



His Last Bow

Adventure XLIV – The Adventure of the Red Circle

Publication History

44 of the 60 stories

First published *The Strand Magazine*, March & April, 1911

The Strand Magazine (US), April & May, 1911

Part of *His Last Bow* collection by

John Murray, London, 1917

George H. Doran, New York, 1927

British illustrators – H. M. Brock & Joseph Simpson

Chronology

Baring-Gould places the dating of the story at Wednesday, September 24 to Thursday, September 25, 1902 Making it 54th of the 60. This means that Holmes is 48 and Watson 50.

Christopher Morley Says

“Unmitigated bleat” was Holmes’s cruel description of the sentimental messages in the newspaper *Personals*, know in the London press as the Agony Column. But in his daily scrapbook of these advertisements he found a clue to the mystery of Mr. Warren’s lodger, who had not been seen for ten days and communicated with the landlady only on scraps of paper.”



Dummies Short Summary

“A murderous secret society and a young, persecuted couple are at the heart of this story. When a young woman spurns the advance of a Mafia chief, her husband takes extraordinary action to protect her.”

How Many Words

At 7,350 words REDC has the 19th most words (#1 is VEIL – 4,499, #56 if NAVL – 12,701)

Classifying This Case

This case is one of 3 classified as fear of retribution. The others are CROO and ILLU.

The Best Of Sherlock Holmes

- 1944 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it #10 on their worst list.
- 1999 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it 34th of the 56 short stories.
- 1999 – The Sherlock Holmes Society of London voted it 30th of the 56 short stories.

What Else Happened That Year (1902)

- Joseph Chamberlain advocates return to Protection and Imperial Preference.
- Peace of Vereeniging, ends Boer War.
- Salisbury resigns, succeeded as PM by Arthur Balfour.
- Anglo-Japanese Treaty, for mutual defense and to maintain status quo in Far East.
- Institution of the Order of Merit for distinguished service to the state; limited to 24 holders at one time.
- Esperanto introduced to England.
- Establishment of Metropolitan Water Board, supplying London.
- Arthur Conan Doyle is knighted.
- Franco-Italian secret treaty; Italy to remain neutral if France were attacked by a third power.
- Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria, Italy) renewed to 1914.
- Italian designs on Tripoli conditionally approved by France and Austria.
- Russo-Japanese Convention, Russia agrees to evacuate Manchuria in 18 months.
- French work day reduced to 9 1/2 hours.
- White settlement of Kenya begins.
- St. Pierre, Martinique, destroyed by earthquake.

- F.A. Krupp takes over Germania shipbuilding yard at Kiel; great armaments firm develops.
- Conan Doyle publishes *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.
- Kipling publishes *Just So Stories*.
- Arthur Edward Woodley Mason publishes *The Four Feathers*.
- Beatrix Potter publishes *Peter Rabbit*.
- Enrico Caruso makes his first gramophone record--154 recordings in all.
- Picasso paints *Nude, Back View*.
- Wireless telegraphy applied to ships.
- Trans-Pacific Cable laid.
- Completion of Aswan Dam in Egypt.

Holmes And Watson – Personal Information

They are both sharing quarters at 221B Baker Street.

Dramatis Personae

- **Emilia Lucca** nee **Barelli**, wife of ...
- **Gennaro Lucca**, an Italian refugee.
- **Gorgiano**, an early version of a Mafia Don.
- **Gregson**, Scotland Yard Inspector
- **Mr. Leverton** of Pinkerton’s American agency.
- **Mrs. Warren**, the Luccas’ London Landlady who brought Holmes into the case.
- **Mr. Fairdale Hobbs**, lodger of Mrs. Warren for whom Holmes had solved a problem in the past.

Quotable Sherlock

- “Take time to consider. The smallest point may be the most essential.”
- “Dear me! What a chorus of groans, cries, and bleatings! What a rag-bag of singular happenings! ... Bleat, Watson, unmitigated bleat!”
- “It is art for art’s sake.”
- “Education never ends, Watson. It is a series of lessons with the greatest for the last.”

Holmes' Fee

It is art for art's sake, Watson. I suppose when you doctored you found yourself studying cases without thought of a fee?" "For my education, Holmes."

Sherlock Holmes On The Big And The Little Screen

- 1922 *The Red Circle* with Eille Norwood as one of the 47 movies made. The National Film and Television Archive at the BFI has viewing copies of this film but it has not been released
- 1994 *The Red Circle* with Jeremy Brett as one of the later episodes in his *Sherlock Holmes* series.

Fainting In The Canon

In this tale a lady fainted on the Brixton Bus.

NEWSPAPERS

- **Daily Gazette** – Fictional

Weapons

- **Knife** - Gennaro Lucca used to kill "Black" Gorgiano of the dreaded Red Circle.
- **Horn-Handled, Double-Edged Dagger** - Of Gorgiano, found, unused beside its owners body.
- **Fist** - Of Gorgiano, with which he knocked Gennaro Lucca Senseless.
- **Blackmail Dealings** - OF the Red Circle, an Italian secret society active in the United States.
- **Coat** - Which two ruffians under the hire of Giorgiano of the Red Circle used to subdue Mr. Warren, mistaking him for Gennaro Lucca.
- **Dynamite** - Which the Red Circle ordered Lucca to use to blow up the house of Mr. Castalotte.

Interesting Fact

...the ORIGINAL TITLE on the manuscript was *The Adventure of the Bloomsbury Lodger*

Frank Mentzel