

SHERLOCK'S SPOTLIGHT

A Quarterly Gazette for Young Sherlockians
Everywhere

Summer 2023

*"The Adventure of
the Copper Beeches"*

*Cover art with permission from
Mike McClure*



Your original artwork could be on the cover of our next issue...

See page 2 for more details!

Welcome to

SHERLOCK'S SPOTLIGHT

Volume 4, Number 3

Summer 2023: "The Adventure of the Copper Beeches"

Published four times a year by The Beacon Society, a society providing educators with resources to bring the magic of Sherlock Holmes to life.

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Associate Editors: Rob Nunn and Michael McClure

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Submit Your Original Artwork for our Gazette Cover

We would love to use a student's artwork for the cover of each issue.

If you would like to submit a .jpg, .png, or .pdf of an original artwork, please follow the simple rules:

- You must be between the ages of 8-13.
- You must have your parent's or guardian's permission to submit the artwork.
- The artwork must be Sherlock Holmes based.

You may send the artwork by email directly to Steve Mason at mason.steve8080@gmail.com

Either have your parent or guardian email the artwork to us or have them include a statement authorizing the use of your artwork in our Gazette.

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Find out more about The Beacon Society and our efforts to bring Sherlock Holmes to students at: www.beaconsociety.com



Welcome to **SHERLOCK'S SPOTLIGHT**

Volume 4, Number 3

Spring 2023: "The Adventure of the Copper Beeches"

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Highlights from the Head-Light

Summer is the perfect time to read the newest issue of *Sherlock's Spotlight*. Our games and puzzles, mini mystery and brain teaser, as well as stories and articles will exercise your brain—like Sherlock Holmes would do. After all, no one wants a flabby brain! If you are inspired to draw or write something about Sherlock Homes yourself, please share it with us!

This issue's Sherlock Holmes story is "The Adventure of The Copper Beeches". Miss Violet Hunter takes a position as a governess for a strange family. But why does she have to cut her hair and wear a certain blue dress? And who is hidden away in the attic? Violet asks Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson for help, and we discover just how terrible some families can be. We're also delighted to share a story written by four students, who were inspired by "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle." Sherlock Drones and his Dalmatian friend Dr. Dotson search for the Countess of Mechanics' famous blue lugnut. Do they find it? And who stole it? Read on and find out!

In many of the Sherlock Holmes stories, people travel by dog-cart. Are they really pulled by dogs? If you wanted to travel by train, instead, how could you find out where to catch the train you wanted and when it leaves? Just like today, people needed a marriage license to get married. How could you get this license? Rich Krisciunas explains the mysteries of dog-carts, Bradshaw's, and special licenses.

What would happen if four teenage friends in 2023 could exchange text messages with Sherlock Holmes in 1897? Ann Kimbrough's Text Me Mystery shows us how a theft isn't really a theft, especially when it's a statue from The British Museum.

Arthur Conan Doyle wasn't always a writer; he trained to be a doctor first. Margie Deck explains how medical

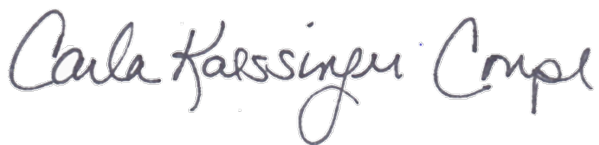
students received practical experience by spending time as physicians' assistants. They worked long hours and had to prepare their own prescriptions, as well as travel to their patients. No wonder Sir Arthur decided to become a writer!

Our resident librarian Beth Gallego recommends two books for young readers that feature Sherlock Bones and Dr. Jane Catson, and another one starring a kid who uses skills he learned from his school's detection club to search for his father. Great reads!

221B Baker Street is a world-famous address, even though that number didn't exist on Baker Street when Arthur Conan Doyle started writing the Sherlock Holmes stories. Liese Sherwood-Fabre tells us how a building society and a museum fought over answering mail sent to Sherlock Holmes.

Why does The Beacon Society publish *Sherlock's Spotlight*? We want to bring the Sherlock Holmes stories to young people, and hope you enjoy them as much as we do. Do you like to write? Our essay contest gives prizes to students who write about Sherlock Holmes [www.beaconsociety.com/joel-senter-essay-contest.html]. How did Sherlock Holmes solve all those mysteries? The Junior Sherlockian Society [<https://www.beaconsociety.com/junior-sherlockian-society.html>] shows you how. Are you an artist? Then send us (with your parents' or guardians' permission) your drawing of Sherlock Holmes [www.beaconsociety.com/sherlocks-spotlight-gazette.html]. You might see your creation on the cover of a future issue of *Sherlock's Spotlight*!

Have fun reading our summer issue, and don't forget to share *Sherlock's Spotlight* with your friends!

