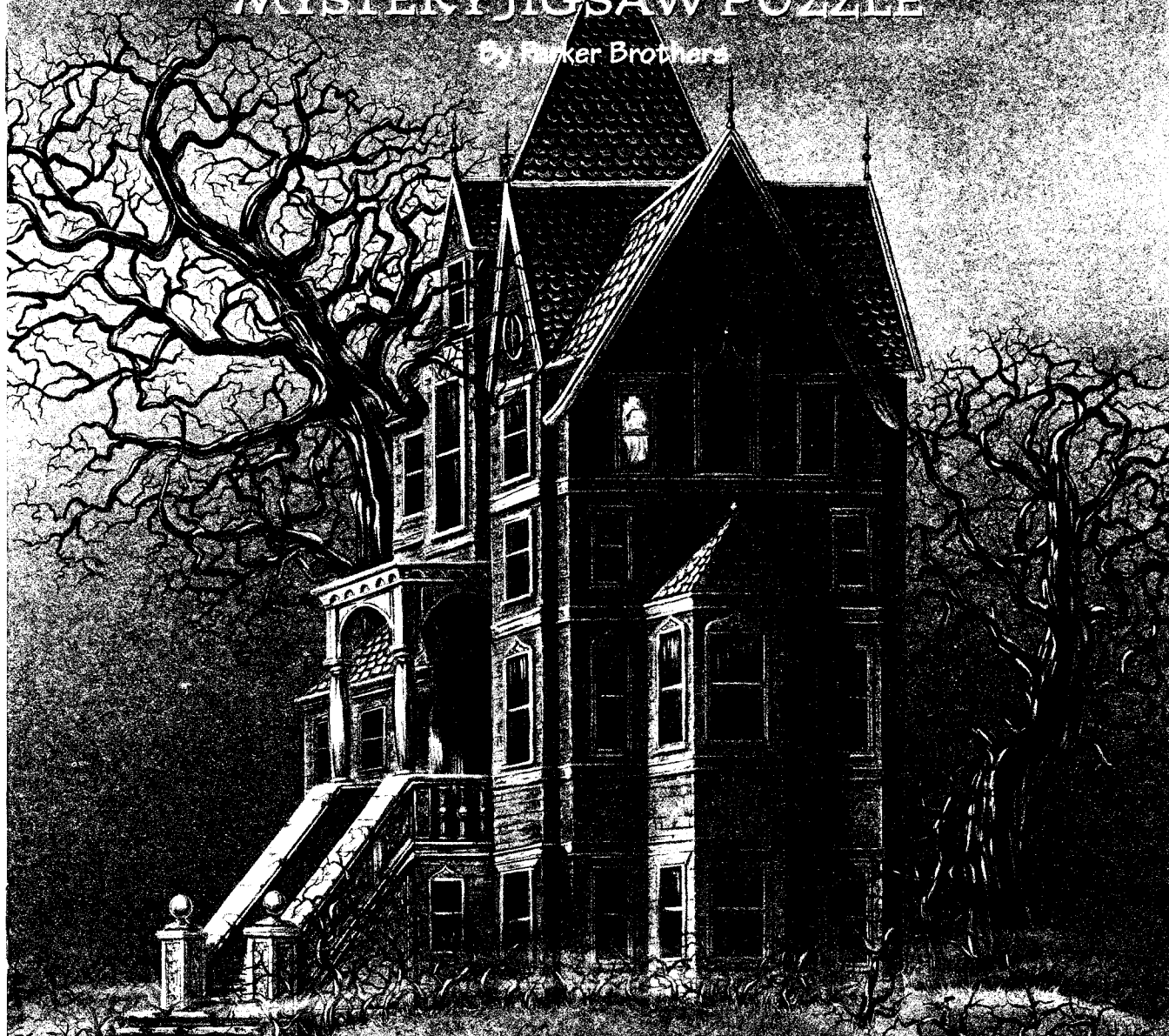


Clue

for
kids™

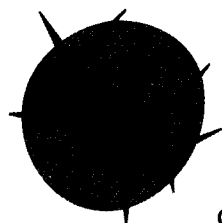
MYSTERY JIGSAW PUZZLE

By Parker Brothers



The Curse of Bledmore Mansion

The Curse of Bledmore Mansion



"We won't really be breaking in," Lily White said. "It's already broken." She pointed to the huge hole where last night's storm had sent a branch shattering through a rear window of the old house. "C'mon. I dare you."

