



Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes Adventure XIII -- The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet

SUMMARY (Diogenes Club)

A very prominent nobleman (unnamed) borrows £50,000 from Alexander and posts the coronet as security. He does not actually own the coronet, which is part of the crown jewels, but only needs the money for four days. Alexander is afraid to leave the coronet at the bank, so he brings it home and puts it in his bureau. He awakens during the night to see Arthur wrenching at it. Upon examining the coronet, it is found to be bent and three of the beryls are missing. He assumes Arthur took the missing piece, but he was really trying to straighten it.

Mary took the coronet and handed it through the window to her lover, Burnwell. Arthur, who was spying on Mary, chased him and got the coronet back from him but during their struggle, Burnwell broke off a corner with the three beryls and kept it.

Holmes solves the case by tracking the bad guys through the fresh snow. Holmes then buys back the missing stones from the fence to whom Burnwell had passed them.

Mary elopes with Sir George, presumably to suffer "the fate worse than death."

Lucy and Francis create a red herring.



SUMMARY (ACD Encyclopedia)

The banker Alexander Holder goes to Baker Street to tell Holmes his story: he lent £50,000 to a client who gave him as collateral the famous beryl coronet. He carried it in Streatham, where he lives with his son, Arthur, and his niece, Mary.

Arthur, under the influence of Sir George Burnwell asked in vain his father a large sum of money to pay off some gambling debts. Woke up in the middle of the night by strange noises, Mr. Holder finds his son in his desk, holding the coronet which is twisted and three beryl are missing. Arthur is arrested immediately. Holmes inspects the Holder's house and deduces that the coronet has been twisted out of the house.

Holmes asks £4,000 to Mr. Holder and succeeds to find the three missing stones. According to footprints in the garden, Holmes deduces that Mary met Sir George Burnwell and she gave him the coronet while Arthur has surprised them and tried to get the coronet back by pulling it from the hands of Sir George.

To avoid trouble for Mary, Arthur accepted to be accused of stealing. Holmes had found the three stones in a pawnbroker and bought them £3,000 plus £1,000 as a reward.

SUMMARY (Wikipedia)

A banker asks Holmes to investigate after a "Beryl Coronet" entrusted to him is damaged at his home. Awakened by noise, he had found his son, Arthur, holding the damaged coronet. Arthur refuses to speak, neither admitting guilt nor explaining himself. Footprints in the snow outside the house tell Holmes that the banker's niece had conspired with a blackguard to steal the coronet; Arthur had discovered the crime in progress and the coronet had been damaged during his struggle to prevent it being stolen. He had refused to tell his father the truth of the crime because of his love for his cousin.

A banker, Mr. Alexander Holder of Streatham, makes a loan of £50,000 (equivalent to approximately £5.76 million in 2019) to a socially prominent client, who leaves a beryl coronet—one of the most valuable public possessions in existence—as collateral. Holder feels that he must not leave this rare and precious piece of jewellery in his personal safe at the bank, and so he takes it home with him to lock it up there. He is awakened in the night by a noise, enters his dressing room, and is horrified to see his son Arthur with the coronet in his hands, apparently trying to bend it. Holder's niece Mary comes at the sound of all the shouting and, seeing the damaged coronet, faints dead away. Three beryls are missing from it. In a panic, Mr. Holder travels to see Holmes, who agrees to take the case.

The case against Arthur seems rather damning, yet Holmes is not convinced of his guilt. Why is Arthur refusing to give a statement of any kind? How could Arthur have broken the coronet (even Holmes, who has exceptionally strong hands, can barely do it) and without making any noise? Could any other people in the

household be involved, such as the servants, or Mary? Could some visitor, such as the maid's wooden-legged suitor, or Arthur's rakish friend Sir George Burnwell, have something to do with what happened to the coronet? The failure to resolve the case will result in Mr Holder's dishonour, and a national scandal.

Holmes sets about not only reviewing the details that he learns from Holder but also by examining the footprints in the snow outside. Eventually, Holmes solves the mystery, and Holder is flabbergasted to find that his niece was in league with a notorious criminal (Sir George Burnwell), although apparently, she is unaware of his character. The two of them escape justice; however, Holmes is convinced that they will receive their punishment in due time. Arthur's motive in allowing his father to think he was the thief was that he was in love with his cousin Mary and saw her passing the coronet to Burnwell outside the window. (The coronet was broken when Arthur was struggling to wrench it from Burnwell's grasp.) Holmes regains the jewels after threatening Sir George at gunpoint with an offer of £1,000 apiece (for each of the 3 beryls); Burnwell is shocked at Holmes' offer—he had already sold them to a fence for £300. With the additional offer of no prosecution, Holmes buys the beryls from the fence for £3,000; Holmes receives £4,000 compensation but sternly scolds Holder that he owes his son an apology for erroneously assuming Arthur had stolen the coronet.