

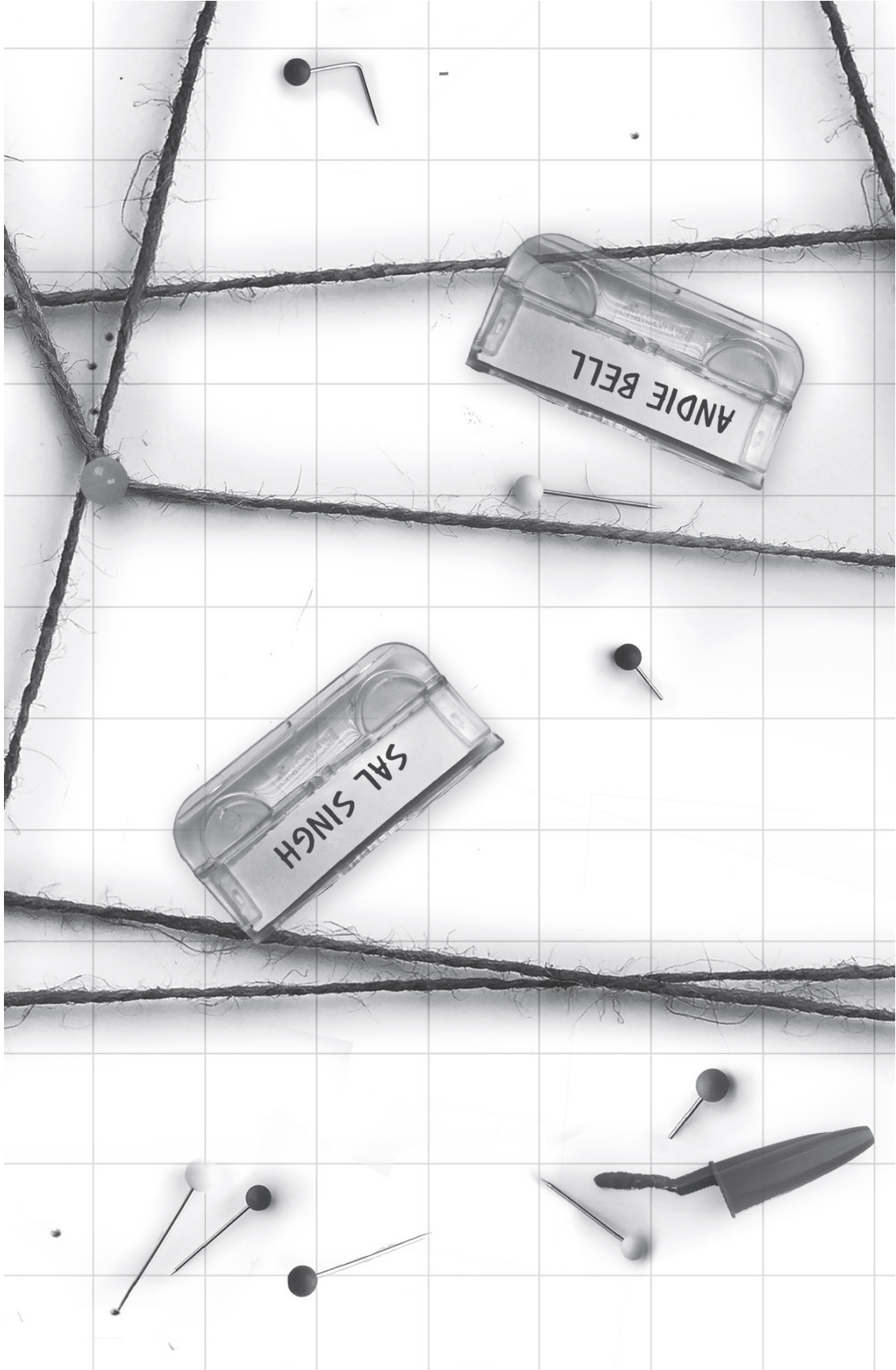
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