مغامرات شيرلوك هولمز
عصبة الرؤوس الحمراء
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^RAYAHEEN^
The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

The Red-Headed League

English - Arabic

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Arthur Conan Doyle

Dar Al-Bihar

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المحتويات

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مقدمة

تنتمي قصص شيرلوك هولمز للكاتب أرثر كونان دويل بأهمية عامة وأكاديمية على حد سواء. ففي الاثنين عشر سنة الماضية، تطور النقد الموجه إليها ليصبح حواراً بناءً ومستمراً. ويعرض هذا الكتاب أهم قصص شيرلوك هولمز وأكثرها تشويقاً. هذا بالإضافة إلى مجموعة من المواد الأخرى التي من شأنها مساعدة القارئ على الفهم. منها نبذة عن حياة دويل وأعماله.

 حول النص:

ما من نص دموجي لقصص شيرلوك هولمز، وتعتبر المجموعة الإنجليزية المجموعة الأبرز، وهي تتكون من مجلدين نشرهما موري عام 1928 و1929 على حياة دويل؛ بينما نشر ويلدي عام 1930 المجموعة الأميركية الأبرز بعد وفاة دويل. لكن الكثير من الأخطاء والتناقضات يشبب النسختين. وينبغي أن نشرى الطبعة الأميركية حاولوا تصويب الأخطاء الفاضحة في النسخة الإنجليزية، لكنهم أخلوا أيضاً بعض الأخطاء المطمعية الجديدة وعدلوا أحياناً كلمات وتعابير إنجليزية بدت لهم عامضة، أو اعتبروها خطاً غير صحيحة.
يركز نص قصص شيرلوك هولمز في هذا الكتاب على الطبقات الإنجليزية الأولى، وقد نُشر العديد من القصص في بداية الأمر تحت عنوان "مغامرات...". فنحصل مثلاً على "مغامرات الباقر الجمرى" أو "مغامرات الزمرة المرقطة". وقد اعتمد دويل بسهولة في النص الموجز، وتمكننا من القصص، أو سمح لناشره ليُقِيم بذلك في طبعة العام 1928.

شيرلوك هولمز: نلقي نظرة على "رجل تحريي استشاري غير رسمي" في العالم، في الأدب الإنجليزي قبل نحو قرن تقريباً، وسرعان ما فرض نفسه في الثقافة الإنجليزية عامة، وأصبح أحد أشهر الشخصيات الأدبية، وما زال يحظى بهذه المكانة حتى اليوم.

وضعت هذه الظروف وغيرها الكثير أن شملة نفحة من روح شيرلوك هولمز في آرثر كونان دويل، فهو شاهد شخصيته البارزة، مهنيته لأدنى التفاصيل، ويمتخير في مهنيةة واسعة وخبرة للاذاعة والتحليلا، وهذا لا يقتصر على قدراته في الطبيعية، بل ساعده في ذلك دراسته وخبرته المهنية، في سنوات الدراسة المدرسية الثمانية، وسنوات دراسة الطب الخمس في جامعة ألبرتا تاناي. وقد مثل دويل تخرج من الجامعة الطبية مدة عشر سنوات، قبل أن يتفوق في الكتابة، ويدعو أن "كونه الطبي كمان وراء تصويره الخاص لشيرلوك هولمز كرجل تحريات على بعض القضايا، بدأ على قدراته الخاصة، وكمفنّش يبقى المبدئ التحليلي.

السير آرثر كونان دويل: في ذات يوم من عام 1907، طلبت إحدى السيدات من السير آرثر كونان دويل نصيحة تحرية، قائلة إن نسيبها المفضل اختفى قبل هذا.
وأهمية التفاصيل في أن. ويطلب التشخيص الطبي الدقيق (التحري) القدرة على التحليل المنطقي وعين الطبيب الخبير لملاحظة العوارض الكامنة (المفاجئة) وراء المرض. وكما كتب أحد أبرز الأطباء كونان دويل في "새ره" أن رؤية الاختلافات السببية وتقديرها بدقه وحمة هي العامل الحاسم في إجراء تشخيص طبي ناجح. في الحياة العادية، نجد سيريلوك هولمز الذي يدهل صديقه وآخوره. وفي إطار التدريب المستمر نجد سيريلوك هولمز رجل التحريات الماهر.

إن صاحب هذا الرواية كان، باعتبار كونان دويل، نموذج سيريلوك هولمز نفسه. فالدكتور جوزيف بيلاشتريه على اكتشاف، ليس الشكوى الفنية فحسب، بل أيضاً اضطرابات مرضية وخلافات مع أنهم كانوا غرباء عنهم. وأصبح كونان دويل معألونًا بـ "إدارة ملفات مرضية". وكتب لاحقا يقول: "نحث في الفرصة لدراسة طرقه في العمل، فتبين لي أنه غالباً ما كانت نظريته الخاطفية كافية لتعريف عن مرضاه أكثر مما عرفه أنا من خلال اختلالي.

وقر على هذه الحادثة حوادث كثيرة تظهر قدرات دويل التحليلية. وظل دويل يذكر مدى تأثر هذه الحوادث حتى بعد سنوات في مطلع حياته كمؤلف، عندما قرر انتباه خط قصير التحري. وهكذا ظهرت شخصية سيريلوك هولمز في "دراسة في اللون الفرديمي" (1887).
أجرى هذه الكتابات والتوجيهات على سمعة دويل بين معاصريه من دون أن يتعكر على قصص شيرلوك هولمز. إلا أنها تجسد منحى رومانستيا أعمق وأكثر تأصلاً في شخصية دويل، مما أثر بشكل أو آخر على قصص هولمز. وكان أولادته ماري بولي دويل اليد الطويل على ما يبدو في بروز هذا النمط نظراً إلى علاقتهما الوثيقة (خلافًا لوالده الذي لم يلعب دوراً بارزاً في تربيته بسبب مشاكله الصحية).

طلبت شهامة دويل وتبنيه للشرف على القصص التاريخية التي كان يفخر بها، لا سيما "الشركة البيضاء" (1891) و "السر ميغيل" (1906)، والتي تزويت بقع معارفات فردوسية في القرن الرابع عشر في إلكترينا. كما يبرز هذا الحصن في العديد من القضايا التتالية في سبيلها طاقاته ومهاراته. ويشاطر دويل وواستن دونل تمكينه الراشخ بأصول الشهامة وقيم الرجل النبيل وواجهته، الأمر الذي يسمح بنصرة الحق والدفاع عن المخطوفين وحماية الضعفاء.

ولا شك أن أصول الشهامة والشرف تعني أيضاً أصول التصرف مع النساء، وهي علاقات طرحت تحديات كبيرة لكل من ويل وهولمز. وكان دويل من دعاة إصلاح قانون الطلاق، أما على الصعيد الشخصي، فقد شهد 7 سنوات من الزواج و3 سنوات على

قصص شيرلوك هولمز:

كانت قصة شيرلوك هولمز الأولى "دراسة في اللون القرميزي"، وقد نشرت في "شارة بيثون الميلادية السنوية".

Beeton's
ظل هولمز يظهر بعد عودته في مغامرات جديدة تعظيمًا إضافيين. فألف دويل رواية رابعة وأخيرة "تعلم الخوف" (1915) إضافة إلى نشر قصصية تصارع هولمز في مجلة "ستراند" حتى عام 1927. إلا أن مستواه تراجع بوضوح مقارنة مع سابقتها.

ومع ذلك لم ينتحر دويل من عدم تجاويف القراءة إدراكاً منه لولائهم وصبرهم. وقد قال فيهم "أخشي أن يصبح السيد تشارلز هولمز كأحمد التيفورات المشهورين الذين، وبعد أن ولي زواجه، لا يزال يستهويهم الإلهامات، مراراً ونكراراً أمام الجمهور المحب، وربما أن هولمز قد احتفى "انتحاباته الأخيرة" عام 1917، فقد كان هذا الاعتراف عام 1927 في مكانته ومؤثرًا جداً.

عُرف عام 1887 مقابل بدل أعباد قليل، لكنه أحد فرقته، وهو ناشر مجلة شهرية، حضر إلى لندن لشراء عقد مع كونوان دويل وأوسكار وابيد حول كتاب جديده. فألف دويل قصة ثانية "علامت الأربعة" (1890) وألف وابيد "صورة دوريان غريغ".

ففي السنة التالية، أفل دويل عيادته في سريموسي وانتقل إلى لندن حيث أمضى معظم أوقاته في كتابة القصص لمجلة "ستراند" الشهرية. وسرعان ما تخلع من مهنته للاستחדשות للكتابة. وهكذا عرض على المجلة قصتين جديدتين "فضيحة في بورمية" و"قصبة الرؤوس الحمراء". وقد طالب الناشر بأربع قصص إضافية كانت باكورة سلسلة "غمائم تشارلز هولمز" (1892). ولاقلت القصص رواجاً كبيراً فطلبت المجلة بالميزان منها. فألف دويل 6 قصص أخرى.

حتى أن المجلة وافقت على دفع بدل مرتفع للحصول على 12 قصة إضافية بين 1892 و1893. لكن دويل قَرَر في قصة "المشكلة الأخيرة" أن يضع حداً لوجود بطله.

الواقع أن هولمز احتجج عن الظهور ولم يمض مدة 8 سنوات. إذ قرر دويل إعادة إحياءه عام 1901 كبطل لتغز جديد بدأ يحيكه منذ مدة وقد لا في ناحة واسعة.
From *A Study in Scarlet*

In the year 1878 I took my degree of Doctor of Medicine of the University of London, and proceeded to Netley to go through the course prescribed for surgeons in the Army. I was duly attached to the Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers as assistant surgeon. On landing at Bombay, I learned that my corps had advanced through the passes, and was already deep in the enemy's country.

The campaign brought honors and promotion to many, but for me it had nothing but misfortune and disaster. As I served at the fatal battle of Maiwand, there I was struck on the shoulder by a (Jezail) bullet. I was compelled to spend the next nine months resting in attempting to improve it.

I had neither kith nor kin in England, and was therefore as free as air. Under such circumstances I naturally gravitated to London. There I stayed for some time at a private hotel in the Strand, leading a comfortless, meaningless existence, and spending such money as I had. So alarming did the state of my finances become, that I soon decided that I must make a complete alteration in my style of living. (Choosing the latter alternative), I began by making...
up my mind to leave the hotel, and take up my quarters in some less pretentious and less expensive domicile.

On the very day that I had come to this conclusion, I was standing at the Criterion Bar, when someone tapped me on the shoulder, and turning round I recognized young Stamford. The sight of a friendly face in the great wilderness of London is a pleasant thing indeed to a lonely man. In the exuberance of my joy, I asked him to lunch with me.

“Whatever have you been doing with yourself, Watson?” he asked in undisguised wonder.

I gave him a short sketch of my adventures, and had hardly concluded it by the time we reached our destination.

“What are you up to now?”

“Looking for lodgings,” I answered. “Trying to solve the problem as to whether it is possible to get comfortable rooms at a reasonable price.”

“That’s a strange thing,” remarked my companion; “you are the second man today that has used that expression to me.”

“And who was the first?” I asked.

“A fellow who is working at the chemical laboratory up at the hospital. He was bemoaning himself this morning because he could not get someone to go halves with him in some nice rooms
which he had found, and which were too much for
his purse.
"If he really wants someone to share the rooms
and the expense, I am the very man for him. I should
prefer having a partner to being alone."

"Why, what is there against him?"

"Oh, I didn't say there was anything against him.
He is a little queer in his ideas. He is a first-class
chemist."

"Did you never ask him what was he going in
for? I asked him."

"No; he is not a man that is easy to draw out.
He is sure to be at the laboratory, returned my
companion. "He either avoids the place for weeks or
else he works there from morning till night. If you
meet this friend of yours, I should like to meet him," I said. "How could I
like we will drive round together after luncheon."

"Certainly," I answered, and the conversation
drifted away into other channels.

As we made our way to the hospital after
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leaving the Holborn, Stamford gave me a few more particulars about the gentleman whom I proposed to take as a fellow-lodger.

"You mustn't blame me if you don't get on with him," he said: "I know nothing more of him than I have learned from meeting him occasionally in the laboratory. You proposed this arrangement, so you must not hold me responsible."

"If we don't get on it will be easy to part company," I answered. "It seems to me, Stamford," I added, looking hard at my companion, "that you have some reason for washing your hands in the matter. Is this fellow's temper so formidable, or what is it? Don't be mealymouthed about it."

"It's not easy to express the inexpressible," he answered with a laugh. "Holmes is a little too scientific for my tastes. He appears to have a passion for definite and exact knowledge."

"Very right too."

"Yes, but it may be pushed to excess."

As he spoke, we turned down a narrow lane and passed through a small side-door, which opened into a wing of the great hospital. Near the farther end a low-arched passage branched away from it and led to the chemical laboratory.

This was a lofty chamber, lined and littered with countless bottles. Broad, low tables were scattered throughout it.
about. There was only one student in the room, who was bending over a distant table absorbed in his work. At the sound of our steps he glanced round and sprang to his feet with a cry of pleasure, “I’ve found it! I’ve found it,” he shouted to my companion, running towards us with a test-tube in his hand.

“Dr. Watson, Mr. Sherlock Holmes,” said Stamford, introducing us.

“How are you?” he said cordially, gripping my hand with strength. “You have been in Afghanistan, I perceive.”

“How on earth did you know that?” I asked in astonishment.

“Never mind,” said he, chuckling to himself. “The question now is about hemoglobin. No doubt you see the significance of this discovery of mine?”

“It is interesting, chemically, no doubt,” I answered, “but practically…”

“Why, man, it is the most practical medico-legal discovery for years. This appears to act as well whether the blood is old or new. Had this test been invented, there are hundreds of men now walking the earth who would long ago have paid the penalty of their crimes.”

“Indeed!” I murmured.
“Criminal cases are continually hinging upon that one point. A man is suspected of a crime months perhaps after it has been committed. His linen or clothes are examined and brownish stains discovered upon them. Are they blood stains, or mud stains, or rust stains, or fruit stains, or what are they? That is a question which has puzzled many an expert, and why? Because there was no reliable test. Now we have the Sherlock Holmes test, and there will no longer be any difficulty.”

His eyes fairly glittered as he spoke, and he put his hand over his heart and bowed as if to some applauding crowd conjured up by his imagination.

“You are to be congratulated,” I remarked, considerably surprised at his enthusiasm.

“There was the case of Von Bischoff at Frankfort last year. He would certainly have been hung had this test been in existence. Then there was Mason of Bradford, and the notorious Muller, and Lefèvre of Montpellier, and Samson of New Orleans. I could name a score of cases in which it would have been decisive.”

“You seem to be a walking calendar of crime,” said Stamford with a laugh. “You might start a paper on those lines. Call it the ‘Police News of the Past.’”

“Very interesting reading it might be made, too,” remarked Sherlock Holmes.
"We came here on business," said Stamford. "My friend here wants to take diggings; and as you were complaining that you could get no one to go halves with you, I thought that I had better bring you together."

Sherlock Holmes seemed delighted at the idea of sharing his rooms with me. "I have my eye on a suite in Baker Street," he said, "which would suit us down to the ground. You don't mind the smell of strong tobacco, I hope?"

"I always smoke myself," I answered.

"That's good enough. I generally have chemicals about, and occasionally do experiments. Would that annoy you?"

"By no means."

"Let me see — what are my other shortcomings? I get in the dumps at times, and don't open my mouth for days on end. Just let me alone, and I'll soon be right. What have you to confess now?"

"I keep a bull pup," I said, "and I object to rows because my nerves are shaken and I am extremely lazy. I have another set of vices when I'm well, but those are the principal ones at present."

"I think we may consider the thing as settled—that is, if the rooms are agreeable to you."

"When shall we see them?"
“Call for me here at noon tomorrow, and we’ll go together and settle everything,” he answered.

We left him working among his chemicals, and we walked together towards my hotel.

“By the way,” I asked suddenly, stopping and turning upon Stamford, “how the deuce did he know that I had come from Afghanistan?”

My companion smiled an enigmatical smile. “A good many people have wanted to know how he finds things out.”

“Oh! A mystery is it?” I cried. “The proper study of mankind is man, you know.” I strolled on to my hotel.

We met the next day as has been arranged, and inspected the rooms at No. 221B, Baker Street, of which he had spoken at our meeting. They consisted of a couple of comfortable bedrooms and a single large airy sitting-room, cheerfully furnished, and illuminated by two broad windows. The bargain was concluded upon the spot. That very evening I moved my things round from the hotel, and on the following morning Sherlock Holmes followed me. We gradually began to settle down and to accommodate ourselves to our new surroundings.

Holmes was certainly not a difficult man to live with. He was quiet in his ways, and his habits were
regular. It was rare for him to be up after ten at night, and he had invariably breakfasted and gone out before I rose in the morning. Sometimes he spent his day at the chemical laboratory, sometimes in the dissecting rooms, and occasionally in long walks, which appeared to take him into the lowest portions of the city. Nothing could exceed his energy when the working fit was upon him; but now and again a reaction would seize him; and for days on end he would lie upon the sofa in the sitting-room, hardly uttering a word or moving a muscle from morning to night.

As the weeks went by, my interest in him and my curiosity as to his aims in life gradually deepened and increased. The reader may set me down as a hopeless busybody, when I confess how much this man stimulated my curiosity, and how often I endeavoured to break through the reticence which he showed on all that concerned himself. Before pronouncing judgment, however, it should be remembered how objectless was my life, and how little there was to engage my attention.

He was not studying medicine. Yet his zeal for certain studies was remarkable, and within eccentric limits his knowledge was so extraordinarily ample and minute that his observations have fairly astounded me. Surely no man would work so hard or attain such precise information unless he had some definite end in view.
His ignorance was as remarkable as his knowledge. Of contemporary literature, philosophy and politics he appeared to know next to nothing. My surprise reached a climax, however, when I found incidentally that he was ignorant of the Copernican Theory and of the composition of the Solar System.

I was on the point of asking him what that work might be, but something in his manner showed me that the question would be an unwelcome one. I enumerated in my own mind all the various points upon which he had shown me that he was exceptionally well informed. I even took a pencil and jotted them down. I could not help smiling at the document when I had completed it. It ran this way:

**Sherlock Holmes – his limits**

1. Knowledge of Literature. – Nil.
2. " Philosophy. – Nil.
5. " Botany. – Variable.
6. " Geology. – Practical, but limited.
7. " Chemistry. – Profound.
8. " "Anatomy. – Accurate, but unsystematic.
9. " Sensational Literature. – Immense. He appears to know every detail of every horror perpetrated in the century.
10. Plays the violin well.
11. Is an expert singlestick player, boxer, and swordsman.
12. Has a good practical knowledge of British law.

When I had gone so far in my list I threw it into the fire in despair.

During the first week or so, I had begun to think that my companion was as friendless a man as I was to myself. Presently, however, I found that he had many acquaintances, and those in the most different classes of society like Mr. Lestrade and a young girl, Sherlock Holmes used to beg for the use of the sitting-room, and I would retire to my bedroom. He always apologized to me for putting me to this inconvenience. "I have to use this room as a place of business," he said, "and these people are my clients."

Again I had an opportunity of asking him a point-blank question, and again my delicacy prevented me from forcing another man to confide in me.

It was upon the 4th of March, as I have good reason to remember, that I rose somewhat earlier than usual, and found that Sherlock Holmes had not yet finished his breakfast. I picked up a magazine from the table and attempted to while away the time with it. One of the articles had a pencil mark at the heading, and I naturally began to run my eye through it.
Its somewhat ambitious title was “The Book of Life,” and it attempted to show how much an observant man might learn by an accurate and systematic examination of all that came in his way. The reasoning was close and intense, but the deductions appeared to me to be far fetched and exaggerated.

"From a drop of water," said the writer, "a logician could infer the possibility of an Atlantic or a Niagara without having seen or heard of one or the other. So all life is a great chain, the nature of which is known whenever we are shown a single link of it. Like all other arts, the Science of Deduction and Analysis is one which can only be acquired by long and patient study, nor is life long enough to allow any mortal to attain the highest possible perfection in it. Before turning to those moral and mental aspects of the matter which present the greatest difficulties, let the inquirer begin by mastering more elementary problems. Let him, on meeting a fellow mortal, learn at a glance to distinguish the history of the man, and the trade or profession to which he belongs. Such an exercise sharpens the faculties of observation, and teaches one where to look and what to look for.

"What ineffable twaddle!" I cried, slapping the magazine down on the table; "I never read such rubbish in my life."

"What is it?" asked Sherlock Holmes.
"Why, this article," I said, pointing at it, "I see that you have read it since you marked it. I don’t deny that it is smartly written. It irritates me, though."

Holmes remarked calmly, "I wrote it myself. I’m a consulting detective, if you can understand what that is. Here in London we have lots of government detectives and lots of private ones. When these fellows are at fault, they come to me, and I manage to put them on the right scent. They lay all the evidence before me, and I am generally able, by the help of my knowledge of the history of crime, to set them straight."

"But do you mean to say," I said, "that without leaving your room you can unravel some knot which other men can make nothing of, they have seen every detail for themselves?"

"Quite so. I have a kind of intuition that way. Observation with me is second nature. You appeared to be surprised when I told you, on our first meeting, that you had come from Afghanistan."

"You were told, no doubt."

"Nothing of the sort. I knew you came from Afghanistan. From long habit the train of thoughts ran so swiftly through my mind that I arrived at the conclusion. But the whole train of thought did not occupy a second."

"But that is a mistake. Who could have seen it that way?"

"But you were quite right. I have always had a special faculty for such things."
"It is simple enough as you explain it," I said, smiling. "You remind me of Edgar Allan Poe's Dupin. I had no idea that such individuals did exist outside of stories."

I walked over to the window and stood looking out into the busy street. "This fellow may be very clever," I said to myself, "but he is certainly very conceited."

"There are no crimes and no criminals in these days," he said, querulously. "What is the use of having brains in our profession? I know well that I have it in me to make my name famous. No man lives or has ever lived who has brought the same amount of study and of natural talent to the detection of crime which I have done. And what is the result? There is no crime to detect."

I was still annoyed at his bumptious style of conversation. I thought it best to change the topic.

