

Hints for the puzzles in the set of puzzles titled "Murder Among the Irises" by Brad Fuller

LOCATION PUZZLE:

1. Holmes's hint: *"Whatsit, did you notice that the artist's names are Lesser and Moore? Could that have another meaning?"*
2. Holmes's hint: *"All these paintings represent a single thing, place or type of person. Whatsit, did you notice any similarities in the names of the objects painted by the artists?"*
3. Holmes's hint: *"Whatsit, you should make note that the two collections include pears and pearls, a chin and a chain, etc. Do you think that is just a coincidence? I think not."*
4. Holmes's hint: *"When written down, the subjects of Lesser's paintings are all only one letter different from the subjects in Moore's paintings. When collected in the order indicated by the numbers, what do the differences spell, my good man?"*
5. Holmes's hint: *"Whatsit, to be specific, the subjects in each of the Moore paintings contain one letter not in their counterpart paintings in the Lesser collection. Those letters spell E-L-E-M-E-?-T-A-R-Y Ah, that missing letter...?"*
6. ANSWER: *"Here is the answer, Whatsit. As for the missing painting, by process of elimination it must pair with the painting of the CROWN. Given the N is the missing letter in ELEMENTARY, the missing painting must be an image of a CROW. CROW is the answer."*

CLUE #1 Featuring Bessel:

1. Holmes's hint: *"The clues on the left, in order, should lead you to the eight-letter answers for each panel in the gate. But, as the text indicates, you must deduce WHERE WE SHOULD START and WHAT DIRECTION we should go for each circular entry."*
2. Holmes's hint: *"Work back and forth between the clues and the answers. They overlap with other answers, so that may help you."*
3. Holmes's hint: *"Whatsit, once you have the answers filled in, did you notice anything odd about them? Don't ignore the letters in the estate name that are part of the gate design. That would be a mistake."*
4. Holmes's hint: *"Do the letters in PINK IRIS FARM have anything in common with the answers you entered?"*
5. Holmes's hint: *"If you entered the right answers, you may notice that each entry contains two letters that match the letter in the middle of the circle. Aha, Whatsit, now you must use your years at sea to do the rest."*
6. ANSWER: *"You may have noticed each answer contains TWO letters that match the center letter in its circle. Does that remind you of anything? It's suggested by the term 'SIGNALLED' in the instructions. These are semaphore configurations. When decoded they spell the answer: SEVEN OF CLUBS."*

CLUE #2 Featuring Percy & Paul:

1. Holmes's hint: "Whatsit, you have made a lot of bluster about the alleged good and evil nature of these boys. They are opposites, like opposite meanings and opposite directions, perhaps?"
2. Holmes's hint: "I see the clues on the left are not in order, but they do reference the answers on the left of the mirror. And the clues on the right reference the righthand entries. Whatsit, you fill in the missing letters to make them answer the clues. But something is odd about the letters you are filling in, you say?"
3. Holmes's hint: "The letters you filled in seem to make words as well. So, 'Bleach perhaps' makes me think WHITEN. And, the letters you filled in, Whatsit, spell WIN, don't they?"
4. Holmes's hint: "So all the letters you must fill in on the left spell words. Could their opposites be on the right side, Whatsit? WIN's opposite is LOSE, for instance, but I don't see LOSE working in any of the answers."
5. Holmes's hint: "Just like a mirror image, the entries on the right are not only opposites to the ones on the left, they are also backwards."
6. Holmes's hint: "Whatsit, now that you have all the opposite pairs of answers, you should connect them by lines. And did you notice the instructions reference INTERSECTIONS?"
7. ANSWER: The letters in the intersections of the lines you drew spell out PAPER FAN. That's the answer."

#### CLUE #3 Featuring Heidi Edington

1. Holmes's hint: "The first step is to determine from which pots she pruned blossoms and how many. But it's not about what she gathered. It's about what she left behind."
2. Holmes's hint: "From clue #2, you can deduce that the hibiscus plant was one from which Heidi did NOT cut a bloom since it has only one blossom. From clue #3, you know that three pots in a straight line, including the hibiscus, were left untouched. The numbers of blossoms indicated at the top of the diagram ('4') mean the anemone, bird of paradise and daffodils were cut. This means two of the three plants — tulips, roses and orchids — were not cut. Also, notice the horizontal row that indicates only '1' blossom was cut. The daffodil must have had a single bloom removed to make the total in the diagonal row equal '4.'"
3. Holmes's hint: "Since the bird of paradise has only two blossoms, you know that one of its flowers was trimmed, leaving the anemone with two blossoms removed. Because of the horizontal row with '3' and the diagonal row with '3,' and knowing from clue #3 that one or both of the orchids and roses were untouched, you can conclude two blooms were cut from the irises, and one each from the ginger and birds of paradise."
4. Holmes's hint: "You can conclude that the bouquet contained eleven blooms. How? The horizontal rows of '6' + '3' + '1' = 10. Since '2' blossoms were taken from the diagonal row with the dahlias, we know that one dahlia must have been cut, making the total bouquet eleven stems! From there the other numbers fall into place, including one peony, two tulips, zero roses and zero orchids."
5. Holmes's hint: "What do you think the remaining blossoms might indicate? The number of blossoms remaining in each pot will help you construct the sequence of letters in an eleven-letter answer. But how? Could the answer relate to the flower names?"

