



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

Adventure XLVIII – The Valley of Fear

1. “A touch! A distinct touch!” You are developing a certain unexpected vein of pawky humor, Watson, against which I must learn to guard myself.”
2. “Ah, Mr. Mac, you would not read that excellent local compilation which described the concealment of King Charles. People did not hide in those days without excellent hiding places, and the hiding place that has once been used may be again.”
3. “All knowledge comes useful to the detective. Even the trivial fact... may start a train of reflection in your mind.”
4. “And yet there should be no combination of events for which the wit of man cannot conceive an explanation. Simply as a mental exercise, without any assertion that it is true, let me indicate a possible line of thought. It is, I admit, mere imagination; but how often is imagination the mother of truth?”
5. “Breadth of view is one of the essentials of our profession. The interplay of ideas and the oblique uses of knowledge are often of extraordinary interest. You will excuse these remarks from one who, though a mere connoisseur of crime, is still rather older and perhaps more experienced than yourself.”



6. "Can a husband ever carry about a secret all his life and a woman who loves him have no suspicion of it?"
7. "Everything comes in circles... The old wheel turns, and the same spoke comes up. It's all been done before, and will be again."
8. "Exactly. She does not shine as a wife even in her own account of what occurred. I am not a whole souled admirer of womankind, as you are aware, Watson, but my experience of life has taught me that there are few wives having any regard for their husbands who would let any man's spoken word stand between them and that husband's dead body. Should I ever marry, Watson, I should hope to inspire my wife with some feeling which would prevent her from being walked off by a housekeeper when my corpse was lying within a few yards of her."
9. "I go into a case to help the ends of justice and the work of the police. If I have ever separated myself from the official force, it is because they have first separated themselves from me. I have no wish ever to score at their expense. At the same time, Mr. White Mason, I claim the right to work in my own way and give my results at my own time- complete rather than in stages."
10. "I say, Watson, would you be afraid to sleep in the same room with a lunatic, a man with softening of the brain, an idiot whose mind has lost its grip?"
11. "If criminals would always schedule their movements like railway trains, it would certainly be more convenient for all of us."
12. "In the first place, I may tell you that Moriarty rules with a rod of iron over his people. His discipline is tremendous. There is only one punishment in his code. It is death."
13. "It immensely adds to the zest of an investigation, my dear Mr. Mac, when one is in conscious sympathy with the historical atmosphere of one's surroundings."

14. "Led on by some rudimentary aspirations towards right, and encouraged by the judicious stimulation of an occasional ten-pound note sent to him by devious methods, he has once or twice given me advance information which has been of value- that highest value which anticipates and prevents rather than avenges crimes."
15. "Let us possess our souls in patience and make as little noise as possible."
16. "Mediocrity know nothing higher than itself; but talent instantly recognizes genius."
17. "I wonder! Perhaps there are points which have escaped your Machiavellian intellect. Let us consider the problem in the light of pure reason. This man's reference is to a book. That is our point of departure."
18. "Picture to yourself the pilot fish with the shark, the jackal with the lion- anything that is insignificant in companionship with what is formidable: not only formidable, Watson, but sinister- in the highest degree sinister. That is where he comes within my purview."
19. "Strange indeed is human nature. Here were these men, to whom murder was familiar, who again and again had struck down the father of the family, some man against whom they had no personal feeling, without one thought of compunction or of compassion for his weeping wife or helpless children, and yet the tender or pathetic in music could move them to tears."
20. "Surely our profession would be a drab and sordid one if we did not sometimes set the scene so as to glorify our results. The blunt accusation, the brutal tap upon the shoulder- what can one make of such a denouement? But the quick inference, the subtle trap, the clever forecast of coming events, the triumphant vindication of bold theories- are these not the pride and the justification of our life's work?"
21. "That's genius, Watson. But if I am spared by lesser men, our day will surely come."
22. "The English law is in the main a just law."
23. "The temptation to form premature theories upon insufficient data is the bane of our profession."

24. "Then he's no use to me. I'm a practical man."
25. "There is a master hand here. It is no case of sawed-off shotguns and clumsy six-shooters. You can tell an old master by the sweep of his brush. I can tell a Moriarty when I see one. This crime is from London, not from America."
26. "There is an appalling directness about your questions, Watson. They come at me like bullets."
27. "Unwelcome truths are not popular."
28. "Watson insists that I am the dramatist in real life. Some touch of the artist wells up within me, and calls insistently for a well-staged performance."
29. "When I went into this case with you I bargained, as you will no doubt remember, that I should not present you with half-proved theories, but that I should retain and work out my own ideas until I had satisfied myself that they were correct. For this reason I am not at the present moment telling you all that is in my mind. On the other hand, I said that I would play the game fairly by you, and I do not think it is a fair game to allow you for one unnecessary moment to waste your energies upon a profitless task. Therefore I am here to advise you this morning, and my advice to you is summed up in three words- abandon the case."
30. "When water is near and a weight is missing it is not a very farfetched supposition that something has been sunk in the water."
31. "When you have one of the first brains of Europe up against you, and all the powers of darkness at his back, there are infinite possibilities."
32. "Why should I be surprised? I receive an anonymous communication from a quarter which I know to be important, warning me that danger threatens a certain person. Within an hour I learn that this danger has actually materialized and that the person is dead. I am interested; but, as you observe, I am not surprised."
33. "Your native shrewdness, my dear Watson, that innate cunning which is the delight of your friends, would surely prevent you from inclosing cipher and message in the same envelope."