Clue
MYSTERY PUZZLE
by Parker Brothers
The Color of Murder
A JIGSAW PUZZLE MYSTERY
LOCAL RESIDENT PREDICTS RAINBOW'S RETURN AFTER 300 YEARS

DARBYSHIRE - Dr. David Black, a private banker and amateur meteorologist, has predicted the reappearance of the Darbyshire Rainbow, an atmospheric phenomenon last seen here in the Cotswolds during the reign of William and Mary.

Based on readings from sophisticated tracking equipment of his own invention, Dr. Black believes the rainbow will make itself visible above his estate at Tudor Close at precisely 5:23 p.m. on Friday, May 13.

Throughout the centuries since its first sighting, the Darbyshire Rainbow has been noted for its wide arc and brilliant colors. During the 1600s, however, the rainbow became associated with bad luck after several mysterious and violent deaths occurred during its appearance.

When questioned about the more unsavory aspects of the rainbow's history, Dr. Black replied, "Superstitious poppycock!"
"Today is my lucky Friday the 13th!" exclaimed Dr. David Black, looking up at the clear sky with his binoculars from the gazebo of his luxurious Tudor Close estate. Satisfied that the weather was just as he expected, Black lowered his binoculars and glanced down at his gold watch. In just a few minutes his six houseguests should be arriving, he thought with happy expectancy.

Through the years, luck had been no stranger to Dr. Black. Thanks to good fortune and hard work, his moneylending business had grown so in volume and in stature that he was now known as a banker instead of a gouger. Black's business success had brought other rewards as well. His stately home was on the Historic Register, and his household was filled with faithful servants, in particular his devoted butler and business confidant Hogarth.

Black also possessed a collection of fine art and famous jewels, including an emerald hatpin Queen Victoria had used to poke Prince Albert. In fact, he had the time and money to indulge his every whim. But when you had as much money as Black, whims became passions and Black's latest passion was a little unusual. A more predictable rich man might have indulged in thoroughbred horse racing, or breeding rare tropical fish, or maybe opening a trendy West End restaurant. But not Black. Black's latest passion was — weather forecasting.

Ordinary thunder or hailstorms were of little consequence to Dr. Black. What he cared about were unique atmospheric events, and if all the weather tracking equipment, charts and notations he had laid out in front of him in the gazebo were correct — and he knew they were — a meteorological milestone was due to appear that very afternoon: the Darbyshire Rainbow, a brilliantly-colored weather phenomenon last seen three centuries ago.

But something else was also due at Tudor Close on this Friday the 13th.
Dr. Black was expecting prompt and complete payment of six promissory notes signed by each one of his six invited guests.

What a colorful bunch of characters they were, thought Black fondly...

**Professor Peter Plum**, American born and bred, had long left the States and the sedentary world of academia behind in exchange for a life filled with activity — physical fitness activity. Aerobics. Calisthenics. Exercise machines. And a string of his own fitness centers.

A self-styled fanatic, Plum would invariably thump his chest and proudly proclaim himself “Fit as a Fiddle.” In fact, he would often wear a pin with a big purple fiddle on it to annoyingly remind everyone just how healthy he was.

His fitness business, however, had unfortunately turned in an unhealthy balance sheet once too often and Plum was soon pondering his next opportunity. “What could I fiddle around with next?” he said to himself. “Music stores, of course. A whole chain of them across all of England!”

“Just £50,000, that’s all I need,” Plum had told Black when he had approached him for a much-needed loan. And Black had readily agreed to the deal at a sweet-sounding 30% interest rate.

Back then Plum’s confident sales pitch had been hard to resist. But today Black hoped those rumors he’d been hearing on the street weren’t true. The rumors that Plum’s music business may have struck a sour note...

Most men thought of pleasure, not business, when it came to the beautiful and sultry **Miss Vivienne Scarlett**, but Dr. Black thought of both.

Lending money to a desirable woman was a dangerous business, especially a woman as unpredictable as Scarlett. Yet Black couldn’t have ignored her request. What man could?

If truth be told, he had been shocked she needed money in the first place. Everything Scarlett had ever wanted some man had given her. Her life was filled with jewels, furs, exotic travel. Even her precious dog
Pinkie and the solid silver dog whistle Scarlett always wore around her neck had been gifts from admirers. What could she possibly need now? Knowing Scarlett's obsession with her beauty, Black was surprised but not shocked at her answer.

"I need Lipo-sculpturing!" Scarlett had explained with a tiny, tiny frown. "Just a slight body reshaping. I need to make an investment in my future earning power - you do understand, don't you?"

