



The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure LI – The Adventure of the Creeping Man

An old fellow makes a monkey of himself when he goes ape over a young woman? Must be time for us to begin reading *The Adventure of the Creeping Man*. My questions and comments:

Watson sure is depressed. How come? Is there a specific point in the story where he manages to snap out of it?

“There are times when he has no recollection of what he does.” Did Presbury have any inkling of the serum’s side effects?

What do you think was Presbury’s objective — to be young or merely to possess a young woman?

Let’s talk knuckles. Why does Holmes put so much stock in them?

Prague c. 1903 is a very believable place to find someone conducting futuristic sci-fi experiments. This ancient city leaped into the 20th century with an amazing degree of gusto. Beginning in 1899, big chunks of the medieval part of town were razed to make way for boxy new buildings. Waves of newcomers, most of them Czech nationals, poured into the city, boosting the metro-area population to more than half-a-million, and making Prague the third largest city in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (only Vienna and Budapest were larger). Lots of new jobs were created, many of which were dependent on technology. Telephones were commonplace. The first automobiles were appearing all over Prague. Manufacturing was mechanized at breakneck speed. The new power station, fired up in 1900, was working well. Electric trams



shuttled people on more than a hundred miles of tracks throughout the city. The new pneumatic postal system, while expensive to use at half-a-crown a pop, was increasingly in demand. By 1908, several cinemas would open around town. The universities enjoyed reputations for progressive, creative thinking. Change is exciting, and Prague was a most exciting place to be! Small wonder Lowenstein, a man whose experiments seem so modern, could be found there.

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