

# The Norwood Builder and Other Stories

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

## The Norwood Builder

- 1 1 Holmes knew that McFarlane was not married because his clothes were untidy. (If he had been married, his wife would have made sure his clothes were tidy.) Holmes also knew that McFarlane was a lawyer because he saw some legal papers in his pockets. He also knew that McFarlane had an illness of the lungs because his breathing was loud and heavy. Holmes knew McFarlane's name and where he lived because McFarlane told him these things.
- 2 The article said that Mr Oldacre seemed to have disappeared after a fire in a timber store behind his house. He had not slept in his bed and his safe had been opened. The police had found blood in his bedroom and on a walking stick. They had also seen marks on the ground showing that something heavy had been pulled across the garden towards the timber store, and they had found pieces of burnt flesh.
- 2 1 Holmes saw that some of the writing was very difficult to read and some of it was clear. He guessed that the clear writing had been written at two stations when the train was not moving. The writing that was worse had been written when the train was moving. The worst writing had been written when the train was crossing lots of points which were close together. The train had only stopped twice and there were lots of points near the main London stations, so Holmes knew that the draft had been written on an express train between Norwood and London Bridge Station, which was near McFarlane's office.
- 3 1 Holmes discovered that McFarlane's mother had been engaged to Oldacre when she was a young woman. She had broken off the engagement when she found out that he was a wicked man. She hated him. Holmes thought that John McFarlane, her son, might hate Oldacre too and might have murdered him.
- 4 1 A fierce-looking old man – Jonas Oldacre – opened a door in the wall and tried to run away. The door looked like part of the wall because it did not have a handle or lock on the outside.
- 2 He knew that the fingerprint hadn't been on the wall when he first looked at the corridor and he knew that McFarlane's walking stick was in the house. He thought that the housekeeper must have hidden the walking stick. He guessed that Oldacre was hiding in the house and had used his own blood to put on the stick. He worked out that Oldacre had used sealing wax to make an impression of McFarlane's finger so that he could make McFarlane's fingerprint on the wall. Holmes paced up and down to measure the length of the outside of the house and then he did the same thing in the upstairs corridor. He found out that the corridor was shorter than it should have been so he knew that there was a hidden room.
- 3 Holmes and Lestrade were polite to each other, but Holmes did not think that Lestrade was a very good detective and Lestrade probably knew that Holmes thought this about him. Lestrade was pleased with himself when he thought that he had solved the case before Sherlock Holmes. Lestrade got angry when he did not understand what Holmes was doing. When Holmes solved the case, Lestrade was willing to congratulate him and ask him how he had done it.

## The Second Stain

- 1 1 The visitors were famous men and both of them were politicians. One was Mr Trelawney Hope, the Minister for European Affairs, and the other was Lord Bellinger, the Prime Minister. Hope was clever, quite young and handsome, and Bellinger was a thin, elderly man who looked like he was used to having great power. Bellinger had wonderful eyes. Both of the men were worried.
- 2 The letter was kept in a safe at Hope's ministry during the day and in a locked dispatch box in his bedroom at night. The bedroom was on the second floor. No one went into the bedroom except Hope, his wife and two servants, who Hope trusted.
- 2 1 The letter was from a ruler of a foreign country who was very angry. It contained shocking accusations, which would have made people very angry with his country. If it had been made public, there could have been a war.
- 3 1 Eduardo Lucas was a spy. Holmes thought that he might have the letter and that he might try to sell it.
- 2 She was the wife of Mr Trelawney Hope. She was a very beautiful young woman, but on the day she visited Holmes she looked pale and very frightened. She was very worried about something.
- 4 1 She was a French woman who lived in Paris, and she believed she was married to Henri Fournaye. She discovered that her husband was living a double life – he was Eduardo Lucas in London. She came to visit him at his London house. It was possible that she had murdered Eduardo Lucas because she was jealous. Holmes did not think she was important because it was not his job to discover who had killed Lucas. He wanted to save Europe from war by finding the letter.
- 2 He thought that the most important thing was that nothing had happened. There wasn't any trouble in any European country, so he knew that the letter had not reached anyone who could make trouble by publishing it.
- 5 1 There was a bloodstain on the carpet and there was also a bloodstain on the floor under the carpet, but the stain on the carpet was not on top of the stain on the floor.
- 2 The policeman at the door of the house had moved the carpet. A young woman had visited the house, but when she had seen the bloodstain, she had fainted and fallen. The carpet had moved across the floor, so the policeman moved it back and straightened it.
- 6 1 He rang the bell to call the butler and asked to see Lady Hilda's husband so that he could tell him about the letter. When the butler said that Mr Trelawney Hope was not in, Holmes said he would wait for him. Lady Hilda then admitted she had the letter because she didn't want Holmes to tell her husband about it.
- 7 1 Many years ago, she had written a letter to a man she loved. Her husband did not know about this man or the letter. Eduardo Lucas had contacted Lady Hilda and told her that he had her love letter. He told her that she must steal a different letter from her husband for him. If she did not get the letter he wanted, he would send her love letter to her husband.
- 2 Yes, Holmes was probably right not to tell them. There wasn't a war because the letter was recovered and returned to the government. Holmes understood that Lady Hilda had done something foolish because she was frightened – he knew that she wasn't really a criminal, so it wasn't important for him to tell her husband what had happened.

