

A PRINTABLE ESCAPE ROOM · AGES 16+

The Blackwood Inheritance



*One will. Five locks. A safe that must be opened before midnight —
and a death that was no accident.*

2-8 players

60-90 min

13 puzzles

Print & play · no locks needed

How to Play

Edmund Blackwood is dead. His will leaves everything to whoever opens his study safe before midnight. You are the distant cousin nobody expected — and you are about to discover that Edmund did not die of a weak heart.

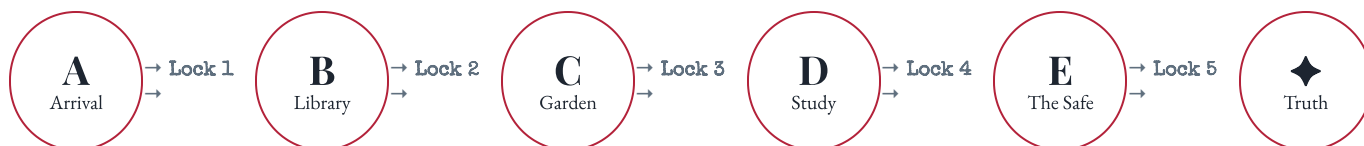
The Lockmaster

One person is the **Lockmaster**. They keep the Lockmaster Key (page near the back) and the sealed envelopes. They may also play, as long as they never peek ahead.

When the players think they have opened a lock, they tell the Lockmaster their answer. Correct? Hand over the next envelope. Wrong? Say “the lock doesn’t budge”.

The Rules

- Start a 60-minute timer when the Will is read aloud.
- Everything you need is on paper. No outside knowledge is needed.
- Pencils, scissors and a little tape are allowed. Crowbars are not.
- Stuck? Ask for a hint. Each puzzle has three: a *Nudge*, a *Push* and the *Answer*.
- When the safe opens, the clock stops — but the game does not. Solve the murder to win.



Lockmaster Setup (15 minutes)

Print every page single-sided. Colour looks best, but every puzzle works in black & white. Cut out the envelope labels on the next page and stick them onto six envelopes (or folded sheets).

Envelope	Put inside	Opened by
A • Arrival	The Will • The Heirs (character cards) • A Note from Mr. Graves • one Lock Sheet	Start of game
B • The Library	Edmund's Mirror Note • The Library Window • The Library Shelf	Lock 1
C • The Garden	Seed Catalogue (word search) • The Shed Door • Garden Plan	Lock 2
D • The Study	Postcard pieces (cut them apart first!) • The Chronicle • Police Photograph	Lock 3
E • The Safe	Inspector's Letter • Tuesday Afternoon • Police Report • Statements • Letters Found in the Safe • The Sealed Letter • Accusation Form	Lock 4
♦ The Truth	Epilogue • Certificate	Lock 5

Atmosphere (optional): dim the lights, light a candle, put a clock where everyone can hear it tick, and play something with a piano in it. Dress code: funeral black.

Bigger group? Print one full set per team of up to 4 and race. The first team to name the killer wins the estate.

Envelope Labels

Cut along the dashed lines.

A Arrival Open at once A	B Envelope B Opened by Lock 1 B
C Envelope C Opened by Lock 2 C	D Envelope D Opened by Lock 3 D
E Envelope E Opened by Lock 4 E	◆ The Truth Opened by Lock 5 ◆

Lock Sheet

Write your answers here, then tell the Lockmaster.

1

The First Door

Which room holds the way forward? (a word)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

2

The Desk Drawer

Three digits

--	--	--

3

The Padlock

A word

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

4

The Study Safe

Dial one: a year · Dial two: a time (12-hour clock)

				—			:		
--	--	--	--	---	--	--	---	--	--

5

The Truth

Name the killer on the Accusation Form

Last Will & Testament

of Edmund Arthur Blackwood · Blackwood Hall, Ashcombe

Let it be known that I, Edmund Arthur Blackwood, being of sound mind if not of sound heart, set down this final testament in my own hand.

In the years since my dear Margaret was taken from me, this house has kept my secrets better than any living person ever could.

By the terms of this will, my entire estate — the Hall, its lands, and everything my study safe contains — shall pass to one heir alone.

