The Bilge Pump

Vol. 13, No. 03 March, 2025

The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star

founded November, 1970

PLEASE NOTE: April 06, 2025 Meeting NOTICE

We will be conducting our next monthly meeting virtually on **March 06** 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 Veiled Lodger".

Bob Katz, BSI, ASH, will lead the discussion on the story of "The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger".

Our special guest speaker will be Beth Gallego, BSI.

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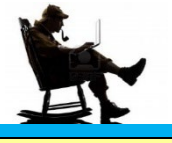

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You can follow us on Twitter at: @barquelonestar

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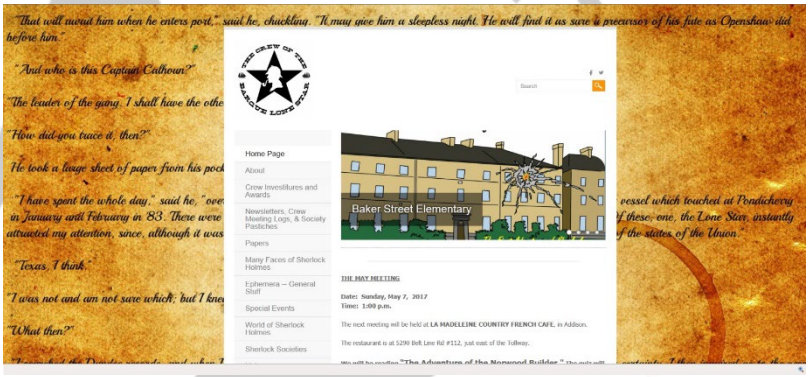

Our Facebook Page:

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

MARCH 02 SUMMARY

There were **68** in attendance at this ZOOM meeting.

The meeting was begun with an opening toast by **Bruce Aikin**, on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. (see page 4).

We the had a quiz on today's story, "The Retired Colourman."

Bob Katz then led a discussion on the story, "The Retired Colourman."

We had several announcements this month, including the following:

We recognized the passing of Herb Linder, one of our wonderful members of the Crew. Cindy Brown will conduct a more thorough *Stand on the Terrace* for Herb in April.

Mr. Holmes Neighborhood is on sale now by Barnes and Noble, as are the previous eight publications by the Crew of the Barque Lone Star. Thanks so much to Liese Sherwood-Fabre for her efforts to finalize each of our books.

The next book that the Crew will be working on will be "Rejected Holmes". The premise will be stories that were rejected by the Strand Magazine, and/or why they were rejected. It can be the rejection letter from the Strand to Watson, or the story itself.

Sandy Kozinn entertained us with a limerick related to today's story.

Rich Krisciunas educated us with his offering of Sherlock Holmes Law 101.

The featured presenter of the day was Johanna Draper Carlson, who spoke on Sherlock Holmes Comic Books in the 2000s.

Brad Keefauver gave us his version of the Sherlockian Top 10.

Shana Carter, BSI, did a reading, "An Irregular's Life" by Edgar S. Rosenberger (see page 5).

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

A TOAST TO SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

Bruce D. Aikin

In 1980, Mr. Anthony Howlett, a former President of The Sherlock Holmes Society of London, wrote the following about the writings of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle:

"In all of them... one finds unusual heroes, often the humble man against great odds; one finds historical accuracy; and overall a simple and compelling style. There is also a driving sense of justice, of personal honour and duty, and of a proud patriotism. If these virtues seem a little old-fashioned nowadays,… that is our loss: they were deep in the soul of Conan Doyle."

Arthur Conan Doyle was a true gentleman. It seems that now the qualities of a gentleman: a sense of justice, personal honour and decorum are not only old-fashioned but in real danger of extinction.

We truly need the example of Sir Arthur to help us rise above the pettiness and arrogance which invade our lives. And so, ladies and gentlemen, I propose a toast: to Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle; born 22 May, 1859; passed beyond this mortal veil on 7 July, 1930.

"Steel true, blade straight."

We really need a lot of people like him.

Anthony Howlett, "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 1859 - 1930," The Sherlock Holmes Journal, Conan Doyle Commemorative Issue, Vol. 14, Nos. 3 & 4, Summer, 1980. The Sherlock Holmes Society of London. page 76

He lost, as he'd won, by his tints,
Green paint, with purplish glints.
He thought that his art
Had made him so smart,
But Holmes picked up too many hints..

Sandy Kozinn, Deckmate

AN IRREGULAR'S LIFE…

Shana Carter, ASH

by Edgar Rosenberger

(With Apologies to Gilbert and Sullivan)

An Irregular's life is a bedlam of strife
As he tries, in a manner of speaking,
To conduct many bouts, to resolve many doubts,
And discover the truth he is seeking.

There's the problem, ah me! of 221B,
And the house where the Great Man resided.
Though we strive and we press to locate the address,
It will never, I fear, be decided.

Sherlock Holmes, it is plain, had a marvelous brain,
And a storehouse of infinite knowledge.
Yet a prime mystery still continues to be,
Where, oh where, did the man go to college?

Weare left in the cold by those tales, still untold,
That we' d welcome with joy and with gladness:
The aluminum crutch, the affairs of the Dutch,
And, of course, Colonel Warburton's madness.

Substituting for "dear" just a gibe or a sneer,
Sherlock Holmes was allergic to marriage.
Though our questions are rife on his thwarted love-life,
It is a state that we dare not disparage.

Mrs. Hudson, the cook, has a place on our book,
And we note all the facts that concern her.
What a shock to the mind, what a horror to find
That she's now, of all things, Mrs. Turner!

Sherlock Holmes, we agree, had a family tree,
And a singular, corpulent brother.
Though his grandma, he said, had been French-born and bred,
We know naught of his father or mother.

In the matter of dates, we're in difficult straits:
Good old Watson can't seem to remember.
In the year - now let's see -was it nineteen-o three?
Was it April, July or December?

There was more than one wife in the good doctor's life,
For we know of his early bereavement.
But to find out just who was his wife number two
Would indeed be a wondrous achievement.

There's the matter of names: was the doctor called James,
As his wife once so glibly addressed him?
(An announcer, I swear, shows the same lack of care.
And we all, I am certain, detest him.)

Thus, we toil, and we strive, like the bees in a hive,
In an aura of pleasant confusion.
May we never be fraught with the horrible thought
That our hero was just an illusion!

The Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society has published 9 wonderful books. Each book is chocked full of wonderful essays and pastiches by our own Society members. 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…

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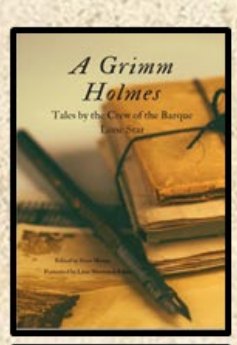
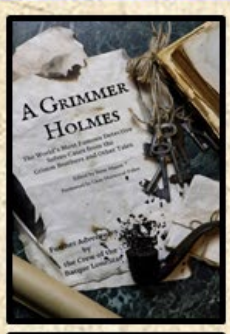
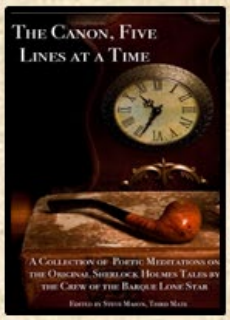
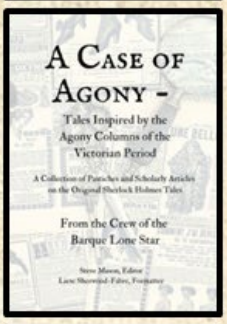
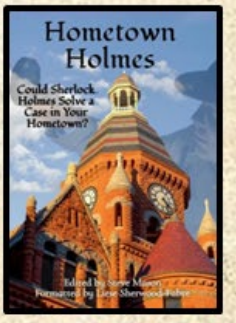
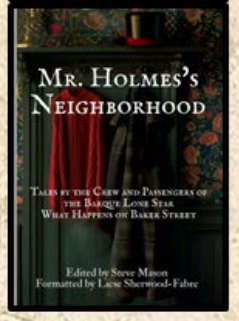












The Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society is producing our 10th book in our 55th year of existence.

Dr. Watson published 60 stories chronicling his adventures with Sherlock Holmes, most of them in the Strand Magazine. Any he mentioned many, many, unchronicled cases. But have you ever wondered, did the Strand ever reject any of the stories?

Rejected Sherlock will finally reveal those stories the Strand would not publish, for whatever reason.

1. Stories should be 3,000 – 5,000 words, which is the average length for a short story. Obviously, a shorter story is fine.
2. Your story will be edited by one or two member volunteer editors, but only for grammar, typos… we will not edit the content of your story.
3. This project is not limited to just those members in the DFW area. Any member, or true Sherlockian, is welcome to submit a pastiche.
4. We plan to finalize the anthology by the end of the calendar year, so we ask for members to submit their entry by October 1.
5. Remember this is a family book, with minors participating, when picking up a topic.
6. We ask that you not only provide the story, but the actual rejection letter from the Strand editor.

The final product will be put together in book form and posted on our website and shared with all society members as a .pdf file. We plan on publishing copies of the book as a gift for those who submit a pastiche in the anthology. The book will then be sold on Barnes & Noble, along with our other books at cost.

YELLOW FEVER

by Franklin Saksena M.D., BSI

Yellow fever is mentioned in the Canon in 2 places viz: Rodger Baskerville, who died in Central America in 1876 (HOUN), and Effie Hebron's husband, John who died in Atlanta (YELL), possibly in 1873.

Yellow fever was also called Yellow Jack because of the name of a nautical flag hoisted from ships arriving from the Caribbean that were suspected of harboring the disease (3). Even today, once a person gets yellow fever there is no cure. A brief survey of yellow fever follows.

New Orleans was a perfect breeding ground for mosquitos to spread the disease. The city is 15 ft. from the river's edge and most of the city is only about 1 foot above sea level. Thus rain, hurricanes, and groundwater seepage add to the swampy nature of the place (4). There was a serious outbreak of yellow fever in New Orleans in 1853 in which about 11,000 people died. Owen Davis's play "Jezebel," written in 1933, describes the effect of yellow fever on the population then. The play was made into a movie starring Bette Davis and Henry Fonda in 1938. At the end of the film, Preston (played by Henry Fonda) contracts the disease and is carted off to an isolation camp, as the authorities assumed that yellow fever was contagious. In 1905 a further1000 died of yellow fever in New Orleans.

