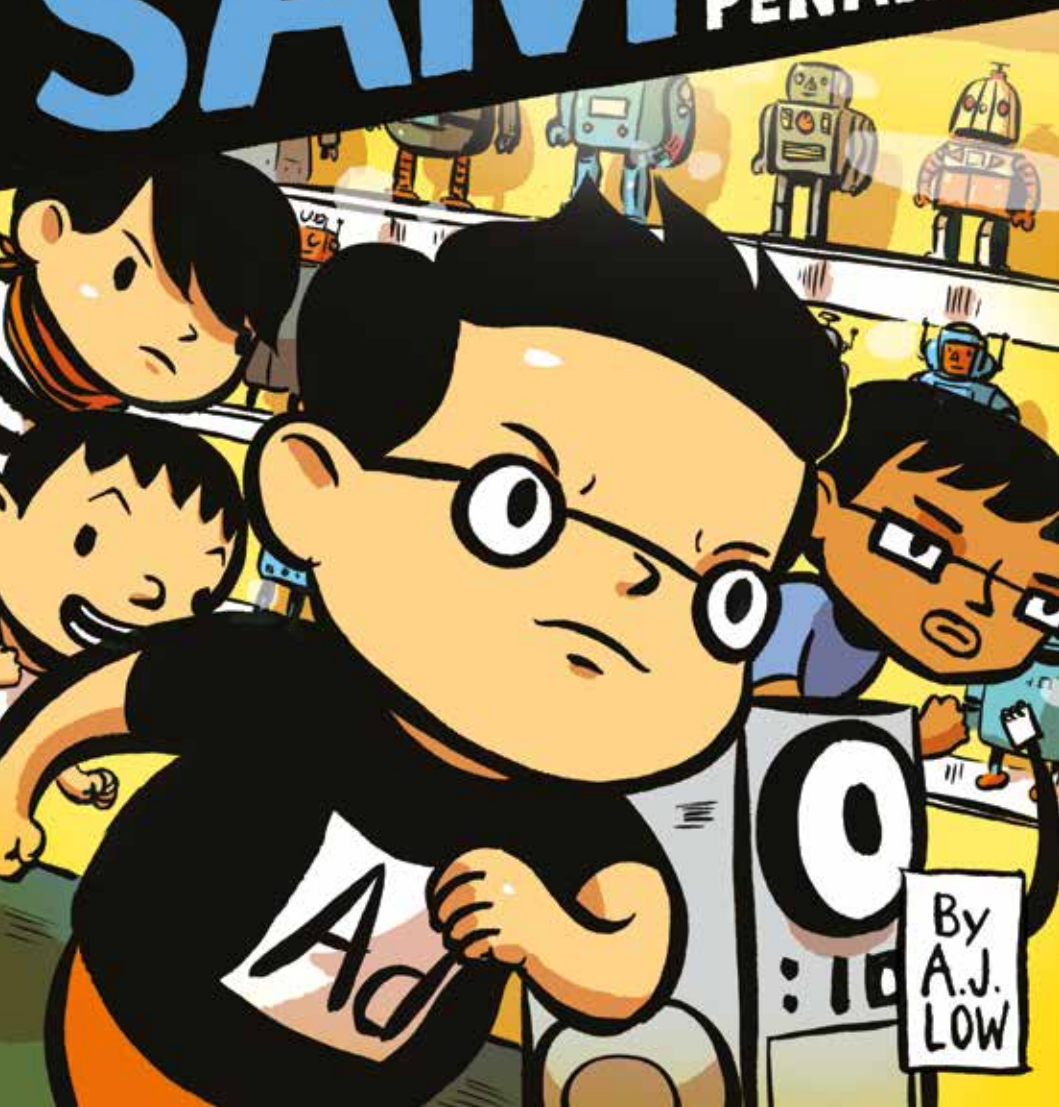


# SHERLOCK SAM

and the  
**VANISHED  
ROBOT** in  
**PENANG**



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# SHER SAM

# LOCK

and the **VANISHED  
ROBOT** in **PENANG**

By  
A.J.  
LOW

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