COLUMBO MYSTERY PUZZLE GAME

Read the booklet inside—then you be the detective. Assemble the puzzle and piece together the hidden clues, just like Columbo did!

ASHES TO ASHES

PRINTER'S INK
Ashes to Ashes
Written by Ehrich S. Wise

The upstairs window flew open and an angry voice boomed out. "Hey, you! Yes, you down there. Get out of my garden this instant or I'll call the police!"

Lieutenant Columbo looked up and smiled. "Oh, excuse me, sir, but I am the police. Let me just find my badge. I know that it's here somewhere in my coat, ah, here it is."

"Lieutenant Columbo? What is it that you're looking for, Lieutenant?" asked the man from his window.

"Well, that's kind of a long story, sir," explained Columbo. "Would you mind terribly if I came inside to discuss it with you?"

"That would be the civilized thing to do," responded the man. "Come around to the front door and I'll let you in."

Columbo entered the front door and gazed up at the chandelier. "This sure is some house you've got here Mr. - er, are you Mr. Arnold Penn?" he asked.

"Yes I am," Penn answered. "Now, what exactly were you doing snooping around my back door at midnight, and what do you want from me?"

"Back door?" Columbo stated incredulously. "I'll tell you, Mr. Penn, that sure looked like a front door to me. I mean it was so big, so impressive, with those pillars in front and everything. This looks like one of those houses you win in those sweepstakes you get in the mail. My wife always fills those things out. They're far too complicated for me to figure out. Besides, on my police salary we couldn't even afford to paint a house like this!"

Penn made an attempt to hide his annoyance. "I see that this is going to take a while, may I take that, er, raincoat?"

"Oh, no thank you sir," said Columbo. "If it's all the same to you, Sir, I'll just wear it."

"Well, take this at least," said Penn as he held a glass ashtray under Columbo's cigar.

"Thank you, Sir," Columbo continued. "As I was saying, I know it's awfully late, but I'm investigating a crash that just happened down on the service road to route 208. The driver was killed, either by the impact or the fire. We're not sure yet."

"And what does this all have to do with me?" Penn wanted to know.

"Do you know someone named..." Columbo flipped through his notepad, then stopped and squinted at a page. "A Mr. Frank Morosco? Our preliminary check showed that he was an unemployed printer who used to pick up some quick money as a bookie."

"No, I don't think I know the name. Did he tell you he knows me?" Penn asked.

"Actually, sir, he was the victim," Columbo said in a near whisper, "so he didn't tell me anything. But I did learn a lot from the contents of his pockets. May I show you, sir? I'll just use that little table there near the door. I'll put down what I found in Morosco's pockets onto this silver tray. These three partially burned scraps of paper, some bills, some coins, and a rabbit's foot. And we also found this key in the ignition."

"You still haven't explained what all of this has to do with me," said Penn without emotion.

"I was just getting to that, sir," Columbo answered. "It's this triangular scrap of paper here. You see, it says, 'A B C D E.' This sure had the guys downtown puzzled, me too. Then I noticed that the 'D' and the 'E' were closer together than the other letters—as if they were the beginning of a word. So," Columbo continued, "I got out the phone book, and it didn't take long to find 'A B C DESIGN & PRINTING.'" Columbo paused to take a breath.

"So," the Lieutenant continued, "I drove down there. To A B C DESIGN & PRINTING. Naturally, it was closed. But I did speak to a night watchman. He told me that he had just come on duty, and that he didn't know what had gone on between closing time and his shift. He also told me you own the company and he was kind enough to give me your address."
“Well really, Lieutenant, I’m sorry that this poor fellow died, but I don’t know why he had a piece of my company’s stationery in his pocket. I don’t know anything about him. You say he died when his truck caught on fire?” Penn asked.

“No, I didn’t say that exactly, sir.” Using his cigar, Columbo demonstrated the movement of the vehicle. “It seems he veered off the service road, dropped about 8 feet, and landed on the highway. Then the truck caught on fire during the accident... if it was an accident. You see, Mr. Penn, I’m beginning to think that maybe this was no accident. I’m finding some strange things; for instance, take a look here at this, sir, if you will.” Columbo pointed.

“Well,” Penn said, “it looks like a simple contact lens case to me. What of it?”

“Why that’s just it, sir,” began Columbo. “Because I asked the coroner to check and, sure enough, Morosco was wearing contact lenses!”

