Section 9. Stories

This section features stories without questions.

Contents

Stories

9-1. Legally… Robbed

Dr. Watson is reading an article in "Mahjong News", `At the MCR London championship 2011, an accident took place. Judges had to make an extremely difficult decision. Clarifications could be made only when both rulebooks – Chinese and English – were thoroughly examined.'

So, Mrs. Hudson is playing at the MCR tournament. Her hand is:

She picks . "Looks like mahjong? Oh, no! Too few points:

- 4 = Last Tile
- 2 = Tile Hog
- 1 = Self-Drawn

Totaling = 7 points"

"One point is missing, what a pity! Once there is no mahjong I would declare Kong" she thought. "Kong!" Suddenly, a very queer thought came to her mind, "I can Rob it!" "Hu!" she declared proudly.

"Where is mahjong? You have only seven points!" questioned one of the opponents.
"I robbed a Kong!"
"But you can't do it! That Kong is **yours**!"
"Really? I think I can!" Mrs. Hudson opened the "Green Book". "Let's call a judge and read it all out altogether."

"Green Book"

Two judges came to the table – one British and one Chinese.

"See p.20, description of fan #47 Robbing The Kong: "Winning off the tile that somebody adds to a melded pung (to create a Kong). (The points for Last Tile may not be combined.)"

– read aloud Mrs. Hudson.

"See the word "***somebody***"? I am English, this is my native language. I know what the word "***somebody***" means. It can be any person, including yourself surely."

After a huge silence, the pause was broken by the Chinese judge.

"You see, madam, there is another text in the "Green Book". See the end of "Preface" section at p.3", `These rules and regulations exist in both Chinese and English editions. As disputes may arise out of a faulty translation or different understandings, they must be settled according to the original Chinese edition.'

"I must assure you, Madam, that in Chinese we use characters 他人 tārén "other person(s)". That is correct. We undoubtedly have to contact the Rules Committee regarding this issue that has occurred. As for your hand, we can not count it as mahjong. Though I propose to not penalize you. Simply continue to play after you have made a Kong."

"Thank you very much!" said Mrs. Hudson and opened the replacement tile. It was . I knew it! Hu!"

Note: This piece of "Sherlock Holmes and Mahjong" series comes in the form of a story without questions. The author's intentions were merely to urge players to read the original rules text more carefully. See, there is a big difference between "another player" and "somebody".

9-2. Nuclear Mahjong
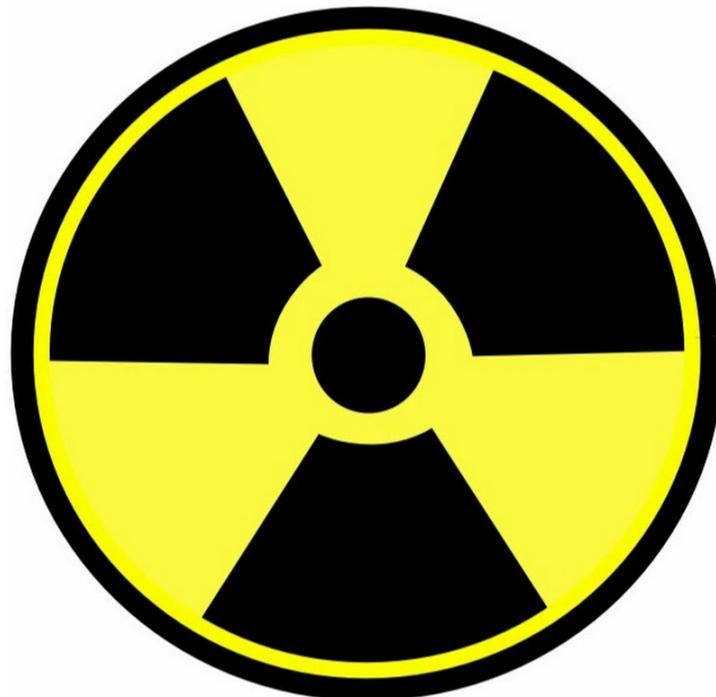
Sherlock Holmes Mahjong Mysteries Contest is over. Today the readers are offered a story, no need to solve anything, just relax and enjoy reading!

While chasing Professor Moriarty and his accomplices, Sherlock Holmes dropped by the London University. He has seen big advertising for the lecture on nuclear physics to be delivered by young professor P. After the lecture Holmes had a short conversation with the professor. They spoke about many items and Holmes had introduced a game of mahjong as some decision-making model.

"How interesting," said professor P., "could you give me the Rules?"
"Surely, here are the Rules," replied Holmes. "And I invite you to 221B Baker Street to have a talk about mahjong and nuclear physics.

