

Classic Detective Stories

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The Five Orange Pips (by Arthur Conan Doyle)

Part One

I have a complete record of all Sherlock Holmes' cases between 1880 and 1897. My friend and I worked together on some very important crimes during that period. We also worked on some very strange cases together. The strangest of all the cases is the one I am going to write about now.

It all began in September. The weather was terrible, I remember. It rained and it was very windy all day. The weather grew worse in the evening. Sherlock Holmes and I sat by the fire in his flat in Baker Street. We did not say much. Holmes was working with some papers and I was reading a story. Suddenly I heard the bell.

'I wonder^① who that is?' I said. 'Are you expecting a friend, Holmes?'

'No,' he said quietly. 'You're my only friend, Watson. I don't like people visiting me at home.'

'Then it must be a client,' I suggested.

'If it is a client,' Holmes replied gravely^②, 'it is a serious case. No one would walk through this storm if the case were not serious.'

The landlady^③ opened the front door of the house. A few moments later there was a knock on the door of Holmes' flat.

'Come in!' cried Holmes.

A young man entered the room. He looked about 22 years old and he was well dressed. He seemed very nervous and he was pale.

'Give me your coat and umbrella,' Holmes ordered. 'I will hang them up to

① wonder: 想知道。

② gravely: 严肃的。

③ landlady: 女房东。

dry. I see you have come to London from the Southwest,' he added.

'Yes,' the young man agreed. He looked surprised. 'I've just come from Horsham. But how did you know that?'

'The clay and chalk^① on your shoes is very distinctive^②,' Holmes told him.

'I've come for advice,' said the young man.

'Advice is easy to give,' Holmes replied.

'I need help as well as advice,' the young man added.

'Help is not always easy to give,' Holmes said seriously.

'I've heard a lot about you, Mr Holmes,' the young man said. 'Major Prendergast told me how you helped him in the Tankerville Club Scandal^③.'

'Ah, yes,' Holmes remembered with a smile. 'The Major was accused of cheating^④ at cards.'

'He said you could solve any mystery!' the young man cried.

'That was an exaggeration^⑤,' Holmes said quietly. 'The Major said you are always successful!'

'That's not true,' Holmes corrected him. 'I have lost four times - three times against men and once against woman.'

'But you've had hundreds of cases,' the young man went on^⑥. 'Four defeats are nothing against hundreds of successes! I'm sure you'll be successful with my case.'

'Please tell us all about it,' my friend suggested.

'It's a strange case,' the young man began. 'The things that have happened in my family are very mysterious.'

① clay and chalk: 尘土。

② distinctive: 与众不同。

③ scandal: 丑闻。

④ cheating: 欺骗。

⑤ exaggeration: 夸张。

⑥ went on: 接着说。

'Tell us everything,' Holmes repeated.

'My name is John Openshaw,' the young man said. 'I have very little to do with the story. To understand it, you will have to know something about the history of my family.' He paused for a moment, then he went on. 'My grandfather had two sons - my uncle Elias and my father Joseph. My father had a bicycle factory in Coventry. He was very successful and when he retired he was a rich man.

'My uncle Elias went to America when he was a young man. He, too, became a successful man. He owned property^① in Florida. He fought for the South in the American Civil War. He became a Colonel in the Confederate army. He did not want black people in America to have the vote. When the South was defeated, my uncle Elias returned to his property in Florida. He came back to England some years ago.

'He bought a house in Horsham. He was an odd^② man. He was not very friendly and he lived by himself. His neighbours sometimes saw him in his garden, but he generally stayed in the house. He drank a lot of brandy and he never had any visitors. He did not want to see his brother.

'He seemed fond of me^③, however,' Mr Openshaw continued. 'He asked my father if I could live with him. I first went to his house when I was about twelve years old. He was kind, in his own way. He played draughts^④ with me, and he put me in charge of^⑤ the servants in the house. By the time I was sixteen, I was master of the house. I had all the keys of the house and I could do what I wanted.

① property: 房地产。

② odd: 古怪的。

③ seemed fond of me: 看上去很喜欢我。

④ draughts: 西洋跳棋。

⑤ put me in charge of: 让我管理（仆人）。

'There was only one place I couldn't go into,' Mr Openshaw said. 'There was a room in the attic that my uncle kept locked all the time. He did not allow anyone to go in there. I looked through the keyhole^① of that room when I was a boy, but it wasn't very interesting, I could only see pieces of old luggage^② and boxes of papers.

'One day my uncle received a letter. He looked carefully at the foreign stamp on the envelope. "From India! I wonder what it can be," he muttered^③. He opened the letter quickly. Five orange pips fell out of it onto the table. My uncle went very pale. He looked terrified. He stared at the envelope. "KKK!" he cried loudly. He looked at the postmark on the envelope. "From Pondicherry," he said.

"What's the matter^④, Uncle?" I cried.

"Death," he said. "That's what this letter means. I have done bad things in the past — and now I'm going to die!" He got up from the table and went into his room. He was still very pale. I picked up the envelope and saw the letters 'KKK' written on the inside of the flap^⑤. There was no letter inside it. Just the five orange pips. I couldn't understand what was happening. I left the dining room a few minutes later and went upstairs. I saw my uncle coming down the stairs. He was carrying a key in one hand and a box in the other. He had been into the locked room in the attic.

"They can try if they want," he muttered mysteriously. "But I'll beat^⑥ them in the end." Then he spoke to me. "Call Mr Fordham, my lawyer," he ordered.

① keyhole: 钥匙孔。

② luggage: 行李。

③ muttered: 嘀咕。

④ matter: 问题。

⑤ flap: 信封口。

⑥ beat: 打败。

'That afternoon the lawyer arrived. My uncle called me into the room. There was a fire burning in the room. There were lots of papers burning in the fire. The box from the attic room was open on the table. I saw the letters 'KKK' on the inside of the lid^①.

"I'm making a will^②," Uncle Elias told me. "I'm leaving everything to your father. When he dies, you will have it all, John. Enjoy it if you can," he told me. Then he said a very odd thing. "But if you can't enjoy it, give everything to your worst enemy!"

'My uncle changed after that day. He began to drink a lot more. He spent most of the time in his room. Once or twice he came out of the room carrying a revolver. He sometimes rushed into the garden, crying that he was not afraid of anyone.

'One day he rushed into the garden with his revolver^③. This time he did not come back. We found him lying at the edge of a pond^④ in the garden. His head was in the water. He was dead.

'There was an investigation, of course. The coroner^⑤ decided that Uncle Elias had committed suicide. My father inherited^⑥ the property.'

① lid: 盒盖。

② will: 遗嘱。

③ revolver: 左轮手枪。

④ pond: 池塘。

⑤ coroner: 验尸官。

⑥ inherited: 继承。

Part Two

'One moment,' said Holmes eagerly^①. 'This is a very interesting story. I want to be sure of the facts. When did your uncle receive the letter with the five orange pips?'

'The letter arrived on the 10th of March, 1883,' Mr Openshaw answered.

'And when did he die?' Holmes asked him.

'He died seven weeks later, on the 2nd of May,' Mr Openshaw replied.

'I see,' Holmes said quietly. 'Now please go on with the story. Tell us what happened next.'

