

4,4
4,5
4,2
3,1
1,5

4

4

4

5

3

1

4

5

2

4

1

5

*You are cordially invited
to a house party at the home of the
Mysterious Marquise.*

*Please present yourself promptly between
11:13 and 11:42 in the morning. Early and
late arrivals will not be admitted.*

*In order to participate in the planned activities,
you will need to use the doorknocker to **TAP** for
entry. The leaves of this invitation will tell you
how to knock. The left will hint toward the rows,
the right toward the columns.*

*Only those with an adventurous spirit and
enjoyment of puzzles should seek to participate.*

*Included in this invitation is a page of
reminders you may find helpful.*



English Alphabet	Alpha Index	Gold Bug	Atbash	Caesar (shift 13)	Morse Code	Braille	Binary Index	Nyctograph	Pigpen	Dancing Men
A	1	5	Z	N	.-	⠠	00001	°.	┐	↖
B	2	2	Y	O	-...	⠡	00010	⠑.	┐	↗
C	3	-	X	P	-..	⠢	00011	┐	┐	↘
D	4	†	W	Q	-..	⠣	00100	┐	┐	↙
E	5	8	V	R	.	⠤	00101	┐	┐	↘
F	6	1	U	S	..-	⠥	00110	┐.	┐	↘
G	7	3	T	T	--.	⠦	00111	┐.	┐	↘
H	8	4	S	U	....	⠧	01000	⠑|	┐	↙
I	9	6	R	V	..	⠨	01001	┐	┐	↙
J	10	,	Q	W	.---	⠩	01010	┐	┐	↙
K	11	7	P	X	-.-	⠪	01011	⠑.	┐	↘
L	12	0	O	Y	.-..	⠫	01100	┐	┐	↘
M	13	9	N	Z	--	⠬	01101	┐	┐	↘
N	14	*	M	A	-..	⠭	01110	┐	┐	↘
O	15	‡	L	B	---	⠮	01111	┐	┐	↘
P	16	.	K	C	---.	⠯	10000	⠑.	┐	↙
Q	17	\$	J	D	---.	⠰	10001	°|	┐	↙
R	18	(	I	E	.-.	⠱	10010	⠑.	┐	↙
S	19	)	H	F	...	⠲	10011	┐	┐	↙
T	20	;	G	G	-	⠳	10100	⠑.	┐	↙
U	21	?	F	H	..-	⠴	10101	°.	┐	↙
V	22	¶	E	I	...-	⠵	10110	°.	┐	↙
W	23	]	D	J	.-	⠶	10111	┐.	┐	↙
X	24	¢	C	K	-..-	⠷	11000	⠑.	┐	↙
Y	25	:	B	L	-.--	⠸	11001	⠑.	┐	↙
Z	26	[	A	M	--..	⠹	11010	┐.	┐	↙

Example of a 5x5 Tap Grid:

	1	2	3	4	5
1	A	B	C	D	E
2	F	G	H	I	J
3	L	M	N	O	P
4	Q	R	S	T	U
5	V	W	X	Y	Z

Handwritten blue notes and symbols:

- A large, stylized blue 'X' or 'M' shape.
- Below it, the word "MILK" written in blue capital letters.
- To the right of "MILK", the word "TURTLE" written vertically in blue capital letters.
- Below "TURTLE", the word "TURTLE" written horizontally in blue capital letters.

I looked at the invitation in my hand one more time before approaching the imposingly tall door.

The door knocker was nothing too special, similar to ones I had seen a hundred times. Brass, and shaped like a lion. Hoping that the theory I had already developed was correct, I took a deep breath, looked at the second page of the invitation and knocked to spell:

1) TURTLE

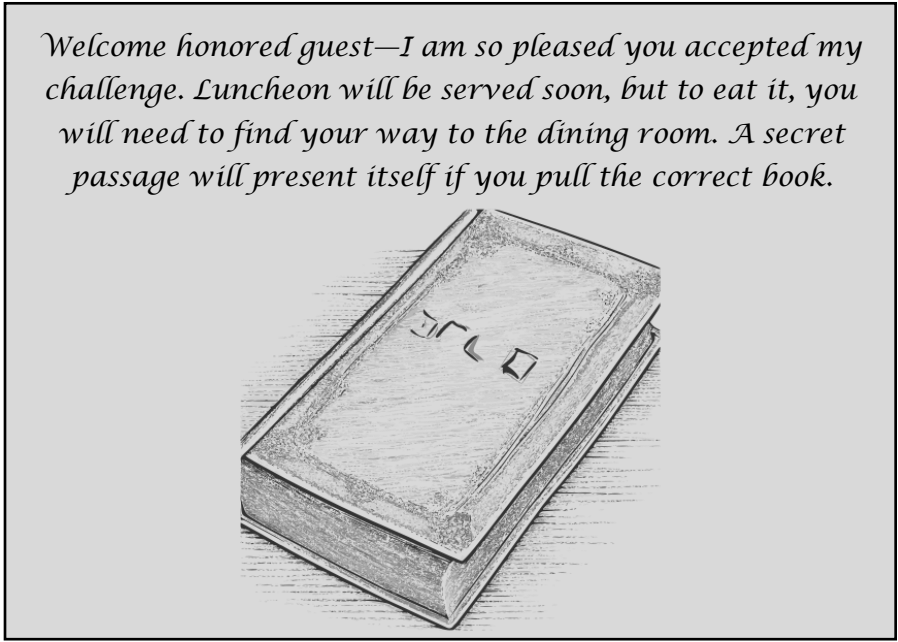
The door was almost immediately opened by a tall man in full livery.

“You’ve been expected. Please, this way,” he said in a deep, monotone voice, gesturing with his right arm toward an empty parlor.

Was I the first to arrive?

But as soon as I entered, the door to the parlor closed behind me and I heard a lock click. I whirled around, but it was very clearly too late. Why would my host have me locked in this parlor without even having greeted me?

Then again, this was a house party specifically for those who like adventures and puzzles. The parlor was simple, with the entire back wall was taken up with bookcases and an array of furniture suitable for conversation arranged in the middle of the room. Upon further examination, a piece of paper with a stub of pencil diagonally across it was a stark contrast to the dark wood of a low table next to the closest chair. I moved quickly to examine it.



It took me a few moments, but eventually I jotted down:

2) NICE

Confident now, I grabbed the pencil to bring with me and searched until I found the book indicated and pulled it. With a smooth, soundless motion, a bookcase next to that book swung open into a well-lit but narrow passage. I stepped into the passage and proceeded down a long hallway, not surprised this time when the door swung closed behind me. At the far end, a closed door had another piece of paper attached to it.

Please take only the seat assigned to you when you enter the dining room. You must enter silently. Fill in the chart below making sure the number of boxes indicated at the top and sides are "closed" (some are already closed—the black boxes) to discover which boxes are "open." Then unscramble those open letters to determine your place card.

3				O	R	N
5	P	C	H			J
4			L	B	A	S
5	V	W	A	Z	O	
4	I	U	X	Q		

LION

This was a bit trickier than the others. It took me several long moments and all the blank space on the paper to unscramble the open letters and find that my place card would read:

3) LION



Opening the door that the note had been pasted to, I finally had my first glimpse of the other people at this house party. I could only assume that someone at the table was also our host, but given that the seat I was assigned was at the head of the table, there was no way to say for sure. As the note had instructed, I entered silently and gave only a polite nod of the head to the others gathered around the table. I didn't recognize anyone as being from my particular set of friends, but there was one gentleman and two ladies who I was confident I had seen before a time or two, perhaps even been introduced to, though I couldn't recall any of their names.

The food was served by silent footmen, the only sounds that interrupted the quiet were the gentle tink of silverware against the dishes or thump of a glass being set on the table. It was an odd way to eat a meal, but not as unpleasant as I would have expected it to be. After the last dish was removed, but before the ladies could rise to retire, the silent footmen placed another card on the table before each of us. I quickly read mine:

Stay silent until you have a guess as to what "teapot" means.
No one may leave the table until the answer is said aloud.

About the time I finished reading it, a clear voice spoke, "She gritted her teeth, trying to **teapot** the pain gracefully."

There was a brief pause before another voice said, "It was questionable whether the old stone wall could **teapot** anything more without collapsing."

"The old man," said another voice promptly on the tail of that one, "suggested he **teapot** left as a shortcut."

There was another slight pause and then a quieter voice said, "The butler entered **teapot**-ting a coffee service."

