The Bilge Pump

Vol. 12, No. 11 November, 2024

The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star

founded November, 1970

PLEASE NOTE: December 01, 2024 Meeting NOTICE

We will be conducting our next monthly meeting virtually on **December 01** at 1:00 pm central. I will send out the link for the meeting the week before the meeting. The story for the month is "The Adventure of the Three Gables".

Bob Katz, BSI, ASH, will lead the discussion on the story of "The Adventure of the Three Gables". **Rich Krisciunas, ASH**, will provide us with another Canonical Law 101.

Our Special Guest Speaker will be **Joann Alberstat, MBt.**

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For more information concerning our society, visit: http://www.dfw-sherlock.org/

You can follow us on Twitter at: @barquelonestar

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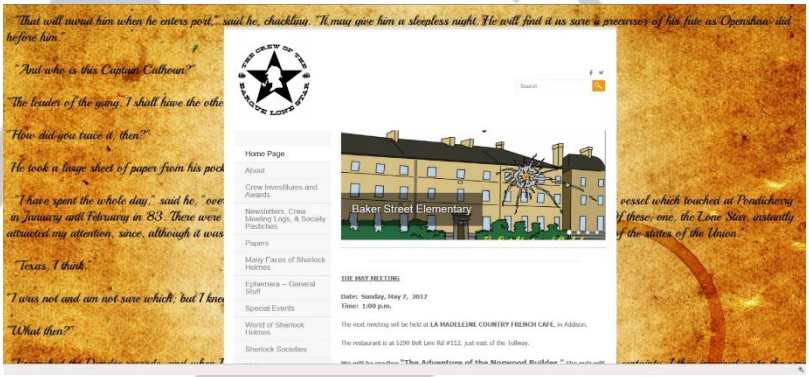


Our Facebook Page:

https://www.facebook.com/BarqueLoneStar/

NOVEMBER 03 SUMMARY

There were **57** in attendance at this ZOOM meeting.

The meeting was opened with our traditional toast. This month given by **Steve Mason**, BSI, our Third Mate. The toast was titled 'Kitty Winter' and was originally given by Joseph Dierkes (see Page 4).

We then moved onto the quiz for this month's story, "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client."

Dr. Bob Katz, BSI, then led us in a lively discussion of the story.

Announcements were made by several members on upcoming meetings of sister societies.

Sandy Kozinn honored us with one of her wonderful limericks about this month's story (see Page 4).

Rich Krisciunas, ASH, led us through Sherlockian Law 101.

We then moved onto our featured speaker for the month. **Barbara Rusch, BSI, ASH, MBt,** gave a wonderful presentation on the link between Sherlock Holmes and Star Trek's Spock, which many Sherlockians feel a strong connection.

Brad Keefauver, BSI, then did his canonical top 10 featuring things in the canon representing three, inspired by our story, "The Illustrious Client."

Shana Carter, ASH, gave a reading from the Baker Street Journal from Volume 2, number 3, from 1952. She read '221-B' (see page 5).

Rich Krisciunas closed the meeting with his toast to the Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

KITTY WINTER

Steve Mason, BSI, ASH

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen!

Folks, I am here tonight to raise a toast to Miss Kitty Winter, a key player in our story tonight, The Illustrious Client.

She was another unsung and wronged woman in the Canon, but was able to help Sherlock Holmes. Although she may not have had a sterling reputation, by her desire to spare other women the pain that she herself underwent at the hands of the evil Baron Gruner, she showed us that she indeed had a heart of gold.

Join with me now as we raise our glasses to Miss Kitty Winter, to her courage, to her convictions, and, most importantly, to her acidic sense of justice!

-Joseph Dierkes

With china the man was an ace,
That Baron, he took the first place,
But with femmes he was mean,
The worst to be seen,
So, revenge got him right in the face.

Sandy Kozinn, Deckmate

221 -B

Shana Carter, ASH

From the *Baker Street Journal,* Volume 2, number 3, 1952, Editor: Edgar W. Smith

The room in Baker Street in which Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson lived and had their being is as familiar to us, almost, as any of our own. Its windows look out through tog or rain or mellow sunshine on the houses in the street across the way, and within lie all the magic, cherished things our hearts have come to know and love.

There, on the farther wall, is the cheery fireplace with the sea-coals blazing on the hearth, and the easy chair with the coal-box by its side, and the Persian slipper close at hand. There on the mantel is the correspondence transfixed by a jack-knife, and the dottles from the frequent pipes.

The chemical-stained table, littered with papers and all sorts of odds and ends, stands in its accustomed place, and the pictures of General Gordon and Henry Ward Beecher lean against the wall. The great index volumes and the commonplace books are crammed upon the shelves; the violin lies carelessly upon the sofa, and the deerstalker cap is hanging on a peg by the door, at the top of the seventeen steps, as if awaiting urgent call to .high adventure in some Limehouse alley or out upon the shivering moor.

And - crowning touch of all - there on a table in the corner, in all their simple dignity and grace, we see the gasogene and tantalus.

"The fog swirls suddenly against the panes, and a four-wheeler rumbles heavily past the door.

It is difficult, peering in at the window, to hear and see precisely what is going on within.

But there is no fog so thick as to shut out the picture of the gaunt figure stretched in the chair by the fireplace; there is no sound so loud as to drown out the wail of the violin now thrown carelessly across the bony knee.

A ring comes at the bell; a step is heard upon the stair.

The drooping eyelids lift, and the nostrils quiver at the eager thrill of the chase.

Come, Watson, come! The game is afoot!"

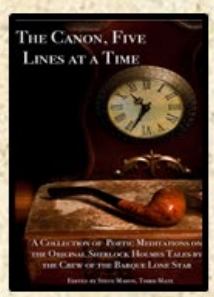
To subscribe to the Baker Street Journal, go to https://bakerstreetirregulars.com/the-baker-street-journal/

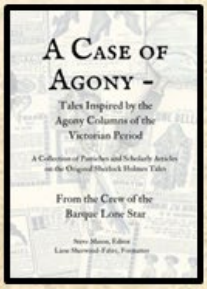
The Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society has published 8 wonderful books. You may download a free copy of the books (as .pdf files) on our website...

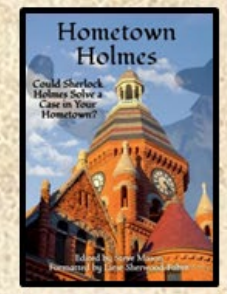
https://www.dfw-sherlock.org/society--crew-member-anthologies-pastiches.html

Or you may purchase a soft-back version of any of our books (at cost) at...

https://www.barnesandnoble.com/s/the%20crew%20of%20the%20barque%20lone%20star

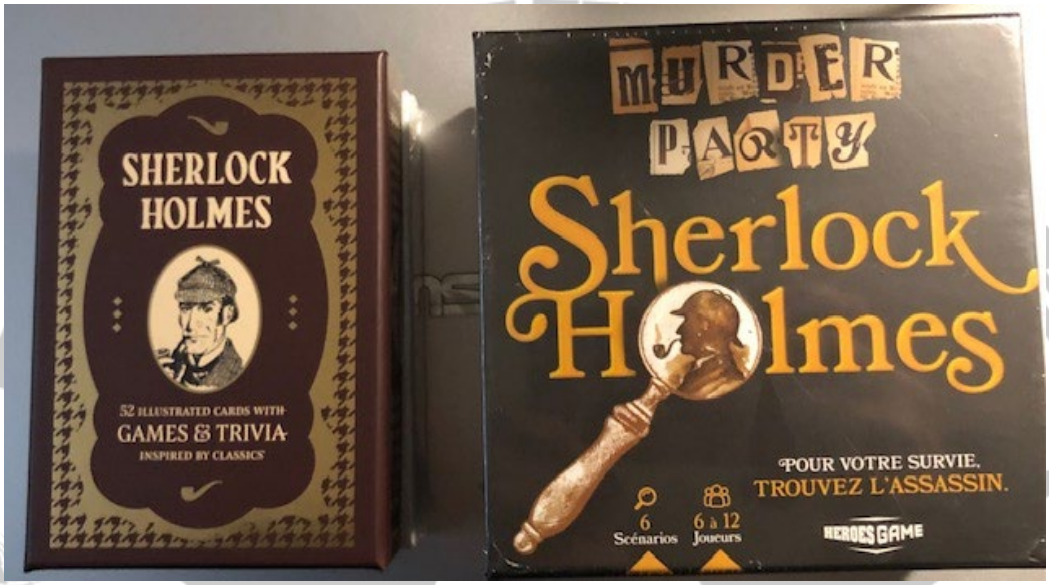






THE GAME'S AFOOT -- A LOOK AT SHERLOCKIAN GAMES

Tim Kline, Deckmate



Strap on your deerstalker and put your knowledge to the test with 52 trivia and game cards, each one featuring a multiple-choice trivia question, charade, game or challenge about the people, places of Sherlock Holmes classics.

Packed with trivia questions, party games, charades and challenges, and illustrated with Sidney Paget illustrations that make for a delightful game of Snap or Memory, there is something for everyone in this new series of quiz and game cards.

Murder Party is only in a French edition at the present time.
A crime has been committed in the pleasant village of Bumble Town, where the great Sherlock Holmes spends his retirement... could it be the work of one of the inhabitants?

No mercy: eliminate your opponents to glean as many clues as possible and win the game!

6 to 12 players including a Game Master 6 scenarios Challenge cards, suspects, victims and secret documents

Liven up a party with friends with this murder mystery party game that will take you casually through an evening or even a whole weekend! A crime has been committed in the peaceful town of Bumble, where the famous Sherlock Holmes spends his retirement. To get to the bottom of the crime, you should collect as many clues as possible. But you can only get them from your fellow players by enticing them to do certain secret tasks for you!

THE CLOCKWORK DETECTIVE

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD, BSI, Deckmate

Liese Sherwood-Fabre has been a blessing for our Society, authoring 120 of these vignettes on the Life and Times of Sherlock Holmes. While this is the last monthly article Liese will author in this series for our newsletter, we will attempt to carry on with articles in the future. Liese, thanks so much for your efforts for the past 10 years!

