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## SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE DUKE'S SON

Are all bicycle tyres the same? How many different kinds of bicycle tyre are there? When someone cycles over soft wet ground, the tyres leave tracks on the ground – but one tyre makes a deeper track. Is it the tyre on the front wheel or the back wheel?

When the Duke's son is kidnapped from Dr Huxtable's school, it is important to know the answers to questions like these. Sherlock Holmes, and his old friend Dr Watson, spend many hours looking at the mud on Lower Gill Moor. They find the tracks of bicycle tyres, the tracks of sheep and of cows – and they also find a body. Now there are even more questions, and Dr Watson thinks it is not possible to find the answers. 'Come, come, Watson,' says Holmes. 'Every mystery has an answer.'

But even Sherlock Holmes is surprised by the answer to this mystery . . .

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SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

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# Sherlock Holmes and the Duke's Son

*Retold by*  
Jennifer Bassett

*Illustrated by*  
Ron Tiner



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## CONTENTS

STORY INTRODUCTION	i
1 Sherlock Holmes has a visitor	1
2 Dr Huxtable's story	5
3 Holmes and Watson go north	11
4 The body on the moor	16
5 A visit to the Green Man	23
6 Sherlock Holmes talks to the Duke	31
7 The Duke's son	35
GLOSSARY	41
ACTIVITIES: Before Reading	44
ACTIVITIES: While Reading	45
ACTIVITIES: After Reading	48
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	52
ABOUT THE BOOKWORMS LIBRARY	53

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## 1

## Sherlock Holmes has a visitor

When visitors came to see Sherlock Holmes in Baker Street, they often did surprising things. Sometimes they put their heads in their hands and cried. Sometimes they talked and talked, and couldn't stop. And sometimes they just sat there and didn't say a word. But nobody was more surprising than Dr Thorneycroft Huxtable.

He was a large man, tall, well-dressed, and important-looking. He came into the room, walked to one of the big chairs, and suddenly fell into it. He sat there, with his eyes closed, looking white and ill.



*He sat there, looking white and ill.*

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*Sherlock Holmes and the Duke's Son*

I ran to get some water for him. Then I got my doctor's bag, and looked at him carefully.

'What is it, Watson?' said Holmes.

'He's all right, I think,' I said. 'He's just very, very tired – and probably hungry too.'

Holmes looked in the man's pockets – and found a train ticket from Mackleton, in the north of England.

'Mackleton – that's a long way,' said Holmes. 'It's not twelve o'clock yet, so he probably left home before five o'clock this morning.'

After a minute or two the man began to move, and his eyes opened. A second later he got quickly to his feet. His face was now red and unhappy.

'Mr Holmes, I am so sorry! I forgot to eat or drink anything this morning – that's why I felt ill.'

'When you feel better—' I began.

'I'm better now, thank you,' said our visitor. 'And I want very much to talk to Mr Holmes – to ask him something. Please, Mr Holmes, come back to Mackleton with me by the next train.'

'I'm sorry, that's not possible,' said Holmes. 'I'm working on two important cases – the Ferrers case and the Abergavenny case. I cannot leave London at the moment.'

'Important cases!' our visitor cried. 'But this case is very important too. You know about the kidnapping of the son of the Duke of Holderness three days ago . . .'

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*Sherlock Holmes has a visitor*

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‘What! The Government Minister?’

‘Yes, that’s him. So you didn’t know . . . It’s not in the newspapers yet, that’s true. But Sherlock Holmes always hears news before other people, I thought.’

Holmes went to get one of his books, and began to read the page about the Duke of Holderness.



*Holmes began to read the page about the Duke of Holderness.*

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*Sherlock Holmes and the Duke's Son*

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‘Holderness, sixth Duke. Wife: Edith, daughter of Lord Grey. One child, Lord Arthur Saltire. Houses in London, Lancashire, and Wales. Government Minister for this . . . for that . . . for the other . . . Well, well,’ said Holmes. ‘He’s one of the greatest men in the country.’

‘One of the greatest, and one of the richest,’ said Dr Huxtable. ‘I know, Mr Holmes, that you don’t work for money, but I must tell you this. The Duke is offering five thousand pounds for news of his son, and another one thousand pounds for the name of his kidnapper.’

‘That,’ said Holmes, ‘is a most interesting offer.’ He looked at me. ‘Watson, I think we are going with Dr Huxtable back to the north of England this afternoon.’

Holmes then looked at Dr Huxtable. ‘Now, sir, tell me everything. What happened? When did it happen? How did it happen? And why does Dr Thorneycroft Huxtable come to ask for my help *three days later*?’

Our visitor drank some water, and began his story.

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