



The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure VIII -- The Man with the Twisted Lip

First published in:

The Strand Magazine, Dec 1891

Time frame of story (known/surmised):

June 1889 given. Date/day of week uncertain/jumbled in conversation with Watson's patient.

Holmes & Watson living arrangements:

Watson practicing medicine and living with wife, who calls him "James".

Opening scene:

Watson at home w/wife, asked by wife's friend to help find and retrieve opium addict husband. While at opium den Watson finds Holmes pursuing an unrelated case, and posing as a user to investigate the disappearance of Neville St. Clair.

Client:

Mrs. St. Clair

Crime, suspicion, concern:

St. Claire disappeared, wife hired Holmes, having spotted husband in disreputable neighborhood in city, Upper Swandam Lane, a vile alley.



Villain:

A professional mendicant named Hugh Boone, with a repulsive facial scar, was arrested for the murder of Neville St. Clair, but turned out to be St. Clair himself.

Motive:

Money. St. Clair had a secret "day job" as beggar, and was making a good living at it.

Logic used to solve:

St. Clair's cut finger. Clue given (somewhat clumsily) in story but not explained by Holmes.

Policemen:

A number of constables with an inspector, met by the client in Fresno Street. They made the initial crime scene investigation.

Inspector Barton, who had charge of the case.

Inspector Bradstreet, a tall stout official, who had been in the force 27 years.

Holmes' fees:

No mention. Holmes stayed at client's house in the country (Lee, in Kent).

Transport:

Watson took a hansom (cab) from his house to the opium den, and sent his patient home in it. Then Holmes took his cab, dismissed the driver, and drove 7 miles to Lee, with Watson. Holmes lit his pipe while driving.

Food:

A cold supper was set for Holmes & Watson by client when they arrived at her house late at night.

Drink:

There was a gin-shop next door to the opium den.

Vices:

Opium den. Neither H or W participate, except for breathing foul air.

While at St. Clair house, Holmes ponders the case overnight while consuming an ounce of shag.

Other cases mentioned:

None

Notable Quotables:

“The impression of a woman may be more valuable than the conclusion of an analytical reasoner.” –Holmes

Other interestings:

The rascally Lascar of the “Bar of Gold”, in the farthest East end of the city, who was known to be a man of the vilest antecedents. (For more info about lascars, see the trifling monograph in the sidebar on the right.)

Holmes client, Mrs. St. Clair, a little blond woman, stood in the open door, clad in some sort of light Mousseline de sole, with a touch of fluffy pink chiffon at her neck and wrists, her figure outlined against the flood of light. (Mousseline de sole is a light, gauze-like fabric. Light Mousseline de sole must be especially gauze-like.) We will leave the the speculation to our readers.

Beggar’s ersatz business was selling vestas, the same type of match that once startled a murderous horse.

The “James” business is another field that is ripe for speculation. We like the theory that John H. Watson’s middle name is Hamish, which is the Scottish version of James.

McMurdo’s Camp