THE HOLLOWMERE FILES

VOLUME 0

# Case File Zero
# Five Cold Cases

*The five files Chief Briggs never closed. A free gift for members of the Inkwell Society reader list.*

MELISSA MOSBERG

THE INKWELL SOCIETY

# How to Investigate

Before you ever stepped off the train, Chief Walter Briggs kept one battered folder at the back of his desk drawer. Five cases from the winter of 1951 that nobody in Hollowmere could crack. He has finally handed it over. Each case gives you a scene, four suspects, and a grid of evidence.

1. **Search the scene.** Find every word on the Evidence list. Words run forwards, backwards, up, down, and diagonally.
2. **Unmask the culprit.** One suspect's **first name** is hidden in the grid, but it is not on the Evidence list. That suspect is guilty.
3. **Find the motive.** When every word and the culprit are circled, read the **unused letters** left to right, top to bottom. They spell out why it was done.

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*Solutions are at the back. You are welcome to print as many copies as you like for your own household.*

CHAPTER ONE · CASE 01

# The Dark Lamp

### THE SCENE

On the stormiest night of January 1951, the great lamp at Gull Point went dark for an hour, and the cargo ship Marigold ran onto the rocks. The keeper's assistant, Wendell Pratt, was found at the foot of the lighthouse stairs the next morning. The ship's cargo of whisky was never found.

### THE SUSPECTS

**GARRETT LOWRY** · Marigold's first mate

*"We saw the light go dark, then the rocks."*

**DORA PRATT** · Wendell's sister

*"Wendell said someone had been paid to put the light out."*

**IMOGEN TEAGUE** · harbor clerk

*"Mr. Mercer bought a new truck in February. Paid cash."*

**SILAS MERCER** · relief keeper

*"The lamp was lit when I left at nine. I'll swear to it."*

### THE EVIDENCE

- ☐ LIGHTHOUSE
- ☐ LAMP OIL
- ☐ SHIPWRECK
- ☐ WHISKY
- ☐ CARGO
- ☐ STORM
- ☐ ROCKS
- ☐ STAIRS
- ☐ KEEPER
- ☐ FOGHORN
- ☐ WICK
- ☐ SPYGLASS
- ☐ FOOTPRINT
- ☐ MOTIVE
- ☐ ALIBI
- ☐ ARREST
- ☐ DAGGER
- ☐ CLUE
- ☐ RUMOR
- ☐ NOTE
- ☐ OATH

### INVESTIGATOR'S NOTES

F H E O Y M O T I V E A
O W K O A K C L U E L L
O M C G R T S A L I S I
T R E R R U H I G A P B
P O R A E S M H H P Y I
R T W C S N T O A W G I
I S P D T H R T R O L D
N N I D O L I O P M A L
T O H U W A R K H G S E
N T S T A I R S G G S T
R E P E E K C E H E O L
I S K C O R R K G H T F

## CASE VERDICT

Culprit (the hidden first name): _____

Motive (the unused letters):

☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐

Ledger letter (culprit's initial): ☐ Case closed ☐

# The Bakery Fire

### THE SCENE

Before dawn on a February morning, the Harbor Street bakery burned to the ground. The baker, Otto Brandt, got out alive, but his night helper did not. The fire chief found a can of kerosene behind the flour store, and the insurance had been doubled a month before.

