

英语注释读物·新福尔摩斯探案集③



福尔摩斯与电话谋杀案

SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE TELEPHONE MURDER MYSTERY

[英] 约翰·豪尔 著



北京大学出版社

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内 容 简 介

约翰·H.华生医生对贝克街 221b 号装上了电话表示欢迎——不管怎样它会为他的社交生活增添光彩。夏洛克·福尔摩斯却不以为然,隐隐感到电话铃声可能预示着不祥之兆。

正值伦敦仲夏时节,华生厌烦了暑热和拥挤的人群,于是动身去乡下的一处别墅消夏几周。同行的客人都是有教养的文人,像华生本人一样,游历丰富,见多识广。不幸的是其中一位客人就在新装的电话机旁遭到谋杀,从而中断了华生的休假——似乎也印证了福尔摩斯的种种疑虑。

被害者人缘不错,似乎找不出被人谋杀的动机。真的没有吗?随着大侦探的调查,昔日的丑闻和仇恨始露端倪。福尔摩斯是否遗漏了什么?或许是一桩认错身份的案子?被害人试图打电话给谁呢?

新福尔摩斯探案集系列

柯南道尔去世了,但是夏洛克·福尔摩斯的探案活动并没有停止,请看三位著名侦探小说家瓦尔·安德鲁斯、约翰·豪尔和威廉·塞尔写的新福尔摩斯探案集系列:

- | | |
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Dramatis Personae

At 221 B, Baker Street

Mr Sherlock Holmes

Dr John H Watson

The staff at Belmont

Gordon Morrison, secretary

Ernest Welsh, gardener and handyman

Mrs Welsh (Ernest's wife), housekeeper

Frederick Evans, assistant gardener

John Merryweather, assistant gardener

The guests at Belmont

James Davenport, engraver

Peter Gregson, sculptor

Jeremy Lane, writer

Benjamin Morgan, photographer

Richard Pountney, retired musician

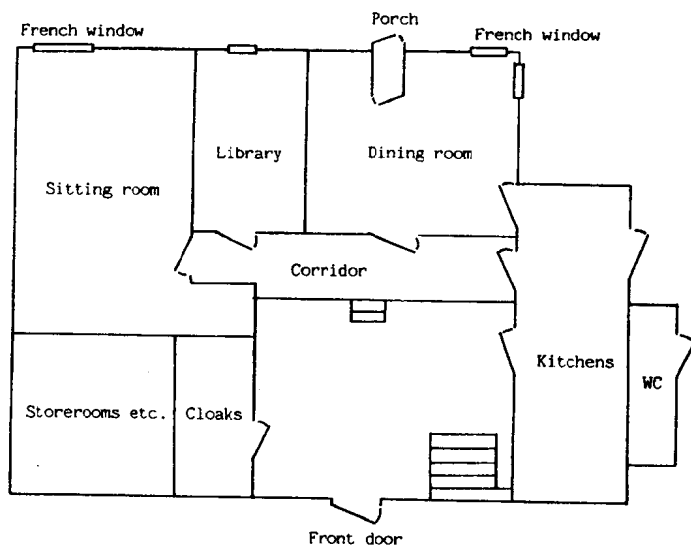
Henry Tomlinson, retired musician

The official forces

Colonel de Montfort, chief constable of the area

Inspector Forrester, of the local police

and a large supporting cast



Plan of 'Belmont' (not to scale)

CHAPTER ONE

华生医生本想带福尔摩斯一起离开炎热的伦敦，去乡下度假。可是福尔摩斯手上的黑珍珠案子没有了结。华生医生只身前往贝尔蒙特庄园，见到几位房客，都是搞艺术的。不幸的是，在他到达的第二天，摄影家本杰明·摩根先生被谋杀了。雕塑家皮特·格雷格森是房客之一。凶器是他的裁纸刀。他是不是凶手呢？

A very curious characteristic of my good friend, Mr Sherlock Holmes, was that even on those rare occasions^① where he erred^② in his interpretation^③ of one – or more – of the aspects^④ of a case, none the less^⑤ he usually managed in some singular^⑥ manner to arrive at a solution^⑦ of the mystery, while everyone else remained baffled^⑧. One instance was that which I shall now describe^⑨, a case which I myself was the means of bringing to Holmes's attention^⑩.

