



*I only quote  
this as a  
trivial  
example of  
observation  
and  
inference.*

## Adventure XXVII -- The Hound of the Baskervilles

1. "A devil with merely local powers like a parish vestry would be too inconceivable a thing."
2. "A study of family portraits is enough to convert a man to the doctrine of reincarnation."
3. "A woman of Spanish blood does not condone such an injury so lightly."
4. "And so could I- from which I gather that in all probability it was a false one. A clever man upon so delicate an errand has no use for a beard save to conceal his features."
5. "Bear in mind one of the phrases in that queer old legend and avoid the moor in those hours of darkness when the powers of evil are exalted."
6. "Evil indeed is the man who has not one woman to mourn him."
7. "I am bound to say that in all the accounts which you have been so good as to give of my own small achievements you have habitually underrated your own abilities. It may be that you are not yourself luminous, but you are a conductor of light. Some people without possessing genius have a remarkable power of stimulating it. I confess, my dear fellow, that I am very much in your debt."
8. "I presume nothing."



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9. "I remain an unknown factor in the business, ready to throw in all my weight at a critical moment."
10. "I think anything out of the ordinary routine of life well worth reporting."
11. "I will not bias your mind by suggesting theories or suspicions. I wish you simply to report facts in the fullest possible manner to me, and you can leave me to do the theorizing."
12. "If they are innocent it would be a cruel injustice, and if they are guilty we should be giving up all chance of bringing it home to them. No, no, we will preserve them upon our list of suspects."
13. "In a modest way I have combated evil, but to take on the Father of Evil himself would, perhaps, be too ambitious a task."
14. "Intense mental concentration has a curious way of blotting out what has passed. The barrister who has his case at his fingers' ends and is able to argue with an expert upon his own subject finds that a week or two of the courts will drive it all out of his head once more."
15. "It is a formidable difficulty, and I fear that you ask too much when you expect me to solve it. The past and the present are within the field of my inquiry, but what a man may do in the future is a hard question to answer."
16. "It is a singular thing, but I find that a concentrated atmosphere helps a concentration of thought. I have not pushed it to the length of getting into a box to think, but that is the logical outcome of my convictions. Have you turned the case over in your mind?"
17. "It is murder, refined, cold-blooded, deliberate murder. Do not ask me for particulars. My nets are closing upon him, and he is already almost at my mercy. There is but one danger which can threaten us. It is that he should strike before we are ready to do so. Another day- two at the most- and I have my case complete, but until then guard your charge as closely as ever a fond mother watched her ailing child."

18. "It is the scientific use of the imagination, but we always have some material basis on which to start our speculation."
19. "Like most clever criminals, he may be too confident in his own cleverness and imagine that he has completely deceived us."
20. "My body has remained in this armchair and has, I regret to observe, consumed in my absence two large pots of coffee and an incredible amount of tobacco."
21. "My eyes have been trained to examine faces and not their trimmings. It is the first quality of a criminal investigator that he should see through a disguise."
22. "Now is the dramatic moment of fate, when you hear a step upon the stair which is walking into your life, and you know not whether for good or ill."
23. "That which is clearly known hath less terror than that which is but hinted at and guessed."
24. "The devil's agents may be of flesh and blood, may they not?"
25. "The more *outré* and grotesque an incident is the more carefully it deserves to be examined, and the very point which appears to complicate a case is, when duly considered and scientifically handled, the one which is most likely to elucidate it."
26. "The nets are all in place, and the drag is about to begin. We'll know before the day is out whether we have caught our big, lean-jawed pike, or whether he has got through the meshes."
27. "The shadow has departed and will not return. We must see what further cards we have in our hands and play them with decision."
28. "The thing takes shape. It becomes coherent."
29. "The world is full of obvious things which nobody by any chance ever observes."

30. "There are seventy-five perfumes, which it is very necessary that a criminal expert should be able to distinguish from each other, and cases have more than once within my own experience depended upon their prompt recognition."
31. "There is a realm in which the most acute and most experienced of detectives is helpless."
32. "There is nothing more stimulating than a case where everything goes against you."
33. "There is nothing so deceptive as the distance of a light upon a pitch-dark night, and sometimes the glimmer seemed to be far away upon the horizon and sometimes it might have been within a few yards of us."
34. "This, then, is the stage upon which tragedy has been played, and upon which we may help to play it again."
35. "Watson, this time we have got a foeman who is worthy of our steel."
36. "We balance probabilities and choose the most likely. It is the scientific use of the imagination."
37. "We have him, we have him and I dare swear that before tomorrow night he will be fluttering in our net as helpless as one of his own butterflies. A pin, a cork, and a card, and we add him to the Baker Street collection!"
38. "We hold several threads in our hands, and the odds are that one or other of them guides us to the truth. We may waste time in following the wrong one, but sooner or later we must come upon the right."
39. "Yes, the setting is a worthy one. If the devil did desire to have a hand in the affairs of men—"