



The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure III -- A Scandal in Bohemia

First published in:

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Time frame of story (known/surmised):

“it was on the twentieth of March, 1888” Note: It is not unusual for there to be internal contradictions in Holmes chronology. The 3-20-88 date given by Watson does not agree with his marital status in other stories.

Holmes & Watson living arrangements:

Holmes alone at 221B. Watson’s marriage had drifted Holmes & Watson away from each other.

Opening scene:

Watson on a call, passed 221B on his return, and stopped in to see Holmes. Holmes had received a note and was expecting a client. Client arrived, and gave a false name, but Holmes saw through it and knew the client was really the King.



Client:

Wilhelm Gottsreich Sigismund von Ormstein, Grand Duke of Cassel Felstein, and hereditary King of Bohemia, who was six feet six inches in height, with the chest and limbs of a Hercules and had an air of barbaric opulence.

Crime or concern:

Some 5 years previously the King was mad – insane, and committed an indiscretion with the opera singer and well known adventuress, Irene Adler. Letters and a photograph of this showing the two of them were retained by Adler. She threatened to send photo to King’s new fiancée, Clotilde Lothman von Saxe-Meningen, second daughter of the King of Scandinavia, whose family had strict principles. The photo would ruin the King.

Villain: Irene Adler, or maybe Holmes himself who takes the case and agrees to recover the photo.

Motive:

To avoid a ruinous scandal in Bohemia.

Logic used to solve:

Holmes stages an odd scene designed to create panic and trick Irene Adler into showing where the photo and letters are hidden.

Policemen:

None mentioned

Holmes’ fees:

Holmes: “Then, as to money?”

King: “You have carte blanche.”

King also gives Holmes £1000 in gold and notes up front for expenses.

Transport:

Client shows up for appointment in the Royal Brougham, pulled by a pair of beauties, worth a hundred and fifty guineas apiece.

From Adler’s residence, the groom took a cab, Irene took a neat little landau, and Holmes took a cab to the church.

Food:

Some cold beef

Drink:

A glass of beer were Holmes lunch/dinner in the late afternoon.

Vices:

Holmes taking cocaine on and off.

Holmes sent up a great blue triumphant cloud from his cigarette.

Other cases mentioned:

Holmes' summons to Odessa in the case of the Trepoff murder, his cleaning up of the singular tragedy of the Atkinson brothers at Tricomalee, and a delicate mission he had accomplished for the reigning family of Holland. STUD. The Darlington substitution scandal, and also the Arnsworth Castle business.

Notable Quotables:

"You see, but you do not observe." – Holmes

"It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. " – Holmes

"Women are naturally secretive, and they like to do their own secreting." – Holmes

She stood at the top with her superb figure outlined against the lights of the hall. – Watson, describing Adler.

"It seemed safer to wait. A little over-precipitance may ruin all." – Holmes

Other interestings:

The woman who brings Holmes' supper and is referred to by Watson as "our landlady" is named Mrs. Turner. This is puzzling because ordinarily it is Mrs. Hudson, and with Watson not residing there, she is not "our landlady", but Holmes'.

When all is said and done:

Holmes' plan does not work. Irene sees thru it at the last minute and retains the photo. But she had lost interest in the King and married someone else. Promised to keep the photo and not give it to King's fiancée.

McMurdo's Camp