

MIDNIGHT MURDER MYSTERIES

THE IMMERSIVE DETECTIVE GAME



ENGLISH RULES

SECOND EDITION

Alain Luttringer



CREDITS & THANKS

Designer, Project Manager, Art Director: Alain Luttringer

Illustrators: Fabrice Weiss, Baptiste Reymann

Graphic Designer: Julie Bellule

Editors: Yvette Peter, Carole, Bernadette and Françoise Schnitzler

Main playtesters: Carole, Bernadette, François and Françoise Schnitzler, Elodie Delhomme, Peter Lentz, Jeanne Lanoix, Lionel Weisbecker, Susanna Nunes, Alice Fournier, Bertrand Audinet, Fabien Wild, Laetitia Brasseur

English Translation: The Geeky Pen

English Version Proofreaders: Caroline D'Silva, Carole and Alain



MULTIFACES EDITIONS

1C rue de Saales, 67000 Strasbourg - France
www.multifaces-editions.com

Copyright © 2017-2020 Multifaces Editions
Midnight Murder Mysteries™ is a trademark.
All rights reserved for all languages and all countries.

MIDNIGHT MURDER MYSTERIES!

Aboard a majestic cruise ship, the lifeless body of a passenger has been found in their luxury suite... The prime suspects are the twelve occupants of the VIP cabins on the upper deck. They are the only ones who could have had access.

You and your fellow private detectives are participating in a conference on board the ship, and you all decide to make a bet. Who among you will prove to be the finest sleuth?

Midnight Murder Mysteries takes you on an unpredictable voyage, in which you must try to reconstruct the circumstances of the alleged crime...

WHO IS THE MURDERER?
WHAT WAS THEIR MOTIVE?
HOW DID THE VICTIM DIE?

These are the three questions you will need to answer once the ship has docked... Or if another detective reveals what they have found!

Some testimonies or clues might add up. Others might contradict one another, or reveal something: this is where you'll have to dig a little deeper... Time is of the essence, because the perils of travel and the insight of your colleagues cast a shadow of doubt over the end of the investigation. You will have to constantly adapt to the circumstances...

This game box has **20 unique cases**. In each case, you can interrogate each of the **12 suspects** on 3 conversation topics.

You can also search for clues at **24 locations** on various decks of the ship.

This box contains:

1 game board, 2 Case booklets (green and red),
19 pawns (5 detectives, 12 suspects, 1 Purser, 1 ship),
1 "Last Moved Suspect" disc, 12 Buoy tokens,
1 pad with Notebook & Deduction sheets,
18 Event cards, 1 rulebook

Preparation: put 'A' stickers on both sides of one of the 12 white Suspect pawns. Do the same for the other letters ('B' to 'L') with the 11 other Suspect pawns. The remaining stickers are backups in case of loss or wear.



VERY IMPORTANT: GENERAL RULES THAT APPLY TO ALL CASES

- ① The body was discovered in the luxury suite (location 13).
- ② The suspicious death occurred the day before, between 11:45 pm and midnight.
- ③ The murderer acted alone (he or she never has an accomplice) and is the only person capable of lying.
- ④ The murderer is always one of the 12 suspects, unless it was an accident (there is no murderer) or a suicide (in this case, the victim is considered to be the culprit).

A GUIDED TOUR

SHIP PLANS

The ship consists of **four decks**, divided into **ten zones**, each consisting of one or more **locations**.

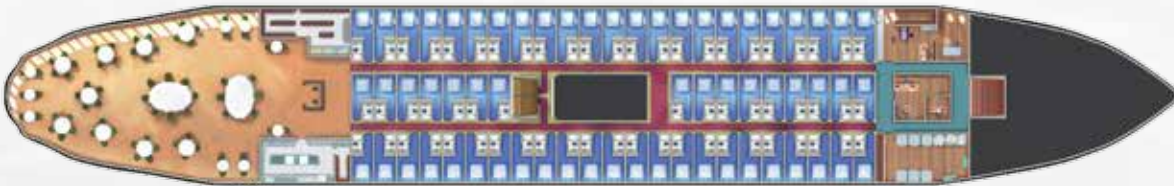
On **the upper deck**, you'll find the VIP cabins of the 12 suspects (zone 1, locations 01 to 12), the luxury suite belonging to the victim (zone 2, location 13), and the wheelhouse (zone 3, location 14).



