The Moor: A Mary Russell Novel Study Guide

The Moor: A Mary Russell Novel by Laurie R. King

BOOKRAGS

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Plot Summary

Mary Russell is called by her husband - the famous sleuth Sherlock Holmes - to travel to the moor to help solve a mystery at the request of her husband's godfather. When she arrives, she has several items he's requested and is ready to help search for clues. Holmes is investigating the sighting of a ghostly carriage and a ghostly dog, similar to the Hounds of Baskerville. The sightings are sporadic but are serious enough to frighten people. Holmes and Russell spend several days and nights on the moor in search of clues. They hear stories from various sources, but most are fueled by rumor rather than first-hand sightings.

During one of their trips onto the moor, Holmes discovers a small bottle of dirt that is later analyzed. There's pure gold in the dirt, though it takes Holmes some time to realize what that clue means. This is only one of many clues they discover. During a dinner with a man named Ketteridge, who is owner of Baskerville Hall, home of the famous "Baskerville Hound" story, Holmes notes that Ketteridge's secretary resembles the original owners of the Baskerville Hall. That secretary, David Scheiman, seems to have a role in the mystery, though it takes Holmes and Russell some time to figure it out.

At one point, Russell goes onto the moor alone, and it's during that trip that she is told that Elizabeth Chase wants to see her "about a hedgehog". Russell isn't certain there's a point to the hedgehog, but goes to hear the woman out. She learns that a young boy saw the hound, though the boy was so traumatized that the story of the sighting has been kept very quiet. From the story, she learns that the hound ate the boy's snack. Elizabeth then says that the hedgehog was struck by something solid - probably a carriage wheel - and had been bitten, apparently by a dog. Elizabeth's stories indicate that the carriage and dog are real, not apparitions.

As Holmes and Russell continue to follow the clues, they find that Ketteridge and Scheiman are con artists. They have teamed up to "salt" the land around the moor with gold. They use the ghostly carriage and hound to scare people away from the operation and expect that land values will skyrocket once the word gets out that gold has been discovered. Homes and Russell catch the men in the act, but Holmes is captured. Russell, calling on her reserves of courage and ingenuity, helps her husband escape. The plot foiled, Holmes and Russell return to spend a final bit of time with their host.

Chapters 1 through 3

Chapters 1 through 3 Summary

Mary Russell is reading a telegram from her husband Sherlock Holmes that requests she take the train immediately to Devonshire. The telegram is brief, saying only that she's to come, regardless of whether she has time, and that she's to bring a compass. A couple of hours later, as Russell sits reading, a second telegram arrives with instructions that she's also to bring a map. That telegram also orders that she "close her books" and embark on the trip. Russell is annoyed that Holmes knows her so well that he would have realized she was still reading. She gathers the map and compass, packs a bag and catches the train. At the Coryton station in Devon, she finds that Holmes isn't there to meet her but that he's left a note giving directions to Lew House, two miles from the station. She sets out. During the walk, she comes to believe someone is watching. When she encounters Holmes, he tells her it's not "someone", but the moor that's watching. He points in the general direction of Dartmoor and doesn't seem surprised at her concern. She accepts the explanation and they continue to Lew House, the home of Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould. Russell asks Holmes how he knows Baring-Gould and Holmes shrugs off the question, saying only that they've known each other a long time. Holmes says that Baring-Gould is nearing ninety and that he's asked Holmes to look into a case.

In chapter two, Russell cleans up and meets Baring-Gould. He tells about his life, including the sketchy education as a child and the fact that it was sufficient for his Cambridge education which prepared him for the "holy orders". He eventually gets to the case and says that there's "something wrong on the moor". He says that it's similar to the case of the "Hounds of Baskerville" in that there have been sightings of a ghostly hound. Later, Russell and Holmes are alone and Russell asks why Holmes summoned her. He says that he needs her help. Holmes says that Baring-Gould is susceptible to myths but that the specific stories recently involving a ghostly carriage and a hound seem worth investigating. He says that the rumors all seem to be tied together. In addition, there has recently been a murder. A man named Josiah Gorton, known for his tendency to wander the moor in search of trace amounts of tin that would indicate land worth mining, was killed three weeks earlier. Gorton was seen in a part of the moor known as Watern Tor but was found near death a day later and miles away. Before his death, he'd talked about a ride in the ghostly carriage of Lady Howard and of seeing her hound. Holmes says that the footprints of a large dog were found near the place Gorton was found.

In chapter three, Holmes explains the legend of Lady Howard. She was noble only by marriage and three husbands died under suspicious circumstances. Though never formally accused of the crimes, local legend has it that she is doomed to ride in a carriage made of her husbands' bones for all eternity. Those who ride in the coach are certain to die and the story goes that the hound accompanying her has the power to set her free by biting "every blade of grass". Their conversation is interrupted when the

housekeeper, Mrs. Elliott, announces that the Harpers have arrived. Baring-Gould asks that she give them a meal and make them comfortable. As they look over maps, Russell notes a section marked "artillery range" and Baring-Gould says the military uses the area for testing. Baring-Gould tells Holmes that he's hearing a great deal of rumor but is physically unable to go onto the moor to track down first-hand accounts. One of those is a young couple who'd seen the coach at night. Holmes later says that while he's in the area he has promised to look into a situation for his brother, Mycroft. Russell has said that she won't help Holmes look into the case but now says that she'd rather be on the moor than spying on the military, a fact that seems to prepare her to go onto the moor while Holmes looks into the issue questioned by his brother.

Chapters 1 through 3 Analysis

The early chapters do a great deal to define the relationship between Russell and Holmes. Russell initially ignores Holmes' summons and returns to her reading. But a short time later she receives a second telegram, telling her to stop reading and get on the road. Holmes knows her well enough to know that she would initially rebel and that her pastime of choice would have been reading. He also knows that she will eventually give in to him and leave for the moor. Russell is aggravated that he does know her so well, but she also knows him very well. Holmes' attitude toward Russell's arrival seems indifferent. He isn't on hand to meet her train and leaves her to walk the two miles to Baring-Gould's house alone and in the dark. He knows that she's self-assured enough to do so without making a fuss, and she does. But Russell also shows a feminine side when she asks Holmes why he summoned her. She's looking for reassurance that he needs her for herself, not just because she could bring him a compass and a map. Holmes does reassure her. It's obvious that the two love each other and each accepts the faults of the other.

The legend of Lady Howard becomes a central part of the storyline and the fact that people spread stories about sightings of a ghostly carriage becomes a major theme in the book. The two criminals in the case will depend on people to share stories about seeing the ghostly carriage and a frightening hound as a way to keep people off the moor at night while they are working to set the stage for an elaborate scam. Their plan works until Russell and Holmes figure it out and put an end to it.

