

THE EVENING TIMES, ST. JOHN, N. B., MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1906.

MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, BY A. CONAN DOYLE.

ADVENTURE III.—A CASE OF IDENTITY

(Continued.)

A flash stole over Mrs. Sutherland's face, and she picked nervously at the fringe of her jacket. "I met him at the gentleman's ball," she said. "They used to send father tickets when he was alive, and then afterwards they remembered us, and sent them to mother. Mr. Windbank did not want us to go. He says, 'I am quite mad if I wanted to much as to join the Sunday-school treat. But this time I was set on going, and I would go for what right had he to prevent? He said the folk were not fit for us to know. When all father's friends were to be there, and he said I had nothing fit to wear, never so much as taken out of the drawer. At last, when nothing else would do, he went off to France upon the business of the firm, but we were father and I, with Mr. Hardy, who used to be our foreman, and it was there I met Mr. Homer Angel.'"

"I suppose," said Holmes, "that when Mr. Windbank came back from France he was very much annoyed at your having gone to the ball."

"Oh, well, he was very good about it. He laughed, I remember, and dismissed his children, and said there was no use denying anything to a woman, for she would have her way."

"I see. Then at the gentleman's ball you met, as I understand, a gentleman called Mr. Homer Angel?"

"Yes, sir. I met him that night, and he called next day to ask if we had him all safe, and after that we met him in his own family circle. But then, as I used to say to mother, a woman wants her own circle to begin with, and I had not got mine yet."

"But how about Mr. Homer Angel? Did he make no attempt to see you?"

"Well, father was going off to France again in a week, and Homer wrote and said that it would be safer and better not to see each other until he had gone. We could write in the meantime, and he used to write every day. I took the letters in the morning, so there was no need for father to know."

"Were you engaged to the gentleman at this time?"

"Oh yes, Mr. Holmes. We were engaged after the first walk that we took. Homer—Mr. Angel—was a cashier in an office in Leadenhall street—and—"

"What office?"

"That's the worst of it, Mr. Holmes. I don't know."

"Where did he live?"

"He slept on the premises."

"And you don't know his address?"

"No, except that it was Leadenhall street."

"Where did you address your letters?"

"To the Leadenhall street post-office, to be sent till called for. He said that if they were sent to the office he would be charged by the other clerks about having letters from a lady, so I offered to typewrite them, like he did his, but he wouldn't have this, for he said that when I wrote them they seemed to come from me, but when they were typewritten he always felt that the machine had come between them. So I wrote them just how I was of Mr. Holmes. But the little things that he would think of."

"It was not suggestive," said Holmes.

"It was long time to learn of him, and the little things that he would think of."

"He was a very nice man, Mr. Holmes. He would rather walk with me in the evening than in the daytime, for he said that he was to be conspicuous. Very retiring and gentlemanly he was. Even his voice was gentle. He had the quiet and sweet smile when he was young, he told me, and it had left him with a weak throat, and a hesitating whispering quality of speech. He was a little well-dressed, very neat and plain, but his eyes were weak, like a child's, and he wore dark glasses against the light."

"Well, and what happened when Mr. Windbank, your stepfather, returned to France?"

"Mr. Homer Angel came to the house again, and suggested that we should marry before he left. He was in a medicinal humor, and made me swear, with my hands on the testament, that whatever happened I would always be true to him. Mother said that it was quite right to make me swear, and that it was a sign of his passion. Mother was all in his favor from the first, and was even kinder to him than I was. When they talked of marrying within the week, I began to ask about father, but they told me to mind my own business, but just tell him afterwards, and mother said she would make it all right with him. I didn't quite like Mr. Holmes, I seemed to fancy that I should like him, as he was only a few years older than me, but I didn't want to go saying on the air, 'I wrote to father at Bordeaux, where the company has the French office, but the letter came back to me on the very morning of the wedding.'"

"It missed him then?"

"Yes, sir, for he had started to England just before he arrived."