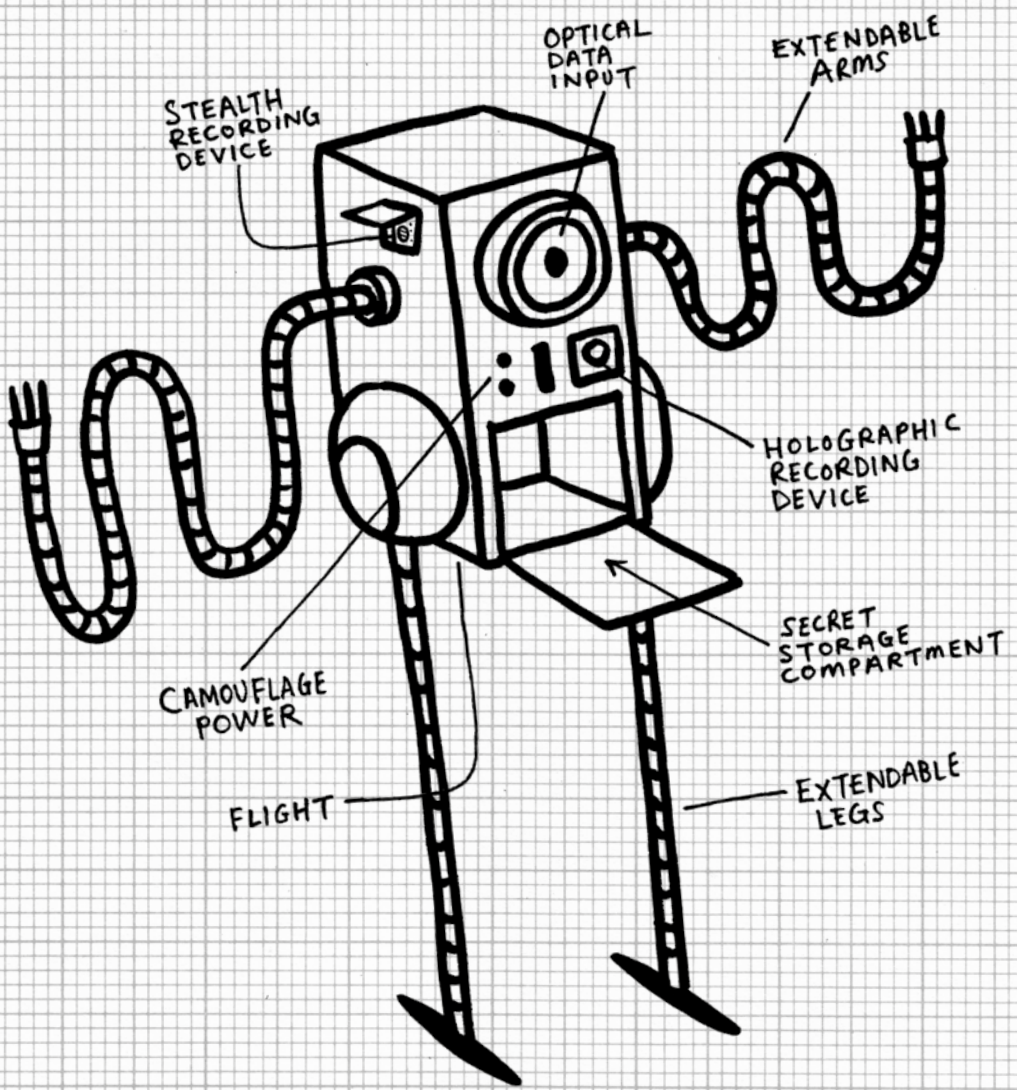
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For the artists of Penang, especially  
Julian "Lefty" Kam for feeding us  
and bringing us around!





# CHAPTER ONE



"I-do-not-appreciate-having-my-parts-exposed-in-public," Watson said.

