

# The Return of Sherlock Holmes

By A. Conan Doyle

(Continued from last week)

"It's all going wrong, Watson—all as wrong as it can go. I kept a bold face before Lestrade, but, upon my soul, I believe that for once the fellow is on the right track and we are on the wrong. All my instincts are one way, and all the facts are the other, and I much fear that British juries have not yet attained that pitch of intelligence when they will give the preference to my theories over Lestrade's facts."

"Did you go to Blackheath?"  
"Yes, Watson. I went there, and I found very quickly that the late lamented Oldacre was a pretty considerable blackguard. The father was away in search of his son. The mother was at home—a little, fluffy, blue-eyed person, in a tremor of fear and indignation. Of course she would not admit even the possibility of his guilt. But she would not express either surprise or regret over the fate of Oldacre. On the contrary, she spoke of him with such bitterness that she was unconsciously considerably strengthening the case of the police, for, of course, if her son had heard her speak of the man in this fashion it would predispose him toward hatred and violence. 'He was more like a malignant and cunning ape than a human being,' said she, 'and he always was, ever since he was a young man.'"

"You knew him at that time?" said I.  
"Yes, I knew him well; in fact, he was an old suitor of mine. Thank heaven that I had the sense to turn away from him and to marry a better, if poorer, man. I was engaged to him, Mr. Holmes, when I heard a shocking story of how he had turned a cat loose in an aviary, and I was so horrified at his brutal cruelty that I would have nothing more to do with him. She rummaged in a bureau, and presently she produced a photograph of a woman shamefully defaced and mutilated with a knife. 'That is my own photograph,' she said. 'He sent it to me in that state, with his curse, upon my wedding morning.'"

"Well," said I, "at least he has forgiven you now, since he has left all his property to your son."  
"Neither my son nor I want anything from Jonas Oldacre, dead or alive," she cried, with a proper spirit. "There is a God in heaven, Mr. Holmes, and that same God who has punished that wicked man will show in his own good time that my son's hands are guiltless of his blood."

"Well, I tried one or two leads, but could get at nothing which would help our hypothesis and several points which would make against it. I gave it up at last, and off I went to Norwood."

"This place, Deep Dene House, is a big modern villa of staring brick standing back in its own grounds, with a laurel clumped lawn in front of it. To the right and some distance back from the road was the timber yard which had been the scene of the fire. Here's a rough plan on a leaf of my notebook. This window on the left is the one which opens into Oldacre's room. You can look into it from the road, you see. That is about the only bit of consolation I have had today. Lestrade was not there, but his head constable did the honors. They had just found a great treasure trove. They had spent the morning raking among the ashes of the burned wood pile, and besides the charred organic remains they had secured several discolored metal disks. I examined them with care, and there was no doubt that they were trouser buttons. I even distinguished that one of them was marked with the name of Hyams, who was Oldacre's tailor. I then worked the lawn very carefully for signs and traces, but this drought has made everything as hard as iron. Nothing was to be seen save that some body or bundle had been dragged through a low privet hedge which is in a line with the wood pile. All that, of course, fits in with the official theory. I crawled about the lawn with an August sun on my back, but I got up at the end of an hour no wiser than before."

"Well, after this fiasco I went into the bedroom and examined that also. The blood stains were very slight, mere smears and discolorations, but undoubtedly fresh. The stick had been removed, but there also the marks were slight. There is no doubt about the stick belonging to our client. He admits it. Footmarks of both men could be made out on the carpet, but none of any third person, which again is a trick for the other side. They were plugging their score all the time, and we were at a standstill."

"Only one little gleam of hope did I get, and yet it amounted to nothing. I examined the contents of the safe, most of which had been taken out and left on the table. The papers had been made up into sealed envelopes, one or two of which had been opened by the police. They were not, so far as I could judge, of any great value, nor did the bank book show that Mr. Oldacre was in such very affluent circumstances. But it seemed to me that all the papers were not there. There were allusions to some deeds—possibly the more valuable—which I could not find. This, of course, if we could definitely prove it, would turn Lestrade's argument against himself, for who would steal a thing if he knew that he would shortly inherit it?"