"I wonder what that fellow is looking for?" I asked, pointing to a stalwart, plainly dressed individual who was walking slowly down the other side of the street, looking anxiously at the numbers. He had a large blue envelope in his hand, and was evidently the bearer of a message.

"You mean the retired sergeant of Marines," said Sherlock Holmes.

I thought to myself, "He knows that I cannot verify his guess."
The thought had hardly passed through my mind when the man whom we were watching caught sight of the number on our door, stepped into the room and handed my friend the letter. Here was an opportunity of taking the conceit out of him.

"May I ask, what your trade may be?"
"Commissionaire, sir."
"And you were?"
"A sergeant, sir, Royal Marine Light Infantry, sir. No answer? Right, sir."

He clicked his heels together, raised his hand in salute, and was gone.
The Red-headed League

I had called upon my friend, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, one day in the Autumn of last year, and found him in deep conversation with a very elderly gentleman, with fiery red hair. With an apology for my intrusion, I was about to withdraw, when Holmes pulled me abruptly into the room, and closed the door behind me.

"You could not possibly have come at a better time, my dear Watson," he said cordially.

"This gentleman, Mr. Wilson, has been my partner and helper in many of my most successful cases, and I have no doubt that he will be of the utmost use to me in yours also."

The stout gentleman half rose from his chair, and gave a bob of greeting, with a quick little questioning glance.

"I know, my dear Watson, that you share my love of all that is bizarre."

"Your cases have indeed been of the greatest interest to me," I observed.

"But none the less you must come round to my view, for otherwise, I shall keep piling fact upon fact
on you, until your reason breaks down under them and acknowledges me to be right. Now, Mr. Jabez Wilson here has been good enough to call upon me this morning, and to begin a narrative which promises to be one of the most singular which I have listened to for some time. You have heard me remark previously that the strangest and most unique things are very often connected not with the larger, but with the smaller crimes, and occasionally, indeed, where there is room for doubt whether any positive crime has been committed. As far as I have heard, it is impossible for me to say whether the present case is an instance of crime or not, but the course of events is certainly among the most singular that I have ever listened to. Perhaps, Mr. Wilson, you would have the great kindness to recommence your narrative. I ask you not merely because my friend Dr. Watson has not heard the opening part, but also because the peculiar nature of the story makes me anxious to have every possible detail from your lips.

The client puffed out his chest with an appearance of some little pride, and pulled a dirty and wrinkled newspaper from the inside pocket of his greatcoat. As he glanced down the advertisement column, with his head thrust forward, and the paper flattened out upon his knee. I took a good look at the man. Altogether, look as I would, there was nothing remarkable about the man save his blazing red head, and the expression of extreme chagrin and discontent upon his features.
Mr. Jabez Wilson started up in his chair, with his forefinger upon the paper, but his eyes upon my companion.

"How, in the name of good fortune, did you know all the information about me, Mr. Sherlock Holmes?" he asked. "How did you know, for example, that I did manual labor? I began as a ship's carpenter."

"Your hands, my dear sir. Your right hand is quite a size larger than your left. You have worked with it, and the muscles are more developed."

"And China?"

"The fish which you have tattooed immediately above your right wrist could only have been done in China. I have made a small study of tattoo marks, and have even contributed to the literature of the subject. In addition, I see a Chinese coin hanging from your watch-chain, the matter becomes even more simple."

Mr. Jabez Wilson laughed heavily. "I thought at first you had done something clever, but I see there was nothing in it after all."

"I begin to think, Watson," said Holmes, "that I make a mistake in explaining. Can you not find the advertisement, Mr. Wilson?"

"Yes, I have got it now," he answered, with his
thick, red finger planted half-way down the column. "Here it is. This is what began it all. You just read it for yourself, sir."

I took the paper from him and read as follows:

"TO THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE:

On account of the bequest of the late Ezekiah Hopkins, of Lebanon, Penn., U.S.A., there is now another vacancy open which entitled a member of the League to a salary of four pounds a week for purely nominal services. All red-headed men who are sound in body and mind, and above the age of twenty-one years, are eligible. Apply in person on Monday, at eleven o'clock, to Duncan Ross, at the offices of the League, 7 Pope's Court, Fleet Street."

"What on earth does this mean?" I ejaculated, after I had twice read over the extraordinary announcement.

Holmes chuckled, and wriggled in his chair, as was his habit when in high spirits. "And now, Mr. Wilson, tell us all about yourself, your household, and the effect which this advertisement had upon your fortunes. You will first make a note, Doctor, of the paper and the date."

"It is The Morning Chronicle, of April 27, 1890. Just two months ago."
"Very good. Now, Mr. Wilson?"

"Well, it is just as I have been telling you, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said Jabez Wilson, mopping his forehead, "I have a small pawnbroker's business at Coburg Square, near the City. It's not a very large affair. I used to be able to keep two assistants, but now I only keep one but that he is willing to come for half wages, so as to learn the business."

"What is the name of this obliging youth?" asked Sherlock Holmes.

"His name is Vincent Spaulding. I know very well that he could better himself, and earn twice what I am able to give him. But after all, if he is satisfied, why should I put ideas in his head?"

"I don't know that your assistant is not as remarkable as your advertisement."

"Oh, he has his faults, too," said Mr. Wilson.

"He's still with you, I presume?"

"Yes, sir. He and a girl of fourteen, who does a bit of simple cooking, and keeps the place clean—that's all I have in the house, for I am a widower, and never had any family. That advertisement... Spaulding came down into the office just this day eight weeks with this very paper in his hand, and he says:"

'I wish to the Lord, Mr. Wilson, that I was a redheaded man.'

"Why that?" I ask.
'Why,' says he, 'here's another vacancy on the League of the Red-headed Men. It's worth quite a little fortune to any man who gets it, and I understand that there are more vacancies than there are men.'

'You see, Mr. Holmes, I am a very stay-at-home man, and, as my business came to me instead of my having to go to it.'

'Have you ever heard of the League of the Red-headed Men?' he asked, with his eyes open.

'Never.'

'Why, I wonder at that, for you are eligible yourself for one of the vacancies.'

'Well, you can easily think that that made me prick up my ears, for the business has not been ever good for some years, and an extra couple of hundred would have been very handy.'

'But,' said I, 'there would be millions of red-headed men who would apply.'

'Not so many as you might think,' he answered. 'You see, it is really confined to Londoners, and to grown men.'

As you may see for yourselves, that my hair is full of a very full and rich tint, so that it seemed to me that I stood as good a chance. Vincent Spaulding seemed to know so much about it, so I just ordered him to put up the shutters for the day, and to come right away with me.
I never hope to see such a sight as that again, Mr. Holmes. From north, south, east, and west every man who had a shade of red in his hair had tramped into the City to answer the advertisement. Fleet Street was choked with red-headed folk. Every shade of color they were — straw, lemon, orange, brick, Irish-setter, liver, clay; but not many had the real vivid flame-colored tint. Upon the stair, some going up in hope, and some coming back dejected; but we wedged in as well as we could, and soon found ourselves in the office."

"Your experience has been a most entertaining one," remarked Holmes, as his client paused and refreshed his memory.

"There was nothing in the office but a couple of wooden chairs and a deal table, behind which sat a small man, with a head that was even redder than mine. When our turn came, the little man was more favorable to me than to any of the others, and he closed the door as we entered, so that he might have a private word with us.

'This is Mr. Jabez Wilson,' said my assistant, 'and he is willing to fill a vacancy in the League.'

'And he is admirably suited for it,' the other answered. 'He has every requirement. I cannot recall when I have seen anything so fine.'
He took a step backwards, cocked his head on one side, and gazed at my hair until I felt quite bashful. Then suddenly he plunged forward, wrung my hand, and congratulated me warmly on my success.

He seized my hair in both his hands, and tugged until I yelled with the pain. He stepped over to the window, and shouted through it at the top of his voice that the vacancy was filled. A groan of disappointment came up from below, and the folk all trooped away in different directions, until there was not a red head to be seen except my own and that of the manager.

'My name,' said he, 'is Mr. Duncan Ross, and I am myself one of the pensioners upon the fund left by our noble benefactor. Are you a married man, Mr. Wilson? Have you a family?'

I answered that I had not. His face fell immediately.

'Dear me! The fund was, of course, for the propagation and spread of the red-heads. It is unfortunate that you should be a bachelor.'

My face lengthened at this, Mr. Holmes, for I thought that I was not to have the vacancy after all; but after thinking it over for a few minutes, he said that it would be all right.
'When shall you be able to enter upon your new duties?'
'Ten to two.'
'That would suit me very well, said I. 'And the pay?'
'Is four pounds a week.'
'And the work?'
'Is purely nominal. You have to be in the office, or at least in the building, the whole time.'
'And the work?'
'Is to copy out the Encyclopaedia Britannica. There is the first volume of it in that press. You must find your own ink, pens, and blotting-paper, but we provide this table and chair. Will you be ready tomorrow?'
'Certainly,' I answered.
'Then, good-bye, Mr. Jabez Wilson.'

Well, I thought over the matter all day, and by evening I was in low spirits again. Vincent Spaulding did what he could to cheer me up. However, in the morning I determined to have a look at it anyhow.
Well, to my surprise and delight everything was as right as possible. The table was set out ready for me, and Mr. Duncan Ross was there to see that I got fairly to work. He started me off upon the letter A, and then he left me; but he would drop in from time to time to see that all was right with me.

This went on day after day. It was the same next week, and the same the week after. Every morning I was there at ten, and every afternoon I left at two. By degrees Mr. Duncan Ross took to coming in only once of a morning, and then, after a time, he did not come in at all. Still, of course, I never dared to leave the room for an instant.

Eight weeks passed away like this, and I had written about Abbots, and Archery, and Armor, and Architecture, and Attica. Then suddenly the whole business came to an end.

"To an end!"

"Yes, sir. And no later than this morning. I went to my work as usual at ten o'clock, but the door was shut and locked, with a little square of cardboard hammered on to the middle of the panel with a tack. Here it is, and you can read for yourself."

He held up a piece of white cardboard, about the size of a sheet of note-paper. It read in this fashion:

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE IS DISSOLVED
Oct. 9, 1890
Sherlock Holmes and I surveyed this curt announcement and we both burst out into a roar of laughter. "I cannot see that there is anything very funny," cried our client. "If you can do nothing better than to laugh at me, I can go elsewhere."

"No, no," cried Holmes, shoving him back into the chair from which he had half risen. "I really wouldn't miss your case for the world. But there is something just a little funny about it. Pray what steps did you take when you found the card upon the door?"

"I was staggered, sir. I did not know what to do. I went to the landlord living on the ground floor, and I asked him if he could tell me what had become of the Red-headed League. He said that he had never heard of any such body. Then I asked him who Mr. Duncan Ross was."

"Oh, said he, 'his name was William Morris. He was a solicitor, and was using my room as a temporary convenience until his new premises were ready. He moved out yesterday.'"

"Where could I find him?"

"Oh, at his new offices. He did tell me the address. Yes, 17 King Edward Street, near St. Paul's."
When I got to that address, no one in it had ever heard of either Mr. William Morris, or Mr. Duncan Ross."

"And what did you do then?" asked Holmes.

"I did not wish to lose such a place without a struggle, so, as I heard that you were good enough to give advice to poor folk who were in need of it, I came right away to you."

"And you did very wisely," said Holmes. "Your case is an exceedingly remarkable one, and I shall be happy to look into it. From what you have told me I think that it is possible that graver issues hang from it than might at first appear."

"Grave enough!" said Mr. Jabez Wilson. "Why, I have lost four pounds a week."

"As far as you are personally concerned," remarked Holmes, "you are, as I understand, richer by some thirty pounds, to say nothing of the minute knowledge which you have gained on every subject which comes under the letter A. You have lost nothing by them."

"No, sir. But I want to find out about them, and who they are, and what their object was in playing the prank — if it was a prank — upon me. It was a pretty expensive joke for them, for it cost them two-and-thirty pounds."
"We shall endeavour to clear up these points for you. And, first, one or two questions, Mr. Wilson. This assistant of yours who first called your attention to the advertisement — how long had he been with you?"

"About a month then."

"How did he come?"

"In answer to an advertisement."

"Was he the only applicant?"

"No, I had a dozen."

"Why did you pick him?"

"Because he was handy, and would come cheap."

"What is he like, this Vincent Spaulding?"

"Small, stout-built. Has a white splash of acid upon his forehead."

Holmes sat up in his chair in considerable excitement.

"Have you ever observed that his ears are pierced for ear-rings?"

"Yes, sir. He told me that a gipsy had done it for him when he was a lad."

"Hum!" said Holmes, sinking back in deep thought. "He is still with you?"
"Oh, yes, sir; I have only just left him."

"And has your business been attended to in your absence?"

"Nothing to complain of, sir."

"That will do, Mr. Wilson. I shall be happy to give you an opinion upon the subject in the course of a day or two. Today is Saturday, and I hope that by Monday we may come to a conclusion."

"Well, Watson," said Holmes, when our visitor had left us, "what do you make of it all?"

"I make nothing of it," I answered, frankly. "It is a most mysterious business."

"As a rule," said Holmes, "the more bizarre a thing is the less mysterious it proves to be."

"What are you going to do then?" I asked.

"To smoke," he answered, "and I beg that you won't speak to me for fifty minutes. He curled himself up in his chair and there he sat with his eyes closed and his black clay pipe. I had come to the conclusion that he had dropped asleep, and indeed was nodding myself, when he suddenly sprang out of his chair with the gesture of a man who had made up his mind.
“Sarasate plays at the St. James’ Hall this afternoon,” he remarked. “What do you think, Watson? Could your patients spare you for a few hours?”

“I have nothing to do today. My practice is never very absorbing.”

“Then put on your hat, and come.”

A short walk took us to Saxe-Coburg Square, the scene of the singular story which we had listened to in the morning. A brown board with “JABEZ WILSON” in white letters, upon a corner house, announced the place where our red-headed client carried on his business. Sherlock Holmes stopped in front of it with his head on one side and looked it all over. Then he walked slowly up the street and then down again to the corner, still looking keenly at the houses. Finally he returned to the pawnbroker’s and went up to the door and knocked. It was instantly opened by a young fellow, who asked him to step in.

“Thank you,” said Holmes, “I only wished to ask you how you would go from here to the Strand.”

“Third right, fourth left,” answered the assistant promptly, closing the door.

“Smart fellow, that,” observed Holmes as we walked away. “He is, in my judgement, the fourth
smartest man in London, and for daring I am not sure that he has not a claim to be third."

"Evidently," said I, "Mr. Wilson's assistant counts for a good deal in this mystery of the Redheaded League. I am sure that you inquired your way merely in order that you might see him."

"Not him."

"What then?"

"The knees of his trousers. My dear Doctor, this is a time for observation, not for talk. We are spies in an enemy's country. We know something of Saxe-Coburg Square. Let us now explore the paths which lie behind it."

The road in which we found ourselves as we turned round the corner from Saxe-Coburg Square presented as great a contrast to it as the front of a picture does to the back. It was one of the main arteries which convey the traffic of the City to the north and west. The roadway was blocked with the immense stream of commerce flowing in a double tide inwards and outwards, while the footpaths were black with the hurrying swarm of pedestrians.

"Let me see," said Holmes, standing at the corner, and glancing along the line, "I should like just to remember the order of the houses here. It is a hobby of mine to have an exact knowledge of London."

أنت رجل في لندن إن لم يكن الثالث.
أجبت: من الواضح أن معاون السيد ويلسون دورا في تجربة الرؤوس الحمراء. أنا واثق من أنك تقدمت للنهاية.
"ليس هو.
ماذا إذا؟
ركبت سيروفا، ركبت سيروفا، أي مدام سارو في أرض العدو. ودبينا بعض المعلوما عن ميدان ساكس كوبورغ; فاستنفشت الآن المسارات التي يخفقها.
إفعطنا عند الزاوية في ميدان ساكس كوبورغ فوصلنا إلى طريق مختلفا كلا رجلا للنهر المضيء عن قطاع. كانت طريقنا أساسية تخرج منها حركة وسط المدينة شمالا وغربا. وقد اكتشفت الطريق بدقه الحركة التجارية ذهبا وإليها بالاتجاهين، وبدأت قارعة الطريق سوداء لكثره المشاة عليها.
قال هولمز وهو واقف عند الزاوية يتأمل طول الخط: دعني أرى جيدا. أريد أن أحفظ تسلسل المنازل هنا. من هو يعرف أن أحفظ لننذ عن ظهر قلب.

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Once we left St. James' Hall, he said, "You want to go home, no doubt, Doctor."

"Yes, it would be as well."

"And I have some business to do which will take some hours. This business at Coburg Square is serious."

"Why serious?"

"A considerable crime is in contemplation. I have every reason to believe that we shall be in time to stop it. But today being Saturday rather complicates matters. I shall want your help tonight."

"At what time?"

"Ten."

"I shall be at Baker Street at ten."

"Very well. And, I say, Doctor! There may be some little danger, so kindly put your army revolver in your pocket." He waved his hand and disappeared in an instant among the crowd.

I was always oppressed with a sense of my own stupidity in my dealings with Sherlock Holmes. Here I had heard what he had heard, I had seen what he had seen, and yet from his words it was evident that he saw clearly not only what had happened, but what was about to happen, while to me the whole business was still confused and grotesque.
What was this nocturnal expedition, and why should I go armed? Where were we going, and what were we to do? I had the hint from Holmes that this smooth-faced assistant was a formidable man—a man who might play a deep game. I tried to puzzle it out, but gave it up in despair, and set the matter aside until night should bring an explanation.

It was a quarter past nine when I started from home and made my way across the Park, and so through Oxford Street to Baker Street. On entering his room, I found Holmes in animated conversation with two men, one of whom I recognized as Peter Jones, the official police agent; while the other was a long, thin, sad-faced man.

"Ha! Our party is complete," said Holmes. "Watson, I think you know Mr. Jones, of Scotland Yard? Let me introduce you to Mr. Merryweather, who is to be our companion in tonight's adventure."

Sherlock Holmes was not very communicative during the long drive, and lay back in the cab humming the tunes which he had heard in the afternoon. We rattled through an endless labyrinth of gas-lit streets until we emerged into Farrington Street.

"We are close there now," my friend remarked. "This fellow Merryweather is a bank director and personally interested in the matter. I thought it was..."
well to have Jones with us also. Here we are. They are waiting for us."

We had reached the same crowded thoroughfare in which we had found ourselves in the morning. Our cabs were dismissed, and, following the guidance of Mr. Merryweather, we passed down a narrow passage, and through a side door, which he opened for us. Within there was a small corridor, which ended in a very massive gate. This was opened and terminated at another formidable gate. Mr. Merryweather stopped to light a lantern, and then conducted us down a dark, earth-smelling passage, and so, after opening a third door, into a huge vault or cellar, which was piled round with crates and massive boxes.

"I must really ask you to be a little more quiet," said Holmes to Merryweather severely. Might I beg that you would have the goodness to sit down upon one of those boxes, and not to interfere?"

The solemn Mr. Merryweather perched himself upon a crate, with a very injured expression upon his face, while Holmes fell upon his knees upon the floor.

"We have at least an hour before us," he remarked, "for they can hardly take any steps until the good pawnbroker is safely in bed. Then they will not lose a minute, for the sooner they do their work the longer time they will have for their escape. We
are at present, Doctor — as no doubt you have divined — in the cellar of the City branch of one of the principal London banks. Mr. Merryweather is the chairman of directors, and he will explain to you that there are reasons why the more daring criminals of London should take a considerable interest in this cellar at present."

"It is our French gold," whispered the director. "We have had several warnings that an attempt might be made upon it."

"Your French gold?"

"Yes. We had occasion some months ago to strengthen our resources, and borrowed, for that purpose, thirty thousand napoleons from the Bank of France. It has become known that we have never had the occasion to unpack the money, and that is still lying in our cellar."

Holmes said, "Now it is time that we arranged our little plans. I expect that within an hour matters will come to a head. In the meantime, Mr. Merryweather, we must put the screen over that dark lantern."

"And sit in the dark?"

"I am afraid so. I see that the enemy's preparations have gone so far that we cannot risk the presence of a light. And, first of all, we must choose our positions. There are daring men, and, though we shall take them at a disadvantage they may do us..."
some harm, unless we are careful. I shall stand behind this crate, and you conceal yourself behind those. Then, when I flash a light upon them, close in swiftly. If they fire, Watson, have no compunction about shooting them down."

Holmes shot the slide across the front of his lantern, and left us in pitch darkness — such an absolute darkness as I have never before experienced.

"They have but one retreat," whispered Holmes. "That is back through the house into Saxe-Coburg Square. I hope that you have done what I asked you, Jones?"

"I have an inspector and two officers waiting at the front door."

"Then we have stopped all the holes. And now we must be silent and wait."

What a time it seemed! From comparing notes afterwards it was but an hour and a quarter, yet it appeared to me that the night must have almost gone, and the dawn be breaking above us. My limbs were weary and stiff, for I feared to change my position, yet my nerves were worked up to the highest pitch of tension, and my hearing was so acute that I could hear the gentle breathing of my companions. Suddenly my eyes caught the glint of a light.
At first it was but a lurid spark upon the stone pavement. Then it lengthened out until it became a yellow line, and then, without any warning or sound, a gash seemed to open and a hand appeared, a white, almost womanly hand in the center of the little area of light. It was withdrawn as suddenly as it appeared, and all was dark again save the single lurid spark, which marked a chink between the stones.

Its disappearance, however, was but momentary. There peeped a clean-cut, boyish face. In another instant he stood at the side of the hole, and was hauling after him a companion, lithe and small like himself, with a pale face and a shock of very red hair.

"It's all clear," he whispered. "Have you the chisel, and the bags? Great Scott! Jump, Archie, jump, and I'll swing for it!"

Sherlock Holmes had sprung out and seized the intruder by the collar. The other dived down the hole. The light flashed upon the barrel of a revolver, but Holmes' hunting-crop came down on the man's wrist, and the pistol clinked upon the stone floor.

"It's no use, John Clay," said Holmes blandly; "you have no chance at all."

"So I see," the other answered with the utmost coolness. "I fancy that my pal is all right."

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"There are three men waiting for him at the door," said Holmes.

"Oh, indeed. You seem to have done the thing very completely. I must compliment you."

"And I you," Holmes answered. "Your red-headed idea was very new and effective."

