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## Arthur Conan Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet* (Simplified Edition by ChatGPT)

### Part 1

In the year 1878, I finished my studies and became a doctor of medicine at the University of London. After that, I went to Netley to learn the special work needed for army surgeons. When my training ended, I was sent to join the Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers as an assistant surgeon. The regiment was in India, but before I could reach it, war had already begun in Afghanistan. When I landed at Bombay, I learned that my regiment had marched far into enemy land. I followed as quickly as I could and finally reached Candahar, where I began my duties.

The war brought honor to many men, but it brought only trouble to me. I was moved from my regiment and joined another unit called the Berkshires. During the battle of Maiwand, I was badly wounded. A bullet struck my shoulder and broke the bone. It also passed close to an important blood vessel. I would have died or been taken by the enemy if not for my orderly, Murray. He lifted me onto a horse and carried me back to safety with great courage.

I suffered greatly from pain and weakness and was sent to a hospital in Peshawar with many other wounded soldiers. I slowly grew stronger and was soon able to walk around the hospital. I even sat outside in the sun. Then I fell ill again with a serious fever that was common in India. For months my life was in danger. When I finally recovered, I was very thin and weak. The doctors decided that I must return to England at once. I was placed on a ship called the *\*Orontes\** and arrived in Portsmouth about a month later. My health was ruined, but I was

allowed nine months to recover.

I had no close family in England. I lived on a small daily income given by the government. With no reason to stay anywhere else, I went to London. I stayed in a private hotel in the Strand and lived a lonely and careless life. I spent more money than I should have, and soon my savings began to disappear. I realized that I must either leave London or find cheaper rooms. I chose to change my way of living and began to look for affordable lodgings.

On the very day I made this decision, I stood at the Criterion Bar when someone tapped my shoulder. I turned and saw Stamford, a young man who had worked under me at Bart's Hospital. Seeing a friendly face in London made me very happy. We greeted each other warmly, and I invited him to lunch with me at the Holborn. We took a cab together through the busy streets.

"What have you been doing, Watson?" he asked as he looked at me closely. "You are very thin and very brown."

I told him the story of my war service and illness. By the time we reached the restaurant, I had finished my tale.

"Poor fellow," he said kindly. "And what are you doing now?"

"I am looking for rooms," I answered. "I want something comfortable but not expensive."

"That is strange," he said. "You are the second man today who said the same thing."

"Who was the first?" I asked.

"A man who works in the chemical laboratory at the hospital," Stamford replied. "He found good rooms but cannot afford them alone. He wants someone to share the cost."

"That sounds perfect," I cried. "I would much rather share rooms than live alone."

Stamford looked at me carefully over his glass. "You do not know Sherlock Holmes," he said. "You may not like him as a roommate."

"Why not?" I asked. "Is something wrong with him?"

"No, nothing exactly wrong," Stamford answered slowly. "He is a little unusual.

He cares deeply about certain kinds of science. Still, he seems to be a good man.”

“Is he a medical student?” I asked.

“I do not think so,” Stamford said. “He knows a great deal about anatomy and chemistry, but he does not attend regular classes. His studies are strange and irregular. Still, he has learned many things that surprise everyone.”

“What does he plan to become?” I asked.

“I have no idea,” Stamford replied. “He is not easy to question. Sometimes he talks freely, but often he keeps silent.”

“I would like to meet him,” I said. “I prefer a quiet person. My nerves are still weak after the war.”

“He will probably be at the laboratory,” Stamford said. “After lunch we can go there together.”

I agreed at once, and we spoke of other matters until the meal ended.

As we traveled to the hospital, Stamford gave me more warnings. “Do not blame me if you dislike him,” he said. “You asked for this meeting.”

“If we do not get along, we can simply separate,” I answered. “But tell me honestly—does he have a bad temper?”

“It is hard to explain,” Stamford said with a laugh. “He loves exact knowledge so much that it can seem cold. I could imagine him testing poison on a friend just to see the result—though he would test it on himself as well.”

