

Game Master Instructions for The Corfu Heist: Mystery at the Sailing Club

Overview

- **Game Duration:** 30 minutes
- **Setting:** Corfu Sailing Club, during an investigation into the theft of the mystical Emerald Compass
- **Objective:** Guide the players through a tense, twist-filled mystery with a surprising reveal, ensuring both Player 1 (the detective) and Player 2 (the sailor/thief) have a fair, engaging experience.

Materials Needed

1. **Character Sheets** for the Detective and the Sailor, including their skills and goals.
2. **Clue Cards** for each key clue:
 - Torn Sail Fabric
 - Night-Sail Journal Entry
 - Gala Photograph (Twist Clue)
3. **NPC Information** for the Captain and the Club Manager (brief notes on their roles and dialogue hints).
4. **Timer** to keep each act within its allotted time.

Game Flow and Instructions

Act 1: Introductions (5 minutes)

1. Set the Scene

- **Objective:** Establish the mystery and set up the players' initial roles and goals.
- **Instructions:**
 - Briefly introduce the players to the Corfu Sailing Club, where the legendary Emerald Compass has recently disappeared after a gala event.
 - Explain the importance of the compass: a mystical artifact with valuable navigational powers.

2. Assign Roles

- **the Detective (Player A):** A local detective investigating the theft. Emphasise that they can trust the Sailor to help them but should rely on their own observations to deduce the truth.
- **the Sailor (Player B):** A charming, confident club member and secretly the thief. She should act helpful and cooperative, diverting suspicion subtly if the Detective begins to suspect her.

3. Explain Skills and Objectives

- **the Detective's Skill:** Observation Mastery – He can inspect one clue more closely to reveal an extra detail.

- **the Sailor's Skill:** Social Manipulation – She can influence one NPC's account to shift suspicion.
- **Key Goal for Both Players:** Encourage the Detective to trust the Sailor initially, and give the Sailor room to work without being obviously deceptive.

Transition to Act 2

- Signal that the investigation is about to start. Prompt both players to begin exploring for clues, with the Sailor playing along as the Detective's ally.

Act 2: Clue Discovery and Twist Reveal (15 minutes)

1. Guide the Players to Clues

- **Objective:** Allow the Detective to gather clues, introduce the Captain and the Club Manager as NPCs, and reveal the Sailor as a potential suspect.
- **Instructions:**
 - Direct the Detective and the Sailor to investigate specific locations for clues. Describe the setting at each point, keeping interactions quick to stay on time.

2. Present Key Clues (10 minutes):

- **Torn Sail Fabric** (Location: Docks): Describe a torn piece of fabric near the water's edge. If the Detective inspects it, suggest that it may be from a struggle. The Sailor should casually downplay its importance, calling it an "accidental tear."
- **Night-Sail Journal Entry** (Location: Club Office): Point them to a club log noting a recent night sail involving "E." The Sailor should try to shrug it off as a regular trip, adding a comment about night sailing being typical for club members.

3. NPC Interactions:

- **The Captain** (3-4 minutes): He remembers someone "familiar" by the compass display during the gala but avoids specifics. When the Detective presses him, the Captain says, "I thought I saw the Sailor there, but maybe I'm mistaken...they were just admiring it, I suppose."
- **The Club Manager (the Club Manager)** (3-4 minutes): She admits overhearing an argument between the Sailor and the Captain about the compass. When prompted, the Club Manager mentions that the exchange sounded "unusually heated," suggesting possible interest or conflict.

4. Introduce the Twist Clue – Gala Photograph (Final 3 minutes of Act 2)

- **Location:** Hallway gallery
- If the Detective uses their **Observation Mastery** skill, mention that they see the Sailor standing close to the compass display in the photo, their gaze intensely fixed on it.
- Encourage the Detective to reevaluate the Sailor's intentions based on this clue, setting up the twist that they may be hiding something.

Transition to Act 3

- Mention that the investigation is nearing an end, and the Detective should be ready to confront suspects based on what he's observed.

Act 3: Confrontation and Reveal (10 minutes)

1. Guide the Detective to Confront the Sailor (5 minutes)

- **Objective:** Build tension by letting the Detective confront the Sailor with the evidence.

- **Instructions:**

- Prompt the Detective to summarise their suspicions and openly question the Sailor.
- If the Detective accuses them directly, the Sailor can either deflect suspicion by blaming the Captain (using their **Social Manipulation** skill) or confess partially if the Detective is convincing.

2. Prompt the Sailor's Defence or Confession

- If the Sailor tries to deflect:
 - Encourage them to cast doubt on the Captain, emphasising their "obsession" with the compass as motivation. She should use their charm to imply they were simply admiring the artifact innocently.
- If the Detective insists on their guilt:
 - Allow the Sailor a moment of hesitation, as if considering what to admit. She can hint that they were "drawn" to the compass but leave their exact role ambiguous.

