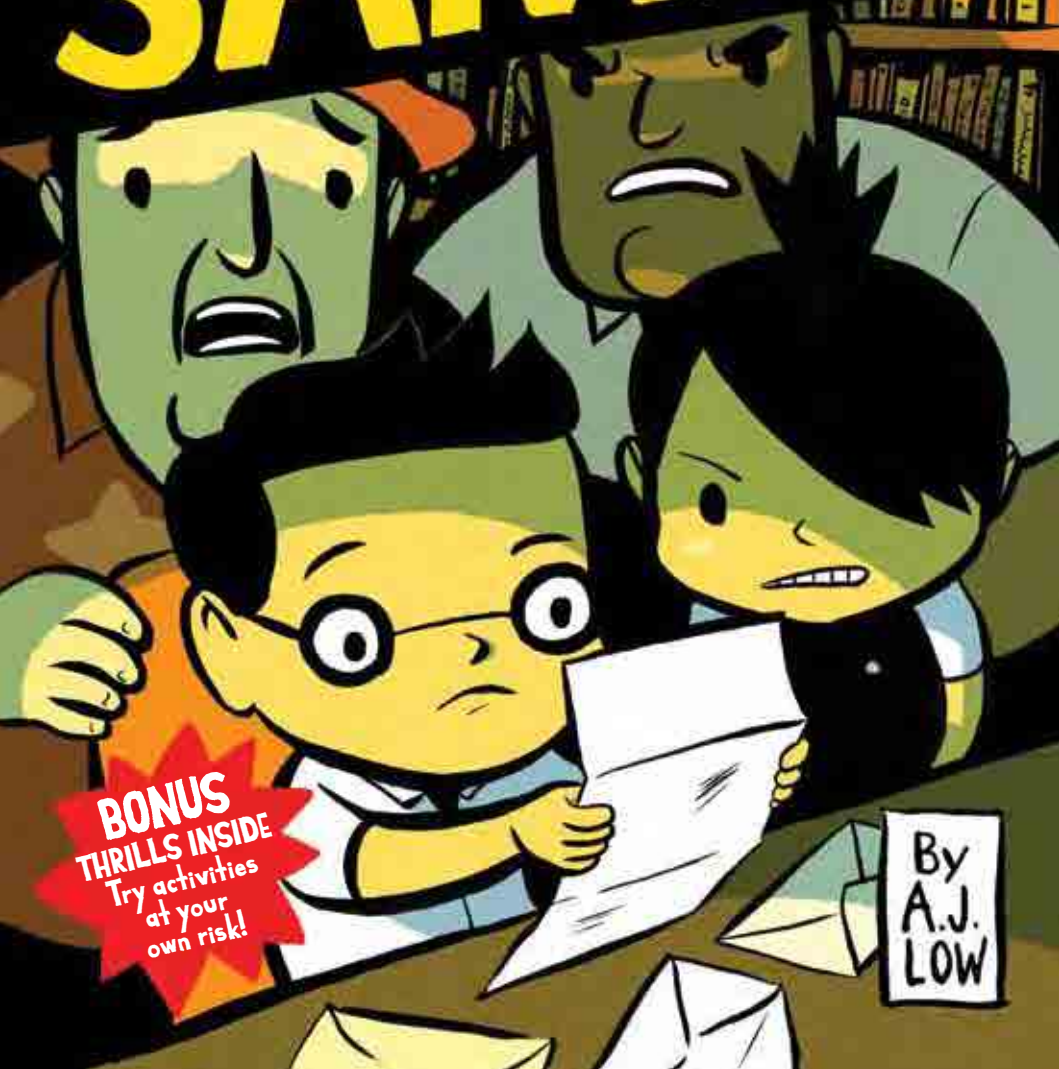


SHERLOCK SAM

and the **SINISTER
LETTERS** in
BRAS BASAH



**BONUS
THRILLS INSIDE**
Try activities
at your
own risk!

By
A.J.
LOW

