Crimebox Investigation

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In an anonymous city of the United States of America, a horrible crime has taken place. A corpse has been found, the crime scene has been secured. Mystery still hangs on the person responsible for the crime. But the investigation that you, players, readers, will lead, will allow to unmask the culprit.

Crimebox Investigation can be played in different ways, depending if you want to untangle the mystery of the investigation or if you want to embody the actors of justice. We propose then two modes of play that use the materials present inside the box: Investigation mode and Trial mode.

Materials

The game is composed of 117 cards, divided as follows:

4 Role cards

These are only used during the Trial mode.

7 Setup cards

These are put on the table at the beginning of the game and are used to setup the investigation board.

106 Investigation cards

6 Places
The place where the investigators have found the body of the victim.
18 Evidence
The suspicious objects found in the different places of the investigation.
18 Investigation reports
The informations collected about one of the characters in the game.
6 Preliminary observations
The first informations collected at the crime scene by the investigators.
12 Identities
The characters involved in the case, both victim and suspects.
6 Autopsies
The conclusions of the analysis performed by the coroner.
16 Relations and connections
The relationships between the different characters of the investigation.
24 Lab analysis
The result of the analysis of a sample of DNA or a fingerprint taken on a piece of evidence.

The Investigation cards are played and put on the table by the players during the course of the game.
All cards have some symbols on them, which can be:

- engraved on the metal background of the card – «metal» symbol,
- drawn on a paper support present on the card – «paper» symbol.

The rule by which the cards are played is the following, independently of the game mode:
A «paper» symbol must always cover an identical «metal» symbol.

Setup of the Investigation

Put in the center of the table the Setup cards, overlapping the two Crime Scene cards in order to form a single «big card»; do the same with the two Victim cards.
Put also on the table the three Suspect cards. The array of the five zones form the investigation board.
Foresee to leave enough space between the five different areas.

Initial situation

Draw at random one Identity card for each of the three Suspects and for the Victim, and place it on the corresponding Suspect or Victim cards. The remaining Identity cards are put back into the box, as they will not be used during this game.
We now know who has been killed and the persons suspected of the crime. The culprit is among them.
Draw at random one Preliminary observation card, one Autopsy card and one Place card. Place them on the corresponding symbols on the Crime Scene cards.
Put back the other cards of these types in the box, they will not be used during this game.
We now know where is the place of the crime, in what circumstances the corpse has been found and how the victim has died.
Divide the remaining Investigation cards according to their types in four decks:

- 1st deck: 18 Evidence cards
- 2nd deck: 18 Investigation report cards
- 3rd deck: 16 Relation and connection cards
- 4th deck: 24 Lab analysis cards

Put these four decks face down. They will form four piles (Evidence, Investigation report, Relation and connection, Lab analysis).
In this initial situation, the victim (Michael Wilson) has been found in the forest. His hands are very dirty, his clothes are soiled. The cause of death is internal hemorrhage. Three people are suspects: Thomas Anderson, Sarah Williams et Joshua Miller.

INVESTIGATION MODE

From 2 to 6 investigators. Duration of the game: about 30 minutes.

You are investigators charged with solving a mysterious case. The investigation will unearth some evidence, the scientific analysis will give you some clues. However, only a keen sense of deduction, an impeccable talent and a fertile imagination will allow you to find the culprit. No clue must be ignored to get to the story behind the crime.

Aim of the game

Have fun with family and friends trying to solve a criminal case. The player who solves the investigation telling a valid story behind the crime and naming the motive, the murderer and his/her MO wins the game.

Beginning of the investigation

The player who has most recently seen a detective series will begin the investigation. After that, the players will in turn proceed with the investigation in clockwise order.

Investigation

When it is his turn, the investigator will choose one of the four decks of cards and draw two cards from it. Then he will put one of the two cards on the investigation board, on a place with the corresponding symbol. In order to do that, it will have to cover the «metal» symbol on one of the cards on the investigation board with an identical «paper» symbol on the card that he is playing. He will then put back the card that he hasn't played on the bottom of the appropriate deck.

