



The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure LIX – The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger

First published in:

Liberty, January 22, 1927; *The Strand Magazine*, February 1927

Time frame of story (known/surmised):

Late 1896 (given) In telling this story, Watson made a slight change of name and place for discretionary purposes.

Holmes & Watson living arrangements:

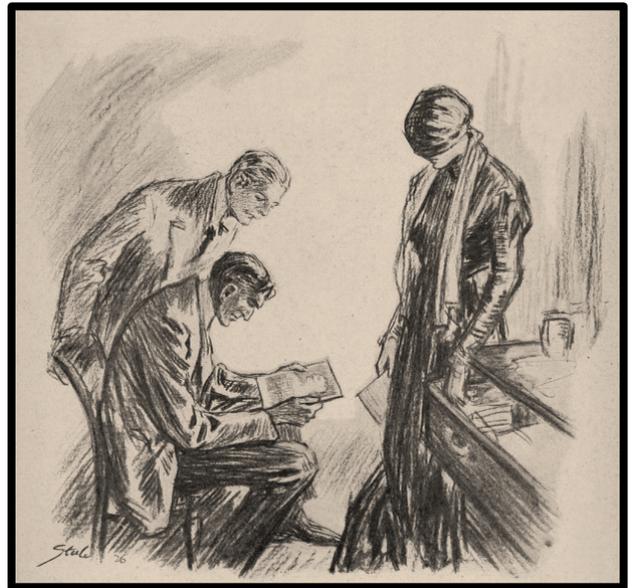
Not explained. Watson received a hurried note from Holmes requesting his attendance.

Opening scene:

It appears Watson and Holmes were not living together, but that is not stated in the story. When Watson arrives after getting the hurried note, the client is seated, and talking to Holmes.

Client:

Mrs. Merrilow, of South Brixton an elderly, motherly woman of the buxum landlady type. She had a lodger, Eugenia Rodner, for seven years and only once had seen her face, which was kept veiled. The face was terribly mutilated. The lodger maintained her privacy. It was privacy she was after, and she was ready to pay for it.



Crime or concern:

Mrs. Merriwell was concerned for the health of her lodger, who seemed to be wasting away. There appeared to be something terrible on her mind. She cried “Murder!” and “You cruel beast! You monster!” It was in the night, and it fair rang through the house and sent the shivers through Mrs. Merrilow.

Villain:

Leonardo, circus strongman, acrobat, and lover of Eugenia, the veiled lodger. Eugenia, herself, with Leonardo (who had a clever and scheming brain) plotted and killed her husband.

They killed him with a spiked club and hoped to pin the blame on their circus lion (Sahara King), but the lion turned on Eugenia and destroyed the middle part of her face. The cowardly Leonardo fled afterward, and went into hiding.

Motive:

Eugenia and her lover wanted to get rid of the husband, who had been a despicable lout. When in his cups he was horrible, a huge bully of a man, who cursed and slashed at everyone. He was a human pig with a dreadful face, and was formidable in his bestiality. He had a vile mouth, small vicious eyes darting pure malignancy, and a heavy-jowled face. Not only that, but he often beat and whipped Eugenia.

Logic used to solve:

Seven years previously Holmes had read of the case, and discussed it with Young Edmunds. There were some oddities that bothered both men, but nothing came of it. Edmunds was being sent to Allahabad (a historic city in northeastern India).

At the time of the later consultation, there was nothing to solve. Eugenia had heard of the accidental death of Leonardo, and asked her landlady to summon Holmes. Eugenia stated she was sick of her life and was dying. Holmes correctly perceived that she was, in fact, contemplating suicide, and talked her out of it.

Policemen:

Young Edmunds, thin and yellow-haired, of the Berkshire Constabulary. A smart lad.

Holmes' fees:

No mention, although Eugenia told Holmes she had plenty of money.

Transport:

Holmes & Watson took a hansom to the client's humble but retired abode.

Food:

Before setting off to see the veiled lodger, Holmes & Watson ate some cold partridge.

Drink:

With the cold partridge, Holmes & Watson shared a bottle of Montrachet to renew their energies. (Note: Montrachet is a Grand Cru white Burgundy, considered one of the best white wines in the world. Prices in 2010 would run \$50.00 U.S. per bottle, and up. Way up, for the really good stuff.)

Vices:

The client did not object to tobacco, so Holmes told Watson, it was OK to indulge his filthy habits. Oddly, Holmes himself did not smoke in this story.

Other cases mentioned:

The story concerning the politician, the lighthouse, and the trained cormorant. "You know who you are."

Notable Quotables:

Holmes was in practice for twenty-three years, and during seventeen of these I was allowed to cooperate with him and keep notes. – Watson

"Poor girl! Poor girl! The ways of fate are indeed hard to understand. If there is not some compensation hereafter, then the world is a cruel jest." – Holmes, to Eugenia.

"Your life is not your own. Keep your hands off it." – Holmes

"What use is it to anyone?" – Eugenia.

"How can you tell? The example of patient suffering is in itself the most precious of all lessons to an impatient world." – Holmes

Other interestings:

When Holmes & Watson interviewed Eugenia in her room, she described herself as a poor wounded beast that has crawled into its hole to die.

The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger is the shortest of the 56 Sherlock Holmes short stories, at 4499 words. The longest, with 12701 words, is *The Naval Treaty*.

When all was said and done:

Right after the crime, Eugenia covered for her lover despite his cowardice. Years later he drowned when bathing near Margate, and Eugenia decided to clear her conscience before passing away. Holmes was sympathetic to her. Eugenia sent him her temptation, a bottle of prussic acid (poison) by post. The brave woman had followed his advice, and had chosen life.

McMurdo's Camp