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CHAPTER I.

THE SCIENCE OF DETECTION.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

SHERLOCK HOLMES took his bottle from the corner of the mantelpiece and his hypodermic syringe from his vest pocket. He looked at his watch, which he had just adjusted, and rolled back his left shirt-cuff. For some little time his eyes rested thoughtfully upon the snowy forearm and wrist all dotted and scarred with innumerable puncture marks. Finally he thrust the sharp point home, pressed down the rubber bulb, and sank back into the velvet-lined armchair with a long sigh of satisfaction.

Three times a day for many months I had witnessed this performance, but custom had not reconciled my mind to it. On the contrary, from day to day I had become more irritable at the sight, and my conscience swelled nightly within me at the thought that I had looked on the courage to prick a vein that I should deliver my soul upon the subject, but there was that in the cool, nonchalant air of my companion which made him the last man with whom one would care to take anything approaching to a liberty. His great powers, his masterly manner, and the experience which I had had of his many extraordinary qualities, all made me distrustful and backward in crossing him.

Yet upon that afternoon, whether it was the because which I had taken with my lunch, or the additional exasperation produced by the extreme deliberation of his manner, I suddenly felt that I could hold out no longer.

"Which is it to-day?" I asked—"morphine or cocaine?"

He raised his eyes languidly from the old black-letter volume which he had opened. "It is cocaine," he said, "a serum per coat solution. Would you care to try it?"

"No, indeed," I answered, bravely. "My constitution has not got over the Afghan campaign yet. I cannot afford to throw any extra strain upon it."

He smiled at my vehemence. "Perhaps you are right, Watson," he said. "I suppose that its influence is physiologically a bad one. I find it, however, so transcendently stimulating and clarifying to the mind that its secondary action is a matter of small moment."

"But consider!" I said, earnestly. "Count the cost! Your brain may, as you say, be roused and excited, but it is a pathological and morbid process, which involves increased tissue-change and may at last leave a permanent weakness. You know, too, what a black reaction comes upon you, surely the game is hardly worth the candle. Why should you, for a mere passing pleasure, risk the loss of those great powers with which you have been endowed? Remember that I speak not only as one comrade to another, but as a medical man to one for whom constitution he is to some extent answerable."

He did not seem offended. On the contrary, he put his finger-tips together and leaned his elbows on the arms of his chair, like one who has a relish for conversation.

"My mind," he said, "rebels at stagnation. Give me problems, give me work, give me the most abstruse cryptogram or the most intricate analysis, and I am in my own proper atmosphere. I can dispense then with artificial stimulants. But I abhor the dull routine of existence. I crave for mental excitation. That is why I have chosen my own particular profession—or rather created it, for I am the only one in the world."

"The only unofficial detective?" I said, raising my eyebrows.

cases of my methods of work in the Jackson Hope case.

"Yes, indeed," said I, cordially. "I was never so struck by anything in my life. I even embodied it in a small brochure with the somewhat fantastic title of 'A Study in Scarlet.'"

He shook his head sadly. "I glanced over it," said he. "Honestly, I cannot congratulate you upon it. Detection is, or ought to be, an exact science, and emotionalism is its enemy. You have attempted to tinge it with romanticism, which produces much the same effect as if you worked a love story or an elopement into the fifth proposition of Euclid."

"But the romance was there," I remonstrated. "I could not tamper with the facts."

"Some facts should be suppressed, or at least a just sense of proportion should be observed in treating them. The only point in the case which deserved mention was the curious analytical reasoning from effects to causes by which I succeeded in unravelling it."

I was annoyed at this criticism of a work which had been specially designed to please him. I confessed, too, that I was irritated by the egotism which seemed to demand that every line of my pamphlet should be devoted to his own special doings. More than once during the years that I had lived with him in Baker Street I had observed that a small vanity underlay my companion's quiet and didactic manner. I made no remark, however, but set nursing my wounded leg. I had had a Jessal bullet through it sometime before, and though it did not prevent me from walking, it ached wearily at every change of the weather.