Chapters 4 through 6

Chapters 4 through 6 Summary

In chapter four, Holmes and Russell head onto the moor. Their first stop, after an hour's walk, is Lydford. Russell notes that Lydford seems to be the very edge of civilization and that when they leave the little village, they are greeted by the inhospitable moor. Russell notes that the moor seems spooky and that she might have given into the eerie feeling had it not been for Holmes' presence. At one point, Russell, apparently being sarcastic, says she can see "why a person would fall in love with Dartmoor". Holmes says that it's a more inviting place in the summer, to which Russell replies that it couldn't be any less inviting. They plan a trip that will take them on a large circular tour of the moor. Their first stop in Lydford is only a short rest. As they set out and face the damp conditions of the moor, Russell says that if Lady Howard were to offer a ride in her coach, Russell would accept.

They arrive soon at the home of Harry Cleave, the man who'd last seen Josiah Gorton alive. Harry invites them inside and tells them about seeing Gorton. He says that Gorton had been in good spirits and headed toward a section of the moor where there had been tin mines. He says that Gorton would have had time to make it to Drake Hill. Harry says that Gorton had promised to buy Harry a beer when next they met, something he'd never done before. He says that Gorton was a private person and so he'd left Gorton without asking for any details.

Russell and Holmes leave and Holmes says he hopes to find the place Gorton had stayed just prior to his death. Holmes says that's where they will spend the night, if they can locate it. They do find the miner's hut and settle in after eating a package of food, including thick sandwiches that Holmes has for them. Russell notes that Holmes quickly goes to sleep after their meal, but that she listens to the sounds of the wind for a long time and finds herself glad Holmes is there. The following morning Holmes sets out alone for a short time, leaving Russell behind in the little hut. Over a small peat fire, she makes "Turkish" coffee and has a cup waiting for Holmes when he returns. He has discovered a small bottle filled with dirt and some glistening specks that Russell immediately says looks like gold.

In chapter five, Holmes and Russell consider the significance of the bottle of gold flecks which were apparently in the possession of Gorton, a known tin miner. For the moment, they put that question aside and plan to go to the places Lady Howard's coach was reported to have been seen. They locate one of the spots using a map and Holmes walks around, searching the ground for clues. He notes that there seems to have been a great deal of traffic in the area. The weather turns for the worse and soon the fog is so thick that Russell becomes hopelessly disoriented. They find a farmhouse and Holmes asks the lady of the house if she'd be willing to sell them a meal. An old woman in the house immediately identifies him as "Snoop Sherlock", a nickname left over from the time Holmes was investigating the Baskerville hound case. Holmes learns from the

people at the house of another man who'd seen Lady Howard's carriage, though there are discrepancies and a great deal of arguing over the exact date and where the man had gone following the sighting.

Holmes and Russell next go to interview a young couple who'd seen the carriage while they were courting. They find the young woman who has become enamored with a new suitor but she collapses at the mention of the carriage and is unable to say anything coherent. They eventually learn the whereabouts of her previous suitor, Thomas Westaway. Thomas's story is not so dramatic but does have some discrepancies until Holmes makes it clear that he doesn't care that the couple were out most of the night, their romantic interlude ended abruptly by the appearance of the carriage. He then admits that it was very dark and he hadn't seen the carriage clearly, let alone it's passenger. He describes a "growl" that seemed to come more from the carriage than the dog and the jangle of harnesses. They head for shelter at the nearest inn.

In chapter six, they find shelter at the inn in the settlement known as Two Bridges. They consider whether to remain at Two Bridges or hire a car to take them on. When Russell says she's not opposed to remaining the night at Two Bridges, Holmes says that it will give them a chance to question the locals. The following morning, Russell is fighting a hangover and has to ask Holmes if they gathered any useful information. Holmes says that one of the young men said his "granny" had heard a dog scratching at her door one evening, but that the young man also said his granny was quite deaf. Holmes also reveals that Russell had played "the tin whistle" during the course of the evening, and that her participation had livened the party and had endeared her to the locals. By the time Russell is able to begin her day, Holmes is ready to begin the search for two witnesses he believes to be reputable - a pair of tourists from London who'd reported sighting the carriage. Though Holmes doesn't have a name, he begins working out ways that he might find the couple.

Chapters 4 through 6 Analysis

It's following the night at the inn at Two Bridges that Holmes says Russell has kept her talent for playing the tin whistle secret from him. He's not angry about it but seems to be surprised, probably because he believes that he knows so much about Russell that he can't imagine her having secrets from him. Holmes, as could be considered typical of this relationship, doesn't pay a great deal of attention to anything he considers a small detail. This will be revealed later when Russell, who has become convinced that there's some deeper meaning to the friendship between Holmes and Baring-Gould, learns that Baring-Gould is Holmes' godfather. When she mentions it to Holmes, he has to think about it for a moment and admits that he'd forgotten that detail.

The story of the Baskerville Hound will become important later in the story only in that it serves as a theory to explain the ghostly carriage and the hound Holmes is currently investigating. In that story, which is a real novel written with Holmes as the central character, Holmes discovers that a man who owns the Baskerville estate is putting phosphorous on a hound in order to make it seem that the hound glows. The reader

who has read that novel will be better equipped to understand the nuances of the references to the Baskerville Hound, but it isn't necessary to understanding this story.

Chapters 7 through 9

Chapters 7 through 9 Summary

In chapter seven, they are walking back to Lew House in the dark and Russell says that she looks as if she's spends days wrestling pigs through a bog while Holmes barely needs a shave and shows no signs of wear. When they arrive, they discover that Baring-Gould has company. He introduces the guest as Richard Ketteridge. Russell's first impression is that the man is vigorous, both with his handshake and his greeting. Ketteridge offers to pour drinks and Holmes accepts but Russell, fully aware of her appearance, excuses herself. When Holmes follows her to their room where Russell prepares for a bath, he asks if she'll be returning to join them. She responds that she'd "rather starve to death first", at which time he leaves her to her bath. She soaks for a long time and then eats the meal that the maid had brought up.

The next morning Russell asks about Ketteridge, who is from California. Holmes says that Russell will have an opportunity to judge Ketteridge for herself because they're having dinner with him that evening. Russell objects that she didn't bring evening attire but Holmes assures her that the "frock" he's seen among her things will be fine for the informal visit. Russell gives in because she's curious about Ketteridge. Later that morning, Holmes and Russell sit down with pen and paper and make a list of the dates they'd come across that seem important to the case of Lady Howard's carriage. There were two sightings reported in July - one by the couple from London. The next was in August when the "courting couple" saw it. On September 15, Josiah Gorton was seen on the moor and he was found near death two days later. Though Russell says she doesn't see the importance of two other dates, Holmes adds that in August a plate had fallen from a shelf and an elderly woman had heard a dog scratch at her door. They discuss the fact that the moon is full around mid-month when the coach has been spotted and wonder if it's because the coach is more visible then. Later, Russell spends some time reading a book written by Baring-Gould. She then gets dressed and a chauffeur arrives to drive them to Ketteridge's house.

