



Clue

MYSTERY PUZZLE

by Parker Brothers



Killer on Board™

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Miss Scarlett stood on the dock and gazed admiringly at the sixty-foot yacht. "I hear he paid for it in cash, with just the profits from the **CompuCloset**."

Colonel Mustard was stunned. "One silly little invention brings in that kind of money? Doesn't seem right."

"Oh, yes. Everyone who is anyone owns a **CompuCloset** these days," cooed Miss Scarlett. "David Black is such a revolutionary thinker."

Mustard frowned and grumbled and, shielding his eyes from the bright Aegean sun, led the way up the gangway. Hogarth, the butler, was waiting on deck to greet them. "On behalf of Dr. Black, let me welcome you to **The Lucky Stiff**."

They were the first guests to arrive, the first of six, the same six who, every autumn for the past several years, had gathered at Tudor Close for Dr. Black's annual picnic. Only this time, instead of an afternoon of cucumber sandwiches in Darbyshire, they were about to spend an entire week cruising the Greek isles. "Quite a change from the usual, eh, Hogarth?" bellowed the colonel. "No blustery September day for us, not this year."

Hogarth took their luggage and led them back toward their cabins. "It was so thoughtful of David to arrange this," Scarlett gushed.

"Thoughtful?" Hogarth paused, a wry smile playing on his face.

"Well, we had to pay our own airfare to Athens. He's never been that thoughtful. But still, being his guests for a week on a brand new motor yacht..."

"I suppose some people might consider it generous," the butler mumbled darkly.

The meaning of Hogarth's dark mumblings became clear later that same day, after the other guests were snugly on board and the yacht had pulled out of the Athens harbor. Only then, when **The Lucky Stiff** was well out to sea and it was too late for anyone to turn back, did Dr. Black

officially greet his guests and reveal the true motive behind his seemingly generous invitation.

The six best friends were relaxing on the main deck, enjoying the sunset and a light evening breeze. The doctor was even more outgoing than usual as he stood at the outdoor bar, making sure that they all were fortified with their favorite drinks. "Now, Lizzie, I believe you take an extra dry martini. Four olives. Does my memory serve me right?"

Elizabeth Peacock accepted the brimming martini glass with a smile, then returned to her casual inspection of the yacht. Even the deck was flawless. Perfect pieces of teak without a knothole or blemish. Why couldn't she have invested in the **CompuCloset**? Just my luck, she berated herself silently. Giving David Black money for every one of his harebrained inventions except this one.

Mrs. Peacock was twice-widowed and had made handsome profits from the untimely deaths of both her husbands. After the second funeral, she moved to Darbyshire and set up house not far from Tudor Close, hoping that with a few good investments she might live out the rest of her days in comfort. But that was before her neighbor had convinced her to put money into half a dozen disastrous inventions. "I'm delighted the **CompuCloset** has done so well for you," she said, forcing a smile.

"Isn't it grand?" said Dr. Black with boyish delight. "I kept telling you it was a sure thing."

Dr. Black's brainchild was a computerized clothes closet that evaluated the weather forecast, your dressing patterns and mood, and then automatically selected the perfect wardrobe for the day ahead. The **CompuCloset** hit the market less than a year ago and was already a raging success among sleepy risers, the color-blind and the indecisive — three huge segments of the British population.

"I bought a set of your new **CompuLuggage**," Miss Scarlett enthused, trying to catch her host's eye. "I'm sure it selected just exactly what I'll need. I used to hate packing for trips."

Dr. Black smiled as he handed the youngish brunette her usual. "Gin and tonic with a wedge of lemon, never lime."

"Right." Scarlett made a point of touching the inventor's hand as she accepted the glass. For the past several years, through his lean times of failure, Dr. Black had grown infatuated with Vivienne Scarlett, Darbyshire's most eligible bachelorette. Scarlett had treated him badly, systematically rebuffing the poor man's clumsy advances. But, of course, that was before the **CompuCloset** had become such a gold mine. The frail, tweedy, eccentric man was suddenly much more attractive and, to Scarlett's annoyance, much less interested in her. It hardly seemed fair. "I've never been cruising the Greek islands before," she cooed with as much romantic meaning as the words would hold. "So generous."

