



The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure XXIV -- The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter

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Time frame of story (known/surmised):

Stated – a summer evening. 1888 – a fair guess.

Holmes & Watson living arrangements:

Living in their house at 221B Baker St.

Opening scene:

Holmes & Watson at home, holding a desultory and drifting conversation. Holmes tells of his early life and mentions his brother Mycroft. Holmes & Watson stroll to Mycroft's club, The Diogenes, and meet him there. Mycroft demonstrates that he has powers of observation and deduction to a greater degree than does Sherlock.

Client:

Mr. Melas, a short, stout man whose olive face and coal black hair proclaimed his Southern origin, though his speech was that of an educated Englishman. Melas was Mycroft Holmes' upstairs neighbor and had submitted a most singular problem for the judgment of Mycroft, who really had not the energy to follow it up. Sherlock was delighted to take the case.



Holmes' fees:

No mention of the fees.

Crime or concern:

Melas' client kidnaps him under the pretext of hiring him for an interpretation job. Job turns out to be questioning a Greek man who is being held and starved by Melas' client and associate, for purpose of intimidating him regarding his sister Sophy Katrides, who had a painful history. They want Sophy to marry Mr. Latimer, who had gained an ascendancy over her. Paul Katrides, her brother who speaks no English, came across from Greece to try to prevent the marriage and instead got kidnapped and victimized to force his cooperation. Then finally, murder. When the kidnappers fled with Sophy, they left her brother and the interpreter behind, confined in a poisonous atmosphere. The brother died but Melas recovered.

Villain:

Harold Latimer, a very fashionably dressed young man, the powerful, broad-shouldered young fellow who hired Melas, and Latimer's associate Wilson Kemp, a small, mean-looking, middle-aged man with rounded shoulders – a man of the foulest antecedents. His features were peaky and sallow, and his little pointed beard was thready and illnourished. He had steel gray eyes, glistening coldly with a malignant, inexorable cruelty in their depths. Not only that, he wore glasses.

Motive:

Sophy had money, but her brother Paul had some control over her fortune.

Logic used to solve:

In his first interview with Katrides, Melas slips in questions in Greek and determines there is evil afoot. Tells Mycroft, who placed an ad in papers. Reply by Sophy's acquaintance led them to the house.

Policemen:

Inspector Gregson, of the Yard, goes with Holmes & Watson to the house where the Greeks were being held, with appropriate warrants.

Transport:

Melas taken by Latimer in a four-wheeler that was fitted with rich quality, but somewhat frayed. Then taken back to Clapham Junction, where he caught the last train to Victoria.

After the house is identified as The Myrtles, Beckenham, Holmes & Watson with Gregson take a four-wheeler and a train, hoping to catch the kidnappers. But the Greeks have departed, and taken their luggage with them.

Food:

Remains of a meal (see below).

Drink:

When Holmes & Watson and Gregson entered Latimer's house, they found on the table two glasses, an empty brandy-bottle, and the remains of a meal.

Watson revived Melas with the aid of ammonia and brandy.

Vices:

When Holmes & Watson returned home from seeing Melas, Mycroft was sitting smoking in the armchair.

Other cases mentioned:

A Manor House case, in which Mycroft thought his younger brother might be a little out of his depth. Sherlock determined Adams did it, and didn't need any help.

Notable Quotables:

Art in the blood is liable to take the strangest forms." – Holmes

"I hear of Sherlock everywhere since you became his chronicler." – Mycroft

"I had the satisfaction of seeing him open his eyes, and of knowing that my hand had drawn him back from that dark valley in which all paths meet." – Watson, on reviving Melas.

Other interesting:

The introduction of Holmes' brother, Mycroft. Revelation that Holmes' ancestors were country squires, and that his grandmother was the sister of the French artist Vernet.

When all is said and done:

Months afterwards a Buda-Pesth newspaper told how two Englishmen had been traveling with a woman and met a tragic end. They had been stabbed, and the Hungarian police believed they had quarreled and inflicted mortal injuries upon each other. Holmes, however, believed that if one could find the Grecian girl, one might learn how the wrongs of herself and her brother came to be avenged.

McMurdo's Camp