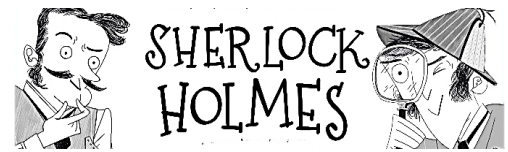


Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle by Arthur Conan Doyle*

### **Part 2: Mr. Baker's Visit**

It was just before 6:30 when I arrived back at Baker Street. Within a few minutes, Mr. Baker had arrived as well.

Holmes wasted no time getting to the point.

"Mr. Henry Baker, tell me, is this your hat, sir?" he asked, gesturing to the hat still hanging from the back of the chair.



Mr. Baker smiled. "It is indeed, Mr. Holmes, and I am most grateful for your finding it and keeping it for me."

"And yet," said Holmes, "you lost this hat two days ago. We had expected to see an advertisement asking if anyone had found it."

"To be quite frank with you, Mr. Holmes, I could not afford to place one. The last few years have been very difficult for me. I had already spent what little money I had on Christmas gifts. I simply did not have enough to pay for an advertisement as well."

"I quite understand," said Holmes. "Now, about your goose. I'm afraid it has been eaten."

Mr. Henry Baker looked from Holmes to the big, fat goose, then back to Holmes. "Eaten? But then, what is this on the table?"

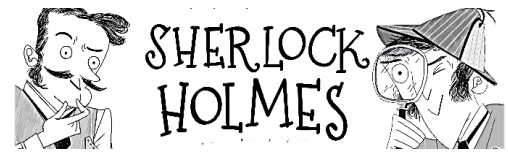
"A replacement goose," Holmes said. "The first one would not have lasted this long, so we ate it and bought you a fresh goose to replace it. I hope this isn't a problem."

Mr. Henry Baker beamed. "Problem? Not at all! A goose is a goose, is it not? And this one is the same size as the other, only fresher."

Holmes handed the hat to Mr. Baker. "So, here is your hat, sir, and there is the replacement goose. I hope your family will enjoy it."

"You, sir, are most kind," said Mr. Baker, taking his hat and putting the goose over his shoulder. "My wife will be very pleased indeed when I return home with this bird. I do not know how I can thank you enough."

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"Well, there is one thing you could do for me," said Holmes. "Would you tell me how you got your goose?"

"By all means," said Mr. Baker. "I got it from Mr. Windigate at the Alpha Inn, but where he got it, I have no idea."

Thank you, Mr. Baker," said Holmes. "Now, hurry and get that goose home to your wife."

"That settles it," said Holmes after our visitor had left. "I'm quite convinced that Henry Baker is an innocent man. Otherwise, he would never have settled for the replacement bird. The thief would have insisted on the original goose since that's where the stolen jewel was hidden. Mr. Baker, on the other hand, was completely satisfied with the bird we gave him. Clearly, he knew absolutely nothing about the Countess's blue carbuncle."

"So where do we go from here, Holmes," I asked?

"To the Alpha Inn, my friend," said Holmes, grabbing his coat. "We need to find out where Mr. Windigate bought that goose,"

### **Part 3: At the Alpha Inn**

Fifteen minutes later, we were at the Alpha Inn.

"Mr. Windigate," said Holmes to the landlord, "Mr. Henry Baker recommended you to me. He showed me a particularly fine goose he'd gotten from you, sir, and I wondered if you might have any more available."

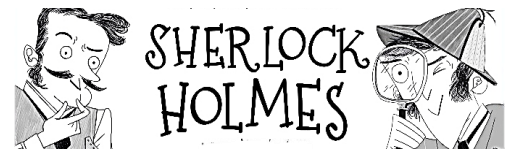
"Sorry," said Mr. Windigate, "I did order a couple dozen geese this Christmas for my good friends and customers; I do this every year. But, they're all gone, sir. Not one left."

"Could you tell us where they come from, Mr. Windigate?" I asked.

"Why, of course. I bought them from Mrs. Oakshott over on Brixton road. She raises the best geese in London. Hand fed, they are."

We thanked Mr. Windigate and left. We were no sooner out the door when we heard shouting coming from inside. We looked back to see Windigate arguing with a man who had entered the inn just as we were leaving.

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"Mr. Ryder, I've already told you that I don't remember if one of the geese I bought from Mrs. Oakshott had a black stripe on its tail," shouted Windigate. "What difference does it make?"

"But that goose was mine," protested the man who had just arrived. "I need to find it. Mrs. Oakshott said she sent it to you by mistake."

"No mistake. I ordered and paid for those birds."

"But one of them was mine," the man repeated. "It got mixed up with yours."

"Listen, Mr. Ryder, I paid for those geese," said Mr. Windigate. "Mrs. Oakshott has plenty more where they came from. If she owes you a goose, just ask her for another one."

"But this one was special," said the man.

"I bet it was," Holmes whispered quietly. "Watson, it looks like we have found our thief. Why else would anyone be so concerned about one particular goose? Come. When he leaves the market we will have a quiet word with him."

As soon as the man left the inn, Holmes approached him.

"Excuse me, Mr. Ryder," said Holmes politely, "I could not help overhearing your conversation with Mr. Windigate. I think that I could be of assistance to you in this matter."

"Who are you, and what business is this of yours?" the man demanded.

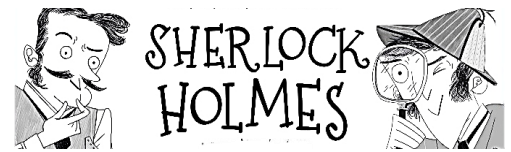
"My name is Sherlock Holmes, and it is my business to know what other people don't know."

"But you know nothing about this," said Mr. Ryder.

"On the contrary," said Holmes, "I know almost everything about it. You are trying to find a particular goose which was sold by Mrs. Oakshott to Mr. Windigate at the Alpha Inn. The goose you're interested in is white and has a black stripe across its tail. Is that not so?"

The man stared at Holmes. "And do you know where the goose is?"

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"I know exactly where it is," said Holmes. "Would you like me to take you there?"

"Yes, indeed!" answered the amazed man.

"Then, meet me at 221b Baker Street tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock sharp."

*To be continued . . .*

Questions:

1. How does Holmes infer that Mr. Henry Baker had nothing to do with the theft of the jewel?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What convinces Holmes that Mr. Ryder is the thief?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Why do you think that Holmes wants Ryder to meet him at his apartment?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Have any ideas about how the blue carbuncle got into the goose?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What do you think will happen next?