INSTRUCTIONS
FOR
DETECTIVES:

1) Read the story and complete the two puzzles, one of which shows the scene before the crime and the other the aftermath.

2) Check the puzzles for clues and solve the mystery.

3) Hold the crime solution up to a mirror to read the answer to the mystery.

The time was January, 1881. The place, Transvaal, South Africa.

Police sergeant Gore put his feet up on the veranda and lazily swatted a mosquito off the table. He was looking forward to his supper and an early night.

As he sat gazing out into the fading light, he marveled at the splendor of the African sky. Every night different, every night an original canvas of glorious color, reds, purples, oranges painting the sky.

Suddenly his attention was drawn to a figure in black striding towards the house.

"Father Pronti," he said, "what brings you here at this time of night?" The usually serene priest looked distraught. He pulled out a handkerchief and wiped his brow then sat opposite the sergeant.

"Dr. Bosman sent me. Bad news. I'm afraid, there's been a death. Frans de Vries. Found some twenty miles away from his farm. Sounds ghastly... he said to come as quick as you can."

"I'm on my way," said the Sergeant standing up and grabbing his hat, "does his wife know?"

"Not yet. Shall I tell her or will you?"

"Would you mind?" he asked, "it might be better coming from a man of the cloth. Where's the body now?"

"Out behind the farm, east of the Limpopo River. I came as fast as I could. The doctor said it looks like the lions have been at him, half of one of his legs is missing."

The Sergeant shook his head, "I'll stop by to see Mrs. De Vries after I've seen the doctor, if you could stay with her until then."

The priest nodded and set off for the farm. The Sergeant looked out at the now crimson sunset. This glorious Africa, he thought. It has its dark side and it can be deadly.

The doctor had built a fire and it was a clear beacon to guide the sergeant through the descending darkness. As he dismounted his horse, he saw two tents and the doctor sitting waiting for him in front of one of them. "At last," said the doctor.

The Sergeant could see the covered body of De Vries lying on a bed inside the other tent. "Lions?" he asked.

The doctor shook his head. "I thought so at first. They've definitely been here, but I don't think they killed him. No, I think this was murder."

"Murder!" exclaimed the Sergeant, "But why? How? How long has he been dead?"

"Two, three days at least by the looks of the body."

"Two days! But Martha hadn't reported him missing."

"Well, it wasn't unusual. He was often gone for weeks lately. Since," the doctor looked warily around him, "you know."

The Sergeant nodded. De Vries had probably caught the diamond fever like so many young men. Mines were appearing all over the Transvaal and De Vries would have
been a fool not to have searched his own land for a lucky find. And had he found diamonds?” asked the Sergeant.

“Not that’s been registered as far as I know. There’s been some nasty goings on because of these diamonds. The lust for money can bring out the worst in a man.”

The doctor went over to the remains of the body and beckoned the Sergeant. “I reckon whoever did this was hoping to make it look like an accident or a lion got him. Out here a few more days and there might have been nothing left to show any foul play.”

“So how can you tell?” queried the Sergeant.

The doctor pointed at the dead man’s head. “First the back of the skull is crushed. No wild cat could have done that. That’s the work of a man, probably when he was sleeping. I found a rock with blood on it near the tent, but that’s not all. Look here, on the neck, there are signs of stabbing. A small knife of some sort. It looks like he was knocked out, then finished off to make sure he never came around.”

The Sergeant turned away, bracing himself against his nausea to search for any clue as to who had done this. The doctor was probably right about De Vries being killed in his sleep. There was no sign of disturbance or struggle that he could see. Only what was to be expected out in the middle of nowhere. Camp beds, a paraffin light, a pen, ink.

“Strange, there’s a pen here but no sign of any paper? Did you see anything?”

The Doctor shook his head.

“Best sleep on it,” he said, “you won’t find much more in the dark. I’ve pitched the tent so we could stay and brought an extra sleeping bag for you.”

“Who found the body?”

“I did,” he said. “I was out on my rounds. I visit all the farm folk out in this region, and I saw the tent and thought I’d just stop in to see who was here.”

“I’ll go and see if Martha’s alright in the morning,” said the Sergeant settling down by the fire. “But at first light, I’ll look for clues as to who did this awful thing.”

The next morning, the sergeant was baffled. Apart from the rock, there was no weapon to be found that could have been used for the stabbing, only the usual camping gear. A compass, the remains of some bread and stale cheese, utensils, a few toiletries, a crucifix on the floor by the bed and his sleeping bag.

“It looks like he’d built a fire, which tells us it was probably night time when he was murdered,” said the Sergeant to the doctor while pointing to the charcoal ashes a short distance away, “and I reckon he didn’t hear whoever it was that killed him. No sign of a struggle so, he was sleeping soundly.”

A gleam of metal in the dead man’s tent caught the Sergeant’s eye. He went over and picked up a knife then shook his head, “Probably the knife Frans used to cut his bread, too big and blunt to have caused those stabbing marks.”

“Come and look at this,” said the Doctor, who was also rooting around. “Could be interesting.”

He held out a small leather case for the Sergeant to examine. Inside was a brush with the initials JDV on the back. “See there’s space for a brush and a comb. The comb is missing.”

“De Vries could have lost it,” said the Sergeant.

“Or,” said the doctor, “it could have been used to make those stabbing marks in his neck.”

“A comb? said the skeptical Sergeant.

“A comb with a long pointed metal handle. You must have seen them. You could buy them up at the stores in Pretoria.”