"You'll see your pal again presently," said Jones. "Just hold out a while while I fix the derbies."

"I beg that you will not touch me with your filthy hands," remarked our prisoner, as the handcuffs clattered upon his wrists. "You may not be aware that I have royal blood in my veins. Have the goodness also when you address me always to say 'sir' and 'please.'"

"All right," said Jones, with a stare and a snigger. "Well, would you please, sir, march upstairs, where we can get a cab to carry your highness to the police station."

"That is better," said John Clay serenely.

"Really, Mr. Holmes," said Mr. Merryweather, as we followed them from the cellar, "I do not know how the bank can thank you or repay you. There is no doubt that you have detected and defeated in the most complete manner one of the most determined attempts at bank robbery that have ever come within my experience."
"I have had one or two little scores of my own to settle with Mr. John Clay," said Holmes. "I have been at some small expense over this matter, which I shall expect the bank to refund, but beyond that I am amply repaid by having had an experience which is in many ways unique, and by hearing the very remarkable narrative of the Red-headed League."

"You see, Watson," he explained in the early hours of the morning, as we sat over breakfast in Baker Street, "it was perfectly obvious from the first that the only possible object of this rather fantastic business of the advertisement of the League, and the copying of the Encyclopaedia, must be to get this not over-bright pawnbroker out of the way for a number of hours every day. It was a curious way of managing it, but really it would be difficult to suggest a better. The method was no doubt suggested to Clay's ingenious mind by the color of his accomplice's hair. The four pounds a week was a lure which must draw him, and what was it to them, who were playing for thousands? From the time that I heard of the assistant having come for half-wages, it was obvious to me that he had some strong motive for securing the situation."

"But how could you guess what the motive was?"

"Had their been women in the house, I should have suspected a more vulgar intrigue. That,
however, was out of the question. The man's business was a small one, and there was nothing in his house which could account for such elaborate preparations and such an expenditure as they were at. It must then be something out of the house. What could it be? I could think of nothing save that he was running a tunnel to some other building when I saw it at the door.

His knees were what I wished to see. You must yourself have remarked how worn, wrinkled and stained they were. They spoke of those hours of burrowing. The only remaining point was what they were burrowing for. I walked round the corner, saw that the City and Suburban Bank abutted on our friend's premises, and felt that I had solved my problem.

"And how could you tell that they would make their attempt tonight?" I asked.

"Well, when they closed their League offices that was a sign that they cared no longer about Mr. Jabez Wilson's presence; in other words, that they had completed their tunnel. Saturday would suit them better than any other day, as it would give them two days for their escape. For all these reasons I expected them to come tonight."

"You reasoned it out beautifully," I exclaimed in unfeigned admiration. "It is so long a chain, and yet every link rings true."
"It saved me from ennui," he answered.

"And you are a benefactor of the race," said I.

"He shrugged his shoulders. "Well, perhaps, after all, it is of some little use," he remarked, 'L'homme c'est rien - l'oeuvre c'est tout,' as Gustave Flaubert wrote to George Sand."

أجاب: "لقد أبعد هذا عنني شبح المال.

"كما أنك محسن للنسل البشري أيضا.

هذ كفتيه مجيبة" ربما كنت ذا فائدة ما فالإنسان لا يواري

شيئا. إنما عمله هو كل شيء على حد قول غوستاف فلوير

وجورج ساند."
A Scandal in Bohemia

To Sherlock Holmes she is always the woman. I have seldom heard him mention her under any other name. In his eyes she eclipses and predominates the whole of her gender. It was not that he felt any emotion akin to love for Irene Adler. All emotions, and that one particularly, were abhorrent to his cold, precise, but admirably balanced mind. He was, I take it, the most perfect reasoning and observing machine that the world has seen: but, as a lover, he would have placed himself in a false position. He never spoke of the softer passions. For the trained reasoner to admit such intrusions into his own delicate and finely adjusted temperament was to introduce a distracting factor which might throw a doubt upon all his mental results. And yet there was but one woman to him, and that woman was the late Irene Adler, of dubious and questionable memory.

I had seen little of Holmes lately. My marriage had drifted us away from each other. Holmes remained in our lodgings in Baker Street, buried among his old books. He was still, as ever, deeply attracted by the study of crime, and occupied his immense faculties and extraordinary powers of observation in following out those clues, and
clearing up those mysteries, which had been abandoned as hopeless by the official police. From time to time I heard some vague account of his doings. Beyond these signs of his activity, I knew little of my former friend and companion.

One night — it was on the 20th of March, 1888 — my way led me through Baker Street. As I passed the well-remembered door, I was seized with a keen desire to see Holmes again, and to know how he was employing his extraordinary powers. I looked up, I saw him pacing the room swiftly, his hands clasped behind him. To me, who knew his every mood and habit, his attitude and manner told their own story. He was at work again. He was hot upon the scent of some new problem. I rang the bell, and was shown up to the chamber which had formerly been in part my own.

His manner was not effusive. It seldom was; but he was glad, I think, to see me. With hardly a word spoken, but with a kindly eye, he waved me to an armchair. Then he stood before the fire, and looked me over in his singular introspective fashion.

"Wedlock suits you," he remarked. "I think, Watson, that you have put on seven and a half pounds since I saw you."

"Seven," I answered.

"Indeed, I should have thought a little more. And in practice again, I observe."
“Then, how do you know?”

“I see it, I deduce it. How do I know that you have been getting yourself very wet lately, and that you have a most clumsy and careless servant girl?”

“My dear Holmes,” said I, “this is too much. I can’t imagine how you deduce it.”

He chuckled to himself and rubbed his long nervous hands together and explained his process of deduction.

I could not help laughing at the ease with which he explained his process of deduction. “When I hear you give your reasons,” I remarked, “the thing always appears to me to be so ridiculously simple that I could easily do it myself, though at each successive instance of your reasoning I am baffled, until you explain your process. And yet I believe that my eyes are as good as yours.”

“Quite so,” he answered, lighting a cigarette, and throwing himself down into an armchair. “You see, but you do not observe. The distinction is clear. For example, you have frequently seen the steps which lead up from the hall to this room.”

“Frequently.”

“How often?”

“Well, some hundreds of times.”

“Then how many are there?”

“How many! I don’t know.”
"Quite so! You have not observed. And yet you have seen. That is just my point. By the way, since you are interested in these little problems you may be interested in this."

He threw over a sheaf of thick pink-tinted notepaper which had been lying open upon the table. "It came by the last post," said he. "Read it aloud."

The note was undated, and without either signature or address.

There will call upon you tonight, at a quarter to eight o'clock [it said], a gentleman who desires to consult you upon a matter of the very deepest moment. Your recent services to one of the Royal Houses of Europe have shown that you are one who may be safely be trusted with matters which are of an importance which can hardly be exaggerated. This account of you we have from all quarters received. Be in your chamber then at that hour, and do not take it amiss if your visitor wears a mask.

"This is indeed a mystery," I remarked. "What do you imagine that it means?"

"I have no data yet. It's a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. What do you deduce from it?"

I carefully examined the writing, and the paper upon which it was written.

"The man who wrote was presumably well-to-
do," I remarked, endeavouring to imitate my companion's processes. "Such a paper could not be bought under half a crown a packet. It is peculiarly strong and stiff."

"Peculiar — that is the very word," said Holmes. "It is not an English paper at all. Hold it up to the light."

I did so, and saw a large 'E' with a small 'g', a 'P', and a large 'G' with a small 't' woven into the texture of the paper.

"What do you make of that?" asked Holmes.

"The name of the maker, no doubt; or his monogram, rather."

"Not at all. The 'G' with the small 't' stands for 'Gesellschaft,' which is the German for 'Company.' 'P', of course, stands for 'Papier.' Now for the 'E'."

He took down a heavy brown volume from his shelves. "Here we are, Egria. It is in a German-speaking country — in Bohemia. 'Remarkable as being the scene of the death of Wallenstein, and for its numerous glass factories and paper mills.' Ha, ha, my boy, what do you make of that?"

"The paper was made in Bohemia," I said.

"Precisely. And the man who wrote the note is a German as shown in the peculiar construction of the sentence."
As he spoke there was a sharp sound of horses' hoofs and grating wheels against the kerb, followed by a sharp pull at the bell.

"I think I had better go, Holmes."

"Not a bit, Doctor. Stay where you are. And this promises to be interesting. It would be a pity to miss it."

"But your client..."

"Never mind him. I may want your help, and so may he. Here he comes. Sit down in that armchair, Doctor, and give us your best attention."

A slow and heavy step, which had been heard upon the stairs and in the passage, paused immediately outside the door. Then there was a loud and authoritative tap.

"Come in!" said Holmes.

A man entered who could hardly have been less than six feet six inches in height, with the chest and limbs of Hercules. His dress was rich with a richness which would, in England, be looked upon as akin to bad taste. Heavy bands were slashed across the sleeves and fronts of his coat, while the deep blue cloak which was thrown over his shoulders was lined with flame-colored silk. He carried a broad-brimmed hat in his hand, while he wore across the upper part of his face a black vizard mask.
“You had my note?” he asked, with a deep, harsh voice and a strongly marked German accent. “I told you that I would call."

He looked from one to the other of us, as if uncertain which to address.

“Pray take a seat,” said Holmes. “This is my friend and colleague, Dr. Watson, who is occasionally good enough to help me in my cases. Whom have I the honor to address?”

“You may address me as the Count von Kramm, a Bohemian nobleman. I understand that this gentleman, your friend, is a man of honor and discretion, whom I may trust with a matter of the most extreme importance. If not, I should much prefer to communicate with you alone.”

I rose to go, but Holmes caught me by the wrist and pushed me back into my chair.

“It is both, or none,” said he. “You may say before this gentleman anything which you may say to me.”

“Then I must begin,” said he, “by binding you both to absolute secrecy for two years; at the end of that time the matter will be of no importance. At present it is not too much to say that it is of such weight that it may have an influence upon European history.”

“I promise,” said Holmes.

“And I.”
"You will excuse this mask," continued our strange visitor. "The august person who employs me wishes his agent to be unknown to you, and I may confess at once that the title by which I have just called myself is not exactly my own."

"I was aware of it," said Holmes dryly.

"The circumstances are of great delicacy, and every precaution has to be taken to quench what might grow to be an immense scandal and seriously compromise one of the reigning families of Europe. To speak plainly, the matter implicates the great House of Ormstein, hereditary kings of Bohemia."

"I was also aware of that," murmured Holmes.

Holmes slowly reopened his eyes, and looked impatiently at his gigantic client.

"If your Majesty would condescend to state your case," he remarked, "I should be better able to advise you."

The man sprang from his chair and tore the mask from his face and hurled it upon the ground. "You are right," he cried. "I am the King. Why should I attempt to conceal it?"

"Why, indeed?" murmured Holmes. "Your Majesty had not spoken before I was aware that I was addressing Wilhelm Gottschick Sigismund von Ormstein, Grand Duke of Cassel-Falstein, and hereditary King of Bohemia."
"But you can understand that I am not accustomed to doing such business in my own person. Yet the matter was so delicate that I have come *incognito* from Prague for the purpose of consulting you."

"Then, pray consult," said Holmes, shutting his eyes once more.

"The facts are briefly these: Some five years ago, during a lengthy visit to Warsaw, I made the acquaintance of the well-known adventuress Irene Adler. The name is no doubt familiar to you."

"Kindly look her up in my index, Doctor," murmured Holmes, without opening his eyes.

For many years he had adopted a system of docketing all paragraphs concerning men and things.

"Let me see," said Holmes. "Hum! Born in New Jersey in the year 1858. Contralto – hum! La Scala, hum! Prima donna Imperial Opera of Warsaw – Yes! Retired from operatic stage – ha! Living in London – quite so! Your Majesty, as I understand, became entangled with this young person, wrote her some compromising letters, and is now desirous of getting those letters back."

"Precisely so. But how..."

"Was there a secret marriage?"

"None."
No legal papers or certificates?"

"None."

"Then I fail to follow your Majesty. If this young person should produce her letters for blackmailing or other purposes, how is she to prove their authenticity?"

"There is the writing."

"Pooh, pooh! Forgery."

"My private note-paper."

"Stolen."

"My own seal."

"Imitated."

"My photograph."

"Bought."

"We were both in the photograph."

"Oh, dear! That is very bad! Your Majesty has indeed committed an indiscretion."

"I was mad – insane."

"You have compromised yourself seriously."

"I was only Crown Prince then. I was young. I am but thirty now."
"It must be recovered."
"We have tried and failed."

"Your Majesty must pay. It must be bought."
"She will not sell."
"Stolen, then."
"Five attempts have been made. There has been no result."

Holmes laughed. "It is quite a pretty little problem," said he.

"But a very serious one to me," returned the King, reproachfully.

"Very, indeed. And what does she propose to do with the photograph?"
"To ruin me."
"But how?"
"I am about to be married."
"So I have heard."

"To Clotilde Lothman von Saxe-Meningen, second daughter of the King of Scandinavia. You may know the strict principles of her family."

"And Irene Adler?"

"Threatens to send them the photograph. She has the face of the most beautiful of women, and the mind of the most resolute of men."
"You are sure that she has not sent it yet?"

"I am sure."

"And why?"

"Because she has said that she would send it on the day when the betrothal was publicly proclaimed. That will be next Monday."

"Oh, then, we have three days yet," said Holmes. "I shall drop you a line to let you know how we progress."

"Pray do so. I shall be all anxiety."

"Then, as to money?"

"You have carte blanche."

"Absolutely?"

"I tell you that I would give one of the provinces of my kingdom to have that photograph."

"And for present expenses?"

The King took a heavy chamois leather bag from under his cloak, and laid it on the table.

"There are three hundred pounds in gold, and seven hundred in notes," he said.

Holmes scribbled a receipt upon a sheet of his notebook, and handed it to him.

"And mademoiselle's address?" he asked.

"Is Briony Lodge, Serpentine Avenue, St. John's Wood."
"Then, good night, Your Majesty. And good night, Watson," he added, as the wheels of the Royal brougham rolled down the street. "If you will be good enough to call tomorrow afternoon, at three o'clock, I should like to chat this little matter over with you."

At three o'clock precisely I was at Baker Street, but Holmes had not yet returned. I was already deeply interested in his inquiry. The nature of the case and the exalted station of his client gave it a character of its own. Indeed, apart from the nature of the investigation which my friend had on hand, there was something in his masterly grasp of a situation, and his keen, incisive reasoning, which made it a pleasure to me to study his system of work, and to follow the quick, subtle methods by which he disentangled the most inextricable mysteries.

It was close upon four before the door opened and he walked into the room. Putting his hands into his pockets, he stretched out his legs in front of the fire, and laughed heartily for some minutes.

"What is it?"

"It's quite too funny. I am sure you could never guess how I employed my morning, or what I ended by doing."

"I can't imagine. I suppose that you have been watching the habits, and perhaps the house, of Miss Irene Adler."
“Quite so. I found Briony Lodge. It is a bijou villa, with a garden at the back, but built out in front right up to the road, two stories. Chubby lock to the door. Large sitting-room on the right side, well furnished, with long windows almost to the floor. I walked round it and examined it closely from every point of view, but without noting anything else of interest.”

“And what of Irene Adler?” I asked.

“Oh, she has turned all the men’s heads. She is the daintiest thing under a bonnet on this planet. She lives quietly, sings at concerts, drives out at five every day, and returns at seven sharp for dinner. Seldom goes out at other times, except when she sings. Has only one male visitor, but a good deal of him. He is dark, handsome, and dashing; never calls less than once a day, and often twice. He is a Mr. Godfrey Norton. This Godfrey Norton was evidently an important factor in the matter. He was a lawyer. What was the relation between them, and what was the object of his repeated visits? Was she his client, his friend, or his mistress? If the former, she has probably transferred the photograph to his keeping. On the issue of this question depended whether I should continue my work. I fear that I bore you with these details, but I have to let you see my little difficulties, if you are to understand the situation.”

“I am following you closely,” I answered.
I was still balancing the matter in my mind when a hansom cab and a gentleman sprang out. He was a remarkably handsome man. He was in the house about half an hour, and I could catch glimpses of him, in the windows of the sitting-room, pacing up and down, talking excitedly and waving his arms. Of her I could see nothing. As he stepped up to the cab, he shouted, 'Drive like the devil.' Away they went, and I was just wondering whether I should not do well to follow them I only caught a glimpse of her at the moment, but she was a lovely woman, with a face that a man might die for. My cabby drove fast. I don't think I ever drove faster. I paid the man and hurried into the church. There was no soul there save the two whom I had followed, and a surpliced clergyman. They were all three standing in a knot in front of the altar. Suddenly, to my surprise, the three at the altar faced round to me, and Godfrey Norton came running as hard as he could towards me.

'Thank God!' he cried. 'You'll do. Come! Come!'

'What then?' I asked.

'Come man, come, only three minutes, or it won't be legal.'

I was half dragged up to the altar, and before I knew where I was, I found myself mumbling responses which were whispered in my ear, and vouching for things of which I knew nothing, and...
generally assisting in the secure tying up of Irene
Adler, spinster, to Godfrey Norton, bachelor.

"This is a very unexpected turn of affairs," said I;
"and what then?"

"Well, I found my plans very seriously menaced.
It looked as if the pair might take an immediate
departure, and so necessitate very prompt and
energetic measures on my part. At the church door,
however, they separated. 'I shall drive out in the Park
at five as usual,' she said as she left him. I heard no
more. They drove away in different directions, and I
went off to make my own arrangements."

"Which are?"
"Doctor, I shall want your cooperation."
"I shall be delighted."
"You don't mind breaking the law?"
"Not in the least."
"Nor running a chance of arrest?"
"Not in a good cause."
"Oh, the cause is excellent!"
"Then I am your man."
"I was sure that I might rely on you. We must be
at Biony Lodge at seven to meet her."
"And what then?"
"You must leave that to me. I have already arranged what is to occur. There is only one point on which I must insist. You must not interfere, come what may. You understand?"

"I am to be neutral?"

"To do nothing whatever. I will end in my being conveyed into the house. Four or five minutes afterwards the sitting-room window will open. You are to station yourself close to that open window."

"Yes."

"You are to watch me, for I will be visible to you."

"Yes."

"And when I raise my hand – so – you will throw into the room what I give you to throw, and will, at the same time, raise the cry of fire. You quite follow me?"

"Entirely."

"That is excellent."

He disappeared into his bedroom, and returned in a few minutes. The stage lost a fine actor, even as science lost an acute reasoner, when he became a specialist in crime.

It was a quarter past six when we left Baker Street. It was already dusk, and the lamps were just being lighted. The house was just such as I had pictured from Sherlock Holmes' succinct
description, but the locality appeared to be less private than I expected.

"You see," remarked Holmes, as we paced to and fro in front of the house, "this marriage rather simplifies matters. The photograph becomes a double-edged weapon now. Now the question is – Where are we to find the photograph?"

"Where, indeed?"

"It is most unlikely that she carries it about with her."

"Where?"

"Her banker or her lawyer. Women are naturally secretive, and they like to do their own secreting. Why should she hand it over to anyone else? Remember that she had resolved to use it within a few days. It must be where she can lay her hands upon it. It must be in her own house."

"But it has twice been burgled."

"Pshaw! They did not know how to look."

"But how will you look?"

"I will not look."

"What then?"

"I will get her to show me."

"But she will refuse."
"She will not be able to. But I hear the rumble of wheels. It is her carriage. Now carry out my orders to the letter."

As he spoke, the gleam of the sidelights of a carriage came round the curve of the avenue. As it pulled up a fierce quarrel broke out. Holmes dashed into the crowd to protect the lady; but just as he reached her, he gave a cry and dropped to the ground, with the blood running freely down his face. Irene Adler, as I will still call her, had hurried up the steps; but she stood at the top with her superb figure outlined against the lights of the hall, looking back into the street.

"Is the poor gentleman much hurt?" she asked.

"He is dead," cried several voices.

"No, no, there's life in him," shouted another. "But he'll be gone before you can get him to hospital."

"He's a brave fellow," said a woman. "They would have had the lady's purse and watch if it hadn't been for him. They were a gang, and a rough one, too. Ah, he's breathing now."

"He can't lie in the street. May we bring him in, marm?"

"Surely. Bring him into the sitting-room. There is a comfortable sofa. This way, please!"
Slowly and solemnly he was laid out in the principal room, while I still observed the proceedings from my post by the window. The lamps had been lit so that I could see Holmes as he lay upon the couch. I do not know whether he was seized with compunction at that moment for the part he was playing, but I know that I never felt more heartily ashamed of myself in my life than when I saw the beautiful creature against whom I was conspiring, or the grace and kindliness with which she waited upon the injured man. And yet it would be the blackest treachery to Holmes to draw back now from the part which he had entrusted to me. After all, I thought, we are not injuring her. We are but preventing her from injuring another.

Holmes had sat up upon the couch, and I saw him motion like a man who is in want of air. A maid rushed across and threw open the window. At the same instant I saw him raise his hand, and at the signal I tossed my rocket into the room with a cry of "Fire." The word was no sooner out of my mouth than the whole crowd of spectators ran away. Thick clouds of smoke curled through the room, and out at the open window. Slipping through the shouting crowd, I made my way to the corner of the street, and in ten minutes was rejoiced to find my friend's arm in mine.

"You did very nicely, Doctor," he remarked. "Nothing could have been better. It is all right."
"You have the photograph!"

"I know where it is."

"And how did you find out?"

"She showed me, as I told you that she would."

"I am still in the dark."

Said he, laughing, "The matter was perfectly simple. I was taken to her sitting-room which was the very room which I suspected. The photograph was laid between that and her bedroom, and I was determined to see which. They laid me on a couch, I motioned for air, they were compelled to open the window and you had your chance."

"How did that help you?"

"It was all-important. When a woman thinks that her house is on fire, her instinct is at once to rush to the thing which she values most. It is a perfectly overpowering impulse, and I have more than once taken advantage of it. The photograph is in a recess behind a sliding panel just above the right bell-pull. She was there in an instant, and I caught a glimpse of it as she half drew it out. When I cried out that it was a false alarm, she replaced it, rushed from the room, and I have not seen her since. I rose, and, making my excuses, escaped from the house, I hesitated whether to attempt to secure the photograph at once; but the
coachman had come in, and as he was watching me narrowly, it seemed safer to wait. A little over-precipitance may ruin all."