SHERLOCK SAM and the SINISTER LETTERS in BRAS BASAH



SHER SAM

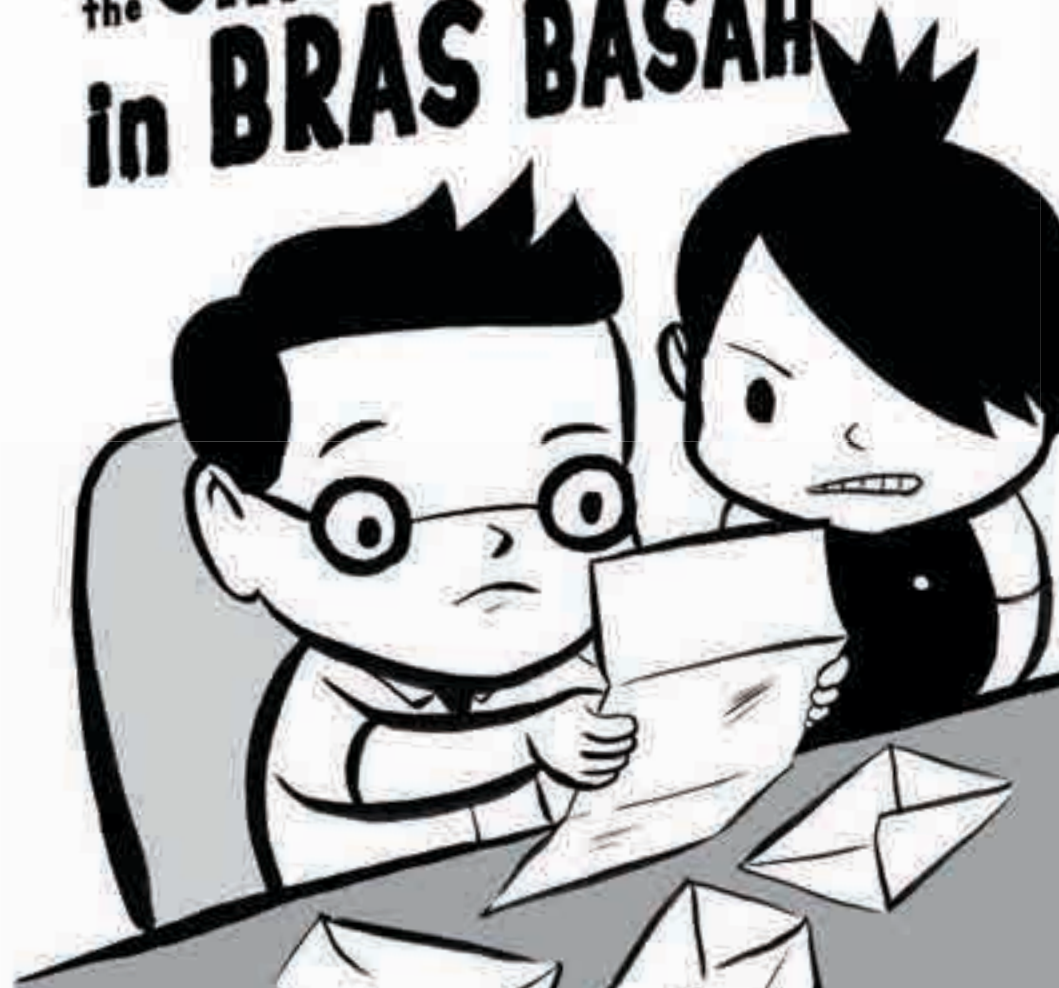
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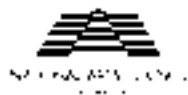


