



Mrs Hudson (& Sherlock Holmes)

D T Galbraith

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Imagine Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson in a world where women are active participants. In the Arthur Conan Doyle stories we get glimpses of Mrs Hudson answering the door or serving dinner but . . . what if Mrs Hudson was a real person – intelligent, educated, capable of investigating the mysteries of the London and of the human personality? What if she had a given name (Emma), parents, a husband, her own profound interests, a sense of humor, and her own compelling emotional life? Mrs Hudson (& Sherlock Holmes) takes this hypothetical as it animating premise. Each chapter of Mrs Hudson is a self contained mystery, in the tradition of the Doyle stories, but the emotional development of the characters wends its way through the stories, reaching back into the past and depths of Holmes and Mrs Hudson, and taking them to their destinies. One problem with the Doyle stories is that there is no emotional development to Holmes or to any of the characters – they are the same in each story; they may get older but they are the same. But if Holmes has such strong powers and is so emotionally stunted, then over the ages of his life there will have been development . . . or degeneration. The story is told by Mycroft Holmes, looking back to the golden years of crime detection after Sherlock's death in 1925, each of the stories a slice from the lives of Watson, Holmes and Mrs Hudson. "There is an untold story that needs telling," Mycroft says, "it is unfinished business." And Mrs Hudson challenges the social ordering – women in late Victorian society, servant and master (Mrs Hudson after all owns the house and Holmes is a lodger), the Empire. One story has Mrs Hudson solving a crime while on the floor dusting the shoes of Holmes, Watson and two detectives. "They have more on their shoes than they do in their heads," she says. And there are love stories. One is Mrs Hudson's with her husband (Doyle calls her Mrs Hudson but we never learn about Mr Hudson) and then Sherlock Holmes with Margot Challis, both told in the Holmesian tradition of mystery and crime detection. Holmes courts Margot with dates to crime scenes and dramatic meetings with the suspects, but all the while there is this question of whether Holmes is capable of emotional connection. Sherlock Holmes, Dr Watson, Mycroft Holmes and Mrs Hudson are joined by 37 new characters in nine new mysteries. Prologue 1. 56 cases of port 2. The coal dust mystery 3. The incident of the Greek vase 4. The occurrence at Riesenbach Falls 5. The anarchist 6. The mystery of the Covenanters Prison 7. The mystery of the Covenanters Prison (con) 8. The Royal collection 9. The trader's donation 10. The trader's donation (con) 11. The mystery of the black cat 12. Mrs Hudson retires Epilogue

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