It was 8am on Saturday morning and we were at Changi Airport, Terminal One. The week-long March school holidays had just started and our parents were taking us to Penang, Malaysia, for the weekend! Dad had checked us in online, so we didn't have to check in our bags for another hour. I suggested that we have breakfast as it was the

most important meal of the day. Fortunately, McDonald's served breakfast until 11am.

"I would be a lot faster if you'd stop complaining about it," I told Watson. I was holding a screwdriver in both hands, trying to turn a particularly stubborn bolt. Trust Watson to have stubborn bolts.

"The-temperature-has-decreased-by-0.05%-since-you-started-working-on-me-in-public," Watson added.

The air conditioning at Changi Airport was very cold, but I didn't have a choice. Mom made us rush out of the house and I could not finish my upgrade on Watson in time. And I wasn't one to leave my work unfinished.

"Wow! I didn't know Watson was a thermometer as well, Sherlock!" Jimmy exclaimed. He had on a green baseball cap and a milk moustache.

Jimmy was my classmate in Primary Five. When Jimmy's grandma heard that we were

going to Penang, she asked if it would be okay for Jimmy to go with us on our trip. Jimmy's mom travelled a lot for work and was currently in Penang. Jimmy was super excited to see his mom!

"I'm pretty sure you're going to damage your robot," a snooty voice said from behind us.

I turned my head and looked at Eliza. Wendy, my big sister who was a year older than me, was standing right next to her. Both girls were holding trays filled with food. Wendy did not look particularly happy. She and Eliza were in the same level in school, but they weren't the best of friends (and that's putting it lightly).

"Are those my pancakes, Wendy?" I asked, focused on the most important thing. "You took the maple syrup packets right? And butter?"

"Please-finish-my-upgrades-before-you-start-eating," Watson said. "I-do-not-want-

ants-in-my-circuits-again.”

The two girls took a seat at our table. My parents and Nazhar were still waiting for their food. Once it was decided that Jimmy was coming with us, my dad invited the rest of the Supper Club as well! Unfortunately for Wendy, he once again forgot that Eliza wasn't officially part of the Supper Club and invited her along too. My dad is a genius engineer, but he is a forgetful genius engineer.

“I think I'm done!” I said, giving the problematic bolt one final twist. I quickly shut the open hatch on Watson's body and sat back to admire my work.

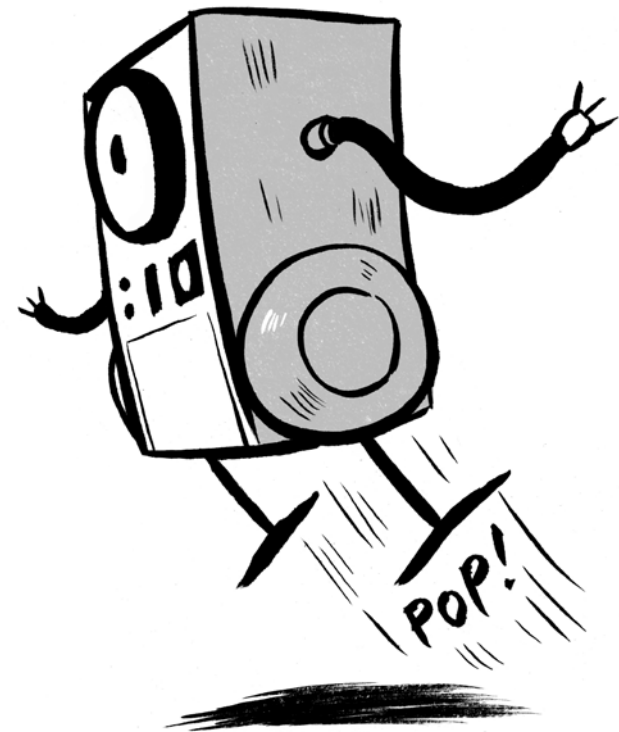
“Why-are-you-staring-at-me-strangely?” Watson asked. “Did-you-leave-grease-on-my-face?”