6. Holmes's hint: *"The number of remaining blossoms equates to which letter in the flower name you use in the answer. The dahlias have two blooms left which means the second letter in 'dahlias' is used."*
7. ANSWER: *"The letters in the flower names add up to ANGEL BROOCH."*

#### CLUE #4 Featuring Brook Van Scaff

1. Holmes's hint: *"What could these stamps have to do with the solution to this puzzle? Did you notice I mentioned how our interests overlap?"*
2. Holmes's hint: *"Focus on the visual elements of the stamps, not the countries."*
3. Holmes's hint: *"If you choose the groups of three correctly, you will notice something about them overlaps, as mentioned in the text."*
4. Holmes's hint: *"Did you notice that the visuals include a KANGAROO and a ROOSTER? In a sense, those words could overlap, right?"*
5. Holmes's hint: *"When you discover the correct groups of three visuals, you'll see that all overlap except for one letter in the middle word of each trio. Oh by the way, Whatsit, the numbers on the stamps aren't prices. They are the number of letters in the word represented by each picture."*
6. ANSWER: *"The phrase is a question: THE LETTERS THAT DO NOT OVERLAP END UP IN THE CIRCLE SPACES. (Example: KANGAROO-ROOSTER-TERRIER. THE 'S' IS IN THE CIRCLE SPACE. THE FOUR LETTERS TOGETHER SPELL THE ANSWER: 'KEYS.' (THE 13<sup>TH</sup> STAMP IS A DOOR LOCK, ALSO A CLUE TO 'KEYS.'"*

#### META PUZZLE:

1. Holmes's hint: *"All four answers to the previous puzzles now can be seen together, but what do they mean? Throughout the story, references have been made to cards, keys and jewelry, and a fan was shown at least once. So, do these items point to someone in particular? As the text says, stop looking at the items individually and think of what they say as a group."*
2. Holmes's hint: *"Think of the clues in the context of a word puzzle instead of just a murder mystery."*
3. Holmes's hint: *"Focus on the letters in the items' names instead of the items themselves. Also, Whatsit, I told you to use your powers of deduction. Take me literally on that point and you can get the answer."*
4. Holmes's hint: *"You may have realized that the letters of the four items can be removed ('power of deduction' and 'process of elimination') from the names on the suspect list. If you do so, Percy, Paul, Brook Van Scaff and Bessel have all their letters removed, but some of Heidi's name remains. As stated in the instructions, you have 'eliminated all suspects but one.' But what did she have to say when accused?"*
5. ANSWER: *"When the letters are removed from the suspect list, only 6 letters remain and they are all in HEIDI EDINGTON. In order, they are 'I-D-I-D-I-T. She confesses 'I DID IT!' Mystery solved, Whatsit!"*

#### BONUS PUZZLE:

1. Holmes's hint: *"Whatsit, look at the number of spaces next to each chess piece to have an idea of how long the name of each weapon will be. Then follow the squares according to how each piece moves in chess."*
2. Holmes's hint: *"You may want to start with a knight since it has more limited options for moving. It just takes trial and error to find a path for each piece that spells the name of a weapon."*
3. Holmes's hint: *"Mark out letters as they are used. Remember each is used only once. The more you gather, the more process of elimination makes solving easier."*
4. Holmes's hint: *"Some of the weapons are less commonly associated with murder, such as a SABER or a BRICK. But, all can be quite deadly."*
5. Holmes's hint: *"Eventually you will find: POKER, BRICK, CYANIDE, LUGER, HATCHET, POISON GAS, SABER, ARROW and CLEAVER. But where is the extra tenth weapon secreted away? Look at my quote about where you would hide a weapon most successfully."*
6. ANSWER: *"Look at the middle column of the weapons list you created. It's the most exotic weapon of all, a KING COBRA. As I said, it's in the 'middle of the challenge.'"*