About In the Hall of the Bandit King

In the Hall of the Bandit King is a roughly 2 hour long live-action roleplaying game for 5-12 players, about amnesiac bandits attempting to solve a murder at the behest of the bandit god. This game is designed to be run by one Game Master, who also takes on the non-player role of the bandit god. (The details of this role, the Leopard Cat Prince, can be found in the last section of this document.)

To run this game you will need players, a game space with room for them, tables and chairs, and game materials as described in the Printing/Stuffing the Game and Setting Up the Game Space.

Preparing to Run the Game

We recommend reading through all of the character sheets as well as the GM Guide and Rules Guide before running this game. Here are some bits of information you may find useful for organizing a run of this game:

Game Blurb

You are a bandit. Probably. Your memories seem to have escaped you for the moment. You are seated at a feasting table in the hall of the bandit king Lion's Jaw, on what seems to be a celebratory occasion…Except it looks like Lion's Jaw is dead in his chair, and the god of banditry himself has shown up asking you all to name the murderer!

Content Warnings

Many characters in this game take part in murder, casual violence, and fantasy banditry, and some have also been victims of these. The game contains references to spousal murder and familial death.

Casting and Player Count

We recommend including the following sets of characters for the number of players in your run:

5 Players	Tiger's Eye, Ox's Back, Horse's Hair, Ram's Horn, Dragon's Mane
6 Players	All above, plus Boar's Head
7 Players	All above, plus Rabbit Foot
8 Players	All above, plus Dog's Snout
9 Players	All above, plus Rat's Tail
10 Players	All above, plus Snake Tongue

11 Players	All above, plus Chicken Legs
12 Players	All above, plus Monkey Fingers

See the section **PLAYER CHARACTERS NOT IN THE GAME** below for an explanation about what happens to the characters that are left out of the cast in the game's story.

Basic casting can be done by sending your players a list of basic descriptions of the characters in your run and asking them to respond with a ranked list of their top 5 choices.

Character	Basic Description
Rat's Tail	Bandit Spy
Ox's Back	Black Market Peddler
Tiger's Eye	2nd-Bandit-in-Command
Rabbit Foot	Kidnapped and Raised by Bandits
Dragon's Mane	Child of the Bandit King
Snake Tongue	Secret State Agent
Horse's Hair	Stressed Bandit Doctor
Ram's Horn	Reluctant Priest of the Bandit God
Monkey Fingers	Bandit Bard
Chicken Legs	Rookie Bandit
Dog's Snout	Fallen Bandit Lord
Boar's Head	Bandit Chef/Counselor

If you are casting this game in person/"at the door", print out as many copies of the Casting Sheet document as you need (1 per 3 players, cut apart with scissors) and ask players to write numbers next to their top choices. (1 for first choice, 2 for 2nd, etc.)

Advanced Casting

If you are casting the game well in advance of your planned run day, you may wish to cast using a more detailed survey instead. A casting survey like this asks players about a variety of traits they would want or not want the character they play to have. Compared to the basic casting method described above, this method lets you match players to characters with more precision than using only basic descriptions, and reveals less information about particular characters to the players before the game. An example of a casting survey in this style for this game can be found here: https://forms.gle/cxDfEz4GUjtP7Hwu5

Printing/Stuffing the Game

Materials Needed

- Index cards/16 item cards, optionally 3 for signs
- Letter sized envelopes/5 per character in your run (25-60), 6 for items, optionally 3 for locations
- Scissors
- Glue stick or tape
- Pens
- Name tags (one for each character in your run)

Optional Materials

- Mounting putty (if attaching things to walls)
- Letter holder/desk organizer or box (to store memory envelopes in game space)
- Materials for decorating envelopes (markers, rubber stamps, ink, stickers, etc.)

Documents That Need to be Printed

- The full character sheet for every character present in your run
- The item card document
- 2-3 copies of the Rules Guide (1 for the GM, 1-2 to be available for players to check during game)

Optional Printed Documents

- Full character sheets for characters not in your run (See PLAYER CHARACTERS NOT IN GAME)
- As many copies of the Casting Sheet as needed IF you are casting in person
- GM Guide if you need a print copy during game
- Additional copies of the Rules Guide for players to check

Memory Envelopes

Take each character sheet for a playable character in your run and cut it into five sections. The first section, ending at [END OF PAGE 1] should be placed in an envelope marked only with the character's initials (RT for Rat's Tail, OB for Ox's Back, etc.) SPECIAL NOTE: The first envelope for Dragon's Mane should also contain the item card **A Silver Locket**.

The second section of the character sheet, ending at [END OF PAGE 2] should be placed in an envelope labeled with the character's initials and "Memory A." The Memory A envelope should also include a name tag for the character - fill this out beforehand with the character's name and apparent age (listed in the table below). Players should be invited to add preferred character pronouns to the name tag when they get it.