On **the main deck**, there's the leisure locations: the pool and the piano bar (zone 4, locations 15 and 16), the beauty parlor (beautician, hairdresser, spa, masseur, etc.) and the shops (zone 5, locations 17 and 18), the casino and the theater, which functions as a multi-purpose hall (zone 6, locations 19 and 20).



On **the lower deck**, we have the restaurant and kitchens (zone 7, location 21), the passenger cabins (zone 8, location 22) and the service rooms: the infirmary, the chief steward's room and the laundry room (zone 9, location 23).



The hold (deck not represented separately) consists of the utility room, the machine room, the cargo hold, etc. (zone 10, location 24).

Several **access points** allow the characters to move from one deck to another:

- zone 4 (main deck) is connected to zone 1 (upper deck);
- zone 5 (main deck) is connected to zone 8 (lower deck);
- zone 6 (main deck) is connected to zone 3 (upper deck).



IMPORTANT

- Zone 2 can only be accessed from zone 1: **it's impossible to move from zone 2 to zone 3 and vice versa.**
- Zone 9 (service rooms) is connected to zone 10 (the hold), situated below the lower deck.

SHIP PROGRESSION TRACK (10 SPACES)

The ship's course is divided into several steps on the game board. The game starts when the ship turns around towards the nearest port (space 2, 3, 4 or 5, depending on the number of players) and ends when it arrives at its destination (space 10).



EVENT CARDS (18)

Some Event cards will cause the ship to advance on the Track. Others will add a bit of spice to the game, for example by changing the movement or access rules.

The Event cards aren't tied to the contents of any specific case.



CASE BOOKLETS (2 X 10 CASES)

Each booklet has 10 cases, which you don't have to play in particular order. We advise you not to try the **Expert** difficulty level cases until you've played at least one or two cases from the **Amateur** level. The Amateur cases contain less wrong paths and offer more ways to find important clues.



The **Case Presentations** can be found at the beginning of the booklet. To the left, you'll find the case number, the title, the difficulty level, an illustration, and an introductory text (which may include case specific rules). To the right, you'll find a correlation table: each of the 60 possible paths you can follow has a number, which points to a specific Paragraph for you to read during the game. **IMPORTANT:** after reading the Case Presentation out loud, show the illustration to all the players and slide the booklet's flap in between the two pages. This way, you won't accidentally refer to the wrong case during the game!

In the middle of the booklet, the **Paragraphs** for all the cases are referenced by a number (without mentioning the name of the corresponding path or case). The Paragraphs are out of order, which means that the surrounding Paragraphs won't be relevant to the current case.

The **Solutions** for the cases are listed upside down at the end of the booklet (DON'T READ THEM PREMATURELY).

A photograph of a lounge area. In the foreground, a black grand piano with its lid open sits on a light-colored carpet with a pattern of large orange-red circles. To the left of the piano are two red armchairs. In the background, there is a curved wall with several rectangular windows and a bar area with shelves. The ceiling has recessed circular lights.

MIDNIGHT MURDER MYSTERIES - NOTEBOOK

Each correct hypothesis = 1 point

Case Name: _____

Culprit: _____

Motivation: _____

Weapon: _____

Location: _____

Time: _____

Witnesses: _____

Investigator: _____

Notes: _____

Final Score: _____ Points

- 6 -

SETUP

1. Please note: **in a game with 4 or 5 players**, remove the card **FULL SPEED** from the deck of Event cards.

PREPARATION. Remove the **4 CALM SEA cards** from the deck. Shuffle the remaining cards face down and create **3 piles of 3 cards and a 4th pile of 4 or 5 cards**. Add 1 CALM SEA card to each pile and shuffle the piles separately. Lastly, place the 4 piles on top of each other (with the 4th pile at the bottom). Place the deck face down on the space marked "Event Deck".

