

**АНГЛИЙСКИЙ В АДАПТАЦИИ:
ЧТЕНИЕ И АУДИРОВАНИЕ**

АРТУР КОНАН ДОЙЛЬ • ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

**ЭТЮД
В БАГРОВЫХ
ТОНАХ**

**A STUDY
IN SCARLET**



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Артур Конан Дойль

ЭТЮД В БАГРОВЫХ ТОНАХ = A STUDY IN SCARLET

3-й уровень

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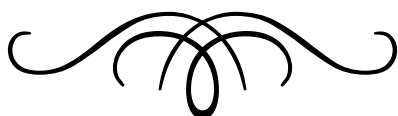
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ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE




A STUDY IN SCARLET



PART I

[Being a reprint from the *Reminiscences*
of John H. Watson, M.D., Late of the Army Medical Department]



CHAPTER 1

Mr. Sherlock Holmes


In the year 1878 I took my degree of Doctor of Medicine of the University of London, and then went through the course for surgeons in the army. Having completed my studies, I was sent to the Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers as Assistant Surgeon. The regiment was stationed in India at the time, and before I could join it, the second Afghan war had broken out. On landing at Bombay, I learned that my corps was already in the enemy's country. I followed with many other officers who were in the same situation as myself, and reached Candahar safely, there I found my regiment, and at once entered upon my new duties. The campaign brought glory and promotion to many, but for me it had nothing but misfortune and disaster; I was removed from my brigade and attached to the Berkshires, with whom I served at the fatal battle of Maiwand. There I was struck on the shoulder by a bullet, which shattered the bone and touched the artery. But for the devotion and courage shown by Murray, my orderly, who threw me across a horse, and

succeeded in bringing me safely to the British lines, I should have fallen into the hands of the enemy.

Worn with pain, and weak from the long hardships which I had undergone, I was removed with a train of wounded sufferers, to the hospital at Peshawur. Here I had improved and was able to walk about the wards, and even to sit a little upon the verandah, when I was struck down by enteric fever, that curse of our Indian colonies. When at last I came to myself and was getting better, I was so weak and worn out, that a medical council determined to send me back to England. A month later I landed in Portsmouth, with my health ruined, but with permission from the government to spend the next nine months in attempting to improve it.

I had neither kith nor kin in England, and was as free as air. My income was eleven shillings and six-pence a day. Under such circumstances I naturally settled in London. There I stayed for some time at a private hotel in the Strand, leading a comfortless, meaningless existence, and spending the money I had, more freely than I ought. The state of my finances became alarming, and I soon realized that I must either leave the capital and settle somewhere in the country or that I must completely alter my style of living. So I made up my mind to leave the hotel, and to take up my lodgings in some less expensive district.

On the very day that I had come to this conclusion, I was standing at the Criterion Bar, when someone touched me on the shoulder, and turning round I recognized young Stamford, who had been my assistant at the hospital. The sight of a friendly face in the great city of London is a pleasant thing to a lonely man. In old days Stamford had never been a friend of mine, but now I greeted him with enthusiasm,



and he, in his turn, seemed to be delighted to see me. In high spirits, I asked him to lunch with me at the Holborn, and we started off together in a hansom.

‘What have you been doing with yourself, Watson?’ he asked in surprise, as we were going through the crowded London streets. ‘You are as thin as a lath and as brown as a nut.’

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

‘Poor devil!’ he said, after he had listened to my misfortunes. ‘What are you up to now?’

‘Looking for lodgings,’ I answered. ‘Trying to solve the problem and get comfortable rooms at a reasonable price.’

‘That’s a strange thing,’ remarked my companion; ‘you are the second man to-day that has used that expression to me.’

‘And who was the first?’ I asked.

‘A fellow, who is working at the chemical laboratory at the hospital. He was annoyed this morning because he could not get someone to live with him in some nice rooms which he had found, and which were too much for his purse.’

‘By Jove!’ I cried; ‘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.’

Young Stamford looked rather strangely at me over his wine-glass. ‘You don’t know Sherlock Holmes yet,’ he said; ‘perhaps you would not like him as a constant companion.’

‘Why, what is there against him?’

‘Oh, I didn’t say there was anything against him. He is a little queer in his ideas — an enthusiast in some branches of science; as far as I know he is a decent fellow enough.’

