

Baker Street Elementary

Year Eight

Created by Joe Fay,

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Introduction by Burt Wolder



The first adventures of

Sherlock Holmes, John Watson, & Stamford

Baker Street Elementary

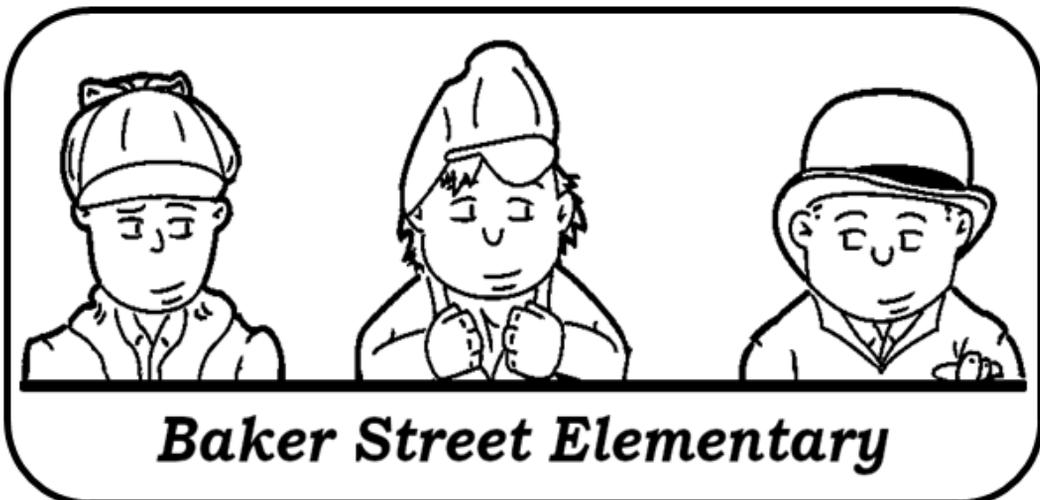
Year 8

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INTRODUCTION

BY BURT WOLDER, BSI, ASH

("THE THIRD PILLAR FROM THE LEFT")

THE MARRIAGE OF ART AND NARRATIVE APPEARS TO BE FUNDAMENTAL TO HUMAN CREATIVITY. STORIES AND PICTURES HAVE GONE TOGETHER SINCE EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHICS, IF NOT BEFORE; SATIRE AND CARICATURE HAVE FEATURED IN PRINTS SINCE THE 17TH CENTURY.

IT IS SURPRISING THEREFORE, AT LEAST TO ME, HOW MUCH HAS BEEN MISUNDERSTOOD ABOUT THE ART FORM OVER THE YEARS. FREDERIC WERTHAM, WHOSE 1954 BOOK SEDUCTION OF THE INNOCENT LED TO THE COMICS CODE, THOUGHT COMICS PRODUCED A "READING DISORDER" BECAUSE THEY PROMOTED "PICTURE READING", WHICH HE DEFINED AS "GAZING AT SUCCESSIVE PICTURES OF A

COMIC BOOK WITH A MINIMAL READING OF THE PRINTED LETTERS". LOOKING BACKWARDS, I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT PEOPLE WOULD HAVE HAD OTHER THINGS TO BECOME ALARMED ABOUT.

BUT THEN, I DIDN'T THINK BANNING BOOKS WOULD STILL BE A TOPIC OF CONVERSATION IN 2023, EITHER.

PERHAPS IT IS THE SIMPLICITY OF THE FORM. IN WRITING ABOUT ERNIE BUSHMILLER'S COMIC STRIP NANCY, JAMES ELKINS OBSERVED THAT WHAT MADE THAT SIMPLE, BLACK AND WHITE WONDERFUL WAS THAT IT WAS ABOUT "WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE VISUAL WORLD BECOMES SO SIMPLE THAT IF YOU TAKE AWAY JUST ONE LINE, IT ALL COMPLETELY COLLAPSES. A COMIC STRIP CAN USE THE MOST BASIC TOOLS TO TELL A STORY FROM BEGINNING TO END."

SIMPLE STRIPS, LIKE NANCY AND **BAKER STREET ELEMENTARY**, FIND ENOUGH ROOM IN THEIR PANELS TO RANGE FAR AND WIDE; IN **BAKER STREET ELEMENTARY**, IT IS THE EVERGREEN LANDSCAPE OF KIDS TRYING TO MAKE SENSE OF THEIR WORLD. THESE KIDS JUST HAPPEN TO BE EXPRESSIVE BEYOND THEIR YEARS, WITH EXPERIENCES THAT HAVE ADDED CANONICAL DIMENSIONS.

THIS LITTLE BAND HAS EXPLORED MANY SUBJECTS OVER EIGHT YEARS. IN THESE PAGES, YOU WILL FIND THEM

THOUGHTFUL ABOUT HOLMES AND FAITH; YOU WILL FIND WRY HUMOR, ALONG WITH CHRISTOPHER MORLEY'S

"SHERLOCK HOLMES PRAYER". THEY WILL EXPLORE THE PAST LIVES OF CANONICAL CHARACTERS, NEW YEAR'S FOOD IN

OTHER COUNTRIES, EGGS FOR BREAKFAST IN BAKER STREET, TREES, AGONY COLUMNS, AND A GREAT DEAL MORE.

THERE IS EVEN ROOM FOR THEM TO REMIND US THAT WATSON WAS CALLED, AT LEAST ONCE, "THE COMPOUND OF BUSY BEE AND EXCELSIOR", AND OF THE MOTTO, "WE CAN BUT TRY".

IT IS ALL AN ENTERTAINING, BRIEF ESCAPE, AND YET ANOTHER DIMENSION TO THE LIMITLESS WORLD OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.

ENJOY!

CROSS PLAINS, NJ



"A UNIVERSAL PRAYER"

"What would ye think of offering up prayer" [STUD]

Sherlock Holmes was not what you'd call a religious man. Nor even spiritual, for that matter. He was driven by logic. Remember in "The Sussex Vampire," he said "The world is big enough for us. No ghosts need apply." We could assume that he would place the Holy Ghost into that category as well.

However, he acknowledges that there is a higher power than any human can ascertain, and his famous "moss rose" soliloquy in "The Naval Treaty" is often cited as evidence of that:

"Our highest assurance of the goodness of Providence seems to me to rest in the flowers."

And Sherlock Holmes was at least familiar with the Bible (from his school days, no doubt), as he was able to dig up the reference to David and Bathsheba in "The Creeping Man":

"My biblical knowledge is a trifle rusty, I fear, but you will find the story in the first or second of Samuel."

While he wasn't likely to say prayers — even when on the brink of the Reichenbach Falls — Christopher Morley, founder of the Baker Street Irregulars, wrote one that transcends all religious beliefs. A prayer that we can all enjoy this holiday season, or year-round.

Sherlock Holmes's Prayer by Christopher Morley

[1] Grant me, O spirit of Reason, matter for Deduction, Intuition, and Analysis; plenty of three-pipe problems, that I may avoid the cowardice of seven percent cocaine, or at least substitute something a little special in white wines.

[2] Grant me newspapers, telegrams, and the grind of carriage wheels against the kerb; the meditative breakfast at morning; the unexpected client in the night-time. And, occasionally, the alerting word grotesque.

[3] Strengthen me not to astonish the good Watson merely for theatrical pleasure; yet always to be impatient of Unmitigated Bleat; and of Guessing, which rots the logical faculty.

[4] If in hours of dullness neither the Turkish bath nor mediaeval charters, nor my scrapbooks nor my fiddle avail to soothe, turn my attention to the infallible reactions of chemistry—or to that rational and edifying insect the Bee.

[5] Remind me that there is a season of forgiveness for misfortune; but never for the incredible imbecility of bunglers (from LeCoq to Lestrade).

[6] In all the joys of action let me not forget the intellectual achievements of lethargy; to wit, Mycroft; and, slightly less to wit, Moriarty.

[7] Burden me not with unrelated facts, but encourage the habit of synthetic observation, collating the distinctions between the various. As the hand of the lithotyper is to that of the cork-cutter, so are the types of the Morning Mercury to those of the Yorkshire Post.

[8] Remember, O spirit, to Segregate the Queen. Viz., the fair sex is Watson's department. For me, the Mind is All. But one confession in remembrance: the pistol-shot initials on the sitting-room wall were not what Watson thought. In the name of that Gracious Lady my favorite letters were the last two. I was writing not VR but IA. The Baker Street Underground shook my aim.

[9] Hold fast the doctrine: When all impossibles are eliminated, what remains, however improbable, must be the Truth.

[10] Then, O spirit, be the Game Afoot!

And here we arrive back at **Baker Street Elementary**, one last time in 2021...

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED
WHERE YOU GO WHEN YOU DIE?



I AM SURE I DON'T KNOW.

MAYBE MANCHESTER.



SO WHERE DO GO IF YOU WERE
GOOD DURING YOUR LIFE?





"PAST IMPERFECT"

"In my past life" [ILLU]

Reincarnation is not a subject we typically associate with Sherlock Holmes.

Although there is passing mention of "Hindoos" and Sikhs in *The Sign of Four* (reincarnation is a belief of the Hindu and Sikh religions), there is no time spent on the topic of having lived another life.

However, there are individuals in the Canon who are eager to escape from their previous lives. People like Jephro Rucastle, whose ruse became apparent after Sherlock Holmes's involvement in "The Copper Beeches":

"Mr. Rucastle survived, but was always a broken man, kept alive solely through the care of his devoted wife. They still live with their old servants, who probably know so much of Rucastle's past life that he finds it difficult to part from them."

And Baron Adelbert Gruner wanted to avoid the naked truth of his past romantic liaisons in "The Illustrious Client":

"The cunning devil has told her every unsavoury public scandal of his past life, but always in such a way as to make himself out to be an innocent martyr. She absolutely accepts his version and will listen to no other."

Hilton Cubitt had an inkling that there was something to Elsie Patrick's past in "The Dancing Men," but he was as good as his word and never inquired. She married him with an intention to leave her old life behind:

"I have had some very disagreeable associations in my life,' said she; 'I wish to forget all about them. I would rather never allude to the past, for it is very painful to me. If you take me, Hilton, you will take a woman who has nothing that she need be personally ashamed of; but you will have to be content with my word for it, and to allow me to be silent as to all that passed up to the time when I became yours.'"

And *The Valley of Fear* was based on the double (triple?) life of John Douglas / Birdy Edwards / John McMurdo. Indeed, Watson acknowledged that Mrs. Douglas didn't know the full story.

"It was remarked sometimes, however, by those who knew them best, that the confidence between the two did not appear to be complete, since the wife was either very reticent about her husband's past life, or else, as seemed more likely, was imperfectly informed about it."

These past lives merely scratch the surface of individuals who take on alternative identities as they go about their duplicitous and sometimes nefarious activities in the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Is life for those associated with criminal enterprises, either as pursuers or the pursued, destined to be one of many lives? Perhaps that's something that a philosophy class at **Baker Street Elementary** might examine...

MA'AM WILL WE BE STUDYING
REINCARNATION THIS SEMESTER?



IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND WHAT
YOUR PAST LIVES WERE ALL ABOUT.

I'M NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR ON THIS LIFE YET.

STAMFORD, YOU INTRIGUE ME
MORE AND MORE EACH DAY.



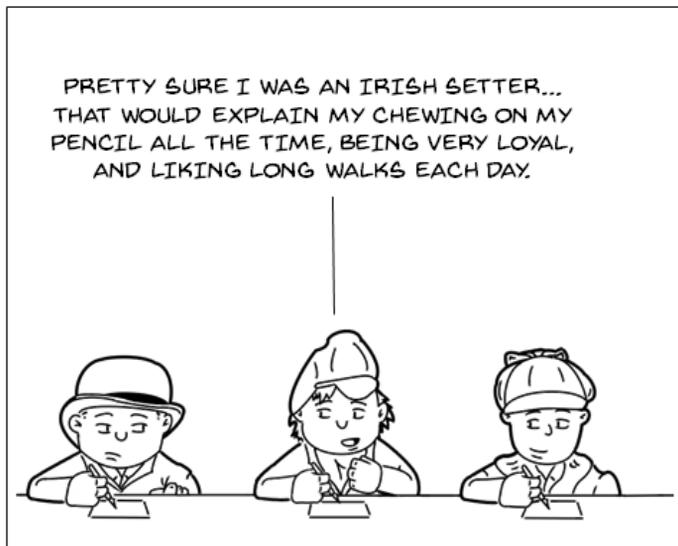
DO YOU ACCEPT THE BELIEF YOU
COME BACK AS SOMEONE ELSE?



I DO... I BELIEVE I WAS A SERVANT
GIRL IN MY FORMER LIFE.

IS BEING A TEACHER A STEP UP OR
DOWN FROM YOUR FORMER LIFE?





I'VE DECIDED IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO BELIEVE IN SANTA CLAUS AFTER ALL.

WHAT CAUSED THE CHANGE?



MY MUM SUGGESTED THE NUMBER OF PRESENTS FOR ME MIGHT BE TIED TO MY BELIEF IN THE JOLLY OL' MAN... WHY RISK IT?



WHY DO WE HAVE TO WRITE 'THANK YOU NOTES' TO ALL THE RELATIVES WHO MIGHT GIVE US A PRESENT, BUT NOT TO SANTA WHO COMES THROUGH EACH YEAR?



THERE'S TOO MANY PRESENTS GIVEN OUT... I BELIEVE CHRISTMAS SHOULD FOCUS ON THE SPIRIT OF THE DAY AND THE FRIENDSHIPS WE HAVE.

SO, NO MONEY TO BUY ME A GIFT, RIGHT?



MY LETTER TO SANTA THIS YEAR EXPLAINED THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS 'GOOD' OR 'BAD' CHILDREN... SIMPLY MISUNDERSTOOD.



WELCOME TO BOXING DAY... OR
NATIONAL GIFT RETURN DAY.

ALL 3 OF US DID LEARN
TRUTHS THIS YEAR.



WHAT'S THE BEST THING TO GIVE YOUR PARENTS...
A LIST OF WHAT YOU WANT FOR CHRISTMAS.



IF YOU SING ENOUGH CHRISTMAS CAROLS
AT SCHOOL, THEY WILL SEND YOU HOME.



THE FOUR STAGES OF MAN... YOU BELIEVE IN
SANTA, YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN SANTA, YOU
BECOME SANTA, YOU START LOOKING LIKE SANTA.



AND ONCE AGAIN, SANTA JUDGED US
WAY TOO HARSHLY, IN MY OPINION.

MAYBE HE COULD SET UP A
'NAUGHTY OR NICE COMMITTEE'
WITH A FEW FORGIVING MEMBERS.



"OUT WITH THE OLD"

"Her idea of cuisine is a little limited" [NAVA]

One of the most remembered quotes about Mrs. Hudson and her culinary abilities comes from "The Naval Treaty," in which Holmes, Watson, and Percy Phelps sit down for breakfast a la Hudson.

"Mrs. Hudson has risen to the occasion," said Holmes, uncovering a dish of curried chicken. "Her cuisine is a little limited, but she has as good an idea of breakfast as a Scotch-woman. What have you here, Watson?"

