



It has been said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. If that's so, then Holmes and Watson must have heads the size of Cleveland from everyone getting into the act. But is it an act? And if so, which one? And where's my program? Darn, I thought this was *The Lion King*. Where's the usher?

In keeping with the season, this issue is devoted to the sillier side of Holmes. Indeed, if you find anything serious at all in this issue, let us know and we'll have it expunged. Better yet, we'll just make fun of it.

We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

*The Papers on the Sundry*

## Ask Professor Moriarty

*"Misinformation is the beginning of manipulation."*

—*The Napoleon of Crime, 1889*

*Dear Professor: Why is the Universe expanding?*

Sometime between 15 and 20 billion years ago, depending on whether you're talking Eastern or Central Standard Time, the universe was born in a great but infinitesimally small fireball. That fireball expanded quickly, creating all the forces, all the particles and all the Brillo pads in the universe. The force of this explosion--imagine, if you will, all the incendiary devices in all of Arnold Schwarzenegger's movies, and then double them--pushed everything away from everything else. The expansion which we see today is the result of that same primeval eruption, and has nothing to do with making additional room for all the *National Geographics* people collect.

*Dear Professor: What is DNA?*

DNA stands for deoxyribonucleic acid. This is the stuff of life-- **Continued on page 2**

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### Canonical Calendar

#### April

- 3/89 - Mrs. Hudson receives a visit from Ed McMahon and Dick Clark. She throws them out.
- 11/92 - Conducting an experiment involving cheese sauce, old pants and pencils, **Continued on Page 3**

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although if you ever used the term “stuff” on a test you wouldn't even get half-credit. Imagine, if you will, a ladder that has fallen from the top of the World Trade Center. It is completely twisted around. This is what a double helix looks like, only the aluminum is replaced with molecules. The sides are composed of alternating phosphate and deoxyribose units, and the rungs are made up of four nucleic acids (adenine, thymine, cytosine and guanine). A lot of people think these are the names of the Marx Brothers, when in fact there were actually five of them (everyone forgets Gummo).

*Dear Professor: How do sleeping pills work?*

The giant pharmaceutical companies don't want you to know this, but each sleeping pill contains DNA from eighty-seven year old American History teachers. Once that DNA hits your brain, you're out.

*Dr. James Moriarty IV holds the Dirward Kirby Chair of Creative Mathematics at Cornell University. His book, Illiteracy: How to Get It, How to Keep It will be published next month.*

### It Could Be Such A Deal by Woody Allen

It was my first time in London and the trip over was hideous. I wouldn't say that we were packed in like sardines on the ship, but ever since that trip I've thought of olive oil as a cologne.

Once on dry land I got directions to 221B Baker Street. Which wasn't easy considering I don't speak English. A large woman let me in and showed me up to a room.

Holmes was shorter than I had expected, but they say that a book makes you look thinner. I introduced myself as Alexander Nebkin of Sussex. Holmes was about to sit down but then stood and fairly barked at me.

“Mr. Nebkin is not your name.”

“Technically, you're correct. But I wanted to honor my mother by—”

“You're not even from England.”

“What gave it away?” I asked, really nervous now. I hadn't felt this clammy since some woman named Sophie had me cornered in the Apennine Mountains.

“For one,” Holmes said grabbing at my face, “the fake nose and glasses.”

“Ow, you took some hair.” I rubbed my forehead. “And it was just starting to grow back too.”

“You must tell me everything, sir. I know you are from America.”

“Yeah? I guess I should've worked more on my accent.”

“What accent?”

“Okay, I deserved that. I'll never believe those Berlitz guys again. I got in here under false pretenses. I only

wanted your pipe. Well, your pipe and your deerstalker. Well, your pipe, deerstalker and that throw rug over there.”

“Why do you want these things?”

“Mr. Holmes, you're all the rage in America. You're what we call boss, keen and in. You wouldn't believe how stuff like this sells. We could—we could make a fortune. Why with your fame and my marketing skills, we'd be the next Elvis Presley and Colonel Parker.”

