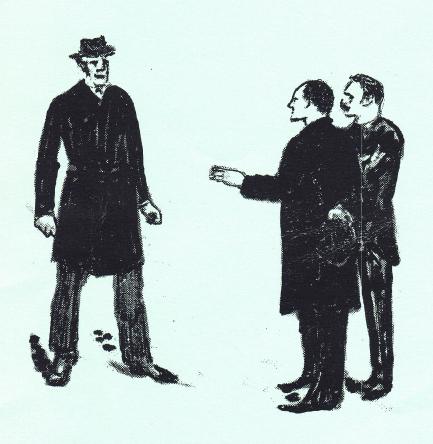
Another Exciting Sherlockian Round-Robin Pastiche by Members of The Pleasant Places of Florida



The Adventure of

The Glorious Scot

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All of the above are members of <u>The Pleasant Places of Florida</u>, a "certified" Scion of the Baker Street Irregulars. The PPoF was founded in 1972 by Leslie Marshall, B.S.I. ("A Scandal in Bohemia"). Current Officers are David McCallister, Carl Heifetz, Jeff Dow, and Wanda Dow. Dr. Benton Wood is Recorder Emeritus.

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Pleasant Places of Florida

The Adventure of the Glorious Scot



Introduction

by Charles Michael Carroll

It was a blustery evening typical of autumn in London, the last Monday of October 1889. The wind whistling down the chimney, moaning and mewing like a child in pain. Holmes was concerned with a mathematical problem of some sort and I was leafing through one of the episodes of Murger's La Vie de Boheme. I was musing to myself that it was a good night to be indoors and close to a warm fire when Holmes looked up

suddenly and said, "By the way, Watson, we shall have a visitor any minute. I trust that you will be able to record our conversation with your usual perspicacity."

"What is this one coming for, Holmes? Not another maimed Greek Interpreter or Andaman Islander blowing poisonous darts, I trust." For answer Holmes tossed a telegram over to me. I read:

TELEGRAM "DESIRE CONSULT WITH YOU" MONDAY EVENING SEVEN OCLOCK STOP URGENT MATTER OF STATE AND NATIONAL IMPORT STOP LOTHIAN."

Holmes added, "Lothian is, of course, the Marquess of Lothian, Earl of Inverness, and in theory at least Thane of Cromarty, although the privileges of that title have long disappeared. He presently holds the office of Secretary of State for Scotland. I think we may assume his business will be concerned with that part of Her Majesty's kingdom. You notice that he takes for granted that I will be available." As Holmes was speaking the clock had struck seven. At the last chime, we heard the page at the door and the tread of more than one person on the stairs, then a knock on our door. "And here is our visitor, prompt as a nobleman and an efficient government official should be."

Holmes opened the door to admit two gentlemen in chesterfields, wrapped up against the cold. The taller one introduced himself. "Mr. Holmes, I am Lord Lothian. I trust you received my wire. Allow me to introduce Mr. Malcolm MacBain, who is like myself an hereditary Thane of our beloved homeland. Let us not waste time in formalities. The business on which we

come cannot be lost in ceremony. Please give your complete attention to what MacBain will tell you." Holmes had shown them to chairs while His Lordship spoke and MacBain began immediately.

Like his companion, MacBain spoke with a slight Scottish burr but very clearly and decisively. "Mr. Holmes, I am honored to be the chairman of a committee whose origins go back to the close of the seventeenth century. As you are aware, when our late King, His Majesty James II was driven from the throne in 1688, provision was made for secreting the crown jewels from the supporters of William of Orange. The scheme they devised was to have built four identical boxes. Three were to contain several jewels and what might look to be parts of the royal paraphernalia; the fourth was to hold the orb, the scepter, the crown of St. Edward and other miscellaneous items. Once the four boxes were dispersed, only one man would know their location, Sir. Ralph Musgrave. Unfortunately, Sir Ralph was killed in a hunting accident in 1697, before His Majesty could be restored to his rightful throne, and carried his secret to the grave.

"One of the false boxes was found at Holyrood Palace in 1742. You were instrumental in finding the second on the estate of Sir Ralph Musgrave just ten years ago this month. By the grace of God there are two still in existence. Two days ago a pawn broker in London brought to our attention three jewels and some bent pieces of silver which he had recently bought and which he found rather curious. We have examined them and believe they were part of the collection of James II; whether they come from the box bearing the genuine treasures or the third false box, we cannot say.