### THE SUSPECTS

**LUCILLE BRANDT** · Otto's wife

*"Otto said the shop was losing money every week."*

**OTTO BRANDT** · the baker

*"I was asleep upstairs. I barely escaped myself."*

**HATTIE SORENSEN** · flour supplier

*"Mr. Brandt owed me for six months of flour."*

**CLEMENT RAWLEY** · insurance agent

*"He raised the policy in January. Said he was being careful."*

### THE EVIDENCE

- ☐ BAKERY
- ☐ KEROSENE
- ☐ OVENS
- ☐ FLOUR SACKS
- ☐ SMOKE
- ☐ ASHES
- ☐ MATCHES
- ☐ INSURANCE
- ☐ DEBTS
- ☐ BREAD
- ☐ FIRE CHIEF
- ☐ POLICY
- ☐ MOTIVE
- ☐ SECRET
- ☐ TORCH
- ☐ HUNCH
- ☐ NOTE
- ☐ DAGGER
- ☐ CASE
- ☐ PRINT
- ☐ HAT

### INVESTIGATOR'S NOTES

P O L I C Y H E N M F W
A C T T N I R P O O L F
N A O T S S E K T T O I
H S R O E D U E E I U R
D E C T C T D R M V R E
O A H T R B E O A E S C
R V E O E A B S T N A H
E H E R T K T E C H C I
G E I N B E S N H U K E
G N S U S R R E E N S F
A S H E S Y A N S C C E
D M O E K O M S N H E Y

**CASE VERDICT**

Culprit (the hidden first name): _____

Motive (the unused letters):

☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐

Ledger letter (culprit's initial): ☐ Case closed ☐

# The Ferry Ticket

### THE SCENE

A stranger in a camel coat stepped off the island ferry in March and was found dead in the waiting room an hour later. His wallet was gone, but a ferry ticket stub in his shoe had a name written on the back. It was the name of a woman in town who had been married before, under another name.

### THE SUSPECTS

**MABEL ORCUTT** · ticket seller

*"The stranger asked me where the Dunmores lived."*

**JASPER DUNMORE** · Philippa's husband

*"My wife has no secrets from me."*

**RUFUS KETTERING** · ferry captain

*"He sat alone and stared at a photograph the whole way."*

**PHILIPPA DUNMORE** · the woman named on the ticket

*"I have never seen that man in my life."*

### THE EVIDENCE

- ☐ FERRY
- ☐ TICKET STUB
- ☐ CAMEL COAT
- ☐ WAITING ROOM
- ☐ WALLET
- ☐ PHOTOGRAPH
- ☐ GANGPLANK
- ☐ BENCH
- ☐ TIMETABLE
- ☐ STRANGER
- ☐ SECRET
- ☐ HARBOR
- ☐ WITNESS
- ☐ SUSPECT
- ☐ SHADOW
- ☐ CASE

### INVESTIGATOR'S NOTES

W I T N E S S H M E R F
I H F R S H A D O W A S
T C H E H A R B O R P T
U N T E R C E S R S P I
R E G N A R T S G B I M
A B C A S E Y N N D L E
B U T S T E K C I T I T
C A M E L C O A T H H A
T E L L A W A D I C P B
O K N A L P G N A G M L
S U S P E C T E W B A E
P H O T O G R A P H C K

**CASE VERDICT**

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Motive (the unused letters):

☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Ledger letter (culprit's initial): ☐ Case closed ☐

CHAPTER ONE · CASE 04

# The Choir Robe

### THE SCENE

On Easter morning, the choir master, Ignatius Bell, collapsed during the first hymn. The doctor found poison in the throat lozenges he kept in his robe pocket. That spring, he had given the solo part to a newcomer instead of the soprano who had sung it for fifteen years.

### THE SUSPECTS

**LIONEL ASHBY** · church organist

*"Mrs. Pollard was alone in the robing room before service."*

**MARJORIE BELL** · Ignatius's wife

*"He was tired of her temper. That's why he chose the new girl."*

**FELICITY GRANT** · the new soloist

*"I didn't ask for the part. He just gave it to me."*

**EUGENIA POLLARD** · senior soprano

*"Fifteen years I sang that solo. Fifteen."*

### THE EVIDENCE

- ☐ CHOIR
- ☐ HYMNAL
- ☐ SOLO
- ☐ ROBE
- ☐ LOZENGES
- ☐ POISON
- ☐ EASTER
- ☐ ORGAN PIPES
- ☐ SOPRANO
- ☐ PEWS
- ☐ SHEET MUSIC
- ☐ VESTRY
- ☐ LEDGER
- ☐ TRACE
- ☐ DAGGER
- ☐ SUSPECT
- ☐ PRINT
- ☐ ARREST
- ☐ SHADOW
- ☐ KEY

