



Mr. Brain's Summer Adventure

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Introduction

After a grueling, relentless year of work—one that felt as though my mind was constantly trapped in a maze of shifting walls, heavy locks, and complex ciphers—I finally hit a wall of my own. I needed a true escape. I needed fresh, unclouded air, beautiful nature, and a place where I could completely clear my mind of puzzles.

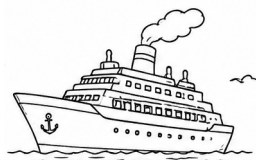
While discussing my fatigue with my old friend, Dr. Alpha, he offered the perfect suggestion: the Island of Pillar. He described it as a place of breathtaking natural beauty, famous for its dramatic coastlines and the historic ruins that give the island its name—ancient, majestic stone buildings surrounded by towering pillars.

Alpha was unable to join me on this voyage, but he asked a small favor before I left. He wanted to experience some of the trip's excitement, so he suggested we maintain an old-fashioned correspondence. For a man who values deliberate thought, the slow and steady pace of fountain pens, crisp vellum, and wax seals was deeply appealing. I gladly agreed.

What follows is the collection of letters I sent to Dr. Alpha during my summer journey. But as you will quickly see, my mind refuses to take a vacation. From the moment I stepped onto the bustling harbour docks, every logistical hiccup, eccentric passenger, and island mystery transformed itself into a logic problem. To make the journey more entertaining for Alpha, I began embedding puzzles directly into my descriptions of the trip, challenging him to see the world through the eyes of a logician.

As you read through my letters across the harbour, the open sea, and the island itself, you will find puzzles woven into the fabric of the story. Grab a pencil, pack your bags, and prepare for a lighter, sun-drenched adventure. As I sealed that very first envelope at the docks, I couldn't even imagine what a wonderful adventure it would become.

Mr. Brain



The Harbour

Letter 1: Waiting to board

Dear Alpha,

I couldn't wait to escape these mid-summer temperatures, step onto a ship, and feel that pleasant sea breeze. As I arrived at the harbour, I was surprised by just how many people and ships were there. I couldn't imagine sea travel was still so popular; I always thought of it as something from old movies.

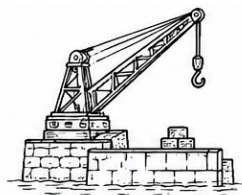
We didn't have time to catch up properly after I booked my voyage, so here are a few details about my travel plan. I managed to get a cabin on a smaller ship with only 50 cabins. I'm happy I didn't have to travel on one of those massive cruise ships—I think I will have a much better time and meet more interesting people this way. I will spend two days at sea and then four days on the island before heading back.

As you can probably already see from the grid below, I couldn't stay away from puzzles! I started writing this while waiting to board the ship and had far too much time on my hands.

Simply writing down the name of the ship for you would be far too easy. So I created this letter grid while waiting to board. When you cross out all the other ship names I can see docked in the harbour around me, the remaining uncrossed letters will spell out the exact name of the ship I am traveling on!

The Rules of the Ship Name:

- ◇ Words may run horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.
- ◇ Words may be read forward or backward.



These are the ship names I noticed: Anna Marie, Aurora, Drifter, Falcon, Grit, Guidance, Harbor Scout, Iron Gull, Lady, Mary Ann, Meridian, Nimbus, Opal, Piper, Seafarer, Trade Wind, Two Brothers, Wave, Wild Cherry, Windward.

R	E	R	A	F	A	E	S	D	W	T	M
T	A	R	O	R	U	A	R	M	I	H	A
U	S	G	R	I	T	A	F	E	L	D	R
O	O	R	E	S	W	E	A	R	D	N	Y
C	P	E	E	D	A	V	L	I	C	I	A
S	A	B	N	H	R	A	C	D	H	W	N
R	L	I	E	E	T	W	O	I	E	E	N
U	W	L	A	D	Y	O	N	A	R	D	P
O	S	U	B	M	I	N	R	N	R	A	I
B	R	E	T	F	I	R	D	B	Y	R	P
R	G	U	I	D	A	N	C	E	O	T	E
A	Z	L	L	U	G	N	O	R	I	W	R
H	E	E	I	R	A	M	A	N	N	A	T

