



Jake Izakson has died and the reading of his last will and testament will effect family and business associates. Who wins and who loses? This packet can be used as a script or game. Your host packet contains the following to help you set up & run:

Page 1: Overview, suggestions

Page 2&3: Outline, casting

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Pages 34-46 : Mr. Z's question list and dossier

Page 47: Little Joe's arrest information (to be given out to Ruby, Simone, Judy between scenes 3 and 4)

Pages 48-52: optional extension ideas for Bible classes, youth groups, retreats, etc. (discussions starters, object lessons, free internet games etc.)

THEMES: Forgiveness, family relationships

People are more important than property

Giving is good, forgiving is better

With God, all things are possible.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Genesis 25-50, Proverbs 21: 9 & 19, 1 John 3: 11, 1 John 4:20-21, Matthew 18:21-22, Romans 13:8-10, Matt. 5: 43-48, Romans 10:12, 2 Peter 1:7, Matthew 5: 21-26, Luke 6: 27, Romans 12:10-21.

If you want to keep the original copy of this game intact, simply save the entire file (word or pdf) with your name added at the end. Then you will have both the original version and your custom version.

The flowing helpful notes contain spoilers. Whoever reads further and organizes the event will NOT experience the Aha! moments of discovering who represents whom.

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Menu/Food/set up

Simple snacks to a buffet all work. It is possible to have dinner when Ruby indicates it is ready but delay dessert until you want the “volunteer jurors” to deliberate.

Arrange chairs or tables and chairs so the characters playing the family members sit in a middle section. There should also be “left” and “right” sections so when Mr. Z separates the “family” (right side) and the “jurors” (left side), everyone can tell which group is which.

Outline

Prior to play decide if this will be a stand-alone party, or segue into something else. (Lesson on forgiveness, introduction for a retreat, etc.)

Set the time, date, location and invite guests. Decide what if anything you will pass out ahead of time. If you are using this as the introduction for a retreat or large group, it is helpful to play it through ahead of time with the main characters before presenting to others.

Assemble the group, handing out dossiers if you have not already done so.

Explain the procedures for the activity; hand out props, costumes & nametags if you are going to use them.

Encourage everyone to stay in character during dinner, snacks and when they mingle.

Hand out scene one. Allow everyone a chance to skim it, then have everyone read their lines in character to introduce the scenario.

Break to eat and interact informally.

Scene 2: rules, etc.

Scene 3: Questioning of characters

Break (dessert? Hand out Little Joe’s arrest information to Ruby, Simone, Judy. Give them time to get ready to present the story in scene 4).

Scene 4: the secret revealed Allow characters time to role play their reaction to the scene and Mr. Z/Joe’s questions.

Scene 5: Hand out scriptures for characters to read. Allow any additional roleplaying to conclude the game.

Casting

Minimum: 7; maximum scripted speaking roles: 17; limitless opportunities for others as volunteer jurors, guests at the memorial dinner, former friends and associates of Jake’s, third cousin’s twice removed....

Little Joe (posing as the attorney Mr. Z) has the largest and hardest role since he directs the action in the game. Ruby doubles as the hostess. If this is used as a youth group activity, consider having those two roles played by adult leaders. To keep the Leanne character “in character” have someone else assist her walking, finding a seat, etc. since she is legally blind.

If you are doing this with a large group, you may want to let the major characters become familiar with the Biblical characters and account of Jacob and his family found in Genesis 25-50. They will need to do this to be comfortable with some improv if you allow questions from the volunteer jurors. It does somewhat diminish the Aha moments.

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Below are brief snapshots of each major character. See individual character sheets for more in-depth information.

Major characters: (Biblical counterpart) & brief description

Ruby: (Reuben) Jake's firstborn, lawyer; organized, responsible, takes the lead

Simone: (Simon) Hot tempered second daughter

Judy: (Judah) Third daughter. Shop 'til you drop adherent

Red: (Esau) Jake's twin brother; rancher, owner(?) of the Bonanza Ranch

Leanne: (Leah) Jake's bitter first wife, legally blind

Larry: (Laban) Leanne's conniving father, owner of the Paddan Paddocks

Possible minor characters: (Jake's other children -most have gender choices)

These are color coded to correspond with what Mr. Z asks each character. If a character is NOT used, the questions in the color corresponding with that character are asked of another character.

Danielle/Danny (Dan)

Gabriella/Gabriel: (Gad)

Ashleigh/Ashton (Asher)

Zack/Zeba (Zebulun)

Jean/Gene (Levi)

Izzy/Isabel (Issachar)

Benny/Jamari (Benjamin)

Natalie//Nate (Naphtali)

Assigning Character Dossiers

The seven main characters have character dossiers. If you wish to include any of Jake's other children note the color coding above. The other sibling characters are color coded to correspond with what can be removed from the major character's dossiers and given to them. Each minor character has a separate dossier. Before running off the major character's dossiers, simply delete the colored portion (which will be done by the minor character).

Optional costumes

Leanne – flashy sunglasses

Mr. Z – business suit, keffiyeh/kufiy, briefcase and papers

Red – western rancher look

Judy – She's a shop-a-holic so anything trendy.

Simone – anything rebellious from hippie to biker chick to ????

Larry – cane

Ruby – conservative, subdued

Gene/Jean – Levi jeans

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The Script

Scene 1: Jake's dead

Ruby welcomes everyone

RUBY: Thank you for coming to this dinner to mark my father's passing. We are grieved at his loss. *Larry snorts in derision* and I'm pleased to see so many of you, his friends, neighbors, business associates and all here tonight. I think I'll have the close family go ahead and introduce themselves while the caterer puts the final touches on. I'm Ruby Izakson, his oldest. Stormy, I mean Simone, you're next.

SIMONE: I'm Simone. Jake was my father, in the biological sense, if ya know what I mean. He was good with horses. That's all I got to say. I just can't say nothing else if I gotta say something nice. Judy, you're next

JUDY: I'm Judy. I will say this for daddy. He was a good provider financially. He knew how to make money. He .. I guess that's all I got to say. Mom, it's your turn

LEANNE: *(sarcastically)* Mother? Now you decide to call me "mother"? *(Judy cringes but Simone bristles)*

LEANNE: *(Too calmly and too nicely)* Jake was a spitfire of a man. Ambitious, good looking, charming. He had a head for business, *(Starting to sound spiteful)* a wandering eye and *(bitterly)* an icicle instead of a heart.

RUBY: *(quiet aside)* Mom, positive. Keep it positive.

LEANNE: *(angrily)* I'm positive he was good at taking what somebody else had worked hard for. I was his first wife and I can tell you, he treated me badly

RUBY: *(trying to dampen her anger)* We're going to say nice things mom, just nice things.

LARRY: *(Standing up)* Well I ain't family and I say Jake was a low down, two-bit cheating scum of the earth! He treated your mother, my daughter like dirt. I'm glad he's dead. He ruined me and my family.

RUBY: *(pleading and upset at the turn of events)* Granddaddy, please. Not in front of all these folks! Besides, you're likely to blow a vein. Please. *(Larry sits)* Uncle Red.

ED: I was Jake's older brother. The name's Edward Izakson, but most folks just call me Red. Me and Jake were twins but our parents and a love of horses was about all we had in common. We were as different as night and day.

RUBY: Ben, honey, come on. It's your turn. Don't be shy.

BEN: I'm Ben, the youngest. My dad was both father and mother to me. He tried hard. I think down deep he was a really lonely man. *(Shrugs, looks to his sisters for direction briefly, then sits down)*

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RUBY: Ummm, we're not quite ready to eat. I guess I could say a bit more about my dad. My father was a smart man, a shrewd man. He expected a lot from everyone but especially his kids. He wanted us to all grow up to be somebody. He told me I could be a lawyer if I worked at it and he was right. He believed in me even when I didn't believe in myself. My dad taught me the value of hard work and persistence. *(Red snorts and mumbles)* Whatever else people might say, dad was a hard worker.

RED: When he was a kid all he did was sit on his butt and watch reruns of Bonanza with mom. "Sept for the time he got me some chili. I'd been riding hard all day, rounding up the stock and had me a hunger the size of Texas. Ma said I was too dirty to come in the house, just set on the porch and Jake fetched me some vittles. The little rascal wouldn't give me any grub less I promised to give him my inheritance. When I finally wrangled a bowl of chili off him it was so hot, I about burst into flames. Then he says, "I'll get ya some water but ya gotta cross your heart and hope to die promise I get your half of the ranch." *(Ruby clears her throat and gives him "the eye". Red notices and says something other than what he intended)* Jake was a big kidder.

RUBY: *(trying to divert attention away from RED)* I see the food is ready.

RED: *(aside)* I sure hope it ain't chili. *(Guffaws at his own joke)*

RUBY: I'm going to ask _____ to bless the food. After we eat, I have an announcement to make about the reading of the will. *(Prayer)*

EAT AND INTERACT

Scene 2- choosing jurors, rules

Ruby: I told you all that I was Ruby, the oldest. I didn't tell you I'm the lawyer for my dad and his Stairway to Heaven Stables and his various corporations. I was his power of attorney. I didn't tell you either that there are some legal problems. There's another attorney coming in, *(looking at paper and having difficulty pronouncing the name)* a Mr. Zaphenath-Paneah. I have no idea why daddy made him executer of the estate. I didn't even know he was one of our lawyers until a couple hours ago.

He may have to call on some of you as witnesses and he says he may have to appoint some of you as jurors. I hope you don't mind. You see, there may be problems with daddy's will. *(struggling to correctly pronounce)* Mr. Zaff en .. Zaff, *(resigning herself to using an abbreviation)* Mr. Z. is going figure out what's going happen with the estate.

(The family explodes in character, everyone spouting off what they think they're entitled to: some or all of it. Chaos, name calling and squabbling. MR. Z enters, looks at the family disaster and begins calmly to open his briefcase and arrange papers. One by one, starting with Ruby, characters realize he's present, infer his identity and point to inform others. LEANNE, because of her poor vision, is the last to realize this and only when LARRY holds on to her arms and speaks loudly into her ear, does she understand why the noise has died down.

The family straightens their clothing, composes themselves and are seated.)

MR. Z: Good day. I am Mr. Zaphenath. I was appointed executor of Jake Izakson's estate. I am glad a good number of you are assembled. I am sure you all will be an invaluable part of these proceedings.

I will begin by asking all family members or anyone who has legal proceedings with the estate or anyone who thinks they might be entitled to something from the estate of Jake Izakson to be seated to my right.

I would ask for volunteers from those of you who are NOT seated to my right to act as what you Americans might call "jurors". There is no exact English equivalent for the Egyptian term. The concept is simple however. These volunteers will function as elders of a tribe or elders of a village who are called upon to dispense both wisdom and justice.

Anyone willing to volunteer as such, please move to the seats on my left. Know that if at any time you wish to ... shall we say "unvolunteer" ... you may do so by returning to the center section. I must ask however that you remain here until our business is conducted.

(MR. Z waits until everyone has been appropriately seated. He then reads the will and LEAANE's lawsuit against the estate. FAMILY MEMBERS react in character. MR. Z once again waits calmly until FAMILY MEMBERS are seated and attentive.)

MR. Z: *(addressing the "volunteer" jury)* A very wealthy man has died. A number of his associates and relatives are eager to receive his property. Inheritances are at stake. Tonight you may encounter tempers, threats, favoritism, deceit, betrayal. Not everything is as it appears on the surface. People may not be who they appear to be. Thinking outside the box is encouraged.

The Bibles on that table may certainly be used. The Bible has the answers for all the dilemmas in life, whether they appear trivial or of utmost importance.

Jake's relatives can and may lie to you and each other. Your job is to uncover who is who and what is what. Some evidence will present itself over and over. Some evidence may be presented only once and may be hard to catch. Keep careful watch. Listen closely. Feel free to take notes. Once again, the Bibles are there for you to use. You can't go wrong with the word of God.

After we get the inheritance squared away and figure out any mysteries we encounter, you will have the opportunity in 25 words or less to sum up any lessons learned. I'd like to take a look at what you have to say, and with your permission share it aloud.