"Ham and eggs," I answered.

We know that what Mr. Phelps uncovers is entirely inedible, but we'll leave the spoilers out of it for now.

Could it be that Mrs. Hudson tired of cooking for the Baker Street boys after so many years? After all, she must have taken possession of 221B Baker Street after her husband's death, and being a landlady to one of the worst tenants in London likely took a toll on her.

In "The Problem of Thor Bridge," we're told that there is a new cook:

"There is little to share, but we may discuss it when you have consumed the two hard-boiled eggs with which our new cook has favoured us. Their condition may not be unconnected with the copy of the Family Herald which I observed yesterday upon the hall-table. Even so trivial a matter as cooking an egg demands an attention which is conscious of the passage of time and incompatible with the love romance in that excellent periodical."

Thus, the "old" cook was likely to have been Mrs. Hudson. Either she required a holiday from cooking or Holmes (in his uniquely straightforward way) intimated that he had had enough of her cooking.

*She had a little more variety when it came to her duties in the dining hall at **Baker Street Elementary**...*

WHAT INTERESTING MENU HAS MRS. HUDSON PREPARED FOR US TODAY?

IT'S NEW YEAR'S DAY... WE ARE GETTING A BUFFET OF GOOD LUCK FOODS.

A black and white line drawing of three cartoon characters sitting at a table. The character on the left is wearing a cap and a collared shirt. The middle character is wearing a cap and a collared shirt. The character on the right is wearing a bowler hat and a collared shirt. They are looking towards the right. In front of them is a buffet table with various food items, including what looks like a roast, a bowl, and a plate.

THERE ARE GOOD LUCK FOODS? WHY HAVE I NOT KNOW ABOUT THIS BEFORE?

A black and white line drawing of a single cartoon character sitting at a table. The character is wearing a cap and a collared shirt. They have a thoughtful or questioning expression on their face. The table in front of them is mostly empty.

SURE... IN ITALY, THEY EAT FRIED PASTRIES TO GUARANTEE A SWEET YEAR.

IN SPAIN, YOU EAT 12 GRAPES AT MIDNIGHT FOR GOOD LUCK.

A black and white line drawing of three cartoon characters sitting at a table. The character on the left is wearing a cap and a collared shirt. The middle character is wearing a cap and a collared shirt. The character on the right is wearing a bowler hat and a collared shirt. They are looking towards the right. In front of them is a buffet table with various food items, including what looks like a roast, a bowl, and a plate.

IN PENNSYLVANIA, PORK AND SAUERKRAUT BRIGHTENS THE NEW YEAR.

AND IN THE SOUTHERN UNITED STATES, BLACK-EYED PEAS ATTRACT A FINANCIAL WINDFALL.

A black and white line drawing of three cartoon characters sitting at a table. The character on the left is wearing a cap and a collared shirt. The middle character is wearing a cap and a collared shirt. The character on the right is wearing a bowler hat and a collared shirt. They are looking towards the right. In front of them is a buffet table with various food items, including what looks like a roast, a bowl, and a plate.

GERMAN FOLKLORE REQUIRES EATING HERRING AT MIDNIGHT FOR GOOD LUCK.

AND PICKLED HERRING IN POLAND DOES THE TRICK.

A black and white line drawing of three cartoon characters sitting at a table. The character on the left is wearing a cap and a collared shirt. The middle character is wearing a cap and a collared shirt. The character on the right is wearing a bowler hat and a collared shirt. They are looking towards the right. In front of them is a buffet table with various food items, including what looks like a roast, a bowl, and a plate.

IN GREECE, POMEGRANATES ARE SUPPOSED TO IMPROVE FERTILITY ON THIS DAY.



PRETTY SURE I DON'T WANT THAT THIS YEAR.

I'M GAME IF IT HELPS THE CROPS TO GROW FOR THE FARMERS.

ASIAN CULTURES BELIEVE EATING ORANGES AND HONEY WILL BRING YOU FORTUNE AND WEALTH.

AND MANY FEEL EATING PORK IS LUCKY, AS PIGS PUSH FORWARD AS THEY EAT.



WILL EATING ALL THAT MAKE ME FEEL LIKE AN ADULT?



NO, YOU WILL FEEL LIKE AN ADULT WHEN YOU EAT TOO MUCH FOR LUNCH AND FEEL DROWSY ALL AFTERNOON...

...BUT IF YOU EAT TOO MUCH FOR DINNER, YOU STAY AWAKE ALL NIGHT.



WHY ARE YOU GIVING ME THAT SLY LOOK?

JUST WONDERING WHEN YOU WERE GOING TO ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT DAY IT IS?



YOU KNOW, AS YOU GET OLDER, LIFE HAS A WAY OF MAKING YOU REALIZE THE IMPORTANT THINGS.



OR IT MAKES YOU REALIZE HOW MUCH NONSENSE YOU'VE WASTED PRECIOUS TIME ON.



YOU MEAN LIKE WISING A BIRTHDAY TO A BUNCH OF PEOPLE YOU HAVE NEVER EVEN MET IN PERSON?



I'M NOT QUITE THAT CYNICAL... I WILL STILL GLADLY ACCEPT A PRESENT.

IT MAY BE A WHILE... I HID IT, AND NOW CAN'T REMEMBER WHERE IT IS.



HAS ANYONE ELSE NOTICED WE HAVE NOT AGED IN THE PAST 7 YEARS... ISN'T THAT JUST A LITTLE CREEPY?



THE LATEST DESPATCH FROM SCOTT AND BURT INDICATE THEY HAVE HELD SEVERAL MEMORIALS THIS YEAR.



WHAT IS DONE AT A MEMORIAL?

PEOPLE PAY TRIBUTE TO THE PERSON WHO IS NO LONGER WITH THEM.



THEY PAY MONEY LIKE THE ROMANS DID?

WRONG TYPE OF TRIBUTE.



THIS TYPE OF TRIBUTE IS WHERE PEOPLE SAY VERY NICE THINGS ABOUT THE PERSON WHO HAS PASSED ON... ESPECIALLY WHAT THE DECEASED MEANT TO THEM.



IF THEY MEANT SO MUCH, WHY DIDN'T THE
PEOPLE SAY VERY NICE THINGS ABOUT
THEM WHEN THEY WERE STILL ALIVE?



YOU KNOW STAMFORD, SOME DAYS YOU ARE
THE WISEST LAD AT THIS INSTITUTION.

AND SWEETEST...



WAIT, DID YOU JUST PAY TRIBUTE TO ME...
DID I DIE? IF SO, I HAVE BEEN IN SCHOOL
ALL DAY... THIS MUST NOT BE HEAVEN, BUT
THE PLACE I AM NOT ALLOWED TO MENTION.

THEN, OTHER
DAYS...



"NOW THAT I DO KNOW IT"

"I shall do my best to forget it" [STUD]

Talk about embarrassing...

Last Sunday was one of the weeks when our fortnightly feature **Baker Street Elementary**, courtesy of our friends Joe Fay and Steve & Rusty Mason from The Crew of the Barque Lone Star was to run.

And thanks to all of the activity bustling around the BSI Weekend, we dropped the ball. Whether because of being overwhelmed with seeing all of the online updates or from traveling, we just forgot about it. Which seems entirely on-brand for today's comic.

When we think about all of the things Sherlock Holmes had to keep in his mind and the multiple monographs he seemed to have at the ready (much like Adam West's Batman had the can of Bat Shark-Repellent spray handy that one time a shark froze to his leg...), it's astounding that his "little brain-attic" seemed to be organized and prepped for just the right moment.

Even ~~Conan Doyle~~ Watson seemed to have difficulty remembering dates. He placed "Wisteria Lodge" in 1892, when Holmes was in the second year of his hiatus. And the ultimate fumbling of dates: not between stories, but within one. When Jabez Wilson visited Baker Street in "The Red-Headed League" and shared the origins of his strange tale, he noted "April 27, 1890, just two months ago."

And yet, when he returned a little while later, he showed Holmes and Watson this:

He held up a piece of white cardboard about the size of a sheet of note-paper. It read in this fashion:

The Red-headed League
is
Dissolved
October 9, 1890.

That is one long case. Perhaps that untested memory got its start at **Baker Street Elementary**...

[We'll be back next week, with our regularly scheduled programming.]

I CAN'T BELIEVE I FORGOT WE WERE HAVING A MAJOR HISTORY TEST TODAY.



YOU SEEM TO BE VERY FORGETFUL ON DATES AND NAMES.

IT RUNS IN MY
FAMILY.....
..... HOLMES.



MASTER WATSON, MAY I SUGGEST YOU GO TO THE LIBRARY AND CHECK OUT A BOOK ON MEMORY IMPROVEMENT.



I DID... I BELIEVE IT'S NOW 5 WEEKS OVERDUE.



I READ WE ONLY RETAIN 10% OF WHAT WE LEARN... ANY CHANCE, MA'AM, YOU COULD JUST TEACH US THAT 10%, AND SKIP THE PARTS WE WON'T REMEMBER ANYWAY?



IF I FOLLOW MY DREAM OF BEING AN AUTHOR, DATES AND OTHER TRIVIAL FACTS JUST WON'T BE THAT IMPORTANT IN MY STORIES.



OF COURSE, THAT IS HOW YOU
LEARN, BY CONSTANTLY
SEEKING OUT THE ANSWERS
TO YOUR QUESTIONS.



WHY ARE YOU AN ART TEACHER? COULDN'T YOU
DO MUCH BETTER FINANCIALLY IF YOU SOLD
YOUR ARTWORK OUT IN THE REAL WORLD?



THAT'S THE EARLIEST SHE HAS EVER LEFT CLASS.

I THINK I WILL PRACTICE
MY STICK DRAWING.



"THE MOTTO OF THE FIRM"

"We can but try" [CREE]

Sherlock Holmes was fortunate to have John H. Watson, M.D. as his helpmate. Time and again, Holmes put the good doctor into questionable circumstances, and Watson gave it his best effort (sometimes after Holmes had to overcome Watson's initial reluctance).

In "The Bruce-Partington Plans," we find Holmes considering breaking and entering the household of the suspect, and Watson initially expressing some trepidation before coming around:

"I don't like it, Holmes."

"My dear fellow, you shall keep watch in the street. I'll do the criminal part. It's not a time to stick at trifles. Think of Mycroft's note, of the Admiralty, the Cabinet, the exalted person who waits for news. We are bound to go."

My answer was to rise from the table.

"You are right, Holmes. We are bound to go."

He sprang up and shook me by the hand.

"I knew you would not shrink at the last."

And when Sherlock Holmes announced his plans to burgle Charles Augustus Milverton's household, Watson resolutely demanded to join him:

"Well, I don't like it; but I suppose it must be," said I. "When do we start?"

"You are not coming."

"Then you are not going," said I. "I give you my word of honour—and I never broke it in my life—that I will take a cab straight to the police-station and give you away unless you let me share this adventure with you."

"You can't help me."

"How do you know that? You can't tell what may happen. Anyway, my resolution is taken. Other people beside you have self-respect and even reputations."

Even when pressed for service with questionable motives in "The Creeping Man," Watson's can-do attitude came through, and Holmes immediately appreciated the combination of industriousness and motivation:

"I think, Watson, that we can catch the professor just before lunch. He lectures at eleven and should have an interval at home."

"What possible excuse have we for calling?"

Holmes glanced at his notebook.

"There was a period of excitement upon August 26th. We will assume that he is a little hazy as to what he does at such times. If we insist that we are there by appointment I think he will hardly venture to contradict us. Have you the effrontery necessary to put it through?"

"We can but try."

"Excellent, Watson! Compound of the Busy Bee and Excelsior. We can but try—the motto of the firm."

"We can but try." Good old Watson!

Meanwhile, the boys at Baker Street Elementary are giving it their best shot...

WELL, AT LEAST I PASSED...
WHAT ABOUT YOU, HOLMES?

I RECEIVED A 'O'... I WAS
BUSY SOLVING A CASE.



MA'AM... A 'O' WILL UNFAIRLY AFFECT MY TERM
AVERAGE... I BELIEVE A SIMPLE FAILING
GRADE WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE, AND NOT
DESTROY MY ENTIRE GRADE.

THIS SHOULD BE INTERESTING.

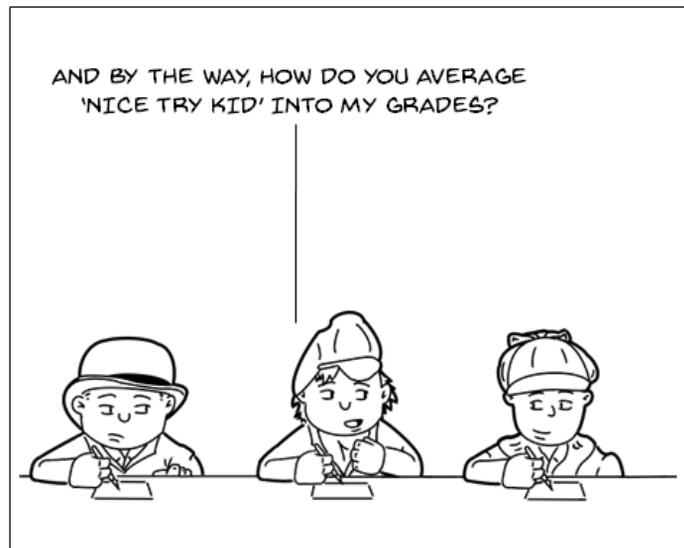
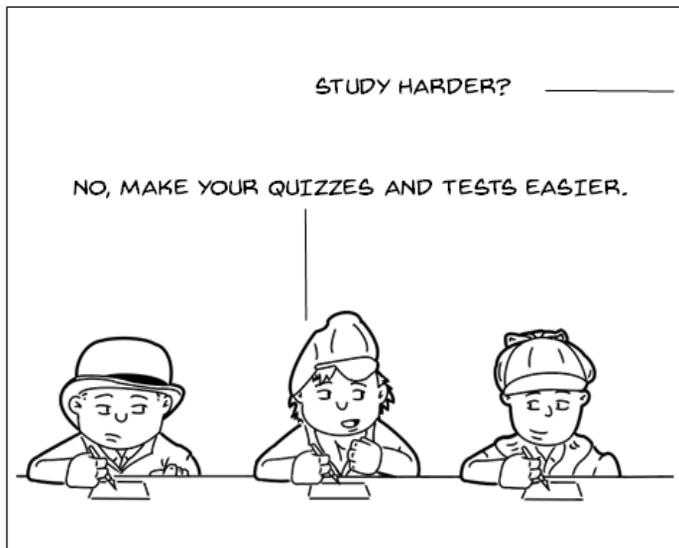
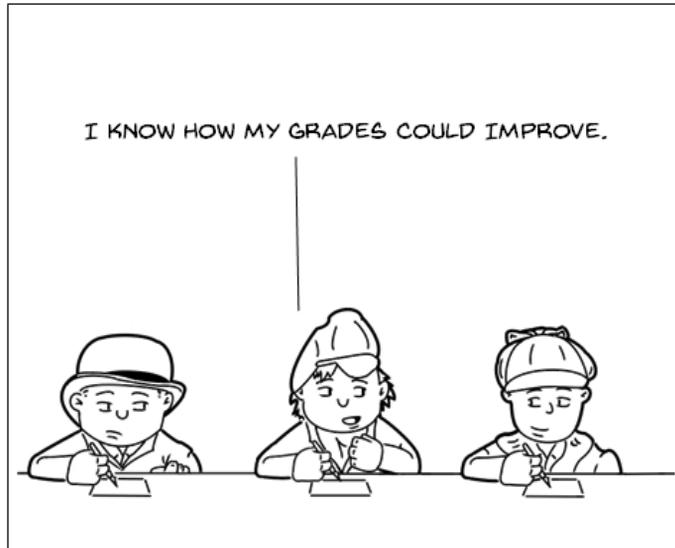


SO, SHERLOCK TURNS IN NOTHING AND WILL GET
THE SAME GRADE I RECEIVED FOR SUBMITTING
A PAPER? THAT DOESN'T SEEM FAIR.