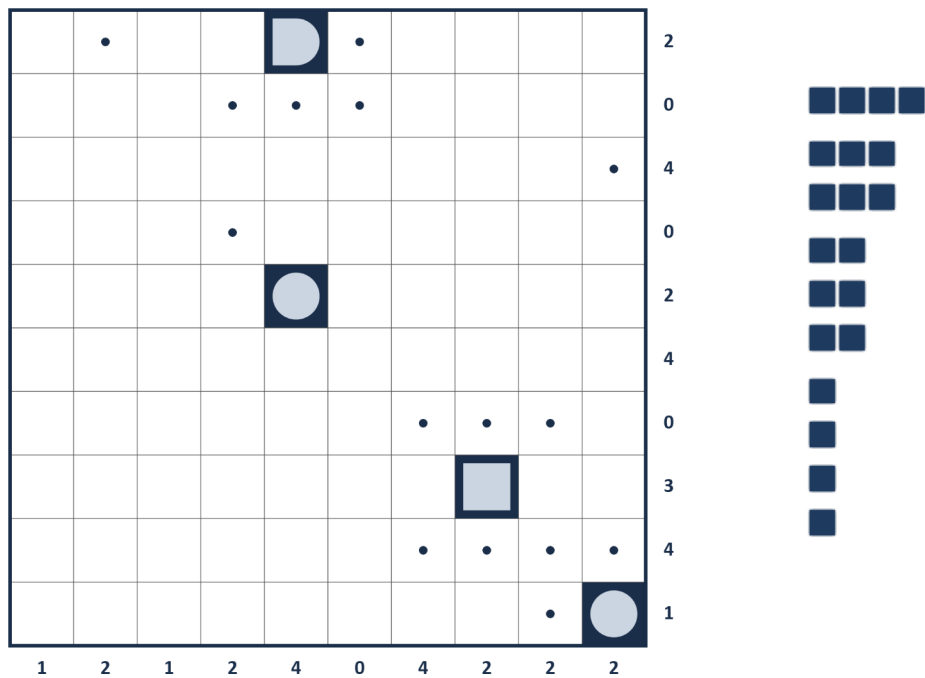
It probably wasn't too hard to find my ship's name. It has a great name, and it represents exactly what I'm looking forward to on this trip.



But now I need to get to my ship's boarding area. I had a bit of trouble finding it because the main slips are a complete logistical disaster today. Try to place all the ships in their proper spots below to see just how crowded the harbour really was. I know you already know the rules, but you also know me—I absolutely love putting these things right above the puzzle, just to keep my own ledger orderly.

The Rules of the Harbour:

- ◇ You must place exactly 10 ships into the grid: one big ship, 4 squares long; two medium ships, 3 squares long; three small ships, 2 squares long; and four boats, 1 square long.
- ◇ Ships can be placed horizontally or vertically, but they can never touch each other, not even diagonally. Every ship must be completely surrounded by open water or the edge of the grid.
- ◇ The numbers at the right side and bottom of the grid tell you exactly how many ship segments are located in that row or column. Some ship parts and ocean cells, marked with dots, are already given.

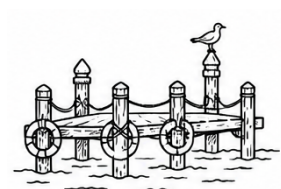


I hope you enjoyed this first letter, Alpha. By the way, looking back at that harbour grid, my ship is the one on the left in the center, and I'm currently on the far right side of this map, so I really need to hurry to get to it before they pull up the gangplank!

I will mail this one right before I step onto the deck. The final boarding call is sounding, and the sea breeze is waiting. I hope to write to you again very soon!

Yours in deduction,

Mr. Brain



Letter 2: Aboard the Sea Breeze

Dear Alpha,

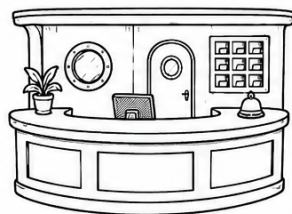
I made it to the boarding area exactly on time. As I waited near the gangplank, I had a wonderful vantage point from which to watch the rest of the passengers arrive. It was quite an eccentric mix—tourists loaded down with sun hats, locals returning home with wrapped market goods, and elegant vacationers moving with deliberate grace. I didn't stop to introduce myself to anyone just yet; the hustle of the harbour boarding process kept everyone moving briskly toward their respective quarters.

Following the line of passengers up the gangplank, I stepped through the heavy wooden entryway and into the ship's main reception lobby. In the center sat the purser's desk, a beautiful piece of curved oak flanked by two polished brass lanterns. Behind the desk hung a large wooden board lined with heavy brass hooks, each holding a cabin key attached to a classic teardrop-shaped fob.