“Try out your new power now!” I said. I really wanted to eat my pancakes while they were still warm. “Everyone! Look!”

Wendy and Eliza ignored me and continued

eating their breakfast in silence, but Jimmy was so excited he was practically vibrating in his seat.

A loud popping sound burst out from Watson, startling some of the people around us. I was worried for a second. Had I turned that dastardly bolt too tightly? Just as I was reaching for my robot to make sure all was in order, Watson popped once again and flew!



Okay, not so much flew as hovered about fifteen inches off the ground, but still! He was defying gravity!

“Watson can fly!” Dad exclaimed. He, Mom and Nazhar had walked up to our table with their trays.

“Oh wow, Sherlock!” Nazhar said, his dark brown eyes wide behind his glasses. Nazhar was Wendy’s classmate and had become a good friend. I often relied on his knowledge of history to help solve my cases.

“Watson is Superman!” Jimmy shouted, doing his favourite Superman pose.

“You guys need to be quiet,” Wendy said grumpily. “Everyone is turning to look at us.”

Mom, who knew the real reason for Wendy’s grumpiness patted her shoulder before sitting down next to her. Wendy gave a small smile.

“Watson, come sit down and eat your batteries,” Mom said. Mom was a fantastic cook. She didn’t like us (especially me) eating

at fast food places too often, but we managed to convince her that it was okay this time around because it was a holiday treat.

Watson gently plonked himself back onto the seat and started to consume the recycled batteries that were his power source.

“Are you guys excited about going to Penang?” Dad asked. He was gleefully biting into his McMuffin. He didn’t get to eat fast food very often either.

Everyone nodded, even Wendy, who seemed to become less grumpy the more she ate. See, breakfast was truly the most important meal of the day. I was already looking forward to a second breakfast on the plane!

“Have any of you been to Penang before?” Mom asked us.

“I’ve been to Kuala Lumpur before,” Eliza said, elegantly taking a bite out of her Egg McMuffin. “But this will be my first time in Penang. My dad’s company has an office there,



though." Eliza's dad ran an outdoor adventure company.

"I've been to Kuala Lumpur and Malacca," Nazhar added, "but not to Penang. My dad told me a lot about Penang's history and I'm really excited to see the Khoo Kongsi."

"*Gong xi?*" Jimmy asked. "Like Happy New Year, *Gong Xi Fa Cai?*" His milk moustache had grown into a milk goatee.

"A *kongsi* is a clan house, Jimmy," Nazhar said in his big brotherly way. "Maybe we can go see it, Uncle?"

"Definitely!" Dad said. "We want this trip to be fun for everyone!"

"And we need to try all the local food," I added. I had done my research this time around. I knew exactly what I had to eat during this trip. I was particularly intrigued by something they called a *pasembur*.

"I want to see the artwork in George Town," Wendy said. "They have street art and wire

art. Did you know that the street artist is from Lithuania? He paints on the sides of buildings, like graffiti. I've seen pictures in my books." My sister was an aspiring artist.

"Do-we-need-to-check-in-soon?" Watson asked.

"About that, Watson," Dad said. He looked a bit nervous. "I'm afraid airline regulation requires that you travel as, erm, well..." Dad stumbled over his words. "You need to, erm..."

"You'll need to travel as carry-on luggage, Watson," Mom said. "But don't worry. It'll only be for an hour-and-a-half, and you'll be in the luggage compartment right above our seats."

"I-am-not-luggage," Watson said. "Even-though-I-have-ten-packets-of-chocolate-Khong-Guan-biscuits-in-my-secret-compartment."

"Dad! Mom! Watson isn't luggage! He's my robot! He's family!" I exclaimed. The ten packets of Khong Guan biscuits were

emergency rations. You can never be too prepared. Who knows when a snack attack might occur?

"I know, son," Dad said sadly, "but as you know, our rules and regulations haven't quite caught up to our technological advances yet." He patted Watson on his metal head.

"But—" I said. It really wasn't fair!

