

A STUDY GUIDE TO SHERLOCK HOLMES

By William S. Dorn



His Last Bow
Adventure XLI -- The
Adventure of Wisteria Lodge

WISTERIA LODGE
DATE OF THE ADVENTURE*
(Date when Miss Burnet escaped)

CLUES:

1. Watson says, “ ... it was a bleak and windy day toward the end of March in the year 1892.” (869)
2. Mr. Baynes says, “There was rain about that time (1 am) ...” (875)
3. Watson says, “It was a cold, dark March evening (when he and Holmes arrived in Wisteria Lodge) with a sharp wind and a fine rain ...” (877)
4. Monday, March 21, 1892 produced rain, wind, and a temperature of 27°. [§]
5. On the day the case opened Gregson says, “ ... the events which led up to the death last night of Mr. Aloysius Garcia ...” (871)
6. Watson says, “ ... some five days after the crime, I opened my morning paper (to find the story of the arrest of the mulatto servant on the day before) ...” (880)
7. Watson says, “It was about five o’clock (on the day when he had read the report of the mulatto’s arrest) ... when an excited rustic rushed into our room.” (883)
8. The rustic (John Warner) reported that, “She (Miss Burnet) fought her way out (of the carriage) again. I ... got her into a cab, and here we are.” (884)

*The story may contain other clues to the date of the adventure. However, use only the clues shown here. Your only goal should be to use logical reasoning to find a date based on the clues shown here.

[§]Source: Christ, Jay Finley, *An Irregular Chronology of Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street* (The Fanlight House, Chicago, 1947) [Reprinted by Magico Magazine, P O Box 156, New York, NY 1983] p. 57

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. 1 implies it was March of 1892
- B. A, 3 and 4 imply that the case opened on Monday, March 21, 1892
- C. B and 5 imply that Garcia was murdered on Sunday, March 20, 1892
- D. C and 6 imply that it was on Friday, March 25, 1892 that Watson read the account of the mulatto's arrest
- E. D, 7 and 8 imply that Miss Burnet escaped on Friday, March 25, 1892.

Miss Burnet escaped on Friday, March 25, 1892

WISTERIA LODGE VOCABULARY WORDS

- audacity (870, 880) – **fearless daring**
pompous (870) – **excessive self-esteem or exaggerated dignity**
spats (870) – **cloth or leather gaiters covering the upper part of the shoes and the**
flurried (870) – confused
toilet (870) – **grooming**
waistcoat (871) – **a vest**
rueful (871) – **expressing sorrow or regret**
swarthy (872) – **dark complexioned**
tête-à-tête (872) – **private conversation between two persons**
taciturn (872) – **untalkative**
distract (872) – **inattentive or preoccupied**
villa (873) – **house in a middle-class suburb**
quarter-day (873) – **first day of each quarter, the day when rents were customarily due**
amiable (873) – **friendly and agreeable**
dog-grate (873) – **detached fire grate standing in a fireplace on supports that are called dogs**
baize (874) – **green cotton or woolen material imitating felt;**
querulous (874) – **complaining or fretful**
five-shilling (875) – **one-quarter of a British pound**
goggle eyes (878) – **bulging eyes**
wattles (878) – **fleshy, wrinkled, often brightly colored fold of skin hanging from the neck or throat of certain birds, such as chickens or turkeys**
au revoir (879) – **farewell**
spud (879) – **sharp spade-like tool used to dig out weeds**
abstraction (880) – **removal**
mulatto (880, 884, 887) – **person of mixed white and Black ancestry**
ambuscade (880) – **ambush**
remand (880) – **an order to send back to custody**

- Jacobean (882) – **built during the reign of James I of England**
prosaic (882) – **straightforward or unimaginative**
sapless (882) – **without spirit or energy**
whipcord (882) – **strong twisted or braided cord**
dog-whip (883) – **whip used for training dogs**
citadel (883) – **stronghold or fortified place**
nefarious (883) – **extremely wicked**
outhouse (883) – **building separated from the main building**
ardour (883) – **passion**
rustic (883) – **a crude or simple person**
aquiline (884) – **eagle-like**
emaciated (884) – **extremely thin as if starved**
emissary (884) – **agent sent on a mission to represent the
interests of someone else**
odious (884) – **deserving hatred or disgust**
insurgents (885) – **persons who oppose those in control**
blanched (885) – **turned pale**
pittance (885) – **extremely small amount of money**
despot (885) – **ruler with absolute power**
gorse bushes (886) – **bushes with fragrant yellow flowers and
black pod; also called furze**
assizes (887) – **trial sessions, civil or criminal, held periodically
in specific locations by a judge or court which moves
from place to place**
Nihilism (887) – **revolutionary movement of mid 19th-century
Russia that advocated the scorn of authority and
tradition and believed in changing society and
government through terrorism and assassination**
fetish (887) – **object believed to have magical or spiritual
powers**
reconnoitring (887) – **making an inspection of in order to
gather information**
piety (887) – **devotion and reverence**
astuteness (887) – **shrewdness**
propitiate (887) – **appease**

WISTERIA LODGE OPEN QUESTIONS

1. On page 874 Holmes said, “It (the note to Garcia) is a woman’s writing, ... but the address is either done with another pen or by someone else.” As it turns out, the address was written by one of the villains. Why didn’t Murillo and Lopez simply wait until Miss Burnet had written the address on the envelope before they bound and gagged her?