“That sounds like true science,” I said.

“Yes,” Stamford replied, “but sometimes he goes too far. I once saw him strike a dead body with a stick to see how marks appear after death.”

“Remarkable,” I said in surprise. “And yet he is not a medical student?”

“No,” Stamford answered. “No one knows what he truly studies. But here we are. You must judge him yourself.”

We entered the hospital and walked through familiar halls until we reached the chemical laboratory. The room was large and filled with bottles and equipment. Only one man worked there. He stood at a table, deeply focused. When he heard us, he turned quickly and rushed toward us with bright excitement.

“I’ve found it!” he cried. “I have discovered a chemical that reacts only to

blood!”

Stamford introduced us. “Dr. Watson, this is Mr. Sherlock Holmes.”

Holmes shook my hand strongly. “How do you do?” he said warmly. “You have been in Afghanistan, I see.”

I stared at him. “How could you possibly know that?”

He smiled but did not explain. “Never mind that now,” he said. “Look at this experiment.”

He pricked his finger and let a drop of blood fall into water. The water still looked clear. Then he added chemicals. At once the liquid turned dark brown.

“Wonderful!” he cried happily. “This test will prove whether a stain is blood. Think how useful this will be in crime cases!”

I admitted that it seemed very clever, though I did not share his excitement. Holmes spoke rapidly about famous crimes that could have been solved with such a test. His eyes shone with energy.

Stamford explained our purpose. “My friend is looking for rooms,” he said. “You wanted someone to share yours.”

Holmes looked delighted. “Excellent!” he said. “I have found rooms in Baker Street. Do you mind tobacco smoke?”

“Not at all,” I replied.

“I sometimes perform chemical experiments,” he continued. “Will that trouble you?”

“Not in the least.”

“I also become silent for days at times,” he added. “Do not think me rude if that happens.”

I laughed. “I have faults too,” I said. “I own a dog, dislike noise, rise at strange hours, and can be very lazy.”

Holmes laughed with pleasure. “Then we shall suit each other well. Let us see the rooms tomorrow.”

We agreed to meet at noon the next day and shook hands. As Stamford and I left, I asked the question that still troubled me.

“How did he know I came from Afghanistan?”

Stamford smiled mysteriously. “That is his special talent,” he said. “Many people wonder the same thing.”

I walked back to my hotel deeply interested in my strange new acquaintance, feeling that my quiet life was about to change.

## Part 2

The next day we met as planned and went together to see the rooms at 221B Baker Street. They consisted of two bedrooms and a large sitting room with wide windows that allowed much light to enter. The furniture was simple but pleasant, and the rent was reasonable when shared between two people. We agreed at once to take the rooms. That evening I moved my belongings from the hotel, and the following morning Sherlock Holmes arrived with several boxes and cases. For some days we were busy arranging our things and settling into our new home.

Holmes proved easy to live with. His habits were orderly, and he made little noise. He usually went to bed early and had already left the house before I rose in the morning. Sometimes he spent the whole day at the chemical laboratory. At other times he visited rooms where bodies were studied for medical learning. On certain days he walked for hours through the poorest parts of London. When work interested him, his energy seemed endless. Yet there were also long periods when he lay on the sofa without speaking, staring at nothing for hours. During those times his eyes looked distant and empty. I wondered whether illness troubled him, though his healthy habits suggested otherwise.

As the weeks passed, my curiosity about him grew stronger. His appearance alone attracted attention. He was tall and very thin, which made him seem even taller than he truly was. His eyes were sharp and bright when he was active, though dull during his quiet moods. His nose was narrow and gave his face an alert expression. His chin was firm and strong, showing determination. His hands were often stained by chemicals, yet they moved with surprising care and skill when handling delicate objects.

I admit that I became something of a busy observer. My life at that time had

little purpose. My health prevented me from going out often, and I had few friends in London. Therefore the mystery of my companion became my main interest. I tried many times to learn what his work might be, but he rarely spoke of himself.

