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# COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

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# CARTOON, by Marc Bilgrey



"SOMEONE HAS KILLED THIS ANNOYING STREET MIME. IT COULD BE ANYONE IN LONDON."

# FROM WATSON'S SCRAPBOOK



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Welcome to the fourth issue of *Sherlock Holmes Mystery Magazine*. When this publication was initially planned, Wildside Press declared it would be carried on for four issues, after which it would be decided whether or not its reception by the reading public would merit it to be continued. I am happy to learn that a fifth number indeed will be produced, and am especially pleased to report that it will be an all-Holmes issue, a fact not without merit in terms of my friend Holmes's vanity.

Now Holmes and I have been deluged of late with a certain query, so before you ask, let me state that neither of us have seen, nor are likely to see, the new film starring that chap Downey as Holmes, and some bloke ostensibly portraying myself. It is Holmes's policy never to attend the theatre or the cinema if he is the principal subject of the plot. There was a time when he did, but it led to many occasions when he was expected to render an opinion of what he witnessed, and to do so objectively would be difficult, perhaps impossible, therefore he abstains.

I have no scruples in this regard. Successful films, books, plays, and of course this magazine, contribute healthily to my retirement income, inasmuch as they are all subject to royalties. (In this, I was quite delighted when copyright law was altered many years back to protect an author for life and many years after!) Another reason I try to stay current with the entertainment industry's ongoing fascination with matters Holmesian is that while my friend does

not himself attend, he relies on me to report on what I've seen. (I suspect that when I render a positive opinion, he dons one of his disguises and goes incognito, but I cannot prove that.)

Over the years, my viewing experience has confirmed that I often come off better than Holmes does in the media, and a few examples immediately come to mind, though I think it impolitic to share them publicly. But in the case of the new film, I feel I owe an explanation for my decision not to watch it. Some months ago, I went to a theatre to see the latest Harry Potter installment. Before the feature began, there was the usual array of coming attractions (trailers I believe you Yanks call them) and one of them promoted the upcoming "Sherlockian" film.

Let me take a moment to state that Mr. Downey is an actor whose work I have always admired, and even in this instance I found him ever so likeable . . . but what in all good sense was the rest of that abominable nonsense about? I was frankly appalled both by the fragments of plot revealed in the trailer, and even more by the over-all tone of the proceedings. It was as incongruous to me as if I'd been invited to a Mozart concert and was subjected to Pink Floyd, instead.

I admit I may be unfair in what I feel here; films so often are better and quite different from the impressions conveyed by their coming attractions, but to quote that chap Han Solo, "I have a bad feeling about this." I leave it to our editor, Mr. Kaye, to weigh in on this issue.

—John H. Watson, M. D.

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In deference to Dr. Watson's feelings about the new Robert Downey Jr. film, I decided not to take sides, but instead have asked one of our regular writers Bruce Kilstein to contribute a review of the new movie to *Sherlock Holmes* # 4.

This issue's nonfiction also includes a column by Lenny Picker and household hints from Holmes and Watson's erstwhile landlady, Mrs. (Martha) Hudson, plus an interview by Carole Buggé with Marina Stajic, chief toxicologist for the office of the New York Medical Examiner. Marina is an old friend of mine and Carole's; I first met Marina at The Wolfe Pack, the society devoted to

America's greatest (and largest) sleuth Nero Wolfe, though Marina considers herself more of a Holmesian aficionado.

Two Holmes stories are featured in this issue: Dr. Watson's own "Adventure of the Resident Patient" and "The Adventure of the Elusive Emeralds," a superb novella which Dr. W. generously enabled its author Carla Coupe to write from his original notes.

Literary associations infuse "Miss Podsnap's Pearls," a crime story by Roberta Rogow that involves one of the characters in the Charles Dickens novel, *Our Mutual Friend*.

"Another Night to Remember" and "The Man in the Overcoat" are more or less hard-boiled adventures. The first story, contributed by William E. Chambers, is reprinted from the 2004 Lawrence Block anthology, *Blood On Their Hands*, and the second is by Marc Bilgrey, *Sherlock Holmes Mystery Magazine's* regular cartoonist.

The issue is rounded out by Hal Charles's "Glass Eye," a new mini-mystery involving broadcast journalist and amateur detective Kelly Locke; a short-short by newcomer Melville S. Brown (thanks to Carole Buggé for recommending him to submit his story to *Sherlock Holmes Mystery Magazine*), and a rare foray into humorous fantasy by the late, lamented Jean Paiva.

*Canonically yours,*  
Marvin Kaye