



## The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

### Adventure XI -- The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb

Are Stark and Elsie just counterfeiters who happen to be German, or are they German agents who are flooding Britain with bogus money? Exactly what is the nature of their “clever gang?”

After speaking German with Stark, a.k.a. Fritz, why — in the heat of the moment, no less — does Elsie suddenly switch to English? “‘Fritz! Fritz!’ she cried in English, ‘remember your promise after the last time.’”

Who drove the coach? Elsie? Mr. Ferguson?  
Some other cohort?

About that thumb: Victor wasn't hanging by his thumbs, he says he was hanging by his hands, which, as Paget illustrates, means he was holding onto the sill with his fingers. His thumbs were below the top of the sill, angling away from the palm. It would be easier for Stark to chop the fingers, rather than reaching out and below the sill to chop the thumb. The thumb would need to be placed on the sill after it was chopped off, where the firemen found it, because it couldn't have been up on the sill during the attack.



About that same Paget illustration: The weapon Stark is holding is the Mother of All Meat Cleavers. More of a halberd than a kitchen utensil. If somebody came at me with one of those, I'd be in the next county in an instant. Sorry, Victor, but only a dummy would just hang there.

The next Paget illustration shows, from left to right: a partially-obscured man in an overcoat and top hat, Holmes, Inspector Bradstreet, Watson, and the station master. Is the partially-obscured man supposed to be Victor, or is he the plainclothes officer who accompanied Bradstreet? If he's Victor, he went home and changed clothes. Would a plainclothes officer wear a top hat? And how come Bradstreet is in uniform? I can't recall Lestrade being in uniform in other stories.

**Sonia Fetherston**

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