

MARIN COUNTY NEW AGE SOCIETY COCKTAIL PARTY

by

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MARIN COUNTY NEW AGE SOCIETY COCKTAIL PARTY

WELCOME!

Get yourself a drink, have some munchies! Relax and enjoy! We're all friends here!

Once a month for the last four years, noted psychic Dorotea Schreckenghast has been having a few friends over to her secluded beach house, north of San Francisco. The New Age Society is an informal gathering of those with a common interest in "the unexplained." While most of the conversation involves psychic phenomena, the whole thing is mainly an excuse for a party. The highlight of the evening is Dorotea's seance. The spirits, through Dorotea, dispense advice to all the guests, and there is always a surprise revelation (or two). Dorotea's friends have come to know that their secrets aren't always safe.

These are not the best times for the New Age Society. Several wealthy Marin County residents, including most of the members of the Society, have suffered at the hands of a notorious cat burglar. The thief possesses a dubious sense of humor, always leaving sarcastic notes thanking victims for the "gift" of their property. The notes are all signed simply "Lancette."

Nothing else is known about Lancette, except that whoever this creep is, Lancette is good! Lancette has defeated the best security systems, scaled buildings, and left no clues other than taunting notes.

Much worse than the burglaries, however, are the murders. Four members of the New Age Society have been murdered or have disappeared in as many months. Society member Police Inspector Cassius Marcellius Mudd had been investigating the Lancette burglaries until he had himself transferred to the much more pressing case of the murders. Inspector Mudd claims to be on the verge of cracking the case.

All this should be of no concern this evening. This is, after all, a party. It's a wonderful night, and the bar is well stocked. Everyone expects to just have a good time tonight. Of course you never know what's going to happen at one of Dori Schrenkenghast's parties.

OUR CAST OF CHARACTERS

Dorotea Schreckenghast - Your hostess. Founder and informal leader of the New Age Society. Mysterious jetsetter, glamorous entertainer, and self-proclaimed mistress of hidden knowledge. In short, Dori is America's number one TV psychic. Dori throws great parties, and she keeps things "interesting" by dropping little bombshells of information about her guests, information that is supposed to be secret.

Faith Serville - Dorotea's secretary/aide/companion. Faith's devotion to Dorotea is total, as is Dori's dependence on Faith. Faith is the only person who is permitted to call Dorotea Schreckenghast, "Dot."

Inspector Cassius Marcellius Mudd - The SFPD's ace detective. Though he often appears clumsy and bumbling, no one doubts his abilities. Mudd has never failed to solve a case. Though he never discusses a case he is working on, Dorotea was able to announce at a party that he was investigating the Lancette burglaries. The Inspector has recently dropped that case to investigate the New Age Society murders.

Professor Emmitt Wanderer - A researcher at the Government's Lawrence-Livermore laboratory, and possibly the top man in applied physics in America. Though an astonishingly brilliant man, Wanderer tends to fit the stereotype of an "absent-minded professor." He and Inspector Mudd met Dorotea when they were invited to be expert witnesses, trying to detect fraud in her act. No fraud was detected and the two have been with the Society since its founding four years ago.

Major Vivian Trader - An officer in the Air Force, Major Trader has been with the society for three years. She is brusque, efficient, and all business, but just as interested in unexplained phenomena as the rest of the group. The Major had long maintained that her work was top secret, but last year Dorotea revealed at a cocktail party that Trader heads the west coast office of Project Blue Book, the Air Force unit responsible for investigating UFO's (and which had officially been disbanded in 1968). Trader has never quite forgiven Dori for this revelation. Major Trader is known as a *very* aggressive feminist.

Contessa Karina Valentino - A European socialite, new to the Society (she moved to Marin County less than a year ago), Contessa Valentino nonetheless fit in at the Society cocktail parties almost immediately.