The Mississippi valley cities, especially Memphis, were also hit hard by yellow fever in 1878 in which 20,000 people died (3). Attempts in 1879 by De Lesseps (who built the Suez Canal) to build the Panama Canal failed because of an outbreak of yellow fever that decimated the workers (6). In the Spanish-American war of 1898, the US lost <1000 in battle and 5000 from diseases in Cuba (mostly yellow fever) (1).

It was initially believed that yellow fever was caused by poisons in the air, and concerted effects were made to segregate and quarantine the victims. None of these approaches were successful in eradicating the disease.

Mosquito borne disease was suggested as early as 1848 by Dr Nott (Alabama) and later verified by Dr. Carlos Finlay (Cuba) in 1881.The latter's findings were ignored until later verified by Dr Walter Reed and Gorgas in 1900. The larvae of the mosquito *Aedes aegypti* were able to thrive in water barrels in ships that were transporting slaves from Africa to the Americas.

Some of the slaves, infected with yellow fever, would be bitten by the mosquito, which then bit an uninfected person, thus spreading the disease. In this way the yellow fever virus and mosquito spread to the East coast of the U.S.A. (New Orleans, Boston, Philadelphia New York) and to South America (Rio de Janeiro) (1,2).

The symptoms of yellow fever are first: fever, abdominal pain and severe myalgias. Later there is severe GI bleeding, jaundice, coma, and death. Mortality can be 20-50% (6).

Dr. Gorgas improved local sanitation and was thus able to gradually eradicate the mosquito breeding grounds. This paved the way for successful completion of the Panama Canal (2). Other preventative measures included adding larvicides and larva eating fish to water storage containers, protective netting, and the wearing of clothing impregnated with an insect repellant such as permethrin (6).

A vaccine against yellow fever was developed in 1937 by Max Thuler, which netted him the Nobel Prize. It is an attenuated live virus vaccine which can have some serious, if rare, side effects (3). In 2006 WHO vaccinated 105 million people in Africa (6). However, the disease is still prevalent in Africa (130,00 severe cases had been reported in Africa in 2013) (6).

Aedes aegypti can also transmit Dengue, Zika and Chikungunya (5). There has been a recent rise in yellow fever (3) in Venezuela and Brazil. There has been a shortage of the yellow fever vaccine, so fractional doses had to be used in Brazil, providing immunity for about 1 year.

There has been a small outbreak of viral infections caused by *Aedes aegypti* in Texas and Florida (Dengue, Zika), so there is concern that yellow fever may rear its ugly head again in a population that is mostly unvaccinated against the disease (3). The authors point out that there are no vaccine doses in the National Stockpile. The rise in the number of anti-vaccine activists during the Covid 19 pandemic could also interfere with preventive measures (3).

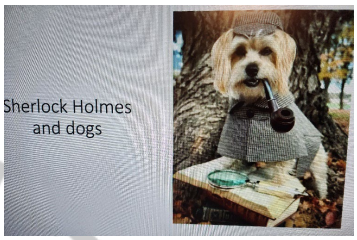
References

1. Brink S *Yellow Fever Timeline: The History of a Highly Misunderstood Disease*, 2016 https.///www.npr.org>sections>goatsandsoda
2. Harcourt-Smith S "Yellow Jack, Caribbean fever." *History Today* 1973; 23:618-624
3. Hotez PJ, La Beauch AD "Yellow Jack's potential return to the American South," *New Engl J Med* 2023; 389:1445-7
4. Olivarius K .Necropolis: Disease, *Power and Capitalism in the Cotton Kingdom*, Harvard University Press 2022, As quoted by K. Wulf, Smithsonian 2022-04-19
5. WHO fact sheet on vector-borne disease, 2024 https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/vector-borne-diseases
6. *Wikipedia*. "Yellow fever 2025" http://en.wikipedia.org>wiki>yellowfever

THE DOGS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

By Phil Angelo

"A dog reflects the family life. Whoever saw a frisky dog in a gloomy family, or a sad dog in a happy one? Snarling people have snarling dogs, dangerous people have dangerous ones."

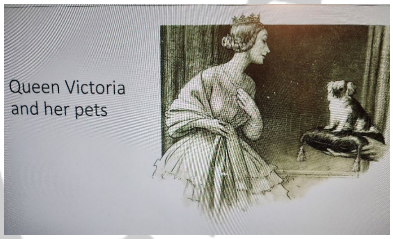


Sherlock Holmes gives that assessment of dog-owner relations in "The Creeping Man," one of the stories in "The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes."

The dog, Roy, played a key role in the case. Holmes reasoned that if the dog, a Wolfhound, was suspicious of his master, well, something must be wrong. If the dog was suspicious, so was Sherlock. In the story, too, Holmes rattles on that he was considering writing a monograph of the usefulness of dogs in detecting crime. Well, dogs do certainly that, by sniffing around and by ratting out their masters in the canon.

But the summary at the top is one of the few instances where Holmes and, thus, Doyle, got things completely and utterly wrong. There are folks who are pretty lousy humans, but utterly devoted to dogs. There are also good people who are pretty lousy dog owners. An example. Joe Biden has a reputation as a considerate and thoughtful individual. His White House dog was a disaster. Biden's official dog, Commander, administered 25 different bites. An equal opportunity biter, Commander wounded Secret Service agents not only in the White House, but also in Delaware, Maryland and Massachusetts. Commander was eventually re-homed.

Biden is not the only president with questionable pet activities. Lyndon Johnson got in a world of trouble by lifting his dogs up by the ears. In case you are wondering about the history of presidential dogs, well, presidential pets have not always been dogs. Lincoln had two goats and a pig. Calvin Coolidge had a donkey named Ebeneezer. Teddy Roosevelt had more than two dozen animals in the White House including an owl, a lion and a rooster.

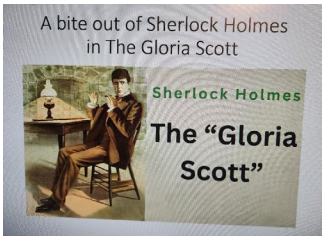


Back to England. The number of dogs in the canon is in keeping with the Victorian upper-class lifestyle. Queen Victoria herself was a noted dog-lover. She had, over her long lifetime at least 10 dogs. The total included: Fatima, a pug; Dash, a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel; Hector, a deerhound; and collies, Noble and Sharp.

There were also two greyhounds, Nero; and Eos. Eos had been brought over from Germany by Prince Albert. There were two Skye Terriers: Dandie; and Islay, who lost a fatal fight with a cat. Her two Pomeranians were Marco; and Turi, who rested with her on her deathbed.

But her best known dog was Looty. Looty was a Pekingese in the Imperial Chinese Court. Looty was brought back to England, a war trophy after the British won the Second Opium War. Looty's Chinese owner had committed suicide rather than face the disgrace of losing the war to the English.

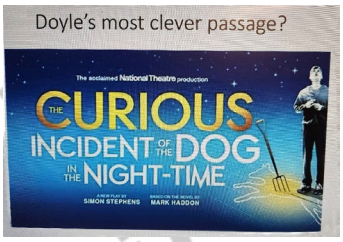
So, it is no surprise that there is a dog right at the start of the canon, when Holmes and Watson are sizing each other up in "A Study in Scarlet," Watson says he "keeps a bullpup." Now the dog never appears again in any of the succeeding novels or short stories. There seem to be two explanations. Bullpup has two possible explanations in slang. One is a firearm. The other is to have a quick temper. I frankly don't believe either of those possibilities. Make up your own mind. The same story sees Holmes euthanize a dog. Sherlock has recovered two pills and he thinks these poison pills are one of the keys to the case. He tests his theory on an ailing terrier. The first pill does nothing, which surprised Holmes. He then reasons that one pill was inert while the other must be fatal. That's the merciful end of the dog.



A dog also was critical in Sherlock's first chronological case. In "The Adventure of the Gloria Scott," Holmes was bitten by a Bull Terrier. The master was laid up for 10 days. Victor Trevor kept checking up on Sherlock, creating a rare friendship for Holmes and ultimately leading to that initial case. Does the entire canon hinge, then, on one dogbite?

Most pooches in the canon seem to serve one of four purposes. There are bloodhounds, or dogs following a scent on the trail. There are abused animals. There are guard dogs, some of them quite vicious. Then, there are dogs who serve a plot device, by observing or not observing. How often did Sherlock admonish Watson — you see but you do not observe. Well, the pooches certainly do observe.

Dogs that are clues

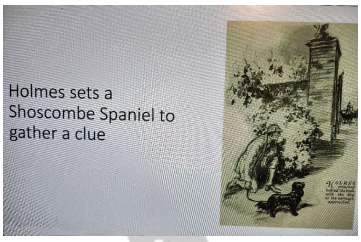


This designation certainly would be appropriate for Roy, the dog we described at the beginning of this essay. Then there is the absolutely clever passage in "Silver Blaze" from "The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes."

Inspector Gregory of Scotland Yard asks: "Is there any other point to which you would wish to draw my attention?"

Holmes responds, "To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time."

"The dog did nothing in the night-time."



"That was the curious incident."

What this means, of course, is that the suspect who made off with Silver Blaze must have been someone who was familiar to the dog. The same type of incident takes place, in reverse, in "The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place." Lady Beatrice Falder raises her beloved Shoscombe Spaniels. Holmes steers one toward a woman who is disguised as Beatrice. The dog first expresses happiness and affection, but as he nears the imposter, he growls and snaps.

Holmes explains.

There is also a dog clue in "The Lion's Mane." Holmes develops an interest in the case when he hears that McPherson's dog, an Airedale Terrier, has died "of grief for its master." That the dog should die was after the beautiful, faithful nature of dogs," Holmes explains.

But the death on the beach was suspicious. Why should a beach be fatal? Holmes reasoned. It turned out the dog had been killed in the same way its master had met his fate.

There are two Carlos in the canon. One yields an important clue in "The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire. This Carlo has its tail on the ground and has trouble walking. The mistaken veterinary diagnosis was spinal meningitis, but his real problem was the curare that Jack Ferguson tried out on him.