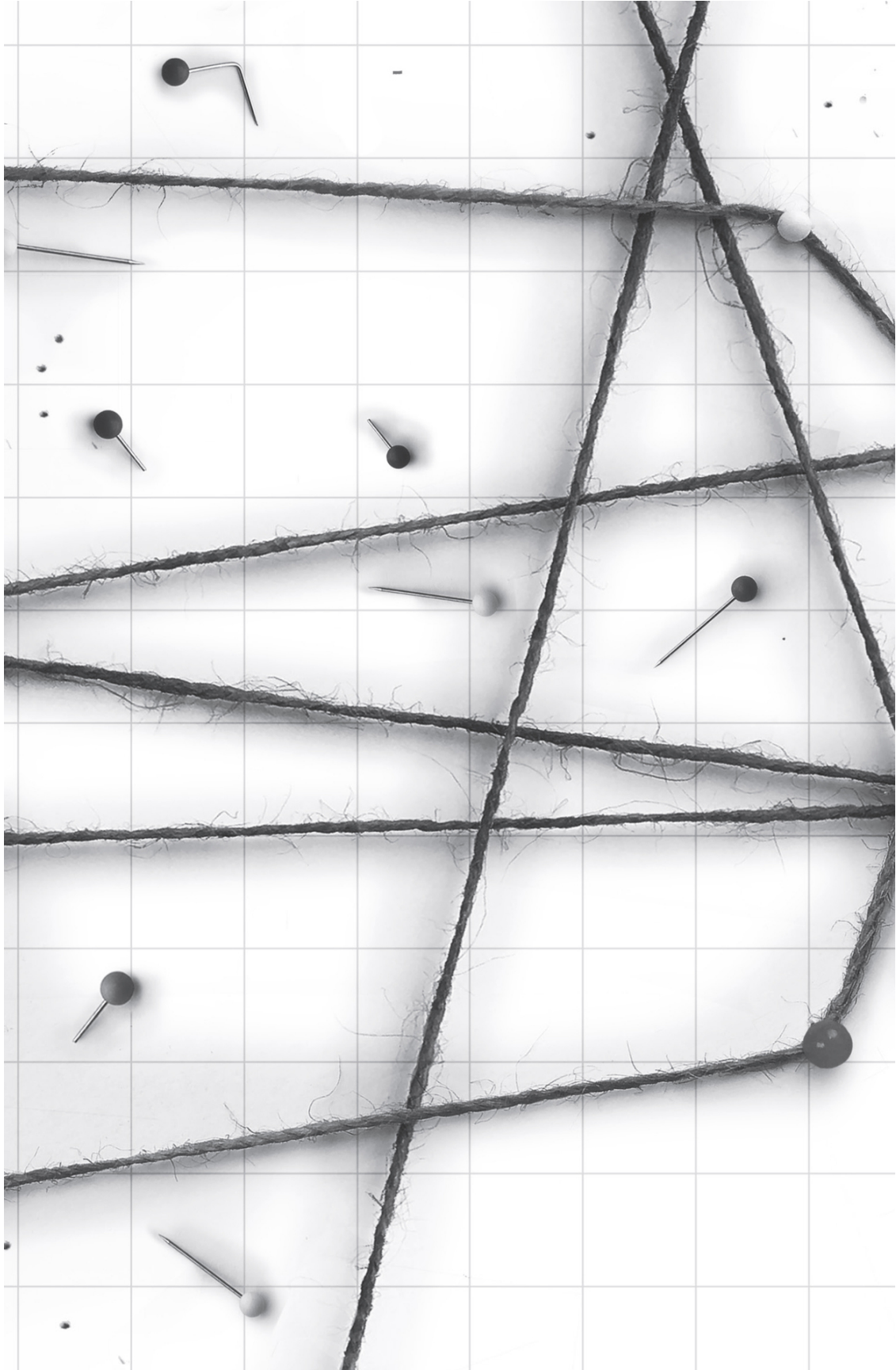
The #1
New York Times
Bestseller

