

Included is a blank character sheet that looks like Murphy's. Each character should prepare one of these for the event, but they can contain whatever information the player considers helpful. Players should be prepared to respond dynamically to Murphy's questions, accusations, etc. Think of this murder mystery as an improvisation exercise: you have an outline for your character, but play along with whatever Murphy suggests.

**DO NOT LET MURPHY KNOW THAT YOU ARE DEVELOPING YOUR OWN CHARACTER.**

## Character Brief

Your character should have a plausible reason (and potentially an additional secret reason) for being at an Antarctic Research Station through the winter. Some examples include:

- Geo-scientist, trying to exploit the Antarctic
- Eco-scientist, trying to protect the Antarctic
- Military personnel, exploring the defence potential
- A cook
- A computer or machinery technician
- An administrator/finance person
- A summer student who got left behind
- An assassin disguised as another role
- Someone hiding from an assassin (etc.) disguised as another role
- A drug dealer (in addition to their other job)
- A psychologist, studying the others like lab rats
- A journalist/documentary maker
- A wealthy explorer (or misguided "social media influencer") who paid to be there
- An astronaut, training to survive extreme conditions
- A physicist, conducting experiments in an extreme climate
- A pilot
- A doctor

## The Scenes

The party has four "scenes". Each scene is focused on creating an escalating experience for the focal player: Murphy. Your role as a player is to improvise and be creative to make this experience fun for Murphy, by a) making it seem like a normal murder mystery party in the earlier scenes, and b) helping give Murphy a visceral sense of escalating murderous insanity in the later scenes.

Your character's role in each scene will be.

- **The Missing Director (~30 minutes):** Mingle with the other characters (including Murphy) as though you're just meeting them for the first time. Begin hinting at or revealing rivalries and tensions with the other characters.
- **The Corpse Revealed (~60 minutes):** The director's corpse will be found, and Murphy will begin investigating it. Keep interacting with other characters as though you're trying to figure out whether they committed the murder. You could even stage a loud argument between your characters while Murphy is within earshot. When interacting with Murphy, try to cast suspicion

on other characters, give away their secrets, reveal their motives, and hand over incriminating items/props that you “found”.

- **Insanity Descends (~20 minutes):** The Game Master will take Murphy away. Quickly move to the second venue (if applicable) and change clothes and name-badge with another character. From now on you will act as though you are and have always been that character and Murphy must be crazy for thinking otherwise. The Game Master may ask you to start acting as though you can't see them and they must be a figment of Murphy's imagination. In this scene Murphy is descending into madness, so try to make the experience interesting and fun for them. Say utter non-sense things to Murphy with a straight face and then move on as though nothing has happened; huddle in small, scared groups, whispering and pointing at Murphy but then all scatter in different directions if Murphy tries to talk to you; start speaking exclusively in a different language; etc. It's best to start this scene subtly but quickly escalate the madness over the course of 20 minutes.
- **The Finale (~20 minutes):** Murphy will be asked to cut a cake and you will all gather around to watch. As Murphy takes the knife and begins cutting the lights will go out. Half the characters will scream and fall over dead (possibly with fake blood, if you're using it). The lights come back on briefly and the other half of characters will be in a panic, as though there is a knife-wielding murderer in the room with them. The lights will go off and the other half of the characters will die horribly. When the lights come back on, Murphy will be alone with a bloody knife in a room full of dead bodies.

## Your Goals

During the party, you will mingle with other characters, discuss who the murderer could be (remember, your character doesn't know that Murphy is the murderer!), discover their secrets, and try to conceal yours. Play the game as you would for a regular murder mystery party.

The Director wasn't very popular amongst research station staff. How might your character benefit from their death? Did your character have the opportunity to murder them, or do they have an alibi leading up to the party? The characters will each have a motive for wanting the Director dead, plus plenty of other drama and intrigue: affairs, drugs, blackmail, embezzling money, you name it. What secrets is your character hiding?

Since we're all in on it, we can get together in small groups in advance and plan elaborate ways that our stories can contradict one another, come apart, result in conflict, etc. Feel free to work with other players to plan gimmicks that seem coincidental parts of the story.

## What is your relationship with the other characters?

The characters don't all need to have relationships with each other, as that can get unwieldy with a large number of players, but each character should have a couple of allies and a couple of enemies. You should have some secret information about other players, and "discover" more throughout the game.

In most cases, your interactions with Murphy will simply be to report other character's secrets and your character's suspicions about who the murderer is. However, you can also drag Murphy into some of the affairs, drug dealing, etc. going on in the game if you like – coordinate with the Game Master if you would like to do this, as they will need to adjust Murphy's character sheet accordingly.