Rather than choose between you, I shall let the house choose. Whoever opens the safe in my study before midnight on the day of my funeral inherits everything.

All who enter this race must play fairly. Every door, drawer and dial in Blackwood Hall will answer only to wits, never to crowbars.

Remember that I have always hidden my best ideas at the very start of things.

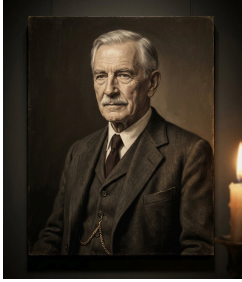
Yours, in life and after it — Edmund A. Blackwood.



Edmund A. Blackwood

Read the Will aloud to start the clock. Then find the room where Edmund's trail begins. → **Lock 1**

The Household



Edmund Blackwood

THE DECEASED · 71

Founder of Blackwood Steel. A weak heart kept him on nightly heart drops. Loved riddles, locks and anything silver. Wrote private notes in mirror-writing.



Victor Blackwood

NEPHEW · 38

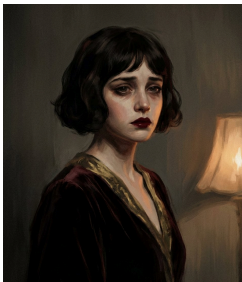
Charming, restless and deep in gambling debt. Lives in London, in rooms above a card club. Quarrelled with Edmund over money last month.



Dr. Lydia Hart

NIECE · 42

The family physician. Practises medicine in the village of Ashcombe, two miles from the Hall. Prescribed Edmund's heart drops herself.



Celeste Moreau

GODDAUGHTER · 29

A singer at a London supper club, where she also lives in a small flat. Edmund paid for her schooling after her mother vanished.



Mr. Graves

THE BUTLER · 64

Has served at Blackwood Hall for thirty years. Not an heir. Keeps the household keys and a very long memory.

BLACKWOOD HALL — HOUSEHOLD NOTICE

Welcome, and my condolences.

The Master left instructions that his rooms are to be locked, and that I am to open nothing for anybody. I apologise in advance for being unhelpful. It is what he wanted.

A few things you may find useful, since the Master was a peculiar man:

- He wrote his private notes backwards, so that nosy servants could not read them. (I read them anyway. It took a mirror.)
- He said he could only ever *see* silver. Everything else in a room, he claimed, was just noise.
- He never finished a book in his life. He left a ribbon in each one he gave up on.
- He took his heart drops at the same minute every night, then went straight to bed.

Dinner will not be served. Nobody is hungry.

— H. Graves, Butler

Edmund's Mirror Note

Found tucked inside the library door.