In a week professor P. entered the apartment at 221B Baker Street. Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson, Mrs. Hudson, and Inspector Lestrade were waiting to hear something about nuclear physics. But instead, and to a great surprise, the professor decided to speak about ... mahjong, to be more precise, about some notions of nuclear physics applicable to MCR mahjong.

Note: For the readers to have a chance to get acquainted with nuclear physics, we will provide links to Wikipedia wherever it is relevant.

Quark Chows

"Good morning, everybody," started professor P. "The first interesting thing which came to my mind when reading the Rules was, surely, Knitted Straight and its components, Knitted Chows.

 — knitted straight

 — knitted chows
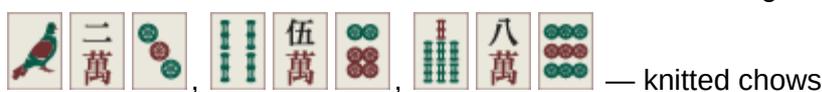
Those are considered "special" Chows. On the other hand, one cannot have in the completed hand only one of such Chows, only **three**. Which reminds me of quark."

Note: A quark (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quark) is a type of elementary particle and a fundamental constituent of matter.

"Quark can never be found as a stand-alone particle," continued the professor. "Moreover, for instance, a proton consists of two `up' quarks and one `down' quark. So, three quarks make one bigger particle. Hence, I would name those Knitted Chows of Knitted Straight as "**_Quark Chows_**" as a full analogy of nuclear physics processes observed in the game of mahjong."

"Holes"

"The next interesting thing are fans Greater/Lesser Honors and Knitted tiles. In order to understand how it works simply do a two-step procedure: take all single different honor tiles plus Knitted Straight, altogether 16 tiles.

 — 7 honor tiles

 — 9 tiles of knitted straight

Now, one needs to add two "holes", that's *anti-matter*, in other words, two tiles of a hand must be annihilated (removed).

 — 2 "holes"
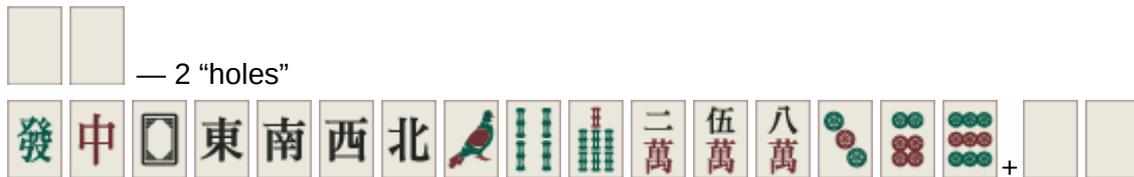
Resulting 14-tile hand will fall into three categories:
- two suit tiles have been removed ⟶ Greater Honors and Knitted tiles

- one honor and one suit tile has been removed ⟶ Lesser Honors and Knitted tiles

- two honor tiles have been removed ⟶ Lesser Honors and Knitted tiles + Knitted Straight

."

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hole#Holes_in_physics.

Symmetry

"Symmetry in physics is one of the fundamental notions, the basic idea behind it is that an object is preserved or remains unchanged under some transformation."

"The first obvious thing from the mahjong world is, surely, fan Reversible Tiles. Strictly speaking, "reversible" is a symmetry with respect to a turn for 180 degrees. In some languages this fan mistakenly is called Symmetric Tiles. Please, take a look at tiles and

. The former is "reversible", or symmetric with respect to a **turn**, the latter is "symmetric" with respect to mirror **reflection** along the long axis.

In-depth waits analysis

"Now let's explore several tile waiting forms. To understand how a "wait" works, let's do some experiment by "ruining" the completed hand! Let's take out one tile off the Pair (A-A), Pung (B-B-B), Chow (D-E-F). In the proposed notation, we receive after removing one tile: A, B-B, D-E (E-F), and D-F (Chow with hole inside). Why is D-E a double-sided wait? The answer lies in symmetry: a "leftover" of taking `upper' tile F from D-E-F and a "leftover" of taking `down' tile C from C-D-E are **identical** in tiles (D-E in both cases). Since tiles D-E have a symmetry, anything that works from one side would automatically work from the other."

"One more example, let's take out of A-A B-B-B one tile (B), the "leftover" A-A B-B has a symmetry in turns of tile patterns, it does not "remember" A or B was taken from the completed hand. Thus, A-A B-B is waiting for both A and B."

"And the last, A-A plus B-C-D minus A ⟶ A + B-C-D ⟶ A-B-C-D. Symmetry in ascending or descending order says that both tiles A or D could be taken from part of the completed hand. Thus, A-B-C-D is waiting double-sided."

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symmetry_(physics)

"Thank you, dear professor," said Sherlock Holmes. "I can assure that for all of us this lecture was both informative and entertaining. And, please, drop by to play a game of mahjong with us!"