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THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES by SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE ADVENTURE I. A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA I. To Sherlock Holmes she is always THE woman. I have seldom heard him mention akin to love for Irene Adler. All emotions, an
d that one particularly, were abhorrent to his cold, precise but admirably balanced mind. He was, I take it, the most perfect reasoning and observing machine that the world has seen, but as a lover he would have placed himself in a false position. He never spoke of the softer passions, save with a gibe and a sneer. They were admirable things for the observer--excellent for d
rawing the veil from men's motives and astrong from the word has been but one woman to him, and that woman was the late Irena she late Irena she late Irena she late Irena she in the word has a love from the veil from men's motives and actions. But for the trained reasoner to admit such intrusions into his own delicate and finely adjusted temperament was to introduce a letter of the observer was but one woman to him, and that woman was the late Irena Adler, of dubious and questionable memory. I had seen little of Holmes lately. My marriage had drifted us away from each other. My own complete happiness, and the home-centred interests which rise up around the man who first finds himself master of his own estable ishment, were sufficient to absorb all my attention, while Holmes, who loathed every form of society with his whole Bohemian soul, remained in our lodgings in Baker Street, buried among his old books, and alternating from week to week between cocaine and ambition, the drowsiness of the drug, and the fierce energy of his own keen nature. He was still, as ever, deeply attented by the study of crime, and occupied his immense faculties and extraordinary powers of observation in following out those clues, and clearing up those mysteries which had been abandoned as hopeless by the official police. From time to time I heard some vague account of his doings: of his summons to Odessa in the case of the Trepoff murder, of his clearing up of the singular tragedy of the Atkinson brothers at Trincomalee, and finally of the mission which he had accomplished so delicately and successfully for the reigning family of Holland. Beyond these signs of his activity, however, which I merely shared with all the readers of the daily press, I knew little of my former friend and companion. One night—it was on the twentieth of M
tries singular tragedy of the Atkinson brothers at Trincomales, and thaily of the mission wintch ne had accomplished so delicately and successfully for the religions and that he dark in readers of the Stily practice), when my way led me through Baker Street. As I passed the well-remembered door, which must always be associated in my mind with he dark incidents of the Stily in Scarlet, tasted up, I saw his tall, spare figure pass twice in a dark silhouette against the blind. He was pacing the room swiftly, eagerly, with his head sunk upon his chest and his hands clasped behind him. To me, who knew his every mood and habit, his attitude and manner told their own story. He was a two knew again. He had risen out of his drug-created dreams and was hot upon the scent of some new problem. I rang the bell and was shown up to the chamber which had formerly been in part my own. His manner was not effusive. It seldom was; but he was glad, I think, to see me. With hardly a word spoken, but with a kindly eye, he waved me to an armchiar, threw across his case of cigars, and indicated a spirit caste and a gasogene to a rarichlar with a kindly eye, he waved me to an armchiar, threw across his case of cigars, and indicated a spirit caste and a gasogene to a rarichlar with a kindly eye, he was a gasogene to the fire and looked me over in his singular introspective fashion. "Wedlock suits you," he remembered door, which a kindly in scall have been getting voursele fashion. It is deduce it. How do I know that you have been getting yourself very under the control of the Low your with a kindly in scall have changed my control of the Low your practice. It is also that you have been caused by syllowed the part of the Low your practice. If a gettlemen walks into my rooms smelling to the part of the Low your practice. It is also to the part of the Low your practice. It is also the part of the Low your practice. If a gettlemen walks into my rooms smelling to the control of the Low your practice. It is not to the control of the Low you ha
, double deduction that you had been out in vile weather, and that you had a particularly malignant boot-slitting spe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ndon slavey. As to your practice, if a gentleman walks into my rooms smelling of iodoform, with a black mark of nitrate of silver upon his right forefinger, and a bulge on the right side of his top-hat to sho