‘A medical student, I suppose?’ said I.

‘No — I have no idea what he is doing. I believe he is well up in anatomy, and he is a first-class chemist; but, as far as I know, he has never taken out any systematic medical classes. His studies are very eccentric, but he has accumulated a lot of out-of-the-way knowledge which would astonish his professors.’

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

‘No; he is not an open-hearted, though he can be communicative enough when he likes.’

‘I should like to meet him,’ I said. ‘If I am to live with any one, I should prefer a man of studious and quiet habits. I am not strong enough yet to stand much noise or excitement: I had enough of both in Afghanistan to last me for the rest of my life. How could I meet this friend of yours?’


‘He is sure to be at the laboratory,’ returned my companion. ‘He either avoids the place for weeks, or works there from morning till night. If you like we will drive round together after luncheon.’

‘Certainly,’ I answered.

As we made our way to the hospital after leaving the Holborn, Stamford gave me a few more details about the gentleman whom I was going 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 from time to time 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,’ I answered. ‘It seems to me, Stamford,’ I added, looking hard at my companion, ‘that you have some reason for washing your hands of the matter. Is this fellow’s temper so hard, or what is it?’



‘It is not easy to express the inexpressible,’ he answered with a laugh. ‘Holmes is a little too scientific for my tastes — it approaches to cold-bloodedness. I could imagine his giving a friend a little drop of the latest vegetable alkaloid, not out of malice, you understand, but simply in order to have an accurate idea of the effects. To do him justice, I think that he would take it himself with the same readiness. He appears to have a passion for definite and exact knowledge.’

‘Very right too.’

‘Yes, but when it comes to beating the bodies in the dissecting-rooms with a stick, it is certainly taking rather an extraordinary shape.’

‘Beating the bodies!’

‘Yes, to check how far bruises may be produced after death; I saw him at it with my own eyes.’

‘And yet you say he is not a medical student?’

‘No. Heaven knows what the objects of his studies are. But here we are, and you must form your own impressions about him.’ 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: It was familiar ground to me, and I needed no guiding as we went down the stone staircase and made our way down the long corridor with its white-washed walls and mouse-coloured doors. Near the farther end a low passage led to the chemical laboratory.

This was a large chamber with countless bottles. Broad, low tables with retorts, test-tubes, and little gas lamps, with their blue flickering flames were standing about. There was only one student in the room, he was bending over a distant table absorbed in his work. At the sound of our steps he glanced round and jumped to his feet with a cry of pleas-

ure: 'I've found it! I've found it,' he shouted to my companion, running towards us with a test-tube in his hand. 'I have found a re-agent which is precipitated by hæmoglobin, and by nothing else.' If he had discovered a gold mine, greater delight could not have shone upon his features.

'Dr. Watson, Mr. Sherlock Holmes,' said Stamford, introducing us.


'How are you?' he said cordially, shaking my hand with much strength. 'You have been in Afghanistan, I believe.'

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

'Never mind,' said he, chuckling to himself. 'The question now is about hæmoglobin. 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. Don't you see that it gives us a reliable test for blood stains? Come over here now!' He seized me by the coat sleeve in his eagerness, and drew me over to the table at which he had been working. 'Let us have some fresh blood,' he said, digging a long needle into his finger, and drawing off the drop of blood. 'Now, I add this small quantity of blood to a litre of water. You see that the resulting mixture has the appearance of pure water. The proportion of blood is not more than one in a million. I have no doubt, however, that we shall be able to get the characteristic reaction.' He threw into the vessel a few white crystals, and then added some drops of a transparent liquid. In an instant the liquid assumed a dull mahogany colour, and a brownish dust dropped out at the bottom of the glass jar.



‘Ha! ha!’ he cried, clapping his hands, and looking as delighted as a child with a new toy.

‘What do you thing of that?’

‘It seems to be a very interesting test,’ I remarked.

‘Beautiful! beautiful! The old test was very uncertain. So is the microscopic examination for blood cells. My test is valueless if the stains are a few hours old. It acts well both with new blood and old. If this test had been invented, hundreds of men now walking the earth would long ago have been punished for their crimes.’

‘Indeed!’ I murmured.

