

## THE CASE OF THE SMOKING HOLMES

‘I had asked you not to continue with me. Really no one is coming to me. If your heart’s wishes are fulfilled then you should choose your own career instead of waking me up early morning’ said Crick who was totally angry upon his friend Jim Macpherson.

‘Still I like to study your movements that how you spend your time on a depressed heart’ replied a confident Jim who was living with Crick after his first case.

‘I wish you good luck to go from here and-‘

‘If I am true, then your calling bell crashes now for another case.’

‘Sir may I disturb you to my attention.’

And on the door a fair brown colored hair smiling young lady waited. Though she was smiling but her face told that she was seriously troubled. As she entered Crick was totally aware that she was panting which means she was running but still there was not a single drop of mud was sticking to her shoes or legs.

‘You should be careful while running in the roads otherwise before you can tell anything the whole city would talk about your death report’ said Crick who was sitting in a chair which was enough comfortable for him.

Jim left the opposite chair to the lady and brought another for himself and started the notepad with his pencil.

‘Sir I ran along the roads not in its centre.’

‘But still you hate the mud particle.’

‘How did you know?’

‘You ran that is for sure as you are panting. But there is mud everywhere and still there are no mud particles on your legs. It accounts for that you like the roads and not the mud particles. So it is simple’ said Crick.

‘Sir you assured that I am right to come to you.’

‘May I ask your name, madam?’ asked Jim.

‘Louisa Shakins.’

‘Pray continue your story.’

‘Sir I am really frightened that my two elder sisters are successively added to the hospital near my house which is situated at Beckham Street. Sir both of them were true lovers of reading stories of the famous detective Sherlock Holmes but still they were somehow trapped to some villainy of someone. They were suffering from some diseases which I don’t know as my parents didn’t tell me. Now I am shifted to that room and I am really a lover of the stories of Sherlock Holmes and I fear that I would find myself somewhere in the next bed of my sisters. Then shall I accept the room to live?’

‘Can you tell me the incidents that happened on the day and previous days of the unhappy events of your sisters?’ Crick started his question.

‘Sir the previous day of the death was extremely bad for her. She was suffering from high fever and was attacked by frequent headaches. On the day of the death at the time of dinner she suggested us to change the rooms but our father said that the bright colors might make her happy. So she obeyed her father and rested herself in the bed. But in the night my father called everybody in the house to her room. We were astonished to see that her eyes were reddened and that look I can never forget. She was looking at black spots in the Holmes portrait then felt little bit trembling and again said something unhearable. And at that moment our father opened all the

windows. He said that fresh air might be good for her and then after an hour when her health was not improving my father took her to the nearest hospital.

Also during middle sister the same things happened but another horrible sign was shown by her.'

'What is that?'

'She said the same things but took his hands to her mouth and then fell unconscious like just smoking.'

'What happened to the black spots shown at the time of unconsciousness of eldest?'

'It was regularly painted by my father.'

'Why?'

'He said that the black in the white doesn't give a good impression.'

'Okay note these Jim. But why after the unhappy event in that room your middle sister and then you?'

'Sir there is a rule in our house that if the highest authority of the room holder leads to something and leaves the room then the next authority would occupy it. Also if my father marries another mother and my real mother goes away then she must occupy that room!!!' And then she broke into a hearty laugh along with Crick. 'Also the room had just repaired and also he has the tendency to use all the old things!'

'Why your father reached first?'

'He said that he heard a sound from her room though my room was next to her, still I obey that I am a sound sleeper.'

'Are there other rooms than this where it is fit for you to live?'

‘Definitely sir but it is the store room which I would never live until I am forced. Now but I can accept the living in store room if you would agree and my father also.’

‘Why father?’

‘He keeps the key to the store room.’

‘Why?’

‘He says that the room should be closed as there are many old things in that room which needs to be removed.’

‘Who are the family members and other person who may occasionally or permanently live in your house?’

‘My parents both father and mother, .our maidservant, our butler- they live permanently and Shauners and Ranmads occasionally come to our house as they work with my father in the bank.’

‘Any specific things that have happened just in between one month of your eldest sister’s death?’

‘Sir, yes the room was repaired and a new Holmes photo was attached in the room. The dressing table was changed.’