3. Final Accusation and Outcome (5 minutes)

- **Objective:** Resolve the game with the Detective's final accusation and reveal the truth.
- **Instructions:**
 - **If the Detective Accuses the Sailor:** Reveal that they're indeed the thief. Praise the Detective's deduction, highlighting their careful attention to the clues and confirming their guilt.
 - **If the Detective Accuses the Captain:** the Sailor has succeeded in diverting their suspicion. Congratulate them on maintaining their cover and subtly misdirecting the Detective.
- **Closing Remarks:** Recap the key moments, celebrating both players' decisions and insights. This can include discussing how the Detective's trust shifted and how the Sailor skillfully avoided suspicion.

Additional Tips for the Game Master

1. **Time Management:** Keep an eye on the clock and gently prompt players to wrap up conversations or interactions if they're lingering.
2. **Pacing:** Encourage the Detective to move between clues quickly, especially in Act 2, so all evidence is discovered before the confrontation.
3. **Balance Maintenance:**

- Ensure clues remain ambiguous until the twist reveal in Act 2, keeping the Detective's options open.
- During the confrontation, give the Sailor flexibility in their responses without pushing them toward an immediate confession.

Summary of Act Structure for Reference

- **Act 1** (5 min): **Introductions** – Set roles and trust dynamic.
- **Act 2** (15 min): **Clue Discovery and Twist Reveal** – Guide players through clue discovery and introduce the Sailor as a suspect.
- **Act 3** (10 min): **Confrontation and Reveal** – the Detective confronts the Sailor, and the final accusation reveals the thief.

Character Sheets

Player 1: The Detective

Background: A skilled investigator from Corfu, the Detective has a reputation for solving mysteries around the island. His attention to detail and logical mindset help them piece together clues others might overlook.

Objective: Discover the true thief of the Emerald Compass by carefully analysing each clue and questioning the characters without arousing suspicion.

Skill:

Observation Mastery

Once during the game, the Detective can use Observation Mastery to gain an extra detail on one clue of their choice. This might be a hidden aspect of a physical item or a subtle reaction from an NPC.

Personal Notes:

1) The Club's Dynamics

the Detective is aware that the Corfu Sailing Club has a history of rivalries and secrets. Be attentive to characters' personalities and hidden motives, as they may reveal more about the theft than first impressions suggest.

2) The Emerald Compass

This artifact was believed to guide lost sailors. It was prominently displayed at the gala, where club members and locals had a chance to see it up close. Someone likely had the opportunity to plan the theft that night.

3) About the Sailor

The Sailor seems eager to help the Detective with their investigation. She is a respected member of the Corfu Sailing Club and says that they want nothing more than to find the culprit behind this incident.

4) The Captain's Reputation

The Detective has heard that the Captain has an unusual attachment to artifacts like the Emerald Compass. Keep an eye on their behaviour, as it may reveal if their “obsession” is genuine admiration or something more calculated.

Player 2: The Sailor

Background: the Sailor is a gifted sailor with a knack for getting what they want. Though she’s charming and sociable, their past is full of secrets. She saw an opportunity with the Emerald Compass and decided to pull off a heist that would cement their reputation.

Objective: Evade suspicion and deflect blame onto other suspects, especially the Captain. Avoid directly lying, but guide the detective toward the narrative that suits your innocence.

Skill:

Social Manipulation

Once during the game, the Sailor can use Social Manipulation to “confide” in an NPC or subtly alter an NPC’s memory of an event. This doesn’t create new evidence but encourages the NPC to recall something in a way that benefits the Sailor’s story.

Personal Notes:

1) Planting Doubt about the Captain

The Captain’s obsession with the compass can be used to the Sailor’s advantage. They know he’s fascinated by old nautical artifacts and can frame them as someone who might go to extremes to get what they want.

2) The Club Manager

The Club Manager overheard a heated exchange the Sailor had with the Captain after the gala. The Sailor can use their Social Manipulation skill to prompt the Club Manager to “remember” the conversation differently, hinting that the Captain was acting possessively about the compass.

3) Physical Evidence

The Sailor left a misleading clue near the boats, the torn sail, which subtly implicate the Captain. They should steer the Detective's attention toward this clue when they seem close to suspecting them.

4) The Gala Photograph

The Sailor knows the photo from the gala can be risky if the Detective sees them and the Captain together. If the Detective questions it, the Sailor can suggest that the Captain was "flirting" with them and looking for excuses to talk about the compass, making them seem a little obsessed.

NPC 1: The Captain

Character Background

- **Role:** A charismatic, seasoned sailor with an eye for valuable nautical artifacts.
- **Connection to the Compass:** He's long admired the Emerald Compass and its legend but never planned to steal it. He was close to it at the gala, however, which makes them a natural suspect.
- **Attitude toward the Sailor:** Friendly, but has noticed they have a "unique interest" in the compass. He respects them as a sailor but finds their focus on the compass a bit strange.

