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ANNIVERSAIRE



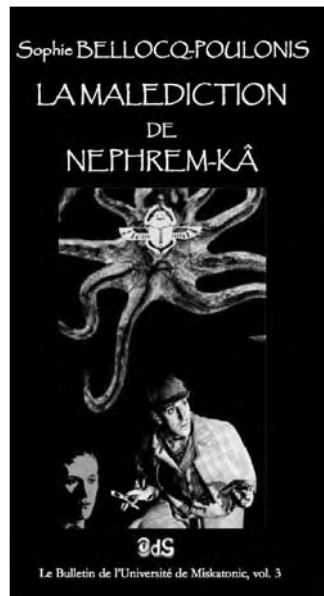
Joan Greenwood

C'est le 4 mars 1921 qu'est née Joan Greenwood, actrice anglaise qui interpréta le rôle de Beryl Stapleton dans *The Hound of the Baskervilles* en 1978, avec Peter Cook et Dudley Moore. Elle était l'épouse du comédien André Morell, le Watson de Peter Cushing dans la version du *Hound of the Baskervilles* de 1959. Les cinéphiles se souviennent surtout d'elle comme la Sibella Holland du film *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (*Noblesse oblige* en français) en 1949.

C'est aussi un 4 mars, en 1881, que le docteur Watson lit, avant de prendre son petit déjeuner, dans un magazine anglais un article intitulé *The Book of Life*, dont l'auteur est Sherlock Holmes (dans *A Study in Scarlet*). Watson estime ce titre « quelque peu ambitieux » pour un article dont l'auteur cherche à montrer tout ce qu'un esprit observateur peut apprendre d'un examen précis et systématique de tout ce qui passe à sa portée. S'il reconnaît que le raisonnement est dense et bien conduit, il estime néanmoins ses conclusions tirées par les cheveux. « En parlant d'une goutte d'eau, un logicien pourrait déduire la possibilité d'un océan Atlantique ou d'un Niagara, sans avoir vu l'un ou l'autre, sans même en avoir jamais entendu parler. Ainsi toute la vie est une vaste chaîne dont la nature nous devient connue chaque fois qu'on nous en montre un seul anneau. » TSJ

GAGNEZ UN WEEK-END À LONDRES AVEC SHERLOCK

À L'OCCASION de la diffusion de la deuxième saison, à compter du mercredi 21 mars, sur son antenne, *France 4* propose de gagner un week-end à Londres sur les traces de *Sherlock*... Le séjour est valable pour deux personnes et comprend le transport en *Eurostar* et une nuit d'hôtel. Pour participer au tirage au sort, il suffit de se rendre sur la page *Facebook* de la chaîne ([cliquez ici](#)) et cliquer sur le bouton « *J'aime* » afin de venir fan. Aussitôt fait, un bouton « *Participer* » vous permettra d'accéder au formulaire d'inscription au jeu. Attention, vous avez jusqu'au 30 mars pour participer.



LA MALÉDICTION DE NEPHREM-KÂ DE S. BELLOCQ-POULONIS

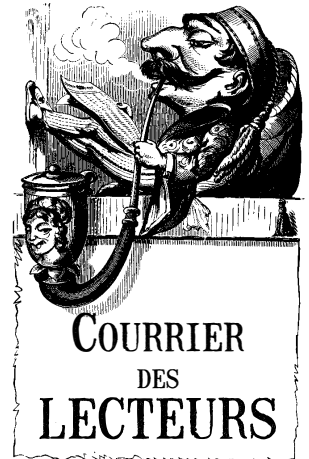
Les éditions de *L'Éil du Sphinx* annoncent la parution (prévue fin mars) du nouveau livre

de Sophie Bellocq-Poulonis, une rencontre entre l'univers de Baker Street et celui de HP Lovecraft assaisonnée de malédiction pharaonique : *La Malédiction de Nephrem-Kâ* (16 euros).

