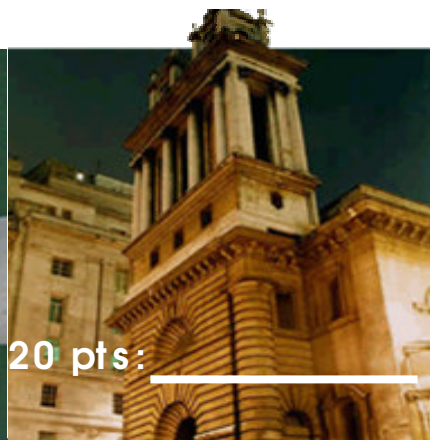




20 pts: \_\_\_\_\_



30. Her parents each belonged to prominent banking families, but her first appearance in April 2002 caused a £50m fraud scandal after the Bank got its numbers wrong. Who was she?

31. Whose new appointment in April 2001 drew an annual salary paid in units of Pride?

32. Which man (who would eventually become a Father) threw a bag of gold through a window three times, once for each daughter?

8

Wasted

### III The Fire Sermon (13)



It was my first day on my first case, and I found myself in limbo. The cell was not exactly the Ritz – rats everywhere, no bed, even the warders looked poor – the net wage around here must be bad. As my eyes adjusted to the dimness, I could just make out a figure hunched in the corner.

"Make yourself at home," it said, "you could be here some time." A hand extended out of the gloom. I shook it. "I'm Johnny. I'm in the business of making money."

Twelve days I was banged up in that hell-hole. Twelve days of sweet nothing before briefly engineering my ticket out of there [1] through the Kitchen. That is a lot of small-talk. Fortunately, Johnny turned out to be quite an interesting guy. He was quite literal about his money-making exploits, and he spent much of the next fortnight revealing to me the intricacies of his trade. He said he worked with a business associate, who was a dentist by profession, and a gatherer of casts in his spare time. Johnny sounded like one half of a great team.

I badly needed a starter for ten after I got out of the can. Our trial came up at the Old Bailey in December. The verdict was self-defence, an ironic portent. I was released immediately – a free man with no money.

Economic necessity drove me to try and alleviate my cash flow problems with a back street loan. A kind Sir whom I knew from my time in Frankie's mob, sent his butler to introduce me to a friend of his in the City. The banker said he was from Essex, and that his name was Nick, which would be quite funny if black humour was your bag.

What a scam! The arrangement involved getting me to sign a bond saying I owed him a monkey, after which he actually offers to pay me out a pony. I declined.

Obviously, the economist was somewhat depressed at losing the knight's initial [2] referral, and the two men were somewhat taken aback by this unusual level of customer dissatisfaction. "Its daylight robbery," I pointed out, "and you two usurers are as cute as a couple of golf balls." I got up and made for the door. "You'll regret this, wise guy," yelled Nick as I left. I wondered later if he'd marked my card for me.



Frankie popped his clogs in April. This was the first piece of good news I'd had in ages, but somehow I didn't think my troubles were over. I imagined his mourning wife entertaining any number of opportunities [3,2]. Tommy, the hypocritical toe-rag, said some nice things in print about the old devil, our ex leader. Nuts to that!

Money remained tight, and in desperation I naively thought a training course might help improve my career prospects. I enrolled at Night School – 'Intermediate Level Detection for Dicks'. The old boy who took the class was a cloak and dagger merchant, too much into all the latest scientific gadgetry for my liking. I heard later that he'd developed an interest in global history, and spent a term where he could teach this.

At the end of the course, we each had to get up and give a lecture to the rest of the class. The aim was to talk earnestly about something you didn't believe in, a sort of role-playing exercise which was good practice for undercover work. Of course, I'd done all this kind of thing for real, but I was still quite pleased with my little speech. One of the Dicks at the front at least seemed interested, if the copious amount of notes he was religiously taking was anything to go by. However, he seemed to be in as much discontent that I'd just skilfully put a hole in his deity [15], if his threatening stares were an accurate gauge.

