

Printable Halloween murder mystery party kit

A complete Halloween murder mystery for 6 to 8 players: eight character sheets ready to cut out and the game master's sheet. Free, no sign-up: print, hand out, play.

Before you start

1. Print this kit, then cut it up: each player must read **ONLY** their own sheet. Hand them out a few days before the party — a player who knows their character plays it bolder.
2. The killer's sheet has an extra section. Fold every sheet the same way before handing them out, or the thickness will give the killer away.
3. The game master keeps the last page of the scenario (solution, clues, timeline) and does not play a suspect.
4. Three acts: the crime is discovered and everyone introduces themselves (20 min), open cross-examination (1 to 1.5 hours), accusations and reveal (20 min). Announce the time of the reveal from the start, or the questioning will drag on without an ending.
5. With 6 or 7 players, leave out the optional roles: the game master's sheet explains what to do with what they knew.

The Last Séance at Ravenel Manor

6 to 8 players · 2.5 hours

READ ALOUD TO OPEN THE EVENING

October 31st, 1926. Every year since he came back from Ireland, Aurélien Ravenel has thrown a masked Halloween ball at his manor in Normandy: carved pumpkin lanterns, costumes required, and at midnight, a séance around the old table in the tower.

Tonight, Aurélien promised more. At dinner he raised his glass: "At midnight, the dead will speak. And once they have spoken, I will have something to tell you myself." At midnight, he drank the spirits' cup alone, as his ritual demands. At five past midnight, the lights went out. When they came back on, Aurélien Ravenel was dead, his head resting on the séance table.

Fog has swallowed the road, and the police won't arrive before dawn. You are all still masked. One of you killed him. You have until sunrise to find out who is hiding behind the mask.

Madame Irma Solovieff

the medium

WHO YOU ARE

Medium, clairvoyant, and "Russian countess" according to your calling cards. Society hostesses invite you to make their tables turn, and you make them turn with a talent no one has ever caught out.

Aurélien Ravenel hired you to lead tonight's midnight séance. He met you twice in his study, behind closed doors, to "prepare the spirits".

YOUR SECRET

You have never spoken to the dead. You are a former music-hall actress, born Irène Sauvage in a working-class corner of Paris. Aurélien paid you five thousand francs to recite, during the séance, a message he wrote himself — supposedly from Mathilde, his first wife, who died twenty years ago. The script is still in your purse.

WHAT YOU KNOW

- At 11:30 pm you set up the tower exactly as Aurélien asked: candles, the séance table, and the spirits' cup — spiced mulled wine he was to drink alone at midnight. You left the door open when you went to powder your nose.
- Coming back around 11:40 pm, you saw a plague doctor — long black coat, beaked mask — leaving the tower. He carried a silver-topped cane. There were two plague doctors at the ball tonight: Gaspard and Doctor Lestrade.
- The message you were to recite said: "The one who signed away my last sleep is among you." Aurélien wanted it to land right before his announcement. You never knew who he meant.

YOUR GOALS TONIGHT

- Make sure no one finds out you are a fraud: your career would not survive it.
- Get back — or get rid of — the script, which proves the séance was staged.
- Figure out who Aurélien's line was aimed at: you are starting to believe that person killed him.

IF YOU ARE ACCUSED

You prepared the cup, and you are the perfect suspect. Say it yourself, boldly: "If I wanted to poison him, would I use the one cup only I had touched?" Then tell them about the plague doctor you saw leaving the tower.

Gaspard Ravenel

the heir

WHO YOU ARE

Only son of Aurélien and his first wife, Mathilde. You were eight when your mother died, and you grew up in a house where no one said her name anymore.

You came dressed as a plague doctor — to mock Doctor Lestrade, who has always treated you like a child. He had the same idea, which the whole ballroom found hilarious.

YOUR SECRET

You are drowning in debt. Tonight, around 11:40 pm, you met Victoire Marchal, the antiques dealer, in the orangery to secretly sell her the astronomical clock from the grand salon — a family heirloom that isn't yours to sell. If your father had found out, he would have cut you off.

WHAT YOU KNOW

- For a month, your father had been obsessed with your mother's death. He spent his nights in the attic going through Mathilde's trunks, and he told you: "They lied to me, Gaspard. They lied to both of us."
- You saw Basile, the gardener, arguing with your father this afternoon. Your father was shouting that he would throw him out, him and his mother.
- You know that Éléonore, your stepmother, had a packed trunk brought down to the front hall this morning. She said it was full of costumes.