"Finally, having drawn every other cover and picked up no scent, I tried my luck with the housekeeper, Mrs. Lexington is her name—a little, dark, silent person, with suspicious and sidelong eyes. She could tell us something if she would. I am convinced of it."

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**Linoleum** Domestic high grade linoleum, two yards wide, regular 80c grade, special for Friday at per square yard..... **38c**

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**Belts** White Wash Belts with embroidered center, nicely worked in all the newest designs; very popular this year. Reduced for Friday to only..... **19c**

**Laces** White point de Paris Lace and Insertions, White Silk Chamilly Lace—English Torchon Lace and Insertion, sold to 10c, special price per yard..... **3c**

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2 inches wide, in all colors, 8c grade, at yard..... **5c**

### Night Gowns

50 and 58c grades marked..... **43c**

68 and 75c grades marked..... **56c**

\$1.00 grades, next week at..... **75c**

\$1.25 grades, next week at..... **94c**

\$1.50 and \$1.75 grades at..... **\$1.29**

\$2.00 and \$2.50 grades at..... **\$1.59**

### Petticoats

50 and 58c grades marked..... **43c**

75 to 85c grades marked..... **65c**

95c and \$1.00 grades marked..... **75c**

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1.39 and \$1.45 grades at..... **98c**

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50c grade now marked at..... **38c**

75c grade now marked at..... **56c**

\$1.00 grade now marked at..... **75c**

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35c and 39c grade at..... **33c**

50c and 58c grade at..... **39c**

68c and 75c grade at..... **50c**

### Chemise

\$1.00 grade now marked at..... **69c**

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\$1.75 grade now marked at..... **\$1.19**

### Silk Petticoats

Women's Taffetta Silk Petticoats, best grade of silk, with 15 inch circular flounce, trimmed with Accordion Plaiting. \$7.50 grade on..... **\$5.00** sale Friday at.....

**\$12.50 Silk Petticoats \$8.50**

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But she was as close as wax. Yes, she had let Mr. McFarlane in at half past 9. She wished her hand had withered before she had done so. She had gone to bed at half past 10. Her room was at the other end of the house and she could hear nothing of what passed. Mr. McFarlane had left his hat and, to the best of her belief, his stick in the hall. She had been awakened by the alarm of fire. Her poor, dear master had certainly been murdered. Had he any enemies? Well, every man had enemies, but Mr. Oldacre kept himself very much to himself and only met people in the way of business. She had seen the buttons and was sure that they belonged to the clothes which he had worn last night. The wood pile was very dry, for it had not rained for a month. It burned like tinder, and by the time she reached the spot nothing could be seen but flames. She and all the freemen smelled the burned flesh from inside it. She knew nothing of the papers nor of Mr. Oldacre's private affairs.

"So, my dear Watson, there's my report of a failure. And yet—and yet!"—he clinched his thin hands in a paroxysm of conviction—"I know it's all wrong. I feel it in my bones. There is something that has not come out, and that housekeeper knows it. There was a sort of sulky defiance in her

### LEAVENED BREAD

Has Been Man's Constant Mainstay From Time Immemorial.

Some writer has said that "The first miller emerging from his savage state, with no thought save hunger, plucked the wheat from the stock, and, using his teeth for millstones, ground the first grist for a customer who would not be denied—his stomach." Thus gaining experience by test in the food line, it would be only natural for this miller to lay up a quantity of grain against an hour of need. Just when he commenced grinding his wheat in the rude stone mortar and moistening the flour preparatory to baking it in the ashes of his camp fire, and just when it was found that an old piece of dough in a fresh batch made it better or "leavened" it, is beyond the reach of historians. Certain it is that though the principle was the same thousands of years ago as it is to-day, it has remained for the makers of Yeast Foam to supply a yeast with all the true leavening powers minus the properties that produce sour, "runny" or soggy bread. This is the yeast that took the first grand prize at the St. Louis Exposition, and revolutionizes the bread making in every home where it is used because much better bread can be made with it from any flour.