## Suggested attire

Your costume should be easy to switch with another player for the final scene: easy to remove/put on and in somewhat generic sizes. If you are using fake blood, wear something that won't get stained.

Examples include:

- Wigs
- Hats
- Jackets
- Lab coats
- Aprons
- Flowy dresses
- Glasses
- Baggy shirts

You will also want a name tag for your character, which should also be easy to switch along with your costume.

## Items

You may want items to help your character play out their role, and to cast suspicion onto them. These items can be "found" or revealed by other characters throughout the event. For example:

- Love letters
- Blackmail letters
- Incriminating photos
- Drugs
- Weapons (other than the murder weapon)
- Keys to the Director's office
- Letters to/from the Director, funding agencies, etc.
- Financial statements ("real" or falsified)

Some sample character bios are included below for inspiration.

# Example Characters

**Name:** Dr. Archibald T. Warren

**Job:** Medical doctor sent (again) to stop a syphilis outbreak amongst the crew.

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** Director discovered I am prescribing counterfeit medication. The outbreaks are a major source of income needed to pay down massive debts incurred from investing in a failed e-store selling vaping supplies followed by another investment in a scam cryptocurrency. Because of this, only half the staff are given actual medicine to keep the outbreak going.

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- Prescription pad
- Fake medicine
- Getting people to invest in cryptocurrency

**Controversies with other characters:**

- Angry with Colonel Deluxe for telling everyone about my counterfeit medication.
- Had a romantic fling many years ago with Maria and am now tracking down my illegitimate son/daughter who is at the station.

**Name:** Sir William Sly (aka Bill Sly the Physics Guy, world renowned bad boy of physics)

**Job:** Physicist trying to detect dark matter.

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** Director had discovered that Bill Sly has tampered with results of other researchers and doesn't want an investigation to lead back to him.

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- Seen leaving Maria Klenova's lab.
- Personal belongings found in directors lab.
- Folder labeled "The Real Results"

**Controversies with other characters:**

- Sleeping with most of staff.
- Has syphilis. Paid by Archibald T. Warren to spread syphilis.
- Knows about affair between Director and Francesca Pamplémousse.
- Doesn't think Colonel Deluxe belongs at the base, has a bad feeling about him.

**Name:** Maria Klenova (first woman to begin scientific work in Antarctica in 1956)

**Job:** Marine geologist - wants to remake the atlas her grandmother is most known for

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** Has fallen in love with the director, tried to get him to feel the same way, but is totally ignored. Maria doesn't like taking no for an answer and pestered the director so much that he told her that he would press charges against her for harassment if she didn't stop (did someone hear the fight??). Maria must be allowed to stay to do her work next year to fulfill her dream of doing something similar as her grandmother and passing down their family's legacy

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- Love notes, photos of the director, etc.

**Controversies with other characters:**

- Had a romantic fling many years ago in a random city with Archibald that resulted in an illegitimate love child that I gave up for adoption. Don't want Archibald to know about the child or find them (don't want to destroy my good family name).

**Name:** Brenda

**Job:** Janitor

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** I have been underpaid for over 20 years on the Antarctica station. No Holiday in the winter. Director was quite scornful with me, and I've become bitter being constantly ignored.

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- My slightly threatening message to the director asking for a raise.
- The keys to the Director's office/room (plus all the keys to the entire research station).

**Controversies with other characters:**

- I like no one, but Amelia because she actually knows my name.

**Name:** Mario Luigi

**Job:** Station plumber/engineer

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** Everyone but the Director knows he's the local "dispensary". Everyone knows the Director would turn him in to the authorities on the spot if he found out.

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- Carries a ziplock bag with "white powder", which he pretends is poison for pest control.
- Murphy has a small ziplock with "white powder"

**Controversies with other characters:**

- Recognizes Kara Mel's tattoo and wants to incriminate her because his family was murdered by an assassin of the same clan.
- In cahoots with Murphy (which no one else knows) in their drug smuggling business. If she remembers, she might blackmail him into doing other more serious illegal stuff or try to incriminate him.

**Name:** Kara Mel

**Job:** Assassin pretending to be a singer

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** I had a contract to kill him.

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- Suspicious assassin tattoo
- I want the credit in order to get paid off. I had a contract for killing him.

**Controversies with other characters:**

- Some other characters recognize assassin tattoo.

**Name:** Francesca Pamplémousse

**Job:** (failed) cook

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** In love with him

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- Has had several failed restaurants that only the director knew about, but for some reason he/she has given Francesca another chance.
- Had an oddly close relationship with the director. Perhaps a love affair?