Character	Apparent Age
Rat's Tail	Early 30s
Ox's Back	Late 30s
Tiger's Eye	Late 20s
Rabbit Foot	Late 10s
Dragon's Mane	Late 10s
Snake Tongue	Mid 40s
Horse's Hair	50
Ram's Horn	Late 20s
Monkey Fingers	Early 30s
Chicken Legs	Early 20s
Dog's Snout	Late 30s
Boar's Head	Early 30s

The remaining three character sheets sections go into envelopes labels "Memory B", "Memory C", and "Memory D" along with the character's initials.

OPTIONAL ENVELOPE DECORATION: You can add decorations to further distinguish each character's memory envelopes, such as different colors, or stamps/images of the character's zodiac animal. This lets GMs and players more easily distinguish the envelopes, and can add some fun extra flavor to the game.

Item Envelopes and Cards

All item descriptions in the item card document should be cut out into rectangles (including their location description). Descriptions under the heading Envelopes should be pasted or taped onto letter sized envelopes (there are 6 of these). Descriptions under the heading Cards should be pasted or taped onto index cards (there are 16 of these). Follow the location instructions on the card descriptions to make sure item cards are placed in the right envelopes.

Setting Up the Game Space

At minimum, the space for this game needs a table large enough to seat all of your players and the GM (up to 13), and chairs for the same number of people. Additional tables and chairs can be useful for placing item cards for the PCs to look through. If more furniture isn't available, you can instead attach open letter sized envelopes to 3 places on the walls of your room with mounting putty and place item cards inside of those.

The three locations other than the main banquet hall (called Table) are the Kitchen, the Peddler's Stall, and the Gang Treasury. If furniture is available, set up cards labeled on a table or group of chairs and place the item cards assigned to that area around them so players can see them. If furniture is not available, label each of the three envelopes on the walls with one of the three areas and put the item cards assigned to that area inside it.

All item cards and envelopes are labels with the location they should be in at game start. The envelope for Lion's Jaw's body specifically should be placed at his seat in the seating arrangement shown in the next section.

The envelope with the first section of each character sheet (marked only with initials) can be set at that character's place at the table before the game, or else given to the player directly.

All envelopes labeled Memory [A, B, C, D] should be placed in an accessible location and neatly organized by character so that players can claim them during the game when they have fulfilled the necessary conditions. A letter holder/desktop organizer may help to keep the envelopes sorted, but if you have enough table space you can simply lay them out in stacks instead.

Running the Game

Starting the Game

When all players have assembled in game space, the GM should show each player to their character's assigned seat at the banquet table, and provide a brief overview of the game's rules and safety mechanics (see the In the Hall of the Bandit King Rules Guide). Players can find the first parts of their character sheets at their seats, or the GM can hand them out directly.

The PCs begin the game in the seating arrangement they were in at the time of the murder. The arrangement looks like this:



PLAYER CHARACTERS NOT IN THE GAME

All player characters that don't have players in the game still exist in the fiction of the game, and are still present at the banquet. They can be assumed to be seated at the table, but they are in a deep sleep from which they cannot wake up during the game. Inform players of this during the rules briefing, and the Leopard Cat Prince should be able to explain in game if asked that he's enchanted them and they don't need to wake up. If possible, it's a good idea to have copies of the sheets for the absent characters available, so that players can read some of the absent characters' memories using the kaleidoscope glasses.

Intended Game Plot

The PCs wake up and are prompted by their initial character sheets to search game space for clues about the murder of Lion's Jaw. The GM takes on the role of the Leopard Cat Prince, as described in the next section. When a PC presents a clue to the Leopard Cat Prince, the Leopard Cat Prince gives them permission to claim their own Memory A envelope. Memory A envelopes provide each character with 3 role playing tasks they can complete in order to claim their envelopes for Memories B, C, and D. (Players are trusted to not open envelopes without fulfilling their corresponding tasks.) PCs may also try to earn additional boons in the form of permission to claim Memory envelopes they haven't completed the corresponding task for, or use of the kaleidoscope glasses (see the In the Hall of the Bandit King Rules Guide section on the kaleidoscope glasses). With all of the PCs' memories recovered, the PCs should understand that all of them conspired together to commit the murder. The PCs are still free to decide among

themselves what story they're going to present to the Leopard Cat Prince. They can do this either when the group agrees they're ready or about 10 minutes before the time allotted for the game is over.

