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The Bloomswell Diaries

By Louis L. Buitendag

- Explaining the absence of Ben's parents, Uncle Lucas says that they "couldn't simply sit by as other people continued to get hurt," and, "Sometimes...doing the right thing is the only option." What do you think he means by this? Do you agree? Why or why not?
- Ben and Mackenzie are both fans of Sherlock Holmes mysteries. Two stories they mention are "The Blue Carbuncle" and "The Adventure of the Priory School." Read one of these stories (full text can be found online or at your library) and write a brief summary. Are there any similarities between the story you read and **The Bloomswell Diaries**?
- Mr. Holiday and Whip mislead Ben several times during their travels together. Describe one of these instances. What do you think Ben learns? How does Ben apply what he learns later on in the story?
- The mechanical tinmen were created to serve the needs of their owners and are generally docile. However, in the wrong hands they can be violent, threatening, and scary. Would you want a tinman of your own? Why or why not? What tasks would you have him do? What would you make sure he does not do?
- Olivander is a mysterious character and we eventually learn he has been on the trail of Ben throughout his journey. What role does Olivander play in the story? Compare and contrast Olivander with the tinmen in the story. How is he the same and how is he different?
- There are a lot of unanswered questions at the end of the book. What do Ben's parents actually do? Where are they? Who is *The Buyer* and what is he planning to do? Write the next chapter of **The Bloomswell Diaries** as a short story or comic book. Be sure to answer some of these, or other, unanswered questions.