In chapter eight, Russell notes that Holmes is obviously angry about something and demands to know what it is. Holmes says that he'd learned that Ketteridge lives at Baskerville Hall, as in the house from the Baskerville Hound case. Russell offers to become ill so that they can return to Lew House, but Holmes declines. He says that Ketteridge bought the entire estate from the previous owner. As soon as they arrive, Ketteridge says that he'd purchased Baskerville Hall at least partly because he was happy to have bought a piece of history, but says that he'd never imagined he'd be welcoming Holmes as a guest - the man who'd saved the estate from a "rascal". Holmes continues to try to steer the conversation away from himself, Baskerville Hall and the Baskerville Hound, but Ketteridge continues to return to those topics. Russell signals to him that she's willing to make their excuses in order to leave, but he again declines. Finally, Russell interrupts Ketteridge and says that Holmes "doesn't enjoy talking about his old cases", a statement so blunt that Ketteridge allows the topic to be changed.

They are called to dinner and Ketteridge's secretary, a man named David Scheiman, joins them. There's a little scene in which Ketteridge rebukes David for having had too much wine. In his anger, David spills his wine on Russell, which makes Ketteridge very angry. He orders David to leave the table, and David does. Ketteridge talks at length about Baring-Gould and the exploits from his youth as well as the loss of his wife. Holmes reveals that Baring-Gould had offered up some information about Ketteridge as well when Holmes asks how Ketteridge came from making it rich in the California gold fields to settling at Dartmoor. He says he was lucky in the gold fields, that he married a woman who died ten years later, and that he'd never been able to settle down since. He says that he's looking to sell Baskerville Hall and move on, and that he has a potential buyer nearby.

David rejoins them and apologizes, saying he has a blood disorder that makes it impossible for him to withstand the effects of alcohol. Holmes, seeming resigned to a new turn in the conversation a few minutes later, invites David to tell the story of the Baskerville Hound. David says there was a man who lived in the seventeenth century who was passionately in love with a woman. They married but the man jealously kept her almost as a prisoner with a dog as her only friend. When he killed the woman in a jealous rage, the dog came rushing to seek revenge and killed the man by biting his throat. David concludes that the hound remains on the moor, searching for either his mistress or her murderer. Holmes and Russell leave a short time later.

In chapter nine, Holmes and Russell arrive at Lew House to discover that there's a man in the parlor. He's "rumpled" and Holmes wakes him. Holmes asks where Baring-Gould is and the man says he'd gone to bed. The man identifies himself as Randolph Pethering and says he is an archaeological anthropologist. He says that he refutes some of the findings in Baring-Gould's books and begins to argue his case. Holmes puts an abrupt stop to the conversation and says that Pethering must leave, giving him only the choice of leaving on his own feet or being thrown out. Pethering leaves and Russell and Holmes lock up for the evening before going to bed themselves. The next morning, Baring-Gould's housekeeper, Mrs. Elliott, makes it clear that she is grateful to Holmes for throwing Pethering out. She showers them with the best food she can prepare. Baring-Gould is not feeling well and remains in bed. When Holmes and Russell stop in to see him later in the morning, he says that Pethering is a "lunatic", but says that he plans to write a letter in favor of Pethering's theories regarding the moor. Baring-Gould doesn't seem to think that Pethering's ideas are correct, but says that the man has a family to feed and that he doesn't want to stand in the way of Pethering's academic career.

Russell leaves Holmes and Baring-Gould together for awhile and wanders the grounds. She discovers the Lew Trenchard Church and goes inside. Holmes finds her there later and she asks if Baring-Gould is dying. Holmes confirms the suspicion and says that the old man probably won't last more than a few more weeks, months at the most. They have lunch together in the village of Lew Down at a place called the Blue Lion. They then look for Pethering, with Holmes planning to give him the message that Baring-Gould has agreed to write a letter. But they learn that Pethering heard rumors of a sighting of the hound and has gone onto the moor in search of it. Holmes and Russell

debate their own next move in their quest to solve the mystery and Homes suggests that Russell go looking for a road of some kind the carriage might be using. Though she' apprehensive, she agrees that she'll look for clues on that front while Holmes goes in search of information his brother has requested regarding the nearby military activities. Before they leave Lew House, Holmes asks Baring-Gould to help locate places on the map that might be used by the carriage. He outlines several possible routes, including some that are not marked on the map.

Chapters 7 through 9 Analysis

Russell is obviously caught up at times in the mystical aspects of the setting. She notes that she's sometimes spooked without any real reason to be. Holmes understands this and tries to explain it to her. His explanations seem sufficient to dispel any apprehensions he has but they aren't enough for Russell.

Pethering's appearance on the scene is designed to take the reader deeper into the setting. Pethering has a disagreement with ideas presented in Baring-Gould's books. Pethering isn't a major character for his actions, but will be for his death. His body will be found later in a lake near Baring-Gould's home.

Scheiman and Ketteridge are not what they purport themselves to be. Holmes will become suspicious of them and will send out queries, based on the story they tell him. What he'll eventually discover is that Scheiman is the former headmaster of a school that was actually a scam and went bankrupt and that Ketteridge is suspected of having been at the heart of a scam involving the sale of land supposed to be rich in mineral deposits. What's more, Holmes will figure out that Scheiman is a descendant of the Baskervilles who formerly owned Baskerville Hall. While Ketteridge is driven by greed alone, Scheiman's motivation seems to be his desire to return to the family home. While the reason for this desire is never explained, it seems likely that it's because he feels his branch of the family was wronged.

Chapters 10 through 12

Chapters 10 through 12 Summary

In chapter ten, Russell is provided a horse in order to make better time on the moor. She doesn't like horses but likes the idea of making the trip faster. She is outfitted with a great many provisions and says that she rushes to leave before someone can add another item to those she's carrying. When she tries to make the horse canter, the beast simply refuses and Russell says the message is clear: If she wants to go faster, she can run. She arrives at the small village of Postbridge after having spent some time talking to people along the way. She doesn't feel well and has to admit that she's about to come down with a cold. She knows that she must get started on her journey the following day but feels too sick to do so. She spends a great deal of time in bed, sleeps a lot and manages to feel better the following day.

In chapter eleven, Russell feels ready to resume her trip on the following day, though the sky remains overcast and the weather seems predictable only in that it never clears up. As she travels, she's met by people who already know who she is and what she's searching for. She says that most of the people want to give her something of value and search deeply in their memories for some mention of the hound, the carriage, or both. As she carefully questions the "witnesses" to the events, she learns that they only know someone who saw the coach and are recounting that story, or have heard about it from a friend of a friend.

Russell arrives at Mary Tavy, another small village on the moor. She telephones a message to the postmistress near Lew House, asking that she tell Baring-Gould that Russell is going to be delayed another day. Russell takes a room at the inn at Mary Tavy and later goes down to the great room, where she finds that there are men from the moor and men from the village. The two groups are separated and it becomes evident that each looks down on the other. They begin to sing and pass the evening with music. When it's announced that there's only time for one more song, Russell requests the song about Lady Howard's coach.