Life went on. My office was usually empty of everything but the smell of dust, but one day the long forgotten sound of the buzzer alerted me to the possibility of a client.

Tentatively, I motioned a young man into the throbbing nerve centre of the Armchair Detective Agency. "I thought you might need some help," he boldly informed me, handing over a business card. I looked at it and smoked thoughtfully. "Do I look like I have need of a partner?" I scoffed.

"Actually, we're in the same racket. I've got this case, murder, some sordid love triangle, very messy and, er, the victim is some small-time local boss who's had the tables turned on him. I think you might be able help me



33. Which detective's autobiography questioned the verdict on the deaths of two men (one shot in the bedroom, the other in the hall), just after the Teapot Dome scandal broke?
34. Which murderer escaped the death penalty after the crowd voted in his favour, but still had a cross to bear?
35. Whose Kane was able to solve a murder underground in 1972?



#### Wasted

with the crime scene. I figured we could maybe pool our resources on this one. I'm sure we will work together splendidly [6]. You'll get a cut of the fee - I'll foot the bill of course."

I preferred to work alone, but I badly needed the money. He talked big, but really he was only a kid. Our partnership would quickly turn sour after I ended up doing much of his work for him. In any case, my office was really just too small for two. I only had one desk, and our paperwork kept getting mixed up. In the end I had to let the kid go, and he was very bitter about it. I should've known he'd jump at the chance to plot revenge.

The Backgammon Case at least gave me something to work on. As I drove off to locate the murder scene, I noticed a sand coloured Mercury coupe convertible parked behind. There was a man sat in the driver's seat trying very hard to be non-chalant, his face obscured by a copy of The Church Times. I didn't think anything of it at the time in truth.

When I got to the murder scene, I realised why the kid thought I could help. My Dad had grown up in this neighbourhood, and I passed the Chimney Boy, the Railway, the Bear and the Tied Trade as I drove to the big solid looking house just before the Abbey gates where it had happened. Three stories told of a man on the up, although the windows on the third floor looked a little precarious - a disgruntled wife might get ideas. The place was crawling with cops, and I needed a drink real bad. I decided to start my investigation in the Globe Inn across the road. I let the landlord pour me a long, cool Bishop's Finger before I got down to business. The CAMRA pint ruler that I took out of my anorak pocket, whose head measurement showed this to be a fine watering hole [6], raised an eyebrow. I asked if he knew who might have wanted the man in the body sack out of the way.

"You a cop?" I got my wallet out and selected a card from it. It wasn't my card. 'Frank Lynn, The Sympathetic Company'. I tried to remember what Mr. Lynn looked like and where I'd met him. I couldn't remember if he even existed. I handed the landlord the card. He read it.

"That's some case you're taking on, Mister. It'd be a helluva a lot easier to tell you who didn't want him out of the way, given how he was hated."

Two more fingers later and I had a list of suspects as lengthy as a felled tree trunk housing a rook [5]. The deceased had put many a local nose out of joint by buying up their land. The landlord hadn't taken kindly to the dead man trying to muscle in on his booty trade. It was also common knowledge, apparently, that his missus was having an affair with the prime suspect. The landlord also reckoned he'd heard from a "reliable source" that a couple of contract killers had been hired to hurry along this guy's exit. It was a lamentable and tragic tale that outdid my sob story, which would provide excellent material for a book, were I to write it.

It was time to visit the happy household. It turned out that some elementary detective work was all that was required. A cherry-stained floor told me he'd been killed in his counting house. A timely fall of snow left a trail of incriminating footprints to the body dumped behind the abbey. The forensic guys reckoned that the victim had been sapped first with a flat, blunt instrument, and then stabbed repeatedly. The dame started blubbing, and her bit on the side was quickly found holed up in a motel not far away. It was all solved by some fairly workmen like sleuthing, quite frankly.