2. Place the **Ship pawn** on the Progression Track according to the number of players: in a game with 2 players place it on space 1, for 3 players on space 2, for 4 players on space 3, for 5 players on space 4.
3. Randomly place the **12 Suspect pawns** in zones 4 to 9 (2 pawns per zone).
4. Each player chooses a different **Detective pawn**.
5. Give each player a **Notebook / Deduction sheet**. Use pencils and erasers for note taking.
6. Give each player a number of **Buoy tokens**: 2 players = 5 tokens, 3 players = 4 tokens, 4 players = 3 tokens, 5 players = 2 tokens.
7. Place the red *Last Moved Suspect* disc and the red Purser pawn next to the board.
8. Choose one player who will be **First Player throughout the whole game**.
9. Starting with the last player in player order and going anti-clockwise, each player places their detective **in one of the zones (4 to 9) which is not already occupied by another detective**.
10. Choose a case from one of the case booklets and read **its presentation** out loud.



PLAYER TURNS

In clockwise order, players will take turns investigating.



"FIRST PLAYER" PHASE (RESERVED FOR FIRST PLAYER)

When it's his/her turn to play, but before their action phase, the **First Player** draws the first **card from the EVENT DECK** and places it face up on the "ROUND EVENT" space.



Place the Purser in the zone (1-10) designated by the number on the Event card. The Purser **prevents the detectives from investigating** the zone he is in. During this turn, players can't search the location and can't interrogate suspects there. The Purser doesn't influence the detectives' movement.

The First Player then reads this round's **event** out loud (title, flavor text and effect). The effect is immediate and only applies to the current round.

"PLAYER ACTIONS" PHASE

On your turn, you have **3 action points to spend (they aren't physically represented in the game)**. You can use them to take the actions described below. Whether public or private, all investigations are automatically successful.

FOR
1 ACTION
POINT

- 1. **Investigate publicly** (read the Paragraph out loud).
- 2. **Move your Detective pawn one zone.**
- 3. **Move the Purser pawn one zone.**
- 4. **Purchase a Buoy token** (provided you have less than the amount you started the game with).

FOR
2 ACTION
POINTS

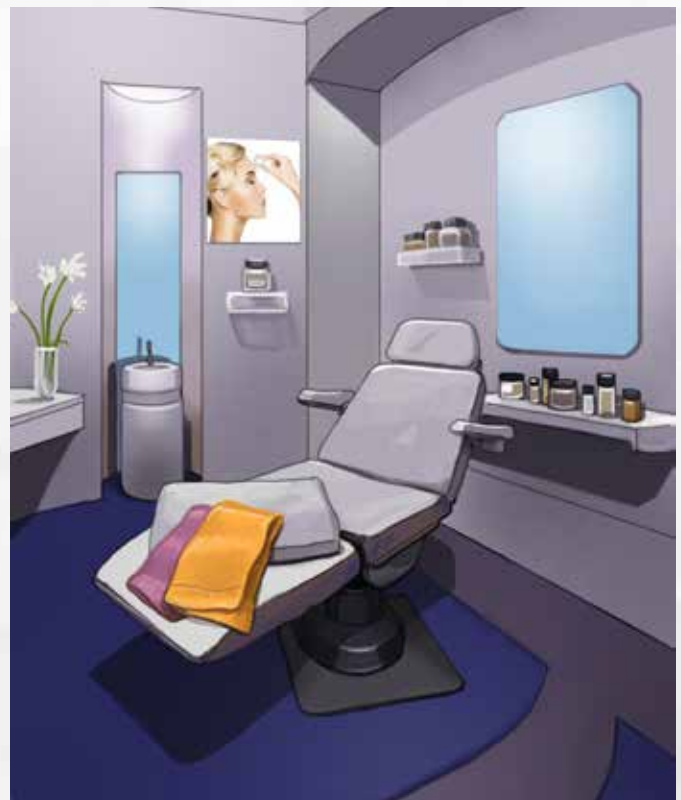
- 1. **Investigate privately** (read the Paragraph for yourself).
Note: after reading it, you may choose to read the Paragraph out loud anyway, in which case you regain 1 action point.
- 2. **Extract information** (not allowed for the luxury suite Paragraph) from a detective in the same zone as you; **you must also give this detective 1 Buoy token.**