"And now?" I asked.

"Our quest is practically finished. I shall call the King tomorrow, and with you, if you care to come with us. We will be shown into the sitting-room to wait for the lady, but it is probably that when she comes she may find neither us nor the photograph. It might be a satisfaction to His Majesty to regain it with his own hands."

"And when will you call?"

"At eight in the morning. She will not be up, so that we shall have a clear field. Besides, we must be prompt, for this marriage may mean a complete change in her life and habits. I must wire to the King without delay."

We had reached Baker Street, and had stopped at the door. He was searching his pockets for the key, when some one passing said:

"Good night, Mister Sherlock Holmes."

"I've heard that voice before," said Holmes, staring down the dimly lit street. "Now, I wonder who the deuce that could have been."

I slept at Baker Street that night, and we were engaged upon our toast and coffee when the King of Bohemia rushed into the room.

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"You have really got it!" he cried, grasping Sherlock Holmes by either shoulder, and looking eagerly into his face.

"Not yet."

"But you have hopes?"

"I have hopes."

"Then, come. I am all impatience to be gone."

We descended.

"Irene Adler is married," remarked Holmes.

"Married! When?"

"Yesterday."

"But to whom?"

"To an English lawyer named Norton."

"But she could not love him?"

"I am in hopes that she does."

"And why in hopes?"

"Because it would spare your Majesty all fear of future annoyance. If the lady loves her husband, she does not love Your Majesty. If she does not love, Your Majesty, there is no reason why she should interfere with Your Majesty’s plan."
"It is true. And yet...! Well! I wish she had been of my own station! What a queen she would have been made!"

The door of Briony Lodge was open, and an elderly woman stood upon the steps. She watched us with a sardonic eye as we stepped from the brougham.

"Mr. Sherlock Holmes, I believe?" said she.

"I am Mr. Holmes," answered my companion, looking at her with a questioning and rather startled gaze.

"Indeed! My mistress told me that you were likely to call. She left this morning with her husband, by the 5:15 train from Charing Cross, for the Continent."

"What!" Sherlock Holmes staggered back, white with chagrin and surprise. "Do you mean that she has left England?"

"Never to return."

"And the papers?" asked the King hoarsely. "All is lost."

"We shall see."

He pushed past the servant, and rushed into the drawing-room, followed by the King and myself. The furniture was scattered about in every direction. Holmes rushed at the bell-pull, tore back a small...
sliding shutter, and, plunging in his hand, pulled out a photograph and a letter. It was dated at midnight of the preceding night, and ran in this way:

"MY DEAR MR. SHERLOCK HOLMES,

You really did it very well. You took me in completely. Until after the alarm of fire, I had not a suspicion. But then, when I found how I had betrayed myself, I began to think. I had been warned against you months ago. I had been told that if the King employed an agent, it would certainly be you. And your address had been given me. Yet, without all this, you made me reveal what you wanted to know. I sent John, the coachman, to watch you. I followed you to your door, and so made sure that I was really an object of interest to the celebrated Mr. Sherlock Holmes. Then I went to see my husband. As to the photograph, your client may rest in peace. I love and am loved by a better man than he. The King may do what he will without hindrance from one whom he has cruelly wronged. I keep it only to safeguard myself, and to preserve a weapon which will always secure me from any steps which he might take in the future. I leave a photograph which he might care to possess; and I remain, dear Mr. Sherlock Holmes,

Very truly yours,
IRENE NORTON, née ADLER"
"What a woman - oh, what a woman!" cried the King of Bohemia. "Would she not make an admirable queen?"

"I am sorry that I have not been able to bring Your Majesty's business to a more successful conclusion."

"On the contrary, my dear sir. Nothing could be more successful. I know that her word is inviolate. The photograph is now as safe as if it were in the fire."

"I am glad to hear your Majesty say so."

"I am immensely indebted to you. Pray tell me in what way I can reward you. This ring..."

He slipped an emerald snake ring from his finger and held it out upon the palm of his hand.

"Your Majesty has something which I should value even more highly," said Holmes.

"You have but to name it."

"This photograph!"

The King stared at him in amazement.

"Irene's photograph!" he cried. "Certainly, if you wish it."

"I thank your Majesty."

And that was how a great scandal threatened to affect the kingdom of Bohemia, and how the best plans of Mr. Sherlock Holmes were beaten by a woman's wit. And when he speaks of Irene Adler, or when he refers to her photograph, it is always under the honorable title of the woman.
A Case of Identity

"My dear fellow," said Sherlock Holmes, as we sat on either side of the fire in his lodgings at Baker Street, "life is infinitely stranger than anything which the mind of man could invent. If we could fly out of that window hand in hand, hover over this great city, gently remove the roofs, and peep in at the queer things which are going on, the strange coincidences, the plannings, the cross-purposes, the wonderful chains of events, working through generations, it would lead to the most outre results."

"And yet I am not convinced of it," I answered. "We have, in our police reports realism pushed to its extreme limits, and yet the result is, it must be confessed, neither fascinating nor artistic."

"A certain selection and discretion must be used in producing a realistic effect," remarked Holmes. "This is wanting in the police report, where more stress is laid perhaps upon the platitudes of the magistrate than upon the details, which to an observer contain the vital essence of the whole matter. Depend upon it, there is nothing so unnatural as the commonplace."

I smiled and shook my head. "I can quite
understand your thinking so,” I said. “Of course, in your position of unofficial adviser and helper to everybody who is absolutely puzzled, throughout three continents, you are brought in contact with all that is strange and bizarre. But here” – I picked up the morning paper from the ground – “let us put it to a practical test. Here is the first heading upon which I come. ‘A husband’s cruelty to his wife.’ There is half a column of print, but I know without reading it that it is all perfectly familiar to me. There is, of course, the other woman, the drink, the push, the blow, the bruise, the sympathetic sister. The crudest of writers could invent nothing more crude.”

“Indeed, your example is an unfortunate one for your argument. This is the Dundas separation case, and, as it happens, I was engaged in clearing up some small points in connection with it. The husband was a straight man, there was no other woman, and the conduct complained of was that he had drifted into the habit of winding up every meal by taking out his false teeth and hurling them at his wife, which you will allow is not an action likely to occur to the imagination of the average story-teller.”

He added, “I forgot that I had not seen you for some weeks. It is a little souvenir from the King of Bohemia in return for my assistance in the case of the Irene Adler papers.”

“And the ring?” I asked, glancing at a remarkable brilliant thing which sparkled upon his finger.

[Footnotes]

تأواح جريدة أخرى وعليها نظرة معلقة: صحيح، لكن هناك مثلك غير مناسب. إنها حالة افتراض لرنداس الذي صادف أن توليتي توضيح بعض النقاط الصغيرة المتعلقة بها، كان الزوج رجلًا مستقبلا ولمكن هناك امرأة أخرى وحش ما تسكنت منه الزوجة هو أنه اعتاد إلهام كل وجهة نظر بالقلاع سنه المزيف ورشق زوجته بالمحتوى. وأتى توافقني الرجل أنه نصرف لا يخطر في بال الروائي العادي.

أضاف: كنت أنسى أنني لم أرك منذ أسابيع. هذه هدية صغيرة من ملك بروميلا تشكري على مساعدته في قضية أيرين أدلير.

سألته لماذا رأيت شيئًا يلمع في اصبعه؟ والخاتم؟
"It was from the reigning family of Holland, though the matter in which I served them was of such delicacy that I cannot confide it even to you, who have been good enough to chronicle one or two of my little problems."

"And have you any on hand just now?" I asked with interest.

"Some ten or twelve, but none which presents any feature of interest. They are important, you understand, without being interesting. Indeed, I have found that it is usually in unimportant matters that there is a field for observation, and for the quick analysis of cause and effect which gives the charm to an investigation. In these cases, there is nothing which presents any features of interest. It is possible, however, that I may have something better before very many minutes are over, for this is one of my clients, or I am much mistaken."

He had risen from his chair. Looking over his shoulder I saw that on the pavement opposite there stood a large woman with a heavy fur round her neck, and a large hat. She peeped up in a nervous, hesitating fashion at our windows. Suddenly, she hurried across the road, and we heard the sharp clang of the bell.

"I have seen these symptoms before," said Holmes. "Oscillation upon the pavement always means an affaire du coeur. Here she comes in person to receive our doubts."
As he spoke there was a tap at the door, and the boy entered to announce Miss Mary Sutherland. Sherlock Holmes welcomed her with the easy courtesy for which he was remarkable, closed the door, and bowed her into an armchair.

"Do you not find," he said, "that with your short sight it is a little trying to do so much typewriting?"

"I did at first," she answered, "but now I know where the letters are without looking." Then, suddenly realizing the full purport of his words, she looked up with fear and astonishment. "You've heard about me, Mr. Holmes," she cried, "else how could you know all that?"

"Never mind," said Holmes, laughing, "it is my business to know things. If not, why should you come to consult me?"

"I came to you, sir, because I heard of you from Mrs. Etherage, whose husband you found so easy when the police and everyone had given him up for dead. Oh, Mr. Holmes, I wish you would do as much for me. I'm not rich, but still I have a hundred a year in my own right, besides the little that I make by the machine, and I would give it all to know what has become of Mr. Hosmer Angel."
"Why did you come away to consult me in such a hurry?" asked Sherlock Holmes, with his fingertips together, and his eyes to the ceiling.

"Yes, I did bang out of the house," she said, "for it made me angry to see the easy way in which Mr. Windibank — that is, my father — took it all. He would not go to the police, and he would not go to you, and so, as he would do nothing, and kept on saying that there was no harm done, it made me mad, and I just left everything and came right away to you."

"Your father?" said Holmes. "Your stepfather, surely, since the name is different?"

"Yes, my stepfather. I call him father, though it sounds funny, too, for he is only five years and two months older than myself."

"And your mother is alive?"

"Oh, yes, mother is alive and well. I wasn’t best pleased, Mr. Holmes, when she married again so soon after father’s death, and a man who was nearly fifteen years younger than herself."

I had expected to see Sherlock Holmes impatient under this rambling and inconsequential narrative, but, on the contrary, he had listened with the greatest concentration of attention.
Holmes said, "This is my friend, Dr. Watson, before whom you can speak as freely as before myself. Kindly tell us now all about your connection with Mr. Hosmer Angel."

"I met him first at the gasfitters' ball," she said. "They used to send father tickets when he was alive, and then afterwards they remembered us, and sent them to mother. Mr. Windibank did not wish us to go. He never did wish us to go anywhere. But this time I was set on going, and I would go, for what right had he to prevent? And it was there I met Mr. Hosmer Angel."

"I see. Then at the gasfitters' ball you met, as I understand, a gentleman called Mr. Hosmer Angel."

"Yes, sir. I met him that night, and he called next day to ask if we had got home all safe, and after that we met him — that is to say, Mr. Holmes, I met him twice for walks, but after that father came back again from abroad, and Mr. Hosmer Angel could not come to the house anymore."

"No?"

"Well, you know, father didn't like anything of the sort. He wouldn't have any visitors and he used to say that a woman should be happy in her own family circle. But then, as I used to say to mother, a woman wants her own circle to begin with, and I had not got mine yet."

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"But how about Mr. Hosmer Angel? Did he make no attempt to see you?"

"Well, father was going off to France in a week, and Hosmer wrote and said it would be safer and better not to see each other until he had gone. We could write in the meantime, and he used to write every day."

"Were you engaged to the gentleman at this time?"

"Oh yes, Mr. Holmes. We were engaged after the first walk that we took. Hosmer – Mr. Angel – was a cashier in an office in Leadenhall Street... and..."

"What office?"

"That's the worst of it, Mr. Holmes, I don't know."

"Where did he live then?"

"He slept on the premises."

"And you don't know his address?"

"No – except that it was Leadenhall Street."

"Where did you address your letters, then?"

"To the Leadenhall Street Post Office, to be left till called for. I offered to typewrite them, like he did his, but he wouldn't have that, for he said that when I
wrote them, they seemed to come from me, but when they were typewritten, he always felt that the machine had come between us. That will just show you how fond he was of me, Mr. Holmes, and the little things that he would think of.

"It was most suggestive," said Holmes. "It has long been an axiom of mine that the little things are infinitely the most important. Can you remember any other little things about Mr. Hosmer Angel?"

"He was a very shy man, Mr. Holmes. Even his voice was gentle. He was always well-dressed, very neat."

"Well, and what happened when Mr. Windibank, your stepfather, returned to France?"

"Mr. Hosmer Angel came to the house again, and proped that we should marry before father came back. He was in dreadful earnest, and made me swear, with my hands on the Testament, that whatever happened I would always be true to him. Mother said it was a sign of his passion. Mother was all in his favor from the first, and was even fonder of him than I was. I began to ask about father; but they said never to mind about father, but just to tell him afterwards."

"Your wedding was arranged, then, for the Friday."
"Yes, sir, but very quietly. Hosmer came for us in a hansom, but as there were two of us, he put us both into it, and stepped himself into a four-wheeler which happened to be the only other cab in the street. We got to the church first, and when the four-wheeler drove up we waited for him to step out, but he never did, and when the cabman got down from the box and looked, there was no one there! The cabman said he could not imagine what had become of him, for he had seen him get in with his own eyes. That was last Friday, Mr. Holmes, and I have never seen or heard anything since then to throw any light upon what became of him."

"It seems to me that you have been very shamefully treated," said Holmes.

"Oh no, sir! He was too good and kind to leave me so. Why, all the morning he was saying to me that, whatever happened, I was to be true. It seemed strange talk for a wedding morning, but what has happened since gives a meaning to it."

"Most certainly it does. Your own opinion is, then, that some unforeseen catastrophe has occurred to him?"

"Yes, sir. I believe that he foresaw some danger, or else he would not have talked so. And I think that what he foresaw happened."

"نعم، سيدى، لكن بهدوء. حضر السيد هوسمر إلينا على متن هندسية إستقلتها ووالدي بينما صعد هو على متن عربة رباعية العجلات كانت الوحيدة الموجودة في الشارع، ووصلنا قبله إلى مكان الزفات ولما وصلت عربته، انتظرنا كي يتزلج لكنه لم يفعل أيًا. فترجل الحوسي ونظر إلى الداخل إلا أنه لم يعثر على أحد! أصرر الحوسي على أن هذا أمر لا يصدق لأنه رأى بعينيه يدخل العربة. حصل ذلك نهار الجمعة الماضي، سيد هولمز، ولم أسمع أو أرى شيئاً يدل على ما حل به."

"قال هولمز: أسأل معاونتكم على ما يبدو.

"لا، سيدى! إنه رجل شهم ولطيف جداً كي يفعل هذا بي. خاصة وأنه أضف الصباح بأكمله يطلب مني أن أكون رفيقًا له مهما حصل. بدأ لي خطابًا مستغرقًا صباح يوم الزفات لكن مغزاه اقتضى لي بعد ما حصل.

"هذا واضح، تعنون إذا أن كارثة ما حلت به؟ نعم سيدي. أعتقد أنه فصل خطر مفتوح إلا أنني حدثت كما فعل، وأعتقد أن ما كان يخشاه تحقيق فعلا."
"But you have no notion as to what it could have been?"

"None."

"One more question. How did your mother take the matter?"

"She was angry, and said I was never to speak of the matter again."

"And your father? Did you tell him?"

"Yes, and he seemed to think, with me, that something had happened, and that I should hear of Hosmer again. Now, if he had borrowed my money, or if he had married me and got my money settled on him, there might be some reason; but Hosmer was very independent about money, and never would look at a shilling of mine. And yet what could have happened? And why could he not write? Oh, it drives me half-mad to think of it! And I can't sleep a wink at night." She pulled a little handkerchief out of her muff, and began to sob heavily into it.

"I shall glance into the case for you," said Holmes, rising. "Try to let Mr. Hosmer Angel vanish from your memory, as he has done from your life."

"Then you don't think I'll see him again?"

"I fear not."

"Then what has happened to him?"
"You will leave that question in my hands. I should like an accurate description of him, and any letters of his which you can spare."

"I advertised for him in last Saturday's Chronicle," said she. "Here is the slip, and here are four letters from him."

"Thank you. And your address?"

"31 Lyon Place, Camberwell."

"Mr. Angel's address you never had, I understand. Where is your father's place of business?"

"He travels for Westhouse & Marbank, the great claret importers of Fenchurch Street."

"Thank you. You have made your statement very clearly. You will leave the papers here, and remember the advice which I have given you. Let the whole incident be a sealed book, and do not allow it to affect your life."

"You are very kind, Mr. Holmes, but I cannot do that. I shall be true to Hosmer. He shall find me ready when he comes back."

There was something noble in the simple faith of our visitor which compelled our respect. She laid her little bundle of papers upon the table, and went her way, with a promise to come again whenever she might be summoned.
Sherlock Holmes sat silent for a few minutes.

"Quite an interesting study, that maiden," he observed. "I found her more interesting than her little problem. You will find parallel cases, if you consult my index, in Andover in '77, and there was something of the sort in The Hague last year. Old as is the idea, however, there was one or two details which were new to me. But the maiden herself was most instructive."

"You appeared to read a good deal upon her which was quite invisible to me," I remarked.

"Not invisible, but unnoticed, Watson. You did not know where to look, and so you missed all that was important. Now what did you gather from that woman's appearance? Describe it."

I went on describing her. When I was finished, Sherlock Holmes clapped his hands softly together and chuckled.

"Watson, you are coming along wonderfully. You have really done very well indeed. Never trust yourself to general impressions, my boy, but concentrate yourself upon details. My first glance is always at a woman's sleeve. In a man perhaps it is better first to take the knee of the trouser. I then glanced at her face, and observing the dint of a pince-nez at either side of her nose, I ventured a remark upon short sight and typewriting, which seemed to surprise her."
"It surprised me."

"But, surely, it was very obvious. I was then much surprised and interested on glancing down to observe that, though the boots which she was wearing were not unlike each other, they were really odd ones. Now, when you see that a young lady, otherwise neatly dressed, has come away from home with odd boots, it is no great deduction to say that she has come away in a hurry."

"And what else?" I asked, keenly interested, as I always was, by my friend's incisive reasoning.

"I noted, in passing, that she had written a note before leaving home, but after being fully dressed. You did not apparently see that both glove and finger were stained with violet ink. She had written in a hurry, and dipped her pen too deep. It must have been this morning, or the mark would not remain clear upon her finger. All this is amusing, though rather elementary, but I must go back to business, Watson."

"As to the letters," he continued glancing over them, "they are very commonplace. Absolutely no clue in them to Mr. Angel, save that he quotes Balzac once. There is one remarkable point, however, which will no doubt strike you."

"They are typewritten," I remarked.
“Not only that, but the signature is typewritten. Look at the neat little ‘Hosmer Angel’ at the bottom. There is a date you see, but no superscription, except Leadenhall Street, which is rather vague. The point about the signature is very suggestive—in fact, we may call it conclusive.”

“Of what?”

“My dear fellow, is it possible you do not see how strongly it bears upon the case?”

“I cannot say that I do, unless it were that he wished to be able to deny his signature if an action for breach of promise was instituted.”

“No, that was not the point. However, I shall write two letters which should settle the matter. One is to a firm in the City, the other is to the young lady’s stepfather, Mr. Windibank, asking him whether he could meet us here at six o’clock tomorrow evening. And now, Doctor, we can do nothing until the answers to those letters come.”

I had had so many reasons to believe in my friend’s subtle powers of reasoning, and extraordinary energy in action, that I felt that he must have some solid grounds for the assured and easy demeanor with which he treated the singular mystery. Only once had I known him to fail, in the case of the King of Bohemia and of the Irene Adler photograph.
I left him then, still puffing at his black clay pipe, with the conviction that when I came again on the next evening I would find that he held in his hands all the clues which would lead up to the identity of the disappearing bridegroom of Miss Mary Sutherland.

A professional case of great gravity was engaging my own attention at the time. It was not until close upon six o'clock that I found myself free to drive to Baker Street, half afraid that I might be too late to assist at the denouement of the little mystery. I found Sherlock Holmes alone, however, half asleep.

"Well, have you solved the mystery?" I asked as I entered.

"There was never any mystery in the matter, though, as I said yesterday, some of the details are of interest. The only drawback is that there is no law, I fear, that can touch the scoundrel."

"Who was he, then, and what was his object in deserting Miss Sutherland?"

The question was hardly out of my mouth, and Holmes had not yet opened his lips to reply, when we heard a tap at the door.

"This is the girl's stepfather, Mr. James Windibank," said Holmes. "He has written to me to say that he would be here at six. Come in!"

The man who entered was a sturdy, middle-sized
fellow, some thirty years of age and a pair of sharp and penetrating grey eyes. He shot a questioning glance at each of us, placed his shiny hat upon the side-board, and slid down into the nearest chair.

"Good evening, Mr. James Windibank," said Holmes. "I think that this typewritten letter is from you, in which you made an appointment with me for six o'clock?"

"Yes, sir. I am afraid that I am a little late, but I am not quite my own master, you know. I am sorry that Miss Sutherland has troubled you about this little matter, for I think it is far better not to wash linen of this sort in public. Besides, it is a useless expense, for how could you possibly find this Hosmer Angel?"

"On the contrary," said Holmes quietly, "I have every reason to believe that I will succeed in discovering Mr. Hosmer Angel."

Mr. Windibank gave a violent start, and dropped his gloves. "I am delighted to hear it," he said.

"It is a curious thing," remarked Holmes, "that a typewriter has really quite as much individuality as a man's handwriting. Unless they are quite new, no two of them write exactly alike. Now, you remark in this note of yours, Mr. Windibank, that in every case there is some little slurring over of the 'e', and a slight defect in the tail of the 'r.' There are fourteen
other characteristics, but those are the more obvious."

"We do all our correspondance with this machine at the office, and no doubt it is a little worn," our visitor answered, glancing keenly at Holmes with his bright little eyes.

"And now I will show you what is a very interesting study, Mr. Windibank," Holmes continued. "I think of writing another little monograph some of these days on the typewriter and its relation to crime. It is a subject to which I have devoted some little attention. I have here four letters which purport to come from the missing man. They are all typewritten. In each case, not only are the 'e's' slurred and the 'r's' tailless, but you will observe, if you care to use my magnifying lens, that the fourteen other characteristics to which I have alluded are there as well."

