



A Case of Identity

Date of the Adventure (Date of Hosmer Angel's disappearance)

Clues:

1. The story was published in September 1891
2. There is a reference to the King of Bohemia and Irene Adler
3. A Scandal in Bohemia occurred in late March 1889
4. Holmes said to Watson, "I forgot that I had not seen you for some weeks."
5. In The Final Problem Watson says "... in the year 1890 there were only three cases of which I retain any record", and Zeisler claims they were The Adventure of the Copper Beeches, the Boscombe Valley Mystery, and The Adventure of the Dying Detective.
6. The Final Problem was the only case in 1891
7. Holmes says, "Your wedding was arranged ... for ... Friday" to which Mary Sutherland replies "Yes, sir, ..."
8. Mary Sutherland's advertisement in the newspaper read "Missing on the morning of the fourteenth, ..."
9. June was the only month in 1889 in the months of April to December on which the 14th fell on Friday.

Conclusions:

- A. 1 implies it was before September 1891
- B. 2, 3, and 4 imply it was late April 1889 or later
- C. 5 implies it was not 1890
- D. 6 implies it was not 1891
- E. A, B, C, and D imply it was late April or later in 1889
- F. 7 and 8 imply that Hosmer Angel disappeared on Friday the 14th
- G. E, F, and 9 imply it was Friday, June 14, 1889

Hosmer Angel disappeared on Friday, June 14, 1889

Vocabulary Words

- *outré* – weird, unusual
- bald – undisguised; plain
- platitudes – trite or banal statements; clichés
- fur boa – long, round fur scarf
- Duchess of Devonshire fashion – fashion shown in Gainsborough’s famous painting of the Duchess where she is wearing a large black hat and feathers tilted at a 45-degree angle
- panoply - a complete or magnificent covering
- *affaire de coeur* – love affair
- bell wire – wire that operates the doorbell
- boy in buttons – uniformed boy who cleans boots, runs errands, etc.
- pilot boat – small boat that guides larger boats in and out of port
- Sunday-school treat – church picnic
- purple plush – soft, thick, purple fabric
- chaffed – made fun of in a good natured way; teased
- quinsy – severe inflammation of the throat, tonsillitis
- the Testament – the New Testament of the Christian Bible
- hansom – two-wheeled, one horse carriage seating two with the driver mounted behind and reins going over the roof of the hood; invented by J. A. Hansom, a Yorkshire architect who patented the cab in 1834
- four-wheeler – a four-wheeled cab
- the box – driver’s seat
- shilling – one-twentieth of a pound
- muff – a tube of fur used to keep the hands warm in cold weather
- claret – dry red wine produced in the Bordeaux region of France
- counsellor – advisor
- languor – lack of physical or mental energy; listlessness
- pince-nez – eyeglasses which pinch the nose and have no ear pieces
- sallow – sickly yellowish hue or complexion
- side-whiskers – sideburns
- frock-coat – knee-length, double-breasted coat; a gentleman’s ordinary daytime costume
- waistcoat – vest



- Albert chain – a watch-chain made of heavy links, named for Queen Victoria’s husband, Prince Albert, who wore such a chain
- Harris tweed – extremely durable woolen garment usually with a checked or herringbone pattern
- gaiters – covering for the ankle and lower leg
- Balzac — Honore de Balzac (1799-1850) French novelist whose best known work is The Human Comedy
- superscription – the address and date of written at the top of a letter
- breach of promise – failure to fulfill a promise to marry
- demeanour – way in which a person behaves
- singular – beyond what is ordinary or usual; remarkable
- dénouement – final outcome
- pungent – penetrating, biting, or caustic
- sideboard – a piece of dining room furniture having drawers and shelves for linens and tableware
- sidled – moved in an unobtrusive, furtive, or suspicious way
- amiable – good-natured and likable
- restive – uneasily impatient
- connivance – scheming; plotting
- cumbrous – cumbersome
- hunting crop – short whip used to make a horse run faster
- *voilà tout* – French for “That is all!”
- Hafiz – Shams-ud-din Mohammed, 14th century Persian poet
- Horace – Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65 B.C. to 8 B.C.), Roman poet second only to Virgil

Open Questions

1. When Mary Sutherland offered to type her letters to Hosmer Angel, “ ... he wouldn’t have that, for he said that when (Mary) wrote them they seemed to come from (her), but when they were typewritten he always felt that the machine had come between (them).” Why didn’t Mary ask that Hosmer write his letters too? And what would Hosmer say if she had asked?

Mary Sutherland wasn’t the brightest woman alive.

2. Why didn’t Holmes tell Mary Sutherland the truth after he had uncovered her step father’s plot? Didn’t he owe it to her as his client? Moreover, by not telling her, wasn’t Holmes playing into Windibank’s hand?

Yes, he was derelict in his duty towards his client. Holmes might have wanted to let Windibank go from crime to crime until he got into serious difficulty and, by letting this crime pass unnoticed, would make that more likely.

3. How could Holmes be sure that Windibank would “rise from crime to crime until he (did) something very bad, and (ended) up on a gallows”? If that were so, wouldn’t every petty criminal eventually be hanged?

He must have known more about Windibank than he let Watson know.

Simple Quiz

1. What was Hosmer Angel's relationship to Mary Sutherland? He was her
 - a. employer
 - b. step father
 - c. brother-in-law
 - d. none of the above
2. Holmes's client in the story was
 - a. Hosmer Angel
 - b. Mary Sutherland
 - c. James Windibank
 - d. none of the above
3. On Mary Sutherland's wedding day, her fiancé
 - a. was kidnapped
 - b. disappeared
 - c. was arrested
 - d. none of the above

Intermediate Quiz

1. Where did Mary Sutherland first meet Hosmer Angel?
 - a. at a church service
 - b. at the Gasfitters' Ball
 - c. at the plumbing office where her father had worked
 - d. none of the above
2. Where were Mary Sutherland and Hosmer Angel to have been married?
 - a. St. Pancras Church
 - b. St. Paul's Cathedral
 - c. St. Saviour's Church
 - d. none of the above
3. What part of a woman's clothing did Holmes advise Watson to look at first?
 - a. her hat
 - b. her shoes
 - c. her sleeve
 - d. none of the above
4. What part of a man's clothing did Holmes advise Watson to look at first?
 - a. his hat
 - b. the knee of his trouser
 - c. his shirt cuff
 - d. none of the above

Advanced Quiz

1. What was the principal of Mary Sutherland's inheritance?
 - a. £1,000
 - b. £2,000
 - c. £2,500
 - d. none of the above
2. Where did Mary Sutherland's Uncle Ned live?
 - a. Australia
 - b. New Zealand
 - c. South Africa
 - d. none of the above
3. Which one of the following was NOT a problem for Hosmer Angel?
 - a. quinsy
 - b. swollen glands
 - c. weak eyes
 - d. weak legs
4. What was the color of the ink that stained Mary Sutherland's forefinger?
 - a. black
 - b. blue
 - c. violet
 - d. none of the above

Answers to the Quizzes

Question	1	2	3	4
Simple	b	b	b	xx
Intermediate	b	c	c	b
Advanced	c	b	d	c