'My father examined the property very carefully,' Mr Openshaw said. 'He searched the room in the attic. The box was there. A label^② on the inside of the box had the letters 'KKK' written on it. There was a note on the label, which said, 'Letters, papers, receipts^③'. The box was empty, but my father found some other papers in the attic. These were records^④ of my uncle's military career. Other papers came from the period after the Civil War. They showed that my uncle did not like the new political situation in America. He did not like the new freedom that black people had. He did not like the new politicians from the North who came to Florida.'

'My father came to live in the house in Horsham at the beginning of 1884. Everything went well for about a year. Then, one morning at breakfast, he suddenly gave a cry of surprise. I looked up, and he was sitting with an envelope in one hand. In his other hand he was holding five orange pips! Of course he knew the story of the five orange pips, but he had always laughed

① eagerly: 急切的。

② label: 标签。

③ receipts: 发票。

④ records: 文件。

at it. Now he looked worried.

"What does this mean, John?" he asked me. His voice sounded scared.

"It's 'KKK'," I replied.

He looked inside the envelope.

"You're right," he said. "But what about this?" he asked anxiously. "What does this mean?"

He showed me the envelope. Above the letters 'KKK' there was some writing.

"Put the papers on the sundial^① in the garden," I read.

"What papers? I don't understand any of this."

"The papers must be the ones from the attic," I told him. "Uncle Elias destroyed them all before he died."

'My father was worried, but he was determined to fight his fear.

"This is all nonsense," he decided. "Where does this letter come from?"

I looked at the postmark on the outside of the envelope.

"Dundee," I told him. "The letter was posted in Dundee." 'We were silent for a moment.

"I think you should tell the police," I warned^② my father.

"They'd laugh at me!" he said quickly. "This is just a foolish^③ joke, John. We'll say no more about it."

I tried to persuade my father to do something about the letter and the five orange pips. It was no good. He refused to do anything.

'About three days later he went to stay with an old friend of his, Major Freebody. I was glad my father was away from the house. I thought he was

① sundial: 日规。

② warned: 警告。

③ foolish: 愚蠢的。

out of danger - but I was wrong!

'The Major sent me a telegram two days after my father's arrival. Something terrible had happened. My father had fallen over the edge of a chalk-pit^① while he was out walking one evening. He died a few days later.

'I investigated the accident very carefully, Mr Holmes.

There was no evidence of murder. The coroner decided that my father had died as a result of an accident.

'That is the story of my family,' Mr Openshaw said. 'That is how I became the owner of my uncle's house about three years ago. I have lived there very happily, Mr Holmes.'

Mr Openshaw stopped talking for a moment. He put his hand in his pocket and took out an envelope.

'Until yesterday morning that is,' he said slowly. He emptied the contents of the envelope onto the table in front of him.

Five orange pips rolled out of it.

'The envelope was posted in London,' Mr Openshaw told us.

'There was the same message that my father received: "'KKK'. Put the papers on the sundial."

'What have you done about it?' Holmes wanted to know.

'Nothing,' the young man replied.

'Nothing?' Holmes repeated in surprise.

'What could I do?' Mr Openshaw asked him. 'I feel desperate^② like an animal in a trap!'

'You must act^③!' Holmes announced. 'You must save yourself.' 'I went to

① chalk-pit: 矿场。

② desperate: 绝望。

③ act: 采取行动。

the police,' Mr Openshaw said. 'It was no good. They listened to my story, but they didn't believe me. They just sent a policeman to the house,' he added.

'Why did you come to me?' Holmes wanted to know. 'And why didn't you come sooner?'

'I only spoke to Major Prendergast today,' the young man said.

Holmes began to speak quickly.

'You received the letter yesterday,' he said. 'Do you have any other evidence to show me?'

'Only this,' Mr Openshaw told him. He put a piece of blue paper on the table.

'I found this piece of paper in my uncle's room after he burnt the papers from the box,' he explained. 'It was on the floor. It seems to be a page from a diary.'

Holmes and I looked at the piece of paper. It was dated 'March, 1869', and beneath^① it was written:

4th. Hudson came. Same old platform.

7th. Sent the pips to Mccauley, Laramore, and John Swain of St. Augustine.

9th. Mccauley cleared.

10th. John swain cleared.

12th. visited Laramore. All well.

Holmes studied the piece of paper for a few minutes and then he turned to

① beneath: 在……的下面。

Mr Openshaw.

'You must go home at once,' he ordered him. 'Put this piece of paper into the box from the room in the attic. Then put the box on the sundial in the garden. You must also write a note.

Explain that your uncle burnt all the other papers. You can do nothing else at the moment. Do you understand?'

'Yes, I do,' Mr Openshaw said. 'I'll do what you advise, Mr Holmes.'

'Go home straight away^①,' Holmes told him. 'And be very careful - you are in great danger!'

'I'm carrying a revolver,' Mr Openshaw replied.

'Good,' Holmes replied. 'I will begin working on the case tomorrow.'

'You'll come to the house in Horsham, then?' Mr Openshaw asked him.

'No,' Holmes said. 'The secret of the case is here in London. I shall stay here to solve the mystery.'

^① straight away: 立即。

Part Three

Mr Openshaw left the flat a little while later. Holmes and I sat in silence for a while. Then he lit his pipe and smoked for a few minutes.

'This is a strange case, Watson,' he said at last. 'John Openshaw is in very great danger — very great danger indeed!'

'What kind of danger, Holmes?' I asked excitedly.

Holmes did not reply to my question.

'Pass me the American Encyclopaedia,' he said. 'I think we shall find out something useful if we study the volume for the letter "K",' he told me. 'We also have to think about Colonel Openshaw,' he said. 'Why did he leave America, I wonder? Was he frightened of something? And why did he lead such a solitary life when he arrived here in England? Was he still afraid of something?' He paused for a moment. 'What do the envelopes tell us?' he asked me. 'Where were the letters sent from, Watson?'

'They were sent from Pondicherry, Dundee and London,' I said. 'The last one came from East London,' he said. 'What does that information tell you, Watson?'

'They are all seaports!' I cried excitedly. 'The writer was on a ship.'

'Precisely!' agreed Holmes. 'Now think about this. Colonel Openshaw died seven weeks after he received the orange pips.

His brother died only a few days after he received the pips.

How do you explain that, Watson?'

'I can't,' I admitted. 'What does it mean, Holmes?'

'The writer sends each letter on the mail boat^①,' Holmes said.

'He then takes another boat to come to England. There is always a delay

^① mail boat: 邮轮。

between the arrival of the letter and the death. The reason for the delay is clear. The mail boat is a fast steam vessel^①. The writer of the letters travels on a slower boat — a sailing-ship!

'But why, Holmes,' I asked. 'What is the reason for these murders?'

'Colonel Openshaw's papers were very important to the writer of these letters,' Holmes said. 'I think there is more than one man, Watson. There have been two murders. That suggests an organisation. 'KKK' are not the initials^② of an individual.

'They are the sign of an organisation, you see. The organisation wants Colonel Openshaw's papers. And they will kill to get them.' 'What organisation, Holmes?'

Holmes turned the pages of the American Encyclopaedia. 'The Ku Klux Klan, Watson. It's a secret organisation that came into existence after the American Civil War. It had centres in Tennessee, Louisiana, Georgia and Florida. Colonel Openshaw lived in Florida, you remember. The purpose of the Ku Klux Klan was terrible. They were against giving black Americans the right to vote. They were very dangerous. They also had a strange tradition, Watson. If they wanted to kill a man, they sent him a warning first. They used oak leaves, melon seeds or orange pips as the warning. The victim then had a chance to change his ways^③, or to leave the country. The Ku Klux Klan collapsed^④ in 1869.'