## The Stockbroker's Clerk

- 1 1 He was a pleasant-looking young Londoner who was a stockbroker's clerk. He had an honest face, fair hair and a little yellow moustache and he wore a black suit. He had worked for a good firm of stockbrokers called Coxon and Woodhouse for five years but he had lost his job. He had applied for other jobs and got one at Mawson and Williams, another firm of stockbrokers.
- 2 1 It had been difficult for him to get his new job after he had lost his job with Coxon's and he did not want to throw it away. He did not know anything about hardware, so he did not understand why Mr Pinner wanted him for the job. He took it because the new offer sounded exciting and he would earn five hundred pounds a year instead of two hundred pounds a year at Mawson's.  
2 He asked Hall Pycroft to write a letter to him agreeing to take the job. It was strange because Hall Pycroft had already accepted the job by word-of-mouth, which was normal for this kind of job.  
3 Hall Pycroft was angry because he had never met the manager from Mawson's and he thought that the manager was pretending to know him in order to stop Mr Pinner talking to him about a better job. He did not like it when the manager had said that he was saving him from poverty.
- 3 1 The size and dustiness of the office worried Hall Pycroft. He was surprised and worried that the office had just two dusty rooms without very much furniture. He had expected to see a large office with new furniture and lots of clerks working at desks. The office he saw made him think that the firm was not a very good one.  
2 Harry Pinner laughed and Hall Pycroft saw that one of his teeth, on the left-hand side of his mouth, had a gold filling. The work had been done very badly. The man who had visited him in London (Arthur Pinner) had also had a badly done gold filling in exactly the same tooth. Hall Pycroft had noticed it when this man had laughed about his bet with the Mawson's manager. Hall Pycroft realized that there were not two men, but only one.
- 4 1 They broke the door to the office because they knew that something bad was happening. They saw that Mr Pinner was choking because he had a belt round his neck. Watson held him up and Holmes cut the belt with a knife. Watson brought a jug of water from the other room and poured some water over his face to help him recover.  
2 Holmes thought that he had brought him to Birmingham so that he would not be able to see or talk to anyone in London. He gave him a long task, which kept him in Birmingham and stopped him returning to London. While he was in Birmingham, someone else could pretend to be him in London. He guessed this because of the letter that Mr Pinner had made Pycroft write. Someone could learn to copy, or forge, the writing. That person could then pretend to be Pycroft at Mawson's because Pycroft hadn't told the manager at Mawson's that he was not going to start his job there, and the manager didn't know what he looked like because he had never seen him. The man had learnt to forge Hall Pycroft's writing because the manager had seen Pycroft's writing in the letter he had sent in answer to Mawson's advertisement. So when that man arrived and said he was Hall Pycroft, the new clerk, the manager believed him.  
3 They were trying to steal one hundred thousand pounds in securities from Mawson's.

## A Scandal in Bohemia

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  - 1 Irene impressed Holmes because she was as intelligent and as logical as he was himself. At the end of the story, we find out that she worked out who he was and what he was doing before he could finish solving the crime.
  - 2 He was from Egria in Bohemia. He was a very large man, who was at least six-and-a-half feet tall. The top part of his face was covered with a black mask, and he was carrying a wide hat. There was fur on the collar of his coat and round the tops of his boots. Over his coat he wore a cloak fastened with a brooch made of gold with a single large jewel in the centre. The man's clothes showed that he was very rich, and that he was not an Englishman. He was Wilhelm Sigismund von Ormstein, Duke of Cassel and King of Bohemia, and he was pretending to be Count von Kramm, a Bohemian aristocrat.
- 2
  - 1 He had met Irene Adler in Warsaw five years before and had fallen in love with her. Irene had a photograph of them together. He now wanted to marry Princess Clotilde of Scandinavia. Irene Adler was blackmailing the king because she was jealous of Clotilde and did not want the king to marry her. She was going to make the photograph public to stop the marriage. If Clotilde's father saw the photograph and found out about Irene Adler, he would not let the king marry his daughter. The king had tried to buy the photograph and to steal it, but had not succeeded. His marriage to Princess Clotilde was going to be announced on the following Monday, and Irene Adler was going to make the photograph public on that day.
- 3
  - 1 He learnt that they were all in love with her. He also learnt that she did not leave her house very often in the morning, but that she always went out in the afternoon between five and seven o'clock for a drive in Regent's Park. He learnt that a gentleman visited her every day and that he was her only male visitor. The gentleman was a lawyer called Godfrey Norton, and he was a dark-haired, handsome man.
  - 2 Holmes had to be a witness at the marriage of Irene Adler and Godfrey Norton.
- 4
  - 1 He planned to make her believe that her house was on fire. He thought that the first thing she would try to save if there was a fire was the thing that gave her power, so she would try to save the photograph, and he would see where it was.
  - 2 Holmes arranged for a group of actors to be in the street near Irene Adler's house. He disguised himself as a clergyman. When she arrived at her house in her carriage, the actors started to fight each other near her. Holmes tried to protect her, but the actors pretended to attack him and he fell to the ground with pretend blood on his face. Irene and her driver went to help Holmes and he asked for a drink of water in a weak voice. She then asked him to come into the house to lie down until he felt better.
  - 3 A slim young man passed them in the street and said goodnight to Holmes. Holmes thought he recognized the man's voice.
- 5
  - 1 Irene Adler defeated him because she left the country with the photograph. She had thought that the king would employ Sherlock Holmes to help him and she had realized that the clergyman was really Holmes and that he had seen where the photograph was in her house. So she left the country and took the photograph with her before Holmes could take it for the king.