

The Adventure of the Circular Room- Circ
The Baker Street Journal, Summer, 1946
The Memoirs of Solar Pons

Date

Copper/April 7-8, 1921

Patrick/April, 1922

Quotes

- *It was a wild, windy night in April of a year in the early twenties when the diabolic affair of the circular room was brought to the attention of Solar Pons. (Parker's narrative)*
- *I assure you, I have every respect for a woman's intuition.*
- *Oh, there is nothing at all mysterious about my methods, Miss Manahan, believe me. They are all too simple. We have been proceeding all along on the theory that Mrs. Thornton's tale is a fabrication born of hallucination out of her mental condition. Let us now proceed from the opposite pole. Mrs. Thornton's tale is either true or not true; that is simple logic. We shall have to discover the answer to the riddle ourselves..*

Comments

- *The Circular Room* has an interesting lineage. Derleth wrote it as a Sherlock Holmes pastiche and it can be found in its original form in Marvin Kaye's anthology, *The Game is Afoot*. He then reworked it for inclusion in the second Pons collection, *The Memoirs of Solar Pons*. The plot remained the same and Holmes and Pons certainly seem interchangeable in many of the early stories. The Sherlock Holmes of Praed St. would forge his own identity as more tales were published.
- The opening line quoted above is reminiscent of many Doyle openings featuring Holmes. The detective and the doctor are at home in their lodgings when a prospective client braves daunting weather to seek help. Upon arrival, the great sleuth makes a few elementary deductions that surprise and impress the visitor. The reader feels a sense of comfort and settles in for the remainder of the adventure.
- In some cases, Parker speculates on some health aspect of a client; often related to their mental or emotional state. He usually makes reasonable deductions based on available facts. Pons often judges them plausible but remains dubious. Unfortunately, Parker is inevitably proven wrong at the case's conclusion.
- Another story element that periodically resurfaces is referenced in the Quotes above. Pons makes a basic assumption that differs from the one Parker or other characters make. It sets Pons upon the correct track while leaving everyone else at

sea. Normally it is not spelled out so plainly beforehand to Parker and the client. The differing basis leads Pons to solve the case, which no one else is close to figuring out.

- Pons considers this to be a devious and revolting crime, referring to it as “a callous, diabolic business long premeditated” and “devil’s work.” One has to believe that he urged for the fullest punishment under the law, though it is unclear if anything more serious than financial mismanagement or embezzlement can be proven.
- Peter Ruber includes this tale among his favorites.