Holmes looked at me closely^⑤.

'Openshaw came to England in 1869,' he reminded me. 'I think he was

① steam vessel: 蒸汽轮船。

② initials: 姓名的首写字母。

③ change his ways: 改变行为。

④ collapsed: 瓦解。

⑤ looked at me close: 注视着我。

carrying the Ku Klux Klan's papers. That may be the reason for the organisation's sudden collapse. His diary contains details about the organisation's members. They are not safe until they have the diary back.'

'What about the page from the diary?' I asked. 'What does that mean?'

'It's pretty^① clear what it means,' Holmes said. "Sent the pips to McCauley, Paramore, and John Swajn of St. Augustine."

That's the warning, you see. The next entry I says, "McCauley cleared." That means he ran away. Then there's the final entry^②, "Visited Paramore." I expect the visit was a fatal one.'

The next morning Holmes and I had breakfast together at his flat.

'I'm worried about Mr Openshaw,' he told me. 'I may go to Horsham, after all.'

As he spoke, I picked up the newspaper that was lying on the table. I saw the headline^③ immediately. 'Holmes,' I cried, 'you're too late!'

'What do you mean?' Holmes asked quickly. I passed him the morning newspaper.

TRAGEDY NEAR WATERLOO BRIDGE

Police Constable^④ Hook was on duty yesterday evening near Waterloo Bridge. He heard a cry for help and then a splash in the water. It was a very dark night and the weather was bad.

The constable could not rescue^⑤ the man.

The water police found the body of a young man in the river.

① pretty: 非常的。

② entry: 条目。

③ headline: 报章大标题。

④ constable: 警察。

⑤ rescue: 救援。

The man was John Openshaw of Horsham. Police believe that he was hurrying through the dark streets and fell into the river by accident. There was no sign of violence on the body.

Holmes put the newspaper down. I have never seen him look so angry.

'I'll get^① them Watson. I'll find the men who did this!' my friend said. 'Openshaw came to me for help. Now he's dead.' He thought for a moment and then he made a decision. 'I'm going out!' he announced.

'To the police?' I asked him. 'Are you going to talk to them?'

'Not yet, Watson — not until I've solved the mystery.'

I did not see my friend for the rest of the day. I returned to the flat in Baker Street early that evening. Holmes was not there so I waited for him. He came in at about 10 o'clock. He was pale and he looked very tired. He ate a piece of bread hungrily and took a long drink of water.

'You're hungry,' I commented^②.

'I haven't eaten since this morning,' he told me. 'I've been very busy all day.'

He faced^③ me excitedly.

'I've got them, Watson. I've got them!' he cried. 'I know who they are now. And I know what I'm going to do!'

He took an orange from the table and began to pull the pips out of it. He put five pips into an envelope and wrote a name and address on it: 'Captain James Calhoun, Barque Lone Star, Savannah, Georgia.'

'That message will be waiting for him when he arrives,' Holmes said with

① get: 找到。

② commented: 发表意见。

③ faced: 朝向, 面对。

a smile.

'But who is he? Who is this Captain Calhoun?' I asked. 'He's the leader of the organisation,' Holmes told me.

'How did you find out about him?' I asked.

Holmes smiled at me.

'I spent the day studying old newspapers,' he informed^① me. 'I made a list of all the sailing ships that stopped at Pondicherry in January and February 1883. There were thirty-six of them. One of them was called the Lone Star. The name gave me a connection with America, you see.'

'Texas is sometimes called the Lone Star State,' I confirmed^②.

'Then what did you do, Holmes?'

'I made a list of all the sailing ships that stopped in Dundee in January 1885,' Holmes said. 'Again, the Lone Star was one of them. Then I discovered that the Lone Star arrived in London a week ago. She has left London now and is returning to Savannah.'

'What are you going to do?'

'That's easy,' Holmes replied. 'Only three members of the crew are Americans — Captain Calhoun and two others. I also know that the three Americans left the ship last night. I spoke to one of the sailors on the boat, you see. The mail boat is faster than the Lone Star. My letter will be waiting for these three men when they arrive - and so will the American police!' he concluded.

Holmes was wrong, however. The murderers of John Openshaw never received the five orange pips that he sent them. The police never arrested them, either. The weather that year was very bad and there was a great storm

① informed: 告诉。

② confirmed: 证实。

in the Atlantic Ocean. The Lone Star was caught in the storm and she sank^①
without survivors^②!

① sank: 沉没。

② survivors: 生还者。

Hunted Down (by Charles Dickens)

Part One

Most people have a chance to see exciting events in their lives. I am the Chief Manager of an insurance office^①.

I, too, have seen exciting things in my thirty years of work.

My office had one wall that was covered in glass. I could see everybody who came into the insurance company. I liked to study the faces of new customers before I spoke to them.

I decided what kind of people they were before they said a word to me. I learned to trust my first impression of people.

The story I want to tell is about a man who came into the company one day. I watched him through the glass in my office.

He seemed about forty years old and he was very well dressed.

He seemed very polite and he appeared to be quite a gentleman.

He was talking to one of the clerks. Despite his appearance, I disliked this man as soon as I saw him.

Suddenly the man noticed that I was looking at him. He smiled at me through the glass. Then he took some papers from the clerk and left.

A few minutes later I called the clerk into my office. 'Who was that man?' I asked him.

'That was Mr Julius Slinkton, sir,' the clerk told me. 'He's from the Middle Temple^②.'

'What did he want?' I enquired.

^① insurance office: 保险公司。

^② Middle Temple: 中殿律师学院。

'He wanted one of our insurance forms,' the clerk replied. 'He said that a friend of yours recommended^① this company.'

'He knew my name then, did he?'

'Oh, yes, Mr Sampson,' the clerk confirmed. 'He knew your name. '

About two weeks later I went to have dinner with a friend of mine. One of the other guests was Mr Julius Slinkton. He was standing near the fire. He noticed me and he asked our host to introduce him to me. Our host quickly brought him over. The three of us began to talk.

'I thought you knew Mr Sampson already,' our host said.

'No,' Mr Slinkton told him. 'I followed your advice. I went into the insurance office, but I didn't speak to Mr Sampson. I didn't want to disturb him.'

'Did you come to the office to take out an insurance policy^②?' I asked Mr Slinkton politely. 'Was it a life insurance policy?'

'It's not a policy for me,' Mr Slinkton said. 'It's for a friend of mine. He asked me to get the information for him. I don't know whether he will take out the policy. People often change their minds, don't you think, Mr Sampson?'

'Yes,' I replied.

We began to talk about other things.

'Your profession has suffered a great loss,' Mr Slinkton said suddenly.

I did not know what he was talking about.

'A loss?' I asked in surprise. 'What kind of loss, sir – a financial one?'

Mr Slinkton laughed.

'I don't mean a financial loss,' he explained. 'I was referring to Mr

① recommended: 推荐。

② policy: 保险条款。

Meltham — '

Now I understood what he was talking about.

'Ah, yes, Mr Meltham,' I agreed. 'That was indeed a sad loss. '

He was the most brilliant man I have ever known in the insurance profession. But did you know Mr Meltham?' I asked.