MASTER STAMFORD, YOU ARE
ONE OF MY VERY SPECIAL
STUDENTS... BUT HONESTLY, YOU
SOMETIMES MIGHT GET A
BETTER GRADE BY NOT
SUBMITTING ANYTHING.





ARE WE PLAYING 'COWBOYS AND INDIANS' TODAY?



NO, GREGSON AND LESTRADE WANT TO PLAY 'COPS AND ROBBERS'... GUESS WHICH THEY WANT TO BE AGAIN?



UHHH... STAMFORD, LIKE SO MANY OTHERS THESE DAYS, I DO NOT BELIEVE YOU HAVE COMPLETELY GRASPED THE CONCEPT OF WEARING A MASK EFFECTIVELY.



DIDN'T YOU SAY, 'THEY WOULD NOT SHOOT UNTIL THEY SEE THE WHITES OF MY EYES?' I'LL BE THE LAST ONE STANDING, IF I CAN JUST FIND THE SIDEWALK AGAIN.



"A GOOD EGG"
 "two empty egg-shells" [RETI]

We've talked about Humpty Dumpty in these parts previously, with the connection between annotated editions.

This time around, let's focus on the edible aspects of the ovicular.

To put it plainly, Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson frequently enjoyed eggs for breakfast. In The Sign of Four, we find them sitting down to ham and eggs:

"When I came down to our room I found the breakfast laid and Holmes pouring out the coffee."

"Here it is," said he, laughing, and pointing to an open newspaper.

"The energetic Jones and the ubiquitous reporter have fixed it up between them. But you have had enough of the case. Better have your ham and eggs first."

When Watson brought Victor Hatherley to Baker Street in "The Engineer's Thumb," Holmes welcomed them with and joined them for breakfast:

"Sherlock Holmes was, as I expected, lounging about his sitting-room in his dressing-gown, reading the agony column of *The Times* and smoking his before-breakfast pipe, which was composed of all the plugs and dottles left from his smokes of the day before, all carefully dried and collected on the corner of the mantelpiece. He received us in his quietly genial fashion, ordered fresh rashers and eggs, and joined us in a hearty meal."

Of course, that famous scene at the conclusion of "The Naval Treaty" found Mrs. Hudson rising to the occasion with curried chicken, ham and eggs.

"Good! What are you going to take, Mr. Phelps—curried fowl or eggs, or will you help yourself?"...

Sherlock Holmes swallowed a cup of coffee, and turned his attention to the ham and eggs.

Breakfast was interrupted by the capture of Patrick Cairns in "Black Peter":

"I must really apologize, Hopkins," said Sherlock Holmes; "I fear that the scrambled eggs are cold. However, you will enjoy the rest of your breakfast all the better, will you not, for the thought that you have brought your case to a triumphant conclusion."

And what should have been soft-boiled eggs in "The Problem of Thor Bridge" became another offering, due to an absent-minded cook:

"There is little to share, but we may discuss it when you have consumed the two hard-boiled eggs with which our new cook has favoured us. Their condition may not be unconnected with the copy of the *Family Herald* which I observed yesterday upon the hall-table. Even so trivial a matter as cooking an egg demands an attention which is conscious of the passage of time and incompatible with the love romance in that excellent periodical."

Meanwhile, the boys at **Baker Street Elementary** are considering the implications of a large fractured egg...

...COULDN'T PUT HUMPTY
TOGETHER AGAIN.



MA'AM... I DO HAVE ONE
QUESTION ON OUR LESSON TODAY.

YOUR QUESTIONS ARE VERY
SIMILAR TO ARGUMENTS.



COULD HUMPTY DUMPTY SUE THE KING'S
MEN FOR MEDICAL MALPRACTICE?

CAN'T CRY OVER SPILLED MILK.



OR POSSIBLY GET A JUDGEMENT AGAINST THE
KINGDOM FOR BUILDING A DEFECTIVE WALL?



I WONDER HOW BIG AN OMELETTE HUMPTY MADE?

AND YOU TWO WONDER
WHY I STICK TO MATH
AND SCIENCES?



SEEMS WE WERE LEFT WITH A
RHYME, BUT NO REASON.

STAMFORD, CAN YOU
EXPLAIN HOW YOU BROKE
THE PENCIL SHARPENER? _____



I DIDN'T DO IT!!



EVERYONE IN THE CLASS
SAW YOU DO IT... CAN YOU
PLEASE TRY TO BE A
LITTLE MORE TRUTHFUL? _____



IT WAS LIKE THAT WHEN I FOUND IT?



I USED IT 10 MINUTES AGO, AND IT
WORKED JUST FINE... ALL I WANT TO
HEAR IS THE HONEST TRUTH.



IT'S NOT MY FAULT?



WHAT SHE WANTS TO HEAR AND THE 'HONEST
TRUTH' ARE MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE.

STAMFORD, JUST TELL HER ALL
YOUR MISTRUTHS ARE TRUE.



"THE PLANE TRUTH" "thickly strewn with trees" [STUD]

Generally speaking, trees are background decorations—in model train setups, satellite imagery, and storytelling. It is rare that a tree becomes a central focus.

Of course, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was a master storyteller, and in many cases, the trees mattered a great deal to him in setting a scene.

For example, we vividly remember the yew alley at Baskerville Hall, where Sir Charles awaited a rendezvous but fled for his life on tiptoes down the alley.

But do you recall where we might find "a lime-lined avenue" leading up to a building?

It's a small detail, but one that helps paint a picture in our minds of the Trevor estate in Donnithorpe in "The Gloria Scott."

The oak and the elm play an essential part in "The Musgrave Ritual," as they help Brunton (and later Holmes) map out the location hinted at in the ritual.

" 'Where was the sun?'

" 'Over the oak.'

" 'Where was the shadow?'

" 'Under the elm.'

In fact, we get an entire story named for a tree in the canon: "The Copper Beeches" takes us to Winchester, to Jephro Rucastle's "dearest old country-house," where a "clump of copper beeches immediately in front of the hall door has given its name to the place."

And lest we forget, Watson had a view out his own window, from which he was able to observe "the solitary plane tree which graces the yard behind our house."

Haven't heard of a plane tree? It's more commonly known as a buttonwood or sycamore in the United States. The boys at **Baker Street Elementary** probably prefer learning about this kind of tree rather than trigonometry...

[We'll see ourselves out.]

MY FATHER PLANTED SOME YOUNG TREES
IN OUR BACKYARD THIS WEEKEND.



BUT I CANNOT FIGURE OUT WHY HE
TIED THEM ALL TO THE GROUND?



EASY... WHEN THEY ARE THAT YOUNG,
THEY JUST CAN'T STAND STILL...

IF YOU DON'T TIE THEM DOWN,
THEY WOULD JUMP OUT AND
CHASE YOU ALL NIGHT LONG.



SO MUCH FOR ASKING EACH OF YOU
TO COMPLETE A LEAF COLLECTION!!
THERE ARE TIMES I WONDER WHY I
EVEN TRY TO TEACH STAMFORD!!



THEY PAY YOU.

IT'S A CHALLENGE YOU
JUST CAN'T PASS UP.



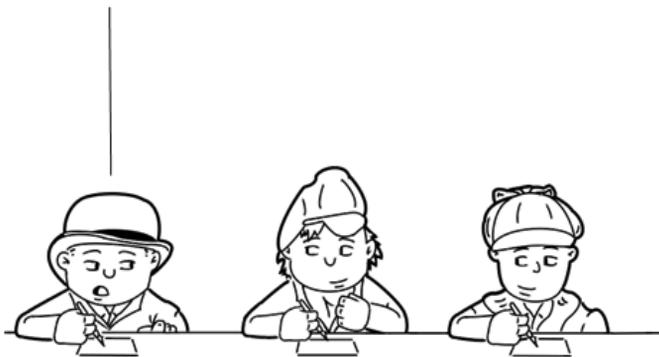
SHE MAY RACE THE TWO OF YOU TO
THE HEADMASTER'S OFFICE TODAY!



MASTER WATSON, WOULD YOU LIKE TO EXPLAIN WHY YOU DID SO BAD ON THE LAST QUIZ?



I SEEM TO BE HAVING LOTS OF PERSONAL PROBLEMS RIGHT NOW.



ARE YOU SAYING YOU NEVER WERE AN ADOLESCENT, MA'AM?



LET ME EXPLAIN TO YOU HOW THE STAGES OF LIFE WORK... AT YOUR AGE, YOU WISH YOU COULD HAVE FUN EVERY DAY...



OF COURSE I WAS... JUST NOT DURING CLASSTIME.

...WHEN YOU GO TO UNIVERSITY, YOU REALIZE YOU CAN HAVE FUN EVERY DAY...



...WHEN YOU REACH MY AGE, YOU JUST WISH OTHERS WOULD QUIT ASKING YOU TO HAVE FUN WITH THEM.



"A TIDY BUSINESS"

"a strong natural turn for this sort of thing" [CHAS]

In The Hound of the Baskervilles, Watson tells us that Sherlock Holmes had a "cat-like love of personal cleanliness."

Could that penchant for tidiness have overlapped into his professional dealings? It seems most likely.

Take this commentary from "The Adventure of the Red Circle":

"Why should you go further in it? What have you to gain from it?"

"What, indeed? It is art for art's sake, Watson. I suppose when you doctored you found yourself studying cases without thought of a fee?"

"For my education, Holmes."

"Education never ends, Watson. It is a series of lessons with the greatest for the last. This is an instructive case. There is neither money nor credit in it, and yet one would wish to tidy it up. When dusk comes we should find ourselves one stage advanced in our investigation."

How fascinating that Holmes couldn't stand to allow a little conundrum like this stand without busying himself with it.

Certainly, consistent with his need to have things just so.

Of course, when we find the mention of Watson finding "himself once more in the untidy room of the first floor of Baker Street," in "The Mazarin Stone," it's a clear indication that the story was written by an imposter.

Meanwhile, it seems that John is learning a little something about psychology at **Baker Street Elementary**...

WHAT DID YOU DO AT YOUR PARENT'S HOUSE THIS WEEKEND?

I TRIED A NEW MIND TRICK ON THEM.



WHAT DID YOU DO?

MY MOTHER WOULD NOT LET ME PLAY OUTSIDE UNTIL I CLEANED MY ROOM.



SUCH TORTURE!!

IT TOOK ME ALL WEEKEND, SO I NEVER WAS ABLE TO GO OUTSIDE.



I TOLD MY PARENTS THOUGH I WAS DEPRIVED OF ONE OF THE BASIC RIGHTS OF A CHILD, THE IMPORTANT THING WAS THEY WERE HAPPY.



MOM RESPONDED, 'OF COURSE WE ARE HAPPY... WE WANTED YOUR ROOM CLEAN, WHICH IT NOW IS'.



OBVIOUSLY, MY 'GUILT TRIP' TECHNIQUE NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT.

ACTUALLY, MOMS INVENTED THE TECHNIQUE... YOU WERE UP AGAINST A MASTER.



MASTER STAMFORD, MAY I WISH YOU A HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY.



AS I... I HOPE WE HAVE NO SNAKES TO CHASE AWAY TODAY.



IGNATIUS, IF I UNDERSTAND IT CORRECTLY, I MAY PINCH YOU WITHOUT IMPUNITY IF YOU ARE NOT WEARING AN ITEM OF GREEN.



YOU ARE CORRECT... HOWEVER, IF I HAPPEN TO BE WEARING SOMETHING OF GREEN, I AM ENTITLED TO PUNCH YOU AS HARD AS I CAN 10 TIMES.



MASTER PETER, IF I UNDERSTAND IT CORRECTLY, I MAY PINCH YOU WITHOUT IMPUNITY IF YOU ARE NOT WEARING AN ITEM OF GREEN.



"THE ODD COUPLE"

"someone to share the rooms and the expenses" [STUD]

Here's an interesting thought experiment. We know that financial straits conspired to bring Sherlock Holmes and John H. Watson together to share a suite of rooms in Baker Street.

Watson recognized that he was outspending his military pension in the opening scenes of A Study in Scarlet:

"There I stayed for some time at a private hotel in the Strand, leading a comfortless, meaningless existence, and spending such money as I had, considerably more freely than I ought. So alarming did the state of my finances become, that I soon realized that I must either leave the metropolis and rusticate somewhere in the country, or that I must make a complete alteration in my style of living. Choosing the latter alternative, I began by making up my mind to leave the hotel, and to take up my quarters in some less pretentious and less expensive domicile."

And upon bumping into his old colleague Stamford, uttered these immortal words:

"Looking for lodgings," I answered. "Trying to solve the problem as to whether it is possible to get comfortable rooms at a reasonable price."

It seems that it was not a unique sentiment, however. Stamford conveyed the phrase

"[Y]ou are the second man to-day that has used that expression to me."

The first, of course, was Sherlock Holmes. But it leads us to wonder: would Watson have lived with Holmes—or put up with him, rather—had the two not been tied together by way of economic necessity?

When Stamford introduced the two, Holmes only outlined three "shortcomings" to Watson: smoking, chemical experiments, and stretches of taciturn behavior. And violin-playing, if that can be considered a shortcoming. That's not much to object to.

Over time, Watson would discover that Holmes had a drug habit, stayed up all hours, associated with dangerous criminals, was the victim of assaults, arson, and attempted murder, and had an outsized ego.

Had Holmes been more forthright with Watson about his "shortcomings," perhaps even Watson's tight finances wouldn't have caused him to agree to a cohabitation agreement. We have a difficult time seeing these two becoming fast friends outside of that initial incentive.

And Baker Street Elementary is where the boys dream of a brighter future...

HAVE YOU TWO CONSIDERED WHO YOU WILL LIVE WITH WHEN YOU GET OLDER?



I ASSUME MY WIFE (OR WIVES)...

AS MY CHRONICLER, DO YOU NOT THINK WE SHOULD SHARE ROOMS?



OF COURSE, YOU WOULD HAVE TO PUT WITH MY CHEMICAL EXPERIMENTS AND MY SULKY PERIODS.



