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"I keep a bull pup," I said, "and I object to row,
because my nerves are shaken, and I get up at all
sorts of ungodly hours, and I am extremely lazy.
I have another set of vices when I am well, but
those are the principal ones at present."

STUD

Dr. Watson

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1930

While I sleepless, aching, weary
pondered on the mysteries

Unfathomed by my soul before,

As I tossed, and turning wondered

Suddenly the darkness thundered

Blazing forth a vision of my dead

Beloved friend once more.

"Poe's Dupin," my friend Mr. Sherlock
Holmes had remarked to me on a long ago
afternoon, "was a very inferior fellow."
Little did I realize at the time of
utterance that it was one his favorite
introductions to a brilliant verbal expedition
into the mind of man and its limitless
potential. I sat by his side, in his little
Sussex study, balancing on my knees the cup
of tea he had kindly brewed over the flame
of his Bunsen burner, whilst I followed
his words with utmost attention.

"To cite an example," the gentle old man continued, "Just look at his showy trick of breaking into another's meditation after a quarter hour's silence with an uncannily appropriate comment. What is this but slight-of-mind? Misdirection. 'the brain is quicker than the eye.' Dupin did not possess -- no more than any other human -- any supernatural powers of intuition. But he was extraordinarily gifted with the power to subtly, invisibly redirect the flow of thought around him so that at the very moment of his comment, the person hearing it would instantly feel that his -- or her -- previous mental images had inevitably led to this one point. However, his statement was coloured in such artful tomes as to wholly conceal his influence in the matter."

I shifted uncomfortably. "I cannot imagine how this is possible," I muttered.

"But I can imagine," he replied serenely. His snow white hair lent to his alert, hawk-like visage an appearance of timeless and compassionate wisdom. "I can imagine, my dear, as I grow older, an infinity of things not possible in my youth. I can imagine, to cite another instance, an apple tree of such remarkable fruitfulness and years that it becomes, by its very existence, the patriarch of all apple trees, ever willing to drop its fruit to one who waits, I can imagine this tree, I say, so clearly that its reality becomes a foregone conclusion."

Just such a tree, I recollected wondering whither he had plucked his

example, stood outside his study window, laden with ripe autumnal fruit, its branches shifting slightly in the gusts early October. I turned my head to regard it, as its leaves brushed every now and then against the window-panes. For the three years, I had known him I could recall the pleasant influence of its lofty presence, spreading a sweet balsamic fragrance in his favorite room whenever the casement was open.

"You have picked a curious means of illustrating your statement," I said hesitatingly. Why use as your example something I have seen a hundred or so times before?"

"quite so," he rejoined a little nettled. He rose from his worn, velvet-lined chair and strolled to the open window, pipe in hand, to pluck two of the red, mature fruits hanging from the nearest branch. A lazy bee followed his long arm back into the room. "Just the thing with tea," he said. He handed one to me, and as I bit into its shiny surface he resumed his discourse.

"But my train of thought has been interrupted. Ah yes. It is a matter of using one's capacity for conceptualization to the fullest. Why must we always think that what we conceive, internally is perceptible only to ourselves? What is the difference, I say, between a house I construct with the tools in my shed, and the one I have already made with the tools of my imagination? The solid reality of the first I cannot verify except in my own perceptum. So it is with the latter. Some more tea, Maudie?"

for some reason my earliest first-hand memories are connected with this man and with my reflections on the written case in which he had outlined his encounter with Cyanea capillata in its role as murderer. You see, I do not remember reading the tale. I only recall having read it. It was early 1909, my twentieth birthday just past, my father's grumblings from our parlour plainly audible to me as I sat ruminating on the neatly penned little manuscript in front of me. Mr. Holmes had posted it to me in Fulworth a few days earlier since I had been intimately involved with the events contained within its pages, for my own corrections and amendments to the text. I recall thinking to myself then, that though two years had passed, his keen memory had not erred in the slightest in its outline of the facts. Of any earlier episodes in my life, I must confess that I do not remember living them; I only remember remembering them. "Remember", in the pages of my dictionary, has a precisely defined meaning.

"Remember: to flesh out or to give substance to, retrospectively." And now, growing older myself and living amid the roar of twentieth century London, why do my own rememberings have such an indirect flavour about them?

