

Death in them thar hills

Preview



Find out
who did in
gold mine owner
Dusty Jones
as he was
being honored
by the citizens
of Cactus Gulch.

Written and developed by

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How to Organize "Death in them thar hills"

Thanks for purchasing the home version of 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 evening:

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 10 people are invited to the event, you may want to assign this duty to Beauregard T. Brady, the mayor of Cactus Gulch.*
- **Role Player Information.** These pages serve as a "cover letter" for the information you'll send to the *ten individuals* who will be in character as the suspects. Run off ten copies of pages 7 and 8 back to back. You may want to use better quality stationery for this letter.
- **The Main Roles.** Pages 9 through 28 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 Get-Together.** The invitation on page 29 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.
- **Marshal's Letter.** The letter on page 30 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 32 clues about the mystery on pages 31 through 34. Cut them out. *Since each guest receives a clue, you can invite up to 32 investigators.*
- **The newspaper account of last night's event in honor of Dusty Jones.** Everyone will receive a copy of *The Cactus Gulch Gazette* article on page 35.
- **The Answer Sheet.** Run off one answer sheet on page 36 for each investigative team.
- **The End. This is the solution to the crime.** Run off pages 37 through 43. 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. *Death in them thar hills* is designed to be an evening's entertainment. Remember: our mysteries are for serious sleuths. It will take two to two-and-a-half hours to solve the case using the recommended format. Because of this, a buffet meal is recommended for the mystery evening. If you have a sit-down meal, add the amount of time the meal will take to your planning time.

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 Cactus Gulch Gazette* (page 35) approximately 10 to 12 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 10 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. Approximately three to four weeks in advance of the event, send invitations to the “get-together” 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 on the night of the mystery event.

STEP 6: The person portraying Beauregard T. Brady greets the guests. Since Brady is the “mayor” and the person who will MC the event, he greets people as they arrive. Brady (or the person who is the facilitator) gives each guest who is investigating the crime a *Marshal Letter with a Clue attached and the Newspaper Article inserted*. (You may want to put them in envelopes marked “Official Information from the U. S. Marshal.”)

If you have only 10 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 “Get-Together” in honor of Dusty Jones. The role player portraying Beauregard T. Brady asks everyone to sit down as “the town of Cactus Gulch” remembers Dusty Jones. Ensure that the get-together is staged in this way:

- Brady reminds everyone that Dusty Jones died last night at an event that was being held in his honor. The ten people who are gathered here to honor Dusty all spoke at the event. They’ve been asked to share their feelings about Dusty with everyone. The sentiments they will express are the same ones they expressed at the dinner last night.
- Brady asks the ten role players to speak in the order indicated in his instructions. They stand and read the sections headlined, “Here’s what you’ll say about Dusty.”

STEP 8: The investigation starts. The facilitator (*with only 10 people*, this will probably be Brady) briefly reviews what happened, including such facts as:

- Dusty Jones has been in Cactus Gulch for five years and has made enemies along the way.
- *Only one of the people who spoke at the get-together 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 10 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 10 people are involved, distribute the remainder of the 32 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 10 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 five-minute intervals. If you have fewer than ten 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: Distribute copies of Dusty's speech. After the 2nd round of questioning, The facilitator should loudly announce that Hannibal Hanks transcribed Dusty's speech and has printed copies for everyone. Distribute a copy of Dusty's speech to each team.

STEP 14: Make an announcement about the Gila Gold. After the 6th round of questioning, the facilitator should announce that the bottle of Gila Gold from which Dusty drank was examined closely and it apparently was not tampered with. It had no unusual odor or color.

STEP 15: 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 10 people, anyone can ask any other role player anything.

STEP 16: Distribute answer sheets. Give teams 10 to 12 minutes to write out their solutions by answering the questions on the *answer sheet*.

STEP 17: 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 10 people, each role player (or two-person team of role players) gives an individual solution to the case.

STEP 18: Read “The End.” The facilitator opens the envelope in which “The End” was placed. The facilitator reads it aloud to the guests. This will take 6 to 8 minutes.

STEP 19: 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.
- Role players **MUST** read their speeches at the get-together exactly as they are written. **THIS IS IMPORTANT.** It enables the investigation to begin with the correct preliminary data.
- 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.
- 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 End.”

Happy trails to you!