                                                                                                                                                                                                                           edical profession." I could not help laughing at the ease with which he explained his process of deduction. "When I hear you give your reasons," I remarked, "the thing always appears to me to be so ridicul you explain your process. And yet I believe that my eyes are as good as yours." "Quite so," he answered, lighting a cigarette, and throwing himself down into an armchair. "You see, but you do not observe. Then m." "Frequently." "How often?" "Well, some hundreds of times." "Then how many are there?" "How many? I don't know." "Quite so! You have not observed. And yet you have seen. That is just my point. Now, I know the seen in these little problems, and since you are good enough to chronicle one or two of my trilling experiences, you may be interested in this." He threw over a sheet of thick, pink-tinted note-paper which had been ly
w where he has secreted his stethoscope, I must be dull, indeed, if I do not pronounce him to be an active memb
ously simple that I could easily do it myself, though at each successive instance of your reasoning I am baffled
e distinction is clear. For example, you have frequently seen the steps which lead up from the hall to this roo
ow that there are seventeen steps, because I have both seen and observed. By-the-way, since you are intere
                                                                                                                                                                                             sted in these little problems, and since you are good enough to chronicle one or two of my trifling experiences, you may be interested in this." He threw over a sheet of thick, pink-tinted note-paper which had been ly hout either signature or address. "There will call upon you to-night, at a quarter to eight o'clock," it said, "a gentleman who desires to consult you upon a matter of the very deepest moment. You recent services to one are of an importance which can hardly be exaggerated. This account of you we have from all quarters received. Be in your chamber then at that hour, and do not take it amiss if your visitor were a mask." "This is indeed a theorize before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts. But the note itself. What do you deduce from it?" I carefully examined the writing, and the paper upon which i companion's processes. "Such paper could not be bought under half a crown a packet. It is peculiarly strong and stiff." "Peculiar--that is the very word," said Holmes. "It is not an English paper at all. Hold it up to the light." I di f the paper. "What do you make of that?" asked Holmes. "The name of the maker, no doubt; or his monogram, rather." "Not at all. The 'G' with the small 't' stands for 'Gesellschaft,' which is the German for 'Company.' It is a custom nental Gazetteer." He took down a heavy brown volume from his shelves. "Eglow, Eglonitz--here we are, Egria. It is in a German-speaking country--in Bohemia, not far from Carlsbad. 'Remarkable as being the scene of the death of Wa error and who is secured to his verbs. It only remains therefore to discover what is wanted by this German who writes the none is a German. Do you note the peculiar construction of the security that the standard paper and prefers we are and prefers we are and prefers we are a proper security of the scene of the paper and prefers we are a proper security of the paper and prefers we
ing open upon the table. "It came by the last post," said he. "Read it aloud." The note was undated, and wit
of the royal houses of Europe have shown that you are one who may safely be trusted with matters which
mystery," I remarked. "What do you imagine that it means?" "I have no data yet. It is a capital mistake to
t was written. "The man who wrote it was presumably well to do," I remarked, endeavouring to imitate my
d so, and saw a large "E" with a small "g," a "P," and a large "G" with a small "t" woven into the texture o
ary contraction like our 'Co.' 'P,' of course, stands for 'Papier.' Now for the 'Eg.' Let us glance at our Conti
llenstein, and for its numerous glass-factories and paper-mills.' Ha, ha, my boy, what do you make of that
ntence--'This account of you we have from all quarters received.' A Frenchman or Russian could not have
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      rman who is so uncourteous to his verbs. It only remains, therefore, to discover what is wanted by this German who writes upon Bohemian paper and prefers wearing a mask to showing his face. And here he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ainst the curb, followed by a sharp pull at the bell. Holmes whistled. "A pair, by the sound," said he. "Yes," he continued, glancing out of the window. "A nice little brougham and a pair of beauties. A hundre

Doct or. Stay where you are. I am lost without my Boswell. And this promises to be interesting. It would be a pity to miss it." "But your client--" "Never mind him. I may want your
bee n heard upon the stairs and in the passage, paused immediately outside the door. Then there was a loud and authoritative tap. "Come in!" said Holmes. A man ent
comes, if I am not mistaken, to resolve all our doubts." As he spoke there was the sharp sound of horses' h
                                                                                                                                                                                      s and grating wheels ag
                                                                                                                                                                                  o, Holmes." "Not a bit.