‘So much have been done. But one more question where your father is now and also mother?’

‘My father now is in bank and also my mother and other permanent members are in the house.’

‘How did you come here by telling your mother I hope so?’ This was asked by Jim.

‘Yeah, true sir.’

‘Why did you ask that question?’

‘Just like-‘

‘Okay you go back to your room and you may hope us at your house today.’

Thus after Louisa was gone Crick went to his deep thought which was generally seen on the face of a detective when he is in a serious mode. After sometime the gloomy cloud was gone over Crick’s face and thus he sprang up with a very excited face.

‘Jim all the effects said were good but I think the effects had been made due to the-‘

‘Some gases according to my studies in the medical journals but the gas is unknown.’

‘Correct. The windows were most of the time closed and then the black spots in a white wall. Forcing also someone to a room is not a culture I hope’ said Crick.

‘So what we would do now is to take train if I am right and the very chance falls upon the permanent member to take the matter’ said Jim excited as if he himself would solve the whole case.

‘But the question is who? The work to provide gas into a room is through some pores. So there is the hand of a permanent member.’

‘The butler or the maidservant is to be good for options’ said Jim after a few moments.

Crick said nothing but was looking as if he didn’t agreed and said the matter can be over if they would waste twenty minutes by travelling to the Beckham Street. They both took the cab and then went to the station and took the train to Beckham Street. There they hired a cab to Louisa’s house and reached there to be welcomed by Louisa herself.

‘Where is your father now?’ asked Crick.

‘In the bank and before you ask my mother had gone to market and only I, butler and the maid servant are present.’

‘Can you show me the rooms?’

‘Yes sir. Take the stairs and come with me.’

Both of them went with Louisa to visit the rooms.

‘Sir this is the room where I am supposed to sleep tomorrow because today my father is making the room gorgeous.’

‘So sensible father’ said Crick and went inside the room.

He saw the whole room which was shining brightly, colored white and then went into the thought. He sat on the bed and then saw the Holmes portrait and he noticed a peculiar thing in the cigar of Holmes and went to check it. He touched the boundary and saw that the back of the cigar is extremely black. He took his index finger and touched the whole thing and then went away from that figure and said ‘this makes the matter simpler and sometimes observation is far better than the experience’ and went away from the room.

‘Where the store room is?’

She took us to the store room which was separated from the room they were living by an extreme narrow edge and the store was locked from outside.

‘Is there any light supplier in the store house?’

‘Every time my father goes he uses a candle or the daylight and thus there is no light source.

Then surprisingly Crick asked for the food which he wanted very seriously and after eating he went outside to wash his hands and came after whole 15 minutes.

‘I thought you were lost in this not so large house having a small garden’ said Jim looking for some fun.

‘No these place just haunted my memory and I thought that this is the worst ever thing which would come to my life. Okay madam and thank you I was really hungry. We are going back now as it seems to me some gentleman coming to this house.’

‘My father’ said the young lady to the person who was holding some decorative flowers in his hands which were noticed by Crick as they were hurrying.

‘Which is the best hotel nearby?’

I was shocked to hear Crick saying that as I had hoped that he might ask if there is any train tonight. But still I answered ‘I hope that one would be the best of all.’ And we all were found resting in the room of the hotel.

‘Why are we staying here?’ asked Jim.

‘You would know it better tonight.

Both found themselves in the night after supper in the garden of Louisa’s house.

‘What are we supposed to do here- to steal the store house’s key because I can do that if you say me how to do it’ said Jim.

‘No I am afraid that we have to play Hide and Seek here in this no moon’s night!’ said Crick and he suddenly looked up to the light that was coming from up.

He was just staring at it and said ‘a single candle can’t do that’ and then suddenly he ran from the bush in which we were in ambush and ran towards the hotel we were staying shouting ‘Eureka’.

‘Why Eureka?’

‘Tomorrow we might have not to pay the night charges to the hotel’ replied Crick.

‘But why?’

‘We are leaving tomorrow to our home.’

And thus I realized that the case was solved and tomorrow would be the big day. The next day we walked from our hotel and reached Louisa's place and called her father.

‘Sir may I ask you question that nobody had entered the store house except you?’