Clarifications on the "Investigate" actions. To search/inspect a location (to gather physical clues or testimonies from other people on board) and to interrogate a suspect, the detective has to be in the same zone as the target. To interrogate a suspect, you must choose one of the three possible conversational subjects and announce it to the other players: **ALIBI** (Where were you at the time of the murder?), **WITNESS** (Do you know something about the death, the victim, or the other suspects?) or **MOTIVE** (What was your relationship with the victim?). When you investigate **privately**, after skimming the Paragraph, you announce to the others whether you want to "**keep it to yourself**" (by reading it silently) or "**make it public**" (by reading it out loud). The players then tick the corresponding small box on the left side of their Notebook (if the Paragraph remains private), or all the small boxes (if it was made public).

Clarifications on the "Move your Detective pawn" action. When moving your detective, you must spend 1 action point per zone you cross. The movement is calculated zone by zone, and each newly entered zone must be adjacent to the previous one. The detectives and suspects are always considered to be in a zone rather than a specific location. Once you're in a zone, you have access to all locations in that zone. One exception: to enter the luxury suite, you must spend 2 action points (spend only 1 to leave) and there can never be more than one detective inside suite 13 at the same time.

Clarifications on the "Extract information" action. If you and another detective share the same zone, you can use the case booklet to privately read a Paragraph this player has already seen (the Paragraphs known by other players are ticked on your case sheet). For this, you must spend 2 action points and also pay the targeted player 1 Buoy token. Effectively, this costs 3 action points, so use this expensive action only when you're convinced the Paragraph is interesting (for example during the last turn when a player chose to trigger the end or during the game when two players have visited opposing locations). In practical terms, when extracting information from another detective, first state to the other players which Paragraph you're going to read, then take the case booklet and read it privately (it's always better to have direct access to the text rather than having it communicated to you by another player).





Each Buoy token allows you to **spend an additional action point**. You can use multiple tokens on a single turn. Once you've used a Buoy token, remove it from the game.

During your turn, you may spend **1 action point** to **purchase a previously spent Buoy token** (even one that was spent during the same turn). You can only purchase a Buoy token if you have less tokens than the amount you started the game with. However, thanks to the 'Extract information' action, it's possible to possess more Buoy tokens than the amount you started with.

Example 1: You spend 1 action point to move your detective to a zone that's adjacent to the one you started in. You then spend 2 action points to privately investigate one of the locations within that zone. You decide to make the Paragraph public, for which you regain 1 action point. You spend your last action point to move your detective to another adjacent zone.

Example 2: You spend 1 action point to publicly interrogate a suspect on the subject ALIBI (all other players had already looked at this Paragraph privately, which made you want to gain the information as well). You then privately interrogate the suspect (for 2 action points) on the subject WITNESS. After reading the Paragraph, you decide to keep it to yourself.

Example 3: You're in zone 1 and want to search the luxury suite. You spend 2 action points to enter it, then you search it privately by spending a Buoy token on top of your 3rd action point. Of course, you decide to keep this precious Paragraph to yourself. Because you're in a hurry, you decide to spend another Buoy token to return to zone 1.

