



The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist (Sherlock Holmes)

Arthur Conan Doyle , Edward Raleigh (Narrator)

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Sherlock Holmes first regards the experiences related by newly-arrived visitor Violet Smith with a degree of impatience and disinterest. This solitary cyclist, however, is being shadowed by a mysterious man on a bicycle as she travels to and from her new employer's home as a music teacher. As Holmes and Watson investigate, a dark, dangerous picture begins to emerge that threatens the young lady's safety and ultimately her freedom.

The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist (Sherlock Holmes) Details

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From Reader Review The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist (Sherlock Holmes) for online ebook

Aishu Rehman says

The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist is not one of the Sherlock Holmes stories that immediately springs to mind but there are some interesting features to it.

Most notably is the fact that the detective shows his physical prowess. The strength of Sherlock Holmes had been displayed in The Adventure of the Speckled Band, but in this story Conan Doyle also shows that the detective can fight. For in an encounter in a pub, had seen his opponent rendered unconscious, whilst Holmes himself was unscathed.

There are also some features within The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist that have been seen before in Conan Doyle stories. The overpayment for services rendered is an indication of a potential crime that was previously used in the case of The Red Headed League and The Adventure of the Copper Beeches. Also the fact that some people were making fortunes in the “colonies” had also previously been used in such stories as The Boscombe Valley Mystery.

The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist is one of the short Sherlock Holmes stories that was faithfully adapted for television by Granada TV, with Jeremy Brett starring in the lead role.

Rachel says

One of my favorite Sherlock stories.

LGandT says

I was glad to read the horse was still grazing but a tad shocked Watson would leave an injured man

Tanya says

My rating: 3 out of 5 stars

I listened to it on www.librivox.org for free. The audiobook (*Version 3 by David Clarke*) is fantastic.

This story was interesting as always but not my favourite. I was not a huge fan on Sherlocks behavior in this one and also the case was more light. After the third and in my opinion really dark case I just hoped for something similar. The story is nevertheless short and is nice to read it.

Lloyd Hughes says

It's Sherlock, it's 5 stars. A young woman living with her recently widowed mother is hired by a man living in the country to teach music to his 10 year-old daughter. When she arrives at her new place of employment, she finds that her employer has a rather unsavory partner. She rides the train to and from her mother's home every Saturday and Monday. Her means of travel between her employer's house and the train station on a bicycle down a very lonely road. She consults Sherlock because she is being tailed at a distance by another solitary cyclist. Hmm...

Darinda says

The fourth short story in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* by Arthur Conan Doyle. A woman hires Sherlock Holmes to discover who the man is that follows her on his bicycle. An entertaining mystery.

Roberto Mattos says

In this story, Holmes is contacted by Miss Violet Smith of Farnham, Surrey about an unusual turn in her and her mother's lives. Violet's father has recently died, and left his wife and daughter rather poor. However, a notice appeared in the newspaper not much later inquiring as to their whereabouts. Answering it, they met Mr. Carruthers and Mr. Woodley, the former a pleasant enough man, but the latter a bully. They had come from South Africa, where they had known Violet's uncle Ralph Smith, who had now also died in poverty and apparently wanted to see that his relatives were provided for. This struck Violet as odd, since she and her family had not heard a word from Uncle Ralph since he'd gone to South Africa 25 years ago. Carruthers and Woodley explained that before dying, Ralph had heard of his brother's death and felt responsible for his survivors' welfare.

Carruthers began by offering Violet a job as a live-in music teacher for his ten-year-old daughter at £100 a year, about twice the going rate. She accepted after Carruthers said that she could visit her mother on weekends. That went well until Mr. Woodley came to stay for a week. He made the most oafish, clumsiest sexual advances and boasted that if Violet married him, she would have a life of luxury. He even grabbed her and demanded a kiss, precipitating expulsion by his host, Carruthers. Violet has not seen Woodley since. The specific thing that has brought Violet to seek Holmes's services, however, is the strange man who follows her on his bicycle as she cycles to and from the railway station for her weekend visits to her mother. The strange man always keeps his distance behind her and disappears without a trace, never letting her near him, and always along the same lonely stretch of road. Violet does not recognize him, but he has a black beard. Holmes asks her about her admirers, and other than Woodley, if he can be styled as such, she can only think of Mr. Carruthers, who, although a perfect gentleman at all times, seems attracted to her.

