10 Knights and Knaves Puzzles

Knights always tell the truth, knaves always lie. Ten truth-teller and liar puzzles, from easy to murderous. Answers at the back.

1. We Are Both Knaves — EASY

Ana says: "Ben and I are both knaves." What are Ana and Ben?

2. The Same Kind — EASY

- **Ana:** "Ben is a knave."
- **Ben:** "Ana and I are the same kind."

What are they?

3. Vouching for Cy — MEDIUM

- **Ana:** "Ben and Cy are both knaves."
- **Ben:** "Cy and I are the same kind."
- **Cy:** "Ben is a knight."

Who is a knight and who is a knave?

4. Exactly One Knight — MEDIUM

- **Ana:** "Exactly one of us is a knight."
- **Ben:** "Ana and Cy are both knaves."
- **Cy:** "We are all knaves."

Who is a knight?

5. Not Both — MEDIUM

- **Ana:** "Either Ben or Cy is a knight, but not both."
- **Ben:** "Cy is a knight."
- **Cy:** "Ana is a knave."

Who is a knight and who is a knave?

6. An Island of Liars? — HARD

- **Ana:** "Either Ben or Cy is a knight, but not both."
- **Ben:** "Exactly one of us three is a knight."
- **Cy:** "Ben is a knight."

How many knights are there?

7. Murder on Knave Island I — HARD

On Knave Island every islander is a knight or a knave, and the killer is always a knave.

- **Ross:** "Sam is innocent."
- **Sam:** "Tia is a knave."
- **Tia:** "Ross did it."

Who's the killer?

8. Murder on Knave Island II — HARD

Same island, same rule: the killer is a knave.

- **Ross:** "I'm innocent."
- **Sam:** "Exactly one of us three is a knight."
- **Tia:** "Ross and Sam are both knaves."

Who's the killer?

9. Murder on Knave Island III — HARD

One more from the island, where the killer is always a knave.

- **Ross:** "Sam and Tia are the same kind."
- **Sam:** "Ross is innocent."
- **Tia:** "Ross is a knight."

Who's the killer?

10. The Sunday Liar

HARD

In a Room for Murder Sunday case, everyone tells the truth except the killer.

- **Pell:** “Quill did it.”
- **Quill:** “Pell is lying.”
- **Rook:** “Quill is lying.”
- **Sable:** “Rook is telling the truth.”

Who’s the killer?

Answer key

1. **We Are Both Knaves. Ana is a knave and Ben is a knight.** A knight could never say it (it would make her a knave), so Ana is a knave, and her statement is false: they aren't both knaves. Ben must be the knight.
2. **The Same Kind. Ana is a knight and Ben is a knave.** Whatever Ana is, calling Ben a knave makes them different kinds (a knight telling the truth about a knave, or a knave lying about a knight). So Ben's "we're the same kind" is false: Ben is a knave, and Ana is the knight.
3. **Vouching for Cy. Ana is a knave; Ben and Cy are knights.** Whatever Ben is, his statement makes Cy a knight: a knight Ben tells the truth (Cy is like him), a knave Ben lies (Cy is the opposite of a knave). Cy, a knight, says Ben is a knight — true. So Ben and Cy are knights, and Ana's statement is a lie.
4. **Exactly One Knight. Only Ana.** Cy can't be a knight (a knight can't call himself a knave), so Cy is a knave and someone is a knight. If Ben were a knight, Ana and Cy would be knaves and Ben the only knight — which would make Ana's statement true, impossible for a knave. So Ben is a knave, his statement is false, and since Cy is a knave, Ana must be a knight. She's the only one, just as she says.
5. **Not Both. Ana is a knave; Ben and Cy are knights.** Ben calls Cy a knight, so Ben and Cy are the same kind. That makes Ana's "one of them but not both" false — Ana is a knave. Cy calls Ana a knave, which is true, so Cy is a knight, and so is Ben.
6. **An Island of Liars?. None — all three are knaves.** Cy calls Ben a knight, so Ben and Cy are the same kind, and Ana's "one but not both" is false: Ana is a knave. If Ben and Cy were knights, Ben's "exactly one of us is a knight" would be false. So they're knaves too, and Ben's statement is indeed a lie: there are no knights at all.
7. **Murder on Knave Island I. Tia.** If Tia were a knight, Ross would be the killer — so a knave, whose "Sam is innocent" would make Sam a killer too. So Tia is a knave, Sam's statement is true (Sam is a knight) and Tia's accusation is false (Ross is innocent). Ross says Sam is innocent — true, since knights aren't killers — so Ross is a knight. The only knave, and the killer, is Tia.
8. **Murder on Knave Island II. Ross.** If Tia were a knight, Ross and Sam would be knaves and Tia the only knight — making Sam's statement true, impossible for a knave. So Tia is a knave, and Ross and Sam aren't both knaves. If Sam were a knave, Ross would be the only knight — again making Sam's statement true. So Sam is a knight, exactly one of them is a knight, and Ross is a knave: his "I'm innocent" is a lie.
9. **Murder on Knave Island III. Tia.** Tia calls Ross a knight, so they're the same kind. If both were knights, Ross's statement would make Sam a knight too — three knights and no knave to be the killer. So Ross and Tia are knaves, Ross's statement is false (Sam, unlike Tia, is a knight) and Sam's "Ross is innocent" is true. The killer is the other knave: Tia.
10. **The Sunday Liar. Quill.** Test each suspect as the liar. If Pell were lying, Quill would be honest — but Rook says Quill is lying, so Rook would be a second liar. If Rook were lying, Sable (who vouches for Rook) would be lying too, and if Sable were lying, so would Rook. Only Quill works: Pell rightly names him, Rook rightly calls him a liar, and Sable rightly backs Rook.

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