d and fifty guineas apiece. There's money in this case, Watson, if there is nothing else." "I think that I had be
help, and so may he. Here he comes. Sit down in that armchair, Doctor, and give us your best attention." A slow and
                                                                                                                                                                               heavy step, which had
                                                                                                                                                                          s dress was rich with a
ered who could hardly have been less than six feet six inches in height, with the chest and limbs of a Hercules. Hi
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ands of astrakhan were slashed across the sleeves and fronts of his double-breasted coat, while the deep blue
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                                                                                                                                                                      cloak which was throw
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he neck with a brooch which consisted of a single flaming beryl. Boots which extended halfway up his calve
                                                                                                                                                                  s, and which were trimm
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rt of
                                                                                                                                                              while he wore across the
ric opulence which was suggested by his whole appearance. He carried a broad-brimmed hat in his hand,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               face, extending down past the cheekbones, a bla
ck vizard mask, which he had apparently adjusted that very moment, for his hand was still raised to it a
                                                                                                                                                          s he entered. From the lower pa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              the face he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                appeared to be a man of strong character, with a
thick, hanging lip, and a long, straight chin suggestive of resolution pushed to the length of obstinac
Id you that I would call." He looked from one to the other of us, as if uncertain which to address. "
                                                                                                                                                     y. "You had my note?" he asked with
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  oice and a strongly marked German accent. "I to
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                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               eep harsh v
                                                                                                                                                  Pray take a seat," said Ho Imes. "This i
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 eague, Dr. W
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  atson, who is occasionally good enough to hel
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         s my friend and coll
p me in my cases. Whom have I the honour to address?" "You may address me as the Count Vo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   friend, is a man of honour and discretion, who
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     leman, your
m I may trust with a matter of the most extreme importance. If not, I should much prefer to com
                                                                                                                                         municate with you alone." I rose to go , but Holm
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      me by the w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  rist and pushed me back into my chair. "It is bo
th, or none," said he. "You may say before this gentleman anything which you may say to me." The Count shrugged his bro
r two years; at the end of that time the matter will be of no importance. At present it is not too much to say that it is of such w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  he, "by binding you both to absolute secrecy fo
European history." "I promise," said Holmes. "
y confess at once that the title by which I have j
                                                                                                                                                                                 ad shoulders. "Then
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      I mus
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          nce upon
And I." "You will excuse this mask," continued our strange visitor. "The augu-
                                                                                                                    st person who employs me wishes his ag
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 wn to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           u. and I ma
ust called myself is not exactly my own." "I was aware of it," said Holmes
                                                                                                                          dryly. "The circumstances are of great
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   s to be taken to quench what might grow to be
                                                                                                                                                                                               delicacy, and
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an immense scandal and seriously compromise one of the reigning famil
                                                                                                                               ies of Europe. To speak plainly, the m
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                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   f Ormstein, hereditary kings of Bohemia." "I wa
s also aware of that," murmured Holmes, settling himself down in his ar
                                                                                                                                 mchair and closing his eyes. Our visit
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   rise at the languid, lounging figure of the man
                                                                                                                                                                                                 or glanced with
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               arent surp
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                d looked impatiently at his gigantic client. "If your Majesty would c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ondescend to state your case," he remarked,
who had been no doubt depicted to him as the most incisive reasoner a
                                                                                                                                    nd most energetic agent in Europe. Holmes slowly reopened
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         his eyes
should be better able to advise you." The man sprang from his chair an
                                                                                                                                     d paced up and down the room in uncontrollable agitation. Th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          he tore the mask from his face and hurled it up
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  on the ground. "You are right," he cried; "I am
he King. Why should I attempt to conceal it?" "Why, indeed?" murmure
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   Wilhelm Gottsreich Sigismond von Ormstein, Grand Duke that I am not accustomed to doing such business in my
                                                                                                                                           Holmes. "Your Majesty had not spoken before I was aware that I was address
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   of Cassel-Felstein, and hereditary King of Boh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ing
         "But you can understand," said our strange visitor, sitting down
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  own person. Yet the matter was so delicate that
                                                                                                                                           e more and passing his hand over his high white forehead, "you can unders
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               tand
                                                                                                                                            ome incognito from Prague for the purpose of consulting you." "Then, pra
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     sult," said Holmes, shutting his eyes once more. "The fa
I could not confide it to an agent without putting myself in his power. I h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  cts are briefly these: Some five years ago, durin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               y con
                                                                                                                                              ress, Irene Adler. The name is no doubt familiar to you." "Kindly look her
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   is eyes. For many years he had adopted a syst