PRÉSENTATION DE L'ÉDITEUR
Sept noms : cinq morts, un fou et un disparu... Bien que la mort de lord Thorndyke, le linguiste émérite, semble des plus naturelles, elle n'est pourtant pas sans rappeler celle du riche négociant en tabac Jack Finley, survenue quelques semaines auparavant dans des circonstances similaires. Cela n'a pas échappé à l'esprit aiguisé de Sherlock Holmes pour qui ces décès sont à rapprocher de celui de Philip Lovecraft, repêché au pied d'une falaise du Sussex, et à relier au passé commun des trois hommes, lesquels ont participé à la mise au jour de la nécropole de Nephrem-Kâ, le pharaon maudit que l'Égypte ancienne s'est empressée d'effacer de son histoire.

Ces disparitions successives raniment le spectre de la malédiction dont on avait dit qu'elle frapperait tous ceux de l'expédition Finley. D'aucuns évoquent à mots couverts la colère du dieu Cthulhu dont la violation du tombeau de Nephrem-Kâ aurait déchaîné la colère. Cthulhu, cette créature qu'une incantation maudite répétée en boucle aurait fait surgir du fond des âges... Cthulhu que les croyances primitives font vivre retranchée dans les entrailles de la terre et les profondeurs océanes, au cœur de dimensions ignorées des hommes... Cthulhu, mythe ou réalité ? Une interrogation à laquelle Holmes et Watson devront se confronter pour aboutir à la résolution de cette enquête. »

Sophie Bellocq-Poulonis a déjà publié chez le même éditeur : *L'Aventure du détective triomphant* (2004), une étude du mythe holmésien, *L'Aventure des vierges de glace* (2007) où Sherlock Holmes rencontre Jack the Ripper, et *Mycroft's testimony* (2009).



Un petit correctif à l'IDN 6988, plus précisément à l'article sur le troisième épisode de la série *Sherlock*. C'est dans *Le Rituel des Musgrave* que l'on apprend que Holmes aimait à tirer au revolver dans son salon pour y tracer un VR patriotique et non dans *Les Plans du Bruce-Partington*.

Jean-Pierre Crauser, *Hôtel Dulong*
Réponse : Absolument. Une manipulation maladroite a mélangé deux éléments de texte au moment où les données ont été mises en ordre à la mise en page. Vous pouvez télécharger de nouveau le bulletin où l'erreur a été corrigée grâce à votre vigilance. Merci.

SHERLOCK HOLMES vous dit :

il n'y a pas de **CRIME PARFAIT !**
car tôt ou tard le criminel le plus rusé se fait prendre et l'on sait que l'innocence ne tient qu'à un cheveu... mais

il y a un **TRIM PARFAIT !**

C'est ce fixateur nouveau qu'utilisent tous les hommes qui veulent avoir toute la journée des cheveux simples et bien coiffés.

TRIM contient notamment des extraits naturels de géhenne, des extraits de plantes agissant sur le sacro-coccyx de vos cheveux, leur apportent force et santé. Les fibres (soies, soies fines) de TRIM donnent à vos cheveux un brillant, douceur, tenue, des cheveux brillants sans être gras !

avec Trim, cheveux bien coiffés, pleins de vie, qui font envie.

Trim est garanti par Gibbs



A Study in Emerald



Neil Gaiman

tobacco, and the two men puffed away, while my friend described a vision he had for a play that could tour the cities of the New World, from Manhattan Island all the way to the furthest tip of the continent in the distant south. The first act would be the last play we had seen. The rest of the play might perhaps tell of the dominion of the Old Ones over humanity and its gods, perhaps telling what might have happened if people had had no Royal Families to look up to – a world of barbarism and darkness – “But your mysterious professional man would be the play’s author, and what occurs would be his alone to decide,” interjected my friend. “Our drama would be his. But I can guarantee you audiences beyond your imaginings, and a significant share of the takings at the door. Let us say fifty per-cent!”

“This is most exciting,” said Vernet. “I hope it will not turn out to have been a pipe-dream!”

