

NOTHING NEW ***"Male costume is nothing new to me" [SCAN]***

One of the early and surprising elements of the Sherlock Holmes Canon is when Irene Adler, dressed as a man, confirmed her suspicions after Sherlock Holmes invaded her home, walking by 221B Baker Street and saying, "Good night, Mr. Sherlock Holmes."

She later explained in her letter she disguised herself as a man in order to ascertain that.

But interestingly, she also added, "I often

take advantage of the freedom which it gives."

Irene Adler came from a theatrical background, having retired from the stage.

So, she must have seen her fair share of men dressed as women, in the Shakespearean tradition, where men played female roles for the first few hundred years of performances.

NOTHING NEW

"Male costume is nothing new to me" [SCAN] (continued)

But what about the other way around - women taking on male roles?

It would seem almost unheard of in Victorian times.

Or would it?

Ellen Terry, a leading Shakespearean actress in the late Victorian / early Edwardian period, wrote a debt was owed to Shakespeare "for his vindication of women in [his] fearless, high-spirited, resolute and

intelligent heroines."

Terry should know. as she played the cross-dressing Portia in The Merchant of Venice as early as 1875.

And let's not forget the legendary Sarah Bernhardt, who played the title role in Hamlet in 1899.

Similarly, the boys at Baker Street Elementary decide it's time to broaden their theatrical casting...

**WELCOME TO OUR PLAY REHEARSAL, IRENE... I
ASSUME PETER HAS ASKED YOU TO HELP DESIGN
THE COSTUMES FOR ROMEO AND JULIET...**



**ACTUALLY, MASTER BLAU HAS
ASKED ME TO PORTRAY JULIET IN
YOUR PRODUCTION... I'M ON LOAN
FROM OUR SCHOOL'S DRAMA CLUB...**



**INTRIGUING... OUR SCHOOL HAS
MAINTAINED THE TRADITION OF AN ALL
MALE-CAST FOR MANY YEARS...**



TRUE, BUT IT IS THE 1800'S, WE HAVE A GRACIOUS LADY AS OUR RULER... MASTER SHAW AND MYSELF BELIEVE INCLUSION OF THE LADIES WILL ONLY ENHANCE THE PERFORMANCE... PLUS THE GIRL'S PROGRAM SENT US SEVERAL REQUESTS, ON PAPER BAGS, TO BE INCLUDED IN THE CAST... YOU HAVE TO GIVE THEM CREDIT FOR PERSISTANCE...



**WAIT... DOES THIS
MEAN I WILL...
BE... KISSING...**



DO YOU THINK HE WILL CONTINUE THESE
FAINING SPELLS IN ADULTHOOD..

THAT WOULD BE A SAFE WAGER...

I'LL FETCH THE
BRANDY AND
AMMONIA... OR SHOULD
I JUST SLAP HIM ?