So let's recap. Jake has entrusted us to settle an estate. With many conflicting interests and opinions of who should get what, we have our work cut out for us.

Scene 3: The questions

Mr. Z reads the will and Leanne's lawsuit. (see official papers and Mr. Z's dossier. He then begins questioning those assembled. At whatever point he decides, AFTER questioning RED, he should read the Summary of Findings regarding the Bonanza Ranch.

Scene 4: the secret revealed

MR. Z: Please let us reconvene. *(when everyone is settled)*. Although I'm sure everyone understand the family history and dynamics, there seems to be one piece of missing information we need to discuss.

SIMONE: *(angrily)* There's nothing to discuss. Case closed.

RUBY: *(more dignified)* There are some things that should be laid to rest with our daddy. *(starting to break down under the years of strain)* No sense bringing them up now.

SIMONE: That's right. The past is the past.

JUDY: *(crying)* It's all my fault. I'm so sorry. I should have just ignored his little barbs and *(sobs into her hands, unable to continue)*

Mr. Z: I believe it happened during your visit to the necropolis of Tuna el-Gebel, with its tombs and catacombs of sacred baboon and ibis burials dating to the Greco-Roman period. Judy, what did Little Joe threaten to do?

JUDY: I skipped seeing the stupid old tombs to shop. I bought this stupid little thing.... *(Starts to cry again)* but Little Joe was going to tell daddy and get me in trouble.

RUBY: I intervened when the fight got serious and worked out a compromise that if the trinket was returned for a refund, Little Joe would be quiet about the whole thing.

SIMONE: But I decided it was time to shut Little Joe up and keep him from ruining the rest of the trip. I came up with a plan and everyone else went along with it. I would tell a museum guard that Little Joe had taken a pot from a display, hoping to get him in trouble until the authorities checked him over and found nothing. I figured the scare would keep him in line the rest of the trip.

RUBY: We had no idea how seriously officials protected antiquities.

SIMONE: Things did not go as planned. Joseph was arrested and hauled off. I blew up and nearly got myself arrested as well.

JUDY: I cried. I felt so powerless. I never meant it to go that far.

SIMONE: *(comforting her)* None of us did.

RUBY: When I got back it was chaotic. Everyone stunned. Judy was sitting on the floor, sobbing. I had to

talk the authorities out of arresting Simone. I managed to smooth things over so Simone got off on a warning. We spent all day trying to track down Little Joe or where he was being held, but all we found were dead ends.

JUDY: We dreaded calling home and telling daddy but we were over our heads.

SIMONE: Before calling father, we all agreed to a pact of silence regarding our involvement. Some of the siblings only knew part of the story anyway.

RUBY: Daddy immediately hired a private investigator, called the governors of several states where he did business and contacted the American Embassy. He did everything in his power to locate Little Joe but no trace of him was ever found.

JUDY: He disappeared off the face of the earth. Why did I ever go along with it?

SIMONE: *(softly, very out of character)* It broke daddy like you break a horse. He had no spirit left.

JUDY: He never got over it. It was like he died inside but kept sleepwalking or something.

SIMONE: I wish I had never thought of such a thing? Why do I always blow up? If I could just tell him and father how sorry I am.

If you are going to have the audience decide how the estate should be divided, do so now. After these are collected

RUBY: If only Little Joe and daddy were still here. If only they could forgive us for what we did. *(several beats of silence while other siblings agree silently)*

Mr. Z: I have. Daddy has too.

The siblings stare, uncomprehending, at Mr. Z. He removes his head covering. One by one they start to recognize him, silently dropping their jaws in disbelief and hope.

Mr. Z: I am Joseph! Daddy is still alive. He'll be joining us shortly I am your brother Joseph. Do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves about what happened. It was part of God's plan and we know that all things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to his purpose. So then, it was not you but God.

And God has taught me these things: Giving is good, forgiving is better. Sometimes it is best to forgive, forget and move on. People are more important than property.

Everyone reacts, first afraid, then happy, JOE takes the initiative to hug all the siblings. He can relate parts of the story below, known only to himself:

The unscrupulous guard took the opportunity to steal the artifact himself. It would sell well on the black market and the stupid American boy would be blamed. Unfortunately for Little Joe, he looked very much like a terrorist the authorities were hunting. Authorities ignored his denials and he simply “disappeared”.

He ended up sharing a cell with an American spy, Bobby Baker, who had infiltrated the terrorist group and had been arrested as part of his cover. Though Baker believed Little Joe’s story, and was released, he did not act to get Joe released for some time. When Joe was finally released, he became the property of the United States Intelligence community and could not be allowed to return home because he could identify Bobby Baker.

Joe resigned himself to serve his country as best he could and worked his way up until he became a Bureau Chief in the Middle East. After 20 years of distinguished service, he retired and planned to finally return home. But he couldn’t just show up on the doorstep. It could give somebody a heart attack.

His years in the Middle East had had an unexpected impact on him as well. All the senseless fighting, hostility and bitterness over things that occurred hundreds of years earlier made no sense to him. Neither did all the turmoil in his family.

He personally had amassed a portfolio worth millions but it meant nothing if peace, love and joy continued to elude his family. After speaking with Jake, and sharing his plan for everyone to reconcile, Jake agreed. (after he got over the shock of you being alive) Joe arranged for his father’s apparent “death” and the reading of the will.

JOE: As a believer in Jesus Christ who has forgiven my sins, I forgive you all. If Jesus could forgive me for what I’ve done, if he forgave those who tortured and killed him, how could I not forgive you? Nothing is impossible with God.

But will you forgive each other?

Characters can be given time to react and respond.

Scriptures for ending Jake

RED: Matthew 18:21-22 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

SIMONE: 1 John 4: 20-21 If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

JUDY: Romans 13:8-10 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in

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this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

RUBY: 1 John 3: 11 This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.

LARRY: 1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

LEANNE: Proverbs 21: 9 & 19 Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife. Better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and ill-tempered wife.

JOSEPH: Matt. 5: 43-48 You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?

Scriptures for minor characters

Romans 10: 12 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

2 Peter 1:7 Add to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

Matthew 5: 21-26 "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.

"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

"Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Luke 6: 27-36 "But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is

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merciful.

Romans 12:10-21 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;

if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head. "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

The law offices of
Zaphenath-Paneah
New York, London, Cairo
The Last Will and Testimony of
Jake Izakson

I, Jake Izakson, being of sound mind and body, do hereby leave my estate to my son Joseph Izakson, only child of my beloved wife, Raquel.

In the event this is not possible I ask that my attorney convene an assemblage of people, unrelated to me or my family, but who are believers in the Lord God Almighty, to decide how my estate should be divided. I have made some poor choices in the past; perhaps they can straighten out the mess I have made of my family. I ask that these people assembled listen to what my family has to say and then do the right thing.

SUMMARY of LEANNE'S SUIT

In brief, the plaintiff, Leanne Izakson, asks the court to reconsider her terms of divorce from Jake Izakson, specifically that she be given a settlement equal to 10% of his estate. These monies would compensate her for back alimony, child support and the mentally cruelty of former husband, Jake Izakson.

SUMMARY of FINDINGS
in the Matter of Ownership of the BONANZA RANCH

The court hereby finds that in the matter of the ownership of the Bonanza Ranch, based upon witness's signed affidavits, Edward Red Izakson did indeed relinquish ownership of said ranch to his brother Jake Izakson.

Character dossiers

WHO YOU ARE: Ruby

How you act; what you know:

As a firstborn you are organized, responsible and hard working. The family business makes you not only well off but part of the elite “horsey” crowd. You pride yourself on accomplishments rather than appearances. You usually remain calm when other lose their heads. You try to keep the peace between everyone, an impossible task. You feel responsible for “the sibling’s secret” though you were not present when it occurred. If you had been, it would not have happened. The guilt will some day break you.

You are primarily responsible for getting the information in black out into the open. Someone else may be responsible for the information in other colors. However, if no one else brings up the colored information, you must do so.

What are your siblings like:

Simone (nicknamed Storm) is the rebellious one. She recognizes the consequences of her actions but does what she wants anyway. When Simone was 14 she decided to sneak out one night and take daddy’s mustang convertible for a spin with a few friends. Little Joe told and she got grounded for a year and a half. From there on out it was war between Little Joe and his half-siblings. Another time she hijacked dad’s dump truck and used it to shove some kid’s car through his living room. She spent the night in jail for that one.

What is Judy like:

Judy is irresponsible; never thinking before she acts. She pitched a fit to dad when Joe got the same allowance as her even though she knew dad would only yell at her. Her philosophy is that there is no problem that can’t be fixed with a credit card and a mall. They despised Little Joe. Joe was smart as a whip, he knew it and he made sure Ruby and everyone else knew it.

What was Joe like as a kid:

Joe was a spoiled brat. Your daddy was enamored with the TV show Bonanza (said it reminded him of home) and insisted they name him Hoss, Adam or Little Joe. When he wasn’t bragging he’s tattling. Simone got the worst of it. Little Joe was obviously dad’s favorite and Judy was furious when he got the same allowance as she did. He was after all, 5 years younger.

How did your parents meet:

Your parents met when Jake came to work for your grandfather Larry at the Paddan Paddocks Stables. Your mom, the only child, fell in love with him and they married. Your mom always wished you had been a boy and sometimes even hints that if one of you had been male, Jake wouldn’t have left her. Other times she blames herself – because she is so ugly.

Your parents divorced when you were in elementary school and your father remarried. Sometimes you envied your step-mom, Raquel with her vacant beautiful face - too brain dead to worry about anything. Otherwise she

is alright, which is good since you spend every other weekend and summers with them. As you got older you realized your mother, Leanne, was bitter woman and it was probably her inner not outer self that drove your daddy away.

Raquel had two sons Little Joe and Ben (Thank God he didn't name anyone Hoss) Ben was born on a cruise and during rough seas. Raquel went into early labor. There were complications and the doctor on board failed to save Raquel.

What was your father like:

Hard worker, mostly. Which is why his horses have won several Kentucky Derbies and he became an independently wealthy breeder.

How did you get along with your father:

You never quite measured up, probably because you were a girl. You think he wished you 3 girls had been 3 sons so he could have his Bonanza of Adam, Hoss and Little Joe.

Where is Joseph:

Presumed dead by the court system.

What do you mean "presumed dead"

The three older girls were planning to take what they considered a well deserved cruise for their graduation from college. You had graduated summa cum laude with a law degree and passed the bar on the first try. Simone had a Bachelor's in graphic design. Barely squeaking out a C- average, Judy got her associate's degree in Fiber Arts (The 21st century equivalent of basket weaving) They'd cruise the Mediterranean for two weeks. Dad was adamant. No cruises. They were bad luck.

Instead he arranged for an "educational trip" for the whole family - spending two weeks on an archeological dig in the Middle East. You promised to learn ancient history and watch out for the others. Then dad decided to send Little Joe since he'd graduated high school at 16. You always wondered if Joe deliberately did it so he could tag along and tattle if anyone got out of line.

Then Little Joe disappeared because of your neglect of duty. (You all swore yourselves to never reveal what actually happened and let Jake think he was abducted randomly) Jake wasted no time. He hired private investigators, contacted the embassy and called the governor of Texas. But it was no use. Little Joe was never found and you all kept your guilty secret.

Did Little Joe's disappearance ruin things between you and your dad:

Yes and no. We all assumed positions in Jake's Stairway to Heaven Stables and the offshoot corporations. Your mother, not understanding your guilt prompted this, misunderstood and claimed they had abandoned her.

Jake was devastated by what he assumed was the death of his favorite son. He made you his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with some help from Simone. Judy shopped. Out of guilt they all treated Ben like gold, as if this could

make up for their deeds.

How do you and Leanne get along:

You tried to maintain a good relationship but it's nearly impossible. You have tried to help Larry with his business but he rejects your advice and throws away even more money on get rich schemes that never pan out. (Leanne's father had made several bad business decisions after Jake left and slowly the Stables became worth less and less. Larry had bet everything he owned on a horse race trying to recoup his losses. Instead he lost it all and ran up huge debts Leanne is worried she'll no inheritance at all, just bills and more bills Bitter, she tried to hire you to renegotiate her divorce decree to get some of Jake's wealth. When you said you couldn't do that, she screamed at you, called you traitor and hired other legal counsel. The process is not going well for Leanne.