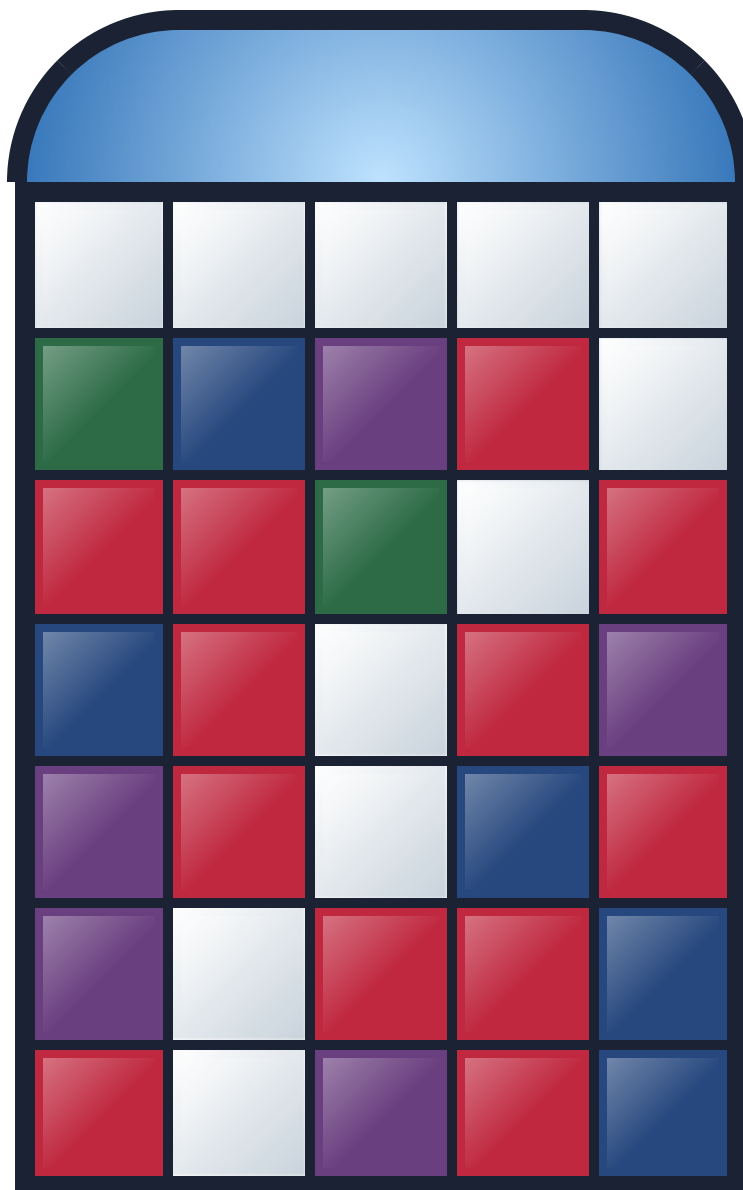
THE FIRST NUMBER IS HOW MANY OF
VICTOR LYDIA AND CELESTE LIVE
IN LONDON



This note gives the **first digit** of the desk drawer. → **Lock 2**

The Library Window

The only window in the library is a panel of old leaded glass. Edmund had it made the year he bought the Hall.



The window hides the **second digit** of the desk drawer. → **Lock 2**

The Library Shelf

One shelf sits at eye level beside the desk — the only shelf without dust.



The shelf hides the **third digit** of the desk drawer. → **Lock 2**

The Seed Catalogue

Edmund’s gardening catalogue, open on a page he had clearly been playing with. Words run in any straight line — even backwards.

S	R	W	L	I	S	A	B	P	N
T	E	O	I	R	I	S	O	R	A
L	V	R	J	R	T	R	E	D	T
I	O	R	A	A	D	F	L	N	R
L	L	A	H	W	S	O	I	E	T
Y	C	Y	O	O	G	M	H	V	Y
T	H	N	E	I	L	T	I	S	Y
E	S	O	R	S	A	L	I	N	U
N	D	A	I	E	A	A	Y	L	E
E	M	Y	H	T	D	S	A	G	E

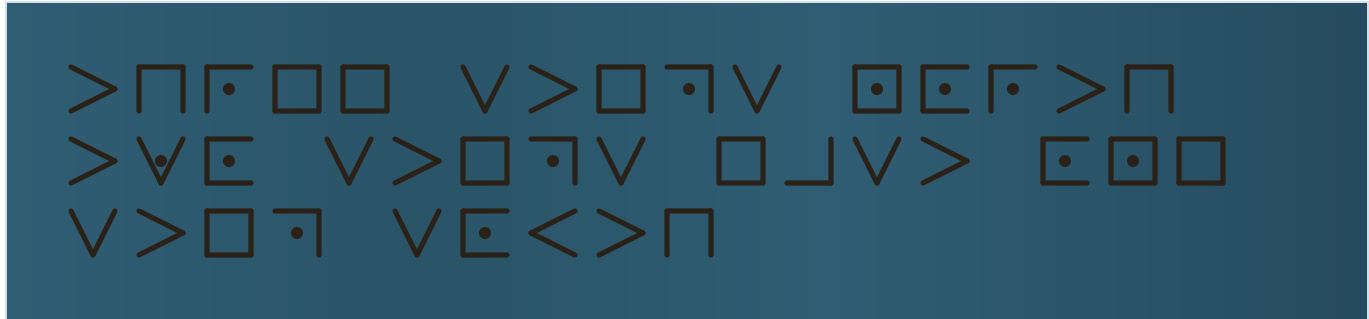
Plants

- Basil
- Clover
- Daisy
- Fern
- Heather
- Holly
- Iris
- Ivy
- Jasmine
- Lily
- Marigold
- Mint
- Rose
- Sage
- Snowdrop
- Thyme
- Yarrow

When every plant is crossed out, read the letters that are left, row by row. **They tell you where to begin.**

The Shed Door

Scratched into the inside of the potting shed door, beside an old gardener’s key chart.