"My practice has extended recently to the continent," said Holmes, after awhile, filling his old briar-root pipe. "I was consulted last week by Francois Le Villard, who, as you probably know, has come rather to the front lately in the French detective service. He has all the Celtic power of quick intuition, but he is deficient in the wide range of exact knowledge which is essential to the higher developments of his art. The case was concerned with a will, and possessed some features of interest. He had observed for him two parallel cases, the one at Riga in 1897, and the other at St. Louis in 1871, which have suggested to him the true solution. Here is the letter which I had this morning, acknowledging my assistance." He tossed over, as he spoke, a crumpled sheet of foreign newspaper. I glanced my eyes at it, catching a profusion of notes of admiration, his old briar-root pipe. "I was consulted last week by Francois Le Villard, who, as you probably know, has come rather to the front lately in the French detective service. He has all the Celtic power of quick intuition, but he is deficient in the wide range of exact knowledge which is essential to the higher developments of his art. The case was concerned with a will, and possessed some features of interest. He had observed for him two parallel cases, the one at Riga in 1897, and the other at St. Louis in 1871, which have suggested to him the true solution. Here is the letter which I had this morning, acknowledging my assistance." He tossed over, as he spoke, a crumpled sheet of foreign newspaper. I glanced my eyes at it, catching a profusion of notes of admiration, his old briar-root pipe.

"He speaks as a pupil to his master," said I.

"Oh, he rates my assistance too highly," said Sherlock Holmes, lightly. "He has considerable gifts himself. He possesses two out of the three qualities necessary for the ideal detective. He has the power of observation and that of deduction. He is only wanting in knowledge; and that may come in time. He is now translating my small works into French."

"Your works?"

"Oh, didn't you know?" he cried, laughing. "Yes, I have been guilty of several monographs. They are all upon technical subjects. Here, for example, is one 'Upon the Distinction Between the Ashes of the Various Tobaccoes.' In it I enumerate a hundred and forty forms of cigar, cigarette and pipe tobacco, with colored plates illustrating the difference in the ash. It is a point which is continually turning up in criminal trials, and which is sometimes of supreme importance as a clue. If you can say definitely, for example, that some murder has been done by a man who was smoking an Indian tankah, it obviously narrows your field of search. To the trained eye there is as much difference between the black ash of a Turkish pipe and the white ash of a bird's-eye as there is between a cabbage and a potato."

"You have an extraordinary genius for minutiae," I remarked.

impulse upon my part, and I have mentioned it to no one."

"It is simplicity itself," he remarked, chuckling at my surprise—"so absurdly simple that an explanation is superfluous and yet it may serve to define the limits of observation and of deduction. Observation tells me that you have a little reddish mould adhering to your instep. Just opposite the Geyser street office they have taken up the pavement and thrown up some earth which lies in such a way that it is difficult to avoid treading in it as entering. The earth in this particular reddish tint which is found, as far as I know, nowhere else in the neighborhood. So much is observation. The rest is deduction."

"How, then, did you deduce the telegram?"

"Why, of course I knew that you had not written a letter, since I sat opposite to you all morning. I see also in your pocket there that you have a sheet of stamps and a thick bundle of post-cards. What could you go into the post office for, then, but to send a wire? Eliminate all other factors, and the one which remains must be the truth."

"In this case it certainly is so," I replied, after a little thought. "The thing, however, is, as you say, of the simplest. Would you think me important if I were to put your theories to a more severe test?"

"On the contrary," he answered, "it would prevent me from taking a second dose of cocaine. I should be delighted to look into any problem which you might submit to me."

"I have heard you say that it is difficult for a man to have any object in his mind without leaving the impress of his individuality upon it in such a way that a trained observer might read it. Now, I have here a watch which has recently come into my possession. Would you have the kindness to let me have an opinion upon the character or habits of the late owner?"

I handed him over the watch, with some slight feeling of amusement in my heart, for the test was, as I thought, an impossible one, and I intended it as a joke against the somewhat dogmatic tone which he occasionally assumed. He balanced the watch in his hand, gazed hard at the dial, opened

the back, and examined the works, first with his naked eye and then with a powerful convex lens. I could hardly keep from smiling at his earnest face when he finally snapped the case to and handed it back.

"There are hardly any data," he remarked. "The watch has been recently cleaned, which robs me of my most sensitive facts."

"I was cleaned before," I answered. "It was my heart I accused my companion of putting forward a most lame and impotent excuse to cover his failure. What data could be expected from an uncleaned watch?"

"Though unscientific my research has not been entirely barren," he observed, staring up at the ceiling with dreamy, look-luster eyes. "Subject to your correction, I should judge that the watch belongs to your elder brother, who inherited it from your father."

"That you gather, no doubt, from the H. W. upon the back?"

"But it was not more guess work?"

"No, not I sever guess. It is a shocking habit—destructive to the logical faculty. What comes strange to you is only so because you do not follow my train of thought or observe the small facts upon which large inferences may depend. For example, I began by stating that your brother was careless. When you observe the lower part of that watch case you notice that it is not only dented in two places, but it is not marked all over from the habit of looping other hand objects, such as coins or keys, in the same pocket. Surely it is no great feat to assume that a man who treats a fifty-guinea watch so cavalierly must be a careless man. Neither is it a very far-fetched inference that a man who inherits one article of such value is pretty well provided for in other respects."

