the suspects on page 7. Select guests who would fit into these roles. Send the role players their information **and** a copy of *The Elmtown Graphic News* (pages 26 and 27) approximately 7 to 10 days before the mystery event. The role players should bring the information with them and use it as a reference when they are questioned by the investigators.

If you have only 6 guests, the role players will also be the investigators. This means you will send the invitations with the roles so that all of the information arrives at the same time.

STEP 4: Invite your guests. In advance of the event, send invitations to the event to the guests who will not be role players .

STEP 5: Select a person to facilitate the investigation. The facilitator should read the *Instructions* on page 6, and review the information in the packet to keep the event moving so that the investigation is conducted effectively.

Here's what to do at the mystery event.

STEP 6: The person portraying Rocky the Clown greets the guests. Since Rocky is an alderman, he greets people as they arrive. Rocky (or the person who is the facilitator) gives each guest who is investigating the crime a *Chief of Police Letter with a Clue attached and The Elmtown Graphic News inserted.* (You may want to put them in envelopes marked "Official Information from the Chief of Police.")

If you have only 6 people at the event, and the role players are also investigating the crime, everyone receives a letter. If your event separates the role players from the investigators, then role players DO NOT receive letters. Tell the investigators they can share clues with each other at any time during the evening.

STEP 7: Conduct the Celebration in honor of Mayor Joe Possumz. The role player portraying Rocky the Clown asks everyone to sit down as members of the Elmtown community remember what happened that morning. Ensure that it is staged in this way:

- Rocky reminds everyone that Joe Possumz died after he watched the Fourth of July parade this morning. The six people who are gathered here to honor the mayor all knew the mayor and marched in the parade. They've been asked to share their feelings about Elmtown and the mayor with everyone.
- Rocky asks the six role players to speak in the order indicated in his instructions. They stand and read the sections headlined, "Say this when asked to speak."

STEP 8: The investigation starts. The facilitator (*with only 6 people,* this will probably be Rocky) briefly reviews what happened, including such facts as:

- Joe Possumz has been in has been the mayor for 12 years and has made enemies along the way.
- The annual Fourth of July parade is his pride and joy. It has grown to major proportions due to his efforts.

- *Only one person committed the murder.*
- MOTIVE, MEANS and OPPORTUNITY must be considered to solve the case.

STEP 9: Form investigative teams. Have the guests who are investigating the murder form three-to-five-person investigative teams. Team members will work together to solve the case.

If only 6 people are at the event, you may (at your discretion) form two-person teams who will work together to solve the case.

STEP 10: Break for dinner or refreshments. The teams may trade clues to obtain as much information as possible while they are eating, but they cannot question the suspects yet.

If only 6 people are involved, distribute the remainder of the 24 clues at regular intervals during the meal until all clues have been used.

STEP 11: Continue the investigation. At the end of the meal, tell the teams that it is time to start the investigation again. Each team should find an area to use as an interrogation room.

If only 6 people are present, everyone stays together and one role player at a time is questioned.

STEP 12: Coordinate the questioning. Have one role player rotate to each interrogation room at seven-minute intervals. If you have fewer than six teams, work out a rotation that gives role players breaks between some of the rounds of questioning. The investigators may ask the suspects ANYTHING.

The suspects should use the information provided in the *Role Player Information* to answer the questions. Suspects should *not* withhold any bits of information, but they should not offer information unless the investigators specifically ask for it. Good investigators must ask the right questions to get the correct information.

STEP 13: Conduct open questioning. Place the suspects in different parts of the facility. For a 7-minute period, investigators from any team may go to the suspects and ask final questions.

WARNING: Some investigators will try to pull the suspects back to their teams. Don't permit this. Several different teams *may* question a suspect at the same time.

With only 6 people, anyone can ask any other role player anything.

STEP 14: Distribute Answer Sheets. Give teams 10 to 12 minutes to write out their solutions by answering the questions on the *Answer Sheet*.

STEP 15 Teams give their solutions. The facilitator asks the questions on the Answer Sheet to each team, one at a time. The teams read the answers exactly as they were written on the Answer Sheet. *NOTE: Often, a team will want to change its mind after hearing the answers from another team. Don't let this happen.*

If you have only 6 people, each role player (or two-person team of role players) gives an

individual solution to the case.

