

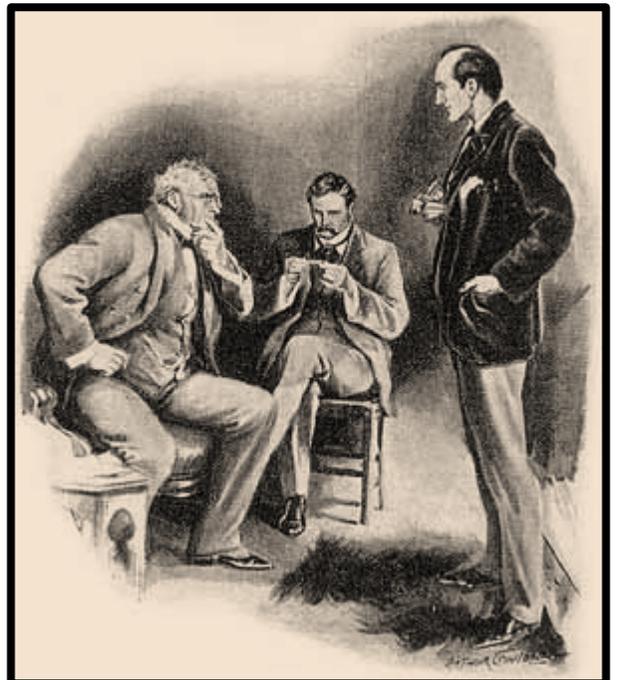


*I only quote  
this as a  
trivial  
example of  
observation  
and  
inference.*

## His Last Bow

### Adventure XLI -- The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge

1. "A chaotic case, my dear Watson. It will not be possible for you to present it in that compact form which is dear to your heart. It covers two continents, concerns two groups of mysterious persons, and is further complicated by the highly respectable presence of our friend, Scott Eccles, whose inclusion shows me that the deceased Garcia had a scheming mind and a well-developed instinct of self-preservation. It is remarkable only for the fact that amid a perfect jungle of possibilities we, with our worthy collaborator, the inspector, have kept our close hold on the essentials and so been guided along the crooked and winding path. Is there any point which is not quite clear to you?"
2. "A singular set of people, Watson."
3. "But how come you into this matter? How can an English lady join in such a murderous affair?"
4. "I have not all my facts yet but I do not think there are any insuperable difficulties. Still, it is an error to argue in front of your data. You find yourself insensibly twisting them round to fit your theories."
5. "I suppose, Watson, We must look upon you as a man of letters. How do you define the word 'grotesque'?"



6. "If you cast your mind back to some of those narratives with which you have afflicted a long-suffering public, you will recognize how often the grotesque has deepened into the criminal. Think of that little affair of the red-headed men. That was grotesque enough in the outset and yet it ended in a desperate attempt at robbery. Or, again, there was that most grotesque affair of the five orange pips, which led straight to a murderous conspiracy. The word puts me on the alert."
7. "I'm sure, Watson, a week in the country will be invaluable to you. It is very pleasant to see the first green shoots upon the hedges and the catkins on the hazels once again. With a spud, a tin box, and an elementary book on botany, there are instructive days to be spent."
8. "Life is commonplace; the papers are sterile; audacity and romance seem to have passed forever from the criminal world."
9. "My mind is like a racing engine, tearing itself to pieces because it is not connected up with the work for which it was built."
10. "No woman would ever send a reply-paid telegram. She would have come."
11. "On the face of it the case is not a very complex one, though it certainly presents some novel and interesting features. A further knowledge of facts is necessary before I would venture to give a final and definite opinion."
12. "Our difficulties are not over. Our police work ends, but our legal work begins."
13. "So much I learned partly from village gossip and partly from my own observation. There are no better instruments than discharged servants with a grievance, and I was lucky enough to find one."

14. "So you see our savage friend was very orthodox in his ritual. It is grotesque, Watson, but, as I have had occasion to remark, there is but one step from the grotesque to the horrible."
  
15. "Well, we can only possess our souls in patience until this excellent inspector comes back for us."
  
16. "You are like my friend, Dr. Watson, who has a bad habit of telling his stories wrong end foremost. Please arrange your thoughts and let me know, in their due sequence, exactly what those events are which have sent you out unbrushed and unkempt, with dress boots and waistcoat buttoned awry, in search of advice and assistance."