It was, I recall^⑪, a seasonably hot day early in July, 1899. I had

① on...occasion *ph.* 在……情况下

② err *v.* 出错

③ interpretation *n.* 解释

④ aspect *n.* 方面

⑤ none the less *conj.* 然而

⑥ singular *a.* 非凡的

⑦ arrive at a solution *ph.* 找到答案

⑧ baffled *a.* 困惑的

⑨ describe *v.* 描述

⑩ bring to ... attention *ph.* 引起……注意

⑪ recall *v.* 回忆

slept badly, owing to^① the oppressive^② heat, which in London seems confined^③ and intensified^④, trapped in some manner by the buildings. In the end I gave up the attempt even to rest, and came down to my breakfast early. I had thus finished and had begun to read the newspaper in earnest^⑤ when Sherlock Holmes entered the room. He nodded to me and seemed about to speak, but then his gaze wandered^⑥ to the corner of the room. He raised an eyebrow, and sighed.

‘It is the future, Holmes!’ said I, following his example and staring at the telephone which we had recently had installed, after much persuasion^⑦ on my part and some reluctance^⑧ on Holmes’s

‘Perhaps it is,’ said he, ‘but I see many disadvantages^⑨ to it.’

‘It is well tried,’ I told him. ‘It is now fully twenty years since the first London exchange opened –’

‘Remind me to send a congratulatory^⑩ telegram to the Postmaster General.’ said Holmes, rather churlishly^⑪.

‘To begin with, there were only eight subscribers^⑫ –’

‘I have some trifling^⑬ recollection^⑭ that you have already

① owing to... *ph.* 因为

② oppressive *a.* 憋气的

③ confined *a.* 狭窄的

④ intensified *a.* 升高的

⑤ in earnest *ph.* = very hard 认真地

⑥ wander *v.* 注意

⑦ persuasion *n.* 说服, 确信

⑧ reluctance *n.* 不情愿

⑨ disadvantage *n.* 缺点

⑩ send a congratulatory telegram *ph.* 发一封祝贺电报

⑪ churlishly *ad.* 粗野地

⑫ subscriber *n.* 用户

⑬ trifling *a.* 微不足道的

⑭ recollection *n.* 回想起的事物

favoured me with lengthy extracts^① from the prospectus^②, Doctor,’ said Holmes.

‘But think, Holmes! Consider the ease with which one may communicate with one’s fellows! Why, it is exactly like having your very own little telegraph^③ office in the house!’ said I.

‘With its own little bell, constantly^④ interrupting one’s meals –’ At that juncture^⑤, the telephone bell rang.

‘Constantly interrupting one’s meals,’ repeated Holmes firmly, picking up the receiver^⑥ with every expression of distaste^⑦. There followed one of those curious one-sided and monosyllabic^⑧ conversations which have become so very familiar to^⑨ all of us in recent years. After a moment, Holmes held^⑩ the instrument out to me. ‘So far as I can judge, Doctor, the caller wishes to speak to you,’ he said.

‘Thank you, Holmes.’ I took the telephone cautiously^⑪, for – although we had had the instrument in the house for a couple of days now – this was the first person to contact me in this fashion. ‘Hello? This is Dr Watson speaking.’

