

BRAINTEASER

Whodunnit?

P. Stott*

In a small outback town, the local drunk, Mr Terry Bull, has been found murdered. The local policeman, Joe Kack (who is bald), has apprehended four people – Alan, Bob, Charles and Dick – all of whom have criminal records, in connection with the crime. Of these four characters, it is known that one is the murderer, two are eyewitnesses to the crime, and one is totally innocent of the crime – he was out of town at the time.

Moreover, it is known that the murderer lies all the time when asked anything remotely connected with the crime, and the man who was out of town at the time always tells the truth. The two witnesses are shady characters, ready to protect their friends from suspicion. They both tell true and false statements alternately, one starting with a true and the other a false statement.

This is what they had to say concerning the crime:

ALAN: I know for sure Charles wasn't a witness.

BOB: Alan was out of town at the time. I should know, because I saw Dick do it.

CHARLES: I saw Bob do it.

DICK: I was out of town at the time of the murder. But I do know that Alan wasn't a witness.

(The fact that Bob and Dick make two statements each is entirely coincidental, and does not necessarily make them the witnesses.)

Analyse the statements to find out whodunnit.

*Philip is in Year 10 at Newington College.