



*'I saw Sir Charles staring at something behind me.'*

he sent someone to fetch me. I checked all the facts. I have just read them to you, and they are all true.

'But Barrymore said one thing that was not true. He said that there were no other prints on the ground around the body. He did not notice any. But I did. They were not close to the body, but they were fresh and clear.'

'Footprints?' asked Holmes.

'Yes. Footprints,' said Mortimer.

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

Dr Mortimer looked at us strangely for a moment. His voice became a whisper as he answered:

'Mr Holmes, they were the footprints of a huge hound!'

*The Problem*

I felt a moment of fear as Mortimer spoke these words. Holmes sat forward in his excitement, and his eyes showed he was very interested indeed.

'Why did nobody else see these footprints?' he asked.

'The footprints were about twenty metres from the body, and nobody thought of looking so far away,' Mortimer replied.

'Are there many sheep dogs on the moor?' asked Holmes.

'Yes, but this was no sheep dog. The footprints were very large indeed – enormous,' Mortimer answered.

'But it had not gone near the body?'

'No.'

'What kind of night was it?' Holmes asked.

'It was wet and cold, though it wasn't actually raining.'

'Describe the Alley to me.'

'The Alley is a path between two long yew hedges. The hedges are small trees that were planted very close together. They are about four metres high. The distance between the two yew hedges is about seven metres. Down the middle is a path of small stones. The path is about three metres wide, with grass on each side of it.'

'I understand there is a gate through the hedge in one place,' said Holmes.