

Watson's Quick Mysteries

The Case of the Double Murder

It was not unusual for Clyde Harrison to work in his study before dinner.

On this day, as he sat at his desk attending to his long overdue correspondence, the door behind him opened slowly and silently.

Philip Williams was in the room with the door closed behind him before Harrison became aware of his presence.

Harrison wheeled to confront the intruder.

"What are you doing here?" He asked trying to conceal his annoyance and apprehension at the interloper's presence in his private quarters.

"What do you think?" Williams answered with another question.

"Any business we have will be handled at our appointment this evening.

Please leave right now and come back later as I asked you to do."

"I don't think so, dear brother-in-law, some things are just too personal to be aired in public."

"How did you get up here, anyway, the doors are all latched and nobody gets by my man, Baron."

"It is easy to get by anyone by simply climbing up the vine lattice to the second floor window which you thought inaccessible and never locked.

"Now, we have a little score to settle."

"Get out of here!"

"Not just yet.

"Have you any idea how much it hurt me to find out that my own brother-in-law planned to turn me over to the police."

"What did you expect me to do?
"You embezzled the firm's money!

"I would never have let you join the firm if you hadn't been Doris' brother! I never trusted you, but I always thought that you were just incompetent, not a thief."

"Thief? I earned that money putting up with your arrogance and bullying all these years.

"Besides, your stinking firm wouldn't miss a few paltry thousand bob and I am not going to jail for simply taking something I earned!

"You understand?"

Williams punctuated his declaration by producing a revolver from his pocket.

"Don't be a fool, Philip! Put that stupid gun away!"

As Philip Williams drew a threatening aim on his brother-in-law's heart, there came a pounding on the study door.

"Sir! Mr. Harrison, sir!

"It is I, Baron.

"I heard voices.

"Is everything all right?"

Williams yanked the door open and jerked the astonished butler into the room.

"Too bad you had to interfere, Baron, now you'll have to go too.

"Dirty shame.

"Good butlers are so difficult to find these days and you were a very good butler.

"Too bad.

"Goodbye, Baron."

The two shots which killed Baron and Clyde Harrison were fired in as many seconds.

The thudding of their bodies upon the oaken floor were the only sounds they made as they died.

"Most unfortunate but necessary I fear," Williams muttered to himself,

"All right, take both wallets... that big signet ring that pretentious creature always wore... Anything else? Silver salver and cigar lighter.

"What else? Baron has nothing more.

"Empty the drawers.

"Riffle and ransack everything like a proper housebreaker should, or

should that be, 'as a proper housebreaker should.' Ha.

"Back down the trellis and out.

"No one will ever be the wiser."

The three men descended the stairs toward the front foyer after examining the scene of violence on the second floor of the Harrison home.

"A clear case of robbery, I think, Mr. Holmes," Inspector Lestrade expounded, "it would seem that the unfortunate Mr. Harrison and the butler Baron stumbled upon the intruder and it cost both of them their lives."

"That is the obvious explanation, Inspector.

"It would seem unlikely that there would be anyone who would have reason to murder both the master of the house and his butler... unless... you did say that it was Mrs. Harrison, Clyde Harrison's wife, who found the bodies?" Sherlock Holmes asked.

"Yes, sir, Mrs. Doris Harrison," replied Inspector Lestrade, "She found them very much where you saw them yourselves upstairs each felled by a single shot to the heart each."

"That must have been quite a shock for the lady," Dr. Watson interjected, "where is she now?"

"Upstairs in her dressing room with a police physician.

"He has given her a sedative, I believe," the Inspector answered.

"You might let your physician know that my services are available for the lady," Dr. Watson volunteered.

"Thank you, doctor, I will inform him of your kindness.

"Excuse me, gentlemen, but I must go back upstairs and see if I can be of any further assistance in the investigation of this unsettling affair.

"I don't think that we will be in need of your services, Mr. Holmes, I wouldn't even have bothered you with such an obvious case of murder associated with robbery had it not been that the victim was a gentleman of such prominence.

"Have no doubt, sir, we will track this villain down!"

"I'm sure you will, Inspector," Holmes agreed, "Let us be about our business, Watson."

"Thank you, gentlemen," Inspector Lestrade said, "Could you, please, show yourselves out? I must go back upstairs and see if I can be of any further assistance in concluding the investigation of this matter."

"Very well," Dr. Watson called to the Inspector's retreating back.

"There seems to be very little more we can do here, Watson, so we should be on our way."

As Mr. Holmes opened the front door, he found himself confronted by a dismayed stranger.

"Who are you?" the stranger asked with ill-concealed astonishment.

"Why, I'm Sherlock Holmes and this is my friend and colleague, Dr. Watson.

"Who are you, if we might ask?"

"I don't know why a stranger demands my identification in my own sister's home, but I am Philip Williams and I have an appointment with my brother-in-law, Clyde Harrison.

"What are you people doing here?"

"It is unseemly for you to learn such a thing from strangers, but I have no choice," Holmes said with some hesitation, "I regret that I have to tell you that your brother-in-law is dead."

"Dear!? What happened?"

"I'm afraid that he was murdered," Holmes explained.

"Oh my God! Murdered? Who could have done such a thing?"

"There seems to have been a robbery, Mr. Williams."

"Oh no! Where is my sister? Is she all right?"

"Yes, Mrs. Harrison is upstairs in her quarters with a physician.

"She was not injured and aside from the shock of her husband's death, she seems to be in satisfactory condition.

"The police are still upstairs but their investigation of the murder scene should be well-nigh completed and there should be no problem with your going upstairs to your sister now, if you wish to do so."

"The police are still here?"

"I would like to talk to them and see what progress they are making in this unbelievable matter!"

"Is my poor brother-in-law still here?"

"Have they removed the bodies yet?"

"Yes, Mr. Williams, the police are still in Mr. Harrison's study upstairs."

"You should ask for Inspector Lestrade who is in charge of the investigation."

"As a matter of fact, when you see him, would you, please, ask him to come downstairs?"

"I would like to have a word with him."

Within two minutes after Williams vanished up the stairs, Lestrade appeared in the foyer.

"Lestrade, this matter might not be as simple as we had first thought."

Holmes suggested, "I believe that there was no robbery and that we are faced with a case of cold blooded, premeditated murder."

"Before attributing Mr. Harrison's death to person or person's unknown, I strongly suggest that you interrogate the dead man's brother-in-law at some length."

"I have reason to believe that he, and not some nameless burglar, had a hand in this gruesome matter."

The Answer to the Mystery is on the next page.

Answer to the Quiz

"So, Holmes, I was astonished to hear you virtually accuse that Williams fellow.

"What on earth led you to believe that he had a hand in the murder of his own sister's husband?" Dr. Watson asked as the pair left the Harrison mansion.

"Really, Watson, I can't believe that you would ask me such a thing.

"You see, and yet do not observe.

"It would seem that you also hear and yet do not observe."

"What did you hear that I did not, Holmes?"

"Nothing, old friend.

"I merely drew an inference which you did not from something we both heard."

"Yes? I can't imagine what.

Please edify me, old man."

"Did you not hear Mr. Williams ask if the bodies had been removed?

"Did you not wonder about his choice of the plural noun?

"He feigned ignorance of the grim events that had transpired in his brother-in-law's home and we only

advised him that his brother-in-law was dead.

"We never mentioned the demise of the poor butler, Baron.

"How could Williams have known that there was more than one body to be removed unless he had greater knowledge of the events than he had learned from us.

"And how, old friend, would he have gained such information unless he had a hand in the matter?

"If I am not mistaken, Lestrade's interrogations will reveal the truth."