

SERVES YOU RIGHT

By: Caroline Berg

The murder doesn't matter - the blackmail does.

The Blackmoor-Winters family has been murdered! However, they had it coming to them. What is more troublesome is that some member of the household has decided to call the constables. Which means you have precisely one hour to blackmail all the servants into telling the "truth" about what happened - a truth which just so happens to paint you as completely innocent.

SET-UP:

Everyone is a servant in the Blackmoor-Winters household. If there are less than four players, the players jointly create the staff, creating at least four (if not more) servants.

At the start of the game, everyone chooses a different occupation within the household. While it was historically possible to have more than one footman or scullery maid in such a household, for the purposes of this game, no occupation can be held by multiple players. A list of occupations, in order of salary, can be found on page two.

Next, everyone chooses one secret the other players do not know. These secrets are not related to the murder of the family, but if found out, could lead to unwelcome speculations.

The secrets can be as simple as ignoring the Master's children, or as complex as defrauding the Blackmoor-Winter's family out of their aunt's inheritance. Whatever the secret is, you don't want other players to know about it! If you can't think of a secret, a list has been provided on page two.

Then everyone picks one other player and lists one bit of unproven blackmail they have over that player. This is not the same as the secrets.

SET-UP CONT.:

For example, it could be that Plute the footman thought he saw Dovie the Lady's maid trying on the family jewels. Meanwhile Dovie might have heard about Nelda kiss the Master's son. And so it goes, until all the characters think they know some sordid tidbit.

Next, take a deck of 54 cards, remove the jokers, and shuffle it.

Finally, decide the order of the players.

HOW TO PLAY:

The point of the game is to make a tangled web of blackmail between all the characters before the constables arrive. This is done by finding out the secrets of the characters. The constables arrive at the manor when any player draws any King from the deck of cards.

During each turn, one character will talk to another character, to try to blackmail them, to find out if the blackmail they have is correct, or to find out their secrets, which they can use to blackmail that character.

This is done by drawing cards, and narrating what happens.

The character who asks questions does not draw cards. It is the character who answers who draws the cards. The cards dictate how they answer.

Spades - the blackmail is correct. If the character asking questions doesn't have a method of blackmailing this character, the character answering questions lets their secret slip.

HOW TO PLAY, CONT.:

Clubs - the blackmail isn't confirmed, and the character answering questions lets slip some blackmail about another character.

Diamonds - the blackmail is a lie and is removed from the game, but the character asking questions lets their secret slip.

Hearts - the blackmail is a lie and is removed from the game. No information is gained.

The game continues until all the secrets are known by at least one other character, or a King is drawn. If a King is drawn before all the secrets are known, the characters are hauled off to jail.

POSSIBLE SECRETS:

- Stealing silver on the sly
- Slept with the Master/Mistress of the house
- Embezzled funds
- Stole medicine to heal a sick relative
- Purposely bad at their job
- Stole clothes from Master/Mistress of the house
- Had an affair with someone of the same sex
- Added sleeping pills to someone's drink
- Takes the horses out for joyrides without permission
- Ignored the Master's children
- Doesn't dust when cleaning
- Defrauded the Blackmoor-Winter's family out of a relative's inheritance
- Steals the mail to read before the family does
- Pretends to be a relative of the Blackmoor-Winters family when in town
- Killed the Young Master's puppy
- Drinks the Master's alcohol when everyone else is asleep
- Purposely ripped the Lady of the house's petticoats.
- Let chickens loose in the sitting room, for fun.

POSSIBLE OCCUPATIONS:

Female Occupations, listed by salary:

- Housekeeper
- Cook
- Lady's maid
- Governess
- Nurse
- Chamber Maid
- Parlour Maid
- Sewing Maid
- House Maid
- Kitchen Maid
- Vegetable Maid
- Scullery Maid
- Laundry Maid
- Dairy Maid

Male Occupations, listed by salary:

- Steward
- Butler
- Under-butler
- Chef
- Head Groom
- Head Gardener
- Game Keeper
- Valet
- Chauffer
- Groom
- Footmen
- Grounds Keepers
- Hall boy
- Tiger, small boy who rode with the horses
- Steel boy, polishes all the silver
- Lamp boy
- Boot boy

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