

SHERLOCK

The Hounds of BASKERVILLE

Meet Sherlock Holmes – the world's most brilliant detective!

 SCHOLASTIC

The Hounds of Baskerville

SHERLOCK HOLMES is a brilliant detective. The police often come to him with difficult cases. But Sherlock is not always easy to work with ...

DR JOHN WATSON was an army doctor. When he comes home from the war in Afghanistan, he becomes good friends with Sherlock. He helps on Sherlock's cases.



HENRY KNIGHT saw a monster kill his father twenty years ago. Now he thinks the monster is back...



DR MORTIMER is Henry's psychologist. She is worried about her patient.



DR STAPLETON is a scientist at Baskerville. She does a lot of secret experiments.



BOB FRANKLAND is a scientist at Baskerville too. He is a fan of Sherlock Holmes.



INSPECTOR LESTRADE is a police officer who sometimes asks for Sherlock's help.

PLACES

221B Baker Street Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson live in this flat in London.



Dartmoor This is a beautiful place in the south-west of England. Some people think that at night Dartmoor can feel strange and frightening.



Dewer's Hollow Henry Knight's father died in these woods on Dartmoor.

Baskerville Nobody knows exactly what happens at this government centre, but people talk about the terrible experiments there.



THE HOUNDS OF BASKERVILLE

Prologue

Twenty years ago

Alone and afraid, the boy ran through the forest. There was thick fog all around him. He did not know where he was or where he was going. He knew only one thing – he had to run because something was back there in the forest, something terrible ... *A monster.*

Henry had been there with his father when the monster attacked. Henry's father had tried to fight it off, but it was impossible. The monster had been too big, too strong for him. Henry had heard his father's screams and then only the terrible animal sounds of the monster. The boy had no choice – he had to escape.

His legs ached but he was too afraid to stop. He looked over his shoulder in fear. Was the monster following him now? He could not see anything, but still Henry did not stop.



He ran out of the forest and reached a hill. From the top he could look down on the wide empty spaces of the moors.

A woman was walking her dog. She saw the fear on the boy's face and asked, 'Are you OK? Are you lost?'

Henry gave no answer. He just looked with wide eyes at the woman's dog. The boy's heart jumped in fear at the sight of it.

Henry began to scream and scream ...

The present day

Henry Knight stood alone in the middle of the forest. This place was called Dewer's Hollow. He often came here. Today the fog around him was cold and he wore a heavy coat and scarf.

Henry was thinking again about that terrible day, twenty years earlier, when his father was killed, here in this exact place.

Henry knew that he could never escape those terrible memories. It was impossible not to think about the huge, dark shapes and the horrible sounds. Had there really been a monster, or had his young mind imagined it all those years ago? More and more Henry did not know the answer to that question.

He looked around now and the old fear rose in him again.



CHAPTER 1

A new case

'I need a case!'

Sherlock Holmes was bored. It wasn't easy being the most brilliant detective alive. He needed something to keep his brilliant mind interested. He needed a new case!

He looked at his friend John Watson, who was calmly reading the newspaper. Their flat in 221B Baker Street was full of books and papers. Sherlock kept anything that might be useful for a case, and anything *might* be useful for a case.

'I wish that I could be like you, John!' said Sherlock. 'Your mind is so normal. Mine is like a sports car, always racing ...'

John looked up from the newspaper. Sherlock was always like this when he didn't have a case.

'Have you checked the website?' he asked. Sherlock had become quite famous as a detective and more and more people were emailing his website with interesting cases.



But not today. Sherlock read the only email on the website to John. '*Dear Mr Holmes, Please can you help me to find my pet rabbit Bluebell? And listen to this part, John: Before Bluebell disappeared, he started to glow in the dark. Thank you from Kirsty Stapleton.*'

Holmes gave the laptop to John angrily. 'Quick, call the police! Little Kirsty's rabbit is lost!'

Suddenly there was a knock at the front door. Sherlock smiled. 'A case!'

* * *

Minutes later Henry Knight was sitting opposite Sherlock in the untidy flat.

'I live near Grimpen village, on Dartmoor,' Henry began. 'When I was a boy, my dad and I used to go for walks on the moor. There's a place there called Dewer's Hollow. I never liked it. It was always dark and foggy there. That's where my father was attacked by a terrible monster. It was huge and black with red eyes, and it killed him.'

'Was it a big dog?' asked John. 'Or another animal?'

'Or maybe it was an experiment that had gone wrong?' said Sherlock keeping his eyes closely on Henry. In that part of Dartmoor there was a top-secret government centre called Baskerville. Nobody knew exactly what the scientists there did, but there had been frightening stories about Baskerville for years. Some people said that there was a dangerous and strange 'monster of the moors' in that part of Dartmoor.

Henry was unsure. Was Sherlock being serious or was he just another person who didn't believe his story? 'Are you laughing at me, Mr Holmes?' he said. 'People laughed at my father too. But he knew about the experiments at

Baskerville. He knew about the monsters that they made there ...'



'But your father died twenty years ago,' said John quietly. 'Why come to us now?'

Henry said nothing. If Sherlock Holmes couldn't take his story seriously, he didn't want to stay any longer. He stood up quickly and moved towards the door.

'He came now because something happened last night,' Sherlock told John.

Henry stopped. 'How did you know?' he asked the detective.

'I didn't *know*, I *noticed*!' answered Sherlock impatiently. 'You came here from Dartmoor this morning. You took the early train so you had breakfast on the way. It was probably a sandwich and it wasn't very good.'

Henry could not hide his surprise. 'How did you know all that?'

Sherlock pointed. 'The ticket in your top pocket, the little bit of food at the side of your mouth ...'

'And how did you know that the breakfast wasn't good?' asked Henry.

'Is breakfast on the train *ever* good?' asked Sherlock. 'Now sit down and tell us – what did you see last night?'

Henry sat again. 'I was in the exact place where my father was killed. It's a strange place, Dewer's Hollow, it–'

'WHAT DID YOU SEE?' Sherlock never worried about being polite.

'Footprints,' said Henry.

'A man's or a woman's?' asked John.

'Neither,' said Henry. 'They were–'

Sherlock did not let him finish. 'Is that all?' he said, jumping up and shaking his head. 'It's just your mind and your imagination. Talk to your psychologist about it. Goodbye, Mr Knight!'

'But ... what about the footprints?' Henry asked.

'Oh, probably just a normal animal on the moors.'

Sherlock wanted Henry to go. He wanted a case, but not this one.

But then Henry said, 'Mr Holmes, they were the footprints of a huge hound.'

Sherlock stopped. He turned and walked back to Henry. 'Say that again – your exact words.'

Henry said it again. 'Mr Holmes, they were the footprints of a huge hound.'

'I'll take the case,' said Sherlock quickly.

John sat up. 'What?' It was never easy to follow Sherlock's way of thinking. 'A minute ago, footprints were boring. Now they're interesting?'

Sherlock gave a little shake of his head. 'You weren't listening, John, as usual!' He turned to Henry Knight. 'You go back to Dartmoor, Henry. We'll follow later.' He smiled excitedly. 'I wouldn't miss this case for anything in the world!'