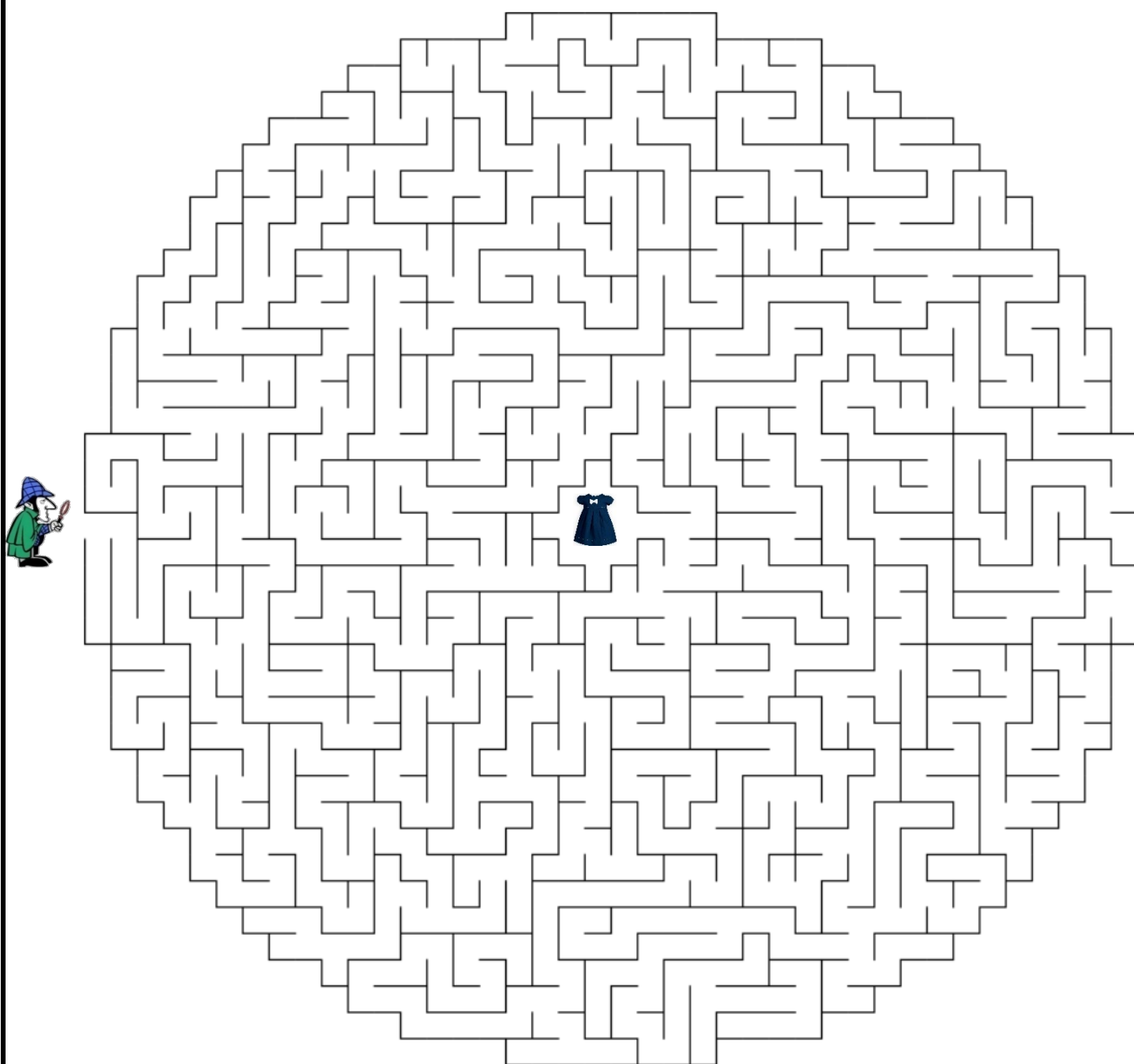


Head-Light, The Beacon Society

That's-A-Maze-ing

In "The Adventure of the Copper Beeches," Sherlock Holmes must determine if it is safe for Violet Hunter to keep her job with the Rucastles. Can you and Sherlock find the blue dress and help him solve the case?

Find the answer on page 29



Story Profile:

"The Adventure of the Copper Beeches"

First published in

- *Strand Magazine*, United Kingdom, June 1892
- *Courier Journal*, United States, June 1892

When the story takes place

- April 1889

Primary Cast of Characters

- **VIOLET HUNTER**, a governess who consults Holmes
- **JEPHRO RUCASTLE**, hired Violet
- **MRS. RUCASTLE**, second wife of Mr. Rucastle
- **EDWARD RUCASTLE**, young son of Mr. and Mrs. Rucastle whom Violet is to watch. A spoiled, ill-natured lad whose chief amusement is torturing small animals. His father finds this behavior adorable
- **ALICE RUCASTLE**, son of Mr. Rucastle by his first wife. Alice has an inheritance from her mother which is independent of her father
- **MR. FOWLER**, a seaman. Beloved of Alice
- **CARLO**, a vicious mastiff dog
- **MRS. STOPER**, runs an employment agency for governesses

Summary

Miss Violet Hunter comes to Sherlock Holmes for advice about her offer to work as a governess at The Copper Beeches, a house near Winchester. The employer, Jephro Rucastle, offers her very high wages but asks very strange conditions: having her hair cut and wearing a specific blue dress.

She refuses at first, but Mr. Rucastle offers even more money. Holmes promises to help Violet if she needs future assistance, and Violet accepts the job.

A few days later, Holmes receives a telegram from Miss Hunter who asks him to come quickly to Winchester.

Violet tells Holmes the Rucastle's elder daughter, Alice, is said to have traveled to Philadelphia because of a dislike of her stepmother, Mrs. Rucastle.

Violet has cut her hair and is invited to sit, wearing an the specific blue dress, in front of a window. When she sees a man watching from afar through the window, she is ordered to wave him away and quit bothering her.

Later, Violet realizes with horror a person has been kidnapped and is being held prisoner in a secret room in the house. Holmes concludes Violet is playing the role of Alice Rucastle and the man who Violet observed from outside is Alice's fiancé, Mr. Fowler.

Holmes and Watson enter the house, taking advantage of the absence of Mr. Rucastle and finds the secret room empty. But Mr. Rucastle arrives and launches his hungry dog at their heels. Unfortunately, the dog turns against Mr. Rucastle and seriously injures his master.

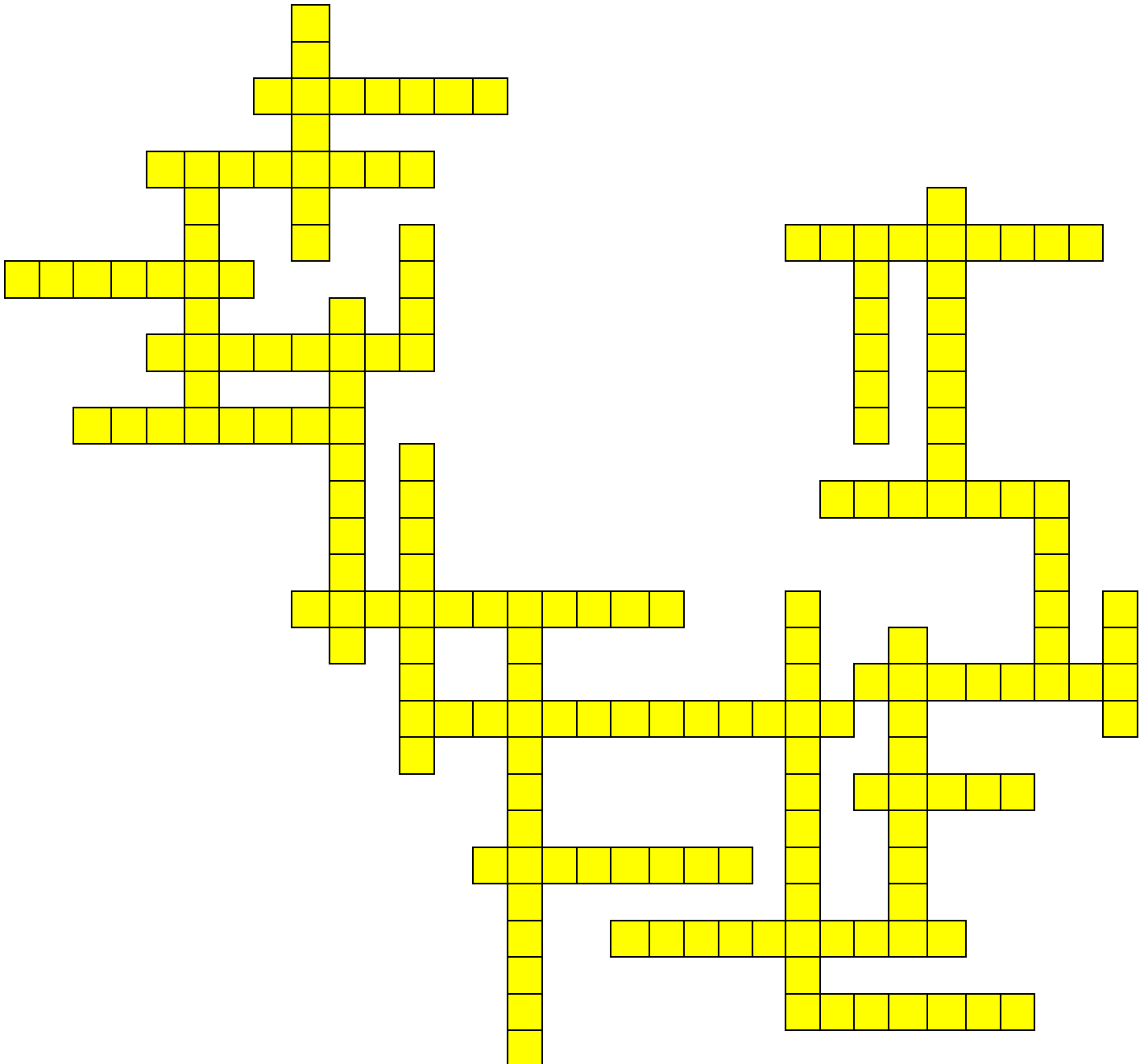
They then learn that Mr. Fowler has freed Alice from her parents, and the couple escaped to start their own future as husband and wife.