'I knew his reputation^①,' Mr Slinkton told me. 'What a sad story it is! A young man like that suddenly gives up his business and retires^② from the world.'

I have said that I disliked Mr Slinkton when I first saw him in the insurance office. I still disliked him. I did not think he was really sad about Mr Meltham at all. I decided to ask Mr Slinkton some questions. I wanted to find out more about this man.

'Have you heard why Mr Meltham left his business?' I asked.

'I have only heard stories about it,' he said. 'Apparently Mr Meltham was unhappy in love.'

'That's not the truth,' I told him. 'The truth is that the lady died.'

'She died, did she?' Mr Slinkton repeated. 'That's terrible—poor Mr Meltham. How very sad for him!'

I still felt that Mr Slinkton was not sincere. There was something false about his expression of sadness.

Then he said to me, 'You are surprised that Mr Meltham's story affects^③ me so strongly. I can see that, Mr Sampson, but I, too, have suffered a terrible loss recently. I have two nieces, you see. One of them, a girl of twenty-three, died recently. The other niece is also not well. The world is a

① reputation: 名声。

② retires: 退隐。

③ affects: 影响。

very sad place!"

Now I thought I understood Mr Slinkton. He was a sensitive man who had suffered. I was angry with myself for disliking him. I watched him for the rest of the evening and he seemed to be a good man. He talked politely to everybody and everybody seemed to like him. I decided that my first impression of Mr Slinkton was wrong.

I spoke to our host about Mr Slinkton. He told me that he had not known him for very long. He told me that Mr Slinkton had taken his two nieces to Italy for their health. It was there that one of them had died. He had returned to England afterwards with his other niece. Now I felt that I understood Mr Slinkton. I was deeply ashamed^① of my previous distrust^② of him.

① ashamed: 为……感到羞耻。

② distrust: 不信任。

Part Two

Two days later I was sitting in my office as usual. I saw Mr Slinkton come into the outer^① office. As soon as I saw him I disliked him again. Mr Slinkton waved cheerfully at me and came into my office.

'I have come back,' he said, 'because I want to find out what my friend has done with the insurance forms. I want to know whether he has sent them back to the company. His family are worried about him, you see. They want him to buy a good insurance policy.'

'Perhaps I can help,' I said. 'What is your friend's name, Mr Slinkton?' I asked him.

'Beckwith,' he told me.

I called the clerk into my office. I asked him to find out if a man called Beckwith had started an insurance policy with the company. The clerk searched^② through his files for a moment and then he brought me some papers.

'Yes, Mr Sampson,' he said. 'We received these forms from Mr Beckwith. He wants a policy for two thousand pounds and he has asked Mr Slinkton to write a reference^③ for him.'

'Me!' cried Mr Slinkton in surprise. He thought for a moment. 'But of course I can do that for him.'

Mr Slinkton sat down in my office and wrote the reference for Mr Beckwith. He left the forms in my office, said goodbye politely and then left.

Mr Slinkton was not my only visitor that day. Very early that morning someone else had come to see me at my house. The visit was a very private

① outer: 外面的。

② searched: 细查。

③ reference: 证明书。

one. No one knew anything about it at all.

Mr Beckwith's insurance policy began in March. I did not see Mr Slinkton again for six or seven months. I went to Scarborough in September and I saw Mr Slinkton walking on the beach there. It was early evening and he greeted me warmly.

Mr Slinkton was with a young lady. He introduced me to her, explaining that she was his niece. Her name was Miss Niner.

I looked at her carefully. I was sorry to see that Miss Niner did not look very well at all. As we walked along the sand, Mr Slinkton pointed to some tracks in the sand. He laughed. 'Your shadow^① has been here again,' he joked to Miss Niner.

'Shadow? What shadow?' I asked.

'My uncle is joking, Mr Sampson,' she explained. 'There is an elderly gentleman here in Scarborough. He travels around in a hand-carriage. I see him so often that my uncle calls him my shadow.'

As she was speaking we saw the old man's hand-carriage come into sight. There was a frail^② old man inside. As the carriage was passing us, he waved his arm at me. He called to me by name. I went to see what he wanted. I was away from Mr Slinkton and Miss Niner for about five minutes.

'My niece is very curious,' Mr Slinkton told me when I rejoined^③ them. 'She wants to know who her shadow is.'

'His name's Major Banks,' I told him. 'He's a very rich man, hut a very sick one. He's just been telling me what pleasure you both give him. I says it's obvious that you are very fond of one another.'

① shadow: 紧跟她的人。

② frail: 虚弱的。

③ rejoined: 重新回到。

'It's true we are very close,' Mr Slinkton said very seriously. 'We are alone, you know — since Margaret died.'

Miss Niner looked sad at her uncle's words. The memory of her sister was clearly still very painful to her. Suddenly she sat down near a rock on the beach. She was pale. Mr Slinkton walked away from us. He, too, seemed very upset by his memories.

Miss Niner began to tell me about her uncle. She said he was a very good, kind man. She told me that she knew she was going to die soon. She was worried about what would happen to her uncle when she died. I saw the hand-carriage coming back towards us along the sand as she was talking. Suddenly I interrupted her.

'Miss Niner,' I said urgently^①, 'I have something to tell you. You are in great danger! You must come with me and talk to that man in the hand-carriage. Your life depends on it!'

Miss Niner was very shocked by my words. I walked with her to the hand-carriage before she had time to object. I did not stay there with her for more than two minutes. Within five minutes I saw her walking up the beach with a grey-haired man.

He had a slight limp^②. I knew that she was safe with that man.

I went back to the rock and sat down. Mr Slinkton came back soon afterwards. He was surprised that his niece had gone. We talked for a few minutes. He told me that Miss Niner was very ill and he looked sad while he told me.

I replied politely to everything he said, but I was holding a weapon^③ in

① urgently: 迫切的。

② had a slight limp: 走路稍微有点跛。

③ weapon: 武器。

my pocket as we walked along together.

'Mr Sampson, may I ask you something?' he suddenly enquired^①.

'What is the news of that poor man Meltham? Is he dead yet?'

'No,' I told him, 'he's not dead yet. But he won't live long, I'm afraid.'

'What a sad place the world is!' Mr Slinkton sighed^② quietly.

① enquired: 询问。

② sighed: 叹气。

Part Three

It was November before I saw Mr Slinkton again, this time in London. I had a very important appointment^① at Middle Temple. I arrived at the Temple and went up some stairs. There were two doors at the top of the stairs. The name BECKWITH was painted on one door. The name SLINKTON was painted on the other.

I went in the door marked Beckwith. The room was dirty and there were empty bottles everywhere. A young man got up when I entered. He walked very unsteadily^② and he seemed drunk.

'Slinkton's not in yet,' he said loudly. 'I'll call him.'

He went into the corridor and began to shout loudly.

'Hey! Julius! Come in here and have a drink!' he called. Mr Slinkton came into the room. He was very surprised to see me.

'Julius, this is Mr Sampson!' Beckwith introduced us. 'Boil the brandy, Julius!' he said.

He gave Mr Slinkton a filthy^③ saucepan^④. 'Come on, boil the brandy the way you usually do!'

Mr Slinkton was embarrassed at my presence in the room, I could see.

'How is your niece, Mr Slinkton?' I asked him quietly.

'I am sorry to say my niece has left me,' he replied. 'She went away without a word of explanation.'

Beckwith held out the saucepan once more.

