

**SO HOLMES, DID YOU
ENJOY YOUR BIRTHDAY?**

**FOR THE MOST PART,
BUT ITS STILL A WORK
IN PROGRESS.**



**A WORK IN PROGRESS ?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN ?**

**OH, I DECIDED TO GIVE
MYSELF MY OWN
PRESENT THIS YEAR.**



PLEASE TELL ME YOU ARE NOT BURNING
ANYTHING UP AGAIN...

I WILL NOT HAVE DIRECT
CONTACT IN THE MATTER, MY
DEAR WATSON. HOWEVER, THE
USE OF FLAMES IS INVOLVED.
JUST LOOK OVER THERE.



I SEE IGNATIUS PRACTICING CRICKET

WARM

LESTRADE AND GREGSON
SHAKING DOWN SOME YOUNGINS'

WARMER

THERE... THERE... IS... OH...



UM, I SEE AN OPEN FLAME WITH STAMFORD
STANDING NEXT TO IT, POKING SOMETHING.

HE IS POKING AT COAL IN
THE FIRE. SADLY, OUR POOR
FRIEND RECEIVED A BLACK
GEM FOR CHRISTMAS AND
LOOKED LIKE HE NEEDED
SOME CHEERING.



I INFORMED HIM COAL IS JUST ANOTHER FORM OF CARBON, AND DIAMONDS ARE JUST CARBON PUT UNDER EXTREME HEAT AND PRESSURE. SO OUR LITTLE GEMOLOGIST IS SWEATING OVER THE FIRE, ABOUT TO START HAMMERING AWAY FOR HIS OWN DIAMOND.



**SO, SOMEHOW YOU CONVINCED STAMFORD
HE COULD MAKE HIS OWN DIAMOND ?**

**WITH A LITTLE
STRETCH OF THE
TRUTH, YES...**



**SO WHAT DID YOU GET HIM
TO APPLY THE PRESSURE ?**

**I FOUND AN OLD
POST MAUL.**

IS THAT NOT OVERDOING IT ?

**I WANTED TO BE SURE IT WAS
DONE IN ONE BIG STRIKE.**



ONE STRIKE FOR WHAT ?

MY BIRTHDAY PRESENT...

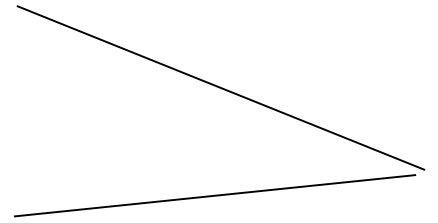
**I THOUGHT THE DIAMOND ITSELF
WAS THE PRESENT FOR YOU.**

NOT AT ALL, JUST WAIT



STRIKE!!!

BOOM!!!



IT... IT EXPLODED... WHAT HAPPENED ?

**I TUCKED SOME COAL DUST IN
THE MAUL HEAD... WHEN IT
STRUCK THE BURNING COAL, IT
CREATED MY BIRTHDAY PRESENT.**

WHAT, A FIRE ?

**NO. FIREWORKS, OR IN
THIS CASE, ONE BIG ONE.**



I NEED TO MAKE SURE STAMFORD IS OKAY...

HE IS. JUST ENOUGH FOR A BIG
FLASH... JUST A FEW BURNT
HAIRS... BUT I SHOULD INFORM
THE NURSE, ALL THE SAME...

HMMM... YOU MIGHT GRAB
SOME AMMONIA...

PLEASE DO NOT DO
ANYTHING FOR MY
BIRTHDAY !!

