

*The Case of the
Missing Portraits:*

*A Shurkey Holmes
Whodunnit?*

MYSTERY



Blessed Are Who?

Episode Three: Eureka!

On the third morning, the kids were greeted by Detective Shurkey, "Welcome back to the mystery museum! I still have not solved the case of the missing portraits but we have some good clues to work with. The first day I found a note that says, 'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy' and on the second day I found a note that says, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.' We also discovered that those words come from Jesus."

"You also found the phone with the movie trailers," said the curator who happened to be wearing a funny hat and clothes that day, "Detective Shurkey, isn't this becoming like the famous *Case of Captain Snickerbelly's Chocolate Moustache?*"

"I'm not sure that's one of my cases," replied the curator, "But this case is becoming very complicated."

The curator ushered Shurkey out from in front of the curtain and said, "Well now it's time to hear from that most wonderful of actors, the great, the wonderful, Miss Purple!"

Miss Purple threw open the curtain, revealing the three remaining portraits as she stepped forward. The curtain swung back in front of the portrait wall. She was wearing some impressive leather armor.

She introduced herself, "It is I, Deborah. And judging by how I'm dressed, I'm a knight. I slew the most terrifying dragon—"

"No dragon!" exclaimed the curator.

"Then it must have been a sea monster," was Miss Purple's reply.

"No sea monster," said the curator, "You didn't slay anything. But you were a respected warrior. Why don't you just read the script?"

Miss Purple took a moment to refer to her notecard before continuing, "Well it looks like, I Deborah was a judge, and prophet, and general, and musician. Wait what didn't I do?"

The curator had an answer, "you were many things to many people."

"I need a costume change," said Miss Purple as she grabbed a black robe and gavel, "Shouldn't I look more like this if I'm a judge?"

"No," said the curator.

Miss Purple held up a guitar next and said, "Well shouldn't I have one of these if I'm a musician?"

"No, said the curator, "You weren't that kind of judge and you weren't that kind of musician. And where are you getting these props?"

"A good actor is always prepared," said Miss Purple.

The curator continued, "You were called by God to use all your gifts to serve everyone around you."

This seemed to give Miss Purple the inspiration she was looking for as she went on, "Wait, I've got it! I Deborah was a hero of the people. In a time of great trouble for God's people, Deborah... oh I mean I, Deborah, led them to do what is right and not what is wrong, to listen to God's word. And I even led an army against the cruel general Sisera in order to free the people. My song became a reminder to the people that God fights with all of us for justice. Wow Deborah is great! I mean, I am Deborah and I am great. And that concludes my performance today. I will see you again next time."

Miss Purple rushed off like she had the two previous days, throwing aside the curtain and revealing another missing portrait.

Again, Shurkey jumped forward to investigate, "The portrait is gone again! That makes three missing portraits! This is quickly becoming one of my greatest cases. We need to work extra hard today searching for clues. I need all of you kids to go out and investigate."

"Well that will work perfectly," said the curator, "Because you are all due to head to your next exhibit, The Medieval Europe Encounter."

The kids followed their leaders off into the museum as Shurkey followed behind them.

Later that day...

In the Medieval Europe Encounter the kids found all kinds of amazing things like suits of armor, replicas of castle walls, swords and shields, and even life-size models of horses and catapults in a big courtyard. They even found the curator, wearing the same funny clothes and hat from earlier,

standing in a big vegetable garden. As some of the kids were passing by the garden to check out a catapult, the curator waved them over.

"You may think that the most amazing thing in this exhibit is that catapult, but I actually think it's this garden," the curator explained, "You see, we have recreated an authentic village garden from hundreds of years ago. I even wear authentic gardening clothes from way back then."

The curator could tell that the kids were losing interest.

"But that's not even the most amazing thing about this garden," the curator explained, "The most amazing thing is that this garden is able to produce enough food to feed several families every day, and we give it all away! That's right, one of our main goals in creating this garden was to share its produce with the local food bank. They tell us that there are kids who come in looking for our big ruby-red tomatoes each week. It's such a pleasure sharing what we grow with others. Cooperation and sharing was the only way that villages in the medieval period were even able to survive. That reminds me of this amazing way that they used to plan out their crop cycles—"

The curator had lost the kids now and they wandered away to another part of the exhibit. As a new group of kids passed by the garden and the curator started the speech about the garden all over again, the first group passed through the door back inside from the courtyard. They almost bumped into Shurkey who was standing there observing another funny looking portrait. This one had a woman standing upright and pointing the way forward. The woman also had a hardhat and a toolbox. The plaque for the painting read, "Builderah."

"There's something fishy here," mumbled Shurkey as the kids continued on their way.



Even later that day...

"Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are the pure in heart," Shurkey kept repeating these words as she paced around in front of the missing portraits.

"We need another break in this case," she continued, "The phone with the movie trailers and the two notes just isn't enough. We need another clue to help us figure out what's happening to all these portraits."

Miss Purple jumped forward and said, "I'm on it! Miss Purple is playing her greatest role yet, a detective."

"Well I wouldn't quite call you a detective but you did help us make a big break in the case yesterday," said Shurkey, "We found that phone with the movie trailers. Now we need to find another clue."

"Why don't you use your magnifying glass too, Detective Shurkey? There's bound to be a clue around here if you look for it," offered Miss Purple.

Shurkey replied, "But I have been searching and searching. There is nothing out of the ordinary. Everything is perfect. Everything is clean. It's almost like it's too perfect. It's like it's too clean. Something is strange here."

Miss Purple noticed something tucked behind the curtain and pulled it out as she said, "Oh somebody left out this vacuum cleaner. We better put it away."

"Wait!" Exclaimed Shurkey, "Eureka! The simplest solution is most often the right solution. Someone has used this vacuum to clean up the scene of the crime. We must see what's inside."

Miss Purple caught on to what Shurkey was saying and opened up the vacuum to find, "Dirt!"

"It's not just any dirt," said Shurkey. "This is nice soil from outside."

"There's also a bit of paper in here," continued Miss Purple as she reached into the vacuum and pulled out a scrap of paper.

Shurkey took the paper and read, "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."

"I'm meek," exclaimed Miss Purple, "I mean Deborah was meek and today I'm Deborah. From Deborah we learned that the meek are people who humbly use their gifts to help whoever needs them. These are heroic types of people who do a lot to serve and even save others but they don't do it to be praised or rewarded. They're like super heroes, like Deborah."

"This must be another saying from Jesus," said Shurkey, "That makes three of them. I wonder how this all fits together. We're starting to gather a great collection of clues but I think we need more time to solve this case. I'm so close. If I could just figure out what's going on with those paintings—"

"Speaking of great collections," interrupted the curator, "We have a great one for all you kids tomorrow. I'll be showing you the Ancient China Area. We even have an authentic block from the Great Wall of China, and much much more. I can't wait for you to see it. Well, we had better get you off to get a good night's sleep so you're ready for tomorrow.

"I have a feeling I won't get much sleep at all tonight," said Shurkey, "I can never sleep much when there's a mystery to solve. Hopefully I'll have a breakthrough for you all when I see you next!"