In chapter twelve, Russell learns that a woman named Elizabeth Chase, who lives near Wheal Betsy, wants to see Russell "about a hedgehog". Russell says that it sounds so strange that it must be true. Russell finds the house without much trouble. Elizabeth Chase is standing in the doorway and Russell soon realizes that the doorway is smaller than normal, making the tiny frame of Elizabeth seem normal sized. Elizabeth says she does a great deal of "animal doctoring". She then asks if Russell wants to hear first about the hedgehog or about the young man who saw the hound. Russell is immediately skeptical about the story of the hound, wondering why she hasn't heard about it from some of the many people who offered up stories about the hound, but encourages Elizabeth to share the story.

Elizabeth explains that the young man who saw the hound is named Samuel, that he's a "good boy" who was home from school on vacation and had gone to his aunt's house to do some chores for her. He finished late and headed home after dark. He stopped to have a snack provided by his aunt when a dog approached. Elizabeth says that Samuel thought it was a pony at first, but that the animal's tail was up and there was a "light coming from the middle" of the dog's head. Samuel was so frightened by the sight of the animal that he ran, leaving everything behind. When he arrived home, his father wanted to investigate, but Samuel refused to go back outside. The next day they found the spot and saw where the beast had eaten the rest of Samuel's snack and had torn his satchel "to shreds". Elizabeth finishes the story with her explanation of why it isn't widely known. She says Samuel is twelve, very responsible and a joy to his parents. He is so traumatized by the encounter that he shakes whenever it's mentioned. Samuel's father won't let anyone talk about it in front of Samuel and Elizabeth is one of only a couple of people who know about it.

Elizabeth barely pauses before going on with the story about the hedgehog. She says that she named the animal "Tiggy". Elizabeth describes the time the hedgehog was found and Russell mentally puts that in the context of other sightings of the coach, though she doesn't yet know how it fits into the mystery. Elizabeth says that the hedgehog was near death. It had a broken leg that Elizabeth set, and the little animal survived the night. Elizabeth pauses and Russell asks what caused the hedgehog's injuries. Elizabeth is pleased that Russell is able to move to the heart of the issue. She says that it appeared have been injured by a cart wheel, probably something moving fast because the hedgehog would normally have scampered away from anything that posed that kind of danger. She says that it appeared the hedgehog had also been bitten, probably by a dog. The other interesting part of the story, according to Elizabeth, is that the hedgehog was out of its normal element. Elizabeth agrees with Russell's theory that the little animal might have been carried by whatever had bitten it, but that it seemed more likely that it had accidentally hitched a ride on whatever it was that ran over the animal.

Chapters 10 through 12 Analysis

Russell is traveling along when the horse throws her. Russell lies on the ground and begins to cry. She isn't that badly hurt but is feeling the strain of the case, her fears on the moor, and her need to solve the case for Baring-Gould before he dies. She cries until her face is swollen from it and then wipes her eyes and prepares to resume the journey. She realizes that she's come to accept the moor during her cry. She says that she feels at peace, as if she now belongs. This phenomenon is almost the same as a typical coming of age theme. Russell realizes that there are things she can't change. She knows that she simply has to accept her role in the situation and move forward, doing her best. At least part of this understanding comes from her acceptance of the remote area. She has come to accept the moor for what it is. With that comes a better understanding of the people who inhabit the moor.

Russell wasn't overly excited about a trip onto the moor by herself, but she takes it on without argument. This is another example of her personality as opposed to that of Holmes. She is very self-reliant but is also willing to defer to his orders, though she makes it clear that it's because she wants to help rather than out of any desire to obey his orders. Holmes simply accepts that she's going to do so and doesn't make a big production of the situation. It's an important part of his character that he doesn't gloat when she does as he says but merely accepts her cooperation as a matter of course. He does this with everyone and it will later be seen that he takes over an entire murder investigation.

Chapters 13 through 17

Chapters 13 through 17 Summary

In chapter thirteen, Russell heads back to Lew House but decides to take time to check out the area where Tiggy was found. She agrees with Elizabeth's assessment of the area, saying that it's not likely that the little hedgehog had made his home there. She is about to continue her trip to Lew House when she has an accident with the horse. She's thrown again, and this time the horse injures his leg. Russell stands with the horse in a stream and bathes the leg in cool water as she tries to decide what to do. She knows it's too far to return to Elizabeth's house and realizes she's only a short distance from Baskerville Hall. While she doesn't want to make an unannounced visit, she's in a tough spot and decides she will anyway. She heads that direction, leading the horse. She soon realizes that she's interrupted some sort of situation. Ketteridge is uncomfortable and urges that Russell have a bath. She knows she's being pushed out of the way while the situation is resolved. She remains in the bathroom but listens for signs of activity. There's a maid in the hall, apparently with orders to ensure the Russell doesn't leave the bathroom. A short time later, she hears Ketteridge's car driving away.

In chapter fourteen, Ketteridge's mood is much lighter when Russell returns downstairs. Ketteridge says the car is being used at the moment but will return shortly, and that he'll take her home then. She finds that a meal is being prepared and Ketteridge offers liquor, saying "There's always something to celebrate". Ketteridge says there are details of the sale still to be worked out but that he expects to leave the moor by summer. The conversation turns to recent sightings of the hound and Russell points out that the Baskerville Hall had something to do with the hound during its previous reign on the moor. She suggests that the hound might be attracted to Baskervilles, or it might simply be attracted to the current owner of the hall. Ketteridge laughs and says that he hadn't given that much thought, but that perhaps he should seek some protection. Russell says that a gun would likely be the most effective. The conversation touches on Ketteridge's life prior to arriving at the moor before turning to Russell's accident. Ketteridge is interested in her reason for being out on the moor and she "breezily" describes some of the sights she's seen, which seems to make Ketteridge relax. Ketteridge suggests that he'd like to hire Holmes to investigate the recent sightings of the hound. About that time, the car returns and Ketteridge drives her home but declines the offer to come inside.

In chapter fifteen, Russell pauses on the porch for a few moments, thinking about Baskerville Hall as compared to Lew House. She notes that, though Baskerville Hall is obviously the result of careful planning while Lew House looks like a hodge-podge of designs, something seems "off" about Baskerville Hall. Russell finds that Baring-Gould is still in bed and she stops by his room to visit with him for a few minutes. She discovers that Holmes' bags are not in their room. The next morning she encounters Baring-Gould downstairs and he reveals that Holmes has gone to London. Unable to contain her curiosity, Russell asks Baring-Gould how he knows Holmes and he reveals

that he's the younger man's godfather, though he adds that he hasn't done well with his duties in that respect. As Russell is coming to terms with that information, a group of people rush into the room with the news that a body has been discovered in the nearby lake.

In chapter sixteen, Russell rushes from the house in the direction of the lake. Russell sees that the body of a man is floating in the water. She calls on the help of a young man named Andrew Budd to paddle her out to the body, pausing only to make a quick inspection of the area and to demand that everyone be kept away from the water's edge in order to preserve any clues. Russell discovers that the body is that of Randolph Pethering. From the clues, Russell deduces that Pethering has been dead more than a few hours and that his body was dumped into the lake.

