

# ***Play to Kill***

*Written for the Golden Cobra Challenge 2018 by Clark B. Timmins*

***Play to Kill*** is a short live-action role-playing (LARP) game for six to thirteen players. Players should sit in a circle in a well-lighted area. The game is played in three rounds; during each round each player will take a turn; play proceeds in the traditional clockwise rotation.

## **Preparation – *Cartes du Destin***

Three decks of cards (“Character”, “Alibi”, and “Murder”) are prepared so they contain the same number of cards as players; the cards should be shuffled. The “Character” deck must contain *The Mayor*; the “Murder” deck must contain *The Murderer*. Players keep their cards secret.

## **Round 1 – *Mon Alibi***

Each player selects a random card from the “Character” deck and the “Alibi” deck. Players should take a few minutes mentally to create the character they will play – while the “Character” card provides the basic profession, the player will need to imagine the character’s name, voice, mannerisms, etc. Too, the character will need to provide an alibi – shaped by the instructions on the “Alibi” card – for the hour during which a murder occurred.

The player who drew *The Mayor* should then stand up and read the following:

“I am Mayor (character name) of this fair town. Alas, our fair town has been startled by a most foul murder. Surely, the perpetrator is here in this very circle! We must all make an examination of ourselves and others that we may discern which among us is the murderer. Let us now hear our various alibis for the hour during which the crime occurred. Befitting my station as Mayor, I first will proceed.”

*The Mayor* then delivers his or her own alibi. The person to the left of *The Mayor* may ask a few brief questions to clarify points in the alibi. Play then proceeds clockwise until all players have had a chance to deliver their alibi.

## **Round 2 – *J’Accuse***

Each player selects a random card from the “Murder” deck. The player who draws *The Murderer* now learns they are playing the character who did indeed commit the murder; all other characters are innocent. *The Murderer* naturally desires to remain incognito and escape justice. Players should keep their cards secret.

The player who drew *The Mayor* stands up and reads the following:

“We all have provided an alibi and none have confessed. This is a sorry state of affairs for our fair town. Surely, the perpetrator is here in this very circle! We must all make an examination of ourselves and others that we may discern which among us is the murderer. Let us now more closely examine our various alibis. Befitting my station as Mayor, I first will proceed.”

*The Mayor* then turns to the player on his or her left and asks several questions that challenge their previous alibi. The questioned player responds as necessary in order to strengthen their alibi and prove their innocence.

### **Round 3 – Plénière**

The player who drew *The Mayor* stands up and reads the following:

“Alas, none have confessed. This is a sorry state of affairs indeed. Yet we must decide who among us is the murderer. I open the floor to plenary discussion – let us speak in good order, asking questions, making observations, and providing further information. At the end of this period I will solicit votes for whom we must condemn.”

A general discussion may ensue for several minutes, as needed.

The player who drew *The Mayor* stands up and reads the following:

“We now must vote, each their own conscience. All stand. You and each of you must now point to that person whom you have adjudged to be the murderer.”

*The Mayor* does not vote. When the finger pointing stabilizes, *The Mayor* notes who has the most votes. If a tie should occur, *The Mayor* casts the final, tie-breaking vote. *The Mayor* then invites the condemned person to utter their final words before being hanged. Theatrics are encouraged. This accomplished, the player holding *The Murderer* card then reveals the card and the town’s citizens learn whether they have hanged the actual murderer.

***La Fin***

*remaining pages are print-and-play card accessories*

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# CHARACTER

## *The Mayor*

You are *The Mayor* of the town and will have extra responsibilities as described in the game document.

As the Mayor, you deserve to be well respected.

## *Town Gossip*

You are widely known as the town gossip. You think you know everything about everyone.

## *Town Drunk*

You are the town drunk. You often have large gaps in your memory.

## *Merchant*

You own and operate the town's only successful mercantile. Almost everyone owes you money.

## *Cooper*

You make and sell barrels. The town merchant is your primary customer. Business is slow but steady.

## *Tanner*

You prepare and sell leathers and hides. Because tanning operations are smelly, you live on the outskirts of town.

## *Cobbler*

You make and sell shoes. Business has been pretty slow, lately.

## *Miller*

You own and operate the town's grist mill. You're quite wealthy.

*Wood Cutter*

You cut and sell firewood. You are often far away from town.

*Teamster*

You drive wagons from the town to the big city. You know a lot more about "life in general" than most town folk.

*Farmer*

You own and operate a small farm. While business is good, farming is awfully hard work.

*Laborer*

You pick up any odd jobs you can find around town. You're always short of money, but you're physically very strong.

*Beggar*

You've got this town figured out. You might have to sleep outside and eat cast-off food. But you don't have to spend your life working!

*Candlemaker*

You make and sell candles. Business is good and you're a master at your craft.

*Carpenter*

Whatever it is and whatever it's used for, you know how to build it. You have a lot of expensive tools.

*Blacksmith*

You own and operate the town's forge. You are hugely strong and usually covered in soot.

*Fisherman*

You make your living by fishing in the river. Fish are plentiful and you always find a good market for your catch. But you do spend a lot of time alone.

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# ALIBI

Your alibi must include a lock and key

Your alibi must include a hammer

Your alibi must include a knife

Your alibi must include removing  
your shoes or boots

Your alibi must include an axe

Your alibi must include a scythe

Your alibi must include a pitchfork

Your alibi must include a  
sledgehammer

Your alibi must include silver coins

Your alibi must include rat poison

Your alibi must include digging a large hole

Your alibi must include leaving home for a few hours during the night

Your alibi must include throwing something into the river

Your alibi must include a coil of rope

Your alibi must contain a shovel

Your alibi must include poisonous mushrooms

Your alibi must include a musket

*Play to Kill*

# MURDER

*You are The Murderer*

*You are Innocent*

*You are Innocent*

*You are Innocent*

*You are Innocent*

*You are Innocent*

*You are Innocent*

*You are Innocent*

*You are Innocent*

*You are Innocent*

*You are Innocent*

*You are Innocent*

*You are Innocent*