

ARCHIBALD GREY

INVESTIGATOR OF THE MACABRE,

POSSESSOR OF THE SKELETON KEY IN:

THE GOLEM'S LABYRINTH

"CHRISTOPHER, HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE CREATURE that has been spotted about London these past two nights?" enquired Archibald Grey as he reclined on his red velvet chaise lounge, a copy of the London Herald in his hands.

"No sir," replied Christopher who, despite the name, was in actuality Archibald's niece, a slender girl of twelve years. She however, looked very much the part of a boy, with her cropped sandy colored hair, pale freckles, and boyish style of dress. This disguise was often a necessity on those occasions when she accompanied her uncle on his grand investigations. Few would permit a young girl on their premises, but a young boy was a brave sport, indeed!

"Permit me to enlighten you," Archibald said, straightening. He set his paper down and stirred the tea on the table next to him. Christopher waited patiently as he took a sip and set the cup down with a small clatter. "Take a look at this." He presented the front page of the paper to her. Much of it was devoted to the upcoming elections for the new House of Parliament and to the campaigns of both the Liberal and Conservative parties. However, space was also given, in the lower right hand corner, to a caption that read: "Mysterious giant markings spotted in London!" The caption was accompanied by a grainy photograph depicting a night scene near Big Ben. The image itself was dark, but an even darker shape could be seen, silhouetted against the murky London sky. It was, indeed, a rather frightening shape, suggestive of a giant figure that rivaled the great clock in size!

"Uncle!" exclaimed young Christopher. "Whatever could it be?"

"Well, my dear, a possible clue may lie in the messages this creature has scrawled on various buildings around London. The paper describes the symbols as nonsensical markings, but see here; observe." Archibald turned the page and pointed out another photograph to his niece, an enlarged image of the mysterious symbols.

"Why, it looks like mere gibberish to me!" Christopher declared lightly.

"I suppose to the uneducated eye, it may" Archibald concurred with a tight nod. Christopher bristled at this slight; yet held her tongue. She considered herself to be far more educated than most girls her age. The greater part of her schooling had been provided by her uncle, himself!

"Oh ho ho, do not take offense!" Archibald chuckled, witnessing the crestfallen expression on his niece's face. "The majority of our populace would fail to realize that this writing is actually an ancient form of Hebrew script, known as the Samaritan Alphabet. It is derived from the Paleo-Hebrew version of the Phoenician Alphabet and is not widely used in this day and age, save for a few, specific religious transcriptions."

"Well, whatever does it say?" asked Christopher, intrigued.

"Unfortunately, despite my broad knowledge, I am unable to answer that question. I am fluent in several languages - but, unfortunately ancient Hebrew is not one of them."

With that, Archibald stood up and strode over to the coat rack next to the door and grabbed his thick cloak, wrapping it tightly about his shoulders. "Christopher, my gloves and cane, please!"

As she scrambled to her feet to fetch the items, Christopher asked, "And wherever are we going, uncle?"

"To Mr. Dighton's library, my dear! I should like to have a look through his books to see if I can find a means to decode these Hebrew words. Perhaps one may reveal a vital clue to this creature that has been terrorizing the streets of London at night."

WILL ARCHIBALD GREY SOLVE THE
MYSTERY OF THE LONDON BEAST?

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