

OUR QUARRY

I sank gratefully into the upholstered chair my host indicated. After receiving his letter imploring me to hurry to his rooms I had left everything, my breakfast, my pants and even my wife. Holmes threw me his spare pair.

“Really Whetstone a few minutes to have put on your pants would not have gone astray.”

“ Sorry Sheerock but your note did state it was urgent.”

“Quite right Whetstone, we are shortly to be receiving a visitor, an important, even shall we say, distinguished visitor.”

“And they have a problem? One that calls for your sheer genius?”

“ Of course, why else would I trifle with it. It is in regard to a problem that you and I have had on another occasion to bear witness to.

“You mean?”

“Yes”

“Not?”

“Exactly Whetstone! You have said enough. There is the door bell, pray beset yourself and keep all your eyes and ears open.”

The door had barely closed behind our visitor when Holmes spoke.

“So Old Granite features is up to his old tricks again. Did you notice her eyes as she related her tale of woe?”

“Hm?”

“What did you make of it?”

“Sorry old man I was diverted by her great dividing range.”

“As she intended you to be. Really Whetstone what have you become? Where is my trusty ally when the game is afoot.”

“I must confess Sheerock I am at a loss at what she expects you to do.”

“You must remember our last encounter, this time we must be more careful or it will be Mt. Vesuvius all over again dribbling hot lava all over himself.”

“A sad case Holmes.”

“We must hurry there and perhaps we will be able to prevent a tragedy. Or worse, a sandal.”

“A sandal?”

“If the game is afoot we will need a sandal.”

“Surely.”

“Certainly. We must away.”

As we rattled together in that draughty coach rolling towards who knew what sordid fate, I could hardly look Holmes in the eye. The coach had only one seat and I was on the floor. It was cold and Holmes had not recently employed the services of a shoe cleaner.

“Oh silt!”

“Whetstone!”

“Pardon me Sheerock but really this is too much”

It was then that I knew we had truly reached Rock Bottom. Seemingly, a seedy, stale smelling, hell hole of a hamlet.

Holmes continued to look down upon me " You brought arms?"

"Of course, they are always about my person, but I also took the opportunity to have a hunting crop cunningly concealed. What shall we do Holmes, find a hospitable jovial innkeeper and let him press upon us food and ale?"

"Better to find a seamstress who will press your pants. Whetstone you have a nasty stain on part of your anatomy that will shortly be touching my own."
" Pardon?"

Remember you are wearing the pants Whetstone"

"Makes a change Holmes, makes a change."

"Strange place for him to hide out"

"Nobody would expect to find him here."

" No, not even us"

" Us, you mean we"

"Me?"

"No, we or should that be I."

"Holmes your educated brain holds too much some of it is in danger of spilling out"

"Quite right Whetstone, let us proceed."

" Are you going to change into some outlandish class driven disguise, pretend to be a Bulgarian Herring Sailor on shore leave or a Hungarian monk fresh out of luck and begging for a scrap of bread.?"

" Really Whetstone, and they say my imagination is fanciful. We shall be what we are, two proud men knocking upon his door. He would not dare, not to open up to us!"

Holmes reached for the knockers, but perhaps fortunately for Holmes they moved out of the way very quickly. The buxom wrenched out of her reverie and screamed up the stairs.

“You better get down here right quick.!”

And there he was, the one we had heard so much about, so much more than either one of us had wanted to know.

“Oh not you and your poncy friend again. Watch yer want this time?”

“Who are you calling poncy” Holmes and I answered together.

“He meant you”

“No he didn’t, he was referring to you”

“He did not.”

The buxom wrenched her way out of harms reach again, we hadn’t noticed him lurking in the corner.

“Push off, a rolling stone don’t give a toss, don’t yer know that yet, moron?”

“Moron?” I took umbrage and very nice it was too. Rock Bottom must have a top class baker. Must get some to take back home but I digress.

“Calling me names?”

“Look here sir, I might have to punch you on the nose” It looked as if someone had already given him a thick lip.

“I have a writ here with your name writ on it from your wife, you remember her I fancy?”

I wiped my brow, I remembered only too well.

“She demands satisfaction! and is retaining Wall, Pumice, Schist and Quartz to draw up legal documents and I have been charged me to deliver them to you.”

Old Granite Features didn't budge an inch, certainly there was flint running through those veins.

"What she playing at, getting you two to do her dirty work for her, bawling her eyes out to pick up a few quid from the papers. Push off, yer morons."

"But what about Cliff, Craig and Bluffy? Will you abandon them to rear themselves, fatherless, friendless, penniless and aloneness?"

"Gourd you don't half say some funny things!"

"Whetstone, kindly leave this to me. Now see here old boy, she has finally come to her senses after having hit one too many potholes on your matrimonial highway."

"Ay?"

"She will be seeking a substantial stipend to recompense her for her wifely duties that you have tarnished with your wayward ways."

"Ay?"

"You hold no more alluvial charms for her. She was left in your continental drift and all this after helping pave your way to the top!"

"Ay?"

"Yer old squeeze is still trying to make mountains out of her molehills. Tell her to get her mesa butte out of our lives""

"Madam, I would thank you to stand to one side."

"Hey you can't come in here and shove me against my will, Will you alright?"

I hadn't seen him lurking back there.

"I've had enough of this, hand it over and push off"

As the door shut heavily behind us I suddenly turned to Holmes.

“I’ve had an epiphany.”

“ Not in my pants!”

“ Old faithful does not wish a divorce!”

“ She doesn’t?”

“ That one in there may have something to say about that.”

“ We must ensure the two never meet”

“ It would be a mudbath!”

“A strange tale indeed, it reminds me of the confusion concerning the cocksure Countess of Cobblestone’s cupid cufflinks that compromised the curate who confined them in the cracked crevice of her commode.”

“How?”

“Sedimentary my dear.”