“I'm sorry,” Holmes said. “I'm not for sale.”

“Everyone has their price. C'mon. Whaddaya say?”

“Mr. Nebkin, please leave.”

“You're making a mistake.

You need to lose this Watson guy—besides, he reminds me of Nigel Bruce. You need a good PR firm.”

“Please leave.”

“Three words: franchising, merchandising, licensing. Not just books but lunchboxes, cocktail napkins, coasters, lobster bibs. How about your face on deodorant? I can see it now: ‘Get off the stick, get on the Holmes.’”

“Get out.”

“Soft drinks. Soft drinks will be very big someday. ‘Have a Holmes and a smile.’”

“You are a very petty man,” Holmes said advancing.

I backed up toward the door.

“Okay,” I said, “we'll go for something classy. How about wine? **Continued on Page 6**

**Continued from page 1** Holmes invents the running shorts.

18/95 - Trying to solve the case of the Blithering Idiot, Holmes buys a timeshare condominium in Westchester.

22/01: Watson reports he was

wounded in the wrist during the Afghan campaign.

24/05: Holmes sells his timeshare and promptly arrests Llewelyn Parker IV for attempting to steal his running shorts concept.

30/17: Holmes retires to raise ants.

Knock knock  
Who's there?  
Well, you're obviously  
not Sherlock Holmes.



“But dear me, what’s this. Somebody hurt? Not—don’t tell me that is our friend Sir Henry!”

*The Hound of the Baskervilles*

Photo courtesy of Tom Takach

## Watson's Mate? by Wanda Dow

Watson looked up in surprise at his next patient. "Holmes! What are you doing here?"

The detective strode into the room and halted not three feet away. "I have found it to be the only way to see you," he stated. "Admit it. You've been avoiding me ever since that slanderous article appeared questioning my sexual preference and life style." He slammed his walking stick across Watson's desk. "You, Watson, of all people, should know that these rumors are not true. My God, man, you were my room mate!"

Watson sighed and leaned back in his chair, rubbing his eyes in weariness. "Too true, Holmes. But my knowledge of the facts does not change the opinions of others. I have a medical practice and social standing to think of now. I thought that perhaps if I allowed time to pass...."

"And that is why you did not invite me to the soiree you had last week? Fear of others' opinions?"

"My wife was called out of town on too short of a notice to cancel the party," Watson explained. "Forgive me, Holmes, but I feared if people arrived and found you there in her absence, they would think you were there to eat, drink, and be Mary."

## A Discovery of Some Importance by Tom Takach

*The following letter, misplaced for decades by the solicitors handling the estate of the late Dr. John H. Watson (it is no secret that the once admirable reputation of the firm of Graham and McFarlane has deteriorated rapidly since its halcyon days of yore), was just this past week printed in The Times. Its contents were apparently intended to be made known at the time of the good doctor's death many years ago. Originally enclosed in a long, thin, pale blue envelope bearing a seal of red wax stamped with a caduceus, the letter is reproduced in its entirety. It is expected that the missive will be the cause of much discussion in Sherlockian circles the world over.*

Finding myself in failing health and not long for this world, I have resolved to make a clean break of the one aspect of my writing career which has been troubling me for years. Since having first chronicled the mysteries solved by Mr. Sherlock Holmes, many times throughout the course of my life I have been approached in the street, in my club, even in my favorite haberdashery by loyal readers desirous of knowing the details of various unpublished cases which are safely reposing in my battered tin dispatch-box in the vaults of Cox and Co., Charing Cross. Even at this late stage of my life, I can in my mind's eye clearly recall the look of excitement and keen interest written upon the countenances of those devoted followers of my fellow lodger's exploits. I know that I shall never be able to enjoy a peaceful afterlife until I have revealed the truth about

something of which I am not proud. There is no battered tin dispatch-box. This mythical container has not details of fresh and secret cases with which to enthrall the great reading public. I can scarce imagine the enormous outcry when this revelation is made known. Please do not think ill of me for perpetrating this seemingly unkind charade (after all, I myself had an infinitely greater deception practiced upon me for three years in the early 1890s) I may say that, as regards the fanciful cases to which I have often alluded in my various accounts of the great detective's work, I did have my reasons for mentioning them.

