

Elementary My Dear Watson

The solution to the mystery that follows depends on your knowledge of chemical elements, symbols, and formulas, Dr. Watson. If a symbol is given, substitute the name of that element; if the name is given, substitute the symbol. The names of compounds may also be symbolized by formulas. Do not fail me, good doctor. The solution must be in my hands by midnight a week hence, or the consequences could be devastating for your grade!

Twas the week before Christmas, when Inspector Lestrade came to me with a most distraught gentleman in tow. (Helium) _____ explained that the gentleman had purchased several pieces of (Ag) _____ and (Au) _____ jewelry for his wife (or mistress, (iodine) _____ surmised), which had disappeared during a street (carbon + argon) _____ ride ((nobelium) _____ doubt to see (hydrogen + erbium) _____!). The victim interrupted with "You must (Fe) _____ this out before the 24th, Mr. (Ho) _____! I will not (Fe₂O₃) _____ until the jewels are recovered and the culprit made to (S) _____ as (iodine) _____ have this day! (holmium + tungsten) _____ dare someone (sulfur + tellurium + aluminum) _____ from me! I'd gladly (Ba) _____ with the fishes and watch him (Zn) _____ in the Thames!" His diatribe did tend to (B) _____.

(Oxygen + nitrogen) _____ questioning, I learned the (carbon + argon) _____ was number (Sn) _____, an express which did not stop during (hydrogen + iodine + sulfur) _____ trip. (Arsenic) _____ to unusual events, (helium) _____ remembered a (Cu) _____ evicting the occupants of the seat behind him and sitting there himself. Enjoying the ride, (helium) _____ was just thinking "these areas (As) _____," when a bad jolt made the (calcium + selenium) _____ of jewelry (sulfur + lithium + phosphorus) _____ between the seat and back of the bench (helium) _____ occupied. The (Cu) _____ retrieved it for him. (Oxygen + nitrogen) _____ checking later, he found the jewelry missing from the (calcium + selenium) _____. (Astatine) _____ their destination, (helium) _____ and the (Cu) _____ searched everyone, and each other, (arsenic) _____ well as the (carbon + argon) _____. (Nobelium) _____ jewels were found.

By this time, Lestrade seemed eager to (beryllium) _____ rid (oxygen + fluorine) _____ our pompous victim, as (tungsten + arsenic) _____ (iodine) _____. (Indium) _____ private, the Inspector explained that he wasn't personally (Sb) _____, but just wanted the theft cleared (uranium + phosphorus) _____ quickly (sulfur + oxygen) _____ he could get (oxygen + nitrogen) _____ to matters more important than petty theft. (Iodine) _____ agreed to help, not to save the Inspector time and embarrassment (tungsten + helium + nitrogen) _____ he failed, (arsenic) _____ I (potassium + neon + tungsten) _____ he would, but because I had the (calcium + selenium) _____ already solved. Informed of this, the Inspector cried, "(Sulfur + oxygen) _____ fast! (Hydrogen + oxygen + tungsten) _____?!" My only reply (tungsten + arsenic) _____ that he meet me after (I) _____ d, armed, and carrying a (Ni) _____.

(Astatine) _____ dusk, the Inspector and (iodine) _____ rode the next to last streetcar of the day to the end (oxygen + fluorine) _____ the line, the (C) _____. I used Lestrade's (Ni) _____ to pay my fare. (Indium) _____ the deserted (C) _____ I found number (Sn) _____ and climbed inside. Reasoning that the culprit sat behind our victim (Pb) _____ me to examine that seat, and I found scratches on the (F) _____. Prying (uranium + phosphorus) _____ a loose piece of (F) _____, I found the missing (Ag) _____ and (Au) _____ jewelry in a (boron + silver) _____. I substituted worthless (SiO₂) _____ to simulate the heft of the (rhenium + aluminum) _____ articles, and replaced the (boron + silver) _____ under the (F) _____. The Inspector and (iodine) _____ then concealed ourselves to await the thief. Nearly dozing (oxygen + 2 fluorine) _____, I was startled by the sound of footsteps echoing (indium) _____ the deserted (C) _____. A shadow entered number (Sn) and I heard the (F) _____ being lifted, a brief silence, then an expletive and "The jewels (Ar) _____!" The Inspector yelled "Police!" and I yelled "(Cs) _____!" as we both jumped into different ends of the streetcar. After a brief struggle, the Inspector had his (Ne) _____ the culprit, (tungsten + holmium) _____ was subdued and handcuffed. I turned (oxygen + nitrogen) _____ the torch and beheld a uniform (oxygen + fluorine) _____ blue with (bromine + arsenic + sulfur) _____ buttons. "(Ho) _____!" exclaimed the Inspector, "It's the (Cu) _____!" "Of course," I replied, "it's elementary, Inspector. He's a (Si) _____ who found his comedy routine impersonating a (Cu) _____ in prison to (beryllium) _____ infinitely (molybdenum + rhenium) _____ rewarding on the outside—almost."

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