PROBABLY 90% OF ADULTS SMOKE, SO I DOUBT THE TOBACCO WILL BOTHER ME... WILL YOUR VIOLIN PLAYING IMPROVE BY THEN?



NO PROMISES... I ASSUME YOU WILL HAVE MORE CONSISTENT HOURS, GETTING UP ON TIME... AND NO DOGS ALLOWED.



I DO LIKE TO HAVE THINGS IN ORDER, SO I CANNOT TOLERATE A MESSY ROOM.



YOU TWO WON'T LAST A WEEK TOGETHER.



WHAT IS WRONG WITH OUR STAMFORD?

HE RECEIVED HIS BOOSTER SHOT
TODAY FOR 'CUDIES'... IT WAS
ADMINISTERED ON THE PLAYGROUND.



THERE IS NO DEFINITIVE TEST FOR 'CUDIES',
SO IT IS BETTER 'SAFE' THAN 'SORRY'.

YOU GUYS ARE SO RIDICULOUS.



THE MAIN SYMPTOM OF THE ILLNESS IS
'SKEPTICISM'... YOU CAN ALWAYS SPOT A
'CARRIER' FROM THAT, LIKE YOU.

'CUDIES'
AREN'T REAL!!!

MY DIAGNOSIS
IS CONFIRMED.



WHAT CONSTITUTES A BOOSTER SHOT?

UMMM... I HIT THE PATIENT
ON THE ARM 3 TIMES.



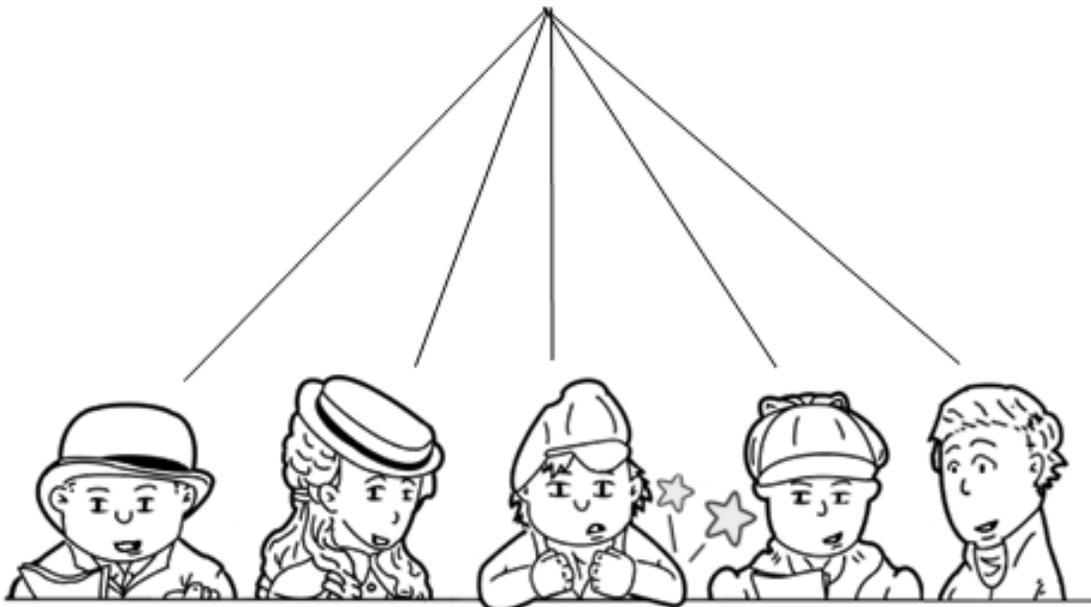
I WISH ONE OF THE YOUNG'UNS ON THE
PLAYGROUND COULD ADMINISTER THE
SHOT... MIGHT NOT HURT SO MUCH.



MY FATHER HAD AN INTERESTING THOUGHT
ABOUT THE PAST 2 YEARS... HE STATED, "OF
ALL THE THINGS I LEARNED IN PRIMARY
SCHOOL, TRYING TO AVOID 'CUDIES' WAS
THE LAST ONE I EXPECTED TO USE.



WE HOPE YOU STAY SAFE AND WELL!!!



"AGONY"

"where all gossip is welcome" [VALL]

Sherlock Holmes knew that he could clean up when he paid attention to those dishing dirt.

The "The Red Circle," Holmes expresses his disdain for such material, but acknowledged its utility:

He took down the great book in which, day by day, he filed the agony columns of the various London journals. "Dear me!" said he, turning over the pages, "what a chorus of groans, cries, and bleatings! What a rag-bag of singular happenings! But surely the most valuable hunting-ground that ever was given to a student of the unusual!"

In "The Three Garridebs," Holmes recommended that John Garrideb use such a resource for finding his quarry:

"I should have thought, sir, that your obvious way was to advertise in the agony columns of the papers."

"I have done that, Mr. Holmes. No replies."

Of course, Holmes scanned the columns daily, so if something so unusual were to appear, he would have certainly seen it and added it to his clippings.

Nor was Holmes averse to personal communication to achieve his goals. In "The Solitary Cyclist," he chided Watson for missing an obvious opportunity to gather intelligence:

"What should I have done?" I cried, with some heat.

"Gone to the nearest public-house. That is the centre of country gossip. They would have told you every name, from the master to the scullery-maid."

And Silas Brown, the trainer at the Mapleton stables in "Silver Blaze" knew exactly how information vital to races could be conveyed:

As Sherlock Holmes replaced the half-crown which he had drawn from his pocket, a fierce-looking elderly man strode out from the gate with a hunting-crop swinging in his hand.

"What's this, Dawson!" he cried. "No gossiping! Go about your business!"

At Baker Street Elementary, there are all kinds of dirt available on the playground...

I CANNOT BELIEVE HOW THE DISCUSSIONS
ON THE PLAYGROUND HAVE DEVOLVED.



THERE IS NOT THOUGHTFUL DISCUSSIONS... NO
GOOD EXAMPLES, NOT ONE REDEEMING
VALUE... IT'S PRETTY MUCH ALL RUMOURS,
ENUENDOS, AND PETTY GRIPING.



THEN WHY DO YOU LISTEN
TO SUCH THINGS? _____



FOR ALL THE REASONS I JUST LISTED.



I WAS ABLE TO COLLECT OVER 30 EASTER EGGS YESTERDAY. HOW DID YOU TWO DO?



I STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHY A BUNNY DELIVERS THE EGGS... SHOULDN'T A CHICKEN HAVE THE JOB?



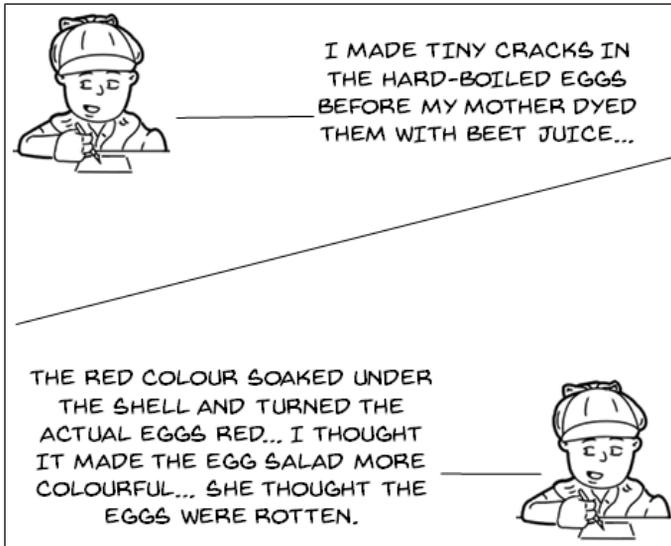
THE CHICKEN COULDN'T CROSS THE ROAD, SO HE DELEGATED THE JOB TO A RABBIT.



I FOUND OUT MY MOTHER DOES NOT APPRECIATE MY SENSE OF HUMOUR.

THIS SHOULD BE GOOD.



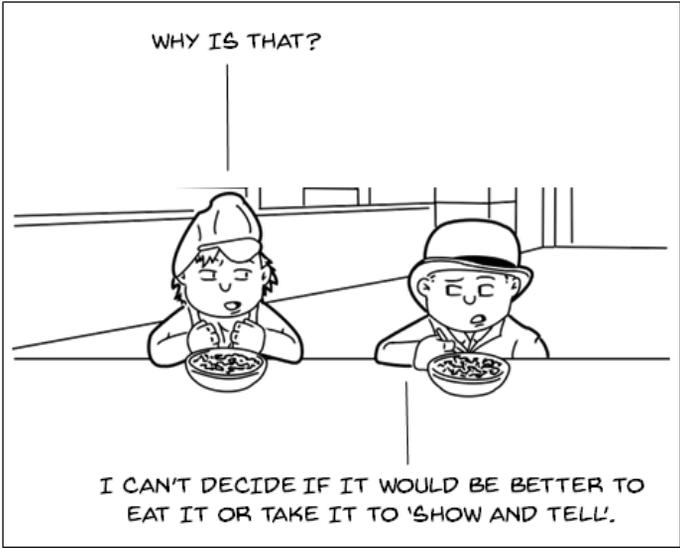
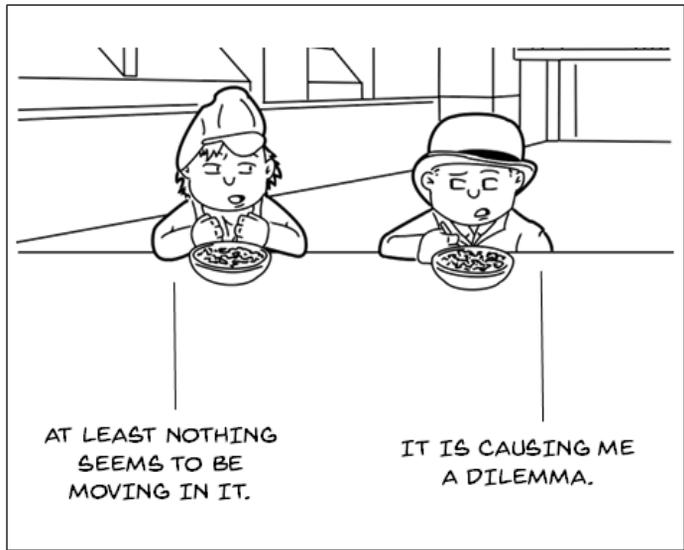


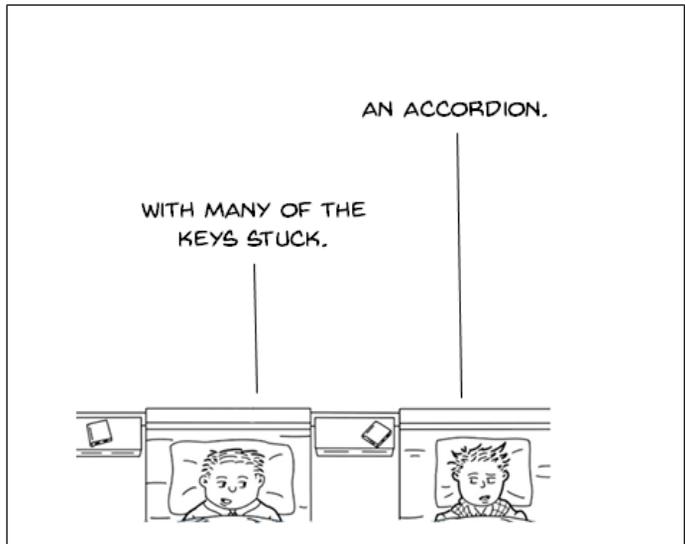
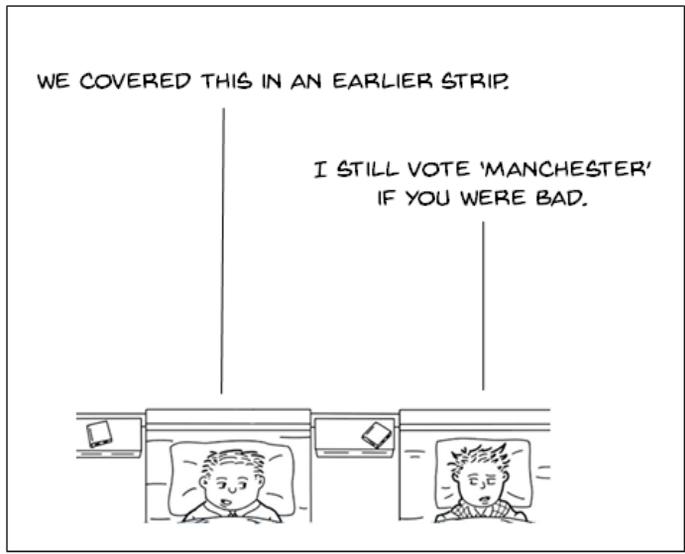
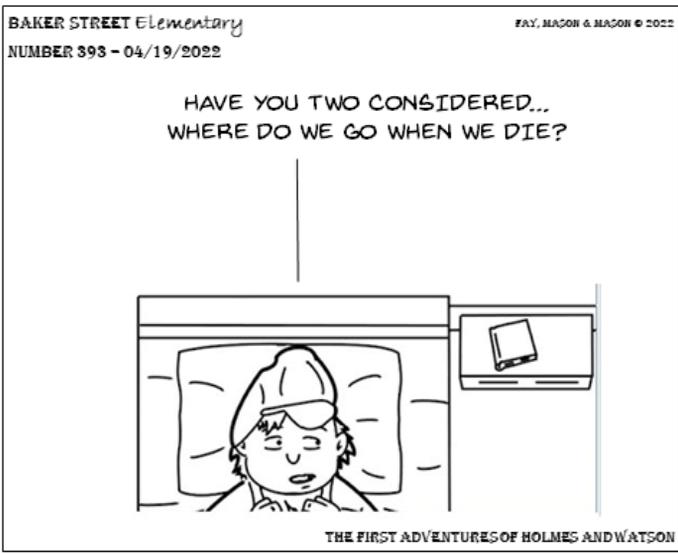
WHAT DOES THE DECORATED EASTER EGG REPRESENT?



IN MY HOUSEHOLD, A VERY FESTIVE OMELETTE.







"E - I - E - I - O"
"small farmers, well-known" [SIGN]

When we think of Sherlock Holmes, we immediately conjure up images of Victorian London, a city swathed in fog, with citizens bustling about on streets lit by gas-lamp. The stories evoke city life.

And yet, we find a few instances of farm life that creeps into the tales from time to time.

Consider the very first time the public met Holmes in A Study in Scarlet: we're taken to a place very different from London: the Great Alkalai plain and eventually to Utah, where John Ferrier sets up as...a farmer. He eventually became "the richest of the farmers," making his daughter Lucy an attractive object for many a suitor.

Next, we find Jonathan Small recounting his tale in The Sign of Four, expressing how different he was from his family:

"They were all steady, chapel-going folk, small farmers, well known and respected over the country-side, while I was always a bit of a rover."

It isn't until we reach stories in The Return of Sherlock Holmes that we encounter farmers again. In "The Dancing Men," we discover that Norfolk farmers are something of a Victorian Airbnb: "And the farmers take in lodgers."

