



## The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes

### Adventure XXII -- The Adventure of Crooked Man

This is another story in which Watson drops everything to go to assist his friend, writes Charlotte Anne Walters.

Holmes turns up at Watson's house late one summer's evening and asks to stay. He expresses his desire that Watson travel with him to Aldershot the following day to assist in the case he is working on. Watson enthusiastically agrees to both requests, despite it being clear from Holmes' deduction that the doctor has a heavy workload at that time. Once again he passes off his poor patients onto a fellow doctor so that he can go on the adventure. And what a strange little adventure it proves to be.

I have recently re-read my novel (how on earth I found the time with things being so manic at work and all this blogging is impossible to say) and I was concerned about a latter few chapters which are arguably rather 'romantic' in theme. Though none-Holmes readers will probably think nothing of this, I have been concerned that the more traditional Holmes fan base will not take to it and prefer instead action, crime etc. But then, having just read the Crooked Man it has occurred to me that most of the original Holmes stories involve love in one form or another. Here again we have a story about a woman who believes the person she really loves to be dead so marries another, only to discover years later that he is alive and her husband had a hand in her lover's fate.



A bit like the American, Hatty Doran, in the Noble Bachelor, who thought her first lover had died and is shocked to see him in the front pew on her wedding day to Lord St Simon.

Clearly love played a massive part in the short stories which we all know and love so well. As love is the foundation of our lives in one form or another, I really shouldn't worry about the fact that it plays its part in the life of the character I have created in my novel. And besides, it's only a few chapters out of twenty-two which are pacey and full of action so surely that will be ok? Won't it?

Back to the crooked man who suddenly sees the woman he loved and wanted to marry in his youth in India, before another suitor set him up and led him into a rebel ambush. After revealing the truth to her out in the street, he follows her home and walks in on her arguing with her husband about the matter. Upon seeing the man he thought was long dead, the husband suffers a seizure and dies instantly, banging his head on the fender on the way down. The man flees and everything points to murder by the wife, but Holmes cleverly unravels the truth. However, he does not reveal all to the police and exercises his own judgement on the matter. It becomes clear to the police anyway that the man died of natural causes.

The story is another example of Holmes solving a problem for its own sake, not for glory, money or reputation. And poor Watson's patients pay the price yet again.

**8 out of 10.**

**Charlotte Anne Walters**

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