In *The Sign of the Four*, Watson calls his friend an "automaton," after Holmes states he made no notice of a woman's beauty. He goes on to add that his friend is a "calculating machine." *Automata* are devices that operate on their own after being set in motion, or transform information based on predetermined instructions. (1) For Watson, Holmes' deductive skills certainly met the second criteria. The term first appeared in English in an essay by Cornwallis in 1616, which described the body as an automaton that moves and carries the soul. The second meaning appeared later to refer to computing machines. (2) While automata have existed since ancient times, the ones developed in the 18th and 19th century represented advancements that led to the creation of computers as well as a series of stories by Edgar Allan Poe. (3)

Tales of early automata stretched back to King Solomon and a pair of mechanical beasts that guarded his throne. Other early devices included moving statues or animals that played instruments or made other noises, such as chirping. (4) Gears and weights controlled their movements. The mechanisms became more sophisticated in the Victorian period with clockmakers and others creating automata that could play the harpsichord, write messages on paper, or appear to eat and swallow bits of food. (5) The Writer, created by Jaquet Droz in 1760, is considered the first computer—i.e., a device that operated on instructions (programs) for performing tasks. The Writer was a mechanical boy that could dip a quill in ink and write sentences on paper. The sentences were determined by type blocks on a wheel used to direct the doll's hand. As such, this mechanical boy wrote whatever had been programmed. (6)

One of the most famous automata was not a mechanical device at all. Wolfgang von Kempelen, a music-box maker, created an automaton, dressed as a Turk, who played chess against humans. The device bested many, including Empress Maria Theresa, Napoleon Bonaparte, and Benjamin Franklin. Following von Kempelen's death, Johann Nepomuk Maelzel purchased the machine and took it on tour through the UK and US. (7) Following a viewing of the Turk's performance, Edgar Allan Poe penned an essay providing seven observations for why the device was a hoax. His most compelling reason: that if it were a machine, it would win all the chess matches—which it did not. He posited a

small man hid inside the Turk and controlled his moves. While he was correct that a man did control it, the actual chess player hid inside the cabinet underneath the figure. The concept inspired him to write about other hoaxes as well as developing his concept of ratiocination, exemplified by Dupin in his detective stories. (8)

In England, the Turk's movements inspired Charles Babbage in another direction. He, too, considered the Turk a hoax, but he developed an idea of a calculating machine. (9) He designed an instrument to mechanically calculate mathematical tables, and built a small calculator that could compute up to eight decimals as a prototype. He had plans for a room-sized machine with storage, but the Difference Engine was never completed because the machinist refused to continue without being paid in advance. Babbage went on to develop plans for an even more complex machine—the Analytical Engine—that performed mathematical operations on punch cards. (10) Punch cards were already used in other machinery. De Vauscanson, a creator of a mechanical flute player also created an automatic silk-weaving loom that followed patterns programmed on cards. (11)

Far from being only amusing toys, automata led to advances in the fields of mathematics, engineering, and industry. They also reflected Victorian society's fascination with progress and the potential of the human mind. Poe viewed the chess playing Turk from a ratiocination viewpoint; Babbage as a means of performing large calculations. Watson's description of Holmes as an "automaton" and "calculating machine" highlighted Holmes' logical, precise mind driven by deduction rather than sentiment. His lack of attention to beauty or emotion did not make him unfeeling, but instead underscored his commitment to rationality and the scientific method—qualities that defined his detective work. He transformed information into conclusions. As he noted himself, "Data! Data! Data!...I can't make bricks without clay."

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1. https://www.britannica.com/technology/automaton
2. https://www.oed.com/dictionary/automaton_n?tl=true&tab=meaning_and_use#
3. https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2012/03/28/the-grandmaster-hoax/
4. https://www.christies.com/en/stories/the-history-of-the-automaton-mechanical-miracles-191ab3c1b3c94bde9118321e83ae9537)
5. https://www.gwsrobotics.com/blog/history-of-robots
6. https://cincinnatiwatch.com/blogs/news/the-first-programmable-computer-automaton-jaquet-droz
7. https://interestingengineering.com/innovation/the-turk-fake-automaton-chess-player
8. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/debunking-mechanical-turk-helped-set-edgar-allan-poe-path-mystery-writing-180964059/
9. https://www.christies.com/en/stories/the-history-of-the-automaton-mechanical-miracles-191ab3c1b3c94bde9118321e83ae9537
10. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Charles-Babbage
11. https://www.gwsrobotics.com/blog/history-of-robots

While the chess-playing Turk was destroyed in a fire, some of the most fascinating automata—including the Writer—are housed in different museums. The Writer and other automata designed by Jaquet Droz are on display at the Neuchâtel Museum of Art and History in Switzerland. A BBC demonstration can be seen here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OehTO9l1Hp8&t=44s. To see an explanation and reproduction of the chess-playing Turk, you can view this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tvla70hy9o

This article will be part of "The Life and Times of Sherlock Holmes, Volume 5," now available for pre-order, and is the last of Liese Sherwood-Fabre's regular monthly contributions. The book can be purchased for pre-order here: https://books2read.com/u/bPnVQd

A MORE COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT 'THE THREE GABLES'

1. Summary (Diogenes Club)

Watson is not living at Baker Street, but is visiting Holmes.

Dixie barges into their rooms and attempts to intimidate Holmes who says that he will convict him of the murder of young Perkins if he does not leave.

Mary has consulted Holmes – she knew of him because he had done some work for her late husband – because of a strange offer she has received. A house agent has approached her with an offer to buy her house and furniture for a princely sum. When she has Sutro look over the agreement he tells her that it is worded in such a manner that she cannot even take her personal effects from the house.

Douglas was a promising young diplomat living in Italy. He met Isadora and had an affair with her. She ended the affair and Douglas was devastated. He took to drink and died of pneumonia. Before his death, Douglas wrote a novel describing their affair in graphic detail. There were two copies of the novel's manuscript. Douglas gave Isadora one of them but died before he could take the other copy to a publisher. Isadora is now engaged to the Duke of Lombard and the appearance of this novel would create a scandal.

The other copy of the novel is among Douglas' effects which have just arrived from Italy and are now with his mother at Three Gables. Isadora wishes to buy the house in order to obtain and destroy the manuscript. When Mary refuses her offer, she has Stockdale and his gang break into the house and steal it. She then burns it.

Holmes learns the sordid details from Pike. He confronts Isadora who reminds him that she tried all legitimate means before resorting to theft. Holmes has Isadora make out a check to Mary so that Mary can take a trip around the world.

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2. Story Info Sheet (McMurdo's Camp)

- First published in:
  Liberty, September 18, 1926; The Strand Magazine, October 1926

- Time frame of story (known/surmised):
  No clue. Some time around 1892 – 1904.

- Holmes & Watson living arrangements:
  Not stated clearly, but it seems as if Waston was visiting, not residing at 221B. He is however, present in Holmes' quarters at the beginning of this story.

- Opening scene:
  The door flew open and a huge negro burst into the room. It was Steve Dixie, the bruiser. Dixie was blustery and threatening, and told Holmes he had a friend interested in things out Harrow way and didn't want Holmes butting in. Holmes seemed to know just what Dixie was talking about, and he told him "You'll tell the magistrate about it, Steve. I've been watching you and Barney Stockdale." Dixie then backed of from his threats.
  Homes told Watson he had received a note from the eventual client, saying she had a succession of incidents in connection with her house, The Three Gables, of Harrow Weald, and would much value Holmes' advice.

- Client:
  Mrs. Mary Maberley, whose late husband, Mortimer Maberley, was one of Holmes' early clients whom he had served well. Mrs. Maberley was a most engaging elderly person, who bore every mark of refinement and culture.

- Crime or concern:
  Some very strange happenings at the Three Gabes. An offer to buy her house, an unusual document. Mr. Sutro, the client's lawyer, advised her that if she signed it, she could not legally take anything out of the house. Mrs. Maberly did not accept the offer because of this odd provision.

  Her son, Douglas had died in Italy. He had been debonair and splendid, but in a single month the gallant boy developed into a moody, morose, brooding creature. His heart was broken, and he became a worn-out cynical man, and then died.

  Then, while interviewing the client at her house, Holmes detected Susan Stockdale, the maid, listening to the consultation through the door. Susan was the wife of Barney Stockdale, the small-time crook who sent Dixie to bully Holmes.

- Villain:

  Isadora Klein, the rich widow of the German sugar king, the beautiful woman who shows no pity, and formerly the mistress of Douglas, the son, before she dumped him in favor of a duke. She was the richest as well as the most lovely widow upon earth.

- Motive:

  Isadora wanted to marry the Duke of Lomand, who was of such an age he might almost be her son. Isadora had come to that time of life when even the proudest beauty finds the half light more welcome. Douglas had written a novel describing his affair with Isadora, with such detail it would have ruined her. She needed to steal the manuscript before it was published to preserve her prospects.

- Logic used to solve:

  Holmes' reading of the situation regarding the unusual offer told him there was something which the client did not know she had, and which she would not give up if she did know. The urgency of the demands indicated whatever was wanted had only just come into the house. Then they found the son's belongings, which had just arrived from Italy, and had not even been unpacked.

  A page found torn from Douglas' manuscript had queer grammar, in which he changed to first person narrative, being so carried away by the story that he imagined himself at the supreme moment to be the hero.

  Holmes suspected intrigue, and consulted Langdale Pike in London. Pike was a human book of reference upon all matters of social scandal. This strange, languid creature spent his waking hours in the bow window of a St. James's Street club and was the receiving station as well as the transmitter for all the gossip of the metropolis. Holmes sometimes helped Pike to knowledge, and on occasion was helped in turn. Pike furnished the information Holmes needed to complete his case.

- Policemen:

  A couple of constables and a bustling, rubicund inspector.

- Holmes' fees:

  No mention, but Holmes demanded and got £5000 from Isadora for his silence in the matter, so her marriage to the Duke could proceed. The money was to be paid to the client, although Holmes probably got his share.

- Transport:

  A short railway journey, and a shorter drive, brought Holmes & Watson to the house of the client, The Three Gables. They made a return trip the next day after being wired that the house was burgled during the night.

- Food & Drink:

  No mention.