The Contessa is flamboyance personified, the life of any party. She is a member of the deposed Romanian royal family, but does not mind being unable to return to her homeland, and now that the Iron Curtain has fallen seems to be in no hurry to go home. The Contessa is truly a citizen of the world.

Dell Jedd - Another newcomer, Dell Jedd made his fortune little more than a year ago when he accidentally found the last undiscovered oil field in Kentucky. A simple, straightforward man, riches and life in "the big city" have done little to change Jedd. No matter what occurs, he can be counted on to remain calm, rarely reacting with more than a shake of his head and a muttered "Gol-ley!" Jedd may also dispense a bit of his legendary "Hillbilly wisdom" if the crisis calls for it.

Barbi Feldman - She joined the Society five months ago after she moved from Los Angeles to open a new branch of her chain of shops specializing in occult supplies, "Barbi's Crystals & Stuff." Pretty blonde Barbi is known to be a good listener, a fact that makes her very popular at Society parties. She and Dell Jedd have been dating for the past two months.

Justin Seynoe - Host of the Justin Seynoe Show, Northern California's favorite talk show. Justin is everything you imagine when you think about someone from Hollywood, and in fact he did move north from Los Angeles "because they needed someone like me around here!" Justin insists he's one step from getting his show run nationally. Dori Schreckenghast often appears on Justin's show.

Sagittarius Regulus Firestar - America's number two television psychic. Dori has long had a rivalry with Ms. Firestar, whose methods are somewhat "different." A channeller, spirit reader, and delver into just about all new age magic, Firestar can be a little disconcerting at times. While her following is smaller than Dori's, her fans are fanatically devoted. As Professor Wanderer is a devoted scientist and Firestar is anything but, the two of them do not get along. Dori once revealed at a party that Firestar's real name is Jane Smith. Merely mentioning this will cause Firestar to fly into an uncontrollable rage. Firestar does not flaunt the use of her powers the way Dori does. However, she did report Tobias Zoomer's murder to the police though she was never at the scene of the crime.

Tovar the Inimitable - A Gypsy seer and showman. Tovar is only a temporary member of the Society; he joined four months ago as a guest of Sag Firestar, who is his biggest fan. He is welcome in the Society since it's always interesting to have another psychic around. Tovar's specialty is finding lost items, and that makes him very welcome as Professor Wanderer and Inspector Mudd constantly lose their keys.

FORMER MEMBERS

Tobias Zoomer (deceased) - Found stabbed to death in his apartment, four months ago. Zoomer had been a best-selling writer of non-fiction, famous for his exposés. He had written nothing in the last ten years, but had been hard at work on a project at the time of his murder. Zoomer has been overheard at a party bragging that he "had the goods" on a member of the Society.

Tolliver Snoop (deceased) - Stabbed to death in his home three months ago. Snoop was the head writer for the National Tabloid, and the first journalist to publicize Dorotea Schreckenghast's predictions. Rumor has it that he'd gotten hold of some of Tobias Zoomer's notes shortly before he was murdered.

Bruce Kent (deceased) - He was poisoned in his apartment two months ago. After he was killed, it was discovered that the man everyone had considered their friend had been with the Society under false pretenses since it had been founded. Bruce Kent was actually Clarke Wayne, a stage magician who has been working for the Center for the Scientific Investigation of Claims Of the Paranormal (CSICOP). CSICOP is an organization devoted to debunking psychics.

Cherise "Rabbit" Scamper (missing, presumed dead) - She disappeared from her home last month and has not been heard from since. Rabbit was noted for her extravagant and decadent parties. When not partying at home, she was partying in some other part of the world. Rabbit traveled at least as much as Contessa Valentino. Her home was found riddled with shotgun holes, and the blood found at the scene has been identified as hers. It is rumored that Rabbit had made a deal with the District Attorney's office; she was supposedly going to provide evidence in a drug investigation to avoid being prosecuted. She and Dell Jedd may have been romantically involved, though both of them claimed to be "just friends."

