

Z is for...

Z-O'CLOCK

I should have known better than to ask Zebediah for help with the last puzzle of my party. My doubts immediately started as soon as we made an appointment to rendezvous at the public library on Saturday.

"I'll meet you there when it opens?" I proposed.

"Sure, at 1:t." he replied.

"Just be there when the doors open," I groaned.

You see, Zeb had recently gotten on a kick of telling time on some new system he'd devised involving, rather than the numbers one through twelve, the whole alphabet. He had tried to explain it to me in the past, but I was still not sure how it worked.

Anyway, we did meet up at the library, and, against my better judgment I asked if he could find a location to hide the Z-piece and create a puzzle to lead players there.

"Way ahead of you on that front, " he said emphatically. "But first, let me show you *this!*" he chimed withdrawing a rather nice pocket-watch. On it's face were upper- and lowercase letters. I hope my rolling-of-the-eyes was not too obvious.

"You're nuts, Zeb. And your custom time scheme makes no sense whatsoever."

"On the contrary, it makes perfect sense," he retorted. "I've been living by it for weeks now. It's really not so different than what you're used to."

"Not so different?! You have *letters* on the watch, not

numbers, twenty-six of th-- no, fifty-two of them."

"Well sure, I use fifty-two minutes in an hour now, with twenty-six hours in a day."

"But that can't work."

"Sure it can, my minutes and hours are just different lengths of time than yours. The important thing to remember is that at midnight each day, my watch reads exactly like your watch would read. Both hands pointing straight up. All the time in between is just measured accordingly."

"I still don't get it." I moaned.

"You just have to know how to convert times, I guess. I can do it pretty quickly at this point. For example, lightning struck the clock tower in Hill Valley at exactly W:x by my reckoning. And the Hindenburg Disaster? That started at U:A, local time."

I thought about his words for a minute, but then shook my head in frustration.

"Forget it, Zeb. It's malarkey, Let's get down to business. Let's talk about the puzzle you're going to make for me."

"*Have made'*, you mean. And I'm sorry you think my innovative system of timekeeping is nonsense."

He handed me a sheet of paper [see next page].

"Because if you don't get it, you'll probably never see your Z-pieces again..."

[see reverse side]