One thing was clear: he was not studying medicine. He had confirmed this himself. Yet he studied certain subjects with deep passion and possessed knowledge both wide and strange. His learning amazed me, though it followed no normal path. No one gains such exact knowledge without a clear goal, yet I could not discover what that goal might be.

What puzzled me most was the strange balance between what he knew and what he did not know. He seemed ignorant of common subjects. He knew almost nothing about modern literature, philosophy, or politics. Once I mentioned the writer Thomas Carlyle, and Holmes asked who that was. My greatest surprise came when I discovered that he did not know that the earth moves around the sun.

“You seem shocked,” he said with a smile when he saw my reaction. “Now that I know it, I shall try to forget it.”

“Forget it?” I cried.

“Yes,” he explained calmly. “A man’s brain is like a small room. You must fill it only with useful tools. If you fill it with useless facts, the useful ones may be lost. I choose carefully what I learn.”

“But the solar system!” I protested.

“What difference does it make to my work?” he replied. “Whether we go around the sun or the moon changes nothing for me.”

I nearly asked him what his work was, but something in his manner stopped me. Instead, I began to list the subjects he knew well and those he did not. One day I even wrote them down as an experiment. When I finished, the list looked like this:

Knowledge of literature: none.

Philosophy: none.

Astronomy: none.

Politics: little.

Botany: knows poisons well but little else.

Geology: practical knowledge.

Chemistry: excellent.

Anatomy: accurate but unusual.

Crime stories: extremely detailed knowledge.

Plays the violin well.

Skilled in boxing and sword fighting.

Understands British law.

After reading this strange list, I threw it into the fire. I could not imagine any profession that required all these skills together.

Holmes's violin playing added another mystery. When asked, he played beautiful music, including works I greatly enjoyed. But when alone, he often played strange sounds that followed his thoughts rather than any known melody. Sometimes the music sounded sad and deep; at other times it became lively and cheerful. I believed the music reflected his changing moods. He usually ended by playing tunes I liked, as if apologizing for testing my patience.

During our first week we received no visitors, and I thought Holmes as lonely as myself. Soon, however, many people began to call. A thin, sharp-faced man named Lestrade visited often. A well-dressed young woman came one morning and stayed for half an hour. Later a nervous old man arrived, followed by a poorly dressed woman. On another day an elderly gentleman called, and once even a railway worker came. Whenever visitors arrived, Holmes asked to use the sitting room alone, and I retired to my bedroom.

"I use this room as my place of business," he once explained. "These people are my clients."

This answer only increased my curiosity, yet I still hesitated to question him directly. At last, however, he himself spoke of the matter.

It was on the fourth of March. I woke earlier than usual and found Holmes still eating breakfast. My own meal had not yet been prepared, so I picked up a magazine from the table while waiting. One article had been marked with pencil. Its title was \*The Book of Life\*. It argued that careful observation could reveal everything about a person. The writer claimed that a trained observer could read

a man's history from small details such as clothing, hands, or expression.

The ideas seemed clever but exaggerated. At last I threw the magazine down.

"What nonsense!" I said. "No one could truly do such things."

"What are you reading?" Holmes asked.

"This article," I replied. "It is clever writing but not practical. I would like to see the author tested in real life."

Holmes spoke calmly. "You would lose your bet. I wrote the article."

I stared at him in astonishment. "You?"

"Yes," he said. "Observation and deduction are my profession."

"Your profession?" I repeated.

"I am a consulting detective," he explained. "When police detectives fail, they come to me. They bring their evidence, and I guide them toward the truth."

He described how detectives such as Lestrade visited him for help. Clients also came privately when troubled by mysteries.

"You mean you solve crimes without leaving this room?" I asked.

"Often," he replied. "Though sometimes I must go out and see things myself. My special knowledge makes the work easier."

He reminded me of the moment when he had correctly guessed my service in Afghanistan.

"It was simple," he said. "You looked like a doctor but carried yourself like a soldier. Your skin showed tropical sun, yet your wrists were pale. Your injured arm showed hardship. Only Afghanistan matched all these facts."