The receiver emitted^⑫ a strange crackle^⑬, over which I could hear

-
- ① extract *n.* 摘录; 选段
② prospectus *n.* 说明书
③ telegraph *n.* 电报
④ constantly *ad.* 不断地; 时常地
⑤ juncture *n.* 关键时刻
⑥ receiver *n.* 电话听筒
⑦ distaste *n.* 厌恶, 不喜欢
⑧ monosyllabic *a.* 短而粗鲁的
⑨ become familiar to *ph.* 变……熟悉
⑩ hold... (out to sb.) *ph.* 拿给(某人)
⑪ cautiously *ad.* 谨慎地
⑫ emit *v.* 发出
⑬ crackle *n.* 爆破声

occasional stray^① fragments of speech. ‘— Watson? — Morrison here, at Belmont. You had arranged — stay with us — some — ago. I thought — telephone — confirm^② your arrival later today.’

‘Yes, yes, indeed,’ said I. ‘I am packed^③ and ready for the off! All being well^④, I shall arrive there in the middle of the afternoon. I look forward to^⑤ my stay.’

‘— look forward to — you. My compliments^⑥, sir.’

‘And mine to you, sir! There you are^⑦, Holmes,’ I said, replacing^⑧ the receiver, ‘that was Mr Morrison, the secretary at Belmont. Wanted to confirm my stay there, beginning this afternoon.’

‘But I thought you had already confirmed it by letter?’ said Holmes, with a smile.

‘Well, I had. Even so^⑨, there may have been some unexpected difficulty, some reason why I could not go. The telephone avoids having to worry about^⑩ sending telegrams, or disappointing^⑪ people at the last minute.’

‘Then perhaps I shall grow to like^⑫ it,’ said Holmes calmly. ‘In any event, I sincerely^⑬ trust you will enjoy your holiday.’

① stray *a.* 飘飘忽忽的

② confirm *v.* 确认

③ pack *v.* 打点(行李)

④ all being well *ph.* 都弄好了

⑤ look forward to *ph.* 盼望, 期待

⑥ my compliments *ph.* 我的问候

⑦ there you are *ph.* 给你

⑧ replace *v.* 放回

⑨ even so *ph.* 虽然如此, 尽管如此

⑩ worry about *ph.* 担心……

⑪ disappoint *v.* 使失望

⑫ grow to like... *ph.* 渐渐喜欢……

⑬ sincerely *ad.* 真诚地

‘Thank you. Lord knows, I am ready enough for a change,’ said I frankly, ‘I grow tired of^① London in this weather, and yearn for^② some country air.’

‘You should get plenty of that,’ said Holmes. ‘Is this place not set ‘twixt^③ the North Downs and the Weald? You will forgive^④ the poetic description^⑤, which, if I mistake not, was in that particular prospectus^⑥. From which I also heard numerous extracts.’

‘It was a trifle^⑦ overblown^⑧,’ I agreed. ‘But, yes, it is on the borders of Surrey and Sussex, and – according to^⑨ the friend who recommended^⑩ it to me, or, rather, me to it – it is a delightful spot.’

‘The area is indeed delightful,’ said Holmes. ‘And with some most interesting associations^⑪ for both of us, for you will recall that intriguing^⑫ – though rather elementary – affair of the Cunninghams, which took place not far from there?’

‘I do recall it, Holmes. In fact, I recorded it under the title of “The Reigate Puzzle”.’

‘I looked into^⑬ it,’ said he. ‘And I must confess^⑭ that I have

-
- ① grow tired of *ph.* 厌倦了
② yearn for *ph.* 向往, 渴望
③ twixt *prep.* 在……之间
④ forgive *v.* 免除
⑤ description *n.* 描述
⑥ prospectus *n.* 说明书
⑦ trifle *n.* 小事, 琐事
⑧ overblown *n.* 夸张的
⑨ according to ... *ph.* 根据……
⑩ recommend sth. to sb. *ph.* 向……推荐
⑪ association *n.* 联想
⑫ intriguing *a.* 引起兴趣的
⑬ look into *ph.* 调查, 检查
⑭ confess *v.* 承认

seldom encountered^① such an emphasis on sensationalism^② at the expense of^③ fact. By the by^④, ' he added, before I could fairly counter^⑤ this charge^⑥, 'does Colonel Hayter still live in those parts?'

