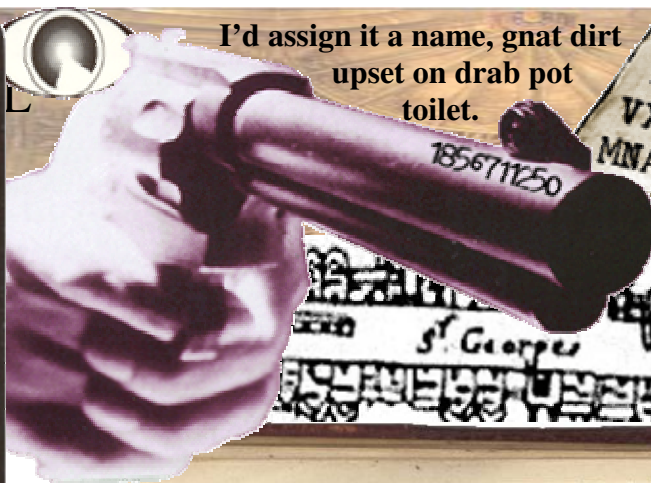


1. What poem was finished in a Swiss sanatorium and taken to Paris for a Pound, to be edited?
2. Whose chance meeting with Stamford led to a very adventurous partnership?
3. Which architect was killed in the Garden with a revolver?
4. Tracey, Brito, Fitzurse: who is the missing suspect from a Grim tale of murder?
5. Dick Powell was the first to do it. Robert Mitchum has done it twice. Robert and George Montgomery each did it in the same year. What?
6. Who was the first British actor to be knighted?
7. If Sandy was modelled on Lawrence of Arabia, who was Richard based on?
8. Which retired Shakespearean actor played the lead in the tragedies of X, Y and Z?

$$(u+1) = 0.5 \times (v+u+2)$$

25 pts:

I'd assign it a name, gnat dirt  
upset on drab pot  
toilet.



Wasted

## I The Burial of the Dead (10)



n fact (that is, if you believe the history books, and had no thoughts to the contrary), May turned out to be the cruellest month. Some guy once wrote, 'Young men may die in May'. I duly obliged.

The grave was waiting. You know your grave, first and foremost, is always waiting, and the maggots too. Not exactly on waste land (there was some green nearby) but they certainly made sure the site was tucked away and difficult to search for. It was unmarked too, the old Chicago overcoat without a name tag. As the nephew prophetically observed, none but those present would know where the body lay. But what did it matter where you lay once you were dead? In a dirty sump or in a marble tower on top of a high hill? You were dead, you were sleeping the big sleep, you were not bothered by things like that. Oil and water were the same as wind and air to you. You just slept the big sleep, not caring about the poisonous nastiness of how you died or where you fell. Me, I was part of the nastiness now. I had played my final part.

A traveller going to seek countries yet unknown? To fish in seas yet uncharted? I wondered if I'd be going to a better place. It would be ironic if were it so after everything that I'd been accused of during my lifetime. Englishmen and Spaniards, Greeks and Turks, Jews and Moors – we all ended up under ground. Still, it was strange down there – I felt heavier than a broken heart.

Heaven shed tears at my abrupt departure, and although few swam in the deep well of mourning, the weather at least wore black as a mark of respect. A troublesome rain played a sombre beat on a couple of umbrellas. The vicar kept it simple, a few words and a handful of dust. He didn't have much of an audience. My publisher turned up, no doubt trying not to think of the boost in sales that such a dramatic exit might trigger, even if my latest work was a tad unfinished. There were no flowers, not even hyacinths. In all, not exactly the curtain call I'd have staged for myself.

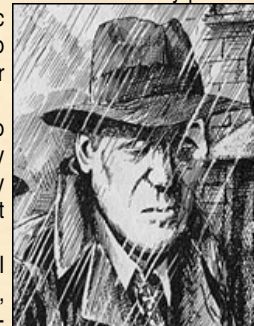
Added to the prompt burial service, the vicar was also disposed swiftly to do me a disservice. Once he'd put me six feet under, the man raced off to record my exit. But frankly, he got it wrong. Men of the cloth, they'd been the bane of my life, out to slander me even after I'd gone. Low born, the lot of 'em, although at least they were not light.

Once I'd had a golden future, so just how had it come from that to this? I thought there was little to tell. I was twenty nine years old, went to college once, and could still speak English if there was any demand for it. I'd had a tough upbringing, sure, despite being patronised at birth, but the old man always made sure there were shoes on our feet. Money didn't grow on trees in those days. I had to start at the bottom and work my way up. It seemed that I'd worked my way all the way back down again now.

This sowed the seeds, and from an early age I yearned to have the capital. I wasn't greedy, I'd be happy just to own a motor yacht to start with [16]. It didn't help that we lived in the shadow of such magnificent opulence. Lucky that I got the brains in the family, earned myself a right royal education. I thought this would be my passport to fame and fortune. The fame bit possibly, but fortune the furies were always hiding, and ultimately, as this tragic story will tell, the search for it proved my downfall.

