

A STUDY GUIDE TO SHERLOCK HOLMES

By William S. Dorn



The Adventures of Sherlock
Holmes
Adventure III -- A Scandal in
Bohemia

A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA DATE OF THE ADVENTURE*

(Date of the King of Bohemia's visit to 221B Baker Street)

CLUES:

1. The King asked Holmes and Watson to pledge themselves to secrecy for two years (164)
2. The story was first published in July 1891
3. Holmes says, "Wedlock suits you Watson" (162)
4. Watson met his future wife, Mary Morstan, on April 16, 1888 (see *The Sign of Four*)
5. It was the 20th of March 1888 (161)
6. Watson had illegible handwriting
7. On the day of the King's visit Holmes says Watson had been getting himself "very wet lately" (162) and Watson admits he had "a country walk on Thursday and came home in a dreadful mess" (162) **N.B.** Watson does not say last Thursday
8. March 1, 1889 was Friday.
9. In 1889 there was rain on March 21; it was dry on March 28.

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. 1 and 2 imply it was on or before July 1889
- B. 3 and 4 imply it was after April 1888
- C. 5 implies it was in March 1888 which appears to contradict B
- D. 6, B and C imply that it could have been March 1889 and around the 20th
- E. 7 implies the King's visit was on Friday
- F. D, E, and 8 imply that Watson's walk in the rain was on March 21 or March 28
- G. F and 9 imply that Watson's walk was on March 21 and the King's visit was March 22

The King visited Baker Street on Friday, March 22, 1889

*The story may contain other clues to the date of the adventure. However, use only the clues shown here. Your only goal should be to use logical reasoning to find a date based on the clues shown here.

A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA VOCABULARY WORDS

- eclipses (161) – **surpasses; outshines**
- predominates (161) – **dominates or prevails over**
- akin (161) – **having a similar quality or character; analogous**
- gibe (161) – **mocking or jeering remark**
- grit (161) – **small grains of sand or stone**
- dubious (161) – **doubtful**
- Bohemian (161) – **like a person who disregards conventional standards of behavior**
- singular (161, 162) – **beyond what is ordinary or usual; remarkable**
- effusive (162) – **excessive in emotional expression; gushy**
- spirit case (162) – **a locked cabinet containing alcoholic beverages**
- gasogene (162) – **apparatus for impregnating water with carbon dioxide; a seltzer bottle**
- incorrigible (162) – **incapable of being corrected or reformed**
- malignant (162) – **destructive**
- slavey (162) – **general maid servant**
- iodoform (162) – **iodine compound used as an antiseptic**
- crown (163) – **a coin worth five shillings, that is, one-fourth of a pound**
- brougham (163, 174) – **one-horse enclosed carriage with four wheels and an open driver's seat in front, named for the Scottish-born jurist, Henry Peter Brougham, First Baron Brougham and Vaux (1778-1868)**
- beauties (163) – **good horses**
- guinea (163, 168) – **one pound and one shilling, that is, 5% more than one pound**
- Boswell (164) – **James Boswell (1740-1795) Scottish lawyer, diarist, and writer renowned as the biographer of Samuel Johnson**

- astrakhan (164) – **curly, wavy fur made of the skins of young lambs from Astrakhan**
- brooch (164) – **large decorative pin or clasp**
- beryl (164) – **transparent gem that may be white, green, blue, yellow, or pink; consists of aluminum beryllium silicate**
- opulence (164) – **exceptional wealth**
- vizard mask (164) – **a mask worn over the eyes only**
- august (164) – **inspiring awe or admiration; majestic**
- languid (165) – **showing little or no spirit; listless**
- incognito (165) – **with identity disguised or concealed**
- docketing (165) – **recording and organizing**
- waylaid (166, 171) – **unexpectedly stopped or intercepted**
- resolute (166) – **determined; unwavering**
- betrothal (166) – **engagement to be married**
- carte blanche (166) – **unrestricted power to act at one's own discretion**
- chamois (167) – **soft leather made from the hide of an extremely agile goat antelope that comes from the mountainous regions of Europe or from the hide of other animals such as deer or sheep**
- cabinet (167, 171) – **dimensions of 3 7/8" by 5 1/2"**
- incisive (167) – **penetrating, clear, and sharp**
- inextricable (167) – **intricate or entangled**
- side-whiskered (167) – **wearing sideburns**
- freemasonry (167) – **name commonly given to a secret fraternal organization of ancient origin; Free and Accepted Masons**
- bijou* villa (168) – **jewel-like suburban house**
- Chubb lock (168) – **a patented lock with tumblers, named for its inventor and believed to be pickproof in the nineteenth century**
- mews (168) – **alley**