While Miss Scarlett's body looked fine to Dr. Black, he understood her vanity perfectly, and Scarlett had promised, "I'll pay you back as soon as my rich Aunt Minerva dies. She's on her deathbed right now."

But Dr. Black had yet to see Auntie's obituary in the paper...

The Reverend Jonathan Green was as devoted to his flock as he had been to his weekly high stakes backgammon games. This devotion led to his winning many souls, but losing much money.

Unfortunately, the nearsighted and forgetful reverend had failed to see the consequences of forgetting to pay his gambling debts, until it was almost too late. Only a quick trip to the local loan shark had conveniently saved his clerical-collared neck.

With every late payment, however, the reverend was threatened with scandalous exposure. How could he ever cut this shark loose? With a large loan, of course, and Dr. Black was happy to oblige, at his usual rate of interest.

"I'll never play backgammon again," the Reverend Green had vowed upon signing the promissory note. "And I'll stay away from loan sharks, too."

No more backgammon? Maybe, thought Dr. Black. But did the good reverend have the resolve to stay away from the church's new big jackpot bingo every Wednesday night? Dr. Black hoped so, but he did wonder why the Reverend Green never answered his phone on Wednesday nights...
The slightly plump, twice-widowed Mrs. Elizabeth Peacock had been back on a diet — and back on the marriage market — when Black had last seen her.

Over tea and crumpets with clotted cream, Mrs. Peacock explained to Black how she planned to lose ten stubborn pounds, find a loving husband, and make money — all at the same time.

"I've got a great investment opportunity," proposed Mrs. Peacock in all seriousness. "It's a weight-loss elixir franchise."

Black tried to hide his disbelief behind his teacup as Mrs. Peacock merrily plunged on with more details. "The pounds of fat will roll off and the pounds of money will roll in," she'd enthused in between nibbles on her crumpet. "Best of all, this elixir stuff is guaranteed to make me as svelte and desirable as that cat Scarlett! If you'll loan me some money, I predict I'll be thin, rich and remarried in just a few weeks!"

"Fat chance!" Black had wanted to say. But Mrs. Peacock readily agreed to his loan terms, so instead Black found himself saying, "It's a deal!"

Now, months later, Black hoped the scales had tipped in Mrs. Peacock's favor, but he had yet to receive a wedding invitation...

While her boss was drinking weight-loss elixir, Mrs. Blanche White, Mrs. Peacock's maid, was indulging in her favorite pastime — obsessive cleaning. Scouring floors, washing windows, and vacuuming at high speed were Mrs. White's ideas of a jolly good time.

The woman just loved to tidy up. In fact, the only things Mrs. White liked better than cleaning were men in uniform. "There's just something about them, Ma'am," she'd gush to her employer, usually after watching the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace. "They look so crisp, so tidy, so thoughtfully clean."

During one of her frenzied cleaning states, Mrs. White had raced out in Mrs. Peacock's Rolls in urgent need of high potency silver polish, and raced right into the back of the greengrocer's lorry. When no amount of elbow grease could correct the damage to Mrs. Peacock's right fender,
Mrs. White had turned frantically to Dr. Black, her previous employer, for a loan. "Dr. B, I need money quick. I don't want Mrs. P to find out about the accident!"

With fond memories of Mrs. White's annual spring cleaning of Tudor Close still fresh in his mind, Dr. Black was happy to help out. After the loan papers were signed, they both had a drink to celebrate their new partnership... a whiskey for Dr. Black; a mai tai for Mrs. White. Gratefully, Mrs. White sipped her drink, and vowed: "I'll pay you back as soon as I catch my military man." Dr. Black wondered just who Mrs. White had in mind...

Retired military man Colonel Mike Mustard had never really managed to leave the military behind. Wearing his uniform and medals every day, he spent most of his time at the Royal Dragoons Club chain-smoking cigars and telling war stories.

Standing at attention at the club bar one day, Mustard had told Black about an "irresistible" opportunity to finance a banana republic coup being led by his old general. "It's a simple, quick, in-and-out military maneuver. Once we save the country for the Queen, a fortune in bananas will be ours. I'm so sure we'll succeed I'll pay you back at a rate of 35% interest."

While Black didn't give a fig about bananas, he did in fact find 35% interest irresistible after all.

"You won't regret this, old chap," the colonel said, shaking hands after the loan papers were signed. "It's a no-lose proposition."

Today, though, Black was beginning to question Colonel Mustard's optimism. What was this banana blight he'd been reading about...