And then there are the few "moor farmers" who rear sheep and cattle in "The Priory School," and "two moorland farmers" in The Hound of the Baskervilles.

Anyone who's familiar with farming — at least the agricultural type — has heard of bushels and pecks as a form of volumetric measurement. However, we don't seem to encounter a single instance of those in the Canon, even from young Francis Prosper, the greengrocer in "The Beryl Coronet."

The Baker Street Irregulars do have a peck, though: Andrew J. Peck ("Inspector Baynes, Surrey Constabulary"), who made a very different measurement in his scholarship: a chronology of the 60 stories, published together with Les Klinger, BSI ("The Abbey Grange"), titled The Date Being—? A Compendium of Chronological Data.

Meanwhile, the boys at **Baker Street Elementary**, try to wrap their heads around mathematical measurements...

QUESTION # 1... A BUSHEL IS EQUAL TO
4 PECKS... WHAT THE HECK IS A PECK?



IT'S A QUICK KISS ON THE LIPS... I SEE MY
MOTHER GIVING MY FATHER A PECK ALL THE TIME.

WELL, MATHEMATICS IS
OUT AS A CAREER CHOICE.



YOU KNOW, I DID INFINITELY BETTER ON
THE LAST MATH TEST THAN I EXPECTED.



UHHH... HOW IS THAT
POSSIBLE? YOU STILL FAILED.



I EXPECTED A ZERO... ANYTHING
HIGHER IS INFINITELY BETTER.



SO, LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT...
FRANKENSTEIN WAS THE NAME OF THE
DOCTOR, NOT THE MONSTER ITSELF?



I ASSUME WHEN FRANKENSTEIN WAS YOUNGER,
HE HAD NO PROBLEM MAKING NEW FRIENDS.

DRUM ROLL INSERTED HERE.



I WONDER WHY THE DOCTOR NEVER
MADE A SECOND MONSTER?



HE JUST DIDN'T HAVE THE GUTS FOR IT.



'GOING TO MEET YOUR MAKER' IS A
EUPHEMISM FOR DYING... WHEN THE MONSTER
WAS KILLED, DID HE GO BACK TO VICTOR?



I DON'T THINK THE THREE
OF YOU ARE TAKING THIS
NOVEL VERY SERIOUSLY.



I ASSUME THE DOCTOR HAD A
'NO RETURN POLICY'.

396 - 05-09-2022

"LA- Z - BOY"**"Lazy Devil" [STUD]**

Quick, think of a word to describe Sherlock Holmes.

Some words that likely came to your mind are: detective, intelligent, clever, energetic, smoker, consultant, high-strung, lazy.

Wait — lazy?

Yes, lazy.

Holmes himself admits to Watson in *A Study in Scarlet* that he can be incurably lazy:

"I'm not sure about whether I shall go. I am the most incurably lazy devil that ever stood in shoe leather—that is, when the fit is on me, for I can be spry enough at times."

And there we have the wonderful dichotomy of Holmes's character that makes him both endearing and infuriating — a contradiction of personality. The bringer of justice (while breaking laws), the defender of British government (but a proponent of the little guy), and a natural athlete (who seldom took exercise for its own sake).

So is it any surprise that Sherlock Holmes would call himself lazy?

Of course, he's not only lazy; he's lazy at times. Even Watson understood that, as this dialog from *The Sign of Four* indicates:

"Yes, the reaction is already upon me. I shall be as limp as a rag for a week."

"Strange," said I, "how terms of what in another man I should call laziness alternate with your fits of splendid energy and vigor."

"Yes," he answered, "there are in me the makings of a very fine loafer and also of a pretty spry sort of fellow. I often think of those lines of old Goethe,—

Schade, daß die Natur nur einen Mensch aus Dir schuf, Denn zum würdigen Mann war und zum Schelmen der Stoff.

["Alas, that Nature made only one man of you, when there was material enough for a good man and a rogue."]

Perhaps Watson hoped that the shock value of Holmes describing himself as lazy took the focus off of he, the narrator.

Recall that during that first meeting, it was Watson who first described himself as lazy:

"I keep a bull pup," I said, "and I object to rows because my nerves are shaken, and I get up at all sorts of ungodly hours, and I am extremely lazy. I have another set of vices when I'm well, but those are the principal ones at present." [Emphasis ours - Ed.]

Of course, this could have been a self-effacing or overly self-critical assessment from a former Army doctor, still recovering from his wounds. An extremely lazy individual wouldn't take up private practice, nor would he put pen to paper to immortalize the greatest detective who ever lived.

Meanwhile, we detect more than a bit of laziness at **Baker Street Elementary...**

ONCE AGAIN, I GOT IN TROUBLE
TODAY FOR NO REASON.



STAMFORD, WHY ON
EARTH DID YOU TURN
IN AN ESSAY WITH
ONLY 12 WORDS?



NO REASON.



SHERLOCK, YOU'RE SMART... I COULD DO SO
MUCH BETTER IN SCHOOL IF YOU WOULD
SIMPLY DO MY HOMEWORK FOR ME... WE
COULD EVEN CHARGE IF YOU DID OTHER
STUDENT'S HOMEWORK.



STAMFORD, THAT IS WRONG ON SO MANY LEVELS.



OH SURE! TOSS MORALITY IN MY
FACE, SIMPLY BECAUSE YOU'RE TOO
LAZY TO DO A LITTLE EXTRA WORK.



I ACUTALLY HAVE TO GIVE
HIM CREDIT FOR TRYING.

HE DEFINITELY COULD HAVE
A CAREER IN POLITICS.



HOW LONG DO YOU SUPPOSED WE WILL LIVE?



I DON'T KNOW... HOLMES, DO YOU HAVE ANY GUESSES?

I WOULD HAZARD APPROXIMATELY 80-85 YEARS, WITH A GOOD BREEZE BEHIND YOU.



AT WHAT POINT SHOULD WE START TAKING CARE OF OURSELVES TO REACH THAT AGE?



"SOMETIMES OLD AGE JUST SHOWS UP ON HIS OWN..."

I BELIEVE THERE IS AN ADAGE, "WISDOM DOES NOT ALWAYS COME WITH OLD AGE."



MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER, WHO IS 88, HAS AN INTERESTING PHILOSOPHY... 'TO STAY HEALTHY, DON'T GO TO THE DOCTOR... THEN HE CAN'T FIND ANYTHING WRONG WITH YOU.'



MY GRANDMOTHER TOLD ME, 'SOMEDAY I WILL BE OLD ENOUGH TO DO ANYTHING I LIKE... BUT BY THEN, I'LL BE TOO TIRED TO LIKE ANYTHING.'



"THEY SAY IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY"

"a good man of good birth and excellent education" [FINA]

Today marks what would have been the 163rd birthday of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

And it's a wonderful time to enjoy the creations of Conan Doyle — not just Sherlock Holmes, but beyond. A number of energetic and enterprising individuals have developed outlets for Conan Doyle enthusiasts to express and share their interests.

A smattering of current offerings includes:

The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Public Library, preparing to celebrate its 50th anniversary at a big event in September.

Then there's the newly-formed ACD Society, with its newsletter, awards and projects, including "The Terror of Blue John Gap" annotated edition, among other things. The site, created and updated by Ross Davies, is a great jumping-off point for all things about Conan Doyle and contains a definitive list of ACD-centric links and sites.

One of the great rabbit holes to explore is the Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia, with over 7,000 pages of wonderful history, descriptions, illustrations, and even full texts of some short stories.

There's even a podcast dedicated to Conan Doyle: *Doings of Doyle*, hosted by Mark Jones and Paul M. Chapman.

Speaking of podcasts, we've assembled a number of IHOSE episodes in which we've had Conan Doyle-centric conversations:

I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere · Arthur Conan Doyle

Meanwhile, it's time to celebrate at **Baker Street Elementary**.

SIR... I BELIEVE SOMEONE IN OUR CLASS
IS CELEBRATING A BIRTHDAY TODAY.



WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I COULDN'T
WAIT FOR MY BIRTHDAY... I WISHED
I COULD HAVE ONE EVERY DAY.



GEE... THE WAY I FEEL THESE
DAYS, THAT KID WAS AN IDIOT!



WHAT IS THE MOST RELEVANT THING YOU
HAVE LEARNED THROUGH THE YEARS?



I LEARNED GAINING WEIGHT IS WHAT
THEY MEANT BY 'GROWING' OLDER.



DO YOU THINK I AM GOING TO PASS MATH THIS SEMESTER... I AM SURE I AM FAILING.



HAVE YOU CONSIDERED A GOOD TRADE SCHOOL?



THAT'S A MEAN THING TO SAY... YOU'RE MY FRIEND... YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO REASSURE ME.

I'LL TRY THIS ONE MORE TIME... I AM SCARED I WILL FAIL OUT OF SCHOOL.



WE ASSURE YOU STAMFORD, TRADE SCHOOL IS YOUR BEST OPTION.

STAMFORD, WE'RE JUST KIDDING YOU.



WELL, I AM NOT TO BLAME... MY MOTHER SAYS MY FATHER TAUGHT ME EVERYTHING I KNOW.



JUST REMEMBER, WHEN THE TEACHER SAID NOT TO LET EDUCATION GO TO YOUR HEAD, FAILING EVERY SUBJECT IS NOT WHAT SHE MEANT.



"BAKER STREET ELEMENTARY CELEBRATES 400TH STRIP"

"my own small achievements" [HOUN]

Five years ago, *I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere* welcomed the contributions of Joe Fay, Rusty Mason, and Steve Mason, BSI ("The Fortescue Scholarship") under the banner of "**Baker Street Elementary**," a Sherlockian comic strip in the style of Charles Schultz's "Peanuts." We've been featuring one of their strips every other Sunday since then.

Over the years, we've become familiar with the younger versions of Holmes, Watson, and Stamford, as well as occasional appearances by Ignatius (Conan Doyle), Irene (Adler), William (Gillette), and others, including a couple of podcast hosts, and their antics at the school known as **Baker Street Elementary**.

They now mark their 400th strip from this delightful series that is housed in full on the website of The Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

Many comic strip writers churn out daily strips — undoubtedly a slog and a full-time job. But even to do this on a weekly basis shows dedication and creativity, and we're glad that these Sherlockians have both in addition to their knowledge of the Sherlock Holmes stories.

We thank them for their wonderful contributions to not only our site, but to the world of Sherlock Holmes. May they find a way to produce 400 more strips.

Let's reflect back on what is **Baker Street Elementary**...

WELL, TODAY IS DEFINITELY A MILESTONE IN OUR YOUNG LIVES... HARD TO BELIEVE WE HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR 400 EPISODES.



HARDER TO BELIEVE THIS IS WHAT WE LOOKED LIKE 7 YEARS AGO.



YOU TWO HAD MUCH MORE HAIR BEFORE SHERLOCK'S EXPERIMENTS BLEW UP.

WHAT WOULD EACH OF YOU SAY IS THE MORE IMPORTANT THING YOU HAVE LEARNED IN THESE 7 YEARS?



NO MATTER HOW POOR OR WELL WE DO ON OUR TESTS, WE SEEM TO BE IN THE SAME CLASS.



IN THE DINING HALL, 'FOOD' IS NOT NECESSARILY A SYNONYM FOR 'EDIBLE'.



NEVER STAND DOWNWIND FROM STAMFORD
AFTER HE HAS EATEN TOO MANY MEATBALLS.



I BELIEVE I SPEAK FOR MANY, MANY
PEOPLE WHEN I SAY HOW MUCH JOY
YOU HAVE BROUGHT TO ME IN THE
PAST 7 YEARS... THANK YOU.



OUR SINCERE APPRECIATION TO JOE FAY,
FOR HAVING THE IMAGINATION TO
BELIEVE IN US FROM THE BEGINNING.

YES, INDEED.



AND THANKS TO RUSTY MASON
FOR BRINGING US TO LIFE!



IS THERE ANY CHANCE OUR FATES
ARE ACTUALLY PREDESTINED BY
THE STARS IN THE COSMOS?



I AM SURE I DON'T KNOW.

I BELIEVE YOU WOULD
HAVE BETTER LUCK WITH
A 'TALKING BOARD'.



MAYBE THE ROMAN, NORSE, OR GREEK
GODS ARE CONTROLLING OUR LIVES?



THESE QUESTIONS ARE NOT
GOING TO HELP ME GO TO SLEEP.

STAMFORD, WHY ARE
YOU TRYING TO PAWN
OFF YOUR ACTIONS?



EASY, I COULD BLAME MY MATH TEST
TODAY ON A MINOR DEITY, AND I WOULD
HAVE MORE FUN IF SOMEONE ELSE TOOK
RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ACTIONS.



"HOW FUN"

"some fun for this cases" [STUD]

We know Sherlock Holmes enjoyed his profession. After all, he created it for himself.

He told us so in The Sign of Four:

"I crave for mental exaltation. That is why I have chosen my own particular profession,—or rather created it, for I am the only one in the world."

But what did Holmes do when he wasn't exercising his brain, which he said rebelled at stagnation and needed to be "connected up with the work for which it was built"?

That is, what did Sherlock Holmes do for fun?

He enjoyed music, for one. At the conclusion of The Hound of the Baskervilles, he and Watson headed off to the opera:

"And now, my dear Watson, we have had some weeks of severe work, and for one evening, I think, we may turn our thoughts into more pleasant channels. I have a box for 'Les Huguenots.' Have you heard the De Reszkes?"

Of course, music helped Holmes process his thinking as well. We saw it in "The Red-Headed League," as he spent an afternoon "in the stalls, in the most perfect happiness, gently waving his long, thin fingers in time to the music."

He had claimed:

"I observe that there is a good deal of German music on the programme, which is rather more to my taste than Italian or French. It is introspective, and I want to introspect."

But aside from music, we also know that he unwound and geeked out in other ways, such as trying to decipher the remains of a palimpsest [GOLD] and the study of the Chaldean roots of the Cornish branch of the Celtic language [DEVI].

To each his own, we suppose.

And that's just what's going on at recess at **Baker Street Elementary**..

<< I CAN'T DECIDE IF THAT IS
PERPLEXING OR SIMPLY AMAZING. >>

WHAT ARE YOU
MUMBLING ABOUT?



I HAVE CREATED A LIST OF THOSE MYSTERIES
OF THE UNIVERSE I WANT TO SOLVE.



WHY WOULD YOU POSSIBLY WANT TO DO THAT?

KEEP BOREDOM AWAY.



I THINK STAMFORD AND I WILL SIMPLY
GO TO LUNCH AND THEN 30 MINUTES
RECESS ON THE PLAYGROUND.



DOESN'T UNRAVELING THE
MYSTERIES OF THE UNIVERSE RANK
HIGHER THAN FOOD AND PLAY?



PRETTY SURE, NOPE!

WELL, HOW ABOUT THAT...
1 DOWN, 27 MORE TO GO.