In chapter seventeen, Holmes returns to Lew House and is distressed over the sight of Russell's face, which is bruised and cut from the fall she took at the end of her journey into the moor. Russell tells him about the discovery of Pethering's body and Holmes commends her for her professionalism regarding the investigation. Holmes then tells how he came to find the London couple through a report that the men had a limp and was in the military. Holmes next says that he's unearthed another important clue. He hands Russell a copy of The Hound of the Baskervilles and tells her to see if the clue also strikes her when she begins reading the book. He leaves her to the reading while he goes to check in on Baring-Gould.

Chapters 13 through 17 Analysis

Russell is certain that she's interrupted something at Baskerville Hall but doesn't know what. When she arrives, Ketteridge says that the car is being used but that it will return later. Russell hears the car as it leaves, proving that Ketteridge is lying, but she doesn't mention it to him. Later, she'll realize that Ketteridge more than likely had the dead body of Pethering stowed in the trunk of the car while he was driving her home.

Russell's suggestion that the hound might be attracted to the owner of the Baskerville Hall is likely her way of seeing what the impact of that statement will be on Ketteridge. Ketteridge's request that Holmes look into the sightings is probably his way of trying to remove suspicion from himself.

Russell is very professional while she's investigating the scene around the lake. She has one of the men row her to the body and help retrieve it, preventing the body from sinking. She looks over the scene, studying prints, drag marks and other clues "from every angle" until she comes to a conclusion as to how Pethering's body wound up in the lake. But when she gets back to Lew House, she viciously scrubs the hand she'd used to drag Pethering out of the water. She notes that she scrubs until the skin is raw but still she feels the horror of having touched the dead, bloated body. This gives a human aspect to Russell's character that might otherwise be lacking. When Holmes arrives, he assures her that her distress after the fact is a very human reaction. This

also makes Holmes' character seem more likeable, a trait that might otherwise not have been seen.

Russell asks Holmes why he hadn't told her that Baring-Gould is his godfather. He seems taken aback and stops what he's doing to think about it for a minute. He then admits that he'd completely forgotten that part of their relationship.

Chapters 18 through 26, Author's Note

Chapters 18 through 26, Author's Note Summary

In chapter eighteen, Russell settles down to read. The book is written by Dr. Watson, Holmes' assistant who has lately become too elderly to help. She reads again about Sir Henry Baskerville who comes to the moor to claim his inheritance, Baskerville Hall. Russell catches what Homes had wanted her to find. It was noted that Ketteridge had bought Baskerville Hall complete, as it was from the previous owner. In the book, there's a reference to a portrait hanging in the dining room - a portrait that wasn't there when they'd visited Baskerville Hall. Holmes believes the portrait was removed in the hope that he wouldn't notice the resemblance of Scheiman to Stapleton Baskerville. Stapleton was heir to the estate and had disappeared during the Baskerville Hound case. Holmes says that he has never really believed that Stapleton died on the moor as was believed by Scotland Yard. Holmes says that he's begun looking into the backgrounds of both Ketteridge and Scheiman. Holmes says that while in London, he'd handed over the small bottle of gold for analysis and that it contained pure gold - not gold ore. Inspector Fyfe, the local police officer looking into Pethering's murder, arrives. He offers up information, including that Pethering was lying about his identity. Fyfe says no one at the university where Pethering was supposed to be employed had heard of him.

In chapter nineteen, Holmes and Russell go to the inn where Pethering was staying and look through his things. Among those is a book written by Baring-Gould filled with notes in which Pethering expresses his disagreement with Baring-Gould's conclusions. Holmes says that he's going to try to follow Pethering's route along the moor and asks Russell to go to Plymouth to talk to Miss Baskerville - the heiress who had sold out to Ketteridge. While reading in the book on the train bound for Plymouth, Russell discovers a brief reference to gold in one of Baring-Gould's books.

In chapter twenty, Russell makes contact with Miss Baskerville. Russell sees that the portrait from Baskerville Hall is hanging in Miss Baskerville's house. She says that Ketteridge had "insisted" she take it. Miss Baskerville said she'd lived in the house all alone and had been looking for a tenant when Ketteridge arrived and asked to buy it. She says it was difficult to maintain it alone and she'd agreed. Russell asks Miss Baskerville if she knows David Scheiman. Miss Baskerville says that she's recently agreed to marry him.

In chapter twenty-one, Russell returns to Lew House and finds Holmes has not yet returned. She has a conversation with Baring-Gould, who says he believes Miss Baskerville is happier in town than she had been living in the Baskerville Hall alone. Russell hears a commotion in the kitchen and discovers that a couple with several small children have arrived, saying that Baring-Gould had told them they were to come if they need help, and that they have no other place to stay. The doctor, who'd checked in on Baring-Gould, says he has a house the family can use for a few days and they leave.

In chapter twenty-two, Russell searches for another reference in Baring-Gould's book about gold on the moor and finds only one about an incident involving rumors of gold that turned out to be a fraud. She later asks Baring-Gould about it and he says little, other than it was a case of "salting" the area with gold in an effort to increase land prices. On a hunch, Russell goes to see the family that had arrived the previous evening and discovers that a man from London had purchased their farm and that they'd had to move before their next house could be ready.

In chapter twenty-three, Holmes returns and has come to the same conclusions as Russell. They share information, including Holmes' theory that Pethering had discovered the gold scam and had gone to confront Ketteridge. Holmes receives a telegram in reply to his queries about Ketteridge and Scheiman. The telegram indicates that one of them is unknown and that the other was headmaster of a failed school. Holmes details what he found when following Pethering's route and says that he believes Pethering's body might have been in the car when Ketteridge drove Russell home. Holmes also shares the theory that the purpose of the carriage and hound is to keep people away from the moor at night while they are salting the area. He also theorizes that the military's firing of a test weapon - the weapon Holmes' brother had been interested in - provides cover for the sound of their salting.

In chapter twenty-four, Holmes receives another telegram, this time explaining that Ketteridge has been accused of a scam in which he sold land that was supposed to be rich in minerals. Holmes has come to realize that there might be an even deeper deception than the use of the carriage and hound as an effort to keep people away from the moor. The fact is that the mystery will eventually be solved and people will know that it was a hoax. Holmes realizes that Ketteridge might be counting on that as a way to increase interest even more. Holmes believes Ketteridge is counting on the fact that people think that he went to the trouble to create the rumor of a ghostly carriage in an effort to keep gold seekers away. The military announces plans to do weapons testing on a particular night and Holmes and Russell make elaborate plans to keep watch on Ketteridge and Scheiman and to catch them in the act of salting. Two more telegrams arrive, one with the information that Pethering is really Randolph Parker, that he's unemployed, and that he's consider crazy but harmless. The second telegram indicates that a shell company called Goldsmith Enterprises is buying up land on the moor.