"I'm afraid I must confess to an ulterior motive." Dr. Black glanced back toward shore. They were far enough away that he could finally explain.

"Generosity isn't the only reason behind the change of venue this year."

"I thought so," Mike Mustard growled as he accepted his double shot of whiskey. The colonel didn't handle jealousy well. Of all the doctor's "best friends," he was probably Black's biggest rival. An enthusiastic handyman and gadget lover, he considered himself a superior engineer and a much more inventive inventor. Through all of Dr. Black's failures, Colonel Mustard had been sympathetic, always ready with a comforting word. But the **CompuCloset**'s success had strained their relationship almost to the breaking point. "I knew there had to be an ulterior motive."

"There is." Dr. Black fortified himself with a swallow of his favorite red wine. "Someone is planning to kill me."

The guests stopped drinking. Their mouths fell open in shock. "Who?" Scarlett finally asked, her voice soft and full of concern. "Who would want to kill you?"

"I don't know. Four months ago I began receiving threatening letters. They're always typewritten and never signed. The last few have even named the date. This unknown maniac intends to murder me on September 28."

Mrs. White checked the calendar feature on her cheap digital watch. "September... Why, that's tomorrow. Someone's going to try to kill you tomorrow? Oh, good heavens. I need another drink."

Blanche White had always been the nervous type, some might even say emotionally unbalanced. She had arrived in Darbyshire four years ago, a dowdy woman who worried about everything and drank nearly anything, although she did have a preference for vodka on the rocks with a twist. She claimed to be a widow with a meager pension and Dr. Black had taken a liking to her, incorporating her immediately into his inner circle. It was Dr. Black, in fact, who had come to her financial rescue, persuading his neighbor, Mrs. Peacock, to employ the older woman as a maid and companion.

Although still working for Mrs. Peacock, Blanche White had come here all on her own. She had been personally invited by the doctor, taken the vacation time and paid for her own airfare. She made it perfectly clear that, for a week at least, she was Mrs. Peacock's equal, entitled to enjoy herself and not even be obliged to pass the salt unless it suited her. It was a situation that her employer "graciously" accepted. She had no choice.

Mrs. White was at the bar now, refreshing her vodka. "You invited us here to witness your murder? How considerate." Her voice and hands trembled and the vodka sloshed over the rim. "Or perhaps you're hoping this maniac will miss you and hit one of us instead. Is that it?"

"I don't intend to be murdered." Dr. Black pointed to the empty horizon. "I've taken careful steps to isolate myself. We're in the middle of the Aegean without another boat in sight. I am surrounded by my trusted butler and my six dearest friends. I feel perfectly safe. And just in case I'm not..." The doctor reached into his jacket pocket and pulled out a snub-nosed .38. "I carry a gun at all times. No crackpot is going to interfere with our annual get-together. I won't have it."

"Good! You can't give in to terrorism," Professor Plum said emphatically. "That's what these wackos want, to see you cowering under the sheets. Stand up to them. I admire that."

"Well, I'm not exactly making myself a target," Black said with a smile. "Now, Plum, old boy. You'll be glad to know I put in a case of those light Yank beers you're so fond of."

Like his beer, Professor Peter Plum was both health-conscious and American. He had landed in Darbyshire a dozen years before and had flitted from one money-making scheme to the next before finally setting up shop as a personal fitness trainer. Dr. Black was one of the professor's few clients and during their many leisurely workouts in the Tudor Close ballroom the two men had formed a close bond.

The Reverend Jonathan Green shyly raised his hand, as if asking permission to speak. He was the sixth guest, the sixth friend, and the most inconspicuous. In fact, for the first year or so of their picnics and dinners, Dr. Black would often refer to his five best friends, unaware, until he finally counted heads, that he was skipping over the quiet clergyman. It was an easy thing to do.

If the Reverend Green resented his nearly invisible status, he didn't show it. Or if he showed it, no one noticed. The Darbyshire parish was a modest one, kept in business by the local insomniacs who faithfully and gratefully arrived every Sunday in order to sleep through the sermons. "It seems odd that the killer would pick the day of our annual picnic for your death," the parson said softly. "Why exactly does this person want to kill you?"