What happened recently:

You found out your POA was useless as soon as your father died. Until Jake's will is executed you are powerless to run the stables and have no assurance that you are named heir in the will. You don't know what to do to make things right with everyone.

You will bring up the point, when the will is read, that it is old. It was made before, Benny/Jamari was born because it states Little Joe is the only child Jake and Rachel had together. Argue that had Jake updated his will, Benny/Jamari would have been included. Since Benny/Jamari is underage, you should be appointed guardian of Benny/Jamari until (s)he reaches the age of majority.

WHO YOU ARE: Simone

How you act; what you know:

The second rebellious daughter of wealthy, divorced parents. Your nickname is Stormy and you live up to it. You got in fights at school. The fights usually got your parent's attention for a few days. One time you got mad at somebody for talking bad about Judy. That night you drove over to their house in your dad's dump truck. You shoved the kid's car through their living room window. You went to jail overnight. You got everybody's attention for that. Your motto is "shoot first, there's no time for questions or thought".

WHO YOU LIKE:

Your baby brother, Ben. To make up for what you did to Joe you have gone overboard loving Ben. You delighted in helping him learn to walk, talk, and ride a horse. There isn't anything you wouldn't do for your baby brother Ben.

WHO YOU DON'T LIKE:

Joe, your younger brother. When you were 14 you decided to sneak out one night and take daddy's mustang convertible for a spin with a few friends. Little Joe told and you got grounded for a year and a half. From there on out it was war.

What do you do for a living:

All the children assumed positions in Jake's huge Stairway to Heaven Stables and offshoot corporations. (Your mother, not understanding guilt over Little Joe prompted this, misunderstood and claimed all of you had abandoned her. You two have not spoken since.

How does the family get along:

Your parents divorced when you were young. They were so busy fighting and trying to outdo each other you would have been totally ignored if you had not forced them to pay attention to you. You threw tantrums in public. You got into trouble at school. You got in trouble with the law.

You spent every other weekend and summers with your dad and step mother Raquel. When Raquel died giving birth to Ben your father threw himself into his work and ignored you more than ever.

What happened on the educational vacation:

You and your sisters were planning to take a well-deserved cruise for graduations from college. Ruby had graduated summa cum laude with a law degree. She still foolishly believed someday she'd get her dad's approval. You had a Bachelor's in graphic arts using computers. Judy barely squeaked out a C- average in an associate's degree in Fiber Arts (The 21st century equivalent of basket weaving) It had taken her three years. You'd cruise the Mediterranean for two weeks. Dad refused saying cruises were bad luck. Instead he decided you'd go on some stupid educational thing with all the kids including stupid tattletale Little Joe.

(One day, Joe began teasing Judy about taking three years to get a two year degree. You concocted a great plan of revenge when brown noser Ruby wasn't around to stop it.

What happened when Little Joe went missing?

When Jake found out his favorite son was missing, he wasted no time. He hired private investigators, contacted the embassy and called the governor of Texas. But it was no use. Little Joe was never found and you all you're your guilty secret. Jake was devastated by what he assumed was the death of his favorite son. He made Ruby his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with your help. Judy just shopped.

What do you know about your grandfather Larry?

Leanne's father had made several bad business decisions after Jake left and slowly the Paddan Paddock Stables became worth less and less. Larry had bet everything he owned on a horse race trying to recoup his losses. Instead he lost it all and ran up huge debts Leanne knew nothing about and she's afraid she'll have no inheritance at all, just bills and more bills Bitter, she hired attorneys to renegotiate her divorce decree to no avail.

Your father died. There are problems with who inherits what.

WHO YOU ARE: Judy

How you act; what you know:

The third daughter of wealthy, divorced parents. They never had much time for you. You struggled through school and barely got an associates degree in Fiber Arts. (21st century basket weaving) You find money to be more reliable than people and firmly believe in retail therapy. You can be withdrawn and quiet or emotional and pathetic.

WHO YOU DIDN'T LIKE:

Joe, your younger brother, who could do no wrong. He was obviously dad's favorite and you were furious when he got the same allowance as she did. He was. After all, much younger.

Below are a number of questions you may be asked. Rather than read from the paper, express the ideas in your own words. Anything not in black will probably be brought up by someone else. If they fail to do so, you must bring it up.

How did the family in general get along:

It's uncomfortable. Your parents divorced when you were young. Your mother, Leanne, became impossible so you were glad to escape to Jake's. You spent every other weekend and summers with your dad and step mother Raquel. A former model, Raquel was delighted when you showed an interest in shopping for clothes and accessories. She got you started on a life of spending everyone's money whenever you were depressed. When Raquel died giving birth to Ben your father threw himself into his work and ignored you more than ever. There was no one to go shopping with anymore.

How do you get along with your siblings:

Ok, except for Little Joe. You avoid Storm (Simone) especially if she's angry. When Simone was 14 she decided to sneak out one night and take daddy's mustang convertible for a spin with a few friends. Little Joe told and she got grounded for a year and a half. From there on out it was war between Little Joe and the others. You just tried to fly under the radar and stay out of it.

How did you get along with your father, Jake:

Not well. He mostly ignored you unless you crossed his favorite, Little Joe. Then you got blasted. Jake was devastated by what he assumed was the death of his favorite son.

What happened after Joe went missing:

Dad made Ruby his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with some help from Simone. You shopped. Out of guilt you all all treat Ben like gold.

How much do you see your mother now?

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Not much. It's very uncomfortable. Both she and Larry call you the Money Moron and say hateful things because you go shopping with "that home wrecker Raquel".

You know Leanne worries about Larry's shady deals and deceitful methods of accounting. Leanne did the books since she was in high school. Whenever Larry is called to account for some discrepancies in bookkeeping, he blames it on Leanne's poor vision. No one wants to make a fuss over a handicapped person's mistakes so he doesn't get in trouble over it.

There are problems with who inherits what but you don't really care as long as your credit cards remain valid. (To be on the safe side you maxed out all your credit cards. Who knows – they might get frozen)

WHO YOU ARE: Leanne

How you act; what you know: You are a bitter, lonely woman betrayed by your family (every last miserable one of them) and have little hope of things being any better, ever. About the only thing you can do about your circumstances is put everyone around you on a guilt trip.

Below are a number of questions you may be asked. Rather than read from the paper, express the ideas in your own words. Anything not in black will probably be brought up by someone else. If they fail to do so, you must bring it up.

What was your life like before your accident:

Your grandfather was well known in the world of horse racing, respected and owned the Paddock Paddan Stables. He'd take you to the Kentucky Derby every year and you loved it. When you were nine he even arranged for you to go back and see the winning horse, King. You were so excited you tripped over your dress hem and startled the horse. King kicked you on the side of your head, slashing one eye. They rushed you to the hospital but despite many surgeries they could not restore normal vision.

What changed after the accident:

Things are always blurry. Reading and writing are difficult, but you mastered them. You learned to drive. You learned to smile despite the whispers. It's the scar and lump you can't master. No matter how hard the hair and make up people try they can't hide the deformity. You became shy and withdrawn and miserable.

After high school you started working for your father, Larry, full time rather than go off to college. Even though you have money you knew you'd never be accepted because of how you look. The Paddan Paddock Stables were doing well and you had everything money could buy.

How did you meet Jake:

Jake had been in some trouble out in Texas and started working for your dad. He was nice to you and helped you with the books after hours. He was the first boy you ever kissed. He was the one that suggested you start wearing flashy sunglasses. It helped hide the eye and you thought he was a genius. He called you his "movie star". You began dating and soon were married. It never occurred to you it was the Paddan Paddock Stables he was after until it was too late.

How did you & Jake get along:

Fine at first. You had three girls right away but your father and Jake argued more and more over control of the stables. Jake hired a secretary named Raquel. She was a former model. You broke down when you overheard him calling her his "little movie star". You nagged and accused and fought but wound up only crying yourself to sleep, alone in your cold empty bed.

Did Raquel cause your break up:

Not entirely. One evening Jake got thrown while trying to break an expensive yearling nicknamed Psycho. It threw him, fracturing his hip. He demanded your father hand over half the business for damages. Your father

refused and mocking him, gave him the yearling instead. Jake walked out on you, your dad, and the business. He filed for divorce. Since he had no money or property, he paid no alimony or child support.

Then what happened:

Jake started his own stables – The Stairway to Heaven Stables and used the untamable yearling as a stud. Four years later, Psycho’s offspring were winning races left and right and Jake’s Stairway to Heaven prospered.

How Did Larry react:

Your dad was determined to put him out of business and made several foolish decisions that nearly bankrupted Paddan Paddock Stables. If that wasn’t bad enough he began to gamble, drink and run up debts.

What were the custody arrangements for your children?

You originally had full custody and Jake only visitation. (in your opinion he poisoned the children against you) But then after the third failed laser eye surgery left you worse than before and the financial difficulties increased, they wound up at Jake’s more and more. As adults, the ungrateful wretches have all abandoned you to work for their father.

Are you in a legal battle with Jake:

You are trying to renegotiate the divorce to get some money. You’ll get money out of that cheating two timing snake or kill him in the process.

WHO YOU ARE: Larry Harran

How you act; what you know:

You are a broken man. Once rich, powerful and admired, you were taken in by Jake and now have lost everything. You have gambling, business and family problems. Everything in your life has turned to dust and ashes.

Below are a number of questions you may be asked. Rather than read from the paper, express the ideas in your own words. Anything not in black will probably be brought up by someone else. If they fail to do so, you must bring it up.

Tell us about yourself:

Your father was well known and respected in the horse racing circles. He was known as a good business man who'd give you a fair deal. The family owned the Paddan Paddock Stables and bred horses, some of which even made it to the Kentucky Derby and Preakness. When your old man retired you took over the stables. You decided to increase profits using some new methods (shady deals and deceitful methods that you'd rather not discuss with anyone in detail – not even yourself.)

What you share only if questioned:

One way involved your accounting practices. Your daughter Leanne had been doing the books since she was in high school. She'd been kicked in the head by a racehorse as a child and she had vision problems. Everyone knew that and felt sorry for her. This was very helpful whenever you were called to account for some discrepancies in bookkeeping. You just blamed it on Leanne's eyes and no one wanted to make a fuss over a handicapped person's mistakes. And you learned how to not make them again.

How did Jake come to work for you:

Becky Sue, a second cousin called you one night out of the blue. You hadn't seen her since graduation but had heard she'd married a well to do rancher in Texas. She said her younger son Jake had some "trouble". She didn't specify and you knew better than to ask her to. You agreed to take the boy on as a hired hand and help him keep a low profile.

What happened between Jake and your daughter:

He and Leanne hit it off, which surprised you since Leanne was pretty homely. They'd work together in the office and watch reruns of Bonanza in the evening. It was one of the few shows Leanne enjoyed. She'd never really dated and fell hard for Jake. You were thrilled for her sake when they announced they were getting married but in the back of your mind you wondered if Jake's real reason for the romance was the fact Leanne, being your only child, would inherit the Paddan Paddock Stables. He and Leanne had their first three children – Ruby, Judy and Simone.

How did you and Jake get along:

Jake was a good manager but he kept pestering you to make him a full partner. You weren't about to give him the reins. You suspected he had something going on with his secretary, Raquel. He hired her despite the fact

she had no secretarial but was a former model.

Why did Jake blame you for a disabling condition:

One evening Jake was trying to break Psycho, a year old racehorse who had been nicknamed Psycho. Another employee had spooked the horse and Psycho was thrashing about. You yelled at him because the horse was worth over a million dollars and you didn't want to lose on an investment. Jake (acting like some big shot show off) Had a go with the horse and ended up getting injured.

When you refused to compensate him he left for greener pastures with Raquel. Leanne was devastated. Jake waited until the divorce was final so he'd look broke and pay less in child support then sued for \$1,000,000 for his hip injury. He won but with a little back door diplomacy you got the judge to award him Psycho instead of cash. The fool started his own stable – the Stairway to Heaven. You suspect he had cheated you out of millions over the years.