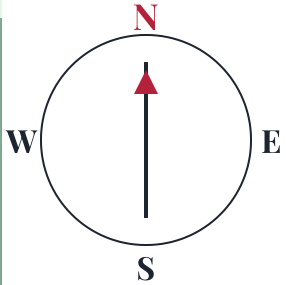
THE GARDENER’S CHART												
												
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
												
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

These are directions. You will need a place to start from. → **Puzzle 7**

Plan of the Walled Garden

Each square on the plan is one step.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Yew Hedge	Rose Arch	Stone Bench	Old Well	Bluebells	Iron Gate	Compost
2	Box Hedge	Herb Bed	Peonies	Birdbath	Lavender	Foxglove	Beehives
3	Greenhouse	Tulips	Fern Walk	Gravel Path	Lilies	Hollyhocks	Potting Shed
4	Orchard	Pond	Marigolds	Sundial	Topiary Swan	Dahlias	Woodpile
5	Apple Tree	Reeds	Rhubarb	Statue of Pan	Violets	Clover Lawn	Tool Rack
6	Pear Tree	Water Pump	Crocus	Gravel Path	Heather	Poppies	Cold Frame
7	Cherry Tree	Summerhouse	Snowdrops	Garden Gate	Thyme	Wild Garlic	Hawthorn



Where the directions end, a plant grows. Its name opens the shed. → **Lock 3**

The Torn Postcard

Lockmaster: cut out the six pieces before sealing Envelope D. Players: tape them back together.

out. of Blackwood · Blackwood Hall ·	at dial of our safe? as that I will think it open it. Nobody ex	ever yours — E. Ashcombe
My darling M., I have set the fi year I lost you, every single time	Mrs. M. E will ever work it	to the of you se in this house ASHCOMBE 13p

The postcard tells you what the safe's **first dial** is. → **Puzzle 9**

The Ashcombe Chronicle

[the date has been torn away]

TRAGEDY AT BLACKWOOD HALL

East wing destroyed by night fire · Mrs. Blackwood lost

Fire tore through the east wing of Blackwood Hall in the early hours of Sunday, claiming the life of Mrs. Margaret Blackwood, wife of the steel magnate Mr. Edmund Blackwood.

The Hall, built in 1852 by the cotton baron Josiah Crane, had stood without serious damage for more than a century. Its east wing was restored only in 1979.

Mr. Blackwood, who founded Blackwood Steel in 1961, was said to be too distraught to speak. A friend

of the family told the Chronicle that the couple had married in the summer of 1962 and would have celebrated their silver wedding — 25 years together — this June.

Firemen from Ashcombe and Lowbridge fought the blaze until dawn. The cause is believed to have been a lamp left burning in the east library. Mr. Blackwood has said the wing will never be rebuilt.

The funeral will be held at St. Anne's. The family asks for privacy.

Work out the year of the fire. That is the **first dial**. → Lock 4

Police Photograph No. 3



Bedroom, west wall. The bedside clock fell and smashed when Mr. Blackwood collapsed. The clock was swept up by the maid before we arrived — but it had been photographed the next morning in the wardrobe mirror, still stopped. This is the only record of the time.

Inspector's note: Mr. Graves confirms the deceased took his heart drops at the same minute every night, and set the second dial of his safe to that very time. He collapsed within a minute of taking them.

The time on the clock is the **second dial** of the safe. → **Lock 4**

ASHCOMBE CONSTABULARY

To whoever opens this safe,

Congratulations — by the terms of the Will, the estate is yours. I am sorry to spoil the moment.

The coroner's report arrived an hour ago. Edmund Blackwood did not die of a weak heart. He was poisoned, and I believe the person responsible is still inside this house tonight.

Mr. Blackwood kept his most private papers in this safe. I have added my own file. Between them, you should be able to tell me **who** killed him, **how**, and **why**.

I will be at the door at midnight. Please have a name for me.

— Inspector R. Holloway



Tuesday Afternoon, 3 o'clock

The inspector has pieced together where each of the household was at three o'clock on Tuesday — the day Edmund died. Each person was in a different place.