OUR SCIENCE CLUB FELT THE RUGBY TEAM IS BEING SINGLED OUT FOR SPECIAL TREATMENT, SO WE STARTED A GROUP TO ENSURE WE GET TREATED BETTER.



BUT NOW THE ORCHESTRA CLUB THINKS THE SCIENCE CLUB IS GETTING SPECIAL TREATMENT, SO THEY FORMED A GROUP TOO.



THE DRAMA CLUB AND THE MATH CLUB HAVE FORMED THEIR OWN GROUPS.

IT WOULD APPEAR TO ME IT WOULD MAKE MORE SENSE IF EVERYONE JUST JOINED THE SAME GROUP... THEN EVERYONE WOULD GET TREATED THE SAME.



STAMFORD, YOU JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION... IF EVERYONE'S TREATED THE SAME, THEN NO ONE FEELS THEY ARE SPECIAL.



"SOMETHING A LITTLE RECHERCHÉ"

"Ah, naughty, naughty" [SIGN]

When we get children together of a certain age, there's a certain kind of humor that inevitably makes its way to the fore.

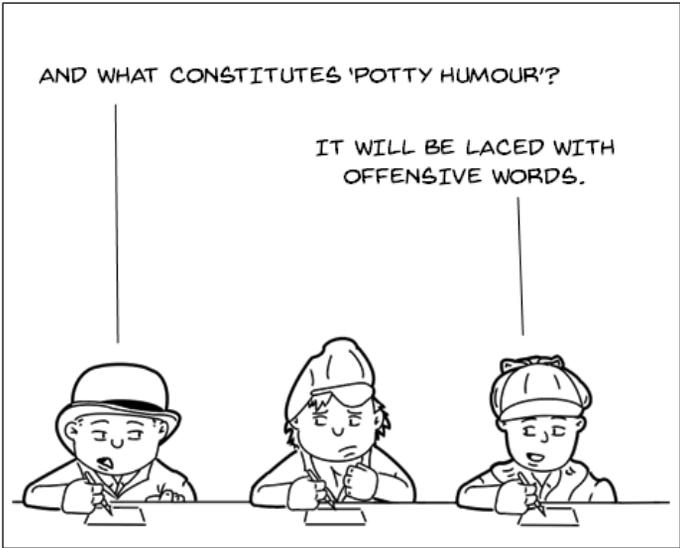
At the utterance of a double entendre or a scatological reference, furtive glances lead to smirks that lead to outbursts of laughter.

Did Holmes and Watson experience such instances as schoolboys? Almost certainly. And what about in the Canon itself?

Well, the great Sherlockian John Bennett Shaw delivered a paper at a dinner in 1971 along those lines. It was so racy that the editor of The Baker Street Journal (who was also the head of the BSI, and was still incensed from the talk at the dinner) refused to publish it.

It was called "a most amusing talk...showing evidence of much research and truly specialized knowledge, but, unfortunately, unpublishable." At least by the BSJ. But it did appear later that year in Bruce Kennedy's Shades of Sherlock.

*Meanwhile, we'll see what the boys are snickering about at **Baker Street Elementary**...*



SO, IN REALITY, USING OFFENSIVE
WORDS IS GIVING UP CONTROL,
WHICH IN A WEIRD WAY IS THE
OPPOSITE OF OFFENSIVE.



WELL, SHE JUST TOOK THE FUN OUT OF
LEARNING MORE WORDS ON THE PLAYGROUND.



I CAN ONLY IMAGINE MY FUTURE
DISAPPOINTMENTS WILL BE MORE FRUSTRATING
IF I DON'T HAVE SWEAR WORDS TO YELL OUT.



I TOLD MY PARENTS THIS WEEKEND I AM NEVER WASTING TIME AGAIN BY REGRETTING ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE PAST.

SOUND ADVICE.



AND THAT SOMEDAY THEY WILL MISS THESE YOUNG, CAREFREE DAYS OF OUR YOUTH AND SAY, "DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN THAT LITTLE SCAMP JOHN DID SUCH CUTE THINGS?"

UUUH... OOOH!



IT MAY BE A LONG TIME BEFORE ME SPILLING PAINT ON THE KITCHEN FLOOR IS A CHERISHED MEMORY.

UNLIKE THE PUNISHMENT?



WELL, I THINK I FAILED QUESTIONS FROM MY SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER AGAIN.

THERE'S A PATTERN FORMING.



HE ASKED, "IF I FOUND MONEY OUT ON THE STREET, WOULD I KEEP IT?"... I REPLIED, "OF COURSE NOT... I WOULD SPEND IT."



HE THEN ASKED IF I KNEW THE MORAL OF 'GENESIS'?... I STATED, "DON'T WALK WITH A CAIN IF YOU'RE ABEL"... DID YOU KNOW THEY HAVE DETENTION IN SUNDAY SCHOOL?



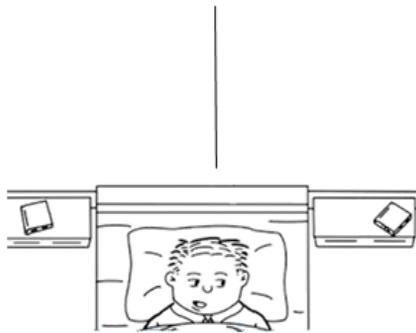
WHEN DO YOU GET YOUR MORALS... IN OTHER WORDS, HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG?



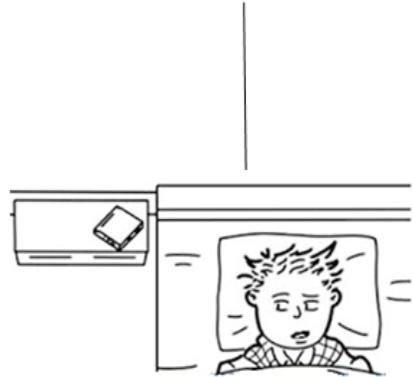
ACCORDING TO MY DAD, THAT'S EASY...
WHATEVER MOM SAYS IS RIGHT.



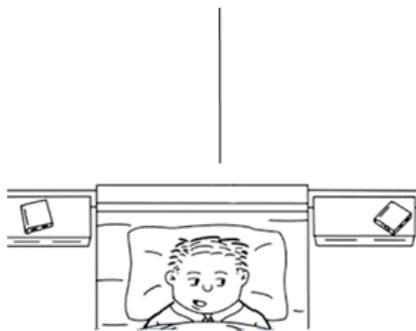
IT DOES SEEM THAT FOR MOST PEOPLE,
THEY ARE CONSTANTLY LOOKING FOR THE
GOOD IN OTHERS, BUT ONLY THINKING
THEY FIND IT IN THEMSELVES.



I HOPE I AM CONFUSED, BUT IT APPEARS
TO ME IN LIFE, RIGHT IS RIGHT, BUT
WRONG USUALLY PAYS BETTER.

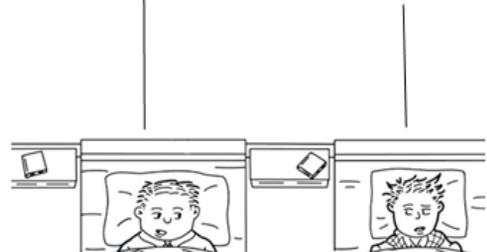


I THINK I MAY STICK WITH MY DAD'S ADVICE...
NEVER DO ANYTHING YOU WOULD BE
EMBARASSED FOR YOUR WIFE, SISTER, AND
GRANDMOTHER TO KNOW ABOUT.



STAMFORD, YOU ARE GOING
TO HAVE ONE BORING LIFE!

BUT YOUR RELATIVES
WILL BE ABLE TO SLEEP
AT NIGHT, UNLIKE US.

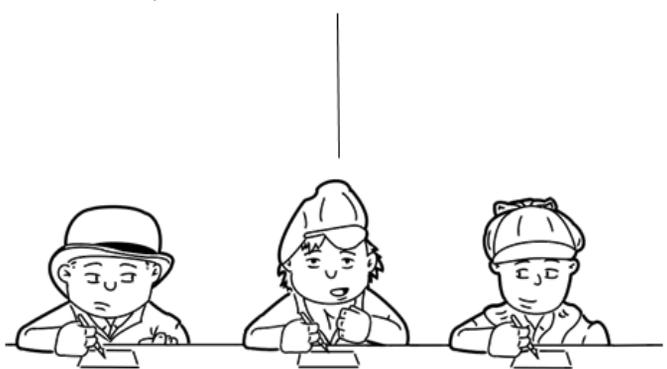


WELL, I RECOGNIZED ANOTHER LITTLE IRONY OF LIFE THIS MORNING.



WE CUT DOWN TREES TO MAKE PAPER,
AND THEN USE THE PAPER TO SAY WE
NEED TO PROTECT TREES?

OR THAT ALMOST ALL PEOPLE LIE AT SOME
POINT, BUT NO ONE WANTS TO BE LIED TO.



ACTUALLY, I WAS GOING TO SAY, WHEN I
WAS GETTING READY TO COME BACK TO
SCHOOL AFTER THE LONG WEEKEND, I
WAS VERY SAD TO BE LEAVING HOME.



A COMMON AFFECTION FOR ALL OF US.

BUT STRANGELY, MY PARENTS
SEEMED TO BE ACTUALLY HAPPY TO
SEE MY BROTHER AND I LEAVING.



LET ME GUESS... ONE OF YOU BROKE SOMETHING.

WHO COULD HAVE GUESSED THE VASE
HAD BELONGED TO MY GRANDMOTHER?



"NOT SO ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR WATSON"

"Interesting, though elementary" [HOUN]

Sherlock Holmes is iconic, well-known to nearly the entire world thanks to his easily recognizable Inverness cape, deerstalker hat, meerschaum pipe, and his pithy "Elementary, my dear Watson."

Of course, you know that none of those are associated with him in the original 56 short stories and four novels by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

"Elementary, my dear Watson" never appears in print in Doyle's original works. We have this exchange from "The Crooked Man":

"Excellent!" I cried.

"Elementary," said he.

And six other uses of "elementary." Along with scores of "my dear Watson." But nothing that links them together—at least not in the original tales.

But when we find ourselves immersed in the wonderful world of P.G. Wodehouse — specifically the Psmith stories. In the 1915 novel Psmith, Journalist, we find this passage:

"I fancy," said Psmith, "that this is one of those moments when it is necessary for me to unlimber my Sherlock Holmes system. As thus. If the rent collector had been there, it is certain, I think, that Comrade Spaghetti, or whatever you said his name was, wouldn't have been. That is to say, if the rent collector had called and found no money waiting for him, surely Comrade Spaghetti would have been out in the cold night instead of under his own roof-tree. Do you follow me, Comrade Maloney?"

"That's right," said Billy Windsor. "Of course."

"Elementary, my dear Watson, elementary," murmured Psmith.

Amazing to think that P.G. Wodehouse coined the most enduring phrase for a character he didn't invent.

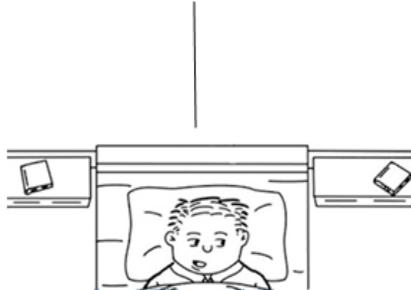
If you'd like to hear more about Wodehouse and Sherlock Holmes, Episode 143 of I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere features an interview with Curtis Armstrong, Elliott Milstein, and Ashley Polasek.

Over at Baker Street Elementary, it's a race to see who gets to choose a turn of phrase for the ages...

IF WE BECOME FAMOUS AS GROWN-UPS,
WE NEED A CATCH WORD... I BELIEVE I
WOULD GO WITH 'DYN-O-MITE'.



THAT SOUNDS VAGUELY FAMILIAR... IT
MAY HAVE ALREADY BEEN USED... FOR
MYSELF, I AM PARTIAL TO THE WORD
'SINGULAR*'. WHAT SAY YOU HOLMES?



** He is very partial to the word. Watson/Doyle used the term
'singular' 147 times in the Canon, in 49 of the 60 stories.*

I FAVOR 'ELEMENTARY', BUT I FEAR IF
I BECOME FAMOUS, PEOPLE WILL
CONSTANTLY MISQUOTE ME.



DID EITHER OF YOU ENSURE OUR
BEDROOM WINDOW WAS LOCKED?



STAMFORD, WE ARE ON THE 3RD FLOOR.

AND THERE IS NO TRELLIS
OR IVY TO CLIMB UP.



EVERYONE KNOWS A
MURDERER COULD
WORK AROUND
THOSE ISSUES.



NOT TO MENTION THE MONSTERS UNDER MY BED.

*The boy makes some good
points... he even makes me
scared.*



THERE COULD BE A
SERIAL KILLER IN
OUR BASEMENT, OR
EVEN IN OUR PRESS.



ACTUALLY, I AM A LITTLE NERVOUS
MYSELF... WHICH MAKES ME NEED TO PEE.

OH, GOOD GRIEF, THIS IS THE
LAST TIME YOU TWO READ THE
NEWSPAPER RIGHT BEFORE BED.



I WONDER IF I CAN GET THEM TO DO MY HOMEWORK?

*If we're so terrifying, why
do we have to sleep on the
cold floor?*



MASTER STAMFORD, WOULD YOU PLEASE TRY TO EXPLAIN YOUR ANSWER TO QUESTION # 3 ON THIS WEEKEND'S TAKE-HOME QUIZ? I AM TRULY HAVING A HARD TIME FOLLOWING YOU.



LET'S SEE... QUESTION # 3... WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RADIUS, CIRCUMFERENCE, AND DIAMETER... I HAD NO CLUE TO THE RIGHT ANSWER, SO I ASKED MY DAD FOR HELP... HIS RESPONSE WAS, AND I QUOTE...



"DIAMETER IS THE... OH WAIT, MAYBE THAT'S THE RADIUS... THE CIRCUMFERENCE ONLY APPLIES TO A SPHERE, I THINK... SO IMAGINE YOU ARE IN THE CENTER OF A CIRCLE, OR MAYBE A TRIANGLE WOULD BE BETTER..."



"...ANYWAY, THE DIAMETER MAY BE BIGGER THAN THE RADIUS... STAMFORD, YOU WILL NEVER LEARN IF YOU KEEP GETTING HELP FROM ME."



THAT'S MY ANSWER AND I AM STICKING WITH IT.



MASTER WATSON, DID YOU COMPLETE THE ESSAY YOU WERE ASSIGNED FOR BEING TARDY YESTERDAY?



NO, I WAS TOO BUSY FINISHING MY MATHEMATICS PROBLEMS.



IN OTHER WORDS, YOU ARE USING ONE RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVADING THE OTHER ONE?



MY FATHER SAYS THAT COULD BE A VERY PRODUCTIVE SKILL AND COULD BE USEFUL ONCE WE ENTER THE ADULT WORKFORCE.