Solution

When each of the five areas of the game (Crime scene, Victim, Suspects 1, 2 & 3) have been completed with at least two new cards, the solution of the case can be given. This means that an investigator who thinks he can solve the case can interrupt the course of the game and announce: **«I know the culprit!»**. In this case:
1. The player who interrupted the investigations explains to his fellow players how, according to him, the crime has been committed, which Suspect is guilty and what are the reasons behind his/her actions. His explanations must include all elements present on the investigation board, but he is not limited by the elements on the cards only. He can add details at will, even if the motive and the MO of the crime must have their source among the elements on the board.
2. After he has ended his explanation, the other investigators must search together the possible inconsistencies in his story, or possibly the oversight of some elements of the investigation. If they find one element that does not check out, the explanation is not valid. Please note that for a Solution to be invalid, there must be a real inconsistency between the proposed explanation and the elements on the investigation board. In this case the Investigation resumes from the turn of the player who has been interrupted.

If all elements of the investigation boards check out with the provided explanation (even if the story is a little «far-fetched» or if some investigators don't «like» it), the explanation is valid and the investigator who proposed it is declared the winner of the game.

If at the end of one player's turn, it is not possible to play Investigation cards anymore, do another round of the table during which each investigator can propose a solution or pass. If no valid solution has been found, the case is closed and all investigators lose the game.

In this example, the victim (Michael Wilson) has been found in the forest. His hands are very dirty, his clothes are soiled. The cause of death is internal hemorrhage. Three persons are suspected: Thomas Anderson, Sarah Williams and Joshua Miller. Here is an example of a possible solution… I know the culprit: it's Thomas Anderson! He killed Michael Wilson to protect his girlfriend Sarah Williams.
The explanation is as follows: Sarah, who is a drug addict, has a meeting during the evening with Michael Wilson, who sells her the drugs. They meet at the park where they usually do their trafficking, but this time, Michael Wilson wants more. He tries to rape her. She fights back, they get on the ground (where the clothes of the victim get soiled and his hands get dirty). The key of the nurse falls from her pocket at that time. Under the blows of Michael Wilson, Sarah is wounded. Her blood is found on the package of drugs that has fallen from his hands.
With the nurse in this bad situation, Thomas Anderson arrives. He followed his girlfriend, because he thought she was under some bad influence, as attested by the investigation reports. He brought with him a baseball bat, with which he hits without hesitation Michael Wilson on the head (blood of the victim on the bat), to save his girlfriend. He kills him on the spot. He realizes, looking at his face, that he is his cousin, who he himself introduced to Sarah. He also has some photos of Michael in his family album.
After the murder, Sarah brings the bat to Joshua Miller, who has no relationship with Thomas, for hiding it. She thinks that this will protect her boyfriend. Joshua Miller accepts, because of friendship and the blackmail of Sarah with which

he did some trafficking of false passports a few months ago. Under cover of an humanitarian association to which the victim also belonged., the student made some illegal alien enter the country in exchange for money.

Game variants

Investigation team
For players who prefer to solve the case together. This mode is particularly recommended for an introductory game. You are all part of the same team. The game is performed as described in the rules, but after one player tries a Solution, all investigators can intervene and give their support with a piece of solution of the case. The victory is shared.

Elite investigators
For the players who love challenge and competition. The games of Crimebox are sometimes (too) short. Play several games in a row and count the investigations solved by each player. You can attribute to each investigation a value in points corresponding to the number of cards which have been played during the investigation. After X (chosen by the players) games, the investigator with the highest point total is declared the winner.

Closed folder
For tense and short games. This mode can also be played solo, as a brain burner.
Reveal the whole investigation board at the same time, placing all possible cards by drawing them at random from the corresponding decks. The first player who finds a coherent solution for this investigation is declared the winner.