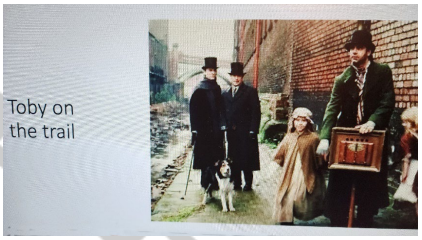
Animal abuse

Sir Eustace Brackenstall comes across as evil in "The Adventure of the Abbey Grange" because he had one drenched his wife's dog in petroleum and set it afire.

In “The Adventure of The Lion’s Mane, Ian Murdoch picks up a little dog belonging to McPherson and hurls it through a plate glass window.

Draghounds on the trail

“I would rather have Toby’s help than that of the whole detective force of London,” says Holmes in “The Sign of Four.”



Holmes dispatches Watson to fetch the sleuth-hound from Old Sherman of Lambeth. Sherman is not amused at first and threatens to drop a “wiper,” on top of Watson’s head. Watson eventually corrals the dog, who leads a merry chase. Toby is thrown off the scent when a passing cart picks up some creosote. Toby winds up perched atop a barrel of creosote.

Off on the smell again, Toby eventually winds up at the waterfront. So Toby did not find the culprits, but he did advance the case. That is also the case with Pompey in “The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter.” Pompey is a squat, lop-eared white-and-tan dog, a supposed mix between a beagle and a foxhound. Pompey is put on the trail of the carriage of Dr. Leslie Armstrong.

Holmes had squirted the wheel of the brougham with aniseed. Pompey succeeded and would have followed the trail to the end of Scotland, according to the canon.

Guard dogs

There is another Carlo in “The Adventure of the Copper Beeches.” This Carlo is a mastiff confined by Toller. The dog was kept hungry. The villain Rucastle attempts to sic the dog on others, but the dog turns on Rucastle, mauling him. Watson has to shoot it.

The Cunninghams in “The Reigate Puzzle” keep a dog. It might have helped guard the property, but it was chained up and serves little purpose in the case.

Charles Augustus Milverton has a brute of a guard dog, but a housemaid keeps it locked up to give Holmes free run of the property.

The Hound of the Baskervilles

Adrian Conan Doyle once wrote that the most dramatic words ever penned by his father were, “I am Birdy Edwards,” when the undercover agent reveals himself to the Scowrers. But this passage is surely in contention for that honor.

“… one false statement was made by Barrrymore at the inquest. He said there were no traces upon the ground around the body. He did not observe any. But I did — some distance off, but fresh and clear.”

“Footprints.”

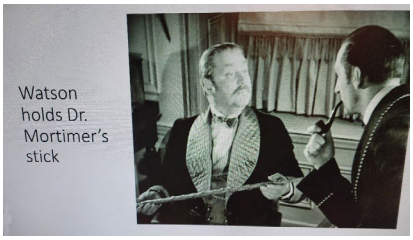
‘Footprints.’

‘A man’s or a woman’s?’

Dr. Mortimer looked strangely at us for an instant, and his voice sank almost to a whisper as he answered:

‘Mr. Holmes, they were the footprints of a gigantic hound!’

The entire case, though, begins with a different dog. Dr. James Mortimer has left his walking stick behind at 221b. Holmes and Watson ponder the stick and come up with a series of deductions. This is similar to passages about Watson's brother's watch or Henry Baker's hat.



Chew marks on the stick lead to the obvious conclusion that Mortimer has a dog. Larger than a terrier, smaller than a mastiff, it turns out to be a curly-haired spaniel.

But the dog we are all waiting for is the hound. It shows up when Mortimer reads the manuscript detailing the curse of the Baskervilles. The hound that stands over the fatal body of Sir Hugo Baskerville is "a foul thing, a great, lack beast, shaped like a hound, yet larger than any hound that ever mortal eye has rested upon." It is said to have blazing eyes and dripping jaws.

The story of the hound appears to have been aided by tales told by Doyle's friend Bertram Fletcher Robinson and by the legend of Black Shuck, an English ghost story by on a wandering apparition of a dog.

Fast forward to the scene of the Victorian mystery and we have a dog corralled by Stapleton and used for murder. The dog frightens one Baskerville to death, slays the convict Selden and narrowly misses killing another. To make the dog appear even more evil, Stapleton paints it with phosphorus.

The legend of the dog, at times, is scary too. Is it the booming of a bittern or the wail of the hound? The atmosphere adds to the terror. The dog is slain by gunshot as the tale ends.

There you have it: smart dogs; guard dogs; dogs that are victims and dogs that are an arm of the law. These are the dogs of Sherlock Holmes.

So thoroughly are dogs woven into the canon, that Watson even describes Holmes as a canine himself. Here is a passage from "A Study in Scarlet." This defines Holmes early in the series.

Watson writes: "As I watched him, I was irresistibly reminded of a pure-blooded, well-trained foxhound, as it dashes backward and forward through to covert, whining in its eagerness, until it comes across the lost scent."

And as Holmes says himself, "Dogs don't make mistakes."

A MORE COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT 'THE RETIRED COLOURMAN'

1. Summary (Diogenes Club)

Watson is not living at Baker St.

Mrs. Merilew visits Holmes at Eugenia's request.

Eugenia has been a lodger at Mrs. Merrilew's for seven years; her face is horribly mutilated and she wears a heavy veil. She feels she is near death and wants to tell the facts of her husband's murder to someone who will understand. Holmes had investigated this murder at the request of Edmunds but could not solve it.

Holmes and Watson visit Eugenia who tells them the following story.

Rounder had a circus. Eugenia married him in a weak moment. He was a huge man and a terrible bully who beat his wife savagely. All pitied her. She fell in love with Leonardo and the two of them planned her husband's murder.

Leonardo fashioned a club shaped like a lion's claw. When Rounder and Eugenia went to feed the lion in the evening as was their custom, Leonardo hit Rounder in the back of the head, crushing his skull and leaving the mark of a lion. Eugenia turned the lion loose, planning to give the impression it had escaped. Since she did tricks in the show with the lion every night, she did not fear it. But the lion smelled fresh human blood which enraged it and when it was released, it turned on Eugenia and mauled her face. Leonardo could have prevented her mauling but he fled in panic and was never seen again.

She had not spoken out sooner because she did not wish to involve Leonardo, but she read of his death in the paper (he drowned) and wanted to tell the facts to clear her conscience.

She planned to suicide, but Holmes talked her out of it and she sent him via post the bottle of prussic acid she had planned to consume.

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2. Story Info Sheet (McMurdo's Camp)

- First published in:
  Liberty, January 22, 1927; *The Strand Magazine*, February 1927

- Time frame of story (known/surmised):
  Late 1896 (given) In telling this story, Watson made a slight change of name and place for discretionary purposes.

- Holmes & Watson living arrangements:
  Not explained. Watson received a hurried note from Holmes requesting his attendance.

- Opening scene:
  It appears Watson and Holmes were not living together, but that is not stated in the story. When Watson arrives after getting the hurried note, the client is seated, and talking to Holmes.

- Client:
  Mrs. Merrilow, of South Brixton an elderly, motherly woman of the buxum landlady type. She had a lodger, Eugenia Rodner, for seven years and only once had seen her face, which was kept veiled. The face was terribly mutilated. The lodger maintained her privacy. It was privacy she was after, and she was ready to pay for it.

- Crime or concern:
  Mrs. Meririlow was concerned for the health of her lodger, who seemed to be wasting away. There appeared to be something terrible on her mind. She cried "'Murder!" and "You cruel beast! You monster!" It was in the night, and it fair rang through the house and sent the shivers through Mrs. Merrilow.

- Villain:
  Leonardo, circus strongman, acrobat, and lover of Eugenia, the veiled lodger. Eugenia, herself, with Leonardo (who had a clever and scheming brain) plotted and killed her husband.

  They killed him with a spiked club and hoped to pin the blame on their circus lion (Sahara King), but the lion turned on Eugenia and destroyed the middle part of her face. The cowardly Leonardo fled afterward, and went into hiding.

- Motive:

Eugenia and her lover wanted to get rid of the husband, who had been a despicable lout. When in his cups he was horrible, a huge bully of a man, who cursed and slashed at everyone. He was a human pig with a dreadful face, and was formidable in his bestiality. He had a vile mouth, small vicious eyes darting pure malignancy, and a heavy-jowled face. Not only that, but he often beat and whipped Eugenia.

- Logic used to solve:

Seven years previously Holmes had read of the case, and discussed it with Young Edmunds. There were some oddities that bothered both men, but nothing came of it. Edmunds was being sent to Allahabad (a historic city in northeastern India).

At the time of the later consultation, there was nothing to solve. Eugenia had heard of the accidental death of Leonardo, and asked her landlady to summon Holmes. Eugenia stated she was sick of her life and was dying. Holmes correctly perceived that she was, in fact, contemplating suicide, and talked her out of it.

- Policemen:

Young Edmunds, thin and yellow-haired, of the Berkshire Constabulary. A smart lad.

- Holmes' fees:

No mention, although Eugenia told Holmes she had plenty of money.

- Transport:

Holmes & Watson took a hansom to the client's humble but retired abode.

- Food:

Before setting off to see the veiled lodger, Holmes & Watson ate some cold partridge.

- Drink:

With the cold partridge, Holmes & Watson shared a bottle of Montrachet to renew their energies. (Note: Montrachet is a Grand Cru white Burgundy, considered one of the best white wines in the world. Prices in 2010 would run $50.00 U.S. per bottle, and up. Way up, for the really good stuff.)

- Vices:

The client did not object to tobacco, so Holmes told Watson, it was OK to indulge his filthy habits. Oddly, Holmes himself did not smoke in this story.

- Other cases mentioned:

The story concerning the politician, the lighthouse, and the trained cormorant. "You know who you are."

- Notable Quotables:

Holmes was in practice for twenty-three years, and during seventeen of these I was allowed to cooperate with him and keep notes. – Watson

"Poor girl! Poor girl! The ways of fate are indeed hard to understand. If there is not some compensation hereafter, then the world is a cruel jest." – Holmes, to Eugenia.

"Your life is not your own. Keep your hands off it." – Holmes

"What use is it to anyone?" – Eugenia.

"How can you tell? The example of patient suffering is in itself the most precious of all lessons to an impatient world." – Holmes

- Other interestings:

When Holmes & Watson interviewed Eugenia in her room, she described herself as a poor wounded beast that has crawled into its hole to die.

