

Sherlock Holmes: The Boscombe Valley Mystery

The detective SHERLOCK HOLMES, his friend Dr Watson and Inspector Lestrade are investigating the mysterious death of a man, McCarthy, at Boscombe Valley in the English countryside. The man's son, young McCarthy, is accused of his father's murder. Here, Holmes is examining the scene of the crime.

SHERLOCK HOLMES: *(Running round, like a dog picking up a scent, then stopping)* What did you go in the pool for, Lestrade?... No, don't answer that. I have no time. That left foot of yours with its inward twist is all over the place. A mole could trace it. There it vanishes among the reeds. Oh, how simple it would all have been had I been here before they came like a herd of buffalo and trampled all over it.

(Pointing to the ground) Here is where the party with the lodge-keeper came, and they have covered all tracks for six or eight feet round the body. But here are three separate tracks of the same feet. *(Draws out a magnifying glass and lies down to have a better view, talking to himself)* These are young McCarthy's feet. Twice he was walking, and once he ran swiftly. The soles are deeply marked and the heels hardly visible. That bears out his story. He ran when he saw his father on the ground. Then here are the father's feet as he paced up and down. What is this, then? It is the butt-end of the gun as the son stood listening. And this? Ha, ha! What have we here? Tiptoes! Tiptoes! Square too, quite unusual boots! They come, they go, they come again. Of course, that was for the cloak. Now where did they come from?

(Runs up and down, sometimes losing, sometimes finding the track. Lies down on the ground and lets out a cry of satisfaction) Ha! *(Collects bits of evidence from the ground and then gets up)*

It has been a case of considerable interest. I fancy that this grey house on the right must be the lodge. I think that I will go in and have a word with the lodge-keeper. When I have done that, we

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may drive back to our lunch. You may walk to the cab, and I shall be with you presently. *(Handing something to Lestrade)* By the way, Lestrade, this may interest you. The murder was done with it. Although there are no marks on it, I know that it had only lain there for a few days. The grass was growing under it. It matches the injuries. There is no sign of any other weapon. ... The murderer? He is a tall man. Left-handed. Limp with the right leg. Wears thick-soled boots and a grey cloak. Smokes Indian cigars. Uses a cigar-holder. Carries a blunt pen-knife in his pocket. There are several other indications, but these may be enough to aid us in our search. *(Pause)* I know you are sceptical, Lestrade. But you work your own method, and I shall work mine.

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, adapted by LAMDA