

To solve this case, three things must be considered: MOTIVE, MEANS and OPPORTUNITY.

First, let's deal with MOTIVE.

Wynn Case, patent attorney. Case had an interest in the card trick that Spade made famous. It was, in fact, really developed and performed by Case's brother-in-law, Fulton House. Case was at the theater to gather evidence and to warn Spade against ever performing the trick again. When the trick failed, Case was ecstatic. He wanted only bad things to happen to Spade. And, he wasn't alone in his ill will toward the magician.

SCARLETT VON ROUGE, Vegas dancer who frequently performed on the same stages as Spade. Her interest in him was more than purely professional, but Spade rejected all of her advances. She fumed, especially when Spade introduced her to an American who claimed to be starting a Spade fan club. Scarlett was certain that there was more to the story than just an ambitious fan. At a pub near the music hall, she met Wynn Case, agreeing to help him with a lawsuit against Spade by spying on Spade's activities.

ADDIE MIRER who said she would be starting the fan club. In fact, she had met Spade in Chicago ten years ago when her brother, Clarence, performed at local night clubs. Addie was also attracted to Spade - with the same outcome. Yet, Addie had a way of getting even. Her father had been a politician who had the dirt on Spade's past locked away in a safe deposit box. When he died, it was opened, and Addie then realized that Spade had many skeletons in his closet. She could get revenge by threatening to reveal what she knew.

DOM GIOVANNI, Spade's long-lost cousin. Hardly! Giovanni isn't even the police official he claims to be. In fact, he was once a Chicago cop when he attracted a young woman, Cynthia Cooper, persuading her to marry him. When he tired of marriage, he bribed an official to nullify the wedding. When he attempted to bribe an honest judge, his police career ended. Still, he kept his hand in illegal activities, such as stealing Fulton House's card trick and selling it to an English card manufacturer. As to his motive for killing Spade, we must discuss one other person to understand it.

CYNTHIA Darling, Spade's agent. Her maiden name? Why "Cooper," of course - the same Cynthia Cooper who had said "I do" to Dom Giovanni so many years ago. Now, though, she is rich and successful - a combination that makes Giovanni drool - and plot to line his own pockets. He suspected that Cynthia held a hefty life insurance policy on Spade. That money along with Cynthia's current wealth were enough to make him want to again woo Cynthia and collect on the policy.

And Cynthia Darling had her own reason for wanting to put Spade out of the picture. Wynn Case had contacted her and threatened to ruin her agency should Spade continue to

perform the trick. Cynthia knew that the trick would remain in his repertoire. How could she stop him?

Of course, we have rival playing card manufacturing companies headed by two people who were also at Spade's McHenry Downtown Theater performance.

IONA FORTUNE, owner of Fortune's Bold Suits. Her products were Spade's cards of choice and she welcomed his endorsement. It meant worldwide recognition for Fortune's company along with increased revenues. Spade was an important cog in the company's success. If, somehow, he would switch loyalties, Fortune would suffer a great loss. And would Spade switch his loyalties?

JOE KING, owner of King's Marvelous Cards, was doing everything he could to make that happen. For years, his company's products were known to be inferior to Fortune's. That is, they were inferior until the recent release of King's Crown Jewel Deck. King's company is nearly bankrupt and Spade's testimonial would definitely turn this around - if only he'd try these new, revolutionary cards. "He must try them," thought King. If he didn't, King would rather see him dead.

Seven suspects - all with motives for murder.

As for MEANS, the picture becomes cloudy. According to police report, the knife wound did not cause Spade's death.

Let's look at OPPORTUNITY and answer this question.

Why was Spade performing at the McHenry Downtown Theater last night? He was there because someone demanded a meeting at a spot near Johnsburg. If he did not agree to meet, said that person, certain details of Spade's past life would be released to the press. If Spade wanted to keep the information quiet, he would be there.

It was Spade who told Cynthia Darling to find a venue where he could perform his act - and, of course, his famous card trick. The booking would distract reporters from his real reason for being in the area. However, Spade told his agent, he would arrange his own accommodations. Darling had no idea where Spade would stay - and Spade's plans would apparently change quickly. For, he arrived in the area two days ago with no hotel reservations. Yet, he unexpectedly checked into the Waterfront Hotel late at night. What could have happened? Where had he planned to stay? And why would he cut short his performance at the Inn?

Magicians are temperamental people. The look and feel of each trick must be precise. If the least little detail goes wrong, a performance could be ruined. Spade himself would tell

us what the problem was. We must track what happened when Spade left the Inn to put the pieces of this case together.

Now that we know Spade was staying in Johnsburg, we can surmise that, after his sudden exit, he headed toward the hotel in the Cadillac he had rented. It's what anyone would do to calm down and reflect on what had happened.

But, what if someone went looking for him? And what if it was the same person who had demanded that Spade be in the area? And also the same person who had planned on providing him with a place to stay? Those accommodations might be a secluded cabin in the woods where the two of them would talk until the conversation became heated and Spade decided to leave.

That same person saw knew how to track Spade down. "He must be found," that person thought. But, first, a stop at the cabin to pick up something from the kitchen.

It was easy to find Spade. His Cadillac was a giveaway as to his whereabouts. An open blind, and an ear to the door soon pinpointed Spade's room where another conversation occurred - one with an enticement to follow this person to a location where Spade's career would be permanently ended.

It was around midnight that Spade agreed to follow this person, driving his car behind hers as she led him toward Pistakee Bay. But, instead of leading Spade to her cabin, this person pulled into a scenic overlook. Spade pulled in after her and followed her into the woods where she pulled out the kitchen knife and stabbed Spade near the heart.

Thinking he was dead, she drove away - not realizing that Spade would be able to drag himself back to his car where someone else would inject the fatal dose. It was a person who, by chance, noticed a car leaving the scenic overlook. This person was also looking for Spade. When he crawled, bloodied and wounded toward his car, the opportunity was present to finish the job that had already been started. But, before he died, Spade was able to tell us what happened last night. The four cards he left behind say it all - just as he had written in his magazine article.

The JOKER - an unexpected event. Two of them occurred to Spade last night. First, a deck of King's Crown Jewel cards was secretly placed in his coat pocket, destroying the timing and the precision of his card trick. Rather than fumble through his act, he decided to end his performance. The other unexpected event was that two "queens" - like the QUEEN OF DIAMONDS - who were seeking his affections would, without knowing it, combine their actions to ensure his demise.

For, it was THREE HEARTS - one opposing the other two - that tell the complete tale. Spade's heart could not be won by either of the queens. That resulted in TWO SPADES - the suit of death with two killers.

Yes, it was ADDIE MIRER who planned to kill Spade last night, but she didn't complete her task. Her rival for Spade's heart, SCARLETT VON ROUGE, did just that when she injected a fatal dose of Botox in his arm. He died only after telling the entire story in the best way he could - with playing cards.

ADDIE MIRER, you're under arrest for attempted murder. And SCARLETT VON ROUGE, you're under arrest for murder. The two of you were unknowing accomplices in taking the life of The Amazing Jack Spade.