But there was still one loose end to tie up. The line about a contract turned out to be true. The dame had paid off two hitmen handsomely in gold. One was found dead shortly afterwards, but the other guy, who went by the name of Will, had fled to the continent. Not a man you'd want to cross - a dark character reportedly.

I managed to find the ferryman, and we headed up the creek with a paddle - at least it sounded like there was a paddle on our port side, but it was very misty. The ferryman confirmed that a certain company had past his ferry that morning, asking for the same destination. As we hung a left to head up-river, I heard a rustle to the north, but the ferryman carried on under the gateway, and continued up the West coast. I spied a place on dry land that reminded me of where I could be found just beneath the Pope in the corner. The ferryman made for down town, and dropped me at a pair of piers. There'll be no red light district, I thought.

The dame at the ticket window told me that a vile rogue had paid to travel a long way east [6] on the previous crossing. The water was calm as we sailed out to sea, and I could just make out Margate Sands in the distance. The hours drifted by. A dot on the horizon slowly grew to become an island, and I savoured the view of the



30 pts:



DAGGER

DAGGER



DAGGER

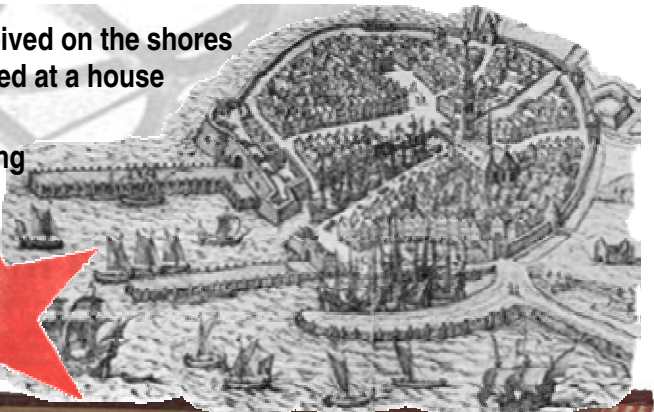
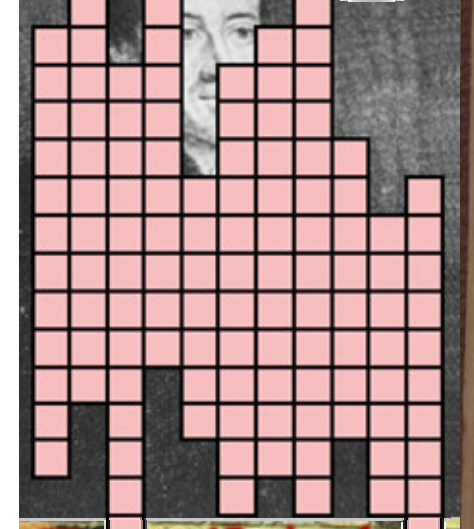




36. Which monster was conceived on the shores of Lake Geneva and finished at a house on West Street?

37. What is key number missing in the following sequence:  
17, 23, ?, 18, 20, 25.

38. Who was nuts to be delivered safely by insomniac plums in 1861?



IO

Wasted

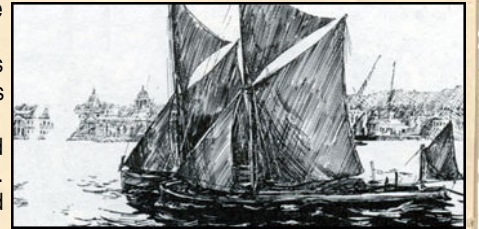
beautiful old walled town that towered upwards, tinged orange in the early morning sun here and there, looking embarrassed.

The choice was economy versus five star luxury on expenses. I checked into a cheap motel room. Where do you go in a strange town when you want information about a killer? To see the crime reporter on the local rag, of course. I found the place. It was written in black flaked paint letters on the front door, after the name of the paper. I learned two things. Apparently the Flying Angel Club sounded like a good place to start. Also that a gentlemen fitting my description had recently checked into the Columbia Excelsior Hotel. I was on my way immediately.

