

Diary of a Mountie - Part the Nineteenth Becalmed

by Jessica McGeary
(based on COTY)

Day Twenty-Two - Saturday, August 29
League Headquarters

This past week has been spent in libraries, eating-houses, and other odd places around London. I've spent most of my daylight hours reading more children's books than any man my age has a right to, unless he does it aloud at a child's bedside, and I've spent all of my evenings in Oxford Street. I've filled up several composition books with notes to a degree that would astonish my mother, were she still alive. I have a separate notebook for theories and guesses about what Prufrock may be after, should any particular book turn out to be factual. I've even gone so far as to put in orders at the booksellers' for copies of books about prior League members- 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, The Invisible Man, and so on- in case they might turn out to be useful. My quarters look like they belong to a university student.

I can't stand this.

There, I've said it! My mother was the schoolteacher in my family- not my father, and certainly not me. Oh, I might've wanted to study the law as a boy, but that didn't last long. Not once my father said I'd be big enough to join the Mounties at eighteen, anyway. I don't mind learning new things, and I don't mind studying when I have to, but this is not my idea of a productive way to spend my time. I didn't earn my stripes by analyzing forms and paperwork- I earned them by bringing in the man who killed my father. At least I feel as if the jujitsu lessons are accomplishing something. I only started a week ago, but at least it's doing something. Investigating in books, hunting for something I don't understand and probably wouldn't recognize if I saw- that's an archaeologist's job, or a bookkeeper's, or a churchman's. Not mine.

Unfortunately, I can't do my job at the moment. We don't know what we're looking for- no one does. Danner hasn't had a lot of luck hunting down information on the docks, that's no surprise. Lord Peter's investment inquiries go nowhere whatsoever, so he's trying to get the Prufrock organization to hire someone who'll be loyal to him as a secretary. I have no idea if Cranston's uncovered anything. It leaves us exactly where we were before, with the knowledge that there's a plot, but no clear picture of what it is or where. So all any of us can do is keep digging and hope we're digging in the right place.

It's still profoundly unsatisfying. A man can only take so much of this. I may as well take a day or two of leave from my 'studies'. Prince needs some proper exercise, anyway. I think I'll take him out to one of the parks and see how long we can go without someone mistaking him for an escaped wolf. There's supposed to be some decent museums here in London, too. Those are probably worth a look. They don't have anything like that in Dawson City, I know that much. As long as I'm done in time for lessons in Oxford Street, there shouldn't be a problem. The books aren't going anywhere...