LITERATURA EM INGLÊS

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

Arthur Conan Doyle · 1892 · Mistério



As Aventuras de Sherlock Holmes — Capítulo I: A Scandal in Bohemia

Três níveis de inglês, com glossário em português · literaturaemingles.com.br

NÍVEL 1

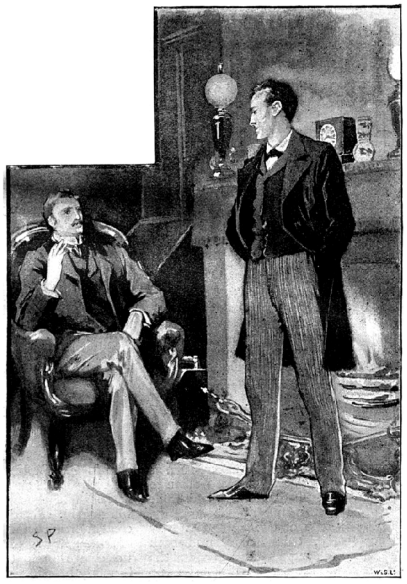
Fácil

A1–A2 — Frases curtas, sem subordinação

I

A Scandal in Bohemia

Um Escândalo na Boêmia · Fácil (A1–A2) · 16 min de leitura



Holmes de pé diante da lareira em Baker Street, 221B, enquanto Watson o observa da poltrona — 'Then he stood before the fire'. — Sidney Paget, 1891. Domínio público.

To Sherlock Holmes she is always the woman. I rarely hear him use another name. In his eyes she stands above all women. But Holmes does not love Irene Adler. He hates soft feelings. His mind is cold and exact. He is a perfect thinking machine. Strong feelings break such a machine. And still, one woman stays in his mind.

I saw little of Holmes in those days. My marriage pulled us apart. Holmes stayed in our old rooms. Our rooms were in Baker Street. He sat among his books. He studied crime every day.

One night I walked through Baker Street. It was March, 1888. I looked up at his windows. The rooms were bright. His tall shadow crossed the blind twice. He walked fast across the room. I knew that shadow well. Holmes had a new problem. I rang the bell.

He pointed to an armchair. Then he stood by the fire. He looked me over in his old way.

“Marriage suits you,” he said. “You have seven new pounds, Watson.”

“Seven!”

“A little more, I fancy. And you work as a doctor again.”

“Then how do you know?”

“I see it. I deduce it. You walked in bad weather last week. And your servant girl is careless.”

“My dear Holmes, this is too much. I did walk in the country. But I changed my clothes.”

He laughed and rubbed his long hands.

“Look at your left shoe. The firelight strikes the leather. I see six long cuts there. Someone scraped the mud away. That person used a careless hand. So you walked in vile weather. And you have a bad servant girl.”

“Your reasons always sound simple. My eyes are as good as yours.”

“Quite so. You see. But you do not observe. You often climb the steps downstairs.”

“Very often.”

“Then how many steps are there?”

“I don’t know.”

“You see. You do not observe. There are seventeen steps. Now, here is a problem.”

He threw me a sheet of pink paper. It had no date and no name.

“A gentleman will call tonight. He comes at a quarter to eight. The matter is very deep. Your visitor will wear a mask.”

“What does it mean?” I asked.

“I have no data yet. A man must not build a theory first. He then twists the facts to fit it.”

We heard horses outside. Then someone pulled the bell hard.

A very tall man came in. His chest and arms looked enormous. He wore a black mask. His chin showed a stubborn man.

“You had my note?” He spoke with a German accent.

“Please take a seat. This is Doctor Watson. And your name?”

“Call me Count Von Kramm. I am a Bohemian nobleman. I prefer to speak with you alone.”

I rose to go. Holmes caught my wrist. He pushed me back into my chair.

“It is both, or none,” said he.

“Then I must begin. Keep my secret for two years. The matter may shake Europe. A great scandal may grow from it. It touches the House of Ormstein. They are the old kings of Bohemia.”

“I know that.” Holmes closed his eyes.

Our visitor stared at him. Then Holmes opened his eyes again.

“Your Majesty may tell me the case.”

The man jumped from his chair. He tore the mask from his face. He threw it on the floor.

“You are right. I am the King. Why do I hide it?”

“Why, indeed? You are Wilhelm von Ormstein, King of Bohemia.”

The King sat down again.

“I do not do such business myself. But this matter is too delicate. So I came from Prague in secret. Five years ago I stayed in Warsaw. There I met Irene Adler.”

“I wrote her letters. And there is a photograph. We are both in it.”

“Oh dear. That is very bad. Buy it, then.”

“She will not sell.”

“Steal it.”

“We tried five times. Twice my men searched her house. Once we took her luggage. We found nothing.”

Holmes laughed. “It is a pretty little problem.”

“But a serious one for me. I marry soon. My bride comes from a strict family. One shadow of doubt ends everything. Irene Adler threatens to send them the photograph. And she will do it. She has a soul of steel.”

“When does she send it?”

“On the day of my betrothal. That is next Monday.”

“Then we have three days. Your Majesty stays in London?”

“Certainly. And you have a free hand with money.”

The King laid a heavy bag down.

“A thousand pounds for costs.”

“And the lady’s address?”

“Briony Lodge, Serpentine Avenue.”

“Then good night, Your Majesty. Call here tomorrow at three, Watson.”

At three o’clock I sat in Baker Street. Near four the door opened. A drunken groom walked in. It was Holmes. In five minutes he came out in tweed. Then he laughed for a long time.

“What is it?”

“You will never guess my morning. I went out as a groom. Horsey men help each other. I found Briony Lodge at once. I helped the men with their horses. They gave me beer and news. Miss Adler drives out at five every day. She has one man visitor only. His name is Godfrey Norton. He is a lawyer of the Inner Temple. That fact troubled me. Perhaps she gave him the photograph.

“Then a hansom cab drove up. A handsome dark man jumped out. He stayed half an hour. He talked fast and waved his arms. He came out in a great hurry. ‘Drive like the devil,’ he cried. ‘First to Gross and Hankey. Then to the Church of St. Monica. Half a guinea for twenty minutes!’

“Then a landau came up the lane. She ran out and jumped in.

“ ‘The Church of St. Monica, John,’ she cried.

“This was too good to lose, Watson. I jumped into another cab. The others arrived first. I hurried into the church. Three people stood at the altar. Godfrey Norton, the lady, and a clergyman. Then Godfrey Norton ran at me.

“ ‘Thank God,’ he cried. ‘You’ll do. Come!’

“ ‘Come, man. Three minutes, or it is not legal.’

“They dragged me to the altar. I mumbled words in answer. I knew nothing about them. And so I helped them to marry. The bride gave me a sovereign. I will wear it on my watch chain.”

“And then?”

“They parted at the church door. So my plans still hold. I need your help this evening, Doctor. We must be at Briony Lodge at seven. There is one rule only. You must not interfere. Some small trouble will start. Stay out of it. They will carry me into the house. Then the sitting-room window will open. Stand near that open window. Watch me. I will raise my hand — so. Then throw this into the room. And shout fire at the same moment.”

He came out as a country clergyman. Holmes changed more than his clothes. His face changed. His manner changed too.

We reached Serpentine Avenue before seven. The street held many people.

“This marriage helps us,” said Holmes quietly. “Now, where is the photograph? She does not carry it. It is too large for a dress. Her banker? Her lawyer? I think neither. Women hide their own things. And she needs it within a few days. It lies in her own house.”

“But men searched the house twice.”

“They did not know how to look. I will not look. I will make her show me.”

“She will refuse.”

“She cannot refuse. Here are her wheels.”

The landau rattled up to the door. One loafer ran forward to open it. Another loafer pushed him away. A fierce quarrel broke out. Someone struck a blow. The lady stepped down into the crowd. Angry men fought all around her. Holmes dashed in to protect her. Then he cried out and fell down. Blood ran down his face. Better people crowded round to help.

Irene Adler stood at the top.

“Is the poor gentleman much hurt?”

“He is dead,” cried several voices.

“No, no, he still breathes!” shouted another.

“He cannot lie in the street. May we bring him in?”

“Surely. Bring him into the sitting-room.”

They carried him in slowly. I watched from my post at the window. Nobody drew the blinds. So I saw Holmes on the couch. Holmes sat up on the couch. He waved a hand for air. A maid ran across and opened the window. At that instant he raised his hand. I threw my rocket into the room. I shouted “Fire!” The whole crowd took up the cry. Thick smoke rolled through the room. Then I heard the voice of Holmes. It was a false alarm, he told them. I slipped away through the crowd. In ten minutes his arm found mine.

“You did it very nicely, Doctor.”

“You have the photograph?”

“I know the place. She showed me.”

“I am still in the dark.”

“It was simple. Everyone in the street worked for me. I hired them all for the evening. I had red paint in my hand. I rushed forward and fell. It is an old trick. Then they carried me in. And into her sitting-room! That was my room of choice. I asked for air. They opened the window. And you had your chance.”

“How did that help you?”

“It was everything. A woman thinks her house burns. She runs to her dearest thing at once. Our lady had one dear thing only. She ran to it. The photograph lies in a recess. It sits behind a sliding panel. The panel is above the bell-pull. She was there in an instant. Then I called out my false alarm. She put it back. I rose and left the house. I call with the King tomorrow.”

We stopped at our own door. Then a passer-by spoke to us.

“Good night, Mister Sherlock Holmes.”

The greeting came from a slim youth. He hurried away.

“I know that voice,” said Holmes. “Now, who could that be?”

In the morning the King rushed in.

“You have it!”

“Not yet. But I have hopes. Irene Adler is a wife now.”

“Married! And the husband?”

“An English lawyer named Norton. Yesterday.”

“But she cannot love him.”

“I hope she does. Then she leaves Your Majesty in peace.”