"But that was unfortunate. Your wedding was arranged then for Friday. What is to be in character?"

"Yes, sir, but very quiet. It was to be at St. Saviour's near Kings Cross."

and we were to have breakfast afterwards at the St. Pancras Hotel. Homer came for us in a hansom. But as there were two of us, he put us both into it, and stepped himself into a four-wheeler, which happened to be the only other cab in the street. We got to the church first, and when the four-wheeler drove up we waited for him to step out, but he never did. The cabman said that he could not imagine what had become of him, for he had seen him get in with his own eyes. That was last Friday, Mr. Holmes, and I never have heard or heard anything since then to throw any light upon what became of him."

"It seems to me that you have been very shamefully treated," said Holmes.

"Oh no, sir. He was too good and kind to leave me so. Well, all the morning I was to be true; and that if even something quite unforeseen occurred to separate us, I was always to remember that I was pledged to him, and that he would claim his pledge sooner or later. It seemed strange talk for a wedding-morning, but what has happened since gives a meaning to it."

"Most certainly it does. Your own opinion is that, that some unforeseen catastrophe has occurred to him?"

"Yes, sir. I believe that he foresaw some danger, or else he would not have talked so. And then I think that what he foresaw happened."

"But you have no notion as to what it could have been?"

"None."

"One more question. How did you happen to take the matter?"

"I was angry, and said that I was never to speak of the matter again. And your father. Did you tell him?"

"Yes, and he seemed to think, with me, that something had happened, and that I should hear of Homer again. As he was very independent about money, and never would look at a shilling of mine. And yet, what could have happened? And why could he not write? Oh, it drives me half mad to think of it and I can't sleep a wink at night. He pulled a little handkerchief out of his waist and said, 'I shall glance into the case for you,' said Holmes, rising; and I have no doubt we shall reach some definite result. Let the weight of the matter rest on me now, and do not let your mind dwell upon it further. Above all, try to let Mr. Homer Angel vanish from your memory, as he has done from your life."

"Then you don't think I'll see him again?"

"I fear not."

"Then what has happened to him?"

"You will leave that question to my hands. I should like an accurate description of him, and any letters of his which you can spare."

"I advertised for him in last Saturday's Chronicle," said she. "Here is the slip, and there are four letters from him."

"Thank you. And your address?"

"No. 31 Lyon Place, Camberwell."

"Mr. Angel's address you never had, I understand. Where is your father's place of business?"

"The travels for Westhouse & Marbank, the great claret importers of Fenchurch street."

"Thank you. You have made your statement very clearly. You will leave the papers here, and remember the advice which I have given you. Let the whole incident be a sealed book, and do not allow it to affect your life."

"You are very kind, Mr. Holmes, but I cannot do that. I shall be true to Homer. He shall find me ready when he comes back."

For all the preposterous hat and the vacant face, there was something noble in the simple faith of our visitor, which compelled our respect. She laid her little bundle of papers upon the table, and went her way, with a promise to come again whenever she might be summoned. Sherlock Holmes sat silent for a few minutes with his finger tips still pressed together, and his legs stretched out in front of him, and his gaze directed upward to the ceiling. Then he took down from the rack the old and only clay pipe, which was to him as a counselor, and, having lit it, he leaned back in his chair, with the thick blue cloudlets beginning to form, and a look of infinite languor in his face.

"Quite an interesting study, that maid-glove and finger were stained with violet ink. She had written in a hurry, and slipped her pen too deep. It must have been this morning, or the mark would not remain clear upon the finger. All this is amusing, though rather elementary, but I must go back to business, Watson. Would you mind reading me the advertised description of Mr. Homer Angel?"

"I have the little printed slip to the left."

"Missing," it said, "on the morning of the 14th, a gentleman named Homer Angel. About 7 ft. in height, strongly built, sallow complexion, black hair, a little bald in the centre, bushy black side-whiskers and moustache, united glasses, slight infirmity of speech. Was dressed, when last seen, in black frock coat, faced with silk, black waistcoat, gold Albert chain, and gray Harris tweed trousers, with brown pattern over elastic-sided shoes. He had been seen in an office in Leadenhall street. Anybody bringing, etc., etc."