'He does.' Colonel^⑦ Hayter was an old friend whom I had first known in Afghanistan, and with whom Holmes and I had been staying at the time of the Cunningham case. 'Colonel Hayter had suggested I stay with him, in point of^⑧ fact. But I fear he is not the man he once was, and any excitement – even an unobtrusive^⑨ guest such as myself – is quite forbidden^⑩. He lives quietly these days, his only companions a nurse, for he is very weak, and a secretary of some sort, a Carstairs, or Carruthers, or some such name. The colonel is working on what he has described to me as his 'literary testament', in the shape of a definitive^⑪ history of the events at Maiwand. The secretary – a young fellow, fresh from university^⑫, as I understand – is helping him to compile^⑬ it, and I have offered to pay a short visit^⑭ tomorrow, to look over^⑮ what has been accomplished thus far, and perhaps offer

① encounter *v.* 遭遇, 遇到

② sensationalism *n.* 激情主义; 感觉论; 快乐主义

③ at the expense of... *ph.* 以……为代价

④ by the by *ph.* 顺便说一下

⑤ counter *v.* 反对

⑥ charge *n.* 指控, 控告

⑦ colonel *n.* 上校

⑧ in point of ... *ph.* 就……而言

⑨ unobtrusive *adj.* 谨慎的

⑩ forbidden *adj.* 不允许进入

⑪ definitive *a.* 已成定论的

⑫ fresh from university *ph.* 刚从大学毕业的

⑬ compile *v.* 编辑, 编纂

⑭ pay a short visit *ph.* 进行短暂的访问

⑮ look over *ph.* 检查

some advice on the literary and military aspects.'

'I see. You will please to give the colonel my compliments and good wishes. I owe^① him much, for he was the means of introducing me to a most diverting^② case,' said Holmes, buttering^③ a slice of toast^④. 'Tell me,' said he, 'you had mentioned^⑤ earlier that you were introduced to this place, and not it to you. What meant you by that?'

'The place is not an hotel,' I told him. 'It is an old country house - Belmont by name - which is run under the terms of a charitable trust^⑥.'

'Indeed?'

'The trust was set up some twenty years ago by a philanthropist^⑦ whose name - could I but recollect^⑧ it myself - would be familiar to you. A household^⑨ name, in very truth, for he made a vast fortune^⑩ in boot-blackening or some such thing^⑪, invested^⑫ it in railway stock^⑬, and so became one of the richest men in England. Now, he was by

① owe *v.* 欠

② diverting *a.* 有趣的

③ butter *v.* 涂奶油于……

④ toast *n.* 吐司面包

⑤ mention *v.* 谈到,提及

⑥ trust *n.* 信托财产

⑦ philanthropist *n.* 慈善家

⑧ recollect *v.* 想起

⑨ household *a.* 普通的

⑩ made a fortune (in) *ph.* 赚了一笔钱

⑪ some such thing *ph.* 一些类似的事情

⑫ invest *v.* 投资

⑬ stock *n.* 股票

way of being a patron^① of the arts – indeed, he was himself a talented amateur^② engraver^③ in mezzotint^④ – ’

Holmes groaned^⑤.

I ignored him. ‘He had a large family – and, by what I am told privately^⑥, an equally large^⑦ wife. He realized that many of his artistic acquaintances^⑧ were in much the same state. He realized further that many of them would benefit^⑨ from the occasional break from home, wife and children, but that most of them simply had insufficient^⑩ funds to permit their taking a holiday abroad, or staying at a first-rate hotel^⑪. He accordingly bought this old manor^⑫ house, and endowed^⑬ it in his will^⑭ with the wherewithal^⑮ to run^⑯ it exactly like one of those first-rate hotels, but at a nominal cost^⑰ to guests.’

‘A philanthropist indeed.’

‘As you say, Holmes.’

‘And the recommendation?’

