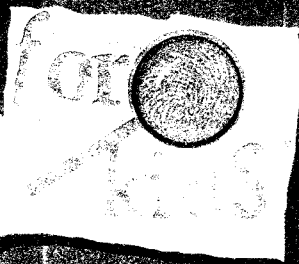
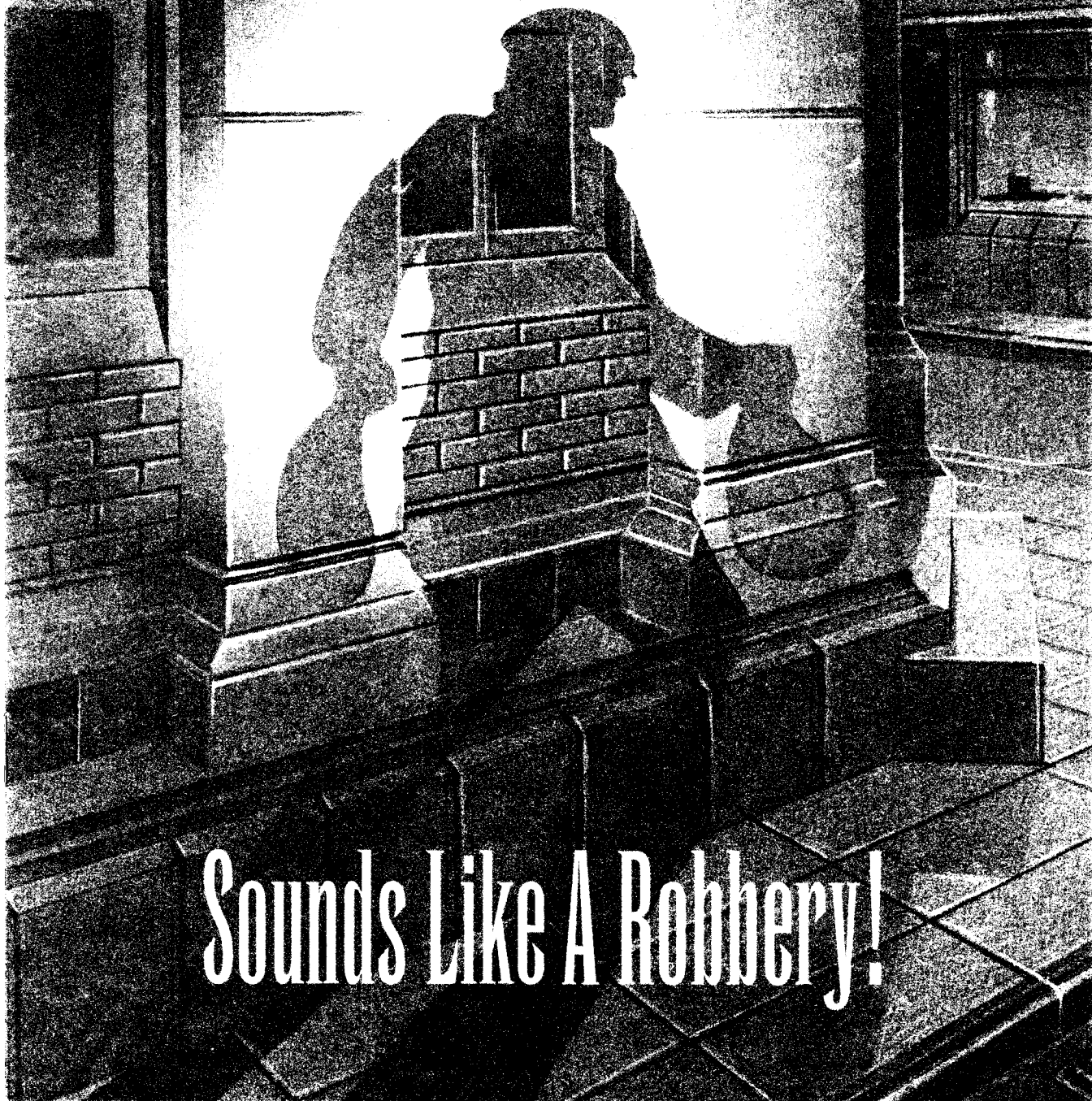


Clue

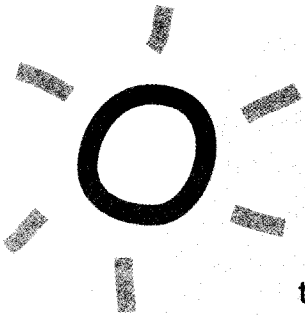


MYSTERY JIGSAW PUZZLE



Sounds Like A Robbery!

