

The Return of Sherlock Holmes

SHERLOCK HOLMES

and to have a strange rigidity about the features. When I approached, it vanished like a shadow. I saw the faintest glimmer of eyes and a mouth that was slightly illuminated. "How long is it since your wife asked you for a hundred pounds?"

The Mystery of the Yellow Face

SHERLOCK HOLMES was a man who seldom took exercise for exercise's sake. Few men were capable of greater muscular effort, and he was undoubtedly one of the finest boxers of his weight that I have ever seen; but he looked upon aimless bodily exertion as a waste of energy, and he seldom bestirred himself save where there was some professional object to be served. Then he was absolutely untiring and indefatigable. That he should have kept himself in training under such circumstances is remarkable, but his diet was usually of the sparsest and his habits were simple to the verge of austerity. Save for the occasional use of cocaine, he had no vices, and he only turned to the drug as a protest against the monotony of existence when cases were scanty and the papers uninteresting.



seen before. It's horrible to have to do it. But I've got to the end of my tether, and I must have advice."

"My dear Mr. Grant Munro," began Holmes. "I am your neighbor over yonder," said I, nodding towards my house. "I see that you have only just moved in, so I thought that if I could be of any help to you I had better say so now."

"What may you be wanting?" she asked in a Northern accent. "I am your neighbor over yonder," said I, nodding towards my house. "I see that you have only just moved in, so I thought that if I could be of any help to you I had better say so now."

"I am a married man and have been so for three years. During that time my wife and I have lived as happily as any two that ever were joined. We have not had a difference, not one, in thought or word or deed, and I have loved her as fondly and lived as happily as any two that ever were joined."

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HE HELD OUT HIS OTHER HAND TO HIS WIFE.

"I am usually an extremely sound sleeper. I have been a standing jest in the family that nothing could ever wake me during the night. And yet somehow on that particular night, whether it may have been the slight excitement produced by my little adventure or not, I was not asleep, but I slept much more lightly than usual. Half in my dreams I was dimly conscious that something was going on in the room, and gradually became aware that my wife had dressed herself and was slipping on her mantle and her bonnet."

immediately afterwards I went out for a walk, that I might think the matter out in the fresh morning air. "I went as far as the Crystal Palace, spent an hour in the grounds, and was back in Norbury by 1 o'clock. It happened that my wife took me past the cottage, and I stopped for an instant to look at the windows, and to see if I could catch a glimpse of the strange face which had looked out at me on the day before. As I stood there, I imagine my surprise, Mr. Holmes, when the door suddenly opened and my wife walked out and looked at me with a look of astonishment at the sight of her; but my emotions were nothing to those which showed themselves upon her face when she saw me. She seemed for an instant to wish to shrink back inside the house again; and then, seeing how useless all concealment must be, she came forward, with a white face and frightened eyes which belied the smile upon her lips."

determined to end the matter once and for ever. I saw my wife and the maid hurrying back along the lane, but I did not stop to speak with them. In the cottage lay the secret which was causing a shadow over my life. I wished that, come what might, it should be a secret no longer. I did not even knock when I reached it, but turned the handle and rushed into the passage. "It was all still and quiet upon the ground floor. In the kitchen a kettle was singing on the fire, and a large black cat lay coiled up in a basket; but there was no sign of the woman whom I had seen before. I ran into the other room, but it was equally deserted. There I rushed up the stairs, only to find two other rooms empty and deserted at the top. There was no one at all in the whole house. The furniture and pictures were of the most common and vulgar description, save in the one chamber at the window of which I had seen the strange face. That was comfortable and elegant, and all my suspicions rose into a fierce, bitter flame when I saw that the mantelpiece stood empty and that the chair beside my wife, which had been taken at my request only three months ago."

"What on earth for?" I asked. "Oh, you really mean it, of course you shall have the money. And you won't let me what you want it for?"

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