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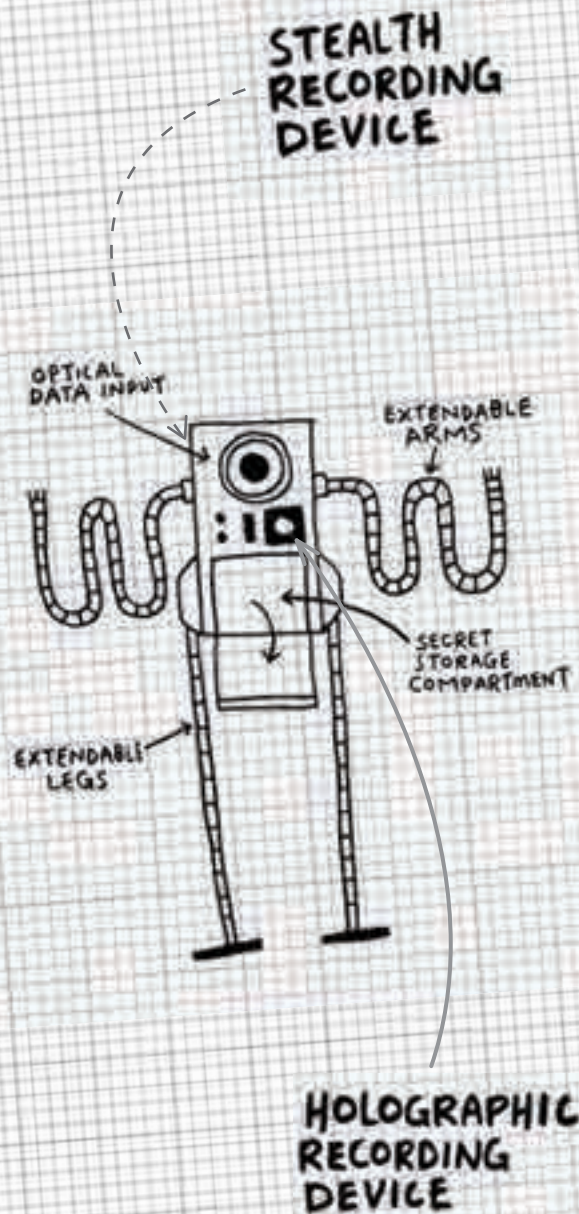
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and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination
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FOR THE OCTOPUSES:
Wherever in the world you all may be





CHAPTER ONE

"Everything-has-gone-black," Watson said.

"It'll only be for a second," I replied, squinting in concentration.

I was standing in front of my robot, putting the finishing touches to the new equipment I had just added to him. Unfortunately, a side effect of my tinkering meant that Watson would lose his vision function for a short while. Needless to say, he didn't take to that kindly.

"It-has-been-twelve-seconds-and-everything-is-still-black," Watson said.

I pushed a button.

"My-vision-has-returned," Watson reported. "You-have-been-eating-biscuits-in-bed-again. I-see-crumbs."

I made a mental note to install a vacuuming function in Watson. Then instead of just complaining, he could be of some use to the constant crumb situation that infested my bedroom.

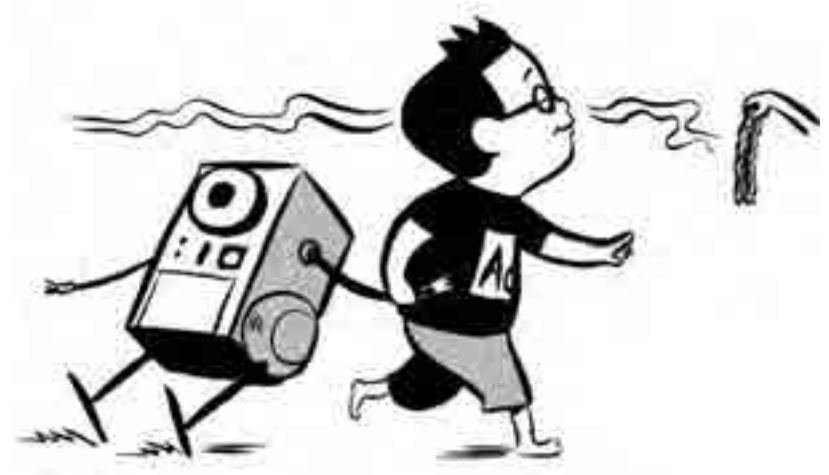
"We'll test out your new super power tonight, Watson! But for now, dinner!" I said. "I smell..."

I paused and sniffed the air.

"Bacon!" I cried.

Dragging Watson by the arm, I dashed out of my bedroom.

"Three, two, one...A-HA!" Wendy exclaimed as I entered the dining room. She was holding a slice of bacon and waving it in the air. My



sister could be very strange at times.

"A-ha, what?" I said, taking my seat. Wait, the dinner table was empty! Where was dinner?

"I was just testing a theory. Dad and you aren't the only ones who experiment," Wendy replied, snickering. She popped the slice of bacon in her mouth and chewed. "Mom said dinner will be ready in five minutes, by the way."

A trap! I had been lured to the dinner table by a bacon-waving sister!

"I-believe-this-time-it-is-Wendy-one-Sherlock-zero," Watson said.

I glared at my robot as I walked to the kitchen to see if I could help Mom.

Dad was already there, carefully putting crisp slices of bacon on top of lettuce, cucumber, tomato and cheese. Mom had grilled the bread so that the cheese had been melted to perfection, just the way I liked it! She was putting the finishing touches to her potato salad—bacon bits! I helped carry everything to the dinner table quickly.