Steve Mason

Sherlockian Kriss Kross

There are approximately 20 American States identified by name in the 60 Sherlock Holmes stories. See if you can place their names in the proper place in the puzzle.

Answer on page 30



ARIZONA
ARKANSAS
CALIFORNIA
COLORADO
FLORIDA

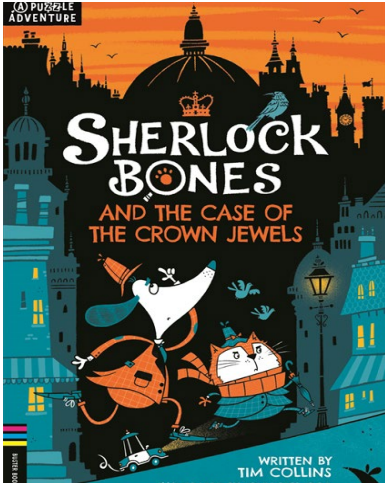
GEORGIA
ILLINOIS
KANSAS
LOUISIANA
MICHIGAN

MISSISSIPPI
MISSOURI
MONTANA
NEBRASKA
NEVADA

NEW JERSEY
NEW MEXICO
NEW YORK
NORTH CAROLINA
OHIO

PENNSYLVANIA
SOUTH CAROLINA
TENNESSEE
TEXAS
UTAH
WASHINGTON

Entertainment Resources for Younger Sherlockians: Comics & Graphic Novels



Sherlock Bones and the Case of the Crown Jewels

Written by Tim Collins and illustrated by John Bigwood

Published by Buster Books

Recommended for: ages 7-10 (grades 2-5)

It's autumn on Barker Street, and Sherlock Bones, the world's greatest detective, is bored. Nothing Dr. Jane Catson can find in *The Morning Terrier* sounds interesting. But, wait! Inspector Bloodhound is at the door. The crown jewels have been stolen, and the police pups need help to find the thief. Throughout the book, there are mazes, search-and-find pictures, and other puzzles for the reader to solve. Bones and Catson are surrounded by interesting characters and places, from the mole's souvenir shop to the squirrels at the Insect Grill. This is a fun and funny mystery adventure - the first in a series.

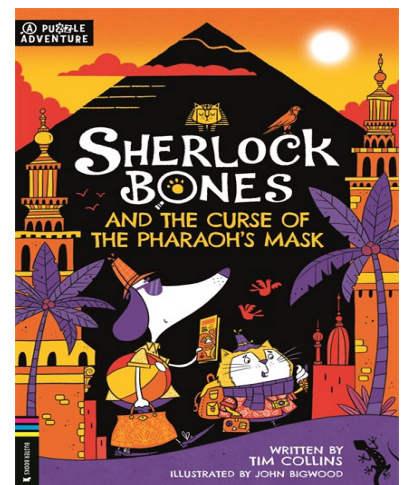
Sherlock Bones and the Curse of the Pharaoh's Mask

Written by Tim Collins and illustrated by John Bigwood

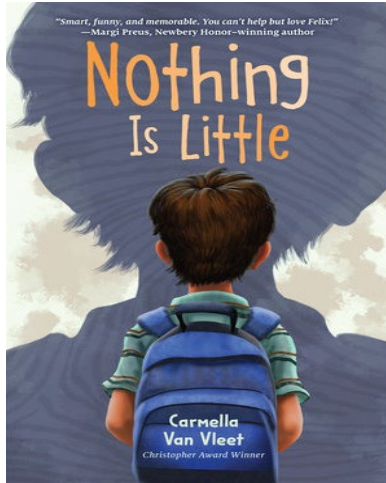
Published by Buster Books

Recommended for: ages 7-10 (grades 2-5)

In the second book in the series, Bones and Catson are on a much-needed vacation to Egypt. Catson is eager to meet up with an old friend in El Kitten, a city on the Nile, and tour a tomb that has just been found. One problem: Bones really isn't very good at relaxing. Then, a priceless mask goes missing and Bones and Catson are the prime suspects! To prove their innocence, they have to find the real culprit among their fellow travelers. But is this just part of a bigger crime? Is there someone hiding behind the scenes? Solve puzzles as you follow along and see what clues you might catch that slip by Dr. Catson.



Two more books in the series are coming soon: *Sherlock Bones and the Mystery of the Vanishing Magician* in September 2023, and *Sherlock Bones and the Horror of the Haunted Castle* in March 2024.



Nothing Is Little

Written by Carmella Van Vleet

Published by Holiday House

Recommended for: ages 8-12 (grades 3-7)

Felix “Shortlock Holmes” Fine is perfectly happy being the smallest kid in school. He has a collection of t-shirts that say things like “Travel Size” and “No, I’m Not An Elf.” He is not excited about the treatment he has to go through for his Growth Hormone Deficiency, especially because it involves getting shots. Every day. He is also not excited about the baby his mom and step-dad, Paul, are expecting. Everything is changing.

On the other hand, he is excited about the school’s new Forensics Club. Along with his friends, he gets to lift fingerprints, identify tool marks, and examine (fake) crime scenes. The smallest details matter. After all, Mr. S. quoted Sherlock Holmes at the very first club meeting, “To a great mind, nothing is little.”

Soon, Felix is examining the details in his own life to solve a personal mystery. His mom has never told him anything about his father. Before he can commit to the family his mom and Paul are building, he wants to know more about his own background. But maybe some questions are better left unanswered.

While not a Sherlock Holmes story, this is a great read, and highly recommended for young Sherlockians.

Beth Gallego

BRAIN-TEASER: Mailing Packages

Dr. Watson mails Christmas presents to relatives in Scotland.

Once at the post office, he is told that each shipping carton can hold up to 22 pounds.

Once they are weighed, it is determined Watson has exactly 66 pounds of packages, and that he can pack carefully and get all the contents into 3 cartons without exceeding the 22 pound weight limit for each carton.

His presents weigh, 1 present at 1 pound, 2 presents at 2 pounds each, 1 present at 3 pounds, 1 present at 6 pounds, 1 present at 8 pounds, 1 present at 9 pounds, 1 present at 10 pounds, 1 present at 11 pounds, and 1 present at 14 pounds.

See if you can place the 10 presents into the 3 cartons, which each carton totaling 22 pounds.

