

Minute Mysteries

These have become a fun thing to do while hiking down the trail. The person presenting the mystery should give the situation and ask what happened. The others participating must solve the mystery by asking questions. The presenter can only answer yes, no, maybe, or it doesn't matter. (Solutions are listed on the following page)

Situations

1. A man is lying dead in the forest, with a matchstick clutched in his hand.
2. A man walks into a bar, sits down and asks the bartender for a glass of water. The bartender pulls out a gun and points at the man. The man says, "Thanks," and walks out of the bar.
3. A man is driving along a mountain road, listening to the radio. Suddenly, he drives off the road and over a cliff and dies.
4. There is a table with 53 bicycles on it. A man, sitting at the table, is hunched over, quite dead.
5. A man gets on a train in town A and heads to town B. He boards a train back to town A. Halfway there, he becomes distraught and leaps from the train, killing himself.
6. A man wakes up in the morning and reads the headline of his local paper: "Mrs. Smith Dies in Ski Accident in Switzerland," and he announces, "That wasn't an accident. That was murder!"
7. There is a man standing next to a box. Seven people walk in, look in the box, nod to each other and then the man, and walk out.
8. A man goes into a seafood restaurant down at the harbor. He orders the special for the day, albatross soup. He takes one bite, then goes out to buy a gun and kills himself.
9. A man is found dead hanging from the ceiling in a completely empty room with all doors locked from the inside. There is a pool of water on the floor.

Solutions

1. Three soldiers were flying in a balloon on a reconnaissance mission over enemy territory. Unfortunately, the balloon started to lose altitude. Realizing that if they crash they would certainly be caught and killed, they decide to take drastic measures. Since they had already thrown all their ballast overboard, they decided to draw matchsticks. The person with the shortest match stick would have to jump, allowing the others to escape. The person dead in the fall was the unlucky one.
2. The man who walked in to the bar had the hiccoughs. The clever bartender figured that scaring the person with the gun would be better than a glass of water, and he was right.
3. The man in the car is a disk jockey at a nearby radio station. He had just committed a murder for which he knows he will be the prime suspect. In order to set up an unshakable alibi, he taped his radio show ahead of time and committed the murder while the tape was being broadcast. On the way back to the station he hears the tape machine malfunction and stop on the radio. He realizes his alibi is useless and kills himself.
4. The 53 bicycles are actually a deck of cards, with bicycles on the backs. The dead man was caught cheating (slipping an extra card in), and was shot by another player.
5. The man who lives town A has been blind all of his life. He has an operation performed on his eyes in town B in an attempt to restore his sight. The operation was a success. However, on the way back to town A, the train enters a tunnel and suddenly there is no light. Thinking he has lost his sight forever, he jumps from the train.
6. The man is Mr. Smith's travel agent. Mr. Smith murdered Mrs. Smith while they were vacationing. The agent knows because Mr. Smith, a real penny-pincher, bought a two-way ticket for himself to Switzerland and only a one-way ticket for his wife.
7. The seven people and the man were shipwrecked on an island with no food. Finally, in order to survive, they resorted to drastic measures. They had the man, who was a surgeon, remove one hand from each person so the group would have food. The surgeon kept both of his hands so he could perform the operations. Eventually, the group was rescued. As part of the group's agreement the surgeon had to have one of his hands removed when they returned to the mainland. His hand was in the box in the room. The seven entered, saw that he had fulfilled his part of the agreement, and left.
8. The man was part of the crew of a freighter that sank in the Pacific. He, and two other crewmen, his best friends, were adrift in a lifeboat for weeks. They had no food and all their attempts at catching fish had failed. He became weak and delirious. One of his friends died and the other cut up the body to keep them alive. The surviving friend told the man that he was eating an albatross that had been caught. When the man ate the albatross soup in the restaurant it didn't taste anything like what he had eaten on the lifeboat. He realized what had happened and killed himself.
9. The man committed suicide in the locked room. He hung himself by standing on a block of ice, which melted.