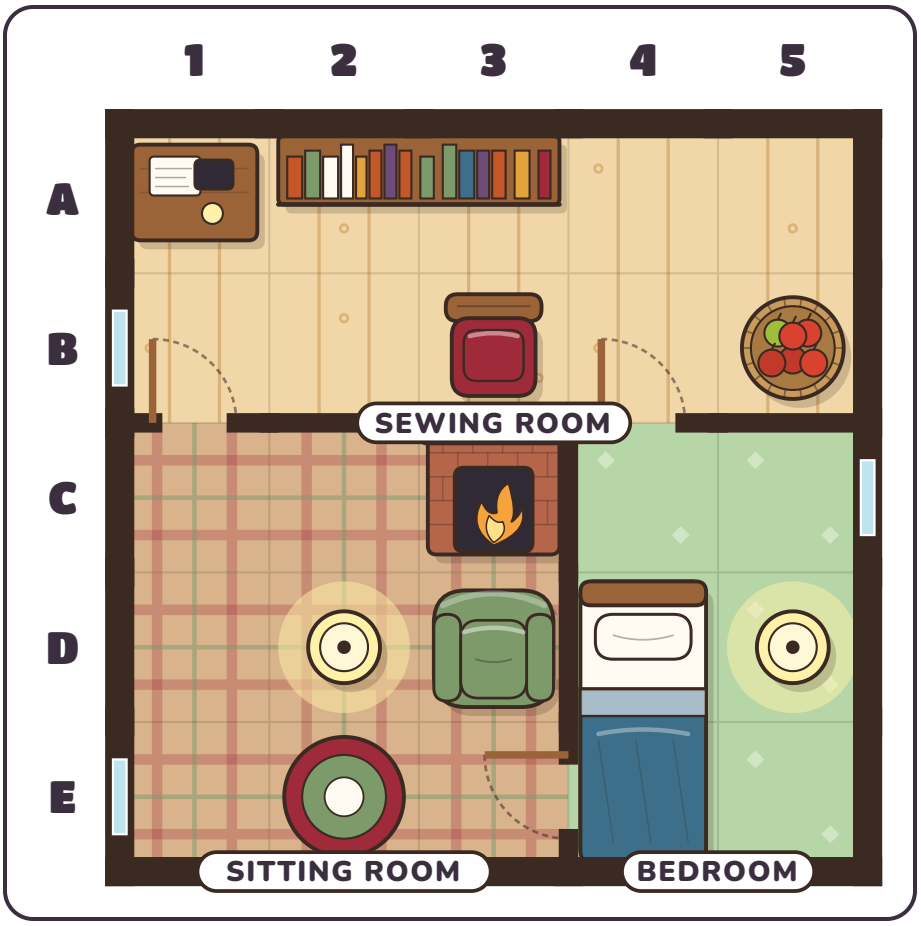
The Cottage Mystery

Grandma's secret recipe went missing — and so did **Willa**'s pulse.

Set in Cranberry Hollow, the town from the book Room for Murder: Thanksgiving.



What the witnesses say



Shirley the lunch lady
"She was beside a lamp. She was not in a corner."



Felipe the baker
"He was beside a rug."



Ruby the teenager
"She was beside a bookshelf."



Otis the mailman
"He was beside the fireplace."



Willa the victim
Found dead — alone in a room with the killer.

CAN STAND / SIT ON

chair · armchair · bed · rug

SOLID — NOBODY THERE

desk · bookshelf · lamp · fireplace · apple basket

The rules

1. Exactly one person in every row and every column.
2. Nobody stands on solid furniture.
3. Every statement is true. "Beside" = the square directly next to it; north is up.
4. The victim was alone in a room with exactly one other person: the killer.

Your verdict

The killer was _____

in the _____

Solved in _____

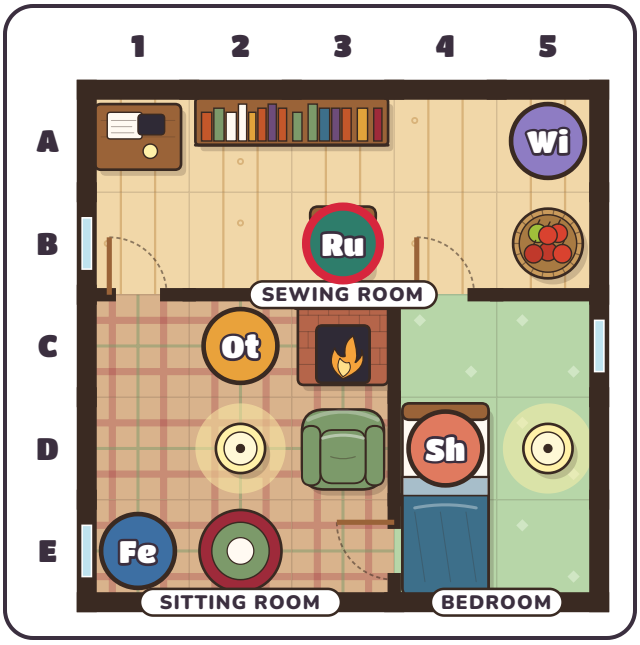
Notes

Answer and step-by-step solution: on the next page.

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Solution: The Cottage Mystery



THE KILLER

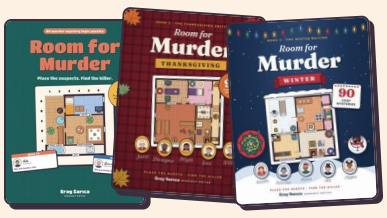
Ruby, the teenager

The only other person in the Sewing Room with Willa.

Shirley D4 · Felipe E1 · Ruby B3 · Otis C2 · Willa A5

How to solve it, step by step

1. Column 5 still needs someone, and only Willa can still stand in it — so Willa is somewhere in column 5.
2. Row B still needs someone, and only Ruby can still stand in it — so Ruby is somewhere in row B.
3. Willa, the victim, has no statement — but only one square is left in a free row and column: A5, in the Sewing Room.
4. Column 4 still needs someone, and Shirley is the only one who can still stand in it. In column 4, “She was beside a lamp. She was not in a corner.” fits only D4.
5. Otis: “He was beside the fireplace.” Of the squares that fit, only C2 is still open — the others are in rows or columns already taken.
6. Ruby: “She was beside a bookshelf.” Of the squares that fit, only B3 is still open — the others are in rows or columns already taken.
7. Felipe: “He was beside a rug.” Of the squares that fit, only E1 is still open — the others are in rows or columns already taken.
8. Everyone is placed. Willa lies in the Sewing Room, and the only other person in there is Ruby. Ruby is the killer.



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The **Room for Murder** puzzle books — Maple Bend, Thanksgiving in Cranberry Hollow and a snowed-in Winter in Juniper Falls — as paperbacks on Amazon and printable PDFs on Etsy (Midnight Motive). Every case has one answer you can reach by logic alone.