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It began like any other boring summer afternoon. Vivienne Scarlett wanted everyone to go to the mall, but everyone said no. They'd spent enough afternoons watching her try on clothes and telling her how nice she looked. Johnny Green tried to get them excited about a game of baseball or touch football. But there were only six of them and Vivienne and Peter Plum weren't all that crazy to play.

When they stopped to think about it, there wasn't any logical reason why they should be such good friends. True, they all went to the same school and they were all about the same age. But their personalities were as different as the colors of their names.

"Maybe we're friends because we all like to argue and get on each other's nerves," Mike Mustard once suggested.

"That's so stupid," Liz Peacock argued back. "Sometimes you really get on my nerves."

"You see?" Mike said. "That proves my point." And then they all got into an argument about who liked to argue the most.

For the past few weeks they'd been playing spy games. It was Mike's idea. He talked them all into getting spy stuff, like binoculars and tape recorders. But they soon got tired of tailing the mailman and went back to just hanging out.

On this particular afternoon, they sat around the front steps of The White Hotel, watching as Peter Plum practiced on his in-line skates.

Peter started all the way down the block and then picked up speed, hoping to jump the entire set of steps. He was crouched down and concentrating hard when two men suddenly appeared from around the other corner, walking toward the same steps. Peter was heading directly for them. "Watch out!" he shouted. The men looked up and froze, exactly the wrong thing to do.

Peter swerved. He jumped the lowest step only, then stumbled into

the street and spun in three tight circles before coming to a stop. Only then did the men unfreeze. One of them applauded. "Good show!" He was tall and thin and dressed like a cowboy, with boots, a cowboy shirt and hat. But his accent sounded English.

"Sorry," Lily White said with a charming smile.

"I keep telling my friends not to play on the steps." Lily's mother ran the hotel and it was second nature for her to be nice to adults, at least to their faces. "I hope you gentlemen are having a pleasant stay. What brings you to Tudor Heights?"

It was a simple question, but the cowboy suddenly seemed confused. The other man was shorter, darker and dressed in an expensive suit. "We're salesmen," he answered in a gravelly voice. The scar across his left cheek crinkled as he smiled. "Computer supplies. Max, let's go."

The kids watched as the men walked into the hotel and down the hall to their rooms. "They don't look like salesmen," Liz Peacock whispered with a sour smile. She was the naturally suspicious type.

"They're not salesmen," Peter said, for once agreeing with her. He came in for a landing on the steps. "There's no computer store in Tudor Heights. My dad was complaining about that just last week."

"You guys!" Johnny Green shook his head. If Liz was too suspicious, then Johnny was too trusting. A sports nut, always with some kind of ball in his hand, Johnny was happy to take things at face value. "Why would they lie to us?"

"Why? There's a million reasons," Mike Mustard said. He had an active imagination and loved to use it. "Maybe they're spies. Or master criminals."

"Right," Peter scoffed. "We have spies and master criminals coming to town all the time." Peter's logical brain sometimes drove Mike crazy.

"Well, there's one way to find out," Lily said as she bounced down the steps. The others followed, anxious for a little excitement. The grown-ups might be fooled by Lily's manners, but her friends knew better. She was the biggest troublemaker of them all.

They trailed her down the block, around the corner and into an alley. Halfway down the narrow alley, Lily stopped, put a finger to her lips — "Shh." — and pointed to an open window on the hotel's first floor. "Room 107," she hissed. "The cowboy."

Johnny was tall enough to see over her head. There was someone in the room, all right. Two people. He could see the cowboy hat sitting on a chair and could hear the English accent. "We can't spy on people." Johnny tried pulling Lily away. "It's not right."

"Why not?" Lily asked, holding her ground.

"Yeah. Why not?" Mike Mustard asked. He was already creeping up to the window, just like his favorite movie hero. Peter was right behind him, taking a notepad and pencil from his pocket.

"You guys!" Johnny hissed, but he followed them anyway.