Personality and Objectives

- **Personality:** Charming, slightly mysterious, and talkative with a playful, roguish air. The Captain enjoys storytelling and can be a bit dramatic.
- **Objective:** Add a hint of suspicion toward the Sailor without directly accusing her. He should be wary but respectful, only subtly suggesting their interest in the compass.

Suggested Dialogue Prompts

Opening Conversation with the Detective

- **Introduction:** "Ah, the Detective! Good to see a sharp eye in the club. Strange happenings indeed... Can't believe the compass vanished like that."
- **If Asked About the Compass's Importance:** "A remarkable artifact! A compass said to always find its way back to its true owner...people like to call it mystical. Frankly, I'd love to have it in my collection—if I had the funds, of course." (Laughs)

Hints Toward the Sailor

- **If the Detective Asks Who Was Near the Compass at the Gala:** "Now that you mention it... I did notice the Sailor admiring it closely. Can't say I blame her—anyone who sails these waters would be drawn to such a treasure, no?"

- **If the Detective Presses Further on the Sailor's Interest:** "It was strange, I admit. She seemed a bit... let's say *focused*. But maybe she's just a dreamer, like me. Or perhaps there's something more—who's to say?"

Redirecting Suspicion Away from Himself

- **If the Detective Questions His Own Involvement:** (Laughs) "Me? Ha! I wish I had the courage to steal something that valuable. If I wanted it, I'd have offered a price. I've no need for sneaking around, detective."
 - **Final Hint, if Pressed:** "Truthfully, though, there are some in this club who aren't as open as I am. You should ask around—you'd be surprised what you might uncover."
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NPC 2: The Club Manager

Character Background

- **Role:** The dedicated and somewhat anxious club manager, responsible for organising events and ensuring the club's smooth operation.
- **Connection to the Compass:** The Club Manager was one of the key organisers of the gala and knows who was present during the event. She's also heard rumours about the compass's significance and feels uneasy about the theft's impact on the club's reputation.
- **Attitude toward the Sailor:** She respects the Sailor's position as a member but finds their attitude overly confident, even entitled. She overheard a tense conversation between the Sailor and the Captain about the compass and wonders if it was more than friendly banter.

Personality and Objectives

- **Personality:** Polite but reserved; they are detail-oriented, professional, and deeply protective of the club's reputation. The Club Manager speaks thoughtfully and is reluctant to gossip, though they will share information if pushed.
- **Objective:** Provide a subtle hint that they overheard the Sailor in an unusual conversation about the compass. She wants to help the Detective but prefers to stay neutral.

Suggested Dialogue Prompts

Opening Conversation with the Detective

- **Introduction:** "the Detective the Detective, thank you for looking into this...It's awful for the club to be involved in such a scandal. We've never had anything like this happen here before."

- **If Asked About the Gala:** “It was a wonderful night, really. Everyone enjoyed themselves...and the compass display was a highlight. People were very curious about it.”

Hints Toward the Sailor

- **If the Detective Asks Who Showed Interest in the Compass:** “I can’t say for certain, but... I did notice the Sailor lingering by the display. She seemed quite taken with it.”
- **If Pressed on Why She Noticed the Sailor:** “Oh, well...they and the Captain had a conversation about the compass earlier. I happened to overhear a bit of it. It sounded...tense, like they disagreed about something important.”
- **If the Detective Asks for Specifics on the Conversation:** “I didn’t hear everything, but it was something about who should ‘keep it safe.’ Odd, isn’t it? They were speaking almost like...well, like it was more than a display piece.”

Redirecting Attention Away from Their Own Role

- **If the Detective Asks About Their Role at the Gala:** “I was simply managing the evening’s flow. I’m here to keep things running smoothly, nothing more.”
- **If the Detective Pushes Further:** “My only concern is the club’s reputation. I’d hardly want to risk that, now would I?” (Smiles politely)

Concluding Hint

- **Final Remark, if Prompted:** “Honestly, the Detective, the people you need to speak to are the ones who find artifacts like that *irresistible*. It’s like a moth to a flame for some, don’t you think?”

Additional Instructions for NPCs

1. **Timing:** Each NPC interaction should ideally last no more than 3-4 minutes to keep the game moving. If the players linger too long, gently steer them toward moving on or ending the conversation with a subtle “Well, I’ll leave you to it.”
2. **Don’t Reveal Too Much Too Soon:** Keep your answers indirect. These conversations should give the Detective leads and hints without overtly suggesting guilt, which keeps the balance intact and allows the Detective to explore all possible suspects.
3. **Support the Twist:** In Act 2, when the Gala Photograph clue reveals the Sailor’s focus on the compass, each NPC should subtly shift their tone to suggest they might be reconsidering the Sailor as more than a curious onlooker. Use phrases like “Come to think of it...” or “Now that you mention it...” to imply they’re connecting the dots along with the Detective.
4. **Keep it Light:** Maintain a natural flow, reacting with humour or charm if asked directly about your own motives. Make it clear through tone and body language that

you don't feel particularly guilty or involved, to maintain the mystery around the Sailor.