We drove to Briony Lodge. The door stood open. An old woman waited on the steps.

“Mr. Sherlock Holmes, I believe? My mistress told me of your visit. She left this morning with her husband. They took the 5:15 train. They go to the Continent.”

“What!” Holmes staggered back. He turned white. “She has left England?”

“Never to return.”

“And the papers?” cried the King. “All is lost!”

“We shall see.” Holmes ran into the drawing-room. The drawers gaped open. Holmes rushed at the bell-pull. He tore back the sliding panel. He pulled out a photograph and a letter. The photograph showed Irene Adler alone. We read the letter together.

“My dear Mr. Sherlock Holmes,

“You did it very well. You took me in completely. Then the alarm of fire came. And I saw my own mistake. Friends warned me against you months ago. And still you made me show it.

“I trained as an actress. Male clothes are nothing new to me. I sent John, my coachman, to watch you. Then I put on my walking clothes. I followed you to your own door. Then I wished you good night.

“Flight is the best answer. So you will find an empty nest. Your client may rest. I love a better man than the King. And a better man loves me. The King wronged me cruelly. I keep the photograph for my safety. I leave another photograph for him.

“Very truly yours,

“Irene Norton, born Adler.”

“What a woman — oh, what a woman!” cried the King. “What a queen she would make! What a pity! She is not on my level.”

“She stands on another level,” said Holmes coldly. “I am sorry. I could not end this business better.”

“On the contrary! Nothing ends better. Her word is iron. Name your reward. This ring —”

He held out an emerald ring.

“You have something of more value.”

“Name it!”

“This photograph!”

The King stared at him.

“Irene’s photograph! Certainly, if you wish it.”

“I thank Your Majesty. Then there is no more to do.”

He bowed. He turned away from the royal hand. And he walked off with me.

So a scandal nearly struck Bohemia. And the best plans of Mr. Sherlock Holmes fell to a woman’s wit. He used to laugh at clever women. I do not hear him laugh now. And he uses one title for her only. He calls her the woman.

Glossário — Fácil

suit (someone) FALSO COGNATO

cair bem, combinar com a pessoa

Marriage suits you.

blind FALSO COGNATO

persiana, cortina de janela — aqui não tem nada a ver com "cego"

His tall shadow crossed the blind twice.

fancy FALSO COGNATO

imaginar, achar — não é "chique" nem "fantasia"

A little more, I fancy.

pretty FALSO COGNATO

aqui é "bem", "bastante": a pretty little problem = um belo probleminha

It is a pretty little problem.

pull apart PHRASAL VERB

separar duas pessoas, deixar uma longe da outra → **afastar**

My marriage pulled us apart.

look (someone) over PHRASAL VERB

examinar alguém de cima a baixo, com atenção → **examinar**

He looked me over in his old way.

take (someone) in PHRASAL VERB

enganar alguém que confiava em você → **enganar**

You took me in completely.

groom EXPRESSÃO

cavalariço: o empregado que cuidava dos cavalos

A drunken groom walked in.

bell-pull EXPRESSÃO

cordão de sino na parede, para chamar o criado de outro cômodo

The panel is above the right bell-pull.

sovereign EXPRESSÃO

moeda inglesa de ouro da época, de uma libra

The bride gave me a sovereign.

deduce VOCABULÁRIO

deduzir, chegar a uma conclusão pelo raciocínio

I see it. I deduce it.

careless VOCABULÁRIO

descuidado, relaxado no trabalho

Your servant girl is careless.

As armadilhas deste capítulo

> "How do you know?" — o inglês precisa de um do para fazer a pergunta, e esse do não quer dizer nada: é só a peça que monta a frase. Em português a gente pergunta com a entonação ("Você sabe?") e nega com o "não" ("Ele não foi"). Por isso o brasileiro escreve "You know how?" e "He not went".

> "a black mask", "a long, straight chin" — em inglês o adjetivo vem antes do substantivo, e quando há vários, todos vêm antes. Em português vem depois: "uma máscara preta". Traduzindo direto da cabeça, sai "a mask black" — e isso não soa como sotaque, soa como erro.

> "It was the twentieth of March, 1888." — esse it não é "isso": ele está ali só porque a frase em inglês não pode ficar sem sujeito. Em português "Era vinte de março" está perfeito; em inglês, "Was the twentieth of March" está errado. Vale para hora, data, clima e distância: It is raining, It is far.

NÍVEL 2

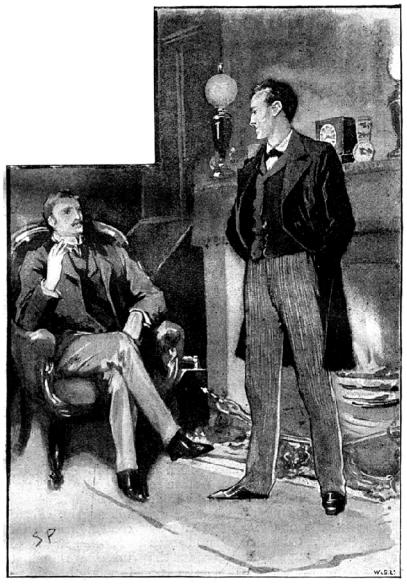
Médio

A2–B2 — O enredo com textura

I

A Scandal in Bohemia

Um Escândalo na Boêmia · Médio (A2–B2) · 33 min de leitura



Holmes de pé diante da lareira em Baker Street, 221B, enquanto Watson o observa da poltrona — 'Then he stood before the fire'. — Sidney Paget, 1891. Domínio público.

To Sherlock Holmes she is always the woman. I have seldom heard him call her by another name. In his eyes she stands above the whole of her sex. But he felt no love for Irene Adler. All emotions were hateful to his cold and exact mind. He was the most perfect reasoning machine in the world. As a lover he would have looked ridiculous, and he knew it. He never spoke of the softer feelings without a sneer. And yet there was one woman for him.

I had seen little of Holmes in those days. My marriage had drifted us away from each other. Holmes hated every form of society with his Bohemian soul. He stayed in our old rooms in Baker Street, buried among his books. He still followed the clues that the police had abandoned.

One night I was walking home from a patient. It was the twentieth of March, 1888. My way led me through Baker Street. I passed that well-remembered door and felt a keen wish to see Holmes. His rooms were brilliantly lit. I saw his tall figure pass twice against the blind. He was pacing the room swiftly, with his head sunk on his chest. To me, who knew his every mood, that attitude told its own story. He was at work again, and hot upon the scent of a new problem. I rang the bell and went up.

His manner was not warm. It seldom was. But he was glad to see me, I think. With hardly a word he waved me to an armchair. He threw across his cigars, then stood before the fire. He looked me over in his singular way.

“Wedlock suits you,” he remarked. “I think you have put on seven and a half pounds.”

“Seven!” I answered.

“A trifle more, I fancy. And in practice again, I observe. You did not tell me that.”

“Then how do you know?”

“I see it, I deduce it. How do I know about your very wet week? And about your clumsy and careless servant girl?”

“My dear Holmes, this is too much. A few centuries ago they would have burned you. It is true that I walked in the country on Thursday. I came home in a dreadful mess. But I have changed my clothes. I cannot imagine how you deduce it.”

He chuckled to himself and rubbed his long, nervous hands.

“It is simplicity itself,” said he. “Look at the leather of your left shoe. The firelight strikes it just there. Six almost parallel cuts mark it. Someone scraped very carelessly round the edges of the sole. That person wanted to remove crusted mud. Hence my double deduction. You have

been out in vile weather. And you keep a particularly clumsy London servant. As to your practice, that is easier still. A gentleman walks into my rooms smelling of iodoform. He has a black mark of nitrate of silver on his forefinger. His top-hat shows a bulge where he hides his stethoscope. I must be dull indeed if I do not call him a doctor."

I could not help laughing at the ease of his explanation.

"When I hear your reasons, the thing always seems ridiculously simple. I believe that my eyes are as good as yours."

He threw over a sheet of thick, pink-tinted notepaper.

"It came by the last post," said he. "Read it aloud."

The note had no date, no signature and no address.

"A gentleman will call upon you to-night, at a quarter to eight. He wishes to consult you upon a matter of the deepest moment. Your recent services to a royal house of Europe speak for you. Be in your chamber at that hour. And do not take it amiss if your visitor wears a mask."

"This is indeed a mystery," I remarked. "What do you imagine that it means?"

"I have no data yet. It is a capital mistake to theorise before one has data. A man then begins to twist facts to suit theories. But the note itself. What do you deduce from it?"

There came the sharp sound of horses' hoofs. Then someone pulled the bell. Holmes whistled and glanced out of the window.

"A nice little brougham and a pair of beauties. A hundred and fifty guineas apiece. There is money in this case, Watson."

"I think that I had better go, Holmes."

"Not a bit, Doctor. Stay where you are. I am lost without my Boswell. And this promises to be interesting."

"But your client —"

"Never mind him. I may want your help, and so may he. Sit down in that armchair."

A slow and heavy step paused outside the door. Then came a loud and authoritative tap.

"Come in!" said Holmes.

A man entered who stood hardly less than six feet six in height. Across the upper part of his face he wore a black mask. His hand was still at it, for he had just adjusted it. His chin was long and straight.

"You had my note?" he asked in a deep harsh voice, with a strong German accent. "I told you that I would call."

"Pray take a seat," said Holmes. "This is my friend and colleague, Doctor Watson. He occasionally helps me in my cases. Whom have I the honour to address?"

"You may address me as the Count Von Kramm, a Bohemian nobleman. I understand that your friend is a man of honour. If not, I should much prefer to speak with you alone."

I rose to go. But Holmes caught me by the wrist and pushed me back into my chair.

“It is both, or none,” said he. “You may say before this gentleman anything you say to me.”

