

The Lego Mystery

An Andrew Aims Adventure

Ellie stepped carefully and slowly down the hallway, tongue poking out the corner of her mouth, a frown of concentration across her face with her eyes fixed intently on the large Lego model balanced unsteadily in her hands. She had been working on building her model all morning. With a sigh of relief she placed it delicately on the dining room table.

Ellie dashed back out the dining room shouting for her sister Layla. She wanted to show her the awesome model. She raced up the stairs with all the grace and silence of a stampede of elephants. Half way up she nearly tripped over their cat, Smudge, who had been happily lazing in a sunbeam. Smudge threw Ellie an angry feline look with her green eyes and spat a 'meow' at her before running down the stairs.

The doorbell rang a loud 'ding dong' and Ellie stopped, considering turning back to answer it.

"I'll get it!" came a shout from the living room. It was her other older sister Cammy. Ellie carried on up the stairs.

"Layla! Layla! You have to come and see my awesome Lego model!" Ellie burst into their shared bedroom.

"No! I'm busy playing."

"Aw, come on. It's awesome."

"Nope! Busy!"

"But it took me ages! I'll let you play with it!"

"How big is it?"

Ellie held her hands apart, claiming her model to be quite a bit larger than it actually was.

"Hmmm, ok then. Where is it?"

"In the dining room. Come on!" Ellie ushered Layla to follow with an enthusiastic wave of her arm as she left the room.

The sisters walked down the hallway together.

"It's a spaceship model with wings and a tail and lights and blaster guns and..." They turned into the dining room. They both gasped loud at what they saw. The awesome Lego spaceship model lay in pieces on the floor.

Ellie was angry. Shrieking and howling she stomped into the living room.

"Who did this? Who did it? Cammy! Was it you?"

But Cammy was nowhere to be seen,

"She must have gone out," said Layla.

"But she smashed my model first I bet!" Ellie hissed through clenched teeth.

"It's a mystery, maybe she did. But why?"

“I’m going to smash something in her room!”

Layla grabbed Ellie by the shoulders.

“I don’t think you should! We should figure out who did it first.”

“It was Cammy!” Ellie stomped her foot and tried to push past Layla.

“We don’t know that,” Layla pulled Ellie back again. “Why don’t we call Andrew Aims?”

“Who?”

“The child private investigator. They say he can solve any mystery.”

“Fine then!”

Layla picked up the phone,

“Hello? Is this Andrew Aims?”

“Yes this is C.P.I Andrew Aims. How can I help?”

“We have a mystery needing solved, quickly.”

“Ok I will be right over.”

The phone clicked as Andrew hung up. Before Layla could put the phone down the doorbell rang again, ‘ding-dong’.

They opened the door. Andrew Aims sat outside on his gadget filled wheelchair. He looked up at both the sisters.

“Hello I’m...” started Layla but Andrew threw up a silencing hand. He stared at them for a second through his round glasses. His hand danced across a keyboard attached to the armrest of his wheelchair, clicking keys without looking. He glanced over at the tablet screen on the opposite armrest.

You must be Layla? And your sister is, em, Ellie? Yes?” They both stood silent for a moment.

“Em! Yes! Just Layla for short. How do you know? And how did you get here so fast?”

“I received your details from my computer. Traced through the phone number. You look the oldest and so matching the names to faces is easy. I can see that your sister here has been crying, her eyes are all red, so I deduced it was not she who placed the call yet it is she who requires my help. Is this a mystery involving a Lego model by any chance? It sounded urgent so I used my speed boosters to get here quickly.” Ellie sniffed and pushed past Layla.

“Yes. Someone smashed my model! I think it was Cammy! How did you know?”

“You’re clutching a piece of Lego. Shall we get started?”

Ellie looked down at her hand confused. She was holding one of the broken wings from her spaceship model and had not even noticed herself.

Andrew followed the sisters to the dining room. The scene of the crime. He looked around carefully, all the time his hand whizzing across his keyboard taking notes. He saw the model smashed on the floor, he calculated the height of the fall from the table and realised the

model had fallen and not, as could have happened, been lifted and smashed down. He observed there were four chairs around the table, none out of place and he noticed a slight smear half way up the window. All this he saw and took note of in the first few seconds he was there.

“Tell me everything that happened please,” he said turning to look at Ellie. She told him all about building the model, bringing it to the dining room, running up the stairs and then finding the model broken.

“Was there anything else that happened during the time you were away from the model? Anything at all?”

Ellie thought hard.

“Em, the doorbell rang.”

“Uh-hu,” Andrew continued typing as Ellie spoke.

“Cammy shouted she would answer it.”