In chapter twenty-five, Russell and Holmes realize that Ketteridge and Scheiman might take advantage of a thunderstorm to do their work rather than waiting for the military tests. They go onto the moor, abandoning their elaborate plans, and are rewarded when the two men arrive and begin their work. Holmes stumbles into Ketteridge's sight and is captured at gunpoint. Ketteridge plans to kill Holmes and so reveals all aspects of the plot to him. Ketteridge and Scheiman met by chance on a boat, and both being scam artists, hatched a plan to take Baskerville Hall for Scheiman, who wanted to regain what he believed should have been his inheritance. Ketteridge says that having to rely on the dog alone was unacceptable because the dog was difficult to train and control. Their plan is for the scam to be revealed after they've made as much as possible from land speculators and for Ketteridge to leave, making it appear that he's to blame and leaving Scheiman as owner of the Baskerville Hall. Russell manages to rescue Holmes.

Scheiman is incapacitated but Ketteridge runs away. When Russell follows, she discovers that Ketteridge's car had been equipped with modified wheels, phosphorous paint and a blanket to quiet the engine, creating the illusion of Lady Howard's coach. When Russell and Holmes meet up again, he tells her that "the moor took" Ketteridge, and that the man is dead, having refused Holmes' offer to help him escape a bog.

In chapter twenty-six, Holmes and Russell, having told Baring-Gould the results of their investigation, take the old man for one last outing, onto his beloved moor.

Chapters 18 through 26, Author's Note Analysis

Russell notes that Holmes takes over the investigation, though neither she nor Inspector Fyfe quite knows when or how it happens. This is typical of Holmes' personality, and it seems that the local law enforcement official is more than willing to allow Holmes that role.

Russell's interest in the family that arrived unexpectedly on Baring-Gould's doorstep seeking shelter is really the final important clue of the motive behind the mystery, though the reader may not put all the information together at this point. Someone is "salting" the area with gold - planting traces of gold. The rumor of gold will be impossible to contain and that rumor will bring in gold hunters. That will increase the land value. The reader doesn't yet know who is planting the gold or why, though it's obvious that Ketteridge and Scheiman are involved. The reader also doesn't yet know the purpose of the ghostly carriage and the hound, though it will is eventually revealed that both are part of the elaborate plot to fuel the rumor.

The "editor's postscript" appears after the final chapter of the book. In this section, the author presents the idea that "Russell's manuscript" seems to be set in a real place with real people, and is therefore assumed to be true. The author, Laurie King, presents the Mary Russell stories as if the manuscripts were provided to her and that she is only serving as editor for Russell's stories.

Characters

Mary Russell

Wife of Sherlock Holmes, she is a writer, scholar and works with Holmes on mystery cases. Referred to as "Russell" by her husband, she is amused by the fact that others are often confused because she and Holmes don't share a last name. Russell is self-confident and willing to help Holmes when he's working on a mystery. She treks into the moor alone to search for clues. Despite this aspect of her character, she becomes slightly spooked on the moor. She doesn't admit this weakness to Holmes but does admit to herself that she's glad he's nearby. Russell is a competent sleuth in her own right. She understands the need to preserve crime scenes in order to follow clues. When Pethering is found dead in the pond, Russell takes over the crime scene, calling on men to help retrieve the body and to keep people from tracking up the area. An important part of her character is that she's willing to defer to Holmes whenever he's around. However, Russell is self-sufficient and accepts the fact that she needs to go onto the moor alone while Holmes is away working on another aspect of the case. She is smart, as is seen when Russell comes to conclusions about the case at the same time as Holmes even though they are not together when each makes the connections to solve the mystery.

Sherlock Holmes

Husband of Mary Russell, he's a renowned sleuth. Called "Holmes" by everyone, he has solved many mysteries prior to being called on to solve the sightings of the ghostly carriage on the moor. Holmes is self-confident almost to the point of arrogance. He doesn't care a great deal what other people think of him. He is somewhat of a one-track personality. When he's working on a particular aspect of the case, he is focused on the details in front of him. Despite that, he's able to put that aspect of the case aside when it's time to focus on something else. In this way, Holmes gathers a great many clues and is faced with the difficulty of figuring out what's relevant and how it relates. Russell admits this to be particularly challenging when she's outlining the case in an effort to come to conclusions on her own. Holmes' thought processes are not detailed though he and Russell come to the same realizations with regard to what's important to the case. Holmes wants to carefully plan his steps but is more than willing to change direction in any given instance. For example, he and Russell make a carefully detailed plan to catch the two men "salting" the moor. But when a thunderstorm erupts and he must make a decision to abandon that plan, he does so with no qualms.

Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould

Holmes' godfather, he is nearing ninety years of age and lives at Lew House near the moor. Baring-Gould is highly respected in the community and has spent his life

gathering the history of the moor and its people. He is aware that there are always stories of spooks and unexplained events on the moor but tells Holmes that what's going on now is more than what's typical. He is self-confident and demanding but is also generous with those in need of his help.

Randolph Pethering

A young man who wants desperately to be a scholar, he arrives at Baring-Gould's house in an effort to convince Baring-Gould to help with his research. Pethering reports himself to be a teacher but really isn't. He goes out in search of Lady Howard's coach and is killed by Ketteridge. His body is dumped in a pond near Baring-Gould's house and Russell retrieves it from the water.

Richard Ketteridge

Owner of Baskerville Hall when Holmes and Russell arrive on the moor. He's really a con artist but passes himself off as a wealthy man who had been interested in the history of the Baskerville Hall. He and Scheiman are actually accomplices in an elaborate scam to create a gold rush on the moor.

David Scheiman

A con artist who is passing himself off as Ketteridge's secretary, he is actually helping Ketteridge with the scam to create a gold rush on the moor. Scheiman is actually the son of a Baskerville who was believed to have drowned on the moor. Scheiman wants to regain ownership of the Baskerville Hall and is willing to go to great lengths to accomplish that. He has also endeared himself to Miss Baskerville, who is the former owner of the Hall, and she tells Russell that they are to be married.

Josiah Gorton

A tin miner, he was found on the moor under suspicious circumstances and died a short time after being discovered. He talked about having been taken for a ride in the hearse of Lady Howard and of a ghostly hound. Holmes traces Gorton's steps just before his death and discovers a small bottle containing what turns out to be gold flakes.

Harry Cleave

The man who sees Josiah Gorton as he's headed onto the moor, Harry says that Josiah had indicated he was about to come into some money. According to Harry, Josiah had promised to buy Harry a beer when they met next, an offer that Harry says had never been made before. Harry seems typical of the people who live on the moor. He's willing to share his story and seems believable.

Lady Howard

A woman who was noble by birth and who reportedly lost several husbands to strange deaths. Though she was never charged for the deaths, she was suspected. The legend goes that Lady Howard was forced to spend eternity riding in a carriage made of her dead husbands' bones.

