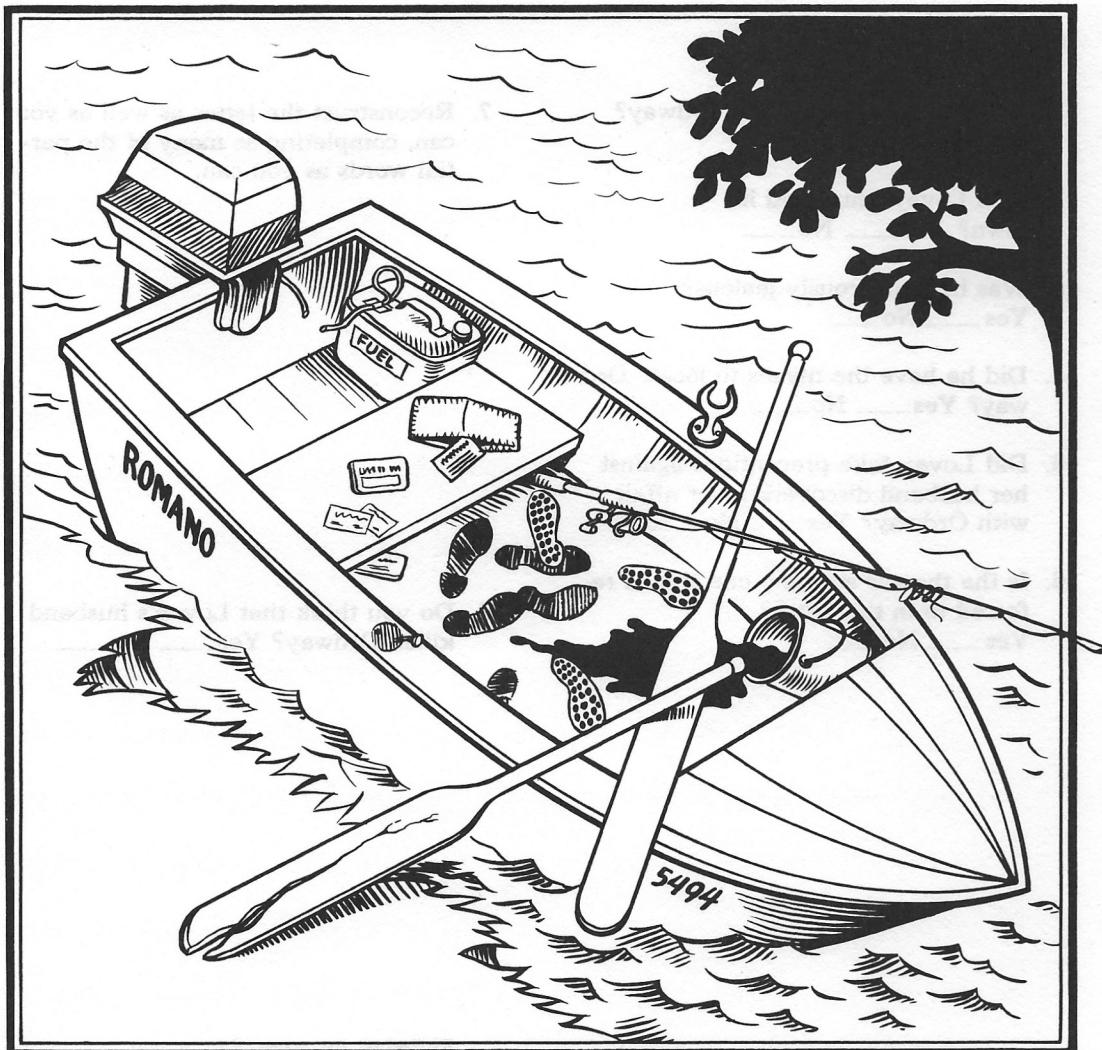


END OF A VILLAIN



Romano Rubitch was undoubtedly the most hated man in Endicott County, and his life was often threatened, even by children. Consequently, when his boat was found drifting in Dead Man's Cove without him, there was the equivalent of dancing in the streets. The widows and orphans whose life savings he'd invested and lost, the friends he'd double-crossed, the tradesmen he'd cheated, and the women he'd dishonored were of one mind: good riddance to bad Rubitch. And whether he'd drowned accidentally or been knocked off by a public benefactor, or had finally repaid his debt to the community by committing suicide was immaterial to most people. But the sheriff of Endicott County had a sworn duty to investigate, and he carried it out capably.

All he knew was that Rubitch had left his house on the morning of May 17 and had not returned for dinner, and that the next day his boat had been found exactly as you see it. If you were the sheriff, what conclusions would you draw?

Questions

1. Do you think Rubitch had been fishing? Yes No
2. Is there evidence of a fight? Yes No
3. Do you think Rubitch committed suicide? Yes No
4. Is this a tippy boat? Yes No
5. Do you think Rubitch fell overboard accidentally and drowned? Yes No
6. Do you think the gas line was deliberately cut? Yes No
7. Is the presence of the paint can unusual? Yes No
8. Do you think that evidence of a fight was planted? Yes No
9. How many people can you prove to have been in the boat? One
Two Three
More than three
10. What do you think happened?

Solution on page 52