- Vices:

  At the very beginning of this story, Holmes had curled down with his pipe in his mouth upon the chair opposite Watson, when Steve Dixie arrived. Holmes raised his pipe with a languid smile when confronted by Dixie. Then after the departure, Holmes knocked out the ashes of his pipe with a quiet chuckle.

- Other cases mentioned:

  None.

- Notable Quotables:

  "Good-bye, Susan. Paregoric is the stuff." (Holmes' insult to the deceitful maid.)

  Homes advice to Isadora: "Have a care, have a care! You can't play with edged tools forever without cutting those dainty hands."

  Holmes – "Surely no man would take up my profession if it were not that danger attracts him."

  Holmes to Watson: " I made a mistake, I fear, in not asking you to spend the night on guard." (after the burglary)

- Other interesting's:

Paregoric is camphorated tincture (solution in alcohol) of opium, used in Victorian times for relief of diarrhea and intestinal pain.

A scenic area in Cumbria County in Northwest England is the Great Langdale Valley, near the Langdale Pikes, a group of mountainous peaks on the northern side of the valley.

- When all was said and done:

The son, Douglas, was attaché at Rome, and he died there of of pneumonia, broken-hearted. Mrs. Maberly got the money she wanted to travel the world. Isadora got to marry the Duke. Holmes compounded a felony, "as usual".

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3. Data! Data! Data! (Frank Mentzel)

- Publishing History

  # 55 of the 60 stories

  The Strand Magazine, October, 1926
  In the US Liberty Magazine, September 18, 1926
  Part of The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes collection by
  John Murray, London, 1927
  George D. Doran, New York, 1927

- British illustrator – Howard Elcock

- Chronology

  Baring-Gould places the dating of the story at Tuesday, May 26 to Wednesday, May 28, 1903 making it 56th of the 60. This means that Holmes in 49 and Watson 51.

- Christopher Morley Says

  "In spite of intimidation Holmes goes to see why someone is anxious to purchase Mr. Maberly's country house with all its contents. The clue is page 245 of the manuscript of a novel, on which an embittered young author had unconsciously mixed his pronouns."

- Dummies Short Summary

  "Mrs. Maberly receives an unusual offer to purchase her house (the buyer wants everything). Thus begins another adventure of Sherlock Holmes."

- How Many Words

  At 6,090 words 3GAB has the 6th most words (#1 is VEIL – 4,499, #56 if NAVL – 12,701)

- Classifying This Case

  This case is the one classified as a theft of a manuscript.

- The Best Of Sherlock Holmes

  1927 – Arthur Conan Doyle did not have it on his list of 12 favorites.
  1959 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it 56th on list of favorites.
  1999 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it 54th of the 56 short stories.
  1999 – The Sherlock Holmes Society of London voted it 54th of the 56 short stories.

- What Else Happened That Year (1903)

  Just for the heck of it, here is one item each month since I had a six page list

  Jan 2nd - Pres T Roosevelt shuts down post office in Indianola Miss, for refusing to accept its appointed postmistress because she was black

  Jan 7th - Start of Sherlock Holmes "Adventure of Blanched Soldier" Jan Feb 22nd - Due to drought the US side of Niagara Falls runs short of water

  Feb 23rd - The US and Cuba sign an agreement by which Cuba releases Guantanamo and Bahia Hondo to the US for naval stations

Mar 22nd - Niagara Falls runs out of water because of a drought
Mar 23rd - Wright brothers obtain airplane patent
Apr 14th - Dr Harry Plotz discovers vaccine against typhoid (NYC)
Apr 20th - 7th Boston Marathon won by John Lorden of Mass in 2:41:29.8
Apr 29th - Limestone slides at Turtle Mountain kill 9 (Frank, Alberta)
visits San Francisco
May 20th - Britain's House of Commons begins a debate on the charges of poor administration and ill treatment of natives in Belgium's colony in the Congo Free State
May 29th - May coup d'etat: Alexander Obrenovich, King of Serbia, and Queen Draga, are assassinated in Belgrade by the Black Hand (Crna Ruka) organization.
Jun 10th - In Belgrade, Yugoslavia, a military coup d'etat- led by the Queen's brother-in-law and other offices - kills King Alexander I of Serbia, Queen Draga, and many officers
Jun 16th - Pepsi Cola company forms
Jun 16th - Roald Amundsen commences the first east-west navigation of the Northwest Passage by leaving Oslo, Norway.
Jul 1st - 1st Tour de France bicycle race begins
Jul 17th - The Russian Social Democratic Workers Party meets, first in Brussels and then London because their leaders have been forced into exile by the Russian Government
Aug 2nd - Unsuccessful uprising of Macedonians against Turkey
Aug 4th - Cardinal Giuseppe Sarto of Venice elected Pope Pius X
Sep 9th - 6 km long Engadin-railroad tunnel of Switzerland inaugurated
Sep 15th - Queen Wilhelmina calls railroad strikers "criminals"
Oct 1st - 1st baseball World Series, Pittsburgh Pirates vs Boston Pilgrims (Red Sox)
Oct 10th - The Women's Social and Political Union was formed by Emmeline Pankhurst to fight for women's rights in Britain.
Nov 3rd - Colombia grants independence to Panama
Dec 9th - Norwegian parliament votes unanimously for female suffrage
Dec 13th - Wright Bros make 1st flight at Kittyhawk
Dec 16th - The Taj Mahal Palace & Tower hotel opens its doors to guests

- Holmes And Watson – Personal Information

Holmes is at 221B but it is uncertain about the doctor. It seems as if Watson was visiting, not residing at 221B. He is however, present in Holmes' quarters at the beginning of this story.

- Dramatis Personae

Two "incidental" characters (Dixie & Pike) are more interesting that the primary characters.
Steve Dixie, a bruiser in the employ of Stockdale.
Young Perkins, murdered by Dixie.
Barney Stockdale, a small-time hoodlum.
Susan Stockdale, wife of Barney who works as a maid for Mary Maberly.
Mortimer Maberly, a former client of Holmes, now deceased.
Mary Maberly, widow of Mortimer who occupies Three Gables.
Douglas Maberly, son of Mortimer and Mary. Now deceased.
Mr. Sutro, Mary's lawyer.
Langdale Pike, a dealer in gossip who writes for the tabloids.
Isadora Klein, a wealthy widow who had an affair with Douglas.
Duke Of Lombard, engaged to Isadora.
Ferguson, a retired sea captain from whom Mrs. Maberly bought Three Gables.

- Quotable Sherlock

"It's a wicked thing to tell fibs."
"You can't play with edged tools forever without cutting those dainty hands."
"I am not the law, but I represent justice so far as my feeble powers go."
"They are good hounds who run silent"
"You can't play with edged tools forever without cutting those dainty hands"
"Surely no man would take up my profession if it were not that danger attracts him."
"I suppose I shall have to compound a felony as usual."

- Holmes' Fee

There is no mention of a fee. Holmes demanded and got £5000 from Isadora for his silence in the matter, so her marriage to the Duke could proceed. Since this money was to be paid to the client, Holmes probably got his share.

- Sherlock Holmes On The Big And The Little Screen

Some interesting characters but a so-so story, hence only on the screen once

1994 The Three Gables with Jeremy Brett on the BBC / Granada Sherlock Holmes series.

- Annotated Sherlock

Just one item needing "translating to the 21st century . .

"Paregoric" an alcohol solution made up of opium and camphor once used un cough remedies

- Weapons

Poker - From the fireplace in 221B, which Watson picked up after the precipitous entry of Steve "Bruiser" Dixie.
Chloroform - Used by one f Barney Stockdale's henchmen to subdue Mary Maberly.

Fist - Of Steve "Bruiser" Dixie, which he swung at Holmes in a threatening manner.

Fist - Of one of the members of Barney Stockdale's gang, which he struck Mary Maberly.

Novel - Written by Douglas Maberly which, if published, would expose the racy career of Isadora Klein.

Morley Says

"The last collection of tales, the Case-Book, put the zeal of Watson lovers under some strain: a few of the dozen stories seem to show the old magic. This is one of the best: Holmes undertakes to rescue the beautiful Miss de Merville from her infatuation for the Austrian Baron Gruner, "perhaps the most dangerous man in Europe." He has "waxed tips of hair under his nose," like some other dangerous Teutons. Holmes's special agent in the underworld, Porky Shinwell, is called upon for help, and Dr. Watson masquerades as a collector of Chinese porcelain, but the dénouement comes by still another hand."

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4. Case Inquiries (Alexander E. Braun)

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"The Adventure of the Three Gables" was first published in Liberty Magazine in September 18, 1926 and The Strand Magazine in October 1926. It is part of The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes. Unsurprisingly so, there is little agreement among our chronologists regarding when this case is supposed to have taken place. Their dating is shown on the table.

The year most agreed upon is 1903. If that is when the case took place, then at the time Sherlock Holmes would have been 49 years old and Doctor John H. Watson 51.

- Main Characters:

Steve Dixie, prizefighter and hired thug, sent to threaten Holmes. Mrs. Mary Maberley, elderly widow, mother of the deceased

Douglas Maberley. Douglas Maberley, rejected lover of Isadora Klein.

Susan, Mrs. Maberley's servant.

Mr. Sutro, Mrs. Maberley's solicitor.

Isadora Klein, a wealthy South American widow, former lover of Douglas.

Langdale Pike, London gossip-monger, with deep connections to society.

- Notable Quotes:

"There are always some lunatics about. It would be a dull world without them."

Langdale Pike was his human book of reference upon all matters of social scandal.

The lady had come, I felt, to that time of life when even the proudest beauty finds the half light more welcome.

"Surely no man would take up my profession if it were not that danger attracts him." "I am not the law, but I represent justice so far as my feeble powers go."

"I suppose I shall have to compound a felony as usual."

- The Missing Novel

Up to a point, we can all understand Mrs. Maberley's hesitancy in going through her dead son's things—the wound opened by his death was still quite fresh. What should have counterbalanced this were the facts surrounding his death; i.e., her son Douglas turned into a "moody, morose, brooding creature" and died a worn-out, cynical man. This alone should have stimulated her to be more interested in the contents of his bags.