Murillo and Lopez made a mistake. The different handwriting on the envelope might have made Garcia suspicious and put him on his guard. Fortunately for them, and unfortunately for Garcia, it did not arouse Garcia’s suspicions.

2. Holmes says, “Their governess is a Miss Burnet, an English-woman of forty or thereabouts.” (882) On the next page, Holmes also says, “ ... Miss Burnet’s age and character make it certain that my first idea that there might be a love interest in our story is out of the question.” (883) Why did Holmes draw this last conclusion? Did he think that a 40-year-old English-woman could not be involved in a romance? Or did he have some other reason?

Holmes might have thought that romance was out of the question for a 40-year-old English woman. After all, Holmes had no experience in romance and left that to Watson. On the other hand, Holmes might have thought that romance was not a factor because Miss Burnet was English and the rest of the household was not.

3. On page 886 Miss Burnet says, “They had gagged me, ... until I gave him (Murillo) the address (of Wisteria Lodge)”. How did Miss Burnet manage to give Murillo the address while she was gagged?

Perhaps Miss Burnet was gagged with the hand of one of the men. The hand might have been periodically removed to give her a chance to speak. If she tried to cry out for help, the hand gag was returned.

4. On page 886 Miss Burnet also says, “ ... he might have twisted it (my arm) off had I understood what it would mean to Garcia.” What did Miss Burnet think they wanted Garcia’s address for if not to murder him?

At the time her arm was being twisted, Miss Burnet was obviously under great strain, both physical and emotional, and therefore might not have fully realized the consequences of revealing Garcia’s address. She is not the first person to reveal a secret under torture and later regret having done so.

WISTERIA LODGE SIMPLE QUIZ*

1. What happened to Aloysius Garcia in the story?
 - a. he was arrested for attempted murder
 - b. he was murdered
 - c. he disappeared
 - d. none of the above

2. What did Inspector Baynes show Holmes in the kitchen sink at Wisteria Lodge?
 - a. the limbs and body of a large, white bird
 - b. the inner organs of a slaughtered lamb
 - c. the skin of a snake
 - d. none of the above

3. What was the final fate of Don Murillo?
 - a. He and his secretary were murdered in Madrid
 - b. He was imprisoned for life
 - c. He was hanged at the Old Bailey
 - d. none of the above

* The Simple Quiz is designed to determine if the student has read the story. Anyone who has read the story through should have no trouble in completing this quiz. The Intermediate and Advanced Quizzes are more challenging.

**WISTERIA LODGE
INTERMEDIATE QUIZ[#]**

1. What was Senor Garcia's first name?
 - a. Aloysius
 - b. Jose
 - c. Manuel
 - d. none of the above

2. What was the English name used by Don Murillo?
 - a. Downing
 - b. Henderson
 - c. Walters
 - d. none of the above

3. What was the name of Don Murillo's children's governess?
 - a. Miss Burnet
 - b. Violet Hunter
 - c. Grace Dunbar
 - d. none of the above

4. What was Don Murillo once called?
 - a. The Beast of Santa Domingo
 - b. The Tiger of San Pedro
 - c. The Lion of Central America
 - d. none of the above

[#] The Intermediate Quiz is designed to test whether the student has read the story with reasonable attention to detail. The Simple Quiz is an easier test while the Advanced Quiz is much more challenging.

THE ADVENTURE WISTERIA LODGE ADVANCED QUIZ[&]

1. What was Scott Eccles address?
 - a. Albermarle Mansion, Kensington
 - b. Popham House, Lee
 - c. Wisteria Lodge, Esher
 - d. none of the above

2. Where did Holmes and Watson find comfortable quarters in Esher?
 - a. The Dingle
 - b. High Gable
 - c. The Bull
 - d. none of the above

3. What was the name of the constable that Inspector Baynes left in charge of Wisteria Lodge?
 - a. Bradstreet
 - b. Downing
 - c. Walters
 - d. none of the above

4. What was the name of the Don Murillo's ex-gardener?
 - a. John Warner
 - b. Hynes Hynes
 - c. Joshua Stone
 - d. none of the above

[&] The Advanced Quiz is designed for aficionados of the Canon. The questions are quite challenging. The Intermediate and Simple Quizzes are designed for the more casual reader of the stories.

ANSWERS TO QUIZZES FOR HIS LAST BOW

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
Wisteria Lodge				
Simple	b	a	a	xx
Intermediate	a	b	a	b
Advanced	b	c	c	a
Cardboard Box				
Simple	b	b	a	xx
Intermediate	b	c	c	a
Advanced	a	b	b	a
Red Circle				
Simple	b	b	a	xx
Intermediate	b	b	c	a
Advanced	b	c	c	a
Bruce Partington Plans				
Simple	a	b	a	xx
Intermediate	c	c	a	b
Advanced	a	b	a	a
Dying Detective				
Simple	d	a	b	xx
Intermediate	b	c	b	c
Advanced	a	b	c	c
Lady Frances Carfax				
Simple	c	a	b	xx
Intermediate	a	b	b	c
Advanced	b	c	b	a

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
Devil's Foot				
Simple	c	c	b	xx
Intermediate	b	a	c	b
Advanced	b	c	c	a
His Last Bow				
Simple	b	b	c	xx
Intermediate	c	a	a	b
Advanced	a	d	c	a