



## The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes

### Adventure XX – The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual

As we launch another reading of *The Musgrave Ritual*, a personal favorite of many Hounds, I offer the following observations:

What is Holmes doing sitting there with a **hundred** Boxer cartridges? Surely it takes fewer than 20 shots to perforate a “V.R.” on the wall! Has any Hound actually duplicated Holmes’ tracing of the queen’s initials? How many bullets did it require?

Maybe SH is prey to emotions akin to love after all! Notice the “tender, caressing sort of way” with which he handles his case files. And exactly how does Holmes know that “a man always finds it hard to realize that he may have finally lost a woman’s love?” Hope for the Russellites after all?

Why were the county police summoned by Holmes prior to raising the stone? Wouldn’t that unnecessarily hold up his investigation while they were summoned? Was Holmes so untried that he needed their comforting presence? Remember, he didn’t actually know, at that point, that a crime had been committed. If it was only their added brute strength that was required to help lift the stone, couldn’t some of the Musgrave staff (like the gardeners or gamekeepers) be pressed into service?



Rachel tossed evidence into the mere, and Holmes said the items thrown in were “the last trace of her crime.” But what of the other traces of Brunton’s death: the piled up wood, the cravat, and the body itself? If Rachel was a criminal, she was a sloppy one. Can we cut her some slack?

How did the crown of the Stuarts, placed in a box and undisturbed for 200-odd years, become bent and twisted out of its original shape? Even the damaged Beryl Coronet still looked crown-like, but the description of the Stuart crown bears no resemblance to anything a king might have worn. And how did the gold become almost black? Gold doesn't tarnish, does it? This surely was no crown! So what was it, then?

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