Dr. Black retrieved one of the letters from a drawer in the bar. Everyone could see the bloodred print, the product of a tinted typewriter ribbon. "My 'killer' says I stole the **CompuCloset** concept — that he or she confided the idea to me, all of the details, and that I blatantly pilfered it. For this I deserve to die."

Scarlett was a little confused. "Did you really steal it?"

"Of course not. It's just some deluded maniac who read about me in the papers and got hold of my address. But that doesn't mean there's no danger." Dr. Black breathed deeply, trying to calm an obvious case of

nerves. "Oh, Reverend Green." He smacked himself on the forehead as if to jar his brain back into place. "I almost forgot you. That's a Shirley Temple, right?"

"Right," the cleric said apologetically. "I never liked the taste of alcohol. Not that I have any moral objection."

The doctor fixed the drink, then raised his own glass in a toast. "To my five — excuse me, my six dearest friends."

The Reverend Green smiled and returned the toast.

That's the last straw, he brooded silently. I'm sick of you treating me like I don't exist. You deserve to die.

Mrs. Peacock also toasted and smiled. *To your death, she mused malignantly. All those stupid inventions I sank money into. Someone should shoot you, just to teach you a lesson.*

Colonel Mustard shared her jealous sentiments as he thought angrily: *You don't deserve all this, Black. Not when really great inventors are going hungry. Here's to your death.*

Miss Scarlett silently concurred, thinking furiously. *Throw me over just when you finally get successful? No one does that to Vivienne Scarlett.*

Mrs. White tried to hide her mounting hysteria. *You got us here under false pretenses and put everyone's life in danger, she thought with deranged zeal. I'm so mad I could kill.*

Professor Plum's thoughts made it unanimous. He recalled the will that Dr. Black drew up three years ago, leaving Plum the rights to all of his inventions. At the time, the doctor's inventions were worth about five shillings and the will had been their little joke. *I'll bet it's still valid, he pondered.*

"To your health," the six friends said in unison as they gazed warmly at their host, then drained their glasses dry.



September 28 dawned bright and beautiful with just a few clouds lining the horizon. Dr. Black and Hogarth were up early. Together they raised the anchor, started the engines and set a course for a nearby cluster of islands. "We'll head for the deserted one," the doctor said as he double-checked the charts.

Hogarth agreed that it might be wise not to encounter any strangers, not today, and within an hour **The Lucky Stiff** was bobbing in the blue-green water, anchored temptingly close to a small inlet nestled at the foot of a rocky coastline.

"So lovely," Scarlett sighed as she leaned over the railing, still nursing her first cup of morning tea. "I'll bet we could even swim ashore from here." She turned to Professor Plum who was yawning beside her at the railing. "What do you say? Care for a little exercise?"

"Exercise?" The fitness expert tried not to sound too reluctant. "Yes, of course. Swimming out to that island would be a breeze. But..."

"It won't take long to swim there and back," Scarlett insisted. "I'll see if any of the others want to join us."

Although none of the men seemed eager to take part in the exertion, they were not about to be shown up by a mere woman. Within minutes it was arranged. Miss Scarlett and the three male guests all quickly changed into swimsuits while the two remaining women, unhampered by masculine pride, settled down with tea and scones and prepared to cheer them on from the comfort of their deck chairs.

It began almost as a race, with Scarlett, Plum, Green and Mustard diving simultaneously from the aft docking area and stroking furiously away. But what had seemed like a quick jaunt soon turned into an ordeal. The currents surrounding the island were stronger than anyone had imagined. All four were competent swimmers, all at about the same

level of proficiency. Still, it took the best of them a full 30 minutes to hit the rocky shore.

"I win," Scarlett panted as she collapsed onto a boulder. Seconds later, she was joined by the others — Green, Plum and Mustard, in that order — stumbling onto the beach. "Who knew it would be such a trek!" She squinted at The Lucky Stiff. It seemed so deceptively near. "Do you think the swim back will be any easier?"

"No!" Colonel Mustard gasped. "I am not swimming back. It's suicide." The military man raised his arms and began to signal the yacht. "Someone will have to come and pick us up."

"Oh, look, they're waving," Mrs. White said merrily. She and Mrs. Peacock were standing at the railing, gazing off at their island-bound friends and returning their waves.