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 ten role players, you may want to create your own character and come in costume. You could be, for example, Nate Dillman, the U. S. marshal who signed the letter on page 30. 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 End” 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 article from *The Cactus Gulch Gazette*. Tell them to talk with as many people as they can to acquire information about Dusty.
- 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 Beauregard T. Brady will be hosting the get-together. It will be up to Brady to get people seated so that the role players can each say a few words about Dusty Jones.
- 4.** Keep the event moving by following the instructions on pages 2 through 5. Make sure all information is given at the right time.
- 5.** **If you are not one of the role players**, after you read “The End,” 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!

You've erected a memorial to George in Sandy Hills Cemetery. Many people think it is the nicest one there.

Here's what you'll say about Dusty.

(These are the same sentiments you expressed at the event in honor of Dusty.)

As many of you recall, Dusty made The Short Stump Saloon his home away from home here in Cactus Gulch. I was honored to supply the Gila Gold Tequila, his favorite drink, for last night's gathering. He drank a toast with the bottle that I hand-picked especially for him.

(Cattie gets tearful.) When I looked at him, I couldn't help but think of my dear husband George. Dusty and George left for the hills on the same day four years ago to look for gold. Dusty returned, but my George didn't. Dusty knew that I've never believed those rumors about his role in George's disappearance.

(Cattie composes herself.) So much is happening here in Cactus Gulch. When you run a saloon, you're able to get involved in a lot of lives. And, I know that the dime novel being written about Dusty will be a real rip-snortin' crowd pleaser. I'm anxious to read it myself because I know there are lots of things I just don't know about him.

I'm glad I could share my feelings about Dusty with everybody.

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Death in them thar hills

Your Role: **Cattie Adams**

To put the following dates in perspective, remember that the mystery takes place in **1883**.

You, **Catherine (Cattie) Adams**, own The Short Stump Saloon, the local "watering hole" in Cactus Gulch. You operate the saloon alone since the death of your husband, **George Adams**. He died mysteriously four years ago while prospecting for gold in the hills. Born 38 years ago (in 1845), you met George at a church social when you were 18 years old and he was 21. Three years later, you were married.

The two of you arrived in Cactus Gulch in 1873. George had heard about potential strikes of gold in the hills around the town and he wanted to get in on the bonanza, so you journeyed from your home in Arkansas to Arizona where he began prospecting the hills.

But, his plans didn't pan out, and the two of you resorted to a profession that you knew well, running a saloon - something you and George had done in Arkansas. But, George never totally forgot his quest for gold, and, periodically, he'd head for the hills and prospect for the shiny yellow ore.

It was five years ago that a weather-beaten, unshaven prospector made his way into town. He put his last quarter on the bar at The Short Stump and ordered a shot of tequila. He told you that his name was **Dusty Jones** and that he was in Cactus Gulch to strike it rich.

George told Dusty that he, too, was a prospector who had been trying to find his fortune near Cactus Gulch. The two of you had opened the saloon when it looked as if gold mining would lead to a dead end. But, George told Dusty that he still kept making regular trips in the hills trying to find his mother lode.

For the next year or so, Dusty made frequent visits to Cactus Gulch - accepting any handouts he could get. He kept saying he would find his gold mine. Everyone who heard him laughed.

And, George told you that on a trip into the hills, he had found an old native American mine that looked promising. That was a little over four years ago. George was the kind of person who never trusted banks. If he struck it rich, **Abraham Patton**, president of the Cactus Gulch Bank, wouldn't see a penny of it.

Patton did, though, stake Dusty to some new equipment. One day, as George was leaving for the hills to prospect, you looked out and saw Dusty following him out of town. George never returned to Cactus Gulch, and his fate has never been determined.

Within a few weeks, Dusty had struck gold somewhere near the Grand Canyon. He didn't reveal the exact location of the mine to anyone, but would bring his bags of gold dust to the bank where **Fred Slate**, the assayer employed by Abraham Patton, determined its value. Frequently, Dusty would pay for his drinks in the Short Stump with gold dust or gold nuggets.

You couldn't help but think that Dusty had something to do with your husband's death. You continue to operate The Short Stump Saloon on your own.

You've seen many changes in Cactus Gulch. The town has grown to about 3,000 people. **Doc Tricia Truehart**, who has now been in town for eight years, can recall a lot of the people who passed through, as well as those who stayed. You've been to the doctor's office many times through the years, and you know that she tries to use natural remedies whenever possible.

Truehart also heads the local Citizens Committee. Even though **Beauregard T. Brady**, the local attorney, carries the title of "mayor," its the committee that has all of the power in town. Brady is a real character. He was a colonel in the Confederate cavalry during the Civil War, but he

doesn't talk about his war record. You've heard that he's embarrassed about something that happened at a place called Crawfish Creek in Virginia. Dusty has been going to him for legal advice.