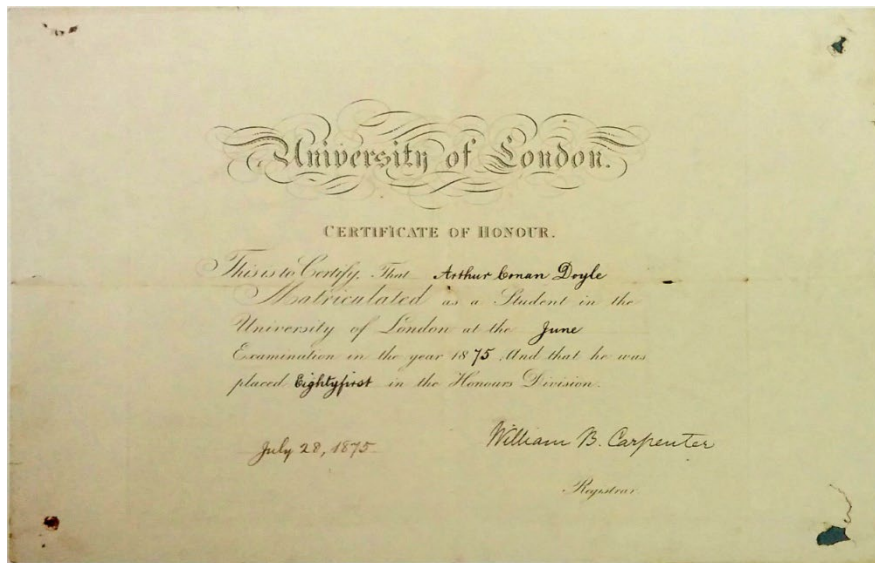
The answer is on page 31

About Arthur, the Author

Glimpses into the life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes

The Medical Student Makes His Way

Once Arthur Conan Doyle earned his Certificate of Honour from the University of London in 1875, the next step in his education was to enroll in university in Edinburgh upon a five-year course of medical study with the plan to graduate as a Bachelor of Medicine in the end. (He had no way of knowing then he would eventually become a very successful writer instead of a successful doctor.) Like many university students, he needed to earn money between school terms to help pay his tuition and living expenses. One way he did this was to find himself a position as a doctor's assistant during the school breaks.



[Certificate of Honour from the University of London for Arthur Conan Doyle's Matriculation Examination (28 July 1875). Credit: https://www.arthur-conandoyle.com/index.php/A_Life_in_Pictures#1876]

During his university years he served as an assistant in several different medical practices, sometimes in the countryside and sometimes in a city practice. The work required long hours with little to no pay. In the beginning, he worked for only room and board to gain experience. At the time, assistants most often lived in the doctor's establishment, sleeping in shared quarters and eating with the other members of the practice and the doctor's family.

He eventually served three different clerkships with Dr. Reginald Hoare. The time was, as Doyle called it, "before the days of motors;" so, Dr. Hoare and his helpers used five horses from early morning until late at night in Birmingham—a large city in the center of the West Midlands region of England. In addition to treating the many patients, in the doctor's home offices and in the patient's

houses, the medical team had to create their own prescriptions, bottling and boxing them to send out, or deliver to the many patients.

In his autobiography *Memories and Adventures*, Doyle tells us, “I had long lists of prescriptions to make up every day, for we dispensed our own medicine, and one hundred bottles of an evening were not unknown. On the whole I made few mistakes, though I have been known to send out ointment and pill boxes with elaborate directions on the lid and nothing inside.”

He would draw on these experiences with Dr. Hoare many years later to write the fiction novel, *The Stark Munro Letters*. The book about a young doctor making his way describes the workday in practice such as the one in Birmingham. The day began with a quick breakfast at 9 in the morning and it ended at 10 at night, with very little time allowed to take a break in between. In addition to the 13-hour regular workday, it was not uncommon for the doctors to be called out in the night to make an emergency house call which “may take us two hours, or may take us ten.” It was a grueling schedule but, as Doyle noted, “I had no time to spend my money.” He was able to send his money home.

It was during his second year of clerkship that the idea that he might earn some money from writing stories first firmly took root. He took a chance—he penned an adventure story, “The Mystery of Sassassa Valley.” To his “great joy and surprise” it was accepted for publication by the Edinburgh magazine *Chambers’s Journal* and he received a small payment.

He was now only three years from finishing his medical education and only a few years from great success as a writer.



[Arthur Conan Doyle at 22, graduating from Edinburgh University. Credit: https://www.arthur-conan-doyle.com/index.php/A_Life_in_Pictures#1876]

Sources:

Doyle, Arthur Conan. *Memories and Adventures* and *The Stark Munro Letters*. <https://www.arthur-conan-doyle.com>. Accessed 7 July 2023.

Stashower, Daniel. *Teller of Tales: The Life of Arthur Conan Doyle*. Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1999, pp. 29-30

Margie Deck

Bradshaws, Dog Carts, and Marriage Licenses

In “The Adventure of the Copper Beeches,” Jephro Rucastle wrote to Violet Hunter and instructed her, “Now do try to come, and I shall meet you with the *dog-cart* at Winchester. Let me know your train.”



What was a dog-cart? Was it a vehicle pulled by dogs? Probably not, though such carts did exist and were used by street vendors. In the Victorian times of Sherlock Holmes, a dog-cart was usually a small carriage with two wheels drawn by a horse. It had two seats, one for the driver and one behind for a passenger. It was originally designed for hunters, with a box behind the driver’s seat to contain one or more retriever dogs.

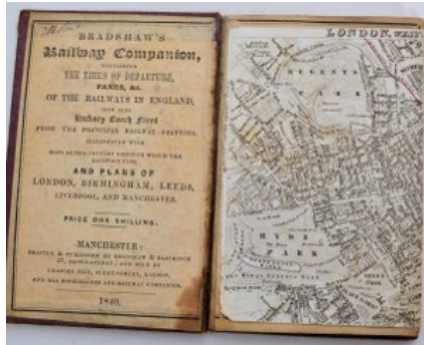
The dog-carts pulled by horses in “Copper Beeches” were popular on country estates for collecting luggage from train stations and providing transportation for family and guests.

The dog-cart was a common vehicle in the stories of Sherlock Holmes. Holmes drove a dog-cart, with Dr. Watson as his passenger, in “The Adventure of the Twisted Lip.” In *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Dr. Mortimer gave Dr. Watson a ride back to Baskerville Hall in his dog-cart. In “The Adventure of the Speckled Band,” Holmes surprised Helen Stoner with his deductive powers. “‘You must have started early, and yet you had a good drive in a dog-cart, along heavy roads, before you reached the station.’ The lady gave a violent start and stared in bewilderment at my companion. ‘There is no mystery, my dear madam,’ said he, smiling. ‘The left arm of your jacket is spattered with mud in no less than seven places. The marks are perfectly fresh. There is no vehicle save a dog-cart which throws up mud in that way, and then only when you sit on the left-hand side of the driver.’”



In “The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist,” Holmes and Watson came upon an empty dog-cart pulled by a horse after Violet Smith was kidnapped and her driver assaulted by Mr. Woodley. Reuben Hayes used a dog-cart to escape from his inn after he was suspected of murder, in “The Adventure of the Priory School,” and the vicar gave Holmes and Watson a ride in his dog-cart to investigate the death of Mortimer Tregennis in “The Adventure of the Devil’s Foot.”

Dog carts pulled by dogs were a popular form of transporting milk and bakery items by vendors in the mid-nineteenth century. There were so many dog carts in London that they became a nuisance to pedestrians and that resulted in the passage of a law banning them from London streets in 1840.



When Holmes received a late night telegram from Violet Hunter asking him to come to the Black Swan Hotel, Holmes told Watson, “Just look up the trains in Bradshaw.” Watson, glancing over his Bradshaw, said, “There is a train at half-past nine, it is due at Winchester at 11:30.” What was a Bradshaw?