"What do you think of the vault?" It was the gravelly-voiced man, the one with the scar.

"A Lexington X300," replied the English accent. "Thirty years old. Quite crackable."

Liz Peacock's mouth fell open. "Bank robbers," she mouthed in surprise. Mike would have said, "I told you so," but he looked too shocked to speak.

The young eavesdroppers all crouched a little further down and edged a little closer, their ears trained on the open window. Could it really be? Maybe they were talking about some other kind of vault.

"The weakest point seems to be the rear wall," added the gravelly-voiced man. His partner called him Victor. "Small town banks get lazy about security. Lucky for us." Victor's laugh sounded downright nasty.

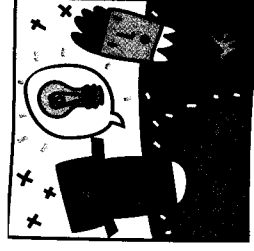
The six friends listened for another minute, then sneaked away from the window, no longer wondering what to do with their afternoon. Johnny Green suggested going to the police, but no one took him seriously.

"A real bank robbery," said Mike, awestruck. "And we're the only ones who know."

Peter was the one who came up with the plan of attack. And then he turned things over to Liz. She was better at giving orders.

When the men came back out, they found Lily sitting alone on the hotel steps. "How's it going?" she asked sweetly. Victor grunted, but he didn't seem to mind when she followed them to their car, talking a mile a minute about anything that popped into her head.

As soon as the men pulled away from the curb, Peter and Johnny took over. They worked as a team, Johnny on his skateboard and Peter on his



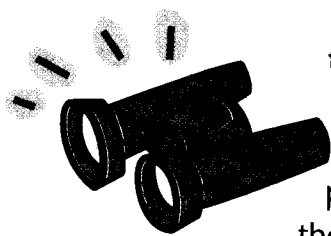
skates. They chased after the car, one on each side of the street. On the first left-hand turn, Peter was locked up in traffic and got left behind.

Johnny made the turn and pumped to catch up. He could see Max in the passenger seat looking at a map, which was probably why the car was going so slowly. Even so, Johnny kept falling farther behind. It was three blocks later that the bank robbers made a right. Johnny tried to follow but got caught by a red light.

"Go through it!" a voice squawked from his waistline. Johnny looked down at the walkie-talkie that was hanging from his belt.

"No, Mike," Johnny said into his walkie-talkie. "That's against the law."

On the roof of Black's clothing store two blocks away, Mike grumbled. "We're tailing bank robbers and he's worried about a red light." Mike turned to his partner. "Where are they now?"



Vivienne was right beside him, peering down through her set of binoculars. Getting up on the roof of Black's had been easy. It was Vivienne's favorite store and she knew every door and stairwell in the place. "Turning east onto Elm," she said. Mike relayed the information.

Peter was the first to call back. "Ya-hoo! Got 'em in sight. This time I won't lose 'em."

Johnny called in ten seconds later. "Got 'em, too. They're slowing down. Stopping. Come on in, everybody. We're at Elm and Third."

Liz was the last of the six to arrive on the scene. She saw the others ducked down behind a dumpster and joined them. "Mrs. Turner, the real estate agent, was waiting for them," Mike whispered. "They're inside." He pointed to the building. "Arcade" was on the marquee in bright red letters.

"The video arcade?" Liz asked. "I thought it closed down last week."

"It did," Peter said. "Maybe they want to rent it. Watch out! Get down."

A large woman with short blond hair was coming out of the arcade. Alone. "Take your time," Mrs. Turner yelled to the people still inside. "Look around. I just have to feed the meter."

"Take your time," an English voice replied eagerly. "We'll be right here."

"What do they want with a deserted store?" Johnny wondered out loud. "Vivienne, the binoculars."

It took Johnny a full minute to make his way across the street, to find

the right angle and to focus the binoculars through the store window. He returned with his report. "They have a little pickax," he told his friends. "They're at the back of the arcade, examining the brick wall."

"Why?" Vivienne asked.

"Don't you know?" Peter said with a snort. Sometimes he couldn't believe how dense they were. "On the other side of that brick wall is the First Tudor Bank. They're planning to break through the wall and rob the bank. This is serious stuff. And..." He checked his watch. "And it's late."