STEP 16: Read “The Last Chapter.” The facilitator opens the envelope in which “The Last Chapter” was placed. The facilitator reads it aloud to the guests. This will take 6 to 8 minutes.

STEP 17: Award prizes. You may want to award prizes to the investigative team that did the best job of solving the crime. Let your creativity run wild in selecting the prizes.

Special role player information ...

(The facilitator may want to review these with the suspects prior to the start of the mystery.)

- Because this mystery is crafted with intertwining facts, the role players are provided with an abundance of information that may or may not be used during the investigation. Since the suspects will undergo interrogation by the investigative teams, the extensive number of personal facts will enable them to answer most questions that are asked. If role players are asked questions not specifically addressed in this information, the role players should answer in character based upon the other facts available to them.
- Role players **MUST** read their comments about Joe Possumz exactly as they are written. **THIS IS IMPORTANT.** It enables the investigation to begin with the correct data.
- The only relationships that the suspects know about are those written into the roles. If asked by investigators about relationships that are not mentioned in the roles, the suspects should say, “No, we’re not related.”
- All of the suspects are telling the truth with the exception of the murderer whose recollections and responses will contain lies – this is intentional and part of the murder investigation.
- Since a good investigator must ask good questions, suspects must only offer information that is asked for by the investigators. They should **NOT** offer information that has not been directly requested.

The murderer **DOES NOT** know he or she committed the crime. This means the suspects don’t have to be good liars. The solution is contained in “The Last Chapter.”

Happy Independence Day sleuthing!

Instructions for the person who will facilitate the event

If you are a role player, then you already have a formal part in the investigation. Your role as facilitator means you will have to stay in character while ensuring that the investigation is conducted effectively.

If you are not one of the six role players, you may want to create your own character and come in costume. You could be, for example, Elmo Law, the Chief of Police who signed the letter on page 22. To facilitate the mystery event, do the following:

1. Review all of the information in this packet so that you are familiar with the mystery. **REMEMBER: If you are attempting to solve the crime, do NOT read “The Last Chapter” in advance. It contains the solution to the case.**
2. As the guests arrive, hand them a copy of the letter, along with a clue and a copy of the Special Edition of *The Elmtown Graphic News*. Tell them to talk with as many people as they can to acquire information about the Mayor.
3. The suspects have been told to arrive 15 minutes early. When they do, take them aside and review the *Special role player information* on page 5. Answer any questions they may have. Even though you are “facilitating” this event, the person playing Rocky the Clown will be hosting the event. It will be up to Rocky to get people seated so that the role players can each say a few words about Elmtown and Mayor Possumz.
4. Keep the event moving by following the instructions on pages 2 through 5. Make sure everything happens at the right time.
5. **If you are not one of the role players**, after you read “The Last Chapter,” lead the guilty party away to jail. If you want to, you can use toy handcuffs to make the arrest. If you want to stage the arrest in this way, let the suspects know you will do this.
6. Take a bow for a job well done!

The “staging area” for the parade was the Fair Grounds located at the north end of Elm Street. The parade route was about a mile long and moved south past the reviewing stand in front of City Hall.

The band always marches at the front of the parade, playing patriotic music.

Vern Fullerton was the grand marshal of the parade. He rode in a Model A Ford near the front of the parade.

When you heard about the mayor’s death, you were in Elm Creek Park getting ready for the free band concert.

You dedicated your piccolo solo in “Stars and Stripes Forever” to a “brighter tomorrow for Elmtown.”

Rhonda Ripley opened Horsebalm Stables 13 years ago, about the same time that **Joe Possumz** returned to Elmtown. You’ve never had much contact with her.

Joe Possumz lived in an apartment above the Elmtown Cultural Center. Since he never married, he didn’t need much space.

Say this when asked to speak:

And a-one, And a-two. Sorry, I always like to be in rhythm when I start something. Yes, I’m another high school classmate of Joe Possumz’s. But, I used to hang out with the same crowd that Vern did. Some of the kids called us “nerds,” but they just didn’t understand our real talents.