g a lengthy visit to Warsaw, I made the acquaintance of the well-known ad
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ny index, Doctor," murmured Holmes without opening h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               up in
em of docketing all paragraphs concerning men and things, so that it was
                                                                                                                                                t to name a subject or a person on which he could not at once furnish i
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ation. In this case I found her biography sandwiched in
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   between that of a Hebrew rabbi and that of a sta
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               nform
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  -yes! Retired from operatic stage--ha! Living in
ere a secret marriage?" "None." "No legal paper
h, pooh! Forgery." "My private note-paper." "St
ff-commander who had written a monograph upon the deep-sea fishes. "Let
                                                                                                                                                  !" said Holmes. "Hum! Born in New Jersey in the year 1858. Contralto-
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     La Scala, hum! Prima donna Imperial Opera of Warsaw
                                                                                                                      me see
London--quite so! Your Majesty, as I understand, became entangled with this
                                                                                                                         young
                                                                                                                                                   person, wrote her some compromising letters, and is now desirous o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              f gettin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     g those letters back." "Precisely so. But how--" "Was th
                                                                                                                                                    should produce her letters for blackmailing or other purposes, how i
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       prove their authenticity?" "There is the writing." "Poo
s or certificates?" "None." "Then I fail to follow your Majesty. If this young per
olen." "My own seal." "Imitated." "My photograph." "Bought." "We were both in t
n Prince then. I was young. I am but thirty now." "It must be recovered." "We have
nce we diverted her luggage when she travelled. Twice she has been wayl aid. Ther
King reproachfully. "Very, indeed. And what does she propose to do wit high the ph
                                                                                                                                                   photograph." "Oh, dear! That is very bad! Your Majesty has indeed c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        an indiscretion." "I was mad--insane." "You have com
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  promised yourself seriously." "I was only Crow
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ommittee
                                                                                                                                                    tried and failed." "Your Majesty must pay. It must be bought." "She
e ha s been no result." "No sign of it?" "Absolutely n
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ' "Stolen, then." "Five attempts have been made. Tw
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ice burglars in my pay ransacked her house. O
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      mes laughed. "It is quite a pretty little problem," said h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  e. "But a very serious one to me," returned the
                                                                                                                                                   ogr
                                                                                                                                                                                  aph?" "To ruin me." "But how?" "I am about to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            be married
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              "So I have heard." To Clotilde Lothman von Sax
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   e-Meningen, second daughter of the King of So
andinavia. You may know the strict principles of her family. She is her
                                                                                                                                                   oul of d
                                                                                                                                                                                   elicacy. A shadow of a doubt as to my condu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ng the matter to an end." "And Irene Adler?" "T
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   hreatens to send them the photograph. And sh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ct would br
e will do it. I know that she will do it. You do not know her, but she h
                                                                                                                                                                                      face of the most beautiful of women, and th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      most resolute of men. Rather than I should
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   marry another woman, there are no lengths to
                                                                                                                                                     e has the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          e mind of the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   will be next Monday." "Oh, then we have three
which she would not go--none." "You are sure that she has not se
                                                                                                                                                                                      she has said that she would send it on the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       e betrothal was publicly proclaimed. That
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          day when th
days yet," said Holmes with a yawn. "That is very fortunate, as I have one or two matters o
he name of the Count Von Kramm." "Then I shall drop you a line to let you know how we pro
provinces of my kingdom to have that photograph." "And for present expenses?" The King to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            stay in London for the present?" "Cer
                                                                                                                                                                                      to look into just at present. Your Majesty
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   tainly. You will find me at the Langham under t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         will, of course
                                                                                                                                                                                      gress." "Pray do so. I shall be all anxiety.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           "Then, as to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             money?" "You have carte blanche.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              Absolutely?" "I tell you that I would give one of the
                                                                                                                                                                                        ok a heavy chamois leather bag from un
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               d laid it on the table. "There are thr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              ee hundred pounds in gold and seven hundred in
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        der his cloak an
notes," he said. Holmes scribbled a receipt upon a sheet of his note-book and handed it to him
                                                                                                                                                                                             "And Mademoiselle's address?" he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   Lodge, Serpentine Avenue, St
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  . John's Wood." Holmes took a note of it. "One
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        asked, "Is Briony
other question," said he. "Was the photograph a cabine t?" "It was." "Then, good-night, your M
                                                                                                                                                                                             ajesty, and I trust that we shall soon
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   d-night, Watson," he added, as the wheels of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ave some good
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    news for you. And goo
he royal brougham rolled down the street. "If you will
                                                                             be good enough to call to-morrow afterno
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     u." II. At three o'clock precisely I was at Bake