Take Dupin now--he would not, I suppose, have any recollections at all, though my friend used the fellow's mental feats to illustrate his own reflections, I know well enough that Dupin was merely a figment of Poe's imaginings. Nevertheless he seemed real enough during my intimate afternoons with Mr. Holmes. All things were touched with a luminous quality greater than reality, and Dupin was as tangible as we were.

Only yesterday, grief overtook me once more thinking of my friend's last hours in his beloved downlands nearly five years ago. That I was not at the side of my dearest friend seemed inexcusable. Instead a curt telegram from my brother William notified me of his passing, followed by the Times notice two days later, covering the country-wide mourning. The notice was printed on a day full of complexity--I see I will have to elaborate on that. Since his service during the Great War and my own subsequent enlistment in the Army Nursing corp, the little time we shared with each other had faded to nothing.

And so here I reside in Bloomsbury, writing my own tales, perhaps in emulation of both him and his friend and biographer Dr. Watson before. There is something peculiar about this London which has been home to me the past thirteen years. Often the city simply is itself, singular and unbewildering, the landmarks plain for those with a map who nod to me in recognition as I stroll. At these times a sense of ill-defined loss accompanies me for a missing quality I am hard pressed to explain. Yet, rarely, should we chance to have a thick and murky fog, or when walking in the dead of night it happens that I lose my way in the deserted streets, a complexity then reveals itself to cast an invisible radiance atop the visible structures--and I am filled with the joy of rediscovery. At these times London looks the same to my eyes but is greater to my heart. No-one passing me then takes the least notice of my presence. Places appear as I walk further that I know only from books. In the light of the next day I cannot find them again.

Ever more seldom do these times occur. A rude shock awaited me the day, newly arrived in London, I first entered a small bookshop to ask for the writings of John Watson. The sallow, myopic, middle-aged clerk confronting me blinked his bespectacled eyes in bemusement until he understood what I wanted.

"That'll be Conan Doyle's books you'll be wantn' now, miss," he assured me, turning to pluck two from his shelves with a bony hand, slapping down on the counter for my inspection. "About the detective fellah Sherlock Holmes. These are them."

"You misunderstand me, ." I told him wish to have those by Dr. Watson." He cackled

"All one and the same, missy, don't you know. What people believe keeps me fair goggle-eyed. Bless you, that doctor fellah's just as imaginary as his partner. Both of them made up out of the whole cloth; aint you ever heard the word 'fiction' before? Know what a figment is? A fairytale. Don't read sich falderall myself--my nose stays pointed at the real world. It's all the trouble I can deal with."

My righteous indignation knew no bounds, I retorted, "But I know the man." Another customer had occupied the clerk's attention and he did not hear me although I repeated myself, I walked out unnoticed.

It was one of those thin days when London wore one face. Strolling farther down Tottenham Court Road I put my request again to the proprietor of the next bookshop. Again I was presented with the works of Conan Doyle; this time I made the

ver the past century, the exploits of the Master Detective have been read of and enjoyed in many parts of the world - from Norway to Tahiti. One of the most avid group of Sherlockians has been that in the Land of the Rising Sun, Japan. Indeed, the Sherlock Holmes Club of Japan enjoys a large membership, but until the past few years, very little S'ian literature and scholarly writing have come out of this area of the world.

This past summer, this was rectified. A book, Sherlock Holmes's London authored, and with photographs taken by Tsukasa Kobayash, Akane Higashiyama and Masaharu Uemura appeared on the travel shelves in this countries' book stores. It is a well-written book, and a treasure trove of Sherlockian travel and lore for those who have been to London, or have a trip scheduled in the future. It is loaded with shapshots in color, and in black and white, as well as drawings by Paget and Steele. This book takes the reader on an armchair tour in the footsteps of Holmes and Watson. There are several sections on the more famous places in the Canon: Moriarty's Restaurant, in the Baker Street Underground Station, the Sherlock Holmes Hotel, the British Museum and of course, the Sherlock Holmes Pub just off Trafalgar Square.

The authors have spared few pains to cover the London which Holmes would have known, and have given a wonderful view of the city with enough nostalgia to wish for those days of hansoms and gaslights. The photos are well-taken and arranged although a picture of Hyde Park, sans the dog answering natures call might be in order. I recommend this book.