The Count shrugged his broad shoulders.

“Then I must begin by binding you both to absolute secrecy. Two years, no less. At present the matter may have an influence upon European history.”

“I promise,” said Holmes.

“And I.”

“You will excuse this mask. The great person who employs me wishes his agent to stay unknown. And I confess at once that my title is not exactly my own.”

“I was aware of it,” said Holmes dryly.

“The circumstances are of great delicacy. An immense scandal may grow from them. To speak plainly, the matter touches the great House of Ormstein. They are the hereditary kings of Bohemia.”

“I was also aware of that,” murmured Holmes. He settled into his armchair and closed his eyes.

Our visitor glanced with surprise at the languid figure before him. He had no doubt heard of the most incisive reasoner in Europe. Holmes slowly reopened his eyes and looked at his gigantic client.

“If your Majesty would condescend to state your case, I could advise you better.”

The man sprang from his chair and paced the room in uncontrollable agitation. Then, with a gesture of desperation, he tore the mask from his face. He hurled it upon the ground.

“You are right,” he cried. “I am the King. Why should I attempt to conceal it?”

“Why, indeed?” murmured Holmes. “Your Majesty had not spoken before I knew your name. You are Wilhelm von Ormstein, hereditary King of Bohemia.”

“But you can understand,” said our visitor, sitting down once more. “I am not used to doing such business in person. Yet the matter was so delicate. I could not trust it to an agent, and put myself in his power. I have come from Prague in secret to consult you.”

“Then, pray consult,” said Holmes, shutting his eyes once more.

“The facts are briefly these. Five years ago I paid a long visit to Warsaw. There I made the acquaintance of the well-known adventuress, Irene Adler. The name is no doubt familiar to you.”

“Was there a secret marriage?”

“None.”

“No legal papers or certificates?”

“None.”

“You must recover it. Buy it.”

“She will not sell.”

“Steal it, then.”

“We have made five attempts. Twice burglars in my pay ransacked her house. Once we diverted her luggage. Twice men waylaid her in the street. There has been no result.”

Holmes laughed. “It is quite a pretty little problem,” said he.

“But a very serious one to me,” returned the King reproachfully.

“Very, indeed. And what does she propose to do with the photograph?”

“To ruin me. I am about to marry Clotilde von Saxe-Meningen. You may know the strict principles of her family. She is herself the very soul of delicacy. A shadow of a doubt would bring the matter to an end.”

“And Irene Adler?”

“She threatens to send them the photograph. And she will do it. You do not know her. She has a soul of steel. She has the face of the most beautiful of women. And she has the mind of the most resolute of men. She would go to any length.”

“You are sure that she has not sent it yet?”

“I am sure. She will send it on one day only. That is the day of the public betrothal. It will be next Monday.”

“Oh, then we have three days yet,” said Holmes with a yawn. “That is very fortunate. Your Majesty will, of course, stay in London?”

“Certainly. You will find me at the Langham, under the name of Count Von Kramm.”

“Then I shall drop you a line. And as to money?”

“You have a free hand. I would give a province of my kingdom for that photograph.”

“And for present expenses?”

The King took a heavy leather bag from under his cloak. He laid it on the table.

“Three hundred pounds in gold and seven hundred in notes,” he said.

Holmes wrote out a receipt and handed it to him.

“And Mademoiselle’s address?”

“Briony Lodge, Serpentine Avenue, St. John’s Wood.”

Holmes took a note of it.

“Then, good-night, your Majesty. I trust that we shall soon have good news. And good-night, Watson. Call to-morrow afternoon at three o’clock.”

At three o’clock precisely I was at Baker Street. Holmes had not yet returned. The landlady told me one thing only. He had left shortly after eight in the morning. I sat down beside the fire to wait.

It was close upon four before the door opened. A drunken-looking groom walked into the room, with an inflamed face and disreputable clothes. I knew my friend’s powers with disguises. Even so, I had to look three times before I felt certain. He came out five minutes later in tweed, respectable as of old.

“Well, really!” he cried, and then he choked and laughed again.

"What is it?"

"You could never guess how I spent my morning, or what I ended by doing."

"I can't imagine. I suppose you have been watching the house of Miss Irene Adler."

"Quite so, but the sequel was rather unusual. I left here a little after eight, as a groom out of work. There is a wonderful freemasonry among horsey men. "Oh, she has turned all the men's heads down in that part. She lives quietly and sings at concerts. She drives out at five every day. She has only one male visitor, but a good deal of him. He is a Mr. Godfrey Norton, of the Inner Temple, dark and handsome. "Then a hansom cab drove up. A gentleman sprang out, remarkably handsome, dark and moustached. He shouted to the cabman to wait. Then he brushed past the maid with the air of a man at home. He stayed about half an hour. Presently he came out, looking even more flurried than before. He pulled a gold watch from his pocket. 'Drive like the devil,' he shouted. 'First to Gross and Hankey's in Regent Street. Then to the Church of St. Monica in the Edgeware Road. Half a guinea if you do it in twenty minutes!'

"Away they went. Then up the lane came a neat little landau. She shot out of the hall door and into it. I caught a glimpse of her only. But she was a lovely woman, with a face that a man might die for.

" 'The Church of St. Monica, John,' she cried. 'And half a sovereign if you reach it in twenty minutes.'

"This was quite too good to lose, Watson. A cab came through the street and I jumped in. The others were there before me. I hurried into the church. Three people stood at the altar: the two whom I had followed, and a clergyman. Suddenly Godfrey Norton came running towards me.

" 'Thank God,' he cried. 'You'll do. Come! Come!'

" 'What then?' I asked.

" 'Come, man, come, only three minutes, or it won't be legal.'

"They half-dragged me up to the altar. Before I knew where I was, I found myself mumbling responses. I vouched for things of which I knew nothing. In short, I helped to tie up Irene Adler, spinster, to Godfrey Norton, bachelor. It was all done in an instant. The gentleman thanked me on one side and the lady on the other. The clergyman beamed on me in front. I never stood in a more preposterous position in my life. The bride gave me a sovereign. I mean to wear it on my watch chain."

"This is a very unexpected turn of affairs," said I. "And what then?"

"Well, I found my plans very seriously menaced. It looked as if the pair might leave at once. At the church door, however, they separated. He drove back to the Temple, and she to her own house. 'I shall drive out in the park at five as usual,' she said. By the way, Doctor, I shall want your co-operation this evening."

"I shall be delighted."

"I was sure that I might rely on you. In two hours we must be on the scene. Madame returns from her drive at seven. We must be at Briony Lodge to meet her. There is only one point on which I must insist. You must not interfere, come what may. There will probably be some small

unpleasantness. Do not join in it. It will end with my entry into the house. Four or five minutes later the sitting-room window will open. Station yourself close to that open window. Watch me, for I will be visible to you. And when I raise my hand — so — throw in what I give you. At the same time raise the cry of fire."

"Entirely."

"It is nothing very formidable," he said. He took a long cigar-shaped roll from his pocket. "It is an ordinary plumber's smoke-rocket. A cap at either end makes it self-lighting. When you raise your cry of fire, many people will take it up. You may then walk to the end of the street. I will rejoin you in ten minutes."

We left Baker Street at a quarter past six. It still wanted ten minutes to the hour when we reached Serpentine Avenue. The lamps were coming on in the dusk. For a small street in a quiet neighbourhood the place looked remarkably animated. "You see," remarked Holmes, "this marriage rather simplifies matters. The photograph becomes a double-edged weapon now. She would not want Mr. Godfrey Norton to see it. Our client does not want his princess to see it. Now the question is, where are we to find it?"

"Where, indeed?"

"It is most unlikely that she carries it about with her. It must be in her own house."

"But men have burgled it twice."

"Pshaw! They did not know how to look."

"But how will you look?"

"I will not look. I will get her to show me."

"But she will refuse."

"She will not be able to. But I hear the rumble of wheels. Now carry out my orders to the letter."

The gleam of a carriage came round the curve of the avenue. It was a smart little landau, and it rattled up to the door. As it pulled up, one of the loafing men dashed forward to open it. He hoped to earn a copper. Another loafer elbowed him away. A fierce quarrel broke out. Someone struck a blow. In an instant the lady stood at the centre of a knot of struggling men. They struck savagely at each other with their fists and sticks. Holmes dashed into the crowd to protect her. But just as he reached her, he gave a cry and dropped to the ground. Blood ran freely down his face. A number of better dressed people crowded in to help. Irene Adler, as I will still call her, had hurried up the steps. But she stood at the top and looked back into the street. The lights of the hall outlined her superb figure.

"Is the poor gentleman much hurt?" she asked.

"He is dead," cried several voices.

"No, no, there's life in him!" shouted another.

"He's a brave fellow," said a woman. "They would have had the lady's purse and watch."

"He can't lie in the street. May we bring him in, marm?"

"Surely. Bring him into the sitting-room. There is a comfortable sofa. This way, please!"

Slowly and solemnly they carried him into Briony Lodge. They laid him out in the principal room. I still watched the proceedings from my post by the window. Nobody had drawn the blinds, so I could see Holmes on the couch. I saw the grace and kindliness with which she waited upon the injured man. And I was conspiring against her. Yet it would be the blackest treachery to draw back now. I hardened my heart and took out the smoke-rocket.

Holmes sat up upon the couch. I saw him motion like a man in need of air. A maid rushed across and threw open the window. At the same instant I saw him raise his hand. I tossed my rocket into the room with a cry of "Fire!" The word was no sooner out of my mouth than the whole crowd joined in. Gentlemen, ostlers and servant maids all shrieked "Fire!" Thick clouds of smoke curled through the room and out at the window. I caught a glimpse of rushing figures. A moment later I heard the voice of Holmes from within. It was a false alarm, he assured them. I slipped through the shouting crowd to the corner of the street. In ten minutes I found my friend's arm in mine. We walked swiftly away from the scene of uproar.