The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger is the shortest of the 56 Sherlock Holmes short stories, at 4499 words. The longest, with 12701 words, is The Naval Treaty.

- When all was said and done:

Right after the crime, Eugenia covered for her lover despite his cowardice. Years later he drowned when bathing near Margate, and Eugenia decided to clear her conscience before passing away. Holmes was sympathetic to her. Eugenia sent him her temptation, a bottle of prussic acid (poison) by post. The brave woman had followed his advice, and had chosen life.

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

- # 59 of the 60 stories
  First published in *The Strand Magazine*, February, 1927 In the *US Liberty* Magazine, January 22, 1927
  Part of *The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes* collection by John Murray, London, 1927
  George D. Doran, New York, 1927
  British illustrator – Frank Wiles

- Chronology
  Baring-Gould places the dating of the story as Oct, 1896 (one day only) making it 39th of the 60. This means that Holmes is 42 and Watson 43.

- Christopher Morley Says
  "There is also a lion's mane in this story, but quite different from the preceding one. A landlady comes to consult Holmes about her lodger, Mrs. Ronder, who has only allowed her face to be seen once in seven years. When the milkman saw her in the window he was so startled he dropped his milk. Holmes fortified himself for the meeting by one of his favorite meals (cold partridge and white wine) but even so he was shocked by the tragedy of Ronder's Circus."

- Dummies Short Summary
  "When summoned by a landlady to check out a mysterious tenant who never shows her face, Holmes finds himself in the role of a confessor instead of a detective. The Veiled Lodger is one of the most tragic tales in the canon.

- How Many Words
  The shortest story is VEIL. At 4,499 words it has the 1st most words (#1 is VEIL – 4,499, #56 if NAVL – 12,701)

- Classifying This Case
  This case is one of 23 classified as a MURDER where the perpetrator was either killed, arrested, or otherwise satisfactorily handled. And one of 4 where Holmes let the perpetrator go free. The others were ABBE, BOSC, and DEVI.

- The Best Of Sherlock Holmes
  This one is rarely above the bottom 5 on everyone's list.
  • 1927 – Arthur Conan Doyle did not have it on his list of 12 favorites.
  • 1959 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it 59th of their favorites.
  • 1999 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted 56th of the 56 short stories.
  • 1999 – The Sherlock Holmes Society of London voted it 56th of the 56 short stories.

- What Else Happened That Year (1898)
  - Jameson Raid in South Africa; British negotiations with Boers (to 1899) fail.
  - • Start of Kitchener's campaign against the Madhi in the Sudan (1896 - 99).
  - • Widespread famine in India, to 1897.
  - • National Portrait Gallery moves to present site in Trafalgar Square.
  - • First all-steel English building erected at West Hartlepool.
  - • Locomotives Act: repeal of "Red Flag" restriction; maximum speed raised to 14 mph.
  - • Royal Victorian Order founded as Personal Order of Sovereign.
  - • First modern Olympic Games are held at Athens.
  - • Utah admitted as state in the U.S.
  - • France annexes Madagascar.
  - • French Tunisian protectorate recognized by Italy.
  - 3 | P a g e T h e A d v e n t u r e o f t h e V e i l e d L o d g e r

- • Italians are defeated by Menelek of Abyssinia at Adowa, resulting in Treaty of Addis-Ababa and end of Italian protectorate.
- • Massacre of Armenians by Kurds and Circassians supported by the Sultan.
- • Insurrection in Crete against Turkish rule.
- • Beginning of the Klondike Gold Rush.
- • First public film exhibition, in U.S.
- • Wells publishes Island of Dr. Moreau.
- • Giacomo Puccini debuts La Boheme at Turin.
- • Antoine Henri Becquerel, observes radiation from uranium affects photographic plates; discovery of radioactivity.
- • Nobel Prizes started, for physics, physiology or medicine, chemistry, literature, furtherance of the cause of peace.
- • Guglielmo Marconi demonstrates on Salisbury Plain the practicability of wireless telegraphy.
- • Samuel Langley (U.S.), successfully flies a steam-driven model aircraft.

- Holmes And Watson – Personal Information
  The master and his Boswell can be found at Baker Street in this tale.

- Dramatis Personae
  • Mrs. Eugenia Rounder, the veiled lodger.
  • Mr. Rounder, deceased. Husband of Eugenia. Circus owner.
  • Wombwell, a rival circus owner.
  • Sanger, another rival circus owner.
  • Leonardo, strongman, acrobat and lover of Eugenia.
  • Griggs, the clown. Friend of Eugenia.
  • Sahara King, a magnificent lion owned by the Rounders.
  • Mrs. Merrilew, Eugenia's landlady.
  • Young Edmunds investigated the death of Mr. Rounder

- Unrecorded Cases
  Sherlockians are greatly intrigued by this title but little about the story.
  • The politician, the lighthouse, and the trained cormorant

- Sherlock Holmes On The Big And The Little Screen
  This story in on the very short list of never done by anyone on any screen.

- Fainting In The Canon
  In this tale Eugenia Ronder faints

- Weapons
  - Five-Pronged Club - Used by Leonardo, the circus strong man, to murder Ronder, the lion keeper and the head of his wild beast show.
  - Poles - Which some of the circus hands used to corner "Sahara King" and escaped lion which mauled Mrs. Ronder.
  - Prussic Acid - Which Eugenia Ronder contemplated committing suicide with.
  - Riding Whip - Which Ronder used to flog his wife.

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4. Case Inquiries (Alexander E. Braun)

"The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger" was first published in Liberty Magazine on January 22, 1927. It appeared in *The Strand Magazine*, on February 1927. It is part of *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes*.

As may be observed on the table, overwhelmingly, our Canon chronologists state that this case took place in 1896. That being so, then at the time Sherlock Holmes was 42 years old and Doctor John H. Watson 44.

- Main Characters:
  Eugenia Ronder, former circus performer.
  Mr. Ronder, Eugenia's late husband, a circus showman.
  Leonardo, circus strongman, Eugenia's dead lover.
  Mrs. Merrilow, Eugenia's landlady, who goes to Holmes on her behalf.

- Notable Quotes:

"When one considers that Mr. Sherlock Holmes was in active practice for twenty-three years, and that during seventeen of these I was allowed to cooperate with him and to keep notes of his doings, it will be clear that I have a mass of material at my command. The problem has always been not to find but to choose. There is the long row of year-books which fill a shelf, and there are the dispatch-cases filled with documents, a perfect quarry for the student not only of crime but of the social and official scandals of the late Victorian era. Concerning these latter, I may say that the writers of agonized letters, who beg that the honour of their families or the reputation of famous forebears may not be touched, have nothing to fear. The discretion and high sense of professional honour which have always distinguished my friend are still at work in the choice of these memoirs, and no confidence will be abused. I deprecate, however, in the strongest way the attempts which have been made lately to get at and to destroy these papers. The source of these outrages is known, and if they are repeated I have Mr. Holmes's authority for saying that the whole story concerning the politician, the lighthouse, and the trained cormorant will be given to the public. There is at least one reader who will understand.

"The ways of fate are indeed hard to understand. If there is not some compensation hereafter, then the world is a cruel jest."

"Your life is not your own. Keep your hands off it."

"The example of patient suffering is in itself the most precious of all lessons to an impatient world."

- Text as Dynamite

Watson opens our case by informing us that there have been attempts to destroy papers that hold information about Holmes' various unpublished cases. Although the present story is somewhat lackluster because we do not get to witness any of Holmes' extraordinary abilities at play (he just listens to a story). However, it is still of considerable interest to Canon students, because it gives us yet another tantalizing hint of another of the Great Detective's 140 or so lost cases and the great importance of some of them.

It is also startling to learn that after so many years such a large part of the Great Detective's memorabilia and notes about his cases still kept its serious and delicate nature to point of being considered dangerous to some still in power.

It is nothing new about governments sealing certain papers and documents for decades if they do not outright destroy them. Today, almost a century after the ending of the Second World War, secret documents remain blocked from public scrutiny by direct orders of the late Sir Winston Churchill because they are believed to reveal Nazi plans to install the Duke of Windsor as king in the event of a successful German invasion. At Queen Victoria's instructions immediately after her death one of his daughters spent weeks reviewing a lifetime of journals, sanitizing, and destroying a considerable portion of the information they contained. Victoria herself was buried with some of that material.

By the time future archaeologists get around to excavating the graves in the ruins of Frogmore House—assuming that they will be able to decipher the language in which those journals are written—their contents will be of very little importance beyond being a curiosity. So it is not strange that our sleuth's papers kept their explosive capabilities for a number of years.

What is truly interesting, however, is that when he retired, Holmes gave Watson the custody of these potentially scandalous documents. Obviously, this is proof on the Master Sleuth's part of the unlimited confidence and trust that he had for his friend and colleague despite the fact that, as he complained in LION, he and the Good Doctor were no longer in close, regular contact. Even so, if the contents of these papers could be so potentially damaging, why would Holmes have chosen not to keep them under his direct control?

A possible explanation is that Holmes chose not to destroy them when he finally left and retired might possibly point to a sense of history. Perhaps he planned to have it all see the light of day when its contents were no longer dangerous for innocent persons—he might have been thinking in terms of the 21st century or even beyond as the time to do it. Unquestionably, the information that Watson guarded remained threateningly disastrous for some, otherwise there would have been no attempts to destroy it.

It is overwhelmingly obvious that Watson's threat to reveal details about the matter concerning the politician, the lighthouse and the trained cormorant was directed to someone still in government and still in power: "There is at least one reader who will understand."

All this leads one to at least consider a very disturbing possibility: Was the "large tin box" a casualty of the government and not the Blitz?"

- Eugenia's Intentions

It would have been interesting to know a little more about Ronder; at least enough to understand what propelled her to bring Holmes into her life.

From what we are told she said, it was a matter of conscience—she wanted the world to know what had really happened so many years ago. She claimed as her reason a belief that she was coming to the end of her life. Why she thought this is never revealed; it could simply have been just a feeling on her part, or some physical infirmity that was slowly killing her, or simply a decision to end her own life. We just do not know.