NOTE: Besides the core members of the New Age Society, members have been known to invite guests who might drop in to the party at any time.

INSPECTOR CASSIUS MARCELLIUS MIDD

Father wanted you to be a boxer. He got to name you. But your father had not reckoned on your inability to hit a punching bag without it hitting you back and knocking you flat. Mother wanted you to be a doctor. Destiny had other plans for you. Despite your natural aptitude (and generous monetary contributions from your parents), you flunked out of medical school.

Your destiny was to uphold the law. Your detractors imply that your parents' money simply had more influence at the police academy than at medical school, but you ignore the criticisms. That you graduated last in your class only shows that the establishment could not cope with grading your unconventional methods and thought processes, thought processes so unconventional even you have difficulty following your own lines of reasoning. Your thinking is so far ahead of the criminals you match wits with that often you put all of the pieces of a mystery together to create a solution that, while you must admit is entirely wrong, makes much more sense than what actually happened. Many times you've solved a case without really knowing how you had done it. Most of your cases are like that, actually. Well... maybe all of them.

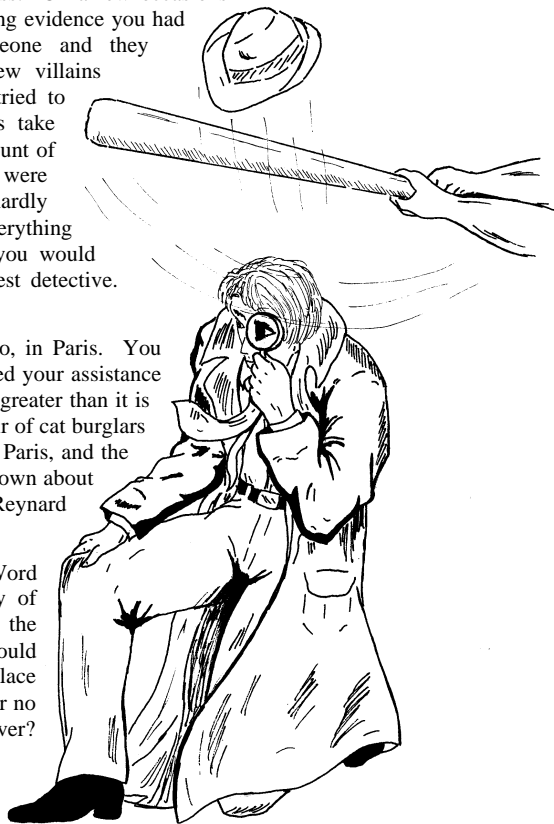
But you still solve them. No matter how tough the case, no matter how crafty the villain, you always find the solution. You are America's most successful detective, the San Francisco Police Department's ace. Your admirers are numerous, and criminals tremble at your name. Mind you, a few of your co-workers grumble that you are just the "luckiest bastard on Earth."

Well... luck does play a role in your success. On a few occasions (well, quite a few, really), you were explaining evidence you had found and totally misinterpreted to someone and they suddenly began to confess to you. A few villains concluded that you were on to them and tried to silence you (it's amazing how few villains take proper care of their weapons - you've lost count of the times someone's gun jammed just as they were about to blow you away.) Surprising, but it hardly matters. You would have shortly sorted everything out without the lucky breaks. Of course you would have. You are, after all, the world's greatest detective. You never let a criminal get away.

Well... almost never. It was five years ago, in Paris. You were on vacation, but the Surete had requested your assistance on a case. Your reputation in Europe is even greater than it is here at home. They love you in France. A pair of cat burglars had looted half of the wealthy households of Paris, and the French police were stumped. All that was known about the criminals were their aliases: Ricardo Le Reynard and Lancette.

You devised a clever trap for the thieves. Word was leaked that a collection of the jewelry of Empress Josephine (whoever she was - the French police assured you that the thieves would know) was to go on public display someplace with a funny name you could never remember no matter how many times they told you (the Lever? Something like that).