Flint Flames, the blacksmith, takes care of the horses in town. Dusty bought his pinto, "Golddust," from Flames, who also has a business that buys and sells horses. One of The Short Stump's customers, **Zeke Quinny**, is frequently at Flames' blacksmith shop.

Three months ago, a "dime novel" writer, **J. P. James** arrived in town. She works for a company back East that has been publishing a series of books about the people in the Wild West. After finishing a book about **Hannibal Hanks**, the editor of *The Cactus Gulch Gazette*, she spent two weeks with sharpshooter **Annie Elmley** and has documented her life.

Annie arrived in town about six months ago, performing for the local citizenry in a demonstration of trick marksmanship. For some reason, she decided to remain in Cactus Gulch and has been staying in the cabin of **Bonnie Crockett**, the local school teacher. You've heard that Bonnie and Annie met when they both lived in Colorado.

Now J. P. James moved on to write about Dusty's life. You wonder if she'll mention George in it. After all, it could be that George is the person who enabled Dusty to find his fortune.

Dusty is now a "regular" at The Short Stump. You make sure you have a supply of Gila Gold Tegulia on hand for him. He's never told anyone where his mine is located. Some people think it's located on land that belongs to the Holeyecowa tribe.

A few weeks ago, you noticed that Dusty began socializing with **Ace Dugan**, a gambler who has been taking money from your customers by fleecing them out of their earnings in poker games. You're sure that Dugan cheats, but you can't prove it. He's has been staying at the Gulch Guesthouse, owned by **Sarah Barnes**, the place where most visitors to Cactus Gulch find accommodations.

Cattie Adams

Cattie Adams

Last month, a group of prominent citizens told you they were planning to honor Dusty at a get-together and all the people in Cactus Gulch would be invited. Since you knew Dusty extremely well, they asked if you'd say a few words about him. You agreed. You know a side of Dusty that no one else could possibly know. You were asked to supply the Gila Gold for the event, so you've set aside a very special bottle for Dusty.

The enclosed newspaper article from *The Cactus Gulch Gazette* describes what happened at the get-together.

Additional details you may need to know:

A gypsy woman named **Madame Marishka** has been working as a housekeeper at Sarah Barnes' guesthouse. She also reads palms and used a crystal ball to tell fortunes. She's been in town about six months.

Recently, a botanist named **Jessica Cotton** has been in Cactus Gulch to study the wild plants and wild flowers that grow in the area.

Last week, a flamboyant character named **Antelope Bob Doty** came into The Short Stump. He asked you if you knew where he could find Annie Elmley. He said he owned a Wild West show and was in town to hire Elmley as a star attraction. You told him that she was staying with Bonnie Crockett.

Fred Slate, the assayer who works for Abraham Patton at the Cactus Gulch Bank, has been in your establishment more than usual recently. He appears to have something on his mind.

Hawk-Who-Watches, the leader of the Holeyecowa tribe has never been in The Short Stump. You've seen him around Cactus Gulch, but he keeps to himself. Lately, though, he's been seen with **Hannibal Hanks**.



Join these people in honoring Dusty Jones:

Beauregard T. Brady, mayor of Cactus Gulch

Tricia Truehart, the town doctor

Hannibal P. Hanks, editor of *The Cactus Gulch Gazette*

Abraham Patton, president of The Cactus Gulch Bank

Cattie Adams, owner of The Short Stump Saloon

Hawk-Who-Watches, leader of the Holecowa tribe

J. P. James, a Wild West writer

Annie Elmley, sharpshooter and showperson

Flint Flames, blacksmith and horse trader

Bonnie Crockett, the local school teacher

Join us at a get-together
in honor of

Dusty Jones



**Murder
Mystery
Party**

who arrived in Cactus Gulch
penniless five years ago and
who became the wealthy owner
of the **T A Q I L A** mine.

Join us at the get-together!

Place:

Date:

Time:

RSVP:

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Your Clue #1

Ace Dugan, a gambler who's been hanging out at The Short Stump Saloon, has implied to several people that **Doc Tricia Truehart** may not be all she claims to be. When pressed to explain what he meant, he said he wouldn't turn someone in with whom he has so much in common.

Your Clue #2

Antelope Bob Doty, the Wild West Show owner, has been telling everyone that he's hired **Annie Elmley** to be in the show. She reportedly told him she'll catch a train to Philadelphia in a few days to join the troupe, but first she must take care of some "personal business."