                                                                                                                                                                                                 on at three o'clock I should like t
r Street, but Holmes had not yet returned. The land
                                                                            lady informed me that he had left the house
                                                                                                                                                                                                    shortly after eight o'clock in th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      e morning. I sat do
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    wn beside the fi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       re, however, with the intention of awaiting hi
m, however long he might be. I was already deepl
                                                                         y interested in his inquiry, for, though it w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           nge features whic
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        h were associated with the two crimes whic
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      nded by none of th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     e grim and stra
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        rrou
h I have already recorded, still, the nature of the
                                                                         case and the exalted station of his client ga
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ch
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        which my friend had on hand, there was so
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     aracter of its own. In
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      deed, apart from the nature of the investigation
mething in his masterly grasp of a situation, a
                                                                    nd his keen, incisive reasoning, which made it a ple
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     m of work, and to follow the quick, subtl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        e methods by which he disentangled the m
                                                                                                                                                                                                           asure
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     me to study his syste
ost inextricable mysteries. So accustomed was I to his invariable success that the very possibility of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      nto my head. It was close upon four before the do
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         or opened, and a drunken-looking groom, il
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      had ceased to enter i
l-kempt and side-whiskered, with an inflamed face and disreputable clothes, walked into the room. Acc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ustom
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   s I was to my friend's a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      zing powers in the use of dis guises, I had to look three ti
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        mes before I was certain that it was indeed
he. With a nod he vanished into the bedroom, whence he emerged in five minutes tweed-suited and respec
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   of old. Putting his hand
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     o his pockets, he stretched o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        t of the fire and laughed heartily for some
                                                                                                                                                                                                                   table,
                                                      then he choked and laughed again until he was obliged to lie back, limp and helples suppose that you have been watching the habits, and perhaps the house, of Miss Iren
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ess how I employed my morning, or what I eft the house a little after eight o'clock this
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  hair. "What is it?" "It's q
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     too funny. I am sure you cou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                       s, in t
ended by doing." "I can't imagine. I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                         e Adle
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 Quite so; but the sequel
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    rather unusual. I will tell you,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    howe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                           one of the
                                                   oom out of work. There is a wonderful sympathy and freemasonry among horsey men. Be
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  m, and you will know all that th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ere is to know. I soon found B
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          It is a bijou villa, with a garden at the back
                                               o the road, two stories. Chubb lock to the door. Large sitting-room on the right side, well furnis
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               hed, with
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   long windows almost to the f
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                loor, and those preposterous E
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    nglish
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        w fasteners which a child could open. Behi
                                             able, save that the passage window could be reached from the top of the coach-house. I walked ro
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  and examined it closely fro
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              m every point of view, but withou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   t noting
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ing else of interest. "I then lounged down t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 und it
he street and found, as I expected, that there was a mews in a lane which runs down by one wall of the garden. I lent the ostlers a hind as much information as I could desire about Miss Adler, to say nothing of half a dozen other people in the neighbourhood in whom I w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 in rubbing down their hors
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            es, and received in exchange two
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       of half and half, two fills of shag tobacco, a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  pence, a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ot in the least interested, b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ut whose biographies I was compel
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               o." "And what of Irene Adler?" I asked. "Oh, she
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   as n
has turned all the men's heads down in that part. She is the daintiest thing under a bonnet on this planet. So say the S erpentine-mews, to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               an. She lives quietly, sing
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          s at concerts, drives out at five every day, and retu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              at seven sharp for dinner. Seldom goes out at oth
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   a m
er times, except when she sings. Has only one male visitor, but a good deal of him. He is dark, handsome, and dashing
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               nce a day, and often twi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ce. He is a Mr. Godfrey Norton, of the Inner Temple. See the advantages of a cabman as a confidant. They had dri
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ge once more, and to think over my plan of campaign. "This Godfrey Norton was evidently an important factor in t
ven him home a dozen times from Serpentine-mews, and knew all about him. When I had listened to all they had to tell,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               down near Briony Lod
                                                                                                                                                                          I began to walk up
he matter. He was a lawyer. That sounded ominous. What was the relation between them, and what the object of his re
                                                                                                                                                                            peated visits? Was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              his client, his friend,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    or his mistress? If the former, she had probably transferred the photograph to his keeping. If the latter, it was less I
kely. On the issue of this guestion depended whether I should continue my work at Briony Lodge, or turn my attention
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             chambers in the Tem
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ple. It was a delicate point, and it widened the field of my inquiry. I fear that I bore you with these details, but I have t
