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Party games for 8 to 100 guests

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presents...

“Famous Couple Fantasy”

Play version
for 16 guests
(but it can be used for less)

by Stephanie Chambers

First edition

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The Suspects

It's the year 2900. They've mastered time travel, but they still don't know the secret to a good relationship. So they've gone back in time and have gathered some famous couples. They've brought them to the future to research and they have put them in a room behind one-way glass. They've given them some things to discuss and they are observing how they behave.

You must unravel the mystery of what makes a good relationship. The couples that are the most united will be allowed to stay here in the future. This could really be a benefit to some of them, because they could take advantage of the great medical advances that have taken place. But not all of the chosen couples will want to stay. So your job is to work out which will stay.

Cleopatra – I'm the Pharaoh of Egypt. Although I am of Greek origin, I do know how to speak Egyptian. When Caesar was in charge, I snuck in to meet him by coming in rolled in a carpet. My plan worked and he allowed me to resume the throne. My son Caesarion is the son of Julius Caesar. Since his assassination, I have married Marcus Antonius. We have three children. **Dress suggestions: Wear a toga and a fancy headpiece. Wear a black wig. If you want you can carry a basket with a fake snake in it.**

Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony) – I am a Roman politician and general. Now I help rule Egypt with Cleopatra. Julius Caesar was my friend and also my mother's cousin. I proved my competency as a leader during the Gallic Wars. And when Caesar was assassinated, I read the eulogy during his funeral and at the same time, removed his toga so that all would see that he had been murdered and I told the audience of his assassins, so that they were then forced to flee for their lives. Cleopatra and I have three children. **Dress suggestions: Wear a toga. Carry a sword.**

Marie Skłodowska-Curie – I am a Polish physicist and chemist. I originally studied at Warsaw's clandestine Floating or Flying University and I began my practical scientific training in Poland. I am the first person to be honored by receiving two Nobel Prizes – one for chemistry and the other for physics. I am the first woman to win a Nobel Prize and I am also the first woman to be a professor at the University of Paris. I discovered radioactivity and I also coined the term for it. **Dress suggestions: Wear a white lab coat and carry a test tube or something similar.**

Pierre Curie – I am a French physicist. I discovered the effect of temperature on paramagnetism. These people of the future tell me that this is now known as Curie's law and that the material constant is known as the Curie constant. And that the temperature transition, above which the substances lose their ferromagnetic behavior, is now known as the Curie point. Later I decided to help my wife with her studies and together we were given a Nobel Prize for our physics research. **Dress suggestions: Wear a white lab coat and carry a magnet.**

Frida Kahlo – My full name is Magdalena Carmen Frieda Kahlo y Calderón. I am a Mexican surrealist artist. I am most well known for my self-portraits. I have suffered from polio since I was six years old. And when a teenager I was involved in a bus accident and this has caused me lifelong pain and suffering and I have had over 35 operations. I took up painting after the accident. **Dress suggestions: Wear a white shirt and a long colorful skirt, a black wig and carry a palette of paints.**

Diego Rivera – My full name is Diego María de la Concepción Juan Nepomuceno Estanislao de la Rivera y Barrientos Acosta y Rodríguez. I am a Mexican painter of murals. I have also been asked to paint a number of murals in the USA. I have children by previous wives. I am a staunch socialist and atheist and because of this some people have not appreciated my art. **Dress suggestions: Wear colorful Mexican clothes and carry a palette of paints.**

Bonnie Parker – I am a well-known outlaw. I'm from Texas but our gang travels mainly around the central parts of the US. It's the midst of the Great Depression, but I suppose most of you won't say that's any excuse. We've killed a bunch of people, but we never set out to that. I like writing poems and because of my fame, some of them have actually been published. **Dress suggestions: Wear 1930s clothes (dark colors, bonnet and long skirt). If you want, you can carry a cigar and a cardboard cutout of a gun (no real ones please).**

Clyde Barrow – My full name is Clyde Chestnut Barrow. I suppose you'd call me an outlaw. I'm also from Texas. We've only been together a couple of years, but they've been wild action packed years. **Dress suggestions: Wear 1930s clothes (sports jacket and pants). If you want, you can carry a cardboard cutout of a gun (no real ones please).**