When he explained it step by step, the reasoning seemed clear, though I had never imagined it myself.

I compared him to the detective Dupin from stories, but Holmes dismissed the comparison. He criticized fictional detectives sharply and claimed their methods were slow or foolish. His confidence surprised me, and at times it even seemed like pride.

While we spoke, Holmes suddenly looked out the window.

"That man outside is a retired marine sergeant," he said.

I assumed he guessed randomly, but moments later the man knocked on our

door and delivered a letter addressed to Holmes. When questioned, he confirmed that he had indeed been a sergeant in the Royal Marines. I could no longer doubt Holmes's abilities.

The letter brought news of a strange death at a house in Lauriston Gardens. A well-dressed man had been found dead in an empty house. There were blood marks but no wound. The police were confused and asked Holmes for help.

At first Holmes seemed lazy and uncertain whether to go, but soon excitement replaced his calm mood.

"Come along," he said at last. "We shall look at it ourselves."

We quickly left the house and entered a cab, racing toward Brixton Road. Outside, the sky was grey and heavy. Holmes spoke cheerfully about violins and music, while I felt troubled by the dark business ahead.

"You do not seem concerned about the case," I said.

"One must never form theories before seeing the facts," he replied. "Evidence must come first."

Soon we arrived near the house. Holmes insisted we walk the last distance on foot. The building stood silent and empty, surrounded by a small muddy garden. A police officer guarded the entrance while curious people watched from outside.

I expected Holmes to hurry inside, but instead he slowly examined the street, the ground, and even the sky. He walked carefully along the garden path, studying the mud with deep attention. Several times he smiled quietly, as if discovering something invisible to me.

At last we reached the door, where Inspector Gregson greeted us warmly. Holmes immediately noticed the disturbed ground outside and criticized the police for damaging possible evidence. Gregson looked embarrassed but led us inside.

A bare hallway brought us to the room where the body lay. The room was empty and covered with dust. The wallpaper hung loose from damp walls, and a single candle stood on the fireplace. The light from the dirty window gave the room a dull grey color.

On the floor lay the dead man.

He was middle-aged, dressed well, and stretched on his back with arms spread wide. His face showed terror and hatred frozen in death. I had seen many dead bodies during the war, yet none appeared more frightening than this one in that silent, empty room.

Holmes knelt beside the body and began his careful examination, moving quickly yet with great attention. The detectives watched with curiosity as he searched for details they had missed.

The mystery had truly begun.

### Part 3

Sherlock Holmes examined the body with deep attention, moving his hands lightly across the man's clothing and face. His eyes seemed distant, yet every movement showed purpose. After a careful inspection, he looked up at the two detectives.

"You are certain there is no wound?" he asked, pointing to the blood stains scattered across the floor.

"Quite certain," Gregson and Lestrade answered together.

"Then the blood must belong to another person," Holmes said calmly. "Most likely the murderer, if this is murder at all."

He spoke as if discussing an ordinary matter, though the scene before us was grim. He compared the case to another crime from many years earlier and advised Gregson to read about it. The inspector admitted he did not know the case, and Holmes shook his head slightly, as if disappointed.

Holmes continued his examination. His fingers worked quickly, opening buttons, checking pockets, and feeling the man's clothes. He sniffed the dead man's lips and studied the soles of his boots. Every action was swift yet exact.

"Has the body been moved?" he asked.

"Only a little," Gregson replied. "Only what was needed for our inspection."

"You may take him away now," Holmes said. "There is nothing more to learn from the body here."

A stretcher was brought in, and four men lifted the corpse. As they raised it, a small object fell and rolled across the floor with a light ringing sound. Lestrade quickly picked it up.

“A woman has been here!” he cried. “It is a wedding ring.”

We gathered around him. The ring was plain gold, clearly a woman’s wedding ring.

“This makes matters more difficult,” Gregson said.

“Or perhaps simpler,” Holmes replied quietly. “What did you find in his pockets?”

