MISS PELL'S CASE OF THE WEEK · NO. 3

The Churchyard Cat

On the last night of October 1931, Lord Ashcombe's guests would not go home. They came in costume, and his secretary, Miss Pell, dealt the murder game all night long, wherever it was darkest: at the party in the Hall, out in the churchyard, in the chapel and down in the cellars. Every guest was dealt a card in silence: one said victim, one said murderer. The lights went out for one minute. When they came back, nobody was allowed to move, and Miss Pell went from guest to guest with her notebook.

HOW TO PLAY

1. **Every statement is true.** Read each one against the plan.
2. **Exactly one suspect stands in every row and every column.** The body is not a suspect. Areas have no such rule: an area may hold several suspects, or none.
3. **The murderer is the one suspect in the area with the body.** That area always holds exactly one suspect, and the rule works while you solve: once one suspect must be there, nobody else can be.

Rows are numbered from the top and columns from the left, so R2C5 is the second row, fifth column; north is the top of the plan. Hatched squares are where nobody can stand. A dark outline around a whole square means nobody can see past it, like a wall. Write initials on the plan as you go: small where a suspect *might* be, large where they *must* be. There is exactly one answer, and you never need to guess.

Beside: in a square next to it, up, down, left or right, and in the same area. Never diagonally, and never through a wall or a doorway. Sitting or standing on something, a chair or a rug, is not being beside it, but another one next to your square is.

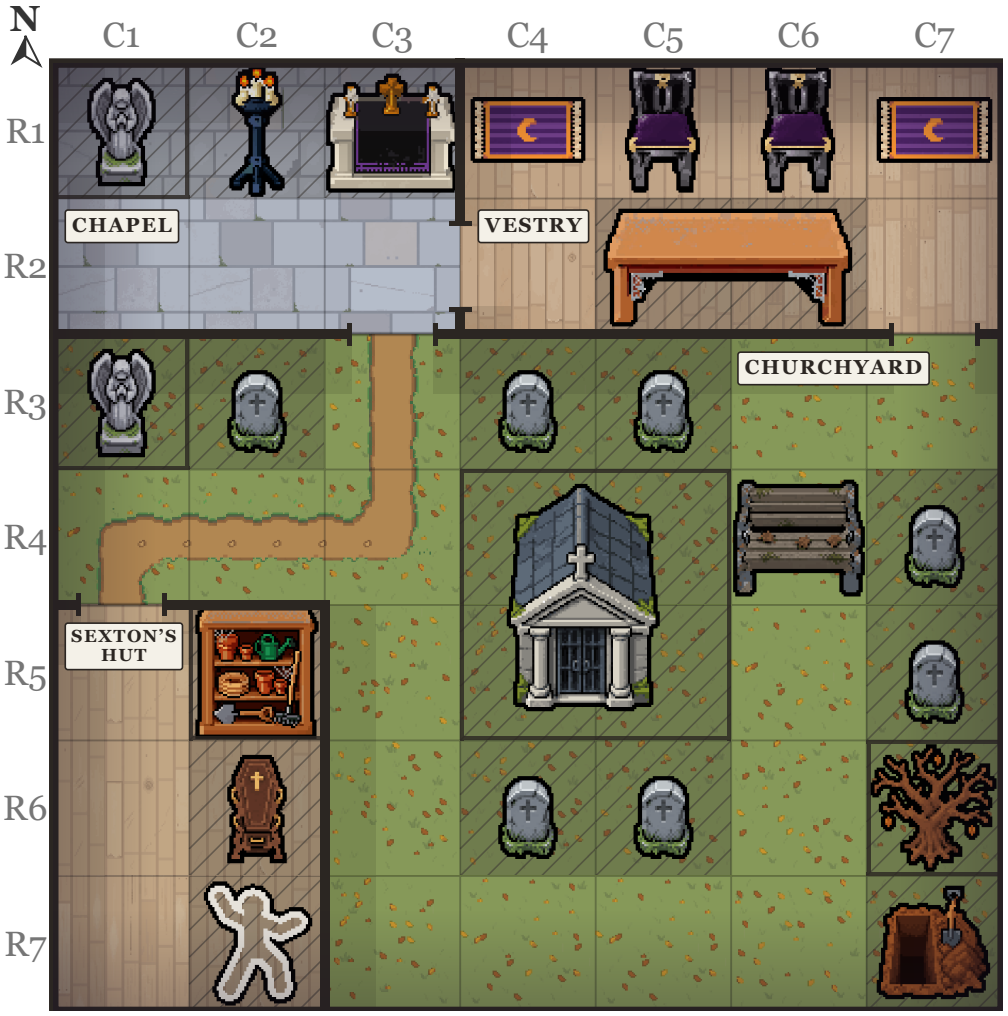
Could see: straight along a row or a column, through doorways, until a wall or an outlined piece stops the view; you see that piece, but nothing behind it. Never diagonally, and people never block the view. The square you stand on does not count.

