

Wanted in the Wild Wild West

A partially-scripted interactive murder mystery party
By Stefanie R. Austin

INTRODUCTION

[ALL characters, except SHERIFF JESSE, are present. CLARK may have a whiskey or beer, with an arm wrapped possessively around DELILAH as PISTOL PETE glares from across the room. CASSIDY may be sitting at the bar, hat tilted down, with an air of mystery. MISS KITTY addresses the audience.]

MISS KITTY: Well, howdy, ya'll! Welcome to The Dusty Spur Inn and Saloon. I'm afraid we don't have any more rooms available, but we've got plenty of whiskey and sarsaparilla. So stick around...the whiskey's not gonna drink itself. And of course, we do have the lovely Miss Lilith here if any of you gentleman are looking for some company tonight.

[CLARK whistles (cat call).]

LILITH: I thought I would take the night off tonight, Miss Kitty, if that's all right with you.

MISS KITTY: Well, of course it's all right. You goin' somewhere tonight?

LILITH: No, I think I'll stay in. There's a wanted train robber on the loose. It could be dangerous.

BONNIE: Why, Lilith, I didn't think you'd be afraid of a train robber.

LILITH: I meant it could be dangerous for him.

DELILAH: You don't think we need to worry about him tonight, do you?

CLARK: You don't need to worry about no train robber, sweetheart. Not when I'm around. If that bandit shows his face 'round here, I'll take care of him. Nobody can beat Clark Stanley in a standoff.

PISTOL PETE: Nobody, huh?

CLARK: What do you call yourself again? Pissy Pete?

PISTOL PETE: *Pistol* Pete.

DELILAH: The fastest gun in the West.

CLARK: Well, well. Why don't we test that theory?

PISTOL PETE: You sure you want to do that?

MISS KITTY: Now, now, boys. You take that nonsense outside.

PISTOL PETE: My apologies, Miss Kitty. I have no intentions of causing any trouble.

MISS KITTY: And you, Clark, best leave that train robber to the professionals. That bounty hunter is still in town. What's his name...Jasper?

CASSIDY: Cassidy. Cassidy Kidd.

[All turn to him, noticing him for the first time.]

MISS KITTY: I didn't see you there, Mr. Kidd. I trust you'll catch the outlaw in no time.

PISTOL PETE: I hear they're calling him "The Shadow." Nobody's seen his face.

BONNIE: And he's on and off the cab quicker than the light can catch him.

DELILAH: That's a beautiful dress, Bonnie. Is that one of your own creations?

BONNIE: Of course it is. Would you like me to make one for you?

DELILAH: Yes, I would love --

CLARK: Of course she would! I'll pay double your rate to get my lady whatever she wants. And you better clear your schedule, Ms. Bonnie. My little Delilah will need a white gown and I'll need a new morning coat.

MISS KITTY: We all know about the engagement, Clark.

CLARK: Our wedding can't happen soon enough, isn't that right, my little Delilah?

DELILAH: Yes, Clark.

[PISTOLE PETE looks on with anger.]

LILITH: *[To DELILAH, sotto]* Blink twice if you need me to poison his whiskey.

CLARK: What's that?

LILITH: I said you ought to have another whiskey.

CLARK: What a fine idea. I think I will.

PISTOL PETE: I think you've had quite enough already.

CLARK: You know what, I'm in a good mood tonight so I'm going to excuse your attitude just this once, *Pissy Pete*, but you better watch yourself.

MISS KITTY: Ok, boys...

CLARK: And you know what? Just because I'm in a good mood I'm gonna offer everyone here tonight a deal on my proprietary blend of snake oil liniment, a true panacea for all ills. A remedy for your malady, an ointment for your ailment. I'm offering it half off tonight only, along with all of my other magical remedies.

CASSIDY: That sounds too good to be true.

CLARK: What can I say? I'm feeling generous tonight.

MISS KITTY: Well, Clark, I'm sure we will all keep that in mind. Now, let's allow these folks return to the festivities. To help you get the lay of the land here, you'll be given some envelopes with some things you ought to ask or mention to us. But also feel free to enjoy the evening and strike up your own conversations. Well, that's all I have for you...you can all go on, now. The whiskey's not gonna drink itself.

MURDER INVESTIGATION

[CLARK is no longer here. SHERIFF JESSE is “off stage” – i.e. not in the room. ALL other characters are gathered. SHERIFF JESSE enters.]

MISS KITTY: Sheriff Jesse, what brings you in this evening? Lilith is off tonight...

SHERIFF: I'm not here for pleasure, Miss Kitty. I'm here on account of a dead man out lying in front of your establishment.

MISS KITTY/BONNIE/DELILAH/PETE/LILITH: Again?

MISS KITTY: Who is it this time?

SHERIFF: It appears to be that new salesman that moved into town a few months back.

DELILAH: Clark? Clark Stanley?

SHERIFF: It would appear so.

[All react, adlibbing]

PISTOL PETE: What happened to him?

SHERIFF: I should be asking you that, *Pistol* Pete. He's been shot in the chest. From a distance, it seems. I hear you've got quite a shot.

PISTOL PETE: You've heard right, sheriff. But I didn't shoot that man.

CASSIDY: That bastard got what he deserved.

SHERIFF: And who are you? Some kind of drifter?

CASSIDY: I'm here on business.

MISS KITTY: He's a bounty hunter looking for that train robber that was rumored to be in town.

SHERIFF: Train robber? I'm sure he's moved on. If he was still in town, we would have found him.

LILITH: Are you sure of that, Sheriff?

SHERIFF: Do you know something I don't, Lilith?

LILITH: Plenty of things. But that isn't news to you, is it now, Jesse?

[SHERIFF is visibly uncomfortable.]

BONNIE: Who did this, Sheriff?

SHERIFF: I don't know, but I intend to find out.

DELILAH: How can we help?

SHERIFF: Well, if Miss Kitty would allow it, I'd like to make sure everyone stays here at the saloon for the time being so I can run my investigation.

MISS KITTY: Fine by me. More time for our guests to spend their money. After all, the whiskey's not gonna drink itself.

SHERIFF: Thank you, kindly. *[To audience]* Now, I hope you folks will help me. You'll be receiving another envelope that will help you as you investigate the murder. You should talk to everyone you suspect and those you do not. Your job is to uncover the possible motives that these folks may have for wanting Clark Stanley dead, as well as whether they had the means to kill him. And look for clues around the saloon...I'm sure there's more here to be learned.

MISS KITTY: How long will this take, Sheriff?

SHERIFF: How's an hour, Miss Kitty? *[SHE nods]* After the investigation, we will ask you all to cast a ballot on who you think the murderer is. The Sheriff's department will provide a reward to one of you who correctly identifies Clark's murderer. Good luck, deputies.

PREVIEW