"You did it very nicely, Doctor," he remarked. "Nothing could have been better."

"You have the photograph?"

"I know where it is."

"And how did you find out?"

"She showed me, as I told you she would."

"I am still in the dark."

"The matter was perfectly simple," said he, laughing. "Everyone in the street was an accomplice. I engaged them all for the evening."

"Then the row broke out. I had moist red paint in my palm. I rushed forward, fell down, and clapped my hand to my face. I became a piteous spectacle. It is an old trick."

"That also I could fathom."

"Then they carried me in. She was bound to have me in. What else could she do? And into her sitting-room, the very room that I suspected. They laid me on a couch. I motioned for air. They had to open the window. And you had your chance."

"How did that help you?"

"It was all-important. A woman thinks that her house is on fire. Her instinct is at once to rush to the thing she values most. It is a perfectly overpowering impulse. I have more than once taken advantage of it. The alarm of fire was admirably done. The smoke and shouting were enough to shake nerves of steel. She responded beautifully. The photograph lies in a recess behind a sliding panel. The panel sits just above the right bell-pull. She was there in an instant. I caught a glimpse of it as she half drew it out. Then I cried out that it was a false alarm. She replaced it, glanced at the rocket, and rushed from the room. I rose, made my excuses, and escaped from the house. "

"And now?" I asked.

"Our quest is practically finished. I shall call with the King to-morrow."

We had reached Baker Street and stopped at the door. He was searching his pockets for the key. Then someone passing said:

"Good-night, Mister Sherlock Holmes."

The greeting came from a slim youth in an ulster. He had hurried by.

"I've heard that voice before," said Holmes, staring down the dimly lit street. "Now, I wonder who the deuce that could have been."

I slept at Baker Street that night. In the morning the King of Bohemia rushed in.

"You have really got it!" he cried, grasping Holmes by either shoulder.

"Not yet."

"But you have hopes?"

"I have hopes."

"Then, come. I am all impatience to be gone. My brougham is waiting."

We went down and started off once more for Briony Lodge.

"Irene Adler is married," remarked Holmes.

"Married! When?"

"Yesterday. To an English lawyer named Norton."

"But she could not love him."

"I am in hopes that she does. If the lady loves her husband, she does not love your Majesty. Then she has no reason to interfere with your Majesty's plan."

"It is true. And yet — ! Well! I wish she had been of my own station! What a queen she would have made!"

He fell into a moody silence until we drew up in Serpentine Avenue. The door of Briony Lodge stood open. An elderly woman waited upon the steps. She watched us with a sardonic eye as we stepped down.

"Mr. Sherlock Holmes, I believe?" said she.

"I am Mr. Holmes," answered my companion, with a questioning and startled gaze.

"Indeed! My mistress told me that you were likely to call. She left this morning with her husband. They took the 5:15 train from Charing Cross for the Continent."

"What!" Sherlock Holmes staggered back, white with chagrin and surprise. "Do you mean that she has left England?"

"Never to return."

"And the papers?" asked the King hoarsely. "All is lost."

"We shall see." He pushed past the servant and rushed into the drawing-room. The King and I followed him. The furniture lay scattered in every direction. The shelves stood dismantled and the drawers gaped open. The lady had clearly ransacked them before her flight. Holmes rushed at the bell-pull. He tore back a small sliding shutter. He plunged in his hand and pulled out a photograph and a letter. The photograph showed Irene Adler herself in evening dress. The

letter carried this direction: “Sherlock Holmes, Esq. To be left till called for.” My friend tore it open, and we all three read it together.

“My dear Mr. Sherlock Holmes, — You really did it very well. You took me in completely. Until the alarm of fire, I had not a suspicion. But then I found how I had betrayed myself, and I began to think. Friends had warned me against you months ago. They gave me your address. Yet you still made me reveal what you wanted. But I have trained as an actress myself. Male costume is nothing new to me. I often take advantage of the freedom which it gives. I sent John, the coachman, to watch you. Then I put on my walking clothes. I came down just as you departed.

“We both thought the same. Flight is the best resource against so formidable an antagonist. So you will find the nest empty when you call to-morrow. As to the photograph, your client may rest in peace. I love and am loved by a better man than he. The King may do what he will. He has wronged me cruelly. I keep the photograph only to safeguard myself. I leave another photograph for him. And I remain, dear Mr. Sherlock Holmes,

“Very truly yours,

“Irene Norton, née Adler.”

“What a woman — oh, what a woman!” cried the King. “Did I not tell you how quick and resolute she was? Would she not have made an admirable queen? Is it not a pity that she was not on my level?”

“The lady is on another level to your Majesty,” said Holmes coldly. “I am sorry that I could not bring your Majesty’s business to a better conclusion.”

“On the contrary, my dear sir,” cried the King. “Nothing could be more successful. I know that her word is inviolate. The photograph is now as safe as if it were in the fire.”

“I am glad to hear your Majesty say so.”

“I am immensely indebted to you. Name your reward. This ring —”

He slipped an emerald snake ring from his finger and held it out.

“Your Majesty has something which I should value even more highly,” said Holmes.

“You have but to name it.”

“This photograph!”

The King stared at him in amazement.

“Irene’s photograph!” he cried. “Certainly, if you wish it.”

“I thank your Majesty. Then there is no more to be done. I wish you a very good morning.”

He bowed. He turned away without noticing the hand which the King had stretched out to him. And he set off in my company for his chambers.

And that was how a great scandal threatened the kingdom of Bohemia. And that was how a woman’s wit beat the best plans of Mr. Sherlock Holmes. He used to make merry over the cleverness of women. But I have not heard him do it of late. And when he speaks of Irene Adler, he uses one title only. He calls her the woman.

Glossário — Médio

presently FALSO COGNATO

logo em seguida, pouco depois — não é "presentemente"

Presently he came out, looking even more flurried than before.

engage (someone) FALSO COGNATO

contratar alguém para um serviço — não é "engajar"

I engaged them all for the evening.

resolute FALSO COGNATO

decidida, firme no que quer

Did I not tell you how quick and resolute she was?

particularly FALSO COGNATO

aqui é "especialmente", "excepcionalmente" — não tem a ver com "particular" de privado

You keep a particularly clumsy London servant.

carry out PHRASAL VERB

executar uma ordem ou um plano até o fim → **executar**

Now carry out my orders to the letter.

break out PHRASAL VERB

começar de repente, estourar — briga, incêndio, guerra → **estourar**

A fierce quarrel broke out.

draw back PHRASAL VERB

recuar de um compromisso já assumido → **recuar**

It would be the blackest treachery to draw back now.

adventuress EXPRESSÃO

aventureira: na época, a mulher que vivia de suas relações com homens ricos. A palavra é uma acusação, não um elogio

I made the acquaintance of the well-known adventuress, Irene Adler.

brougham EXPRESSÃO

carruagem fechada, puxada a cavalo, de gente rica

A nice little brougham and a pair of beauties.

hansom cab EXPRESSÃO

o táxi da Londres vitoriana: carruagem de dois lugares, com o cocheiro atrás e acima do passageiro

A hansom cab drove up to Briony Lodge.

spinster EXPRESSÃO

solteira — o termo do registro legal do casamento na época

I assisted in the secure tying up of Irene Adler, spinster.

chagrin VOCABULÁRIO

desgosto misturado com humilhação, de quem perdeu

Sherlock Holmes staggered back, white with chagrin and surprise.

As armadilhas deste capítulo

> “How do you know?” — o inglês precisa de um do para fazer a pergunta, e esse do não quer dizer nada: é só a peça que monta a frase. Em português a gente pergunta com a entonação (“Você sabe?”) e nega com o “não” (“Ele não foi”). Por isso o brasileiro escreve “You know how?” e “He not went”.

> “a black mask”, “a long, straight chin” — em inglês o adjetivo vem antes do substantivo, e quando há vários, todos vêm antes. Em português vem depois: “uma máscara preta”. Traduzindo direto da cabeça, sai “a mask black” — e isso não soa como sotaque, soa como erro.

> “It was the twentieth of March, 1888.” — esse it não é “isso”: ele está ali só porque a frase em inglês não pode ficar sem sujeito. Em português “Era vinte de março” está perfeito; em inglês, “Was the twentieth of March” está errado. Vale para hora, data, clima e distância: It is raining, It is far.

NÍVEL 3

Original

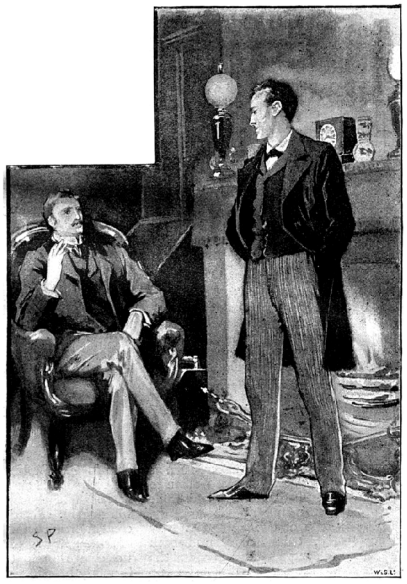
Texto do autor — O livro como foi escrito

I

A Scandal in Bohemia

Um Escândalo na Boêmia · Original (Texto do autor) · 66 min de leitura

I.



Holmes de pé diante da lareira em Baker Street, 221B, enquanto Watson o observa da poltrona — 'Then he stood before the fire'. — Sidney Paget, 1891. Domínio público.

