

A STUDY GUIDE TO SHERLOCK HOLMES

By William S. Dorn



The Adventures of Sherlock
Holmes
Adventure IX -- The Adventure of
the Blue Carbuncle

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND DATE OF THE ADVENTURE*

(Helen Stoner's visit and Dr. Roylott's death which occurred on the same day)

CLUES:

1. It was early in April in the year '83 (258)
2. April 1, 1883 was Sunday
3. Two days (before Holmes visited Stoke Moran) some repairs were started at Stoke Moran (263)
4. Repairmen would not have worked on Saturday or Sunday
5. Holmes visited Doctors Commons to see a will on the day of visit (265)
6. Doctors Commons would not have been open on Sunday
7. When Holmes and Watson visited Stoke Moran there was "no sign of workmen" (266). Such a statement would be unnecessary if the day were Saturday or Sunday when workmen would not be expected to be working anyway.
8. It was a perfect day, with bright sun (265)
9. Wednesday and Thursday (April 4 and 5, 1883) produced little sun in London.

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. 1 implies it was in the first week of April 1883
- B. A and 2 imply that day of Holmes's visit to Stoke Moran was April 1 through April 7 of 1883
- C. 3 and 4 imply that the day of the visit was not Monday or Tuesday

*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.

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- D. C implies that that the day of the visit was Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday
- E. 5 and 6 imply that the day of the visit was not Sunday
- F. D and E imply that the day of the visit was Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday
- G. 7 implies that the day of the visit was not Saturday
- H. F and G imply that the day of the visit was Wednesday, Thursday or Friday
- I. 8 and 9 imply that the day of the visit was not Wednesday nor Thursday
- J. H and I imply that the of the visit day was Friday
- K. B, J and 2 imply that the day of the visit was Friday, April 6, 1883

Dr. Roylott died on Friday, April 6, 1883

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND VOCABULARY WORDS

- singular (257, 268, 272) – **beyond what is ordinary or usual; remarkable**
- knock you up (258) – **wake you by knocking at the door**
- retorted (258) – **returned like for like; retaliated**
- return ticket (258) – **round trip ticket**
- dog-cart (259, 263) – **a cart with two seats placed back-to-back; name is derived from box under rear seat originally used to carry dogs**
- averted (259) – **turned away**
- dissolute (259) – **indulged in sensual pleasures or vices**
- The Regency (259) - **1811-1820, last 9 years of George III's reign when he was insane**
- squire (259) – **a country gentleman especially one who is the principal landowner in a village**
- pauper (259) – **extremely poor person**
- morose (260) – **gloomy**
- parapet (260) – **low protective wall**
- bramble-covered (260) – **covered with prickly shrubs or bushes**
- fortnight (261) – **two weeks**
- fain (262) – **gladly, willingly**
- sounded (262) – **examined something by causing it to emit sound**
- staples (262) – **U-shaped metal loops with pointed ends, driven into a surface to hold bolts or wiring in place**
- herald (263) – **a sign of something to come**
- livid (263) – **discolored as from a bruise; black-and-blue**
- aperture (264) – **opening**
- frock-coat (264) - **close fitting, double-breasted, knee-length coat**
- gaiters (264) – **cover for the ankle and instep, spats**
- bile-shot eyes (264) – **eyes whose whites are colored brownish-yellow or greenish-yellow**

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blandly (264) – **showing no concern or worry**

Jack-in-office (265) – **a petty official unjustifiably claiming distinction or merit**

draught (265) – **draft**

insolence (265) – **arrogance; impertinence**

pittance (265) – **very small amount of money**

trap (265) – **one-horse, two-wheeled, open carriage**

gable (266) – **part of house that is enclosed by part of the roof that slopes downward**

stile (266) – **steps over a fence**

lichen-blotched (266) – **spotted with a fungus that forms a crust-like or branching growth**

whitewashed (267) – **covered with a mixture of lime and water to whiten it**

counterpane (267) - **bedspread**

Wilton carpet (267) – **carpet with lush surface loops of yarn; named for the town in Southwestern England where it was first made**