TRIAL MODE
From 4 to 8 players. Duration of the game: about 30 minutes.
In this game mode, you are the lawyers of the suspects, or otherwise the prosecutor charged with defending the law. Justice must be served and one guilty party sentenced, as it is not your client…

Premise of the game
Each player embodies a particular role in the case (Prosecutor or Lawyer). It is recommended that you play some games in Investigation Mode before playing in Trial Mode. This game mode depends on the verve and eloquence of the players. It is particularly suited to players who appreciate roleplaying games.
In four players, each has a different role. With five or more players, the roles can be played by teams of two. When two players have the same role, they form a team and must seat near each other. They will play together, since they have the same objective. Everything happens as if they are one and the same player. To make the teams, choose one partner with which you are at ease and you love to discuss and debate. This will make the game more interesting and will avoid the issue of some players vanishing behind their partner.
For the first game, we recommend that the player most at ease with discussions, the most diplomatic, should be the Prosecutor. The other players will play as the Lawyers of the suspects. Distribute to each player or team of two players the Role card which they have chosen.

Victory conditions for each role
The Prosecutor must see that the suspect, whom he named as the culprit during the course of the game, is convicted.
Each Lawyer must see that his client (the suspect written on his card) is declared innocent.

First phase of the game: the investigation
During this phase, each player, beginning with the Prosecutor, plays in turn going around the table clockwise. When it is his turn, the player chooses one of the four decks and draws two cards. Then he plays one of the two cards on the investigation board, on the empty space of the corresponding type. He puts back the card that he hasn't played at the bottom of the corresponding deck.
The Prosecutor, who is there to balance the investigation, must play on the area (Crime scene, Victim, Suspect 1, 2 & 3) on which there are less cards. If there are more than one such areas, he chooses on which of these areas he plays. He draws two cards of the proper type to complete the «deficient» area.
This phase is identical to the Investigation game mode, but it is strongly suggested, in order to give the game all his drama, to portray your role in a very vivid way. Also, when a player puts a card on the table, all comments or beginnings of explanation are welcome.
In any moment of the game whatsoever, the Prosecutor can choose to accuse one of the Suspects. He names one of the Suspects as the culprit. After that, the first phase of the game (the Investigation) ends immediately. The player go then to the second phase: the Trial.

Second phase: the trial

During this phase, certain roles change.

The Lawyers of the two suspects which have not been accused quit their role of Lawyers and become Jurors of the trial. **They have won, since their client is definitively exonerated.** They will now decide, in light of the elements who will be presented to them, if the accused is guilty or not.

• Indictment

The Prosecutor (or team of Prosecutors) must take the floor and explain how the crime has been committed and why he accuses the suspect who he has named. He must explain the motive and the MO of the crime. During the few minutes of the Indictment, the Prosecutor must not be interrupted. If there are two Prosecutors, they can give each other the floor, complete each other's speech… in order to help.

• Pleading

When the Prosecutor (or team of Prosecutors) has finished the exposition of his arguments, the Lawyer (or team of Lawyers) of the accused suspect begins his Pleading to try and get his client (the accused suspect) exculpated. In order to do that, he must find an error or a weakness in the Indictment speech by the Prosecutor. He can also point out an element of the investigation board which has not been explained or which does not collimate with the Indictment, in order to convince the Jurors that his client is not guilty. He must not be interrupted, neither by the Prosecutor, nor by the Jurors. If there are two Lawyers, they can give each other the floor, complete each other's speech… in order to help.

• Deliberation

The Jurors must deliberate on the Indictment and the Pleading, and decide, in complete good faith, if the accused is guilty or not. They can discuss among them, try to convince each other, but neither the Prosecutor nor the Lawyer of the accused can intervene in this debate.

Note: The Lawyers of the suspects who have been exonerated have nothing to do anymore with their old client during this phase of the game. Even if the Pleading of the Lawyer of the accused suspect involves again one of the exonerated suspects, the Lawyer of that suspect, who is now Juror, should not worry since in no way this will convict his old client.

• Verdict

After some moments of discussion, all Jurors hold out their arms towards the middle of the table and at the same time orient their thumb according to their decision:

- thumbs up: the accused is innocent
- thumbs down: the accused is guilty

If the majority of the thumbs is up, the suspect is declared not guilty. The Prosecutor has lost and the Lawyer of the accused has won. If the majority of the thumbs is down, the suspect is declared guilty. The Prosecutor has won and the Lawyer of the accused has lost. In case of a tie (same number of thumbs up than down), the suspect is declared not guilty: that's the benefit of the doubt. The Prosecutor has lost and the Lawyer of the accused has won.