a good
girl's
guide to
murder

HOLLY JACKSON







A Good Girl's Guide to Murder

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To Mum and Dad,
this first one is for you.

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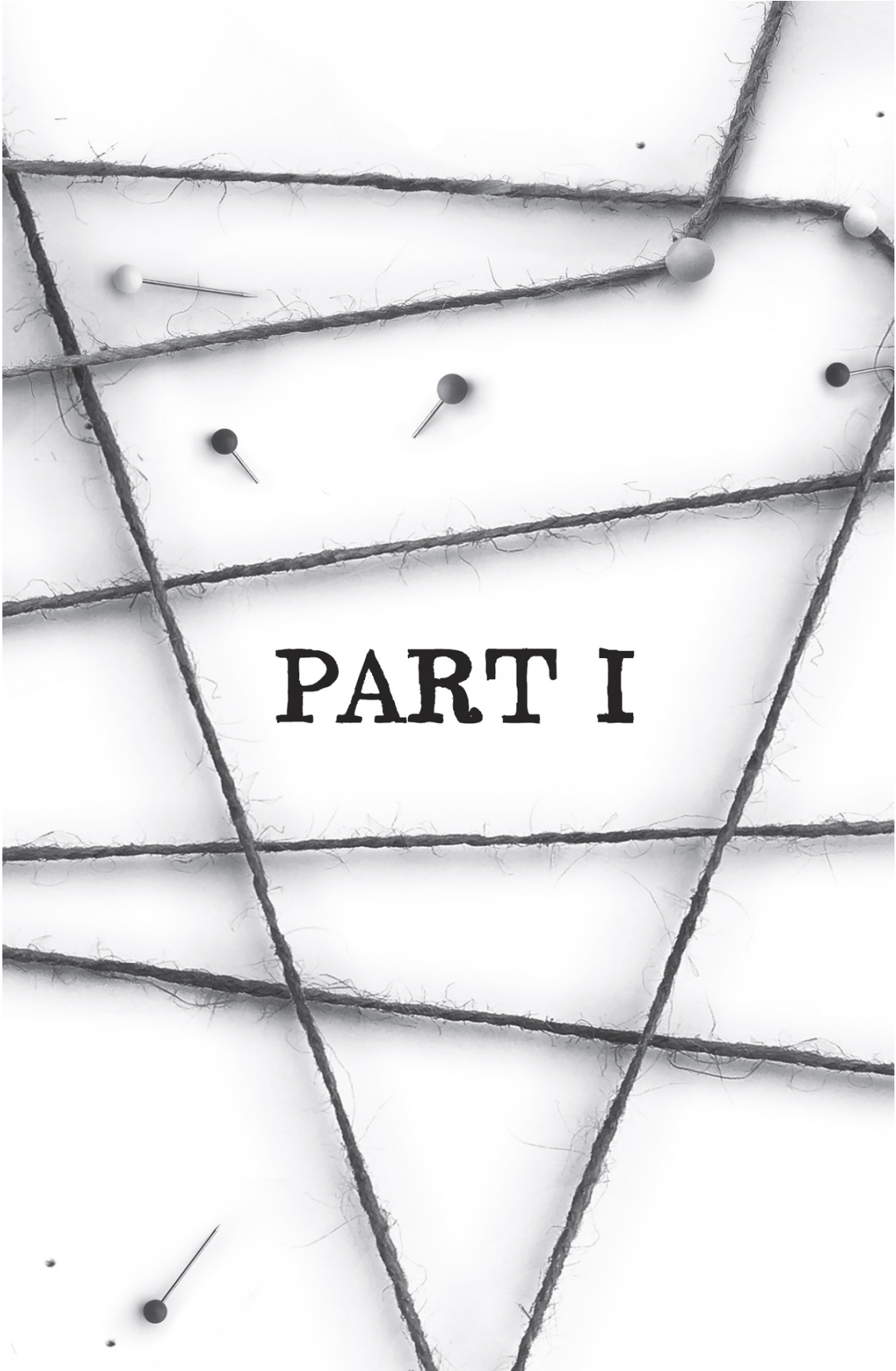
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PART I

QAG

Recognising
Academic
Achievement

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION 2017/18

Candidate number

4169

Candidate's full name

Pippa Fitz-Amobi

Part A: Candidate proposal

To be completed by the candidate

- The courses of study or area(s) of interest to which the topic relates:
English, Journalism, Investigative Journalism, Criminal Law

Working title of Extended Project.

Present the topic to be researched in the form of a statement/question/hypothesis.

Research into the 2012 missing persons investigation of Andie Bell in Little Kilton.

A detailed report on how both print/televised media and social media have become invaluable players in police investigations, using Andie Bell as a case study. And the implications of the press in their presentations of Sal Singh and his alleged guilt.

- My initial resources will be:

Interview with missing persons expert, interview with a local journalist reporting on the case, newspaper articles, interviews with members of the community. Textbooks and articles on police procedure, psychology and the role of media.

Supervisor's Comments:

Pippa, as previously discussed, this is an incredibly sensitive topic to pick – a terrible crime that happened in our own town. I know you cannot be persuaded away but the project has been accepted only on the condition that no ethical lines are crossed. I think you need to find a more focused angle for your report as you work through your research, without concentrating too much on sensitive issues.