To Sherlock Holmes she is always the woman. I have seldom heard him mention her under any other name. In his eyes she eclipses and predominates the whole of her sex. It was not that he felt any emotion akin to love for Irene Adler. All emotions, and that one particularly, were abhorrent to his cold, precise but admirably balanced mind. He was, I take it, the most perfect reasoning and observing machine that the world has seen, but as a lover he would have placed himself in a false position. He never spoke of the softer passions, save with a gibe and a sneer. They were admirable things for the observer—excellent for drawing the veil from men's motives and actions. But for the trained reasoner to admit such intrusions into his own delicate and finely adjusted temperament was to introduce a distracting factor which might throw a doubt upon all his mental results. Grit in a sensitive instrument, or a crack in one of his own high-power lenses, would not be more disturbing than a strong emotion in a nature such as his. And yet there was but one woman to him, and that woman was the late Irene Adler, of dubious and questionable memory.

I had seen little of Holmes lately. My marriage had drifted us away from each other. My own complete happiness, and the home-centred interests which rise up around the man who first finds himself master of his own establishment, were sufficient to absorb all my attention, while Holmes, who loathed every form of society with his whole Bohemian soul, remained in our lodgings in Baker Street, buried among his old books, and alternating from week to week between cocaine and ambition, the drowsiness of the drug, and the fierce energy of his own keen nature. He was still, as ever, deeply attracted by the study of crime, and occupied his immense faculties and extraordinary powers of observation in following out those clues, and clearing up those mysteries which had been abandoned as hopeless by the official police. From time to time I heard some vague account of his doings: of his summons to Odessa in the case of the Trepoff murder, of his clearing up of the singular tragedy of the Atkinson brothers at Trincomalee, and finally of the mission which he had accomplished so delicately and successfully for the reigning family of Holland. Beyond these signs of his activity, however, which I merely shared with all the readers of the daily press, I knew little of my former friend and companion.

One night—it was on the twentieth of March, 1888—I was returning from a journey to a patient (for I had now returned to civil practice), when my way led me through Baker Street. As I passed the well-remembered door, which must always be associated in my mind with my wooing, and with the dark incidents of the Study in Scarlet, I was seized with a keen desire to

see Holmes again, and to know how he was employing his extraordinary powers. His rooms were brilliantly lit, and, even as I looked up, I saw his tall, spare figure pass twice in a dark silhouette against the blind. He was pacing the room swiftly, eagerly, with his head sunk upon his chest and his hands clasped behind him. To me, who knew his every mood and habit, his attitude and manner told their own story. He was at work again. He had risen out of his drug-created dreams and was hot upon the scent of some new problem. I rang the bell and was shown up to the chamber which had formerly been in part my own.

His manner was not effusive. It seldom was; but he was glad, I think, to see me. With hardly a word spoken, but with a kindly eye, he waved me to an armchair, threw across his case of cigars, and indicated a spirit case and a gasogene in the corner. Then he stood before the fire and looked me over in his singular introspective fashion.

"Wedlock suits you," he remarked. "I think, Watson, that you have put on seven and a half pounds since I saw you."

"Seven!" I answered.

"Indeed, I should have thought a little more. Just a trifle more, I fancy, Watson. And in practice again, I observe. You did not tell me that you intended to go into harness."

"Then, how do you know?"

"I see it, I deduce it. How do I know that you have been getting yourself very wet lately, and that you have a most clumsy and careless servant girl?"

"My dear Holmes," said I, "this is too much. You would certainly have been burned, had you lived a few centuries ago. It is true that I had a country walk on Thursday and came home in a dreadful mess, but as I have changed my clothes I can't imagine how you deduce it. As to Mary Jane, she is incorrigible, and my wife has given her notice, but there, again, I fail to see how you work it out."

He chuckled to himself and rubbed his long, nervous hands together.

"It is simplicity itself," said he; "my eyes tell me that on the inside of your left shoe, just where the firelight strikes it, the leather is scored by six almost parallel cuts. Obviously they have been caused by someone who has very carelessly scraped round the edges of the sole in order to remove crusted mud from it. Hence, you see, my double deduction that you had been out in vile weather, and that you had a particularly malignant boot-slitting specimen of the London slavey. As to your practice, if a gentleman walks into my rooms smelling of iodoform, with a black mark of nitrate of silver upon his right forefinger, and a bulge on the right side of his top-hat to show where he has secreted his stethoscope, I must be dull, indeed, if I do not pronounce him to be an active member of the medical profession."

I could not help laughing at the ease with which he explained his process of deduction. "When I hear you give your reasons," I remarked, "the thing always appears to me to be so ridiculously simple that I could easily do it myself, though at each successive instance of your reasoning I am baffled until you explain your process. And yet I believe that my eyes are as good as yours."

“Quite so,” he answered, lighting a cigarette, and throwing himself down into an armchair. “You see, but you do not observe. The distinction is clear. For example, you have frequently seen the steps which lead up from the hall to this room.”

“Frequently.”

“How often?”

“Well, some hundreds of times.”

“Then how many are there?”

“How many? I don’t know.”

“Quite so! You have not observed. And yet you have seen. That is just my point. Now, I know that there are seventeen steps, because I have both seen and observed. By the way, since you are interested in these little problems, and since you are good enough to chronicle one or two of my trifling experiences, you may be interested in this.” He threw over a sheet of thick, pink-tinted notepaper which had been lying open upon the table. “It came by the last post,” said he. “Read it aloud.”

The note was undated, and without either signature or address.

“There will call upon you to-night, at a quarter to eight o’clock,” it said, “a gentleman who desires to consult you upon a matter of the very deepest moment. Your recent services to one of the royal houses of Europe have shown that you are one who may safely be trusted with matters which are of an importance which can hardly be exaggerated. This account of you we have from all quarters received. Be in your chamber then at that hour, and do not take it amiss if your visitor wear a mask.”

“This is indeed a mystery,” I remarked. “What do you imagine that it means?”

“I have no data yet. It is a capital mistake to theorise before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts. But the note itself. What do you deduce from it?”

I carefully examined the writing, and the paper upon which it was written.

“The man who wrote it was presumably well to do,” I remarked, endeavouring to imitate my companion’s processes. “Such paper could not be bought under half a crown a packet. It is peculiarly strong and stiff.”

“Peculiar—that is the very word,” said Holmes. “It is not an English paper at all. Hold it up to the light.”

I did so, and saw a large “E” with a small “g,” a “P,” and a large “G” with a small “t” woven into the texture of the paper.

“What do you make of that?” asked Holmes.

“The name of the maker, no doubt; or his monogram, rather.”

“Not at all. The ‘G’ with the small ‘t’ stands for ‘Gesellschaft,’ which is the German for ‘Company.’ It is a customary contraction like our ‘Co.’ ‘P,’ of course, stands for ‘Papier.’ Now for the ‘Eg.’ Let us glance at our Continental Gazetteer.” He took down a heavy brown volume from

his shelves. “Eglow, Eglonitz—here we are, Egria. It is in a German-speaking country—in Bohemia, not far from Carlsbad. ‘Remarkable as being the scene of the death of Wallenstein, and for its numerous glass-factories and paper-mills.’ Ha, ha, my boy, what do you make of that?” His eyes sparkled, and he sent up a great blue triumphant cloud from his cigarette.

“The paper was made in Bohemia,” I said.

“Precisely. And the man who wrote the note is a German. Do you note the peculiar construction of the sentence—‘This account of you we have from all quarters received.’ A Frenchman or Russian could not have written that. It is the German who is so uncourteous to his verbs. It only remains, therefore, to discover what is wanted by this German who writes upon Bohemian paper and prefers wearing a mask to showing his face. And here he comes, if I am not mistaken, to resolve all our doubts.”

As he spoke there was the sharp sound of horses’ hoofs and grating wheels against the curb, followed by a sharp pull at the bell. Holmes whistled.

“A pair, by the sound,” said he. “Yes,” he continued, glancing out of the window. “A nice little brougham and a pair of beauties. A hundred and fifty guineas apiece. There’s money in this case, Watson, if there is nothing else.”

“I think that I had better go, Holmes.”

“Not a bit, Doctor. Stay where you are. I am lost without my Boswell. And this promises to be interesting. It would be a pity to miss it.”

“But your client—”

“Never mind him. I may want your help, and so may he. Here he comes. Sit down in that armchair, Doctor, and give us your best attention.”

A slow and heavy step, which had been heard upon the stairs and in the passage, paused immediately outside the door. Then there was a loud and authoritative tap.

“Come in!” said Holmes.

A man entered who could hardly have been less than six feet six inches in height, with the chest and limbs of a Hercules. His dress was rich with a richness which would, in England, be looked upon as akin to bad taste. Heavy bands of astrakhan were slashed across the sleeves and fronts of his double-breasted coat, while the deep blue cloak which was thrown over his shoulders was lined with flame-coloured silk and secured at the neck with a brooch which consisted of a single flaming beryl. Boots which extended halfway up his calves, and which were trimmed at the tops with rich brown fur, completed the impression of barbaric opulence which was suggested by his whole appearance. He carried a broad-brimmed hat in his hand, while he wore across the upper part of his face, extending down past the cheekbones, a black vizard mask, which he had apparently adjusted that very moment, for his hand was still raised to it as he entered. From the lower part of the face he appeared to be a man of strong character, with a thick, hanging lip, and a long, straight chin suggestive of resolution pushed to the length of obstinacy.

“You had my note?” he asked with a deep harsh voice and a strongly marked German accent. “I told you that I would call.” He looked from one to the other of us, as if uncertain which to address.

“Pray take a seat,” said Holmes. “This is my friend and colleague, Dr. Watson, who is occasionally good enough to help me in my cases. Whom have I the honour to address?”

“You may address me as the Count Von Kramm, a Bohemian nobleman. I understand that this gentleman, your friend, is a man of honour and discretion, whom I may trust with a matter of the most extreme importance. If not, I should much prefer to communicate with you alone.”

I rose to go, but Holmes caught me by the wrist and pushed me back into my chair. “It is both, or none,” said he. “You may say before this gentleman anything which you may say to me.”

