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Party games for 8 to 100 guests

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presents...

“The Action Movie Murder”

Play version
for 8 to 16 guests

by Stephanie Chambers

First edition
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The Suspects

A bunch of guys went to the movies to see a SCI-FI action thriller and when the lights came up – Joe was found dead in his seat. Was it poisoned popcorn? Find out what's really been going on.

Martino – I'm a chemistry teacher. I've set up a lab at home. Hoping my side business will bring in some extra income. Trying to develop a brain-enhancing herbal supplement. I've been experimenting on myself. *Dress suggestions:* Wear casual clothes but carry a capped test tube or a plastic bag full of special ingredients. If you want, you can wear a baldhead skullcap.

Dagan – I run a really cool joint on the west side of town. It looks like a pinball parlor but when you release the balls on the old-fashioned pinball machine, you find that a secret door opens to an invite-only nightclub. I've called it "Slapsies". *Dress suggestions:* Wear cool clothes & dark shades. Carry a Slapsies promo.

Naaman – I'm an African leader in exile. I'm dealing with various parties to get back my own money. It's complex and involves various currencies and foreign banks. I thought I could trust these guys, but now I am not so sure. *Dress suggestions:* Wear colorful African inspired clothing.

Vitore – I'm ex-military. I had some intense training and a bunch of experiences. But I don't remember my last few ops. I'm trying to piece together the details. *Dress suggestions:* Wear cool casual clothes.

Cormac – I'm a personal trainer at a gym near here. That's how I met most of these guys. We train hard and play hard, or at least when our women let us. *Dress suggestions:* Wear a tracksuit and, if possible, a heart monitor and/or pedometer. Add some fake muscles.

Bennet – I'm the projectionist and also the ticket seller during the daytime when I am often the only one here. To be honest, I just put the movie on and then I left. I don't like sci-fi anyway because the plots are always so weak. This movie's been on for a while, so there were just the seven guys watching it. *Dress suggestions:* Wear a uniform.

Salvador – Most of my friends call me "Dali". But I'm not a painter. Actually, I'm the opposite. I'm a demolitionist – a destroyer rather than a creator. *Dress suggestions:* Wear workman clothes like overalls.

Argus – I create wearable robot technologies for a living. Sometimes I try out the suits on myself, but I never wear them in public, 'cause I don't like being stared at. *Dress suggestions:* Wear nerd-type clothes like big glasses and a check shirt.



Optional Investigator

Sergeant Jay Leonard – I’m the kind of cop you don’t want to mess with if you know what’s good for you. On the good cop bad cop scale, I’m off the charts in the wrong direction. *Dress suggestions:* Wear a fake Police uniform or a blue shirt and trousers and carry a notebook and pen. Or don’t wear a uniform and wear tough guy clothes. Wear cool sunglasses.

Optional witnesses

Farrell – I’m a journalist. Because I ride a really fast motorbike, I often get here before the police do. I’ve seen a lot of really messed up stuff. But I’m cool. Nothing fazes me. *Dress suggestions:* Wear motorbike rider clothes and carry a helmet and a pen and notepad or a digital tablet.

Franz – I’m a medical examiner. I’m young because I was a gifted child. I graduated from med school before I turned twenty-one. I’ll probably go back and do a PhD, but I wanted to see some action first. *Dress suggestions:* Wear a white lab coat and carry a doctor’s black bag.

Theo – I sell newspapers at a stand on the corner near the theater. When I saw these guys walk by today, I knew there was going to be trouble. Maybe I’m psychic. *Dress suggestions:* Carry some newspapers.

Lyss – My full name is Ulysses, but most people call me Lyss. I wish my parents never named me that because on top of it all, I have a lisp. I was handing out discount flyers for a local restaurant outside the theater. I managed to give a few of them flyers. *Dress suggestions:* Wear neat clothes. Carry some flyers.

Eddie – I’m a CSI – a crime scene investigator. In this case, I’m taking everyone’s fingerprints and analyzing the popcorn and so on. *Dress suggestions:* Wear a uniform and carry some evidence bags and an inkpad to use for fingerprint taking. Or use a digital tablet for this.

Reuel – I’m what some people call a modern day sorcerer. I revive the dead or make them walk at least. One of the suspects – I’m sworn to secrecy as to which one, but one of them asked me to come here after they found Joe had died. I heard from him that Joe always said he wanted to be a zombie. *Dress suggestions:* Wear weird hippy clothes and carry a tiny voodoo doll and stick pins in it.

Vergil – I’m Joe’s father. I’m in a state of shock. I can’t believe he’s dead. But that’s him. No doubt about it. He’s been a bad kid, but didn’t deserve this. *Dress suggestions:* Wear conservative clothes.

Name Tags

Martino
(suspect)

Dagan
(suspect)

Naaman
(suspect)

Vitore
(suspect)

Cormac
(suspect)

Bennet
(suspect)

Salvador
(suspect)

Argus
(suspect)

Investigator

Sergeant Jay Leonard
(investigator)

Witnesses

Farrell
(witness)

Franz
(witness)

Theo
(witness)

Lyss
(witness)

Eddie
(witness)

Reuel
(witness)

Vergil
(witness)

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The Play

Note: *Although this is in play format, you do not have to take to a stage and act it out. You can just sit around a dining table and read out your lines or sit in a circle on sofas etc.*

Note: *If it says the line may be said by “Anyone”, we recommend that one of the optional detectives and witnesses take a turn to say the line. If there are no optional witnesses or detectives, then everyone should take a turn saying one of these lines, however, the person the clue is about should not say it. You may like to work out beforehand who will say each of these 24 “Anyone” clues and write their character’s name next to each one.*

- Anyone: Why did you guys decide to come to a Friday matinee?
- Cormac: They’ve all been doing my boot camp course. We got to talking about movies during one of the lifting breaks. Naaman said “Attack of the Spheres” was so good that he’d be prepared to see it again and the rest of us hadn’t seen it.
- Martino: I’m lucky. I don’t teach any classes on a Friday. Sometimes we do lunch together. This time it was a popcorn lunch or at least it was for those that wanted it.
- Vitore: I’m between jobs at the moment. And there’s a bunch of money in my bank account. Still trying to work out where the money came from. All I remember is catching a plane overseas.
- Salvador: I run my own demo business. I always take Fridays off. That’s the perk of having your own business.