Chronicle Books, San Francisco

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9" x 12", 128 pages paper. \$14.95- 1 to 5 copies
\$ 7.48- 5 to 10 copies
\$ 5.98- 10 or more
copies

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In the early 1970s, an innocuous little book for children, titled "Basil of Baker Street," was published. The book, written by Californian Eve Titus, introduced the amazing mouse detective, Basil, and his trusty companion, Dr. David Dawson, who reside in the basement at 221b Baker Street, and follow the deductive footsteps of the two more famous occupants upstairs.

The book, and its four successors did well at the bookstores. Remarkably, the book found its way not only into the hands of children, but into libraries, and the hearts of adults, Sherlockians. Sherlockians always eager for a good parody, found more enjoyment in the little books than the audiences for which they were written.

Then Disney Studios announced that an animated version of the original Basil book would be appearing in theaters across the country this summer, there were more delighted adults than children. From what rumors filtered out from Disney, it sounded as though the folks who have given enjoyment to generations would be treating the Titus characters with as much respect and artistic care as Snow White and Pinocchio. As we learned on a rainy Sunday evening in a half-full theater, the reports were true.

The storyline itself varies greatly from the original "Basil" book, but the script writers have included all the major characters: Basil, a ferret-like, lightening sharp mouse, Dr. Dawson, affable, staunch, though a tad too Nigel Bruceish, the ever-flustered housekeeper, Mrs. Judson, and a melodramatic, oily tongued Professor Ratigan, the likes of who would appeal to

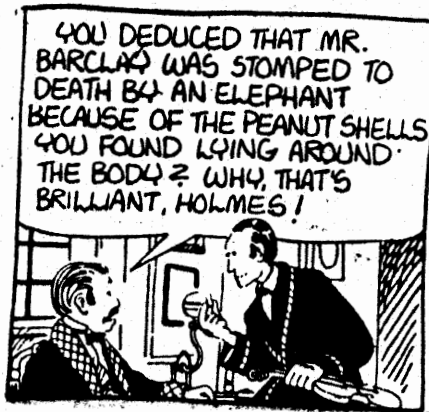
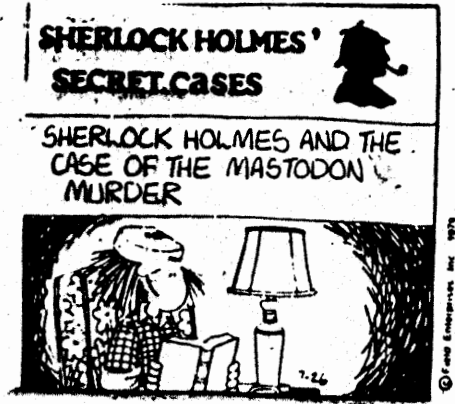
ol' Cruella Deville and Captain Hook. (Vincent Price characterized the voice of the Professor.) The plot is relatively uncomplicated: Basil and Dawson help the motherless Olivia Flaversham, portrayed in the timeless Bambi school of tear-jerkers, to find her toymaker father, who has been kid-, or mousenapped by the Professor in his evil scheme to rule the entire British Mouse Empire. The movie is complete with a Victoria-like mouse queen, a lovable, if menacing, one-legged bat henchman of Ratigan's named Fidget, a towering tank of a basset named Toby, and even a cameo appearance by 221b's more famous occupants. But what is more fascinating, and too easily forgotten if one has not watched a Disney movie for some time, is the mood and classic animation achieved in these films. All the eeriness of a fog-shrouded, rainy London street, the loneliness of the Thames at midnight and more is captured superbly. The intricacies of animation, the art of bringing humanness to animals and objects that only Disney knows how, is in abundance in this movie. The final big chase scene down the Thames, and a fight to the death between Basil and the Professor in the mechanism of Big Ben, leaves one on the edge of one's seat, wishing for more.

We only hope that Disney decides to do a sequel, however long that may take.

If you see any Sherlockian movies this summer, make it "The Great Mouse Detective". This should be at the top of your list.

P.S. Take your kids to see it. They'll like it too.

