



The Pink 'Un



Editor, Webmaster, Tantalus, Program Chair: **Phil Dematteis**, 1817 Belmont Drive, Columbia SC 29206-2813; hansomwheels@aol.com

Palmetto Club Liaisons: **George and Sarah Linder**

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The Hansom Wheels Website (which includes *The Pink 'Un*): <http://www.hansomwheels.com>

“When you see a man with whiskers of that cut and the ‘**Pink 'Un**’ protruding out of his pocket, you can always draw him by a bet”—
Sherlock Holmes, “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”

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I Find It Recorded in My Notebook . . .

The Hansom Wheels met at The Palmetto Club on April 15. There to enjoy the festivities, in alphabetical order, were **Richard Blenko, Joyce Crout, Mary Dematteis, Tom Elmore, Patti Estes, Becky and Kevin Lewis, George and Sarah Linder, Jamie McCulloch, Pat McNeely, Ashby and Joann Morton, Wayne Scott, Susie Slaughter, Julie Smoak, Michelle Taylor, Kelly Weber, Barbara Yongue, and Your Editor, Phil Dematteis aka The Tantalus.**

After dinner, I announced that the game was afoot; we toasted *the* woman, Irene Adler; and we were led in the responsive reading of The Musgrave Ritual by **Jamie McCulloch.**

We went on to the Happy Hour Posers, in which the titles of stories from the Canon are concealed in the form of bad puns: 1. Carole Lombard's husband lost all of his money on a bad investment (answer requires British pronunciation) = the stock broke her Clark = “The Stockbroker's Clerk,” the Assigned Story of the Evening (Carole Lombard was married to Clark Gable, and the Brits pronounce “clerk” as “clark”). 2. He played his brass wind instrument (not a bugle) as the coffin was lowered into the grave = the burial cornet = “The Beryl Coronet.” 3. Still on the theme of wind instruments: It was a woodwind from hell! = the devil's flute = “The Devil's Foot.” 4. Archie Andrews's rich brunette girlfriend has a sister named after a woody leguminous vine of the southeastern US with compound leaves and blue, white, purple, or rose flowers = “Wisteria Lodge” (in the comics, Archie's girlfriend's name is Veronica Lodge; she doesn't really have a sister).

The Featured Presentation of the evening was “The Adventure of the Obvious Deductions,” by **The Tantalus** (i.e., **me**), which I had originally presented in October 2001. It was a parody (the only kind of stuff I write) inspired by the passage in “The Stockbroker's Clerk” where Watson says that he can join Holmes on a case because his neighbor can take over his practice temporarily. A few minutes later Holmes looks at the

brass plate on the neighbor's door and says, “Your neighbor is a doctor.” This has always bothered me, so in my story every deduction Holmes makes is like that: he deduces that it's raining because Watson comes in soaking wet, thunder is heard outside, and water is running down the windowpane;* that his new client, Josiah Hungerdunger, is tall and well-built by looking at him; that he is a lawyer because that's what it says on his card; that Watson's neighbor is a doctor because the sign on the neighbor's door has “M.D.” after his name; that the speed of the hansom cab they take is zero because the telegraph poles on the side of the road appear to be standing still; that the murder victim's cause of death is a poker lodged in his skull; and so on. I also dealt with Holmes's innocence of all things sexual: Hungerdunger says he thinks his wife is cheating on him with his brother; Holmes thinks he means they are cheating him at cards. Hungerdunger rephrases to say that the wife and brother are having an affair; Holmes thinks he means they're throwing a party and didn't invite him. He tries again, saying that they're having illicit congress; Holmes thinks he means that they went to the US and illegally got elected to the House or Senate. Finally, Hungerdunger describes in graphic detail what he is talking about; Holmes is outraged that he could accuse a woman of doing such disgusting things and runs him out with a bullwhip.

We ended with a group reading of Vincent Starrett's Sacred Sonnet, “221B,” and went home to laugh all over again at our memories of the hilarious story.

*When I first presented this story, **Bob Robinson** told me that Bret Harte had used the wet-raincoat-and-umbrella and rain-on-the-windowpane gag in “The Stolen Cigar-Case” (1900), which I hadn't read at the time. So I had Holmes eliminate two other theoretical causes of Watson's dampness: that he had fallen into the Thames (impossible, because he didn't have garbage all over him) and that he had been urinated on by squirrels (impossible, because it would take hundred of squirrels to get Watson that wet, and they are too modest to pee in groups).

For August: The Greatest Portrayer of Sherlock Holmes (Sorry, Jeremy)!

The Hansom Wheels will meet at **7:00 p.m.** on **Thursday, August 15**, at **The Palmetto Club**, 1231 Sumter Street. The Featured Presentation will be **Tom Elmore's** discussion of the actor many people (including me) consider the definitive portrayer of Sherlock Holmes: Basil Rathbone. The Assigned Reading is “The Illustrious Client” (because it mentions South Africa, where Rathbone was born). The price for dinner will be **\$40.00** per person; adult beverages will be available. If you have not already made your reservation(s), please do so by

emailing hansomwheels@aol.com by **12:00 noon on Monday, August 12**. If you want to add an extra person after you reserve, please email that same address. If you have made a reservation, **the deadline for cancel is also noon on the 12th**. We will be charged for all the meals we have ordered by that time, whether they are eaten or not; so if you cancel after the deadline or just don't show up, we will be forced to ask you to fork over \$40.00 (\$80.00 for a couple) anyway. See you there!

Happy Hour Posers (Name the Adventures):

1. My mother’s brother was sad because his diet consisted entirely of sugars, starches, and fiber.
2. I called my regular guy to come and repaint my house, but I found out that he had won the Powerball and didn’t need to work anymore.
3. The lawyer took the case of a man from Chicago who had been exposed to radiation that made him glow in the dark.
4. I put a dollar bill into a change machine but only got two bits back.

Photos from the Meeting Courtesy of Richard Blenko, Ladies’ Man



The Tantalus reading his story



George and Sarah Linder



Becky and Kevin Lewis



Tom Elmore



Ashby and Joann Morton



Kelly Weber



Julie Smoak



Jamie McCulloch



Barbara Yongue



Michelle Taylor



Susie Slaughter



Patti Estes



Wayne Scott



Pat McNeely with Richard Blenko



Richard Blenko with Joyce Crout



Richard Blenko with my wife (wait ... what?!)