"That will do," said Holmes. "As to the letters," he continued, glancing over them, "they are very commonplace. Absolutely no clew in them to Mr. Angel, save that he writes in a cursive hand. There is one remarkable point, however, which will help to identify him. Look at the signature. Look at the bottom. There is a date, you see, but no superscription except Leadenhall street, which is rather vague. The point about the signature is

of little black jet ornaments. Her dress was brown, rather darker than coffee-colored, with a little purple plush at the neck and sleeves. Her gloves were greyish, and were worn through at the right forefinger. Her boots I didn't observe. She had small, round, hanging gold earrings, and a general air of being well-to-do, in a vulgar, comfortable, engaging way."

Sherlock Holmes clasped his hands softly together and chuckled.

"For my word, Watson, you are coming along wonderfully. You have really done very well indeed. It is true that you have missed everything of importance, but you have hit upon the method, and you have a quick eye for color. Never trust to general impressions, my boy, but concentrate yourself upon details. My first glance is always at a woman's elbows. In a man it is perhaps better first to take the knee of the trouser. As you observe, this woman had plush upon her elbows, which is a most unusual material for showing traces. The double line a little above the wrist, where the typewritten rears against the table, was beautifully defined. The spring-machine of the hand-type, leaves a similar mark, but only on the left arm, and on the side of it farthest from the thumb, instead of being right across the broadest part, as this was. I then glanced at her face, and observing the dint of a pinneer at either side of her nose, I ventured a remark upon short hair and typewriting, which seemed to surprise her."

"It surprised me."

"But surely it was very obvious. I was then much surprised and interested on glancing down to observe that, though the boots which she was wearing were not unlike each other, they were really odd ones; the one having a slightly decorated top, and the other a plain one. One was buttoned only in the two lower buttons out of five, and the other at the first, third, and fifth. Now, when you see that a young lady, otherwise neatly dressed, has come away from home with odd boots, half-buttoned, it is no great deduction to say that she came away in a hurry."

"And what else?" I asked, keenly interested, as I always was, by my friend's incisive reasoning.

"I noted, in passing, that she had written a note before leaving home, but after being fully dressed. You observed that her right glove was torn at the forefinger, but you did not apparently see that both glove and finger were stained with violet ink. She had written in a hurry, and slipped her pen too deep. It must have been this morning, or the mark would not remain clear upon the finger. All this is amusing, though rather elementary, but I must go back to business, Watson. Would you mind reading me the advertised description of Mr. Homer Angel?"

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very suggestive—in fact, we may call it conclusive."

"Of what?"

"My dear fellow, is it possible you do not see how strongly it bears upon the case?"

"I cannot say that I do, unless it were that he wished to be able to deny the signature if an action for breach of promise were instituted."

"No, that was not the point. However, I shall write two letters, which should settle the matter. One is to a firm in the city, the other is to the young lady's stepfather, Mr. Windbank, asking him whether he could meet me here at six o'clock to-morrow evening. It is just as well that we should do business with the male representative. And now, doctor, we can do nothing until the answers to those letters come, so we may put our little problem upon the shelf for the interim."

(To be continued.)

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come, so we may put our little problem upon the shelf for the interim."

(To be continued.)

THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

Little Clarence returned from a visit to a New York cousin with a slang vocabulary that proved very distressing to his father, a village clergyman. Soon after his return he was sent to the library for a certain book. On the way the title slipped his mind, but not until it had created an association of ideas.

"Top wants a book on rubbernecking," Clarence announced.

"The Rev. Mr. X wants a book on rubbernecking," gasped the librarian. "What is the title, Clarence?"

"I forgot," said Clarence, "but it is about rubbernecking," he hastened.

"He was sent home for more specific information, and returned with a piece of paper on which was written:

"Looking Backward."

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