Mr. Windibank sprang out of his chair, and picked up his hat. "I cannot waste time over this sort of fantastic talk, Mr. Holmes," he said. "If you can catch the man, catch him, and let me know when you have done it."

"Certainly," said Holmes, stepping over and turning the key in the door. "I let you know, then, that I have caught him!"

"What Where?" shouted Mr. Windibank, turning
white to his lips, and glancing about him like a rat in a trap.

"Sit down, and let us talk it over."

Our visitor collapsed into a chair.

"Between ourselves, Windibank, it was as cruel, and selfish, and heartless a trick in a petty way as ever came before me. Now, let me just run over the course of events, and you will contradict me if I go wrong."

"The man married a woman very much older than himself for her money," said he, "and he enjoyed the use of the money of the daughter as long as she lived with them. It was a considerable sum. It was worth an effort to preserve it. The daughter was of a good, amiable disposition so that it was evident that with her fair personal advantages, and her little income, she would not be allowed to remain single long. Now her marriage would mean, of course, the loss of a hundred a year, so what does her stepfather do to prevent it? He takes the obvious course of keeping her at home, and forbidding her to seek the company of people of her own age. But soon he found that that would not answer forever and went to that ball. What does her clever stepfather do then? He conceives an idea more creditable to his head than to his heart. With the connivance and assistance of his wife he
disguised himself, covered those keen eyes with tinted glasses, masked the face with a moustache, sunk that clear voice into an insinuating whisper, and, he appears as Mr. Hosmer Angel, and keeps off other lovers."

"It was only a joke at first," groaned our visitor. "We never thought that she would have been so carried away."

"Very likely not. However that may be, the young lady was very decidedly carried away, and having quite made up her mind that her stepfather was in France, the suspicion of treachery never for an instant entered her mind. She was flattered by the gentleman's attentions, and the effect was increased by the loudly expressed admiration of her mother. Then Mr. Angel began to call, for it was obvious that the matter should be pushed as far as it would go, if a real effect were to be produced. There were meetings, and an engagement, which would finally secure the girl's affections from turning towards anyone else. But the deception could not be kept up for ever. The thing to do was clearly to bring the business to an end in such a dramatic manner that it would leave a permanent impression upon the young lady's mind, and prevent her from looking upon any other suitor for some time to come.

Hence those vows of fidelity exacted upon a Testament, and hence also the allusions to a
possibility of something happening on the very morning of the wedding. James Windibank wished Miss Sutherland to be so bound to Hosmer Angel she would not listen to another man. As he could go no further, he conveniently vanished away by the old trick of stepping in at one door of a four-wheeler, and out at the other. I think that this was the chain of events, Mr. Windibank!"

Our visitor had recovered something of his assurance while Holmes had been talking, and he rose from his chair now with a cold sneer upon his pale face.

"It may be so, or it may be not, Mr. Holmes," said he, "but that it is you who are breaking the law now, and not me. I have done nothing actionable from the first, but as long as you keep that door locked, you lay yourself open to an action for assault and legal constraint."

"The law cannot, as you say, touch you," said Holmes, unlocking and throwing open the door, "yet there was never a man who deserved punishment more." The heavy hall door banged, and from the window we could see Mr. James Windibank running at the top of his speed down the road.

"There's a cold-blooded scoundrel!" said Holmes, laughing, as he threw himself down into his chair once more. "That fellow will rise from crime to crime until he does something very bad, and ends on
a gallows. The case has, in some respects, been not entirely devoid of interest."

"I cannot now entirely see all the steps of your reasoning," I remarked.

"Well, of course it was obvious from the first that this Mr. Hosmer Angel must have some strong object for his curious conduct, and it was equally clear that the only man who really profited by the incident, as far as we could see, was the stepfather. Then the fact that the two men were never together, but that the one always appeared when the other was away, was suggestive. So were the tinted spectacles and the curious voice, which both hinted at a disguise. My suspicions were all confirmed by his peculiar action in typewriting his signature, which of course inferred that his handwriting was so familiar to her that she would recognize even the smallest sample of it. You see all these isolated facts, together with many minor ones, all pointed in the same direction. Voila tout!"

"And Miss Sutherland?"

"If I tell her she will not believe me. You may remember the old Persian saying, 'There is a danger for him who take the tiger cub, and danger also for who so snatches a delusion from a woman.'"
The Boscombe Valley Mystery

We were seated at breakfast one morning, my wife and I, when the maid brought in a telegram. It was from Sherlock Holmes and it ran in this way:

"Have you a couple of days to spare? Have just been wired for from the West of England in connection with Boscombe Valley tragedy. Shall be glad if you will come with me. Air and scenery perfect. Leave Paddington by the 11:15."

My experience of camp life in Afghanistan had at least had the effect of making me a prompt and ready traveller. My wants were few and simple, so that in less than the time stated I was in a cab with my valise, rattling away to Paddington Station. Sherlock Holmes was pacing up and down the platform.

"It is really very good of you to come, Watson," said he. "It makes a considerable difference to me, having someone with me on whom I can thoroughly rely. If you will keep the two corner seats I shall get the tickets."

"Have you heard anything of the case?" he asked when he came back.

"Not a word. I have not seen a paper for some days."
"The London press has not had very full accounts. I have just been looking through all the recent papers in order to master the particulars. It seems, from what I gather, to be one of those simple cases which are so extremely difficult."

"That sounds a little paradoxical."

"But it is profoundly true. The more featureless and commonplace a crime is, the more difficult it is to bring it home. In this case, however, they have established a very serious case against the son of a murdered man."

"It is a murder, then?"

"Well, it is conjectured to be so. I shall take nothing for granted until I have the opportunity of looking personally into it. I will explain the state of things to you. Boscombe Valley is a country district not very far from Ross, in Herefordshire. The largest landed proprietor in that part is a Mr. John Turner, who made his money in Australia, and returned some years ago to the old country. One of the farms which he held, that of Hatherley, was let to Mr. Charles McCarthy, who was also an ex-Australian. The men had known each other in the Colonies. Turner was apparently the richer man, so McCarthy became his tenant, but still remained, it seems, upon terms of perfect equality, as they were frequently together. McCarthy had one son, a lad of eighteen, and Turner..."
had an only daughter of the same age, but neither of them had wives living. They appear to have avoided the society of the neighboring English families, and to have led retired lives. McCarthy kept two servants—a man and a girl. Turner had a considerable household, some half-dozen at the least. That is as much as I have been able to gather about the families. Now for the facts. On June 3—that is, on Monday last—McCarthy left his house at Hatherly about three in the afternoon, and walked down to the Boscombe Pool, which is a small lake in the Boscombe Valley. He had told his serving-man that he must hurry, as he had an appointment of importance to keep at three. From that appointment he never came back alive. From Hatherly Farmhouse to the Boscombe Pool is a quarter of a mile, and two people saw him as he passed over this ground. Both witnesses depose that Mr. McCarthy was walking alone. The game-keeper adds that within a few minutes of his seeing Mr. McCarthy pass he had seen his son, Mr. James McCarthy, going the same way with a gun under his arm. He thought no more of the matter until he heard in the evening of the tragedy that had occurred. The Boscombe Pool is thickly wooded ground, with just a fringe of grass and of reeds round the edge. A girl of fourteen, Patience Moran, who is the daughter of the lodge-keeper of the Boscombe Valley Estate, was in

فضلاً تحاكي مجتمع العائلات الإنجليزية المجاورة واعتبار حيّة بعيدة عن الأضواء. كاً ماكان في خيلمان، رجل ومرأة، أما تربر قلبه ستة على الأقل. هذا عن الأسرتين، الآن ماذا عن الوقائع؟

في 3 حزيران (يونيو)، أي الاثنين اللتين، غادر ماكارتنى منزله في هاثيرلي قرية الثلاثة بعد الظهر واتجه إلى بحيرة بوسكوكب وهي بحيرة صغيرة في وادي بوسكوكب. وكان قد أعلم بالخادم بضرورة الاستعجال لأن لديه موعدًا هاماً في الثلاثة. لكنه لم يعد حياً من ذلك الموعد.

بعد مزرعة هاثيرلي عن بحيرة بوسكوكب نحو ربع ميل، وقد شاهد شخصان على هذه الطريق. ويجمع الشاهدان على أن السيد ماكارتنى كان بردوه، إلا أن حارس الطرقات يضيف أنه شاهد ابن السيد ماكارتنى بير من هناك بعد بضع دقائق على سرور الوالد، ساكناً الاتجاه نفسه ومعه سلاح، ولم يفكر بالقضية إلى أن سمع في المساء نياً المأساة التي حصلت.

تحيط أشجار كثيفة ببحيرة بوسكوكب مع فسحة صغيرة من الماء والقصب عند أطراف، ووصف أن كانت بينس سوير، وهي فتاة في الرابعة عشرة من العمر وأيضا حراس عفار وادي بوسكوكب، تقطع أزهاراً من إحدى الغابات هناك. وقد شاهدت
one of the woods picking flowers. She states that while she was there she saw, at the border of the wood and close by the lake, Mr. McCarthy and his son, and that they appeared to be having a violent quarrel. She was so frightened by their violence that she ran away, and told her mother when she reached home. She had hardly said the words when young Mr. McCarthy came running up to the lodge to say that he had found his father dead in the wood, and to ask for help. He was much excited, without either his gun or his hat, and his right hand and sleeve were observed to be stained with fresh blood. On following him they found the dead body of his father stretched out upon the grass beside the Pool. The head had been beaten in by repeated blows of some heavy and blunt weapon. His son's gun was found lying on the grass within a few paces of the body. Under these circumstances the young man was instantly arrested, and a verdict of 'Wilful Murder' having been issued on Tuesday, he was on Wednesday brought before the magistrate at Ross, who have referred the case to the next assizes. Those are the main facts of the case as they came out before the coroner and at the police-court."

I remarked, "If ever circumstantial evidence pointed to a criminal, it does so here."

"Circumstantial evidence is a very tricky thing. It may seem to point very straight to one thing, but if
you shift your own point of view a little, you may find it pointing to something entirely different. There are several people in the neighborhood, however, and among them Miss Turner, the daughter of the neighboring land-owner, who believe in the young one's innocence, and who have retained Lestrade to work out the case in his interest. Lestrade has referred the case to me, and hence it is that two middle-aged gentlemen are flying westward at fifty miles an hour, instead of quietly digesting their breakfasts at home.

"I am afraid," said I, "that the facts are so obvious that you will find little credit to be gained out of this case."

"There is nothing more deceptive than an obvious fact," he answered, laughing. "There are one or two minor points which were brought out in the inquest, and which are worth considering."

"What are they?"

"It appears that his arrest did not take place at once, but after the return to Hatherly Farm. On the inspector of constabulary informing him that he was a prisoner, he remarked that he was not surprised to hear it. This observation of his had the natural effect of removing any traces of doubt which had remained in the mind's of the coroner's jury."

"It was a confession," I ejaculated.
"No, for it was followed by a protestation of innocence. His frank acceptance of the situation marks him as either an innocent man, or else as a man of considerable self-restraint and firmness.

I shook my head. "Many men have been hanged on far slighter evidence," I remarked.

"So they have. And many men have been wrongfully hanged.

"What is the young man's own account of the matter?"

"It is, I am afraid, not very encouraging to his supporters, though there are one or two points in it which are suggestive. You will find it here, and may read it for yourself."

He picked out from his bundle a copy of the local Herefordshire paper, and pointed out the paragraph in which the unfortunate young man had given his own statement of what had occurred. It ran this way:

"I had been away from home for three days at Bristol, and had only just returned upon the morning of last Monday, the 3rd. My father was absent from home at the time of my arrival, and I was informed by the maid that he had driven over to Ross with John Cobb, the groom. Shortly after my return I heard the wheels of his trap in the yard, and, looking out of my window, I saw him get out and walk..."
rapidly out of the yard, though I was not aware in
which direction he was going. I then took my gun,
and strolled out in the direction of the Boscombe
Pool, with the intention of visiting the rabbit warren
which is upon the other side. On my way I saw
William Crowder, the gamekeeper, as he has stated
in his evidence; but he is mistaken in thinking that I
was following my father. I had no idea that he was in
front of me. When about a hundred yards from the
Pool I heard a cry of “Cooee!” which was a usual
signal between my father and myself. I then hurried
forward, and found him standing by the Pool. He
appeared to be much surprised at seeing me, and
asked me rather roughly what I was doing there. A
conversation ensued, which led to high words, and
almost to blows, for my father was a man of a very
violent temper. Seeing that his passion was
becoming ungovernable, I left him, and returned
towards Hatherly Farm.

I had not gone more than one hundred and fifty
yards, however, when I heard a hideous outcry
behind me, which caused me to run back again. I
found my father expiring on the ground, with his
head terribly injured. I dropped my gun, and held
him in my arms, but he almost instantly expired. I
knelt beside him for some minutes, and then made
my way to Mr. Turner’s lodge-keeper, his house
being the nearest, to ask for assistance. I saw no one
near my father when I returned, and I have no idea how he came by his injuries. He was not a popular man, being somewhat cold and forbidding in his manners; but he had, as far as I know, no active enemies. I know nothing further of the matter."

A conversation followed between the coroner and the witness in which the witness refused to answer many questions.

"I see that the coroner calls attention, and with reason, to the discrepancy about his father having signalled to him before seeing him, also to his refusal to give details of his conversation with his father. They are all, as he remarks, very much against the son."

Holmes laughed softly to himself, and stretched himself out upon the cushioned seat. "I shall approach this case from the point of view that what this young man says is true, and we shall see whether that hypothesis will lead us. Not another word shall I say of this case until we are on the scene of action. We lunch at Swindon, and I see that we shall be there in twenty minutes."

It was nearly four o'clock when we at last, after passing through the beautiful Stroud Valley found ourselves at the pretty little country town of Ross. A man was waiting for us upon the platform. It was Lestrade of Scotland Yard.

النجة. لم أكن أقد علم أنني عندما عدت إليه ولست أدرى من أن آت تلك الإصابة. صحيح أنه لم يكن محرماً جداً بسبب طباعه الباردة، لكن ليس له أعداء على حد علمي. هذا كل ما أعرفه.

هذا الدعوى بين المحقق والشاهد، فأعطى خلافه الشاهد عدم الإجابة على الكثير من الأسئلة. عرفت على الموضوع بالقول: لقد أصاب المحقق في السؤال عن مناداة الولد إليه قبل أن يعلم بوجوده، كما أن رفض الرجل إعطاء تفاصيل عن الحادث الذي دار بينهما، كلها عناصر تلعب دورًا ضد الأبناء.

ضحك حملت بخطف وتحدد على المقدم قائلاً: أما أنا فإنظر إلى القضية من منظر آخر هو اعتبار ما يقوله الشاب صحيحًا. وسترى لاحقًا إلى أن نقولنا هذه الفرضية. لن أقول بهكمة بعد الآن عن هذه المسألة إلى أن نصل إلى ساحة الجريمة. ستتناول الغداء في سويندون التي نصلها بعد ثلاث ساعات.

وصلنا في الرابعة تقريبًا بعدما مرنا عبر وادي ستراود للجميل إلى بلدة روس الريفية الخلابة. هناك وجدنا رجلاً انتظرنا هو ليستراد من اسكوتند بارد.
As we sat over a cup of tea, Lestrade said, "You have, no doubt, already formed your conclusions from the newspapers. Still, of course, one can't refuse a lady. She had heard of you, and would have your opinion, though I repeatedly told her that there was nothing which you could do which I had not already done. Why, bless my soul! Here is her carriage at the door."

He had hardly spoken before there rushed into the room one of the most lovely women that I have ever seen in my life.

"Oh, Mr. Sherlock Holmes!" she cried, glancing from one to the other of us. "I am so glad you have come. I know that James didn't do it. We have known each other since we were little children, and I know his faults as no one else does; but he is too tender-hearted to hurt a fly. Such a charge is absurd to anyone who really knows him."

"I hope we may clear him, Miss Turner," said Sherlock Holmes. "You may rely upon my doing all that I can."

"But you have read the evidence. You have formed some conclusion? Do you not see some loophole, some flaw? Do you not yourself think that he is innocent?"

"I think that it is very probable."

"There now!" she cried, throwing her head and
looking defiantly at Lestrade. "You hear! He gives me hope."

"I am afraid that my colleague has been a little quick in forming his conclusions."

"But he is right. And about his quarrel with his father, I am sure that the reason why he would not speak about it to the coroner was because I was concerned in it."

"In what way?" asked Holmes.

"It is no time for me to hide anything. James and his father had many disagreements about me. Mr. McCarthy was very anxious that there should be a marriage between us. James and I have always loved each other as brother and sister, but of course he is young and has seen very little of life yet, and – and well, he naturally did not wish to anything like that yet. So there were quarrels, and this, I am sure, was one of them."

"And your father?" asked Holmes. "Was he in favor of such a union?"

"No, he was averse to it also. No one but Mr. McCarthy was in favor of it."

"Thank you for this information," said Holmes. "May I see your father if I call tomorrow?"

"I am afraid the doctor won't allow it."

"The doctor?"
"Yes. Poor father has never been strong for years back, but this has broken him down completely. Mr. McCarthy was the only man alive who had known Dad in the old days in Victoria."

"Ha! In Victoria! That is important."

"Yes, at the mines."

"Quite so; at the gold mines, where, as I understand, Mr. Turner made his money."

"Yes, certainly."

"Thank you, Miss Turner. You have been of material assistance to me."

"You will tell me if you have any news tomorrow. No doubt you will go to the prison to see James. Oh, if you do, Mr. Holmes, do tell him that I know him to be innocent."

"I will, Miss Turner."

"I must go home now, for dad is very ill. Goodbye, and God help you in your undertaking."

She hurried from the room as impulsively as she had entered, and we heard the wheels of her carriage rattle off down the street.

"I am ashamed of you, Holmes," said Lestrade.
after a few minutes' silence. "Why should you raise up hopes which you are bound to disappoint? I am not over-tender of heart, but I call it cruel."

"I think that I see my way to clearing James McCarthy," said Holmes. "Have you an order to see him in prison?"

"Yes, but only for you and me."

"We have still time to take a train to Hereford and see him tonight?"

"Ample."

"Then let us do so."

I walked down to the station with them, and then wandered through the streets of the little town, finally returning to the hotel, where I lay on the sofa and tried to interest myself in a novel. I found my attention wander so constantly from the fiction to the fact. Supposing that this unhappy young man's story was absolutely true, then what could have occurred between the time when he parted from his father and the moment when, draw back by his screams, he rushed into the glade? It was something terrible and deadly. What could it be? Might not the nature of the injuries reveal something to my medical instincts? The weekly country paper contained a verbatim account of the inquest. In the surgeon's deposition it
was stated that the posterior third of the left parietal bone and the left half of the occipital bone had been shattered by a heavy blow from a blunt weapon. I marked the spot upon my own head. Clearly such a blow must have been struck from behind. That was to some extent in favor of the accused, as when seen quarreling he was face to face with his father. Still, it did not go for very much, for the older man might have turned his back before the blow fell. Still, it might be worth while to call Holmes’ attention to it.

It was late before Holmes returned. He came back alone, for Lestrade was staying in lodgings in the town.

He remarked, as he sat down, “It is of importance that it should not rain before we are able to go over the ground. I have seen young McCarthy.”

“And what did you learn from him?”

“Nothing.”

“Could he throw no light?”

“None at all. I was inclined to think at one time that he knew who had done it, and was screening him or her, but I am convinced now that he is as puzzled as everyone else. He is not a very quick-witted youth.”

“I cannot admire his taste,” I remarked, “if it is indeed a fact that he was averse to a marriage with so charming a young lady as this Miss Turner.”
"Ah, thereby hangs a rather painful tale. This fellow is madly, insanely in love with her, but some two years ago and before he really knew her, for she had been away five years at a boarding-school, what does the idiot do but get into the clutches of a barmaid in Bristol, and marry her at a registry office! No one knows a word of the matter, but you can imagine how maddening it must be to him to be upbraided for not doing what he would give his very eyes to do, but what he knows to be absolutely impossible. It was sheer frenzy of this sort which made him throw his hands up into the air when his father, at their last interview, was gording him on to propose to Miss Turner. On the other hand, he had no means of supporting himself, and his father. It was with his barmaid wife that he had spent the last three days in Bristol, and his father did not know where he was. Mark that point. It is of importance. Good has come out of evil, however, for the barmaid, finding from the papers that he is in serious trouble, and likely to be hanged, she has written to him to say that there is really no tie between them. I think that that bit of news has consoled young McCarthy for all that he has suffered."

"But if he is innocent, who has done it?"

"Ah! Who? I would call your attention very particularly to two points. One is that the murdered man had an appointment with someone at the Pool,
and that the someone could not have been his son, for his son was away, and he did not know when he would return. The second is that the murdered man was heard to cry ‘Cooee!’ before he knew that his son had returned. We shall leave minor point until tomorrow.”

There was no rain and the morning broke bright and cloudless. At nine o’clock Lestrade called for us to go to Hatherly Farm and the Boscombe Pool.

“There is serious news this morning,” Lestrade observed. “It is said that Mr. Turner is so ill, his life is despaired of.”

“An elderly man, I presume?”

“About sixty; but his constitution has been shattered by his life abroad and he has been in failing health for quite some time. This business has had a very bad effect upon him. He was an old friend of McCarthy’s and a great benefactor to him, for I have learned that he gave him Hatherly Farm rent free.”

“Indeed! That is interesting,” said Holmes.

We reached Hatherly Farm after a while. “Yes, that is it.” It was a widespread, comfortable-looking building, two-storied. We called at the door, when the maid, at Holmes’ request, showed us the boots which her master wore at the time of his death, and
also a pair of the son’s, though not the pair which he had then had. Having measured these very carefully, Holmes desired to be led to the courtyard, from which we all followed the winding track which led to Boscombe Pool.

Sherlock Holmes was transformed when he was hot upon such a scent as this. Men who had only known the quiet thinker and logician of Baker Street would have failed to recognize him.

The Boscombe Pool is situated at the boundary between the Hatherly Farm and the private park of the wealthy Mr. Turner. Lestrade showed us the exact spot at which the body had been found, and indeed, so moist was the ground, that I could plainly see the traces which had been left by the fall of the stricken man. To Holmes very many other things were to be read upon the trampled grass. He ran round, like a dog who is picking up a scent, and then turned upon my companion.