The Count shrugged his broad shoulders. “Then I must begin,” said he, “by binding you both to absolute secrecy for two years; at the end of that time the matter will be of no importance. At present it is not too much to say that it is of such weight it may have an influence upon European history.”

“I promise,” said Holmes.

“And I.”

“You will excuse this mask,” continued our strange visitor. “The august person who employs me wishes his agent to be unknown to you, and I may confess at once that the title by which I have just called myself is not exactly my own.”

“I was aware of it,” said Holmes dryly.

“The circumstances are of great delicacy, and every precaution has to be taken to quench what might grow to be an immense scandal and seriously compromise one of the reigning families of Europe. To speak plainly, the matter implicates the great House of Ormstein, hereditary kings of Bohemia.”

“I was also aware of that,” murmured Holmes, settling himself down in his armchair and closing his eyes.

Our visitor glanced with some apparent surprise at the languid, lounging figure of the man who had been no doubt depicted to him as the most incisive reasoner and most energetic agent in Europe. Holmes slowly reopened his eyes and looked impatiently at his gigantic client.

“If your Majesty would condescend to state your case,” he remarked, “I should be better able to advise you.”

The man sprang from his chair and paced up and down the room in uncontrollable agitation. Then, with a gesture of desperation, he tore the mask from his face and hurled it upon the ground. “You are right,” he cried; “I am the King. Why should I attempt to conceal it?”

“Why, indeed?” murmured Holmes. “Your Majesty had not spoken before I was aware that I was addressing Wilhelm Gottsreich Sigismond von Ormstein, Grand Duke of Cassel-Felstein,

and hereditary King of Bohemia."

"But you can understand," said our strange visitor, sitting down once more and passing his hand over his high white forehead, "you can understand that I am not accustomed to doing such business in my own person. Yet the matter was so delicate that I could not confide it to an agent without putting myself in his power. I have come incognito from Prague for the purpose of consulting you."

"Then, pray consult," said Holmes, shutting his eyes once more.

"The facts are briefly these: Some five years ago, during a lengthy visit to Warsaw, I made the acquaintance of the well-known adventuress, Irene Adler. The name is no doubt familiar to you."

"Kindly look her up in my index, Doctor," murmured Holmes without opening his eyes. For many years he had adopted a system of docketing all paragraphs concerning men and things, so that it was difficult to name a subject or a person on which he could not at once furnish information. In this case I found her biography sandwiched in between that of a Hebrew rabbi and that of a staff-commander who had written a monograph upon the deep-sea fishes.

"Let me see!" said Holmes. "Hum! Born in New Jersey in the year 1858. Contralto—hum! La Scala, hum! Prima donna Imperial Opera of Warsaw—yes! Retired from operatic stage—ha! Living in London—quite so! Your Majesty, as I understand, became entangled with this young person, wrote her some compromising letters, and is now desirous of getting those letters back."

"Precisely so. But how—"

"Was there a secret marriage?"

"None."

"No legal papers or certificates?"

"None."

"Then I fail to follow your Majesty. If this young person should produce her letters for blackmailing or other purposes, how is she to prove their authenticity?"

"There is the writing."

"Pooh, pooh! Forgery."

"My private note-paper."

"Stolen."

"My own seal."

"Imitated."

"My photograph."

"Bought."

"We were both in the photograph."

"Oh, dear! That is very bad! Your Majesty has indeed committed an indiscretion."

“I was mad—insane.”

“You have compromised yourself seriously.”

“I was only Crown Prince then. I was young. I am but thirty now.”

“It must be recovered.”

“We have tried and failed.”

“Your Majesty must pay. It must be bought.”

“She will not sell.”

“Stolen, then.”

“Five attempts have been made. Twice burglars in my pay ransacked her house. Once we diverted her luggage when she travelled. Twice she has been waylaid. There has been no result.”

“No sign of it?”

“Absolutely none.”

Holmes laughed. “It is quite a pretty little problem,” said he.

“But a very serious one to me,” returned the King reproachfully.

“Very, indeed. And what does she propose to do with the photograph?”

“To ruin me.”

“But how?”

“I am about to be married.”

“So I have heard.”

“To Clotilde Lothman von Saxe-Meningen, second daughter of the King of Scandinavia. You may know the strict principles of her family. She is herself the very soul of delicacy. A shadow of a doubt as to my conduct would bring the matter to an end.”

“And Irene Adler?”

“Threatens to send them the photograph. And she will do it. I know that she will do it. You do not know her, but she has a soul of steel. She has the face of the most beautiful of women, and the mind of the most resolute of men. Rather than I should marry another woman, there are no lengths to which she would not go—none.”

“You are sure that she has not sent it yet?”

“I am sure.”

“And why?”

“Because she has said that she would send it on the day when the betrothal was publicly proclaimed. That will be next Monday.”

“Oh, then we have three days yet,” said Holmes with a yawn. “That is very fortunate, as I have one or two matters of importance to look into just at present. Your Majesty will, of course, stay in London for the present?”

“Certainly. You will find me at the Langham under the name of the Count Von Kramm.”

“Then I shall drop you a line to let you know how we progress.”

“Pray do so. I shall be all anxiety.”

“Then, as to money?”

“You have carte blanche.”

“Absolutely?”

“I tell you that I would give one of the provinces of my kingdom to have that photograph.”

“And for present expenses?”

The King took a heavy chamois leather bag from under his cloak and laid it on the table.

“There are three hundred pounds in gold and seven hundred in notes,” he said.

Holmes scribbled a receipt upon a sheet of his note-book and handed it to him.

“And Mademoiselle’s address?” he asked.

“Is Briony Lodge, Serpentine Avenue, St. John’s Wood.”

Holmes took a note of it. “One other question,” said he. “Was the photograph a cabinet?”

“It was.”

“Then, good-night, your Majesty, and I trust that we shall soon have some good news for you. And good-night, Watson,” he added, as the wheels of the royal brougham rolled down the street. “If you will be good enough to call to-morrow afternoon at three o’clock I should like to chat this little matter over with you.”

II.

At three o’clock precisely I was at Baker Street, but Holmes had not yet returned. The landlady informed me that he had left the house shortly after eight o’clock in the morning. I sat down beside the fire, however, with the intention of awaiting him, however long he might be. I was already deeply interested in his inquiry, for, though it was surrounded by none of the grim and strange features which were associated with the two crimes which I have already recorded, still, the nature of the case and the exalted station of his client gave it a character of its own. Indeed, apart from the nature of the investigation which my friend had on hand, there was something in his masterly grasp of a situation, and his keen, incisive reasoning, which made it a pleasure to me to study his system of work, and to follow the quick, subtle methods by which he disentangled the most inextricable mysteries. So accustomed was I to his invariable success that the very possibility of his failing had ceased to enter into my head.

It was close upon four before the door opened, and a drunken-looking groom, ill-kempt and side-whiskered, with an inflamed face and disreputable clothes, walked into the room. Accustomed as I was to my friend’s amazing powers in the use of disguises, I had to look three times before I was certain that it was indeed he. With a nod he vanished into the bedroom, whence he emerged in five minutes tweed-suited and respectable, as of old. Putting his hands into his pockets, he stretched out his legs in front of the fire and laughed heartily for some minutes.

“Well, really!” he cried, and then he choked and laughed again until he was obliged to lie back, limp and helpless, in the chair.

“What is it?”

“It’s quite too funny. I am sure you could never guess how I employed my morning, or what I ended by doing.”

“I can’t imagine. I suppose that you have been watching the habits, and perhaps the house, of Miss Irene Adler.”

“Quite so; but the sequel was rather unusual. I will tell you, however. I left the house a little after eight o’clock this morning in the character of a groom out of work. There is a wonderful sympathy and freemasonry among horsey men. Be one of them, and you will know all that there is to know. I soon found Briony Lodge. It is a bijou villa, with a garden at the back, but built out in front right up to the road, two stories. Chubb lock to the door. Large sitting-room on the right side, well furnished, with long windows almost to the floor, and those preposterous English window fasteners which a child could open. Behind there was nothing remarkable, save that the passage window could be reached from the top of the coach-house. I walked round it and examined it closely from every point of view, but without noting anything else of interest.

“I then lounged down the street and found, as I expected, that there was a mews in a lane which runs down by one wall of the garden. I lent the ostlers a hand in rubbing down their horses, and received in exchange twopence, a glass of half-and-half, two fills of shag tobacco, and as much information as I could desire about Miss Adler, to say nothing of half a dozen other people in the neighbourhood in whom I was not in the least interested, but whose biographies I was compelled to listen to.”

“And what of Irene Adler?” I asked.

“Oh, she has turned all the men’s heads down in that part. She is the daintiest thing under a bonnet on this planet. So say the Serpentine-mews, to a man. She lives quietly, sings at concerts, drives out at five every day, and returns at seven sharp for dinner. Seldom goes out at other times, except when she sings. Has only one male visitor, but a good deal of him. He is dark, handsome, and dashing, never calls less than once a day, and often twice. He is a Mr. Godfrey Norton, of the Inner Temple. See the advantages of a cabman as a confidant. They had driven him home a dozen times from Serpentine-mews, and knew all about him. When I had listened to all they had to tell, I began to walk up and down near Briony Lodge once more, and to think over my plan of campaign.

“This Godfrey Norton was evidently an important factor in the matter. He was a lawyer. That sounded ominous. What was the relation between them, and what the object of his repeated visits? Was she his client, his friend, or his mistress? If the former, she had probably transferred the photograph to his keeping. If the latter, it was less likely. On the issue of this question depended whether I should continue my work at Briony Lodge, or turn my attention to the gentleman’s chambers in the Temple. It was a delicate point, and it widened the field of

my inquiry. I fear that I bore you with these details, but I have to let you see my little difficulties, if you are to understand the situation."