She already knew that a woman (or, as she put it, "a fiend") had been actively involved in her son's ruination. Consid- ering that in those days it was not unu- sual for people of that class to keep a journal, it should have occurred to her that perhaps she might have found something that might have helped her avenge her son's tragic death.

In any case, even if no journal existed, she still would have found the manuscript of his novel, which would have made everything clear: the reasons for his miserable demise as well as to why some stranger might have been so interested in the complete contents of the house. As it is, the lady seemed singularly untouched by the whole affair.

- The Compounded Felony

It never ceases to amaze me how just a slight change in perspective can completely alter a scene. If one considers the whole sorry Klein/Maberly affair from the perspective of the lady in question, a very solid argument could be made that Isadora was simply acting in self-defense when she had Douglas beaten up. She tells Holmes that Douglas "became pertinacious."

According to my dictionary this would mean that he was stubborn, obstinate, persistent, unshakeable, headstrong, perverse, willful, and tenacious—by today's standards all of those qualities would have labeled him a stalker.

Holmes attitude towards Isadora Klein was atypical and disappointing. Consider that the woman was not only being stalked and eventually forced to take drastic steps to keep a novel with libelous undertones from being published. Had that not done what she did she would have been left with a reputation irretrievably in tatters and a ruined life.

One cannot help but think that had she gone to Holmes for help first, ahead of Mrs. Maberly, he would have been willingly acted in a way similar to hers, at least where the manuscript was concerned. There is a precedent for this: Holmes displayed no reticence in representing the interests of a client who had behaved in a very ungentlemanly manner—I refer, of course, to Wilhelm Gottsreich Sigismond von Ormstein, Grand Duke of Cassel- Felstein, and hereditary King of Bohemia. That Irene Adler intelligently bested him does not detract from the fact that he was willing to go after the lady as if she had been one of the criminals with which he often dealt.

Some time back, an old schoolmate of mine (now a portly, balding, eminent psychiatrist—alas, we were not all in the college yearbook!) commented to me rather nostalgically that in our modern times, the crime passionnel, as it was understood during Holmesian times is now a rarity. "Men and women no longer kill one another over affairs of the heart as they once used to," he said almost regretfully. "These days, very few men blow their brains out in despair because the lady of their dreams rejected them."

I asked him why this might be and his reply was somewhat cynical: "Our society today has too many distractions that keep a person from brooding too deeply about such things—cellphones, tablets, and TVs offer a flood of political nonsense, empty news, and mindless entertainment 24/7. This tends to distract the person's mind from the rejection." He sighed and added, "Same reason why people do not mourn a death as much as they used to."

- An Extremely Doubtful Provenance

I tend to agree with those who state that it is very doubtful that Watson was the author of this account.

Reasonably so, many Canon scholars have wondered whether this is a spurious case. Undeniably, it does not read like anything that the Good Doctor would have penned. For example, we have here a Sherlock Holmes who acts in a completely atypical way, cracking bad jokes ("Paregoric is the stuff."), and behaves not as the consummate Victorian gentleman that we all know him to be, regarding Steve Dixie's race.

The ending, as well, is quite unsatisfactory. Although we have witnessed his decision to "compound a felony" on more than one occasion, his reasons for doing so have been unassailable; i.e., he has done it for a good reason. In BOSC, for example, although he protects the innocence of the accused young McCarthy, he allows the real murderer of the elder McCarthy, old John Turner, go free because of the reasons which led him to commit the crime and because his poor health will soon have him standing before a Higher Tribunal. In ABBE we witness practically the same situation: Holmes lets Captain Jack Croker get away with the killing of Sir Eustace Brackenstall because he acted in self-defense and to protect Mary, Sir Eustace's severely abused wife; he saw no reason to cause a scandal.

In the present case, however, Holmes lets Isadora go although she instigated deadly violence against a former lover. Although it is true that young Maberley did not accept her refusal and became a stalker, the guilt was not only on one side—it was abundantly shared by both, rendering any possible outcome less than satisfactory. This is particularly so, because hers was an action partially prompted by self-defense which was further and more strongly propelled by an urgent desire to make a profitable marriage with a nobleman. Her only punishment—if it may be called that in view that she was extremely wealthy—was to have her issue Mrs. Maberley, her dead former lover's mother, a £5,000 (≈$1,900,000) check to enable her to travel around the world.

Overall, this is not one of Holmes or Watson's better cases. The Great Detective shines opaquely, and the "crime" he investigates, like a good equation, balances with equal guilt on both sides—Isadora and Douglas'—making for an unsatisfactory conclusion.

- The Remarkable Langdale Pike

In my case, the main reason for me to wish that I were convinced of the canonicity of this adventure lies mostly at the feet of Langdale Pike. We are told that he is Sherlock Holmes' "human book of reference upon all matters of social scandal." We are further told that, "This strange, languid creature spent his waking hours in the bow window of a St. James's Street club and was the receiving-station as well as the transmitter for all the gossip of the metropolis. He made, it was said, a four-figure income by the paragraphs which he contributed every week to the garbage papers which cater to an inquisitive public. If far down in the turbid depths of London life there ever was some strange swirl or eddy, it was marked with automatic exactness by this human dial upon the surface. Holmes discreetly provided Langdale information, and on occasion was helped in turn. We have here a remarkable eccentric, with an equally as eccentric nom de guerre.

It seems very likely to me that their means of exchange was not composed of pounds and shillings, but by something far more valuable to both: information. My most favorite Canon scholar, the legendary William S. Baring-Gould's claimed in his biography of Holmes, Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street, that Pike was a college acquaintance of the Great Detective who encouraged a young Holmes to try acting. Baring-Gould then proceeds to identify Pike by his true name, "Lord Peter." In the Granada Television adaptation of the Canon, Pike is also presented as old university chum of Holmes', and is depicted as the mirror image of the notorious blackmailer Charles Augustus Milverton, in that he suppresses more information than he exposes. Watson is rather scathing about Pike, but Holmes sympathetically suggests that Pike is as isolated as he is.

It makes sense that Holmes would know and keep in touch with someone like Pike. Our sleuth's rela- tionship with Shinwell Johnson, whom Watson tells us in ILLU had become "a valuable assistant" in keeping our sleuth abreast of the goings-on of "the huge criminal underworld of London and obtaining information which often proved to be of vital importance." Both Shinwell and Pike (and very likely others left unmentioned), were opposite sides of the same magnet, and would have served similar useful purposes— one concentrated on crime, the other on high society.

Perhaps not much of a difference there. . .

- What else happened in 1903:

Empire

Britain and France agree to settle disputes through International Court at The Hague.
Coronation Durbar for Edward III, King-Emperor, at Delhi.
British expeditionary force sent to Tibet.
Alaskan frontier question between Canada and U.S. settled by arbitration.
Exchange of visits between London and Paris; Arbitration Treaty establishes Entente Cordiale.

Britain

Joseph Chamberlain begins Tariff Reform Campaign
Foundation of universities at Liverpool and Manchester. Establishment of Workers' Educational Association.
GRW introduces early motor-bus service from Helston to the Lizard; the initiation of bus services largely originates from railway companies.
Wyndham's Act--Irish landlords to be bought out; peasant ownership; repayments over 68-and-a-half years.
Road speed limit in England increased to 20 mph.

World

Dutch Democratic Labor Party formed; general strike suppressed by troops.
Russian massacre of Jews at Kishinyov.
Mursteg Program—Austro-Russian proposals to solve Macedonian problems fails.
Russia refuses to evacuate Manchuria under terms of Russo-Japanese Convention.
Belgium introduces Old Age Pension plan.
Foundation Bank of Persia loans with large Russian interests.
Alexander Obrenovitch and Queen Draga of Serbia assassinated; Peter Karageorgevitch elected king.

Art

Barrie writes his play, *The Admirable Critchon.*
Degas, *Dancers in Yellow Skirts.*
First recording of an opera, Verdi's *Ernani*.
Elgar, *The Apostles*, an oratorio.
Jack London, *The Call of the Wild.*

German, *A Princess of Kensington*, operetta.
Pisarro, *Bridge at Bruges*.
Butler's *The Way of All Flesh*, a semi-autobiographical novel of middle-class life is published posthumously.
Erskine Childers, *The Riddle of the Sands*, a novel.
Shaw, *Man and Superman*.

Science and Technology

First radio press messages published by The Times.
Tsiolkovski publishes paper on astronautics.
Orville and Wilbur Wright make their first flight in a heavier-than-air machine.
Henry Ford founds his motor company.
Wilhelm Einthoven invents the electro-cardiograph.
J.J. Thomson publishes *Conduction of Electricity through Gases*.
Bertrand Russell publishes *Principia Mathematica*.
Phenobarbitone, a long lasting sedative, developed.

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5. Selected Chronologies

a.	The Original Story by Arthur Conan Doyle	
b.	William Baring-Gould	Tuesday, May 26, 1903
c.	H.W. Bell	May, 1903
d.	Roger Butters	October, 1902
e.	Jay Finley Christ	Sunday, September 14, 1902
f.	Jean-Pierre Crauser	July, 1902
g.	D. Martin Dakin	1903
h.	Bill Dorn	Wednesday, June 4, 1902
i.	Henry Folsom	Fall, 1902
j.	John Hall	Spring, 1902
k.	Craig Janasek	Tuesday, May 26, 1903
l.	Brad Keefauver	Wednesday, March 15, 1893
m.	Toshio Suzuki	Summer, 1903
n.	June Thomson	July, 1903
o.	Ernest Bloomfield Zeisler	Tuesday, June 1, 1896

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6. Canonical Queeries (Ralph Edwards, BSI)

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- How does this entrance compare with others (PRIO, SPEC)?
- How had Holmes's consulting practice developed over the years?
- Does "curled down" differ from "curled up"?