Information to Know While Running the Game

- Some players may have trouble finding clues to offer in exchange for their Memory A envelope, which will hold them back from progressing with their other memories. When most players have obtained their Memory A envelopes, the GM playing the Leopard Cat Prince should look out for anyone lagging behind for too long and try to help them progress by offering them their envelope in exchange for any ideas they may have about the mystery. We recommend erring on the side of not letting people get stuck over being strict with what constitutes a clue.
- The correct solution for the Puzzle Box item envelope is for the player to just go ahead and open the envelope.
- The characters have the following special combat styles which can also be used to open envelopes:

Style	Characters
Wins ties on rock	Tiger's Eye, Dragon's Mane, Dog's Snout
Wins ties on paper	Rat's Tail, Snake Tongue, Horse's Hair
Wins ties on scissors	Rabbit Foot, Ram's Horn, Boar's Head

- Ox's Back, Monkey Fingers, and Chicken Legs have unique combat styles that can't be used to open envelopes. See their character sheets for details.

The Murder Plot

The plot to murder Lion's Jaw was originally conceived by Tiger's Eye and Dog's Snout. It isn't established in the character sheets who exactly told each member of the gang about the plot, but all of them agreed to participate. Ox's Back brought ingredients for the poison and antidote to the gang's base with the rest of their wares. Rat's Tail purchased these ingredients using the gang's funds and hid the transaction in their ledgers. Horse's Hair used their medicinal knowledge to brew the poison and the antidote. Boar's Head put the poison in the wine that would be served at the high table, and the antidote in a dish of bitter herbs they knew Lion would refuse to eat. Ram's Horn decided to treat the killing as a sacrifice in order to earn the Leopard Cat Prince's favor for the endeavor, and attached a ritual string to Lion's boot for this purpose. During the feast, Snake Tongue, Dragon's Mane, Tiger's Eye, and Rabbit Foot sat at the high table close to Lion's Jaw and knowingly consumed the poisoned wine along with the antidote, to prevent Lion's suspicions (Snake Tongue additionally was immune to the poison even without the antidote). Chicken Legs served the poisoned wine to the high table, while Monkey Fingers encouraged Lion to drink as much as possible by proposing toasts and such. The poison works by gradually shutting down the body's functions. Eventually Lion's Jaw

realized something was wrong and attempted to rise from his seat and draw his sword, but he was already too physically weakened to fight, so he was unsuccessful.

GM NPC: The Leopard Cat Prince

You are the Leopard Cat Prince, the patron god of bandits, thieves, cats, forsaken lovers, and other lawless mortals who look to you for aid. You find your worshipers' grand exploits and downfalls all extremely amusing, and you're happy to tip the scales in their favor when they offer you appealing treasures and further entertainment. This is probably why you remain as popular as you do despite your reputation as a capricious and heartless deity.

On this particular evening you were invited to the Lion's Jaw gang's feast by an offering made by your Cat's Claw Ram's Horn. You didn't actually need to give your blessing to the murder conspiracy the gang members were enacting against their erstwhile king (it was twelve against one, after all), but you've decided that the way you want to spend the night is gracing these rebellious bandits with your divine presence anyway. Therefore, you've come up with a game to play with them. The game is simple: You've stolen away the gang's memories and asked them to tell you which of them committed the murder. You're truly looking forward to seeing what answers they come up with!

Lion's Jaw was indeed a worshiper of yours, but he wasn't one of your favorites. His late wife Turtle's Shell, on the other hand, was clever and graceful and wore the best scents. Lion's Jaw put an end to her, and all's fair in love and crime, so you're not about to avenge him when you didn't even do that for her. You intend to offer a boon to whichever of the gang members end up confessing to the murder (all of them, if they tell the whole truth), but you aren't going to let them know that right away. They likely assume you intend to punish the culprit, and you'll let them believe that for as long as it doesn't ruin the game. However, you won't outright lie to them about this, that's the boring kind of cheating.

The fun kind of cheating is something you wholly approve of, so you're willing to offer the use of a new magical artifact of yours to any of the bandits who amuse you sufficiently. These are the kaleidoscope glasses, a delightfully odd little treasure you received as an offering from one of this gang's recent raids. You've endowed these eyeglasses with a bit of your power, so now they allow a mortal wearing them to steal a secret from an object, or another person's memory. You take them back after they're used - by divine theft if necessary, but it shouldn't be.