ostlers (168, 172) – **stablemen, grooms**

half and half (168) – **half ale and half porter or bitter beer**

the Inner Temple (168) – **one of the four Inns of the Court that are incorporations for the study of law; they have the exclusive privilege of calling barristers to the Bar**

N.B. a barrister is an attorney who can plead cases in the superior courts

hansom cab (168) – **two-wheeled, one horse carriage seating two with the driver mounted behind and reins going over the roof of the hood; invented by J. A. Hansom, a Yorkshire architect who patented the cab in 1834**

aquiline (168) – **eagle-like**

landau (168, 169, 171) – **four-wheeled carriage with a top in two parts so that it may be closed, half-open, or entirely open**

tags (169) – **ends of harness straps**

sovereign (169) – **gold coin worth one pound**

shabby (169) – **wearing threadbare clothing**

surpliced (169) – **wearing a loose-fitting, white ecclesiastical gown with wide sleeves over an ankle-length garment with a close-fitting waist and sleeves**

expostulating (169) – **reasoning earnestly in an effort to change an opinion or position**

spinster (169) – **a woman who has never been married**

sally (169) – **rush out**

sitting-room (170, 173) – **parlour or livingroom**

plumber's smoke rocket (170) – **a smoke-generating device used by plumbers to test for leaks in drains**

nonconformist clergyman (170) – **clergyman not in the Church of England**

Mr. John Hare (170) – **well-known English actor who specialized in character roles, knighted in 1907**

acute (170) – **keenly perceptive or discerning**

succinct (171) – **concise and terse**

shabbily (171) – **in clothes showing signs of wear and tear**

guardsmen (171) – **members of the Household Brigade who form the bodyguards of the King or Queen**

averse (171) – **opposed**

copper (171) – **a penny**

marm (172) – **slang for Madame**

compunction (172) – **strong sense of guilt**

ulster (172, 173) – **long loose fitting rough overcoat usually belted**

fathom (173) – **comprehend**

bell-pull (173, 174) – **a cord attached to a wire that rings a bell to call servants who are elsewhere in the house, usually the kitchen**

coachman (173) – **driver of any carriage**

over-precipitance (173) – **too much rash haste**

pavement (173) – **sidewalk**

sardonic (174) – **cynically mocking**

chagrin (174) – **annoyance or embarrassment**

imprudently (175) – **unwisely**

antagonist (175) – **opponent**

née (175) – **born**

epistle (175) – **a letter**

inviolate (175) – **unbreakable**

A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA OPEN QUESTIONS

1. When Irene realized that she had been tricked, Holmes must have known that she would remove the photo before he would return the next day. Why didn't he strike while the iron was hot?

Did Holmes want her to escape with the photograph?

2. Holmes suggested perjury, robbery, and theft to the King (165-166). Why?

Holmes often thought royalty was above the law

3. If the suggestions that Holmes had made (see 2. above) were workable, how could any blackmailer succeed?

He or she couldn't.

4. Why does Bohemian notepaper imply that the writer is from Bohemia (163)?

It doesn't.

5. How did Holmes recognize the King so readily? (165)?

There must have been articles in the newspapers about the King's impending wedding and perhaps also his visit to London. There also might have been photographs of the King in the newspapers. The King certainly had a distinctive appearance.

6. If Holmes's knowledge of politics was nil (21), how could he rattle off the titles of the King (165)?

A case of Holmes pulling Watson's leg. Holmes knowledge of politics was not nil.

7. What kind of wedding did Irene and Godfrey have? Up until May 1886 marriages had to take place before noon. After that the time was extended to 3 pm. A church wedding would require that the banns of marriage be published weeks before the ceremony. In most weddings there are two witnesses, neither of whom makes any response.

