

“What a lot of blood for one story!
Sherlock Holmes is very clever to know
chemistry and German.” William, 11



A STUDY IN SCARLET

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

‘On his rigid face was an expression of horror and hatred such as I had never seen before upon human features.’

When Dr Watson agrees to share lodgings with Sherlock Holmes, he soon finds himself involved in a shocking and mysterious murder case.

What will Holmes discover when he examines the body? There are no marks on the dead man, so why is there so much blood at the scene of the crime?

Inspector Lestrade and Inspector Gregson have asked Holmes to help them. But will they listen to his advice?

Can the famous detective and his new friend discover the truth before the murderer strikes again?



A STUDY IN SCARLET Arthur Conan Doyle

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Retold by Tony Evans
Illustrated by Felix Bennett



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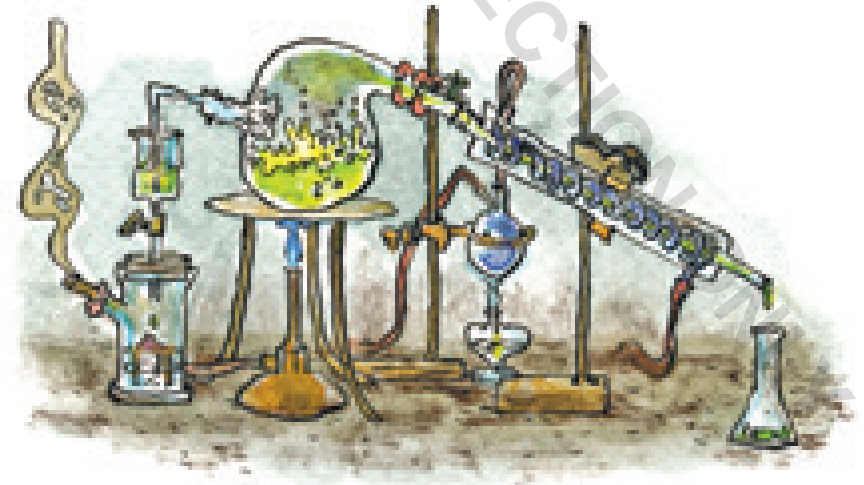


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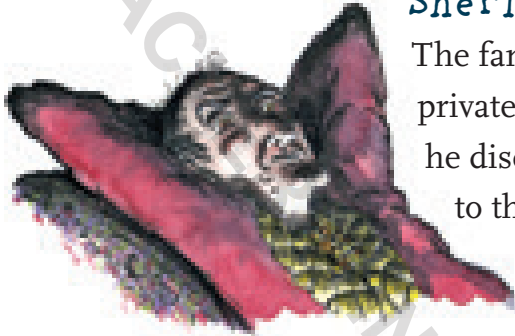
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THE CHARACTERS

Sherlock Holmes

The famous and brilliant private detective. What will he discover when he is called to the scene of a horrible crime?



Doctor Watson

Sherlock Holmes's new friend, dependable and brave. Can he help Holmes track down a dangerous suspect?



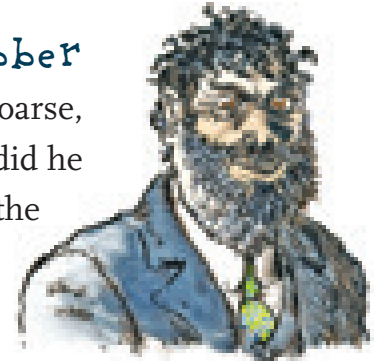
Inspector Gregson and Inspector Lestrade

Two Scotland Yard detectives who ask Sherlock Holmes to help them solve a complicated case. But will they listen to his ideas?



Enoch Drebber

Enoch Drebber is a coarse, unpleasant man. Why did he visit the empty house near the Brixton Road, and what happened to him there?



Jefferson Hope

Twenty years ago, Jefferson Hope was a happy young man engaged to be married. What has made him so fierce, determined and full of hatred?



Wiggins

Wiggins is a poor but clever boy who helps Sherlock Holmes with his investigations. He is the leader of a group of other youths.



Lucy Ferrier

Lucy Ferrier was once a young and beautiful woman, lively and happy. Who was responsible for her tragic fate?





A STUDY IN SCARLET

I knew very few people in London, and as I stood at the bar in the Criterion Restaurant it was a pleasant surprise to feel a tap on my shoulder and to hear Stamford's voice. He had worked with me several years ago at St Bartholomew's Hospital.

'Why, it's Doctor Watson!' he cried. 'You look as brown as a nut. Whatever have you been up to?'

We decided to have lunch together. Over our meal I explained that after I had completed my medical training three years ago I had become an army doctor and gone to Afghanistan. I had been wounded and had caught a fever, and had been sent home to England to recover.

'I have been living in a hotel for the last two months, but I need to find some cheaper lodgings,' I said. 'Anywhere comfortable is very expensive. I would not object to sharing some rooms if I could find someone to go halves on the rent.'

‘That’s a coincidence,’ Stamford said. ‘You are the second person today who has said that to me. If you really want someone to share rooms with, I can introduce you to him. He is doing some experiments at the hospital chemical laboratory this afternoon. But I must warn you, he has some rather strange habits and ideas.’

‘Who is he?’ I asked.

‘His name is Sherlock Holmes.’



After we had finished our lunch we took a cab to the hospital, and found only one person in the laboratory. He was bending over a glass jar, then stood up and held it to the light. At the sound of our steps he spun round.

‘I’ve found it!’ he shouted to Stamford. ‘A new test for blood. It will detect even the smallest stain.’

The man who had turned to face us was just over six feet in height, and so lean that he



seemed even taller. His eyes were sharp and piercing, and his thin hawk-like nose and square chin made his whole expression alert and determined.

‘Doctor Watson, Mr Sherlock Holmes,’ said Stamford, introducing us. ‘Doctor Watson is looking for someone with whom to share a flat.’

Back in time

As well as being an exciting detective story, *A Study in Scarlet* gives us fascinating glimpses of life in late Victorian Britain.

For a story that was written in 1887, and is set in 1881, some details seem surprisingly modern. Sherlock Holmes and Inspector Gregson both send telegrams to the Cleveland police in America. These were in many ways like today's text messages, although you had to visit a post office to send one. When the telegram got to its destination, it would be printed on a piece of paper and delivered by hand to the person to whom it had been sent. By the 1880s telegrams could be sent to many distant countries, including America, Australia, and India.

Sherlock Holmes's discovery of a new test for bloodstains at the start of the book was made up by Arthur Conan Doyle, but it shows how the use of scientific detection methods was developing fast at that time. Although the Scotland Yard detectives Inspector Gregson and Inspector Lestrade are not as clever as Sherlock Holmes, they are part of a well-organised police force not very different from the one we have today.

In other ways the story shows us how different things were one hundred and thirty years ago. In this version of *A Study in Scarlet*, Sherlock Holmes uses a chemical test to detect a deadly poison. However, in the original story, the poison is tested on his landlady's dog, which is very ill and is dying. This would not have seemed cruel at the time. These days we are much more concerned with animal welfare, and we know that sick animals should always be taken to a vet if they are ill or need to be put to sleep.

Despite the many advances in medicine which had been made by the 1880s, even simple operations were still very dangerous. Jefferson Hope's serious medical condition – a swollen blood vessel near his heart – could now be treated by drugs or surgery. Doctor Watson understands what the matter is, but cannot offer any cure. Many people, young and old, who are alive in Britain today because of modern medicine would not have survived in late Victorian times.