I nodded to show that I followed his reasoning.

"It is very customary for pawn-brokers in England, when they take a watch, to scratch the number of the ticket with a pin point upon the inside of the case. It is more likely than the label, as there is no risk of the number being lost or transposed. There are no less than four such numbers visible to my lens on the inside of this case. Inference—that your brother was often at low water marks—has been deduced from the had occasional lapses of propriety, or he could not have accepted the pledge. Finally, I ask you to look at the inner plate, which contains the buy-back. Look at the ornaments of scratches all round the hole—marks where the key has slipped. What other man's key could have scored those grooves? But you will never see a dented watch without them. He winds it at night, and he leaves the traces of his midnight hour. There is the mystery in all this."

"It is clear as daylight," I answered. "I regret the injustice which I did you. I should have had more faith in your marvelous faculty. May I ask whether you have any professional inquiry on foot at present?"

"None. Hence the cocaine. I cannot live without brain work. What else is there to live for? Stand at the window here. Was there ever such a dreary, dismal, unprofitable world? How the yellow fog swirls down the street and drifts across sun-colored houses. What could be more hopelessly grimy and material? What is the use of having powers, doctor, when one has no field upon which to exert them? Crime is commonplace and aimless in those which are commonplace have any function upon earth."

I had opened my mouth to reply to this tirade, when, with a grip knock, our landlady entered, holding a card upon the brass salver.

"A young lady for you," she said, addressing my companion.

"Miss Mary Morstan," he read. "Hail! I have no recollection of the name. Ask the young lady to step up, Mrs. Hudson. Don't go, doctor. I shall prefer that you remain."

CHAPTER II.

THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE.

Miss Morstan entered the room with a firm step and an outward composure of manner. She was a blonde young lady, small, dainty, well-groomed, and dressed in the most perfect taste. There was, however, a plainness and simplicity about her costume which bore with it a suggestion of limited means. The dress was a somber grayish beige, trimmed with unbranded and she wore a small turban of the same dull blue color, with a single plume of white feathers in the side. Her face had neither regularity of feature nor beauty of complexion, but her expression was sweet and amiable, and her large blue eyes were singularly spiritual and sympathetic. In an experience of women which extends over many nations and three separate continents, I have never looked upon a face which gave a closer promise of a refined and sensitive nature. I could not but observe that as she took the seat which Sherlock Holmes placed for her, her lip trembled, her hand quivered, and she showed every sign of intense inward agitation.

"I have come to you, Mr. Holmes," she said, "because you once enabled my employer, Mrs. Cecil Forrester, to

up her gloved hand to detain me. "If your friend," she said, "would be good enough to stop, he might be of inestimable service to me."

I related into my chair. "The facts are these: My father was an officer in an Indian regiment who sent me home when I was quite a child. My mother was dead, and I had no relative in England. I was placed, however, in a comfortable boarding establishment at Edinburgh, and there I remained until I was seventeen years of age. In the year 1878 my father, who was senior captain of his regiment, obtained twelve months' leave and came home. He telegraphed to me from London that he had arrived all safe, and directed me to come down at once, giving the Langham hotel as his address. His message, as I remember, was full of kindness and love. On reaching London I drove to the Langham, and was informed that Capt. Morstan was staying there, but that he had gone out the night before and had not returned. I waited all day without news of him. That night, on the advice of the manager of the hotel, I communicated with the police, and next morning we advertised in all the papers. Our inquiries led to no result; and from that day to this no word has ever been heard of my unfortunate father. He came home with his heart full of hope, to find some peace, some comfort, and to find that he had been deceived, and that his father and a checking stop short the sentence.

"The date?" asked Holmes, opening his notebook.

"He disappeared upon the 24 of December, 1878—nearly ten years ago."

"He is a soldier," he said.

"Only one that we know of—Major Sholto, of his own regiment, the Thirtieth Bombay Infantry. The major had retired some little time before, and lived at Upper Norwood. We communicated with him, of course, but he did not even know that his brother existed in England."

"A singular case," remarked Holmes.