The six kids exchanged glances. It was almost dinnertime. Their families would be waiting. "We've done all we can right now," Lily said. She was hungry. "We figured out what the robbers plan to do and how they plan to do it. The only question is when."

"Yeah. When?" Johnny looked at his own watch. "If I don't get home, my mom's gonna shoot me."

"But we can't give up the surveillance," Liz whined. "Dinner or no dinner."

As usual, it was Peter who came up with the solution. "Mike," he said. "You have a tape recorder, right?"

"Yeah." Mike suddenly beamed. "A voice-activated micro-cassette. Want me to get it?"

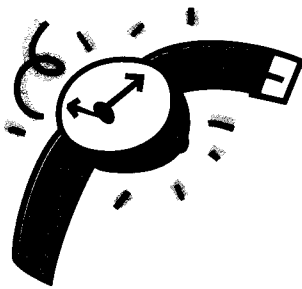
"Yeah. And meet us back at the hotel," said Peter. "I've got a plan."

Mike biked home, joining the others later back at the hotel. He handed Peter a tiny tape recorder. Peter sneaked a potted geranium down from the windowsill of room 107 and hid the machine under the leaves. Then he placed the pot back by the open window.

"We'll meet here after dinner," Peter said as they tiptoed out of the alley. "Eight p.m. Synchronize your watches. With any luck, we'll have another conversation to listen to."

It was still light out when Peter, Liz and Mike returned to the hotel window. Liz insisted it was her turn for a little danger. "Why should boys have all the fun?" she said as she sneaked up to the window. After making sure no one was in the room, she lifted down the flowerpot and looked inside.

Vivienne and Johnny had just shown up as Liz scurried back to join the group. "The tape recorder's gone," she stammered. "And someone left this note."



Liz unfolded a small piece of paper. The message was in a sloppy, childish scrawl. "We know what you're up to. Stop your meddling. Or else!"

They passed the note around, then passed it around again. "Wow," Mike said for the fifth time. "What're we gonna do?"

"I say we go to the police," said Johnny.

"Yeah, right," Liz sneered. "We show them a crummy little note that looks like you wrote it. You think they'll believe us? Where's our proof?" When Lily arrived, they all started telling her the scary news but she wasn't listening. She had some scary news of her own. "They just checked out," she said, all breathless. "Max and the guy with the scar."

"What?" Peter said. "No one checks out of a hotel at night."

"I know. Mom made them pay for tonight but they still checked out. That means they're going to rob the bank. Now. That's why they're not coming back."

"We have to stop them," Johnny decided. "C'mon. Let's go."

Vivienne and Mike had bikes. Johnny had his skateboard and Peter, his in-line skates. Lily and Liz made the trip on foot, running all the way. They got to the abandoned video arcade just a few minutes after the others.

The downtown street was deserted as they gathered around the arcade's side window and peered inside. The glare from a street lamp made it hard to see anything. "Some lights are moving in there," Liz whispered. "I think."

"I'm ready for 'em," bragged Johnny as he took two rolls of quarters out of his pocket. "I saw it on TV. You hold a roll of quarters in your fist. It makes you punch harder."

"It makes you hurt your hand," Lily giggled.

Peter saw that the window was protected by iron bars. Reaching through the bars, he tried the latch. "It's unlocked," he said in amazement and eased the window open. "Vivienne?"

The smallest member of the group examined the bars. "I think I can squeeze through," Vivienne said. Johnny and Mike boosted her up to the ledge.

It was a tight fit and she had to take off her belt, which made her outfit not quite match. But she pushed her way through, then disappeared below. A few seconds later and the side door opened. "Come in," Vivienne

Their eyes adjusted to the darkness. The large front windows let in light from the street, enough so that they didn't bump into any of the shadowy machines. "Wow," said Liz. "All of the games are still here."

The kids hadn't quite figured out what to do. One by one, they tiptoed down the narrow arcade aisles, not quite as brave as they'd been a few minutes before. The headlights of a passing car played across the machines and made them cringe. They were all concentrating so hard on being quiet that they didn't notice when they began to wander away from each other.

Johnny had just realized he was all alone when he heard the voices. At first, they were hard to make out. Two men, he could tell. Their voices didn't sound exactly like the robbers. But their words were chilling. "I say we knock 'em off. They know too much."

