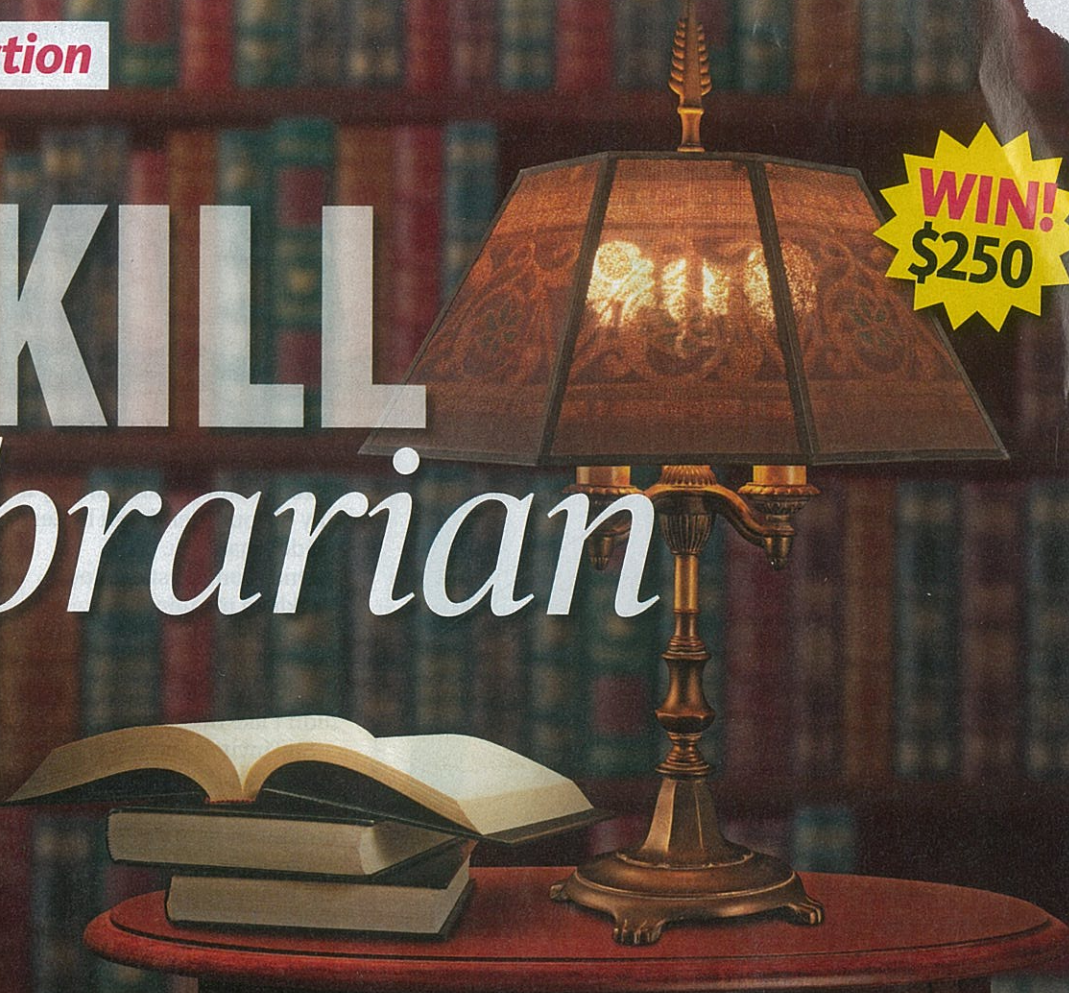


TO KILL a librarian

WIN!
\$250

Follow the clues and
put the name you
suspect on the entry
coupon on page 50



Hal Spear traced his fingers against the leathery book spine and inhaled deeply.

Ahhh, there's nothing like the smell of a library, he thought.

It was early on a Saturday morning and not many people were there. That was just how he liked it.

Hal was ready for a slow, relaxing day but as he turned the corner, into the crime section of the library, his plans were suddenly flipped upside down.

"Oh my God..." Hal uttered.

Sprawled on the floor in front of him was Mr Huckleberry, one of the head librarians who Hal knew well - a brusque but very efficient librarian. The front of his throat was red, as if someone had grabbed the tall man from behind and strangled him.

Hal knelt down to look for a pulse but found nothing except a glassy-eyed look on the poor man's face and a smudge of blue on his skin.

Even though Mr Huckleberry was dead, his body was still warm.

This is only a recent crime, Hal reasoned.

Hal took a deep breath, trying to overcome the shock, then after phoning the police, walked briskly to the front desk to find the other two librarians.

He found both of them behind the counter.

Just like Mr Huckleberry, Hal knew these women. Miss Eyre, a petite woman in her 30s, rubbed her fingers over her temple as she talked on the phone.

"As I said 10 minutes ago, we can't loan out what we don't have in the catalogue... Yes, that's right... No, but I can check the system again if you like..."

It seemed to be a disgruntled member of the public complaining on the other end.

Mrs Darcy, a tall, older lady with neat round spectacles gave a huff of frustration

and threw her pen into the bin near her desk before turning to look at Hal as he approached.

"Excuse me, ladies," Hal said, rather loudly for a library. "I'm sorry, but you both need to stop what you're doing. I hate to have to tell you that it appears your Mr Huckleberry has been murdered."

Both women gasped and Miss Eyre hung up the phone in shock.

At the sound of the commotion, the only other person in the library walked over, a copy of *In Cold Blood* in one hand and a manga comic in the other.

"What's going on?" the pimply young man asked.

"This is a library, can you please keep it down?"

"Unfortunately, no, we can't," Hal replied. "And I'm going to need you to tell me what you've been doing since you entered the library."

"What on earth for?" the young man said. But when he got a steely glare from Hal he responded, "If you must know,

"This is only a recent crime"

I only got here five minutes ago and I was going to return this book, but I went straight for the graphic novel area. My name's Robinson, by the way."

Mrs Darcy fiddled with her pale pink scarf, tucking the fabric to cover a dirty mark, then grabbed a tissue from her bag to dab at her eye.

"I just can't believe this has happened," she said. "I've worked with that man for 20 years."

Hal nodded his head in sympathy and pulled out his handcuffs. Robinson's eyes widened in fear.

"Well, lucky for Mr Huckleberry's family I know exactly who committed this crime," he said.

Who murdered Mr Huckleberry?

A Miss Eyre B Mrs Darcy C Robinson

• We'll reveal the solution on our Facebook page on December 4 and in Issue 4.