

# Peace, Love and Murder

## Character Descriptions

### Instructions for Deep Dive Workshop August 4

Please study each of the characters below and decide which character(s) you are interested in playing. Plan to mingle with the group as the character(s) you have interest in. Ultimately, you'll be able to audition for as many parts as you'd like. Mingle is likely to be alone and possibly with one of the other characters. Please know your relationship to each of the other characters. You may use your notes/this document. Note: some characters can be male or female.

**Setting:** It's the 1970s at a commune called Hate Nobody (Abby never could spell) and all the characters are regulars at the commune except for the sisters who are hitchhikers who have been around for a month or so. The motto at the commune is "Serenity Now" (fingers waving up and down). The "Commune Conversation" (much like a town hall meeting) will follow pot smoking and various munchies. No times are assigned to various activities as time has no meaning in the commune.

**Dead guy:** Poppy Seed **Method of death:** Pot laced with hemlock.

**Props:** munchies, joints for all characters, several old beat-up chairs, bean bag? 5 pet rocks in houses (provided by the art ctr), satchels for Luna & Moonbeam with hemlock hanging out. Agenda hand written on a piece of paper.



### Characters and backgrounds



**Abby Streeter M** – Probably 30-40 years old. Model for this part is Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead. Guru/leader of the commune. Just wants to have a good time and have everyone get along. He loves music and makes it his life's work. His motto is "serenity now." As a songwriter and singer, Abby encompasses everything being a hippie meant. He stole his mom's car, got kicked out of the Army and committed his adulthood to music. In conjunction with his rebellious attitude, Abby's wild hair, scruffy beard and style are as hippie as it comes. Married to Gloria Stickem. They met through a group of tax evaders in 1969 – it was actually a support group for those who had pledged to not pay their taxes in protest to the Vietnam War. Abby loved Gloria's passion and aggressiveness regarding women's lib when they met but now he's not so pleased with her "nagging" about things he should do and especially when she puts him in his place. He's a happy guy who loves music and drugs. **Costume:** denim jacket, ratty t-shirt, dirty jeans, boots or flip flops. Maybe carries a guitar.

### Abby's Relationship to:

- **Gloria:** you're her husband. You met several years ago at a Tax Evader Support Group. You both decided to not pay taxes in protest to the Vietnam War. You loved her spark and enthusiasm for women's rights and you knew she was really smart. She loves your music and your happy-go-lucky attitude. You're both kinda fed up with each other; fight a fair amount: usually due to her nagging (which she does throughout the entire show). She's really a stick in the mud at this point in your lives.
- **Poppy:** you love the property but can't stand Poppy. You think you have a way to take over the property due to a loophole in the contract but you have to get Poppy out of the way. You repeatedly talk about putting a plan in place to inherit the property somehow.

- **Dash:** you like Dash. He's been through a lot and you are empathetic: even though he served in the war (which you opposed). You don't understand his outbursts and tell him to cut it out. When he's sane, he's really a nice guy and you like hanging out with him. You both consider each other friends. (cont. on next page)
- **Moonbeam:** She's new at the commune and you like her so far but she seems really smart and pretty serious. She has her light moments but you just aren't sure about her background. Where did she and her sister originally come from?
- **Luna:** You like Luna for sure. She seems so transparent although ditzy. You wouldn't mind getting "closer" to either of the girls. They're younger and more open than Gloria.



**Dash Gordon M** – Any age from 25 - 40. Model: Mel Gibson in Conspiracy Theory. You served in Vietnam and have PTSD as a result which few people under. You appear downright crazy and believe in all kinds of conspiracy theories (the Vietnam war was just a hoax, LSD was created by the US government, Mr. Potato Head is a communist plot, Rubik cubes are from aliens and whatever else you can think of from the 70s). You also tend to be violent because of your past. You're at the commune to convert to "serenity now." You probably had too much LCD while in the Vietnam War. You hope to cure your violence by smoking pot instead of hard drugs and trying to learn about Serenity Now. You periodically have violent outbreaks (yelling something about the war or anything else that may catch your attention). You also have lucid, sane moments as well which is when the other characters see who you used to be... a nice guy. **Costume:** army fatigues or jeans and 60s shirt (tie dye?)

