

# Links

—James Saunderson

Having solved his riddle, you rush outside in search of the Prince. Tracking the subdued whispers of *heydavedidyaseethemassiveearsonthatbloke*, you follow the gaze of the idle contractors staring, mouths agape, into the half-finished building. Lo and behold, perched upon a throne of treated pine is a slightly impatient royal hiney.

The air around you precipitates the ethereal crystals of awkward silence usually heard, or rather, not heard, whilst visiting distant relatives you know nothing about. Half-anticipating royal fanfares, you continue standing before the pile of wood, head cocked slightly to one side. When it becomes clear that no trumpeter is going to burst into the foreground, you attempt to strike up a conversation.

“Umm... err... Y-Your Majesty, I-”

“It’s Royal Highness.”

“Sorry?”

“It isn’t Your Majesty, at least, not yet. I’m not one to be picky, but if you’re going to use a title, at least use the right one. It’s Royal Highness.”

“Oh, alright. Your High-”

“*Royal* Highness.”

“Oh, of course, my apologies, Your *Royal* High-”

“Yes, very good. Now, we don’t have time to dawdle, I must confide in you a matter of utmost secrecy; I’ve been told by my former mentor at Geelong Grammar that you can be trusted. Before we start, would you like a cookie? My mum baked them for me yesterday.”

A lecture and a half later, you half-stumble out of the half-building, still waiting for all the information to sink in, and trying to formulate a simpler version of everything you have just heard.

Apparently, Eddie McGuire and Germaine Greer have joined forces to remove all traces of cricket from the face of the Earth, beginning with the destruction of the Ashes. Greer’s motives are unknown, but the general consensus is that she just can’t stand cricketers’ aversion to showing a little more flesh. Eddie, on the other hand, shows some uncharacteristic subtlety; all that business with becoming the CEO of Channel 9 was just part of his scheme to undermine cricket in general. First he would slowly cut back on funding, then introduce more ads, and bit by bit, he would squeeze it off TV entirely, to be conveniently replaced by his beloved Collingwood.

And then, the plot thickens...

As of late, the Queen has been seen sneaking out of Buckingham Palace every night, and you have it on the authority of Charles' Geelong Grammar mentor (who somehow knows and trusts you, despite being several degrees of separation away) that she has been meeting up with a rather shady character. Fearing for reputation of the Crown, the Prince has decided to altruistically knock her off and assume the throne himself.

*Shame about the cookies though, they're really yummy. Here, take one, I insist.*

Anyway, to carry out this monstrous deed, he's hired the greatest fighting force in the United Kingdom—the Barmy Army. However, the price most certainly isn't cheap; the assassins want nothing short of England successfully defending the Ashes, which means that Charles first needs to thwart the combined efforts of Ego McGuire and Germaine Drear.

Typical of Melbourne weather, the rays of sunlight slowly wink away, allowing dark and foreboding clouds to take over the skies. As you bite into the large, oddly-shaped cookie Charles gave you, it shatters to reveal a hollow interior. Trying very hard to avoid remembering the last time you followed the advice of a fortune cookie, you look down and pull out a very long strip of paper. Shaking off the crumbs, you see a string of letters and numbers.

K53 P39 K2 P3 K2 P3 K2 P2 K1 P4 K1 P4 K1 P4 K8 P5 K25 P23 K9 P6 K4

P1 K4 P1 K4 P1 K1 P14 K5 P11 K22 P22 K11 P5 K14 P1 K1 P14 K4 P10

K24 P3 K3 P3 K3 P3 K3 P8 K8 P4 K14 P1 K1 P14 K4 P6 K10 P3 K3 P3 K3

P3 K3 P3 K3 P3 K3 P3 K3 P8 K8 P4 K14 P1 K1 P4 K1 P4 K1 P4 K4 P10

K24 P22 K11 P5 K3 P3 K2 P3 K3 P1 K1 P3 K1 P4 K1 P5 K5 P11 K22 P23

K9 P7 K4 P1 K4 P1 K2 P2 K2 P2 K3 P2 K3 P2 K9 P5 K25 P39 K3 P1 K4

P1 K3 P2 K3 P10 K40 P42 K6 P5 K53