Le Reynard took the bait and found half the Paris police force waiting for him. He



SAGITTARIUS REGULUS FIRESTAR

Transdimensional alien space monsters are trying to conquer the Earth, but that's ok.

The aliens dare not strike against Earth as long as those whose faith in themselves have allowed them to tap the powers of their minds (such as yourself) remain strong. So long as you remain unwavering in your dedication to keep the Blessed Earth Mother's spirit free and untainted, the harmony of the eco-balance shall be sustained.

It's a tough job, but you get lots of help from your friends. You have a strong following - not so large as that showboating cow Dori Schreckenghast, but all your followers are dedicated believers, not Dori's crowd of media dupes. Your followers lend you their karmic energy, and with it you maintain a psychic shield around the Mother Earth Ark, a barrier through which the aliens cannot invade.

Your greatest ally is the spirit of an ancient Atlantian sorcerer named Herb. Through Herb, you channel the benevolent souls of those who have departed the material plane. Herb's guidance is invaluable, as is the information the friendly spirits provide you.

The only real danger to the Earth comes from within. The aliens cannot invade through your barrier, but they can pierce it enough to contact evilly inclined humans. A total bummer, but what can you do? The aliens hope to use the human traitors to undermine the faith of your followers, weakening your energy pool to the point where they can break through. This you must guard against; the Earth Mother depends on you. Luckily, most of the alien's human dupes use what they learn from the aliens for their own materialistic agendas.

You are responsible for all the rumors about Tobias Zoomer's lost notebook. Everyone in the New Age Society fears that the notebook contains information damaging to themselves; only you know the notebook's true contents. You know this because you dictated the whole thing to Zoomer shortly before he died.

The notebook contains everything Herb has told you about the alien conspiracy on Earth and the New Age Society members involved. Major Trader and Professor Wanderer are aware of everything, but are covering it up. Also, Wanderer and the Major are rivals, each trying to steal and exploit alien technology. The foulest villain of them all is Dori Schreckenghast. She is a fraud, totally without power. When she is exposed it could be a fatal blow to the faith people have in those who truly wield the power (yourself for instance). Your power pool could be ruined, your mental barrier could collapse, and the aliens could take over the Earth.

Oh, wow! Schreckenghast is the greatest threat there is to Mother Earth and she must be stopped. You mentioned the alien conspiracy to Zoomer at a New Age Society meeting 5 months ago. He'd

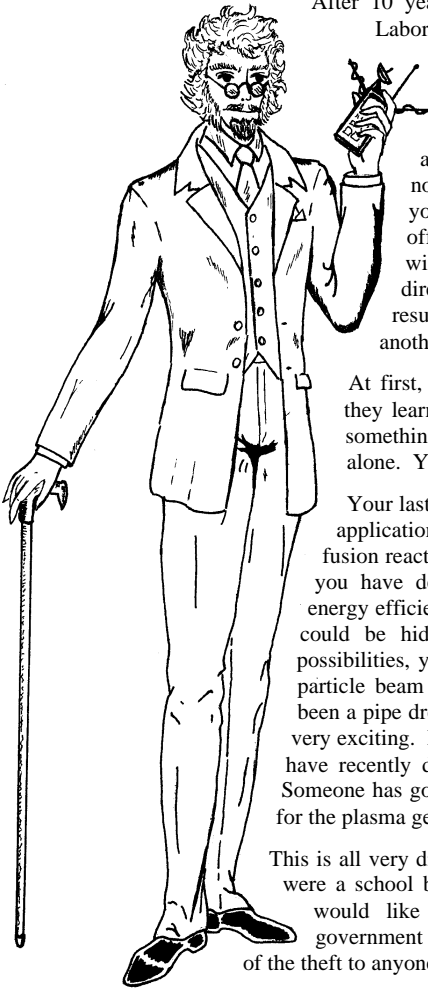


PROFESSOR EMMITT WANDERER

You remember your Cal Tech days. Your memory was better then. You were 16. Young to be a full professor they tell you, though you didn't know anything else so you didn't see what was odd about it. It was years before you came to understand that not everyone had your grasp for applied physics. Or mathematics. Or quantum mechanics. Or... well, what it comes down to is you seem to know more than a lot of folks.