Gregson pointed to several objects laid out nearby. “A gold watch, a heavy chain, a gold ring with a symbol, a gold pin shaped like a dog’s head with red stones for eyes, a card case, some money, and a book. There were also two letters addressed to the dead man and another person named Joseph Stangerson.”

Holmes listened carefully.

“Where were the letters sent?” he asked.

“To the American Exchange in the Strand,” Gregson answered. “They concern a ship sailing to New York. It appears the man planned to return to America.”

Holmes asked whether inquiries had been made about this Stangerson. Gregson explained that notices had been sent and messages telegraphed to America.

Holmes smiled slightly. “Did you ask the right questions in your telegram?”

Gregson looked offended. “I asked for information.”

Holmes laughed softly but said nothing more. At that moment Lestrade returned from another part of the room, clearly excited.

“I have made an important discovery,” he announced proudly. “Something everyone else missed.”

He struck a match and held it against the wall where a piece of wallpaper had fallen away. On the exposed plaster a word was written in dark red letters:

RACHE.

“What do you think of that?” Lestrade said triumphantly. “The murderer began to write the name Rachel but was interrupted. A woman named Rachel must be involved.”

Holmes suddenly burst into laughter, which annoyed Lestrade greatly.

“I beg your pardon,” Holmes said politely, still smiling. “You deserve credit for finding it first. It was written by the second person present last night.”

He then took a tape measure and a magnifying glass from his pocket and began studying the room. He moved slowly across the floor, sometimes kneeling, sometimes lying flat to examine small details invisible to us. He spoke quietly to himself while working, making small sounds of satisfaction when he noticed something important.

For more than twenty minutes he continued this strange investigation. He measured distances, collected a little grey dust into an envelope, and carefully studied each letter of the word on the wall. At last he stood and replaced his tools.

“People say genius is the ability to take great pains,” he said. “It is not a perfect definition, but it suits detective work.”

Gregson and Lestrade watched him with mixed curiosity and doubt.

“What do you think of the case?” they asked.

“It would be unfair if I took your credit,” Holmes answered with gentle sarcasm. “You are doing very well already. Still, I will gladly assist if needed. For now, I wish to speak with the constable who found the body.”

Lestrade checked his notebook. “John Rance,” he said. “You will find him at 46 Audley Court.”

Holmes wrote down the address and turned toward the door.

“Come along, Doctor,” he said to me. Then he paused and addressed the detectives again. “Before we leave, I will offer a few facts. The murderer is a man over six feet tall, in the prime of life, with small feet for his height. He wears square-toed boots and smokes a Trichinopoly cigar. He arrived in a four-wheeled cab drawn by a horse with three old shoes and one new shoe on its front leg. He likely has a red face and long fingernails on his right hand.”

The detectives stared at him in disbelief.

“If this is murder,” Lestrade asked, “how was it done?”

“Poison,” Holmes answered shortly. Then he added, “And ‘Rache’ means ‘revenge’ in German. Do not waste time searching for a woman named Rachel.”

With that final remark, he left the house, leaving both detectives speechless.

Outside, the afternoon air felt fresher after the heavy atmosphere within. Holmes walked quickly, his energy fully awakened.

We stopped at a telegraph office where he sent a long message. Then we took another cab toward Audley Court to meet the constable.

“There is nothing like hearing a story directly,” Holmes said. “My conclusions are nearly complete, but more details may help.”

I shook my head in amazement. “You cannot truly be certain of all those facts you gave.”

“There is no guesswork,” he replied. “The marks of a cab were clear in the mud. It had arrived during the night after rain began. Therefore it brought the two men to the house.”

He explained each deduction calmly. The length of footprints revealed the man’s height. The position of the writing showed the level of the writer’s eyes. Scratches in the plaster proved long fingernails. Ash on the floor revealed the cigar type.

His explanations seemed simple once spoken, though I could never have reached them myself.

“My head spins,” I admitted. “So many questions remain. Why bring a man to an empty house? Where is the cab driver? Why poison instead of rob? Why leave a wedding ring? And why write that strange word?”

