

# Never Play With Dead Things

An Audience-Participation  
Mystery Comedy

*By Kamron Klitgaard*

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## STORY OF THE PLAY

The premise is simple: A group of students dig up a corpse as a prank but the dead get upset and rise from the grave, trapping the students inside the mausoleum. Which character has the power to stop the Zombie menace? The audience gets the opportunity to band together in groups to solve the mystery. This part of the play is called the Clue Quest and happens during the intermission. Clue Characters (Zombies) are scattered around the building at strategic locations to give clues to the audience groups. All the clues lead to the identity of the character with the “power” to solve the story and save the world!

## ORIGINAL CAST

HOST..... *Gentry Sparrow*  
KAREN..... *Melissa White*  
MIKE..... *Robert Sant*  
SPIKE..... *Huu Tran*  
DEATH..... *Tori Blanchard*  
LISA..... *Danielle Peterson*  
JONES..... *Chris Jones*  
CARETAKER..... *Kristen Smart*  
ORSON..... *Robert Dana*  
ASSORTED ZOMBIES: *Sara Stevenson, Nikki Chambers, Joe Reader, Chase Larsen, Ian Marietti, Colleen Monaghan, Jason Kitten.*

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(4 m, 3 w, 2 flexible, 10 or more zombies)*

**HOST:** *(Male or female)* Dressed as a mortician (or Morticia). This character is really into macabre, almost undead him/herself.

**KAREN:** A preppie-type who's overly sweet and nice. She wears baby blue and pink, and carries a small boom box.

**MIKE:** The all-American boy. Wears jeans and a letterman's jacket. Also very nice.

**SPIKE:** Spike is half punker/half skater. Has colored spiked hair, wears lots of leather and chains and safety pins.

**DEATH:** She is completely Gothic. She wears all black, with black hair and white face with black lips.

**LISA:** She's a total airhead.

**JONES:** He's rich and stuck up.

**CARETAKER:** *(Male or female)* A drunk.

**ORSON:** He's the dug-up corpse with whom the others play.

**ZOMBIES:** At least ten. The Zombies should be played by all the Clue Characters. There are three Zombies with individual lines. ZOMBIE 1 has several lines in Part 1. ZOMBIES 2 and 3 have one line each in Part 3.

## THE CLUE CHARACTERS

Clue characters can be either male or female. If you have lots of actors, several could play each clue character. The more zombies you have the more fun the production will be. If you don't have enough actors to play each clue character you can substitute them for "hidden clues" which is explained in Part 2 - The Clue Quest.

**SLOW ZOMBIE MUTE:** An undead who constantly walks slowly toward its victims. This type of zombie cannot talk but can moan and groan. He should always be reaching out for his victims. The clue is attached to his back so he can delay letting the teams see the clue by keeping his back away from them.

**TALKING ZOMBIE:** Says "Brains" a lot. He wants brains to eat. It hurts to be dead, and eating brains is the only thing that helps.

**ZOMBIE HUNTER:** Equipped with several weapons to fight zombies. He's seen it all so nothing shocks him anymore, but he does hate zombies and has quite an attitude about them.

**NEWS REPORTER:** (And optional Cameraman.) Always searching for some scientific reason why the dead are coming back to life and eating human brains. Stays safely away from the zombies in the Clue Quest but has them in the background when doing a report. (It's fun to actually record some of the Clue Quest events.)

**CAPTURED ZOMBIE and CAPTOR:** Wild and ferocious zombie(s). Has been captured by a scientist who is studying it. The scientist has the zombie on a pole leash. He tests its abilities and trains it by feeding it pieces of brain.

**SIAMEEZE ZOMBIES:** Two zombies who are attached together. They try to eat the audience members but keep tripping over each other.

**RIGOR MORTIS VICTIM:** This person is not a zombie but has been bitten by one and is now suffering the effects of rigor mortis.

**ZOMBIE COMEDIAN:** Used to be a stand-up comedian in life and is now carrying on his trade with a microphone and as many dead jokes as he can think of.

**SLEEPING ZOMBIE:** This zombie lies motionless. A sign reading "The clue is in his/her coat pocket" is posted somewhere nearby. All is well until the Clue Quest victim tries to take the clue. The zombie suddenly springs to life to scare the victim.

**GRAVE ROBBER:** Has lots of stories to tell and shows some of the treasure he has collected by robbing graves. Some things like jewelry are still attached to body parts.

**ZOMBIE VICTIM:** A person who has been bitten by a zombie and is slowly dying. Several seconds after death the character will turn into a zombie and wake to join the undead.

**NOTE:** *You do not need to use all of these Clue Characters. Conversely, if you need more you can make up your own.*

## **WHAT'S IN THIS SCRIPT?**

There are four parts to this mystery:

**1. THE STORY** - This is the scripted part of the play in which a mystery is presented to the audience.

**2. THE CLUE QUEST** (*Optional*) - This is where the audience is given a quest to answer riddles and search for clues. During the Clue Quest they will encounter and interact with many different characters in different locations. This is a great opportunity for actors to improvise. And if the audience members are skilled sleuths they will then put all the clues together to solve the mystery.

**3. THE CONCLUSION** - The audience returns to the theatre to watch the conclusion of the story, which reveals the answer to the mystery.

**4. THE PAYOFF** (*Optional*) - All the characters, even dead ones, come out and present prizes to the audience members who solved the mystery.

There are complete instructions on how to design your Clue Quest to fit your production needs. This is a big part of the fun because you can make the quest personal for your audience and for your actors. You can make it a big part of your production, you can cut it out all together or it can be somewhere in between. Sometimes the Clue Quest is what the audience enjoys the most!

*Additional production information located at end of script.*

## **PART 1 - THE STORY**

### **SCENE 1**

*(There are several dimly lit tombstones across the stage. The door to the mausoleum can be out there too. The CARETAKER walks across the stage with a lantern and takes a drink from a tin flask, then exits. Enter HOST.)*

**HOST:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. And welcome to our mystery. I ask you to pay close attention to what you are about to witness, for the information you see will help you in solving our mystery. Tonight's tale into the macabre is not for the faint of heart. It involves the most gruesome acts of violence, the most horrifying scenes of terror, and the most twisted hideousness ever seen on this or any other stage. In fact, we had to cut the part about the Mary Kay saleswoman or we would have been shut down. However, you may rest assured that there is little or no offensive language apart from two "darns", three "dang it's", a "teetee" and one "doodoo." And since they only occur here in my opening monologue, you're past them now. So sit back and relax as The *(name of your company)* ... Presents ... "Never Play With Dead Things." Ha ha ha ha ha. *(Laughing evilly. SFX: Thunder and lightning.)* Have you ever seen a dead graveyard? You know the kind I mean. It's usually at the end of a street where the streetlights don't work. The caretaker hasn't been seen for years, no one really knows why. The grass is overgrown and hides many of the markers. There's a rusty iron gate around the property. Is it there to keep some out? Or is it there to keep something inside? Lights have been seen both in the mausoleum and in the crypts outside. On a night not long ago two teenagers were walking home from a date...

*(Enter MIKE and KAREN.)*

**KAREN:** I sure had fun, Mike.

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