“What did you go into the Pool for?”

“I fished about with a rake. I thought there might be some weapon or other trace. But how on earth…”

“Oh, tut, tut! I have no time. That left foot of yours is all over the place. Oh, how simple it would all have been had I been here before they came like a herd of buffalo, and wallowed all over it. But here are three separate tracks of the same feet.”
He drew out a lens, and lay down upon his waterproof coat to have a better view, talking all the time rather to himself than to us. "These are young McCarthy's feet. Twice he was walking, and once he ran swiftly so that the soles are deeply marked, and the heels hardly visible. That bears out his story. He ran when he saw his father on the ground. Then seven times he paced up and down. What is this, then? It is the butt end of the gun as the son stood listening. And this? Ha, ha! What have we here? Square, too, quite unusual boots! They come, they go, they come again. Now where did they come from?"

He ran up and down, sometimes losing, sometimes finding the track, until we were well within the edge of the wood and under the shadow of a great beech, the largest tree in the neighborhood. Holmes laid down once more upon his face with a little cry of satisfaction. For a long time he remained there, turning over the leaves and dried sticks, gathered up what seemed to me to be dust into an envelope, and examining with his lens not only the ground, but even the bark of the tree as far as he could reach. A jagged stone was lying among the moss, and this also he carefully examined and retained. Then he followed a pathway through the wood until he came to a high-road, where all traces were lost.
He remarked, returning to his natural manner, "I fancy that this grey house on the right must be the lodge. I think that I will go in and have a word with Moran, and perhaps write a little note. Having done that, we may drive back to our luncheon. You may walk to the cab, and I shall be with you presently."

It was about ten minutes before we regained our cab, and drove back into Ross, Holmes still carrying with him the stone which he had picked up in the wood.

"This may interest you, Lestrade," he remarked, holding it out. "The murder was done with it."

"I see no marks."

"There are none."

"How do you know, then?"

"The grass was growing under it. It had only lain there a few days. There was no sign of a place whence it had been taken. It corresponds with the injuries. There is no sign of any other weapon."

"And the murderer?"

"Is a tall man, left-handed, limps with the right leg, wears thick-soled shooting-boots and a grey cloak, smokes Indian cigars, uses a cigar-holder, and carries a blunt penknife in his pocket. There are several other indications, but these may be enough to aid us in our search."
Lestrade laughed. "I am afraid I am still a sceptic," he said.

"Nous verrons," answered Holmes calmly. "You work your own method, and I shall work mine. I shall be busy this afternoon, and shall probably return to London by the evening train."

"And leave your case unfinished?"

"No, finished."

"But the mystery?"

"It is solved."

"Who was the criminal, then?"

"The gentleman I describe."

"But who is he?"

"Surely it would not be difficult to find out. This is not such a populous neighborhood."

Lestrade shrugged his shoulders. "I am a practical man," he said, "and I really cannot undertake to go about the country looking for a left-handed gentleman with a lame leg."

"All right," said Holmes quietly. "I have given you the chance. Good-bye. I shall drop you a line before I leave."

Having left Lestrade at his rooms, we drove to
our hotel, where we found lunch upon the table. Holmes was silent and buried in thought, with a pained expression upon his face, as one who finds himself in a perplexing position.

"Look here, Watson. Just sit down in this chair and let me preach to you for a little. I don't quite know what to do, and I should value your advice. Light a cigar, and let me expound."

"Pray do so."

"Well, now, in considering this case there are two points about young McCarthy's narrative which struck us both instantly. One was the fact that his father should, according to his account, cry 'Cooee!' before seeing him. The other was his singular dying reference to a rat. He mumbled several words, you understand, but that was all that caught the son's ear."

"What of this 'Cooee!' then?"

"Well, obviously it could not have been meant for the son. 'Cooee!' is a distinctly Australian cry, and one which is used between Australians. There is a strong presumption that the person whom McCarthy expected to meet him at Boscombe Pool was someone who had been in Australia."

"What of the rat, then?"

Sherlock Holmes took a folded paper from his pocket and flattened it out on the table.
"This is a map of the colony of Victoria," he said. He put his hand over part of the map. "What do you read?" he asked.

"ARAT," I read.

"And now?" He raised his hand.

"BALLART."

"Quite so. That was the word the man uttered, and of which his son only caught the last two syllables. He was trying to utter the name of his murderer. So-and-so of Ballart."

"It is wonderful!"

"It is obvious. We have come now out of more vagueness to the definite conception of an Australian from Ballart with a grey cloak."

"Certainly."

"And one who was at home in the district, for the Pool can only be approached by the farm or by the estate, where strangers could hardly wander."

"Quite so."

"The impression of his right foot was always less distinct than his left. Why? Because he limped - he was lame."

"But his left-handedness?"
"You were yourself struck by the nature of the injury as recorded by the surgeon at the inquest. The blow was struck from immediately behind, and yet was upon the left side. Now, how can that be unless it were by a left-handed man? He had stood behind that tree during the interview between father and son. He had even smoked there. I found the ash of a cigar. Having found the ash, I then looked round and discovered the stump among the moss where he had tossed it. I was an Indian cigar, of the variety which are rolled in Rotterdam."

"And the cigar-holder?"

"I could see that the end had not been in his mouth. Therefore he used a holder. The tip had been cut off, not bitten off, but the cut was not a clean one, so I deduced a blunt penknife."

"Holmes," I said, "you have drawn a net round this man from which he cannot escape. The culprit is..."

"Mr. John Turner," cried the hotel waiter, opening the door of our sitting-room, and ushering in a visitor.

The man who entered was a strange and impressive figure. His slow, limping step and bowed shoulders gave the appearance of decrepitude. It was clear to me at a glance that he was in the grip of some deadly and chronic disease.
"Pray sit down on the sofa," said Holmes gently. "You had my note?"

"Yes, the lodge-keeper brought it up. You said that you wished to see me here to avoid scandal."

"I thought people would talk if I went to the Hall."

"And why did you wish to see me?" He looked across at my companion with despair in his weary eyes, as though his question were already answered.

"Yes," said Holmes, answering the look rather than the words. "It is so. I know all about McCarthy."

The old man sank his face in his hands. "God help me!" he cried. "But I would not have let the young man come to harm. I give you my word that I would have spoken out if it went against him at the Assizes."

"I am glad to hear you say so," said Holmes gravely.

"I would have spoken now had it not been for my dear girl. It would break her heart— it will break her heart when she hears that I am arrested."

"It may not come to that," said Holmes. "What!"

خاطبه هولمز بلطف: تفضل بالجلس على الأربكة. أوصليك رساتني؟
نعم، أعطاني إياها الحارس. قلت إنك تريد مقاليتي هنا تجنب الفضيحة.
أقرض أن الناس سيستغنون الكلام إذا ما حضرت إلى المزرعة.
لم تود رويتي؟ قال هذا ناظرا إلى صديقي بعينين ملهمًا للأس، كم يعرف الجواب ستقا. رد هولمز على نظرته أكثر منه على كلماته: نعم. أعرف كل شيء عن ماكاري.
أخفي الرجل الجرز وجه الباككي بين يديه.
فليساعني الله! لكتي أن أرضى أن يصيب الشاب أي مكره. أقسم في سأعترف بالحقيقة لو جاء الحكم ضده.
يسرتي سماع هذا.
لكنت تكلمت الآن ولا بنتي العريزة. سيتفطر قلبيا إن علمت أي موقف.
أجاب هولمز مطمئنا: قد لا نضمن إلى ذلك.

ماذا؟
"I am no official agent. I understand that it was your daughter who required my presence here, and I am acting in her interests. Young McCarthy must be got off, however."

"I am a dying man. I have had diabetes for years. My doctor says it is a question whether I shall live a month. Yet I would rather die under my own roof than in a goal."

Holmes rose and sat down at the table with his pen in his hand and a bundle of paper before him. "Just tell us the truth," he said. "I shall jot down the facts. You will sign it, and Watson here can witness it. Then I could produce your confession at the last extremity to save young McCarthy. I promise you that I shall not use it unless it is absolutely needed."

"You don't know this dead man, McCarthy. He was a devil incarnate. His grip has been upon me these twenty years, and he has blasted my life. I'll tell you first how I came to be in his power.

It was in the early 'sixties at the diggings. I was a young chap then, hot-blooded and reckless. In a word, I became what you would call over here a highway robber. There were six of us, and we had a wild, free life of it. Black Jack of Ballarat was the name I went under, and our party is still remembered in the colony as the Ballarat Gang.

لست عميلاً رسمياً، وانتُكِ هي التي طلبت حضوري إلى هنا وإنما عمل لما فيه مصلحتها. لكن يجب إطلاق سراح ماكاري في الأبين.

إلى على شفائر الموت وأعاني من داء السكري منذ سنوات عديدة. يقول الطبيب إن أيامي باتت محدودة. لكني أفضل الموت على فراثي منه في زنزانة.

نهض هولمز عندها وجلس إلى الطاولة. ثم تناول قلمًا ورزمة أوراق شارحاً. قل لنا الحقيقة وحسب. سأدون الوقائع ثم توقع الوقة ويشهد ويتسور على ذلك. لن استعمل هذا إلا في الحالة القصوى لإنقاذ ماكاري في الأبين. أعدك بأن لا أستعمله إلا لهذا الغرض.

أنت لم تعرف ذلك الرجل، وكان الشيطان تجسده. لقد وقعت في قبضته منذ عشرين سنة دمر حياتي. سأروي لك القصة منذ البداية.

كان ذلك في مطلع الستينات في المناجم. كنت آناذاك فتى متهوراً ومندفعاً، أي باختصار ما تسميه هذا قاطع طريق. كنت مجموعة مولقة من ستة أشخاص نعيش أحراراً من أيّة قيد، بلاك جاك من بيلارات هم كنيتي ولا زلت أعرف في المستمرة بسمرة بيلارات.
One day a gold convoy came down from Ballarat to Melbourne, and we lay in wait for it and attacked it. There were six troopers and six of us but we emptied four of their saddles at the first volley. Three of our boys were killed. I put my pistol to the head of the wagon-driver, who was this very man McCarthy. I wish to the Lord that I had shot him then, but I spared him, though I saw his wicked little eyes fixed on my face, as though to remember every feature. We got away with the gold, became wealthy men, and made our way over to England without being suspected. There I parted from my old pals, and determined to settle down to a quiet and respectable life. I bought this estate, which chanced to be in the market. In a word, I turned over a new leaf, and did my best to make up for the past.

All was going well when McCarthy laid his grip on me.

I had gone up to town about an investment, and I met him in Regent Street with hardly a coat to his back or a boot to his foot.

'Here we are, Jack,' says he, touching me on the arm: 'we'll be as good as a family to you. There's two of us, me and my son, and you can have the..."
keeping of us. If you don't— it's a fine, law-abiding country is England, and there's always a policeman within hail.'

Well, down they came to the West Country, there was no shaking them off, and there they have lived rent free on my best land ever since. Things grew worse as Alice grew up, for he soon saw I was more afraid of her knowing me past than the police. Whatever he wanted he must have, and whatever it was I gave him without question, land, money, houses, until at last he asked for a thing which I could not give. He asked for Alice.

Not that I had any dislike to the lad, but his blood was in him, and that was enough. I stood firm. McCarthy threatened. I braved him to do his worst. We were to meet at the Pool midway between our houses to talk it over.

When I went down there, I found him talking with his son, so I smoked a cigar, and waited behind a tree until he should be alone. But as I listened to his talk, all that was black and bitter in me seemed to come uppermost. He was urging his son to marry my daughter with as little regard for what she might think as if she were a slut from off the streets. It drove me mad to think that I and all that I held most dear should be in the power of such a man as this.
Could I not snap the bond? I was already a dying and desperate man. I knew that my own fate was sealed. But my memory and my girl! Both could be saved. I did it, Mr. Holmes. I would do it again."

"Well, it is not for me to judge you," said Holmes, as the old man signed the statement which had been drawn out. "I pray that we may never be exposed to such a temptation."

"I pray not, sir. And what do you intend to do?"

"In view of your health, nothing. You are yourself aware that you will soon have to answer for your deed at a higher court than the Assizes. I will keep your confession, and, if McCarthy is condemned, I shall be forced to use it. If not, it shall never be seen by mortal eye; and your secret, whether you be alive or dead, shall be safe with us."

"Farewell, then," said the old man solemnly. Tottering and shaking in all his giant frame, he stumbled slowly from the room.

"God help us!" said Holmes, after a long silence. "Why does Fate play such tricks with poor helpless worms?"

James McCarthy was acquitted at the Assizes, on the strength of a number of objections which had been drawn out by Holmes, and submitted to the defending counsel. Old Turner lived for seven
months after our interview, but he is now dead; and there is every prospect that the son and daughter may come to live happily together, in ignorance of the black cloud which rests upon their past.

سبعة أشهر بعد اللقاء معنا. الآن وقد مات من المحتمل جدًا أن يحيا الأبناء والأختين حياة سعيدة معًا بعيدًا عن العذاب الذي عكرت صفو ماضيهما.
The Man with the Twisted Lip

Isa Whitney was much addicted to opium. The habit grew upon him, as I understand when he was at college. He found, as so many more have done, that the practice is easier to attain than to get rid of, and for many years he continued to be a slave to the drug, an object of mingled horror and pity to his friends and relatives.

One night – it was June, '89 – there came a ring to my bell. I sat up in my chair, and my wife laid her needlework down in her lap and made a little face of disappointment.

"A patient!" said she. "You'll have to go out."

I groaned, for I was newly come back from a weary day. We heard the door open, a few wearied words, and then quick steps upon the linoleum. Our own door flew open, and a veiled lady entered the room.

"You will excuse my calling so late," she began, and then, suddenly losing her self-control, she ran forward, threw her arms about my wife's neck, and sobbed upon her shoulder.
“Oh! I'm in such trouble!” she cried; “I do so want a little help.”

"Why," said my wife, pulling up her veil, "it is Kate Whitney. How you startled me, Kate! I had not an idea who you were when you came in."

"I didn't know what to do, so I came straight to you." That was always the way. Folk who were in grief came to my wife like birds to a lighthouse.

"I want the Doctor’s advice and help too. It's about Isa. He has not been home for two days. I am so frightened about him!"

It was not the first time that she had spoken to us of her husband's trouble. We soothed and comforted her by such words as we could find. Did she know where her husband was? Was it possible that we could bring him back to her?

Hitherto, his orgies had always been confined to one day, and he had come back in the evening. But now the spell had been upon him eight-and-forty hours. He was to be found with stock, she was sure of it. But what was she to do? How could she, a young and timid woman, make her way into such a place, and pluck her husband out from among the ruffians who surrounded him?

There was the case, and of course there was but one way out of it. There was no great difficulty in the
first stage of my adventure. When I found the den of which I was in search, I ordered my cab to wait, passed down the steps, and by the light of a flickering oil lamp I found a low room, thick and heavy with the brown opium smoke, and terraced with wooden berths, like the forecastle of an emigrant ship.

Through the gloom one could dimly catch a glimpse of bodies lying in strange fantastic poses. The most lay silent, but some muttered to themselves, and others talked together in a strange, low, monotonous voice.

As I entered, a sallow Malay attendant had hurried up with a pipe for me and a supply of the drug.

"Thank you, I have not come to stay," said I.
"There is a friend of mine here, Mr. Isa Whitney, and I wish to speak with him."

There was a movement and an exclamation from my right, and, peering through the gloom, I saw Whitney, pale, haggard, and unkempt, staring out at me.

"My God! It's Watson," said he. "I say, Watson, what o'clock is it?"

"Nearly eleven."
"Of what day?"
"Of Friday, June 19."
“Good heavens! I thought it was Wednesday. It is Wednesday.” He sank his face on to his arms, and began to sob in a high treble key.

“I tell you that it is Friday, man. Your wife has been waiting these two days for you. You should be shamed of yourself!”

“So I am. But you’ve got mixed, Watson, for I have only been here a few hours, three pipes, four pipes – I forget how many. But I’ll go home with you. I wouldn’t frighten Kate – poor little Kate. Give me your hand! Have you a cab?”

“Yes, I have one waiting.”

As I passed the tall man who sat by the brazier I felt a sudden pluck at my skirt, and a low voice whispered, “Walk past me, and then look back at me.” The words fell quite distinctly upon my ear. I glanced down. They could only have come from the old man at my side. I took two steps forward and looked back. It took all my self-control to prevent me from breaking out into a cry of astonishment. He had turned his back so that none could see him but I. His form had filled out, his wrinkles were gone, the dull eyes had regained their fire, and there was none other than Sherlock Holmes. He made a slight motion to me to approach him.

“Holmes!” I whispered, “what on earth are you doing in this den?”
“As low as you can,” he answered, “I have excellent ears. If you would have the great kindness to get rid of that sottish friend of yours, I should be exceedingly glad to have a little talk with you.”

It was difficult to refuse any of Sherlock Holmes’ requests, for they were always so exceedingly definite, and put forward with such an air of mastery. I felt, however, that when Whitney was once confined in the cab to be sent home, my mission was practically accomplished; and for the rest, I could not wish anything better than to be associated with my friend in one of those singular adventures which were the normal condition of his existence. In a few minutes I had paid Whitney’s bill, led him out to the cab, and seen him driven through the darkness. In a very short time a decrepit figure had emerged from the opium den, and I was walking down the street with Sherlock Holmes.

“I was certainly surprised to find you there.”

“But not more so than I to find you.”

“I came to find a friend.”

“And I to find an enemy!”

“An enemy?”

“Briefly, Watson, I am in the midst of a very
remarkable inquiry, and I have hoped to find a clue in these sots, as I have done before now. There is a trap-door at the back of that building, which could tell some strange tales of what has passed through it upon the moonless nights."

He put his two forefingers between his teeth and whistled shrilly, a signal which was answered by a similar whistle from the distance, followed shortly by the rattle of wheels and the clink of horse's hoofs.

"Now, Watson. You'll come with me, won't you?"

"If I can be of use."

"Oh, a trusty comrade is always of use. My room at the Cedars is a double-bedded one."

"The Cedars?"

"Yes; that is Mr. St. Clair's house. I am staying there while I conduct the inquiry."

"But I am all in the dark."

"Of course you are. You'll know all about it presently. Jump up here! All right, John, we shall not need you. Here's half-a-crown. Look out for me tomorrow at about eleven."

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He flicked the horse with his whip, and we dashed away through the endless succession of somber and deserted streets, which widened gradually, until we were flying across a broad balustraded bridge, with the murky river flowing sluggishly beneath us. Holmes drove in silence, with the air of a man who is lost in thought, whilst I sat beside him curious to learn what this new quest might be. We had driven several miles, and were beginning to get to the fringe of the belt of suburban villas, when he shook himself, shrugged his shoulders, and lit up his pipe with the air of a man who has satisfied himself.

"You have a grand gift of silence, Watson," said he. "It is a great thing for me to have someone to talk to. I was wondering what I should say to this dear little woman tonight when she meets me at the door."

"You forget that I know nothing about it."

"I shall just have to tell you the facts of the case before we get to Lee."

"Proceed, then."

"Some years ago -- to be definite, in May 1884 -- there came to Lee a gentleman, Neville St. Clair by name, who appeared to have plenty of money. He took a large villa. By degrees he made friends in the

ضرب الحصان بسوطة فائقة فانطلقنا في عهديه متشابك من
الشوارع المعتمة المقفرة، اتسع كريجيًا إلى أن وصلنا إلى جسر
واسع ذي درابزين، ولئن العظم لم يجري من تحتنا. لزم هولمز
الصمت طوال الطريق وكان يفكر، بينما جعلت أنا قريبة في شرق
لمعرفة المزيد عن بعثه الجديد. وبعد أن اختبأنا بضعة أمثال
وشارفتنا على الوصول إلى أطراف حزام النيلات، إنقضت هولمز
وسرت كتفه ثم أشعل على نفسه كلم راميًا عما فعله وقال:

"إذا كان الكلام من فضيحة فالسكت من ذهب يا راتسون. لكن
يسرنى أن يكون لي من أثيرته إليه. مادا ترايني سأقول لليلة
المرأة العزيزة عندما تنتظرني عند الباب؟

لا بد أنك نسيت أنني لا أعرف شيئا عن الموضوع؟"

"أي ما يكفي من الوقت لأطلعك على الوقائع قبل أن تصل

إلي: "تفضل."

قبل بضعة سنوات، في أيار (مايو) من العام 1884 تحديدًا،
أني رجل يدعى نبيل سانت كليفر إلى لي. بدأ ثريًا جدًا فانشطر
فيلا كبيرة وكون تدريجيًا شبكة أصدقاء جديد في الجوار وتشابه
neighborhood, and in 1887 he married the daughter of a local brewer, by whom he has now had two children. He had no occupation, but was interested in several companies, and went into town as a rule in the morning, returning by the 5:14 from Cannon Street every night. Mr. St. Clair is now 37 years of age, is a man of temperate habits, a good husband, a very affectionate father, and a man who is popular with all who know him. I may add that there is no reason to think that money troubles had been weighing upon his mind.

Last Monday Mr. Neville St. Clair went into town rather earlier than usual. He would bring his little boy home a box of bricks. Now, by the merest chance his wife received a telegram upon this same Monday, very shortly after his departure, to the effect that a small parcel of considerable value which she had been expecting was waiting for her at the offices of the Aberdeen Shipping Company. The office of the company is in Fresno Street where you found me tonight. Mrs. St. Clair had her lunch, started for the City, did some shopping, proceeded to the company's office and found herself exactly at 4:35 walking through Swandam Lane on her way back to the station. Have you followed me so far?

"It is very clear."

"She suddenly heard an ejaculation or a cry, and was struck cold to see her husband looking down at

العام 1887 ابنتي صاحب جمعة محلي ورقص منها بولدرين. لم تكن له وظيفة معينة لكونه كان يهتم بعده شركات، واعتقد أن يذهب إلى المدينة صباحًا على أن يعود في تمام الخامسة وأربع عشرا دقيقة كله مساء عبر شارع كاتون، يبلغ عمر السيد سانت كلير الآن 37 عامًا ليست له عادات مميزة، وهو زوج مثالي وأب عطوف وجميع من يعرفونه يحبونه. كما أنه ما من شيء يدل على أنه كان يعاني من مشاكل مادية.