-
- ① patron *n.* 赞助人
 - ② amateur *a.* 业余的
 - ③ engraver *n.* 雕刻师
 - ④ mezzotint *n.* 铜版术雕刻
 - ⑤ groan *v.* 哼着说
 - ⑥ privately *ad.* 私下里
 - ⑦ large *a.* 慷慨的
 - ⑧ acquaintances *n.* 熟人;相识
 - ⑨ benefit (from) *ph.* 受益
 - ⑩ insufficient *a.* 不够的,不足的
 - ⑪ a first-rate hotel *ph.* 一流的饭店
 - ⑫ manor *n.* 庄园
 - ⑬ endow *v.* 捐赠
 - ⑭ will *n.* 遗嘱
 - ⑮ wherewithal *n.* 必要的钱财
 - ⑯ run *v.* 经营
 - ⑰ at a nominal cost *ph.* 以极低的价钱

‘Oh,’ said I, ‘one needs a recommendation from someone who has stayed there, nothing more than that^①. Provided that^② one has some connection with literature, or the arts. Oh, and the terms of the trust mean that only men can stay there, of course.’

‘So that there may be no distractions^③, presumably^④?’ said Holmes.

‘Presumably. You ought to come along^⑤, Holmes – I could ring the secretary now, see if they have a room free.’

‘You are very kind. But I fear my literary achievements^⑥ are scarcely an adequate testimonial^⑦.’

‘You underrate^⑧ yourself, Holmes. Why, your monographs^⑨ have invariably^⑩ been received as the last word on their subject – whatever it may have been.’

Holmes laughed. ‘I am tempted^⑪. But it is very short notice. And besides, I can hardly leave just at the moment, when this business of the black pearl of the Borgias is so very pressing^⑫.’

I nodded, for I knew that Holmes was engaged on^⑬ trying to track

① nothing more than that *ph.* 仅此而已

② provided that... *conj.* 假如

③ distraction *n.* 分心

④ presumably *ad.* 可能地

⑤ come along *ph.* 一起去

⑥ achievement *n.* 成就

⑦ testimonial *n.* 证明

⑧ underrate *v.* 低估; 看轻

⑨ monograph *n.* 专题论文

⑩ invariably *ad.* 不变地

⑪ tempt *v.* 诱惑

⑫ pressing *a.* 急迫的

⑬ be engaged on *ph.* 忙于……

down^① the thief who had stolen the fabulous^② jewel from the Prince of Colonna's room at the Dacre Hotel. I may add that the case baffled^③ even Holmes for a time, although he solved the puzzle a year later in a most interesting case which I have recorded under the title, 'The Six Napoleons'.

'Did I overhear^④ you say your bag is packed?' asked Holmes.

'You did. I am all ready, and shall leave by the afternoon train – unless, of course, I can be of any assistance^⑤ with your investigations, in which case I am entirely at your disposal^⑥.'

Holmes shook his head. 'Thank you for the offer, but I fear that the problem may be insoluble^⑦, at least for the moment, and that your best efforts would not help me. I suspect^⑧ that it will prove to be one of those annoying^⑨ cases where the solution, if it comes at all, is delayed some considerable^⑩ time, and is largely dependent on chance. No, Doctor, it only remains for me to wish you an enjoyable and restful holiday in the country^⑪. And that I must do now,' he added, looking at his watch, 'for I have an appointment at half past the hour^⑫. Princes are not to be kept waiting, even when one brings them no good news.'

-
- ① track down *ph.* 搜寻
 - ② fabulous *a.* 极好的
 - ③ baffle *v.* 使……迷惑
 - ④ overhear *v.* 无意中听到
 - ⑤ be of... assistance *ph.* 对……有帮助的
 - ⑥ at someone's disposal *ph.* 供某人支配
 - ⑦ insoluble *a.* 不能解决的
 - ⑧ suspect *v.* 怀疑
 - ⑨ annoying *a.* 讨厌的
 - ⑩ considerable *a.* 相当多的
 - ⑪ country *n.* 乡村
 - ⑫ at half past the hour *ph.* 再过半小时