"I have not yet described to you the most singular part. About ten years ago—to be exact, upon the 4th of May, 1888—an advertisement appeared in the Times asking for the address of Miss Mary Morstan, and stating that it would be to her advantage to come forward. There was no name or address appended. I had at that time just entered the family of Mrs. Cecil Forrester in the capacity of governess. By her advice I published my address in the advertisement column. The same day there arrived through the post a small cardboard box addressed to me, which I found to contain a very large and lustrous pearl. Since then, every year, upon the same date, there has always appeared a similar box, containing a similar pearl, without any clue as to the sender. They have been pronounced by an expert to be of a rare variety and of considerable value. You can see for yourself that they are very like the one which I had over here."

"Your statement is most interesting," said Sherlock Holmes. "Has anything else occurred to you?"

"Yes, and no later than to-day. That is why I have come to you. This morning I received this letter, which you will perhaps read for yourself."

"Thank you," said Holmes. "The envelope, please. Forrester, London, S. W., dated July 7. Hum! Hum! Hum! thumbprint on corner—probably your man. Best quality paper. Envelopes of such a nature. Particular man in his stationery. No address. 'Be at the Lyceum theater to-night at seven o'clock. If you are distressed, bring two friends. You are a wronged woman, and shall have justice. Do not bring police. If you do, all will be vain. Your old friend.' Well, really, this is a very pretty little mystery. What do you intend to do, Miss Morstan?"

"That is exactly what I want to ask you."

"Then we shall meet certainly go. You and I—and you, why, Dr. Watson is the very man. Your correspondent says two friends. He and I have worked together before."

"That would be come?" she asked, with a pleading appeal in her voice and expression.

away, standing at the window, I watched her walking bravely down the street, until the gray turban and white feather were but a speck in the amber crowd.

"What a very attractive woman!" I exclaimed, turning to my companion.

"He has in his eye again, and was leaning back with a dreamy smile. "Is she?" he said, languidly. "I did not observe."

"You really are an automaton—an calculating machine!" I cried. "There is something positively inhuman in you at times."

He smiled gently. "It is of the first importance," he said, "not to allow your judgment to be biased by personal qualities. A client is to man more a factor in a problem. The emotional qualities are antagonistic to clear reasoning. I assure you that the most winning woman I ever knew was hanged for poisoning three little children for their insurance money, and the most repellent man of my acquaintance is a philanthropist who has spent nearly a quarter of a million upon the London poor."

"In this case, however—"

"I never make exceptions. An exception disproves the rule. Have you ever had occasion to study character in handwriting? What do you make of this fellow's scribble?"

"It is legible and regular," I answered. "A man of business habits and some force of character."

"Holmes shook his head. "Look at his long letters," he said. "They hardly rise above the common herd. That I might be an a, and that I am a. Men of character always differentiate their long letters, however illegible they may write. There is a stiffness in his 'r's and self-esteem in his capitals. I am going out now. I have some few references to make. Let me recommend this book—one of the most remarkable ever printed. It is Winwood Reade's 'Martyrdom of Man.' I shall be back in an hour."

I sat in the window with the volume in my hand, but my thoughts were far

from the daring speculations of the writer. My mind ran upon our late visitor—her smile, the deep red tinge of her veins, the strange mystery which overhung her life. If she were evened at the time of her father's disappearance, she must be seven-and-twenty now—a sweet age, when a young girl has lost the self-consciousness and become a little sobered by experience. So I said to myself, and with such dangerous thoughts came into my head that I hurried away to my desk and plunged furiously into the latest treatise upon pathology. What was I, an army surgeon with a weak leg and a weaker brain, to think of such things? She was a unit, a factor, nothing more. If my future were black, it was better surely to face it like a man than to attempt to brighten it by mere will-o'-the-wisp of the imagination.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.

Time to Return.

Stratford Landing.

AN EDITORIAL COMMENT.

Of What the Legislature Has Done.

The following view of the work of the past Legislature is from the pen of an able and experienced legislator, and is a very interesting and valuable contribution to the public mind.

"It is possible to argue that, at times, measures are proposed, for instance, when there are so many options that a general compromise is necessary. But even there should not permit the legislature, not to my knowledge, to hold its hand. It is in the hands of the people that the success of the government is to be found."

The school children are poorer for the work of this Legislature. Less money than they have been having, will be left when the large appropriations to other objects (and many and contributing for law to the common good) have been drawn out. And the Treasury, already \$200,000 behind, will probably be a great deal further in arrears when the next Assembly convenes from the people, to succeed that which now faces them.

A law was made to let the public printing to the lowest bidder; but when a firm of the wrong political affiliation made the lowest bid, it was given to another firm. This standard is not clearly the way to get out of the difficulty. The voter in the legislature to the State College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts and the Normal and Industrial School was not far from the mark, as were the necessary buildings and other equipments, which, when they are not in the State, it is fair to grant, may be made.

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