### Sherlock Holmes---A Case of Identity

By A Conan Doyle.
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dear fellow," said Sherlock Holmes, as we sat on either side of the fire in his lodgings at Baker street, 'life is infinitely stranger than anything which the mind of man could invent. We would not

dare to conceive the things which are really mere commonplaces of existence. If we could fly out of that window hand in hand, hover over this great city, gently remove the roofs, and peep in at the queer things which are going on, the strange coincidences, the plannings, the cross-purposes, the wonderful chain of events, working through generations, and leading to the most outre results, it would make all fiction with its conventionalities and foreseen conclusions most stale and unprofit-"And yet I am not convinced of it." I

answered. "The cases which come to light in the papers are, as a rule, bald enough and vulgar enough. We have in our police reports realism pushed to its extreme limits, and yet the result is, it must be confessed, neither fascinating nor artistic." "A certain selection and discretion must be used in producing a realistic effect," remarked Holmes. "This is wanting in the police report, where more stress is laid, perhaps, upon the platitudes of the mag-

istrate than upon the details, which to an

observer contain the vital essence of the whole matter. Depend upon it there is nothing so unnatural as the commonplace." I smiled and shook my head, "I can quite understand your thinking so," said I, "Of course, in your position of unofficial absolutely puzzled, throughout three continents, you are brought in contact with your short sight it is a little trying to do fit for us to know, when all father's friends seen or heard anything since then to throw all that is strange and bizarre. But here" so much typewriting?" were to be there. And he said I had any light upon what became of him."

—I picked up the morning paper from the "I did at first," she answered, "but now nothing fit to wear, when I had my purple "It seems to me that you have been

fectly familiar to me. There is, of course, face. blow the bruise, the sympathetic sister or know all that?" vent nothing more crude."

taking the paper and glancing his eye consult me?" down it. "This is the Dundas separation there was no other woman, and the conthem at his wife, which, you will allow, is not an action likely to occur to the imagination of the average story-teller. Take a pinch of snuff, doctor, and acknowledge that I have scored over you in your example.

He held out his snuffbox of old gold, with a great amethyst in the center of the lid. Its splendor was in such contrast to his homely ways and simple life and I could not help commenting upon it. "Ah," said he, "I forgot that I had not

seen you for some weeks. It is a little souvenir from the king of Bohemia in return for my assistance in the case of the Irene Adler papers."

"And the ring?" I asked, glancing at a remarkable brilliant which sparkled upon

"It was from the reigning family in Holland, though the matter in which I served them was of such delicacy that I cannot confide it even to you, who have been good enough to chronicle one or two

"And have you any on hand just now?"

I asked, with interest. "Some ten or twelve, but none which present any feature of Interest. They are important, you understand, without being interesting. Indeed, I have found that it is usually in unimportant matters that there is a field for the observation, and for the quick analysis of cause and effect which gives the charm to an investigation. The larger crimes are apt to be the simpler, for the bigger the crime, the more obvious, as a rule, is the motive. In these cases, save for one rather intricate matter which has been referred to me from Marseilles, there is nothing which presents any features of interest. It is possible, however, that I may have something better before very many minutes are over, for

mistaken." He had risen from his chair and was street. Looking over his shoulder, I saw a large woman with a heavy fur boa 'round interest." her neck, and a large curling red feather in a broad-brimmed hat which was tilted Holmes. "And since you draw so large a "It has long been an axiom of mine that her body oscillated backward and forward, nicely upon an income of about £60." and her fingers fidgetted with her glove

sharp clang of the bell. a woman has been seriously wronged by a a day." symptom is a broken bell wire. Here we to me," said Holmes. comes in person to resolve our doubts."