At that precise moment a black cloud crossed the sky and cast a shadow over the gazebo. Black roused himself from his reveries and looked at his watch again. Where were the guests? "I sent Hogarth to the train station hours ago," he moaned, pacing nervously. "That train from Paddington is so unreliable. Ah... wait a minute... here they are now."
As Black left the gazebo to meet his guests, he thought optimistically to himself: "There's going to be a pot of gold at the end of my rainbow after all!"

"Happy Friday the 13th!"

From the steps of Tudor Close, Dr. Black greeted his guests warmly as they started unfolding themselves from the Bentley that Hogarth had parked in front of the mansion.

It might have been Black's imagination, but he thought his visitors didn't look too happy. Even the loyal Hogarth seemed to have a forlorn look about him as he held the door open for his passengers.

It must be the stress of "payment due" day, rationalized Black to himself. I hope they haven't been telling Hogarth too many hard luck stories.

As he peered closer into the car, Black had another thought: They're packed in there like a tin of kippers. What's that... a furry kipper? No, it's a dog! I should have told Hogarth to make two trips.

A crumpled, slightly plump and sneezing Mrs. Peacock was the first one out of the car, sneezing loudly into her monogrammed linen handkerchief. "I'm allergic to that hairy pomegranate," she snarled with distaste, eyeing Miss Scarlett, who was clutching a ball of fur to her pretty bosom.

"Pomeranian. Pinkie is a Pomeranian," sniffed Scarlett, giving Pinkie a delicate kiss as she gracefully followed Mrs. Peacock out of the car.

Scarlett adjusted her skirt and untangled the red silk cord with its silver dog whistle that she wore around her neck. She hid her slight smile. While she wouldn't admit it, Scarlett was delighted that her precious pooch could cause such discomfort to that "dreadful Peacock creature."

"Now, now, ladies," soothed the Reverend Green, stepping out of the car with a distracted air. He began patting his pockets and looking back into the car. "Has anyone seen my glasses? I hope I didn't leave them at the train station."

"Who cares about your glasses?" Professor Plum growled, pushing
the reverend aside as he leapt from the car. "What I care about is the smell of that disgusting cigar Colonel Mustard has been polluting us with. I was hoping Tudor Close would be a smoke-free environment."

The colonel remained silent, still inside the car, stifled by the weight of Mrs. White who had insisted upon sitting on his lap all the way from the train station.

Mrs. White, perhaps motivated by the professor's criticism, at last removed herself from the colonel's lap and slipped out into the bright sunshine. "I rather fancy a man with a cigar," she said defensively, as she turned adoring eyes towards Colonel Mustard, who was slowly extracting himself and his cigar from the back seat.

"Keep that bloody woman away from me," Mustard muttered in between puffs, as he painfully maneuvered his way to the opposite side of the group, well away from Mrs. White. "She's crushed my leg and reactivated my war wound."

Hogarth shut the car door and looked to Dr. Black for guidance.

Black, ever the responsible and gracious host, recognized a mood change was definitely in order if he wanted to keep his six guests from killing each other — metaphorically speaking, of course.

"Let's relax now and discuss business later," Black said jovially. "I've predicted that in just a few hours the Darbyshire Rainbow will appear directly above us for the first time in 300 years. I want you all to enjoy its beautiful colors, reds... blues... purples... yellows... greens. After the rainbow we'll have dinner and I'll collect the little gifts you have ready for me," he added with a wink.

The six guests exchanged dubious glances, but dubious about the rainbow or dubious about the "gifts," Dr. Black couldn't tell.

"Rainbow!" gasped Miss Scarlett, breaking the silence. "Doesn't that rainbow have a curse on it?" she asked, giving Pinkie an overprotective pat.

"Curse? Oh, no!" moaned Mrs. White as she ran to Mustard's side, clutching his arm.

Mustard's eyes rolled heavenward.
"Yes, it's something about death, isn't it?" spoke up Mrs. Peacock, stifling a sneeze with her handkerchief.

"Utter nonsense," Black responded quickly. "This rainbow is a natural phenomenon that can only be seen every 300 years. I'm even writing a scholarly article on it for the Royal Weathermen's Journal. The rainbow is scheduled to appear at exactly 5:23 p.m. this afternoon."

"Well, what do we do in the meantime?" grumbled Colonel Mustard, lighting another cigar and rubbing his sore leg.

Dr. Black had a ready answer: "Relax, of course. Freshen up in your rooms if you wish. Walk leisurely around the grounds or have a drink. Mrs. White, I even have a mai tai for you."