1. Graves was not at Blackwood Hall, and not at the card club.
2. Whoever was on the train was a man.
3. Victor has been banned from every society event in London since the scandal, so he was nowhere near the gala.
4. Neither of the women set foot in the card club.
5. Celeste has not been inside Blackwood Hall since the spring.

	Card club	Blackwood Hall	London gala	Train
Victor				
Lydia				
Celeste				
Graves				

Mark ✓ and ✗. You will need this when you read the police report.

CORONER'S & POLICE REPORT — E. A. BLACKWOOD

Time of death	Tuesday night, within a minute of his nightly heart drops
Cause	Poisoning by digitalis — the heart poison found in the foxglove plant
The tea cup	Tested. Clean.
The whisky glass	Tested. Clean.
Heart-drop bottle	Contained a lethal dose of digitalis. The bottle had been emptied and refilled — see the medicine cabinet log.
Medicine cabinet	Kept locked at all times. No sign of forced entry.
Foxglove	Grows in the Hall's walled garden. Leaves recently cut.

Medicine Cabinet Log (kept inside the cabinet door)

Sat 10:45 pm	Drops taken	E.B.
Sun 10:45 pm	Drops taken	E.B.
Mon 10:45 pm	Drops taken	E.B.
Tue 3:10 pm	Bottle refilled — new supply	[torn]
Tue 10:45 pm	—	

Statements

Mr. Graves: “There are only two keys to the medicine cabinet. One is on my ring, and it never leaves me. The other belongs to Dr. Hart, because she prescribes the Master’s drops. Tuesday was my day off.”

Dr. Lydia Hart: “I was at my surgery in Ashcombe all Tuesday afternoon. Ask anyone. I never refill his drops without writing it in the log — look for yourself.”

Victor Blackwood: “Yes, I needed money. Yes, I shouted at the old man. But I was losing at cards in London on Tuesday, and I’ve never had a key to anything in that house.”

Celeste Moreau: “I sang at a charity gala in London on Tuesday. There were three hundred people and a photographer. Edmund was the closest thing to a father I had.”

Somebody refilled the bottle at 3:10 on Tuesday afternoon. Who could open the cabinet — and who was actually at the Hall to do it?

Letters Found in the Safe

Uncle —

Twenty thousand pounds, by the end of the month, or I swear you will regret it. You have more money than God and you won't miss it.

— V.

Edmund,

I don't want your money. I never did. I want the truth about what happened to my mother, and I think you know it. Please — before it's too late.

— C.

E. — The prescription pad you asked about is nothing to worry about. I keep it locked in my bag. Take your drops at the usual time and stop fretting. Your heart can't take it.

— L.

The Sealed Letter

An unsent letter to Edmund’s solicitor, dated Tuesday morning. Mr. Graves says the Master always scrambled important letters the same way: he moved every letter *forward* in the alphabet by the hour at which he took his drops.

WI XSOMO RKC LOOX PYBQSXQ WI ZBOCMBSZDSYXC
KXN COVVSXQ DROW. S CRKVV QY DY DRO ZYVSMO
YX PBSNKI.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Decode the letter to learn **why** Edmund had to die.

Accusation Form

Inspector Holloway is at the door. Fill this in together, then read it to the Lockmaster.

WHO killed Edmund Blackwood?

HOW was it done?

WHY did they do it?

PROOF — which three clues convinced you?

If the name is right, open the envelope marked ♦.

Epilogue



Dr. Lydia Hart did not run. She simply took off her gloves and sat down.

For two years she had been writing false prescriptions in Edmund's name and selling them in London. On Monday, Edmund found the missing pages of her prescription pad. On Tuesday morning he wrote to his solicitor — in his secret code — to say he would go to the police on Friday.

That afternoon, while Graves was away on the train and every other heir was in London, Lydia let herself into the Hall with her own key. She emptied Edmund's heart drops, refilled the bottle with a digitalis tincture made from the foxglove in his own garden, and tore her initials out of the cabinet log. At a quarter to eleven that night, Edmund took his drops as he always did.

Her alibi — “at my surgery all afternoon” — lasted exactly as long as it took you to put the household in its proper places.

Blackwood Hall is yours. Edmund, you suspect, would have been delighted by how you won it.

Hints • Part 1 (Lockmaster only)

Give the Nudge first. Wait a few minutes before the Push. Give the Answer only if the players ask for it.