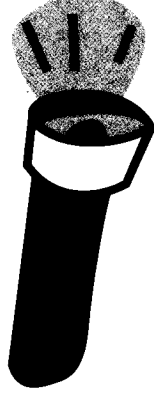
"Nah. They're a bunch of kids," said the second voice. "Amateurs. They didn't even go to the police."

"I tell you, they could ruin everything. This is our biggest heist in years. I say we kill 'em. Make it look like an accident. Just like we did in London."

A hand fell on Johnny's shoulder and he nearly leaped out of his skin. It was Lily, looking even sicker than he felt. Mike and Peter popped their heads out from behind two nearby video games. They all listened as the one robber talked the other into getting rid of them. Then suddenly the voices stopped, which was even scarier.

Vivienne and Liz appeared from around the side aisles, their faces ashen. "What they said — sounded very familiar," Liz whispered.

Before Johnny could answer, they heard a door opening. From somewhere in the closed-up arcade, flashlights began to stream across the walls. "The police!" Vivienne thought happily.



And then she heard the unmistakable English accent and the gravelly voice. "Oh, no!" she hissed. "What'll we do?"

"We know someone's in here," said the gravelly-voiced Victor. "Come on out."

The kids all turned to Peter, hoping for an idea. Peter always had some idea. But not this time. It was Liz who finally came to the rescue. "I've got it," she whispered. "Johnny, break out your quarters. Everyone,

Johnny undid his rolls. He passed the quarters around while Liz explained her plan. Vivienne thought it was crazy, but it was the only plan they had — the only chance they had.

The two men were now on their guard as they began walking cautiously up the main aisle. "Who — Who's there?" the English accent stammered.

A second later and it started. Boom! — like an explosion. The men twisted their flashlights to the left, scouring between the rows of machines. Then from the right came a tinny fanfare. Then left again — the ratta-tat of machine guns. The noises tumbled over themselves: gunshots and shouts and screams. By the time the men realized that these were just video game sounds, there was more.

"Ow," yelled Victor as something hit him on the knee. He swung his flashlight down and saw a round disk from a table hockey game. He was just about to pick it up when another disk hit him in the back. He barely had time to say "Ow" again before the basketballs from the shooting game started coming.

The two men were like sitting ducks, stuck in the middle of the aisle, disoriented by the noise and the blinking lights, as they got pelted by every loose object ever built into the arcade.

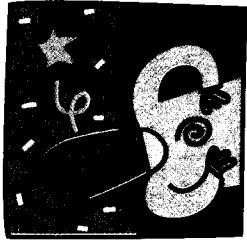
The Englishman, Max, threw his hands in front of his face and made a mad dash for a side aisle. When he uncovered his eyes, the first thing he saw was a game machine with furry animals popping up and down.

"What the heck?" he thought. A split-second later, he was hit squarely on the head.

When the lights came on, the two men were found moaning on the floor. Johnny was about to lead the others in a cheer of triumph when he glanced up and saw another adult. It was Officer Nancy Brill. Her gun was drawn.

The kids started talking, all at the same time. "Quiet!" Officer Brill's usually sunny face was creased into a frown. "We're going down to the station," she growled. "Everybody. Let's go!"

The six young detectives sat in Police Chief Jacobs' office. Waiting for what seemed like hours. From the way everyone was acting, they had a



Chief Jacobs walked in. Max and Victor were right behind him, followed by Mr. Walters, the bank president. "I don't want to hear any more stories about robbers," the chief said, raising his hand.

The group fell silent and listened. "When you kids broke into the store, you set off an alarm." Chief Jacobs pointed to the two men. "These gentlemen were here with me. They're security experts. Mr. Walters brought them into town to help with the bank's expansion."

"Expansion?" Liz gulped. "You mean they're not bank robbers?"

Max laughed, but Victor still looked angry. "First Tudor Bank is taking over the arcade and putting in a new vault," Victor growled. "When the alarm went off, we went down with Officer Brill to check it out. And got attacked."

"No," Peter said stubbornly. "That's not true. You took Mike's tape recorder. And you left this." He pulled the threatening note from his pocket and handed it to Max.

"Not us, mate," said Max. "Someone must be playing a joke on you."

"No," Peter insisted. "What about the voices we heard in the arcade? You were planning to kill us."

The two men exchanged confused glances. "We don't know what you're talking about."