Bradshaw's Railway Companion was the standard manual for train travel in England. The guidebook of railway schedules and routes was named after its founder George Bradshaw who published his

first timetable in 1839 at a cost of one shilling. Originally an eight-page pamphlet, by the turn of the century it had grown to nearly a thousand pages and was complete with maps and descriptions of attractions along the way. There were 150 rail companies in England whose train tracks criss-crossed the country. Bradshaw minutely recorded each train’s routes and times and brought order to the chaos of traveling.

At the end of “*The Adventure of the Copper Beeches*,” Dr. Watson wrote, “Mr. Fowler and Miss Rucastle were married, by *special license*, in Southampton the day after their flight, and he is now the holder of a government appointment in the island of Mauritius.” What was a special license?”

There were three ways to get married in England; posting of banns, common licenses, and *special licenses*. Most people got married with banns because it was free. A *bann* was an announcement in a church. The couple would notify their parish clergyman of their intent to marry. The clergyman, then, posted their intention at the church and announced the banns at church services for three successive Sundays in a row prior to the wedding. Once the banns had been announced three times, with no objections, the parson could perform the marriage. It had to be in the parish church or chapel, between 8 AM and noon (changed later to 3 PM) and the marriage was recorded in the church’s register.



Those who wanted to get married faster had two other options. A bishop or his representative could issue a *common license*. It cost two or three pounds. It was valid for three months, but the couple had to wait seven days before getting married.

A rich couple, particularly from the nobility, had one more option for an even faster wedding, a *special license*. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the highest church official in London, could issue special licenses which allowed a couple to get married anywhere at any time. Application had to be made to the ecclesiastical court in London. Such licenses were limited to members of the nobility and their children, baronets, and knights, plus certain high government officials and Members of Parliament. Mr. Fowler was a government official and therefore eligible.

Rich Krisciunas

© 7/9/23

A World-Famous Address

Within a day of their meeting, John Watson and Sherlock Holmes moved into 221B Baker Street. When *A Study in Scarlet* was published, Baker Street existed, but the address did not. Reality only caught up with fiction in the 1930s when three streets (Baker Street, York Place, and Upper Baker Street) were combined to form Baker Street.



full-time secretary to respond to them, often explaining that Mr. Holmes no longer lived at that address, having retired to raise bees in Sussex.

In 1990, John Aidiniantz purchased a townhouse at 229 Baker Street and established The Sherlock Holmes Museum. This tourist destination recreated Holmes

and Watson's living quarters as well as several rooms housing replications of scenes from various cases.

At that time, the buildings were renumbered, and the address of the financial company Abbey National Building Society became 221 Baker Street. Almost immediately the Royal Mail began delivering all letters addressed to the great detective to this company. The correspondence was so great, the business employed a

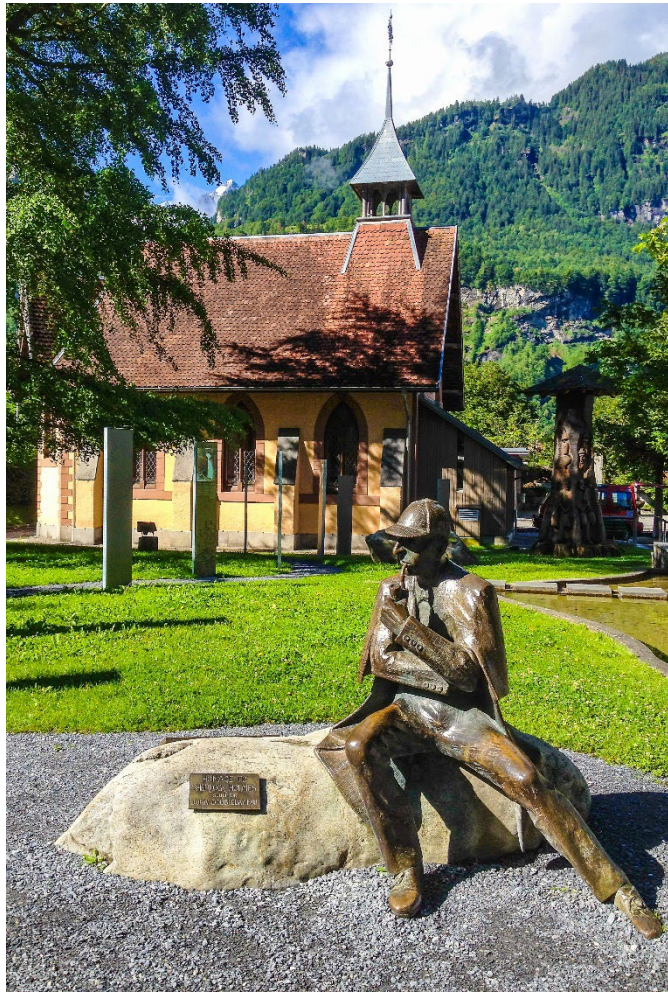


The museum and Abbey National fought for the next twelve years over who should receive Mr. Holmes's letters.

Abbey National argued they were more equipped to handle their responses, but after the company moved in 2002, the City of Westminster approved the museum's use of the address 221B and the Royal Mail began to deliver correspondence there.

In addition to this museum, other replicas exist of 221B's sitting room. The original stories mention the room's fireplace, Holmes's chemical table, Watson's desk, and the basket, or wicker, chair for guests. Other aspects, like the wallpaper and other furniture, were left to the designer's choice.

For example, the Sherlock Holmes Pub in London displays the first collection of Holmes memorabilia collected for the Festival of Britain in 1951 and



includes Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's desk and chair.

Other depictions can be found at the Sherlock Holmes Museum in Meiringen, Switzerland near the Reichenbach Falls; a museum inside a hotel at Lucens, Switzerland; the Wilson Library at the University of Minnesota; and Baker Street West in

Jackson, California. Regardless of the location, the rooms in all are arranged as if its occupants just left and will return shortly.

Fires burn in the fireplace, a jack-knife holds recent correspondence in place on the mantel, and papers are scattered about the room. The visitor is left with the impression that at any moment, the two will enter, offer the basket chair to the guest, and settle back as a new mystery is presented to them.

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD

Sherlock Holmes Mini-Mystery

Can you help Sherlock Holmes solve the mystery from the clues provided?

A messenger from Scotland Yard asks Sherlock Holmes and Watson to meet Inspector Lestrade at a nearby fountain. Once the detective arrives, Lestrade points out two scruffy individuals sitting on the ledge of the fountain. They were very similar in appearance, wearing almost identical clothing.

A nearby house had been burglarized, with several pieces of jewelry stolen. They were soon found at the EZ Pay Pawn Shop. The owner of the shop, Jebez Justin, stated both suspects had been in the shop earlier in the day, but he could not remember which one pawned the stolen loot, as they look so much alike.

The police had not yet spoken to either suspect. Holmes asks to question each one, away from the other.

Holmes holds out the jewelry to the first suspect, Tobias South, and asks, "Have you ever seen this before?"

"No. I don't know what you're holding me for. I didn't steal anything."

Holmes responds, "It was stolen, that you are right about, and it was pawned at the local pawn shop. Do you visit the shop often?"

"Yes, I was there earlier today, but it was to redeem a ticket and get my own possessions back."