Your Clue #3

As with many writers, **J. P. James**, the "dime novelist" who's been writing about some of the residents of Cactus Gulch, used a "nom de plume" (or pen name) when writing one of her most popular works. The book was about wild flowers and plants that grow in the West.

Your Clue #4

Lately, several residents of Cactus Gulch have seen **Zeke Quincy**, a notorious horse thief, in **Flint Flames'** blacksmith shop. Flames has never told anyone in town where he gets the horses that he sells to residents and travelers.

Your Clue #5

While reading a history of the Civil War, you found out that **Beauregard T. Brady**, at the time a Confederate colonel, attempted to lead a charge at the Battle of Crawfish Creek. The actions of a Union soldier, Private **Dustin Jones** were instrumental in foiling the military maneuver.

Your Clue #6

While talking with botanist **Jessica Cotton**, she told you that a very dangerous plant grows in the land around Cactus Gulch. All parts of the Jimson weed, she said, are poisonous and would be fatal if consumed in the right quantity.

Your Clue #7

Cattie Adams, owner of The Short Stump Saloon, supplied all of the alcoholic drinks for the get-together to honor **Dusty Jones**. She took special care to make sure that Gila Gold Tequila, Dusty's favorite drink, was available in large quantities.

Your Clue #8

In recent weeks, **Hawk-Who-Watches**, leader of the Holeecowa people, has been noticeably cool in his encounters with **Dusty Jones**. Only Dusty and **Beauregard T. Brady** know where Dusty's gold mine is located. Could it possibly be on Holeecowa land?

The Cactus Gulch Gazette

Hannibal P. Hanks, editor

May 10, 1883

All the news that fits, we print. Serving Cactus Gulch since 1881

Vol. 2 No. 26

Dusty Jones Drops Dead

Local Gold Mine Owner Succumbs After Being Honored By Citizenry of Cactus Gulch

by Hannibal P. Hanks

Cactus Gulch is sad today as it mourns the loss of Dusty Jones, the man who arrived in town five years ago with nothing but lint in his pockets. When he died last night, Dusty was one of the wealthiest men in the Arizona Territory.

The source of Dusty's riches was the gold mine that, only three weeks ago, he named The TAqIIA Mine. Since Dusty never went to school and couldn't spell very well, we all knew he meant to name it after his favorite drink, Gila Gold Tequila.

Dusty was being honored at a dinner organized by residents and prominent local figures. Everyone drank their beverages of choice (supplied by The Short Stump Saloon) and munched from individual bowls of mixed nuts as they socialized prior to the start of the festivities.

After listening to tributes by Mayor Beauregard T. Brady, Doc Tricia Truehart, Bank President Abraham Patton, School Teacher Bonnie Crockett, (yours truly) Hannibal P. Hanks, Sharpshooter Annie Elmley, Saloon Owner Cattie Adams, Chief Hawk-Who-Watches, Dime Novelist J. P. James, and Blacksmith Flint Flames, Dusty had his say, speak-



Dusty Jones

(Sketch made by traveling artist in 1879, shortly after Dusty struck gold.)

ing his mind about the town and its people. (Since yours truly managed to transcribe the speech, it will be printed up and available later today to any interested parties.) He then raised a glass of Gila Gold, toasted the crowd and sat down. A few minutes later, he slumped over in his chair. Doc Truehart rushed to him, but it was too late. Dusty was dead.

U. S. Marshal Nate Dillman is investigating the incident. Because Dusty was in relatively good health, the marshal believes he may have been murdered. Dillman confiscated the bottle of Gila Gold to examine it in greater detail. He plans on letting everyone know what he finds out.

Ever since Dusty struck gold in the hills near Cactus Gulch four years ago, he's made weekly vis-

its to town with bags of gold nuggets and gold dust to be assayed at the Cactus Gulch Bank, owned by Abraham Patton. Assayer Fred Slate confirms that the gold was indeed graded as 22-carat, the purest strike ever in these parts.

To show their continuing feelings about Dusty, the ten people who spoke last night at Dusty's dinner will gather today to repeat the sentiments they expressed to Dusty as he listened intently.

If it was murder, everyone should be deputized to figure out who did it.

H.P.H.

The Bill of Fare for Dusty Jones' Final Meal:

Chicken soup

Arizona beef steaks
A selection of wild vegetables
Cornbread

Mixed nuts

Beverages provided by
The Short Stump Saloon
(A special bottle of
Gila Gold Tequila
was reserved for Dusty)