Hogarth soon joined them on deck and, after several bouts of frantic hand signals, it was he who finally deduced their meaning. "They seem to be in need of a little rescue," the butler said as he lowered a spyglass owned by "Captain" Black.

The "little rescue" was quick and painless. Hogarth single-handedly used the two sets of ropes to lower the emergency inflatable rubber boat into the water, then climbed down into it and unlatched the hooks. A pull on the starter cord and the outboard motor chugged to life. In just five minutes the butler was cutting the engine and drifting up to the marooned guests waiting in the cove. "I thought I might test the new rubber boat," he said diplomatically. "Would anyone care for a ride back to the yacht?"

The four swimmers crowded into the emergency vessel and in another five minutes were back on board The Lucky Stiff, the three men making a show of helping Hogarth latch on the hooks and haul up the rubber boat.



"Is anyone ready for another assault on the island?" Dr. Black asked with his usual good humor. The time was shortly after lunch. By now the

guests had all had their fill of sun and food and relaxing. Mrs. White was so bored she had even resorted to swabbing the deck. On future days they would undoubtedly pull into ports and mingle with humanity, but everyone understood the doctor's reluctance to do any of that today.

Meanwhile, their host was doing his best to alleviate their boredom. "I radioed a nearby village," he told them. "A local fisherman will be arriving with his boat to take you to the deserted island for a little change of scenery. What with all your beach gear, that will be a lot more comfortable than trying to squeeze you all into the inflatable boat."

The six friends jumped at the chance to stretch their legs. "Hogarth will go with you," Dr. Black added. "I think I might like to spend some time by myself." Again, everyone understood.

The boatman was a Greek fisherman with a bald, sunburned head and just enough English to be coherently rude. He tossed their towels and bags into a corner of his boat and would have been happy to toss in the seven passengers as well. A few minutes later and he was tossing everything and everyone out onto the same rocky beach. "One hour," he barked as he turned and clambered back into his rusty fishing boat. "One hour I be back. If you no right here, good-bye. I go without." And with a wave of his hand, he was once more pulling away, motoring toward the fishing nets he was tending in the waters off his own little island.

"What? One lousy hour?" Miss Scarlett sputtered. "That's hardly enough. Why didn't someone argue with him?"

"Why didn't you argue with him?" snorted Professor Plum.

Before another minute had passed they were all busy arguing with each other. Scarlett and Plum argued over whose fault it was that the boatman had been so rude. Colonel Mustard and the reverend argued over whether or not to tip the man on his return. Mrs. Peacock spent the time accusing Mrs. White of losing her suntan lotion while Mrs. White complained about the island. "Why didn't you tell us it was such an awful little beach?" she shouted at the four who had made the morning swim.

"You didn't ask," Colonel Mustard huffed, turning his back on the rest of them and striding up a rocky goat path.

Not to be outdone, Mrs. White also pivoted on her heel, found her own goat path and marched away in a fit of temper almost as impressive as the colonel's.

In all, seven goat paths radiated from the inlet, providing seven different escape routes for the six angry guests and the even-tempered butler who was just as anxious as the others to be on his own.

In exactly one hour, the seven paths were filled again with returning explorers, all of them in better moods, all of them prepared now to sit out on the deck with a drink and forget their differences. As promised, the Greek boatman had already arrived at the inlet. He herded them onto his fishing boat and quickly deposited them back on the aft docking area of *The Lucky Stiff*. (Just for the record, no one tipped.)

"Hello? David?" Miss Scarlett called out. "We're back." She had half-expected their congenial host to greet them with hors d'oeuvres and their favorite drinks at the ready. "Dr. Black? Hello? Where could he be?"

The seven all exchanged puzzled glances, then worried glances. Then instinctively, without a word of instruction from anyone, they fanned out and began to scour the yacht.

Mrs. White and Professor Plum were the ones who eventually found him. They had been searching the deck for the fourth time when Mrs. White, on a whim, opened a steel storage closet and out toppled the body of Dr. David Black, a bullet hole penetrating his left temple. The murder happened sometime before five p.m. — on September 28, just as the threats had predicted.



"Rather fitting, his body being stuffed into a closet." Colonel Mustard sipped his whiskey, his hand still shaking from the shock. "Given the killer's motive, I mean."