### INVESTIGATOR'S NOTES

H A L E D G E R E G P A
V I E S U S P E C T O H
E N S H E E T M U S I C
P E T R S P A O L E S R
E G R O P I A R R G O O
W U A T T P O A R N N B
S E C L A N M Y H E N E
O O E S H A D O W Z S T
H E L D A G G E R O R T
G I S O P R A N O L K R
P R I N T O E A S T E R
R I O H C V E S T R Y L

**CASE VERDICT**

Culprit (the hidden first name): _____

Motive (the unused letters):

☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Ledger letter (culprit's initial): ☐ Case closed ☐

# The Last Lobster Pot

### THE SCENE

In April, the body of a young lobsterman, Danny Coombs, was pulled up tangled in a line of traps that were not his own. Every buoy on the line was painted in the colors of the oldest fishing family in town. Someone had been raiding their traps all winter.

### THE SUSPECTS

**HARLAN VOSS** · rival lobsterman

*"Danny was poaching. Everyone knew it."*

**TESSA MOODY** · fish buyer

*"Mr. Pennock told me he'd 'settle it himself.'"*

**EZRA PENNOCK** · head of the fishing family

*"Those were my traps. I want to know who was hauling them."*

**MYRTLE COOMBS** · Danny's mother

*"Danny said old Pennock threatened him on the dock."*

### THE EVIDENCE

- ☐ LOBSTER
- ☐ TRAPS
- ☐ BUOYS
- ☐ ROWBOAT
- ☐ BAIT
- ☐ ROPE
- ☐ POACHING
- ☐ DOCK
- ☐ TIDES
- ☐ OARS
- ☐ GAFF HOOK
- ☐ SEAWEED
- ☐ VERDICT
- ☐ DAGGER
- ☐ LEDGER
- ☐ WITNESS
- ☐ MOTIVE
- ☐ POISON
- ☐ GUILT
- ☐ SHADOW
- ☐ MIST

### INVESTIGATOR'S NOTES

S K G V E R D I C T T D
P H C N T T E B O L Y A
A H A O I S R A O E D G
R S B A D H E E N D S G
T H B R E O C G B G E E
M A B W S M A A I E A R
I D O N I F O R O R W B
S O G B F T G T Z P E U
T W H H W I N U I E E O
E P O R S O T E I V D Y
L O B S T E R R S L E S
K P O I S O N A P S T S

## CASE VERDICT

Culprit (the hidden first name): _____

Motive (the unused letters):

☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐

Ledger letter (culprit's initial): ☐ Case closed ☐

THE CASEBOOK

# Solutions

*Light grey: evidence. Black: the culprit. Circled: the motive letters.*

CASE 01




## The Dark Lamp

**CULPRIT**

**Silas Mercer**, relief keeper

**MOTIVE**

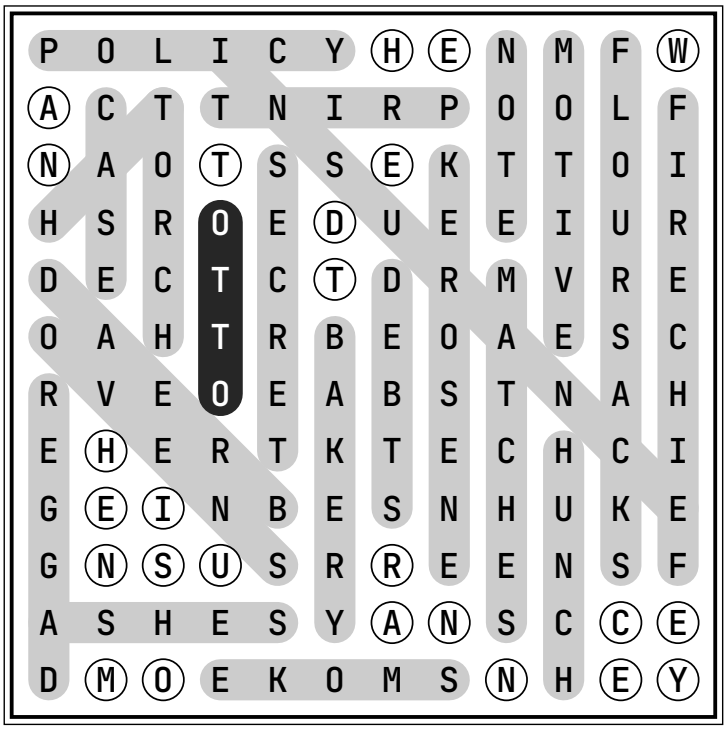
*He was paid to darken the light.*

**LEDGER**

**S**

Smugglers paid Silas to put out the lamp so the Marigold would wreck and they could take the whisky. Wendell saw him do it.

CASE 02




## The Bakery Fire

**CULPRIT**

**Otto Brandt**, the baker

**MOTIVE**

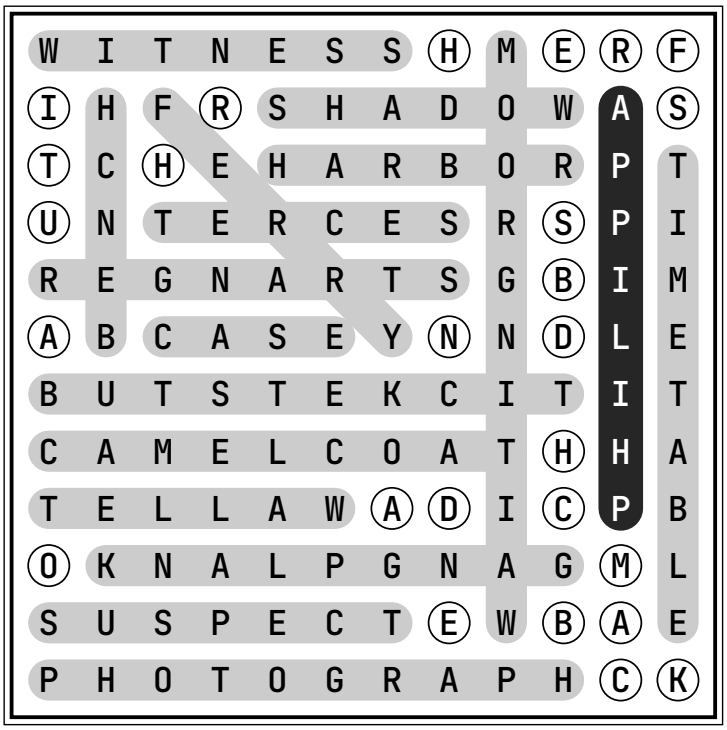
*He wanted the insurance money.*

**LEDGER**

**O**

Otto had doubled the insurance and set the fire himself. He did not know his helper had come in early.