YOUR GOALS TONIGHT

- Hide your meeting in the orangery at all costs: it would give you an alibi, but it would ruin you.
- Find out what your father meant to announce at midnight — and what he found in the attic.
- Prove that you are not the one seen near the tower: they are mixing you up with the other plague doctor.

IF YOU ARE ACCUSED

They will say a plague doctor went into the tower at 11:40 pm. Deny it without saying where you were, as long as you can. If they close in, admit the orangery — Victoire can confirm — and ask where the other plague doctor was at that time.

Éléonore Ravenel

the widow

WHO YOU ARE

Aurélien's second wife for twelve years. You married a charming man; you lived with a collector of ghosts, who preferred the dead to the living and his tower to your bedroom.

Tonight you are a widow. You don't know yet whether it feels like grief or like freedom, and you are afraid it shows.

YOUR SECRET

You were leaving. Your jewels are sold, your trunk is packed in the front hall, and you have a ticket for the Paris train on November 1st. Aurélien knew nothing. No one must think you had a reason not to wait for that train.

WHAT YOU KNOW

- Three weeks ago, Aurélien showed you what he found in the attic: an old prescription in Mathilde's name, signed "Dr A. Lestrade", a few days before she died. In the margin, in Aurélien's hand: "Mathilde did not just fade away."
- You know Doctor Lestrade is the one who pronounced Mathilde dead twenty years ago and signed the certificate: "heart failure". He was also the one treating Aurélien's heart.
- You saw Victoire Marchal and Gaspard exchanging looks at dinner, like two people who have an appointment.

YOUR GOALS TONIGHT

- Keep your departure secret: a wife about to run away makes a perfect culprit.
- Understand what the prescription meant, now that Aurélien died before he could speak.
- Show nothing of what you feel — neither grief nor relief.

IF YOU ARE ACCUSED

Remind everyone that at midnight you were sitting at Aurélien's right, hands on the table like everyone else. Then ask, coldly, why the doctor declared "heart attack" before he had even taken a pulse.

Doctor Armand Lestrade

the doctor

WHO YOU ARE

The Ravenel family doctor for twenty-five years: you delivered Gaspard and looked after Aurélien's tired heart. You came as a plague doctor, with a genuine antique silver-topped cane. The Ravenel boy had the same idea; you did not find it funny.

YOUR SECRET

Twenty years ago, you are the one who signed Mathilde Ravenel's death certificate: heart failure. No one remembers your name at the bottom of that paper, and you would like to keep it that way.

WHAT YOU KNOW

- Aurélien threatened this morning to throw out Basile, the gardener, and his elderly mother who lives in the lodge.
- Madame Irma is no more Russian than you are: you saw her on stage at the Casino de Paris, under another name.
- Ophélie Darcourt was taking notes under the table at dinner: she is writing about this family.

YOUR GOALS TONIGHT

- Get everyone to settle on a heart attack: Aurélien's heart was weak, you have said so for years.
- Steer suspicion toward Irma, who prepared the cup, or toward Gaspard, who wears your costume.
- Get your hands on the prescription Aurélien found in the attic, if it still exists.

IF YOU ARE ACCUSED

Stay the physician: calm, precise, a little condescending. Point out that there were two plague doctors tonight, and the other one had everything to gain from his father's death.

YOU ARE THE KILLER

It was you. Twenty years ago, one evening when you had been drinking, you prescribed Mathilde a dose of digitalis ten times too strong. You wrote "heart failure" and built your career on that silence.

Aurélien found the prescription: his midnight "announcement" would have ruined you. At 9 pm, in the dark, you picked aconite (monkshood) from the flower bed below the terrace. At 11:40 pm, you stirred the chopped leaves into the spirits' cup, in the tower that had been left open.

Irma saw you leave without knowing which plague doctor she saw — but your cane gives you away: Gaspard doesn't have one. You declared "heart attack" at once, just like twenty years ago. Make them believe it, or make them accuse Gaspard.

Basile Coste

the gardener

WHO YOU ARE

Gardener at the manor since you were a boy, like your father before you. You live in the lodge with your mother, who no longer gets out of bed. You know every plant on the grounds, and which ones kill.

Tonight, Aurélien asked you to serve dressed as a gravedigger, "for atmosphere". You obeyed, as always.