#### Dash's Relationship to:

- **Poppy:** Poppy often tortures you by making exploding noises behind your back to set you off. Dash goes crazy when he sees Poppy but will also have a calm conversation with him. Thinks Poppy's the cause of the war and that Poppy is plotting to enroll everyone in the Russian space program. He often has outbursts around and about Poppy.
- **Abby:** you like Abby as he likes you. You consider each other friends although no one really understands your outbursts, especially Abby.
- **Gloria:** you're actually really drawn to her as she's smart, good looking and probably really good in bed. Your attraction is purely physical with her as she's a real fox. You have no need for her smarts although you play it up when you see her to make her think you like her for her brains; not just her body.
- **Moonbeam:** she's new at the commune and you think she and her sister are both really young and cute. Moonbeam is a bit over your head and you often walk away shaking your head as she is that smart. Her smarts go way over your head.
- **Luna:** You really like Luna. She's so free-spirited and ditzy. You think that you and Luna will make a great team once you get to know each other. She's kinda scared of you especially when you have your outbursts.



**Poppy Seed** – 60+ old guy – crabby, gray beard and long hair. He is the actual owner of the commune property and likes having some income for the property. Rent is never paid on time and he's forever chasing after Abby to pay up. Thinks Abby and his followers are crazy and he hates the idea of a commune of hippies; although he is certainly the picture of an old hippie himself. Any of the current topics of the day (pet rocks, Rubik cubes, skate boards, trolls, slinkies, Mr. Potato Head), he thinks they're totally stupid. Poppy supported the Vietnam effort and our boys in combat. Dead Guy poisoned by some tainted weed.

Hates everyone in the commune: a bunch of "damn hippies." Hates Abby for being so irresponsible. Hates Gloria for being a women's libber. Hates Dash because he's crazy. Hates Luna for being a stupid girl. Hates Moonbeam for being smarter than he is.

Your relationships with the commune hippies is pretty miserable. You hate hippies but like the money coming in and the pot smoking. You are always at the "commune conversations" just to keep up with what's happening. You do enjoy smokin' a little pot with the group but think the meetings are stupid. You grumble through all of it. You die from a hemlock laced joint in the last scene.

Here's the info on hemlock including the symptoms you can display during the scenes. You're basically dead before the scenes even start as you've all been smokin' pot for the past hour or so.

**Hemlock** is a genus (Cicuta) of perennial plants of the umbel family, with compound umbels of small white flowers and intensely poisonous, tuberous roots. Accidental ingestion of the plant may result in central nervous system depression, respiratory failure, acute rhabdomyolysis, acute renal failure and even death. Rhabdomyolysis involves: intense muscle aching or swelling, muscle weakness or stiffness, feeling generally exhausted, fever, nausea and vomiting. typical symptoms for humans include dilation of the pupils, dizziness, and trembling followed by slowing of the heartbeat, paralysis of the central nervous system, muscle paralysis, and death due to respiratory failure.



**Moonbeam Chocolat:** 25 -35s. Sister to Luna Beam and the older of the two. Model: Joan Baez without the music. An active participant in the 1960s protest movement, she supported [civil rights](#) and anti-[Vietnam War](#) rallies. The two sisters hitchhike around the country visiting various communes and somehow there's always a mysterious death while staying at each commune. Are they sister serial killers or is it just coincidence? They grew up in North Jersey as daughters of a mob family and rebelled against the violence in the family hence, they are now flower children seeking "serenity now." Both sisters are horticulturalists and know lots about all kinds of plants including poisonous plants. Her real name is Francesca Greco. Moonbeam is the smarter and more strategic of the two sisters. She is in cahoots with Abby to get rid of Poppy – somehow. **Costume:** long skirt or baggy pants, 60s shirt (tie dye or peasant blouse) headband, long hair – unstyled, no make up or very little. Carry a satchel with hemlock hanging out of it.