Holmes smiled kindly. “You state the difficulties well. Some parts remain unclear, but the main facts are settled. The word on the wall was meant to mislead the police. It was not written by a German. The writer tried too hard to appear German.”

He paused and added, “I will not explain everything yet. A magician loses his charm once his trick is revealed.”

His pleasure at my admiration was clear. Praise affected him deeply, though he tried to hide it.

“One more thing,” he continued. “The two men entered together peacefully. Inside, one remained still while the other walked back and forth, growing more

excited. You can see it from the footprints. Then the tragedy occurred.”

Our cab stopped in a narrow and gloomy street. Dirty children played nearby, and worn clothes hung between buildings. We found number 46 and were shown into a small room while Constable Rance dressed.

He soon entered, looking annoyed at being awakened.

“I have already given my report,” he said.

Holmes took a coin from his pocket and turned it slowly between his fingers. “We would like to hear it in your own words,” he said gently.

The constable’s eyes rested on the coin. He sat down and began his story carefully.

“My duty runs from ten at night to six in the morning,” he said. “Around two o’clock I walked along Brixton Road. It was quiet and raining. Then I saw a light in the empty house at Lauriston Gardens. I knew the house should be empty, so I suspected trouble.”

Holmes interrupted softly. “You first reached the door, then walked back to the gate before entering.”

The constable jumped in surprise. “That’s true, sir! I felt uneasy and wanted someone nearby before going inside.”

Holmes nodded slightly, encouraging him to continue.

The mystery deepened with every word the man spoke.

#### Part 4

Constable Rance stared at Sherlock Holmes with wide eyes, still amazed that his small action had been guessed so exactly.

“Yes, sir,” he continued slowly, “I went back toward the gate because the place felt strange and lonely. I thought maybe I could see the lantern of another officer nearby. But there was no one. So I returned to the door and pushed it open.”

He paused and wiped his forehead, as if remembering the moment made him uneasy again.

“The house was dark and quiet,” he said. “I called out, but no one answered.

Then I stepped into the front room and saw the man lying there on the floor. At first I thought he was drunk, but when I bent down I saw his face. It frightened me, I tell you. I hurried outside and blew my whistle for help.”

“Did you notice anything else?” Holmes asked calmly.

“There was a candle burning,” Rance replied. “And blood on the floor, though I could not see any wound. That made it all the stranger.”

“Was anyone else nearby?” Holmes asked.

Rance hesitated. “Well, sir... there was one man.”

Holmes leaned forward slightly. “Tell us about him.”

“He was standing near the gate,” said the constable. “A tall fellow, drunk as could be. He was singing to himself and could hardly stand straight.”

Holmes’s eyes brightened, but his voice remained quiet. “Describe him carefully.”

“He was tall,” Rance said. “Had a red face and wore a brown coat. Looked like a working man. I thought nothing of him at the time. I was too busy thinking about the body.”

Holmes exchanged a quick glance with me but said nothing.

“What did the man do?” Holmes asked.

“Nothing much,” Rance answered. “He leaned against the railing and laughed when I passed him. I thought he was just another drunk and paid him no mind.”

Holmes sighed softly, almost sadly.

“You should have taken him with you,” he said.

Rance looked confused. “Why, sir?”

“Because that man was probably the murderer,” Holmes replied calmly.

The constable jumped to his feet. “The murderer! Then I let him go!”

“You could not have known,” Holmes said kindly. “What happened next?”

Rance sat down again, shaken.

“I waited until another officer came,” he continued. “Then we examined the room together and sent for the inspectors. That is all I know.”

Holmes handed him the coin. “You have been very helpful,” he said.

Once outside, I turned to Holmes with excitement. “That drunken man must be

the killer! Why would he stay so close to the scene?"

"Because he wished to return," Holmes replied. "He had lost something important—the wedding ring. He pretended to be drunk so he could search without suspicion."

"Then why did he leave?"