                                                                                                                                                                              to the gentleman's
o let you see my little difficulties, if you are to understand the situation." "I am following you closely," I answered. "I wa
k, aquiline, and moustached--evidently the man of whom I had heard. He appeared to be in a great hurry, shouted to th
                                                                                                                                                                                  s still balancing the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              matter in my mind
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 when a hansom cab drove up to Briony Lodge, and a gentleman sprang out. He was a remarkably handsome man, dar
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              e maid who opened the door with the air of a man who was thoroughly at home. "He was in the house about half an hou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            nd brushed past th
r, and I could catch glimpses of him in the windows of the sitting-room, pacing up and down, talking excitedly, and wa
rom his pocket and looked at it earnestly, 'Drive like the devil,' he shouted, 'first to Gross & Hankey's in Regent Street,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ing. Presently he emerged, looking even more flurried than before. As he stepped up to the cab, he pulled a gold watch in the Edgeware Road. Half a guinea if you do it in twenty m inutes!' "Away they went, and I was just wonderi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           er I could see noth
                                                                                                                                                                                        ving his arms. Of h
                                                                                                                                                                                           and then to the Chu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           rch of St. Monica
ng whether I should not do well to follow them when up the lane came a neat little landau, the coachman with his coat
                                                                                                                                                                                             only half-buttoned.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          and his tie unde
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          r his ear, while all the tags of his harness were stickin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  g out of the buckles. It hadn't pulled up before
she shot out of the hall door and into it. I only caught a glimpse of her at the moment, but she was a lovely woman, wit
                                                                                                                                                                                                 h a face that a man
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      The Church of St. Monica, John,' she cried, 'and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       half a sovereign if you reach it in twenty min
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         miaht die for. "
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    came through the street. The driver looke
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    d twice at such a shabby fare, but I jumped i
hat was in the wind. "My cabby drove fast. I
utes.' "This was quite too good to lose, Watson. I was just balancing whether I should run for it, or whether I should pe
                                                                                                                                                                                                   rch behind her land
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        au when a cab
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   and of course it was clear enough w
before he could object. 'The Church of St. Monica,' said I, 'and half a sovereign if you reach it in twenty minutes.' It wa
                                                                                                                                                                                                      s twenty-five minut
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        es to twelve,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ed into the church. There was not a soul there
don't think I ever drove faster, but the others were there before us. The cab and the landau with their steaming horses
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       oor when I a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 rived. I paid the man and hurri
e save the two whom I had followed and a surpliced clergyman, who seemed to be expostulating with them. They were
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                of the altar. I lounged up
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       the side aisle like any other idler who has dr
                                                                                                                                                                                                         all three standing in a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      knot in front
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              "Thank God,' he cr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ied. 'You'll do. Come! Come!' "What then?"
opped into a church. Suddenly, to my surprise, the three at the altar faced round to me, and Godfrey Norton came runn
                                                                                                                                                                                                       ing as hard as he could t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   owards me.
asked. "'Come, man, come, only three minutes, or it won't be legal.' "I was half-dragged up to the altar, and before Lkne
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      were whispered in my ear, and vouching for t
                                                                                                                                                                                                       w where I was I found mysel
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                f mumbling re
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            sponses which
hings of which I knew nothing, and generally assisting in the secure tying up of Irene Adler, spinster, to Godfi
                                                                                                                                                                                                       n. bachelor. It was all done in an instant, and there wa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      an thanking me on the one side and the lady
on the other, while the clergyman beamed on me in front. It was the most preposterous position in which I ever found
                                                                                                                                                                                                       myself in my life, and it was the thought of it that sta
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        rted me laug
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      hing just now. It seems that there had been s
ome informality about their license, that the clergyman absolutely refused to marry them without a witness of some so
                                                                                                                                                                                                       rt, and that my lucky appearance saved the bridegr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      having to sally out into the streets in search
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      oom from
of a best man. The bride gave me a sovereign, and I mean to wear it on my watch-chain in memory of the occasion." "T
                                                                                                                                                                                                       his is a very unexpected turn of affairs," said I; "a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      then?" "Well, I found my plans very serious
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    nd what
y menaced. It looked as if the pair might take an immediate departure, and so necessitate very prompt and energetic m
                                                                                                                                                                                                       easures on my part. At the church door, howeve
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  r, they
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      separated, he driving back to the Temple, an
d she to her own house. 'I shall drive out in the park at five as usual,' she said as she left him. I heard no more. They dr
                                                                                                                                                                                                       ove away in different directions, and I went off
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ake my own arrangements." "Which are?"