And let me be clear, there is to be **NO CONTACT** made with either of the families involved in this case. This will be considered an ethical violation and your project will be disqualified. And don't work too hard. Have a nice summer.

Candidate declaration

I certify that I have read and understood the regulations relating to unfair practice as set out in the notice to candidates.

Signature:

Pippa Fitz-Amobi

Date:

18/07/2017



One

Pip knew where they lived.

Everyone in Little Kilton knew where they lived.

Their home was like the town's own haunted house; people's footsteps quickened as they walked by and their words strangled and died in their throats. Shrieking children would gather on their walk home from school, daring one another to run up and touch the front gate.

But it wasn't haunted by ghosts, just three sad people trying to live their lives as before. A house not haunted by flickering lights or spectral falling chairs, but by dark spray-painted letters of *Scum Family* and stone-shattered windows.

Pip had always wondered why they didn't move. Not that they had to; they hadn't done anything wrong. But she didn't know how they lived like that.

Pip knew a great many things; she knew that hippopotomonstrosesquipedaliophobia was the technical term for the fear of long words, she knew that babies were born without kneecaps, she knew verbatim the best quotes from Plato and Cato, and that there were more than four thousand types of potato. But she didn't know how the Singhs found the strength to stay here. Here, in Kilton, under the weight of so many widened eyes, of the comments whispered just loud enough to be heard, of neighbourly small talk never stretching into long talk any more.

It was a particular cruelty that their house was so close to Little Kilton Grammar School, where both Andie Bell and Sal Singh had gone, where Pip would return for her final year in a few weeks when the August-pickled sun dipped into September.

Pip stopped and rested her hand on the front gate, instantly braver than half the town's kids. Her eyes traced up the path to the front door. It might

only look like a few feet but there was a rumbling chasm between where she stood and over there. It was possible that this was a very bad idea; she had considered that. The morning sun was hot and she could already feel her knee pits growing sticky in her jeans. A bad idea or a bold idea. And yet, history's greatest minds always advised bold over safe; their words good padding for even the worst ideas.

Snubbing the chasm with the soles of her shoes, she walked up to the door and, pausing for just a second to check she was sure, knocked three times. Her tense reflection stared back at her: the long dark hair sun-dyed a lighter brown at the tips, the pale face, despite a week just spent in the south of France, the sharp muddy green eyes braced for impact.

The door opened with the clatter of a falling chain and a double-locked click.

'Hello?' he said, holding the door half open, his hand folded over the side. Pip blinked to break her stare, but she couldn't help it. He looked so much like Sal: the Sal she knew from all those television reports and newspaper pictures. The Sal fading from her adolescent memory. Ravi had his brother's messy black side-swept hair, thick arched eyebrows and oaken-hued skin.

'Hello?' he said again.

'Um . . .' Pip's put-on-the-spot charmer reflex kicked in too late. Her brain was busy processing that, unlike Sal, he had a dimple in his chin, just like hers. And he'd grown even taller since she last saw him. 'Um, sorry, hi.' She did an awkward half-wave that she immediately regretted.

'Hi?'

'Hi, Ravi,' she said. 'I . . . you don't know me . . . I'm Pippa Fitz-Amobi. I was a couple of years below you at school before you left.'

'OK . . .'

'I was just wondering if I could borrow a jiffy of your time? Well, not a jiffy . . . Did you know a jiffy is an actual measurement of time? It's one one-hundredth of a second, so . . . can you maybe spare a few sequential jiffies?'

Oh god, this is what happened when she was nervous or backed into a corner; she started spewing useless facts dressed up as bad jokes. And the other thing: nervous Pip turned four strokes more posh, abandoning middle class to grapple for a poor imitation of upper. When had she ever seriously said 'jiffy' before?

‘What?’ Ravi asked, looking confused.

‘Sorry, never mind,’ Pip said, recovering. ‘So I’m doing my EPQ at school and –’

‘What’s EPQ?’

‘Extended Project Qualification. It’s a project you work on independently, alongside A levels. You can pick any topic you want.’

‘Oh, I never got that far in school,’ he said. ‘Left as soon as I could.’

‘Er, well, I was wondering if you’d be willing to be interviewed for my project.’

‘What’s it about?’ His dark eyebrows hugged closer to his eyes.

‘Um . . . it’s about what happened five years ago.’

Ravi exhaled loudly, his lip curling up in what looked like pre-sprung anger.

‘Why?’ he said.

‘Because I don’t think your brother did it – and I’m going to try to prove it.’