FUNKY WINKERBEAN



transaction. I returned to my room to read the fruits of my purchase far into the night in order to compare them, confusedly, with my edition of Poe, a gift from the hand of my old friend. Seeing the similar sentences printed on different pages in no way eased my confusion nor my subsequent dark and troubled dreams. Yet the next morning was a rare one whose salutary effects cleared my mind of uncertainty. It was imbued with a thick and glorious mist that tugged me in its swirling wake towards Victoria Station, and the Fulworth bound train that would take me to see Mr. Holmes again.

All was just as I remembered; his undisguised pleasure that I had come back, the sinewy arm round my shoulder, the tea and whisky to brighten our conversation in his study. Now and again thicker curls of smoke wafted upwards from his old clay to punctuate his speech, emphasizing the points he made.

"You look the same as ever, Maudie -- well, nearly. Would you care for one of mine?" From his dressing gown pocket he pulled the silver cigarette case to toss it into my hands. His keen features wore a mischievous look in recognition of my discomfort. "Dear girl, surely you didn't gull yourself into fancying I would not notice! Even as you have metamorphosed into a modern woman, so you have taken up smoking -- most likely, I should say, for that very reason. You apall me; what have I created?"

My reply stuck in my throat, unwilling as I was to investigate what he meant by that. He regarded me notunkindly.

"Whisky then, to take the chill off your bones? Not awaiting my answer, he poured me a good tumblful which I accepted. It's fiery

influence brightening the room around me. Modern women: the phenomenon is not without features of interest. You would provide a most excellent example for my monograph for you manifest every alteration our new age has to offer. No, my dear, you mustn't construe that to be a criticism. Your books which you have been so kind as to send show how finely your intellect has developed. I'm proud of you, Maudie." Under the glow of his affectionate words, everything seemed right again.

How grimly that compares to my next attempt to visit him can best be shown by the scene at Victoria. It was another thin day.

"Fulworth?" shouted the harassed ticket seller above the blowing whistles and clanging all around us. "I've never heard of that one. There is no train to Fulworth, miss. Excuse me," He turned to the people crowding the queue behind me to deal with their requests.

On another day wearing but one aspect -- it was 8 July 1930 -- the Times carried another death notice. "Steel true, blade straight, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle." Under the leader there was a lengthy obituary citing his many accomplishments, literary and otherwise. "Of course (it ran) Sir Arthur is best remembered for his creation of the immortal fictional detective, Sherlock Holmes, whose exploits have become known worldwide through his books." It must be, I decided, that I was losing my reason and would land in Bedlam. And yet the article went on and on, blandly. There never appeared any later refutation in the editorial column to protest this gross calumny. The only thing to reassure me was a telegram, some days later, from Mr. Holmes, stating cheerfully that he was thinking of me, nothing more.

Vividly, I recall the day I had been signing books at the shop which had graciously agreed to display my works. I did so in no good humor, for the long unbroken stretch of thin days had robbed me of my spirit. Then the sun began to set, lending a shimmering, rich quality to the London streets, overlaying the city with the twinkling shroud of its ephemeral twin and I held my breath, hardly daring to believe that it had happened again. I wasted no time in hailing a cab to the station for a Sussex-bound train.

I had not seen him in some years. Sherlock Holmes was little changed; his temples perhaps more receded, the thin face from which bright eyes still twinkled, a bit more frail.

"You must take something from me, Maudie," he remarked after we had spent our repertoire of casual conversation. Hoisting himself out of his favorite chair, he rummaged among the untidy papers in his desk to produce, at length, a bound manuscript. "This," he pronounced, confronting me with it, "is my magnum opus, The Whole Art of Detection. Hum! You needn't attempt to conceal your astonishment -- I'll wager all this time you thought it was idle talk on my part. Nonsense -- and you see the proof before you."

"It's a bit heavy," I ventured, hefting the tome.

"Indeed! There was much to say upon the subject, all of it is pertinent, and myself the one person qualified to do so. However, I may sum up for you in one phrase the underlying motif that is its backbone, "Nothing is so essential to the investigator as imagination.

A priori, this book is my bequest to You and you will, of course, act as my agent. Do you agree to it?"

"I am honoured," I stammered.