- Where was Billy?
- What identifies a boxer? (See GLOR)
- Do we read into this case more racial prejudice than fully justified?
- Is Dixie's speech separable into American and British?
- Is it pure coincidence that boxers appear in two consecutive adventures?
- What does "you'll get put through it" mean?
- Are differences in the salutations and complimentary closes of letters throughout the Canon significant?
- Why a shorter drive for a short walk?
- Other than as a writer, why was Douglas prominent?
- Had Douglas been spoiled as a child?
- What does "be my own mistress" imply?
- Did Susan's revelations get Holmes away from Harrow?
- Why did Holmes not learn Susan's last name; or was it an alias?
- Should Holmes have deduced an unpublished novel?
- Would Watson have prescribed paregoric?
- Did the Post Office have deposit boxes?
- Did Holmes say "Dr. Watson agrees…." for emphasis or for sarcasm?
- What did Holmes have in his pocket?
- Should Holmes have foreseen inaction by Mrs. Maberly?
- Do reputable newspapers today have garbage pages?
- Was Harrow built up enough that screams would bring the police, or that idlers would gather?
- Was the piece of paper being guarded to preserve finger prints?
- Should Holmes have suspected Douglas of mostly wanting a wealthy wife?
- Wasn't copying the manuscript a tremendous task?
- Will Isadora be harmed by the outcome of the Perkins case?
- Should Holmes have raised the amount to cover his fee?

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7. 17 Steps (Brad Keefauver, BSI)

1. Let's Diagram This Play . . .

Watson writes that Holmes "had just settled me into the well-worn low armchair on one side of the fire, while he had curled down with his pipe in his mouth upon the opposite chair, when our visitor arrived." Steve Dixie then bursts in, looks the two men over, identifies Holmes, then starts "coming with an unpleasant, stealthy step round the angle of the table."

Has this table been between visitors and the fireplace chairs in any previous adventures? With all the entrances Watson has recorded at the 221B sitting room, why haven't more people had to walk around that table?

2. The Etymology Of An Offensive Portrayal

One of the hot buttons surrounding Steve Dixie's offensive caricature is his constant use of the title "Masser" in referring to Holmes. The reader's immediate reaction seems to be that it's a sloppy version of "Master," and that Dixie is an ex-slave from America whose life has been spent referring to white people with that title. Is there any hope for a different interpretation of "Masser Holmes"?

Wouldn't an immigrant bruiser like Dixie choose to threaten people with a less subservient title, having given up that life? Or was Dixie actually referring to Holmes with a title that couldn't be printed in Strand Magazine, and Watson was cleaning up Dixie's language with his own prejudicial version?

(Try reading Dixie's lines substituting "m*f*" for "masser," if you're indelicate enough to try it, and you'll find him much more the "terrific" Dixie, as Watson describes him.) Why could Dixie say "Mr. Holmes" perfectly well when quoting Barney Stockdale?

3. Seven Degrees To Steve Dixie

If this tale didn't have enough hot buttons in it already, certain lines have been interpreted in ways that may not have been aligned with the original intention. Watson writes that Dixie "swung a huge knotted lump of a fist under my friend's nose" and that "Holmes examined it closely with an air of great interest."

When Holmes then coolly asks, "Were you born so? Or did it come by degrees?" many modern readers take this to be a racial slur. Sure, Holmes says it while looking at the fist under his nose. But while Watson writes that the fist is "huge" and the fist is

“knotted,” but never that the fist is “black.” The fact the fist is under Holmes’s nose also implies one more condition not directly mentioned: Dixie is a violent jerk.

So what was it that Holmes thinks Steve Dixie came to by degrees? Size? Knottiness? Or being a rude, door-busting jerk?

4. Just Another Murder In The Backlog

“I’ve wanted to meet you for some time,” Holmes tells Dixie, and after an exchange of threats and insults, continues with, “But it was the killing of young Perkins outside the Holborn Bar--"

Later, Holmes states, “He is one of the Spencer John gang and has taken part in some dirty work of late which I may clear up when I have time.”

Couldn’t Holmes put Lestrade or someone on the trails he couldn’t get to immediately, especially the ones involving murder? Where was Holmes hearing of these non-client crimes and did he only bother with then, regardless of their severity, when he didn’t have a paying client?

5. Making A Career Of Being Fabulous

How much do we know about Douglas Maberly?

All London knew him, including Sherlock Holmes. He was a “magnificent creature,” “vitally alive,” and “lived intensely--every fibre of him!” In fact, Holmes speaks about him with such out-of-character passion that we start to wonder about the detective’s heterosexuality. We know Maberly was a junior member of the embassy staff in Rome, as well as a writer, when he died, but what was he in London that he impressed Sherlock Holmes so much with his vitality?

6. Calling Dr. Henry Higgins! Calling Dr. Henry Higgins!

Here’s a pretty little puzzle -- listen to Susan’s accent for a moment:

"Leave me alone! What are you a-doin' of?"

“I was comin' in to ask if the visitors was stayin' for lunch . . .”

"Who be you, anyhow, and what right have you a-pullin' me about like this?"

Where does this wheezy woman hail from, based upon this goofy accent of hers? Ireland? America? Australia? Or somewhere else entirely?

7. Victorian Consumer Confidence: Down, Seriously Down

"Now, Mrs. Maberley, has any object just arrived?" Holmes asks his client.

"No, I have bought nothing new this year,” Mrs. Maberly replies.

In today’s consumer culture, the thought that Mrs. Maberly has bought nothing in a year is a feat that belongs in the record books, especially as she has not been in her house all that long. Is Mrs. Maberly referring to a certain level of purchase, or has she not even had a new dress in this year?

8. That Amazing Victorian Postal Service Once More

“Your letter to me had the 10 P. M. postmark,” Holmes tells Mrs. Maberly, and the modern reader gapes in wonder. Just how much information did the Victorian postmark carry? Was said info rubber stamped or marked by hand? Did postmarking go on around the clock?

9. The Ever-Busy Holmes Fails To Act, Again

First we learn of Holmes failing to look into the young Perkins murder, then he makes the pronouncement, “But you said--why, surely this might be the missing link,” as he sees Douglas Maberly’s trunks. He then tells his client to examine them, and he will call tomorrow to find out if she’s found anything.

Has Holmes gone the route of self-serve gas stations, letting clients do his observation for him? How could Holmes *not* be curious enough to help Mrs. Maberly look through her son’s things in pursuit of hidden treasure?

10. Holmes Veers Off Toward The Pike

“Now, Watson, this is a case for Langdale Pike,” Holmes announces.\

Watson explains to us that “Langdale Pike was his human book of reference upon all matters of social scandal.

This strange, languid creature spent his waking hours in the bow window of a St. James's Street club and was the receiving-station as well as the transmitter for all the gossip of the metropolis.”

What made Holmes so quick to turn to Langdale Pike in this matter? The detective knows that he’s looking for an object that makes the Maberly house more valuable than it really is. Why would he think that object had something to do with social scandal?

11. And The Times *Didn't* Get Thrown Out?

Of Langdale Pike, Watson says, "He made, it was said, a four-figure income by the paragraphs which he contributed every week to the garbage papers which cater to an inquisitive public."

What were the "garbage" papers of Victorian London and what garbage filled their pages? Might Watson have had his own celebrity mishap with such scandal sheets, explaining why he seems down on them?

12. Mary Maberly Versus The Burglars

"Before he could get away I sprang up and seized him," the elderly Mary Maberly explains. "I clung to him, but he shook me off, and the other may have struck me, for I can remember no more."

Not that this feisty old lady needs it, but would a Victorian woman living alone with two maids have a weapon in her house for just such occasions as this?

13. The End Of A Queer Novel

". . . face bled considerably from the cuts and blows, but it was nothing to the bleeding of his heart as he saw that lovely face, the face for which he had been prepared to sacrifice his very life, looking out at his agony and humiliation. She smiled--yes, by Heaven! she smiled, like the heartless fiend she was, as he looked up at her. It was at that moment that love died and hate was born. Man must live for something. If it is not for your embrace, my lady, then it shall surely be for your undoing and my complete revenge."

This passage, we are told, looks like the end of a 245 page novel. From what we are later told, we known this is Douglas Maberly's fictionalized account of his romance with Isadora Klein. What must those first 244 pages have been, considering that Maberly expected to get it published? What kind of plot might it have had, ending as it did? Was it a simple tragic romance, or something smuttier, to be published under the name "Anonymous"? Couldn't he have come up with a better ending, or was it unfinished?

14. The Chances Of Isadora's Marriage Happening

"I hear that she is about to marry the young Duke of Lomond, who might almost be her son. His Grace's ma might overlook the age, but a big scandal would be a different matter . . ."

A big scandal, eh? What about "Then there was an interval of adventure when she pleased her own tastes. She had several lovers . . ."

Would the Duke of Lomond hear about Isadora's many lovers, or were their circles different enough that such rumors didn't reach her? Wouldn't Klein's "adventuress" reputation alone kill the wedding?

15. Send The Children Out Of The Room For A Moment

Isadora Klein explains, "He wanted marriage--marriage, Mr. Holmes-- with a penniless commoner. Nothing less would serve him. Then he became pertinacious. Because I had given he seemed to think that I still must give, and to him only."

Wow, could Ms. Klein actually be talking about sex here? If so, is this the only real reference to that biological act in the Canon? (No puns, double entendres, or other Shavian humor allowed in the answering of this question.)

16. Not A Nice Neighborhood After All

Isadora Klein lived in "one of the finest corner-houses of the West End," a prominent house in a prominent neighborhood. And Ms. Klein hired a gang of thugs to beat the most popular man in London in front of this same house.

How is it that Maberly's beating wasn't the talk of all London? Couldn't the police pull in hired louts like Stockdale and Dixie? Why would it take a novel to bring this to the fore?

17. The Future Of The Widow In Question

"What else could I do with my whole future at stake?" Isadora protests.

If Isadora is the richest, best-looking widow on Earth, how could her whole future be ruined by a book that may or may not have been about her, as far as readers were concerned? What would marriage to the Duke of Lomond have gained her that her life would be ruined without?.

8. View Halloas (Rosemary Michaud)

Did you think that Sherlock Holmes was a bit rude and crude in last week's story, "The Mazarin Stone?" Well, this week the Master picks up right where he left off, and the results are not pretty. Perhaps it would be easier to tolerate his puerile sarcasm towards Steve Dixie and Susan Stockdale if we could see that he was doing his best for his client, but the Sherlock Holmes of "The Three Gables" is as ineffective as he is annoying! Still, he's Sherlock Holmes, and I hope we will find some good Hounds who will NOT run silent, and that we can all survive this "Harrow-ing" adventure without defiling our wells of speech and civility. In a moment, the week's comments and questions on "The Three Gables."