They were gathered together in *The Lucky Stiff*'s lounge, mixing their own drinks this time and trying to come to grips with the death of their collective best friend. "We never should have left him alone," Miss Scarlett sighed into her gin and tonic. "That maniac was obviously following the yacht, just waiting for his chance to strike."

"Not necessarily." Hogarth had just entered from the main deck. "I've taken the liberty of looking things over. You'll pardon me for saying so, but I don't think the murderer was an outsider — or a stranger."

"Not..." Mrs. Peacock nearly choked on her martini. "Hogarth! You certainly can't believe it was one of us."

"I'm afraid I do, Madam. As you know, the doctor carried a gun. He was never without it."

Colonel Mustard nodded. "He had it stuffed in the pocket of his robe when we left. We all saw it."

"Exactly. Now, if a stranger had tried to board the yacht while we were away..."

The colonel followed his logic. "Yes, of course. The killer had to be someone he knew — someone he trusted who caught him off guard."

"I checked and the gun is missing," Hogarth continued. "My theory is the killer, a friend, grabbed it from the master and shot him with his own gun."

"But it couldn't be one of us," the Reverend Green insisted. "There was no way of getting back and forth. Even if one of us had the endurance to swim both directions, an unlikely feat, that alone would have taken over an hour. And we were stranded on the island for one hour exactly."

"I was snorkeling by myself off the north shore," Professor Plum volunteered. "I'm afraid I can't vouch for anyone else."

"I didn't even bring a bathing suit," Mrs. Peacock said. "I spent my hour hiking through the hills. Alone."

The four others added their own alibis, all equally uncorroborated. The reverend had also been snorkeling, but off the west shore. Mrs.

White claimed to have spent half her time blowing up an inflatable float and the other half bobbing in a small northwest cove. Colonel Mustard had gone hiking in the opposite direction from Mrs. Peacock, collecting samples of native flora for his collection. Miss Scarlett had found a sandy beach on the eastern end and had a nice burn as proof of her time in the sun. As for Hogarth, he had found a shade tree and sat down with his book **Jeeves**. In short, each claimed to have been perfectly alone for nearly an hour and none admitted to being anywhere near the southern inlet that faced **The Lucky Stiff**.

"You see? None of us had a motive or the opportunity," Miss Scarlett concluded with an obvious sense of relief. "It had to be some maniac stranger. Either that or a phantom."

"It wasn't a phantom or a stranger," Hogarth stubbornly insisted.

"Come out to the deck and I'll show you."

The butler led the way to the side of the yacht facing the deserted island. He pointed to a deck chair not far from the railing. "From what I've been able to piece together, this is where the master had been sitting when the killer boarded the yacht. It was also the scene of the murder."

Colonel Mustard snorted scornfully. "Hogarth the detective! Do you also know how the killer got back and forth from the island? Perchance this little setting told you the killer's identity as well."

"As a matter of fact, it did," Hogarth turned to face the six suspects. "This 'little setting' tells me everything I need to know."

The best friends stared dumbfounded at the butler, then at the deck, their minds full of questions. How could Hogarth be so sure that this was the murder scene? How could the killer possibly get to the yacht and back in under an hour? And most importantly, who killed Dr. David Black?

By assembling the jigsaw puzzle, you, too, can examine the scene and piece together just how the phantom of **The Lucky Stiff** struck down the unlucky doctor.

THE SOLUTION

At the picnic two years ago, the Reverend Green reminded his hearers why the Congregation in the South. The church remembered the rich but, in truth, forgot about Green's part in it. Finally, driven crazy by the constant neglect, the clerk swore revenge.

As when on the riverboat was alone, he used his sparkling grin to swim back to the yacht, low water on deck. Although not poised to see him, Dr. Black found them both drinking. Green half-finished glass of wine, as they were drinking. Green grabbed the gun. His first shot missed, penetrating the back seat. Butler took over the broken glass.

To avoid fingerprints, Green threw the gun overboard along with his drink. Fortunately, his gun was left and the glass broke on the deck. When his preferred drink was a Guley. Finally, the very one of their drinks that could possibly turn a snooty varnish, the presence of a cherry near the broken glass is evidence of his guilt.

In order to return to the island, Green took the inflatable rubber boat, left ropes and bucket and plummeted his way back, snatching the vessel near the shore.