'Boil the brandy, Julius,' he repeated. 'Give me what you always give me

① appointment: 约会。

② unsteadily: 脚步不稳的。

③ filthy: 肮脏的。

④ saucepan: 深平底锅。

for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Boil the brandy, I tell you!

Now Mr Slinkton looked even more embarrassed. This was not a pleasant situation for him. He thought for a moment and then he spoke to me.

'You're a man of the world^①, Mr Sampson,' he began. 'I'll tell you the truth.'

'No, Mr Slinkton,' I said firmly^②. 'You'll never tell the truth. I know all about you.'

'You want to save your insurance company some money,' he said calmly. 'You will try to argue that I was responsible for Beckwith's condition — and for his eventual^③ death. But you won't be able to prove that, you know. You won't be able to prove anything!'

Beckwith suddenly picked up his brandy-glass and threw it at Mr Slinkton. The glass cut his forehead^④ and blood began to flow down his face. Mr Slinkton took out his handkerchief and dried his face. As he was doing this, another man came into the room — a man with grey hair who walked with a slight limp.

Mr Slinkton looked at this man in surprise.

'Look very carefully at me,' Beckwith cried out. 'You're a rogue^⑤, Slinkton, and I've caught you! I took these rooms on purpose^⑥, just to catch you. I pretended to be a drunkard^⑦ in order to catch YOU and I've done it. You'll never escape now. YOU see, the last time you went to see Mr Sampson, I had already been to see him myself — I went to his house very early that

① man of the world: 阅历丰富。

② firmly: 坚定的。

③ eventual: 最后的。

④ forehead: 额头。

⑤ rogue: 恶棍。

⑥ on purpose: 故意。

⑦ drunkard: 醉汉。

morning. We know everything. We know what you were planning. You thought you could kill me for the two thousand pounds of the insurance policy, didn't you? You wanted to kill me with brandy, didn't you? But you wanted me to die quickly. That's why you also gave me small amounts of poison^①.'

Mr Slinkton was surprised by Beckwith's behaviour. The young man did not seem at all drunk now. At first Mr Slinkton did not know how to react. Then he found his courage. He was very pale, but he looked coldly at Beckwith. He did not say a word.

'I took these rooms on purpose,' Beckwith went on. 'I knew what kind of man you are, you see. You're the man who's already killed one innocent^② girl for her money. And now you're slowly killing another one.'

Slinkton laughed.

'Think how stupid you really are!' Beckwith continued.

'You thought I was drinking brandy all day — but I threw most of it away. You never knew that I came into your room at night when you were asleep. I took all your papers, Slinkton. I read your journal^③, too. It's got all the information about the poisons that you use. It explains everything. I know where the journal is now!'

Slinkton looked at Beckwith questioningly^④.

'It's not in your desk,' Beckwith told him.

'Then you're a thief,' Slinkton told him calmly. He spoke calmly, but his face was white.

'I'm your niece's shadow,' Beckwith said quietly.

① poison: 毒药。

② innocent: 无辜的。

③ journal: 日记。

④ questioningly: 疑惑的。

Suddenly Slinkton lost his calm and his courage. He looked frightened now. Still he said nothing.

'I've watched you all the time,' Beckwith said. 'I knew that you were poisoning Miss Niner. I went to Mr Sampson and told him everything. That man standing at the door is Mr Sampson's servant. The three of us have saved your niece's life!'

Beckwith paused for a moment to look at Slinkton. Then he went on.

'You don't even know my real name,' he said very quietly. 'You asked Mr Sampson several times if he had any news about Meltham. I can give you news about him — I am Meltham!' he announced triumphantly^①.

'I loved your niece Margaret. I could not save her — but I promised to pursue^② you to the end. And I've done it!' he cried. 'I've hunted you down, Slinkton.'

Slinkton now looked in horror at the man who was accusing him. He was unable to speak for fear.

'You never knew my real name,' Meltham told him. 'You are seeing me under my real name now for the first time. You will see me again when you answer the charge^③ of murder in court. And I hope you see me in your imagination — when they put the rope around your neck and the crowd cries out for your death!'

Slinkton turned quickly away from us for a second and put his hand to his mouth. The room suddenly filled with the smell of some chemical. Slinkton gasped^④, ran a few steps and fell to the floor. He was dead.

Meltham and I made sure that Slinkton was dead. Then we left the room

① triumphantly: 得意洋洋的。

② pursue: 追查。

③ charge: 指控。

④ gasped: 喘气。

together.

'I have done what I promised do,' Meltham said sadly to me. 'My life is ended now.'

I did everything that I could to help him, but the poor man died a few months later.

The Stir Outside the Cafe Royal (by Clarence Rook)

He was a brilliant criminal and he used many different names. The man who robbed the bank in Detroit and shot the bank manager was known as Captain Mathurin. The man who committed fraud^① in Melbourne was known as Rossiter. The police believed that Mathurin and Rossiter were the same man.

The police could not catch^② Mathurin. He was very careful to protect his real identity. Most of the people who worked with him did not even know what he looked like.

Only two people in the world could identify^③ him. One of them was the bank manager he had killed in Detroit. Mathurin shot him in front of his girlfriend. It was the other person who ended Mathurin's criminal career.

It all happened in a very dull^④ way if you look at it from one point of view. But the story is very different if you look at it from another point of view. I first heard the story from a young detective that I met in a pub near Westminster. Then a young woman called Miss Van Snoop gave me more information.

A young lady was driving down Regent Street one day in a horse-drawn cab^⑤. It was about one-thirty in the afternoon and it was warm and sunny. The cab was travelling slowly, because the young lady said she was frightened of horses. Regent Street was full of women doing their shopping and men standing around talking. The young lady looked at the street with interest.

① fraud: 诈骗。

② catch: 逮捕。

③ identify: 认出。

④ dull: 乏味的。

⑤ horse-drawn cab: 马车。

There was a little stir^① as the young lady's cab approached^② the Café Royal. One cab was stopping outside the restaurant and there were two others behind it. The traffic in the street stopped for a moment. The girl looked at the people who were standing on the steps of the building. She sat back quickly in her seat.

'Drop me^③ here,' she told the driver. Her accent was American.

The driver stopped the cab and the girl got out.

She gave the driver a coin. The driver looked at it with interest. He smiled.

'Americans are very generous,' he said to himself.

The girl walked towards the Café Royal. She glanced^④ at the men who were standing on the steps. Several of the men looked at her with interest. They were surprised to see a woman on her own^⑤. She entered the restaurant and walked into the dining room.

'American, you can be sure of that,' one of the men commented. 'They go anywhere they want. They're not afraid of anything!'

There was a tall man walking in front of the girl towards the dining room. He was very well dressed. He stopped for a moment when he entered the dining room. He was looking for a table. The girl stopped behind him. The waiter waved^⑥ the man to a table. The girl sat down at a table behind him.

'Excuse me, madam,' the waiter said to her. 'This table is for four people. Would you mind^⑦—?'

① stir: 混乱。

② approached: 靠近。

③ Drop me: 让我下车。

④ glanced: 瞥见。

⑤ on her own: 独自一人。

⑥ waved: (朝某人)挥手。

⑦ mind: 反对。

'I guess^① I'll stay where I am,' the girl said softly^②. She gave the waiter a determined look and put some money into his hand.