"Because the constable remained nearby," Holmes said. "He had no safe chance to search."

Holmes looked thoughtful as we walked back toward the cab.

"This case grows clearer," he continued. "We now know that the murderer returned to the house after the crime. That tells us much about his state of mind."

"You seem certain of everything," I said.

"Not everything," he answered. "But enough."

We rode back toward Baker Street while Holmes remained silent, deep in thought. His earlier energy had returned, and I sensed that his mind worked quickly behind his calm expression.

When we reached home, he hurried upstairs and immediately began writing several letters. After sealing them, he rang for a street boy who often carried messages for him.

"Take these at once," Holmes instructed. "And wait for answers."

The boy ran off, and Holmes leaned back in his chair with satisfaction.

"Now we wait," he said.

"Wait for what?" I asked.

"For our man," he replied simply.

That evening Holmes spoke little. He played his violin softly while the fire burned low. The music sounded thoughtful, almost sad. I realized that during such moments he allowed his mind to arrange facts quietly until a clear picture appeared.

The next morning brought new activity. One of Holmes's young helpers returned with information gathered from the streets. Holmes read the notes quickly and smiled.

"Excellent," he murmured. "Everything proceeds as expected."

Though he explained little, I began to understand that he used many hidden methods unknown to the police. His network of street children seemed able to learn things that official officers could not discover.

Later that day Inspector Gregson arrived, full of excitement.

“I have solved the case!” he announced proudly.

Holmes welcomed him politely and invited him to sit.

Gregson explained that he had traced the dead man, Enoch J. Drebber, and discovered a suspect connected to him. According to Gregson, jealousy and anger had led to murder. He described his reasoning with great confidence, clearly pleased with himself.

Holmes listened without interruption, though I noticed a faint smile on his lips.

When Gregson finished, Holmes thanked him kindly but asked a few quiet questions that seemed to weaken the inspector’s conclusions. Gregson grew less certain as he spoke.

Soon after, Lestrade also arrived, equally excited.

“I have important news,” he declared. “Joseph Stangerson has been found.”

“Alive?” Holmes asked.

Lestrade’s face darkened. “Dead,” he said. “Murdered this morning.”

The room fell silent.

Lestrade explained that Stangerson had been found in a hotel room, killed by a knife. Near the body was a small box containing pills.

Holmes rose quickly, his eyes shining with interest.

“Now the case truly begins,” he said.

He examined the pills carefully. They appeared ordinary, yet Holmes handled them with great care.

“One is harmless,” he said slowly, “and one contains poison.”

To prove his idea, he dissolved one pill in milk and gave it to a sick dog belonging to the landlady. Nothing happened. Then he tested the second pill. Within moments the animal died peacefully.

“You see,” Holmes said quietly. “The murderer offered his victims a choice between life and death.”

I felt a chill at his words. The crime now seemed more terrible than before.

Holmes paced the room, thinking deeply.

“Everything fits,” he said at last. “We know the method, the motive, and the man.”

“Then why not arrest him?” I asked.

Holmes smiled slightly. “Because he is coming to us.”

He glanced toward the door as if expecting someone at any moment. The mystery, which had begun in confusion and darkness, was moving steadily toward its end.

## Part 5

Holmes spent the rest of the afternoon in quiet preparation. He arranged papers on the table, checked his watch often, and looked toward the window whenever footsteps sounded outside. His calm manner suggested patience, yet I could see excitement beneath it. I waited beside him, unable to hide my curiosity.

“You truly expect the murderer to come here?” I asked.

“Yes,” Holmes replied. “He will arrive soon enough. All the steps lead him toward us.”

He explained no more, and I learned that pressing him for answers rarely helped. Instead, I watched as evening slowly fell over Baker Street. The sounds of passing carriages faded, and lamps were lit along the street.

At last there was a knock at the door.

Mrs. Hudson entered and announced that a cab driver had come in answer to Holmes’s message. Holmes nodded calmly.

“Show him up,” he said.