Holmes then approached the second suspect, Gregory North. He showed North the stolen loot and asked if he had ever seen it before.

"No, I have never seen it... and I did not steal it. Talk to Jebez Justin. He will tell you I did not bring in the jewelry to pawn."

Holmes then asks, "But you do take things to the EZ Pay Pawn Shop, right?"

"Sometimes, but not today. I wasn't even there today."

Holmes responds, "I don't think that is true, Mr. North."

Why does Holmes suspect Gregory North stole the jewelry?

The answer is on page 31

Steve Mason

Text Me Mystery Presents: Watson is Missing

by Ann Kimbrough

**BIZT
BIZT
BIZT**

IT'S GROUP CHAT TIME
WITH SHERLOCK HOLMES
AND HIS TEENAGE
FRIENDS FROM 2023...
AND TROUBLE IS AFOOT!

Get More
Case Info!

SCAN
ME



QUIK DEETS:

Sherlock Holmes's texting group is with teenagers: Kyndra, Jett, Bizzy & Cheese. They help him solve mysteries. Dr. Watson usually joins the group. The investigations can take them anywhere, with Sherlock relying on his friends for modern-day help--especially the common sense kind. Oddly, the teenagers usually have to warn Sherlock against doing something dangerous!



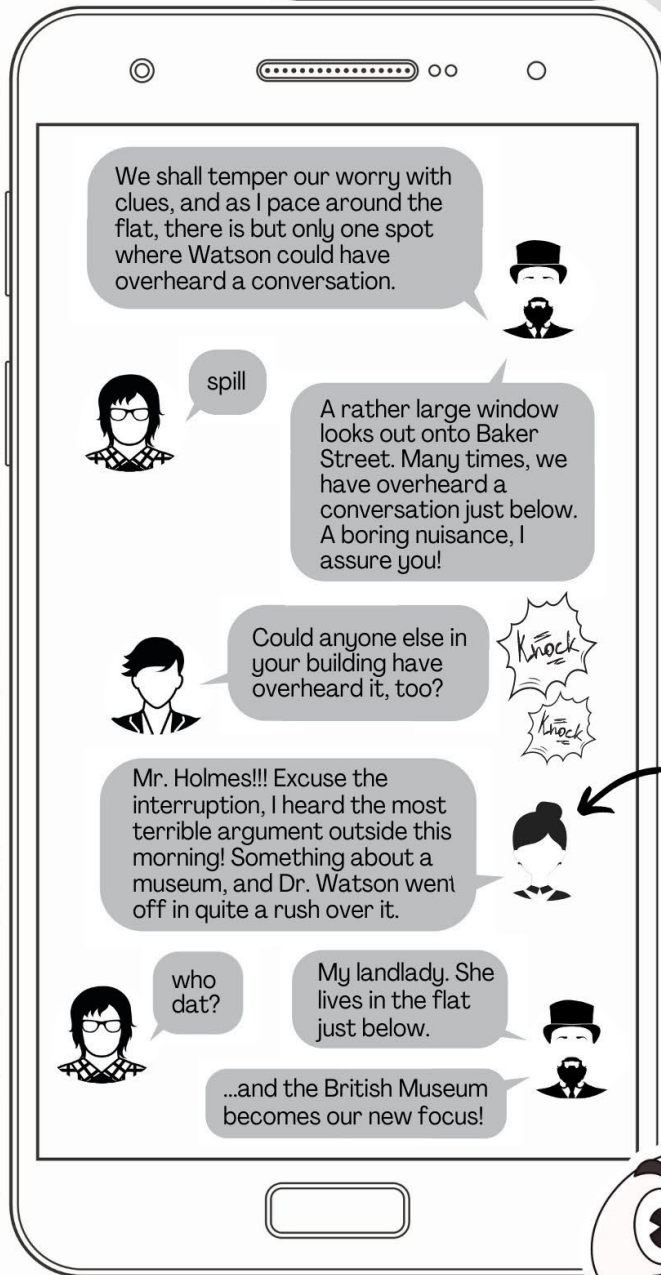
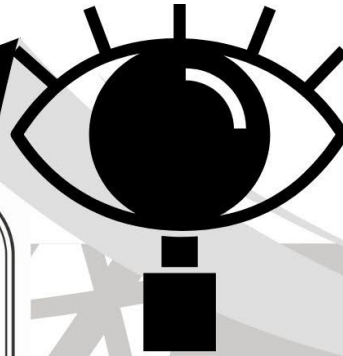
Trouble in the news?

Scotland Yard needs help?

What is going on???



GOT CLUES???



**We Love
Good Clues:**

- Men Arguing
- Watson Followed Men
- Mrs. Hudson heard "Museum"

hmm...
time for a
field trip!



The gang takes a quick break, while Sherlock hurries to the British Museum. Cheese uses the time to Google the location and discovers it has been the site of several attempted thefts, over its history! Has Watson stumbled upon one of them?

AT THE MUSEUM:

Two men just stole a bronze Benin statue!



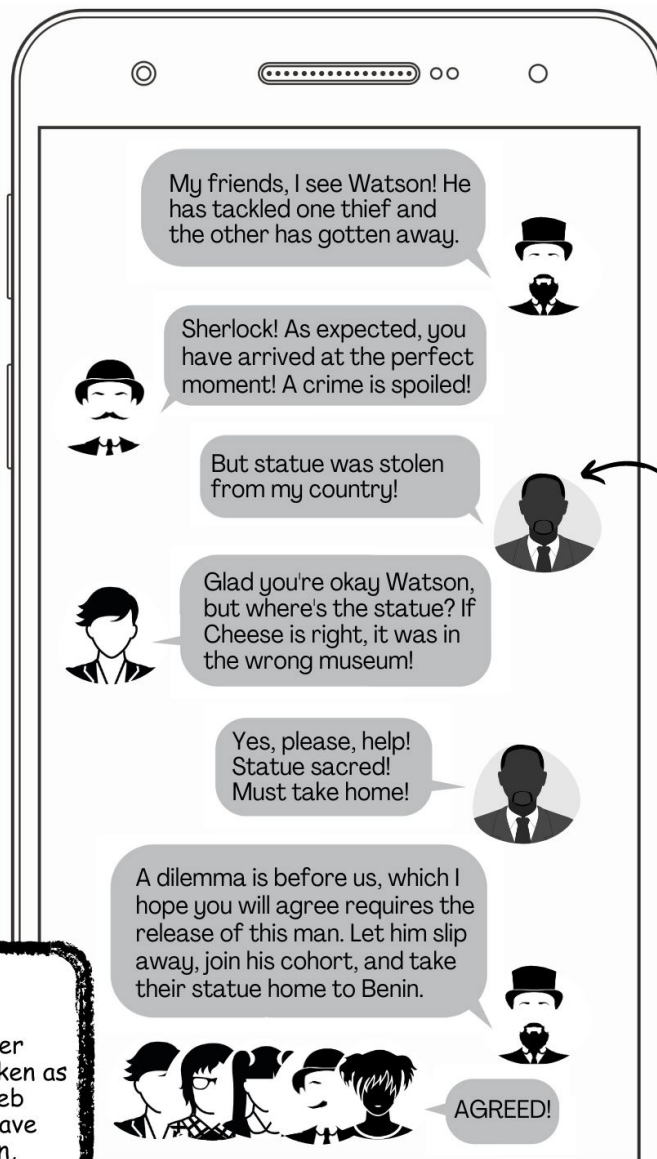
... and Watson gives chase!
So does Sherlock!