Puzzle	Nudge	Push	Answer
1 • The Will	Edmund tells you in the Will how he hides things.	“At the very start of things” — look at the first letter of each paragraph.	LIBRARY
2 • Mirror Note	Hold it up to a mirror, or read each word right to left.	It asks how many of Victor, Lydia and Celeste live in London. Check their Household cards.	2 (Victor and Celeste)
3 • Window	Read Mr. Graves’ note again: what could Edmund “see”?	Look only at the silver (clear) panes. Ignore every other colour.	7
4 • Shelf	Some books are different from the rest. Mr. Graves mentioned them.	Take the first letter of each book with a ribbon, left to right.	F-I-V-E → 5
5 • Seed Catalogue	Cross out every plant first. Words go forwards, backwards, up, down and diagonally.	Read only the uncrossed letters, left to right, top row first.	START AT THE SUNDIAL
6 • Shed Door	Each symbol is a letter. The chart shows which shape is which letter; a dot matters.	The first word is THREE.	THREE STEPS NORTH, TWO STEPS EAST, ONE STEP SOUTH
7 • Garden Plan	Start on the Sundial (D4). North is at the top of the plan.	D4 → up three to D1 → right two to F1 → down one.	F2 — FOXGLOVE

Hints · Part 2 (Lockmaster only)

Give the Nudge first. Wait a few minutes before the Push. Give the Answer only if the players ask for it.

Puzzle	Nudge	Push	Answer
8 · Postcard	Match the edges; two pieces are upside down.	The postcard says the first dial is the year Margaret was lost.	"The year I lost you"
9 · Chronicle	The date is torn off, so you must calculate it. Not every year in the article matters.	They married in 1962 and would have had 25 years together this June.	1962 + 25 = 1987
10 · Photograph	Why do the numbers on the clock look strange?	It is a reflection. Flip it back: the short hand is near the X, the long hand on the IX.	10:45
11 · Tuesday	Use clues 2 and 4: who can be at the card club?	Only a man can be at the card club, and Graves can't → Victor. So Graves is on the train.	Victor - card club · Graves - train · Celeste - gala · Lydia - the Hall
12 · Report	The poison was in the drops, not the tea. Who can open the medicine cabinet?	Only Graves and Dr. Hart have keys. Where was each at 3:10 on Tuesday?	Only Lydia had both a key and the chance.
13 · Scaled Letter	Edmund took his drops at 10:45. So he shifted each letter forward by 10.	Move every letter 10 places back: W→M, I→Y ...	MY NIECE HAS BEEN FORGING MY PRESCRIPTIONS ... (his niece = Lydia)

Lockmaster Key (keep hidden!)

Lock	Answer	Then give
1 · The First Door	LIBRARY	Envelope B
2 · Library Desk Drawer	2 7 5	Envelope C
3 · Garden Shed	FOXGLOVE	Envelope D
4 · Study Safe	1987 — 10:45 (also accept 22:45)	Envelope E · stop the timer
5 · The Truth	DR. LYDIA HART	Envelope ♦

For Lock 5, a full win needs all three:

Who: Dr. Lydia Hart. **How:** she refilled the heart-drop bottle with digitalis (foxglove) at 3:10 pm on Tuesday. **Why:** Edmund had discovered she was forging prescriptions and was going to the police on Friday.

Proof: only she and Graves had cabinet keys · the logic grid puts Graves on the train and Lydia at the Hall at 3 pm · the decoded letter gives the motive. (Her statement “at my surgery all afternoon” is a lie.)

Scoring (optional): name correct = you inherit. Name + method + motive = *Master Detective*. Finished the safe in under 45 minutes = add a star to the certificate.

BLACKWOOD HALL · ASHCOMBE

Heir of Blackwood

This certifies that

opened the safe, unmasked a murderer,
and inherited the Blackwood estate

EB

Time on the clock

Date

Signed on behalf of the late Edmund A. Blackwood — H. Graves, Butler

YOU ARE CORDIALLY SUMMONED

The Reading of the Will

The late **Edmund A. Blackwood** requests your presence at Blackwood Hall for the reading of his final testament.

Date _____ Time _____

Place _____

Dress: funeral black. Bring your wits. Leave your crowbar at home.

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