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 to m
ome cold beef and a glass of beer," he answered, ringing the bell. "I have been too busy to think of food, and I am likel
                                                                                                                                                                                                       y to be busier still this evening. By the way, D
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                OC
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      tor, I shall want your co-operation." "I shall b
e delighted." "You don't mind breaking the law?" "Not in the least." "Nor running a chance of arrest?" "Not in a good c
                                                                                                                                                                                                       ause." "Oh, the cause is excellent!" "Then I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      our man." "I was sure that I might rely on yo
u." "But what is it you wish?" "When Mrs. Turner has brought in the tray I will make it clear to you. Now," he said as he
                                                                                                                                                                                                       turned hungrily on the simple fare that ou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       had provided, "I must discuss it while I eat, i
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   r landladv
or I have not much time. It is nearly five now. In two hours we must be on the scene of action. Miss Irené, or Madame, r
                                                                                                                                                                                                       ather, returns from her drive at seven. We
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        must be at Brion
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     y Lodge to meet her." "And what then?" "Yo
u must leave that to me. I have alréady arranged what is to occur. There is only one point on which I must insist. You m
                                                                                                                                                                                                       ust not interfere, come what may. You un
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       neutral?" "To do nothing whatever. There wi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              derstand?" "I am to be
Il probably be some small unpleasantness. Do not join in it. It will end in my béing conveyed into the house. Four or fiv
                                                                                                                                                                                                       e minutes afterwards the sitting-room w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      station yourself close to that open window.'
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     indow will open. You are to
'Yes." "You are to watch me, for I will be visible to you." "Yes." "And when I raise my hand--so--you will throw into th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      of fire. You quite follow me?" "Entirely." "It is
                                                                                                                                                                                                       e room what I give you to throw, and w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ill, at the same time, raise the cry
nothing very formidable," he said, taking a long cigar-shaped roll from his pocket.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ket, fitted with a cap at either end to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      make it self-lighting. Your task is confined to
                                                                                                                                                                                                       It is an ordinary plumber's smoke-roc
that. When you raise your cry of fire, it will be taken up by quite a number of peo
                                                                                                                                                                                                       ple. You may then walk to the end of t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          he street, and I will rejoin you in ten
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      minutes. I hope that I have made myself clear
?" "I am to remain neutral, to get near the window, to watch you, and at the s
                                                                                                                                                                                                       ignal to throw in this object, then to r
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      orner of the street." "Precisely." "Then you
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              aise the cry of fire, and to wait you at the c
may entirely rely on me." "That is excellent. I think, perhaps, it is almost tim
                                                                                                                                                                                                       e that I prepare for the new role I have
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      returned in a few minutes in the character of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     to play." He disappeared into his bedroom and
an amiable and simple-minded Nonconformist clergyman. His broad black
                                                                                                                                                                                                       hat, his baggy trousers, his white tie,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            his sympathetic smile, and general look of peering and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       benevolent curiosity were such as Mr. John
Hare alone could have equalled. It was not merely that Holmes changed hi
                                                                                                                                                                                                       s costume. His expression, his manne
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 r, his very soul seemed to vary with every fresh part that he as
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      sumed. The stage lost a fine actor, even as s
cience lost an acute reasoner, when he became a specialist in crime. It was