The restaurant was full of people. Many people looked at the girl who was eating alone, but she did not seem to be embarrassed or shy. She did not to be embarrassed or shy. She did not look at anyone. When she was not looking at her plate, she kept her eyes fixed on the back of the man at the next table. He ordered champagne with his lunch. The girl drank water. Suddenly she called a waiter.

'Please bring me a sheet of paper and my bill, ' she said quietly.

The waiter came back with a sheet of paper. The girl thought for a few minutes. Then she began to write something. She folded the paper and put it in her purse^③. Then she paid her bill^④.

A few minutes later the man at the next table paid his bill as well. The girl put on her gloves and watched the man's back. The man got up to leave the dining room. He walked past the girl's table. She turned her face away and looked at a mirror on the wall. Then she, too, got up. She followed the man out of the dining room.

The man stopped on the stepped on the steps for a moment. The porter^⑤ was talking to a policeman. He noticed the man and asked him if he wanted a cab.

'Yes, please, ' the man replied.

Then the porter noticed the girl. She was standing behind the man. As he turned towards her, he saw that her hand was in the man's pocket. She was

① guess: 想。

② softly: 轻声地。

③ purse: 手提包。

④ bill: 账单。

⑤ porter: 看门人。

stealing something. She pulled her hand back quickly.

'What—!' the man cried out. He turned round to face the girl.

'Is something missing, sir?' the porter asked him.

'My cigarette case, ' the man said. 'It's gone. '

'What's this?' said the policeman. He stepped forward^①.

The porter pointed at the girl.

'That woman has stolen this gentleman's cigarette case, ' he said. 'I saw her doing it. '

The man looked at the girl.

'Just give it back, ' he said quietly. 'I don't want to make a fuss about it^②. '

'I haven't got it, ' the girl answered. 'I'm not a thief. I never touched your pocket. '

'I saw her do it.' the porter said again.

'Right!' said the policeman suddenly. 'You'll have to come with me, young lady. You too, sir, ' he said to the well-dressed man. 'We'll take a cab to the police station. '

'I didn't steal anything.' the girl said again.

She got into the cab very calmly when it arrived. The policeman watched her carefully. He did not want her to throw anything out of the window. The well-dressed man sat quietly in the cab, looking out of the window.

When they arrived at the police station the girl denied^③ the crime again.

'We'll have to search her, ' the inspector decided. She was taken to a room for an interview with the female searcher.

The girl entered the room of the female searcher. As soon as the door was

① stepped forward: 向前走。

② make a fuss about it: 把事情闹大。

③ denied: 否认。

closed she put her hand in her pocket. She took out the cigarette case and placed it on the table.

'There you are,' the girl said. 'Now, ' she went on, 'I want you to look in this pocket. Find my purse and take it out. '

The woman took out the girl's purse.

'Open it, ' the girl ordered. 'There's a note inside, ' she said. 'Read it, please.'

The woman took out the note the girl had written in the restaurant. It said: 'I am going to steal something from this man. It is the only way to get him into a police station without violence. He is Connel Mathurin, alias Rossiter, alias Connell. The police in Detroit, New York, Melbourne, Colombo and London want him. He is a very dangerous man, I am a New York detective—Nora Van Snoop. '

'Take that note to your boss, ' Miss Van Snoop told the woman. 'Do it now!'

The woman left the room and spoke to someone in the corridor. A few minutes later the inspector came into the room.

'Don't worry, ' Miss Van Snoop told him, 'I've got my documents here with me. I can prove who I am.'

'Are you sure that this is the man who shot the Detroit bank manager?' the inspector asked her.

'Heavens!^①' Miss Van Snoop cried. 'Didn't I see him shoot Will Stevens with my own eye! Didn't I join the police to find him!'

The inspector left the room. The girl listened attentively^②. Then she heard a shout from the next room. The inspector came back.

① Heavens!: 天哪!

② attentively: 仔细地。

'I think you're right, ' he told her. 'It is Mathurin. But why didn't you ask the police to help you? '

'I wanted to arrest him myself,' Miss Van Snoop explained. 'And now I have, ' she said quietly. 'Oh. Will! Will! '

Miss Van Snoop sat down and began to cry. Thirty minutes later she left the police station and went into a post office. She telegraphed her resignation^① from the New York police force.

^① resignation: 辞职。

The Oracle of the Dog (by Gilbert Keith Chesterton)

Part One

'Yes,' said Father Brown, 'I like dogs. But I don't like it when people spell them backwards^①.'

Father Brown was talking to a young man, Fiennes. For a moment the young man looked surprised. Then he smiled.

'I see what you mean,' he said. 'You don't like it when people make 'gods' of them. Is that it, Father? But I think dogs are wonderful. Sometimes I really do think they know more than we do!'

Father Brown did not reply. He went on stroking^② the head of the large black dog that was lying in front of him.

'Actually,' the young man said excitedly, 'there's a dog in the case I want to talk about. It's a very strange case and the dog is one of the strangest parts of it.'

He reached into his pocket.

'I've got all the details here from the newspaper.'

He passed an article from a newspaper to Father Brown.

The terrible events at Cranston in Yorkshire are like a mystery story. It is impossible to understand how the murder was committed or what happened to the murder weapon.

Colonel Druce was stabbed^③ from behind while sitting in his

① backwards: 反方向的。

② stroking: 抚摸。

③ stabbed: 用刀刺。

summerhouse^①. There is only one entrance to the summerhouse. There are witnesses who say that no one entered the summerhouse at the time of the murder.

Patrick Floyd, the Colonel's secretary, says that he was working on a ladder in the garden at the time of the murder. He was cutting the hedge^② with a pair of garden shears^③. He could see the whole of the garden from that position.

Janet Druce, the Colonel's daughter, was sitting on the terrace at the time of the murder. She confirms that no one entered the summerhouse. She saw Mr Floyd at work in the garden.

Another witness is the Colonel's son, Donald Druce. He was looking out of his bedroom window at the time of the murder. He says that he saw both Mr Floyd and his sister Janet.

There are two other witnesses - Dr Valentine, and the Colonel's solicitor, Mr Aubrey Traill!. Their accounts are consistent with^④ those of the others.

Everybody agrees about what happened. At about 3:30 p.m. Janet Druce went into the summerhouse to ask her father if he wanted some tea. He said he did not want any. He said he was waiting to see his solicitor, Mr Traill. Janet Druce came away from the summerhouse and met Mr Traill on the garden path. He then went into the summerhouse. He stayed there for half an hour. The witnesses saw the Colonel say goodbye to the solicitor.

Witnesses say that the Colonel seemed happy that day. He had been

① summerhouse: 花园凉庭。

② hedge: 篱笆。

③ shears: 大剪刀。

④ are consistent with: 与...一致。

angry with his son, Donald, for staying out late the night before. Later, however, the Colonel seemed happy. He had given a very warm welcome to two of his nephews who came over for the day. These two young men were out walking when the tragedy happened.

Ten minutes after the lawyer left the summerhouse, Janet Druce went there again. She found her father lying on the floor with a stab wound^① to the back. His white linen coat was covered with blood. The Colonel was dead.

Father Brown studied the newspaper report for a few minutes. Then he put the paper down.^②

'So the Colonel wore a white coat, did he?' he commented.

'That's right,' Fiennes replied. 'It's a habit he picked up^③ when he lived in the tropics. I didn't see anything myself,' he said. 'I was walking with the two nephews when the murder happened. We had that dog with us - the one I wanted to tell you about. But I saw the lawyer going down the path towards the summerhouse and Floyd working on his ladder. Floyd couldn't have committed the crime.'