"It's still wrong," said Johnny Green.

The six kids peered into the shadowy rooms. They were all dying to sneak in, just to take a look around. But they were also scared. For years, they had walked by Bledmore Mansion, the town's one real haunted house. The older kids had told them all the ghost stories. Strange things happened to folks who ventured into the old, empty mansion. And now Lily was daring them.

"Ooh." Vivienne Scarlett pushed her way to the front. "There's some neat stuff in there." Her idea of heaven was a day spent window-shopping at the mall. This dusty mansion looked almost as much fun. "I'm going to get a closer look." And before anyone could stop her, Vivienne slipped through the broken window and disappeared inside.

"All right!" Lily cheered. "Who's next?" The grown-ups in town were all fooled into thinking that Lily was meek and polite, the perfect kid. But she was the biggest troublemaker of them all. "Mike? Here's your chance for some real adventure."

Mike Mustard liked adventure, that was true. But, despite his big talk, he preferred to get his adventure from the safety of a book or a movie. "Oh, yeah?" stammered Mike. "If you're so brave, Lily White, you go."

In another second, they were back to arguing. They always argued.

The six young friends all went to the same school and were all about the same age. Maybe that's why they were friends. It certainly wasn't because they got along or liked the same things. They were about as different as kids could be.

"There is no scientific proof that ghosts exist," said Peter Plum. He

was the group know-it-all, the one who always corrected the others and told them they weren't logical. The most irritating thing about Peter was that he really did know a lot.

"We know there aren't any ghosts," Liz Peacock said with a sour smile. "But try telling that to Clarence."

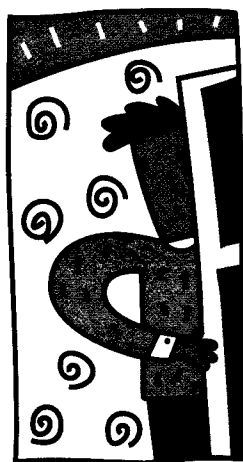
Clarence was the name of the ghost. According to the stories, he'd been a crazy old hermit, the last family member to actually live here. Thirty years ago, Clarence Bledmore died in his bedroom — under mysterious circumstances — or so the older kids said. Ever since then, no one had been able to live in the mansion for more than a few months.

In the middle of all their arguing, the back door squeaked open. Mike yelped and jumped. He landed on Liz's foot, making her yelp and jump, too.

It was only Vivienne. "You guys gotta come in," she said, standing in the open doorway. "This place is full of the coolest stuff."

The other five looked back and forth at each other. But no one budged. "Come on in," Vivienne urged.

"You're not supposed to," Johnny whined. "It's not right." Johnny Green always tried to make them do the right thing, which was even more irritating than being a know-it-all. "Let's go home."



If anything could make them go inside, this was it. In a defiant rush, Liz, Peter, Mike and Lily poured through the open door, sneering at Johnny as they passed. Johnny grumbled, then followed them in.

It was late afternoon, after school, and there was plenty of light for them to see their way through the shadowy rooms. Vivienne took the lead, fascinated by all the dusty knickknacks.

"Wow!" said Vivienne, stopping in her tracks. "A crystal ball." They had just walked into the dining room. The others all peeked over her shoulder. Sure enough, there in the center of a small round table sat a shiny crystal ball. "Maybe this place really is haunted."

"Cool." Lily White instantly plopped herself down in one of the chairs. "Let's have a séance — you know, try to contact the ghosts."

"I'm not sure that's a good idea," stammered Mike Mustard.

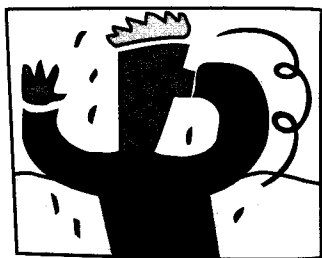
"We shouldn't touch anything," Johnny agreed.

