

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

The body of Norma Featherstone lay on the plain wooden floorboards, her arms bent at awkward angles, her head to one side. The gash at her temple was deep and bloody, and her forehead was still clenched in a scowl, like she'd been angry when she died.

Detective Sergeant Abby Sweet sighed as she looked around the hall of the local Country Women's Association, all set up for the town's annual Tea Cosy Expo. The nearby trestle tables groaned with tea cosies of the most elaborate designs: miniature beehives complete with fat bumble bees; towering white cosies covered in colourful daisies; multi-coloured ones festooned with pink roses.

"Well, this would have been a pleasant morning's outing, if not for the dead body in the corner of the room," she muttered almost to herself.

Her junior constable looked up from his notebook. "Yeah, uh, I guess so, boss."

"What do you know, Damo?" "Well, it looks like Mrs Featherstone died at about eight this morning."

"Got a hell of a whack to the side of her head," Abby noted.

She looked down at the body again, one sensible court shoe had come off and the hem of her floral dress didn't quite cover her knees. Norma had died at the far end of the hall, a few steps from the stage.

Next to the body lay the shattered remains of a novelty teapot: shards of ceramic chicken peppered the floor,

some with Norma's blood still clinging to the surface.

"Yep, forensics are pretty confident the blow is what killed her," Damo said.

Abby looked at the single shelf that ran around the hall, sporting a permanent display of teapots. A forensics technician was up a small ladder, dusting for fingerprints in the only empty spot.

"And the other women were here helping to set up?" Abby said, nodding at the trio of women huddled around the tea urn at the far end of the room.

"Yep, that's right," Damo replied.

Abby looked back at the wall behind the body, at the violent spray of blood that fanned across the Queen's photo.

"Let's have a chat with the good ladies, then, shall we?" she said and marched down the room towards them.

Plump and red-faced, Margaret Hutton was as round as she was short. She shook Abby's hand vigorously as she introduced herself.

"I can't believe this," she said. "Never had anything like this happen before - it's God-awful."

"Were all you ladies were here early this morning?" Abby asked.

"Certainly was," Margaret said. "But I was outside sorting out the tangled bunting all morning - single-handed." She added this with an accusatory glare at the other two.

Mrs Eileen Willis shook her halo of dark grey curls. "Poor Norma, she could be difficult at times..."

Margaret gave a snort. "Difficult? That woman could have argued with a lamppost."

"Yes, she could be difficult," Eileen continued, "but who deserves this?" She sat between the others, her feet barely touching the floor.

grave. This is a small town, detective, we would have noticed someone else turn up."

At the other end of the CWA hall Abby picked up an especially pretty tea cosy. Made to look like a cupcake it was all pink frosting, with a cherry artfully crocheted on the top.

"Human nature never ceases to amaze me, Damo."

"Oh?" the constable said.

"Yep, our killer has probably been nursing her grievances for years. I'm guessing it didn't take much to bring things to a head," she replied.

Abby placed the cosy back on the table and looked at the constable. "Shall we go arrest our killer, Damo?"

WIN!
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She looked up at Abby now. "And before you ask, I was in and out of the hall fetching the boxes of tea cosies that had been delivered.

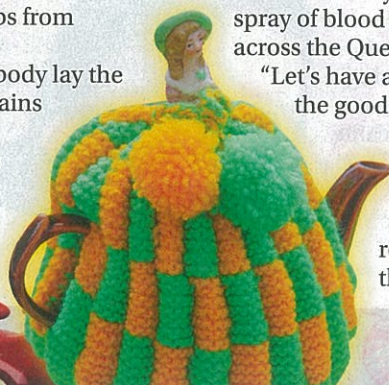
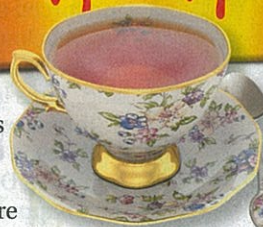
We've had so many this year..."

"Look," Mrs Joyce Henkell said, looking up from her hands, "she could be a royal pain in the backside but she got things done, that's for sure." She was an elegant woman, her long legs stretching out from under her tailored skirt, a scarf tied artfully around her shoulders.

"I wasn't in the hall either. I was out the back roping off the car parking area."

"There was no-one else here this morning?" Abby asked. "Nope," Joyce answered. "Quiet as the

A COSY KILLER



Who killed Norma Featherstone?

- A Margaret Hutton
- B Eileen Willis
- C Joyce Henkell

• We'll reveal the solution on our Facebook page on December 11 and in Issue 5.