Elizabeth Barrett Browning – I am a poet. I am the eldest of 12 children and I started writing poetry and 6 or 8 years of age. Although I now live in Italy, I am popular in England and the United States. I have suffered from a mysterious illness since I was 15. I met Robert after he wrote to me in praise of my poetry. I was delighted when he wanted to marry me as I am six years his senior. **Dress suggestions: Wear clothes from the Victorian era (eg long hooped skirts). Carry some of your poetry.**

Robert Browning – I am a poet and playwright. Although my wife has gained more fame than I have, some have appreciated my dramatic monologues. I also started writing poetry when young. Elizabeth and I had to elope because her father didn't want any of his children to marry. That's also why he disinherited her. The people of the future tell me that I did finally publish a 12-book poem later in my life that did bring me some renown. **Dress suggestions: Wear clothes from the Victorian era (eg a formal suit). Carry some of your written work.**

Pearl Bailey – I started off in nightclubs as a singer and dancer and doing vaudeville but ended up in Broadway musicals, and in movies. I had a top ten hit song in the 1950s. In the 70s I had my own TV show. I was even appointed America's Ambassador of Love in 1970 by Richard Nixon. **Dress suggestions: Wear a black wig and glamorous stage outfit.**

Louie Bellson – My real name is Luigi Paulino Alfredo Francesco Antonio Balassoni. I'm a jazz drummer. I'm also a composer, arranger, bandleader, and jazz educator, and I pioneered the use of two bass drums. I performed with Benny Goodman and with Duke Ellington. Later I became Pearl's musical director. **Dress suggestions: Wear a suit and carry a drum and/or a drum stick.**

Annie Oakley – My real name is Phoebe Ann Moses. I'm an American sharpshooter and exhibition shooter. I ended up starring in Buffalo Bill's Wild West show. One of my tricks, which everyone seems to love, is that I can repeatedly split a playing card, edge-on, and put several more holes in it before it touches the ground, using a rifle at 90 feet. **Dress suggestions: Wear a cowboy hat, a longish skirt and carry a cardboard cutout of a rifle (no real ones please).**

Francis (Frank) Butler – I'm an Irish immigrant and I was a dog trainer before I became a traveling show marksman. I placed a huge bet with a hotel owner that I could beat any local fancy shooter. But Annie beat me and she was only 15 and 5 feet tall. So I decided to marry her. We performed together and later I became her manager. **Dress suggestions: Wear a cowboy outfit and carry a cardboard cutout of a rifle (no real ones please).**

Abigail Adams – I'm the wife of the president. John and I often discuss politics. I am an advocate of married women's property rights and I believe there should be more opportunities for women, particularly in the field of education. Women, I believe, should not submit to laws not made in their interest, nor should they be content with the simple role of being companions to their husbands. They should educate themselves and thus be recognized for their intellectual capabilities, so they can guide and influence the lives of their children and husbands. **Dress suggestions: Wear your hair tied back in a large bow or wear a bonnet, pearls and a long dress.**

John Adams – I'm the second president of the United States of America. I believe in the "Enlightenment" values of reforming society and advancing knowledge. I am a federalist, and I am one of the key Founding Fathers of the United States, having helped convince the Congress to pass the Declaration of Independence. **Dress suggestions: Wear a white wig or powder your hair (as was the fashion for men at this time). Wear a long coat, long socks, and knee length britches. Add a few pillows to make yourself more rounded.**

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Name Tags

Cleopatra

Mark
Antony

Marie
Sklodowska-Curie

Pierre
Curie

Frida
Kahlo

Diego
Rivera

Bonnie
Parker

Clyde
Barrow

Elizabeth
Barret Browning

Robert
Browning

Pearl
Bailey

Louie
Bellson

Annie
Oakley

Frank
Butler

Abigail
Adams

John
Adams

Merri Mysteries
presents...

