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The Mysteries of Beethovens Hair

Lydia Nibley
Russell Martin
Charlesbridge Publishing (February 2009)
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Its hard to believe that adult TV series like “CSI” and “NCIS” are overlooked in their all-hours re-runs by older children. And, although they may act as (an unrealistic) deterrent to a future in crime, they might also unwittingly be relating the message that discoveries can only be accomplished through the aid of expensive machines and databases. *Beethovens Hair*, which was published in an adult version in 2001 and became a *Washington Post* Book of the Year, brings forensics back into the realm of amateurs. The two men responsible for tracing the origins and journey of a lock of Beethovens hair are professionals in their own fields, but their discovery is based purely on their passion as laymen. They loved Beethovens music first and foremost. The fact that one of them was a real estate developer and the other a Mexican American physician named Che Guevara only adds to the charm.

The story itself-from Beethovens deathbed to a small town in Denmark to a collector in Arizona is a fascinating history lesson. The fact that Beethoven himself seemed to be interested, even passionate, that the world recognize and unravel his mystery adds tension and brings the story to a satisfying conclusion. *Beethovens Hair* is a wonderfully grown-up addition to middle school libraries.
HEATHER SHAW (April 14, 2009)

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