"MOVE A SUSPECT" PHASE (OPTIONAL)

After spending your action points, you may **move one (and only one) suspect of your choice one or two zones for free**, in accordance with the movement rules. Put the **Last Moved Suspect disc** underneath the moved suspect, which indicates the next suspect to be moved this way has to be a different one.

Suspects can't be moved into the luxury suite. Note: **if a suspect is in the zone with the VIP cabins**, that suspect is considered to be in their cabin. This means **their cabin can't be searched**, but it's still possible to interrogate the suspect.

At the start of the game, it might not be interesting to move the suspects. But as the game unfolds, it can prove to be very useful to draw a suspect closer to you, to move them away from your fellow detectives, or even to prevent their VIP cabin from being searched... Keep this in mind!



END OF THE CASE AND PLAYER CONCLUSIONS

A case can end in two ways: **when the ship arrives at the port** OR **when a detective makes revelations**. In both cases, all players will share what they have deduced, but not in the exact same manner.

COMPARING HYPOTHESES

Remember: hypotheses 1 and 2 have to be different for each of the 3 case elements.

CULPRIT	hypothesis 1 (50 pts): _____	hypothesis 2 (30 pts): _____
MOTIVE	hypothesis 1 (30 pts): _____	hypothesis 2 (20 pts): _____
MODUS OPERANDI	hypothesis 1 (20 pts): _____	hypothesis 2 (10 pts): _____



THE SHIP ARRIVES AT THE PORT

If the ship pawn reaches the **final space** on the Progression Track (the port), the detectives immediately cease their investigations. However, the players can decide to take **one final game turn** if they **all agree** to do so.

Then, the players write down their hypotheses 1 and 2 **simultaneously and in secret** on their Deduction sheets. After everyone has finished (all players have put their pencils down), the players are no longer allowed to adjust their notes. Starting with the First Player and going clockwise, everyone announces **their three answers for hypothesis 1**.

A DETECTIVE MAKES REVELATIONS (ZONE 6)

If a player's **detective is in zone 6 at the end of their turn** and they think they've discovered the three case elements, they may trigger the end of the game during the course of any given round... They simply announce **"I want to reveal my findings"**. **The players finish the current game round up** and until the player sitting to the right of the First Player, so that everyone has had an equal amount of turns. The other players don't need to reach zone 6 during this final turn.

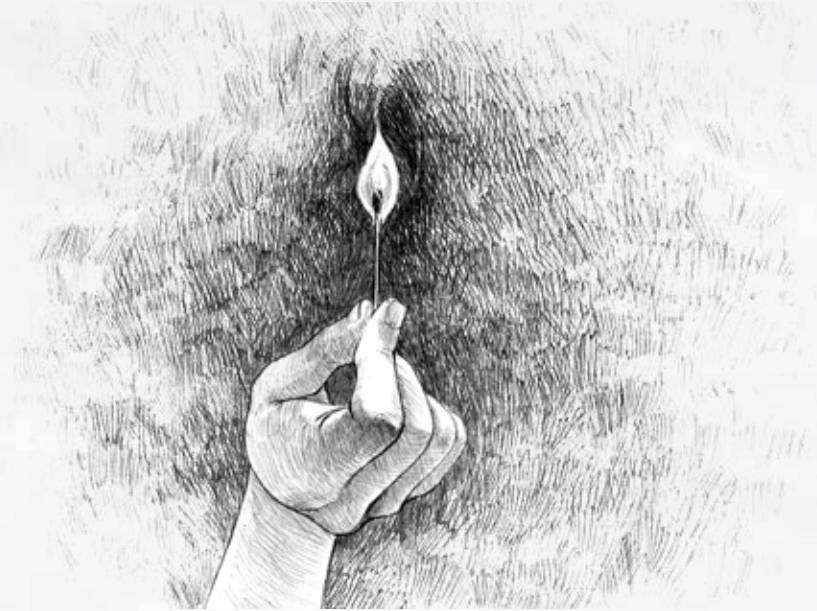
Then, the player who triggered the end of the game **writes down their deductions first and reads (only!) their hypothesis 1 out loud**, without explaining their choices. **The other players may not react to this information at this stage**. After listening to the hypothesis, they simultaneously and secretly write down their own hypotheses 1 and 2, on their own Deduction sheets. When everyone has finished, the players announce their own hypothesis 1 in clockwise order.