I just have to tell you that I feel better today than I have in months. Don’t take that the wrong way. You’ve heard the saying that “out of every ending comes a new beginning.”

The Independence Day concert in Elm Creek Park is always a thrill for me. I love to see the faces of the people in the crowd as I perform my piccolo solo.

Some people probably don’t recognize me because I look so different when I’m all cleaned up and wearing my band uniform.

Today, it’s as if everything is starting over for me. Thanks, Joe, even after you’ve passed away you have an effect on the people around you.

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I Loathe A Parade

Your Role: Albert Ames

You, **Albert Ames**, are the leader of the Elmtown Civic Band, and are renowned for your flute and piccolo playing. You were born in a hospital in nearby Bigville, but grew up in Elmtown, attending the local public schools, and graduating from Elmtown High School 31 years ago.

The only child of Martha and Clarence Ames, your parents were professional musicians who performed with the Bigtown Symphony Orchestra - Martha on violin and Clarence on bass. It was easy for you to decide at a very young age that you would also aspire to a career in music. When you were eight years old, you began taking flute lessons and, by the time you got to high school, you could have simply forgotten about every other subject. Nothing but music mattered. You could master pretty much any musical instrument.

As a result, you were a bit of a loner. You didn’t date much and had few friends. One of those friends, though, was **Vern Fullerton**. Vern was considered a “nerd” by his other classmates because he took an interest in subjects such as chemistry and natural science. He was called Vernie the Owl by some of the kids, a spinoff from the name of the school mascot, Elkie the Elk.

One of Fullerton’s biggest tormentors was a classmate, **Joe Possumz** who wasn’t much of a student, but he was the quarterback of the football team and, your senior year, was voted “king” at the prom. Possumz was regarded as a heartthrob and every girl wanted to date him. You, on the other hand, were almost invisible to the girls. You found Possumz to be obnoxious, yet people seemed to like him and he managed to graduate from high school without doing a whole lot of work.

All through high school Vern had a crush on one particular girl, **Mona Schwartz**. Mona was involved in all sorts of school activities, but she never noticed him because she was enamored with Possumz, who seemed to play with her emotions like a jazz musician on a saxophone. As a senior, Mona was the captain of the

cheerleading squad. Vern would go to football games and watch her as she cheered on the team. You could tell that Vern really resented the way Possumz treated her.

Vern couldn't wait to go to college at Major State University. You, on the other hand, had higher aspirations. You dreamt of the day you could leave Elmtown and pursue your musical career. When you were a senior, you applied for and were accepted into the Jullio School of Music in Baltimore. Your parents were bursting with pride as you boarded the plane that would take you to your new school.

All went well. Four years later, you received your degree in music, with a performance major in flute and piccolo. You were so talented that you auditioned for the Chesapeake Symphony Orchestra and were hired. That was 26 years ago.

During 10 years of hard work, you became a fixture with the orchestra, being particularly noted for your piccolo solo in "Stars and Stripes Forever." You were on top of the world. But, such lofty elevations can make a person light-headed. That's when things started tumbling down.

Because you had established an extravagant lifestyle, you found yourself short of money. One day 16 years ago, you were in the Symphony's Office and the cash receipts from the box office were being counted. When the others in the office looked away, you quickly stuffed a stack of bills into the briefcase that contained your sheet music. You thought no one would notice, but you were wrong.

That night, the police came knocking at your door. You were arrested, tried, found guilty and sent to jail for five years. Orchestras talk among themselves and, with such a black mark on your record, you were unable to obtain employment with another orchestra after your release.

That's why the road led back to Elmtown ten years ago. But, you can't earn a living in music in Elmtown, so you have learned a new profession. You operate Ames Chimney Sweeping and Fireplace Service. With an abundance of old houses in Elmtown, residents are always in need of someone who can clean and repair fireplaces.

You couldn't believe it when you found out that **Joe Possumz** was now the mayor. His success on the football field had secured a political career for him. He's just finishing his third term as mayor and will be running for re-election in a few months. His opponent will be Alderman **Rockwell Kenmore**, known to everyone as

Rocky the Clown when he performs at parties and in the Independence Day parade. You support Kenmore, but he stands little chance of winning unless something happens to Possumz.