As he spoke there was a tap at the door, and the boy in buttons entered to announce and she picked nervously at the fringe of Miss Mary Sutherland, while the woman her jacket. "I met him first at the gasherself loomed behind his small black figure fitters' ball," she said. "They used to send like a full-sailed merchantman behind a father tickets when he was alive, and then tiny pilot boat. Sheriock Holmes welcomed afterwards they remembered us, and sent her with the easy courtesy for which he them to mother. Mr. Windibank did not was remarkable, and having closed the wish us to go. He never did wish us to door and bowed her into an armchair, he go anywhere. He would get quite mad if looked her over in a minute, and yet ab- I wanted so much as to join the Sunday stracted fashion, which was peculiar to school treat. But this time I was set or

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adviser and helper to everybody who is "I CAME TO YOU, SIR, BECAUSE I HEARD OF YOU FROM MRS. ETHEREGE, WHOSE HUSBAND YOU FOUND absolutely puzzled, throughout three con-

ground-"let us put it to a practical test. I know where the letters are without look- plush that I had never so much as taken shamefully treated," said Holmes. Here is the first heading upon which I ing." Then, suddenly realizing the full out of the drawer. At last, when nothing come. 'A Husband's Cruelty to His Wife.' purport of her words, she gave a violent else would do, he went off to France upon to leave me so. Why, all the morning he There is half a column of print, but I start and looked up, with fear and aston- the business of the firm, but we went, was saying to me that, whatever happened know without reading it that it is all per- ishment upon her broad, good-humored mother and I, with Mr. Hardy, who used I was to be true; and that if even some-

"Indeed, your example is an unfortunate I have trained myself to see what others ball?" one for your argument," said Holmes, overlook. If not, why should you come to

with it. The husband was a teetotaler, everyone had given him up for dead. Oh, Mr. Holmes, I wish you would do as much duct complained of was that he had drifted for me. I'm not rich, but still I have a into the habit of winding up every meal hundred a year in my own right, besides by taking out his false teeth and hurling the little that I make by the machine, and I would give it all to know what has become of Mr. Hosmer Angel."

"Why did you come away to consult me in such a hurry?" asked Sheriock Holmes, with his finger-tips together, and his eyes

Again a startled look came over the someland. "Yes, I did bang out of the house," she said, "for it made me angry to see the easy way in which Mr. Windibankthat is, my father-took it all. He would not go to the police, and he would not go to you, and so at last, as he would do nothing, and kept on saying that there was no harm done, it made me mad, and I just put on my things and came right away to you."

"Your father," said Holmes, "your stepfather, surely, since the name is different." "Yes, my stepfather. I call him father, though it sounds funny, too, for he is only

five years and two months older than myself." "And your mother is alive?" Oh, yes, mother is alive and well. I

wasn't best pleased, Mr. Holmes, when she married again so soon after father's death, and a man who was nearly fifteen years younger than herself. Father was a plumber in the Tottenham Court road, and he left a tidy business behind him, which mother carried on with Mr. Hardy, the foreman, but when Mr. Windibank came he made her sell the business, for he was very superior, being a traveler in wines. They got £4,700 for the good-will and interest, which wasn't near as much as father could have got if he had been alive."

I had expected to see Sherlock Holmes impatient under this rambling and 'nconsequential narrative, but, on the contrary, had listened with the greatest concenthis is one of my clients, or I am much

tration of attention. "Your own little income," he asked, "does it come out of the business?"

"Oh, no, sir. It is quite separate, and standing between the parted blinds, gazing was left me by my Uncle Ned in Auckland. down into the dull, neutral-tinted London It is in New Zealand stock, paying 44 per cent. Two thousand five hundred pounds that on the pavement opposite there stood was the amount, but I can only touch the

"You interest me extremely," said in a coquettish Duchess-of-Devonshire sum as a hundred a year, with what you fashion over her ear. From under this earn into the bargain, you no doubt travel great panoply she peeped up in a nervous, a little and indulge yourself in every way. hesitating fashion at our windows, while I believe that a single lady can get on very

"I could do with much less than that, buttons. Suddenly, with a plunge, as of Mr. Holmes, but you understand that as the swimmer who leaves the bank, she long as I live at home I don't wish to be hurried across the road, and we heard the a burden upon them, and so they have the use of the money just while I am staying "I have seen those symptoms before," with them. Of course, that is only just said Holmes, throwing his cigarette into the for the time. Mr. Windibank draws my "Oscillation upon the pavement al- interest every quarter and pays it over to ways means an affaire de coeur. She would mother, and I find that I can do pretty like advice, but is not sure that the matter well with what I earn at typewriting. It is not too delicate for communication. And brings me twopence a sheet, and I can yet even here we may discriminate. When often do from fifteen to twenty sheets in

man she no longer oscillates, and the usual "You have made your position very clear "This is my friend, may take it that there is a love matter, Dr. Watson, before whom you can speak but that the maiden is not so much angry as freely as before myself. Kindly tell us as perplexed, or grieved. But here she now all about your connection with Mr.