What you share under pressure:

You were determined to put him out of business and made several foolish decisions that nearly bankrupted Paddan Paddocks. You began to gamble. You ran up debts. Leanne loathes you and blames you for ruining both her marriage and her inheritance.

How do you get along with Leanne now:

Leanne tried and failed to renegotiate her divorce settlement and prove Jake had more money than showed up on his income statements when they went to court the first time. She is bitter and discouraged because it's not going well and you overheard her say she wished he was dead. She said if only she had good vision she's shoot him herself.

WHO YOU ARE: Red Isakson

How you act; what you know:

Although your legal name is Edward, everyone has called you Red from the time you were old enough to sit a horse. You're a guy's guy and proud of it. You could live off the land for weeks if you had to. But you don't have to. Your hard work has got you where you are – one of the most powerful, influential and wealthy ranchers in the state of Texas. Semi-retired to enjoy what you have done you're a bit perplexed about this ownership problem your attorney is talking about. That's his problem to deal with. Ain't that what you pay him for?

Below are a number of questions you may be asked. Rather than read from the paper, express the ideas in your own words. Anything not in black will probably be brought up by someone else. If they fail to do so, you must bring it up.

Tell us about your family:

Your father was a successful cattle rancher named Zackary Abramson. He had a large spread named the Bonanza Ranch out in Texas. Your mother, Becky Sue, gave birth to twins – you, the oldest, and Jake who was 2 minutes behind. Your mother was partial to Jake but Zack liked you since you could rope and ride with the best of them. Jake never was much for the cowboy life. He just liked staying indoors and watching reruns of Bonanza with his ma. Your dad had planned to leave the ranch to you, not the sissy boy, Jake.

How did you and Jake get along as kids:

Not well. He was a mamma's sissy boy and you were a real cowboy. One time you had come in from a cattle drive hungry and bone tired. Jake had given you this stew but half of it must have been chili powder. You started coughing and gagging. He made you promise to give him your share of the ranch to get a drink of water. You used to scoff at him for watching a TV show rather than LIVING the life. (Kind of like baseball or any sport – why watch when you can play?)

Another time you, he and some ranch hands were playing poker. You were out of cash and bet your share of the ranch on a jack high straight flush in hearts. Jake had a Queen high straight flush in spades. Good thing it was just playing around. You were just joking rashly about betting your share of the ranch.

Then Jake started telling folks he'd taken sworn witness statements to a notary and made it legal. When you found out you were furious and swore to kill Jake. Your mom shipped Jake out. It was years before you found out he went back east to work with some cousins of hers. You figured he'd joined the army or something.

How did you get along as adults:

Years later Jake wanted to make things up to you and gave you a horse. Like you needed another horse. But you were gracious and took it.

Your brother's deception has come back to haunt you as you ready to finally retire and enjoy the Bonanza ranch. **That stupid bet at the poker game is threatening your ownership of the ranch. Your lawyers have assured you they will get it sorted out eventually but you fume while matters are tied up in court.**

NOTE: Your attorney filed official paperwork to make sure your deed and title to the Bonanza Ranch and free and clear. When the Summary of Findings is read, react in character.

MINOR CHARACTERS

WHO YOU ARE: Ashleigh/Ashton

How you act; what you know:

One of many children in a quarrelsome family with wealthy, divorced parents. The older siblings got in trouble and there is some dreadful secret that you know would unbalance the already unstable family if it ever got out.

As the game unfolds you are primarily responsible for bringing out the information in red. However, if any of the information in black is left out by whomever is supposed to say it you may add it in.

The following are questions you may be asked. Rather than read the information, express it in your own words.

What do you do for a living:

All the children assumed positions in Jake's huge Stairway to heaven Stables and offshoot corporations. (Your mother, Leanne is legally blind, bitter and claimed all of you had abandoned her. You have tried to make things right with her. You do get along with your grandpa Larry. But he's in trouble for some reason.

How does the family get along:

Your parents divorced when you were young. You spent every other weekend and summers with your dad and step mother Raquel. When Raquel died giving birth to Ben on a cruise your father threw himself into his work and ignored you more than ever.

What happened on the trip:

Your older sisters were planning to take a well-deserved cruise for graduations from college. Ruby had graduated summa cum laude with a law degree. *She still foolishly believed someday she'd get her dad's approval.* Simone had a Bachelor's in graphic arts using computers. *It's just amazing she stayed in college and out of jail long enough to get a degree.* Judy barely squeaked out a C- average in an associate's degree in Fiber Arts (The 21st century equivalent of basket weaving) It had taken her three years. Dad refused to let them go saying cruises were bad luck. Instead he decided you'd go on some stupid educational thing with all the kids including stupid tattletale Little Joe.

What happened when Little Joe went missing?

Jake was devastated by what he assumed was the death of his favorite son. He made Ruby his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with your help. *Simone has temper tantrums but babies Benny/Jamari.* Judy just shops.

What do you know about your grandfather Larry?

Leanne's father had made several bad business decisions after Jake left and slowly the Paddan Paddock Stables became worth less and less. Larry had bet everything he owned on a horse race trying to recoup his losses. Instead he lost it all and ran up huge debts When your mom, Leanne found out about it, she panicked. She's afraid she'll have no inheritance at all, just bills and more bills Bitter, she hired attorneys to renegotiate her divorce decree to no avail.

Your father died. There are problems with who inherits what.

WHO YOU ARE: Benny/Jamari

How you act; what you know:

The only surviving child of your dad, Jake and his second wife, Raquel, and the youngest child of Jake's. He wanted to name you Hoss, but didn't when Raquel begged him not to. Your daddy was enamored with the TV show Bonanza. The two of you watched reruns and his collection of DVDs all the time. Said it reminded him of home. Once he started crying about never seeing his mother, Becky Sue, again before she died. When you asked about her, all he would say was Uncle Red wouldn't let him come home and that nobody would ever hurt you. He looked crazy intent when he said that so you never brought it up again.

As the game unfolds you are primarily responsible for bringing out the information in brown. However, if any of the information in black is left out by whomever is supposed to say it you may add it in.

The following are questions you may be asked. Rather than read the information, express it in your own words.

What are your half-siblings like:

Simone (nicknamed Storm) is the rebellious one but she always takes care of you. Your mom died giving birth to you on a cruise ship and she stepped in to take her place. She taught you to walk, ride a horse, tutored you for school. You never call her Stormy like the rest do.

What is Judy like:

Judy is irresponsible; never thinking before she acts.

Where is Joseph:

Presumed dead by the court system. The only memory you have of him is when he lent you his favorite Steelers jacket to wear while he was gone on some trip.

What do you mean "presumed dead"

Little Joe disappeared on a trip to the Middle East and was never found. Ever since, Jake became so overprotective it was insane. You never are allowed to do anything remotely dangerous.

Simone has nightmares about Little Joe's abduction and confided to you it was all her fault. She said if Jake ever found out he'd kill her, then himself. You were so scared about losing the two people you loved most you never spoke of it to anyone.

WHO YOU ARE: Danny/Daniella

How you act; what you know:

One of many children in a quarrelsome family with wealthy, divorced parents. The older siblings got in trouble and there is some dreadful secret that you know would unbalance the already unstable family if it ever got out.

As the game unfolds you are primarily responsible for bringing out the information in red. However, if any of the information in black is left out by whomever is supposed to say it you may add it in.

The following are questions you may be asked. Rather than read the information, express it in your own words.

WHO YOU DIDN'T LIKE:

Joe, your younger brother, who could do no wrong. **He was constantly tattling on every little thing anyone did – especially Simone. They really butted heads.**

How did the family in general get along:

It's uncomfortable. Your parents divorced when you were young. Your mother, Leanne, became impossible so you were glad to escape to Jake's. You spent every other weekend and summers with your dad and step mother Raquel. **A former model, Raquel was delighted whenever she shopped for clothes and accessories and got Judy started on a life of spending money. Raquel died giving birth to Ben on a cruise and Jake hated anything to do with cruises ever since because he blamed the doctor on board for her death.**

How do you get along with your siblings:

Ok, except for Little Joe. You avoid Storm (Simone) especially if she's angry. When Simone was 14 she decided to sneak out one night and take daddy's mustang convertible for a spin with a few friends. Little Joe told and she got grounded for a year and a half. From there on out it was war between Little Joe and the others. You always sided with Simone. You were afraid not to. **Everyone calls her Stormy for good reason.**

How did you get along with your father, Jake:

OK. He left you alone. Jake was devastated when **Little Joe was abducted on vacation.**

What happened after Joe went missing:

Dad made Ruby his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with some help all of you. You shopped. Out of guilt you all all treat Ben like gold.

How much do you see your mother now?

Every week but it's very uncomfortable. Your mother, Leanne, whines about money every time you visit. Bitter, she hired attorneys to renegotiate her divorce decree to get some of Jake's wealth. Now that Jake passed away, a big legal mess has begun. There are problems with who inherits what so Judy maxed out all of her credit cards in case they were frozen.

WHO YOU ARE: Gabriella/Gabriel

How you act; what you know:

One of many children in a quarrelsome family with wealthy, divorced parents. As long as you can remember the family has been unstable and fights.

As the game unfolds you are primarily responsible for bringing out the information in blue. However, if any of the information in black is left out by whomever is supposed to say it you may add it in.

The following are questions you may be asked. Rather than read the information, express it in your own words.

How did the family in general get along:

Your parents divorced when you were young. Your mother, Leanne, became impossible to live with. She talked bad about Jake and Raquel every chance she got. Jake married a former model, Raquel who had been his secretary and your mom really blasted her. She complained about how well Raquel dressed and how much stuff she had and how Jake doesn't pay child support because Raquel spends everything he makes.

How do you get along with your siblings:

Ok, you just tried to fly under the radar and stay out of all the fighting and arguing.

How did you get along with your father, Jake:

Not well. He mostly ignored you unless you crossed his favorite, Little Joe. Then you got blasted. Jake was devastated by what he assumed was the death of his favorite son.

What happened after Joe went missing:

Dad made Ruby his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with some help from Simone. Judy shopped. Out of guilt you all treat Benny/Jamari like gold. Jake would probably die of grief if anything ever happened to Benny/Jamari

How much do you see your mother now?

Not much. It's very uncomfortable. Now that Jake passed away, another big legal mess has begun. There are problems with who inherits what.

WHO YOU ARE: Gene/Jean

How you act; what you know:

One of many children in a quarrelsome family with wealthy, divorced parents. You have a dreadful secret that you have suppressed so far down you don't remember what it is. But if you did, you fear it would unbalance the already unstable family dynamics.

As the game unfolds you are primarily responsible for bringing out the information in purple. However, if any of the information in black is left out by whomever is supposed to say it you may add it in.

The following are questions you may be asked. Rather than read the information, express it in your own words.

What do you do for a living:

All the children assumed positions in your father's (Jake's) huge Stairway to Heaven Stables and offshoot corporations. (Your mother, Leanne, not understanding guilt over Little Joe's death prompted this, misunderstood and claimed all of you had abandoned her. You two have not spoken since.

How does the family get along:

Your parents divorced when you were young. You spent every other weekend and summers with your dad and step mother Raquel. She and Judy shopped together all the time. You wish they had included you but they said you were too young. When Raquel died giving birth to Ben your father threw himself into his work and ignored you more than ever.

What happened on the educational vacation:

You and your sisters were planning to take a well-deserved cruise for graduations from college. Ruby had graduated summa cum laude with a law degree. Judy barely squeaked out a C- average in an associate's degree in Fiber Arts (The 21st century equivalent of basket weaving) It had taken her three years. You'd cruise the Mediterranean for two weeks. Dad refused saying cruises were bad luck. Instead he decided you'd go on some stupid educational thing with all the kids including stupid tattletale Little Joe.

What happened when Little Joe went missing?