"Later you can all play croquet," Black added as he pointed expansively in front of him. "Look, it's a beautiful day. Hogarth has already set up the croquet court here on the south lawn in front of the gazebo. That way, I'll be able to keep track of all my weather equipment and work on my article in the gazebo while you're having a spot of recreation."

"Sounds good and healthy to me," acknowledged Professor Plum as he pointed to the "Fit as a Fiddle" button on his lapel. "The more exercise I get, the better."

"It's all right with me, too," piped in the Reverend Green, "except I won't be able to see the balls or the wickets very well without my glasses."

"Green, I've played croquet with you before, and glasses didn't help you then," charged Professor Plum rudely.

Dr. Black handed the Reverend Green his binoculars. "Here, Reverend, take these for later. I don't care about your wicket-watching, but I do want you to see the rainbow. They should help. Now ladies and gentlemen, I'm off to the library to work. I have some more meteorological research I need to do. The only thing I ask is that you don't enter the gazebo since I've set up some delicate equipment that's especially sensitive to movement."

Triggered by Black's words "don't enter the gazebo," looks of deep curiosity and irresistible temptation crossed the faces of all six guests.
Unmindful, Dr. Black headed for the library and left his six guests to amuse themselves.

The croquet game was not going well. Instead of lifting the guests' spirits, the game seemed to have the opposite effect. In fact, if a color commentator were present, the words "outright hostility" might have been used to best describe the play-by-play attitude of the six participants.

Each wicket seemed to get stickier and stickier as the game progressed. When the match was almost over, Mrs. Peacock took a particularly aggressive swing and her ball sent Miss Scarlett's ball flying.

An enraged Miss Scarlett watched helplessly as her green ball rolled out of bounds. "Why, you old battle-ax, that's not fair!" she shouted.

With a delighted smirk, Mrs. Peacock raised her orange mallet in triumph. "Just the rules of the game, dearie. Perhaps you'd play better if you'd put that silly pomegranate down and use two hands."

Miss Scarlett responded to the challenge. "I'll put him down all right!" she snarled through clenched teeth. "Here, Pinkie, go take a big bite out of Mrs. Peacock." Scarlett pushed Pinkie in Peacock's direction.

Mrs. Peacock screamed and sneezed at the same time. "Keep that hairy mop away from me!" She cowered as the dog charged towards her.

"Ladies, ladies, please," exhorted Professor Plum. "Hurry, Green, take your shot."

Scanning the lawn for his ball, Green was forced to admit, "I've forgotten the color of my ball. Oh, yes... I'm yellow, aren't I? I think I see it now over there."

The reverend stumbled towards the white ball and bent down to strike it with his mallet.

"Stop! White's my color, Green," said a frustrated Professor Plum impatiently. "You're always forgetting and hitting the wrong ball, Reverend."

After the Reverend Green finally hit the correct ball, it was Mrs.
White’s turn to take a shot. Stepping up to her ball, she bent down and began dusting it with the hem of her skirt.

“That’s much better,” Mrs. White said, straightening up. “I can’t hit a dirty ball. Now Colonel, what do you think about my stance? What about my swing?”

Standing at attention at the last wicket, Colonel Mustard shook his red mallet angrily. Taking his cigar out of his mouth for the first time all day, he replied, “Just hit the bloody blue ball, you silly woman. You don’t need help with your swing. Just put all of that weight behind it and swat it!”

Just as the squabbling and dog-yapping was about to reach a new level of intensity, a jubilant Dr. Black emerged from the mansion and interrupted the croquet players. Pointing heavenward, he cried, “Look! Look! It’s starting to rain, just as I expected! You know, you can’t have a rainbow without rain. This proves all of my charts and tracking equipment are accurate. My prediction will be coming true!”

All together, the six guests looked up at the sky. Sure enough, while the sun still shone brightly, a steady rain began pounding the south lawn.

Dr. Black spoke solicitously to his guests. “Hurry, go inside to the drawing room. I don’t want you to get wet. We still have almost an hour before the rainbow will appear. Hogarth and I will put the croquet set away in the gazebo. I want to do some more work back in there anyway. We’ll meet back out here to see the rainbow. Hurry... I’ll send Hogarth along in a few minutes to make you some drinks.”

It was almost 5:23. The rain had stopped, and Dr. Black and his guests were scattered on the south lawn awaiting the rainbow’s arrival. All seven faces were turned expectantly upwards.

Fittingly, Dr. Black was the first one to see the rainbow emerge from the English sky. “There it is! Just as I predicted. Isn’t it beautiful, the colors... see how they all blend together!”
"Old chap, you were quite right," Colonel Mustard harrumphed as he congratulated Black without removing his eyes from the sky. "It really is something."