Lily ignored them. She was already bent over the crystal ball, imitating some hokey old fortuneteller. "Oh, ye spirits of Bledmore Mansion." She couldn't help giggling as she chanted. "Come to us — oh, ye spirits."

Liz Peacock giggled, too. Of all the friends, she had the nastiest sense of humor. And then she stopped laughing. The crystal ball. Was it really starting to glow? "Lily," she whispered. "Look what's happening."

They were all staring now. The ball on the table was glowing mysteriously, brighter and brighter. Next came the sounds. Then the ghostly voices.

The whole room now seemed possessed. Chains rattled. Doors squeaked. Voices from nowhere moaned and groaned. As if by magic, a dozen candles in the chandelier suddenly caught fire.



Then a shadow on the ceiling caught Mike's eye. When he glanced up, he saw the face of a ghost staring down at him and laughing. A split-second later, Mike went stumbling out of the room, screaming at the top of his lungs. His five friends followed and they didn't stop running until they hit the street.

No one looked back at the old mansion. If they had, they would have seen a haunting figure standing by a second floor window. The figure gazed down on the fleeing, screaming children — and cackled gleefully.

Peter Plum sat patiently on the front porch while his next-door neighbor finished carving the head of a toy soldier. Peter knew better than to rush Mr. Gray. "Bledmore Mansion," the retired man said for the third time in a row. And he shook his head. "My, my."

For forty years, Ichabod Gray had been a real estate agent. He knew the inside story of every house in the neighborhood. "Why do you want to know about Bledmore Mansion?"

"We have to go in there after her," Johnny said reluctantly.

"Why?" asked Mike with a shudder. "She's just looking around." But deep down, he knew why. "Look, even if there is a ghost, I'm sure he won't hurt her. Right?"

"Right. Then he won't hurt you, either," Lily said and pushed Mike through the hole in the window.

Johnny led the way through the house. In every room they stopped and called Vivienne's name, in more of a scared whisper than a shout. When there was no answer, they moved on. Johnny was trying to stay clear of the dining room, the place where they'd seen the ghost. But the house had so many twists and turns that he lost his sense of direction. Before he knew it, he was leading them into the very room he was trying to avoid.

"Good job," Liz said sarcastically when she saw the round table and the crystal ball. "I'm not staying here." As she brushed past them, Liz stumbled. Reaching out, she grabbed for the table and accidentally hit something — it felt like a button — right under the table's edge. How strange.

"Augh," Mike whined. He had been keeping an eye on the crystal ball. Now, just as it did yesterday, the ball began to glow. "Look!" He pointed. "Let's get out of here." And he ran.

"No. Wait." Liz walked back to the table, reached under the edge again and felt around. A second later and the light in the crystal ball faded.

Mike peeked out from around the corner. "How'd you do that?"

"It's a button," Liz said as she bent down under the table.

Peter bent down, too. "There's a bunch of wires. I'm going to push the button again. Everybody stay calm."

The five intruders stood around the table and watched. Just as before, the crystal ball glowed. When the ghostly sounds started, Johnny and Peter began examining the walls. "There are speakers in the vents," Johnny pointed out.

When the chandelier candles lit up, Peter stood on a chair to get a closer look. "They're not real flames," he said. "They're fake."

"Look out!" Lily gasped, pointing up to Peter's head. "The ghost."

out after a day of school. Breathlessly, he told them about Madame Rose and the curse.

"Right! A curse!" Liz Peacock snickered. "Mr. Smarty believes in curses. Well, we invaded the Bledmore property, didn't we? Why didn't we disappear?" Then she looked around at the others — and stopped laughing. "Where's Vivienne?"

Everyone looked around. They hadn't thought about it before, but Vivienne was always here with them after school. Today she hadn't come.

"Hmm. Viv was the only one who actually invaded the mansion," Mike muttered nervously. "The rest of us used the door."

"That's dumb," Johnny said defiantly. "There's no curse. And she didn't disappear." But he was nervous, too. "Who's got a quarter?"

They assembled around a pay phone and waited while Johnny called the Scarlett house. When he hung up, his hands were shaking. "She didn't come home. Her mom thinks she's with us."

"Wow," Mike said. "Vanished. Just like Madame Rose. And all the others."

The five friends stood silent, each one thinking about ghosts and curses and other things that weren't supposed to exist.