When Jake found out his favorite son was missing, he wasted no time. He hired private investigators, contacted the embassy and called the governor of Texas. But it was no use. Little Joe was never found and you all you're your guilty secret. Jake was devastated by what he assumed was the death of his favorite son. He made Ruby his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with your help. Judy just shopped. One time Judy told you she wished she'd never gone along with the revised plan but it was better than the first. At least she thought to at the time. When you asked her "what plan" she panicked and said you must never talk about it again.

Your father died. There are problems with who inherits what.

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WHO YOU ARE: Izzy/Isabel

How you act; what you know:

One of many children in a quarrelsome family with wealthy, divorced parents. As long as you can remember the family has been unstable and fights.

As the game unfolds you are primarily responsible for bringing out the information in blue. Rather than read the information, express it in your own words. If any of the information in black is left out by whomever is supposed to say it you may add it in.

What are your siblings like:

Simone (nicknamed Storm) is the rebellious one. When Simone was 14 she decided to sneak out one night and take daddy's mustang convertible for a spin with a few friends. Little Joe told and from there on out it was war between Little Joe and her. She vowed one day to make Little Joe "so little no one would ever see him again"

What was Joe like as a kid:

Joe was a spoiled brat. Always watching reruns of Bonanza with dad. Your daddy was enamored with the TV show Bonanza (said it reminded him of home). He ran away from home because of a fight with Uncle Red.

How did your parents meet:

Your parents met when Jake came to work for your grandfather Larry at the Paddan Paddocks Stables. Your mom, the only child, fell in love with him and they married. Your mom always wished you had been a boy and sometimes even hints that if one of you had been male, Jake wouldn't have left her. Other times she blames herself – because she is so ugly.

Your parents divorced when you were in elementary school and your father remarried, Raquel pretty but too brain dead to worry about anything.

Raquel had two sons Little Joe and Ben (Thank God he didn't name you Hoss) Ben was born on a cruise and during rough seas. Raquel went into early labor. There were complications and the doctor on board failed to save Raquel.

Where is Joseph:

Presumed dead by the court system.

What do you mean "presumed dead"

The three older girls were planning to take what they considered a well deserved cruise for their graduation from college. Dad was called them stupid. Didn't they remember how Raquel died? No cruises. They were bad luck.

Instead he arranged for an "educational trip" for the whole family - spending two weeks on an archeological dig in the Middle East to learn ancient history. Yuck. Then dad decided to send Little Joe since he'd graduated

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high school at 16.

Then Little Joe disappeared and Jake hired private investigators, contacted several embassies and called the governor of Kentucky. But it was no use.

Did Little Joe's disappearance ruin things between you and your dad:

Yes and no. We all assumed positions in Jake's Stairway to Heaven Stables and the offshoot corporations. Your mother, not understanding your guilt prompted this, misunderstood and claimed they had abandoned her.

Jake was devastated by what he assumed was the death of his favorite son. Out of guilt you all treated Ben like gold.

How do you and Larry get along:

Very well. He says you are his favorite grandchild and gets you to tell him what's going on at home. Leanne's father, Larry, had made several bad business decisions and the Paddan Paddock Stables became worth less and less. Larry bets all the time on horse races trying to get caught up on his bills but he loses allot.

WHO YOU ARE: Nate/Natalie

How you act; what you know:

One of many children in a quarrelsome family with wealthy, divorced parents. As long as you can remember the family has been unstable and fights.

As the game unfolds you are primarily responsible for bringing out the information in green. However, if any of the information in black is left out by whomever is supposed to say it you may add it in.

The following are questions you may be asked. Rather than read the information, express it in your own words.

What are your siblings like:

Simone (nicknamed Storm) is the rebellious one. She recognizes the consequences of her actions but does what she wants anyway. She got in fights at school. The fights usually got your parent's attention for a few days. One time she got mad at somebody for talking bad about Judy. That night she drove over to their house in your dad's dump truck and shoved the kid's car through their living room window. She got everybody's attention for that and was jailed overnight..

What is Judy like:

Judy is irresponsible; never thinking before she acts.

What was Joe like as a kid:

Joe was a spoiled brat. Too bad they didn't name him Hoss from the show Bonanza.

What was your father like:

Hard worker, mostly. Which is why his horses have won several Kentucky Derbies and he became an independently wealthy breeder.

Where is Joseph:

Presumed dead by the court system.

What do you mean "presumed dead"

On an "educational trip" for the whole family - spending two weeks on an archeological dig in the Middle East - Joe disappeared. When Ruby found out he'd been arrested by the police, she did everything she could to find him but the police claimed he'd been abducted by someone looking like a real policeman. Judy and Simone know something about it they aren't telling.

What do you know about your Uncle Red?

One time you ran away from home because of all the fighting and stayed with Uncle Red for a few days. He told you this story from his teen years. He, your dad and some ranch hands were playing poker. Uncle Red bet his share of the ranch on a jack high straight flush in hearts. Jake had a Queen high straight flush in spades. Red lost but it was always playing around. Then Jake started telling folks he'd taken sworn witness statements to a notary and made it legal. Grandma Becky Sue shipped Jake out to Uncle Larry's because she was afraid Red would "hurt him bad."

WHO YOU ARE: Zack/Zeba

How you act; what you know:

One of many children in a quarrelsome family with wealthy, divorced parents. The older siblings got in trouble and there is some dreadful secret that you know would unbalance the already unstable family if it ever got out.

As the game unfolds you are primarily responsible for bringing out the information in green. However, if any of the information in black is left out by whomever is supposed to say it you may add it in.

The following are questions you may be asked. Rather than read the information, express it in your own words.

What do you do for a living:

All the children assumed positions in Jake's huge Stairway to heaven Stables and offshoot corporations. (Your mother, Leanne is legally blind, bitter and claimed all of you had abandoned her. You have tried to make things right with her. You do get along with your grandpa Larry.

How does the family get along:

Your parents divorced when you were young. You spent every other weekend and summers with your dad and step mother Raquel. At home with dad (Jake) there was always fighting. Especially Little Joe vs. the oldest three: Ruby, Simone and Judy. When Raquel died giving birth to Ben your father threw himself into his work and ignored you more than ever.

What happened on the educational vacation:

You and your sisters were planning to take a well-deserved cruise for graduations from college. Ruby had graduated summa cum laude with a law degree. Dad refused saying cruises were bad luck. Instead he decided you'd go on some stupid educational thing with all the kids including stupid tattletale Little Joe. (One day, Joe began teasing Judy about taking three years to get a two year degree. Simone concocted a great plan of revenge when brown noser Ruby wasn't around to stop it. Something went wrong and Little Joe got abducted. Simone said you'd be sorry if you opened your mouth about it. You believe her. They don't call her Stormy for nothing.

Your father died. There are problems with who inherits what.

WHO YOU ARE: Mr. Zaphenath-Paneah (Joseph/"Little Joe)

Although you begin posing as an Egyptian attorney, you are actually the favorite son of Jake Izakson and least favorite of all your siblings. Details about your childhood are included in the questions you ask other characters.

It all happened during a visit to the necropolis of Tuna el-Gebel, with its tombs and catacombs of sacred baboon and ibis burials dating to the Greco-Roman period. Little Joe was threatening to tell Jake that Judy had not only skipped seeing the tombs el-Amarna in order to shop but also bought an expensive trinket at the gift shop.

Ruby intervened when the fight got serious and worked out a compromise that if the trinket was returned for a refund, Little Joe would be quiet about the whole thing.

While Ruby left the group to return the trinket, Simone concocted a plan for revenge. She would tell a museum guard that Joseph taken a pot from a display, hoping to get him in trouble until the authorities checked him over and found nothing. The scare would keep him in line the rest of the trip. Not one of them knew how seriously officials protected antiquities.

Things did not go as planned. Joseph was arrested and hauled off. Simone blew up and nearly got herself arrested as well. Judy burst into tears and was sitting on the floor, sobbing when Ruby returned. Ruby managed smooth things over so Simone got off on a warning but was unable to locate Little Joe or where he was being held. They knew they'd have to call home.

Before calling their father, they all agreed to a pact of silence regarding their involvement. Some of the siblings only knew part of the story anyway. Jake immediately hired a private investigator, called the governors of several states where he did business and contacted the American Embassy. He did everything in his power to locate his son but no trace of Joe was ever found.

The siblings have kept their vow of secrecy all these years.

Known only to Joseph:

The unscrupulous guard took the opportunity to steal the artifact himself. It would sell well on the black market and the stupid American boy would be blamed. Unfortunately for Little Joe, he looked very much like a terrorist the authorities were hunting. Authorities ignored his denials and he simply "disappeared".

He ended up sharing a cell with an American spy, Bobby Baker, who had infiltrated the terrorist group and had been arrested as part of his cover. Though Baker believed Little Joe's story, and was released, he did not act to get Joe released for some time. When Joe was finally released, he became the property of the United States Intelligence community and could not be allowed to return home because he could identify Bobby Baker.

Joe resigned himself to serve his country as best he could and worked his way up until he became a Bureau Chief in the Middle East. After 20 years of distinguished service, he retired and planned to finally return home. But he couldn't just show up on the doorstep. It could give somebody a heart attack.

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His years in the middle east had had an unexpected impact on him as well. All the senseless fighting, hostility and bitterness over things that occurred hundreds of years earlier made no sense to him. Neither did all the turmoil in his family.

Sometimes it is best to forgive, forget and move on. He had done that. People are more important than property. He personally had amassed a portfolio worth millions but it meant nothing if peace, love and joy continued to elude his family. Giving is good, forgiving is better.

Because of his work in a political region greatly influenced by three major religions, Joe knew Judaism, Islam and Christianity inside and out. He'd become a devout believer not only in God (With God, all things are possible) but also his son, Jesus Christ. If Jesus could forgive humanity for what they did to him; Joseph could forgive his siblings. But could his family forgive each other?

His extended family was still feuding and fighting. After speaking with Jake, and sharing his plan for everyone to reconcile, Jake agreed. (after he got over the shock of you being alive) Joe arranged for his father's apparent "death" and the reading of the will.

QUESTIONS you ask the others

Which questions are asked of whom depends on which characters are involved. Leanne, Larry, Red, Ruby, Simone and Judy will be involved. Determine which minor characters are involved.

Questions are color coded. If any of the below characters are involved, they will give out the information written in their color. If they are not involved, one of the major characters will have to provide the information. Encourage characters to add in any information if they think another character has omitted. The information they know is also provided in case you notice something has been left out. Feel free to make up additional questions to coax it from them.

During this time, AFTER questioning RED, read the Summary of Findings. RED's reaction should liven things up if they're getting too ho-hum.

Danielle/Danny
Gabriella/Gabriel
Ashleigh/Ashton

Zack/Zeba
Jean/Gene
Izzy/Isabel

Benny/Jamari
Natalie//Nate

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Ruby

What are your siblings like:

Simone (nicknamed Storm) is the rebellious one. She recognizes the consequences of her actions but does what she wants anyway. When Simone was 14 she decided to sneak out one night and take daddy's mustang convertible for a spin with a few friends. Little Joe told and she got grounded for a year and a half. From there on out it was war between Little Joe and his half-siblings. Another time she hijacked dad's dump truck and used

it to shove some kid's car through his living room. She spent the night in jail for that one.

What is Judy like:

Judy is irresponsible; never thinking before she acts. She pitched a fit to dad when Joe got the same allowance as her even though she knew dad would only yell at her. Her philosophy is that there is no problem that can't be fixed with a credit card and a mall. They despised Little Joe. Joe was smart as a whip, he knew it and he made sure Ruby and everyone else knew it.

What was Joe like as a kid:

Joe was a spoiled brat. Your daddy was enamored with the TV show Bonanza (said it reminded him of home) and insisted they name him Hoss, Adam or Little Joe. When he wasn't bragging he's tattling. Simone got the worst of it. Little Joe was obviously dad's favorite and Judy was furious when he got the same allowance as she did. He was after all, 5 years younger.

How did your parents meet:

Your parents met when Jake came to work for your grandfather Larry at the Paddan Paddocks Stables. Your mom, the only child, fell in love with him and they married. Your mom always wished you had been a boy and sometimes even hints that if one of you had been male, Jake wouldn't have left her. Other times she blames herself – because she is so ugly.

