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The Atomic Bombshell!



Dr Robert Van Der Boom
Character Booklet

Congratulations! You are taking part in a murder mystery by Red Herring Games.

A few simple instructions to help you along:

Firstly: Don't Panic!

This booklet contains all the information you need as a guest to help you act your part throughout the murder mystery party.

The first page provides you with additional background information to help you get into character, however there are no special acting abilities required and you can make as much or as little of your character as you wish.

After that on each page you are given either something to read out, questions to ask, or answers to questions you may be asked. Although you are encouraged to ad lib, it is very important you do not lie, so provide the information contained within your booklet when it is asked of you.

Your host for the evening will direct you where necessary and tell you when to move on to the next round when the time is right.

If you are the murderer you will not be told. When you finally come to guess who did it – it could easily be you and feel free to point the finger at yourself if you feel you must!

And lastly: Have fun!

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Dr Robert Van Der Boom

Background Character Information:

Keep this information to yourself, and use it to help you to act in character throughout the mystery:

You are the project leader in charge of the creation of the Super-doomsday weapon (known only as "The Device").

You have spent years (many years) of your life on this project and have poured your very soul into its completion. "The Device" is almost a child to you; certainly you have devoted more time to bringing it into the world than you ever gave to your daughter Penny – though it has to be said, as a doomsday weapon Penny Pinching is probably just as effective!

Needless to say with the loss of the plans you are devastated - almost inconsolable! You might even have one or two heart palpitations during the evening as the stress gets to you.

You work hard, very hard, and are always sketching ideas or floating possibilities with your scientific colleagues. You may want to doodle either plans or equations onto napkins or any paper to hand.

Obviously you have the utmost respect for your esteemed colleagues and of course your wife, however that respect does not encompass your daughter for whom you have very little time. She's only ever after one thing – your money! Argue with her as much as you like – she is ALWAYS wrong, about everything. You find her very narrow minded and self-interested.

Dr Robert Van Der Boom

Introductions:

Use the following dialogue to introduce yourself to the other guests, speaking when indicated below.

Dr Robert Van Der Boom speaks first using the following dialogue:

Well, as Inspector McArthy says, this is a national crisis! If we don't find those plans America could be ruined! Especially if they fall into enemy hands! But it isn't just a national crisis – it is a personal catastrophe! I, Dr Robert Van Der Boom have been project lead for “The Device” for nearly 7 years. As the man in authority I am the one who will be held accountable for this – my career will be ruined! Ruined!

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Scripted Dialogue Round 1

Annie Cryption Well! I have to say I have never been so insulted in my life! I mean – how long have I worked diligently for the research labs? Years! And for what? To be accused of stealing the blueprints to which I had access every day!

Dr Jack Black I know what you mean Annie. This is a nasty business.

Dr R. Van Der Boom Made worse by the fact that the inspector has a suspect list that includes all of us!

Mrs Van Der Boom Yes Robert – that had not been lost on me.

Annie Cryption Well, I think it is disgusting. Everyone here has poured their very souls into that project and to have your name dragged through the muck like this – well, it kind of makes you wish you *had* stolen the plans!

Mrs Penny Pinching Be careful Annie – I'm sure the FBI will be listening to what we say – you can't go around making statements like that – they might think you really did steal the plans!

Cont.

Mr Hirem Enfirem Well somebody in this room did, unless McArthy is very much mistaken. Though – if any of the FBI are listening at the door they might like to know right now it wasn't me!

Mrs Penny Pinching Like they are going to believe you! I don't think so. They've got their reasons for putting us all on the suspect list, I just want to find out what they are.

Dr R. Van Der Boom I'm sure you do – then you can sell your story to the tabloid press and make a fortune.

Penny Pinching Nice idea father, but as you well know, they'll censor me. I mean, they wouldn't want something like this leaking out to the public. Traitors on the atomic bomb project is just the sort of thing they'll want to keep hushed up.

Mrs Van Der Boom I can see why. No-one likes to think of a bomb in their own back yard.

Dr Jack Black Not that atomic weapons have to be in your own back yard to kill you off. You just need to be within a 50 mile radius of the blast to be toasted.

Annie Cryption How reassuring! Perhaps we'd better get on with finding those blueprints then?

Dr Robert Van Der Boom

First Round

Questions you should ask:

Ask Dr Jack Black about probabilities. As a mathematician does he spend a lot of time thinking about probabilities and chance? Had he calculated the possibility of the blueprints going astray?

Ask Annie Cryption if she enjoys her work and whether she finds it fulfilling and exciting.

Information you should reveal about yourself only when asked.

You work hard and often have to work late into the evenings with the result that you end up neglecting Millicent. With the project nearing completion you have been putting in a lot more work and decided to seek permission to bring some of the work home so you could work within your office and at least be in the same living space as Millicent even if you weren't actually interacting.

Before you were allowed to take the work home your house and wife were vetted carefully. The head of security cleared your wife, and you trust her implicitly, therefore you know it isn't her that took the blueprints.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Scripted Dialogue Round 2

Dr R. Van der Boom Fingerprints on the liquor bottles? I hope no-one has been helping themselves to my Glenmorangie!