While many of you doubtless remember me as a contented gentleman who had an experience of women which

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extended over many nations and three separate continents, you may not know that I may also claim an experience of similar breadth with regards to poverty. Whereas Mr. Henry Baker once remarked that "shillings have not been so plentiful with me as they once were," those prized tokens had never been in abundance for me until I began recording the adventures of the world's first private consulting detective. It was only then that I began to discover the sheer delight in being able to partake of a delicious meal at Simpson's Dining Rooms whenever I liked, to enjoy the choicest Tokay, to have Bradley's make up exotic and aromatic tobacco mixtures to my private specifications. Understand that it is exceedingly difficult to give up, or face the prospect of giving up such of life's luxuries after they have once been experienced. And therein lies the reason for the imaginary cornucopia of cases with which I have so often teased you. I knew that one day, Holmes would retire, and then where would I be? At least if my half-witted literary agent and that greedy Greenhough Smith, acting editor of the *Strand* magazine, believed that I had more of what the public wanted secreted away, they might be

more tolerant of me during any future barren literary periods (during which I would be concocting cases to go with the titles I alluded to), still treating me with the respect which had come to mean so much to me.

To be fair, however, the fault is not entirely my own. I lay some of the blame at the feet of my dedicated readers, who accepted unquestioningly the weird and improbable titles of the cases at which I hinted. The Grice Patersons in the island of Uffa? Have any of you ever found such an island on any globe or in any atlas? The Amateur Mendicant Society with their luxurious club? As a member of the less-well-to-do segment of London society for far too great a period of my life, I can assure you that no such organization could ever have been possible. And what about Isadora Persano, who was found to be mad and in possession of a "remarkable worm said to be unknown to science?" The reason it was unknown was because neither it nor Isadora existed in the first place. Sometimes I even lacked the energy to come up with an interesting title, and still you were intrigued. Witness "The Adventure of the Tired Captain." But I digress. I hope that you all may display that spirit of forgiveness which is mankind's greatest gift and

pardon me my offences. Remember me as your faithful servant whose little white lie is hopefully eclipsed by the genuine and, if I may say, exhilarating cases which I have committed to posterity.

I remain your appreciative and loyal fellow-traveler who shall soon arrive at life's most mysterious destination of all.

John H. Watson, M.D

### Nuptials

If Violet Smith married Jonathan Small, divorced him and married Abe Slaney, she'd be Violet Smith Small Slaney.

If Violet Westbury married Abel White, divorced him and married John Clay, she'd be Violet White Clay.

If Violet Hunter moved to the Isle of Mann, she'd be Violet Hunter of Mann.

### What Fools - Answers

1. Alexander Holder
2. Stanley Hopkins
3. Patrick Cairns
4. Jim Browner
5. Victor Hatherley
6. Dr. James Mortimer
7. Sir James Damery
8. Violet De Merville
9. Count Negretto Sylvius
10. Jonathan Small
11. Hall Pycroft
12. Sherlock Holmes
13. Boss McGinty to Tiger Cormac
14. Rance and Lestrade
15. Mike Scanlan to McMurdo



"I have seen the police...." Holmes shook his clenched hands in the air. "Incredible imbecility!" he cried.

*The Five Orange Pips*

*Photo courtesy of Tom Takach*

**Continued from Page 2**

'We'll sell no Holmes before its time.'

The vein thing in his head wasn't as large so I thought I was on to something."

"Men's suits. 'There's always room in our Holmes for you.'"

"Out."

"Automobiles. 'Wouldn't you really rather have a Holmes. How about 'Dogs Love Holmes.'"

"Out. Now."

"Department stores. 'Come see the softer side of Holmes.'"