“No sir, it shall not!” said my friend, puffing on his own pipe, chuckling at the man’s joke. “Come to my rooms in Baker Street tomorrow morning, after breakfast-time, say at ten, in company with your author friend, and I shall have the contracts drawn up and waiting.”

With that the actor clambered up onto his chair and clapped his hands for silence. “Ladies and Gentlemen of the company, I have an announcement to make,” he said, his resonant voice filling the room. “This gentleman is Henry Camberley, the theatrical promoter, and he is proposing to take us across the Atlantic Ocean, and on to fame and fortune.”

There were several cheers, and the comedian said, “Well, it’ll make a change from herrings and pickled-cabbage,” and the company laughed.

And it was to the smiles of all of them that we walked out of the theatre and out onto the fog-wreathed streets.

“My dear fellow,” I said. “Whatever was—”

“Not another word,” said my friend. “There are many ears in the city.”

And not another word was spoken until we had hailed a cab, and clambered inside, and were rattling up the Charing Cross Road.

And even then, before he said anything, my friend took his pipe from his mouth, and emptied the half-smoked contents of the bowl into a small tin. He pressed the lid onto the tin, and placed it into his pocket.

“There,” he said. “That’s the Tall Man found, or I’m a Dutchman. Now, we just have to hope that the cupidity and the curiosity of the Limping Doctor proves enough to bring him to us tomorrow morning.”

“The Limping Doctor?”

My friend snorted. “That is what I have been calling him. It was obvious, from footprints and much else besides, when we saw the Prince’s body, that two men had been

in that room that night: a tall man, who, unless I miss my guess, we have just encountered, and a smaller man with a limp, who eviscerated the prince with a professional skill that betrays the medical man.”

“A doctor?”

“Indeed. I hate to say this, but it is my experience that when a Doctor goes to the bad, he is a fouler and darker creature than the worst cut-throat. There was Huston, the acid-bath man, and Campbell, who brought the procrustean bed to Ealing...” and he carried on in a similar vein for the rest of our journey.

The cab pulled up beside the kerb. “That’ll be one and tenpence,” said the cabbie. My friend tossed him a florin, which he caught, and tipped to his ragged tall hat. “Much obliged to you both,” he called out, as the horse clopped out into the fog.

We walked to our front door. As I unlocked the door, my friend said, “Odd. Our cabbie just ignored that fellow on the corner.”

“They do that at the end of a shift,” I pointed out.

“Indeed they do,” said my friend.

I dreamed of shadows that night, vast shadows that blotted out the sun, and I called out to them in my desperation, but they did not listen.

5. The Skin and the Pit.

This year, step into the Spring - with a spring in your step!
JACK'S. Boots, Shoes and Brogues. Save your soles!
 Heels our speciality. **JACK'S.** And do not forget to visit our new clothes and fittings emporium in the East End - featuring evening wear of all kinds, hats, novelties, canes, swordsticks &c. **JACK'S OF PICCADILLY.** *It's all in the Spring!*

Inspector Lestrade was the first to arrive.

“You have posted your men in the street?” asked my friend.

“I have,” said Lestrade. “With strict orders to let anyone

in who comes, but to arrest anyone trying to leave.”

“And you have handcuffs with you?”

In reply, Lestrade put his hand in his pocket, and jangled two pairs of cuffs, grimly.

“Now sir,” he said. “While we wait, why do you not tell me what we are waiting for?”

My friend pulled his pipe out of his pocket. He did not put it in his mouth, but placed it on the table in front of him. Then he took the tin from the night before, and a

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glass vial I recognised as the one he had had in the room in Shoreditch.

"There," he said. "The coffin-nail, as I trust it shall prove, for our Master Vernet." He paused. Then he took out his pocket watch, laid it carefully on the table. "We have several minutes before they arrive." He turned to me. "What do you know of the Restorationists?"

"Not a blessed thing," I told him.

Lestrade coughed. "If you're talking about what I think you're talking about," he said, "perhaps we should leave it there. Enough's enough."