... so does Cheese...
in a digital way!



check this --
Google search:

the thief might not be a thief -- over 5000 bronze statues & art were taken as "spoils of war" from Benin City in Feb 1897!!! in our time, most museums have returned the bronze pieces to Benin, which is now called Nigeria

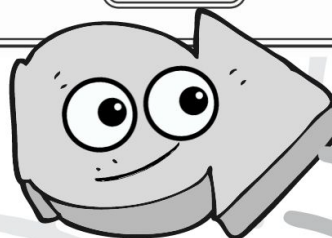


thief?
or
maybe
not

LET'S CHAT AGAIN



CHARACTERS ARE FROM THE TEXT ME MYSTERY SERIES, "SHERLOCK & WATSON WIRED" BY SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE & ANN KIMBROUGH, W/LICENSED ART FROM CANVA & ISTOCKPHOTO.



LOGGING
OFF



Sherlock Drones and the Adventure of the Blue Lugnut

(inspired by The Adventure of The Blue Carbuncle, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle)

Archie B, author

Jack D, editor

Henry V, illustrator

Christopher G, colorist

Chapter One- A Mystery Begins

Early one January morning when Sherlock Drones was just turning on, he noticed something fishy. Fish for breakfast?! Luckily, drones don't eat. On Sherlock Drones' roof, on Baker Street, Dr. Dotson, the Dalmatian, came running up.

"Sherlock Drones! Sherlock Drones!" he barked. "This morning, Weederson, the farmer, told me something quite interesting. He said that a man by the name of Henry Chef was being attacked by some shady characters. To defend himself, he swung around his stirrer. Unfortunately, he broke a pet store window behind him. Weederson came running to help, but when the shady characters saw him, they ran away and so did Henry Chef. In Henry Chef's awkward process of running, he dropped his goose and hat. Weederson picked them up and tried to return them, but Henry Chef was too far away. He gave them to me. So, I ask you this, can you help me return these items to Henry Chef?"

"Calm down, Dotson! The real question is why wouldn't I!"

Just then, they heard hollering.

"It's me, Weederson," he yelled.

"Who?" Sherlock asked.

"It's me, Weederson! Look what I found in the goose!"

"Oh no! It is the Countess of Mechanics' blue lugnut," woofed Dr. Dotson.

"I would recognize that bolt anywhere!" buzzed Sherlock. "I was reading a newspaper when I saw it! The header read 'Blue Lugnut was Stolen.' Of course, at the time it said the police were still interrogating the plumber John Corner. But now, it's final, he's in jail! Dotson, fetch me Henry Chef. The owner of *this* hat and goose."

Chapter Two- The Meeting

That night, around 8:30 PM, Henry Chef (with his stirrer in hand) climbed to the roof of 221b Baker Street.

"I found him!" Dr. Dotson arffed, as he was escorting Mr. Chef up the stairs.

"You called me here?" he questioned sternly.

"Yes, indeed," said Drones.

"Would you like your hat?"

"Yes, please," he replied.

"Your goose was going to go bad, so I woofed it down for dinner," yipped Dr. Dotson.

Fumbling his stirrer, Henry Chef demanded, "Why in the world would you eat my goose!" so loudly that everyone on Baker Street could hear him.

Sherlock Drones quickly interjected, " Hold on, hold on! We got you another goose."

"Thank you, thank you."

Before he turned to climb down from the roof, Sherlock Drones wondered where he got his goose.

"Well, I got it at the Alpha Inn. I was a member of their goose club."

"Well, it's getting late, Dotson. Let's go to bed. Would you like to sleep here tonight?" offered Sherlock Drones as Mr. Chef walked away.

"Yes, please," he woofed.

"Make yourself at home," Sherlock Drones said while showing him to a dog bed.

As they settled in for the night, Sherlock said, "Well, now we know that Henry Chef knows nothing about the blue lugnut."

"I agree," Dr. Dotson barked. "Let's go around London tomorrow and see if Corner really is the robber."

Chapter Three- The Alpha Inn

After recharging himself, Sherlock Drones felt 100% in the morning. Before Dr. Dotson woke up at 9:30 AM, Drones exercised by pitching, rolling, and yawing.

When Dr. Dotson finally woke up, he had breakfast which had been prepared by Mrs. Hudson, the rooflady. During his meal, Sherlock droned on and on about the day's plans.

“Dr. Dotson, as soon as you are finished woofing down your morning meal, let’s plan to visit the Alpha Inn.”

Dr. Dotson barked in agreement.

They traveled to the Alpha Inn, and Dr. Dotson requested caffeine and Theobromine-free hot chocolate. Sherlock Drones requested nothing more than information about their geese.

“Oh, I see,” began Mr. Breezefence, the owner of the Alpha Inn. “I purchased them from Mr. Reckenrim at Covent Greenhouse Market.”

As soon as Dr. Dotson lapped up his hot chocolate, they were on their way to the market.

Chapter Four- Covent Greenhouse Market

They arrived at the Covent Greenhouse Market at 12:30 PM. The market was bustling with sellers pitching their wares. Sherlock Drones beeped, “This is the busiest I’ve ever seen. Hopefully, we can navigate ourselves through the chaotic crowd.”

Sherlock offered to hover above the crowd. With his drone’s eye view, he spotted Mr. Reckenrim’s stall. Once spotted, Drones signaled the path to the stall by Morse Code. The buzzes did not draw attention. Once Drones and Dr. Dotson arrived, they wondered where Mr. Reckenrim got his geese.

He erupted in anger replying, “Why does everyone keep asking about my geese?!” Drones and Reckenrim argued and argued. In the end, Drones tricked him into letting the cat out of the bag. Reckenrim asked his assistant, Buck, to bring him the books.

“See here. See this little book. Look at this third name in red ink. Read it out loud to me,” grunted Reckenrim.

Drones read aloud, “Miss Maggie Treelob, 117 Brixton Road, 249.”

“Correct,” Reckenrim replied. “Now look that name up in the big book.”

“Miss Maggie Treelob, 117 Brixton Road, sells geese.”

“Exactly!” called out Reckenrim. “Now then, what is the last entry?”

“December 22. 24 geese sold to Covent Greenhouse Market for 10 shillings.”

“Precisely. And what is written underneath?”

“Sold to Mr. Breezefence of The Alpha Inn for 12 shillings.”

“What do you have to say now?”

Drones was speechless and ejected a pound from his coin compartment.

As they turned to plan their next step, shouting erupted for the second time from Reckenrim’s stall. They turned to see a centaur-looking man arguing with Reckenrim.

“That’s it!” Reckenrim yelled. “I’m closing down for the night. Get out or I’ll set the tractors on you!”

“Fine! Good night,” said the centaur-looking man.

“That sounds like trouble,” Drones buzzed to Watson. “Let’s check it out!”

They walked over to the centaur-looking man and said, “Are you looking for a certain goose? If so, we may be of service.”

“Yes, yes I am. Thank you very much, kind sir,” the centaur-looking man said.

“And by the way, I haven’t gotten your name yet.”

“It’s - it’s - John Cardinalson.”