Guilt by association: I am a bit confused by the organization of the "Spencer John" gang. Steve Dixie reported to Barney Stockdale, and we assume that Barney reported to the head of the gang. However, Barney and his wife Susan also worked for Isadora Klein on what seems to have been a fairly regular basis. Is such criminal moonlighting a likely situation? Was "Spencer John" really Frau Klein's nom de guerre? Was Isadora Klein behind the "killing of young Perkins outside the Holborn Bar?" Was Perkins a suitor who didn't get the hint after his first beating?

The story doesn't tell us how long Susan Stockdale had been posing as a maid at the Three Gables. But why didn't Isadora Klein have her search for the manuscript instead of going through all that other trouble?

Holmes spoke glowingly of Douglas Maberley, but from what we know of him, was he really the kind of man Holmes would have admired?

Watson wrote that Holmes was in "a chatty mood" at the beginning of the case. Was he taking cocaine again? Was the drug responsible for his ungentlemanly behavior?

The de-Klein and fall: The worst mistake Holmes made in this case was his failure to arrange for Mrs. Maberley's protection. When he asked her if her lawyer was "a capable man," the context was such that she undoubtedly assumed Holmes was referring to Sutro's legal skills. As it happens, Sutro was somewhat elderly himself and would not have been sufficient protection even if Mrs. Maberley had asked him to spend the night. Holmes later said he should have left Watson on guard, and that would have certainly been better – though perhaps not for Watson! Why didn't Holmes arrange for a police presence, such as the trap he laid for Beppo in "The Six Napoleons?"

Why didn't Holmes offer to go through Douglas Maberley's luggage? Even though he may not have known exactly what he was looking for until after he spoke with Langdale Pike, the chances are that he might have guessed the importance of the manuscript if he had seen it. Why didn't he at least take a look? Why leave Mrs. Maberley to do it herself, especially since she obviously had no idea what was going on?

Holmes resolved the case by extorting money from Isadora Klein. Was this the best he could do, or should he have tried to have her prosecuted for the crimes involved in the theft of the manuscript?

Holmes was an introspective and thoughtful man, and we must imagine that he later reflected on this case with chagrin. Do you think his sloppy handling of this one may have influenced his decision to retire? Or was he sloppy because he had already made up his mind to get out of the detective game?

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9. Delicate Questions (Chris Redmond, BSI)

Does this story's general flavour of decadence, decay and perverse sex, somehow more characteristic of the 1920s than of the 1890s, spoil the enjoyment of a reader who is anticipating a "typical" Sherlock Holmes tale?

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10. Additional Thoughts (Steve Clarkson)

Mrs. Morton Maberley, whose late husband had been a client of Holmes, was puzzled by an unexpected offer from an anonymous person to buy her home, The Three Gables, at the highest price she could name. The catch was that the offer included everything in the house, with the possible exception of her clothing and jewelry. The furniture, the pictures… even her Crown Derby tea-set were all included as a condition of the purchase. Remembering that Holmes had helped her husband, she turned to the Master Detective for guidance.

Holmes decided to take up the matter after a sudden incursion into the rooms at 221B Baker Street by a professional pugilist named Steve Dixie, who warned Holmes to keep away from The Three Gables under penalty of physical harm. That very day Holmes and Watson visited Mrs. Maberley at her home and determined that there was something which the house contained that was wanted very badly by whoever had hired Dixie, an "enforcer" for the Spencer John gang, to try to scare Holmes off. Holmes advised

Mrs. Maberley to make a strict accounting of the contents of her home, and said he would return upon the morrow to look further into the situation.

By the next day, however, Mrs. Maberley had been chloroformed into unconsciousness during the night and the house had been rifled by burglars. The only thing missing was the bulk of a manuscript written by her son Douglas, who had died only a month earlier.

One page of the manuscript was inadvertently left behind by the burglars, and furnished Holmes with a clue that might lead him to the person behind this strange sequence of events.

I have never read the excerpt of Douglas Maberley's manuscript contained in this story without saying a silent prayer of gratitude that Isadora Klein had the good taste to burn the rest of it. Could it be that Doyle was having a little joke at the expense of the tabloids of the day such as the Family Herald (THOR) when he wrote that tommyrot? Was Isadora Klein really afraid that the unintended comical undertones in the narrative would make her not the talk, but rather the laughing-stock of British society?

Watson writes, "I don't think that any of my adventures with Mr. Sherlock Holmes opened quite so abruptly, or so dramatically, as that which I associate with The Three Gables." Surely, he hadn't forgotten the violent appearance of Dr. Grimesby Roylott in the doorway of 221B in SPEC? What do the Hounds think? Were there any adventures besides these in which the story opens abruptly and/or dramatically?

Holmes said to the wheezy Susan Stockdale, "Good-bye, Susan. Paregoric is the stuff…." Paregoric is a camphorated tincture of opium, used in Victorian times for relief of diarrhea and intestinal pain. Would it also have been helpful in treating asthma, emphysema, or any complaint which causes the sufferer to wheeze loudly?

Isadora Klein told Holmes that Barney and Susan Stockdale were the only persons who knew of her involvement in this matter. If the Stockdales (and Steve Dixie, for that matter) were members of the Spencer John gang, how was it that the Stockdales knew Isadora Klein's role in the Maberley affair, but Spencer John didn't? Who was "Spencer John"? Was he a would-be Moriarty? Was "Spencer John" the criminal pseudonym of Isadora Klein?

Finally, Frau Klein described Douglas Maberley as "a penniless commoner." It's not as though she were averse to marriage to a younger man, for she was engaged to the young Duke of Lomond. She was wealthy due to her inheritance from the German Sugar King (Sugar Daddy?). Was she only interested in a title, a place in the peerage?

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11. Questions & Comments (Sonia Fetherston, BSI)

A black male comes crashing through the door……and blackmail turns out to be a crashing bore. It must be time for our next story: The Adventure of the Three Gables. My questions and comments:

Douglas Maberley: obsessive weirdo, or hopeless romantic?

Isadora Klein: heartless Jezebel, or innocent bystander?

At various times in his career Holmes joked about trying his hand at crime. When he negotiated the hush-money deal in 3GAB, which (if any) laws were broken?

It appears likely that Mrs. Maberley will accept money to forget about the little unpleasantness. Is she reasonable or greedy?

By story's end, Isadora Klein is free to marry the Duke of Lomond — a ficticious name used to shield the identity of a nobleman presumably of Scots descent. "Lomond" comes from Loch Lomond, the lake with the "bonnie, bonnie banks" northwest of Glasgow. One family in particular is associated with Loch Lomond's history, and it's possible that Isadora's duke was a clansman of theirs. They are the tumultuous MacGregors. After 1603 Clan MacGregor was forcibly crushed, "altogidder abolisheed" as James VI put it, and for years surviving clan members were ordered to change their name or die. Some were executed, some fled to avoid persecution, but most surviving MacGregors simply adopted the last names of their "septs" – branches of the clan acquired through marriage and other means. All of the enactments against the MacGregors were finally repealed by 1775, but a few of the descendants of those proscribed MacGregors still go by the adopted surnames chosen nearly 400 years ago. So, though they are truly "MacGregors," today some of them bear the surname "Campbell," others go by "Murray," a few are called "Grant," and some even use a last name familiar to us. . . . ."Leckie."

There was a beautiful house in Biddenham, Bedford called "Three Gables." It was built by Charles Edward Mallows (1864-1915), the architect, landscape designer and artist, on commission for his father-in-law. Constructed between 1900-01, Mallows used an Arts and Crafts approach to the design of Three Gables, placing vernacular building materials inside a fabulous natural garden. Photos I've seen of the house show a central block with the three gables across the second story (British). Two wings extend at slight angles from the block. Mallows was not a towering figure in British architecture, however, and it's the incredible garden at Three Gables which established him. Look for references to him in gardening history books if you're interested in pursuing his life and works.

Mrs. Maberley jokes that she owns nothing "rarer than a Crown Derby tea-set," a reference to the English porcelain manufacturer. I collect a different type of porcelain, but I'll share the little I know about Crown Derby. Derbyware has been around

since the mid-1750's. Many of the pieces are nice, and a few are found in Museums such as the Victoria and Albert in London, and the Cincinnati Art Museum in the USA. Their work is not particularly rare or astonishing. Derby was known for table as well as ornamental pieces. Following the death of the founder and his heirs, former Derby workers went on to become the creative force behind Crown Derby (1877), and then Royal Crown Derby (so-called under separate trademark following appointment in 1890 as manufacturers of porcelain to Queen Victoria). Crown Derby pioneered brilliant colors using an enameling technique similar to the modern Limoges process. The most recent Crown Derby tea set transaction I've been able to find was an 1887 "Kings" pattern set (pot, jug, covered sugar bowl, six cups, saucers) that sold for $210 in 1994 — a very reasonable price, depending on the condition of the pieces. Edwardian Royal Crown Derby sets sell for two/three times that amount because they're finer quality. What the collectors go ape over is miniature Royal Crown Derby pieces, which were only briefly manufactured as children's toys around 1904.

3GAB is the Sherlock Holmes story I most want to see in 3-D. Steve Dixie and Susan Stockdale tumbling through doorways……Dr. Watson with the poker (do they still use the bent one in Baker Street?).....the chloroforming of Mrs. M, and the looting of her room……the speeding cab……..Isadora rushing after Holmes…….Isadora throwing down her own poker……..hand me the popcorn and the funny glasses, Mycroft!

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12. 56 Stories in 56 Days (Charlotte Anne Walters)

Mrs Klein is the ultimate cougar, and much more interesting than Irene Adler in my opinion, writes Charlotte Anne Walters.

Here we return to the familiar narration of Doctor Watson and encounter a ruthless woman who hires a band of ruffians to protect her interests. This story also contains some great minor characters that feature in my own novel – the boxer Steve Dixie and the gossip Langdale Pike. I particularly love Pike, who makes a hearty living out of collecting and passing on society gossip. I would love to have heard more about him throughout the stories and really enjoyed the way Granada presented him in their dramatisation of this story.