IMPORTANT

For **each of the 3 case elements** (culprit, motive, MO), each player must formulate a **hypothesis 1** (their favorite) AND a different **hypothesis 2** (their second chance). They can never write down the same word in 1 and 2, they will only score points once!). There are no "sets of hypotheses" to be considered: each element of the hypothesis is read and considered separately.

SOLVING THE CASE

One of the players reads the entire **solution of the case** out loud.



Now it's time to **calculate the scores**. The players each add up their points for the answers they got right: they do this for both hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 (provided the answers are different).

Modifying scores in case of revelations (zone 6):

- Each false hypothesis 1 of the player making revelations deducts 10 points from their score (**you might want to refrain from making revelations if you're not absolutely certain of your accusations**)
- Each correct hypothesis 1 of the player making revelations deducts 5 points **from the other players' scores (even the players who had chosen the same hypothesis 1 for that element)**.

The player with the highest total score wins the game and is declared the finest sleuth on board! In case of a tie, all players involved share the victory.



SOME USEFUL TIPS

KEEP AN EYE ON THE FLAP!

When consulting the case booklet during the game, **make sure you're on the right double page each time before consulting the correlation table** (the flap might have slid out by accident). This is the only way to make sure no false information enters the game. Identical first names are used for the same suspects in all of the cases, which means that potential errors might not be spotted at first glance!

UNIQUE PASSENGERS



The cases are completely independent from one another.

Even though they have identical first names in all of the cases, the **suspects** are never the same people. The surnames of the suspects are of no importance to the cases. Passengers they might share their cabin with are never accomplices to the murder. In the case booklets, the first names of the suspects are written in capital letters so the players can easily identify them.

Even when **other passengers and staff members** (with the exception of the Purser) aren't physically represented on the game board, they are still considered to be on the ship and might appear in location descriptions and testimonies, or on Event cards. Again, be aware that these are never the same characters.

PROPERLY SEARCH THE LOCATIONS!

Focusing on the suspects and neglecting the locations is a beginner's mistake, because the locations might reveal important paths... Actually, the Paragraphs for the locations are potentially **just as instructive** as the conversations you have with the suspects. What's more, **a location can never "lie" to you** (keep in mind that only the culprit may or may not be lying to you).

Try to systematically visit suite 13 in all of the cases. After all, the luxury suite is the crime scene and the victim's residence! Other strategic locations include the **wheelhouse**, where the captain or his second in command might give you information, and the **service rooms**, where the ship's doctor who examined the body will usually be. **The culprit's cabin** (once you've identified them) is also usually a key location...



SUPER BUOYS!



A good strategy is to spend a Buoy token to gain **the second action point** you need to investigate privately, when you only have one action point left. This is especially useful considering you get your spent action point back if you subsequently decide to render the newly gained information public. You can then use that action point again **during the current turn**, for example to repurchase the Buoy token you just spent.

If you're not sure on how to spend your last action point on any given turn, you may purchase a Buoy token. It could give you more flexibility later on, for example by offering you opportunities to extract information from other players.



PLAYING MIDNIGHT MURDER MYSTERIES WELL = OBSERVING YOUR FELLOW DETECTIVES!

A good detective never allows the mind to wander by simply waiting for their turn to come around. The case is constantly moving forward as the other players take their turns... **Looking out for the actions and reactions of other players is often a very useful strategy!** Darn, what do they know that you don't?

Keep track of the movements of the detectives and suspects. Write down carefully which paths the other players have taken and analyze their choices: why did they choose this topic of conversation for a certain suspect, and not another? Why did they choose to keep a Paragraph to themselves and not make it public? Make a habit of observing the other players and their reaction to the Paragraphs they've chosen to read privately. Take note of their facial expressions and whether they're writing down lots of information or none at all.