Drones beeped loudly, “No, your real name!”

The man replies, “Ok, ok. My real name is James Horseman.”

“James Horseman?!” Reckenrim exclaimed.

“Not now, Reckenrim,” Drones chirped. Then he turned to James Horseman. “Come with us, friend, to Baker Street. Then we will have a little chat about your goose. A cab is waiting to take us. Come.”

Chapter Five- The Final Discussion (Mood Music provided by Europe

<https://youtu.be/9jK-NcRmVcw>)

“Come in,” said Sherlock Drones. “Make yourself at home in the wicker chair.”

“Thank you,” James Horseman studded. He was obviously trembling in fear.

“I’m guessing you would like to know about the goose with the barred tail,” Drones declared.

“Yes, please!” James replied excitedly.

“Oh, well it came here. It was a wonderful goose. After it was dead, it laid a bright blue car part!” Drones held up the blue lugnut. James stood up and stared.

“The jig is up!” said Drones. James started to stumble. “Dotson, help him to his seat. Bring him a large can of Diet Pepsi.”

James took a few sips of the soda and seemed to relax a bit. But he still possessed frightened eyes.

“Ah. Now he looks better.” Then Drones added, “I have almost every connection in my memory chip... except one. How had you heard about the blue lugnut?”

“Catherine Carburetor, the lady’s assistant mechanic, informed me.”

“Ah. So, the temptation was too much for you! So you snatched it! So what did you do then? Did you create a small job for the plumber? And then, when he left you stole the lugnut and blamed him?

“Yes! That is exactly what I did. How did you know?”

“It’s my business to know! Now, how did the blue lugnut get from you to the goose?”

“After I stole it,” Horseman said, “I didn’t feel comfortable staying at the hotel so I headed to my sister’s house. When I arrived, I remembered that my sister would give me a goose for Christmas. She raises them. So that no one would find the blue lugnut on me, I decided to hide it in my goose. I picked out the one with a barred tail and shoved the lugnut down its throat. Unfortunately, it wiggled free and I struggled to catch it. I thought I had my goose. It wasn’t until later when I attempted to retrieve the lugnut that I realized I snagged the wrong goose. I went back to my sister’s house. She said that she had two geese with barred tails. I captured the wrong one! She also told me that she had already sold the rest of her geese to Reckenrim at Covent Greenhouse. I went to the greenhouse, but Reckenrim had already sold all of his geese. Then, you found me.”

It would have been silent if it weren’t for the humming of Drones’ blades. Then, Drones demanded, “Get out now!”

Horseman did not hesitate a second. He went crashing down the rooftop stairs.

“Send him to jail now and make him a jailbird for life. Horseman will not do wrong again. This has been a most singular tale. Well, all is well that ends well.”

Drones continued, “By the way, how do you bark ‘the end’ in a canine conversation?”

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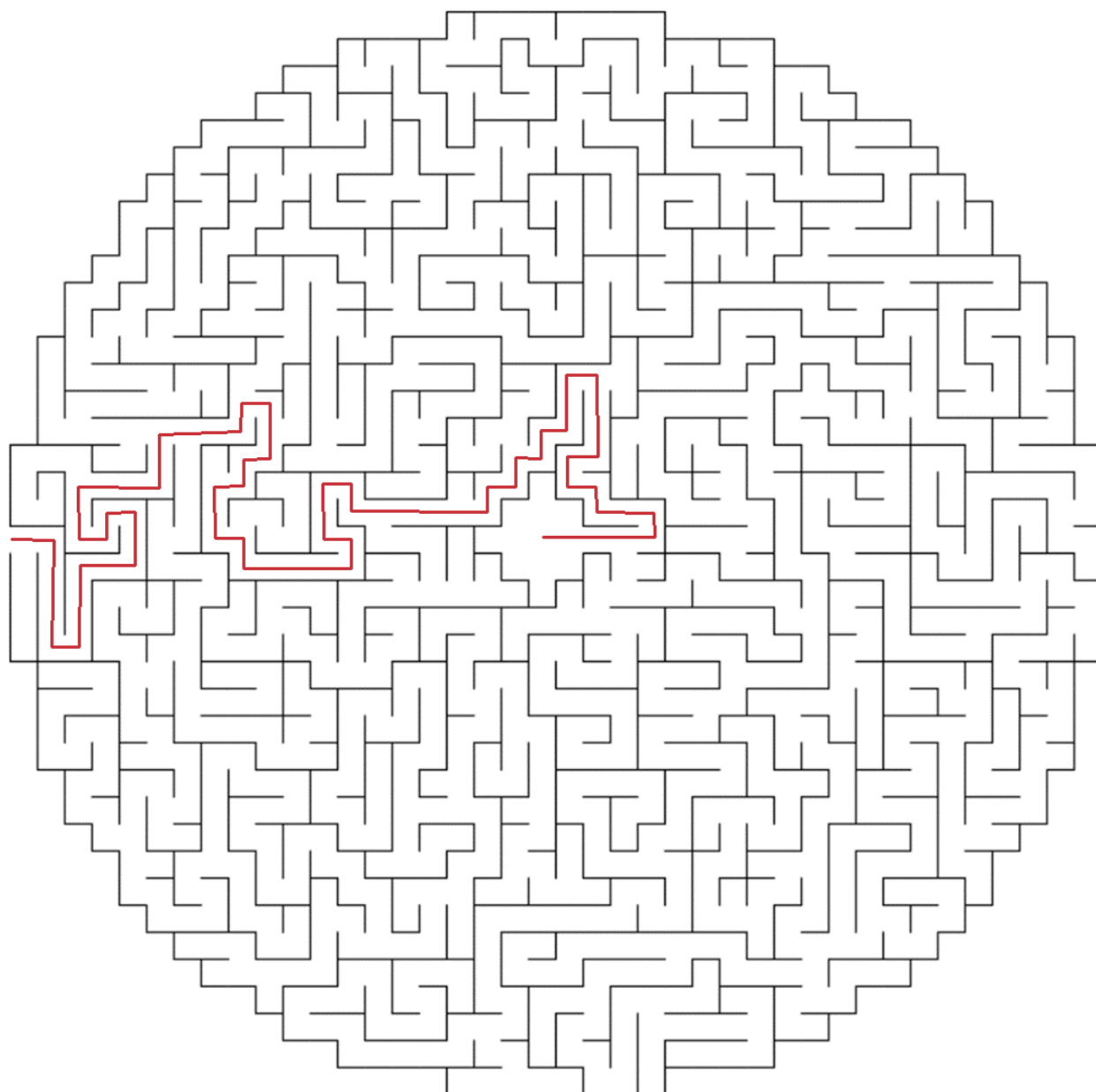
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Puzzle Answers

THAT'S-A-MAZE-ING



[illegible]

Brain-Teaser

Watson would place the presents in the cartons in this manner:

1 carton = 8 pounds + 14 pounds = 22 pounds

1 carton = 1 pound + 10 pounds + 11 pounds = 22 pounds

1 carton = 2 pounds + 2 pounds + 3 pounds + 6 pounds + 9 pounds = 22 pounds

Mini-Mystery

Gregory North knew the stolen jewelry had been taken to the EZ Pay Pawn Shop to be pawned, even though no one had yet mentioned where the jewelry had been taken. Therefore, North must have been the one to take it there.