What happened when Jake and Leanne divorced:

Your parents divorced when you were in elementary school and your father remarried. Sometimes you envied your step-mom, Raquel with her vacant beautiful face - too brain dead to worry about anything. Otherwise she is alright, which is good since you spend every other weekend and summers with them. As you got older you realized your mother, Leanne, was bitter woman and it was probably her inner not outer self that drove your daddy away.

Raquel had two sons Little Joe and Benny/Jamari (Thank God he didn't name anyone Hoss) Benny/Jamari was born on a cruise and during rough seas. Raquel went into early labor. There were complications and the doctor on board failed to save Raquel.

What was your father like:

Hard worker, mostly. Which is why his horses have won several Kentucky Derbies and he became an independently wealthy breeder.

How did you get along with your father:

You never quite measured up, probably because you were a girl. You think he wished you 3 girls had been 3 sons so he could have his Bonanza of Adam, Hoss and Little Joe.

Where is Joseph:

Presumed dead by the court system.

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What do you mean “presumed dead”

The three older girls were planning to take what they considered a well deserved cruise for their graduation from college. You had graduated summa cum laude with a law degree and passed the bar on the first try. Simone had a Bachelor’s in graphic design. Barely squeaking out a C- average, Judy got her associate’s degree in Fiber Arts (The 21st century equivalent of basket weaving) They’d cruise the Mediterranean for two weeks. Dad was adamant. No cruises. They were bad luck.

Instead he arranged for an “educational trip” for the whole family - spending two weeks on an archeological dig in the Middle East. You promised to learn ancient history and watch out for the others. Then dad decided to send Little Joe since he’d graduated high school at 16. You always wondered if Joe deliberately did it so he could tag along and tattle if anyone got out of line.

Then Little Joe disappeared because of your neglect of duty. (You all swore yourselves to never reveal what actually happened and let Jake think he was abducted randomly) Jake wasted no time. He hired private investigators, contacted the embassy and called the governor of Texas. But it was no use. Little Joe was never found and you all kept your guilty secret.

Did Little Joe’s disappearance ruin things between you and your dad:

Yes and no. We all assumed positions in Jake’s Stairway to Heaven Stables and the offshoot corporations. Your mother, not understanding your guilt prompted this, misunderstood and claimed they had abandoned her.

Jake was devastated by what he assumed was the death of his favorite son. He made you his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with some help from Simone. Judy shopped. Out of guilt they all treated Benny/Jamari like gold, as if this could make up for their deeds.

How do you and Leanne get along:

You tried to maintain a good relationship but it’s nearly impossible. You have tried to help Larry with his business but he rejects your advice and throws away even more money on get rich schemes that never pan out. (Leanne’s father had made several bad business decisions after Jake left and slowly the Stables became worth less and less. Larry had bet everything he owned on a horse race trying to recoup his losses. Instead he lost it all and ran up huge debts Leanne is worried she’ll no inheritance at all, just bills and more bills Bitter, she tried to hire you to renegotiate her divorce decree to get some of Jake’s wealth. When you said you couldn’t do that, she screamed at you, called you traitor and hired other legal counsel. The process is not going well for Leanne.

What happened recently:

You found out your POA was useless as soon as your father died. Until Jake’s will is executed you are powerless to run the stables and have no assurance that you are named heir in the will. You don’t know what to do to make things right with everyone.

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Simone

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Have you ever been arrested:

One time you got mad at somebody for talking bad about Judy. That night you drove over to their house in your dad's dump truck. You shoved the kid's car through their living room window. You went to jail overnight. You got everybody's attention for that.

How do you get along with Benny/Jamari:

Great. To make up for what you did to Joe you have gone overboard loving Benny/Jamari. You delighted in helping him learn to walk, talk, and ride a horse. There isn't anything you wouldn't do for Benny/Jamari.

What problem did you have with Little Joe:

Joe, your younger brother. When you were 14 you decided to sneak out one night and take daddy's mustang convertible for a spin with a few friends. Little Joe told and you got grounded for a year and a half. From there on out it was war.

How does the family get along:

Your parents divorced when you were young. They were so busy fighting and trying to outdo each other you would have been totally ignored if you had not forced them to pay attention to you. You threw tantrums in public. You got into trouble at school. You got in trouble with the law.

You spent every other weekend and summers with your dad and step mother Raquel. When Raquel died giving birth to Benny/Jamari your father threw himself into his work and ignored you more than ever.

What do you do for a living:

All the children assumed positions in Jake's huge Stairway to heaven Stables and offshoot corporations. Simone is a graphics artist.

What happened on the cruise:

You and your sisters were planning to take a well-deserved cruise for graduations from college. Ruby had graduated summa cum laude with a law degree. She still foolishly believed someday she'd get her dad's approval. You had a Bachelor's in graphic arts using computers. Judy barely squeaked out a C- average in an associate's degree in Fiber Arts (The 21st century equivalent of basket weaving) It had taken her three years. You'd cruise the Mediterranean for two weeks. Dad refused saying cruises were bad luck. Instead he decided you'd go on some stupid educational thing with all the kids including stupid tattletale Little Joe.

(One day, Joe began teasing Judy about taking three years to get a two year degree. You concocted a great plan of revenge when brown noser Ruby wasn't around to stop it.

What happened when Little Joe went missing?

When Jake found out his favorite son was missing, he wasted no time. He hired private investigators, contacted the embassy and called the governor of Texas. But it was no use. Little Joe was never found and you all you're your guilty secret. Jake was devastated by what he assumed was the death of his favorite son. He made Ruby

his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with your help. Judy just shopped.

What do you know about your grandfather Larry?

Leanne's father had made several bad business decisions after Jake left and slowly the Paddan Paddock Stables became worth less and less. Larry had bet everything he owned on a horse race trying to recoup his losses. Instead he lost it all and ran up huge debts Leanne knew nothing about and she's afraid she'll have no inheritance at all, just bills and more bills. Bitter, she hired attorneys to renegotiate her divorce decree to no avail.

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Judy

How did the family in general get along:

It's uncomfortable. Your parents divorced when you were young. Your mother, Leanne, became impossible so you were glad to escape to Jake's. You spent every other weekend and summers with your dad and step mother Raquel. A former model, Raquel was delighted when you showed an interest in shopping for clothes and accessories. She got you started on a life of spending everyone's money whenever you were depressed. When Raquel died giving birth to Benny/Jamari your father threw himself into his work and ignored you more than ever. There was no one to go shopping with anymore.

How do you get along with your siblings:

Ok, except for Little Joe. You avoid Storm (Simone) especially if she's angry. When Simone was 14 she decided to sneak out one night and take daddy's mustang convertible for a spin with a few friends. Little Joe told and she got grounded for a year and a half. From there on out it was war between Little Joe and the others. You just tried to fly under the radar and stay out of it.

How did you get along with your father, Jake:

Not well. He mostly ignored you unless you crossed his favorite, Little Joe. Then you got blasted. Jake was devastated by what he assumed was the death of his favorite son.

What happened after Joe went missing:

Dad made Ruby his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with some help from Simone. You shopped. Out of guilt you all treat Benny/Jamari like gold.

How much do you see your mother now?

Not much. It's very uncomfortable. Both she and Larry call you the Money Moron and say hateful things because you go shopping with "that home wrecker Raquel".

You know Leanne worries about Larry's shady deals and deceitful methods of accounting. Leanne did the books since she was in high school. Whenever Larry is called to account for some discrepancies in bookkeeping, he blames it on Leanne's poor vision. No one wants to make a fuss over a handicapped person's mistakes so he doesn't get in trouble over it.

There are problems with who inherits what but you don't really care as long as your credit cards remain valid. (To be on the safe side you maxed out all your credit cards. Who knows – they might get frozen)

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Leanne

What was your life like before your accident:

Your grandfather was well known in the world of horse racing, respected and owned the Paddock Paddan Stables. He'd take you to the Kentucky Derby every year and you loved it. When you were nine he even arranged for you to go back and see the winning horse, King. You were so excited you tripped over your dress hem and startled the horse. King kicked you on the side of your head, slashing one eye. They rushed you to the hospital but despite many surgeries they could not restore normal vision.

What changed after the accident:

Things are always blurry. Reading and writing are difficult, but you mastered them. You learned to drive. You learned to smile despite the whispers. It's the scar and lump you can't master. No matter how hard the hair and make up people try they can't hide the deformity. You became shy and withdrawn and miserable.

After high school you started working for your father, Larry, full time rather than go off to college. Even though you have money you knew you'd never be accepted because of how you look. The Paddan Paddock Stables were doing well and you had everything money could buy.

How did you meet Jake:

Jake had been in some trouble out in Texas and started working for your dad. He was nice to you and helped you with the books after hours. He was the first boy you ever kissed. He was the one that suggested you start wearing flashy sunglasses. It helped hide the eye and you thought he was a genius. He called you his "movie star". You began dating and soon were married. It never occurred to you it was the Paddan Paddock Stables he was after until it was too late.

How did you & Jake get along:

Fine at first. You had three girls right away but your father and Jake argued more and more over control of the stables. Jake hired a secretary named Raquel. She was a former model. You broke down when you overheard him calling her his "little movie star". You nagged and accused and fought but wound up only crying yourself to sleep, alone in your cold empty bed.

Did Raquel cause your break up:

Not entirely. One evening Jake got thrown while trying to break an expensive yearling nicknamed Psycho. It threw him, fracturing his hip. He demanded your father hand over half the business for damages. Your father refused and mocking him, gave him the yearling instead. Jake walked out on you, your dad, and the business. He filed for divorce. Since he had no money or property, he paid no alimony or child support.

Then what happened:

Jake started his own stables – The Stairway to Heaven Stables and used the untamable yearling as a stud. Four years later, Psycho's offspring were winning races left and right and Jake's Stairway to Heaven prospered.

How Did Larry react:

Your dad was determined to put him out of business and made several foolish decisions that nearly bankrupted Paddan Paddock Stables. If that wasn't bad enough he began to gamble, drink and run up debts.

What were the custody arrangements for your children?

You originally had full custody and Jake only visitation. (in your opinion he poisoned the children against you) But then after the third failed laser eye surgery left you worse than before and the financial difficulties increased, they wound up at Jake's more and more. As adults, the ungrateful wretches have all abandoned you to work for their father.

Are you in a legal battle with Jake:

You are trying to renegotiate the divorce to get some money. You'll get money out of that cheating two timing snake or kill him in the process.

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Larry Harran

Tell us about yourself:

Your father was well known and respected in the horse racing circles. He was known as a good business man who'd give you a fair deal. The family owned the Paddan Paddock Stables and bred horses, some of which even made it to the Kentucky Derby and Preakness. When your old man retired you took over the stables. You decided to increase profits using some new methods (shady deals and deceitful methods that you'd rather not discuss with anyone in detail – not even yourself.)

Larry will be reluctant to bring this up – make sure it gets out.

One way involved your accounting practices. Your daughter Leanne had been doing the books since she was in high school. She'd been kicked in the head by a racehorse as a child and she had vision problems. Everyone knew that and felt sorry for her. This was very helpful whenever you were called to account for some discrepancies in bookkeeping. You just blamed it on Leanne's eyes and no one wanted to make a fuss over a handicapped person's mistakes. And you learned how to not make them again.

How did Jake come to work for you:

Becky Sue, a second cousin called you one night out of the blue. You hadn't seen her since graduation but had heard she'd married a well to do rancher in Texas. She said her younger son Jake had some "trouble". She didn't specify and you knew better than to ask her to. You agreed to take the boy on as a hired hand and help him keep a low profile.

What happened between Jake and your daughter:

He and Leanne hit it off, which surprised you since Leanne was pretty homely. They'd work together in the office and watch reruns of Bonanza in the evening. It was one of the few shows Leanne enjoyed. She'd never really dated and fell hard for Jake. You were thrilled for her sake when they announced they were getting married but in the back of your mind you wondered if Jake's real reason for the romance was the fact Leanne, being your only child, would inherit the Paddan Paddock Stables. He and Leanne had their first three children – Ruby, Judy and Simone.