"Mr. Holmes, we must discover the source of these objects. If they come from the false box, they would be valuable, even in a mutilated state. But should they come from the box which contains the crown and other paraphernalia, their value would be incalculable. We have a description of the man who sold them to the broker. I think we can be certain he was only a fence but he could lead us to the source. In memory of our late King, and in the name of the present Queen of the United Kingdom, we beg your assistance. We can guarantee that you will have carte blanche in terms of authority or expenses in your pursuit of the matter. Can I give you further information?"

We sat dumbfounded for several minutes, then Holmes spoke. "My Lord and Mr. MacBain, I shall give the matter my undivided attention from this moment." He went into his room.

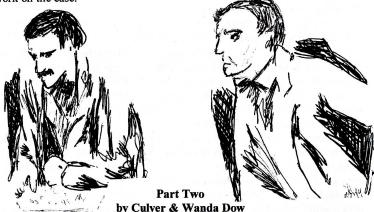
Fifteen minutes had elapsed when an old crippled sailor barged into the room. "Yes, my good man, what can I do for you?" I said. He shuffled over to me and dropped a greasy paper into my lap.

"I was told to give this to you," he mumbled and was gone.

I glanced at the paper and read, "Contact me through Mycroft."

After another five minutes had passed, Lord Lothian said to me in an irascible tone, "What has become of Mr. Holmes? Is he going to accept that case?"

I replied to his Lordship, "That was Mr. Holmes, Milord. He is already at work on the case."



I was used to Holmes being gone for a few days while he was working on a case, but when a week and a half had passed, with no visits from grizzled sailors or meek clergymen, my curiosity, as well as my concern began to get the best of me. I decided to visit the man whose mountainous build was matched only by his intellect, Sherlock Holmes' older brother, Mycroft.

I was shown into the visitor's room at the Diogenes club and waited with what little patience I had left, pacing the small area. Eventually, the bulk that was Mycroft filled the doorway. He waved to one of the seats and took his place in the other. I studied him as he settled himself and concluded that although a very large man, he was quite dexterous and that his brain was probably not the only thing powerful about him.

Fishing a paper from his pocket, he finally settled those intense grey eyes on me. "Well, Doctor. We meet again. Your timing is most fortuitous," he said.

"How so?" I asked. "Have you heard from your brother?"

He handed over the paper, "I just today received this note from him. It is in some type of code, but I have not yet broken it."

I opened the paper, straightening it out on my leg. It was full of lines and squiggles, with letters here and there, some which appeared to be backwards and some which were not. Nothing was lined up or in columns. All in all, it resembled a child's drawing more than anything else. I looked up.

"You say you have not yet deciphered it?" I asked.

Mycroft shook his head, "No. But then, I have only had it in my possession for a few hours."

"Is the fact that he sent this message in code to you a clue in itself?," I queried. "Do you think it means that he is in great danger?"

"I believe that most things my brother does puts him in danger," Mycroft replied calmly, "but I have no doubt that he can take care of himself." He

studied me for a moment before continuing, "When was the last time you saw him?"

"Monday before last," I answered.

"Hmmm," he nodded, "twelve days ago. I heard from him then as well."

"Did he visit you dressed as a crippled old sailor?"

He shook his head, "No. I merely received correspondence as to the case on which he was working. An explanation with all the pertinent details."

I stared at the crude paper in my lap. "Mr. Holmes," I asked, hesitantly, "what if... that is, should something happen to your brother, how would we know? I mean, he is in disguise. You would not be notified. No one would know it was he who...who was injured, or...or worse."

He leaned over and tapped my knee with his large paw. "Fear not, good doctor. Like my brother, I have my ways of knowing what is going on out and about in the streets of London and elsewhere. Should anything untoward happen to Sherlock, I would know. Perhaps even before the police."

I nodded, suddenly feeling relieved. For a moment we sat in silence, each to his own thoughts. Then I picked up the paper in my lap and held it up in front of my face, squinting.

"Is there any watermark on the paper?" I asked. "Anything about the paper that would give you a clue to his whereabouts?"

There was a sharp bark and he snatched the paper from my hands with a quickness that defied his size.

"My god, man!" he yelped. "Sherlock was right about you! You are indeed a whetstone to sharpen the dullest knife; a glass to bring the thing you have been studying into sharp focus!" He was holding the paper in front of his own eyes, but with the print facing me.

"What is it?" I asked, shocked at his sudden emotion. "A clue?"