"It-is-okay," Watson said. "I-am-excellent-at-keeping-myself-entertained. I-have-a-Dungeons-and-Dragons-game-in-my-memory-banks."

"I'm afraid you won't be able to do that, Watson," Mom said. Now she was starting to look a little nervous too.

"Why-is-that?" Watson asked.

"The airline is worried that your electromagnetic waves will interfere with their electronic and navigation systems," Mom said. "You're going to have to turn yourself off."

"It-is-the-curse-of-having-a-magnetic-

personality," Watson said. "Next-time-I-will-be-travelling-First-Class."

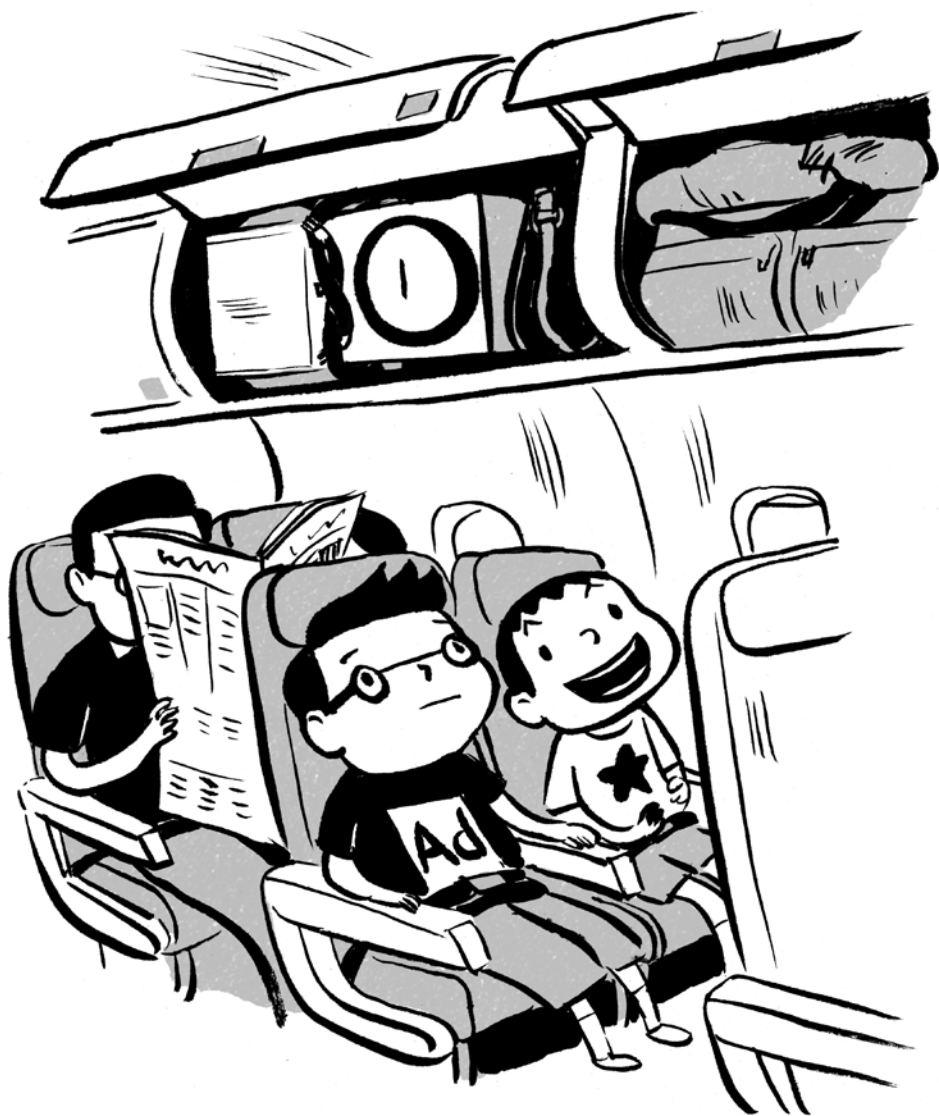
I grumbled a bit more, but when Mom pointed out that the choices were between turning Watson off or leaving him at home, I had to accept my fate. Well, accept Watson's fate. On his behalf. Watson, stoic as ever, appeared to be okay with the unexpected turn of events but I was still feeling quite miffed.