You taught for 10 years. You enjoyed teaching, mostly. You believe you were a good teacher, though at times it was beyond your ability to stick with the subject matter. You must admit it, you have a tendency to ramble. A bit. You know your students learned in your classes. They might, however, have trouble explaining just what subject they had learned.

You would say that's the only trouble you had as a Professor. That, and certain difficulty getting around the campus (and no, regardless of what your critics would say, you did not constantly get lost. You simply forgot where you were going).



After 10 years at Cal Tech, the government recruited you for their Laboratory in Livermore, CA. There you have been for these last fifteen years (fifteen? fourteen? No, perhaps it has been sixteen. Never mind). At first your government employers provided you with detailed agendas. They would work out schedules and demand project reports and feasibility studies on time, and a lot of other such nonsense. Unfortunately, once you get to work on something you'll encounter some unforeseen effect which will send you off on a tangent to track it down and this will present you with new questions which will send the project in a new direction and then you'll find that some of your least relevant results are also the most interesting which will lead to yet another change of direction...

At first, your work habits upset your employers. Soon, however, they learned that no matter what you worked on it would result in something new that they could use, so they decided to leave you alone. You have all been very happy since then.

Your last project was to miniaturize charged particle accelerators for application in fusion power generators. The lasers used to start a fusion reaction tend to use more power than the reaction generates, but you have designed a particle beam generator that is phenomenally energy efficient as well as being small. You figure half a dozen of them could be hidden under a bed. Though you haven't explored the possibilities, you foresee engineering improvements that could make the particle beam projectors even smaller. Cheap, clean fusion power has been a pipe dream for a very long time (you forget how long). This is all very exciting. However, someone has seen fit to rain on your parade. You have recently discovered evidence of tampering in your computer files. Someone has gotten into your files and copied all your notes and the plans for the plasma generator. Was 3.14159 too obvious a passcode?

This is all very distressing. No one has stolen anything from you since you were a school boy and the bullies used to take your lunch money. You would like to speak with your friend Cassius Mudd, but your government employers have forbidden this. You are not to say a word of the theft to anyone. Not a word.

ITEM CARDS

Photocopy these cards onto card or cover stock, then cut them out and give them to the characters. There is a table listing who starts with what on page 3.

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Item Card</i></p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">A Crystal Pendant</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"><small>Marin County New Age Society Cocktail Party © 2001 Interactivities Ink, Ltd. www.interactivitiesink.com</small></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Item Card</i></p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">Shotgun</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Does 4 Red Stars of Damage. Use Ranged Weapons Ability. Requires Shotgun Shells.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><small>Marin County New Age Society Cocktail Party © 2001 Interactivities Ink, Ltd. www.interactivitiesink.com</small></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Item Card</i></p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">Shotgun Shells</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Four of them. Check off when used.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">□□□□</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><small>Marin County New Age Society Cocktail Party © 2001 Interactivities Ink, Ltd. www.interactivitiesink.com</small></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Item Card</i></p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">Safe</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Locked. Complexity: 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><small>Marin County New Age Society Cocktail Party © 2001 Interactivities Ink, Ltd. www.interactivitiesink.com</small></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Item Card</i></p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">Briefcase</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Item cards paperclipped to this are in the briefcase.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><small>Marin County New Age Society Cocktail Party © 2001 Interactivities Ink, Ltd. www.interactivitiesink.com</small></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Item Card</i></p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">A Bag of White Powder</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">See a GM to analyze or use.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><small>Marin County New Age Society Cocktail Party © 2001 Interactivities Ink, Ltd. www.interactivitiesink.com</small></p>
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