I found the killer hidden amongst the various linen on his bed. "Murdered anyone at backgammon recently?" It was a smart line.

He stirred himself slowly from his slumber, and looked temporarily shaken. He recovered his composure quickly. "It's a fair cop. Look, buddy, what say you take this and forget the whole matter," he said with a resigned air.

In slow motion, he got two small-ish purses out of his top pocket. He handed them to me. They were bulging at the seams, and literally worth their weight in gold. Clearly contract killing was a profitable trade. I stood gaping at a small fortune in coins. A sun was setting behind a sharp mountain peak, in what looked like a wreath of leaves. When I looked up the room was empty. I read later he got burnt shortly afterwards in that foreign place, and his name is forever blackened by history.



I discovered that I also had an unwelcome visitor when I got back to my own motel. As I passed through reception, I spied a familiar dog collar sat at the Residents Bar. It dawned on me that I'd had a constant shadow for some time now. He had a notebook open in front of him. Surveillance? Was Big Frankie organising it from beyond the grave?

"Who in God's name are you?" I demanded as he followed me up the stairs. "I'm just watching your spending habits," said the vicar with a snicker. I'd thought he was the one with the habit. I was playing for time, but a plan was starting to form. He could solve a number of problems for me, not least how I was going to explain away the fat bags of gold to a Customs Officer on my return to Blighty - I'd had vile dreams about a person who carried the money. It was time to put Johnny's so so theories into bad practice.

I wanted to put words into his mouth. "Do you want to see how I make my money." My tail was wagging his head now, eager to see me incriminate myself. I took out my pipe and lighter, and some shrapnel from my pocket. I got the dental work out of my bag. I placed a shilling in the cast and pressed hard. It left a distinct impression. I flicked the zippo and held it under a penny until it became soft, almost runny, so that I could ease it into the cast. I left it to cool for a few moments. The priest gawped at my handiwork. The pewter was not ideal for the task, and it had smudged a bit, although it was recognisable more or less. It didn't matter.

It slipped into my other pocket. I grabbed my coat and hat and made for the door. "Follow me." I headed in the direction of the nearest police precinct. Plenty of cops milling about outside. Good. I went to a nearby newspaper stand and picked up a copy of the Star. I handed over my coin. It was still warm. The stall-holder held it up and studied it quizzically. Clearly not the usual level of remuneration he was used to, for flogging papers at his stall.

It took all of five seconds before the penny dropped. "Hey, fella! This shilling's no good." I pretended to rummage in my pocket. The newspaper man studied some more. "Hey! This is a counterfeit!" He rushed from his stall and accosted the nearest cop. I stood where I was, as, I noted, did my interested onlooker. He hadn't sussed me out. The pair rushed over.

I turned round to the left and pointed at my shadow. "It was him," I squealed in mock panic, "it was his idea." My clerical tail looked like a rabbit caught in the head-lights. By now a swarm of cops had come over to see what all the excitement was about. Amidst much palaver, the two of us were read our rights and frog-marched roughly into the station. I asked to speak to my solicitor, not that she'd be able to do much, it was more to keep up appearances. "You can call'er on that phone there."

I felt the weighty purses pressing reassuringly against my chest. Instead of being behind me, my pursuivant



39. Which Manifesto writer can be found between Hardy and Wells on a Band record?

40. In which town did John & Paul break fifty thousand, only for John Paul to pull a million thirty years later?

41. Whose headgear was nearly ten times too big during a well documented battle fought at St. James in 1697?

Heaven had found another scoundrel to donate to...



Wasted

II

parson was beside himself, expostulating that it was all my idea and had been nothing to do with him. I enjoyed his comeuppance, it give me a feeling of great satisfaction.

