



The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure LV – The Adventure of the Three Gables

Mrs Klein is the ultimate cougar, and much more interesting than Irene Adler in my opinion, writes Charlotte Anne Walters.

Here we return to the familiar narration of Doctor Watson and encounter a ruthless woman who hires a band of ruffians to protect her interests. This story also contains some great minor characters that feature in my own novel – the boxer Steve Dixie and the gossip Langdale Pike. I particularly love Pike, who makes a hearty living out of collecting and passing on society gossip. I would love to have heard more about him throughout the stories and really enjoyed the way Granada presented him in their dramatisation of this story.

The title of this story also features in Barefoot, though not in its entirety. I blended together the names 'Wisteria Lodge' and 'Three Gables' to create Wisteria Gables, the property in my story which becomes almost as significant as 221B.

We have another Birmingham reference in this story too – Steve Dixie says that he has been training at the Bull Ring in Birmingham. What a lovely reminder of what the Bull Ring was before it became a major shopping centre with shiny fittings and a luxury department store. Blimey, times have changed!

The story is simple enough, though Granada did a brilliant job of embellishing it and made it into one of my favourite episodes.



Isadora Klein is a great villainess, cunning, beautiful, with a preference for young men and enough money to call the shots.

The story starts with Holmes being threatened by Dixie, which only serves to whet his curiosity and prompt him to investigate the case of a sweet old lady who has had a generous but strange offer made on her property. An agent informs her that his client wishes to purchase not only her house but also all the furniture. The money offered is very generous and enough for her to fulfil an ambition to travel around the world. Only trouble is, she is not allowed to remove anything from the house except a few personal possessions under supervision. At this point, she contacts Holmes for help and the involvement of Dixie, and the gang leader Barney Stockdale, convinces him that the matter is serious.

Turns out that the lady's handsome young son had died recently of a broken heart and his possessions are being stored in the house. He had been seduced and then dumped by the heartless Klein because he was of common birth. As an act of revenge he had written a scandalous novel all about their affair. As she was about to marry a titled young man, a scandal would threaten this union and that's why she tried to buy the house and everything in it – to get her hands on the manuscript. When this failed a burglary was staged and the writings snatched.

Holmes visits her to get it back but it is too late, the papers have been burned. Holmes threatens to unleash the scandal unless she writes out a cheque for enough money to travel around the world. This she eventually does and the sweet old lady gets to fulfil her ambition.

It's another example of Holmes genuinely caring about his client and going above and beyond to help them. Mrs Klein still seems to get off lightly in my opinion though as a scandal is avoided and she probably does manage to ensnare the titled young man who she is clearly using for social advancement only. In the Granada episode Holmes forces her to break off the engagement and her plans are thwarted. I have to say that I do prefer that ending.

A good story with a surprisingly contemporary feel – 7 out of 10.

Charlotte Anne Walters

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