خرج السيد سانت كلير إلى المدينة نهار الاثنين الماضي لبكر من العادة ووعد أن يلبس معي لابته علبة لعب، وصاحت في نطقته بعد رحيله برقية مفادها أن طردا ماهما كانت بانتظاره وصل إلى مكتب شركة أيردين للشحن في شارع فرز، حيث وجدته ليلا تجاوزت السيد سانت كلير غداها وتوجهت إلى وسط المدينة، ثم قصدت بعد التبضع، مكتب الشركة ووصلت في تمام الساعة الرابعة وخمس وثلاثين دقيقة إلى شارع سوانام في طريق العودة إلى المحطة. أما زلت معي؟"

"نعم، كل شيء واضح حتى الآن."

"مشلت السيد سانت كلير ببطء وهي تبحث عن عربة تقلها، وهي كذلك، سمعت فجأة هتافًا أو صراخًا، وكم فوجئت برؤية

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her. She distinctly saw his face, which she describes as being terribly agitated. He then vanished from the window so suddenly that it seemed to her that he had been plucked back by some irresistible force from behind. One singular point which struck her quick feminine eye was that, although he wore some dark coat, he had on neither collar nor necktie.

Convinced that something was amiss with him, she rushed down the steps— for the house was none other than the opium den in which you found me tonight—and, running through the front room, she attempted to ascend the stairs which led to the first floor. At the foot of the stairs, however, she met this Lascar scoundrel who pushed her out into the street. She rushed down the land, and, by rare good fortune, met, in Fresno Street an inspector. The inspector and two men accompanied her back, and made their way to the room in which Mr. St. Clair had last been seen. There was no sign of him there except the toy which he had promised to bring home.

This discovery, and the evident confusion which the cripple showed, made the inspector realize that the matter was serious. The rooms were carefully examined, and results all pointed to an abominable crime. On examination, traces of blood were to be seen upon the window-sill, and several scattered drops were visible upon the wooden floor of the bedroom. Thrust away behind a curtain in the front

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room were all the clothes of Mr. Neville St. Clair, with the exception of his coat. Out of the window he must have gone, for no other exit could be discovered.

"And now as to the villains who seemed to be immediately implicated in the matter, the Lascar was known to be a man of the vilest antecedents, but as by Mrs. St. Clair's story he was known to have been at the foot of the stair within a few seconds of her husband's appearance at the window. His defence was one of absolute ignorance.

Now for the sinister cripple who lives upon the second floor of the opium den, and who was certainly the last human being whose eyes rested upon Neville St. Clair. His name is Hugh Boone. He is a professional beggar. Some little distance town Threadneedle Street upon the left-hand side there is, as you may have remarked, a small angle in the wall. Here it is that the creature takes his daily seat. His appearance, you see, is so remarkable that no one can pass him without noticing him. This is the man whom we now learn to have been the lodger at the opium den, and to have been the last man to see the gentleman of whom we are in quest."

"But a cripple!" said I. "What could he have done single-handed against a man in the prime of life?"
“Surely your medical experience would tell you, Watson, that weakness in one limb is often compensated for by exceptional strength in the others.”

“Pray continue your narrative.”

“Mrs. St. Clair had fainted at the sight of the blood upon the window, and she was escorted home in a cab by the police. Inspector Barton, who had charge of the case, made a very careful examination of the premises, but without finding anything which threw any light upon the matter. One mistake had been made in not arresting Boone instantly, as he was allowed some few minutes during which he might have communicated with his friend the Lascar, but this fault was soon remedied, and he was seized and searched, without anything being found which could incriminate him. He denied strenuously ever having seen Mr. Neville St. Clair, and swore that the presence of clothes in his room was as much a mystery to him as to the police. As to Mrs. St. Clair’s assertion, that she had actually seen her husband at the window, he declared that she must have been either mad or dreaming.

And it did, though the police hardly found upon the mud-bank what they had feared to find. It was Neville St. Clair’s coat, and not Neville St. Clair. Which lay uncovered as the tide receded. And what do you think they found in the pockets?”

“I cannot imagine.”
"But I understand that all the other clothes were found in the room. Would the body be dressed in a coat alone?"

"No, sir, but suppose that this man Boone had thrust Neville St. Clair through the window. What would he do then? He must get rid of the tell-tale garments. There is not an instant to be lost. He rushes to some secret hoard, where he has accumulated the fruits of his beggary, and he stuffs all the coins upon which he can lay his hands into his pockets to make sure of the coat’s sinking. He throws it out, and would have done the same with the other garments had he not heard the rush of steps below, and only just had time to close the window when the police appeared."

"It certainly sounds feasible."

"Well, we will take it as a working hypothesis for want of a better. The questions which have to be solved, what Neville St. Clair was doing in the opium den, what happened to him when there, where is he now, and what Hugh Boone had to do with his
disappearance, are all as far from a solution as ever. I confess that I cannot recall any case within my experience which looked at the first glance so simple, and yet which presented such difficulties.”

Whilst Sherlock Holmes had been detailing this singular series of events, we had been whirling through the outskirts of the great town until we drove through two scattered villages, where a few lights still glimmered in the windows.

My companion said, “See that light among the trees? That is the Cedars, and beside that lamp sits a woman whose anxious ears have already, I have little doubt, caught the clink of our horse’s feet. I hate to meet her, Watson, when I have no news of her husband. Here we are.”

We had put up in front of a large villa which stood within its own grounds. A stable-boy had run out to the horse’s head, and, springing down, I followed Holmes up the small, winding gravel drive which led to the house. As we approached the door flew open, and a little blonde woman stood in the opening. She stood with eager eyes and parted lips, a standing question.

“Well?” she cried. “No good news?”

“No.”

“No bad?”

“No.”
"Thank God for that. But come in. You must be weary, for you have had a long day."

"This is my friend, Dr. Watson. He has been of most vital use to me in several of my cases, and a lucky chance has made it possible for me to bring him out and associate him with this investigation."

"I am delighted to see you," said she, pressing my hand warmly. "You will, I am sure, forgive anything which may be wanting in our arrangements, when you consider the blow which has come so suddenly upon us."

"My dear madam," said I, "I can very well see that no apology is needed."

"Now, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said the lady as we entered a well-lit dining-room, upon the table of which a cold supper had been laid out. "I should very much like to ask you one or two plain questions, to which I will beg that you will give a plain answer."

"Certainly, madam."

"In your heart of hearts, do you think that Neville is alive?"

Sherlock Holmes seemed to be embarrassed by the question. "Frankly now!" she repeated, looking keenly down at him, as he leaned back in a basket chair.
"Frankly then, madam, I do not."

"You think that he is dead?"

"I do."

"Murdered?"

"Perhaps."

"Then perhaps, Mr. Holmes, you will be good enough to explain how it is that I have received this letter from him today?"

She stood smiling, holding up a little slip of paper in the air. He snatched it from her in his eagerness, and smoothing it out upon the table, he drew over the lamp, and examined it intently. I had left my chair, and was gazing at it over his shoulder. The envelope was a very coarse one, and was stamped with the Gravesend postmark, and with the date of that very day, or rather of the day before, for it was considerably after midnight.

"Surely this is not your husband's writing, madam."

"No, but the enclosure is."

"I perceive also that whoever addressed the envelope had to go and inquire as to the address. Let us now see the letter! Ha! There has been an enclosure here!"
"Yes, there was a ring. His signet ring."

"And you are sure that this is your husband's hand?"
"One of his hands."

"One?"

"His hand when he wrote hurriedly. It is very unlike his usual writing, and yet I know it well."

Dearest, do not be frightened. All will come well. There is a huge error which it may take some little time to rectify. Wait in patience.

Neville

"Written in pencil upon a fly leaf of a book, octavo size, no water-mark. Posted today in Gravesend by a man with a dirty thumb. Ha! And the flap has been gummed, if I am not very much in error, by a person who had been chewing tobacco. And you have no doubt that it is your husband's hand, madam?"

"None. Neville wrote those words."

"Well, Mrs. St. Clair, the clouds lighten, though I should not venture to say that the danger is over."

"Oh, you must not discourage me, Mr. Holmes. I know that all is well with him. There is so keen a
sympathy between us that I should know if evil came upon him."

"In this letter you certainly have a very strong piece of evidence to corroborate your view. But if your husband is alive and able to write letters, why should he remain away from you? On Monday he made no remarks before leaving you?"

"No."

"And you were surprised to see him in Swandam Lane?"

"Very much so."

"Was the window open?"

"Yes."

"He only, as I understand, gave an inarticulate cry?"

"Yes."

"A call for help, you thought?"

"Yes. He waved his hands."

"But it might have been a cry of surprise at the unexpected sight of you which might have caused him to throw up his hands."

"It is possible."

"And you thought he was pulled back."
"He disappeared so suddenly."

"He might have leaped back. You did not see anyone else in the room?"

"No, but this horrible man confessed to having been there, and the Lascar was at the foot of the stairs."

"Quite so. Your husband, as far as you could see, had his ordinary clothes on?"

"But without his collar or tie. I distinctly saw his bare throat."

"Had he ever spoken of Swaddam Lane?"

"Never."

"Thank you, Mrs. St. Clair. Those are the principal points about which I wished to be absolutely clear. We shall now have a little supper and then retire, for we may have a very busy day tomorrow."

A large and comfortable double-bedded room had been placed at our disposal, and I was quickly between the sheets, for I was weary after my night of adventure. Sherlock Holmes was a man, however, who when he had an unsolved problem upon his mind would go for days, and even for a week, without rest, turning it over, rearranging his facts,
looking at it from every point of view, until he had either fathomed it, or convinced himself that his data were insufficient. A sudden ejaculation caused me to wake up, and I found the summer sun shining into the apartment. The pipe was still between his lips and the room was full of a dense tobacco haze.

"Awake, Watson?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Game for a morning drive?"

"Certainly."

"Then dress." He seemed a different man to the sombre thinker of the previous night.

As I dressed, I glanced at my watch. It was twenty-five minutes past four. I had hardly finished when Holmes returned with the news that the boy was putting in the horse.

"I want to test a little theory of mine," said he, pulling on his boots. "I think I have the key of the affair now."

"And where is it?" I asked, smiling.

"In the bathroom," he answered. "Oh, yes, I am not joking," he continued, seeing my look of incredulity. "I have just been there, and I have taken it out. Come on, my boy, and we shall see whether it will not fit the lock."
We made our way downstairs as quickly as possible; and out into the bright morning sunshine and away we dashed down the London road.

"It has been in some points a singular case," said Holmes.

In town, the earliest risers were just beginning to look sleepily from their windows as we drove through the streets in Bow Street. Sherlock Holmes was well known to the Force, and the two constables at the door saluted him. One of them held the horse's head while the other led us in.

"Who is on duty?" asked Holmes.

"Inspector Bradstreet, sir."

"Ah, Bradstreet, how are you?"

A tall, stout official had come down. "I wish to have a word with you, Bradstreet."

"Certainly, Mr. Holmes. Step into my room here."

It was a small office-like room. The inspector sat down at his desk.

"What can I do for you, Mr. Holmes?"

"I called about that beggar-man, Boone – the one who was charged with being concerned in the disappearance of Mr. Neville St. Clair, of Lee."
"Yes. He was brought up and remanded for further inquiries."

"So I heard. You have him here?"

"In the cells."

"Is he quiet?"

"Oh, he gives no trouble. But he is a dirty scoundrel."

"Dirty?"

"Yes, it is all we can make him do to wash his hands, and his face is as black as a tinker’s."

"I should like to see him very much."

"Would you? That is easily done. Come this way."

He led us down a passage, opened a barred door, passed down a winding stair, and brought us to a whitewashed corridor with a line of doors on each side.

"The third on the right is his," said the inspector. He quietly shot back a panel in the upper part of the door, and glanced through.

We both put our eyes to the grating. The prisoner lay with his face towards us, in a very deep sleep, breathing slowly and heavily. He was, as the inspector had said, extremely dirty, but the grime which covered his face could not conceal its

"Yes. Let me hear. I have written in Arabic."

"So I heard. You have a record of him here?"

"In the cells."

"Is he quiet?"

"Oh, he gives no trouble. But he is a dirty scoundrel."

"Dirty?"

"Yes, it is all we can make him do to wash his hands, and his face is as black as a tinker’s."

"I should like to see him very much."

"Would you? That is easily done. Come this way."

He led us down a passage, opened a barred door, passed down a winding stair, and brought us to a whitewashed corridor with a line of doors on each side.

"The third on the right is his," said the inspector. He quietly shot back a panel in the upper part of the door, and glanced through.

We both put our eyes to the grating. The prisoner lay with his face towards us, in a very deep sleep, breathing slowly and heavily. He was, as the inspector had said, extremely dirty, but the grime which covered his face could not conceal its
repulsive ugliness. A broad weal from an old scar ran across it from eye to chin, and by its contraction had turned up one side of the upper lip.

"He's a beauty, isn't he?" said the inspector.

"He certainly needs a wash," remarked Holmes. "I had an idea that he might, and I took the liberty of bringing the tools with me." He opened his bag as he spoke, and took out, to my astonishment, a very large bath sponge.

"He! He! You are a funny one," chuckled the inspector.

"Now, if you will have the great goodness to open that door very quietly, we will soon make him cut a much more respectable figure."

He slipped his key into the lock, and we all very quietly entered the cell. The sleeper half turned, and then settled down once more into a deep slumber. Holmes moistened his sponge, and then rubbed it twice vigorously across and down the prisoner's face.

"Let me introduce you," he shouted, "to Mr. Neville St. Clair, of Lee, in the country of Kent."

Never in my life had I seen such a sight. The man's face peeled off under the sponge like the bark from a tree. Gone was the horrid scar and the twisted lip which had given the repulsive sneer to his face! Suddenly realizing the exposure, the man broke into
a scream, and threw himself down with his face to the pillow.

"Great heaven!" cried the inspector, "it is, indeed, the missing man. I know him from the photograph."

The prisoner turned with the reckless air of a man who abandons himself to his destiny.

"Be it so," said he. "And pray what am I charged with?"

"Well, I have been twenty-seven years in the Force, but this really takes the cake."

"If I am Mr. Neville St. Clair, then it is obvious that no crime has been committed, and that, therefore, I am illegally detained."

"No crime, but a very great error has been committed," said Holmes. "You would have done better to have trusted your wife."

"God help me, I would not have ashamed them of their father. My God! What an exposure! What can I do?"

Sherlock Holmes sat down beside him on the couch, and patted him kindly on the shoulder.

"If you leave it to a court of law to clear the matter up," said he, "of course you can hardly avoid
publicity. On the other hand, if you convince the police authorities that there is no possible case against you, I do not know that there is any reason that the details should find their way into the papers."

"God bless you!" cried the prisoner passionately. I would have endured imprisonment, ay, even execution, rather than have left my miserable secret as a family blot to my children. You are the first to have ever heard my story.

I became a reporter on an evening paper in London. One day my editor wished to have a series of articles upon begging in the metropolis, and I volunteered to supply them. There was the point from which all my adventures started. It was only by trying begging as an amateur that I could get the facts upon which to base my articles. For seven hours I plied my trade, and when I returned home in the evening I found, to my surprise, that I had received no less than twenty-six shillings and fourpence.

I wrote my articles, and thought little more of the matter until, some time later, I backed a bill for a friend, and had a writ served upon me for 25 pounds. I was at my wits' end where to get the money, but a sudden idea came to me. I spent a fortnight in begging in the City under my disguise. In ten days I had the money, and had paid the debt.

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ألا يُفْتَضِحُ أَمْرِكُ، مِنْ جَهَةٍ ثَانِيةٍ، إِذَا نُجِحتُ فِي إِتِّقَانِ النَّفَاقِيَّةُ بَيْنَا

غَيْرِ مِزْلَبٍ، لَا أَرُى مِنْ دَاعٍ لِنَشْرِ التَّفَاصِيلِ فِي الجُرَّانَ.

فَلِيُبَارِكُكَ أَنَا أَفْضِلُ التَّوْقِيَّةِ وَالجِبَّيْدُ وَالحُمْيَةَ وَحَتَّىِ الإِعْدَامَ

على فَضْحِ سَرِيِّ لَعْلَائِقِي وَأَوَلَادِي، سَتُكُونُ أَوَّلُ مِنْ يَعْرِفُ قِصْتِي.*

بَدَأَ أَعْمَلُ كَصَحَافيٍّ فِي جَرِيدَةِ مُسَانِيَةٍ فِي لَندَنَّ، وَأَوَّلَ مَحْرُورُ

السَّمَحَاءَ ذَا ذِيَّ يَوْمٍ أَنْ يِنْشَرَ سَلَسَلَتَ مَقَالَتِي عَنْ النَّسَوَاءِ فِي المُدْنِيَّةِ,

فَطَوَتْ لِإِجْرَاءِ التَّحْقِيقِ: بَدَأَتْ مَعَمْرَتِي مِنْ هَذَا. كَانَتْ الْطَرِيقَةُ

الوحِيدَةُ لِلْحُصُولِ عَلَى التَّفَاصِيلِ لِلْلَّادِمِ لِمَقَالَتِي عِبْرَ عِلْمٍ دُوْرِ

المَشْتَرِيّ بَنْفَسِي، هَذَا فَعَلْتُ، وَنَسْلَتْ مَدَةً سِبْعَ سَاعَاتٍ، وَكَم

فَوَجَّهْتْ مَسَاءَ عَنْدَا أَذْرَكْ أَنَّي جَنِبْتُ 26 شَلَّةٍ وأَرْبَعَةٌ بَنْسَاتٍ,

كَتَبْت مَقَالَتِي وَلَمْ أُعْرِفَ الْأَمْرَ اِتْبَهَا إِلَى أَنْ تَأْخَذْتُ عَنْ سَمَادِ

سَنَدَ مُسْتَحِقٍ لَأَحَدِ أَصْدَاقِي قَدْرهُ 25 جَنِبَةَ، وَبِنَيَّمَا أُنا أَفْكَرُ فِي

طُرُقَةٍ أَوْمِنْ بِهَا الْمَالَ، خَطَّرْتَ عَلَى بَالِي فُكْرَةً، فَقَرَرْتُ النَّسَوَاءَ

لْعَشْرَةِ أَيَامٍ فِي وَسْطِ المُدْنِيَّةِ وَأَنا مَتْخَفِّطٌ كَمَا فِي الْمَسَأَةِ السَّلِبِّيَّةِ,

وَإِسْتَطَعْتُ فِي غَيْضِ عَشْرَةِ أَيَامِ أَن أَجْنُي المَبْلَغِ اللَّازِمِ وَأَسْدُد

الْدِيْنِ.

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It was a long fight between my pride and the money, but the dollars won at last, and I threw up reporting, and sat day after day begging in the corner. Only one man knew my secret. He was the keeper of a low den in which I used to lodge in Swandam Lake, where I could every morning emerge as a squalid beggar, and in the evening transform myself into a well-dressed man about town. This fellow, a Lascar, was well paid by me for his rooms, so that I knew that my secret was safe in his possession.

Well, very soon I found that I was saving considerable sums of money. As I grew richer I grew more ambitious, took a house in the country, and eventually married, without anyone having a suspicion as to my real occupation. My dear wife knew that I had a business in the City. She little knew what.

Last Monday I had finished for the day, and was dressing in my room above the opium den, when I looked out of the window, and saw, to my horror and astonishment, that my wife was standing in the street, with her eyes fixed full upon me. I gave a cry of surprise, threw up my arms to cover my face, and rushing to Lascar, entreated him to prevent anyone from coming up to me. I heard her voice downstairs, but I knew that she could not ascend. Swiftly I threw off my clothes, pulled on those of a beggar, and put
on my pigments and wig. Even a wife’s eyes could not pierce so complete a disguise. But then it occurred to me that there might be a search in the room and that the clothes might betray me. I threw open the window, reopening by my violence a small cut which I had inflicted upon myself in the bedroom that morning. Then I seized my coat, which was weighted by the coppers which I had just transferred to it from the leather bag in which I carried my takings. I hurled it out of the window, and it disappeared into the Thames. The other clothes would have followed, but at that moment there was a rush of constables up the stairs, and a few minutes after I found, rather, I confess, to my relief, that instead of being identified as Mr. Neville St. Clair, I was arrested as his murderer.

Knowing that my wife would be terribly anxious, I slipped off my ring, and confided it to the Lascar at a moment when no constable was watching me, together with a hurried scrawl, telling her that she had no cause to fear.”

“That note only reached her yesterday,” said Holmes.

“Good God! What a week she must have spent.”

“The police have watched this Lascar,” said Inspector Bradstreet, “and I can quite understand that he might find it difficult to post a letter unobserved. If the police are to hush this thing up, there must be no more of Hugh Boone.”

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"I have sworn it by the most solemn oaths which a man can take."

"In that case I think that it is probable that no further steps may be taken. But if you are found again, then all must come out. I am sure, Mr. Holmes, that we are very much indeed indebted to you for having cleared the matter up. I wish I knew how you reach your results."

"I reached this one, said my friend, "by sitting upon five pillows and consuming an ounce of tobacco. I think, Watson, that if we drive to Baker Street we shall just be in time for breakfast."
The Blue Carbuncle

I had called upon my friend Sherlock Holmes upon the second morning after Christmas, with the intention of wishing him the compliments of the season.

"You are engaged," said I; "perhaps I interrupt you."

"Not at all. I am glad to have a friend with whom I can discuss my results."

I seated myself in his arm-chair, and warmed my hands before his crackling fire, for a sharp frost had set in.

Sherlock Holmes said, laughing, "It's only one of those whimsical little incidents which will happen when you have four million human beings all jostling each other within the space of a few square miles. Amid the action and reaction of so dense a swarm of humanity, every possible combination of events may be expected to take place, and many a little problem will be presented which may be striking, and bizarre without being criminal. We have already had experience of such."
"So much so," I remarked, "that, of the last six cases which I have added to my notes, three have been entirely free of any legal crime."

"Precisely. You allude to my attempt to recover the Irene Adler papers, to the singular case of Miss Mary Sutherland, and to the adventure of the man with the twisted lip. Well, I have no doubt that this small matter will fall into the same innocent category. You know Peterson, the commissionaire?"

"Yes."

"It is to him that this trophy belongs."

"It is his hat."