"TIME AND TIDINESS WAIT FOR NO MAN"

"tidy up a bit" [SECO]

We might think that Dr. Watson, as a doctor, appreciated cleanliness and tidiness. But we have him at his own word in the opening of "The Musgrave Ritual" that his field experience in Afghanistan superseded his medical sensibilities:

"An anomaly which often struck me in the character of my friend Sherlock Holmes was that, although in his methods of thought he was the neatest and most methodical of mankind, and although also he affected a certain quiet primness of dress, he was none the less in his personal habits one of the most untidy men that ever drove a fellow-lodger to distraction. Not that I am in the least conventional in that respect myself. The rough-and-tumble work in Afghanistan, coming on the top of a natural Bohemianism of disposition, has made me rather more lax than befits a medical man.

But with me there is a limit, and when I find a man who keeps his cigars in the coal-scuttle, his tobacco in the toe end of a Persian slipper, and his unanswered correspondence transfixed by a jack-knife into the very centre of his wooden mantelpiece, then I begin to give myself virtuous airs."

Sherlock Holmes had his methods, even in his questionable personal habits. And nowhere was this more evident than in this scene from The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes, when Holmes takes Mrs. Hudson to task for tidying up.

Who would have thought that it was at **Baker Street Elementary** that she got her start?

OUR ROOM SEEMS LESS CLUTTERED...
ANYONE ELSE NOTICED?



WHEN HOLMES WAS SICK YESTERDAY, MRS.
HUDSON DELIVERED A TRAY TO OUR ROOM.

DEAR LADY, BUT NOT
A MASTER CHEF.



SHE TOOK PITY ON YOU AND I
AND TIDIED UP THE ROOM.

I MAY NEVER FIND
ANYTHING AGAIN.



SHE COMMENTED SHE FELT SORRY FOR WHOEVER
LOOKED AFTER HOLMES WHEN HE GREW UP.

I TOLD HER IT WAS A NICE
GESTURE, BUT WE BOTH KNEW I
WILL JUST MESS IT UP AGAIN.



WHEN WE GRADUATE OUT OF THIS SCHOOL,
MAYBE THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD SEAL
OUR ROOM AND DEEM IT A 'TIME CAPSULE'.



I DON'T WANT TO WRITE THIS PAPER... I CAN'T BELIEVE I HAVE TO DO IT... I WILL NEVER GET IT FINISHED IN TIME.



I THOUGHT YOU WROTE IT LAST NIGHT.



I DID, BUT I COULD NOT FIND IT THIS MORNING WHEN WE WERE LEAVING OUR ROOM.

JUST SAY ONE OF YOUR ROOMMATES ACCIDENTALLY TORE IT UP WHEN HE WAS CLEANING UP THE ROOM LAST NIGHT.

YEAH, RIGHT... LIKE THE TEACHER WILL BUY THAT EXCUSE.



UHHH... YOU BETTER HOPE SHE DOES!



"GRAND GIFT OF SILENCE"

"a child has done the horrid thing" [SIGN]

When Holmes and Watson come across clues in Pondicherry Lodge after the death of Bartholomew Sholto, Watson describes what they found:

"He held down the lamp to the floor, and as he did so I saw for the second time that night a startled, surprised look come over his face. For myself, as I followed his gaze my skin was cold under my clothes. The floor was covered thickly with the prints of a naked foot,—clear, well defined, perfectly formed, but scarce half the size of those of an ordinary man."

And immediately, Watson's conclusion is:

"Holmes," I said, in a whisper, "a child has done the horrid thing."

Now, we know that Sherlock Holmes held a distrust of women and that he told Watson that "The most winning woman I ever knew was hanged for poisoning three little children for their insurance-money."

But what was Watson's experience with children such that he should immediately conclude that a child killed a grown man with a poisoned dart?

Perhaps it was his experience in tormenting children on the playground, as he recounted in 'The Naval Treaty':

"On the contrary, it seemed rather a piquant thing to us to chevy him about the playground and hit him over the shins with a wicket."

Was Watson projecting (and perhaps exaggerating) his own misbehavior when he incorrectly assumed that a child had killed Sholto?

He seems silent on the matter, as he was at **Baker Street Elementary**...

MASTERS HOLMES AND
WATSON, ARE YOU IN THERE? _____

YES MA'AM, WE BOTH ARE.



MAY I ASK WHAT
YOU ARE DOING? _____

READING OUR HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT.



UHHH... OK... _____



NOTHING SETS OFF AN ADULT'S SENSE OF DANGER
LIKE THE UNEXPECTED SILENCE OF A CHILD.

COME OUT TO THE
COMMON ROOM SO I CAN
KEEP AN EYE ON YOU. _____



HYPOTHETICALLY, FOR £1,000,
WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO...

YES!!



YOU DIDN'T LET ME FINISH THE QUESTION... YOU
HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I MIGHT HAVE ASKED...

YES!!



AFTER ALL, I DO HAVE A
VERY ACTIVE IMAGINATION.



STAMFORD, FOR £1,000, MY GREED CAN
EAT ANYTHING YOUR IMAGINATION CAN
COME UP WITH, AND STILL WANT MORE.

I WISH I HAD A PENNY FOR EVERY TIME
MY PARENTS CALLED ME 'GREEDY'.

WAIT, MAKE THAT A SHILLING!



"NO SHORT, SHERLOCK" "the facts are briefly these" [SCAN]

Once Sherlockian scholarship took off in the 1930s and early 1940s, the collective writers (who were many — remember Christopher Morley's observation that "Never before had so much been written by so many for so few") must have tired of writing out the full story titles again and again.

So the intrepid Jay Finley Christ, BSI ("The Final Problem"), who needed to save space in his 1947 volume *An Irregular Guide to Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street*, created a standardized four-letter abbreviation for the stories. In fact, we carry a copy of that very list for easy reference. You can find it at ihose.co/ABREV.

Christ's basic principle was simple: the abbreviation is the first four letters of the story's title, leaving aside phrases like "The Adventure of." He listed them alphabetically, from ABBE for "The Abbey Grange" to YELL for "The Yellow Face."

A few problems arise with the four-letter rule, most obviously the fact that three stories begin with the word "Three." Christ solved that one easily by using numerals in the stories where there might be confusion: 3GAB for the Gables, 3GAR for the Garridebs, 3STU for the Students.

He didn't do the same thing for "The Five Orange Pips" or "The Six Napoleons" because there's only one five and one six. And The Sign of the Four is SIGN, with no numeral needed.

And lest you think that these choices were capricious or confusing, Christ was a professor at the University of Chicago, home of the famed *Chicago Manual of Style*. The manual indicates that "whole cardinal numbers from one through one hundred, as well as ordinals, are spelled out in nontechnical contexts." Indeed, Christ was working from academic and legal precedents for his abbreviations.

As you know, all good systems have a few exceptions, and Christ's was no different. He chose CHAS for "Charles Augustus Milverton," because that was a recognized abbreviation for Charles; and ENGR for "The Engineer's Thumb."

And in three instances he apparently ignored introductory words, deeming them as insignificant as "The Adventure of." So we have IDEN for "A Case of Identity," LAST for "His Last Bow," and TWIS for "The Man with the Twisted Lip." In each case, the word with the most significant meaning for that story takes precedent.

That's the long and the short of it, anyway. Let's see how **Baker Street Elementary** grapples with it...

I AM CONSIDERING AN INTERESTING CONCEPT... YOUR LAST INVESTIGATION WAS MY INSPIRATION.



AS YOU RECALL, THE CASE, AS I CHRONICLED IN THE SCHOOL PAPER, WAS ENTITLED, 'THE ADVENTURE OF THE MISSING FARTHING AND TARNISHED SHILLING'.

THE PAPER HAS SUGGESTED I SHORTEN THE NAMES OF YOUR FUTURE CASES SO THEY DO NOT HAVE TO WASTE SO MUCH TYPE... WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT ABBREVIATING THE STORIES?



THE LAST CASE COULD BE KNOWN AS EITHER 'MISS', 'TARN', OR 'SHIL'.



I COULD NOT HELP NOTICE YOU DID NOT SUGGEST USING A SHORTENED VERSION OF 'FARTHING'.



THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER HAS STANDARDS.

NOT A BAD IDEA... MAYBE ONE OF THE MILLIONS OF MY FUTURE ADORING FANS WILL MAKE A LIST OF ALL MY ADVENTURES WITH ABBREVIATIONS.

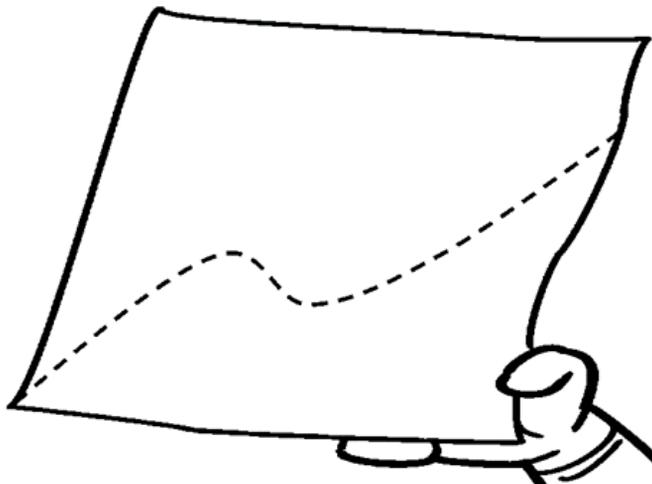
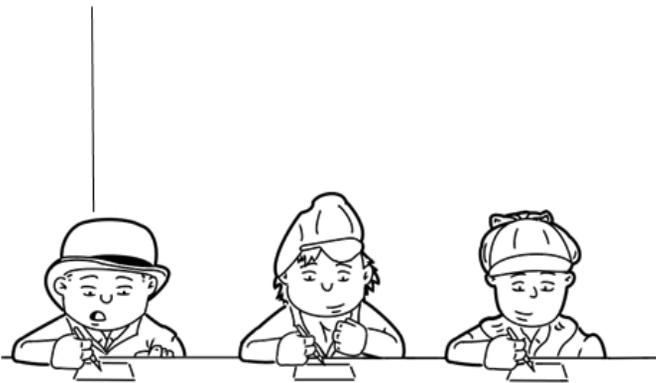


I MAY ALSO STRUGGLE WITH 'THE CASE OF THE DAMAGED CRAPPIE GEAR'.

MASTER WATSON, HAVE YOU FINISHED YOUR GRAPH ON HOW YOU SEE YOUR ACADEMIC TRAJECTORY AS A STUDENT THROUGHOUT YOUR CAREER?



YES MA'AM... I BELIEVE IT TO BE VERY ENTERPRISING.



MAY I ASK WHAT THE DIP IN THE MIDDLE REPRESENTS?



I FORGOT TO STUDY FOR THE SCIENCE TEST TODAY... WHO KNOWS HOW THAT MAY AFFECT MY ENTIRE ACADEMIC LIFE.



MAY EXPLAIN WHY MY GRAPH IS A STRAIGHT HORIZONTAL LINE.

NOT TO GET TOO RELIGIOUS, BUT WHO IS MARY, AND WHY IS SHE SO SPECIAL?



SHE WAS THE MOTHER OF JESUS.

WHEN SHE DIED, SHE WENT STRAIGHT TO HEAVEN.



WOW, STRAIGHT TO HEAVEN?



I BET SHE NEVER SPILLED GLUE ON HER MOTHER'S RUG.

THAT WOULD BE A VERY SAFE BET, I CAN GUESS.



"LUNCH AND LEARN"

"a hasty luncheon at the buffet" [NAVA]

When it comes to dining habits in Victorian England, as with so much during that period, it all comes down to class or status. Lower classes had more humble dining experiences, while upper classes enjoyed more luxurious ones.

The good news is you too can eat like a Victorian, should you choose. According to Writers in London in the 1890s, avoiding the lower and upper class options, you could expect the following for a middle class lunch:

*Bread, with cold leftover beef and asparagus/potato, and a cold pudding
A couple pieces of buttered bread, a slice of meat, and a cold pudding
Cold chicken sandwich, a cup of warm broth, and a cold pudding
Fairly simple for the middle class.*

*But nothing like what the cafeteria offers at **Baker Street Elementary**...*

WILL YOU ALLOW ME TO PUBLISH MY NOTES
ON 'THE GIANT RAT OF THE DINING HALL'?

I DON'T BELIEVE THE SCHOOL
IS YET PREPARED FOR IT.



WHY... YOU SUCCESSFULLY PROVED IT
WAS A HOAX, A SIMPLE PRACTICAL
JOKE, EVEN IF IT DID LOOK ALIVE.



YES, BUT MRS. HUDSON, OUR LUNCHLADY,
IS STILL HAVING NIGHTMARES.

I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE AN ADULT COULD
JUMP STRAIGHT UP SO HIGH... SHE COULD
HAVE BEEN AN OLYMPIAN IN GREECE.



I HOPE IN THE FUTURE I CAN PUBLISH ALL
THE STORIES I HAVE NOTES OF YOUR CASES.



YOU MIGHT WANT TO INVEST IN A VERY
LARGE BOX TO HOLD ALL OF THEM.

I HOPE YOU STUDIED MORE EFFECTIVELY THAN BEFORE... THESE STANDARDIZED TESTS DEVELOPED BY THE SCHOOL ARE 'A LITTLE MORE DIFFICULT' THAN THE ONES I CREATE FOR YOU.



STAMFORD, I NEVER SAW YOU CRACK OPEN YOUR HISTORY TEXTBOOK THIS WEEKEND.

I DID NOT NEED TO.



I SPENT ALL OF LAST WEEK AND THIS WEEKEND LEARNING 'MORSE CODE'.



WHILE I BELIEVE THAT COULD BE A WORTHY PURSUIT FOR FUTURE CAREER PLANS, WHY LEARN IT NOW?

YOU AND SHERLOCK CAN SIMPLY TAP ME THE RIGHT ANSWERS.



IT WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH EASIER TO SIMPLY STUDY YOUR LESSON.

ONCE AGAIN, YOU ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR THE EASY WAY OUT.



THE ONE FLY IN YOUR OINTMENT IS THAT NEITHER HOLMES OR I KNOW THE CODE.

I AM RUNNING OUT OF EXCUSES FOR THE TEACHER... I BETTER FEIGN ILLNESS AGAIN.



TIME FOR ANOTHER QUIZ... _____



DO EITHER OF YOU HAVE A PENCIL I CAN BORROW?

WHY, YOU HAVE ONE IN YOUR HAND?



BUT YOURS ARE MAGICAL... SOMEHOW, YOURS SEEM MORE INTELLIGENT ON PAPER.



YOU WILL NEVER GUESS WHAT I FOUND
IN OUR CHAMBER POT THIS MORNING?

MY MIND REBELS AT THE
IMAGES I JUST FORMED.



IT WAS A PAIR OF STAMFORD'S SOCKS.

I WAS DEAD ON MY FEET LAST NIGHT...
I KNEW NOT WHAT I WAS DOING.



GREAT... NOW I HAVE TO GO PEE.



UHHH... I WOULD SUGGEST YOU ALLOW
ME TO CHECK THE CLOTHES HAMPER
WHEN WE GET BACK TO OUR ROOM!



