



The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure LVI – The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier

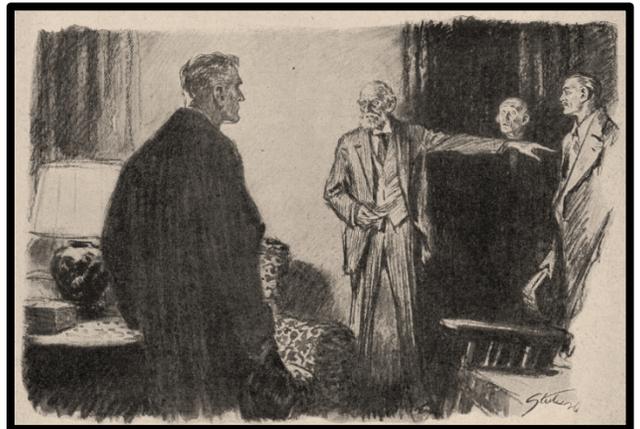
The horror of illness and the power of friendship are central to our next account, *The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier*. My questions and comments this weekend:

The color white is a powerful cultural symbol representing many things, initiation and surrender being only two examples. What things might white symbolize in this particular story?

Would you rather be a guest at Colonel Emsworth's house for a weekend...or would you rather have James M. Dodd as a guest in your own home for a weekend? Think carefully now!

Why would the Emsworth family retain Mr. Kent, when a much better-qualified consultant like Sir James Saunders was present in England?

"I miss my Watson," Holmes admits at one point. I do, too! But perhaps other Hounds disagree and don't mind dispensing with the good doctor now and then?



Watson is sometimes foggy about dates, but Holmes is specific: James and Godfrey joined the army in January 1901. I looked at my own city's newspaper for that month and year to learn more about those 31 days. There were many articles about politics and conflict in South Africa, but to be honest with you, it was the **other** news that month which captivated me. In China, the new year began with the army on full alert, mistaking celebratory gunfire for a Boxer uprising. A baby princess, Isabelle, was christened in Paris. Major Walter Reed achieved an 80 percent success rate inoculating Cubans against Yellow Fever. The United States Congress considered stripping southern Blacks of their right to vote. In Nice, police arrested Russian Prince Victor Nakadchivez on charges of nihilism and plotting to take the life of the Tsar. Bloodshed and insurgency

rocked the Philippines almost daily. Carrie Nation and her temperance ladies were jailed in Wichita after vandalizing two saloons in slightly less than 10 minutes. Twenty-six little children perished in an orphanage fire in Rochester. In Belgium, Queen Marie Henrietta was seriously ill with bronchitis, while in England Queen Victoria, that certain gracious lady, died surrounded by her family. An American capitalist offered to buy the Baker Street and Waterloo Underground from the faltering London & Globe Finance Corp. And interestingly enough in light of this week's story, a news item from Honolulu reported that the bodies of two suspected lepers were found dumped in a nearby rock quarry. Maybe Godfrey was right when he worried about being dragged off to a horrible doom?

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