

THE REAL MYSTERY OF THE ADVENTURE OF THE THREE GABLES

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The relationship between Sherlock Holmes and Isadora Klein, like Churchill's impression of Russia, is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.

Isadora Klein is, without doubt, the most reprehensible character in the Canon.

Her cruelty knew no bounds. She would do anything -- destroy any life - - to satisfy her lust or to satiate her appetites.

Yet, Holmes never sought to bring her to justice.

Douglas Maberly did not die of pneumonia, as his mother supposed, nor did he die of complications from the beating that was inflicted upon him.

He died of a broken heart, a result of the cruelty of Isadora Klein, la belle dame sans merci.

And his was but one of a long series of destroyed lives that she left in her path.

Why, then, did Holmes not bring this temptress to justice ?

By her own confession, she had engaged ruffians to commit at least two felonies -- and she had sought to threaten Holmes out of the case.

She had arranged for a premeditated attack and beating upon young Maberly, and she had contracted for the burglary of the mother's home under cover of night.

She had stolen from this widowed, and now childless, soul a manuscript that would have been of enormous sentimental value to a grieving mother.

Also, through her hired henchmen, she had sought to intimidate Sherlock Holmes.

This seductress had romped upon the emotions of young Maberly, using him to satisfy her sensual appetites -- then heartlessly tossing him aside when he stood in the way of her more important campaign to satisfy her financial and material greed through a marriage to the young Duke of Lomond.

Yet, Holmes never sought to bring her to justice.

When Sherlock Holmes strode upon the stage where these events were being played out, he declared: "I represent justice so far as my feeble powers go." (Doubleday, page 1032)

Well, his powers were very feeble that day, and they did not go very far in this case.

The reasons shall become abundantly clear to those who will examine the following circumstances with an open mind.

What did Holmes do to obtain justice?

Absolutely nothing!

For the paltry sum of 5000 pounds Sra. Klein purchased his silence and

her freedom -- freedom to continue a career of ruining the lives of younger men.

The amount was insignificant for one recognized by Holmes to be: "the richest as well as the most lovely widow on earth." (Doubleday p. 1031)

If Holmes had sought to obtain justice, he fell far short of his goal in this case.

But Holmes was not seeking justice.

That was not at all what he had on his mind.

In our pursuit of the truth we shall find, unfortunately, that Holmes, like all the others before him, was susceptible to seduction.

If Sherlock Holmes had even thought of imposing justice upon Isadora Klein, he soon fell apart in her presence.

Sra. Klein was completely in control, and totally dominated him from this point on.

She was aware, as Holmes was soon to learn, that he, too, could be seduced when up against one who has developed that activity to its highest art form.

Holmes forgot about seeking justice.

He cared not a whit for justice.

That was no longer on his mind.

It may have been Isadora's "coquettish intimacy" or her "roguish and exquisite look" (p. 1032) that caused his downfall.

Possibly, it was her "perfect figure" or her "two wonderful Spanish eyes," (p. 1031) that did him in.

As she held Holmes by the arm, Watson tells us, she "turned from steel to velvet." (p.1032)

Whatever her technique may have been, she knew how to have her way with a man. In common parlance, she did a job on Holmes, and he fell for it.

Even Watson could see what was happening: "I felt of all Holmes's criminals this was the one whom he would find it hardest to face." (p.1032)

You may ask, would Holmes permit his silence to be bought for 5000 pounds?

It was not the money for which Holmes sold himself.

He was not that cheap.

The key to the mystery lies in Keats's poem, "*La Belle Dame Sans Merci*," to which Holmes sought to draw our attention (p. 1031).

Holmes saw himself, not Maberly, as the Knight-at-Arms of that classic.

Who but Holmes fit the poetic description: "alone and palely loitering"?

Who but Holmes was "so haggard and so woe begone"?

In Holmes's view, it was he, not Maberly, who had met the "Lady in the Meads -- full beautiful, a faery's child."

It was Holmes, and only Holmes, who looked upon the succession of broken hearts and destroyed lives: "I saw pale Kings, and Princes too, Pale warriors, death-pale were they all; They cried -- '*La belle dame sans merci*, Thee hath in thrall."

And truly she did have Holmes in thrall.

Like all of the others before him, Sherlock Holmes had become enslaved by the irresistible attraction of Isadora Klein.

Helpless to resist her enticements he, too, was captured in her inescapable web of sensuality.

He was the Knight-at-Arms, become a knight-in-waiting, in amoral servitude to "the beautiful lady without mercy."

It is for this reason that Holmes referred to that poem of Keats.

Holmes expects us to understand his references and to grasp his meanings, even when Watson misses the point.

It now becomes clear exactly what Holmes was telling us that received in exchange for his silence.

I think he should be ashamed of himself.