Elizabeth Chase

The woman who tells Russell about the sighting of the hound and the broken leg of the hedgehog which seems to be proof that the carriage is a real conveyance rather than an apparition. Elizabeth is something of an animal doctor. She's very small in stature. She strikes Russell as a very reliable person and Russell considers Elizabeth's story believable.

Objects/Places

Devonshire

Where Holmes tells Russell she's to come by train.

A Compass

The only item Holmes initially tells Russell to bring with her to Devonshire.

Lew House

The name of the home where Baring-Gould lives.

Lady Howard's Coach

Reportedly made of the bones of her dead husbands, it's actually a hoax put together by Ketteridge in an effort to wreak havoc on the moor and to frighten people away from the area where he's "salting".

Lydford

Where Holmes and Russell stop for a brief rest during their first trip onto the moor.

Snoop Sherlock

How many of the people on the moor refer to Holmes.

Two Bridges

Where Holmes and Russell spend a night at an inn and drink a great deal. It's also where Holmes discovers that Russell can play the tin whistle.

Baskerville Hall

The house where Ketteridge lives.

Lew Trenchard Church

Where Holmes and Russell are when Holmes confirms that Baring-Gould is dying and probably won't live more than a few more months.

Wheal Betsy

Where Russell meets Elizabeth Chase.

Tiggy

The name of the hedgehog found by Elizabeth Chase.

Plymouth

Where Miss Baskerville lives when Russell goes to visit her.

Themes

The Importance of Following the Clues

Russell knows little about the mystery upon her arrival on the moor but is soon enmeshed in the case. Russell and Holmes gather a great deal of information and it's up to them to figure out what details are important to the case and how they fit together. Perhaps the biggest single clue is the bottle of dirt that contains gold flakes. That gold is pure rather than the gold ore that might have been expected. Russell isn't certain for some time how that discovery plays into the case but eventually learns that someone is "salting" the area with gold in an effort to create a gold rush which would drive up the price of land. Russell begins putting that theory together when she questions a family that arrived at Baring-Gould's seeking a place to stay after a London buyer purchased their farm. It's Holmes who points out that Baskerville Hall is exactly as it was when owned by Miss Baskerville with the exception of a single portrait. That portrait was removed in an effort to keep guests from seeing the family resemblance between the patriarch of the Baskervilles and David Scheiman. Other important clues include the hedgehog that was probably injured by a carriage wheel and the boy who reported that the hound ate his snack - indicating that neither the carriage nor the hound were apparitions. The use of clues to drive the reader to conclusions is very effective in this book and becomes the major theme as the reader tries to figure out what will happen next.

Greed

Greed is the overall driving motivation behind the plot of the story. Richard Ketteridge and David Scheiman are con artists who meet by chance and come up with the idea of joining forces for an elaborate scam. What's interesting is that the two men are obviously intelligent and diligent but they are caught up by their greed. Neither wants to put forth the effort to make money honestly but do a great deal of work to make the scam work. There's an enormous amount of planning involved. They create the rumor of the ghostly hound and the carriage in an effort to keep people from the moor at night - the time they are "salting" the area with gold. On a deeper level of deception, they are planning that the carriage and hound will eventually be revealed as a hoax but plan to fuel the rumor that it was designed to keep people away from searching for gold. That, they believe, will increase interest and help spread the rumor of gold, increasing the demand for land. In the case of Ketteridge, the greed seems to be purely financial, but Scheiman is obviously greedy for the Baskerville Hall as well. Scheiman is a descendant of the Baskervilles and feels he has been cheated of his rightful place in the family and his inheritance.

The Effects of Rumor

The main story is based on a scam planned by Richard Ketteridge and David Scheiman, and they count heavily on the power of rumor to make their plan work. The basis of the scam is to create the illusion of a gold discovery which will feed people's greed for gold, prompting the equivalent of a gold rush on the moor. If the plan works, the price of land will skyrocket as people seek to get in on the action. Toward that end, Scheiman and Ketteridge fuel the rumor of Lady Howard's ghostly carriage roaming the moor. The legend is that Lady Howard might have been responsible for the deaths of several husbands, and that for her crimes she's sentenced to drive through eternity in a coach made of the bones of those husbands. The rumor exists prior to Scheiman and Ketteridge creating the illusion of Lady Howard's coach, so they are in fact fueling the legend and counting on rumor to spread the story. As Holmes and Russell begin investigating the sightings, they learn that almost everyone is willing to tell stories of the coach. It's only after tedious questioning that they learn that few have actually seen the coach. In most cases, those who are telling the stories are repeating what they've heard from others. This is not a phenomenon specific to the situation or the people, but is typical of human nature. Scheiman and Ketteridge know this will be the case and that they don't have to create the illusion of the ghostly carriage often in order to fuel the rumor.

Style

Point of View

The story is written in first person from the perspective of Mary Russell. Known as "Russell" throughout the story, she's a fictional character but presented as the author of the book. Russell is a self-confident woman who is the wife of Sherlock Holmes. She wants to be more self-reliant than she actually is and this could lead her to be less than honest about her feelings sometimes. However, she remains truthful, admitting that she's glad to have Holmes nearby when she's feeling frightened or uncomfortable. When Russell has to pull a body from a lake, she does so, but is later horrified by having touched the body. She admits this feeling to Holmes as well. The use of first-person is an interesting perspective in that the character is fictional and refers freely to another fictional character. The fact that Russell's life is so completely enmeshed with that of Sherlock Holmes - a well-known fictional character - makes the story somehow more believable rather than less so. This could be augmented by the fact that Russell's actions are set in a real place and is apparently historically correct as well. The limited perspective means that the reader is sometimes in the dark as to the meaning of clues. For example, Holmes comes to the conclusion that Scheiman is related to the Baskervilles long before Russell. The reader isn't given the information until Russell learns of the connection. The limited perspective is used by the author to outline all the clues and bring the story to an acceptable conclusion. As Russell sits down to examine each of the clues and decide what each means, her thought process is revealed to the reader.

Setting

The story is set in England, probably around the 1920s. The setting is, at least upon cursory examination, geographically correct. The major places, such as Dartmoor and Lew House, really exist. The use of these real places as settings is effective in making the story seem plausible. Various aspects of the setting are described in great detail. In some cases, the details are cumbersome and seem aimed at taking the reader's mind away from the solution to the mystery. The descriptions about the mystic quality of the moor are used to help build suspense, and the author is successful in this effort. The reader with a good imagination can imagine himself feeling the sense of being watched, just as Mary Russell felt upon her arrival on the moor. Items available are in keeping with the time period. Russell arrives by train but there are cars used by the various characters, including Ketteridge. There are phones but not in every home. Russell telephones a message to the village postmistress for Baring-Gould when she's detained on the moor. Russell also talks about the lights at Baskerville Hall. She says that a person could become accustomed to them, obviously indicating that the technology is fairly new and she is not accustomed. Other specific settings, such as the inn and the house of Elizabeth Chase, are probably not real but may very well be based on what

would have been typical for the time period. The setting is believable and acceptable to the story.