"Erm, Sam," Dad said, clearing his throat. "There's something else." He looked even more nervous.

"Well...you see. We're not travelling on a regular airline this time. So..." Dad said, before turning to Mom. "Erm, well...you tell him!"

Mom sighed deeply and rolled her eyes. She looked at me and said, "It's not the end of the world, Sam. They just don't serve food on our flight as they are a budget airline."

That was the last straw! Who do I send my feedback letter to?



...

## CHAPTER TWO



"I still can't believe they made us pay for our snacks on the plane!" I said, huffing indignantly.

"Yes-you-were-clearly-the-most-inconvenienced-party-on-that-flight," Watson said. Mom had turned him on as soon it was safe to do so, and he had not stopped grumbling since.

"Also, I don't recall you paying for anything, Sam," Wendy added.

We had arrived at Penang International Airport and were waiting for the van Dad

# ABOUT THE CHARACTERS



## **SAMUEL TAN CHER LOCK a.k.a. SHERLOCK SAM**

Ten-year-old Sherlock Sam's heroes are Sherlock Holmes, Batman and his dad. Extremely smart and observant, Sherlock loves solving any and all mysteries—big or small. He loves comics and superheroes!



## **WATSON**

Built by Sherlock to be his trusty, cheery sidekick, Watson is, instead, a grumpy 'old man' who is reluctantly drawn into Sherlock's adventures; or as Watson perceives them, his misadventures. Watson is environmentally friendly.



## **WENDY**

Sherlock's older sister. A year older than him, Wendy is a very talented artist but she is terrible at Chinese. Sherlock would like to be taller than her soon. She doesn't like wearing dresses or skirts.



## **JIMMY**

Sherlock's classmate. Jimmy is the only boy in a Peranakan family with four sisters. Seemingly much younger than his actual age, everything is exciting and magical to Jimmy. He has terrible handwriting.



## **DAD**

An engineer, Sherlock's dad is a scientific genius, but is rather forgetful and bumbling in real life. He has never stopped reading superhero comics—a love he's passed on to his son.



## **MOM**

A homemaker, Sherlock's mom is half-Peranakan and is constantly experimenting in the kitchen. Sherlock often wonders why she tempts him with food, then does not allow him to eat his fill.



## **NAZHAR**

Usually shy and quiet, Nazhar will stand up for his friends when they are threatened. Sherlock admires him for his knowledge of history which Nazhar learned from his dad. Nazhar believes in the supernatural much to the dismay of Sherlock.



## **ELIZA**

One of the prettiest and most popular girls in school, Eliza often bullies kids she sees as weird or geeky, for example, Sherlock Sam and his friends. Eliza spends a lot of time in front of the bathroom mirror, making sure her hair is neat.



## **OFFICER SIVA**

A Deputy Superintendent in the Singapore Police Force, Officer Siva is an experienced policeman who is extremely impressed by the intelligence he sees in Sherlock Sam. He loves *kaya* toast and coffee from Chin Mee Chin, a bakery in Katong.

## 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.

You can contact the authors at [sherlock.sam.sg@gmail.com](mailto:sherlock.sam.sg@gmail.com) or by visiting [sherlocksam.wordpress.com](http://sherlocksam.wordpress.com) and [facebook.com/SherlockSamSeries](https://facebook.com/SherlockSamSeries).

