



The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure LVII – The Adventure of the Lion’s Mane

Publishing History

57 OF THE 60 STORIES

First published in *The Strand Magazine*, December, 1926 In the US *Liberty Magazine*, November 27, 1926

Part of *The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes* collection by

John Murray, London, 1927

George D. Doran, New York, 1927

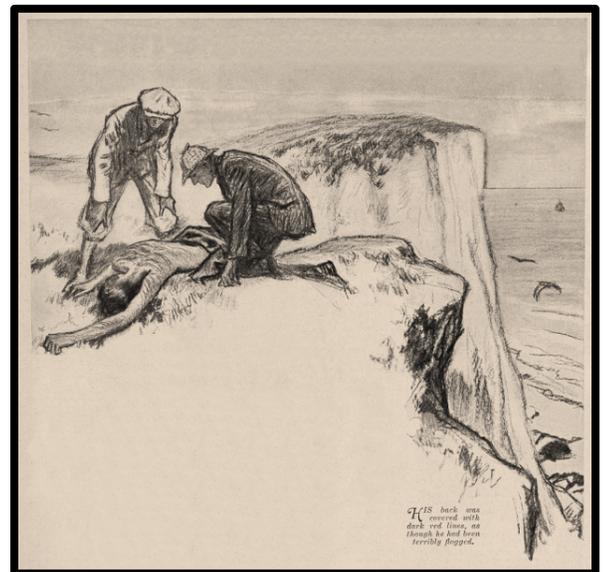
British illustrator – Howard K. Elcock

Chronology

Baring-Gould places the dating of the story as Tuesday, July 27 to Thursday, Aug 3, 1909 making it 59th of the 60. This means that Holmes 55 and Watson is 57 but not hears from.

Christopher Morley Says

“A young science teacher went swimming and died in agony on the beach, apparently flogged to death. Holmes himself tells the story, and much better this time. The peaceful seclusion of his bee-farm in Sussex, where he lived alone with his housekeeper (presumably Mrs. Hudson), had improved his writing. His villa was probably at Birling Gap, west of the great promontory of Beachy Head, and near the famous chalk cliff known as the Seven Sisters. In the garret of his house Holmes kept all the books he had gathered in a lifetime, and one of these (a volume of natural history) showed him what had happened.”



Dummies Short Summary

“In this, the second story told by Holmes, he has retired to a cottage on the Sussex Downs near the coast. One morning a neighbor staggers up the beach and dies, crying out, “The lion’s mane!” Holmes finds the man’s back is covered with what looks like whip marks. What killed the man, and what do his dying words mean?”

How Many Words

At 7,234 words LION has the 18^h most words (#1 is VEIL – 4,499, #56 if NAVL – 12,701)

Classifying This Case

This case is one of 23 classified as a MURDER and one of 14 where the perpetrator was either killed, arrested, or otherwise satisfactorily handled. And the victim was killed by a giant sea medusa.

The Best Of Sherlock Holmes

- 1927 – Arthur Conan Doyle did not on his list of 12 favorites.
- 1959 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it 53rd on their list of favorites.
- 1999 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it 33rd on their list of favorites.
- 1999 – The Sherlock Holmes Society of London voted it 33rd of the 56 short stories.

What Else Happened That Year (1909)

- **January 16** – Ernest Shackleton's expedition claims to have found the magnetic South Pole^[1] (but the location recorded may be incorrect).
- **January 24** – The White Star Liner RMS *Republic* sinks the day after a collision with *SS Florida*. In the first recorded use of the CQD emergency radio signal for a large passenger vessel, one person, a male passenger, is lost on the *Republic*.^[2]
- **March 18** – Einar Dessois uses a shortwave radio transmitter, becoming the first radio broadcaster.
- **March 31** – Serbia accepts Austrian control over Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- **April 6** – Robert Peary, Matthew Henson, and four Inuit explorers, Ootah, Ooqueah, Seegloo, and Egingwah, come within a few miles of the North Pole.^[3]
- **April 11** – The city of Tel Aviv (known in its first year as Ahuzat Bayit) is founded by the Jewish community on the outskirts of Jaffa.
- **April 14** – Adana massacre: Ottoman Turks kill 15,000–30,000 Armenian Christians in the Adana Vilayet.

- **April 18** – Joan of Arc is beatified in Rome.
- **April 27** – Sultan of the Ottoman Empire Abdul Hamid II is overthrown and succeeded by his brother, Mehmed V. He is sent to the Ottoman port city of Thessaloniki (Selanik) the next day.
- **June 15** – Representatives from England, Australia and South Africa meet at Lord's Cricket Ground and form the Imperial Cricket Conference.
- **July 25** – Louis Blériot is the first man to fly across the English Channel (thus a large open body of water) in a heavier-than-air craft.
- **August 12** – Indianapolis Motor Speedway opens in the United States.
- **November 18** – In Nicaragua 500 revolutionaries (including 2 Americans) are executed by order of dictator José Santos Zelaya. The United States responds by sending 2 warships.
- **December 23** – King Albert I of Belgium succeeds his uncle, Leopold II (died December 17), on the throne.

Holmes And Watson – Personal Information

Watson is not present for this story. Good ole' Watson only has an occasional week-end visit. This was the most that Holmes ever saw each other. Holmes was retired and living in his little Sussex home, and it was he that wrote the story.

Dramatis Personae

- **Harold Stackhurst**, Holmes' neighbor and master of a private school.
- **FITZROY Mcpherson**, science master at the school. Secretly engaged to Maude.
- **Ian Murdoch**, math teacher at the school. Former suitor of Maude.
- **Anderson**, the village constable.
- **Maude Bellamy**, the local beauty and daughter of ...
- **Tom Bellamy**, owner of a boat livery
- **William Bellamy**, son of Tom who is co-owner of the livery.
- **Fitzroy's Uncle**, a rich dying man. Fitzroy is his sole heir.
- **The Lion's Mane**, *Cyanea capillata*, a stinging jellyfish.

Quotable Sherlock

Very little said that is worth remembering.

- “That the dog should die was after the beautiful, faithful nature of dogs.”
- “I am an omnivorous reader with a strangely retentive memory for trifles.”

Sherlock Holmes On The Big And The Little Screen

LION has never been on any sized screen.

Annotated Sherlock

- “**surds**” irrational numbers with an indefinite number of digits after the decimal point, such as the square root of three
- “**clay or soft marl**” clay mixed with carbonate of lime
- “**amid the hard shingle**” a beach or other tract covered with loose stones or pebbles

Weapons

- **Boulder** - Dislodged by Holmes on top of Cyanea Capillata.
- **Flexible Whip or Scourge** - Though by Inspector Bardle to have been the murder weapon used to kill Fitzroy

Frank Mentzel