Mystery in the Masterpiece

People who enjoy art often have to be detectives. They may want to know when a painting was created, what it is a picture of, or who the artist was. For some paintings the answers are easy, but for others it takes lots of research to figure out their secrets.

What do you see in this painting? Who do you think the people are, and what are they doing? These are all things to wonder about, but the biggest mystery is the name of the artist.

We think it is by Antoine Le Nain, a French painter who lived about 400 years ago. But it could also be by one of his brothers, Louis or Mathieu. All 3 worked closely together in one studio. Because they usually signed only their last name, Le Nain, it’s hard to know who created which painting! Antoine was best at miniature paintings and portraits (pictures of people), often painted on rectangles of copper. Louis was the genius of the family. Mathieu lived longer than his brothers, so his later work is easier to label.

Use your detective skills to find the hidden words in this puzzle.

Circle the words as you find them—up, down, backward, forward, diagonally. Can you track down all the words?

Antoine  France  Art  Guess  Brother  Le Nain  Clue  Meal  Color  Painting  Copper  Secret  Easel  Sketch

Whichever brother created the painting at the top of this page, it’s no mystery that it’s a beauty!