Language and Meaning

The book is written in a straight-forward style but conversations are sometimes difficult to follow. The writer attempts to mimic the language of the people of the moor and there are some aspects of that dialect that make the writing difficult to understand. Russell mentions that she has trouble understanding some people as well. There are some words in the conversation that readers may find very confusing. "Enov" is really enough and "vine" is really find. Many of the first letters of words are dropped altogether, so "'ave" is written when the person is trying to say have. There are only a few conversations with the people of the moor in which these changes are made and these are obviously the author's attempt to convey an accurate picture of the people. The reader has to be careful to realize that the people aren't highly educated but also aren't stupid. Other dialogue - that of Ketteridge, Holmes, Russell, Baring-Gould and other characters - is without this language style. All the conversations are relatively easy to follow and comprehend. There seems to be more narrative than dialogue. Russell's thoughts are presented as narrative from her perspective. The division is acceptable for the story.

Structure

The story is set in England, probably around the 1920s. The setting is, at least upon cursory examination, geographically correct. The major places, such as Dartmoor and Lew House, really exist. The use of these real places as settings is effective in making the story seem plausible. Various aspects of the setting are described in great detail. In some cases, the details are cumbersome and seem aimed at taking the reader's mind away from the solution to the mystery. The descriptions about the mystic quality of the moor are used to help build suspense, and the author is successful in this effort. The reader with a good imagination can imagine himself feeling the sense of being watched, just as Mary Russell felt upon her arrival on the moor. Items available are in keeping with the time period. Russell arrives by train but there are cars used by the various characters, including Ketteridge. There are phones but not in every home. Russell telephones a message to the village postmistress for Baring-Gould when she's detained on the moor. Russell also talks about the lights at Baskerville Hall. She says that a person could become accustomed to them, obviously indicating that the technology is fairly new and she is not accustomed. Other specific settings, such as the inn and the house of Elizabeth Chase, are probably not real but may very well be based on what would have been typical for the time period. The setting is believable and acceptable to the story.

Quotes

"Sherlock Holmes was not one to suffer fools even under coercion, yet he was apparently here under his own free will, and without resentment. There was undoubtedly something in the situation that I had thus far failed to grasp."
Chap. 2, p. 31

"My Lady's coach hath nodding plumes, the coachman hath no head, My Lady is an ashen white, as one who is long dead."
The song of Lady Howard, Chap. 3, p. 49

"Holmes' pixies, waiting to tease the unwary traveler into a mire, no longer seemed so ludicrous, and had it not been for Holmes, I might very well have heard the soft pad of the Baskerville hound behind me and felt its warm breath on the back of my neck. However, with Holmes beside me as a talisman, the spooks kept their distance, and what might have been a place of animosity and danger was rendered merely desolate to the point of being grim."
Chap. 4, p. 60

"So it was that as we approached Lew House, with me limping and slurping in my boots while beside me walked my partner and husband, his only dishevelment after three days of moor-crawling the day's light stubble on his jaw and a high-tide mark of mud around the lower half of his otherwise clean boots. He looked as if he were returning from a gentle day's shooting; I seemed to have spend the day wrestling a herd of escaped pigs through a bog."
Chap. 7, p. 101

"The case Holmes and I had just finished had begun with a debt to a dead woman. For several weeks over the summer I had lived with the fact that the debts to the dead are heavier than those owed the living because there is no negotiation, no forgiveness, only the stark knowledge that failure can never be recompensed, that even success can only restore balance."
Chap. 9, p. 143

"The horse was as solid and without frills as his name, capable of two gaits: a leisurely stroll and a spine-snapping trot. An experimental urge towards a canter met with a slowing of the trot and a laying back of the ears, a clear message that he was going as fast as he could, damn it, and if I didn't like it, I could just get down and run myself."
Chap. 10, p. 156

"Baskerville Hall, on the other hand, was the real thing. A structure grown slowly over the centuries and dramatically situation, it was filled with beautiful, cared-for things, well heated, adequately staffed, more than adequately lit (one could even get used to the electric lights, I knew), and mastered by a man in his physical and mental prime."
Chap. 15, p. 218

"It was like meeting Queen Victoria's wet nurse. One knew she must have had one, but her existence seemed rather unlikely."
Chap. 15, p. 226

"I asked farmwifes, shepherds, three stonemasons, two thatchers, a goose girl, and the village idiot whether or not they had seen a ghostly carriage or a black dog, had heard anything peculiar, noticed anything out of the ordinary. All but the village idiot gave me nothing but nonsense, and he gave me nothing but a smile."
Chap. 17, p. 249

"'And I can't see Scheiman quite so cold-blooded, not to turn a hair at his innocent employer's getting behind the wheel with a corpse in the boot of the car.' I shuddered at the reminder that I had been in the car, had sat making inconsequential remarks about the beauty of the evening, while just behind me lay the folded-up remains of the man whose coat I would be hanging onto the following morning."
Chap. 23, p. 323

"Oh, it looked the part all right, and David even fixed a cute little contraption n its head to give it a 'glowing eye' - powered by a better - but the whole point of having the dog was making it ghostly, and a hundred and twenty pounds of dog is anything but. Lock it in the stables and it howls and scratches the door down; turn it loose and it chases sheep and gets itself shot at; you have to feed it meat and then clean up after it so your ghostly dog isn't leaving great stinking piles across the countryside; and you never know, when you're off on a Lady Howard run, if the dog isn't going to take off."
Chap. 25, p. 351

"Considering the circumstances, it is a little surprising that more of the manuscripts written by Mary Russell do not involve well-known public names."
Author's Postscript, p. 367

Topics for Discussion

Describe Mary Russell. What are her strengths? Her weaknesses? What makes her a believable character? What makes her a likeable character? What is known about her from this story?

What is the relationship between Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes? Compare the two characters? How are the similar? How are they different? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each? How do those strengths and weaknesses impact each other?

Who is Sabine Baring-Gould? Is he a fictional character? Why do you believe the author chose him as a character in the book? Is the method effective? What is known about Baring-Gould from this book?

Who is Richard Ketteridge? Who is David Scheiman? How do Russell and Holmes meet them? Where do they live? What is their role in the mystery? What things do they do that make them suspect in the eyes of Russell and Holmes? What do they do to try to throw off that suspicion?

Who is Lady Howard? How does she figure into the mystery Russell and Holmes are investigating? What is the "hound of Baskerville?" How does that animal figure into the mystery? What are the clues Russell and Holmes discover that make them certain neither Lady Howard nor the hound are apparitions?

Describe how greed plays into the mystery Holmes and Russell are investigating. What is the difference between the greed exhibited by Ketteridge and that of Scheiman? There are other characters who exhibit greed to some degree. Name at least one and describe that greed.

Describe the case being investigated by Russell and Holmes. List at least six important clues they discover and how each leads them closer to solving the mystery.