"Too late for that," said my friend. "For there are those who do not believe that the coming of the Old Ones was the fine thing we all know it to be. Anarchists to a man, they would see the old ways restored – mankind in control of its own destiny, if you will."

"I will not hear this sedition spoken," said Lestrade. "I must warn you –"

"I must warn you not to be such a fathead," said my friend. "Because it was the Restorationists that killed Prince Franz Drago. They murder, they kill, in a vain effort to force our masters to leave us alone in the darkness. The Prince was killed by a rache – it's an old term for a hunting dog, Inspector, as you would know if you had looked in a dictionary. It also means revenge. And the hunter left his signature on the wallpaper in the murder-room, just as an artist might sign a canvas. But he was not the one who killed the Prince."

"The Limping Doctor!" I exclaimed.

"Very good. There was a tall man there that night – I could tell his height, for the word was written at eye level. He smoked a pipe – the ash and dottle sat unburnt in the fireplace, and he had tapped out his pipe with ease on the mantel, something a smaller man would not have done. The tobacco was an unusual blend of shag. The footprints in the room had, for the most part been almost obliterated by your men, but there were several clear prints behind the door and by the window. Someone had waited there: a smaller man from his stride, who put his weight on his right leg. On the path outside I had several clear prints, and the different colours of clay on the bootscraper outside gave me more information: a tall man, who had accompanied the Prince into those rooms, and had, later, walked out. Waiting for them to arrive was the man who had sliced up the Prince so impressively..."

Lestrade made an uncomfortable noise that did not quite become a word.

"I have spent many days retracing the movements of his highness. I went from gambling hell to brothel to dining den to madhouse looking for our pipe-smoking man and his friend. I made no progress until I thought to check the newspapers of Bohemia, searching for a clue to the Prince's

recent activities there, and in them I learned that an English Theatrical Troupe had been in Prague last month, and had performed before Prince Franz Drago..."

"Good lord," I said. "So that Sherry Vernet fellow..."

"Is a Restorationist. Exactly."

I was shaking my head in wonder at my friend's intelligence and skills of observation, when there was a knock on the door.

"This will be our quarry!" said my friend. "Careful now!"

Lestrade put his hand deep into his pocket, where I had no doubt he kept a pistol. He swallowed, nervously.

My friend called out, "Please, come in!"

The door opened.

It was not Vernet, nor was it a Limping Doctor. It was one of the young street Arabs who earn a crust running errands – "in the employ of Messrs. Street and Walker", as we used to say when I was young. "Please sirs," he said. "Is there a Mister Henry Camberley here? I was asked by a gentleman to deliver a note."

"I'm he," said my friend. "And for a sixpence, what can you tell me about the gentleman who gave you the note?"

The young lad, who volunteered that his name was Wiggins, bit the sixpence before making it vanish, and then told us that the cheery cove who gave him the note was on the tall side, with dark hair, and, he added, he had been smoking a pipe.

I have the note here, and take the liberty of transcribing it.

My Dear Sir,

I do not address you as Henry Camberley, for it is a name to which you have no claim. I am surprised that you did not announce yourself under your own name, for it is a fine one, and one that does you credit. I have read a number of your papers, when I have been able to obtain them. Indeed, I corresponded with you quite profitably two years ago about certain theoretical anomalies in your paper on the Dynamics of an Asteroid.

I was amused to meet you, yesterday evening. A few tips which might save you bother in times to come, in the profession you currently follow. Firstly, a pipe-smoking man might possibly have a brand-new, unused pipe in his pocket, and no tobacco, but it is exceedingly unlikely – at least as unlikely as a theatrical promoter with no idea of the usual customs of recompense on a tour, who is accompanied by a taciturn ex-army officer (Afghanistan, unless I miss my guess). Incidentally, while you are correct that the streets of London have ears, it might also behoove you in future not to take the first cab

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that comes along. Cab-drivers have ears too, if they choose to use them.