“Famous Couple Fantasy”

by Stephanie Chambers

The Play

Famous Couple Fantasy - Act One

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”, it can be said by any of the guests. Everyone should take a turn saying one of these extra 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 “Anyone” clues and write their character’s name next to each one.*

- Anyone: The people who brought us here have left us some instructions. They want us to discuss various different aspects of our lives together and to prove our unity as a couple. The first aspect of our lives we have to discuss is how our personalities affect our unity.
- Antony: Cleopatra and I both have very strong personalities. I think we would not find each other’s company stimulating enough if that weren’t the case.
- Cleopatra: I’m the Pharaoh of Egypt. I could only marry a man that respected me and that I also respected. My people need strong leadership. But that is something that you commoners may not understand.
- Marie: It similar for us. Our work is so important to us. We support each other in pursuing our scientific goals. We both have very serious personalities.
- Pierre: Yes. At first Marie didn’t trust me because I am a Frenchman, but I showed her that I am reliable and that I am as happy for her success as I am for my own.

Frida: Our great love is obviously art. But we are both passionate about life itself and sometimes our passion turns to anger and other emotions.

Diego: Our life together is certainly never dull. It changes just as the seasons do. It's tumultuous and rocky. Our love for one another is there beneath it all.

Bonnie: Your lives sound a bit like ours. Except ours has the extra dimension of being illegal. It's exciting and the moments of quiet are fragile and fleeting. But at least we are together.

Clyde: If it weren't for the Depression, maybe our lives wouldn't have to be this way. We're always on the go and sometimes things don't go like we planned them to. But Bonnie is the greatest partner I could ever wish for. She's a great gang member.

Elizabeth: Well, obviously poetry is what makes our hearts flutter. We both appreciate the quieter yet emotional side of life. And the beauty of life.

Robert: Yes. It was Elizabeth's poetry that drew me to her. And it wasn't easy, as some doubted my motives especially as I was younger and less wealthy than she was. But love prevailed.

Annie: Well I beat Frank in a sharp shooting contest. That's how we met. But he's always been supportive of my talents. And my mother liked him too because he didn't smoke, drink, or gamble.

Frank: Yeah, I knew I was whipped when I missed that twenty-fifth shot. But I had to admire her talent. She was only fifteen but she was a master when it came to using a gun. But she loved my dog before she came to love me, so at first I signed my letters with "George" because that was my dog's name. But in the end she married me, not the dog.

Pearl: Well in terms of personality, Louie is known to be almost embarrassingly obliging and affable. Those sorts of qualities are rare in show business. That's partly why I married him.

Louie: And I married Pearl because she's a brassy, sassy, classy lady. At home and on stage, she's always making droll observations and wry asides. She still makes me laugh.

Abigail: Well I think our pen names for each other give some indication of how we view each other's personalities. I call John – Lysander – after the Spartan war hero. I suppose that's because I've always viewed him as a leader even from when we were courting. But generally I just address him as "my dearest friend", because that's what he is to me.

John: I call Abigail – Diana – after the Roman goddess of the moon. But sometimes I call her my "Dear Adoreable". Later on in middle age Abigail started calling herself Portia – the patient wife of the great Roman politician Brutus.

Cleopatra: I too am called a Goddess. I am worshipped as the Goddess Isis – the ideal mother and wife as well as the patron of nature and magic.

Anyone: We're also supposed to talk about our ability to generate wealth and possessions and our attitudes to this.

Elizabeth: I would have been wealthier if I hadn't married Robert. My father disinherited me because of it. But it doesn't matter. We manage to get by.

Robert: We're lucky that Elizabeth had some money of her own and that people appreciate and buy her poetry so that also supplements our income.

Cleopatra: Well, as Pharaoh, wealth and luxury are my birthright. But I studied religion and mathematics and I am fluent in nine languages. So obviously the riches of the mind are just as important to me.

Antony: Yes. Cleopatra's ability to speak Egyptian has made her more loved by her subjects than previous pharaohs. And we often discuss the best strategies for diplomacy and for defense and attack. We plan to someday conquer Rome itself.

Marie: As researchers, we certainly aren't wealthy by any means. And I had to work as a governess to pay for my sister to study. Then she repaid the favor and paid for my education. I married in a dress than I could also wear as a laboratory outfit. And that was fine.

Pierre: I had to work as a laboratory instructor to pay for my doctorate. But Marie and I manage to provide for our children. Winning the Nobel Prize provided us with a little bit more financial stability, but most of that money is going into continuing our research. Money doesn't matter that much to us.

Frida: As my health has made me an invalid a lot of the time, I certainly haven't brought much money our way. But we have survived somehow.