“Really? That’s interesting. And anything else?”

“Oh yeah I nearly tripped over Smudge our cat.”

“I see! Ok let’s examine the crime scene.”

Andrew drove his chair further into the room. He pressed several buttons on his keypad and with a mechanical whirring a long robotic arm extended out from under his chair. The sisters watched fascinated as the arm carefully picked up a chunk of the broken model. A small tray slid out slowly from the back of the chair, the robot arm placed the Lego on it and it slid back out of sight.

“I am going to closely examine the blocks for clues.”

Layla peered over Andrew’s shoulder to get a closer look at his tablet screen. There was a lot of complicated text and numbers flashing around it, moving and changing faster than Layla could read. His hands were a blur as he flicked one up to his face, pushed his glasses up his nose and back to the keyboard all in one blink. He leaned in closer to the screen. With a bleep and ring the screen changed to a picture of the Lego block.

“Ah, here come the results.”

Text and numbers raced across the screen. Layla felt dizzy at the amount of information flashing in-front of her but it all seemed to make sense to Andrew.

“Ok. So the model was destroyed sometime between Ellie leaving the dining room, running up the stairs and returning. There is only one door to the dining room and that is the one we used leading to the hallway and one open window in the opposite wall. The guilty party...”

“Cammy I bet!” hissed Ellie,

“Ah, not so I am afraid, the mystery is not as easy as that. My computer has analysed the Lego brick and found traces of ginger hair and soil from outside.”

“What does that mean then?” asked Layla,

“I am not sure yet but it was most definitely not your sister Cammy.”

“How do you know? It still could have been!” said Ellie planting her hands on her hips and frowning.

“No. You see, the information I have says Cammy does not have ginger hair.” Ellie’s frown deepened, this time though as she considered the evidence. Her anger seeped out. She had been convinced it was going to be Cammy.

“Who then?”

“Perhaps once we find out who the mystery visitor at the door was. I need to question Cammy.”

Layla suggested that maybe Cammy had gone outside with whoever had been at the door and she was probably still with them now.

“Yes, exactly what I was thinking,” agreed Andrew. They all headed back out the front door.

“She could be anywhere! Where do we look first?”

“It’s ok I can find her. Does she have a mobile phone?”

“Yes,” replied Layla. She gave Andrew the number as he typed furiously.

“I can trace her phone signal and pinpoint her location.”

“Really? You can do that?” said Layla. Andrew paused and looked at her. He casually pushed his glasses up his nose.

“Of course. All good child private investigators can!” He resumed his work.

Andrew’s computer found that Cammy was down at the play park on the other side of town.

“It will take ages to get there!” complained Ellie.

“Not at all.” Andrew reached down the left-hand side of his chair and flipped open a hidden panel. He pressed his thumb to the screen beneath the panel and a red line scanned across it leaving a copied picture of his unique thumb print. A female computer voice spoke from somewhere on the chair, Ellie thought it sounded a little like their mum.

“Identification confirmed please input passkey to continue.” Andrew tapped in his secret password while reciting a verbal command.

“ID confirmation, authorisation ‘Aims-Alpha-zero-zero-one’”

“Advanced chair operations authorized,” replied the computer. “Please select option.”

Andrew ran his finger down the tablet screen where a list of options had appeared. He pressed on one and the screen opened onto a picture of something that looked like a helicopter, he pressed it.

The whole chair started to rumble with whirring and clicking bleeps, blips and bangs. With a swoosh a tall pole rose up over the chair. From the armrests there was a ‘shvroom’ as wings unfolded followed by a click, click, click ‘vroosh’ when a steering wheel slid out and up from under the seat. Rotors popped out from the pole with a metallic ‘spring’ and with a final

hissing like a steam train the transformation was finished. Andrew's gadget chair was now a mini helicopter.

"Hop aboard," he instructed, clicking some buttons. A small platform extended out the back for them to stand on.

"Remember your safety belts!"

Layla and Ellie jumped onto the platform, their hair flapping all around their heads as the rotors started whirling, whipping up the wind with a loud buzzing. They fastened their belts around themselves just as Andrew pulled back on the steering wheel and the helicopter slowly rose up into the air. The sisters gasped as butterflies fluttered in their tummies. The ground sank quickly beneath them and once they were higher than the houses Andrew steered towards the play park.

"Hang on!" With the flick of a button the helicopter launched through the sky. They landed a few minutes later just outside the play park. Layla immediately spotted Cammy and called to her. Cammy was already looking at them, as was everybody in the park. It was not every day you see a mini helicopter fly overhead and land quite spectacularly nearby. She frowned once she realised it was Layla shouting to her. Surprised and confused she ran over to them. The rotors slowed down, stopped the loud whirring and more thankfully dropped the dust cloud they had swirled up around the helicopter.