‘What? I have the keys only-’ and it was clearly seen that his voice was extremely shaking and the lips were trembling and the matter was clear that he was shocked.

Mr. Rowlett this is your man who had attempted to make his daughters bedridden.

And as he was caught by a cop who was smart enough to catch him hands and add the chains to it. The man was no other than Louisa's father and I was totally shocked to know. I took out my pad and started to note the description of how Crick got the man.

‘Sir Rowlett, every plan he had attempted to remove all the evidences except only one that the soot attached on the pipe of Sherlock Holmes. The photo was new and thus it was purposeful. I was astonished to hear that the photo was brought some days before the illness of Louisa's sisters. He wanted to find a map that was under the bed of the room. The rule unfortunately didn't allow him to go through the must for daughter's room. So the only option left was that to remove the persons from that room.’

‘The photo was hanged in such a position that it would be helpful for the father. He just made a sharp round hole around the outer concentric circles of the Holmes pipes. So as I got the glimpse of something tiny black particles falling from it then it struck me that the photo was smoking and the smoke came from the end of the hole. The store house was adjacent to Louisa's room and thus the hole ended in the store house. The missing link was that who was doing it and how?’

‘I got the answers when I got to the bush of the garden in night. I saw that the store house was brightening brightly and thus as I knew that Louisa's father goes to the store house only



using candle then the previous indications of his hand in this matter was greatly clear. And then came to my mind that a single candle can never do that amount of glowing and thus as there is no light source then it would be a number of candles that were lightened. And a number of candles in closed, oxygen less room create what in your supposition Jim?’

I was busy writing and thus it took me some time to get my nerves out from my hands to the mind and I replied ‘Carbon Monoxide, the deadly odorless gas, I suppose.’

‘Correct! Jim Correct! It was the Carbon monoxide that was produced to take his daughters to the hospital. It produces soot as these are the unburnt particles of carbon. Also you may think that the opening might provide the oxygen but the other room was most of the time closed and it took some days for father to get the bed emptied.’

‘So I understood why Louisa’s middle sister was shown at last in a smoking pose. She might have guessed that the black spots were so made because it was smoking-’ and was interrupted by Crick that the fear of photo is smoking was able to terrify the middle sister.

Mr. Rowlett asked a good question thereafter ‘Sir what were the previous two indications?’

‘The first being the father centre of every answer and matter. Second is a matter to think about.

Jim you remembered that I came after about 15 minutes washing. But it took just some seconds to wash the hands. There I took the long turn to the back door to meet the butler gave him some money and asked him to tell the truth.

‘I asked if that there were any secret places for manuscripts and if there is any manuscripts that might have helped the father to find some knowledge about any kind of treasure or its map?’

He replied ‘Sir the library is there (and he showed me the room). Once I was searching the manuscript when master came and forced me to bring me some tea and thus I went away. Then he sat there and searched the manuscripts and got the glimpse of a manuscript in which it might have written about the treasure or about its map. And then I went away. When I came back holding the tea there was a shine in my master’s face. After serving I asked the manuscript he was holding a manuscript and he said that there under the bed of my eldest daughter lie something about the treasure which was earned by my grandfathers. What do you want to know about it? Just go away and I came out. Thus it is what I can tell about.’

‘The keys of the store room is only with the father I mean Sir Kraus (which I had known by asking the butler before my question) or –‘

‘Sir it is only with my master and nobody else in the whole house that keeps the keys.’

Then I gave him the money and went to the table.’

So they looked for the paper and Crick said that it is the directions for the treasure map which I have no interest to think for at the present moment.

‘But there lies a single doubt with me’ said Jim.

‘May I clear that?’

‘Yeah. Why the father didn’t kill them totally so that it would be beneficial to him as his daughters might gain their nerves at any time?’ asked Jim.

‘In my opinion Sir Kraus is a father after all. But I can’t frame the true answer of it rather only this’ said Crick with a tinge of doubt in his facial expression.

Upon returning back to the house Crick made a statement of hope which Jim agreed upon ‘And of course, I am feeling like Holmes - people visiting me with their problems. He had Dr.

Watson as his partner, and I have you as my partner. Though I definitely can't be him, but I still enjoy myself with this work. I just hope this amateur detective gets some more of it.'

