

## Help, hints and walk-through

This guide should hopefully cover much of the basic information germane to reaching the end of the story, but it may be expanded if further questions or difficulties come to light.

Please don't hesitate to contact the author at [arthur.hastings@post.com](mailto:arthur.hastings@post.com) for any inquiries.

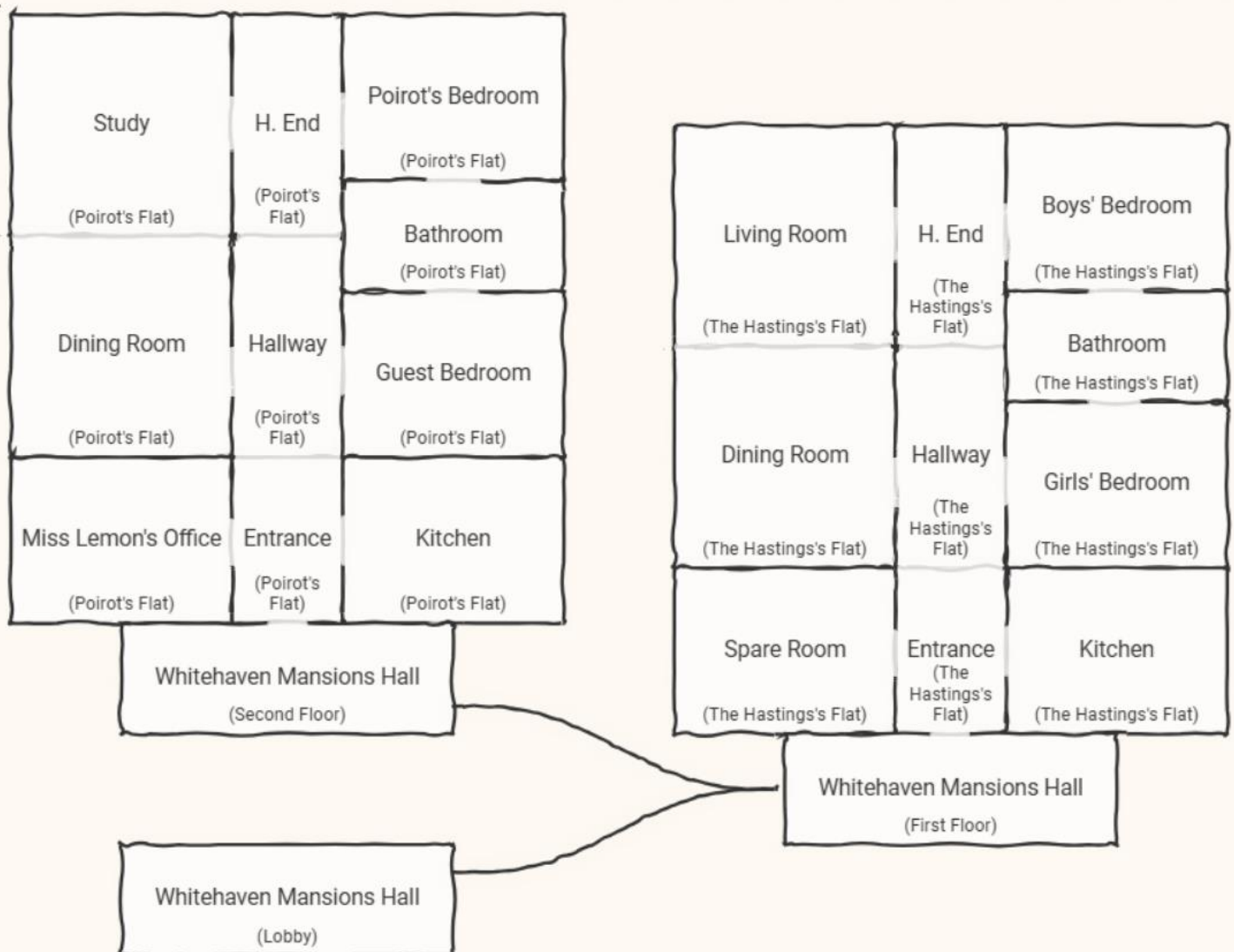
Structure:

### Section 1 — General Tips and Hints

### Section 2 — Finding and Solving the Mystery (mild and moderate 'spoilers' in two parts)

### Section 3 — The Culprit (hints about the case followed by a large 'spoiler' in the next part)

## Floor Plans



## Section 1 — General Tips and Hints

- There is no winning or losing in this game; the main goal is not to perfectly solve the mystery, but simply to enjoy however much of the characters' stories you wish to unveil through your explorations. Narrative scenes will continue to progress and unfold as you complete objectives, including giving correct or incorrect answers to Poirot, and will only be slightly altered by your choices.
- *Italics* indicate that a noun has already been examined, except in special cases like compass directions where the italics are used for emphasis. You will never need to examine an already-italicized noun in order to progress the narrative (but note that italicized nouns may still have relevant non-EXAMINE actions which can produce new text). You will also never need to interact with the nouns contained within descriptions (e.g. any details revealed by EXAMINE-ing an object), with the exception of drawers which can contain bolded nouns.
- For a general idea of your current objective, check the middle of the status bar at the top of the screen.
- The HELP and ABOUT commands may help you navigate the environment.
- You can use the commands SAVE and RESTORE to mark your progress, but please be aware that they may not always work on the IFComp website due to necessary updates. If you are experiencing issues saving or restoring a file and would like assistance, do not hesitate to contact the author at the address provided above.
- Only a few clearly-marked elements in the Hastings's flat are truly necessary to interact with in order to reach the ending; the rest are included simply to fill out the story with personally-relevant details.
- Most of the story should play out in a very straightforward way, but there are two objectives (searching Poirot's flat and naming a culprit) which can potentially cause readers to feel stuck. The following section contains advice for getting unstuck, should that happen to you.

## Section 2 — Finding and Solving the Mystery

Part 1 — Mild spoilers; for moderate spoilers, see the next page.

- In order to find the clue which will begin the mystery, you need to thoroughly search Poirot's flat, paying special attention to any bolded nouns. Do not be discouraged if you cannot find the disturbed object right away, as it requires some exploration and is not immediately apparent (however, the object in question is in plain sight and not hidden).
- Once you find and examine the object, a special scene will be shown, and the objective will change. There should be a visual indicator that the clue can be examined, when it is time to do so; however, this indicator might not trigger until you have sufficiently explored.
- Once the clue is found, do not be afraid to give an answer to Poirot; he will let you guess again an indefinite number of times, or let you give up after any wrong guess. There is no material evidence to gather beyond the clue itself, but you may find it helpful to review and reflect on past events to help figure out the most likely culprit.

[However, please note that it is currently not possible to back out of “question mode” after you have confirmed that you wish to give your final answer—proceeding towards giving a name will put the story in its final phase and begin the ending scenes (there is still one more opportunity after this to roam around before concluding the story for good, but some elements of the world will be out of reach at that point). This question mechanism may be changed in the future if it becomes a problem.]

## Part 2 — Moderate spoilers

- Begin by examining every bolded noun you can find in Poirot's flat. Not all of them are strictly necessary, but there is one in particular which is essential to the continuation of the story (it can plainly be seen in one of the rooms and will be mentioned in the description printed when entering or LOOKing in a room).
- If you have examined every bolded noun and still cannot find the clue, try stepping into one of the bedrooms for a moment, or even leaving Poirot's flat entirely. The clue is in the flat but may not be apparent straight away. Moving around is a very important step.
- Once you exit the bedroom or return to the flat, try going from room to room and you should notice something different.
- For a bigger hint, you can find more specific information regarding the location and means of discovery below. On the next page are some questions about the case to help guide your search for the culprit, which include the name of the disturbed object.

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The disturbed item is in Poirot's study.  
(It can be found by examining the correct bolded noun in the study along with about 2/3rds of the bolded nouns in the flat as a whole, then moving fully out of sight of the study, and finally returning to the premises)

### Section 3 — The Culprit

Please note that it is not necessary to get this answer right on the first try, or even to get the answer right at all; in any case, the story will proceed to its natural conclusion, and the culprit will be revealed to you in time.

However, if you really wish to have the answer to the mystery right away, please proceed to the next page.

Alternatively, on the second half of this page is a series of questions which may help you reach the correct answer without fully giving it away (contains spoilers for all previous parts of the story).

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According to Poirot, when would the books have been disturbed?

When were the books actually disturbed?

Who was in the flat at the time?

What could explain the discrepancy in timing?

The culprit is

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**Hercule Poirot!**