Here are a few choice facts about you that you found in the memories of the Lion's Jaw gang that you thought they ought to remember even after you took the rest of their memories:

1. The Leopard Cat Prince likes to steal the memories of drunkards, collecting nights of revelry and debauchery from across the land. [Known by Boar's Head]
2. Burglars promise the Leopard Cat Prince the rarest object from their spoils so he'll silence their steps in the night. [Known by Rat's Tail]

3. Once the Leopard Cat Prince's lover betrayed him, so he simply stole his own memory of ever having loved. Many songs of lost love entreat him to steal away the pain of heartbreak. [Known by Monkey's Fingers]
4. Once two rival gangs fought over which was truly favored by the Leopard Cat Prince. He favored the one that won. [Known by Dog's Snout]
5. Once a kingsman made a bandit king swear an oath by the Leopard Cat Prince to leave his lands be. The bandit king didn't lift a finger, but by the next new moon the kingsman's manor had burned. [Known by Tiger's Eye]
6. Everyone knows the Leopard Cat Prince has favorites. When someone should by all rights be dead after the stupid shit they pulled but they come out ahead, that's when you know they've got his eye. Of course, if you don't try some stupid shit in the first place, you won't find that out, will you? [Known by Chicken Legs]
7. They say that when the Crown Prince of Heaven was young, he would go hunting in full regalia. One day after a successful hunt he took a nap beneath a tree, and woke up stripped completely naked. That's how the Leopard Cat Prince got his own princely crown. [Known by Snake Tongue]
8. They say stray cats are agents of the Leopard Cat Prince. Treat them well if you want his favor, but be careful they don't find anything you want to keep hidden. [Known by Horse's Hair]
9. The Leopard Cat Prince's favorite offerings are stolen treasures, gemstones, potent herbs, secrets, memories, and the meat of small birds. [Known by Rabbit Foot]
10. Every bandit gang worth its salt has a "priest" of the Leopard Cat Prince, the Cat's Claw. Their job is to determine appropriate timing and offerings to get as much favor as they can for the gang's endeavors. [Known by Ram's Horn]
11. Many bandits claim to have obtained useful secrets by bartering with the Leopard Cat Prince. Some of them are just concealing their sources, but some of them might be telling the truth. [Known by Ox's Back]
12. Some bandit gangs don't keep guard dogs because they believe it offends the Leopard Cat Prince. These gangs haven't been especially successful. [Known by Dragon's Mane]

Leopard Cat Prince Mechanics

Boons you can offer during game:

1. One use of the kaleidoscope glasses
2. A memory you've stolen from the person you've asked
3. Stealing an item held by another character (only offer this if asked specifically - if you do it, you won't hand the item over to the character who asked for the boon. You stole it, not them, so it's yours to do with what you want.)

Payments you find appealing:

1. An accusation of the murder of Lion's Jaw, complete with method and motive (This is what you're really waiting around here for, so you should offer a memory for it if available.)

2. Demonstration of theft (Either witness a character steal something after combat or be shown an item that was stolen. The Leopard Cat Prince can always tell if an item was stolen by its current holder, so ask the player OOC if you're not sure.)
3. Treasures you especially favor (This includes the items Quail Eggs, Perfume Bottle, and Crystal Eyes. The Leopard Cat Prince may choose to accept or reject any other offerings according to his whims.)

Combat Style: You are a god. If anyone fights you, you decide the results of the battle.

Starting the game: When the bandits first wake up, you should address them as the Leopard Cat Prince, informing them that you've arrived at the banquet at their invitation, point out that Lion's Jaw is dead in his seat, and tell them to find the murderer for you. You can also let them know that you've stolen their memories to make this game more entertaining for you.

Poisoned glasses: Some characters may drink from poisoned wine glasses. The glasses on the high table and Lion's glass are poisoned, and the glasses on the lower table are not. If a character who is not Snake, Dragon, Rabbit, or Tiger drinks this poison, tell them: "Your limbs begin to feel heavy, and the light in the room feels brighter, starting to burn your eyes. Your extremities start going numb." The amount of poison wine left in the glasses is not enough to kill any of the PCs, but they will continue experiencing these symptoms and are mechanically unable to win in combat until they consume the antidote (either in the form of the bottled antidote or the bitter herb dish). If Snake, Dragon, Rabbit, or Tiger drinks this poison, they won't experience the effects, because they are either immune to all poison (Snake) or consumed the antidote earlier in the evening (Dragon, Rabbit, Tiger).

Endgame: The game ends either when all the PCs have agreed on the story they're telling the Leopard Cat Prince about the murder, OR roughly 10 minutes before the end of game time, when the Leopard Cat Prince demands an answer.

The Leopard Cat Prince will grant a boon to every character who confesses to the murder, or whoever is held accountable. These boons should be expected to be either specific treasures/secrets, or general blessings on the character's future endeavors, but you can grant other things if requested and it seems narratively appropriate.

PCs may request the resurrection of a dead character, such as Turtle's Shell, as their boon. This is something the Leopard Cat Prince can grant by means of stealing the soul of the dead back from the underworld, but he should be reluctant to do it without several PCs (3 or so) being willing to spend their boon on it, as it's a big task for him. PCs volunteering to join him in the raid should also boost his willingness to grant this boon.