I gave my name to the steward, who checked his ledger, pulled down a heavy brass key, and handed it over with a polite nod. I could simply tell you the cabin number, but I had some time after entering the room, so get ready for another puzzle. I hid the room number inside this grid.

The Rules of the Grid:

- ◇ *The grid is divided into bold, outlined zones (sectors).*
- ◇ *A zone containing exactly 1 square must contain the number 1. A zone of 2 squares contains the numbers 1 and 2, a zone of 3 squares contains 1, 2, and 3, and so on.*
- ◇ *Identical numbers can never touch each other, not even diagonally.*
- ◇ *Fill in the missing numbers to discover the digits inside the two shaded squares.*

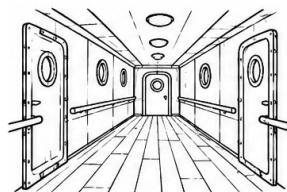


				1			2		1	3
	4							5		4
1									1	
3				5				5	2	
1	5				2					4
2			4							
					2				3	4
	2			4	3	4	3			
3							1			4

As I looked down at the key, I noticed that the purser's desk also held a large official deck blueprint showing how the cabins were grouped into structural watertight sectors. It looked like a maze to me, and when I started walking toward my room, it definitely felt like a maze of hallways. I had to stop several times and check with crew members to make sure I was going the right way. They were all in a rush with preparations for departure, but they were most kind and helped reassure me that I was on the right path.

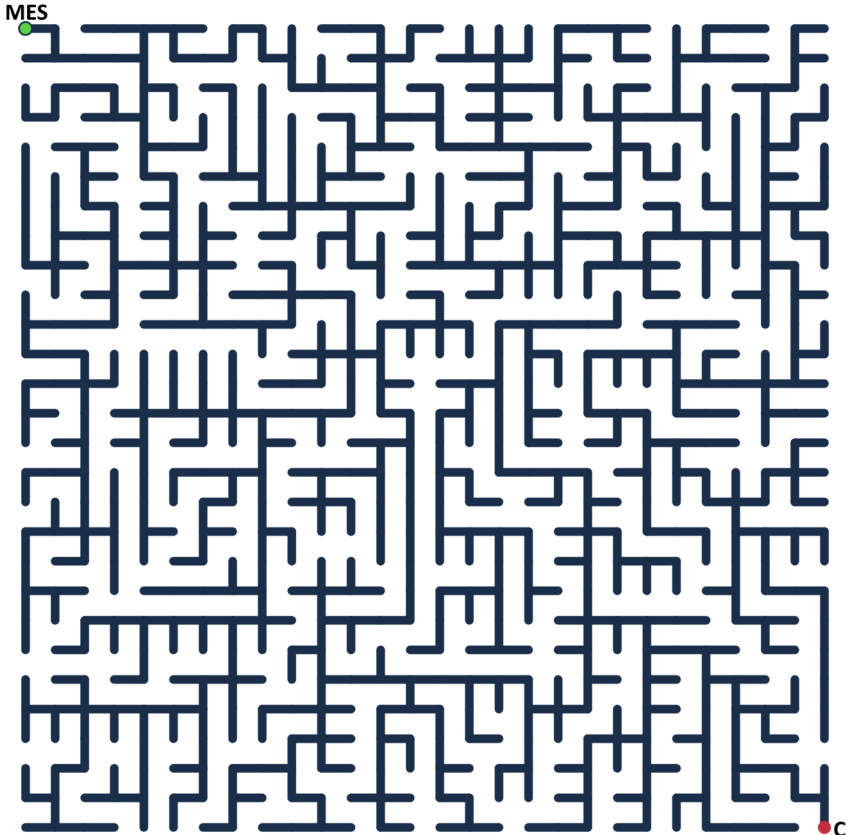
When I started drawing it, the layout honestly looked much simpler than it had felt while I was trying to find my room, so I complicated it a bit for you. You do not have the feeling of being lost, so otherwise it would be too simple for you!

Have a look at the corridor maze below, Alpha. See if you can trace the single, continuous path from the main stairs to my cabin door without hitting a dead end or stepping into a crew-only zone.



The Rules of the Corridor:

- ◇ Start your search at the Main Entry Stairs (MES)
- ◇ Follow the solid lines, which represent the narrow hallways of the passenger deck. The empty white spaces represent the solid walls of the ship. Trace a single, continuous line to reach the terminal point marked Cabin (C) without hitting a dead end.