‘Criminal cases always depend upon that one point. A man is suspected of a crime months after it has been committed. His 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 experts, 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 glittered as he spoke, and he put his hand over his heart and bowed as if to some applauding crowd summoned 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 if this test had existed. Then there was Mason of Bradford, and the notorious Muller, and Lefevre of Montpellier, and Samson of New Orleans. I could name a lot 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, too,’ remarked Sherlock Holmes, putting a small piece of plaster over the prick on his finger; ‘I have to be careful,’ he continued, turning to me with a smile, ‘for I work with poisons a good deal.’ He held out his hand as he spoke, and I noticed that it was all covered with similar pieces of plaster, and discoloured with strong acids.

‘We came here on business,’ said Stamford, sitting down on a high three-legged stool, and pushing another one in my direction with his foot. ‘My friend here is looking for a lodging; and as you were complaining that you could get no one to live 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 flat in Baker Street,’ he said, ‘which would suit us. You don’t mind the smell of strong tobacco, I hope?’

‘I always smoke strong tobacco 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 am in low spirits at times, and don’t open my mouth for days on end. You must not think I am sulky when I do that. Just let me alone, and I’ll soon be right. What have you to confess now? It’s just as well for two fellows to know the worst of one another before they begin to live together.’

I laughed at this cross-examination. ‘I keep a bull pup,’ I said, ‘and I object to rows because my nerves are shaken,

and I get up very late, and I am extremely lazy. I have another set of vices when I'm well, but those are the main ones at present.'

'Do you include violin playing in your category of rows?' he asked, anxiously.

'It depends on the player,' I answered. 'A well-played violin is a treat for the gods — a badly-played one —'

'Oh, that's all right,' he cried, with a merry laugh. 'I think we may consider the thing 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.

'All right — noon exactly,' said I, shaking his hand.

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

'By the way,' I asked suddenly, stopping and turning to Stamford, 'how did he know that I had come from Afghanistan?'

My companion smiled an enigmatic smile. 'That's just his little peculiarity,' he said. 'A good many people have wanted to know how he finds things out.'

'Oh! a mystery is it?' I cried, rubbing my hands. 'This is very interesting. I am much obliged to you for bringing us together. 'The proper study of mankind is man,' you know.'

'You must study him, then,' Stamford said, as he bade me good-bye. 'You'll find him a problem, though. I'll bet he learns more about you than you about him. Good-bye.'


'Good-bye,' I answered, and walked to my hotel, considerably interested in my new acquaintance.

CHAPTER 2

The Science of Deduction

We met next day as he had 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. So desirable in every way were the apartments, and so moderate the terms seemed when divided between us, that the bargain was concluded upon the spot, and we at once entered into possession. That very evening I moved my things round from the hotel, and on the following morning Sherlock Holmes followed me with several boxes and suitcases. For a day or two we were busily employed in unpacking and laying out our property. When that was done, 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 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 took him to the most sinister parts of the city. Nothing could exceed his energy when he had a working fit; but now and again he would lie upon the sofa in the sitting-room for days on end, hardly uttering a word or moving a muscle from morning to night. On these occasions I have noticed such



a dreamy, vacant expression in his eyes, that I might have suspected him of using some narcotic, if the cleanliness of his whole life had not forbidden such an idea.

As the weeks went by, my interest in him and my curiosity as to his aims in life gradually deepened and increased. His very person and appearance could attract the attention of the most casual observer. He was over six feet high, and so lean that he seemed to be considerably taller. His eyes were sharp and piercing, and his thin, hawk-like nose gave his whole expression an air of alertness and decision. His chin was square and had the prominence which marks the man of determination. His hands were blotted with ink and stained with chemicals, yet he had an extraordinary delicacy of touch, as I frequently had occasion to observe when I watched him manipulating his fragile instruments.

The reader may consider me a hopeless busybody, when I confess how much this man stimulated my curiosity. I often tried to break through the reticence which he showed on all that concerned himself. Remember, how objectless was my life, and how little there was to engage my attention. My health forbade me from going out unless the weather was exceptionally good, and I had no friends who would call upon me and break the monotony of my everyday life. Under these circumstances, I became very interested in the little mystery which hung around my companion, and spent much of my time trying to discover it.

He was not studying medicine. He had himself, in reply to a question, confirmed Stamford's opinion upon that point. Neither had he pursued any course of reading for a degree in science which would give him an entrance into the learned world. Yet his zeal for certain studies was re-