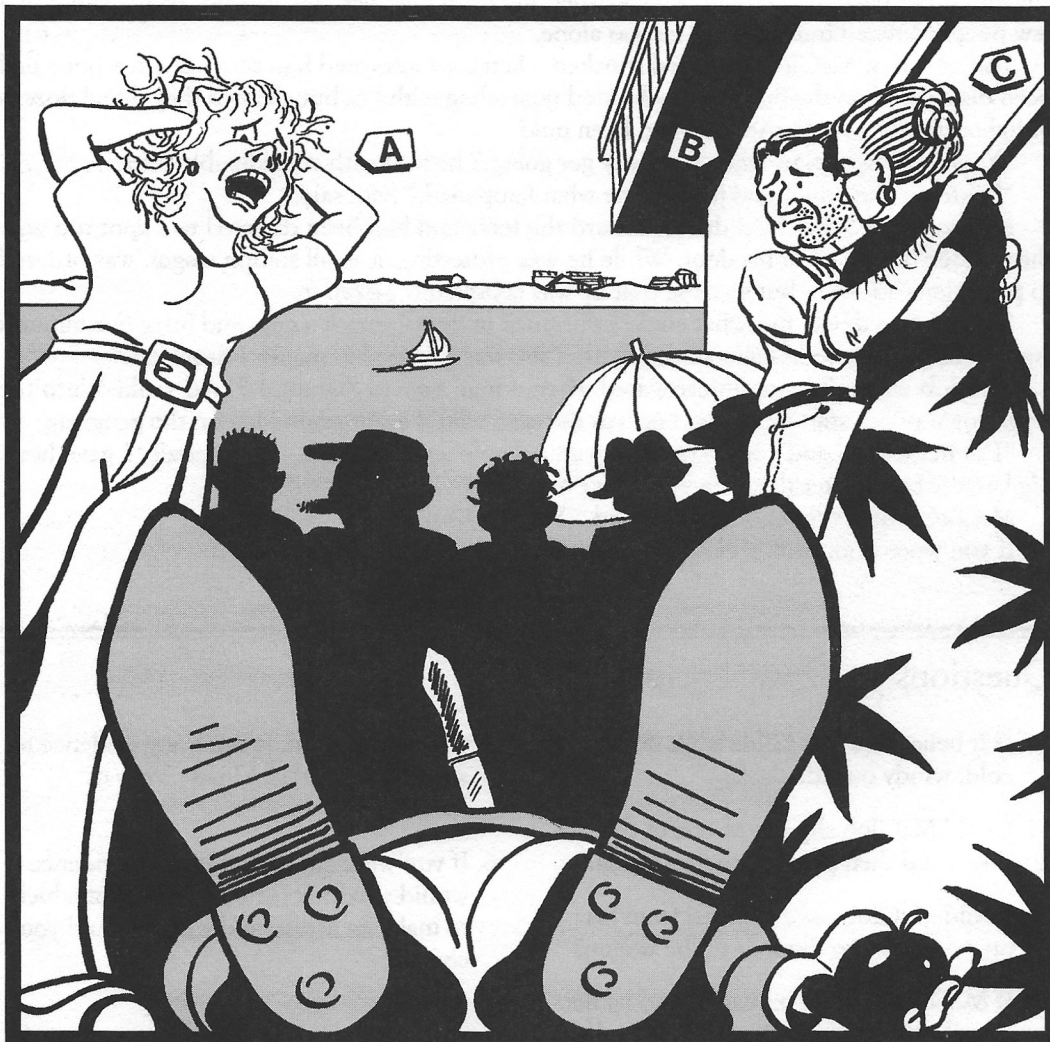


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# ***THE POSSIBLE DREAMS AUCTION***



Anyone who has been on the Vineyard in August is familiar with the benefit auction called “Possible Dreams,” with Art Buchwald as the auctioneer. It is held outdoors next to the pool in the courtyard of the Harborside Inn, where several hundred people attend and bid for such things as dinner for six at the home of a *New York Times* executive, a portrait to be painted by the local artist Jules Worthington, or an afternoon at police headquarters with Sam.

At the last auction, it became apparent that a couple in the balcony surrounding the courtyard were feuding with each other. The climax was reached in a bidding war that found the woman offering \$8,000 for an afternoon on a mystery yacht rumored to be owned by a TV celebrity. The man abruptly gave up bidding and left her holding the bag at an inflated price. After that, the comedy was over and both left the balcony.

Gradually, the news rippled through the courtyard that the pair were the former Ken Shoemans, recently divorced and now remarried—he to a notorious former Miss America and she to a tenor named Fargo Farabelli. As fate would have it, the two couples were housed in adjoining suites that fronted on the long circular balcony.

After the tension subsided, the audience concentrated on Art Buchwald’s auctioneering. As a result, no one was looking up when a man went tumbling down over the balcony.

Sam was the first to rush over and see the knife still protruding from the man’s chest. After a futile attempt to help the dying man, Sam got down to business.

The murder weapon was a fruit knife of the kind that the hotel supplied, and a half-eaten apple was still clutched in the victim’s hand. Meanwhile, a dozen people were yelling out their identification of the man: “Ken Shoeman, billionaire.” With that, it was easy to narrow the investigation down to three suspects, shown here. They were:

Brenda Farabelli (C), the former Mrs. Shoeman, who said she and her husband had been lying on the couch near their door, talking about the auction, when they heard the commotion in the courtyard.

Fargo Farabelli (B), who backed up his wife’s statement in every detail.

Sheila Shoeman (A), now a brand-new widow, who said she’d been resting after the excitement of the auction. Her beloved Kenny, meanwhile, had picked up an apple and a fruit knife and went out to the balcony, remarking that he wanted to enjoy his fruit with some scenery.

Sam listened, studied the three people, and made an arrest. Whom did he charge, and why?

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## Questions

1. Is it credible that no one saw who stabbed Shoeman?
2. Is it believable that Shoeman, if stabbed in his own room, staggered out to the balcony, where he fell?
3. Is there evidence that Sheila lied in her statement?
4. Is there evidence that Farabelli lied?
5. Is there evidence that Brenda lied?
6. Who killed Kenneth Shoeman?

*Solution on page 59.*