In short, immerse yourself in the game. If you do more than just "hide in your own corner", a whole new dimension will open up! You can gain an enormous amount of information (Do I also choose this path, or do I avoid it?) and save yourself lots of time by observing the other players. Bluffing is of course part of the game: after all, there's a bet to be won!

NOTES ON DEDUCTION ... AND STRATEGY!

Each case has 60 possible paths! Choose wisely, because the game was developed in such a way that you'll never discover them all... Besides, time is of the essence! At the start of the game, everyone will leave a bit to chance, but soon you'll be discovering clues that will jump-start your investigation. Trying to hoard information by following lots of different paths is almost never a good approach. You have to try and detect **the best paths to follow**. To do that, you'll need lots of **insight and attention** (for the other players' investigations), **and a methodical approach to optimizing your movements and carefully selecting the paths you wish to pursue**.

During the other players' turns, **go over your notes again!** This is important in many cases: don't neglect important elements, cross-reference your information, and connect the dots... **Planning ahead while you wait for your turn** will keep the game running smoothly.

If you notice the detectives are taking too much time on their turns, consider adding a **sand timer** (3 minutes) to make the case more dynamic. This is optional, because speeding up the game might prove too stressful for some players.

FOR FUN AND FOR POINTS: GOALS OF THE GAME

The official goal is to **achieve the highest score** (even if tied with another player). But scoring points isn't the core element of the game. The **most exciting parts** lie in **discovering the story** piece by piece and in **trying to understand** what happened. Ultimately, you're aiming to avoid the wrong paths and be the best **at gathering and interpreting the puzzle pieces** presented by the story.



PLAY AID

GENERAL RULES THAT APPLY TO ALL CASES

The body was discovered in the luxury suite (location 13).

The suspicious death occurred the day before, between 11:45pm and midnight.

The murderer acted alone (he or she never has an accomplice) and is the only person capable of lying.

The murderer is always one of the 12 suspects, unless it was an accident (there is no murderer) or a suicide (in this case, the victim is considered to be the culprit).

PLAYER TURNS

"FIRST PLAYER" PHASE (RESERVED FOR FIRST PLAYER)

The **First Player** place the Purser in the designated zone, then he/she reads this round's **event** out loud.

"PLAYER ACTIONS" PHASE

On your turn, you have **3 action points to spend** (and maybe more with your Buoy tokens).

For 1 action point you may:

1. **Investigate publicly.**
2. **Move your Detective pawn one zone.**
3. **Move the Purser pawn one zone.**
4. **Purchase a Buoy token** (provided you have less than the amount you started the game with).

For 2 action points you may:

1. **Investigate privately** ! You may regain 1 action point if you choose to read the Paragraph out loud.
2. **Extract information** (not allowed for the luxury suite Paragraph) from a detective in the same zone as you; **you must also give this detective 1 Buoy token.**

"MOVE A SUSPECT" PHASE (OPTIONAL)

After spending your action points, you may **move one (and only one) suspect of your choice one or two zones for free**. Put the **Last Moved Suspect disc** underneath the moved suspect.



END OF THE CASE

If the ship pawn reaches the **port** on the Progression Track, the detectives immediately cease their investigations. However, the players can decide to take **one final game turn** if they **all agree** to do so.

OR

At the end of their turn, a player choose to trigger the end of the game for all players (**their Detective pawn needs to be in zone 6**). **Players finish the current game round up.**

SPECIAL RULES

If a suspect is in the zone 1, that suspect is considered to be in their cabin (which can't be searched).

To enter the luxury suite, you must spend 2 action points (spend only 1 to leave).

There can never be more than one detective inside suite 13 at the same time.

Suspects can't be moved into the luxury suite.

It's impossible to move from zone 2 to zone 3 and vice versa.