“So?” interrupted Penn, in a challenging tone.

“So,” continued Columbo. “It’s a bit strange that he was wearing glasses too when he died! Now why do you suppose that is?” asked Columbo as he held his cigar to his forehead.

“I wouldn’t know, I’m sure,” answered Penn.

“Well, what I think is that Morosco was killed!” Columbo announced. “Killed probably outside his truck, but I can’t be sure yet. I think he was talking to the killer, that he was struck in the head, and placed in the driver’s seat of the truck. The killer, paying careful attention to details, saw the glasses on the dash board and placed them on the dead man, not realizing that this would give him away. I believe the killer then set the truck on fire to cover up evidence.”

“What kind of evidence was in the truck?” Penn asked, now suddenly interested.

“When we found it? Ashes. Just ashes. But I think that whatever burned was something that the killer wanted to hide. Something most probably illegal,” Columbo said, staring Penn directly in the eye.

“Isn’t that a bold assumption, Lt. Columbo?” asked Penn.

“No, sir, it’s quite obvious really,” Columbo continued. “Something illegal was going on in Frank Morosco’s life. In fact, there’s something illegal on this table right now.”

Penn’s annoyance finally surfaced, “I think I’ve had enough of your fantasizing. A man is going about some business by himself, he dies in a common accident, and you’ve extrapolated some incredible murder scenario.”

“I don’t think he was doing this by himself, sir,” Columbo insisted. “You owe a lot of money, don’t you Mr. Penn? And you joined with this Frank Morosco in a scheme to—quite literally—make a million dollars.”

Penn burst out vehemently, “Take this garbage and get out of my house! Here, I’ll open the door for you—What? Who are those people?” he demanded.

“Those are police officers, Mr. Penn. They’ll take you down to the station house now, and you can speak to your lawyer on the phone,” Columbo said solemnly.

Penn’s voice became low and hoarse, “I don’t need to speak to my lawyer. I want you to tell me right now why you think I’m a murderer.”
Did you follow Columbo’s logic?
1. What, on the table, was evidence of Morosco’s illegal activities?
   And what did that evidence contain that made Penn furious with Morosco?
2. What made Columbo think that Penn was in debt?
3. Why was Columbo certain that Penn already knew about the accident before he was told?
4. What piece of evidence connects Penn and Morosco?
Put together the puzzle, and examine the photograph. Then reread the story and try to follow Columbo’s logic. When you think that you’ve made your best guess at the four questions above, read the solution by holding it up to a mirror.

SOLUTION

Well, sir. I never got to see what was in the truck before it bumped…

But I think it was a piece of fill dirt, the kind railway枕末 in.
(1) It’s a common sight to see a railway枕末 on your printing press. "Columbo"

You fool! You go on to see that the piece of fill dirt is just a (2) piece of fill dirt on the track. This other dirt is just a (3) piece of fill dirt on the track. There are two mistakes. The type of mistake is, in fact, a common mistake. The mistake is a common mistake.

But when you make a man see how the part that’s in the common mistake

may change to fill dirt.

You know, and I’ve got you, Mr. Penn. All I know is that you own a printing company. But I can see that the table, (4) that your “fill dirt” is just a piece of fill dirt on the track. What you’re doing is to have a piece of fill dirt on the track. And then you’re doing what you’re doing to have a piece of fill dirt on the track. And then you’re doing what you’re doing to have a piece of fill dirt on the track. And then you’re doing what you’re doing to have a piece of fill dirt on the track.

"No, sir. it just doesn’t. You’re... you’re..."
"Yes, I’ll sign your sheet. "I’m doing it now."
"Yes, I’ll sign it. When did you sign your signature?"
"I’m doing it now."
"Yes, I’ll sign it."
"When did you sign it?"
"I’m doing it now."
"When did you sign it?"
"I’m doing it now."

Columbo brushes and dabs on his finger, but without success. It is just a piece of fill dirt that is on the track. It is one of those parts that is just a piece of fill dirt.

Dear Reader:

"Mr. Penn, are you ready to go?"
"Yes, I’m ready.

"Where’s your gun?"
"Mr. Penn, are you ready to go?"
"Yes, I’m ready."
"Where’s your gun?"
"Mr. Penn, are you ready to go?"
"Yes, I’m ready."