"What are you two doing on a helicopter?" asked Cammy. Ellie leapt off of the little platform. Waving a finger at Cammy she snapped, "Was it you eh?"

Cammy frowned down at her, she batted her wagging finger aside,

"Stop that! Was what me?"

Layla joined them. She placed a hand on Ellie's shoulder who looked up at her.

"Ellie, remember we know it wasn't Cammy!"

"Oh yeah! Well!" she snapped her head back towards Cammy. "Who was it then? Your friend at the door?" Ellie stabbed her finger at her once more.

"What on Earth are you blathering about? And stop doing that!" Cammy slapped Ellie's hand away again.

"Ow that hurt!" Ellie leapt towards Cammy with her hand raised ready to retaliate but Layla grabbed it.

"Stop it!"

"Perhaps I can help this situation." Andrew drove his wheelchair, no longer a helicopter, in-between the squabbling siblings.

"Who's this?" asked Cammy pointing at Andrew.

"CPI Andrew Aims. I assume you are the third sister Cammy?"

"CP what?"

"Child Private Investigator. Your sisters have hired me to solve a mystery for them and I need to ask you a few questions."

“Ooooookayyyy!” Cammy replied. “What about?”

Layla told Cammy about the broken Lego model, Ellie interrupting on occasion to remind her that it was an ‘awesome’ model, and it had been ‘deliberately smashed’.

“What’s that got to do with me? I didn’t touch your stupid model!”

“Awesome model!” snarled Ellie.

“Yeah whatever! I didn’t touch it.”

“I know this already. Can you tell me what did happen earlier though? When the doorbell rang?” Andrew had started his trick of typing quickly with one hand while the other tapped on his tablet screen again. He never looked down at what he was doing, keeping his eyes fixed on Cammy. She tried to stare back but the cool blueness of Andrew’s eyes seemed to be swirling, unblinking and hypnotic. Nobody had ever defeated him in a staring contest.

“Em, you’ve got creepy eyes you know!” said Cammy blinking several times.

“Have I?” answered Andrew softly. “Could you answer the question please?”

“Ok well, em, the doorbell rang. I got off the couch to answer it. It was my friend Lennon. We came here. You arrived in your funny helicopter, end of story!”

Andrew’s hands paused for a moment as he stared at Cammy. She stepped back.

“Whoa! Stop the creepy eyeball thing mate!”

“There’s more I think. What else happened?”

Cammy shook her head impatiently as she finally had to look away from Andrew, his intense stare making her uncomfortable.

“Nothing!”

“Did you see the Lego model on the dining room table?”

“Eh? Not that I remember.”

“Did anything happen before you answered the front door?”

“Oh yeah. I smashed my elbow off the living room door frame dodging past the stupid cat. She came tearing in through the door just as I opened it. It hurt! We done now?”

“One last thing. Can I please see the bottom of your trainer?”

“Eh?”

Reluctantly Cammy lifted her foot to show Andrew the bottom of her trainer. He tapped some buttons and the mechanical robot arm sprung out again. It swept around over Andrew’s head and reached towards Cammy’s trainer.

“Whoa!” she protested. “That things not gonna take my shoe it is?”

“Please stay calm. I just need a sample.”

He slid open a panel in the top of his right armrest, just underneath the tablet and lifted out a small plastic test tube. From inside the tube Andrew lifted a cotton bud and handed it to the robot arm. The arm gently rubbed the bottom of Cammy’s trainer with it and delicately placed it inside the tube before taking it from Andrew and retracting back into the chair.

“Ok while that is analysing could I speak to this friend, em?” he looked at his notes on the screen. “Lennon, yes?”

Lennon ran over. Cammy explained to him what *'her crazy sisters'* wanted, he nodded and agreed to answer Andrew's questions. First though Andrew collected a sample from the bottom of Lennon's trainers.

"Well," started Lennon, "I pressed the doorbell. Waited. Cammy answered. We decided to come to the park so walked through the hallway to the kitchen, out the back door, grabbed Cammy's bike, came back around front, I jumped on my bike and we came here."

"So you were in the house?"

"Well yes, just to walk through to the back door,"

"You must have passed the dining room then? You saw the model?" Andrew fixed his stare on Lennon this time. Lennon shivered. He turned to Cammy,

"He has creepy eyes!" Cammy nodded and shrugged at the same time. "Em yeah I think I did glance in and see it sitting on the table."

"Not smashed?"