“No sneaking extra helpings of bacon, Sam!” Mom called out from the kitchen. Mom was a great cook, but I was never allowed extra helpings of anything, except vegetables.

Wendy grinned at me widely as I sat down. I frowned at her in return. She pulled out a slice of bacon from her sandwich and waved it about. However, before I could inform Mom about Wendy’s devious ploy, she put it on my plate, right on top of my sandwich, and smiled.

Sometimes, having a big sister was pretty nice.

I grinned back and quickly popped the bacon into my mouth before Mom caught us.

Dad, Mom and Watson finally sat down as well.

“So, Sam, what’s this letter game I hear people are playing?” Dad asked. “I read about it in the papers. The reporter called it a massive island wide game of Chain Mail.”

“It’s not a game, Dad. It’s a sociological experiment,” I replied. Dad was a genius engineer and loved science; he understood the importance of experiments.

“Yes, of course, son. Could you explain this sociological experiment to your old Dad?” Dad said, smiling.

“Basically, you receive letters from people all around Singapore with instructions on how to send out your own letter to another person,” I said. “We have to use paper and pen, and snail mail. Sometimes it’s your friends who send you letters, but they’re not supposed to let you know.”

“Oh! That’s like the game we used to play when we were kids,” Mom said. “This was long before email was invented. No one writes letters any more. Such a pity.”

“We’re not playing it, Mom. We’re participating in an experiment,” I said.

“Yes, dear,” Mom replied. She and Dad grinned at each other.

“For our game, I mean, experiment,” Wendy said before I could correct her, “Sam and I wrote about our favourite books.”

“Yeah! Then we mailed our letters to someone else with instructions for them to do the same,” I said.

“How did you kids get involved in this experiment?” Dad asked.

“Nazhar was the first to receive a letter. And then later on, Wendy, Jimmy, I and even Watson received letters too!” I said. My initial reaction had been to try and track down the sender. It was a mystery! It had to be solved!

But Nazhar convinced me that not knowing who sent the letters was an important part of the experiment, and that by seeking him or her out, I would be ruining the experiment. It was logical, so I stopped my search.

“Wow!” Dad said. He turned excitedly to Mom and asked, “I wonder if we’ll receive any chain letters?”

“I hope so,” Mom replied. She looked just as excited as Dad. Mom loved to read and talk with Dad about the books she read.

“May I have just one more slice of bacon?” I asked hopefully.

“No more bacon, Sam. But if you’re still hungry, I can make you a tuna sandwich,” Mom replied.

“Er, no thanks, Mom,” I replied. Tuna. Always with the tuna.

Later that evening, at 9.30pm, I sent Watson to the kitchen to test out his new ability. I instructed him to come back to the room at

10.30pm with his findings and double chocolate Khong Guan biscuits (if the coast was clear).

At 10.32pm, Watson returned to our room.

I immediately asked him for the most important thing.

“Did you get the double chocolate biscuits?” I said.

“No. Someone-came-to-the-kitchen-while-I-was-there,” Watson said.

“Was it Dad sneaking ice cream again?” I asked. “No, wait, don’t tell me. SHOW me!”

I ran over to turn the bedroom lights off.

With a soft whirring sound, Watson’s tummy started to glow and a beam of light shot out from him. The new holographic projector I had installed in him earlier this evening worked!

I saw a small, fuzzy image (I would have to recalibrate it later). However, the scene that Watson was playing back showed an empty kitchen.

“There’s no one there, Watson,” I said.

“Patience-is-a-virtue-of-aspiring-young-detectives,” Watson replied.

I watched a few moments more, wondering what exactly would reward my patience.

Suddenly, I saw what Watson was referring to. Someone had entered the dark kitchen. The sneaking figure was walking on tiptoe and kept looking behind its shoulder, checking to see if anyone was following it. I immediately deduced that it didn’t want anyone to know it was in the kitchen, or else it would have turned the light on! I shifted closer to the holographic image to get a better look. It had to be Dad. He knew Mom had a “No snacks after 10pm” rule. The figure reached up to the top shelf and took out the tin of Khong Guan biscuits! MY Khong Guan biscuits!

“It has to be Dad!” I exclaimed.

Just then, the dark figure walked over to the kitchen table to open the tin. The moonlight from the window hit its face.



