



The Return of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure XXXVII – The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez

At Oxbridge and Camford the professors worry about kids cheating on their Greek exams. Meanwhile, in Russia, students at another university plot to overthrow the entire social order. As we prepare for the next story, *The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez*, consider these questions and comments:

The dose was small. Presumably, it was orally administered. Onset of the symptoms was rapid, including turning a “dreadful color,” progressive pain, and dizziness. What kind of poison was in that phial?

As I understand nihilism, its advocates want a classless society. Coram, however, employs servants. Has he changed? Is it possible to change that much?

Sherlock Holmes says that glasses are so instructive “it would be difficult to name any articles which afford a finer field for inference.” Elsewhere in the canon he says pretty much the same thing about pipes, watches, and bootlaces. Which of **your** belongings would tell Holmes the most about you?

As we learn from GOLD, not every crime needs a motive, and accidents happen. In past weeks we’ve discussed the skills of several police detectives. Did Hopkins do a good job in this story?



Whenever anyone dies young we grieve twice: once for the loss of an individual, and once for the loss of his or her potential. . . . what might have been. Willoughby Smith was a very young man, straight from the university. He was engaged as personal secretary to a scholar and a writer. His duties included research and writing. He was a decent, quiet, hard-working fellow with good references and not an enemy in the world. But for his untimely death, who knows where Smith's career might ultimately have taken him? We can't say for certain, but perhaps there's a clue. His good education and first job, you see, closely parallel that of another young personal secretary who went on to become arguably the finest English-language satirist — Jonathan Swift!

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