We were brought before the governing Bobby, and swiftly put on the first boat back to Blighty. As we neared the English coast, I wondered if this had merely been a water crossing in order to get an old penny [1]. We moored near the fish market, the flashing light was waiting to greet us. Of course, going through Customs was not necessary for somebody already under arrest, and the bulging purses nestled warmly in my inside pocket. Red alert over; mission accomplished.

A welcome party was laid on, and a black maria whisked me off to see the Old Bill, who delivered a fiery sermon on the evils of debasing the Queen's currency. It wasn't pleasant, but my previous faithful dealings on the old girl's behalf must have held some weight, for I was released with only my ears hurting. And a dry throat of course. I headed down a narrow street that ran along the river bank to a little hostelry of dropsical appearance that I just happened to know. Some faded letters overhead informed me that a Mr. Porter was licensed to sell intoxicating liquor. Just what I needed. A full bodied pint of Marston's Pedigree.



The door was shut. I pushed it open to reveal a smokey room filled with noise. An old man with a long nose stood huddled over the till, counting the takings. With a bit of imagination there was a certain old character in the bar. A basic, old-fashioned affair, it boasted wooden chimney pieces, beams and partitions, and a crackling fire in the corner. A young lady was serving drinks in cheery fashion behind the bar, whilst the ostler attended to his nags, occasionally skulking over to the fire to stir the contents of a large pot with a more menacing air. He looked like a character who'd cut your throat whilst you slept. The bar was starting to get full as last orders approached.

I looked up to where the clock hung. It was too late for a purl, so I settled for a pint of Dog's Nose. As I waited for my change, I cast a side-long glance down the bar. The old guy wore a scowl that could have felled a flap. "Don't mind my old man," laughed the bar-maid as she returned. "We've only just taken over the premises. Not even had time to change the signs yet. We're thinking of changing the name to The Grapes. Its part of a customer-facing vertical unit re-branding initiative for the inn. What do you think?"

"Err, not very original, is it? What happened to the previous landlord? He was a friend of mine too. A good man if I recall"

"He was one of those jolly fellows. One of six, actually. He ran the place with his wife, but they sold up when their daughter earned a small fortune thanks to her latest book. One of those mystery thriller thingies, full of furtive characters. She was a graduate of St. Oskar's apparently, and well versed in the nocturnal ritual of washing her feet in soda water. Sounds like she was on a different planet to me." I nodded vaguely, and asked if there were any rooms left at the inn. "Just one," she replied. "It's a bit small though." I took it anyway. "My name's Abi, by the way." She looked playfully into my eyes.

I'd had my fill of Abbeys for one week. "Are you still serving food?" She turned and pointed at the cauldron over the fire. "That's all we got left, luv. The pot of spicy rice-porridge. The bloke who buried the empty box makes it." It looked like the kind of fare that would give food-poisoners a bad name. She sensed that my mouth was not exactly watering. "Or there's a chippie down the road," she added. "Bernie the Frier. I go there when I'm desperate - they do the best fish and chips around here."

As far as pouring forth goes, this wench was second to none, but I thought it wise to take the fifth in more ways than one. I took my glass over to the 'Cosy' and sat down. The sound was down on the TV, and John Thaw and Denis Waterman looked quite comical as they screeched silently around a corner. I headed up to my room. I took my tobacco out and carefully filled my pipe. I smiled at how full my bags were crammed, and took out one of the coins adoringly and laid it on the table. A spread eagle boasted a shield for a breast, and had the letters "E.B." punched into the left wing. I was infinitely richer than I'd been twenty four hours earlier, I only hoped it would last for a long time.

Lost in this reverie, the golden vision must have temporarily blinded me, for I clumsily knocked one of the coins over the edge. It rolled onto the floor and down a crack between the floor-boards. I badly needed to find somewhere safe to stash my cash. I carefully wrapped each coin in a tissue, and buried them in my tobacco pouch, snapping a rubber band around the whole. Tomorrow I'd head to the hock shop first thing.