Someone had conceived the bright idea of interring me with unseemly haste (not the dean's idea, probably); the inquest would've had a kipper complaining that the stitching was too tight. The witnesses had stories that matched like a carefully pressed three-piece suit. Too neat, and a little over-dressed for my funeral. The coroner was more interested in the cost of the murder weapon than cross-examining the witnesses. It was verging on a conspiracy to my reckoning. The jury, sixteen men good and true, had little choice but to return the sorts of verdict they did. Or was I too fond of making a drama out of a crisis?

Death did not really look good on my CV, nor was it good for business. Barbed obituaries followed, but I could only hope that my life would provide some wise words for others. I'd served Queen and country, and my spell in the paras was especially notable. At the end of the day, a private eye should be investigating suspicious deaths, not be the victim of them. They wanted to dig the dirt, happy to see their bogeyman get his just deserts.







9. Who wrote a capital biography in MM?

10. In what street was Dr. David Black first the victim of foul play in 1949?

11. A traveller's Yahoo search was ended when he heard it straight from which horses' mouths?

12. What, the first of 14 to be built by a Eugenius, was finally closed by a storm 125 years later?

13. Who, by his own Criterion, was Lady Rothermere's fan in 1922?

14. To where was Pickford one of four movers who later produced The Gold Rush?

15. Who graduated from the Metropolis to become a star on the Planet?



10 pts:



Perhaps I should take to investigating the case myself? I could get the note book and quill out for old time's sake. But I'd probably be a bit rusty, having been murdered, but anyone could solve these kind of clues in his sleep. Stick to the basics – where, who and how – and anyone could crack it. Getting some answers to my questions would be a good start. There might even be a pay-cheque waiting at the end. But I also knew that choosing my words carefully would be the key to solving the riddle, and that somewhere in the garden there was a mint to be made, a veritable king's ransom. As they say in the brotherhood: 'finders keepers...'

\*

The fat lady cleared her throat. It was just like those cheap pulp fiction books I was into. It sounds corny, but my life flashed before my eyes, well, one particular scene anyway. I was just a kid, nine or ten maybe. All excited I was, as kids are on a big day out. Mom and Dad were taking me up to the big city for the first time. In that moment I saw myself – I had my book, a teddy too, as I sat fidgeting in the car, mentally killing myself with childish anticipation and impatience. Dad, generally a placid guy, glared at me and sounded all stern: "Would you please sit still!"

Finally arriving, I found that it was a magical place for a little boy. Somehow, it was exactly what I'd expected. To start with, every detail was a real discovery! I imagined that life in the big city would be one long play-time. I'd pass Casey's every day on my way home from school, but that was nothing compared to the characters here. I'm not quite sure what I made of it all but visiting all of the sights was certainly a revelation.



In the afternoon, we signed up for one of those tourist excursions. It was one of those moments that is life-defining: a trip to the theatre to catch a show, with a ride across on the river taxi thrown in. People queued up in the ranks, feeling like lords as they waited to reach the end of the piers. When our turn eventually arrived, we boarded and the ferryman was as large as life. "Ere, did I tell you who I 'ad in the back of my old boat the other day..."

On the other bank above our heads, the happy, laughing crowds flowed over the bridge towards the theatre. It was smaller than I expected. It started at eight, and we paid a penny each to take our place in the yard. The show itself was some popular musical comedy, about some flower girl who sounds as if she can talk to the animals.

So she goes to a speech therapist, and ends up working as a personal conductress on the buses [16,1,14]. There was no lag in the action, and I was captivated by a magical experience.

We headed back to the city afterwards, and happened to pass a little clairvoyante's shop. She turned out was no wiser than your average wise-guy, and I'd never heard of her before. Mom and Dad said I could go in for a laugh, and I excitedly pushed open the door that announced "Madame Sosostriis, Fortune Teller". The old dame looked in fine fettle, and I eagerly crossed her palm with silver. She got her best set of cards out, shuffled them mysteriously, and began turning them over onto the table. I became quite animated as she lay each card in a pre-ordained position down between us, curious to know what tomorrow's once-rosy future held.

"Ah, the bold Sir Knight of Swords, is it not!?" the dame asked after the boy [14]. "Beware he doesn't bury one just where it hurts most: in your back". Slowly, she revealed the next card. "Ah, yes, look! The humble page: the inscrutable serving man who is quite ready to serve both cold dishes and time. Now, here! The Queen of Cups, the lady of situations, perhaps all too fond of vial entertainment." The fourth card was placed face up. "The Prince of Disks. A magician, who can metamorphose all that you care to invest into a large treasury of his own. And here, the next. Oh, yes, The Hierophant. Be warned that the spiritual trail may not always lead to divine justice..... and finally, oh dear, the Devil. Or, at least his agent – a slimmed down version representing an unseen evil force I fear."

She looked deep into my eyes. "Now, you, the querent, how will the Wheel of Fortune turn for you?" She gazed into her crystal ball, before turning over five cards from the top of the pack in rapid succession. "First, Judgement, but perhaps not justice. Second, The Star, rising in the morning of your day. Third, the Lovers, sadly unrequited. Fourth, the Tower, yes, you'll certainly need a big reserve of strength. And the final act..."

As she turned over the final card, her voice trailed off with the sort of smile the operating-room sees. With a shaking hand, she lay the all-revealing fifth card next to the others. "Death by water," she whispered in a still, eerily quiet voice. "Fear death by water."