"Voices?" Officer Brill had just walked in. She reached into her pocket and pulled out a tiny tape recorder. "Chief? I found this in the arcade, beside one of the games."

Mike yelped. "Hey, that's mine!"

Officer Brill punched a button, rewinding the tape. "Could these be the voices you kids heard?" She punched another button and the tape recorder sprang to life, blasting out the same two voices they'd heard in the shadowy store.

"I knew it sounded familiar," Liz moaned. "That show was on TV. I watched it right before dinner. You're right. Someone was playing a joke on us."

The kids all felt so awful. They apologized to the two men and this time even Victor smiled. "It's kind of funny when you think about it," he said. "Two security experts getting captured by a bunch of kids. You've



The adults all left Chief Jacob's office, laughing and smiling. "You kids wait here until your parents come," Officer Brill said as she shut the door. Peter started pacing the room, as mad as he'd ever been. "Whoever played this dirty trick..." They were all thinking the same thing. "Leaving that note. Playing that tape in the arcade. It's got to be one of us." He looked accusingly at the other five.

"Pretty good trick," Lily said with a smile. "All right. Which one of you did it?" But no one said a word.

"At least I got my tape recorder back." Mike turned over the cassette and punched the play button, just to check it out. They could hear their own voices on the tape. "That's from this afternoon," Mike said. "From when we put the recorder by the hotel window." They listened to themselves for a minute and could even hear themselves sneaking away.

Mike was about to press the off button when they heard something more. Footsteps coming back down the alley. "That must be the wiseguy," Johnny said, "coming back to steal the machine."

They all listened in silence. "Whoever it was forgot to turn it off!" Lily hissed. And sure enough, she was right. Then they heard a barking dog. "Whoever took the tape recorder turned right onto Poplar Street. That's Tinker, Mrs. Rogers' poodle."

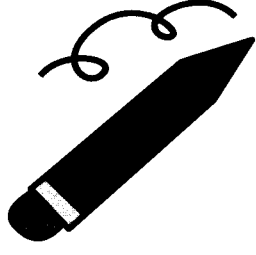
"No," argued Johnny. "I think that's a dog at the pet store."

"Wait a minute, let's just listen." Peter said, pulling out his pad and pencil. He listened for more sounds and wrote them down. At the end of ten minutes, they heard a screen door closing. And then nothing. The machine had finally been turned off.

Liz knew what Peter was up to and she was excited. "We're going to catch this joker. Where's a map?"

On top of Chief Jacobs' desk was a tourist map of Tudor Heights. Johnny unfolded it, then took a pen and began to label locations around town. "The hotel. My house. Peter's house."

Liz explained. "The joker took the tape recorder from the hotel to his house. Or her house. The machine recorded all sounds along the way. All we have to do is follow the sounds and we'll know where the joker went. Let's look at Peter's list."



1. Dog barking.
2. Parrot squawking.
3. Ball bouncing.
4. Splashing water.
5. Piano playing.
6. Dog barking.
7. Bell ringing.
8. Horse neighing.
9. Bouncing diving board.
10. Dump truck backing up.
11. Railroad crossing bell.
12. Cars going over wooden planks.

Which one of the kids took the tape recorder and played the prank on the others? The jigsaw puzzle is a map of Tudor Heights. Piece it together, then see if you can follow the sounds to discover who the culprit is!

THE SOLUTION

With the help of a team of experts, we developed a solution that would allow us to meet our goals. The solution was based on the following principles:

- 1. **Efficiency:** We needed a solution that would be efficient and cost-effective.
- 2. **Scalability:** The solution needed to be scalable and able to handle a large volume of data.
- 3. **Security:** The solution needed to be secure and able to protect sensitive data.
- 4. **Integration:** The solution needed to be able to integrate with existing systems and data sources.

After evaluating several options, we decided to implement the following solution:

- 1. **Cloud Migration:** We migrated our data and applications to the cloud to improve scalability and efficiency.
- 2. **Data Encryption:** We implemented data encryption to ensure the security of our sensitive information.
- 3. **Automated Backups:** We implemented automated backups to ensure that our data was always up-to-date and recoverable.
- 4. **Performance Monitoring:** We implemented performance monitoring to ensure that our system was running optimally.

The solution was implemented successfully and has allowed us to meet our goals. We are very satisfied with the results and believe that this solution will continue to serve us well in the future.

