

from help. The next question: who was he waiting for that night? And why was he waiting in the Yew Alley and not in the house?

'You think he was waiting for someone?'

'Sir Charles was old and unwell. We can understand why he took a walk each evening. But why did he stand in the cold, on wet ground, for five or ten minutes? Dr Mortimer cleverly noted the cigar ash, so we know how long Sir Charles stood there. We know that he kept away from the moor, so it's unlikely that he waited at the moor gate every evening. I am beginning to understand some things, Watson. But I'll think no more about it until we meet Dr Mortimer and Sir Henry Baskerville in the morning. Please give me my violin.'

And Holmes began to play his violin. He had done all the thinking he could. Now he needed more details of the case to help him.

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*Sir Henry Baskerville*

Dr Mortimer and Sir Henry Baskerville arrived at exactly ten o'clock the following morning. Sir Henry was a small, healthy, well-built man. His face showed that he had a strong character. He wore a country suit of thick, red-brown material, and his skin showed that he spent most of his time in the open air.

'I am glad this meeting was already arranged,' Sir Henry said, after we had shaken hands with our visitors. 'I need your help, Mr Holmes. A strange thing happened to me this morning. Look at this letter.'

He put a piece of paper on the table. On it were the words: 'Do not go on to the moor. If you do, your life will be in danger.' The words had been cut out of a newspaper. 'Can you tell me, Mr Holmes, what this means, and who is so interested in me?' Sir Henry asked.

'This is very interesting,' said Holmes. 'Look how badly it has been done. I think the writer was in a hurry. Why? Perhaps because he did not want somebody to see him. I think the address was written in a hotel. The pen and the ink have both given the writer trouble. The pen has run dry three times in writing a short address. There was probably very little ink in the bottle. A private pen and bottle of ink are never allowed to get into that condition. Hullo, what's this?' He was holding the letter only a few centimetres from his eyes.

'Well?' I asked.

'Nothing,' he said, and threw the letter down. 'Now, Sir Henry, have you anything else to tell us?'

'No,' said Sir Henry. 'Except that I have lost one of my shoes. I put a pair outside my door last night. I wanted the hotel to clean them, but when I went to get them this morning, one had gone. I only bought them yesterday, and I have never worn them. But I wanted a good shine on them.'