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Credits

This is a collection of mystery scenarios for the tabletop roleplaying game Brindlewood Bay. You need the core rulebook in order to play these mysteries. You can find the core rulebook on DrivethruRPG.com by searching for Brindlewood Bay.

Brindlewood Bay is written by Jason Cordova and published by The Gauntlet Publishing. Find more information about Jason Cordova and The Gauntlet Publishing [here](#).

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Introduction

A murder! A mystery!

The police in this small town are baffled!

A book club of elderly women are on the case!

In Volume 1:

- A high-stakes Scrabble tournament at the library is disrupted by murder!
- The high school mascot is found dead at a most inconvenient time!
- A psychic message warns of an impending political assassination!
- A trip to the petting zoo goes horribly wrong!
- A community of the future is hiding secrets around every corner!



Tiles and Tribulations

By Amanda Mullins – Complexity: 7

This is a fairly straightforward mystery and takes place all in a single location (the Brindlewood Bay Public Library), so it is ideal for earlier in the campaign, as a one-shot, or as a break from more intense mysteries further into a campaign.

Feel free to bring in favorite side characters, love interests, and rivals to complicate matters for the Mavens. Maybe Etienne Beauregard is there complaining that French words are not allowed. Perhaps Sheriff Dalrymple was the first to lose in the tournament. There is lots of opportunity to cause drama in the library!

When Keeping this mystery, it is entertaining to lean into rare or sesquipedalian words (that is, unnecessarily long).

Here are some to get you started:

- Acrimonious – angry/bitter
- Cacophony – bad noise
- Capricious – impulsive
- Defenestration – throw out of a window
- Ebullience – enthusiasm
- Elucidate – explaining
- Grandiloquent – bombastic
- Importunate – overly persistent
- Limerence – obsessive infatuation with a person
- Obdurate – stubborn
- Perfidiousness – disloyalty/treacherousness
- Perspicacious – having good judgement
- Pulchritudinous – beautiful
- Sagacious – also having good judgement
- Verisimilitude – appearing real

Presenting the Mystery

It's the annual Brindlewood Bay Scrabble Club Tournament! The Club's top eight players are competing in a bombastic battle to see who will be crowned the town's top tiler. The wordy winner has the honor of getting their name engraved on the coveted Cup of Champions (along with a \$50 gift certificate to Humerding's Hobby Store).

The Brindlewood Bay Public Library hosts the tournament, and onlookers number in the *tens*. That's right, a record turnout for the Scrabble Club! People chat excitedly and mill around the library lobby waiting for the second round to start, Styrofoam cups of cheap coffee in hand.

Paint the Scene: Even though the Brindlewood Bay Public Library is in dire need of upgrading, what signs show the staff take great pains to make it a welcome place? Despite the care of the staff, what about the library is unsettling?

Round One of the tournament had an excess of excitement:

- Three-year champion and Brindlewood Beacon book critic Mason Hutchinson ousted local laureate Phoenix Auger from the tournament. Ask one of the Mavens to describe a moment of Mason displaying poor sportsmanship upon winning this round
- High school English teacher Jordan Parks awkwardly lost against his student (and teenage genius) Ranjit Kapoor. Ask one of the Mavens to describe the audience reaction when the last tiles were placed in this tense battle
- Nicholas Armstrong, a plumber with a penchant for prolix, bested Brindlewood Bay newcomer Madelynn Cardinal by over 150 points (undeniably an unbalanced board). Ask a Mavens to describe sounds heard from the library outside the game room during the awkward silence after Nicholas won
- Elizabeth Lu, nearly 90 years old and founder of the Scrabble Club, lost to one of our very own Murder Mavens in a marvelous meeting of matrons

Pose the following to the Maven with the highest reason or to the Maven who would be most likely to enter a Scrabble tournament and reach the finals: You have been playing with the Brindlewood Bay Scrabble Club for some time, and this is your first year in the finals. Describe the moment you won your game this round. What final word did you place, and how did you feel upon winning?

Acting referee Gary Humerding, of Humerding's Hobby Store, and head librarian Mrs. McMalley prepare the Community Room (renamed Tournament Hall for today) for Round Two. Of course, to prevent cheating, all audience members and guests must wait in the lobby! Only players and staff in the Tournament Hall between rounds.

Keepers Note: You can take this time as audience members shuffle out as an opportunity for the Mavens to role-play with the Suspects before the murder occurs, or you can continue with Presenting the Mystery.

Finally, the Hall is set up and Round Two is nearly ready to start. Suddenly, a blood-curdling scream comes from the hallway! The Maven in the tournament finds Mrs. McMalley, head librarian, gesturing wildly toward blood seeping out from under the Community Room bathroom door. Opening the door reveals the corpse of tournament favorite Mason Hutchinson for all to see.

Mason's face is purple, eyes wide and watery, with putrid yellow and red foam still seeping from his mouth. His fingernails are caked in blood from clawing at his neck in desperation. Wedged deep in his throat are a handful of Scrabble tiles, coated with a foul-smelling liquid. Blood seeps from his skull, pooling at the bottom of the door where he ultimately fell, cracking his head open on the washroom tiles.

It's murder once again in Brindlewood Bay, and the police tell all the visitors and competitors to remain in the building.