Hosmer Angel. going, and I would go; for what right had "Do you not find," he said, "that with he to prevent? He said the folk were not

> Is the joy of the household, for without it no happiness can be complete. How

> sweet the picture of mother and babe,

angels smile at and commend the

thoughts and aspirations of the mother

bending over the cradle. The ordeal through

which the expectant mother must pass, how-

ever, is so full of danger and suffering that

she looks forward to the hour when she shall

feel the exquisite thrill of motherhood with indescribable dread and

fear. Every woman should know that the danger, pain and horror

of child-birth can be entirely avoided by the use of Mother's Friend,

a scientific liniment for external use only, which toughens and renders

the other woman, the drink, the push, the Holmes," she cried, "else how could you Mr. Hosmer Angel." "I suppose," said Holmes, "that when Mr. landlady. The crudest of writers could in- "Never mind," said Holmes laughing; 'It Windlbank came back from France he was claim his pledge sooner or later. It seemed is my business to know things. Perhaps very annoyed at your having gone to the strange talk for a wedding morning, but "Oh, well, he was very good about it. He to it," laughed, I remember, and shrugged his "I come to you, sir, because I heard shoulders, and said there was no use denycase, and, as it happens, I was engaged in of you from Mrs. Etherege, whose hus- ing anything to a woman, for she would tastrophe has occurred to him?" clearing up some small points in connection band you found so easy when the police and have her way."

"I see. Then at the gasfitters' ball you Mr. Hosmer Angel?" "Yes, sir. I met him that night and he called next day to ask if we had got home all safe, and after that we met him-that is to say, Mr. Holmes, I met him twice for walks, but after that father came back mother take the matter?"

come to the house any more." "Well, you know, father didn't like anywhat vacuous face of Miss Mary Suther- thing of the sort. He wouldn't have any own family circle. But then, as I used to say to mother, a woman wants her own circle to begin with, and I had not got mine yet."

again, and Mr. Hosmer Angel could not

"But how about Mr. Prosmer Angel? Did

he make no attempt to see you?" "Well, father was going off to France again in a week, and Hosmer wrote and said that it would be safer and better not to see each other until he had gone. We could write in the meantime, and he used to write every day. I took the letters in the morning, so there was no need for father to know."

this time?" "Oh, yes, Mr. Holmes. We were engaged after the first walk that we took. Hosmer-

Mr. Angel-was a cashler in an office in Leadenhall street-and-"What office?"

"That's the worst of it, Mr. Holmes, I don't know." 'Where did he live?"

"He slept on the premises." "And you don't know his address?"

"No-except that it was Leadenhall Where did you address your letters,

"To the Leadenhall street postoffice, to be left till called for. He said that if he

were sent to the office he would be chaffed by all the other clerks about having letters from a lady, so I offered to typewrite them, like he did his, but he wouldn't have that, for he said that when I wrote them they seemed to come from me, but when they were typewritten he always felt that the machine had come between us. That will show you just how fond he was of me, Mr Holmes, and the little things that he would

the little things are infinitely the most important. Can you remember any other little things about Mr. Hosmer Angel?"

"He was a very shy man, Mr. Holmes. He would rather walk with me in the evening than in the daylight, for he said that he hated to be conspicuous. Very retiring and gentlemanly he was. Even his voice was gentle. He'd had the quinsy and swollen glands when he was young, he told me, and it had left him with a weak throat, and a hesitating, whispering fashion of He was always well dressed, very neat and plain, but his eyes were weak, just as mine are, and he wore tinted glasses against the glare."

"Well, and what happened when Mr. France?"

"Mr. Hosmer Angel came to the house again, and proposed that we should marry and a look of infinite languor in his face. before father came back. He was in dreadful earnest, and made me swear, with my hands on the Testament, that whatever happened I would always be true to him. was. Then, when they talked of marryfather; but they both said never to mind structive." about father, but just to tell him afterwards, and mother said she would make it her which was quite invisible to me," all right with him. I didn't quite l'ac that, Mr. Holmes. It seemed funny that I should ask his leave, as he was only a few years You did not know where to look, and so older than me; but I didn't want to do anything on the sly, so I wrote to father at Bordeaux, where the company has its French offices, but the letter came back to ne on the very day of the wedding."