Mrs Van der Boom Well, I made sure everyone had the blended scotch that I served Robert, but if people have been helping themselves – they may well have taken some of the good stuff.

Penny Pinching Yeah – I mean, if you are swiping blueprints, you are hardly the sort of character to be concerned about taking a snifter or two of a good single malt without permission. Really mother! You do speak such rubbish!

Dr R. Van Der Boom Leave your poor mother alone Penny. This is hardly the time to be your usual truculent self.

Annie Cryption That's Truculent with a capital T is it? I just ask for the notes.

Mr Hirem Enfirem Well if you are taking dictation then perhaps you should omit Truculent and replace it with something a little less abusive. Penny was just stating the facts. We are all unnerved by the events of tonight and you can hardly blame her for being a little on edge. **Cont.**

7 8

Dr Jack Black Yes, you are right Hirem, we are all a little stressed – but perhaps if we all had some access to Roberts single malt the interrogation thing might run a little more smoothly.

Mr Hirem Enfirem I agree. Nothing like a little lubricant to get things running nicely.

Penny Pinching I've always thought that money was a better lubricant than alcohol in certain circles. At least it has always worked for me in the past.

Dr R. Van Der Boom But whoever took the plans is probably being paid very handsomely for their delivery. They are hardly likely to give themselves up for what we could offer them.

Annie Cryption If money is the carrot, it all depends on what stick you planned to use as well. But then, I am sure they knew what was at stake before they took the blueprints. So I guess it is back to the old tried and trusted investigative techniques.

Dr Robert Van Der Boom**Second Round****Questions you should ask:**

Ask Annie Cryption whether she has handled the blueprints for “The Device” before and if she knows what they look like.

You noticed Mr Enfirem disappeared half way through the evening – where did he go?

Information you should reveal about yourself only when asked.

Before being appointed project leader for the super-doomsday weapon project you worked for an “ordinary” weapons manufacturing firm. One could say you were in the wrong place at the wrong time, because the company you worked for was actually exporting weapons and munitions to Japan.

When the 2nd World War broke out and you realised that your weapon designs were being used against American soldiers you were mortified, left the firm and enlisted so that you could come up with ways to counteract your designs. Unfortunately a few veterans have realised you designed the weapons that killed their friends and are now making threats against your family unless you make financial reparations.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Scripted Dialogue Round 3

Mr Hirem Enfirem Did he say we were getting somewhere? I can’t see it myself.

Annie Cryption Nor I. But then, when you are taking notes sometimes you miss the woods for the trees.

Dr Jack Black Or the sentences for the words. Sometimes you need to stand back, get a bit of perspective.

Dr R. Van Der Boom I agree. I’m surprised I didn’t think of it before really – I always stand back from my own work now and again to get perspective and I suppose investigations are no different.

Penny Pinching If you hadn’t have stood back from your work in the first place we wouldn’t be in this mess father. You should never have left the blueprints out on the desk.

Mrs Van Der Boom Leave your father alone. He could hardly know that one of his friends or relations was a double agent could he?

Annie Cryption Assuming of course that it is a spy that took the blueprints. Perhaps it wasn’t.

Cont.

Mr Hirem Enfirem Yes, perhaps it was just someone looking for a way to make a bit of money, you know, sell the blueprints onto the highest bidder.

Dr Jack Black Or perhaps someone with strong views on weapons research that didn't want the bomb constructed.

Mrs Van Der Boom It could even be industrial espionage, not looking at anyone in particular.

Dr R. Van Der Boom Would people please stop this nonsense! This petty finger pointing is of no practical use to anyone – in fact quite the opposite because it will alienate everyone. Don't forget, after the blueprints are found we all still have to work together and the less damaging accusations are made, the better if you ask me.

Annie Cryption I quite agree. Shall we just get back to business then?

Dr Robert Van Der Boom

Third Round

Questions you should ask:

Ask Millicent what her opinion is of atomic weapons.

You have seen Dr Jack Black meeting with some very shifty characters in the local bar. Is he in-hock to some money lenders?

Information you should reveal about yourself only when asked.

The plans for "The Device" are worth a considerable amount on the international market. And sale of them would certainly mean you could pay any blackmail demands – but you didn't have to resort to such underhand means!

Instead you told the FBI about the blackmail requests – in your important position (as chief of the super doomsday weapon project) it is in America's best interests not to have your Japanese exporting brought into the public domain – and the FBI will certainly be able to deal with the blackmailers more effectively than you.

Do not read further until instructed by your host.

Dr Robert Van Der Boom

Concluding Statement

Use the following dialogue to summarise your position, speaking when indicated below.

Dr Robert Van Der Boom speaks first using the following dialogue:

Well! I thought I'd heard it all, but it appears not. It was I who reported the blueprints as stolen – to even think that I may have stolen them myself is preposterous, and to have such a slur on my character made by such a junior detective is, quite frankly, shocking!

After you have heard from all the guests make a prediction as to who the murderer is and why.

Tell the others.

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