"I am following you closely," I answered.

"I was still balancing the matter in my mind when a hansom cab drove up to Briony Lodge, and a gentleman sprang out. He was a remarkably handsome man, dark, aquiline, and moustached—evidently the man of whom I had heard. He appeared to be in a great hurry, shouted to the cabman to wait, and brushed past the maid who opened the door with the air of a man who was thoroughly at home.

"He was in the house about half an hour, and I could catch glimpses of him in the windows of the sitting-room, pacing up and down, talking excitedly, and waving his arms. Of her I could see nothing. Presently he emerged, looking even more flurried than before. As he stepped up to the cab, he pulled a gold watch from his pocket and looked at it earnestly, 'Drive like the devil,' he shouted, 'first to Gross & Hankey's in Regent Street, and then to the Church of St. Monica in the Edgeware Road. Half a guinea if you do it in twenty minutes!'

"Away they went, and I was just wondering whether I should not do well to follow them when up the lane came a neat little landau, the coachman with his coat only half-buttoned, and his tie under his ear, while all the tags of his harness were sticking out of the buckles. It hadn't pulled up before she shot out of the hall door and into it. I only caught a glimpse of her at the moment, but she was a lovely woman, with a face that a man might die for.

"'The Church of St. Monica, John,' she cried, 'and half a sovereign if you reach it in twenty minutes.'

"This was quite too good to lose, Watson. I was just balancing whether I should run for it, or whether I should perch behind her landau when a cab came through the street. The driver looked twice at such a shabby fare, but I jumped in before he could object. 'The Church of St. Monica,' said I, 'and half a sovereign if you reach it in twenty minutes.' It was twenty-five minutes to twelve, and of course it was clear enough what was in the wind.

"My cabby drove fast. I don't think I ever drove faster, but the others were there before us. The cab and the landau with their steaming horses were in front of the door when I arrived. I paid the man and hurried into the church. There was not a soul there save the two whom I had followed and a surpliced clergyman, who seemed to be expostulating with them. They were all three standing in a knot in front of the altar. I lounged up the side aisle like any other idler who has dropped into a church. Suddenly, to my surprise, the three at the altar faced round to me, and Godfrey Norton came running as hard as he could towards me.

"'Thank God,' he cried. 'You'll do. Come! Come!'

"'What then?' I asked.

"'Come, man, come, only three minutes, or it won't be legal.'

"I was half-dragged up to the altar, and before I knew where I was I found myself mumbling responses which were whispered in my ear, and vouching for things of which I knew nothing, and generally assisting in the secure tying up of Irene Adler, spinster, to Godfrey Norton, bachelor. It was all done in an instant, and there was the gentleman thanking me on the one

side and the lady on the other, while the clergyman beamed on me in front. It was the most preposterous position in which I ever found myself in my life, and it was the thought of it that started me laughing just now. It seems that there had been some informality about their license, that the clergyman absolutely refused to marry them without a witness of some sort, and that my lucky appearance saved the bridegroom from having to sally out into the streets in search of a best man. The bride gave me a sovereign, and I mean to wear it on my watch chain in memory of the occasion."

"This is a very unexpected turn of affairs," said I; "and what then?"

"Well, I found my plans very seriously menaced. It looked as if the pair might take an immediate departure, and so necessitate very prompt and energetic measures on my part. At the church door, however, they separated, he driving back to the Temple, and she to her own house. 'I shall drive out in the park at five as usual,' she said as she left him. I heard no more. They drove away in different directions, and I went off to make my own arrangements."

"Which are?"

"Some cold beef and a glass of beer," he answered, ringing the bell. "I have been too busy to think of food, and I am likely to be busier still this evening. By the way, Doctor, I shall want your co-operation."

"I shall be delighted."

"You don't mind breaking the law?"

"Not in the least."

"Nor running a chance of arrest?"

"Not in a good cause."

"Oh, the cause is excellent!"

"Then I am your man."

"I was sure that I might rely on you."

"But what is it you wish?"

"When Mrs. Turner has brought in the tray I will make it clear to you. Now," he said as he turned hungrily on the simple fare that our landlady had provided, "I must discuss it while I eat, for I have not much time. It is nearly five now. In two hours we must be on the scene of action. Miss Irene, or Madame, rather, returns from her drive at seven. We must be at Briony Lodge to meet her."

"And what then?"

"You must leave that to me. I have already arranged what is to occur. There is only one point on which I must insist. You must not interfere, come what may. You understand?"

"I am to be neutral?"

"To do nothing whatever. There will probably be some small unpleasantness. Do not join in it. It will end in my being conveyed into the house. Four or five minutes afterwards the sitting-room window will open. You are to station yourself close to that open window."

"Yes."

"You are to watch me, for I will be visible to you."

"Yes."

"And when I raise my hand—so—you will throw into the room what I give you to throw, and will, at the same time, raise the cry of fire. You quite follow me?"

"Entirely."

"It is nothing very formidable," he said, taking a long cigar-shaped roll from his pocket. "It is an ordinary plumber's smoke-rocket, fitted with a cap at either end to make it self-lighting. Your task is confined to that. When you raise your cry of fire, it will be taken up by quite a number of people. You may then walk to the end of the street, and I will rejoin you in ten minutes. I hope that I have made myself clear?"

"I am to remain neutral, to get near the window, to watch you, and at the signal to throw in this object, then to raise the cry of fire, and to wait you at the corner of the street."

"Precisely."

"Then you may entirely rely on me."

"That is excellent. I think, perhaps, it is almost time that I prepare for the new role I have to play."

He disappeared into his bedroom and returned in a few minutes in the character of an amiable and simple-minded Nonconformist clergyman. His broad black hat, his baggy trousers, his white tie, his sympathetic smile, and general look of peering and benevolent curiosity were such as Mr. John Hare alone could have equalled. It was not merely that Holmes changed his costume. His expression, his manner, his very soul seemed to vary with every fresh part that he assumed. The stage lost a fine actor, even as science lost an acute reasoner, when he became a specialist in crime.

It was a quarter past six when we left Baker Street, and it still wanted ten minutes to the hour when we found ourselves in Serpentine Avenue. It was already dusk, and the lamps were just being lighted as we paced up and down in front of Briony Lodge, waiting for the coming of its occupant. The house was just such as I had pictured it from Sherlock Holmes' succinct description, but the locality appeared to be less private than I expected. On the contrary, for a small street in a quiet neighbourhood, it was remarkably animated. There was a group of shabbily dressed men smoking and laughing in a corner, a scissors-grinder with his wheel, two guardsmen who were flirting with a nurse-girl, and several well-dressed young men who were lounging up and down with cigars in their mouths.

"You see," remarked Holmes, as we paced to and fro in front of the house, "this marriage rather simplifies matters. The photograph becomes a double-edged weapon now. The chances are that she would be as averse to its being seen by Mr. Godfrey Norton, as our client is to its coming to the eyes of his princess. Now the question is, Where are we to find the photograph?"

"Where, indeed?"

“It is most unlikely that she carries it about with her. It is cabinet size. Too large for easy concealment about a woman’s dress. She knows that the King is capable of having her waylaid and searched. Two attempts of the sort have already been made. We may take it, then, that she does not carry it about with her.”

“Where, then?”

“Her banker or her lawyer. There is that double possibility. But I am inclined to think neither. Women are naturally secretive, and they like to do their own secreting. Why should she hand it over to anyone else? She could trust her own guardianship, but she could not tell what indirect or political influence might be brought to bear upon a business man. Besides, remember that she had resolved to use it within a few days. It must be where she can lay her hands upon it. It must be in her own house.”

“But it has twice been burgled.”

“Pshaw! They did not know how to look.”

“But how will you look?”

“I will not look.”

“What then?”

“I will get her to show me.”

“But she will refuse.”

“She will not be able to. But I hear the rumble of wheels. It is her carriage. Now carry out my orders to the letter.”

As he spoke the gleam of the sidelights of a carriage came round the curve of the avenue. It was a smart little landau which rattled up to the door of Briony Lodge. As it pulled up, one of the loafing men at the corner dashed forward to open the door in the hope of earning a copper, but was elbowed away by another loafer, who had rushed up with the same intention. A fierce quarrel broke out, which was increased by the two guardsmen, who took sides with one of the loungers, and by the scissors-grinder, who was equally hot upon the other side. A blow was struck, and in an instant the lady, who had stepped from her carriage, was the centre of a little knot of flushed and struggling men, who struck savagely at each other with their fists and sticks. Holmes dashed into the crowd to protect the lady; but, just as he reached her, he gave a cry and dropped to the ground, with the blood running freely down his face. At his fall the guardsmen took to their heels in one direction and the loungers in the other, while a number of better dressed people, who had watched the scuffle without taking part in it, crowded in to help the lady and to attend to the injured man. Irene Adler, as I will still call her, had hurried up the steps; but she stood at the top with her superb figure outlined against the lights of the hall, looking back into the street.

“Is the poor gentleman much hurt?” she asked.

“He is dead,” cried several voices.

“No, no, there’s life in him!” shouted another. “But he’ll be gone before you can get him to hospital.”

“He’s a brave fellow,” said a woman. “They would have had the lady’s purse and watch if it hadn’t been for him. They were a gang, and a rough one, too. Ah, he’s breathing now.”

“He can’t lie in the street. May we bring him in, marm?”

“Surely. Bring him into the sitting-room. There is a comfortable sofa. This way, please!”