The title of this story also features in Barefoot, though not in its entirety. I blended together the names 'Wisteria Lodge' and' Three Gables' to create Wisteria Gables, the property in my story which becomes almost as significant as 221B.

We have another Birmingham reference in this story too – Steve Dixie says that he has been training at the Bull Ring in Birmingham. What a lovely reminder of what the Bull Ring was before it became a major shopping centre with shiny fittings and a luxury department store. Blimey, times have changed!

The story is simple enough, though Granada did a brilliant job of embellishing it and made it into one of my favourite episodes.

Isadora Klein is a great villainess, cunning, beautiful, with a preference for young men and enough money to call the shots.

The story starts with Holmes being threatened by Dixie, which only serves to whet his curiosity and prompt him to investigate the case of a sweet old lady who has had a generous but strange offer made on her property. An agent informs her that his client wishes to purchase not only her house but also all the furniture. The money offered is very generous and enough for her to fulfil an ambition to travel around the world. Only trouble is, she is not allowed to remove anything from the house except a few personal possessions under supervision. At this point, she contacts Holmes for help and the involvement of Dixie, and the gang leader Barney Stockdale, convinces him that the matter is serious.

Turns out that the lady's handsome young son had died recently of a broken heart and his possessions are being stored in the house. He had been seduced and then dumped by the heartless Klein because he was of common birth. As an act of revenge he had written a scandalous novel all about their affair. As she was about to marry a titled young man, a scandal would threaten this union and that's why she tried to buy the house and everything in it – to get her hands on the manuscript. When this failed a burglary was staged and the writings snatched.

Holmes visits her to get it back but it is too late, the papers have been burned. Holmes threatens to unleash the scandal unless she writes out a cheque for enough money to travel around the world. This she eventually does and the sweet old lady gets to fulfil her ambition.

It's another example of Holmes genuinely caring about his client and going above and beyond to help them. Mrs Klein still seems to get off lightly in my opinion though as a scandal is avoided and she probably does manage to ensnare the titled young man who she is clearly using for social advancement only. In the Granada episode Holmes forces her to break off the engagement and her plans are thwarted. I have to say that I do prefer that ending.

A good story with a surprisingly contemporary feel – 7 out of 10.

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13. Observance of Trifles (Brian Keith Snell)

We've all experienced this, haven't we? We go home for a family gathering, and a favorite uncle or cousin we've long admired is there. Our ideal is shattered, though, when the relative suddenly blurts out something hateful and racist, and suddenly you're disillusioned and uncomfortable and you have no idea what to do.

Which brings us to The Adventure of The Three Gables.

One of the reasons this post is so late is that I have no idea what to do here.

Like when your beloved grandfather starts dropping anti-Semitic comments during Thanksgiving dinner...what do you do? Try and correct him? Start a big argument that ruins dinner for everybody? Press too hard and you find out that many more of your loved ones harbor similar disturbing prejudices? Keep eating and stew in silence? Stop accepting invitations to family gatherings?

Granted, Sherlock Holmes (and Watson) are fictional characters, but in some ways the sting is just as bad. To see a character you admire, the epitome of intellect and reason and not letting unwarranted prejudices cloud your reason, speaking and behaving in way that you feel is racist--it jars. It hurts.

Now, as a middle-aged middle-class white male, I am spectacularly unequipped to speak intelligently on such issues. Anything I can add to the discussion would be as an outsider dilettante, right?

And there are some halfhearted defenses I could try to make of Holmes' behavior in this story. "All his jabs weren't directed at blacks in general, just at Steve Dixie. He wasn't generalizing, he wasn't being racist--Dixie really did smell bad!" Or "Holmes didn't really feel that way--he was trying to use those comments to get under Dixie's skin, to throw him off guard and get him to blurt out information about his boss!"

Or "Holmes was just as rude to Sam Merton the boxer in Mazarin Stone! He's not racist, he just hates dumb bruisers in general!" Or "...but The Adventure Of The Yellow Face!!"

And they even be some glimmers of truth, and perhaps mitigation, in those arguments. But Watson himself is also not terribly pleasant in some of his descriptions of Mr. Dixie, and in his transcription of his dialogue. So we can't just dismiss complaints about this story out-of-hand with rhetorical tricks.

As regular reader Arynne said, "[Holmes] is a racist a**hole in Three Gables!" It's difficult for me to reject that conclusion.

Perhaps a better question is--should we be surprised? After all, even in real life, people are terribly complicated, and inconsistent in ways that would never pass muster if we analyzed them the way we analyzed literary works. Abraham Lincoln, the Great Emancipator, held views on race relations that, while common at the time, would have right-thinking people reject the entirety of his career if spoken today. People can be more than one thing at once, even contradictory things.

That can be true in literature and entertainment, too. Without getting into all of the controversy over the release of the "sequel" to To Kill A Mockingbird, Go Set A Watchman tells of an Atticus Finch in his older days who maybe isn't quite the perfect idol of liberalism 9th grade English classes (and Gregory Peck) have made him to be for decades. He attends meetings of racist organizations! He's for "states' rights!" Despite his defense of Tom Robinson, he doesn't support integration or full civil rights for blacks!!

Good Lord, you would have thought they were murdering puppies on Main Street, so great was the anguished outcry by people astonished that their lifetime hero maybe, just maybe, was not an icon of perfection!! How dare you tell us our heroes are complex and contradictory and...

We can see a similar thing in the original Star Trek. It was the 1960s, and they liked to make a big deal over Earth overcoming all its prejudices and hatreds. But every single episode featured the chief medical officer making racist comments about the ship's first officer. So much for racism being over...or does racism not count if you're only racist against fictional races and species? (And yes, insert all of the defenses of "they're friends" and "he's just needling Spock" you like...but then ask yourself why some of those same defenses wouldn't apply to Holmes in this story.)

This and later iterations of Trek were quick to assert that everybody on a planet had the exact same culture and behavior: Tellarites are all quarrelsome, Ferengi are all greedy, Klingons are all warlike, etc. ****, the Next Generation episode Redemption Part II has a high-ranking Star Fleet officer say that, "No one would suggest that a Klingon would be a good ship's counselor, or that a Berellian could be an engineer. They're just not suited for those positions." Even the mighty Federation, it seems, can harbor some racism (or speciesism) in the future.

I can't get into the mind of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, but surely he was, just as we all are, products of our time. That's not a defense, of course. And I'm not going to get so clever as to say "he was only portraying the racism of the times, he wasn't actually racist himself." Maybe he was, maybe he wasn't. We can't know, though, so where does that leave us?

As I said above, I just don't know. The best I can do here is to suggest that Sherlock Holmes is as human as the rest of us. That he is vast, and contains multitudes, and some of the lesser multitudes peeked out during this story...and maybe allowing for a little bit of mitigation for the era, a little bit for the possibility that Holmes may have been trying to provoke a perp...

Yeah, Sherlock is a "racist *******" in Three Gables. I don't think that we toss out the whole story because our hero was less than perfect this time around. We continue to admire Lincoln and Atticus Finch. We still watch Star Wars despite "I'd just as soon

kiss a Wookie." And we still go to family gatherings despite Uncle Bob's occasional embarrassing moment.

That's the best I've got.

OTHER TRIFLES AND OBSERVATIONS:

**All of the above being said, this is a pretty nice little story, marred only by two things: we should have met Langdale Pike, and the ending was far too abrupt. How did Holmes explain the largesse of a world trip to Mrs. Maberley?

Otherwise, it is a fairly low stakes affair, with the whole motive revolving around that old Victorian fear of scandal. Good heavens!!

**The Granada adaptation manages to greatly raise the stakes. In the television version, Douglas Maberley actually because of the beating Isadora Klein's goons gave him. Apparently, the attack "ruptured his spleen," according to Watson, which somehow caused the pneumonia that killed him!! That was the reason she was so desperate to get the "novel"--it functioned as an accusation (and proof?) of murder!! And despite the seeming impossibility of proving that in a court of law, Holmes essentially blackmails Klein with it, by promising not to report it to the authorities if she founds Mrs. Maberley's trip, and breaks off her engagement to Duke and leave England forever!!! Which she does!!

Also, Granada makes Mary Maberley Douglas' grandmother, instead of his mother. Go figure...

**Man, Sir Arthur was using "Three" a lot in his stories. Three Gables, Three Garridebs, Three Students, Missing Three Quarter...you're making it very confusing for us to remember which story was which, Sir!!

**Good old Watson: "...the slight clatter which I made as I picked up the poker." Always ready to leap to Holmes' aid.

**If Holmes actually knew something of the murder of "young Perkins," why hadn't he gone to the authorities with it? Or did he just have his suspicions, which he was able to conveniently used to scare Dixie? Does he have a lot of "I suspect but can't proves" in his arsenal, ready to dispense when needed?

**Mrs. Maberley's note said, "I have had a succession of strange incidents occur to me in connection with this house." Yet, as far as we can tell, there was only one incident: someone trying to buy the house with odd conditions attached to the sale. Did other things happen, that she never bothered to tell us about? There was no sign of threats, or break-ins, or anything, right? Or was one eccentric, rich anonymous person trying to buy your house enough to justify hiring a detective?

**Then again, Mary was familiar with Holmes work: "I believe that my late husband, Mortimer Maberley, was one of your early clients." Holmes says, "it is some years since he used my services in some trifling matter."

So a minor, apocryphal case...

**Watson, architecture critic, on the house name Three Gables: "the house, a brick and timber villa, standing in its own acre of undeveloped grassland. Three small projections above. the upper windows made a feeble attempt to justify its name."

**Apparently, Douglas Maberley was the talk of the town. Holmes:

But of course all London knew him. What a magnificent creature he was!...I have never known anyone so vitally alive. He lived intensely -every fibre of him!"

One can only wonder at what inspired such fame and adoration for a minor diplomat.

**Mary: "You remember him as he was -- debonair and splendid. You did not see the moody, morose, brooding creature into which he developed. His heart was broken. In a single month I seemed to see my gallant boy turn into a worn-out cynical man."

Holmes: "A love affair -- a woman?"

Mary: "Or a fiend."

