

A Case of Abduction -- A Sherlock Holmes Short Mystery

by Thomas McGuire

The following short story was e-mailed to us by the author, Thomas McGuire, with the request that we publish it on our web site. We are always ready to offer talented Sherlockians a vehicle through which they might expose their creations.

We have published Mr. McGuire's story just as he transmitted it to us with only minor editing. Thanks for the contribution, Mr. McGuire

Holmes and I were returning to our rooms on a steaming August afternoon in 1885 after enjoying a cool pint at Stalworth's pub, when a boy of about twelve approached us in a very agitated state.

He was dirty and poorly clad. I attempted to chase him away.

"Mr. 'Olmes!" he cried out.

"I know this boy Watson," Holmes acknowledged.

"Mr. 'Olmes, do you remember me sir?"

"You're Simpson, second to Wiggins in charge of the Baker Street Irregulars!"

"Right you are sir. I need to speak to you on an urgent matter!"

"What is it Simpson?"

"It's like this Mr. 'Olmes, Wiggins has gone missing!"

"What do you mean Simpson?"

"He has disappeared sir, not to be found!"

"When did this happen?" Holmes asked.

"Two days ago. Sometimes he goes to Covent Garden to see some mates, but he hasn't come back. Can you 'elp us?"

"I can certainly try Simpson!"

Holmes said putting his hand on the boy's shoulder, "Can you give me any more information?"

"Other than 'im disappearin' after he started out for Covent Garden, I don't 'ave any." He paused for a moment. "Now that I think about it Mr. 'Olmes, there was a bloke 'angin around that seemed to be watchin' us lot for a day or two!"

"Simpson," Holmes said, "I believe I will have a solution to your problem by tomorrow morning!"

Simpson scurried away to tell his mates.

For life of me I could not see why Holmes would offer such hope on scant information.

"I say Holmes, do you think you should offer him false hope. You have told me on several occasions that you never guess!"

"I assure you Watson, I am not guessing. I believe I can confirm who the culprit is that kidnapped Wiggins!"

"If it is that serious Holmes, what do we do?"

"We are off to Scotland Yard Watson!"

Holmes waved down a passing cab and ordered all speed with a promise of a large gratuity.

Upon arrival we immediately saw Inspector Gregson.

"Gregson, do you recall that larcenist and moral degenerate I assisted you in imprisoning about six months ago. Masterson is his name I believe!"

"It's strange you should come at this time Mr. Holmes. Just four days ago Masterson escaped from prison. I meant to inform you, but we have been up to our necks in other, more pressing matters." Holmes leaped to his feet. "Good heavens Gregson, let us hope your failure to inform me has not cost the life of an innocent boy. Good day!"

"Now that it has been brought up Holmes," I mentioned. "I seem to remember this Masterson fellow. A brutish man that you gave damning testimony against resulting his conviction!"

"Correct Watson, what you might not remember, is that I employed Wiggins in my investigation. His disappearance and Masterson's escape, I believe, are more than a coincidence. Wiggins may have been abducted by him to get at me."

Upon arrival at our rooms we found a note under the door.

Holmes scanned it quickly.

"Just as I feared Watson, read it for yourself!"

"Dear Mr. Holmes. I have your informer Wiggins. I am quite angry with the boy, but it is you I want. Meet me tonight at ten at the Black and Tan Pub in Covent Garden and take a table in the rear of the room. Destroy this message, do not inform the police, come alone and unarmed. You for the boy, don't look for me, I will find you!"

The note was unsigned.

"What ever will you do Holmes?" I gasped.

"I shall have to keep our rendezvous Watson!"

"Surely you don't mean to give into this kidnapper's demands?" I pleaded.

"Certainly not Watson, listen closely, I have a plan . . ."

Holmes kept his appointment at the pub.

He took a table in the back as instructed.

At about ten past the hour, a rather large, sinister looking man walked up to Holmes' table, sat down and began to speak.

"I see you came Mr. Holmes, no police I trust?"

"Not a policeman within sight Masterson, I assure you! Where is

the boy? I am ready to make the exchange!"

"Not to worry Mr. Holmes, he's in the back. Stand up and walk ahead of me through that door to your left. I've got a revolver in my coat pocket, so no tricks!"

The two of them rose to leave the table.

Just as Masterson stepped behind Holmes, a fellow in his cups, staggered up behind Masterson, fell upon him and mumbled almost incoherently, "Hello mate, buy a chap a drink?"

Masterson reached back and pushed the stranger to the floor, "Back off me, you bloody sot!"

At that moment Holmes spun around and brought his cane down on Masterson's head.

There was a sharp crack and Masterson appearing only stunned, drew his pistol and turned toward Holmes.

The stranger, still on the floor drew a pistol from his coat.

"Drop that gun Masterson, or I shoot!"

Masterson turned toward him and aimed his revolver.

Again Holmes struck him upon his pate, a shot rang out and a bullet from Masterson's revolver embedded itself in the floor at the

stranger's feet who fired back and struck his assailant just above the right knee.

He collapsed in a heap.

Seconds after the shots, police officers charged in from both the front and rear entrances.

Masterson was dragged away, no doubt to a prison cell he would not escape from again.

Holmes, along with Inspector Gregson searched the back rooms and found Wiggins bound and gagged.

Gregson promised to see he was returned to his friends.

Holmes returned to the pub and found the stranger who aided him sitting at a table.

"Watson, I think you missed your calling as an actor!"

"Thank you Holmes," said I, "That plan of yours was excellent. However I nearly did get shot you know!"

Holmes, in a rare act of affection put his arm about my shoulder,

"Nonsense my dear fellow! Any plan is only as good as those who make it work. Shall we have a pint before returning to our rooms?"

"I should like to have more than one if you don't mind!" I replied.