#### **Moonbeam's Relationship to:**

- **Poppy:** He reminds both sisters of their father: old, cranky and violent. You talk about lacing his drugs with something to calm him down but you aren't quite sure how much of the stuff to use for his size.
- **Abby:** you really like Abby especially his music and general outlook on life. He's a free spirit and you think that you and your sister will probably set up permanently at Hate Nobody.
- **Gloria:** You like Gloria and admire her smarts but you think she's kinda nasty. Would like to be friends and be a confidant to Gloria but you really miss the mark as far as Gloria is concerned.
- **Luna:** Of course you love Luna as your sister but you're also very aware of how stupid she appears. You've grown tired of being the "older sister" and always taking care of her.
- **Dash:** You kinda like Dash but you're leery of his violent outbursts. Empathizes with him being in the war but can't stop lecturing him on why he ever signed up or allowed himself to be drafted.



**Luna Beam:** 20s to 30s. Sister to Moonbeam: younger of the two. Model: Goldie Hawn. Luna is a ditzy blonde much like Goldie Hawn. The two sisters hitchhike around the country visiting various communes and somehow there's always a mysterious death while staying at each commune. Are they sister serial killers or is it just coincidence? They grew up in North Jersey as daughters of a mob family and rebelled against the violence in the family hence, they are now flower children seeking "serenity now." Ultimately, they will decide which commune to join and live out their lives. She and her sister both like Hate Nobody at this point and are seriously considering making it their home. She has certainly assessed her own ideas about her fellow commune mates. Both sisters are horticulturalist and know lots about poisonous plants. Her real name is and Angelica Greco. Watch some of the episodes of Laugh In.

Goldie is totally ditzzy and very funny. **Costume:** long skirt or baggy pants, 60s shirt (tie dye or peasant blouse) headband, no make-up or very little. Carry a satchel with hemlock hanging out of it.

#### Luna's Relationship to:

- **Poppy:** You have not spent a lot of time with him but you think he's very strange. He reminds you of your dad – old, cranky and violent. You love everyone else in the commune. Actually, you are afraid of Poppy and thinks this would be an ideal commune if he were just gone.
- **Abby:** She likes him but feels sorry for him when Gloria orders him around. You would like to have an affair with him but you aren't sure how Gloria would respond.
- **Gloria:** You actually admire Gloria except for her treatment of Abby. Gloria is so very smart that you are a bit intimidated by her.
- **Dash:** You have a crush on Dash but is put off when he is violent – reminds you of your father. But otherwise, you are really taken by him. You are clearly a very sweet, empathetic, dumb girl.
- **Moonbeam:** You are little sister to Moonbeam so you are more submissive which Moonbeam really resents when she thinks about your being so weak.



**Gloria Stickem.** Abby Streeter's wife: 30-40ish. Model is Gloria Steinem. Into women's lib, and regularly burns your bra. Gloria is widely recognized during the hippie movement as a feminist leader. Like a true hippie, you protested the Vietnam War by pledging not to pay your taxes. You also created *I Am Woman* magazine a few years ago. You met Abby at a support group for tax evaders in 1969. You love his free spirit and particularly his music but you hate that he won't make important decisions (like paying the rent on time). You nag him constantly about holding commune meetings, paying bills/rent, providing better food and accommodations for the group. You often lecture/yell at him on the right thing to do. You come from wealth and although you are truly a hippie in philosophy, you tend to be more business than anyone else in the commune. **Costume:** Still hippy style but a step up from dirty jeans. Nicer jeans, a clean top with some love beads, big, drippy earrings, long hair, horn rimmed glasses. (cont. next page)

#### Gloria's Relationship to:

- **Poppy:** You really hate him because he's always nagging Abby about the rent (which she also does). You think he's a stupid, old man (which he is compared to her) and figures it would be really easy to eliminate him with some of Moonbeam's plants.
- **Abby:** your husband although you probably never actually married. You do love his music and free spirit but his lack of discipline and responsibility drives you nuts. You regularly nag him about this, that and the other thing (rent, bills, utilities, general upkeep of the place, better food).
- **Moonbeam:** is in cahoots with her in trying to eliminate Poppy somehow. Moonbeam is debating over which plant to use and Gloria thinks there's an easier way --- just shoot him and drag the body out to the fields and bury him. No one will miss him.
- **Luna:** you like Luna but thinks she's a bit disabled/stupid. You sometimes yell at her to get her act together. Luna is the true expert on plants.
- **Dash:** He's certainly different but you are ok with him. He has his issues and the fact that he fought in the war disturbs you. You were dedicated to not paying your taxes and he was off fighting the war. Are you guilty over or resentful of his service?