CASE 03




## The Ferry Ticket

**CULPRIT**

**Philippa Dunmore**, the woman named on the ticket

**MOTIVE**

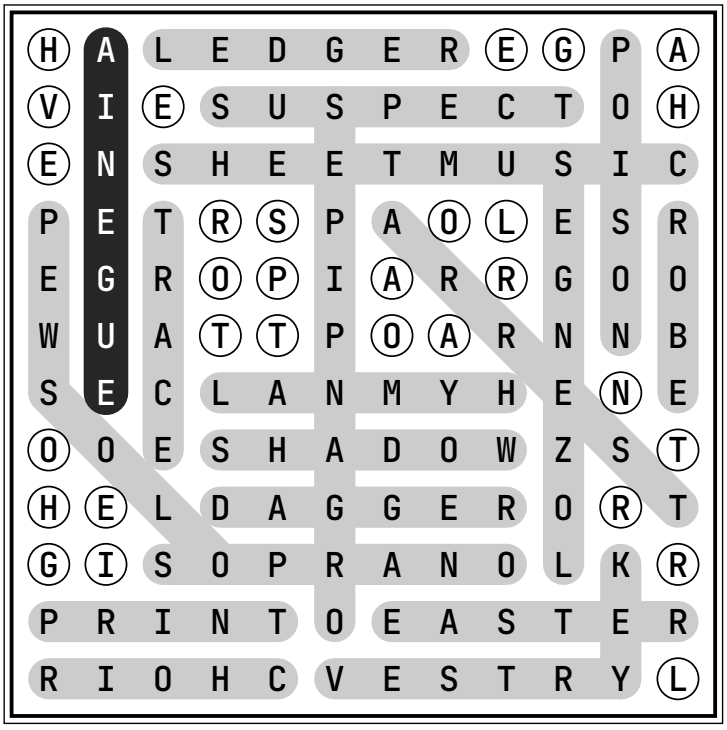
*Her first husband had come back.*

**LEDGER**

**P**

The stranger was Philippa's first husband, whom she had left without a divorce. The photograph in his coat was their wedding picture.

CASE 04




## The Choir Robe

**CULPRIT**

**Eugenia Pollard**, senior soprano

**MOTIVE**

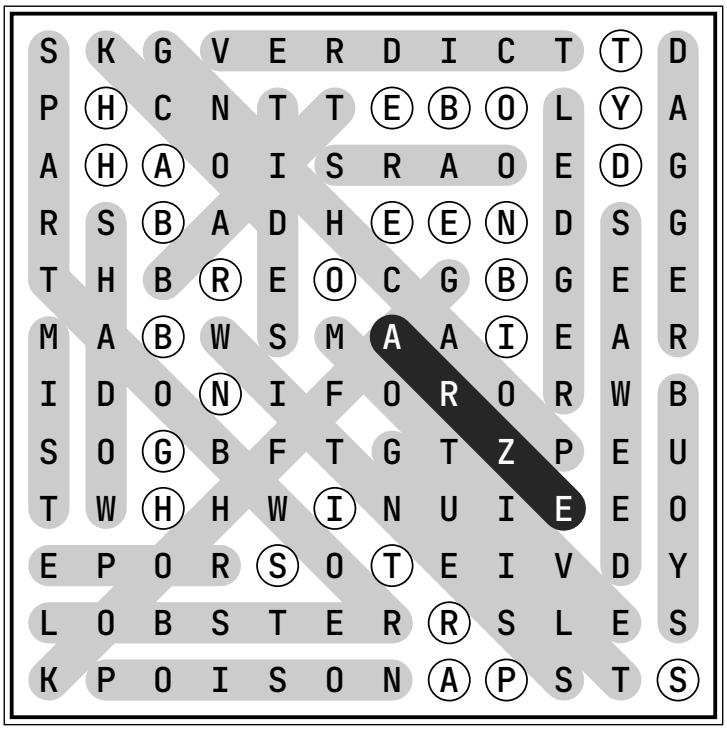
*He gave her solo part to another girl.*

**LEDGER**

**E**

Eugenia swapped the lozenge tin in the robing room. The poison came from the rat bait in her own cellar.

CASE 05




## The Last Lobster Pot

**CULPRIT**

**Ezra Pennock**, head of the fishing family

**MOTIVE**

*The boy had been robbing his traps.*

**LEDGER**

**E**

Ezra caught Danny hauling his traps at dawn and pushed him over. The paint on Ezra's gaff hook matched the bruise.

# The Files Stay Open

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