camp-bed (268) – **folding bed**

dog lash (268, 272) – **dog leash**

whipcord (268) – **strong, twisted or braided cord used as a whip**

reverie (268) – **daydream**

hasp (269) – **metal fastener with a hinged, slotted part that fits over a projecting part and is secured by a bolt**

clinchd fists (269) – **clenched fists**

scruples (269) – **uneasy feelings arising from conscience**

affected (271) – **showed a liking for**

stump (271) – **short piece**

vigil (271) – **watch kept during normal sleeping hours**

parish clock (271) – **church clock**

dark lantern (271) – **lantern with sliding door**

parsonage (272) – **residence provided by a church for its parson**

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND OPEN QUESTIONS

1. What was it that crawled up and down the bell pull? Snakes are totally deaf, so whistling would not call a snake back. Snakes do not feed on milk. A snake might crawl down a rope but could not crawl up. There is no such thing as a swamp adder.

The poison was fast acting so it must have been of the cobra family. Perhaps it was a hybrid of a cobra and a gila monster

2. When Holmes woke Watson, he (Holmes) was fully dressed (258). If Helen Stoner was waiting in the sitting room, why did Holmes dress before waking Watson?

Holmes or any English gentleman would not appear before a lady not fully dressed.

3. Holmes says that the case involving Mrs. Farintosh was "before your time, Watson" (259). If so how did Helen Stoner get the Baker Street address?

By the time Holmes sent his bill to Mrs. Farintosh, he (Holmes) had moved to Baker Street.

4. Helen Stoner says that " ... there seemed to be no obstacle to our happiness" (260). Based on Dr. Roylott's past (in a fit of anger he beat a native butler to death - page 260), did it seem like there were no obstacles to their happiness?

A strange statement indeed.

5. On page 262 Julia was described as having "hands groping for help" but on the same page it says "In her right hand was found the charred stump of a match, and in her left a match-box." How did she 'grope' with her hands full?

It would be difficult but not impossible.

6. Dr. Roylott poured brandy down Julia's throat (262). Does that seem to be a wise thing to do?

No, brandy would speed up the effect of the poison.

7. On page 272 Holmes says, "... the schemer falls into the pit which he digs for another". The correct quotation is, "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it, and whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him." From where is that quotation taken?

Ecclesiastes 1:2

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND SIMPLE QUIZ*

1. Grimesby Roylott was killed by
 - a. a heart attack
 - b. an angry gypsy
 - c. a poisonous snake
 - d. none of the above

2. After Grimesby Roylott left the rooms at 221B Baker Street, Sherlock Holmes
 - a. put on his coat and followed Roylott
 - b. looked up Roylott's name in his records
 - c. straightened the poker Roylott had bent
 - d. none of the above

3. Helen Stoner's relationship to Grimesby Roylott was that she was
 - a. his housekeeper
 - b. his step daughter
 - c. his niece
 - 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.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND INTERMEDIATE QUIZ[#]

1. How much income would Grimesby Roylott receive if both of his stepdaughters married?
 - a. £100
 - b. £250
 - c. £500
 - d. none of the above

2. Who referred Helen Stoner to Holmes?
 - a. Mrs. Farintosh
 - b. Mrs. Forrester
 - c. Inspector Lestrade
 - d. none of the above

3. What was the name of Helen Stoner's fiancé?
 - a. Percy Armitage
 - b. James Farintosh
 - c. George Forrester
 - d. none of the above

4. Watson said that the snake that killed Julia Stoner and Grimesby Roylott was?
 - a. a black adder
 - b. a swamp adder
 - c. a water moccasin
 - 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.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND ADVANCED QUIZ &

1. Where did Holmes and Watson stay on their visit to Stoke Moran?
 - a. the Crown Inn
 - b. the Horse and Coach Inn
 - c. the White Hart Inn
 - d. none of the above
2. What type of slippers was Grimesby Roylott wearing when the snake attacked and killed him?
 - a. English
 - b. Persian
 - c. Turkish
 - d. none of the above
3. What type of carpet was on the floor of Julia Stoner's bedroom?
 - a. Checkered
 - b. Persian
 - c. Wilton
 - d. none of the above
4. What was the maiden name of Helen and Julia Stoner's mother?
 - a. Westbury
 - b. Westcombe
 - c. Westphail
 - 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 |

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| 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 |