“Possible,” mused the Sergeant.

Suddenly he was distracted by a strange marking in the earth leading from inside the tent to outside. He followed the marks down to the river where they disappeared. The marks were small, like a half moon. “Interesting,” he said. “These look like the marks from a walking stick or something similar.”

He got down on the ground to examine the marks more closely. “No sign of his horse,” said the doctor. “He must have run off. There’s horse tracks here at the side of the tent and footprints, mine, yours, and De Vries.”

“I think it’s time we paid Martha De Vries a visit,” said the Sergeant. “See if she can shed any light on any of this.”

The two men mounted their horses and made for the farm. On arrival, they were met by Nkhosi, the De Vries servant.

“Good morning, sirs” he offered politely. “Mrs. De Vries is inside.”

Martha De Vries was sitting in her kitchen with Father Pronti, who immediately rose when the two men entered.

Martha was a plain looking woman, with red frizzy hair yet the Sergeant had always admired her efforts to look fashionable, even in the wilds of Africa. Even today, she was dressed like a town lady, lace at her collar and delicate heels on her feet. Quite useless for roaming the outback, the Sergeant mused.

“Have you found out anything?” she cried.

The Sergeant shook his head. “Only that your husband was murdered. Martha, I’m so sorry, but I need to know all you can tell me.”

Martha shook her head. “He’d been gone four days, that’s all I know.”

“Looking for diamonds?” he asked.

“Oh no,” objected Martha beginning to sob. “He wasn’t interested in any of that madness. Corn is our life. Frans knew that. Our wealth was in our produce.”

He could have sworn he’d heard rumors that De Vries was after diamonds. Perhaps he hadn’t told his wife. Perhaps she was lying.

The Sergeant felt at a loss to comfort her. “Well at least he had faith and led a good Christian life.”

Martha laughed bitterly. “Who? Frans? No Sergeant, Frans was not a believer.”

Suddenly the priest pointed out the window towards the servant’s hut. “There’s your man out there,” he whispered.

“Nkhosi?” said the Sergeant. “But why?”

“You found marks from a walking stick. He always carries a stick when out in the fields. All his tribe does. They have never gotten over the Dutch taking over what
they still believe is their land. Nkhasi may be a servant here, but to his tribe he's a Prince. And if he's heard talk of diamonds on what he still believes is his land... he's probably your killer."

"Yes," said Martha, "And he always goes barefoot. So Frans wouldn't have heard him approaching..."

At that moment Nkhasi burst in. "I cannot be quiet any longer, sir," he seemed very distressed. "I am an innocent man. My people are a peaceful tribe." He pointed at the priest. "Ask him how often he visits here. Always when Mr. De Vries is away. He is your murderer. He wants this farm."

The priest turned livid. "I come to care for the needs of this child of God!" he spluttered at Martha, who had gone bright red. "How dare you accuse me. As if I would hurt Martha or any one of my flock..."

Martha suddenly pointed at Nkhasi. "Why don't you tell them what it is you wear around your neck?"

Nkhasi looked aghast as everyone turned to stare at his necklace, which was a brown stone threaded with a shoeacle.

"An uncut diamond, if I'm not mistaken," said Martha smugly.

"My people have known about these stones for many years," Nkhasi said. "But it does not mean I killed Mr. De Vries."

"Ask her where the priest spent the night. In her bed, that's where. She wishes to marry this priest." He fumed, "Ask her. I heard them talking about it this morning."

"Silence," cried the priest. "I am a man of God, you heathen savage..."

The Doctor could contain himself no longer. "That's not what I've heard," he said turning to the Sergeant. "The 'good' Father does have a certain reputation with the ladies, particularly those left alone for long periods of time."

At this, Martha exploded. "You mean there are others?"

The Doctor nodded. "Oh yes. Many. Father Pronti is not the only person people choose to confess to. I've had many a young girl in tears in my office over him."

"How dare you?" cried Martha turning on the priest. "I thought you loved only me. It was our secret," she looked down in anger. "But it wasn't me you wanted, was it? You knew Frans had found diamonds. It was you who killed Frans, wasn't it?"

The priest's expression grew cold. "I know you hoped there was going to be an us, Martha, trying to lure me to you with the promise of diamonds."

Martha sprang up to slap the priest as each suspect began hissing accusations at other.

"Quiet, all of you," cried the Sergeant. "I have one question that needs answering."

The room went quiet.

"Martha," asked the Sergeant. "Did you at any time go out to where your husband was camping?"

"No, absolutely not," she replied.

"Father Pronti, did you?"

"I did not," said the priest.

"Nkhasi?"

"No sir."

"And now," announced the Sergeant. "I will tell you which of you is a liar and the murderer."

---

**THE SOLUTION:**

"I know what you're asking. So let me answer your questions with this:"

"I know you're asking "Who killed Frans?" and "Where did Frans find the diamonds?"

"I know you're asking "Who is Father Pronti's secret lover?"

"I know you're asking "Who is the man with the red shoeacle?"

"I know you're asking "Who is the one who wants the farm?"

"I know you're asking "Who is the one who wants the diamonds?"

"I know you're asking "Who is the one who wants to marry Martha?"

I know all of these questions, and I can answer them. I am the solution."

---

Copyright TDC Games Inc. Hasca, H. 60163, Made in the USA
concept under license from Paul Lamond Games and B.S. Randall Ltd.
All Rights Reserved.