YOUR SECRET

For two years you have been quietly selling wine from the cellar to pay your mother's doctor. Aurélien found out yesterday and gave you until November 1st to leave the lodge. You cursed him in front of witnesses this afternoon.

WHAT YOU KNOW

- Around 9 pm, lighting the lanterns on the terrace, you saw a plague doctor crouching by the flower bed below the terrace, in the dark. You couldn't tell which of the two it was. He went back toward the house.
- Later, walking past, you noticed that several stems of monkshood — aconite, a deadly plant — had been cut clean in that bed. No one but you knows it grows there.
- You saw Madame Éléonore pay the coachman to come back at dawn on November 1st, "without telling Monsieur".

YOUR GOALS TONIGHT

- Make sure no one learns about the wine: a man who stole from the victim makes a convenient culprit.
- At the right moment, let people know someone cut aconite on the grounds — even if it draws attention to you, the one who knows plants.
- Protect your mother: whatever happens, she must be able to stay in the lodge.

IF YOU ARE ACCUSED

You don't talk much, or well, in front of these people. Just say that if you had wanted to poison the master, you wouldn't have needed a ball to do it — and that the man by the flower bed wore a beaked mask, not a gravedigger's spade.

Victoire Marchal

the antiques dealer

WHO YOU ARE

Antiques dealer on the Left Bank, specializing in "curiosities": Venetian masks, spirit boards, reliquaries.

Aurélien has been your best client for ten years; half his tower came from your shop.

You came as Columbine, white mask and tricorn hat. You love parties where everyone hides: that's where the good deals happen.

YOUR SECRET

At 11:40 pm you were in the orangery with Gaspard Ravenel, secretly buying the astronomical clock from the grand salon — a family heirloom he has no right to sell. You knew it was receiving stolen goods. You planned to sell it to an American for twice the price.

WHAT YOU KNOW

- From the orangery, through the glass roof, you saw a plague doctor cross the gallery toward the tower stairs around 11:40 pm — at the very moment Gaspard, in his own plague doctor costume, was sitting across from you. The figure walked with a cane.
- You know Aurélien asked Madame Irma for a "very special" séance: last week he bought from you a spirit board said to have belonged to a Dublin medium, "to make Mathilde speak".
- You know Ophélie Darcourt asked you tonight what certain pieces in the tower were worth, as if she were taking inventory.

YOUR GOALS TONIGHT

- Keep the clock sale secret: it would cost you your reputation, maybe your shop.
- But figure out who the other plague doctor was: what you saw clears Gaspard, and only you know it.
- Leave tomorrow with the clock, if that is still possible.

IF YOU ARE ACCUSED

You had no interest in your best client's death — say so, numbers in hand. If they push, reveal what you saw from the orangery, even if you then have to explain what you were doing there.

Ophélie Darcourt

the gothic novelist

WHO YOU ARE

Novelist. Your tales of ghosts and haunted manors sell in every train station, and critics despise you. You are an old friend of Éléonore's, who invites you to the ball every year.

You came as the White Lady, veil and candelabra. You watch everything; it's your job.

YOUR SECRET

Your next novel, "The Dead of Ravenel", tells this family's story under the thinnest of disguises. Aurélien read the proofs last week: he promised you a lawsuit that would ruin you if the book came out.

WHAT YOU KNOW

- At dinner, Doctor Lestrade casually asked you where Aurélien kept his "famous spirits' cup" and what time the tower would be set up.
- You saw Madame Irma muttering lines in the corridor, a sheet of paper in her hand, like an actress waiting in the wings.
- You know Gaspard owes money to some unsavory people: one of them came looking for him all the way to your publisher's office in Paris.

YOUR GOALS TONIGHT

- Keep the threatened lawsuit from becoming an obvious motive.
- Get a book out of tonight — without becoming its main character.
- Find out whether the séance was rigged: you are almost sure it was.

IF YOU ARE ACCUSED

Remind them a novelist needs her models alive: a lawsuit sells books, a murder gets them pulled from the shelves. Then tell them the question the doctor asked you at dinner.

Oscar Ravenel

the prankster nephew

WHO YOU ARE

Aurélien's nephew, twenty-two, a law student in Paris when you can be bothered. They invite you because you are family; they keep an eye on you because you are you.

You came as a skeleton, glow-in-the-dark paint and all. Halloween is your night.