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How did you and Jake get along:

Jake was a good manager but he kept pestering you to make him a full partner. You weren't about to give him the reins. You suspected he had something going on with his secretary, Raquel. He hired her despite the fact she had no secretarial but was a former model.

Why did Jake blame you for a disabling condition:

One evening Jake was trying to break Psycho, a year old racehorse who had been nicknamed Psycho. Another employee had spooked the horse and Psycho was thrashing about. You yelled at him because the horse was worth over a million dollars and you didn't want to lose on an investment. Jake (acting like some big shot show off) Had a go with the horse and ended up getting injured.

When you refused to compensate him he left for greener pastures with Raquel. Leanne was devastated. Jake waited until the divorce was final so he'd look broke and pay less in child support then sued for \$1,000,000 for his hip injury. He won but with a little back door diplomacy you got the judge to award him Psycho instead of cash. The fool started his own stable – the Stairway to Heaven. You suspect he had cheated you out of millions over the years.

What you share under pressure:

You were determined to put him out of business and made several foolish decisions that nearly bankrupted Paddan Paddocks. You began to gamble. You ran up debts. Leanne loathes you and blames you for ruining both her marriage and her inheritance.

How do you get along with Leanne now:

Leanne tried and failed to renegotiate her divorce settlement and prove Jake had more money than showed up on his income statements when they went to court the first time. She is bitter and discouraged because it's not going well and you overheard her say she wished he was dead. She said if only she had good vision she's shoot him herself.

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Red AKA Edward Izakson

Tell us about your family:

Your father was a successful cattle rancher named Zackary Abramson. He had a large spread named the Bonanza Ranch out in Texas. Your mother, Becky Sue, gave birth to twins – you, the oldest, and Jake who was 2 minutes behind. Your mother was partial to Jake but Zack liked you since you could rope and ride with the best of them. Jake never was much for the cowboy life. He just liked staying indoors and watching reruns of Bonanza with his ma. Your dad had planned to leave the ranch to you.

How did you and Jake get along as kids:

Not well. He was a mamma's sissy boy and you were a real cowboy. One time you had come in from a cattle drive hungry and bone tired. Jake had given you this stew but half of it must have been chili powder. You started coughing and gagging. He made you promise to give him your share of the ranch to get a drink of water.

Another time you, he and some ranch hands were playing poker. You were out of cash and bet your share of the ranch on a jack high straight flush in hearts. Jake had a Queen high straight flush in spades. Good thing it was just playing around. You were just joking rashly about betting your share of the ranch.

Then Jake started telling folks he'd taken sworn witness statements to a notary and made it legal. When you found out you were furious and swore to kill Jake. Your mom shipped Jake out. It was years before you found out he went back east to work with some cousins of hers. You thought he'd joined the army or something.

How did you get along as adults:

Years later Jake wanted to make things up to you and gave you a horse. Like you needed another horse. But you were gracious and took it.

Your brother's deception has come back to haunt you as you ready to finally retire and enjoy the Bonanza ranch. **That stupid bet at the poker game is threatening your ownership of the ranch. Your lawyers have assured you they will get it sorted out eventually but you fume while matters are tied up in court.**

MINOR CHARACTERS

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Ashleigh/Ashton

Who are you:

One of many children in a quarrelsome family with wealthy, divorced parents. The older siblings got in trouble and there is some dreadful secret that you know would unbalance the already unstable family if it ever got out.

What do you do for a living:

All the children assumed positions in Jake's huge Stairway to Heaven Stables and offshoot corporations. (Your mother, Leanne is legally blind, bitter and claimed all of you had abandoned her. You have tried to make things right with her. You do get along with your grandpa Larry. But he's in trouble for some reason.

What do you know about your grandfather Larry?

Leanne's father had made several bad business decisions after Jake left and slowly the Paddan Paddock Stables became worth less and less. Larry had bet everything he owned on a horse race trying to recoup his losses. Instead he lost it all and ran up huge debts. When your mom, Leanne found out about it, she panicked. She's afraid she'll have no inheritance at all, just bills and more bills. Bitter, she hired attorneys to renegotiate her divorce decree to no avail.

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Benny/Jamari

Tell us about yourself:

The only surviving child of your dad, Jake and his second wife, Raquel, and the youngest child of Jake's. He wanted to name you Hoss, but didn't when Raquel begged him not to. Your daddy was enamored with the TV show Bonanza. The two of you watched reruns and his collection of DVDs all the time. Said it reminded him of home. Once he started crying about never seeing his mother, Becky Sue, again before she died. When you

asked about her, all he would say was Uncle Red wouldn't let him come home and that nobody would ever hurt you. He looked crazy intent when he said that so you never brought it up again.

What are your half-siblings like:

Simone (nicknamed Storm) is the rebellious one but she always takes care of you. Your mom died giving birth to you on a cruise ship and she stepped in to take her place. She taught you to walk, ride a horse, tutored you for school. You never call her Stormy like the rest do.

How did you and Little Joe get along:

The only memory you have of him is when he lent you his favorite Steelers jacket to wear while he was gone on some trip. Ever since, Jake became so overprotective it was insane. You never are allowed to do anything remotely dangerous.

Simone has nightmares about Little Joe's abduction and confided to you it was all her fault. She said if Jake ever found out he'd kill her, then himself. You were so scared about losing the two people you loved most you never spoke of it to anyone.

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Danny/Daniella

How did you get along with Little Joe

He was constantly tattling on every little thing anyone did – especially Simone. They really butted heads.

How did the family in general get along:

A former model, Raquel was delighted whenever she shopped for clothes and accessories and got Judy started on a life of spending money. Raquel died giving birth to Benny/Jamari on a cruise and Jake hated anything to do with cruises ever since because he blamed the doctor on board for her death.

How do you get along with your siblings:

Everyone calls her Stormy for good reason.

How did you get along with your father, Jake:

Jake was devastated when Little Joe was abducted on vacation.

How much do you see your mother now?

Every week but it's very uncomfortable. Your mother, Leanne, whines about money every time you visit. Bitter, she hired attorneys to renegotiate her divorce decree to get some of Jake's wealth. Now that Jake passed away, another big legal mess has begun. There are problems with who inherits what so Judy maxed out all of her credit cards in case they were frozen.

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Gabriella/Gabriel

Tell us about Raquel:

Jake married a former model, Raquel who had been his secretary and your mom really blasted her. She

complained about how well Raquel dressed and how much stuff she had and how Jake doesn't pay child support because Raquel spends everything he makes.

What happened after Joe went missing:

Dad made Ruby his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with some help from Simone. Judy shopped. Out of guilt you all treat Benny/Jamari like gold. Jake would probably die of grief if anything ever happened to Benny/Jamari

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Gene/Jean

How does the family get along:

Raquel and Judy shopped together all the time. You wish they had included you but they said you were too young. Little Joe teased Judy because she barely squeaked out a C- average in an associate's degree in Fiber Arts (The 21st century equivalent of basket weaving)

What happened when Little Joe went missing?

When Jake found out his favorite son was missing, he wasted no time. He hired private investigators, contacted the embassy and called the governor of Texas. But it was no use. Little Joe was never found and you all you're your guilty secret. Jake was devastated by what he assumed was the death of his favorite son. He made Ruby his POA and withdrew from everything but seeing that Benny/Jamari was safe and indulged. Ruby carried on with the business with your help. Judy just shopped. One time Judy told you she wished she'd never gone along with the revised plan but it was better than the first. At least she thought to at the time. When you asked her "what plan" she panicked and said you must never talk about it again.

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Izzy/Isabel

What are your siblings like:

Simone (nicknamed Storm) is the rebellious one. When Simone was 14 she decided to sneak out one night and take daddy's mustang convertible for a spin with a few friends. Little Joe told and from there on out it was war between Little Joe and her. She vowed one day to make Little Joe "so little no one would ever see him again"

What was Joe like as a kid:

Joe was a spoiled brat. Always watching reruns of Bonanza with dad. Your daddy was enamored with the TV show Bonanza (said it reminded him of home). He ran away from home because of a fight with Uncle Red.

How did your parents meet:

Your parents met when Jake came to work for your grandfather Larry at the Paddan Paddocks Stables. Your mom, the only child, fell in love with him and they married. Your mom always wished you had been a boy and sometimes even hints that if one of you had been male, Jake wouldn't have left her. Other times she blames herself – because she is so ugly.

How did Little Joe's disappearance change things

Yes and no. We all assumed positions in Jake's Stairway to Heaven Stables and the offshoot corporations. Your mother, not understanding your guilt prompted this, misunderstood and claimed they had abandoned her.

How do you and Larry get along:

Very well. He says you are his favorite grandchild and gets you to tell him what's going on at home. Leanne's father, Larry, had made several bad business decisions and the Paddan Paddock Stables became worth less and less. Larry bets all the time on horse races trying to get caught up on his bills but he loses allot.

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Nate/Natalie

What are your siblings like:

Simone (nicknamed Storm) is the rebellious one. One time she got mad at somebody for talking bad about Judy. That night she drove over to their house in your dad's dump truck and shoved the kid's car through their living room window. She got everybody's attention for that and was jailed overnight..

What did Ruby do when Joe disappeared:

When Ruby found out he'd been arrested by the police, she did everything she could to find him but the police claimed he'd been abducted by someone looking like a real policeman. Judy and Simone know something about it they aren't telling.

What do you know about your Uncle Red?

One time you ran away from home because of all the fighting and stayed with Uncle Red for a few days. He told you this story from his teen years. He, your dad and some ranch hands were playing poker. Uncle Red bet his share of the ranch on a jack high straight flush in hearts. Jake had a Queen high straight flush in spades. Red lost but it was always playing around. Then Jake started telling folks he'd taken sworn witness statements to a notary and made it legal. Grandma Becky Sue shipped Jake out to Uncle Larry's because she was afraid Red would "hurt him bad."

QUESTIONS TO ASK: Zack/Zeba

What do you do for a living:

All the children assumed positions in Jake's huge Stairway to heaven Stables and offshoot corporations. (Your mother, Leanne is legally blind, bitter and claimed all of you had abandoned her. You have tried to make things right with her. You do get along with your grandpa Larry.

How does the family get along:

Your parents divorced when you were young. The older siblings got in trouble and there is some dreadful secret that you know would unbalance the already unstable family if it ever got out. There was always fighting. Especially Little Joe vs. the oldest three: Ruby, Simone and Judy.

What happened on the trip:

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Something went wrong and Little Joe got abducted. Simone said you'd be sorry if you opened your mouth about it. You believe her. They don't call her Stormy for nothing.

(When all the information has been revealed)

MR.Z: We shall now take a short break. Refresh yourselves and reconvene at *(fill in the time)*

Little Joe's arrest information

It all happened during a visit to the necropolis of Tuna el-Gebel, with its tombs and catacombs of sacred baboon and ibis burials dating to the Greco-Roman period. Little Joe was threatening to tell Jake that Judy had not only skipped seeing the tombs el-Amarna in order to shop but also bought an expensive trinket at the gift shop.

Ruby intervened when the fight got serious and worked out a compromise that if the trinket was returned for a refund, Little Joe would be quiet about the whole thing.

While Ruby left the group to return the trinket, Simone concocted a plan for revenge. She would tell a museum guard that Joseph taken a pot from a display, hoping to get him in trouble until the authorities checked him over and found nothing. The scare would keep him in line the rest of the trip. Not one of them knew how seriously officials protected antiquities.

Things did not go as planned. Joseph was arrested and hauled off. Simone blew up and nearly got herself arrested as well. Judy burst into tears and was sitting on the floor, sobbing when Ruby returned. Ruby managed smooth things over so Simone got off on a warning but was unable to locate Little Joe or where he was being held. They knew they'd have to call home.

Before calling their father, they all agreed to a pact of silence regarding their involvement. Some of the siblings only knew part of the story anyway. Jake immediately hired a private investigator, called the governors of several states where he did business and contacted the American Embassy. He did everything in his power to locate his son but no trace of Joe was ever found.