"No, no; he found it. First as to how it came here. It arrived upon Christmas morning, in company with a good fat goose. About four o'clock on Christmas morning, Peterson, who, as you know, was making his was homewards down Tottenham Court Road. In front of him he saw a tallish man carrying a white goose slung over his shoulder. As he reached the corner of Goodge Street, a row broke out between this stranger and a little knot of roughs. One of the latter knocked off the man's hat. Peterson had rushed forward to protect the stranger from his assailants, but the man, seeing an official-looking person in uniform rushing towards him, dropped his goose, took to his heels, and vanished amid the labyrinth of
small streets. Peterson was left in possession of the field of battle, and also of the spoils of victory in the shape of this battered hat and a most unimpeachable Christmas goose.

"Which surely he restored to their owner?"

"My dear fellow, there lies the problem. It is true that "For Mrs. Henry Baker" was printed upon a small card which was tied to the bird's left leg, and it is also true that the initials 'H.B.' are legible upon the lining of this hat; but, as there are some thousands of Bakers, and some hundreds of Henry Bakers in this city of ours, it is not easy to restore lost property to any one of them."

"What, then, did Peterson do?"

"He brought round both hat and goose to me on Christmas morning, knowing that even the smallest problems are of interest to me. The goose we retained until this morning, when there were signs that, in spite of the slight frost, it would be well that it should be eaten without unnecessary delay. Its finder has carried it off therefore to fulfill the ultimate destiny of a goose, while I continue to retain the hat of the unknown gentleman who lost his Christmas dinner."

"Did he not advertise?"

"No."

"Then, what clue could you have as to his identity?"
"Only as much as we can deduce.

"From this hat?"

"Precisely."

"But you are joking."

"Here is my lens. You know my methods. What can you gather yourself as to the individuality of the man who has worn this article?"

I took the tattered object in my hands, and turned it over rather ruefully.

"I can see nothing," said I, handing it back to my friend.

"On the contrary, Watson, you can see everything. You fail, however, to reason from what you see."

"Then, pray tell me what it is that you can infer from this hat?"

He picked it up, and gazed at it in the peculiar introspective fashion which was characteristic of him. "The man was highly intellectual, fairly well-to-do within the last three years, although he has now fallen upon evil days. This may account also for the obvious fact that his wife has ceased to love him."

"My dear Mr. Holmes!"

"He has, however, retained some degree of self-respect. He is a man who leads a sedentary life, goes..."
out little, is middle-aged, has grizzled hair which he has had cut within the last few days, and which he anoints with lime-cream. These are the most patent facts which are to be deduced from his hat.

"You are certainly joking, Holmes."

"Not in the least. Is it possible that even now when I give you these results you are unable to see how they are attained?"

"I have no doubt that I am very stupid; but I must confess that I am unable to follow you. For example, how did you deduce that this man was intellectual?"

For answer Holmes clapped the hat upon his head. It came right over the forehead and settled upon the bridge of his nose. "It is a question of cubic capacity," said he: "a man with so large a brain must have something in it."

"The decline of his fortunes, then?"

"This hat is three years old. If this man could afford to buy so expensive a hat three years ago, and has had no hat since, then he has assuredly gone down in the world."

"Your reasoning is clearly plausible. But his wife—you said that she had ceased to love him."

"This hat has not been brushed for weeks. When I see you, my dear Watson, with a week's
accumulation of dust upon your hat, and when your wife allows you to go out in such a state, shall fear that you also have been unfortunate enough to lose your wife's affection."

"But he might be a bachelor."

"Nay, he was bringing home the goose as a peace-offering to his wife. Remember the card upon the bird's leg."

"You have an answer to everything," I said, laughing, "but since, as you said just now, there has been no crime committed, and no harm done save the loss of a goose, all this seems to be rather a waste of energy."

Sherlock Holmes had opened his mouth to reply, when the door flew open, and Peterson the commissaire rushed into the compartment with the face of a face who is dazed with astonishment.

"The goose, Mr. Holmes! The goose, sir!" he gasped.

"Eh! What of it, then? Has it returned to life, and flapped off through the kitchen window?"

"See here, sir! See what my wife found in its crop!" He held out his hand, and displayed upon the center of the palm a brilliantly scintillating blue stone, rather smaller than a bean in size, but of such purity and radiance that it twinkled like an electric point in the dark hollow of his hand.
Sherlock Holmes sat up. "By Jove, Peterson," he said, "this is treasure-trove indeed! I suppose you know what you have got?"

"A diamond, sir! A precious stone. It’s the precious stone."

"Not the Countess of Morcar’s blue carbuncle?" I ejaculated.

"Precisely so. I ought to know its size and shape, seeing that I have read the advertisement about it in The Times every day lately. It is absolutely unique."

"It was lost, if I remember aright, at the Hotel Cosmopolitan," I remarked.

"Precisely so, on the twenty-second of December, just five days ago. John Horner, a plumber, was accused of having abstracted it from the lady’s jewel-case. The evidence against him was so strong that the case has been referred to the Assizes. The question for us now to solve is the sequence of events leading from a rifled jewel-case at one end to the crop of a goose in Tottenham Court Road at the other. You see, Watson, our little deductions have suddenly assumed a much more important and less innocent aspect. Here is the stone; the stone came from the goose, and the goose came from Mr. Henry Baker, the gentleman with the bad hat and all the other characteristics with which I have bored you. So
now we must set ourselves very seriously to finding this gentleman, and ascertaining what part he has played in this little mystery. To do this, we must try the simplest means first, and these lie undoubtedly in an advertisement in all the evening papers. If this fails, I shall have recourse to other methods."

"What will you say?"

"Give me a pencil, and that slip of paper. Now, then: ‘Found at the corner of Goodge Street, a goose and a black felt hat. Mr. Henry Baker can have the same by applying at 6:30 this evening at 221B Baker Street.’ That is clear and concise."

"Very, but will he see it?"

"Well, he is sure to keep an eye on the papers. Here you are, Peterson, run down to the advertising agency, and have this put in the evening papers."

"Very well, sir. And this stone?"

"Ah, yes, I shall keep the stone. Thank you. And, I say, Peterson, just buy a goose on your way back, and leave it here with me, for we must have one to give to this gentleman in place of the one which your family is now devouring."

When the commissionaire had gone, Holmes took up the stone and held it against the light.
"Just see how it glints and sparkles. This stone is not yet twenty years old. It was found in the banks of the Amoy River in Southern China, and is remarkable in having every characteristic of the carbuncle, save that it is blue in shade, instead of ruby red. In spite of its youth, it has already a sinister history. There have been two murders, a vitriol-throwing, a suicide, and several robberies brought about. Who would think that so pretty a toy would lead to prison? I'll lock it up in my strong-box now, and drop a line to the Countess to say that we have it."

"Do you think that this man Horner is innocent?"

"I cannot tell."

"Well, then, do you imagine that this other one, Henry Baker, had anything to do with the matter?"

"It is, I think, much more likely that Henry Baker is an absolutely innocent man, who had no idea that the bird which he was carrying was of considerably more value than if it were made of solid gold. That, however, I shall determine by a very simple test, if we have an answer to our advertisement."

"And you can do nothing until then?"

"Nothing."

"In that case I shall continue my professional round. But I shall come back in the evening at the hour you have mentioned."
"Very glad to see you. I dine at seven."

I had been delayed at a case, and it was a little after half-past six when I found myself in Baker Street once more. As I approached the house I saw a tall man waiting outside. Just as I arrived, the door was opened, and we were shown up together to Holmes' room.

"Mr. Henry Baker, I believe," said he, rising from his armchair, and greeting his visitor with an easy air of geniality. "Pray take this chair by the fire, Mr. Baker. Ah, Watson, you have just come at the right time. Is that your hat, Mr. Baker?"

"Yes, sir, that is undoubtedly my hat."

He spoke in a low staccato fashion, choosing his words with care, and gave the impression generally of a man of learning and letters.

"We have retained these things for some days," said Holmes, "because we expected to see an advertisement from you giving your address. I am at a loss to know now why you did not advertise.

Our visitor gave a rather shamefaced laugh. "Shillings have not been so plentiful with me as they once were. I had no doubt that the gang of roughs who assaulted me had carried off both my hat and the bird. I did not care to spend more money in a hopeless attempt at recovering them."

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

تأثرت في معاينة مريض قل أصل إلى شارع بيكر إلا متأخراً بعد السادسة والنصف بليل. شاهدت وأنما أقرب سن المنزل رجلاً طول القامة ينتر في الخارج. ما أن وصلت حتى فتح الباب أمامي فدخلنا وأرتقينا مع السلم إلى غرفة هولمز. وقف هذا الأخير بير حديثه برحابة النيا، الخيمة المعتادة. تفضل بالجلوس قرب الموقد سيد بيكر. لقد أتيت ففي الوقت المناسب يا واتسون. هذه قبعتك سيدي؟ نعم. إنها قبعتي بالتأكيد.

كان يتكلم بشكل متقطع ويحسن اختيار كلماته، مما يعني عادة أنه رجل مشغول وصوفي في الأدب. قال هولمز: "نحتاج إلى هذه الأغراض منذ عدة أيام لأننا توقعنا أن تستغرق إعلانا تذكر فيه عنوانك لنعيدها إليك. هل لم تفعل؟ إلينا زارتنا حينا: لأن الأحوال المادية غير جيدة منذ سدة. وكانت واحدة من أن الزمرة التي اعتدت علي قد سرقت قبعتي والإيرزة معها. فما جدوى إنفاق المال على محاولة إجابة لا استعادتهم؟"
"Very naturally. By the way, about the bird—we were compelled to eat it."

"To eat it?" Our visitor half rose from his chair in his excitement.

"Yes, it would have been no use to anyone had we not done so. But I presume that this other goose upon the sideboard, which is about the same weight and perfectly fresh, will answer your purpose equally well?"

"Oh certainly, certainly!" answered Mr. Baker, with a sigh of relief.

"By the way, would it bore you to tell me where you got the other one from?"

"Certainly, sir," said Baker, who had risen and tucked his newly gained property under his arm. "There are a few of us who frequent the Alpha Inn near the Museum. This year our good host, Windgate by name, instituted a goose-club, by which, on consideration of some few pence every week, we were to receive a bird at Christmas. My pence were duly paid, and the rest is familiar to you. I am much indebted to you, sir." With a comical pomposity of manner he bowed solemnly to both of us, and strode off upon his way.
Holmes said, when he had closed the door behind him, "It is quite certain that he knows nothing whatever about the matter. Are you hungry, Watson?"

"Not particularly."

"Then I suggest that we turn our dinner into a supper, and follow up this clue while it is still hot."

"By all means."

It was a bitter night. Outside, the stars were shining coldly in a cloudless sky, and the breath of the passers-by blew out into smoke like so many pistol shots. In a quarter of an hour we were in Bloomsbury at the Alpha Inn. Holmes pushed open the door of the private bar, and ordered two glasses of beer.

"Your beer should be excellent if it is as good as your geese," he said.

"My geese!" The man seemed surprised.

"Yes, I was speaking only half an hour ago to Mr. Henry Baker, who was a member of your goose-club."

"Ah! Yes, I see. But you see, sir, them's not our geese. I get the two dozen from a salesman in Covent Garden. Breckinridge is his name."
“Ah! I don’t know him. Well, here’s your good health, landlord, and prosperity to your house. Good night.”

We passed across Holburn, down Endell Street, and so through a zigzag of slums to Covent Garden Market. One of the largest stalls bore the name of Breckinridge upon it, and the proprietor was helping a boy to put up the shutters.

“Good evening. It’s a cold night,” said Holmes.

The salesman nodded, and shot a questioning glance at my companion.

“Sold out of geese, I see,” continued Holmes, pointing at the bare slabs of marble. “I was recommended to you.”

“Who by?”

“The landlord of the Alpha.”

“Ah, yes: I sent him a couple of dozen.”

“Fine birds they were, too. Now where did you get them from?”

To my surprise the question provoked a burst of anger from the salesman.

“Now then, mister,” said he, with his head cocked and his arms akimbo, “what are you driving at? Let’s have it straight, now.”

“It is straight enough. I should like to know who sold you the geese which you supplied to the Alpha.”
"Well, then, I shan't tell you. So now!"

"Oh, it is a matter of no importance. I have a fiver on it that the bird I ate is country bred."

"Well, then, you've lost your fiver, for it's town bred," snapped the salesman.

"It's nothing of the kind."

"I say it is."

"I don't believe you. You'll never persuade me to believe that."

"Will you bet, then?"

"It's merely taking your money, for I know that I am right. But I'll have a sovereign on with you, just to teach you not to be obstinate."

The salesman chuckled grimly. "Bring me the books, Bill," said he.

The small boy brought round a small thin volume and a great one, laying them out together beneath the hanging lamp.

"That's the list of the folk from whom I buy. D'you see? Well, then, here on this page are the country folk. You see this other page in red ink? Well, that is a list of my own town suppliers. Now, look at that third name. Just read it out to me."

"Mrs. Oakshott, 117 Brixton Road - 249," read Holmes.
"Now, then, what's the last entry?"

"December 22. Twenty-four geese. Sold to Mr. Windgate of the Alpha."

"What have you to say now?"

Sherlock Holmes looked deeply chagrined. He drew a sovereign from his pocket and threw it down upon the slab. A few yards off he stopped under a lamp-post, and laughed in the hearty, noiseless fashion which was peculiar to him.

"Well, Watson, we are, I fancy, nearing the end of our quest, and the only point which remains to be determined is whether we should go on to this Mrs. Oakshott tonight, or whether we should reserve it for tomorrow. It is clear from what that surly fellow said that there are others beside ourselves who are anxious about the matter, and I should..."

His remarks were suddenly cut short by a loud hubbub which broke out from the stall which we had just left. Turning round, we saw a little fellow standing in the center of the circle of yellow light which was thrown by the swinging lamp, while Breckinridge, the salesman, was shaking his fists fiercely at the cringing figure.

"I've had enough of you and your geese," he shouted. "You bring Mrs. Oakshott here and I'll answer her, but what have you to do with it?"

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"One of them was mine all the same," whined the little man.

"Well, then, ask Mrs. Oakshott for it."

"She told me to ask you."

"I've had enough of it. Get out of this!" He rushed fiercely forward, and the inquirer flitted away into the darkness.

"Ha, this may save us a visit to Brixton Road," whispered Holmes. "Come with me, and we will see what is to be made of this fellow." Striding through the scattered knots of people who lounged round the flaring stalls, my companion speedily overtook the little man and touched him upon the shoulder. He sprang round, and I could see in the gaslight that every vestige of color had been driven from his face.

"Who are you, then? What do you want?" he asked in a quavering voice.

"You will excuse me," said Holmes blandly, "but I could not help overhearing the questions which you put to the salesman just now. I think that I could be of assistance to you."

"You? Who are you? How could you know anything of the matter?"

"My name is Sherlock Holmes. It is my business to know what other people don't know."

"But you can know nothing of this?"
"Excuse me, I know everything of it. You are endeavoring to trace some geese which were sold by Mrs. Oakshott, of Brixton Road, to a salesman named Breckinridge, by him in turn to Mr. Windigate, of the Alpha, and by him to his club, of which Mr. Henry Baker is a member."

"Oh, sir, you are the very man whom I have longed to meet. I can hardly explain to you how interested I am in this matter."

Sherlock Holmes hailed a four-wheeler which was passing. "In that case we had better discuss it in a cozy room rather than in this windswept marketplace," said he. "But pray tell me, before we go further, who is it that I have the pleasure of assisting."

The man hesitated for an instant. "My name is John Robinson. My real name is James Ryder."

"Precisely so. Head attendant at the Hotel Cosmopolitan. Pray step into the cab, and I shall soon be able to tell you everything which you would wish to know."

The little man stood, glancing from one to the other of us with half-frightened, half-hopeful eyes, as one who is not sure whether he is on the verge of a windfall or a catastrophe.
"Here we are!" said Holmes cheerily, as we filed into the room. "Now, then! You want to know what became of those geese?"

"Yes, sir."

"Or rather, I fancy, of that goose. It was one bird, I imagine, in which you were interested — white, with a black bar across the tail."

Ryder quivered with emotion. "Oh, sir," he cried, "can you tell me where it went to?"

"It came here."

"Here?"

Holmes unlocked his strong-box, and held up the blue carbuncle, which shone out like a star, with a cold, brilliant, many-pointed radiance. Ryder stood glaring with a drawn face, uncertain whether to claim or disown it.

For a moment he had staggered and nearly fallen. He sat staring with frightened eyes at his accuser.

"I have almost every link in my hands, and all the proofs which I could possibly need, so there is little which you need tell me. Still, that little may as well be cleared up to make the case complete. You had heard, Ryder, of this blue stone of the Countess of Morcar's?"

"It was Cathering Cusack who told me of it," said he, in a cracking voice."
"I see. Her lady-ship's waiting-maid. Well, the temptation of sudden wealth so easily acquired was too much for you, as it has been for better men before you; but you were not very scrupulous in the means you used. You know that this man Horner, the plumber, had been concerned in some such matter before, and that suspicion would rest the more readily upon him. What did you do, then? You made some small job in my lady's room—you and your confederate Cusack—and you managed that he should be the man sent for. Then, when he had left, you rifled the jewel-case, raised the alarm, and had this unfortunate man arrested. You then..."

Ryder threw himself down suddenly upon the rug, and clutched at my companion's knees. "For God's sake, have mercy!" he shrieked. "Think of my father! Of my mother! It would break their hearts. I never went wrong before! I never will again. I swear it. I'll swear it on a Bible. Oh, don't bring it into court! For Christ's sake, don't!"

"Get back into your chair!" said Holmes sternly. "It is very well to cringe and crawl now, but you thought little enough of this poor Horner in the dock for a crime of which he knew nothing."

"I will fly, Mr. Holmes, I will leave the country, sir. Then the charge against him will break down."

"Hum! We will talk about that. And now let us

أنا راضٍ في قلبك عمّا حدث. لقد انتهت هذه الأضواء العالية، فلا تدخل إلى المحكمة.

أنت لي في أيديك، يا بولس! يا بولس! انت قاتل، ليس أنسى

فتاني، يا ثارثي! أقسم على الكتب المقدس ألا أفعل

ونقلناها، يا بولس! ما ألا أستطيع أن تأتي

أدير سعيًا، أحيي البلاد، فقس طلب الديماني.

ستحدث عن هذا لاحقًا، فإنني أحبك ما حصل من...

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hear a true account of the next act. How came the stone into the goose, and how came the goose into the open market? Tell us the truth, for there lies your only hope of safety."

"When Horner had been arrested, it seemed to me that it would be best for me to get away with the stone at once, for I did not know at what moment the police might not take it into their heads to search my and my room. There was no place about the hotel where it would be safe. I went out and I made for my sister's house.

I had a friend once called Maudsley. One day he had met me, and fell into talk about the ways of thieves and how they could get rid of what they stole, I knew that he would be true to me so I made up my mind to go right on to Kilburn, where he lived, and take him into my confidence. He would show me how to turn the stone into money. But how to get to him in safety? I was leaning against the wall at the time, and looking at the geese which were waddling about round my feet, and suddenly an idea came into my head which showed me how I could beat the best detective that ever lived.

My sister had told me some weeks before that I might have the pick of her geese for a Christmas present, and I knew that she was always as good as her word. I would take my goose now, and in it I would carry my stone to Kilburn. I drove one of the
birds, a fine big one, white, with a barred tail. I caught it and, prising its bill open, I thrust the stone down its throat as far as my finger could reach. The bird gave a gulp, and I felt the stone pass along its gullet and down into its crop. But the creature flapped and struggled, and out came my sister to know what was the matter. As I turned to speak to her, the brute broke loose and fluttered off among the others.

"I caught the bird, and carried it all the way to Kilburn. I told my pal what I had done. We got a knife and opened the goose. My heart turned to water, for there was no sign of the stone, and I knew that some terrible mistake had occurred. I left the bird, rushed back to my sister's, and hurried into the back-yard. There was not a bird to be seen there. I asked where they were gone and she said to Breckinridge of Covent Garden.

I ran off as hard as my feet would carry me to this man Breckinridge; but he had sold the lot at once, and not one word would he tell me as to where they had gone. You heard him yourselves tonight. My sister thinks that I am going mad. Sometimes I think that I am myself. And now—and now I am myself a branded thief, without ever having touched the wealth for which I sold my character. God help me! God help me!" He burst into convulsive sobbing, with his face buried in his hands.
There was a long silence, broken only by his heavy breathing, and by the measured tapping of
Sherlock Holmes' finger-tips upon the edge of the

"Get out!" said he.

"What, sir! Oh, Heaven bless you."

"No more words. Get out!"

And no more words were needed. There was a
rash, a clatter upon the stairs, the bang of a door, and
the crisp rattle of running footfalls from the street.

"After all, Watson," said Holmes, reaching up his
hand for his clay pipe, "I am not retained by the
police to supply their deficiencies. If Horner were in
danger, it would be another thing. I suppose that I am
committing a felony, but it is just possible that I am
saving a soul. This fellow will not go wrong again.
He is too terribly frightened. Send him to gaol now,
and you make him a gaolbird for life. Besides, it is
the season of forgiveness."

Tala'aq: صمت طويل، لم يعكره سوى تنفسه السفلي، وقرع
شريروك هولمز الخفيف حافة الطاولة بأطراف أصابعه. ثم تبكي
صديقي، وفتح الباب.

"خرج!"  
"أخرج! صديقي! فليباركك الله!"

"لا داعي للكلام. أخرج فحسب!"

لم تكن هناك حاجة إلى قول المزيد. سمعناه يقفز على السلم
ويصفع الباب وراءه، ويعمل خطاه في الشارع.

علق هولمز على ما حصل بعد أن تشاجر عادة المصنوع
من الصصال: الواقع، يا所说的، أي ليست مجرد على تغطية
ثغرات الشرطة، فلم كان مورنر يخطر لتغير الأمر. اعتقد لي
أرتكب جنادا، لكن للذين أيضا أن يعذب. أذا وافق من أنه لن يكرر
خطاه بعد الآن لشفا خوفه. ولو زحاء مرة في السجن، لاعفاد
السجن. لنركز الجسر، دكتور، لأنه على وشك بدء تحقيق
جديد محوره أيضا طرح."