"I'm not interested," he said pushing me into the hall.

The door closed behind me.

It was worth the attempt. I walked out to the street and stood there. If Holmes wasn't interested, who else could I get? Who would be stupid enough to fall for such a gimmick?

Lestrade.

I asked for directions to Scotland Yard.

*April Fool. It wasn't really Woody Allen, just the Papers on the Sundial.*

**Q:** What do you get when you cross a French dictator with a bucket of dirt? **A:** The Napoleon of Grime.

**Q:** What do you call a fire at the US Mint? **A:** A Silver Blaze.

**Q:** What do you call a rock group with measles? **A:** A Speckled Band.

**Q:** Where would a Scottish investment counselor attend religious services? **A:** At a Stockbroker's Kirk.

If Godfrey Norton became a servant to the Queen (Royal Servant), then returned to America and was elected Vice President, he would be Godfrey Norton, RSVP.

If Watson's "incorrigible" servant girl married the manufacturer of rope products after her firing, she'd be Mary Jane Hemp.

If the Ferguson's nurse married the head trainer at Shoscombe stables, divorced him then married the platelayer in "The Bruce Partington Plans," she'd be Mrs. Mason Mason.

How many Scotland Yarders does it take to solve a crime? We don't know. It's never happened.

**WHAT FOOLS THESE MORTALS BE**

And what fools there are in the Canon! See if you can figure out who said the following "fool"-ish quotes.

1. "Oh,my God! What a blind fool I have been!" \_\_\_\_\_
2. "I was a fool not to call you in at the time, Mr. Holmes." \_\_\_\_\_
3. "Like a fool I left my baccy-pouch upon the table." \_\_\_\_\_
4. "I was a fool to let her go on biding with us - a besotted fool..." \_\_\_\_\_
5. "I have been making a fool of myself," he gasped. \_\_\_\_\_
6. "He only repeated what some fool said at the inquest." (Holmes said this, but who is "He"?)  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. "It may be some fussy, self-important fool; it may be a matter of life or death." (Holmes said this, but who is "It"?) \_\_\_\_\_
8. "He's after some other poor fool and wants to marry her this time." (Who is the fool?)  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. "You see, the damned fool won't arrest us if he can get the stone." \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. "I had just got past the goose-step and learned to handle my musket, when I was fool enough to go swimming in the Ganges." \_\_\_\_\_
11. "The worst of the story is that I show myself up as such a confounded fool.."  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. "Fool that I was to hold my hand." \_\_\_\_\_
13. "'Be quiet, you fool! You'll be the undoing of us yet!'" (Who said it and to whom?) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_
14. What two Scotland Yarders has Holmes referred to as fools? \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_
15. "Good Lord, man! You're a fool not to have been down to the Union House and registered your name the first morning after you came here!" (Who said it and to whom?) \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*"A fool takes in all the lumber of every sort that he comes across, so that the knowledge which might be useful to him gets crowded out, or at best is jumbled up with a lot of other things, so that he has a difficulty in laying his hands upon it."*

**Sherlock Holmes**



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**SPRING GATHERING**

The 23rd Annual Spring Gathering of the Pleasant Places of Florida has been set for May 2, 1998 at 11:30. The setting will be the St. Petersburg home of our host, Dr. Charles Michael Carroll, the infamous Count Negretto Sylvius himself! The adventure is (of course) The Mazarin Stone. Bring items for display or sale. Newsletter exchanges will be available for perusal or borrowing. Lunch will be \$7.00 per person. If you intend to come, please fill out the registration coupon below and get it back to Dr. Mike NO LATER THAN APRIL 20, 1998. Registrants will receive driving directions from the Count. Contact Mike Carroll at  
phone:

*Yes! I definitely want to attend the 23rd Spring Gathering of the Pleasant Places of Florida!  
Count me in and send me directions!*

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*Name(s)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Mailing Address*

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*City, State, Zip Code*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Phone*

\_\_\_ *I will be bringing items for sale.*

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Make checks payable to Mike Carroll,

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