"A clue?" He lowered the paper and stared at me incredulous. "A clue?! It is a map itself, my good man! Look here!"

In his enthusiasm I could see the excitement that I had witnessed so often in his brother when he had discovered the key to unlock the case in which he was involved. I got up and stood by his chair as he held the paper up to the light at arm's length. Indeed it was a map. A watermark, handmade, which was undetectable when viewed laying flat, made up most of the streets. The lines and squiggles all fell into place as other roads and landmarks, and the letters were all in the proper direction. Looking at it, I realized that those which I had seen backwards were now forwards, and those which I had seen forwards were the same either way.

"Is he telling us where he is? Or where the jewels are?" I asked.

"I believe he wants you to meet him here," Mycroft pointed at the map, "and to also bring E. Do you know who that would be?"

I pondered for a moment, then shook my head. "No. But how do you know that's what he wants?"

"Here," he pointed. "W is you, the slash is with, followed by E2, which I deduce

to mean that he wants you to come with E, too. Or two Es. Hmmm. You say you can't think of anyone with a name beginning with E involved with this case? Perhaps some dogs he uses for tracking? Or some of those young ruffians he employs to scour the streets?"

I smiled. "It's not a person, Mr. Holmes," I concluded. "A thing. He wants me to bring my Eleys No. 2."

"Excellent, Doctor!" Mycroft almost beamed. "Now let's see if we can glean any more from this document before you depart."



I hurriedly left Mycroft for Baker Street. Upon my arrival I was confronted by an impatient Mrs. Hudson.

"Dr. Watson, what am I to do with this crate of salted cod that has just arrived from Mr. Holmes?" she protested. Thrusting a crumpled sheet of paper at me, Mrs. Hudson continued, "This note was attached to the crate instructing me to have you look after it."

"Dear lady, "I replied, "Have your man secure the crate downstairs in the coal bin for now. I will take full responsibility for it but I must take my leave for Scotland on urgent business." Quickly I packed and proceeded to catch the night train to Edinburgh, the meeting place that Holmes had indicated in his strange missive to Mycroft.

As I sat comfortable in my snug compartment, the train rushed me once again into another extraordinary adventure with my dear friend Sherlock Holmes. My association over the years with Holmes had prepared me to question little where his instructions might take me, like the good soldier I had once been. I must admit Holmes' correspondence with Mycroft did unnerve me a bit. This development suggested to me grave matters of state may be involved.

Shortly before my train was to cross the Scottish border, my compartment door slid open and an old crone of a woman shuffled in. "May I join you, Dr. Watson?" she croaked. I stared dumbfounded at the old woman as she metamorphosed before my eyes into Sherlock Holmes.

"Great Scott, Holmes! What is this masquerade about?" I gasped. As was his way, his face radiated mischievous glee. Quickly Holmes settled himself in the seat

opposite me and stuffed a large duffel bag with the articles of his disguise: an overdress, wig, false teeth, thick spectacles and shawl.

"Dear friend, I knew I could count on you," he exclaimed. "Are you armed?" he inquired.

"Yes, as you requested," answered I.

"Good! Be at the ready. We are about to tread on perilous ground. Watson, the very security of England may hinge on our next actions," declared Holmes.

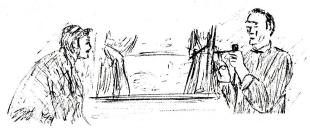
"But Holmes, what about the jewels?" I questioned.

"That matter was but a trifle, old friend. You might say the jewels rest with the fishes," he replied.

"Good Lord! The crate you sent to Baker Street," I gasped.

"Precisely," quipped Holmes, the mischievous glee again apparent in his eyes.

"Holmes expression quickly became grim as he continued, "Watson, we will be meeting Mycroft's man when the train arrives in Edinburgh. The game we seek is both cunning and savage."



Part Four
By Caroline Everett

As the train slowed for Carlisle, Holmes enlightened me further.

"When Lord Lothian and MacBain came to Baker Street, the latter, during his exposition, dropped several clues, apparently unknown to his Lordship, to convey to me that he was not telling the whole truth. When he referred to the Stuart crown I discovered at Hurlstone, he knew it to be the ancient relic worn by Charles I and not revealed until 1879 by me. Therefore it could not be the one left by James I in 1688 almost forty years later, nor was it a 'false box' that I found. The 'false box' from Holyrood was probably a genuine cache of James II's treasure, not the crown and regalia which may or may not be still missing. I deduced that MacBain suspects Lord Lothian of hoarding that carton, probably unearthed during '45 by an ancestor for the never-to-be coronation of Bonnie Prince Charlie. Perhaps Lord Lothian has another Jacobite rebellion in mind!