                                                                                                                                                                                                        a quarter past six when we left Baker S
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        treet, and it still wanted ten minutes to the hour when we found ourse
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      Ives in Serpentine Avenue. It was already du
sk, and the lamps were just being lighted as we paced up and down in fron
                                                                                                                                                                                                       t of Briony Lodge, waiting for the comin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              g of its occupant. The house was just such as I had pictured it from Sherloc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      k Holmes' succinct description, but the locali
ty appeared to be less private than I expected. On the contrary, for a small
                                                                                                                                                                                                       street in a quiet neighbourhood, it was rem
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      arkably animated. There was a group of shabbily dressed men smoking and laughi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ng in a corner, a scissors-grinder with his wh
eel, two guardsmen who were flirting with a nurse-girl, and several well-dres
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           wn with cigars in their mouths. "You see," remarked Holmes, as we paced to and fro in front of the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        house, "this marriage rather simplifies matters. The ph
                                                                                                                                                                                                     sed young men who were lounging up and do
otograph becomes a double-edged weapon now. The chances are that she would be as averse to its being seen by Mr. Godfrey Norton, as our client is to its coming to the eyes of his princess. Now the question is, Where are we to find the photograph?" "Where, indeed?" "It is most unlikely that she carries it about with her. It is cabinet size. Too large for easy concealment as
bout a woman's dress. She knows that the King is capable of having her waylaid and searched. Two attempts of the sort have already been made. We may take it, then, that she does not carry it about with her." "Where, then?" "Her banker or her lawyer. There is that double possibility. But I am inclined to think neither. Women are naturally secretive, and they like to do their
own secreting. Why should she hand it over to anyone else? She could trust her own guardianship, but she could not tell what indirect or political influence might be brought to bear upon a business man. Besides, remember that she had resolved to use it within a few days. It must be where she can lay her hands upon it. It must be in her own house." "But it has twice been burgled." "Pshaw! They did not know how to look." "But how will you look?" "I will not look." "What then?" "I will get her to show me." "But she will refuse." As he spoke the gleam of the side-lights of a carriage came round the curve of the avenue. It was a sma
t little landau which rattled up to the door of Briony Lodge. As it pulled up, one of the loafing men at the corner dashed forward to open the door in the hope of earning a copper, but was elbowed away by another loafer, who had rushed up with the same intention. A fierce quarrel broke out, which was increased by the two quardsmen, who took sides with one of the lounger
s, and by the scissors-grinder, who was equally hot upon the other side. A blow was struck, and in an instant the lady; but just as he carriage, was the centre of a little knot of flushed and struggling men, who struck, and in an instant the lady; but just as he carriage, was the centre of a little knot of flushed and struggling men, who had stepped from her carriage, was the centre of a little knot of flushed and struggling men, who had stepped from her carriage, was the centre of a little knot of flushed and struggling men, who had stepped from her carriage, was the centre of a little knot of flushed and struggling men, who had stepped from her carriage, was the centre of a little knot of flushed and struggling men, who had stepped from her carriage, was the centre of a little knot of flushed and struggling men, who struck, and in an instant the lady; but just as he reached her he gave a cry and description and struggling men, who had stepped from her carriage, was the centre of a little knot of flushed and struggling men, who struck savagely at each other with their fists and sticks. Holmes dashed into the crowd to protect the lady; but just as he reached her he gave a cry and description and struggling men, who struck savagely at each other with their fists and struck savagely at each other with the crowd to protect the crowd to protect the carriage, was the centre of a little knot of flushed and struggling men, who struck savagely at each other with the crowd to protect 
ut she stood at the top with her superb figure outlined against the lights of the hall, looking back into the street. "Is the poor gentleman much hurt?" she asked. "He is dead," cried several voices. "No, no, there's life in him!" shouted another. "But he'll be gone before you can get him to hospital." "He's a brave fellow," said a woman. "They would have had the lady's purse are
d watch if it hadn't been for him. They were a gang, and a rough one, too. Ah, he's breathing now." "He can't lie in the street. May we bring him into the sitting-room. There is a comfortable sofa. This way, please!" Slowly and solemnly he was borne into Briony Lodge and laid out in the principal room, while I still observed the proceedings from the sitting-room.
my post by the window. The lamps had been lit, but the blinds had not been drawn, so that I could see Holmes as he lay upon the couch. I do not know whether he was seized with compunction at that moment for the part he was playing, but I know that I never felt more heartily ashamed of myself in my life than when I saw the beautiful creature against whom I was conspiring, or the grace and kindliness with which she waited upon the injured man. And yet it would be the blackest treachery to Holmes to draw back now from the part which he had intrusted to me. I hardened my heart, and took the smoke-rocket from under my ulster. After all, I thought, we are not injuring her. We are but preventing her from injuring another. Holmes had sat up
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