Yeast Foam is purely vegetable, being made of the best malt, corn, hops and other healthful ingredients. The factory is also the cleanest and best equipped in the world. This yeast is the only kind that preserves in the bread all the delicious flavor and nutritive value of the wheat. The bread made with it is always sweet and wholesome and stays moist until used. Forty loaves of bread can be made from one 5c package. The makers of Yeast Foam are giving out a new book called "Good Bread; How to Make It." This little book, invaluable in its way, has twenty-six illustrations in color, and tells how to make all kinds of bread, biscuits, buns and rolls, as well as containing other recipes which will be found invaluable in the home. The way of preparing the different recipes is very clear and comprehensive. The book will be sent free to any one sending their name and address, with a request for same, to the Northwestern Yeast Company, Chicago, Ill. Every woman who bakes should secure a copy.

**Excursion Tickets to Modern Woodmen Picnic at Audubon, Iowa,**  
Via the North-Western Line, will be sold at reduced rates on August 3, limited to return until August 4, inclusive. Apply to agents Chicago & North-Western R'y.

eyes which only goes with guilty knowledge. However, there's no good talking any more about it, Watson. But unless some lucky chance comes our way I fear that the Norwood disappearance case will not figure in this chronicle of our successes which I foresee that a patient public will sooner or later have to endure."

"Surely," said I, "the man's appearance would go far with any jury."  
"That is a dangerous argument, my dear Watson. You remember that terrible murderer, Bert Stevens, who wanted us to get him off in '87? Was there ever a more mild mannered, Sunday school young man?"

"It is true."  
"Unless we succeed in establishing an alternative theory this man is lost. You can hardly find a flaw in the case which can now be presented against him, and all further investigation has served to strengthen it. By the way, there is one curious little point about those papers which may serve us as the starting point for an inquiry. On looking over the bank book I found that the low state of the balance was principally due to large checks which have been made out during the last year to Mr. Cornelius. I confess that I should be interested to know who this Mr. Cornelius may be with whom a retired builder has such very large transactions. Is it possible that he has had a hand in the affair? Cornelius might be a broker, but we have found no scrip to correspond with these large payments. Failing any other indication, my researches must now take the direction of an inquiry at the bank for the gentleman who has cashed these checks. But I fear, my dear fellow, that our case will end gloriously by Lestrade hanging our client, which will certainly be a triumph for Scotland Yard."

I do not know how far Sherlock Holmes took any sleep that night, but when I came down to breakfast I found him pale and harassed, his bright eyes the brighter for the dark shadows round them. The carpet round his chair

ed thing and may possibly cut in a very different direction from that which Lestrade imagines. Take your breakfast, Watson, and we will go out together and see what we can do. I feel as if I shall need your company and your moral support today."

My friend had no breakfast himself, for it was one of his peculiarities that in his more intense moments he would permit himself no food, and I have known him to presume upon his iron strength until he has fainted from pure inanition. "At present I cannot spare energy and nerve force for digestion," he would say in answer to my medical remonstrances. I was not surprised, therefore, when this morning he left his untouched meal behind him and started with me for Norwood. A crowd of morbid sightseers were still gathered round Deep Dene House, which was just such a suburban villa as I had pictured. Within the gates Lestrade met us, his face flushed with victory, his manner grossly triumphant.

"Well, Mr. Holmes, have you proved us to be wrong yet? Have you found your tramp?" he cried.

"I have formed no conclusion whatever," my companion answered.  
"But we formed ours yesterday, and now it proves to be correct, so you must acknowledge that we have been a little in front of you this time, Mr. Holmes."

"You certainly have the air of something unusual having occurred," said Holmes.  
Lestrade laughed loudly.  
"You don't like being beaten any more than the rest of us do," said he. "A man can't expect always to have it his own way, can he, Dr. Watson? Step this way, if you please, gentlemen, and I think I can convince you once for all that it was John McFarlane who did this crime."