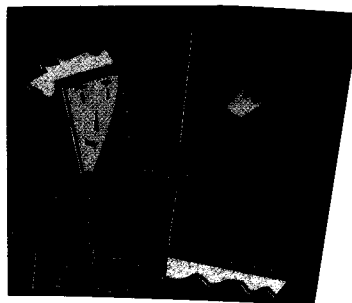
"Wait a minute," Liz Peacock finally said with a snort. "I know where Vivienne is. You saw how she looked at all the stuff in the mansion. I'll bet she went right back there."

"Yeah," Johnny agreed. "You know how she loves to window-shop." Peter smiled and nodded.

But the only way to really set their minds at ease was to go to Bledmore Mansion and see for themselves.

When they arrived at the rear of the house, Liz pointed to something in the grass by the broken window. "You see?" It was Vivienne's backpack and they all sighed in relief. "She's in there, snooping around. Vivienne!"

Mike stuck his head inside and shouted her name. But there was no answer. "She can't hear you," Peter said. "I suppose we have to..." He didn't want to say it.



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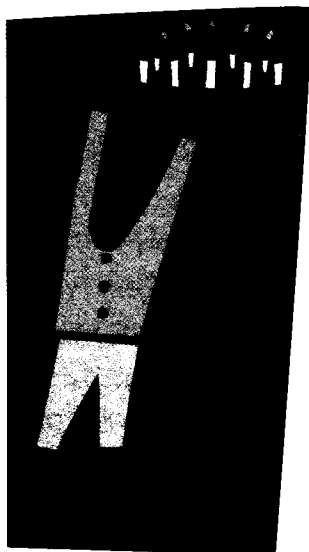
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From down below, it looked like a ghost was materializing right out of the ceiling, growing larger and more solid every second. The frightening face laughed menacingly and looked like it was about to bite off Peter's head.

"A holograph," Peter said, not at all scared by the electronically-produced image. "Cool." And he got down from the chair.

"Madame Rose must have had this stuff put in," Liz deduced. Next to Peter, she was the most logical one.

Peter nodded. "Mr. Gray told me she had some renovations done. In the middle of a séance, all she had to do was push that button and the ghosts would come to life. It must have been very convincing."

"It convinced me," Mike said. "And I'm not easily scared." He was sitting under the table, examining the button. "That first time, when Lily was doing her hocus-pocus with the crystal, one of us must have accidentally touched it."

"Let's do it again," Lily squealed. She reached underneath for the button, but Johnny stopped her. They weren't here to play around, he reminded her, but to find Vivienne.

The friends all agreed. And this time, when they searched from room to room, they weren't quite as nervous.

Vivienne was not anywhere on the first floor, so Johnny led the way upstairs. "Shh," he said as soon as he walked into the master bedroom at the top of the staircase. "You hear that?"

They crowded into the room and listened. There were voices. Grown-up voices. And they seemed to be coming from inside the walls.

Mike circled the room, his ear pressed against the old wood paneling. The other kids watched as he arrived at the fireplace. "It's louder here." Mike began to push and pull every knob and panel in the fireplace mantel. "This always works in the movies," he added, a little embarrassed.

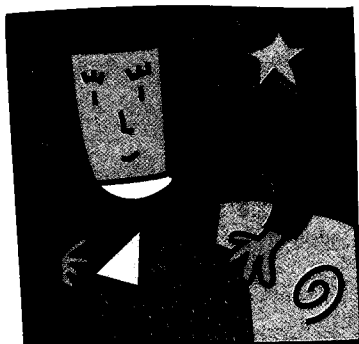
"Too bad we're not in a movie," joked Liz. "Hey! You did it."

Mike was just as surprised as Liz when one of the carved pineapples pulled down, like the lever on a slot machine. There was a soft click and the entire left side of the mantel popped gently out of the wall.

"It's a secret door," Johnny whispered as he rushed to help Mike open it all the way.

Behind the false mantel was a narrow passage and a spiral staircase. The voices were louder and shadowy light poured down the stairs. The kids all glanced at each other, terrified of making any noise that would expose them.

