



BY A. CONAN DOYLE

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CHAPTER III. 'It's Just the Very Biggest Thing in the World.'

HARDLY was it shut when Mrs. Challenger darted out from the dining room. The small woman was in a furious temper. She barred her husband's way like an enraged chicken in front of a bulldog. It was evident that she had seen my exit, but had not observed my return.



'Let me down!' she wailed.

'You brute, George!' she screamed. 'You've hurt that nice young man.' He jerked backward with his thumb. 'Here he is, safe and sound behind me.' She was confused, but not unduly so. 'I am so sorry. I didn't see you.'

'I assure you, madam, that it is all right.' 'He has marked your poor face! Oh, George, what a brute you are! Nothing but scandals from one end of the week to the other. Every one hating and making fun of you. You've finished my patience. This ends it!'

any rate, than I am accustomed to associate with your profession.' All this he boomed forth like a professor addressing his class. He had swung around his revolving chair so as to face me, and he sat all puffed up like an enormous, bluff, his head laid back and his eyes half covered by supercilious lids. Now he suddenly turned himself sideways, and all I could see of him was tangled hair with a red, protruding ear. He was scratching about among the litter of papers upon his desk. He faced me presently with what looked like a very fattened sketchbook in his hand.

'I am going to talk to you about South America,' said he. 'No comments, if you please. First of all, I wish you to understand that nothing I tell you now is to be repeated in any public way unless you have my express permission. That permission will in all human probability never be given. Is that clear?'

amable but degraded race, with mental powers hardly superior to the average Londoner. I had effected some cures among them upon my way up the river and had impressed them considerably with my personality, so that I was not surprised to find myself eagerly awaited upon my return. I gathered from their signs that some one had urgent need of my medical services, and I followed the chief to one of his huts. When I entered I found that the sufferer to whose aid I had been summoned had that instant expired. He was, to my surprise, no Indian, but a white man. Indeed, I may say a very white man, for he was faxen haired and had some characteristics of an albino. He was clad in rags, was very emaciated and bore every trace of prolonged hardship. So far as I could understand the account of the natives he was a complete stranger to them and had come upon their village through the woods alone and in the last stage of exhaustion.

'The man's knapsack lay beside the couch, and I examined the contents. His name was written upon a tab with in it—Mangle White, Lake avenue, Detroit, Mich.' 'From the contents of the knapsack it was evident that this man had been an artist and poet in search of effects. There were scraps of verse. I do not profess to be a judge of such things, but they appeared to me to be singularly wanting in merit.

'I was turning away from him when I observed that something projected from the front of his ragged jacket. It was this sketchbook, which was as dilapidated there as you see it now. Indeed, I can assure you that a first folio of Shakespeare could not be treated with greater reverence than this relic has been since it came into my possession. I hand it to you now, and I ask you to take it page by page and to examine the contents.'

CHAPTER IV. Challenger's Proofs. 'WELL, what do you think of that?' cried the professor, rubbing his hands with an air of triumph. 'It is monstrous—grotesque!'

you see that the man is put in for a purpose? He couldn't really have stood in front of that brute and lived to draw it. He sketched himself in to give a scale of heights. He was, we will say, over five feet high. The tree is ten times bigger, which is what one would expect.'

'Good heavens!' I cried. 'Then you think the beast was—Why, Claring Cross station would hardly make a kenpel for such a brute!'

'I have no doubt of it at all,' said I. 'Well, that is something gained.' 'We progress, do we not? Now, will you please look at the top of that rocky pinnacle? Do you observe something there?'

'I really do not know,' said I. He opened the standard work to which he had already referred me. 'Here,' said he, pointing to the picture of an extraordinary flying monster, 'is an excellent reproduction of the dimorphodon, or pterodactyl, a flying reptile of the jurassic period. On the next page is a diagram of the mechanism of its wing. Kindly compare it with the specimen in your hand.'

tumors of a strange land were common among all the riverine tribes. It was my business to find out more.'

'I believe it is the same place as the painted picture,' said I. 'It is the same place,' the professor answered. 'I found traces of the fellow's camp. Now look at this.'

'Nothing of the sort,' said the professor severely. 'Living, as I do, in an educated and scientific atmosphere, I could not have conceived that the first principles of zoology were so little known. Is it possible that you do not know the elementary fact in comparative anatomy that the wing of a bird is really the forearm, while the wing of a bat consists of three elongated fingers with membranes between? Now, in this case the bone is certainly not the forearm, and you can see for yourself that this is a single membrane hanging upon a single bone and therefore that it cannot belong to a bat. But, if it is neither bird nor bat, what is it?'

'I really do not know,' said I. He opened the standard work to which he had already referred me. 'Here,' said he, pointing to the picture of an extraordinary flying monster, 'is an excellent reproduction of the dimorphodon, or pterodactyl, a flying reptile of the jurassic period. On the next page is a diagram of the mechanism of its wing. Kindly compare it with the specimen in your hand.'



It Represented a Long Line of Cliffs.

'But how did they come to be there?' 'I do not think that the problem is a very obscure one,' said the professor. 'There can only be one explanation. South America is, as you may have heard, a granite continent. At this single point in the interior there has been, in some far distant age, a great sudden volcanic upheaval. These cliffs, I may remark, are basaltic and therefore plutonic. An area as large perhaps as Sussex has been lifted up en bloc with all its living contents and cut off by perpendicular precipices of a hardness which defies erosion from all the rest of the continent. What is the result? Why, the ordinary laws of nature are suspended. The various checks which influence the struggle for existence in the world at large are all neutralized or altered. Creatures survive which would otherwise disappear. You will observe that both the pterodactyl and the stegosaurs are jurassic and therefore of a great age in the order of life. They have been artificially conserved by these strange accidental conditions.'

'But surely your evidence is conclusive. You have only to lay it before the proper authorities.'

'So in my simplicity I had imagined,' said the professor bitterly. 'I can only tell you that it was not so; that I was met at every turn by incredulity, born partly of stupidity and partly of jealousy.'

There is more Catarrh in this section of the country than all other diseases put together, and until the last few years was supposed to be incurable. For a great many years doctors pronounced it a local disease and prescribed local remedies, and by constantly failing to cure with local treatment, pronounced it incurable. Science has proven Catarrh to be a constitutional disease, and therefore requires constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, is the only Constitutional cure on the market. It is taken internally. It acts directly on the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. They offer one hundred dollars for any case it fails to cure. Send for circular and testimonials. Address: F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O. Sold by Druggists, Etc. Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

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Another Railroad for Alaska Is Considered

Washington, May 19.—Another government owned railroad in Alaska is being considered today by the senate territorial committee. John McKenzie of Cordova was a witness, giving information about such a project.

TO THE LADIES OF THE CHORUS Mr. Hopper introduced us at a Wednesday matinee. She was tall and she was lovely, in a grand and queenly way.

But I went at eight that evening to the theatre where they played. For I felt I'd know that face again, no matter how arrayed.

There were fifty in the chorus, each as fair as fair can be. But I looked both long and vainly for the face I'd come to see.

For the Ten Athenian suitors, those aristocratic sprigs, All dress and talk and walk alike and all wear yellow wigs.

'Is she the tenth?' I asked myself, 'or is she number three?' In every act I think that each, in turn, is surely she.

I've asked the ushers one and all, I've pumped the stage-door man; At its dim portals every night each muffled face I scan.

And when the Colonel takes them off to one-night stands out West, I know my soul will hunger with a feeling of unrest;

A distinctive characteristic of 1916 is that it is a prosperous presidential year.

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