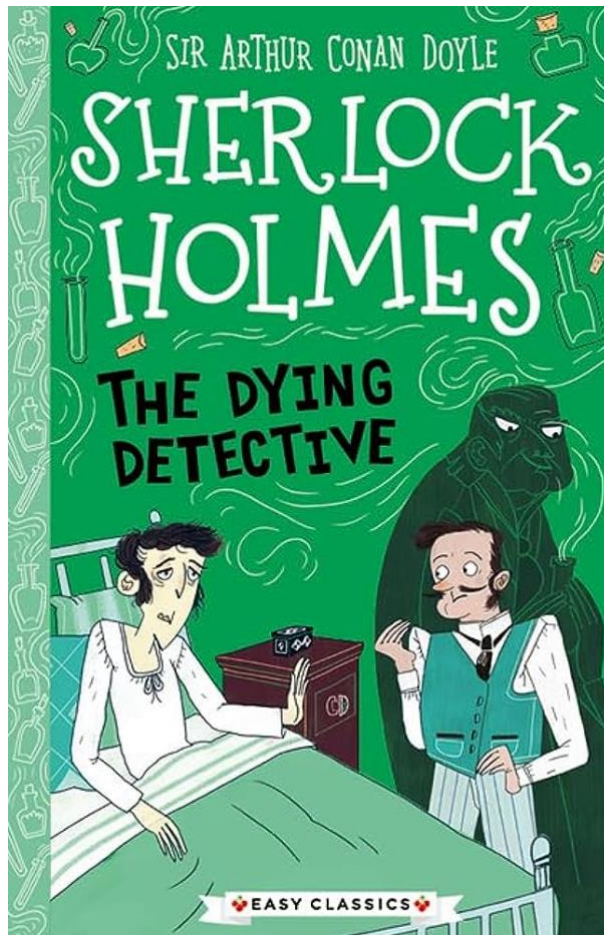


THE DYING DETECTIVE

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

SUMMARY

“The Dying Detective” is a Sherlock Holmes short story by the British author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. In the story, Dr. Watson becomes convinced that his



brilliant consulting detective friend Sherlock Holmes is dying from a highly contagious disease that is usually found only in Asia. Holmes refuses to allow

Watson to examine him. Instead, Holmes tells Watson to bring a man called Culverton Smith to see him.

Culverton Smith has no professional medical training but he knows more about the disease which Holmes claims to be suffering from than anyone else in the world. Holmes admits that he and Culverton Smith are not on friendly terms because Holmes suspected that the man had some part in the death of his nephew.

Mrs. Hudson informs Watson about Holmes's illness

One day in November, Holmes' landlady Mrs. Hudson goes to see Watson. She tells him that Holmes is dying. He has had nothing to eat or drink for three days. He has been getting steadily worse throughout that time but has refused to see a doctor. He has finally allowed Mrs. Hudson to fetch Watson but still refuses to see any other doctor.

Watson enters Holmes' bedroom and is struck by how ill his friend looks. According to Holmes, he is suffering from a tropical disease that is usually confined to Sumatra. Holmes says that an investigation recently took him to a place where he must have caught the disease.

Sherlock Holmes refuses to allow Dr. Watson to examine him, saying that the disease can be passed on by touch and when Dr. Watson offered to bring Dr. Ainstree, Holmes shut the door and ordered him not to move till six in the evening and then he could fetch a doctor of Holmes's choice. Dr. Watson did not know what to do for two hours so he just walked around the room slowly. He came across a small black and white ivory box with a sliding lid.

Holmes refuses to be examined

When he was about to examine the contents in the box, Holmes strictly forbade him from touching his things. In a kind of delirium, Holmes ordered to take out his coins and keep all the half-crowns in his watch pocket.

He even instructed to light the gas lamp and keep it half on and place some letters on the table within his reach and slide the lid of the ivory box with Tongs and put the Tongs and the ivory box on the table. He also instructed Dr.

Watson to bring Mr. Culverton Smith from 13, Lower Burke Street, as Holmes was serious. Dr. Watson was hesitant to go yet he did as he was asked to do.

Holmes clarified that he was not a doctor but a plantation man with a deep knowledge of the disease. Holmes asked Watson to plead with him and convince him to come to his house and save Holmes who was seriously ill. Dr. Watson offered to bring him in a cab. However, Holmes instructed Watson to plead with him and reach Holmes before he arrives.

Holmes' plan

While waiting for the cab Watson met Mr. Morton in a civil dress where Mr. Morton informed what he heard at Smith's house. Dr. Watson entered Mr. Culverton Smith's room by force. On hearing Mr. Holmes's name, he enquired how Holmes was doing. When he learned that he was very ill and believed that only he could save his life, he enquired how Holmes got the eastern disease. Dr. Watson told him all he knew. Dr. Watson, on the pretext of an appointment, returned to Holmes earlier and stayed in a room there as per Holmes's order.

Smith's careless attitude

Smith arrived and called out for Holmes. Holmes responded to his questions in a weak voice. He asked Holmes to describe the symptoms. When Holmes completed describing the symptoms Smith was strangely happy. He disclosed, "Poor Victor Savage was a dead man on the fourth day.

A strong and healthy young man. What a coincidence indeed!" Holmes said, "I know that you did it". Holmes groaned and asked for water. Smith gladly gave him water. He requested Smith to cure him and offered to forget his hand in the murder of Victor. Smith said that Watson shared the information that Holmes got the fever from Chinese sailors. He wanted to know seriously if there could be any other reason.

Holmes outsmarts Smith

Holmes said, 'successful acting'. Just then Inspector Morton said to Smith that he was arrested on a charge of murder. There was a scuffle. Inspector Morton

overpowered Smith and handcuffed him. Holmes apologized to Dr. Watson for being rude to him and undermining his capability as a doctor. All the acting was done just to bring Smith there. Even the coin trick was to make Watson believe that Holmes was really delirious. Holmes asked Dr. Watson to take him for eating something nutritious at Simpsons.

Conclusion

The author has highlighted that a criminal cannot get away for long, criminal may also be caught by his own words. "The Adventure of the Dying Detective" has a fairly simple plot, there is not much to the mystery, but Sherlock adds to it with all his deceptive ways.

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