It was wild Lily who took the lead up the staircase, followed by Johnny and the others. When she came near the top, she stopped. Her head was just above the landing and she could see clearly into the dusty attic. Lily felt Johnny's breath on her neck and they both gasped at what they saw. Right in front of them, barely ten feet away, was their friend Vivienne. She was tied up in an old kitchen chair with a rag tied around her mouth.



The room was surprisingly large, a storage area filled with old toys and broken furniture. Over in the far corner were the people they'd heard talking, a man and a woman who were rummaging through a stack of boxes. Behind Lily and Johnny, the other friends were lined up on the spiral stairs. They could all plainly hear.

"It's no use," the woman grunted and kicked one of the boxes. She was short and dumpy-looking, like an unmade bed with brown frizzy hair. "We've been looking for weeks. Nothing."

"We gotta keep searching," the man replied. "Madame Rose hid her money somewhere in the mansion. She told me."

"Yeah, but where? If only the little brat hadn't interrupted us," the woman said, glaring at the tied-up Vivienne. "Soon they're gonna start looking for her."

"That's why we gotta find the money. After we get away, then we'll phone the police and tell them where she is."

The man was probably younger than their fathers, large and muscular with a bit of a gut. He crossed over to Vivienne. "You gave us quite

a fright when you sneaked in here," he said with a mean chuckle. "At first we thought you were the Bledmore ghost. I don't want old Clarence getting mad. He might make us disappear — like Rose."

"Don't mention that ghost," the woman scolded. "He gives me the creeps."

The kids had heard enough. One by one, they tiptoed down the stairs and back into the bedroom. No one made a sound until Liz eased shut the fireplace mantel. "Poor Vivienne," Liz hissed. "All tied up. She must be scared stiff."

"I know that man," Johnny said eagerly. "Mr. Beezle. He did some construction for my dad."

"I know the woman," Mike piped up. "Glenda Fry. She works at that hi-tech store, Tudor Electronics. What are they doing here?"

Everyone looked to Peter. Peter always had the answer. "It's simple," he said with a knowing smirk. "Madame Rose must've hired these two to fix up the mansion. Ms. Fry put in those electronic gadgets we saw and Mr. Beezle did the construction."

It made sense. "Then," Peter went on, "when Madame Rose disappeared, these two came back — to try to find her money."

"Let's go get the police," Johnny suggested firmly.

"N-No," stammered Mike. "I mean, there's got to be another way. If my parents find out I sneaked into Bledmore Mansion, I'll be grounded till I'm twenty."

"Mike has a point," Lily agreed. "On the other hand, if Vivienne is really in danger..."

"I've got it." Liz almost shouted the words, she was so excited. "The perfect plan to rescue Viv."

"What is it?" Peter was skeptical of any plan that wasn't his.

"It's brilliant. These guys believe in ghosts, right?"

"They seem to," Lily agreed.

"Well, I met Madame Rose a few times. Her voice is pretty easy to imitate." Liz said a sentence or two in a high, tremulous voice. Her friends were impressed. "Now, here's my idea."

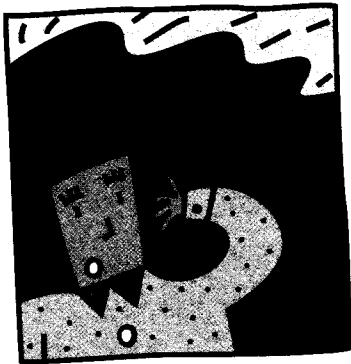
The others gathered 'round as Liz outlined her perfect plan.

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Carl Beezle went through the boxes one final time while his partner checked on their prisoner. Vivienne squirmed, but Glenda Fry paid no attention. "We'll search our way down," she said as she tightened the ropes. "One final time." She sneered at Vivienne. "You don't mind staying with us for a day, do you, dear?" Vivienne's eyes got big and she squirmed some more.

Ms. Fry chuckled, then stopped. "What was that?"

Mr. Beezle heard it, too — a weird banging sound on the pipes. "It's just the plumbing," he said nervously. But the bangs grew louder and



the lights started to flicker. Then came the howling sound, like a sudden wind gusting up through the vents. "It's just..." he gasped. "It's just..."

"Get out." A high-pitched, familiar voice was drifting up with the wind. "Get out. Before it's too late."