Lennon again looked at Cammy for support. They both turned to Andrew and shrugged.

"Yeah I suppose," they replied together.

"But we didn't go into the dining room."

"Yeah," agreed Cammy. "We went outside, got my bike and left,"

"I remember exactly that because when we walked down the little grassy bit by the side of the house Smudge landed on my head. I got a fright and she laughed," he nodded his head towards Cammy who then giggled at the memory.

"Ha, ha, yeah she jumped out of the window. You squealed like a frightened pig!"

"Would that be the dining room window you walked past?"

"Yeah it was."

Just then there was a beep, beep from the tablet. Andrew looked at it as his fingers sped over the keyboard. He pushed his glasses up. He hummed. He hawed. He nodded. He muttered *'that's interesting'*. He shook his head. Consulted his notes. Frowned. Raised his eyebrows. Then finally looked up at the rest of the group.

"The results of the analysis are in." He paused, looking from Ellie to Layla to Cammy to Lennon and back again.

"And?" hissed Layla impatiently.

"The soil on both your trainers is a match for the sample found at the crime scene."

"I knew it!" Ellie leapt up clenching her fists. "It was you!"

"No Ellie it wasn't," said Andrew calmly.

"But you just said it matched!"

"Look at their hair. It's not ginger."

Ellie looked puzzled. They all looked puzzled.

"Who then?" asked Layla.

"I think I have figured it out. We must return to the house."

One quick helicopter ride later Andrew, Layla and Ellie were all back at the start, in the dining room. With a number of clicks, bleeps, button presses and swipes on the screen another hidden compartment, this time inside the left armrest, slid open to reveal two pairs of sunglasses.

“Put these on. I have programmed them to show you the truth behind this mystery, my own glasses will do the same.” They slid the glasses over their eyes. Wherever they looked appeared in black and white, it was very strange as they could still see properly out of the sides in colour.

“Now look at the crime scene.” Still everything was black and white, the table the chairs, the pieces of the smashed model still on the floor, but there was a line of purple blotches right across the room.

“What are those?” asked Ellie.

“Just as I suspected,” said Andrew triumphantly, “Footprints.”

“Footprints?” gasped Layla.

“Yes, and they have been made by feet that have the same soil on them. It looks purple in the glasses”

“By who?”

“Well I should really say ‘paw prints’.”

“Paw prints!” Layla and Ellie gasped together.

“Yes you see how they come into the room. Over the table, up and out of the window?” The sisters followed the trail of paw prints with their eyes and nodded.

“And I am willing to bet that your cat smudge has ginger hair and uses this window regularly.”

“Yes! Yes she does!” exclaimed Layla.

“So was it her that knocked my model off the table?”

“Yes! Smudge appeared in all of your stories which raised my suspicions.

I first assumed the culprit had used the door but that could not be, Cammy and Lennon would have seen them. So that left only the window, the small smear I observed earlier I believe was made by the cat’s back paw as she fled out. It all fits. The soil from her paws is from the ground beneath the window outside, the ginger hair and the timing of it all. Smudge ran from you on the stairs, caused Cammy to bang her elbow then followed her and Lennon down the hallway turning into the dining room. As she leapt from the floor to the table then from table to window she did indeed knock over the model which fell and smashed. She made it out of the window just in time to land on Lennon’s head who, of course, with Cammy were both also under the window therefore getting the same soil on their trainers! And if you look again you can see a trail of prints coming back inside, the culprit has returned!”

“Let’s go and catch her!” said Ellie through gritted teeth.

“I will leave that to you, my job is done here. Another case solved. Oh! But one last

thing.” Andrew tapped and pressed buttons for a few moments. This time two robot arms swung out of his gadget chair. The arms moved back and forth grabbing up all the Lego. Then in a blur of movement reassembled the model in seconds. They swivelled around towards Ellie holding her awesome spaceship model, fully repaired. Ellie gasped with delight.

“Yeah! Thank you.” She took the model carefully.

Once Andrew left, the sisters decided to follow the prints. They had kept the sunglasses. The prints wound back and forth along the hallway, halfway up the stairs and back down again then into the living room. They found Smudge curled up on the sofa.

“You bad cat!” shouted Ellie but Smudge never even moved. She opened one lazy eye, stared at Ellie for a second and then went back to sleep,

“I don’t think she cares about your model Ellie,” said Layla, “Come on let’s go play.”

Layla and Ellie sat playing with their Lego bricks for the rest of the afternoon. Ellie added a few more awesome touches to her spaceship for the first ten minutes before deciding it was actually time to smash it up anyway.

She wanted to build a helicopter instead.

THE END