For someone who had firmly decided to keep away from the world, it seems peculiar that she would choose Sherlock Holmes as witness to her revelation. Although it is true that, being one of Watson's many readers, she knew about him and his accomplishments and deeds she had to realize that this created a good possibility of ending her hidden, private existence. Holmes himself warned her that he was not giving any assurances—he still might consider it necessary to go to the authorities after hearing her story. However, perhaps as has been the case with so many of us, she may have come to feel as if she personally knew the Great Detective, thanks to the Good Doctor's literary output.

It is understandable why she would not wish to go to the police or think that a clergyman would be of any possible help. But if her intention was solely to make the facts of what had happened known, she could have written it all down and left it in care of a solicitor, with instructions for it to be opened by the authorities upon her death. The fact that she did not choose any of these options confirms that this was a more a matter of conscience than anything else.

Aside from the tragedy that the poor woman daily endured (based on her tale, few would disagree that Ronder deserved his fate) she still felt crushed by a guilty conscience. Therefore, when Leonardo died she decided that the time had come to unburden herself. Because she was considering suicide, she had little cause to worry about Holmes going to the authorities.

When one considers the dynamics of their meeting, it almost seems as if Eugenia wanted to do more than just unburden her conscience and confess to what she had done. She sought absolution and who better than Holmes to play the part of the father confessor.

Perhaps she had read what Holmes mused while holding a rose in NAVA:

"There is nothing in which deduction is so necessary as in religion. It can be built up as an exact science by the reasoner. Our highest assurance of the goodness of Providence seems to me to rest in the flowers. All other things, our powers our desires, our food, are all really necessary for our existence in the first instance. But this rose is an extra. Its smell and its color are an embellishment of life, not a condition of it. It is only goodness which gives extras, and so I say again that we have much to hope from the flowers."

Eugenia may have succeeded in what she hoped to get from our sleuth. Holmes not only listened to her confession, but seemed to give her an absolution of sorts: "Well, well, it is of little consequence now. The case is closed." When she drops her veil and reveals her face to our two friends, to justify how pointless her life has become and validate her wish to end it all, our sleuth admonishes her:

"Your life is not your own. Keep your hands off it."

"What use is it to anyone?"

"How can you tell? The example of patient suffering is in itself the most precious of all lessons to an impatient world."

He essentially is telling her that suffering brings with it its own redemption. He tells her that "The ways of fate are indeed hard to understand. If there is not some compensation hereafter, then the world is a cruel jest."

Regardless of the fact that this is one of the few canonical cases in which there is no criminal to be caught and no deductions or investigations are necessary to get at the truth, Sherlock Holmes shines.

Not as the exceptional mastermind, but as a sensitive and compassionate human being—we once more glimpse the exceptional Victorian gentleman that he was. Even his strong warning to Eugenia that taking her own life would be morally wrong is couched in a manner that offers her hope.

Bravo, Mr. Holmes!

What else happened in 1907:

Empire

Jameson Raid in South Africa; British negotiations with Boers (to 1899) fail.
Anglo-French treaty settles boundaries in Siam.
Kaiser's telegram to Kruger, congratulating him on the defeat of the Jameson Raid.
Matabele Revolt suppressed (1896 - 97).
Protectorate established in Sierra Leone and East Africa.
Start of Kitchener's campaign against the Madhi in the Sudan (1896 - 99).
Sudanese railway extended to Wadi Haifa.
Widespread famine in India, to 1897.

Britain

Hotel Cecil, the Strand, built.
National Portrait Gallery moves to present site in Trafalgar Square.
Beginning of period of rising prices and falling wages (until 1914).
Truck Act: regulates deductions from wages or fines for bad workmanship.
Conciliation Act: boards can settle industrial disputes if both sides are willing.
First all-steel English building erected at West Hartlepool.
Locomotives Act: repeal of "Red Flag" restriction; maximum speed raised to 14 mph.
Royal Victorian Order founded as Personal Order of Sovereign

World

First modern Olympic Games are held at Athens.
Utah admitted as state in the U.S.
France annexes Madagascar.
State visit of Tsar Nicholas to France (Paris).
Van Houten's Franchise Bill extends the Dutch franchise.
French Tunisian protectorate recognized by Italy.
Massacre of Armenians by Kurds and Circassians supported by the Sultan.
Insurrection in Crete against Turkish rule.
Italians are defeated by Menelek of Abyssinia at Adowa, resulting in Treaty of Addis-Ababa and end of Italian protectorate.
Beginning of the Klondike Gold Rush.
Foundation of Russo-Chinese Bank.
Cassini Treaty: China gives Russia the right to build a railway through Manchuria to Port Arthur.
First public film exhibition, in U.S.

Art

Wells publishes Island of Dr. Moreau.
Gilbert and Sullivan debut The Grand Duke.
Giacomo Puccini debuts La Bohème at Turin.
Toulouse-Lautrec paints Maxime Dethomas.
R. Strauss debuts Also Spracht Zararhustra.

Science and Technology

Antoine Henri Becquerel, observes radiation from uranium affects photographic plates; discovery of radioactivity.
Nobel Prizes started, for physics, physiology or medicine, chemistry, literature, furtherance of the cause of peace.
Guglielmo Marconi demonstrates on Salisbury Plain the practicability of wireless telegraphy.
Emile Achard first describes paratyphoid fever.
Samuel Langley (U.S.), successfully flies a steam-driven model aircraft.
Rehn, of Frankfort, sutures a heart wound; beginning of heart surgery.
Zeeman observes that light emitted by a substance placed in a magnetic field undergoes changes.
Earliest record of water chlorination, during typhoid outbreak in Italy.

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5. Selected Chronologies

a.	The Original Story by Arthur Conan Doyle	Summer, 1898
b.	William Baring-Gould	October, 1896
c.	H.W. Bell	Fall, 1896
d.	Roger Butters	1896
e.	Jay Finley Christ	1890
f.	Jean-Pierre Crauser	November, 1902
g.	D. Martin Dakin	October, 1896

h.	Bill Dorn	October, 1896
i.	Henry Folsom	September, 1902
j.	John Hall	1896
k.	Craig Janasek	Monday, October 28, 1896
l.	Brad Keefauver	Tuesday, September 22, 1896
m.	Toshio Suzuki	Fall, 1896
n.	June Thomson	October, 1896
o.	Ernest Bloomfield Zeisler	October, 1896

6. Canonical Queeries (Ralph Edwards, BSI)

- At what ages and in which years was Holmes active?
- Why did Holmes retire so early?
- Which six years did Watson miss?
- What did Watson do after Holmes retired?
- Where were the case records kept?
- Were family honor and famous forebears limited by social class?
- If the miscreant was known, why was the warning not given personally?
- Do any other Cases have elements as disparate as a politician, lighthouse, and trained cormorant?
- Didn't Watson usually change identification data?
- Where did Watson reside in 1896?
- Did Watson imitate Dickens with "Merrilow"?
- Does today's anti-smoking campaign have roots as far back as 1896?
- How was milk dispensed in those years?
- Is "these times" a chronic problem for landladies or an economic period?
- Can a person who is wasting away also be described as full and voluptuous?
- Does Abbas Parvas seem like an English place name?
- Was Eugenia to pay for Holmes' services?
- Is 3 p.m. considered early afternoon?
- When do lions roar?
- Would a lion's paw crack a skull?
- How do felines attack their prey?
- What had Allahabad to do with this case?
- Is Montrachet appropriate for a pick-up lunch?
- Is the broken armchair appropriate?
- Why was the husband's photo kept?
- With raw meat available, was human killing likely?

7. 17 Steps (Brad Keefauver, BSI)

1. Forget The Tin Dispatch Box, I'll Take This Collection!

Watson writes, "There is the long row of year-books which fill a shelf, and there are the dispatch-cases filled with documents, a perfect quarry for the student not only of crime but of the social and official scandals of the late Victorian era."

Up until now we've been hearing a lot about Watson's single tin dispatch box, but now he's talking about "dispatch-cases" and a "long row of year-books" (which would, by itself, solve many a chronological problem). Whose materials were these? What made the tin dispatch box material different from this massive reference?

2. The Return Of A Pesky Politician?

"I deprecate, however, in the strongest way the attempts which have been made lately to get at and to destroy these papers. The source of these outrages is known, and if they are repeated I have Mr. Holmes's authority for saying that the whole story concerning the politician, the lighthouse, and the trained cormorant will be given to the public. There is at least one reader who will understand."

As "Veiled Lodger" appeared in January of 1927, can we use that date as a clue as to who might have been harassing Watson in 1926 regarding the long-passed lighthouse/cormorant scandal, perhaps someone whose career had just taken a turn for the better? Can we take this statement as a sign that Watson was alive and still in contact with Holmes in 1926?

3. Watson's Motives For The Writing

"But the most terrible human tragedies were often involved in those cases which brought him the fewest personal opportunities, and it is one of these which I now desire to record."

Watson has already told us that he has a massive amount of material to choose from, but he desires to record this particular story, a tale about "an example of patient suffering," as Holmes later puts it. Was Watson relating this tale due to some occurrence in his personal life, perhaps for a friend or relative (or offspring!) who now needed such a lesson? Or could this tale somehow be a message for the same person who wanted the lighthouse papers?

4. Sherlock Holmes, Non-Smoker?

"Mrs. Merrilow does not object to tobacco, Watson, if you wish to indulge your filthy habits," Holmes jibes in the beginning of this case. This seems just another of the detective's little pokes at Watson (especially given the smoke-filled room he says it in), but it makes one wonder if Sherlock Holmes actually did ever quit smoking for a time. Might Holmes have tried to give up smoking as a part of some self-betterment campaign in the 1890s? Do we have any records of smokers trying to quit from that era?

5. Two Not-So-Faithful Holmes Readers

"Well," Mrs. Merrilow says to Mrs. Ronder, "if you won't have the regulars, there is this detective man what we read about."

The two ladies have obviously been sharing the same literature in the house library -- but it's 1896, three years after "Final Problem" first saw print and seven years before "Empty House" was released. Why don't they think Holmes is dead? Would a lot of people at that time have read "Adventures" but not "Memoirs"? Or had Holmes's return finally made it into the newspapers? Mrs. Ronder tells Holmes she has followed his work for "some years." Does that make her sound like a reader of the Strand, or the book collections of the tales?

6. When Watson Meets The Buddha On The Road . . .

The good doctor writes: "So excited was he that he did not rise, but sat upon the floor like some strange Buddha, with crossed legs...