You found out that Mona Schwartz was now **Mona Minski**, having married another of your high school classmates, **Mike Minski** 25 years ago. Five kids later, they are still together and Mona has organized "The Marching Mommas," made up of members of her old cheerleading squad.

And, a year after moving back to town, you also found small part-time employment as the leader of the Elmtown Civic Band. Your piccolo solo is now the hit of Elmtown's Fourth of July celebration. You have never married and live in a small flat above the Elmtown Bakery.

Because of your work, your clothes are constantly covered with soot and residue from fireplaces and chimneys. The doctors at the Elmtown Clinic have warned you that some potentially hazardous elements are present in the residue on your clothes.

Flue dust contains arsenic, cadmium, lead, thallium and zinc. Especially in their pure forms, arsenic and thallium can be extremely deadly. They've told you that arsenic can show up as a green power, while thallium is light blue.

Albert Ames

Albert Ames

You take your clothes to Elmtown Dry Cleaning to be cleaned. The shop used to be owned by **Bernie Beam**, long-time Elmtown resident. But five years ago Bernie retired. You walked into the shop and who should be behind the counter but your old friend **Vern Fullerton**. He had returned to Elmtown to be with his widowed mother and, in addition to having bought out Bernie, he worked part-time as the weatherman at the local TV station, WORM, Channel 99. Vern had obtained his degree in meteorology from Major State University and had been working with the State Weather Service.

Four months ago, you were cleaning a chimney at the house of **Dottie Pinewood**, the mayor's administrative assistant. The Pinewood name has been in Elmtown for over a century and is very well respected. Dottie married into the family. For the past 15 years, she's been the Cub Master of Cub Scout Pack 1776. Her husband, Peter Pinewood, died in a boating accident 13 years ago.

You overheard Dottie talking on the phone and it sounded as if the mayor was on the other end of the line. You weren't sure what was said, but it sounded as if Dottie Pinewood wasn't in agreement with what the mayor was suggesting.

Three months ago, your life took another twist. You were practicing with the band in the Elmtown Civic Center when in walked Mayor Possumz. He pulled you aside and told you that "his sources" had found out about your criminal record. If you wanted to keep things quiet, Possumz told you that you must cut him in on your business profits. Since then, you've made frequent trips to his office to buy his silence.

The "transactions" are handled by **Dottie Pinewood** who seems very awkward as a go-between. You wonder if this "blackmail" was discussed in the telephone conversation you overheard. The whole situation irks you, but what can you do about it?

Here are other facts you may be asked about:

Your Clue #1

In high school, when she was known as Mona Schwartz, Joe Possumz dated **Mona Minski**. Apparently, the relationship meant more to Mona than it did to Possumz.

Your Clue #2

Dottie Pinewood, the Cubmaster of Cub Scout Pack 1776 who is also Joe Possumz's administrative assistant, is the daughter of former Elmtown mayor **Steven Hunter**. It's said that her support of Possumz helped him get elected four years ago.

Your Clue #3

You've been told that **Albert Ames**, leader of the Elmtown Civic Band, was once a member of the Chesapeake Symphony Orchestra. He reportedly did something that made him end up in jail.

Your Clue #4

Vern Fullerton, the part-time weatherman at WORM, Channel 99, has always been interested in science. One of his best subjects in both high school and college was chemistry.

Your Clue #5

Alderman Rockwell Kenmore, also known as **Rocky the Clown**, is running for mayor in the upcoming election. No one expected him to win unless something happened to his opponent, Mayor Joe Possumz.

Your Clue #6

Friends of yours at the Elmtown Clinic have confidentially told you that doctors warned **Albert Ames** about the soot and residue that cover his clothes when he cleans chimneys for his business, Ames Chimney Sweeping and Fireplace Service. Some of the

Your Clue #7

Mayor Possumz has been pushing the construction of a new road that would speed traffic in to and out of Elmtown. The road would go right through Horsebalm Stables, owned by **Rhonda Ripley**.

Your Clue #8

Mayor **Joe Possumz** was famous for his red-white-and-blue bowtie. He wore it to all patriotic celebrations, making sure that it was clean and pristine. It became a trademark of sorts for the mayor.