

"Purely Elementary my dear Watson"

Sherlock Holmes continued to surprise Dr. Watson even at the Bridge table

North

♠ Q J 6 4 2

♥ 10 8

♦ A 6 4 3

♣ J 2

West

♠ 7

♥ 5 3 2

♦ K J 10 7

♣ J 8 7 5 4 3

East

♠ 8 3

♥ J 9 7 4

♦ 9

♣ A K Q 10 9 6

South

♠ A K 10 9 5

♥ A K Q 6

♦ Q 8 5 2

♣ -----

The bidding

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	2♠	3♣
4♥	Pass	4♠	Pass
6♠			

Lead: four of clubs

"Holmes" said Dr Watson as he showed the famous detective the accompanying hand, "here is a further example of the ill fortune that has recently plagued me. I contracted for 6♠, and West led a ♣. I ruffed, drew trumps, then played ♥AKQ, discarding a ♦ from dummy, then led ♦2 to the ♦A and a ♦ back."

“Alas, East showed out, and West took 2 ♦ tricks to put me one down. I had expected East to have the ♦K, in view of his vulnerable three clubs bid, but to my dismay, defeat suddenly became my portion”

“My dear Watson,” Holmes replied as he refilled his pipe, “things are not always what they seem. Just as many enthusiasts who love the game dearly, but who fail to make full use of their deductive powers, you neglected to utilize clues you could have exploited”

“It was eminently correct to ruff the ♣, draw trumps and cash three hearts, but you should then have ruffed the ♥6 in dummy, and the ♣J in your hand. In so doing you would have learned that East had started with precisely two ♠s and four ♥s. East’s vulnerable 3♣ overcall would have suggested that he had at least six ♥s, hence he could not have been dealt more than one ♦”

“Accordingly, you would next have played a low ♦ from your hand and a low ♦ from dummy! You could then sit back and reap the rewards of your astute analysis. Whoever took the trick would be forced to yield the slam”

“A marvelous diagnosis, by Jove” said Watson admiringly.

“**Purely elementary my dear Watson**” the great detective replied.