He led us through the passage and out into a dark hall beyond.  
"This is where young McFarlane must have come out to get his hat after the crime was done," said he. "Now, look at this." With dramatic suddenness he struck a match and by its light exposed a stain of blood upon the whitewashed wall. As he held the match nearer I saw that it was more than a stain. It was the well marked print of a thumb.

"Look at that with your magnifying glass, Mr. Holmes."  
"Yes, I am doing so."  
"You are aware that no two thumb marks are alike?"  
"I have heard something of the kind."  
"Well, then, will you please compare that print with this wax impression of young McFarlane's right thumb taken by my orders this morning?"

As he held the waxen print close to the blood stain it did not take a magnifying glass to see that the two were undoubtedly from the same thumb. It was evident to me that our unfortunate client was lost.  
"That is final," said Lestrade.  
"Yes, that is final," I involuntarily echoed.  
"It is final," said Holmes.

Something in his tone caught my ear, and I turned to look at him. An extraordinary change had come over his face. It was writhing with inward merriment. His two eyes were shining like stars. It seemed to me that he was making desperate efforts to restrain a convulsive attack of laughter.  
"Dear me! Dear me!" he said at last. "Well, now, who would have thought it? And how deceptive appearances may be, to be sure! Such a nice young man to look at! It is a lesson to us not to trust our own judgment, is it not, Lestrade?"

"Yes, some of us are a little too much inclined to be cocksure, Mr. Holmes," said Lestrade. "The man's insolence was maddening, but we could not resist it."

Important fresh evidence to hand. McFarlane's guilt definitely established. Advise you to abandon case. LESTRADE.  
"This sounds serious," said I.  
"It is Lestrade's little cock-a-doodle of victory," Holmes answered, with a bitter smile. "And yet it may be premature to abandon the case. After all, important fresh evidence is a two-edged

"What a providential thing that this young man should press his right thumb against the wall in taking his hat from the peg! Such a very natural action, too, if you come to think of it." Holmes was outwardly calm, but his whole body gave a wriggle of suppressed excitement as he spoke. "By the way, Lestrade, who made this remarkable discovery?"

"It was the housekeeper, Mrs. Lexington, who drew the night constable's attention to it."  
"Where was the night constable?"

"He remained on guard in the bedroom where the crime was committed so as to see that nothing was touched."

"But why didn't the police see this mark yesterday?"

"Well, we had no particular reason to make a careful examination of the hall. Besides, it's not in a very prominent place, as you see."

"No, no—of course not. I suppose there is no doubt that the mark was there yesterday?"

Lestrade looked at Holmes as if he thought he was going out of his mind. I confess that I was myself surprised both at his hilarious manner and at his rather wild observation.

"I don't know whether you think the McFarlane came out of jail in the dead of night in order to strengthen the evidence against himself," said Lestrade. "I leave it to any expert in the world whether that is not the mark of his thumb."

"It is unquestionably the mark of his thumb."  
"There, that's enough," said Lestrade. "I am a practical man, Mr. Holmes, and when I have got my evidence I come to my conclusions. If you have anything to say you will find me writing my report in the sitting room."

Holmes had recovered his equanimity, though I still seemed to detect gleams of amusement in his expression.  
"Dear me, this is a very sad development, Watson, is it not?" said he.

"And yet there are singular points about it which hold out some hopes for our client."

"I am delighted to hear it," said I heartily. "I was afraid it was all up with him."

"I would hardly go so far as to say that, my dear Watson. The fact is that there is one really serious flaw in this evidence to which our friend attaches so much importance."

"Indeed, Holmes! What is it?"  
"Only this, that I know that that mark was not there when I examined the hall yesterday. And now, Watson, let us have a little stroll round in the sunshine."

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"She could tell us something if she would."

was littered with cigarette ends and with the early editions of the morning papers. An open telegram lay upon the table.

"What do you think of this, Watson?" he asked, tossing it across.  
It was from Norwood and ran as follows:

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