"It missed him then?" "Yes, sir; for he had started to England

just before it arrived." "Ha! that was unfortunate. Your wedding was arranged, then, for Friday. Was t to be in church?"

"Yes, sir, but very quietly. It was to be at St. Saviour's, near King's Cross, and we were to have breakfast afterward at the St. Pancras hotel. Hosmer came for us in a hansom, but as there was two of us, he put us both into it, and stepped himself into a four-wheeler, which happened to be the only other cab in the street. We got to the church first, and when the four-wheeler drove up we waited for him to step out, but he never did, and when the cabman got down from the box and looked, there was no one there! The cabman said that he could not imagine what had become of him, for he had seen him get in with his own eyes. That was last Friday, Mr. Holmes, and I never have

"It seems to me that you have been very

"Oh no, sir! He was too good and kind "You've heard about me. Mr. to be our foreman, and it was there I met thing quite unforeseen occurred to separate us, I was always to remember that I was pledged to him, and that he would what has happened since gives a meaning

"Most certainly it does. Your own opinion is, then, that some unforeseen ca-"Yes, sir. I believe that he foresaw

some danger, or else he would not have met, as I understand, a gentleman called talked so. And then I think that what he foresaw happened." "But you have no notion as to what it could have been?" "None."

> "One more question. How did your "She was angry, and said that I was never to speak of the matter again."

"And your father? Did you tell him?" "Yes; and he seemed to think, with me, that something had happened, and that I visitors if he could help it, and he used to should hear of Hosmer again. As he said, say that a woman should be happy in her what interest could any one have in bringing me to the doors of the church and then leaving me? Now, if he had borrowed my 1804 FARNAM STREET, money, or if he had married me and got my money settled on him, there might be some reason; but Hosmer was very independent about money and never would look at a shilling of mine. And yet, what could have happened? And why could be not write? Oh, it drives me half mad to think of, and I can't sleep a wink at night." She pulled a little handkerchief out of her muff and began to sob heavily into it. "I shall glance into the case for you."

said Holmes, rising, "and I have no doubt that we shall reach some definite result. Let the weight of the matter rest upon me now, and do not let your mind dwell upon it further. Above all, try to let Mr. Hosmer Angel vanish from your memory, as he has done from your life."

"Then you don't think I'll see him

again?" "I fear not." "Then what has happened to him?" "You will leave that question in my

hands. I should like an accurate description of him, and any letters of his which you can spare." "I advertised for him in last Saturday's Chronicle," said she, "Here is the slip and

here are four letters from him." "Thank you. And your address?" 'No. 31 Lyon Place, Camberwell," "Mr. Angel's address you never had. I

understand. Where is your father's place "He travels for Westhouse & Marbank, the great claret importers of Fenchurch

"Thank you. You have made your statement very clearly. You will leave the papers here, and remember the advice

which I have given you. Let the whole incident be a sealed book, and do not allow it to affect your life." "You are very kind, Mr. Holmes, but I cannot do that. I shall be true to Hosmer.

He shall find me ready when he comes back. For all the preposterous hat and the vacuous face, there was something noble in the simple faith of our visitor which compelled our respect. She laid her little bundle of papers upon the table, and went

whenever she might be summoned. Sherlock Holmes sat silent for a few minutes with his finger tips still pressed together, his legs stretched out in mont of him and his gaze directed upward to the ceiling. Then he took down from the rack the old and ofly-clay pipe, which was to Windibank, your step-father, returned to him as a counsellor, and, having lit it, he leaned back in his chair, with the thick blue cloud-wreaths spinning up from him

her way, with a promise to come again

"Quite an interesting study, that maiden," he observed. "I found her more interesting than her little problem, which, by the way is rather a trite one. You will Mother said that it was quite right to make find parallel cases, if you consult my inme swear, and that it was a sign of his dex, in Andeavor in '77, and there was Mother was all in his favor from something of the sort at The Hague last the first, and was even fonder of him than year. Old as is the idea, however, there were one or two details which were new to ing within the week, I began to ask about me. But the malden herself was most in-

> "You appeared to read a good deal upon "Not invisible, but unnoticed, Watson.

you missed all that was important. I can never bring you to realize the impor-

(Continued on Page Seven.)

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