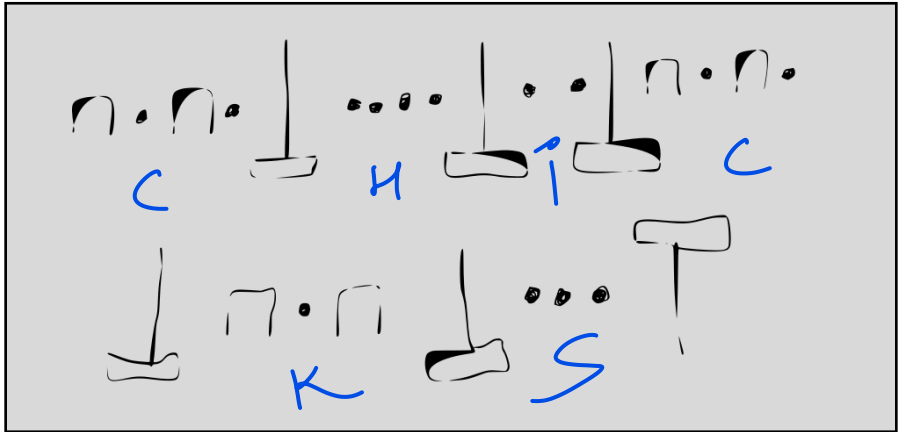
A very deep voice all the way at the other end of the table from me said, "The **teapot** reared up on its back legs."

Finally, there was silence as everyone at the table pondered what the teapot could be. Suddenly struck with a thought, I spoke up and said:

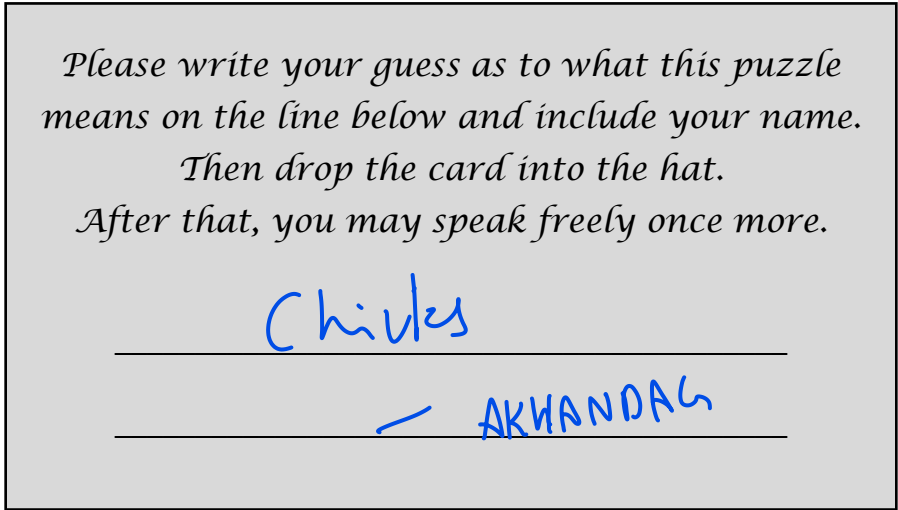
4) BEAR

Apparently that was the right answer, because the previously blank faced footmen got big grins on their mouths and opened the doors out of the dining room, forming something of a living wall to guide us all down a hall to a door that led to the back lawn.

We were greeted by the curious sight of a croquet set assembled in a most peculiar way. Instead of having a proper course to follow to hit the balls through the wickets and with mallets waiting on the side, the entire set was lined up in what looked like a random order, with an oddly large number of balls and few wickets. Wanting an easier way to look at it all together, I quickly sketched:



The ever-present footmen then proceeded to hand us another small card, similar in size and shape to a calling card.



I was completely stumped for a long moment, comparing the lawn before me to my small sketch, but then I was struck with a realization and wrote my name along with:

5) CHICKS

After the last of us dropped our card into the proffered hat, one of the footmen announced that we were welcome to play croquet while we waited, then the lot of them returned to the house with the hat and I was pretty sure I heard the snick of the lock turning once again.

With nothing better to do, we played croquet. The impetus to silence being gone, I introduced myself to my fellow game players and enjoyed an afternoon of discussing the puzzles we had encountered so far.

As soon as the last ball had been hit in our game (the timing was too perfect to be coincidence, they must have been watching us), the door to the house once more opened and the footmen streamed out, clearly with a purpose as each man walked straight to a person on the lawn to hand us an envelope with our name written on it in an elegant script. I opened mine to read:



Taking my pencil, I carefully wrote my previous answers starting in the top left corner.

Then I proceeded to do my best to figure out this final clue, thoroughly intrigued by the thought of this mysterious organization.

The Answer: THECRIMESCLUB



JUNIOR
CRYPTOGRAPHER'S
CORNER



**CRYPTO + PRIVACY
VILLAGE**



NEXTGEN