Diego: We're lucky that our parents aren't poor. And that I have gained some work projects overseas. But as a staunch believer in socialist ideals, material wealth means little to me.

Bonnie: Well. We certainly were never rich. We had to use the money we stole to buy more armaments. It's the midst of the Depression, so we're just doing what we can to survive.

Clyde: Yeah. We're not doing it to become rich. I just want to get enough money to buy enough arms so that I can raid the prison I spent time in. Revenge on the prison system is my motive, not money. My only luxuries are a few suits and a few cigars, tis all.

Pearl: What with the movies and records and our performing everywhere, we do okay financially. We've adopted two children, so we share what we have with them.

Louie: I act as her manager. We get by. But we love music and that's more important to us than the money we make from it. And I also enjoy passing on what I've learnt. That's why I write books about it.

Annie: Well starring in Buffalo Bill's Wild West show certainly gave our finances a shot in the arm (excuse the pun). But we use some of it to support various causes.

Frank: Yeah. Before I married Annie, I can't say I made much as a traveling show marksman or before that as a dog trainer. But together we do quite well. I handle the financial side of things. But we've spent a lot of money recently on court cases because some woman claimed she was Annie Oakley and the newspapers said Annie was in prison for theft and drug use. We had to clear Annie's name.

Abigail: My mother didn't want me to marry John because his family wasn't as well off as ours. We had a long courtship, because my mother wanted to be sure John would be able to provide for me. When we first started our marriage, I took care of the farm and the family while John was away on long trips. Now that he is President, things are a bit easier for us, but we are obligated to host a lot of social gatherings.

John: I certainly never became President for financial reasons. I was already a lawyer and able to provide for my family. I inherited a house and land when my father died. I became President because I want America to become firmly established as the great country that it is.

Anyone: Apparently the people in this future time have refined the art of lie detection. If we lie about anything, the air around us will turn red – giving us a red halo. So beware what you say or you will be surrounded by red just like the urban myth of there being pee detectors in pools.

Anyone: I can't believe I am discussing my love life with someone like Cleopatra – someone who supposedly bathed in milk and saw herself as a God. I can barely afford to buy milk let alone bathe in it.

Anyone: We must all keep a close eye on our wallets. From what I've heard Bonnie and Clyde have quite a reputation. I wish I had a bulletproof vest on for that matter, but maybe they disarmed them when they brought them here.

Clyde: Will you guys stop rousting us? We're not robbers any more. We're future travellers like you all are. But that doesn't mean I'm ready to give up my guns just yet.

Anyone: Don't stand too close to the Curies. I've heard that even Marie's cookbooks are kept in a lead case because they are so radioactive. Marie coined the term "radioactivity", but she didn't know how dangerous it is to your health.

Anyone: Does anyone have a geiger counter handy? I want to work out how far to stand away from Marie and Pierre.

Anyone: Frida and Diego are lucky that no one tried to assassinate Trotsky when he was staying with them. They are lucky he moved a few blocks away after he quarreled with Diego.

Anyone: Well Annie Oakley met the famous Native American chief, Sitting Bull. The chief liked her and they became friends. He gave her the name "Little Sure Shot".

Anyone: Now they want us to do a task – a challenge – to prove how united we are as a couple and to show how much effort we put into our lives and into our relationship with each other. We have to write one line of a poem each and it must rhyme. How about you go first Frida?

Frida: Our marriage is like a burrito with too many peppers.

Diego: We take breaks from each other just to recover.

Marie: There's love in the lab not just Bunsen burners.

Pierre: In ourselves and in physics, there's lots to discover.

Annie: Our target is love and we're both sharpshooters.

Frank: That I'd trust her to shoot my ashes is known the world over.

Elizabeth: We express ourselves in poems and letters.

Robert: Our words full of love will be remembered forever.

Cleopatra: People kneel before me but in love I'm one of the donors.

Antony: She reveals a true pearl once you remove her cover.

Abigail: The written words, the deeds aren't what's said behind doors.

John: Our real love is shown only when we're alone together.

Bonnie: Our bullets and our actions don't reflect our ardors.

Clyde: Our lives may be short, but our love will never be over.

Pearl: Our music may be loud, but our love spills over like soft spores.

Louie: That grow in the rich soil and warmth we give each other.