



The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure XXIII -- The Adventure of Resident Patient

Watson sits in the rooms at 221B on a rainy day in October longing to go on a holiday which he can't afford. I'm not surprised he's skint considering the way he abandons his patients to chase off after Holmes at every opportunity, writes Charlotte Anne Walters.

Holmes shocks Watson at the start by seeming to read his mind, and it is rather brilliant that by just observing where his friend looks in the room, how he raises a hand to his old war wound, and the movement of his eyebrows, Holmes knows what he is thinking. Not only is this a fantastic demonstration of the method which Holmes uses to reach his conclusions and the unusual way he sees the world, but also how very well he knows his only friend. He also seems to sense that Watson is in a 'Brown study' and suggests they go for an evening walk together which lifts Watson from his unhappiness. Sherlock Holmes can actually be rather sweet when he wants to be.



Upon returning from their evening walk, the two friends find a visitor waiting for them by the name of Dr Percy Trevelyan. I do sympathise with this young man's story. He is a very skilled young man who excelled at university but is not of wealthy birth and therefore cannot jump the queue to success and buy all the trappings he needs to become a successful doctor, such as impressive premises, horse and carriage etc. So instead he resolves to start small and perhaps in ten years have earned enough to set up as a specialist in his chosen field.

I have known many young people in this position who have turned up at my office door looking for retail work because they needed to earn some money before continuing with studies or doing unpaid work experience in the profession they aspire to. Other young people seem to have the resources to do what they need to without these diversions and this does often seem unfair. Fortunately, in my role as manager of a temp agency I am able to help a little but the work isn't fantastically paid and I have known many a gifted young person who has had to give up their dreams and take full-time retail work because they simply can't carry on any longer without a full time wage.

So I really like Dr Trevelyan and understand the sense of elation he must have felt when a wealthy patron, Mr Blessington, comes forward to offer assistance and make all his dreams come true. That's what I need, someone to step forward out of the shadows to make my dreams of being a full time writer come true.

Hurrah then for Mr Blessington but what a shame he lands up dead, and am I the only person left wondering what will become of the poor young doctor now that his funding has been cut off?

Mr Blessington was clearly afraid for his life but wouldn't tell Holmes the truth about his past on his first visit, prompting Holmes to simply walk away from the case. I wonder if perhaps, Holmes should have felt some guilt therefore when the man was murdered that very night? Perhaps if he had tried a bit harder to extract the truth a tragedy could have been avoided? But then as he was such a scoundrel in his past anyway, perhaps Holmes felt as if justice had been done.

Everything points to suicide but Holmes' brilliant deduction at the scene – very CSI – particularly involving the cigar ash, leads to a very conclusive verdict of murder and the truth about Blessington's past being comprehensively revealed.

I really enjoyed returning to this story and will happily give it 8 out of 10.

Charlotte Anne Walters

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