**Controversies with other characters:**

- Colonel Deluxe doesn't know a thing about knives

**Name:** Reggie Boone

**Job:** Oil and mining tycoon wanna-be, pretending to be staying in Antarctica "as a vacation"

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** The director strongly supported a (currently in place) ban on all mining in Antarctica and intended to report Reggie Boone to the United States government. Reggie Boone believes he has found gold in Antarctica and desperately wants to bring no attention to this finding. Reggie fears an international media shitstorm. Reggie believes the director being dead may just work in his favour. Reggie just wants everybody to move on and forget this happened.

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- Metal detector
- Copies of Global Mining Review, Mining Global, Canadian Mining Magazine, and numerous other magazines
- Biographies of John D. Rockefeller and other famous oil tycoons
- Claims to be sharing his vacation on "social media" but has no followers on any of his accounts

**Controversies with other characters:**

- Generally, Reggie doesn't get along with anybody because he is secretive and lying and thinks he's fooling everybody but is really just kind of dumb.

**Name:** Dr. Ester

**Job:** Psychologist studying how the Antarctic crew will fare over the winter

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** Was seen having an argument with the director, who accused her of being a hack and threatened to have her expelled from the station.

**Incriminating info/items other characters can find:**

- Letter from the university saying that funding has run out and this trip is her last chance to make a major publishable discovery or be fired.

**Controversies with other characters:**

- Ongoing rivalry with Harriet Harvey since high school.
- Knows that Kara Mel is lying and pretending about something in her identity.
- Thinks Archibald T. Warren isn't a real doctor and should be sent home.

**Name:** Lyle Isbister

**Job:** Field Accountant II, Antarctic Finance Unit, Treasury Board Secretariat

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** Is very open about the fact that he felt the director was imprudent in the station's operations. He is embezzling the majority of the station's budget, and if the director caught him, that might result in deeper scrutiny of the station's operations.

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- The official and actual set of the station's books

**Controversies with other characters:**

- Other characters find the books.

**Name:** Colonel Deluxe

**Job:** Commander of the military detachment

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** Everyone knows that I want to build a proper Antarctic military base and that it will make my career if I succeed. The director was too scientifically focused and actively worked against me. But the deputy director sees potential in my plans and we get along well. Now that the director is dead, the deputy is almost certain to be put in charge of the station. I also seem to have a fairly cavalier attitude towards killing.

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- I have a fascination with knives and often bore people with stories about my enormous collection back home. A few people have noticed that whenever I go into the field, I seem to have a different knife with me and have started to wonder just how many I brought to the base.

**Controversies with other characters:**

- I've gotten into heated arguments with the cook because he/she doesn't know a thing about sharpening knives. Lately the portions I receive in the cafeteria seem to be getting smaller and smaller.
- I don't get along well with the academics who work at the station. They're pretentious and arrogant and don't think the military belongs here.
- Murphy got her start in the military, and we served together in Afghanistan in the early 2000s. I was happy that she joined the RCMP because she didn't handle the stress of combat well. When we'd come under fire, she'd sometimes kind of wig out and go berserk. Once she killed one person she wouldn't stop until everyone was dead.

**Name:** Amelia

**Job:** Studied some sociology and is an aspiring Instagram influencer, came to Antarctica hoping to increase her follower base with interesting posts, but drastically failing at it because nothing happens in the winter.

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** The longer it takes for the murder to be solved the more she can post on Instagram and increase her follower base: milking the cash cow of this great live unfolding event.

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- Taking selfies with the body of the director; her Instagram feed looks very suspicious.

**Controversies with other characters:**

- She is the daughter of Maria and Archibald (everyone knows except Archibald, because the Director found out from the personnel files and let the info slip)
- Mad at Maria for being unwilling to acknowledge her blood connection.
- Everyone finds her annoying (fragile princess type personality), and no one wants pictures of them posted online.

**Name:** Harriet Harvey

**Job:** Journalist attempting to get into the documentary world. Journalism just doesn't pay these days.

**Plausible motive for having murdered the director:** The Director did not like journalists snooping around the station. He believed I was overstepping and invading privacy. There was a heated argument that resulted in him banishing me. I have months of my own money invested in this. Netflix won't back me until I produce something.

**Incriminating information/items other characters can find:**

- Some indication of my debt or Netflix's rejection of my request for funds.
- Formal notice of agreement termination.

**Controversies with other characters:**

- Discovered Lyle was embezzling and instead of going to the authorities blackmailed him. Paying for my own documentary was tough but suddenly I am very comfortable.
- I want the Colonel to be found guilty. He discovered my blackmail and I am too pretty to go to jail.