"You should be!" He replied tartly. "You have no idea how few people I really trust. With Watson gone.....ah Maudie, you've turned out as I would like". I recall the curious, secretive, half-fatherly smile on his lips as he waved to my departing train bound for London; 1933. It was the last I saw of him.

We are on the eve of another war; the newspapers are full of it, and all the days show the same monotone countenance. Last evening, I went walking in Baker Street in a chill, drizzling mist whose familiar thickness swirled through my thoughts. It was comforting, somehow, like the presence of a guardian spirit. And late last night I had an unfolding dream.

I saw a king, seated in a golden chair, hung round with an air of immanence. Suddenly his brow split and out stepped, full-blown a woman of magnificence. Her eyes were the eyes of timeless wisdom, gray and penetrating, and in her hand was an olive branch. Gradually behind her a city brightened, over which she spread her arms.

And the king, who had been forgotten, died but still she presided, unseen, over the city that bore her name illuminating it with clear wisdom.

The images in my dream streamed together, emerging and growing brighter, until they coalesced into something absolute and unmistakable: the figure of Sherlock Holmes, standing once more before me.

"You are ready now, I observe," he stated, not unkindly, "though certainly you have been long enough about it. High time too, for with the east wind blowing once more you will need to be sure of what you know to stand before it unbowed."

"Why did you not tell before?" I asked.

"That I created you?"

"No, the other."

"They are both very intertwined, are they not? And to answer you, if you couldn't see it for yourself, why should I have wasted my breath?"

"I always shied away from it," I offered humbly.

"Quite so. Young people under a certain age never can deal with paradox. I was the same way myself. But as I have told you, the reality of matter is no greater than the reality of the mind. Let your senses dispel your doubts. Pick up a teacup. Smoke a cigarette. They are no more tangible than you, perhaps less so. You exist as surely as anyone walking this earth. Do you deny it?"

"No," I said with a great rush of certainty that what he said I knew to be true. His tone softened and his twinkling eyes regarded me with amusement.

"Now that we have settled that, you must appease my own curiosity over something you have long wondered. What do you imagine happens when people read your books? What are you creating? Have you thought about it?"

"Not in that way, I confess. But I still want to know why?"

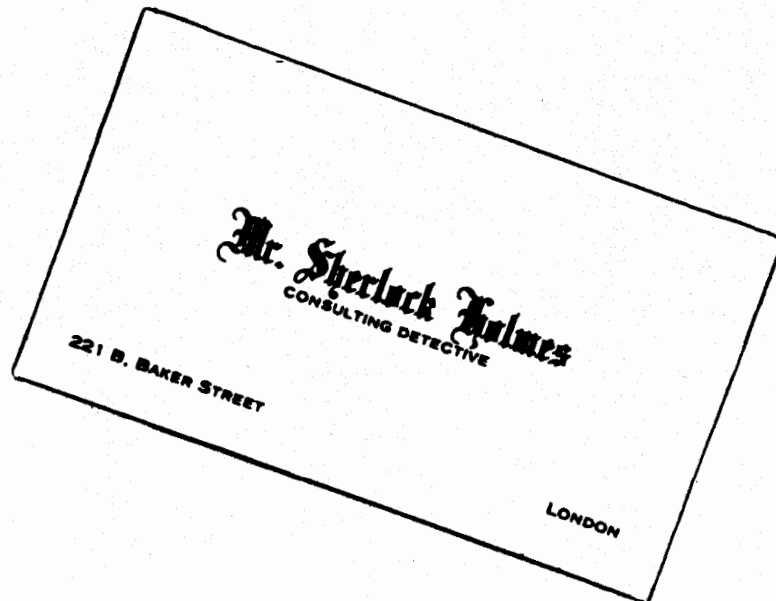
"Why what? Really, Maudie, you must be more precise. Precision is the mark of a logical mind."

"Why then, did you put your efforts into me?"

"Oh that." His face became rather thoughtful. "I wonder you need to ask. You needed to be brought forth, to be given reality. Not only was I the only one to do so, I rather wanted to. Why, after all, do you write?"

With that he was gone, leaving me to ponder the ambitious question he had posed to which I lamented my own failure to reply. I could have answered him had I only been able to ask it, first, of a third party, Sir Arthur, out of whose brow we both had sprung.

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to be published in 1987. For information regarding this book, send inquiries to the publisher.

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