When I opened the cabin, I was pleasantly surprised. There wasn't too much space, but it was nicely organized, with a comfortable bed and a small desk. I wasn't planning on spending too much time in the cabin anyway, but first I had to do the tedious job of unpacking a few things I would need while on board.

And then, my brain blocked. I completely forgot the combination to my suitcase.

The combination is always something logical so I can easily remember it, but this time it wasn't that easy. I knew for one bag I always use the phrase "Bring your luggage", which gives me the combination 547. But I couldn't remember the code for the other one.

I sat on the edge of the bed, staring blankly for a moment. Then, I looked through the porthole window at the gorgeous weather outside, and the phrase suddenly returned to me: "Beautiful blue sky".

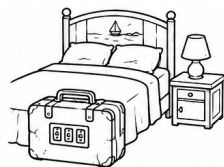
Well, now I have told you both of the combinations for my bags. Did you manage to deduce the second one, Alpha?

The Rules of Decoding the Bag:

- ◇ From the first sentence and the code, try to find the pattern and decode the second sentence.

When I finally unpacked, I noticed we were moving. I had to get outside quickly; I didn't want to miss leaving the port. I hurried up the staircase to the deck to enjoy the view as we left the port behind and headed toward the open sea. The smell of the sea around started to intensify, with a gentle breeze carrying it to my face.

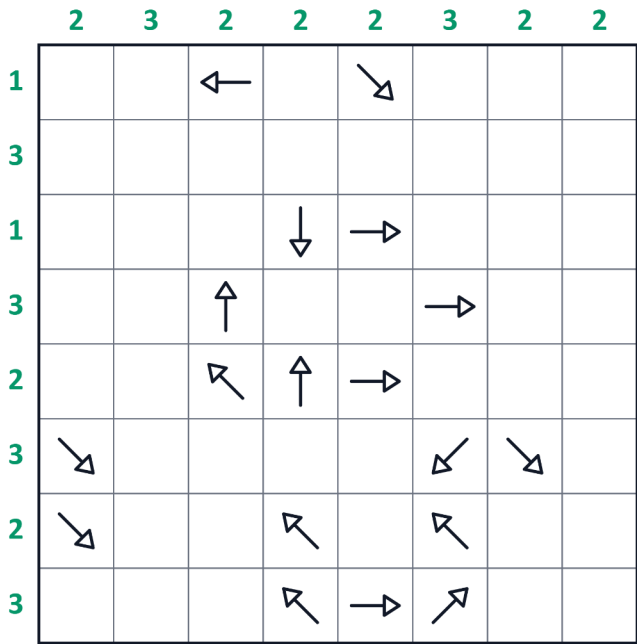
I sat on the deck, and other people started to arrive. I started a conversation with an old sailor, who had worked all his life on a boat. Now, he and his wife were also taking a vacation. He said he insisted that travel needs to be by boat—it was the only way he could enjoy it.



While he told me his old sailor stories, we noticed the stars. As a seasoned sailor, he knew a great deal about them and how to navigate by them. It was fascinating to hear all that knowledge. I mapped part of the sky in the next puzzle. I couldn't capture its beauty, but I hope you still get some fun out of it!

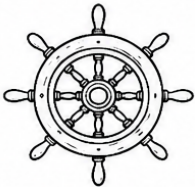
The Rules of the Star Grid:

- ◇ Place all stars so that every arrow and edge clue is satisfied.
- ◇ An arrow looks along a straight line in the direction it points.
- ◇ Exactly one cell in that arrow's line of sight must contain a star.
- ◇ Every placed star must be seen by exactly one arrow.
- ◇ Edge clues show the exact number of stars in each row and column.



I hope you enjoyed this letter, Alpha. I'm off to get some sleep now. The rocking of the ship is incredibly soothing, and I plan on skipping breakfast entirely tomorrow just to enjoy a proper rest.

Mr. Brain



You've Reached the End of This Edition

Thank you for joining Mr. Brain for the beginning of his summer adventure!

In this edition, you followed him through The Harbour and aboard the Sea Breeze. His journey, however, is only just beginning.

In the next chapter, Mr. Brain explores the open sea, encounters new passengers, and discovers many more puzzles before Pillar Island appears on the horizon.

- ◇ Continue with the Supporter — BrainBreeze Membership on Patreon to unlock the next chapter.
- ◇ Join the Brainstorm Tier on Patreon to read the complete adventure, including Pillar Island, the ancient ruins, Nina's disappearance, and the final chamber mystery.
- ◇ You can find the available editions and puzzle solutions on Patreon.

Thank you for solving!

Mr. Brain's journey continues....