YOUR SECRET

You are the one who killed the lights at five past midnight: you pulled the tower's fuse to prank the séance. You had no idea what was about to happen, and now you are terrified people will think the blackout was part of the murder.

WHAT YOU KNOW

- Around 9:15 pm, while scouting the tower for your prank, you saw Doctor Lestrade come in from the garden through the terrace door. He was pulling off his gloves, and they were caked with soil.
- You know your uncle had summoned his lawyer for November 2nd: he wanted to "put his affairs in order".
- You heard Éléonore say on the telephone: "The day after tomorrow. Yes. For good."

YOUR GOALS TONIGHT

- Confess the fuse prank — but only once you have proven it had nothing to do with your uncle's death.
- Get the doctor talking: you can't stop thinking about those muddy gloves.
- Don't cry in front of Gaspard.

IF YOU ARE ACCUSED

Yes, you cut the lights. But the blackout came at five past midnight, AFTER Aurélien drank the cup: he wasn't killed in the dark. Ask instead what the doctor was doing in the garden at 9 pm.

Game master's sheet

Do not hand out this page.

THE SOLUTION

The killer is Doctor Armand Lestrade.

Twenty years ago, Lestrade killed Mathilde Ravenel by mistake with a dose of digitalis ten times too strong, and wrote "heart failure". Aurélien found the prescription in the attic and meant to expose him at midnight, right after "Mathilde's" message recited by Irma: "The one who signed away my last sleep is among you."

At 9 pm, Lestrade picked aconite (monkshood) from the flower bed below the terrace. At 11:40 pm, taking advantage of the tower Irma had left open and of a costume identical to Gaspard's, he stirred the chopped leaves into the cup Aurélien was to drink alone at midnight. The blackout at 12:05 am is a prank with no link to the crime.

CLUES TO PLANT

- The dregs of the spirits' cup: fragments of chopped green leaves. Basile identifies them as monkshood if he sees them. Reveal this in Act 2.
- The two plague doctors: Irma saw the 11:40 pm figure carrying a silver-topped cane (only Lestrade has one), and Victoire was with Gaspard at that time. Together, they clear Gaspard and point to Lestrade.
- The attic prescription, signed "Dr A. Lestrade": Éléonore knows about it. It is in the tower, tucked into the spirit board's box (have it found in Act 2 if no one brings it up). It explains the séance message.
- The diagnosis that came too fast: Lestrade said "heart attack" before even taking a pulse. Éléonore noticed.
- Useful red herrings: the cup prepared by Irma (a fraud), the plague doctor mistaken for Gaspard (who sold the clock), Basile's eviction (he knows aconite), Éléonore's trunk (about to run away), Ophélie's lawsuit, Oscar's blackout. Six motives or suspicious behaviors, no killer.

WITH 6 OR 7 PLAYERS

With 7 players, remove Ophélie. With 6 players, remove Oscar as well. No decisive clue depends on them.

Without Oscar: in Act 2, announce that the tower's fuse was found sitting on the fuse box with a scribbled note, "Boo! — O." — Oscar, the nephew, left before midnight. The blackout becomes a prank with no author present. His muddy gloves aren't needed: Basile's testimony and the cut aconite are enough.

Without Ophélie: Lestrade's question about the cup is lost, but it was only a confirmation. If players go around in circles on Irma, have her séance script discovered in her purse.

TIMELINE OF THE EVENING

- 8:00 pm Masked guests arrive. Two plague doctors: Gaspard and Doctor Lestrade, who carries a silver-topped cane.
- 9:00 pm Lestrade picks aconite from the bed below the terrace. Basile glimpses a plague doctor crouching in the dark.
- 9:15 pm Lestrade comes back in through the terrace door, gloves caked with soil (seen by Oscar).
- 9:30 pm Dinner. Aurélien announces: "At midnight, the dead will speak." Lestrade asks Ophélie where the cup is kept.
- 11:30 pm Irma sets up the tower and the spirits' cup, then steps out, leaving the door open.
- 11:40 pm Lestrade stirs the aconite into the cup. Irma sees him leave; Victoire sees him cross the gallery while Gaspard is with her in the orangery.
- 12:00 am The séance begins. Aurélien drinks the spirits' cup alone. Irma starts "Mathilde's" message.
- 12:05 am The lights go out (Oscar's prank). Aurélien convulses in the dark.
- 12:10 am The lights come back. Aurélien is dead, his head on the table. Lestrade immediately declares: "heart attack".