

A Sherlockian Toast (posted 2021-2-7)

A toast to Willoughby and Susan
by Richard Krisciunas
before meeting of the Watson's Tin Box
on August 31, 2020
(also before the Scowrers and Molly Maguires on January 16, 2021)

Tonight may we all take a brief moment
To recognize two persons from this case;
The secretary and a maid who worked
For the professor at Yoxley Old Place.

The first of the two is Willoughby Smith,
Who was hired straight from university.
He was decent, hard-working and quiet
And in his life faced no adversity.

Smith returned home in the midst of a burglary,
Suffered an injury that he wouldn't withstand.
After interrupting a theft from the study,
He was found with a golden pince-nez in his hand.

Next is the young maid Susan Tarlton
Who first thought Smith was already dead.
So she did the Christian thing, I guess,
And then poured some water on his head.

Really? As Willoughby lay there gasping for life
What the maid did almost made me want to laugh.
Instead of some brandy like Watson might prescribe
She just doused him with water from a carafe?

His eyes opened slowly for an instant
And as he wiped the water from his face,
He used his final ounce of energy
And made this observation on the case.

"The professor" he murmured, "it was she!"
Were the last words Willoughby would speak.
BEFORE he lay dead on the study floor
On a night that was cold, rainy and bleak.

The "she" was Professor Coram's ex-wife
Who he abandoned when a policeman was killed.
When she and her friend were shipped to Siberia,
Coram's dream to move to London was fulfilled.

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In the end, Holmes identified the murderess.
Anna and Willoughby Smith both met their demise.
Smith lost his life after being stabbed in the neck
While Anna lost her way because of her poor eyes.

Let's toast the maid and the secretary.
And raise your favorite beverage to the sky.
To young Susan and poor wet Willoughby
Let's all drink until your glass is dry.

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