

# THE CASE OF THE WRONG ANSWERS

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Saint Louis, Missouri

Monday, November 5th

"Thank you for coming, Lieutenant Jamison. I am Captain Lemuel Grant. This is not a poetical matter. But I would appreciate your expertise."

"Is the clue that strange?"

"Please be seated. Are you familiar with the name of Cagliostro?"

"Are you referring to the columnist who writes horoscopes for one of the weekly suburban journals?"

"Yes."

"I don't believe in astrology, but the name intrigued me."

"Why?"

"Not only was Cagliostro an 18th-century alchemist and charlatan, but the letters of his name can be arranged to form the word 'astrologic'. What happened to him?"

"Last Friday night we received a frantic telephone call. Cagliostro had ordered a pizza by telephone. When the delivery man knocked on the door, the door swung open. He went inside and found Cagliostro with his head lying on top of his desk. Cagliostro had been shot in the heart. Death had been instantaneous, but he had been able to enter two definitions in a crossword puzzle. Since they don't seem to make sense, I can see why the killer didn't bother to take the paper. Here is the puzzle. Can you make any sense out of it?"

"Strange. For 'City recently reunited' he entered 'Cadozi'; and for 'Five' he entered 'Braille'."

"What's strange?"

"They are the wrong answers. Do you have any suspects?"

"We broke open a locked drawer and found three dossiers. We questioned the three suspects, but they all had alibis for Friday evening. False alibis can be broken if we know where to apply the pressure. Here are the dossiers. Since Cagliostro couldn't be making much money from his weekly column, we believe he was a blackmailer as well."

"Let me study these items, Captain. I'll get them back to you as soon as possible."

In the privacy of his own office, Lieutenant Jamison read the dossiers and made the following notations:

William Phelps. Bull, Age 50. Divorced. Belligerent. Liberal at times. Possible bigamist. Potential risk-taker.

Nora Desmond. Scales. Age 29. Single. Affectionate. Frugal. Liaison with married man. Highly photogenic in close-ups.

Sigmund Adkins. Scorpion. Age 36. Affianced. Enigmatic. Excellent calligrapher. Likes to endorse checks other than his own.

Thursday, November 8th

"Can't thank you enough, Lieutenant, for your guidance. Didn't take much effort to crack the alibi. How did you find the solution?"

### **WORD WAYS CUMULATIVE INDEX 1968-1990**

Two indices of *Word Ways* material have been prepared and placed in computer files, and from now on will be periodically updated. The first is an author index, arranged alphabetically by author surname (from Fred Abrams to Giles Zimmer). Articles published under a nom de plume will be indexed under the true name of the author so that the full corpus of that author can be appreciated. The second is a subject-matter-oriented index, similar in spirit to the ones published in November 1972, February 1978 and August 1984. Typically, subject-matter-oriented indices are arranged alphabetically by topic, but this proved impossible because the nomenclature of logology is not well-established (does the user know to look under *shiftword* for the wordplay characterized by the shift of PECAN to TIGER? what does one call the wordplay in which one rearranges the alphabet to maximize the number of self-descriptive number names?). Instead, the index has been given a taxonomic arrangement in the spirit of Roget's *Thesaurus* in which words are classified by their meanings. Although it takes a little work to become familiar with it (a summary of topics is given at the start), the index does enable the reader to find in one place references to related types of wordplay. A distinction is made between articles discussing the theory of wordplay (and the best examples), and illustrating the wordplay by constrained writing (such as palindromes or lipograms).

Copies of either or both of these indices will be provided at cost to *Word Ways* readers interested in them: \$5 for either one (specify which one is wanted), or \$10 for both. Each index is approximately 30 pages long. Orders received in a given calendar year will be supplied with indices cumulated through the immediately preceding year.