'What do you know about the solicitor?' Father Brown asked quietly.

Fiennes was silent for a moment and then he began to speak very seriously.

'Traill's a peculiar^④ man. He dresses very well, but he's quite nervous. He's always moving his hands about, touching his tie or his tie-pin^⑤. If I had to say - but it's impossible. No one knows how it was done.'

① wound: 伤口。

② a bit wild: 生活放荡。

③ picked up: 养成。

④ peculiar: 奇特的。

⑤ tie-pin: 领带夹。

He stopped talking for a moment. Then he went on.

'But the dog knows who did it. I'm sure of that. That's why I mentioned the murder in the first place. It's the dog that interests me.'

Father Brown did not seem to hear the remark^① about the dog. He wanted more details about the people who were at the house.

'You went to Cranston to visit young Donald Druce, didn't you? Didn't he go on the walk with you?'

'No,' said Fiennes, smiling. 'Donald's a bit wild, you see. He was out all night and only woke in the afternoon. I went on the walk with his cousins, two young army officers from India. The older one, Herbert Druce, talked about horses all the time. The younger one, Harry, talked about his bad luck at Monte Carlo.'

'I see,' said Father Brown. 'Now tell me about the dog,' he asked. 'What kind of dog was it?'

'Like that one,' Fiennes said, pointing to the black dog at Father Brown's feet. 'You said you didn't think it was right to believe in a dog. But I believe in that dog. His name's Nox, by the way. You see, what that dog did is a big mystery - a bigger mystery than the murder itself!'

^① remark: 评价。

Part Two

Father Brown waited for Fiennes to continue his story.

'Herbert Druce, his brother Harry and I went for a walk on the shore^① with the dog. Colonel Druce's garden is near the sea.

'As we were walking, we passed a curious rock near the sea. It is called the Rock of Fortune. It's interesting because it's really two rocks, one balanced on top of the other. It was just as we passed the rock that had the first feeling. I knew something terrible was going to happen!

'I was walking next to Herbert. Harry had stopped to light his pipe under a hedge. We called out to ask him the time. Harry looked at his watch and shouted out what time it was.

'We walked on a little further. We were throwing sticks into the sea for Nox, I remember. And then the strange thing with the dog happened. Herbert threw his walking stick into the sea for Nox. The dog jumped into the water and swam off to find the stick. He came back with it after a few minutes. He was very pleased with himself. You know the way dogs are.

'Then Harry threw his walking stick into the sea as well. The dog jumped into the water once more and swam off to find the stick. That's when it happened. Suddenly Nox stopped looking for the stick. He turned around quickly in the sea and swam back to the shore. He stood in front of us and began to howl^② terribly. It was a fearful^③ noise.

'We all stood and looked at Nox in surprise. The dog howled for a little while and then we heard a woman's shriek^④. We didn't know what it was

① shore: 海岸。

② howl: 嚎叫。

③ fearful: 可怕的。

④ shriek: 突然尖叫。

then, but we knew afterwards. It was the cry Janet Druce made when she found her father's body in the summerhouse.'

Fiennes paused excitedly.

'So the dog knew, you see! He came out of the sea and began to howl when the Colonel died!'

'What happened then?' Father Brown asked calmly.

'We went back to the house,' Fiennes said.

'When we went into the garden we saw the lawyer, Traill,' the young man said. 'Nox saw him too,' he went on. 'The dog jumped forward and barked furiously at the man. Traill turned around and ran away! It was as if the dog knew -'

Suddenly Father Brown stood up. His face was red and he was very angry.

'So the dog knew who the murderer was, did he?' he shouted angrily. 'Traill was accused by the dog, is that what you're saying? What kind of evidence is that, you young fool^①?''

Fiennes was surprised at the priest's anger. For a moment he was silent.

'What's the matter, Father?' he asked. 'What have I done?'

Father Brown was embarrassed.

'I'm sorry,' he said. 'I've been very rude^② - please forgive me. Just tell me the rest of the story.'

'You may not believe in the mystery of the dog,' Fiennes said quietly. 'But you've got to admit the dog's behaviour was strange. First he comes out of the sea and begins to howl dreadfully. That happened at the exact moment his master was killed. Then, when he sees the lawyer, the dog barks furiously at him. It must mean something, don't you think?'

① fool: 笨蛋。

② rude: 无礼的。

The priest said nothing. Fiennes went on.

'Anyway, it wasn't just the dog. There is something odd about Traill. He's a nervous sort of man. He's always playing with that tie-pin of his. That made me think, you see. Of course the police searched everybody as soon as they arrived. They were looking for the weapon, but they never found it. I began to wonder if the tie-pin wasn't the murder weapon.'

Father Brown nodded his head.

'Ah,' he said thoughtfully, 'the murder weapon. Were there any other suggestions about that?'

'Harry Druce had an idea,' Fiennes told him. 'He was in the Indian police, you see. He knows about detective work. He's a clever young man. He left the police because of some trouble^① about breaking the rules or something. Anyway, he disagreed with me about the dog. He says a really dangerous dog doesn't bark - it growls^②.'

'He's right about that,' the priest said softly. There was silence in the room. Father Brown was thinking. Suddenly he looked up at Fiennes again.

'About the lawyer,' he said. 'Why was Traill at the house that day?'

'He explained about that,' Fiennes said. 'Colonel Druce was preparing a new will.'

'What about the will itself?' Father Brown wanted to know. 'Did the Colonel change the will the afternoon he died?'

'Yes, he did,' Fiennes admitted. 'Druce was angry with his son Donald that day. He changed the will. The money went to Janet rather than Donald.'

'So Janet Druce benefited from her father's death,' Father Brown said quietly.

① trouble: 麻烦。

② growls: 咆哮。

'Good heavens! You don't mean -?'

'Is she going to marry Dr Valentine?' Father Brown asked.

'I think so,' Fiennes replied. 'They're in love.'

'A doctor always carries his medical bag with him,' Father Brown said quietly. 'There are a lot of sharp objects in a doctor's medical bag, aren't there?'

'You think he could have -?'

Father Brown shook his head.

'The problem is not who did it,' he said. 'The problem is how they did it. Remember that Colonel Druce was in the summerhouse. There was only one entry to it. A lot of people say that nobody went into the summerhouse. Floyd was on his ladder in the garden. Janet was on the terrace. Donald was looking out of his bedroom window. They all say that no one went into the summerhouse.'

'What do you think?' Fiennes asked Father Brown. 'You've had a lot of experience in this kind of crime.'

'I can't really help,' the priest said. 'I don't know the place or the people. But I'm interested in your friend Harry, the young man from the Indian police. Can you find out what he's doing now?'

'All right,' Fiennes agreed. 'I'm going down to the house again tomorrow. I'll let you know^① what happens there when I come back.'

^① let you know: 告诉你。

Part Three

Two days later Fiennes made another visit to Father Brown's house. The young man entered the room in a state of great excitement. He was very pale.

'You told me to find out what Harry Druce was doing,' he said to Father Brown. 'Do you know what he's done?'

Father Brown did not reply. He looked at his guest calmly.

'I'll tell you what he's done,' Fiennes went on. 'He's killed himself!'

The priest did not seem surprised by the news Fiennes had given him.