Moments

- A precariously balanced stack of books, topped with Dr. Suess' *Yertle the Turtle*, comes crashing down
- A bored child reads a strange children's book about the history of Brindlewood Bay (**Paint the Scene:** Describe one of the illustrations in this book)
- A fist-fight is started over the "D-I-L-E-M-N-A" dilemma (a worldwide phenomenon of mass misremembering of being taught to spell the word "dilemma" with an "n" often attributed to the Mandela Effect)
- People play the word game Hangman on a chalkboard, with one letter left (the O in "guillotine")
- A broken clock ticks loudly, gaining in volume almost like a countdown, but nobody seems to notice
- Gary Humerding drinks the last cup of regular coffee (2 cream, 2 sugar), leaving only the full canister of decaf

Suspects

Phoenix Auger, a poet

Tall. Middle-aged. Ink-stained hands. Phoenix has self-published over a dozen poetry anthologies themed around moral philosophy and deontology. Some critics (specifically Mason Hutchinson) reviewed his works as "lengthy", "quantity over quality", and "oh no, not another one".

Quote: "Bluffing is allowable by the rules, of course, but it is bad form and immoral. NEOTOXIN is not a legal word in the Scrabble Official Tournament and Club Word List! He got into my head. To be honest, he was not a good person—he hated my poems AND I caught him brailing once."

Jordan Parks, a teacher

Balding. Short. Owlsh. Mr. Parks has been the head of the English department at Brindlewood Bay High School for years and is a stickler for spelling and proper punctuation. He rarely gives out any grade higher than a B+, much to the annoyance of his students.

Quote: "It is quite perplexing. Mason had atrocious grammar, of course, and failed my class twice (how he became a book critic is beyond me). And yes, he frequently tried to pass off his improperly spelled words in games, but that is no reason to kill a person. Life is not a Robin Masterson novel."

Ranjit Kapoor, a student

Trendy. Confident. Shorter than average. Ranjit is a genius, and he could easily be taking college-level courses if he wanted. However, he is happy to bask in the fame of being the smartest kid at school, and frequently Tik-Toks his adoring fans (the few people who don't find him obnoxious).

Quote: "Check it out, Tik-Tok. POV from a murder investigation! This Scrab tourney was mid but I was flexing. Got some dubs and trips. Then some guy got merked, no cap! I'll be streaming everything! It's gonna be fire! Smash that like and follow!"

Nicholas Armstrong, a plumber

Friendly. Big red beard. Always chewing gum. Nicholas has lost the Scrabble championship to Mason three years in a row, but they had a friendly rivalry before Mason's untimely demise. This year the loser would have to jump in the Bay naked! While nobody expected Nicholas to actually beat Mason this time, everyone was cheering for him anyway (at the very least to put Mason in his place).

Quote: "I can't believe Mason is dead! We were always neck and neck, you know? He'd always try and get away with coffee-housing me, and I would just laugh. What a horrible way to go. I've seen poisonings before; as a plumber, you see all kinds of things."

Madelynn Cardinal, a newcomer

Graceful. Soft-spoken. A little bit on the dreamy side. Madelynn is new to Brindlewood Bay, and, despite not having much of an interest in the game, she joined the Scrabble Club to make friends. Either beginner's luck or natural talent got her to the finals, but nobody is certain which.

Quote: "Goodness, I've heard this kind of thing happens here. I suppose it was only a matter of time? That Hutchinson fellow wasn't very nice. He was always criticizing my rack management, and he yelled at my dog once."

Muriel McMalley, a librarian

Severe. Perpetual frown. Hates fun. Mrs. McMalley (as she makes everyone call her) has a reputation for being strict to the point of ruthlessness. Everyone jokes that someone must have some dirt on her to force her to host the tournament each year, but she isn't much for jokes. Now keep your voice down in the library.

Quote: "I should have known better than to allow the Scrabble Club back. After this, I will finally make certain they will never sully this place with their presence again. I do not tolerate shenanigans in my library, and that includes murders."

Elizabeth Lu, a club founder

Petite. Walks with a cane. Always carrying a carpeted knitting bag. Elizabeth founded this club more years ago than anyone can remember. She is old-fashioned and a bit hard of hearing, but a real firecracker when across the board. She won't even let her great-grandchildren win against her.

Quote: "These young players have all these newfangled words. I never know if I'm being bluffed or if I am just old! Ha! Still, I was the champion every year until Mason joined the club. I suppose now that he's dead, I'm back in the running."

Garry Humerding, a business owner

Round. Loud. Red-faced. Garry inherited Humerding's Hobby Store from his father, Jerry, upon Jerry's passing. He isn't much into hobbies or games himself, but he knows hobbyists are happy to empty their pockets for every little new thing that comes out.

Quote: "The problem with games like Scrabble is that they are one and done. There should be expansions! Extra content! New rules! Legacy mode! You have to make games sexy and exciting! Sorry, what? Oh yes, very sad about that dead guy."

Other Library Patrons/Scrabble Club Audience Members

Various other people are in the library during police investigation and questioning. All have alibis, as only the players and staff were allowed in the Tournament Hall between rounds. Some ideas if you need them: Davy and Deena Armstrong (7-year-old twins), Anjali Kapoor (Ranjit's mother), Sarah Lu (Mrs. Lu's granddaughter), or bring back a favorite NPC/Suspect from a previous mystery.