"RISING TO THE OCCASION"

"exceptional physical strength" [VALL]

We don't often think of the physical fitness of Mrs. Hudson, but the reality is that she must have been fairly active to keep up with a tenant like Sherlock Holmes.

For more than 20 years, he occupied the rooms at Baker Street, and during that time, she had to deal with all sorts of unorthodox behavior, as Watson recounts in "The Dying Detective":

"Mrs. Hudson, the landlady of Sherlock Holmes, was a long-suffering woman. Not only was her first-floor flat invaded at all hours by throngs of singular and often undesirable characters but her remarkable lodger showed an eccentricity and irregularity in his life which must have sorely tried her patience. His incredible untidiness, his addiction to music at strange hours, his occasional revolver practice within doors, his weird and often malodorous scientific experiments, and the atmosphere of violence and danger which hung around him made him the very worst tenant in London."

Perhaps it's a good thing that she admired him, though:

"The landlady stood in the deepest awe of him and never dared to interfere with him, however outrageous his proceedings might seem. She was fond of him, too, for he had a remarkable gentleness and courtesy in his dealings with women."

Not only did she put up with these eccentricities, but her role required stamina as well.

For example, in *The Valley of Fear* she welcomed a visitor in the wee hours:

"Late last night Mrs. Hudson, our landlady, brought up a message that a gentleman wished to see Holmes, and that the matter was of the utmost importance."

And in "The Speckled Band," she was roused out of bed:

"Very sorry to knock you up, Watson," said he, "but it's the common lot this morning. Mrs. Hudson has been knocked up, she retorted upon me, and I on you."

These services on behalf of Sherlock Holmes even stretched into the physical, as we saw in "The Empty House." Holmes sets up a decoy to catch Col. Moran in the act, and Mrs. Hudson is deployed on the floor:

"I hope you preserved all precautions, Mrs. Hudson?" said Holmes.

"I went to it on my knees, sir, just as you told me."

"Excellent. You carried the thing out very well. Did you observe where the bullet went?"

"Yes, sir. I'm afraid it has spoilt your beautiful bust, for it passed right through the head and flattened itself on the wall. I picked it up from the carpet. Here it is!"

Poor Mrs. Hudson! Having to crouch down on the floor for hours on end, and then being present amid gunfire.

Far from the "comfortable somnolence" of Martha in "His Last Bow," Mrs. Hudson in her prime was a physically fit specimen. Perhaps she got her training at **Baker Street Elementary**...

DID EITHER OF YOU FIND THE MEATBALLS
AT LUNCH TODAY DISGUSTING?



NO MORE THAN USUAL.

STAMFORD, YOU DID NOT START
THINKING ABOUT WHERE THEY
CAME FROM... SLAUGHTERED
AND BUTCHERED COWS?



NO, BUT I DID SEE
MRS. HUDSON
ROLLING THEM IN
HER HANDS.

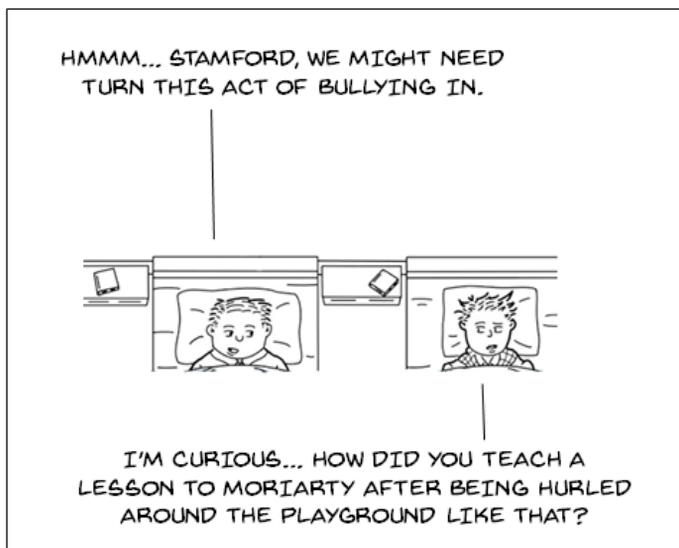
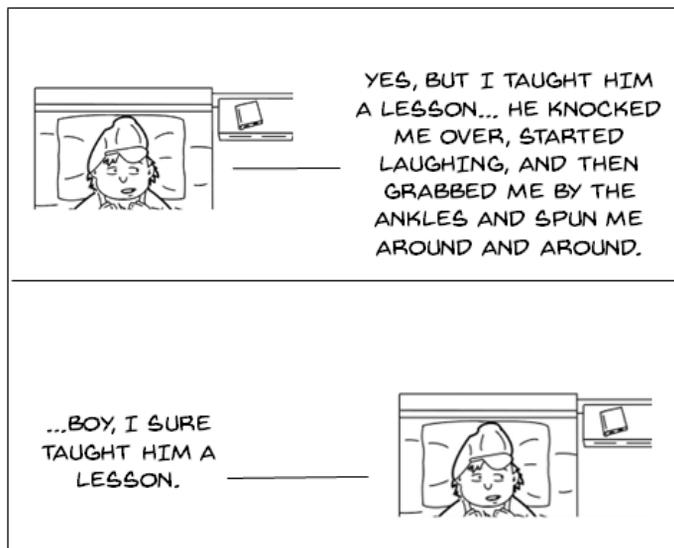
BUT SHERLOCK,
YOU WOULD HAVE
BEEN PROUD OF
ME... I RAN INTO
YOUR NEMESIS ON
THE PLAYGROUND
THIS AFTERNOON.



YOU HAVE AN ENEMY? HOW IS THAT
POSSIBLE? YOU'RE SO LOVABLE.

ARE YOU SPEAKING
OF MORIARTY?





WHAT WERE YOU TWO ARGUING
ABOUT EARLIER TODAY?



I DON'T REMEMBER ANYMORE.

I CAN'T REMEMBER EITHER, BUT
I AM SURE I WAS IN THE RIGHT.



NEITHER OF YOU REMEMBER WHAT
YOU WERE ARGUING ABOUT? I AM
SURE THAT'S HOW MOST WARS START!!



"HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER"
"remarkably good fishing" [GLOR]

While we give Sherlock Holmes much credit for his acumen with sporting activities that are physically involved—boxing, single-stick, bicycle riding—there is one area that deserves more attention.

His ability with the rod and reel. That is, fishing.

We should have been tipped off early on, as in "The Gloria Scott," as he notes all that Trevor's estate offered:

There was excellent wild-duck shooting in the fens, remarkably good fishing, a small but select library, taken over, as I understood, from a former occupant, and a tolerable cook, so that he would be a fastidious man who could not put in a pleasant month there.

And toward the end of the Canon, in "Shoscombe Old Place," we find Holmes using fishing as an excuse to get near the hall:

"Is there good fishing in that part of Berkshire?"

The honest trainer showed very clearly upon his face that he was convinced that yet another lunatic had come into his harassed life.

"Well, sir, I've heard there are trout in the millstream and pike in the Hall lake."

"That's good enough. Watson and I are famous fishermen—are we not, Watson?"

It's one thing to claim to be a good fisherman; it's quite another to prove it. Holmes knew that any disguise or alias was only as good as the proof points that supported it.

Which leads us to conclude that if he were to maintain this ruse, he must have been able to produce the goods to make his fish tale a believable one.

*Maybe he got his start with hooks and lines by playing hooky at **Baker Street Elementary...***

SO, JOHN, WERE YOUR PARENT UPSET
WE SKIPPED SCHOOL TO GO FISHING?



I BELIEVE THE BEST TERM
WOULD BE 'BORDERLINE LIVID'.

APOLOGIES LASTED
FOR HOURS I ASSUME.



STRANGE, MY PARENTS
JUST THANKED ME FOR
BRINGING HOME
SUPPER.



BEING RIGHTEOUSLY INDIGNANT, THEY ARE
EXPECTING ATONEMENT FOR OUR ACTIONS.

ATONEMENT? WHAT IS THEIR
DEFINITION OF ATONEMENT?



DID YOU RECEIVE
ANY PUNISHMENT
YET? I CAN ONLY
IMAGINE.



IN THIS INSTANCE, ENTERTAINMENT
OF THE RIGHTEOUSLY INDIGNANT.

I THINK I WOULD REQUEST
A FIRING SQUAD AT DAWN...
SOUNDS LESS PAINFUL.



"WE CAN BUT TRY"
"the motto of the firm" [CREE]

One of the wonders of the attraction of Sherlock Holmes is that we stand (or sit, as the case may be) in amazement at his abilities.

While we may never have the same skill at ratiocination and logical conclusions, we would at least hope to be able to exercise the same kind of judgment or justice that Holmes did.

As Edgar W. Smith wrote in his essay "The Implicit Holmes,"

"For it is not Sherlock Holmes who sits in Baker Street, comfortable, competent, and self-assured; it is we ourselves who are there, full of a tremendous capacity for wisdom, complacent in the presence of our humble Watson, conscious of a warm well-being and a timeless, imperishable content.

The easy chair in the room is drawn up to the hearthstone of our very hearts — it is our tobacco in the Persian slipper, and our violin lying so carelessly across the knee — it is we who hear the pounding on the stairs and the knock upon the door."

While we like to picture ourselves in Holmes's shoes — in the sitting room at Baker Street or out on the moor pursuing the Hound — the opposite is closer to the truth: we like to think of Holmes in our shoes.

"That is the Sherlock Holmes we love—the Holmes implicit and eternal in ourselves."

*Let's see how it's playing out at **Baker Street Elementary**...*

STAMFORD, DO YOU SEE ANY
OF HOLMES IN ME?

WHAT'S THAT MEAN?



I GUESS YOU MEAN IN APPEARANCE AND
MANNERISMS... SO DOES IT BUG YOU?



SOMETIMES WHEN TWO PEOPLE SPEND
A LOT OF TIME TOGETHER, THEY SORT
OF BECOME THAT OTHER PERSON.

IN WHAT WAY?



IT'S JUST HOLMES CAN IGNORE OTHERS, CAN
BE A SLOB, AND BE EXTREMELY LAZY AT
TIMES, AND IT DOES NOT SEEM TO FAZE HIM.

IF YOU BECOME LIKE ME,
IT WON'T FAZE YOU EITHER.



LOOK AT THIS PLACE... I LEAVE FOR A WEEKEND, AND IT'S NOW A PIG STY.



WHY IS IT WHEN I AM HERE, I HAVE THE SAME DUTIES AS YOU TWO DO, BUT I SOMEHOW CAN KEEP THE ROOM TIDY?



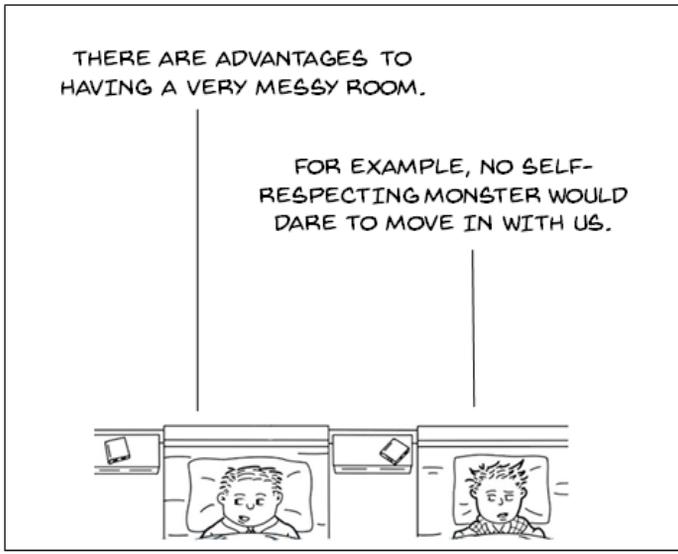
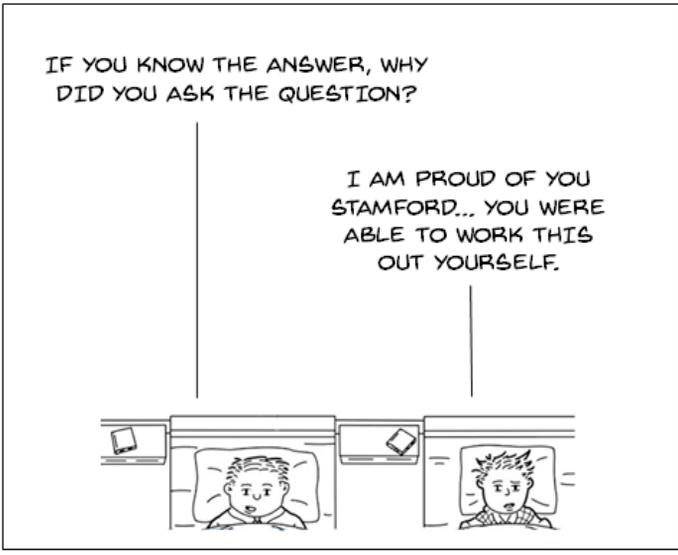
WHEN YOU ARE HERE STAMFORD, MAYBE WE SPEND MORE TIME OUT OF THE ROOM



MAYBE WATSON AND I ARE MORE CREATIVE WHILE YOU ARE GONE.

WAIT, YOU ARE SOMEHOW BLAMING THE MESS ON ME BEING GONE?





"PICTURE THIS"

"Your pictures are not unlike you" [3GAR]

Who among us doesn't change over the years? Certainly in appearance, and hopefully in intellect as well.

We're shaped by the world around us, the people with whom we interact, the programs we consume, and the books we read.

For those of us who like to return to the same books over and over again, when we do so, we notice a transformation that was so eloquently observed by Clifton Fadiman:

"When you reread a classic, you do not see more in the book than you did before; you see more in you than there was before."

And isn't that why we reread the Sherlock Holmes canon? The same characters, the same plots, the same settings are all there. Sherlock Holmes and his habits, methods, and philosophy all remain constant.

As we enjoy rereading the Canon at different stages in our lives, our personal growth makes us more aware of things in the stories and in ourselves.

Already at Baker Street Elementary, the boys are beginning to notice some changes afoot...



"HOW ARE YOU?
YOU HAVE BEEN
IN
AFGHANISTAN,
I PERCEIVE."

"VERY GOOD!
SHALL WE ARGUE
ABOUT IT HERE
IN PUBLIC, OR
TALK IT OVER IN
YOUR PARLOUR?"



"FROM WHAT I
HAVE SEEN OF
THE LADY, SHE
SEEMS, INDEED,
TO BE ON A VERY
DIFFERENT
LEVEL TO YOUR
MAJESTY."

"THESE ARE THE RECORDS OF YOUR EARLY
WORK, THEN? I HAVE OFTEN WISHED THAT
I HAD NOTES OF THOSE CASES."



SERIOUSLY, THAT'S WHAT
WE LOOK LIKE IN 20
YEARS... I LOOK 100
YEARS OLD.

I LOOK LIKE AN OVER-
SIZED CRANE OR
VULTURE.



WHAT ARE YOU TWO COMPLAINING ABOUT? I AM
ONLY IN 1 PICTURE IN THE ENTIRE 60 STORIES.



Home of the Hounds