"Disguised as an old sailor, I followed Lord Lothian and MacBain to the Portman Square house of the journalist Hector Macmillan, a noted Scottish separatist. Waiting in the mews behind the house, I saw our two gentlemen and another, presumably Macmillan, come out the back door where a cart was

waiting. The carter loaded a large box marked "Salted Cod" on the wagon, received his wages and drove off. I intercepted him, and by paying a large bribe, persuaded him to deliver the box to you at Baker Street after ten days when its loss would be unlikely to be traced to me."

"But Holmes, why were you dressed as an aged woman?" I asked.

"In the guise," he answered, "I have been investigating the pawn broker and the man who sold the jewels and silver to him. If my deductions are correct, there is an insurrection underway in Scotland, and, known as we are to Lord Lothian, we may be in harm's way from these patriotic but misguided plotters. Fortunately in MacBain we have a spy in the dissidents' camp who may well prove of value to us."

With these words, Sherlock Holmes pulled out his pipe and spent the rest of the journey in silence.



Conclusion By Jeffery Dow

It was shortly after noon when we arrived at Waverley Rail Station. I was famished but Holmes would not allow us to dine. Instead, he led me

through the great mass of people who were traipsing about the station. He located a ticket counter and spoke to the gentleman. The small bespectacled man left his post and returned with another gentleman, this one a full head taller than him. He wore a gray suit and a bowler and extended his hand to my partner.

"A pleasure to meet you, Mr. Holmes," he said rolling his r's. "A genuine pleasure. And you must be Dr. Watson. I have so enjoyed your accounts." He pumped my hand.

"Now that we are all pleased with one another," Holmes said, "may I ask your name."

"McPherson, Angus McPherson." The large man came around the counter and walked us toward the front of the station.

"Have you heard anything from Mr. MacBain?" Holmes asked.

"No, I haven't."

"Hmm, curious. I was hoping he might have tried to contact someone."

"If he has, it hasn't been us."

"Have you been able to locate the arms?"

"Thanks to your information, Mr. Holmes, we have. I've been working with the Edinburgh Police, and we've also placed several well-known separatists in the city. We think they may be getting ready to move the arms soon."

"Do you have the warehouse under surveillance?"

"All day and all night."

"I'd like to join that group if I might."

"It might be best if you and Dr. Watson remained as much out of sight as possible during the daylight hours. If you are seen by any separatists, they might surmise a bit too much."

"How do you-"

"I have taken the liberty of commandeering a small office for you and Dr. Watson."

And with that, he steered us toward a door. It opened into a room about fifteen feet square. There were two cots, several chairs and a small desk. On the floor were half a dozen books, including a collection by Thomas Hardy. On the desk was a small pouch of tobacco.

"I hope this is acceptable," McPherson said as I dropped my bag on the floor.

"How are we to dine?" I asked. Holmes gave a small laugh.

"There's a small restaurant in the station. Their specialty is pheasant. I can have them send over a small lunch. Courtesy of the Edinburgh Police Department."

"That would be wonderful," I said. Perhaps our sequestering would not be so had after all.

"And for you, Mr. Holmes?"

"Just some soup, I think."

"Very well." McPherson disappeared and inside of an hour a cart was wheeled in with the most scrumptious pheasant I have ever tasted.

We spent the rest of the day in the small room. I started reading *Wessex Tales*. Holmes tried to read a novel, but soon dropped it on the floor. He left the room briefly and returned with a newspaper. He spent the rest of the day reading it.

Without ordering, dinner arrived at 7:30. My whitefish was delicious, but Holmes hardly touched his herring. I knew that this enforced exile was foreign to him. By the time the sun had set he was pacing the room, furious at his inability to take action.

Around ten o'clock, McPherson appeared in the doorway.

"I trust you had a pleasant afternoon."

"Very pleasant," I answered, but Holmes only glared at him.

"If you care to join us at the warehouse, Mr. Holmes, you are more than welcome." Holmes managed a grim smile as he pulled out a deerstalker from his small bag.