A moment later a tall man entered the room. He wore the clothes of a cab driver and carried himself with tired ease. His face was strong and red, and his eyes moved quickly around the room.

“You sent for a cab, sir?” he asked.

“Yes,” Holmes said pleasantly. “I need a trunk taken to the station. Would you

be so kind as to help me carry it?"

The man agreed at once. Holmes pointed to a large box near the wall. As the driver bent forward to lift it, Holmes suddenly sprang toward him with surprising speed and snapped a pair of handcuffs onto his wrists.

"Gentlemen," Holmes said calmly, "allow me to present Mr. Jefferson Hope, the murderer of Enoch Drebbler and Joseph Stangerson."

The man struggled fiercely, but Holmes held him firmly. I rushed forward to assist, and together we forced him into a chair. His strength was great, but resistance soon ended when he realized escape was impossible.

Inspector Lestrade and Gregson, who had been waiting nearby at Holmes's request, hurried into the room. Both stared in astonishment.

"You have him already!" Gregson cried.

Holmes smiled slightly. "The case is complete."

Jefferson Hope looked from one face to another. His expression showed no fear, only deep exhaustion.

"You are clever," he said quietly to Holmes. "I knew sooner or later someone like you would appear."

Holmes nodded. "You may as well tell your story," he said. "It will save time."

The prisoner leaned back and spoke slowly.

"I will tell it," he said. "Not because I must, but because I wish the truth known."

He explained that many years earlier he had loved a young woman named Lucy. She and her father had lived among a strict religious group in America. Two powerful men, Drebbler and Stangerson, had forced Lucy into marriage against her will. The suffering broke her spirit, and she died soon after.

Hope's voice grew heavy as he spoke of her death.

"From that day," he said, "I lived only for revenge."

He followed Drebbler and Stangerson across many countries for years, waiting for his chance. At last he tracked them to London. There he began his plan carefully.

One night he met Drebbler alone and persuaded him to enter a cab. He drove him to the empty house in Lauriston Gardens. Inside, Hope revealed his identity

and forced Drebber to choose between two pills—one harmless, one poisoned.

“I wanted justice,” Hope said. “Not murder in anger. I gave him a choice, as fate once gave none to Lucy.”

Drebber chose the poisoned pill and died soon after. The blood found in the room came from Hope himself, caused by a sudden illness that made his nose bleed. During the struggle, Lucy’s wedding ring fell from his pocket without his noticing.

Hope returned later to search for it, pretending to be drunk when the constable saw him. Unable to recover the ring, he fled.

He then hunted Stangerson, who refused the same choice and attacked him. Hope killed him with a knife in self-defense.

The room remained silent as he finished speaking.

Holmes listened without interruption.

“Your story explains everything,” he said quietly.

Lestrade and Gregson quickly prepared to take the prisoner away. As they stood him up, Hope staggered slightly. His face had turned pale.

“He is ill,” I said, stepping forward as a doctor.

Hope nodded weakly. “I have a sickness of the heart,” he admitted. “It has followed me for years. I knew I would not live long.”

Holmes looked at him thoughtfully. “You expected death soon,” he said.

“Yes,” Hope answered. “That is why I acted at last.”

The inspectors led him away. When the door closed behind them, silence filled the room again.

I turned to Holmes with admiration.

“You solved everything,” I said. “Yet others will take the credit.”

Holmes shrugged lightly. “That does not matter. The work itself is enough.”

The next morning newspapers praised the police for solving the case. Holmes read the articles calmly, though none mentioned his name.

“Does that not trouble you?” I asked.

He smiled faintly. “Not at all. Recognition will come someday.”

I realized then that I had witnessed something remarkable. Holmes had turned

observation and reason into an exact method, almost like science. His mind saw order where others saw confusion.

As I sat beside the fire that evening, I decided that the world should know of his abilities. I would record our adventures faithfully so that others might understand the art of deduction.

Thus began my account of Sherlock Holmes, consulting detective, and of the strange case that first brought us together—a study written, not in colors, but in scarlet.