After Violet leaves, Holmes observes that it is odd that a household would pay £100 a year for a music teacher but be too cheap to pay for a horse and trap. He sends Dr. Watson to Surrey to see what he can find out. This turns out to be virtually nothing, except to establish that the lady's story is true, and that the mystery man comes out of and goes back into a local house, Charlington Hall. Holmes upbraids Watson for his lackluster results. They also receive a letter from Violet that evening saying that Carruthers has proposed to her, but she had to refuse since she is already engaged to a man named Cyril Morton, an electrical engineer in Coventry.

Holmes goes to Surrey himself, and gets into a fight in a pub for his troubles; when he returns and tells Watson what happened, he actually considers his experience in Surrey to be hilarious. It seems that Mr. Woodley has been in the taproom at the pub and heard his name mentioned in conversation. He comes out and demands to know who Holmes is and what he wants. The discussion escalates to violence; Holmes emerges with a few bruises, whereas Woodley has to be carried home. The innkeeper has merely mentioned that Woodley is a regular weekend guest at Charlington Hall, which is rented by Williamson, who, rumor has it, is a clergyman.

Holmes returns to 221-B Baker Street with his face somewhat marred, and another letter arrives from Violet, saying that her situation has become impossible owing to Mr. Carruthers's proposals, and Mr. Woodley's reappearance. She is quitting. Holmes knows that some intrigue is afoot, and he tells Watson that they must get themselves to Surrey to see that Violet makes it to the station. Carruthers has at last acquired a trap, and she need not ride her bicycle this time.

Through a failure to realize that Violet might take an earlier train than usual, Holmes discovers that he is too late to meet Violet. The trap comes along the road, but by the time it does, no one is in it. Violet has been abducted. Holmes and Watson board the empty trap in an attempt to go after the kidnappers. They come face-to-face with the mysterious cyclist, who pulls a revolver on them. However, both parties quickly realize that they are on the same side; both have Violet's welfare in mind. The cyclist declares that the abductors are Woodley and Williamson. He evidently knows something of the intrigue.

The group first find an unconscious groom, who was driving the trap, in the bushes, and then they find all three persons that they have been seeking on the Charlington Hall grounds, with the apparently defrocked clergyman performing a wedding ceremony between the other two. The bride is somewhat unwilling, judging from the gag over her mouth. Woodley's boast of having married Violet leads Carruthers, the mysterious cyclist, to pull out his revolver and shoot Woodley, wounding him.

The intrigue does indeed involve Uncle Ralph in South Africa. He was dying when Carruthers and Woodley left; far from being penniless at his death, it is revealed that in reality, Uncle Ralph had amassed a large fortune. As he was illiterate, he would surely die intestate, and therefore Violet would inherit his wealth as Ralph's next of kin. The two crooks made their way to England in the hopes that one of them would get to marry Violet — Woodley won the chance in a card game on the ship — and they had to draw Williamson into the plot, promising him a share of the lucre. The plan went awry when first, Woodley proved to be a brute, and next, Carruthers fell in love with Violet, and thereafter wanted nothing to do with his former confederates. He took to disguising himself and following her as she rode her bicycle past Charlington Hall, where he knew Woodley and Williamson might be lying in wait for her.

Heavy penalties await Woodley and Williamson, but Carruthers only gets a few months due to Woodley's less-than-savory reputation. Holmes reassures Carruthers the "marriage" performed by Williamson was void. Not only was it performed against Violet's will, but Williamson had been defrocked and therefore had no authority to legalize a marriage.

I recommend this story to any reader who appreciates a well written mystery story, mainly featuring Sherlock Holmes.

Warren Nast says

Quick easy read with everything you know and love about Sherlock Holmes.

Azuma-chan says

The things people will do for money! Dear god!

Laura says

*From BBC Radio 4 Extra - The Return of Sherlock Holmes:
The Baker Street sleuth investigates who's following music teacher Violet Smith. Stars Clive Merrison and Michael Williams.*

George Slade says

So a woman is freaked out by a man following her on a bicycle and it turns out to be her creepy boss trying to protect her from some other creepy man, and it turns out that both men and a third were actually part of a plot to trap her into marriage and steal her money. Women really didn't have a chance back in the day did they?

Wild says

I don't understand why it is considered one of Sherlock cases of failure, I mean I understand that he failed to see the importance of the case and for this, she is almost abducted, but at the end, everything turns up all right and Sherlock does discover what happens. It's a short and simple case but also is very interesting.

Crime Addict Sifat says

"The Return of Sherlock Holmes" is the third arrangement of stories including the world's most celebrated analyst, Sherlock Holmes. This specific book is the fourth story of the third arrangement. Appreciate Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's creative energy as you read "The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist."

Robert Taub says

Sherlock Holmes in the countryside, with two bicycles at the heart of this simple mystery. A short read.

Jason Parent says

Each story is consistently good upon Sherlock's return