Hmmm. Does Mary know that Isadora was the one who broke Douglas' heart and spirit? That "fiend" comment suggests she knew something. It's a pity she wasn't more forthcoming. as she could have saved Holmes some time hanging around with gossip columnists!

Also? When Holmes says. "A love affair--a woman?" Is he implying that maybe it wouldn't have been a woman? That he suspected Douglas of having...ahem...other interests? It just seems odd to insert that qualifier in there, in that way, if you didn't have some reason to think that maybe it wasn't a woman...

**Of course, someone willing to considerably overpay for a house could be an indication of evil-doing. Or it could be a sign of a housing bubble with imminent economic collapse coming...

**This "Haines-Johnson" and Klein make a bit of a mistake by over-egging the offer a fair bit.

Buy the house and all the furniture for far more than market price? No problem. But language in the contract stating that she "could not legally take anything out of the house -- not even your own private possessions?" And his explanation to her, "'Well, well, some concession might be made for your personal effects. But nothing shall go out of the house unchecked," is obviously going to be unacceptable to a woman of "refinement and culture."

There should have been some way to make that contract more subtle, without forcing Mrs. Maberley to an option that anyone would see as offensive and unacceptable--not to mention immediately alerting her lawyer that something odd was going on.

**What other options existed?

Douglas effects had arrived "last week," and been untouched, "piled in a corner." Surely the wicked maid Susan knew his luggage was there, unopened. Surely she and her cronies should have known that Douglas' novel must be there. Couldn't Susan have searched Douglas' things? Offered to unpack them for Mrs. Maberley? Mary had no idea that the novel even existed--she would never notice that it was missing?!?!

Surely Mary was not at much as a shut-in as Garrideb was. Break in (or have Susan let you in) while she's at the market, or visiting friends, or at church. Why do you need to rush in and chloroform her, especially when you must know, through Susan, that Mary has no idea the manuscript exists? What's the infernal rush?

Offer Mary the contract, without the offensive clauses. Include her moving expenses as part of the deal. Stockdale and his gang pose as movers, and search the trunks while in transit...or even switch them out entirely.

There were an awful lot of options available before resulting to insane contracts and break-ins that involved physically assaulting an old woman.

**Holmes catching Susan eavesdropping: "He strode across the room, flung open the door, and dragged in a great gaunt woman whom he had seized by the shoulder. She entered with ungainly struggle like some huge awkward chicken, torn, squawking, out of its coop."

**Isadora may have felt that Susan and Barney were "good hounds who run silent."

But look at what Holmes is able to get out of Susan in about 30 seconds:

"Suppose I tell you that it was Barney Stockdale to whom you spoke?" said Holmes.

"Well, if you know, what do you want to ask for?"

"I was not sure, but I know now. Well now, Susan, it will be worth ten pounds to you if you will tell me who is at the back of Barney."

"Someone that could lay down a thousand pounds for every ten you have in the world."

"So, a rich man? No; you smiled -- a rich woman. Now we have got so far, you may as well give the name and earn the tenner."

So in quick order, Holmes gets Susan to admit she's with Stockdale, and that they're working for a wealthy woman.

Klein really shouldn't be confident of her droogs' ability to stay silent when Sherlock Holmes on the case.

**Holmes being very pawkey with Susan:

"Just a little wheezy, Susan, are you not? You breathe too heavily for that kind of work."

"Now, Susan, wheezy people may not live long, you know. It's a wicked thing to tell fibs."

"Good-bye, Susan. Paregoric is the stuff..."

See, he's laying the insults on everybody this case,. not just Dixie...

**Every homeowner's dream: "You don't happen to have a Raphael or a first folio Shakespeare without knowing it?"

**Sherlock is on a roll this day: "I was wondering whether [the previous owner] could have buried something. Of course, when people bury treasure nowadays they do it in the Post-Office bank. But there are always some lunatics about. It would be a dull world without them."

Of course, now there's BitCoin. Then again, people are buying gold as a safety investment again these days, so maybe there are some more folks burying things in their back yards...

And yes, there are always some lunatics about.

**Holmes and Watson ask Mary in about three different ways whether or not something new had come into the household lately. It does make her look a little bit dotty to not think about the "several trunks and cases" that were lying there in plain sight.

**At their second encounter, Steve Dixie avers to help Holmes if he can, and Sherlock replies that "that the lady in that house, and everything under that roof, is under my protection."

So, did Steve take part in the break in? He certainly didn't inform Holmes about it, before or after...does Sherlock follow up on his threat to tell the authorities about the murder of Perkins?

**As mentioned above, I think not showing us Langdale Pike is a lost opportunity:

...his human book of reference upon all matters of social scandal. This strange, languid creature spent his waking hours in the bow window of a St. James's Street club and was the receiving station as well as the transmitter for all the gossip of the metropolis. He made, it was said, a four-figure income by the paragraphs which he contributed every week to the garbage papers which cater to an inquisitive public.

If ever, far down in the turbid depths of London life, there was some strange swirl or eddy, it was marked with automatic exactness by this human dial upon the surface. Holmes discreetly helped Langdale to knowledge, and on occasion was helped in turn.

What a delicious description. Obviously Pike is one of the many agents Holmes employed later in his career, and, despite Watson's obvious distaste, could have been a fascinating character to meet. It also would have been nice to hear his stories about Douglas and Isadora first hand, and not have Holmes pull them out as a surprise reveal many (many) pages later.

Some commentators have said that "Langdale Pike" is such an obviously false name, that it somehow proves that this story was not canonical. Please...many a gossip columnist--not to mention dealers in secret information--have used pseudonyms.

**After the break-in, we meet "a bustling, rubicund inspector, who greeted Holmes as an old friend."

This is the only case where Doyle doesn't name the inspector. Who is it? Why not name him? Why not use Lestrade or one of the old stand-bys?

Perhaps since the inspector is portrayed as a racist and a bigger than usual dolt, Doyle didn't wish to sully Gregson et. al. with this character...

**Unnamed inspector is incompetent, and pompous about being incompetent!

Mary: “There was one sheet of paper which I may have torn from the man that I grasped. It was lying all crumpled on the floor. It is in my son's handwriting."

"Which means that it is not of much use," said the inspector. "Now if it had been in the burglar's --"

"Exactly," said Holmes. "What rugged common sense! None the less, I should be curious to see it."

The inspector drew a folded sheet of foolscap from his pocketbook. "I never pass anything, however trifling," said he with some pomposity. "That is my advice to you, Mr. Holmes. In twenty-five years' experience I have learned my lesson. There is always the chance of fingermarks or something."

Idiot.

**Douglas was certainly not destined to win any writing awards:

". . . face bled considerably from the cuts and blows, but it was nothing to the bleeding of his heart as he saw that lovely face, the face for which he had been prepared to sacrifice his very life, looking out at his agony and humiliation. She smiled -- yes, by Heaven! she smiled, like the heartless fiend she was, as he looked up at her. It was at that moment that love died and hate was born. Man must live for something. If it is not for your embrace, my lady, then it shall surely be for your undoing and my complete revenge."

It must have been fun for Sir Arthur to deliberately write so badly...

**This is the 3rd time in Case-Book when a woman of Latin American origin has played a substantial role in the story, having married a wealthy American or European and come home with him. I wonder what was going on in Sir Arthur's life that brought that about...

**That being said, Doyle does tell us that Isadora "is pure Spanish," and "her people have been leaders in Pernambuco for generations." But Pernambuco is in Brazil, which was under Dutch and then Portuguese control!! It's not impossible a Spanish family could have lived there, of course...

**Holmes describes Klein as "the richest as well as the most lovely widow upon earth." Wow. I'm not sure how extensive his research on that esoteric topic is, though.

Meanwhile, Watson may not be 100% in agreement, at least on the beauty part, as he noes "The lady had come, I felt, to that time of life when even the proudest beauty finds the half light more welcome."

As to the "wealthiest" part? The reason Isadora rejected Douglas' pleas for marriage was that he was "a penniless commoner." And nothing was more important to her then "her life's ambition" to marry a young duke, so it was "imperative" to avoid scandal. Money, and perhaps royal title, were still of great importance to her, no matter how wealthy she may have been.

**Quite a humourous bit from Watson:

A machine-like footman took up our cards and returned with word that the lady was not at home.

"Then we shall wait until she is," said Holmes cheerfully.

The machine broke down.

"Not at home means not at home to you," said the footman.

Ha ha!

**Holmes: "Surely no man would take up my profession if it were not that danger attracts him." And, by hiring goons to warn him away, Isadora "forced me to examine the case of young Maberley."

Yet another reason pursuing some alternate, easier plans for obtaining the manuscript might have been in order...

**Kudos to Isadora for being bright enough to burn the manuscript immediately, unlike many another mysteries where the criminal keeps evidence around for no good reason.

**The fickle winds of fate--if Douglas hadn't died of pneumonia, he would have sent the other copy of the (awful) manuscript to the publisher from Italy, and it would have been printed. Talk about lucky...and perhaps the reason Granada chose to make Isadora's actions the (not quite believable) cause of his illness and death. Because we don't like to think of fortune favoring the wicked like that...

**Holmes: "I am not the law, but I represent justice so far as my feeble powers go."

Well, this is no murderer he is freeing in this case. Yes, she is a fairly nasty "belle dame sans merci," ruthless and cruel...but that is hardly a crime. The actual crime, burglary and assault, are not nothing, but no one was seriously hurt. And Mrs. Maberley wasn't even aware of what was lost, and wasn't hurt substantially by its taking.

Still, it was a crime, and as Holmes notes, Mrs. Klein does like to play with "edged tools," so more incidents were not unlikely in the future.

So, a tough call on the feeble powers of justice here. Certainly Mrs. Maberley wouldn't have been too happy with a lurid scandal involving her dead son, either. And she does get to travel around the world the substantial check from Klein, AND she gets to keep her house and furniture! And perhaps becoming a Duchess will encourage Klein to end her questionable associations and illegal activities. So, justice?!?

**I would have loved a scene where Sherlock hands a big check to Mrs. Maberley, and tells her to go on a world cruise, but can't tell it who it's from or what it's about, or explain the mysteries of the offer to buy the house, or the break-in. Is it justice to keep your client in the dark...?