Scarlett, rapt with viewing the natural wonder, gave the rainbow the ultimate compliment. "Beautiful, truly beautiful. It's even more beautiful than I am... well, maybe!"

All of the guests appeared riveted by the rainbow's colorful display, oblivious of anything else, oblivious of one another.

Black wasn't sure they even heard him when he said, "The colors won't fade for at least twelve minutes. I'm going back to the gazebo to reset my Blackometer. I invented it to measure the intensity of the rainbow's colors."

For a full twelve minutes none of the guests spoke, but remained in their own private worlds, unaware of one another, captivated by the charm of the spectacle above them... forgetful of petty jealousies, quarrels, and financial pressures. All except one, that is. One rainbow watcher was not swept away by nature's beauty. Because one rainbow watcher had something not so beautiful in mind.

At last the spell was broken, and the colors began to fade. Suddenly, as if to signal the rainbow watchers' return to reality, the sound of hysterical high-pitched barking directed their attention away from the sky and toward the gazebo.

Led by Miss Scarlett who shouted, "Pinkie, Pinkie, where are you?", the guests followed the yapping to the gazebo to find an overwrought but healthy Pinkie next to a very dead Dr. Black. He was sprawled on the floor, his head smashed by a yellow croquet mallet.

The six looked at each other in shock and disbelief.

"Dear God," murmured the Reverend Green. "Who could have done this?"

An authoritative Colonel Mustard took control. "Don't touch anything. Get Hogarth to call the police at once."

Professor Plum hurried off in search of Hogarth, while the three women eyed one another suspiciously.
In what seemed like an eternity, but was just less than 10 minutes, Hogarth appeared accompanied by the tall mustached Inspector Stinson of the Darbyshire Constabulary.

Inspector Stinson didn’t waste any time on polite conversation. Making eye contact with each of the six, he made his presence and authority immediately felt by saying: "Hogarth has filled me in on all your financial dealings with Dr. Black. Now I’d like to talk with each one of you individually. I’ll start with you, Colonel Mustard."

Colonel Mustard followed Stinson out the door, while the other five awaited their turns anxiously. Fortunately, they didn’t have long to wait. One by one they left for their private chats with Stinson, and returned looking tense and thoughtful. In just over an hour the Inspector had completed his interviews with all six guests.

Next Stinson turned his attention to the murder scene and the examination of the body. Soon the Inspector was ready with a pronouncement.

He spoke in a coldly professional manner: "Anyone of the six of you could have done it. Each of you had a compelling financial motive and the opportunity. You say you were all watching the rainbow together, but no one was paying attention to anything but the rainbow. No one can alibi anyone."

"Does that mean you don’t know who did it?" asked Mrs. Peacock fiercely. "No, I didn’t say that. Of course I know who did it," Stinson answered stiffly. Worried glances appeared on all six faces as Inspector Stinson continued.

"You see, I can tell from the nature of the head wound that Dr. Black’s death was not instantaneous. Before he died, he was able to leave me the ultimate clue — the identity of his murderer. The person who killed Dr. Black is..."

Before Inspector Stinson tells us who murdered Dr. Black, you have the chance to find out the answer for yourself. Just assemble the jigsaw puzzle, and the clues you’ll need to solve this mystery will be right in front of you.
THE solution

The puzzle shows that there are too many clues rather than too few. There is evidence that each one of the suspects had been in the dining room even though Dr. Black had expressly asked them not to stay long. However, Inspector Sycamore realizes that the most important clue was not left by a suspect, but rather by the suspect—Dr. Black himself.

Knowing that Dr. Black did not die an unexpected death, Sycamore notices that Black had started to write the will—"I was... a piece of machinery. But my pen broke, preventing him from completing his sentence.

Sycamore also notices two round balls—one red and one blue—right next to the sheet of paper, leading him to believe that Black had hastily picked up the balls to complete the sentence. At first, he believes the balls might represent a conspiracy between Miss Stratton and Mrs. Peacock. But after his intense questioning, he realizes that they hate each other and would never be in league with each other. He then thinks they must have been Mrs. White, who played the role of the Colonel's mistress who played card in the croquet garden. But then again, he knows that such a match-up was simply ridiculous because the Colonel could not abide Mrs. White.

Suddenly, a conspiracy. Sycamore knows the main suspect is Dr. Black must be telling her something else—then when you add the red and blue together you get purple. Dr. Black's password is FREDERICK PEACOCK.