



The Mystery of The Mary Celeste

Based on
The Story of
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

This is a true story.

It is November 7th, 1872. Captain Benjamin Briggs, his wife Sarah and their baby Sophia are at the port in New York. They are going to Italy on the Mary Celeste.

Captain Briggs is an experienced seaman. He and his seven men are preparing the ship. The mariners are carrying 1700 barrels of alcohol into the cargo compartment.

The ship is departing to Italy this the afternoon.

It is December 4th, 1872. The Dei Gratia is sailing in the Atlantic Ocean, 600 miles west of Gibraltar. The Dei Gratia is an English ship.

Morehouse is the captain of the Dei Gratia. One of his men is looking out with a telescope.

‘Captain Morehouse! Look! I think it is a ship!’

‘Let me see. Yes, it is the Mary Celeste! What is it doing here?’ asks Captain Morehouse, confused.

‘I can’t see anybody on board, sir.’

‘Really? Let me see it again.’ says the Captain, surprised.

‘Yes, you are right! There isn’t anybody on board! That is very strange!’

‘What are we going to do, sir?’

‘C’mon, prepare the small boat immediately! Let’s board the Mary Celeste.’ says the captain.

Morehouse and his men board the Mary Celeste.

‘Hello, there! Is anyone here?’ calls Morehouse, but there is no answer.



Captain Briggs is not on board. Sarah and baby are not on board. The seven men are not on board, either. There is no sign of life. The deck of the ship is completely deserted.

‘Where is everybody? The ship is abandoned!’

‘Hum, this is no good. Very bizarre. Let’s look around and examine every compartment.’ orders Captain Morehouse.

‘Is this a ghost ship?’ asks a mariner.

The men investigate the main deck.

There is a lot of water on the deck, but there are no signs of an accident or violence.

The canvas, the anchor and the wheel are intact.

The ship’s clock and compass are broken.

The life boat, chronometer and sextant are not on the ship.

Captain Morehouse investigates Captain Briggs’s cabin.

Captain Briggs’s official diary is there. The last note is dated November, 24. There are no notes about a tempest coming. All the notes are usual.

There is a chest containing Sarah’s clothes, two medallions, many rings, and money. The baby’s toys are in the cabin, too.

The mariners go to the cargo compartment.

The compartment is intact and there is no water on the floor.

The barrels are intact, but there isn’t any alcohol in 9 of them.



There is a lot of food and fresh water on board and they are not contaminated.

‘Captain Morehouse!’ shouts a mariner. ‘Look, this is a diary!’

‘Bring it to me, mariner. Let me see it.’ orders Morehouse. ‘Well, it is not an official diary, but let’s read it.’



It is the chief mate’s diary. There are unfinished notes dated November, 25. But, again, there are no notes about a tempest, no notes about an accident, no notes about sick people, nothing unusual. There are some calculations but they are not important.

The Dei Gratia escorts the Mary Celeste to the port in Gibraltar. There, they present it to the British authorities. There is a serious and intense investigation on the ship and evidences.

There are no signs of a pirate attack, no signs of tempest or tornadoes in the area on those days, no signs of imminent explosion of the alcohol, no signs of sabotage or mutiny, no hallucinatory substances on board, medical problems, nothing.

Nobody can give a plausible explanation why the ship was abandoned.

It is an enigma.

Today, there are different theories to explain the mystery of the Mary Celeste.

Some people consider that the Mary Celeste is a victim of the Bermuda Triangle, where ships and airplanes disappear with no reasonable cause.

Other people believe in abduction. They say that Captain Briggs, his family and the mariners on the Mary Celeste were captured by aliens.

What about you? What is YOUR theory?