How would a Victorian Englishman like Watson have been most familiar with Buddha? Would he know much of Buddhism, or know simply of the little figurines from some Oriental decor fad?

7. And Sometimes Watson Didn't Take Notes

"You may well say so. And yet there were one or two points which worried young Edmunds, of the Berkshire Constabulary. A smart lad that! He was sent later to Allahabad. That was how I came into the matter, for he dropped in and smoked a pipe or two over it."

"A thin, yellow-haired man?"

"Exactly. I was sure you would pick up the trail presently."

Can we assume from the above exchange, as well as Holmes's words, "You were with me then," that Watson was present for the initial Abbas Parva conversation with Edmunds? Was a social evening with an investigator from the official force so commonplace that Watson didn't even bother keeping notes on such casual case discussions?

8. Sherlock Breaks For Lunch

After talking with Mrs. Merrilow and refreshing his memory of the case, Holmes says, "There is a cold partridge on the sideboard, Watson, and a bottle of Montrachet. Let us renew our energies before we make a fresh call upon them."

Would this be a commonplace lunch for the detective, or had he called upon Mrs. Hudson to do something special for Watson's visit?

9. Rich Man's Justice, 1880s Edition

Of Ronder, we learn: "Again and again he was had up for assault, and for cruelty to the beasts, but he had plenty of money and the fines were nothing to him."

Fines for cruelty to animals don't seem unusual, but for repeated assaults? Could Ronder get off easily from "murderous" drunken rages in which he badly beat people just by flashing the cash? Was tying your wife down and beating her with a riding whip so easy for a rich man to get away with?

10. And Then There's Always Leaving . . .

The nightmare that Mrs. Ronder describes as her life is a terrible one, and her love affair with the strong man was her one escape. So why didn't Mrs. Ronder and Leonardo actually escape and go look for work with another circus, as so many others from Ronder's had? Working for a travelling circus was not the most stable, stuck-in-one-place life anyway, so why not hit the road, especially with all of Ronder's tortures? Wouldn't escape be easier than murder?

11. The Manner Of The Lion's Attack

As a creature operating on pure instinct, even in the heat of the blood lust described by Mrs. Ronder, why would a lion go for a person's upper face? Mrs. Ronder's chin and mouth seem unmarked, so the throat was not Sahara King's target. Wouldn't a lion strike first with his front claws, as Eugenia and Leonardo had hoped to imitate? Why bite her head?

12. The Victimization Of Eugenia Ronder

"I never saw him or heard from him again. Perhaps I have been wrong to feel so bitterly against him."

After years of abuse from Ronder, Eugenia even blames herself for Leonardo's betrayal and faithlessness, loving the strong man even in her seclusion. Would a woman of that period had any resources other than her own strength of character for pulling out of such a downward spiral?

13. The Reach Of The Times And Its Kin

"He was drowned last month when bathing near Margate. I saw his death in the paper."

Margate is a goodly distance from London -- would every drowning at the beach there make the London papers, or was Mrs. Ronder reading some other papers? Would a strong man be enough of a celebrity to make his death more newsworthy?

14. The Sea's Last Execution

Leonardo's drowning is the last in a long line of Canonical folk who receive their just desserts from the sea itself. In fact, it almost seems like Sherlock Holmes sometimes has some mystic tie to a great sea beast who cleans up loose ends for him. Is there something symbolic in Holmes's killing of the strange sea creature of "The Lion's Mane" as the last recorded case of his private career, perhaps showing a break between Holmes and the executioner of Leonardo and John Openshaw?

15. Watson Gives Up Beautiful Women

After years of describing attractive women to us, Watson ends his run with this description of Eugenia Ronder's face, "It was horrible. No words can describe the framework of a face when the face itself is gone. Two living and beautiful brown eyes looking sadly out from that grisly ruin did but make the view more awful."

Earlier in the tale, Watson has praised Eugenia's mouth and chin as they showed under the masked portion of her face. Her eyes also seem to both be in one piece. Yet he says her face is "gone." What's left of a face when you eliminate the mouth, chin, and eyes are the nose and eyebrows -- but how does a lion bite the nose and eyebrows without doing damage to the eyes? Would as much damage have been done to Eugenia's face by infection, as the actual bite?

16. Time To Heal, And More Time To Heal

"It was six months before she was fit to give evidence," Holmes says of Mrs. Ronder's recovery. Surely her physical recovery would have been quicker than that, wouldn't it? Is he speaking of mental recovery, of was Mrs. Ronder simply putting off the questioning by drawing her convalescence out?

17. Choose Your Poison And Send It To Holmes

"Two days later, when I called upon my friend, he pointed with some pride to a small blue bottle upon his mantelpiece."

Mrs. Ronder had planned to kill herself with that small blue bottle of prussic acid. Was it the best choice for suicide in 1896? When non-suicidal people went into the store to buy a small blue bottle of prussic acid, what did they usually use it for?

8. View Halloas (Rosemary Michaud)

Those dangerous Canonical animals are on the loose again! It's only a flashback, but where was Leon Sterndale or even Sebastian Moran when somebody really needed their services? No, I don't mean that they should have shot Sahara King, who really can't be blamed for the attack on Mrs. Ronder. I was thinking that it might have been satisfying to turn the big guns onto the porcine beast Ronder and the sneaking weasel Leonardo (who deserted Eugenia Ronder after she was nearly desserted by Sahara King.) Ah well, I suppose the big game hunters were simply "un-a-veil-able" at the time. In a moment, I'll post the comments and questions to kick off this week's story of "The Veiled Lodger."

"Poor girl": Deformed, mutilated, or frightening faces occur fairly frequently in the Canon. I can think of "The Man with the Twisted Lip," "The Crooked Man," "The Hound of the Baskervilles (I mean Seldon; as far as I know the Hound was positively radiant), "The Illustrious Client," "The Blanched Soldier," and also "Wisteria Lodge," if you can judge by the constable's reaction to the that face in the window. "The Yellow Face" turned out to be a mask, but it looked scary enough before its secret was revealed. Can the Hounds think of any other frightening faces in the stories? Are there any common threads to the stories where disfigurement rears its ugly head? Was this "Phantom of the Opera" sort of thing popular in those days? (I mean writing about mutilated faces, not having them.)

Was little Jimmy Griggs in love with Mrs. Ronder?

Is a North African lion different from other types of African lions?

Mrs. Ronder was obviously very troubled in mind, but was she actually "wasting away," or was this merely an exaggeration on the part of the kindly and full-figured landlady?

I find Holmes's sympathy towards Mrs. Ronder to be quite touching, and all the more so because it is so unexpected from Holmes. I have always imagined that Holmes originally came to see the lady merely because he wanted his curiosity satisfied, and that he himself was surprised at the effect her story had upon his emotions. The question is: Why? By 1896, Holmes must have seen and heard of dozens or perhaps hundreds of tragedies and injustices. Why did Mrs. Ronder's case inspire such an unusually heartfelt response from the usually cold reasoning machine?

Notes of his doings: Watson mentioned that "The Veiled Lodger" was one of those "terrible human tragedies," rather than a detective story, but what really inspired the good doctor to include this case among his published chronicles? And while we're speaking of detection: Holmes didn't do any of it in this case. Do you think he took any money?

Is Watson's opening paragraph related in any way to the remainder of the story, or was it simply a handy place to insert some unfinished business? Aside from that warning about the politician, etc., what else might Holmes and Watson have done to protect their case files?

This is a question that comes up every time "The Veiled Lodger" is discussed, but that's because it's simply unavoidable. The internal evidence makes it clear that Watson and Holmes were not sharing rooms at the time of the story, but Watson was obviously quite nearby because that note from Holmes brought him over in time to meet Mrs. Merrilow. What explanation might there be for Watson's absence? As another line of thought, might it be possible to argue that it was Watson who was living in Baker Street and Holmes who was staying elsewhere?

Was Holmes trying to quit smoking? Was that the reason he teased Watson about "your filthy habit?" Had Watson and Holmes taken up separate residences while Holmes was going through withdrawal?

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9. Delicate Questions (Chris Redmond, BSI)

The introduction to this tale identifies it as "one of the most terrible human tragedies."

Is it a tragedy in the classical sense, involving a fall from greatness that evokes pity and terror, or is it merely a sad story?

And aren't most of Holmes's cases tragedies in the looser sense??

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10. Additional Thoughts (Steve Clarkson)

Mrs. Merrilow, a landlady, was concerned about her mysterious boarder. At night Mrs. Merrilow would hear her lodger, Eugenia Ronder, crying aloud in her sleep — terrible cries of "Murder!" and "Coward!". Mrs. Merrilow counseled Mrs. Ronder that the clergy and the police were available to remedy whatever was bothering her, but Mrs. Ronder opted to talk with Sherlock Holmes instead. Watson mentions a case involving a politician, a lighthouse, and a trained cormorant, but this case features a circus, a lion, and a strongman.

The full title of this story is The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger, but it's not really an "adventure" in the sense of the word that is most often used. It's an exercise, in hindsight, involving a crime that Holmes was unable to solve when it occurred. In that respect, the plot resembles SIXN, in which Holmes also was consulted but at the time was unable to shed light on the missing Black Pearl of the Borgias. VEIL is also another instance of Holmes "commuting a felony" by shrugging off a woman's confession of complicity in cold-blooded murder. The question boils down to this: Was Holmes justified, in this case, or any of the others, in concealing the true solution of a crime on the basis of an ethical judgment that disregards the fact that the law was broken?

VEIL is one of three stories in the Canon that have an undercurrent of adultery, the other two being CARD and RETI. In the latter cases, both the wife and her lover are slain by the aggrieved husband. The husbands in CARD and RETI, Jim Browner and Josiah Amberley, were apprehended within days and faced the penalties prescribed by law immediately. But in VEIL, the husband — a real rotter by all accounts — was murdered, and the wife and illicit lover lived on for a number of years. Eugenia Ronder was terribly disfigured but survived, and it might be said that Leonardo got off scot-free, although we don't know whether his conscience troubled him. Is there any significance in VEIL's deviation from the earlier "norm" set by CARD and RETI? Can all three of these stories, as well as ABBE (published in 1904), DEVI (1910), and HOUN (1902), be linked to Doyle's advocacy for liberalization of England's divorce laws?