A cab was waiting just outside the station. The air was cool and damp, the gas lamps casting a yellow glow on the street and its surroundings. McPherson took up the reins, and the clopping of the horse's hooves was the only sound as we made our way down Princes Street. We turned right and went past Queen Street. Shortly after that, McPherson stopped and we all disembarked. We walked quietly up the street and then approached a small building. I saw Holmes scanning the building, and he seemed quite interested in a series of decorative circles in the side of the building. McPherson knocked three times softly, paused, knocked three more times, paused again, and then knocked

twice more. The door opened immediately.

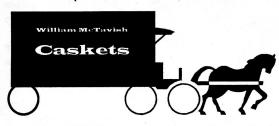
The room was nearly pitch-black, save for several dark lanterns. We were greeted quietly by half a dozen men. Several of them seemed in awe of my partner, but they soon returned to their stations. Three of them sat on the floor, staring out small holes drilled in the wall.

"The building immediately across the road is the one we're keeping watch on," McPherson whispered.

Just then, we heard hooves on the pavement and one of the policemen—or so I surmised since neither the words "detective" nor "sergeant" were mentioned during the introductions—said, "That's them."

McPherson stooped and looked out one of the holes. "Aye," he whispered with a sigh of resignation. Almost as one, the policemen took out their revolvers and checked them. I did the same with my Eley's No. 2, and Holmes examined his pistol. Then we held our breath.

"They're in," our informant reported. At that, McPherson opened the door, and the lot of us tiptoed across the street, the dark lanterns covered. Parked next to the



door was large horsedrawn truck. "William McTavish. Caskets" was printed on the side. The thrill of the chase that I had experienced so many times before surged through my veins.

Even in the darkness, I saw everything with a crystal clarity.

The large Scotsman paused at the door, his hand on the knob. He turned it as quietly as he could. Stepping away, he summoned a portly detective and had him stand in front of the door. At McPherson's signal, he kicked in the door and we ran into the darkened room.

In the grim closeness, I saw four dark lanterns on tables. Four men were standing in front of six caskets; two had rifles in their hands.

"Lay down your guns," McPherson yelled. Three of the men did so; the fourth turned and ran.

"It's Macmillan," Holmes said and ran after him. I followed him, my gun at the ready. But after two dozen steps I was in darkness again, behind me the sounds of the three separatists being taken into custody. I stopped and listened for the sounds of nearby footsteps. I heard none.

I was afraid to move, for fear of being shot by either Macmillan or Holmes. Why had I bolted so? I'd put myself in danger. As my eyes adjusted to the darkness, I began to see vague shapes. Some of the shapes seemed to move and I raised my revolver. Fortunately, upon closer inspection, the movements were mere phantoms.

I don't know how long I stood there, almost afraid to breathe. I heard scuffling sounds, first from in front of me, then from behind. Then I saw the vague outline of a hand, a gun emanating from it. Was it Holmes? Or Macmillan? Or someone else. I followed the direction where the barrel was pointed. There was a man, his back turned to the peril, a deerstalker on his head—

I raised my gun, but the hand disappeared, only to be replaced by a crashing sound. There was the sound of fist against flesh. There was a scream, another punch. A lightning flash from the gun and the sound of someone slumping against the floor.

I rushed toward the sounds. Others were behind me, their dark lanterns flashing. As the wild lights swung around I made out the form of a small man pinned against the floor by a larger man. As I neared, the man underneath was trying to push his captor aside.



Holmes appeared out of thin air and leveled a gun at the smaller man's head. "Mr. Macmillan, I presume," he said.

I reached the three and knelt down. Macmillan was breathing heavily, and I rolled the larger man off of him. It was McPherson, and I pressed my ear against his chest. I heard nothing, and when I felt his abdomen, my hand became covered with blood.

"I'm afraid Mr. McPherson is dead," I said sadly. The euphoria of the policemen evaporated as they realized their loss:

"Where is MacBain?" Holmes said, still pointing his gun at his prisoner. The policemen surrounded him, shining their lights in his eyes. "Where is MacBain?" Holmes asked again.

"Back there," Macmillan said pointing behind him with his head.

"Watson, please," Holmes said and I followed him through the darkness. I was now able to see much better, and we walked past several crates, Holmes looking suspiciously around each corner. We heard someone moving and slowed our pace.

"MacBain?" Holmes said. "Are you there?"

We heard several grunts, and followed the sounds. Sandwiched between two crates, lying prostrate on the ground was the hereditary Thane. Holmes put his gun away, knelt and untied the poor man. I removed the gag from his mouth and he panted in relief.