The siblings have kept their vow of secrecy all these years.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF FORGIVENESS:

Esau and Jacob. (Genesis 33:4–15)
 Joseph (Genesis 45:8–15)
 Moses (Numbers 12:1–13)
 David (2 Sam 19:18–23)
 Solomon (1 Kings. 1:52, 53)
 Jesus (Luke 23:34)
 Stephen (Acts 7:59-60)
 Paul (2 Timothy 4:16)

Another lesson on Joseph/forgiveness can be found at <http://www.unionchurch.com/archive/030500.html>

Go Bible.org offers a 13 lesson series on forgiveness. <http://www.gobible.org/study/233.php>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

List 4-5 things Joseph's brothers had deprived him of. What happened to him that he didn't deserve?

What kind of offense do you find most difficult to forgive?

Do you meditate on an offense over and over?

How do you find it in yourself to let go of past offenses even though you "deserve" to hang onto them?

Does forgiving someone mean that the offense is forgotten and has no further consequences?

Do you ever feel that you a prisoner of unforgiveness? When? Why?

What is the Biblical measure of forgiveness? (Seventy times seven, Matthew 18:21-22; unlimited, Luke 17:3-4; as God forgave us, Ephesians 4:32)

What are the benefits of forgiving? (precursor to us being forgiven, Mark 11:25-26; restores relationships, 2 Cor. 2:5–10)

Was Joseph focused on restoration of relationship? Evening up the score? Did Joseph require repentance from his brothers as a condition of forgiveness? Are we obligated to forgive if the offender has not asked us? Is not sorry?

Whose pattern of forgiveness should we follow?

Situations to discuss

****Suppose you are being abused. The abuser says they are sorry. You believe them. You forgive them. But you also tell the person that unless they get some help you will not return to the house. Is that incompatible with forgiveness? Can you care about the person, forgive them and still insist that something change?**

****On April 9, 1960, Adolph Coors III was kidnapped and eventually shot to death. His fifteen year son hated Joseph Corbett, the man who was sentenced to life for slaying his father.**

Predict what will happen internally and externally?

Fifteen years later, Ad Coors the 4th, became a Christian and asked God to free him of the bitterness he held toward Joseph Corbett, to keep resentment from eating away at him because he could see that his hatred was affecting his relationship with God.

Predict how God worked in his life.

Finally, in God's strength Coors went to the maximum security to visit Corbett but Corbett refused to see him. Coors left a Bible inscribed with "I'm here to see you today and I'm sorry that we could not meet. As a Christian I am summoned by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, to forgive. I do forgive you, and I ask you to forgive me for the hatred I've held in my heart for you." Sometime later Coors testified that he had developed a love for that man that only Jesus Christ could have put in his heart.

PROMPTS AND QUOTES FOR RESPONSES

Prompts: Choose one or more of these prompts and respond verbally or in writing.

Another option to discuss is to read them and have everyone indicate their level of agreement physically. Strongly agree? (raise both hands) Agree? (raise one hand) Disagree? (cross your arms) Unsure? (hand on head)

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." [Eph. 4:32 by Paul]

The old proverb says, "Revenge is sweet"

One must concentrate on doing what is right, rather than concentrating on saying you're sorry later.

To return evil for good is devilish; to return good for good is human; to return good for evil is godlike.

Love means never having to say you're sorry. (from a movie in the 60's)

A saying of the rabbis: "Forgive the first offense, the second, the third; punish the fourth."

"The unforgiving spirit is a root of bitterness from which there springs a tree whose leaves are poisonous, and whose fruit, carrying in it the seeds of fresh evil, is death to all who taste it."

A poem by Charles Henry Webb

Revenge is a naked sword—
It has neither hilt nor guard,
Wouldst thou wield this brand of the Lord?
Is thy grasp then firm and hard?

But the closer thy clutch of the blade,
The deadlier blow thou wouldst deal,
Deeper wound in thy hand is made—
It is thy blood reddens the steel.

And when thou hast dealt the blow—
When the blade from thy hand has flown—
Instead of the heart of the foe,
Thou mayest find it sheathed in thine own.

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." (Col. 3:13, Paul)

"Burn me once, shame on you. Burn me twice, shame on me."

What is this forgiveness of Christ? You know how he exhibited it in his daily life. He was much tried, but he was never provoked to wrath. Both by friends and by enemies he was made to suffer, yet he neither accused the one nor the other to his great Father. He never reviled those who reviled him, but patiently yielded to their malice, giving his back to the smite-ers, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. His disciples he gently rebuked, but he never spoke to them in anger. A life of forgiveness was crowned by his dying prayer for his persecutors, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." He loved his enemies; he lived for his enemies; he died for his enemies. He was incarnate gentleness, the mirror and paragon of forgiveness. [Spurgeon, Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Vol. 31 p. 361]

We must all continually acknowledge that we do not practice the forgiving heart as we should. We are to have a forgiving spirit before the other person expresses regret for his wrong. The Lord's prayer does not suggest that when the other man is sorry, then we are to show a oneness by having a forgiving spirit. Rather, we are called upon to have a forgiving spirit without the other man having made the first step. We may still say that he is wrong, but in the midst of saying that he is wrong, we must be forgiving. [Francis Schaeffer, The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer Crossway Books 1985]

OBJECT LESSONS

The Etch-a-sketch

Show audience and Etch-a-sketch and explain how it works if they do not know. Allow your audience to choose the picture you'll draw with the Etch-A-Sketch. Have them rate or comment on how well you did. Tell them you are not happy with certain features. Mention that drawing a picture with curves is almost impossible. but Etch-A-Sketch's best features is its ability to erase and allow you to start over.

Turn the Etch-A-Sketch upside down, and give it a big shake. **Say:** I made mistakes on my drawing. The Etch-A-Sketch lets me start over. Sometimes we make mistakes in life. God lets us start over. Do we allow others the same opportunity?

Read 1 John 1:9 Ask: What is sin? What does it mean to confess our sins? What happens when we confess our sins? Who should we confess them to? Why?

(Option: Allow students to privately etch their sins, pray, then shake them away and start over. OR have them think of a sin against another person they would like forgiveness for. Have them write specifically what they want forgiven on paper and pray for God to do the impossible – give them the courage to ask for forgiveness and give the one they sinned against the strength and courage to forgive. Designate a time later to pass them to the person from whom they seek forgiveness. Ask that they both pray and then throw the paper into a campfire or otherwise destroy it once it is forgiven.

The white socks

Show two pairs of socks – new, white socks still in the package and a horribly dirty pair with stains that cannot be washed or bleached out.

Ask which one they'd prefer to wear and why.

We started out like these new clean socks. But as time goes on, they start looking more like these dirty ones. Why? Give me some examples, personal or otherwise.

If I wash these dirty socks, will they look like the new ones? Why or why not?

Just as we cannot make these dirty socks new, we cannot make our lives pure. Only Jesus can do that. And he will. The apostle John assures us in 1 John 1:9 that “ If confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” But it doesn't negate what Jesus said when he taught his disciples to pray in Matthew 6: 9-14. (have someone read the passage)

This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation,¹
but deliver us from the evil one. For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Salt and Pepper

Form groups of 3-5 and give each group a saucer, salt and pepper shaker and a plastic spoon. Explain they will use these after you show them what to do.

SAY: The Bible says we are the salt of the earth in Matthew 5:13 (pour about 1/4 of a teaspoon of salt onto a saucer. To increase the challenge, pour the salt into a small mound and require the size and shape of the mound to be unchanged) Evil is like this pepper (sprinkle some on the salt). How do we remove the pepper without removing the salt? The only thing you can use is the plastic spoon. Talk it over and see what you can come up with.

Allow 5-10 minutes then reconvene the group and ask what worked and what didn't.

This task is nearly impossible. Probably like how Joseph felt when he saw his brother. (rub the spoon

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vigorously against your clothing - something wool makes it easier – to generate static electricity. Pass the spoon over the mound, and the pepper will attach itself to the spoon, without disturbing the salt.) How does this relate to forgiveness? To “All things are possible with God?”

Pillows

Ask everyone (*or selected group*) to hold their “grudge” (*the pillow*) in front of them with both arms. This pillow represents a grudge you hold against someone. It could be something someone said, a look they gave you, something they did intentionally or possibly something they did but have no idea it affected you as it did. ASK: What are some things people hold grudges about?

Explain that when some people hold grudges, they want to hold onto them tightly and as close to their hearts as possible. Many people believe this will protect them from being hurt again. ASK: What could the pillow-grudge protect from? When would it be useless as protection?

Direct those with pillows to continue to hold their grudges until a specified time. (during meals this can be particularly interesting). Whoever is able to hold their pillow-grudges until that time will have their name entered in a drawing for the prize in the box (or envelop, or whatever you choose as long as they cannot tell what the prize is). After the time has elapsed, allow anyone who has kept their grudge successfully to relinquish it and put their name in the drawing.

While they do this, ASK: How did holding the grudge limit you? Help you? Hinder you.

The Bible talks about holding grudges. Have these scriptures read: **Genesis 27:41**

Esau held a **grudge** against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”

Genesis 50:15 When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “What if Joseph holds a **grudge** against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?” **Leviticus 19:18** “Do not seek revenge or bear a **grudge** against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

Mark 6:19 So Herodias nursed a **grudge** against John and wanted to kill him.

DISCUSS: How did holding a grudge help or hinder these people?

ASK: What do you think the prize is for holding a grudge?

Draw the winner’s name and have them open the box or envelop and reveal the contents. These can be written on slips of paper or even as labels on bottles with skull and crossbones to indicate poisons: depression, cardiovascular disease, anxiety, bitterness to poison future relationships. (See websites listed below for details on the medical studies that found these results)

<http://www.webmd.com/depression/news/20000225/holding-a-grudge-can-be-bad-for-your-health>

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/forgiveness/MH00131>

A LESSON BASED ON MATTHEW 18:21-35

Imagine you borrowed a friend’s car or play station or other valuable item you cannot afford to replace. (ask for other examples of both valuable things or irreplaceable things that might have personal or sentimental value) Somehow it became broken or stolen and you could not replace it. How would your friend react? How would you like them to react? What if they said it was OK, that you did not have to pay it back?

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Imagine for a moment, you killed their pet or a loved one. How would that change things? How much less hurtful would it be to them if you only failed to intervene when someone else damaged their property or destroyed a love one? How much less guilty would you be? Jesus said if anyone sin against us, we should first go and talk the matter over with him privately to settle the matter. If the matter cannot be settled between the two, then and only then are others involved. Gossiping is not listed as an option.

What makes it hard NOT to talk about it to others? What makes it hard to talk to the person? What kind of person (possibly someone you know or maybe an “ideal” person) IS easy to talk to? Why? How can one become the kind of person easy to approach?

Peter asked Jesus how often his brother should sin against him and he forgive him. What answer do you suppose he was hoping for? In many people’s minds, if they have forgiven someone two or three times, they have gone the extra mile. Might Peter have thought Jesus would give him the gold medal for saying seven times? How do you think he felt when Jesus answered him?

In the parable Jesus told, who represents whom? Think back to the situation when you lost or damaged a friend irreplaceable item. How does this mesh with the parable? What would be the modern day equivalent of the second servant who owed the forgiven servant? How do the 2 debts compare? If the law had been enforced, who would have suffered besides the servant (the servant’s family would be sold as slaves) Why wasn’t the forgiven servant more kindly disposed to the one who owed him?

Because of our mistakes, God lost his only son. How does he treat you for being party to that murder? How can we pay him back?

PRODIGAL’S SON LESSON– LUKE 15:11-32

Read the passage assigning the various parts and narration to group members. Compare and contrast the older brother’s response to the father’s. Apply it to our situations today.

Read 1 John 2: 9-11 Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister¹ is still in the darkness. Anyone who loves their brother and sister¹ lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.

Read I John 3: 19-21 We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

Forgiveness battleship <http://www.quia.com/ba/506162.html>

Genesis 37 & 39: Young Joseph rags to riches <http://www.quia.com/rr/861125.html>

Genesis 40-47 challenge board <http://www.quia.com/cb/789315.html>

Sons of Jacob matching <http://www.quia.com/jg/1432632.html>