Well, it was a strange wedding indeed.

8. Who was the landlady (170)?

Mrs. Turner

A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA SIMPLE QUIZ*

1. The person who threw the smoke bomb through Irene Adler's window was
 - a. Dr. Watson
 - b. Sherlock Holmes
 - c. a guardsman
 - d. none of the above

2. Holmes's client in the story was
 - a. Irene Adler
 - b. the King of Bohemia
 - c. Godfrey Norton
 - d. none of the above

3. At the end of the story, Irene Adler is
 - a. singing at the Royal Opera House
 - b. listening to Holmes explain his solution to the mystery
 - c. on her way to the Continent of Europe
 - d. none of the above

* The Simple Quiz is designed to determine if the student has read the story. Anyone who has read the story through should have no trouble in completing this quiz. The Intermediate and Advanced Quizzes are more challenging.

A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA INTERMEDIATE QUIZ[#]

1. What type of mask did the King of Bohemia wear when he visited Holmes and Watson?
 - a. black
 - b. face
 - c. vizard
 - d. none of the above

2. Where was Irene Adler born?
 - a. New England
 - b. New Jersey
 - c. New York
 - d. none of the above

3. What letters were on the watermark of the King of Bohemia's stationery?
 - a. large G small e, P, large T small g
 - b. large E small g, P, large G small t
 - c. large E small g, large G small t
 - d. none of the above

4. What did Irene Adler give to Holmes (in disguise) as a souvenir after her wedding?
 - a. a half crown
 - b. a guinea
 - c. a sovereign
 - d. none of the above

[#] The Intermediate Quiz is designed to test whether the student has read the story with reasonable attention to detail. The Simple Quiz is an easier test while the Advanced Quiz is much more challenging.

A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA ADVANCED QUIZ[&]

1. On what street was Briony Lodge?
 - a. Briony Avenue
 - b. Serpentine Avenue
 - c. Winchester Avenue
 - d. none of the above

2. How old was the King of Bohemia at the time of the adventure?
 - a. 30 years old
 - b. 35 years old
 - c. 40 years old
 - d. none of the above

3. Which one of the following did Holmes NOT receive for helping the ostlers rub down horses?
 - a. twopence
 - b. a sandwich
 - c. a glass of half and half
 - d. tobacco

4. In what year was Irene Adler born?
 - a. 1848
 - b. 1858
 - c. 1868
 - d. none of the above

[&] The Advanced Quiz is designed for aficionados of the Canon. The questions are quite challenging. The Intermediate and Simple Quizzes are designed for the more casual reader of the stories.

ANSWERS TO QUIZZES FOR THE ADVENTURES

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
A Scandal in Bohemia				
Simple	a	b	c	xx
Intermediate	c	b	b	c
Advanced	b	a	b	b
The Red-Headed League				
Simple	b	b	a	xx
Intermediate	b	b	a	b
Advanced	b	c	b	a
A Case of Identity				
Simple	b	b	b	xx
Intermediate	b	c	c	b
Advanced	c	b	d	c
The Boscombe Valley Mystery				
Simple	a	b	b	xx
Intermediate	c	b	b	b
Advanced	b	a	c	a
The Five Orange Pips				
Simple	b	b	a	xx
Intermediate	b	b	b	c
Advanced	c	a	b	a
The Man with the Twisted Lip				
Simple	b	a	b	xx
Intermediate	a	c	b	a
Advanced	b	a	c	b
The Blue Carbuncle				
Simple	a	b	c	xx
Intermediate	c	b	a	a
Advanced	b	b	c	c
The Speckled Band				
Simple	c	c	b	xx
Intermediate	c	a	a	b
Advanced	a	c	c	c

The Adventures

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
The Engineer's Thumb				
Simple	b	a	c	xx
Intermediate	a	b	c	b
Advanced	b	c	c	a
The Noble Bachelor				
Simple	b	b	c	xx
Intermediate	a	b	b	c
Advanced	a	a	c	c
The Beryl Coronet				
Simple	b	b	b	xx
Intermediate	b	c	b	a
Advanced	b	c	b	c
The Copper Beeches				
Simple	a	a	b	xx
Intermediate	a	a	c	b
Advanced	a	b	c	c