You are certainly correct in one of your suppositions: it was indeed I who lured the half-blood creature back to the room in Shoreditch.

If it is any comfort to you, having learned a little of his recreational predilections, I had told him I had procured for him a girl, abducted from a convent in Cornwall where she had never seen a man, and that it would only take his touch, and the sight of his face, to tip her over into a perfect madness.

Had she existed, he would have feasted on her madness while he took her, like a man sucking the flesh from a ripe peach leaving nothing behind but the skin and the pit. I have seen them do this. I have seen them do far worse. And it is not the price we pay for peace and prosperity. It is too great a price for that.

The good doctor – who believes as I do, and who did indeed write our little performance, for he has some crowd-pleasing skills – was waiting for us, with his knives.

I send this note, not as a catch-me-if-you-can taunt, for we are gone, the estimable doctor and I, and you shall not find us, but to tell you that it was good to feel that, if only for a moment, I had a worthy adversary. Worthier by far than inhuman creatures from beyond the Pit.

I fear the Strand Players will need to find themselves a new leading man.

I will not sign myself Vernet, and until the hunt is done and the world restored, I beg you to think of me simply as,

Rache.

Inspector Lestrade ran from the room, calling to his men. They made young Wiggins take them to the place where the man had given him the note, for all the world as if Vernet the actor would be waiting there for them, a-smoking of his pipe. From the window we watched them run, my friend and I, and we shook our heads.

“They will stop and search all the trains leaving London, all the ships leaving Albion for Europe or the New World,” said my friend, “Looking for a tall man, and his companion, a smaller, thickset medical man, with a slight limp. They will close the ports. Every way out of the country will be blocked.”

“Do you think they will catch him, then?”

My friend shook his head. “I may be wrong,” he said, “But I would wager that he and his friend are even now only a mile or so away, in the rookery of St. Giles, where the police will not go except by the dozen. And they will hide up there until the hue and cry have died away. And

then they will be about their business.”

“What makes you say that?”

“Because,” said my friend, “If our positions were reversed, it is what I would do. You should burn the note, by the way.”

I frowned. “But surely it’s evidence,” I said.

“It’s seditious nonsense,” said my friend.

And I should have burned it. Indeed, I told Lestrade I had burned it, when he returned, and he congratulated me on my good sense. Lestrade kept his job, and Prince Albert wrote a note to my friend congratulating him on his deductions, while regretting that the perpetrator was still at large.

They have not yet caught Sherry Vernet, or whatever his name really is, nor was any trace of his murderous accomplice, tentatively identified as a former military surgeon named John (or perhaps James) Watson. Curiously, it was revealed that he had also been in Afghanistan. I wonder if we ever met.

My shoulder, touched by the Queen, continues to improve, the flesh fills and it heals. Soon I shall be a dead-shot once more.

One night when we were alone, several months ago, I asked my friend if he remembered the correspondence referred to in the letter from the man who signed himself Rache. My friend said that he remembered it well, and that “Sigerson” (for so the actor had called himself then, claiming to be an Icelander) had been inspired by an equation of my friend’s to suggest some wild theories furthering the relationship between mass, energy and the hypothetical speed of light. “Nonsense, of course,” said my friend, without smiling. “But inspired and dangerous nonsense nonetheless.”

The palace eventually sent word that the Queen was pleased with my friend’s accomplishments in the case, and there the matter has rested.

I doubt my friend will leave it alone, though; it will not be over until one of them has killed the other.

I kept the note. I have said things in this retelling of events that are not to be said. If I were a sensible man I would burn all these pages, but then, as my friend taught me, even ashes can give up their secrets. Instead, I shall place these papers in a strongbox at my bank with instructions that the box may not be opened until long after anyone now living is dead. Although, in the light of the recent events in Russia, I fear that day may be closer than any of us would care to think.

S _____ M _____ Major (Ret’d)
Baker Street,
London, New Albion, 1881.

LE DESSIN DU DIMANCHE

