



## The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes

### Adventure LII – The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire

In honor of our next story, I pledge to roll up my sleeve and donate a pint of blood at my local Red Cross. I encourage fellow Hounds to consider — shameless plug for a good cause! — making a contribution at your own local blood bank, too. Who knows? The life you save might be another Sherlockian's.

Now let's enjoy *The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire*.

This weekend's questions and comments:

Here's a love triangle: the story of a man, his wife, and her jealous rival.

By the story's end, are there clear winners and losers among the threesome?

Vampires are called "the undead." Is it over the top to say Jacky's mother is sort of "undead" herself?

"I think a year at sea would be my prescription..." Aw, come on! What would an English jury give the offender?

Does Holmes have any other client, anywhere else in the canon, who is as excruciatingly bashful about his problem as is Bob Ferguson?

If this story took place in our day and age, Bob Ferguson wouldn't need an attorney or a detective. He could call on the services of a very helpful agency, "The Vampire Research Center," founded in Elmhurst, New York. (There is also a Vampire Information Exchange, a Vampire Studies Society, and a Count Dracula Fan Club — all of which publish informative journals). "Vampirologist" Stephen Kaplan created the Vampire Research Center in order to study modern-day vampires and their victims. He developed a questionnaire to collect information from persons who report vampire attacks: Where did the attack occur, when and to whom? Were there witnesses? What did the vampire look like? Describe the wound. Did the victim go to a doctor, and if so what did the



doctor say? Did the victim go to the police, and if so what did they say? And so on. People who think they themselves are vampires get another questionnaire: Why do you think you're a vampire? How long have you been one? Describe your first blood-drinking experience. What does blood taste like? Do you prefer it chilled or warm? Etc. Etc. Etc. The questions get more gross as they go on. The V.R.C. also offers dental exams to observe any "unusual characteristics" of the teeth. Dear me. I think I'll stock up on turtlenecks and stay in at night...

**Sonia Fetherston**

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