

12th June,

Hi Karen,

Well, I got the results back from 'the lab,' as you call it. I think we should have just listened to the detective. As you might expect, the results are pretty clear: there are no traces of any mycotoxins or other chemicals on the Hungry Corpse mask that could have led to confusion, delusion, aggression or anything else that might have made Andrew Paris lose his mind and shoot himself in that study - but I think we already knew that, given that he couldn't have been holding the gun when it was fired. Unless he propped it up somehow?

Melissa from mycology did, however, notice that some of the dreadlocks forming the beard looked like they had recently been burnt a little, perhaps by a spark from a fire. I think that might explain the unpleasant smell you noticed in the study? As someone who has singed his eyebrows on more than one occasion, I can confirm that burnt hair stinks.

So much for my theory. And the ground-breaking paper on mycotoxicity in New Caledonian masks that I had been deluding myself into thinking I could write. I think you might need to reassess the cast of characters in this story. I'm clearly more of a red herring than a sleuth, and the detective seems sharper than I suspect you gave him credit for. As for Jared and Lisa - who knows? Maybe they're savants? Anything seems possible right now.

Well, that's that. I was going to say good luck with your investigation, but I've just read your *Witness* piece and it sounds like you're moving on from all this. So good luck with everything else, I suppose. If you ever need a detective in the future, definitely don't look to me.

All the best,

Charlie

P.S. I trust you have a plan for returning the Hungry Corpse to Andrew Paris' house, given that you were the one who made me steal it? It's just sitting here in my office. I'm pretty sure that's illegal? If I'm arrested I'm blaming you.