"Madame Rose?" Ms. Fry glanced around the shadowy attic. "Where are you?"

"Clarence has me," the voice echoed and moaned. "The ghost. The curse." The lights kept flickering. Chains rattled. Pipes banged. "You must flee. Before it's too late."

Ms. Fry stared at her partner, terrified. Then she turned to face the attic window — and screamed. A lighted candlestick was floating just outside, floating in thin air.

Suddenly, there was a new sound, a thumping sound, coming from somewhere. "Halloooo!" another voice echoed from inside the wall. Then more thumps.

Their eyes were glued to the vibrating wall. And then slowly the wall creaked open, revealing a new secret passage. A large, shadowy figure stood just inside the hole. "Halloooo!"

That was all it took. Mr. Beezle and Ms. Fry screamed in unison and almost flew down the stairs.

Mike and Lily snickered. They had been behind a packing crate and

seen it all. "Don't worry, Vivienne," said Mike as he popped out of his hiding place. "It's just us, coming to the rescue." He walked over to the chair and began to untie the knots.

"Liz. Good job. You make a great ghost," Lily said to the figure in the passage.

"What?" They spun around to the spiral staircase. Liz was just climbing up to meet them. "Are you talking to me?"

Mike and Lily took one look at Liz, then turned and looked at the ghost in the passage. It was taller than Liz, they saw now, taller than all of them.

It was Madame Rose. The real Madame Rose.

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Madame Rose poured a round of hot cocoa. The kids were all sitting snugly in her kitchen, listening intently to their new friend. "I never really disappeared," she explained. "I just had amnesia."

On that day when her sailboat got caught in the storm, Madame Rose was washed overboard. "I was rescued on the beach in Proctorville," she said. "Miles from here. I had absolutely no memory of anything."

During her month in the hospital, her memory slowly returned. "It was just yesterday when I remembered this mansion. I came back today on the bus. As I was unlocking the front door, I heard all sorts of strange noises. I guess that was you kids, playing your little joke. Well, I followed the noise into a secret passage. That's how I wound up in the attic."

She was a thin, energetic woman with a warm smile. Now, for the first time since they met her, the smile faded. "I never trusted those two," Rose said. "That's why I hid my money. The only problem now..." The smile turned into a definite frown. "I can't remember where I hid it."

Peter was aghast. "You can't remember?"

"Not a clue." The woman seemed about ready to cry. "What ever

am I going to do? Without that money, I'm broke. Wait a minute." She snapped her fingers. "I do remember something."

The kids all held their breath. "I made a puzzle for myself," Madame Rose recalled. "You see, even without amnesia, I have a terrible memory. So I left myself a little clue. I remember it took me a long time to make it. If I ever forgot the hiding place, all I had to do was check this clue and it would tell me where I hid the money."

Vivienne beamed. "I just love puzzles. Where is it?"

"Well, that's just it. I can't remember. Wait a minute." Madame Rose snapped her fingers again. "It's in my bedroom, that much I remember."

In a flash, the psychic and her young friends scurried up the stairs to the master bedroom. "The clue is in this room somewhere," she told them. "All we have to do is find it."



***Can you help find the money? Piece together the jigsaw puzzle.
Find the hidden clue and figure out where Madame Rose hid her savings!***

THE SOLUTION

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"The course," Ms. Marie Kline, general secretary, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, said, "has been very helpful to our young people."

The story centers on the mother and the party of a million, a posthumous party. Of the three, there are four guests: "a friend of the father, not a friend of the mother," and "a friend of the mother, not a friend of the father."

"Don't inhale!" said Virginia Rose. "Inside the barrel, just like you did when you were very young. This one has a handle, so the baby can hold the sides in a loop. It's not designed to be in one piece. The bottom comes out, so you can clean it. It's not a baby bib. Madame Rose changed her name. She thinks you "know what" she said. It's not like the baby can be noisy. "Don't say anything about me. How do you like that, huh?"

[illegible]

The other side of the coin is that the more you know about the more, the better.

“Cindy,” he said, a little nervously. “Please, let me finish, please.”

We didn't have a farm report
and then the family got a job. I was a little nervous. Was I
different? I was a little nervous. I was a little nervous. I was a little nervous.
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