Two rows north and one column east: an exact distance, counted in squares.

North of, west of: compares rows or columns, and nothing else. North is the top of the plan, east is the right.

Of the people beside a sink, exactly two wore a bowler: counts the bowlers among whoever stood there; it does not say how many stood there.

Wore, had: what the lineup shows under each suspect's picture. *Everyone beside a clock, if anyone, had a beard* does not say that anyone stood beside one.



A black cat had followed the club in at the lych gate, and nobody could catch it. When the lanterns were lit again, Clara lay in the Sexton's Hut.

THE CLUES

1. Kit was not beside a gravestone.
2. Thomas was one row south and two columns east of Martin.
3. Jack was in the second column.
4. Peter was in the fourth column.
5. Douglas could not see the mausoleum.
6. Lucy was north of Kit.
7. Martin was east of Peter.

GENERAL CLUES

8. Of the people beside a bench, exactly one wore a monocle.

THE SUSPECTS

1. Thomas
a witch's hat
a monocle
a beard

2. Jack
a witch's hat
a beard

3. Kit
a top hat
a beard

4. Peter
a top hat
spectacles
a beard

5. Douglas
a monocle
a beard

6. Martin
a witch's hat
a beard

7. Lucy
a top hat
spectacles

THE MURDERER _____

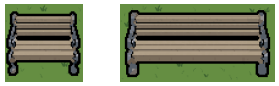
The Furniture

Every piece in this case, drawn as on the plan, and the two things that matter about each: whether a suspect can stand on its square, and whether a suspect can see past it.

altar

✗ nobody can stand here

✓ can see past it



bench

✓ can sit or stand here

✓ can see past it

candle stand

✗ nobody can stand here

✓ can see past it

chair

✓ can sit or stand here

✓ can see past it

coffin

✗ nobody can stand here

✓ can see past it

gravestone

✗ nobody can stand here

✓ can see past it

mausoleum

✗ nobody can stand here

✗ blocks the view

open grave

✗ nobody can stand here

✓ can see past it

rug

✓ can sit or stand here

✓ can see past it

statue

✗ nobody can stand here

✗ blocks the view

table

✗ nobody can stand here

✓ can see past it

tool shelf

✗ nobody can stand here

✗ blocks the view

tree

✗ nobody can stand here

✗ blocks the view

Stuck?

Three hints, each giving away a little more than the last. Read one, then go back to the plan.

Hint I · Where to begin. Start with Martin. Clues 2, 4 and 7 together leave him exactly one square.

Hint II · When you are stuck. Read clues 5 and 8 together: they are enough to place the next suspect. Clue 5 is about what Douglas could see. From each square still open to him, look along the row and the column, never diagonally, through doorways, up to a wall or onto an outlined piece. By this point four suspects should be placed.

Hint III · A checkpoint. Martin at R1C5, Thomas at R2C7, Jack at R4C2.

Who did it?

The answer, step by step, is at whereaboutspuzzles.com on Saturday.

Twenty more murders in one night

Miss Pell dealt her game all through that Halloween night: at the party in the Hall, in the churchyard by lantern light, at a seance in the Library at midnight, in the haunted chapel and down in the cellars before dawn. She kept the night's games in a notebook of their own. **Whereabouts: Murder in the Dark** is that notebook: twenty Halloween murder mysteries, gentle at dusk and hard before dawn, with a practice case solved for you, three levels of hints for every case, and the answers step by step.

Find it in the Whereabouts shop on Etsy: **whereaboutspuzzles.etsy.com**

And every Friday, a new case is free at **whereaboutspuzzles.com**.

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