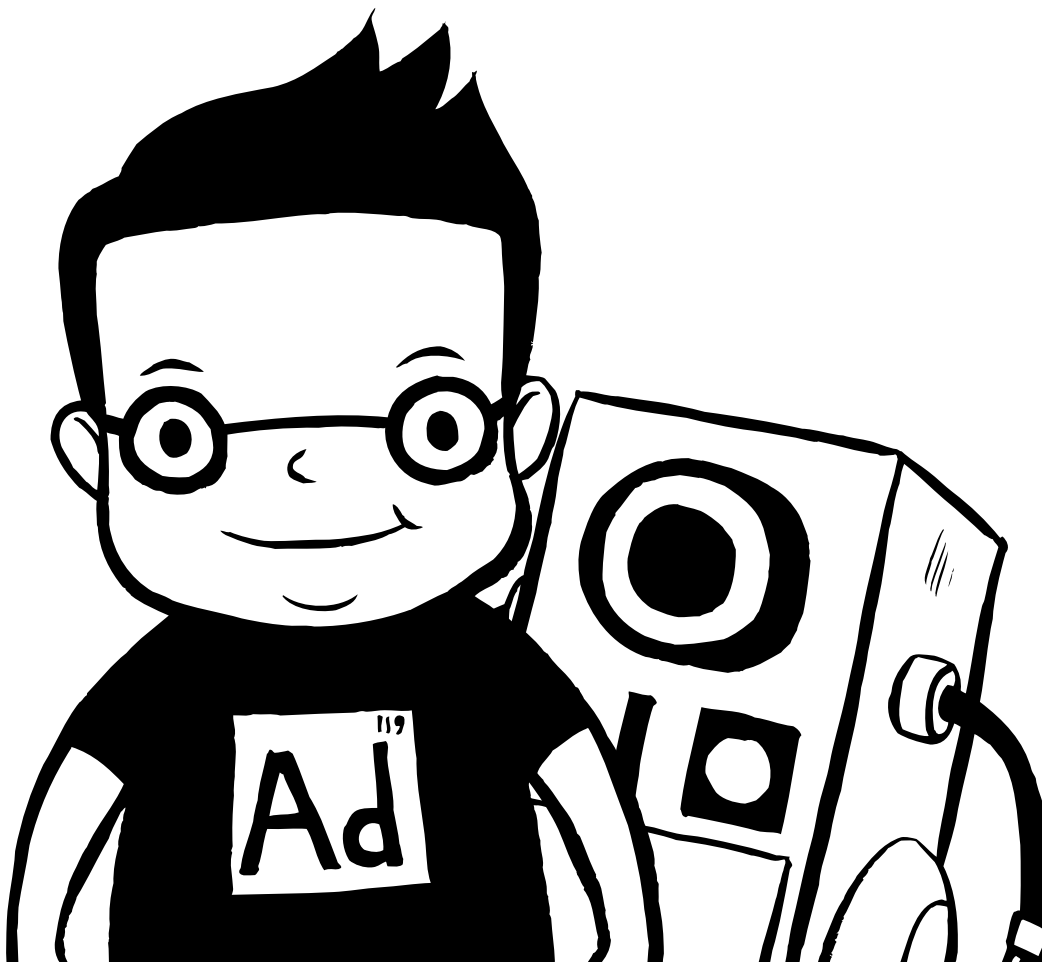
## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Andrew Tan (also known as drewscape) is a full-time freelance illustrator and an Eisner-nominated comic artist. He illustrates for print ads, magazines and also enjoys storyboarding and illustrating for picture book projects. During his free time, he's always creating his own comics for the fun of it. In his home studio you'll find an overflow of art tools of all kinds as he loves experimenting with them. He has already too many fountain pens and tells himself that he will stop buying more. Andrew published his first graphic novel, *Monsters, Miracles & Mayonnaise*, in 2012.

# MAYHEM AT MACRITCHIE!

Look out for *Sherlock Sam and the Cloaked Classmate in MacRitchie* as the adventures of Sherlock Sam continue!

Sherlock Sam encounters his most important mystery yet! His classmate has gone missing at MacRitchie Reservoir, and no one can find him. Fearing the worst, Officer Siva refuses to let the Supper Club help, but there's never been a mystery Sherlock, Watson and their friends could ignore!



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**“Sherlock Sam is a worthy successor to beloved child sleuths like Encyclopedia Brown and Cam Jansen.”**  
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