'Did you expect this?' Fiennes asked him suspiciously^①.

'I thought it was possible,' Father Brown replied sadly. 'That young man worried me. That's why I asked you to see what Harry Druce was doing.'

'I found his body,' Fiennes said sadly. 'I was walking down the path in the garden when I had a very strange feeling. I knew something was wrong. I looked around me. Everything seemed all right, but I still felt something was terribly wrong. Then I realised what it was. I looked over the top of the hedge. I couldn't see the Rock of Fortune!'

Father Brown listened intently^②.

'I understood immediately what had happened,' Fiennes went on. 'The top piece of the Rock of Fortune was missing. I ran down the garden and pushed my way through the hedge. I found the loose^③ rock on the shore - and Harry Druce was lying underneath it. There were some words written on the sand near the body: "The Rock of Fortune falls on a Fool." It was a terrible sight.'

'So Harry Druce was the murderer,' Father Brown said sadly. He sat quietly for a moment. 'It was the Colonel's will, you see,' the priest explained.

① suspiciously: 疑惑的。

② intently: 专心的。

③ loose: 散落的。

'Harry Druce thought he was going to inherit everything. He knew the Colonel was angry with your friend Donald. He thought the money would go to him instead.'

He paused for a moment.

'Harry Druce was in trouble, you see. First he lost his job in the Indian police and then he lost his money at Monte Carlo. He murdered his uncle for the money. He killed himself when he discovered that he'd murdered his uncle for nothing.'

'We still don't know how he managed^① it,' Fiennes said.

'That's what I'd like to know.'

'I think I can tell you how he did it,' the priest offered^② quietly.

'You!' cried Fiennes excitedly. 'But you haven't been there! You don't know the people. How could you possibly solve the mystery?'

Father Brown jumped up from his chair in excitement.

'The dog!' he shouted. 'The dog, of course! The whole story was right there in front of you, from the start. You didn't look at the dog properly^③.'

'But you told me that you didn't believe in the dog!' Fiennes argued. 'You got angry when I started telling you about the dog. You were quite rude about it.'

'The dog is the answer to the mystery,' Father Brown repeated.

'But you have to consider the dog as an animal. A dog is not some mysterious force that can judge men. That's where you went wrong.'

The priest paused to think.

'Let me explain what I mean,' he said. 'When you told me about the

① managed: 做成。

② offered: 主动提出。

③ properly: 正确的。

murder you mentioned the dog's behaviour on the beach and in the garden. You thought the dog 'knew' that the Colonel was dead because it howled dreadfully on the beach. Soon afterwards, Nox barked at the lawyer and you made the same mistake. You thought the dog 'knew' that Traill was the murderer. When Traill ran away from the dog, you were sure he was the murderer.'

'But that's what happened!' Fiennes insisted. 'I was there. I saw it.'

'You're very clever with all your psychology,' the priest said. 'That's why you didn't see what was really happening. It was all much simpler than you imagined. Don't you see?' he cried excitedly. 'You made the dog into a kind of mysterious oracle^①. I But a dog isn't an oracle - it's an animal.'

Fiennes looked at the priest in confusion. 'What do you mean?' he asked.

'Traill was a nervous man,' Father Brown said. 'You told me that yourself. You said that he was always playing with his tie-pin, do you remember? Now it's a fact about dogs that they generally don't like nervous people. The dog barked at Traill because he didn't like the man. Traill ran away because he was frightened of the dog. That's all that happened. There was no mystery about it. It had nothing to do with the murder at all.'

Fiennes opened his mouth to speak, but then he changed his mind. Father Brown continued to speak.

'What happened on the beach with the dog was more interesting. Nox jumped into the water to fetch Harry Druce's stick. Then he came back again without it and began to howl. When you learned about the murder, you made the same mistake again. You thought the dog 'knew' the Colonel was dead.'

'But that's what happened,' Fiennes insisted. 'Nox went into the water and he came back without the stick. Then he began to howl. I was there. I saw it.'

^① oracle: 圣贤。

'There you go^① again,' Father Brown said impatiently. 'You're treating Nox as if he were some kind of oracle. But a dog is an animal. Dogs don't know anything about murder. They can't detect crime.'

'So what does his behaviour mean, then?' Fiennes asked impatiently.

'Nox went into the water because he wanted to find the stick,' Father Brown explained slowly. 'But he came out of the water for a very simple reason. He came out because he couldn't find the stick. The stick wasn't there! That's why he howled.'

'Why couldn't he find the stick?' Fiennes asked. 'What happened to it?'

'It sank,' Father Brown said simply. 'It wasn't an ordinary walking stick, you see. It was a swordstick^②. It was the murder weapon and Harry Druce got rid of^③ it in a very clever way. That's why he started that game of throwing things for the dog.'

'A swordstick,' Fiennes said slowly. 'I think I begin to understand it now. But how did Harry Druce kill the Colonel with it?'

'We have to remember two things,' Father Brown told him. 'The murder happened in a summerhouse. The other important thing is that the Colonel was wearing a white coat.'

'Go on,' Fiennes said.

'Nobody could understand how the murderer did it,' Father Brown explained. 'There is only one entry to the summerhouse. All the witnesses said that no one entered it. They were right. No one went inside. It wasn't necessary for Harry Druce to enter the summerhouse.'

'What do you mean?'

① There you go: 瞧，你又来了。

② swordstick: 内藏利剑的手杖。

③ got rid of: 除去。

'A summerhouse is not a solid building. It's made of wooden slats^①. There are gaps^② between the wooden slats, aren't there? You've just told me that there was a hedge at the back of the summerhouse. You ran through the hedge when you saw that the Rock of Fortune had fallen. A man could easily stand near the hedge and look through it. The Colonel's white coat made him an easy target^③.'

Father Brown stopped for a moment.

'You told me something important about your walk on the beach,' he said to Fiennes. 'You said that Harry Druce stopped to light his pipe under a hedge. Do you remember?'

'That's how he did it!' Fiennes said. 'He took out the swordstick and stabbed the spot of white he could see through the hedge.' He thought for a moment. 'But it was terribly risky^④, wasn't it? He couldn't be certain that the Colonel would die. He couldn't be certain that the Colonel would leave him the money. And in fact he was wrong - he didn't get any money.'

'You have to understand the character of the man,' Father Brown explained. 'Harry Druce was a gambler^⑤. He liked risks. He took a risk when he was in the Indian police and he lost his job for it. He took another risk at Monte Carlo and he lost his money for it. He was a gambler by nature^⑥. When he came to the house that day, he saw that Colonel Druce was angry with his son Donald. He knew that the Colonel was changing his will. Perhaps the Colonel was going to leave him the money! That was the risk he took. He murdered the Colonel because he thought it was a good

① wooden slats: 木条。

② gaps: 空隙。

③ target: 目标。

④ risky: 冒险。

⑤ gambler: 赌徒。

⑥ nature: 本性。

risk.'

The two men were silent for a while. Then Fiennes spoke again.

'So the dog really was important to the story?'

'Of course Nox was important to the story,' Father Brown agreed. 'The dog couldn't tell you about the stick because he couldn't talk. You invented the dog's story, instead of really thinking about the dog as an animal. You made Nox into a superstition^①. That's something that people do all the time, you know. The modern world doesn't believe in God and so it invents magic to take His place. That's why I was angry with you before.'

^① superstition: 迷信。