Watson begins the narrative by tantalizing us with a reference to yet another unchronicled case, that of "the politician, the lighthouse, and the trained cormorant." In mentioning this case, Watson deplores attempts to obtain his or Holmes' records of it, and threatens to make the facts known to the public if any further attempts are made. "There is at least one reader who will understand," he writes. Implicit in that remark is a clue that more than one person was involved. But how could Watson be sure that the person to whom his threat was directed would actually read those words? Was that person an editor who would handle his manuscript — or a literary agent, may we imagine?

Mrs. Ronder's landlady, Mrs. Merrilow (not "Merridew of abominable memory" (EMPT) is described as "buxom," and when she exits 221B her gait is described as "waddling." To me, this implies more than "buxom;" it indicates obesity. Is this stereotypical description actually a portrait of a typical landlady of the time? Did Mrs. Hudson look like this?

Holmes was consulted by young Edmunds, of the Berkshire Constabulary, at the time of the incident but was unable to shed any light on it; although he was troubled by some inconsistencies that were not considered at the time of the inquest. Young Edmunds, he told Watson, subsequently was sent to Allahabad. Allahabad is a city in southern Uttar Pradesh, in India. Apparently, Edmunds didn't decide to go to Allahabad — he was "sent." Who might have sent him there, and why?

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11. Questions & Comments (Sonia Fetherston, BSI)

Hur-REE! Hur-REE! Hur-REE! Step right up to the Big Top for our next story, The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger. There's a clown, a strong man, and a wild animal, but watch out for the ringmaster's whip! My questions and comments for this tale:

Why did Holmes want to have a witness present during his meeting with Mrs. Ronder?

"No words can describe the framework of a face when the face itself is gone." Her chin was fine, her mouth intact, and her eyes were still "beautiful." With so much of her face unscathed, were the actual injuries really that horrible?

Of all the angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim — why was Gabriel specifically singled out for comparison to Leonardo?

How did Victorians dispose of known hazardous materials? And should Holmes and Watson take any special precautions handling and sniffing at that blue bottle?

Leonardo drowned at Margate presumably while swimming near the town's fine beach. Of interest to the Hounds, who discussed bathing cots and bathing machines a few days ago, Margate was where Benjamin Beale lived. He, of course, was the modest Quaker man who invented the bathing machine in 1753. But Margate is notable for another Sherlockian sort of reason. It was from Margate that Elizabeth Stuart embarked for the continent in 1613, after her marriage to Frederick V…the King of Bohemia!

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

Here we have another mysterious lodger with a past to hide, but this story is very different to The Red Circle even though I do keep getting them confused, writes Charlotte Anne Walters.

This is a common problem for me, getting the stories mixed-up because of the similarities between them. So many include women with violent husbands, dodgy deeds committed abroad, foreign baddies with an axe to grind, old lovers re-appearing, governesses in trouble – I mean, surely I'm not the only one who confuses the Copper Beeches with the Solitary Cyclist? But then, in fairness to Doyle, it would be almost impossible to come up with 56 stories without touching on common themes across the series.

Love, loss, the past catching up with someone, occur over and over again in most works of literature including my own – I am certainly not saying all this as a criticism, more as an explanation of why the stories can blur and merge sometimes in my mind.

Anyway, on to this particular story and there really isn't much to say. It's another one of those which can be described as a good story but not necessarily a good Holmes story. The tale itself is fine, but Holmes has very little to do with it. He gets called in because the woman, the veiled lodger, needs someone to listen to her story before she takes her own life. That's all Holmes is, just an ear. He doesn't have to investigate anything, use his fantastic powers of observation or analyse at the scene.

He just listens then shows a surprising level of sympathy and compassion and persuades the woman not to take her own life. Okay, so he does technically save a life, but not much else really.

The woman was married to a violent lion-tamer and has an affair with the circus' strong man. They devise a plan to kill the husband but it back-fires and she gets horribly injured by the lion, condemning her to a lonely life of isolation, hidden behind a veil to hide her terrible scars. She has never told anyone about the crime as her husband's death was put down as being caused by a simple lion attack. This plays on her conscience and prompts her landlady to suggest she unburden herself to Holmes.

And that's it really, wish there was more to add but I don't feel this story moves us forward in our understanding of Holmes or is anything other than a mildly diverting short story.

Can only give it 5 out of 10 I'm afraid.

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13. Observance of Trifles (Brian Keith Snell)

The James Bond short story Quantum of Solace involves Bond listening as the governor of the Bahamas relates a tale about the tragic romantic history of a couple he once knew. That's it--Bond just listens to someone else's story. No spycraft or adventure for 007 whatsoever. It's not a bad story--indeed, it's pretty good--but it's really not a James Bond story, if you know what I mean.

Which brings us to The Adventure of The Veiled Lodger.

The crux of Veiled Lodger is just Holmes sitting and listening to the tragic story of our mysterious woman. There is no mystery at all, no deductions to be had. Sherlock just hears her tale of woe, and offers her a bit of advice. He might as well have been a priest. It's a good enough story, but it's not really a Sherlock Holmes story, if you know what I mean.

Which leaves me frighteningly little to right about here.

Fortunately, the good doctor has rescued us. For, while this may not be much of a mystery, and not your standard Sherlock Holmes story, Watson provides us plenty of meat in this amazingly dense first paragraph:

When one considers that Mr. Sherlock Holmes was in active practice for twenty-three years, and that during seventeen of these I was allowed to cooperate with him and to keep notes of his doings, it will be clear that I have a mass of material at my command. The problem has always been not to find but to choose. There is the long row of year-books which fill a shelf and there are the dispatch-cases filled with documents, a perfect quarry for the student not only of crime but of the social and official scandals of the late Victorian era. Concerning these latter, I deprecate, however, in the strongest way the attempts which have been made lately to get at and to destroy these papers. The source of these outrages is known, and if they are repeated I have Mr. Holmes's authority for saying that the whole story concerning the politician, the lighthouse, and the trained cormorant will be given to the public. There is at least one reader who will understand.

Well, there are a number of juicy morsels there. What can we unpack?

Let's start with Watson's comment of the length of their partnership:

When one considers that Mr. Sherlock Holmes was in active practice for twenty-three years, and that during seventeen of these I was allowed to cooperate with him and to keep notes of his doings...

Lots of good fodder there for chronologists and players of The Great Game.

I'll leave it to others to argue about when "active practice" started, or what stories count as part of that, or what this tells us about Watson's absences and marriage(s). Do the adventures during the Interregnum count as the active practice? What about the two years he spent building up to His Last Bow? Ohm the headaches...

What is interesting to me is that, while Holmes was in "active practice" for 23 years, Watson/Doyle published stories of that practice for 41 years, or nearly twice the length of Sherlock's career!

From another angle: doesn't 23 years seem rather short for Holmes' career? At least by modern standards, one finishes college and perhaps grad school at, let's say an average of age 25. Then you work until you retire. Which for most people would mean an active practice of 35-40 years (albeit often not at the same job). Which makes Holmes' 23 years seem surprisingly small.

Still, we shouldn't necessarily judge by modern standards. Life spans were shorter then, and retirement may have come early. Doyle never gives us a clear idea of Holmes' age when we first meet him. Stamford certainly seems to think that Holmes is a student; but that doesn't necessarily tell us much, as Sherlock may have been a "professional student," staying in college for years gathering his eclectic knowledge without approaching the normal degree path. And we're certainly not clear on his age when he retired. Perhaps he didn't retire because of old age, but because of ill health, or boredom, or sufficient wealth not to have to work, or the

desire to get out of the city he spoke about in Lion's Mane. A late start to his "active practice," an early retirement, knock out 3 years for the Interregnum...you could just about argue 23 years. Still feels short, though...

As to the matter of how much material Watson has...

...it will be clear that I have a mass of material at my command. The problem has always been not to find but to choose.

There is the long row of year-books which fill a shelf and there are the dispatch-cases filled with documents, a perfect quarry for the student not only of crime but of the social and official scandals of the late Victorian era.

Given that Watson has spoken of hundreds, if not thousands, of untold cases, well, that has to be an awful lot of material there.

Of course, it's practically required for any pastiche to begin with an "editor's" introduction explaining how some of those papers came into their possession--inheritance, estate sale, hidden compartments in old homes they just purchased--thus justifying the story as "real."

The real problem with that idea is that Watson never tells us that he has completed stories just laying around--just year books and documents. In fact, several times John has told us that he has to go back and refer to his notes when Sherlock has given him permission to write up an old case. These untold cases haven't been written up yet--which puts paid to any claims to anyone claiming to have found completed manuscripts written by Watson in those newly discovered dispatch cases! At best they would have found newspaper clipping and notes. Don't be fooled!!

Still, these year-books and dispatch cases full of documents are irresistible, aren't they? As he says, they form a record of late Victorian life, of crime and scandal and society. We've already been given such a glimpse of that era through the 60 stories we have...just think how much more we could learn with access to all of Watson's files!

Alas, it was not to be:

...I may say that the writers of agonized letters, who beg that the honour of their families or the reputation of famous forebears may not be touched, have nothing to fear. The discretion and high sense of professional honour which have always distinguished my friend are still at work in the choice of these memoirs, and no confidence will be abused.

Damn you and your discretion, Watson!!

Of course, we can question how legitimate those requests for privacy are. By Victorian standards, a relative suffering from a rare disease was seen as bringing great shame upon a family. Women who had written indiscreet letter before they even met their husbands were driven to insane lengths to "protect their honour" and cover up their past, as if they were expected to have been emotional as well as physical virgins before they wed.

So by our standards, a lot of the "honour" and "reputation" used to justify covering up these tales would surely be trivial. Not only that, but now you're protecting the reputation of forebears? Come on now, John and Sherlock--surely the records of your cases are far more important that the world learning that some upper-class twit was a twit!!

But some people go beyond begging:

Concerning these latter, I deprecate, however, in the strongest way the attempts which have been made lately to get at and to destroy these papers. The source of these outrages is known, and if they are repeated I have Mr. Holmes's authority for saying that the whole story concerning the politician, the lighthouse, and the trained cormorant will be given to the public. There is at least one reader who will understand.