“MOM?” I said. I turned to Watson, pointed at my holographic mother and exclaimed in shock, “It’s MOM! MOM is sneaking Khong Guan biscuits! MOM!”

“So-it-appears,” Watson replied.

I was too surprised to do anything, but the last thing I remembered thinking before I fell asleep was: I wonder what Mom’s favourite Khong Guan biscuit is.





ABOUT THE AUTHORS

The writers behind the pseudonym A. J. Low are the husband-and-wife team, Adan Jimenez and Felicia Low-Jimenez. Born in California to Mexican immigrant parents, Adan became an immigrant himself when he moved to Singapore after graduating from New York University with an English Literature degree. He previously co-wrote a children's book, *Twisted Journeys #22: Hero City*. He loves comics, LEGO®, books, movies, games (analog and video), *Doctor Who* and sandwiches, and one day hopes to own a store that sells all these things. Felicia was born and raised in Singapore. She spent most of her childhood with her head in the clouds and her nose buried in a book, and now daydreams of owning her own bookstore. She has a graduate degree in Literary Theory, and the *Sherlock Sam* series is Felicia's debut writing effort, after accumulating years of experience buying, selling and marketing books.

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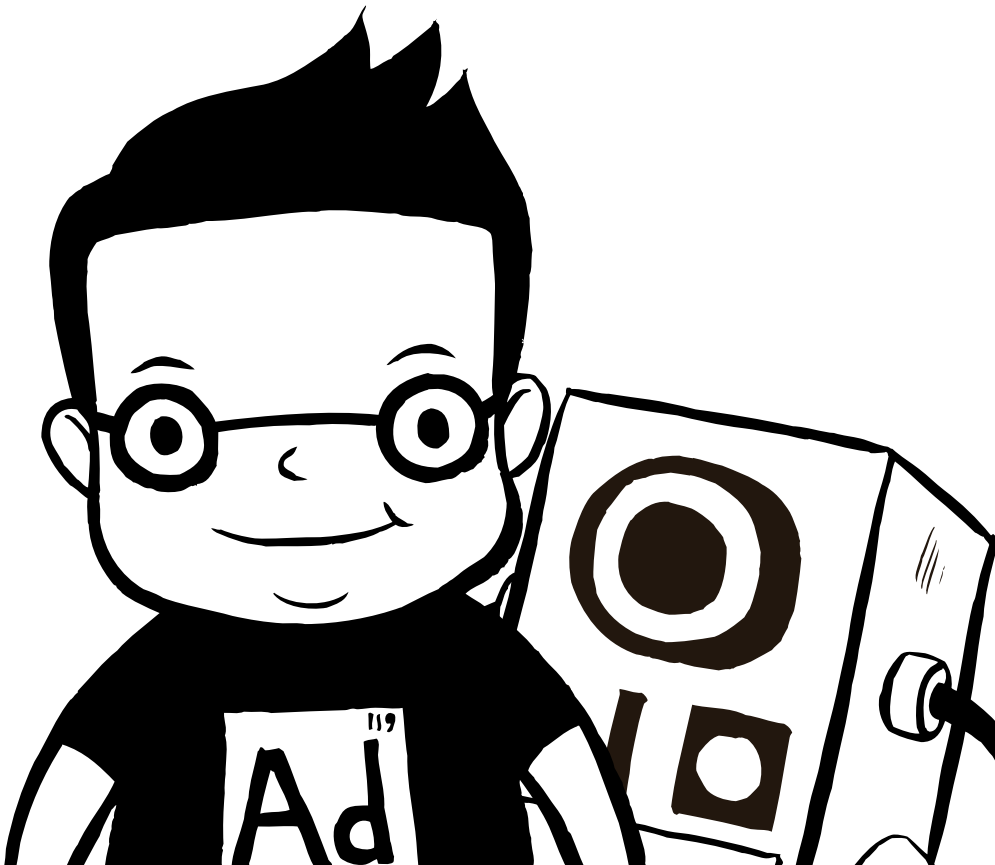
ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

drewscape is Andrew Tan, a freelance illustrator from Singapore. His work consists of drawing storyboards and illustrating for advertising agencies as well as magazines. He enjoys creating comics just for the fun of it. He loves experimenting with various styles and mediums, hunting for new art tools, and discovering new graphic novels with fresh and interesting drawing styles. His inspirations come from daily life, manga, European comics and science fiction. drewscape published his first graphic novel, *Monsters, Miracles & Mayonnaise*, in 2012.

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