"What—what was the shot?" he asked when he caught his breath.

"An Angus McPherson," I said. "We wouldn't have found you without him."

"I'm terribly sorry," MacBain said.

"As are we all," Holmes said, "as are we all."

There were few details released to the newspapers regarding the shooting at the warehouse that night. It was only reported that Angus McPherson and several policemen were investigating suspicious activity when the gunplay ensued. Mr. MacBain's named was never mentioned.

I attended the funeral of McPherson, a stately, somber affair. It was characteristically gloomy, a gentle rain falling, for the interment. Holmes did not stay for the ceremony, preferring to return to London to wrap up the last of this sordid business and to confer with Mycroft. I presented McPherson's widow with my most profound condolences and thanked her on behalf of Holmes. She dabbed her eyes and smiled grimly.

The train back to London was long and tedious, and I spent countless hours staring out the windows, looking backwards toward Edinburgh. I found it hard to catalog my thoughts.

When I did finally return to Baker Street, emotionally and physically exhausted, bag in hand, Holmes was sitting in front of the fire, busy again on the same mathematical puzzle on which he was working before our adventure began. I fell into bed and did not wake up until the middle of the next morning.

After a breakfast of sausages and biscuits, Holmes began to speak, not even asking me how my trip was.

"They were going to sell the jewels to purchase more weapons."

"Jewels?" I asked, a bit confused.

"The jewels that were in the box with the cod."

"Oh, those jewels."

"The insurrection was probably no more than several months, perhaps weeks, away."

"And Lord Lothian?"

"Quietly taken into custody yesterday. No doubt brother Mycroft will find a way to explain it all. Rather fortunate all round, I'd say."

"Except for McPherson."

"Yes," Holmes ruminated. I looked at my friend and for an instant thought I saw a look of profound gratitude in his eyes. "Yes," he said again, "except for McPherson."



Previous "Round-Robin" Pastiches by The Pleasant Places of Florida

- 1. The Case of the Foreign Cabman (1975) [Leslie Marshall, Joy Mitchell, Tom Mitchell, Tom Reesor, Wanda Butts & Paul Gunning]
- 2. The Case of the Lost L's (1976) [Leslie Marshall, Mike Carroll, Marvin Norton, Charles Saunders, & Harry Seigrist]
- 3. The Adventure of the Second Stein (1977) [John Fought, Ben Wood, Mike Carroll, Ed Morgan, Joy Mitchell & Tom Mitchell]
- 4. The Singular Adventure of the Solitary Balloonist (1977) [Tom Reesor, Herman Herst, Ben Wood, Caroline Everett, Mike Carroll & Tom Mitchell]
- 5. The Curious Affair of the Witch's Brougham (1978) [Herman Herst, Svend Petersen, Paul Gunning, Wanda Butts, & Mike Carroll]
- 6. The Adventure of the Florid Ians (1979) [Mike Carroll, Caroline Everett, Helen Swift, Bill Ward & Wanda Butts]
- 7. The Case Of The Three Merry Debs (1980) [George Tullis, Helen Swift, Bill Ward, Caroline Everett & Wanda Butts]
- 8. The Adventure of the Bar's Clue Bungle (1982) [Ben Wood, Mike Bryan, Helen Swift, John Kalajian, Wanda Butts, Caroline Everett, Marsha Pollak & Mike Carroll]
- 9. **The Adventure of the Pale Ontologist** (1987) [Stephanie Rapp, George Tullis, John Fought, David McCallister & Caroline Everett]
- 10. The Adventure of the Doc Croaker's Dirk (1991) [Ben

Wood, David McCallister, John Kalajian, Duane Damon, Judy Buddle & Jeff Dow]

- 11. **The Sound of the Basket Hills** (1994) [Ben Wood, Tom Takach, Caroline Everett, Mike Carroll & Wanda (nee Butts) Dow.]
- 12. A Case of Hide 'n' Tea (1994) [Jeffery Dow, Carl Heifetz, Wanda Dow, Bob Ennis, & Peter Calamai]
- 13. **The Bourbon Bullion Bafflement** (1996) [Ben Wood, Mike Carroll, Mike Bryan, Neil Harvey, Caroline Everett & Wanda Dow]
- 14. The Case of the Yule Lantern Lost (1998) [Tom Takach, Caroline Everett, Carl Heifetz, Dave Scott & Robert Hahn]