Whoa!! Watson is laying down some serious smack there!! Veiled threats directed at a reader! Mysterious attempts to steal Watson's papers! Allusion to an insane sounding apocryphal case!! Holy crap!! There's a whole story there, just in someone's attempts to suppress a story that Watson had no intention of telling!! Egads!!

Well, that's an awful lot to digest from one paragraph. Unfortunately, that's about it, as we now transition to Sherlock not solving a mystery or making any deductions, but just listening to a woman's confession. "But the most terrible human tragedies were often involved in those cases which brought him the fewest personal opportunities, and it is one of these which I now desire to record," Watson tells us. Quantum of solace, indeed...

OTHER TRIFLES AND OBSERVATIONS:

**Watson on this story: "In telling it, I have made a slight change of name and place, but otherwise the facts are as stated."

How many other lion attacks were there in England?? How many circus owners killed by their show beasts.

Unless you changed the species of the animal involved, it doesn't seem like it would have been too hard for Watson's interested readers to track down the "real" story, discretion be damned.

**Holmes is in high humor:

When I arrived I found [Holmes] seated in a smoke-laden atmosphere...

"Mrs. Merrilow does not object to tobacco, Watson, if you wish to indulge your filthy habits.

**Holmes: "You will understand, Mrs. Merrilow, that if I come to Mrs. Ronder I should prefer to have a witness."

Why?

**Let's build the Gothic terror:

"You say that Mrs. Ronder has been your lodger for seven years and that you have only once seen her face."

"And I wish to God I had not!" said Mrs. Merrilow. "It was, I understand, terribly mutilated."

"Well, Mr. Holmes, you would hardly say it was a face at all. That's how it looked."

**Mrs. Ronder had some money:

"Did she give references when she came?"

"No, sir, but she gave hard cash, and plenty of it. A quarter's rent right down on the table in advance and no arguing about terms. In these times a poor woman like me can't afford to turn down a chance like that."

Let's remember that a little further on, shall we...?

**More terror building:

She seems to be wasting away. And there's something terrible on her mind. 'Murder!' she cries. 'Murder!' And once I heard her: 'You cruel beast! You monster!' she cried.

**Mrs. Merrilow counseling her boarder to find some help: 'Mrs. Ronder,' I says, 'if you have anything that is troubling your soul, there's the clergy,' I says, 'and there's the police. Between them you should get some help.'

Perhaps there's something in the middle of those two options?

**When Mrs. Merrilow suggests Sherlock Holmes: 'That's the man,' says she. 'I wonder I never thought of it before.'

Perhaps because no one would think of a famous detective as a confessor where no detection was involved?

**The terrible crime scene:

Ronder lay, with the back of his head crushed in and deep claw-marks across his scalp, some ten yards from the cage, which was open. Close to the door of the cage lay Mrs. Ronder upon her back, with the creature squatting and snarling above her. It had torn her face in such a fashion that it was never thought that she could live.

**Holmes actually admiring a policeman: "...young Edmunds, of the Berkshire Constabulary. A smart lad that!"

**Mrs. Merrilow perhaps isn't the good Samaritan the beginning of the tale would have us think:

It was very clear that her chief preoccupation was lest she should lose a valuable lodger, and she implored us, before showing us up, to say and do nothing which could lead to so undesirable an end.

**Watson waxing lyrical: "From keeping beasts in a cage, the woman seemed, by some retribution of fate, to have become herself a beast in a cage."

**"She sat now in a broken armchair in the shadowy corner of the room."

What, the well-paid landlady can repair or replace a chair for her only boarder?

**Why had Ronder lied to the police? "Because the fate of someone else depended upon it. I know that he was a very worthless being, and yet I would not have his destruction upon my conscience. We had been so close -- so close!"

Not to be too indelicate, but perhaps the reason she lied is because she were a participant in a plot that successfully murdered your husband? That seems slightly less altruistic than she's trying to present it, right?

**More from Eugenia: "I could not stand the scandal and publicity which would come from a police examination. I have not long to live, but I wish to die undisturbed."

Lady...you MURDERED another human being. One would think that avoiding scandal and publicity would be the least of your concerns...as opposed to avoiding the gallows!

**Ronder: "And yet I wanted to find one man of judgment to whom I could tell my terrible story, so that when I am gone all might be understood."

Holmes is an odd choice for that role, isn't he? He's known for solving crimes, yet she's seeking absolution.

"That when I am gone" might suggest that Watson waited until her death to publish this account--which perhaps means she lived another 30 years.

**Watson still hung up on physical corruption representing spiritual corruption, and vice versa: "Ronder was a huge porcine person and that his wife was a very magnificent woman." And:

It was a dreadful face -- a human pig, or rather a human wild boar, for it was formidable in its bestiality. One could imagine that vile mouth champing and foaming in its rage, and one could conceive those small, vicious eyes darting pure malignancy as they looked forth upon the world. Ruffian, bully, beast -- it was all written on that heavy-jowled face.

It's interesting, then, that Watson didn't make the same leap to suggest that Eugenia's facial injuries were a reflection of her role as a murderess...

**"When I became a woman this man loved me, if such lust as his can be called love, and in an evil moment I became his wife."

Not sure by what she means "an evil moment," unless she means that her own "lust" caused her to say yes to his proposal...

**Eugenia on her co-conspirator: "Compared to my husband he seemed like the angel Gabriel. He pitied me and helped me, till at last our intimacy turned to love -- deep, deep, passionate love, such love as I had dreamed of but never hoped to feel."

Apparently a one-sided love, as Leonardo ran--and even after Eugenia lied for him and he was in the clear, he abandoned her...

**The moment that happens in every noir film: "Soon my lover and I understood that it could not be avoided. My husband was not fit to live. We planned that he should die."

I'm in no way defending Ronder's treatment of his wife. And the draconian divorce laws of the era limited her options.

But couldn't Eugenia and Ronder just have taken off? As two people who left a traveling circus troupe, it's hard to see that the police would have spent much time hunting for her, even if the "porcine" husband filed a complaint. And there are plenty of places--even other countries--they could have gone to live in bliss and safety.

So why not leave, instead of stooping to cold-blooded murder?

**A cunning plan:

We made a club -- Leonardo made it -- and in the leaden head he fastened five long steel nails, the points outward, with just such a spread as the lion's paw. This was to give my husband his death-blow, and yet to leave the evidence that it was the lion which we would loose who had done the deed.

It worked well enough to fool local coroners and constabulary...

**The flaw in the cunning plan:

You may have heard how quick these creatures are to scent human blood, and how it excites them. Some strange instinct had told the creature in one instant that a human being had been slain. As I slipped the bars it bounded out and was on me in an instant.

Oops.

The sad part is, that even if the lion hadn't turned on them, the poor guy likely would have been destroyed anyway, framed as a "man-killer." At least this way, he got a little of his own back.

**The "deep, deep passionate love" of her life:

Leonardo could have saved me. If he had rushed forward and struck the beast with his club he might have cowed it. But the man lost his nerve. I heard him shout in his terror, and then I saw him turn and fly.

**So what does a mauled circus widow do?

I had but one desire, Mr. Holmes, and I had enough money to gratify it. It was that I should cover myself so that my poor face should be seen by none, and that I should dwell where none whom I had ever known should find me.

**Go back to that line: "I had enough money to gratify it."

According to Eugenia herself, she started as a "poor circus girl." Now, she has "money enough" to gratify her wishes, and "plenty of hard cash" to throw at her landlady.

That's one detail that Mrs. Ronder omits from this tale--because the death of her husband was declared an accident, she inherited his money and property (and perhaps insurance money?). The murder left her well-off enough to fulfill her desires--although admittedly they might have been better desires had she not been mauled.

So there's the motive that hasn't been shared with us, and the probable reason Eugenia and Leonardo went straight to murder instead of flight as their first option: the money.

**Holmes, though, seems fooled: "Poor girl!" he said. "Poor girl! The ways of fate are indeed hard to understand. If there is not some compensation hereafter, then the world is a cruel jest."

**Again, why she didn't turn in Leonardo: "He had left me under the beast's claws, he had deserted me in my need, and yet I could not bring myself to give him to the gallows."

Damned conveniently, lying to the police also spared herself the gallows...but surely that never entered her thinking, did it?

**Of course, perhaps Holmes did figure all this out. After all, I'm not making any of this up--all is this is straight from Watson's narrative, even if he doesn't give it the interpretation I do. Surely Holmes saw the same things?

It's not the first time he has let a wife go unmolested for the death of an abusive husband. But unlike Abbey Grange, there's no plausible way that this incident can be written off as merely an "accident." Eugenia by her own words admitted to enthusiastically and successfully participating in a plan to murder her husband.

Perhaps Holmes felt the disfigurement was punishment enough. Or that enough time had passed, and no good could come of making it a police matter. Or maybe...

**Holmes, sensing that Eugenia is planning suicide:

"Your life is not your own," he said. "Keep your hands off it."

"What use is it to anyone?"

"How can you tell? The example of patient suffering is in itself the most precious of all lessons to an impatient world."

A very Catholic attitude.

But then again, we know she was no mere "patient sufferer," but ultimately the author of her own pain.

There's nothing to support this reading, and it's likely not in character, but part of me likes to think that while Holmes didn't think she any longer deserved civil punishment, he felt she should remain alive, to suffer with her guilt and bad dreams. But that's just me projecting, in all likelihood.

**Watson on her terrible injuries:

It was horrible. No words can describe the framework of a face when the face itself is gone. Two living and beautiful brown eyes looking sadly out from that grisly ruin did but make the view more awful.

**Eugenia relinquishes her poison:

"'I send you my temptation. I will follow your advice.' That was the message. I think, Watson, we can guess the name of the brave woman who sent it."

Brave woman? Please....

That also makes two stories in a row with people carrying around cyanide. How easy was that stuff to get in those days??

**I suppose you can tell that I'm not terribly sympathetic to Eugenia.

Not to minimize her torment before the killing (assuming it was real, as we only have her word for it), but my more modern sensibilities can't help but read this like a classic noir, be it Double Indemnity or Body Heat. A woman takes a lover, dupes him into killing her husband for the money, and the dumps the guy. In this case, of course, she's the one who suffers for her crime, not the dupe...but the injuries from the lion were essentially self-inflicted, a punishment for her crimes. Murder will out, even if the ******* had it coming.

Or perhaps I'm just a lot more hard-hearted than Holmes and Watson (and Doyle).