Anyone: So you didn't eat any lunch before the one pm matinee?

Argus: We bought some shakes from Cormac at the gym. He put a bunch of protein powder in, so we were good to go.

Naaman: My wife always packs my lunch and snacks. So I had that. I don't like the shakes as they always put bananas in them. I hate bananas. I had too many as a child growing up in Africa.

Dagan: This class really suits me because it doesn't start till ten thirty. The nightclub closes at two on Thursdays, so that's how I can make it.

Anyone: What about you Bennet? What were you up to this morning?

Bennet: Sleeping. I often don't get home from work till midnight. And I walk a few dogs for some extra income.

Martino: That's where I've seen you before. You must walk some dogs in my neighborhood.

Anyone: Did Joe have a shake or did he bring or buy his lunch?

Cormac: I think he had a berry shake. But I didn't poison him if that's what you're thinking. Some of the others shared the berry shake.

Vitore: Three of us shared a giant tub of popcorn – Dagan, Joe and I.

Dagan: I'm big compared to Joe. I hope it isn't just that the poison hasn't hit me yet. Sometimes we turn people away from Slapsies when we're packed. I hope you're not one of the disgruntled ones Bennet?

Bennet: No. I'm not into nightclubs. They're not my scene. I'm more into nature than clubs. My grandfather has a ranch.

Anyone: Did any of you know each other before you took the boot camp?

Argus: Martino and I have known each other since college. And I told you that you needed to get rid of some of that fat belly of yours, didn't I Marti?

Martino: Yeah. Teaching chemistry doesn't keep you fit – that's for sure. And having a girlfriend that's really into cooking doesn't help.

Naaman: I'd been coming to the gym for over a year and Dali and I are workout buddies. We met at the gym didn't we Dali?

Salvador: Yeah. You dropped a weight and it rolled on to my toe. I had to become your buddy to stop you doing stupid things like that.

Anyone: Did any of you know Joe outside of the gym?

Vitore: He lives in my apartment building. He says I've lived there for a few years, but most of the time I've been away. Since we've gotten to know each other at the gym, we've hung out a bit together. We sometimes double date women we've met online.

Dagan: Yeah. I've seen you both at the club a bit. But I've known Joe for years. He and I were bouncers at a club before I inherited money and could set up my own place.

Anyone: Did Joe still work as a bouncer?

Salvador: No. He worked as a daytime security guard. But he dressed and acted as if he'd got a better job than that. He must have had another source of income. I tried to ask him about it, but he just said he'd had some luck at the casino.

Martino: His younger brother is in my class. I think they both have this attitude that they don't need to work – that their rich Daddy will take care of them.

Anyone: What they both don't know is that their Dad isn't as rich as he appears. His house and car are mortgaged to the hilt and if he ever has to stop working as an attorney, his house of cards will fall down.

Anyone: Yeah. Joe's grandparents made money renting out porta potties, but they were frugal and invested every cent they made. Joe's Dad got a good education but he didn't inherit their frugality and he's blown his inheritance.

Naaman: Joe's Dad has been acting as my attorney. I met Joe at one of his father's parties. Joe was thinking of studying geology. He liked to be physical.

Cormac: Yeah. That's for sure. But he just didn't get that all the late nights and the junk food was depleting his energy levels. He wouldn't even drink a shake without putting heaps of Agave into it. He was so addicted to sugar.

Argus: Joe and I went to high school together. I finished a masters and Joe dropped out after two years of college. I think he was afraid that he didn't have the brains for it. He was too used to the party life. My wife was always having a go at him about it.

Anyone: I'm sure I saw you and Joe having a coffee together Bennet.

Bennet: Yeah. We met at an acting class and we've been extras a few times in some TV ads. And he often comes to the movies.

Anyone: Martino's experiments on himself haven't always worked out. His hair fell out because of his previous batch of the herbal supplement. He found out afterwards that he has a rare allergy to lemongrass.

Anyone: But he said his new batch looks like being a winner.

Anyone: People say that Vitore used to be a real snob. He didn't even say hello back if you greeted him. But he's been different since he came back this time.

Anyone: Joe's mother has early onset Alzheimer's. He loved his mother, so he's been really upset about it.

Anyone: Argus is one of the partners in a high-tech start-up. They are about to sell their technologies to a major company.

Anyone: Some of the people Naaman has been negotiating with to get his hands on his money are on the wanted list by the international war crimes tribunal.

Anyone: Vitore did work in Africa and Naaman knows what he did, but he hasn't told Vitore this.

Anyone: Before Cormac became a personal trainer he was actually convicted for being a hacker.

Anyone: He spent two years in prison but was released early for good behavior.

Anyone: Salvador demolished the old factory next door to the factory where Argus works.

Anyone: Joe was a security guard at a complex owned by Bennet's father.

Anyone: Dagan didn't inherit the money he used to set up his nightclub. That's just what he tells people.

Anyone: There were no marks found on Joe's body. His fingers are purple and swollen. So he must have touched the poison with his fingers.

Anyone: There was a weird bad smell in the cinema. And it wasn't just because it had been occupied by a bunch of guys eating popcorn.