Slowly and solemnly he was borne into Briony Lodge and laid out in the principal room, while I still observed the proceedings from my post by the window. The lamps had been lit, but the blinds had not been drawn, so that I could see Holmes as he lay upon the couch. I do not know whether he was seized with compunction at that moment for the part he was playing, but I know that I never felt more heartily ashamed of myself in my life than when I saw the beautiful creature against whom I was conspiring, or the grace and kindliness with which she waited upon the injured man. And yet it would be the blackest treachery to Holmes to draw back now from the part which he had intrusted to me. I hardened my heart, and took the smoke-rocket from under my ulster. After all, I thought, we are not injuring her. We are but preventing her from injuring another.

Holmes had sat up upon the couch, and I saw him motion like a man who is in need of air. A maid rushed across and threw open the window. At the same instant I saw him raise his hand and at the signal I tossed my rocket into the room with a cry of “Fire!” The word was no sooner out of my mouth than the whole crowd of spectators, well dressed and ill—gentlemen, ostlers, and servant maids—joined in a general shriek of “Fire!” Thick clouds of smoke curled through the room and out at the open window. I caught a glimpse of rushing figures, and a moment later the voice of Holmes from within assuring them that it was a false alarm. Slipping through the shouting crowd I made my way to the corner of the street, and in ten minutes was rejoiced to find my friend’s arm in mine, and to get away from the scene of uproar. He walked swiftly and in silence for some few minutes until we had turned down one of the quiet streets which lead towards the Edgeware Road.

“You did it very nicely, Doctor,” he remarked. “Nothing could have been better. It is all right.”

“You have the photograph?”

“I know where it is.”

“And how did you find out?”

“She showed me, as I told you she would.”

“I am still in the dark.”

“I do not wish to make a mystery,” said he, laughing. “The matter was perfectly simple. You, of course, saw that everyone in the street was an accomplice. They were all engaged for the evening.”

“I guessed as much.”

“Then, when the row broke out, I had a little moist red paint in the palm of my hand. I rushed forward, fell down, clapped my hand to my face, and became a piteous spectacle. It is an old trick.”

"That also I could fathom."

"Then they carried me in. She was bound to have me in. What else could she do? And into her sitting-room, which was the very room which I suspected. It lay between that and her bedroom, and I was determined to see which. They laid me on a couch, I motioned for air, they were compelled to open the window, and you had your chance."

"How did that help you?"

"It was all-important. When a woman thinks that her house is on fire, her instinct is at once to rush to the thing which she values most. It is a perfectly overpowering impulse, and I have more than once taken advantage of it. In the case of the Darlington Substitution Scandal it was of use to me, and also in the Arnsworth Castle business. A married woman grabs at her baby; an unmarried one reaches for her jewel-box. Now it was clear to me that our lady of to-day had nothing in the house more precious to her than what we are in quest of. She would rush to secure it. The alarm of fire was admirably done. The smoke and shouting were enough to shake nerves of steel. She responded beautifully. The photograph is in a recess behind a sliding panel just above the right bell-pull. She was there in an instant, and I caught a glimpse of it as she half drew it out. When I cried out that it was a false alarm, she replaced it, glanced at the rocket, rushed from the room, and I have not seen her since. I rose, and, making my excuses, escaped from the house. I hesitated whether to attempt to secure the photograph at once; but the coachman had come in, and as he was watching me narrowly, it seemed safer to wait. A little over-precipitance may ruin all."

"And now?" I asked.

"Our quest is practically finished. I shall call with the King to-morrow, and with you, if you care to come with us. We will be shown into the sitting-room to wait for the lady, but it is probable that when she comes she may find neither us nor the photograph. It might be a satisfaction to his Majesty to regain it with his own hands."

"And when will you call?"

"At eight in the morning. She will not be up, so that we shall have a clear field. Besides, we must be prompt, for this marriage may mean a complete change in her life and habits. I must wire to the King without delay."

We had reached Baker Street and had stopped at the door. He was searching his pockets for the key when someone passing said:

"Good-night, Mister Sherlock Holmes."

There were several people on the pavement at the time, but the greeting appeared to come from a slim youth in an ulster who had hurried by.

"I've heard that voice before," said Holmes, staring down the dimly lit street. "Now, I wonder who the deuce that could have been."

III.

I slept at Baker Street that night, and we were engaged upon our toast and coffee in the morning when the King of Bohemia rushed into the room.

"You have really got it!" he cried, grasping Sherlock Holmes by either shoulder and looking eagerly into his face.

"Not yet."

"But you have hopes?"

"I have hopes."

"Then, come. I am all impatience to be gone."

"We must have a cab."

"No, my brougham is waiting."

"Then that will simplify matters." We descended and started off once more for Briony Lodge.

"Irene Adler is married," remarked Holmes.

"Married! When?"

"Yesterday."

"But to whom?"

"To an English lawyer named Norton."

"But she could not love him."

"I am in hopes that she does."

"And why in hopes?"

"Because it would spare your Majesty all fear of future annoyance. If the lady loves her husband, she does not love your Majesty. If she does not love your Majesty, there is no reason why she should interfere with your Majesty's plan."

"It is true. And yet—! Well! I wish she had been of my own station! What a queen she would have made!" He relapsed into a moody silence, which was not broken until we drew up in Serpentine Avenue.

The door of Briony Lodge was open, and an elderly woman stood upon the steps. She watched us with a sardonic eye as we stepped from the brougham.

"Mr. Sherlock Holmes, I believe?" said she.

"I am Mr. Holmes," answered my companion, looking at her with a questioning and rather startled gaze.

"Indeed! My mistress told me that you were likely to call. She left this morning with her husband by the 5:15 train from Charing Cross for the Continent."

"What!" Sherlock Holmes staggered back, white with chagrin and surprise. "Do you mean that she has left England?"

"Never to return."

"And the papers?" asked the King hoarsely. "All is lost."

"We shall see." He pushed past the servant and rushed into the drawing-room, followed by the King and myself. The furniture was scattered about in every direction, with dismantled

shelves and open drawers, as if the lady had hurriedly ransacked them before her flight. Holmes rushed at the bell-pull, tore back a small sliding shutter, and, plunging in his hand, pulled out a photograph and a letter. The photograph was of Irene Adler herself in evening dress, the letter was superscribed to "Sherlock Holmes, Esq. To be left till called for." My friend tore it open, and we all three read it together. It was dated at midnight of the preceding night and ran in this way:

"MY DEAR MR. SHERLOCK HOLMES,—You really did it very well. You took me in completely. Until after the alarm of fire, I had not a suspicion. But then, when I found how I had betrayed myself, I began to think. I had been warned against you months ago. I had been told that, if the King employed an agent, it would certainly be you. And your address had been given me. Yet, with all this, you made me reveal what you wanted to know. Even after I became suspicious, I found it hard to think evil of such a dear, kind old clergyman. But, you know, I have been trained as an actress myself. Male costume is nothing new to me. I often take advantage of the freedom which it gives. I sent John, the coachman, to watch you, ran upstairs, got into my walking clothes, as I call them, and came down just as you departed.

"Well, I followed you to your door, and so made sure that I was really an object of interest to the celebrated Mr. Sherlock Holmes. Then I, rather imprudently, wished you good-night, and started for the Temple to see my husband.

"We both thought the best resource was flight, when pursued by so formidable an antagonist; so you will find the nest empty when you call to-morrow. As to the photograph, your client may rest in peace. I love and am loved by a better man than he. The King may do what he will without hindrance from one whom he has cruelly wronged. I keep it only to safeguard myself, and to preserve a weapon which will always secure me from any steps which he might take in the future. I leave a photograph which he might care to possess; and I remain, dear Mr. Sherlock Holmes,

"Very truly yours,

"IRENE NORTON, née ADLER."

"What a woman—oh, what a woman!" cried the King of Bohemia, when we had all three read this epistle. "Did I not tell you how quick and resolute she was? Would she not have made an admirable queen? Is it not a pity that she was not on my level?"

"From what I have seen of the lady, she seems, indeed, to be on a very different level to your Majesty," said Holmes coldly. "I am sorry that I have not been able to bring your Majesty's business to a more successful conclusion."

"On the contrary, my dear sir," cried the King; "nothing could be more successful. I know that her word is inviolate. The photograph is now as safe as if it were in the fire."

"I am glad to hear your Majesty say so."

"I am immensely indebted to you. Pray tell me in what way I can reward you. This ring—" He slipped an emerald snake ring from his finger and held it out upon the palm of his hand.

"Your Majesty has something which I should value even more highly," said Holmes.

“You have but to name it.”

“This photograph!”

The King stared at him in amazement.

“Irene’s photograph!” he cried. “Certainly, if you wish it.”

“I thank your Majesty. Then there is no more to be done in the matter. I have the honour to wish you a very good morning.” He bowed, and, turning away without observing the hand which the King had stretched out to him, he set off in my company for his chambers.

And that was how a great scandal threatened to affect the kingdom of Bohemia, and how the best plans of Mr. Sherlock Holmes were beaten by a woman’s wit. He used to make merry over the cleverness of women, but I have not heard him do it of late. And when he speaks of Irene Adler, or when he refers to her photograph, it is always under the honourable title of the woman.

As armadilhas deste capítulo

> “How do you know?” — o inglês precisa de um do para fazer a pergunta, e esse do não quer dizer nada: é só a peça que monta a frase. Em português a gente pergunta com a entonação (“Você sabe?”) e nega com o “não” (“Ele não foi”). Por isso o brasileiro escreve “You know how?” e “He not went”.

> “a black mask”, “a long, straight chin” — em inglês o adjetivo vem antes do substantivo, e quando há vários, todos vêm antes. Em português vem depois: “uma máscara preta”. Traduzindo direto da cabeça, sai “a mask black” — e isso não soa como sotaque, soa como erro.

> “It was the twentieth of March, 1888.” — esse it não é “isso”: ele está ali só porque a frase em inglês não pode ficar sem sujeito. Em português “Era vinte de março” está perfeito; em inglês, “Was the twentieth of March” está errado. Vale para hora, data, clima e distância: It is raining, It is far.

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