## DEATH IN THE NIGHT

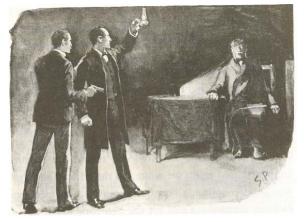
That night we \_\_\_\_\_\_ (go) back to the house. When we \_\_\_\_\_\_ (see) Helen Stoner's light, Holmes and I \_\_\_\_\_\_ (get) in quietly *through* the window. Then we \_\_\_\_\_\_ (wait) silently in the *middle* bedroom in the dark. We waited *for* three hours and \_\_\_\_\_\_ (move, not). Suddenly we saw a light and \_\_\_\_\_\_ (hear) a sound from Dr Roylott's room. But nothing \_\_\_\_\_\_ (happen), and again we waited in the dark. Then there \_\_\_\_\_\_ (is) another sound, a very quiet sound. . . Immediately Holmes \_\_\_\_\_\_ (jump) up and \_\_\_\_\_\_ (hit) the bell-rope hard.

'Can you see it, Watson?' he\_\_\_\_\_\_ (shout). But I saw nothing. There was a quiet whistle. **We both** \_\_\_\_\_\_ (look up) at the *air-vent*, and suddenly we heard a **terrible cry** in the next room. **Then** the house was **silent** again.

'What\_\_\_\_\_\_ (mean)?' I asked. My **voice** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (shake). 'It \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (finish),' answered Holmes. 'Let's go and see.' We went into Dr Roylott's room. The **metal box** was open. Roylott \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (sit) on a chair, and his eyes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (is) **fixed on** the air-vent. **Round** his head was a **strange**, yellow speckled band. He **was dead**.

'The **band**! The **speckled** band!' \_\_\_\_\_ (say) Holmes very quietly. The band \_\_\_\_\_ (move) and \_\_\_\_\_ (begin) to turn its head. 'Be **careful**, Watson! It's a **snake**, an Indian snake - and its **poison** can \_\_\_\_\_ (kill) very **quickly**,' Holmes \_\_\_\_\_ (cry). 'Roylott \_\_\_\_\_ (die) immediately. We must \_\_\_\_\_ (put) the snake back in its box.' Very, very **carefully**, Holmes \_\_\_\_\_ (take) the snake and \_\_\_\_\_ (throw) it into the metal box.

'But how \_\_\_\_\_ (know, you) about the snake, Holmes?' I\_\_\_\_\_ (ask).



'At first, Watson, I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (think) that it \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (is) the **gypsies**. But then I\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (understand). I thought that **perhaps** something \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (come) through the air-vent, down the **bell-rope** and **onto** the bed. **Then** there was the milk - and **of course**, snakes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (drink) milk. It was easy *for* the Doctor to get Indian animals. And because he was a doctor, he \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (know) that this snake's poison is **difficult to find** in a dead body. So every night he \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (put) the snake through the air-vent, and it went down the bell-rope onto the bed. **Of course**, nobody must see the snake, so every night he \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (whistle) to **call it back**. The sound of metal **falling** was the door of the metal box, which was the snake's home. **Perhaps** the snake came through the air-vent **many times** before it \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (kill) Julia. But **in the end** it killed her. And Helen, too, nearly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (die) **because of** this snake.

'But **tonight**, when I \_\_\_\_\_\_ (hit) the snake on the rope, it \_\_\_\_\_\_ (is) angry and \_\_\_\_\_\_ (go) back through the air-vent. And so it killed the Doctor. I \_\_\_\_\_\_ (sorry, not) about that.'

**Soon after this** Helen Stoner \_\_\_\_\_\_ (marry) her young man and \_\_\_\_\_\_ (try) to forget the terrible deaths of her sister and **stepfather**. But she never really \_\_\_\_\_\_ (forget) the speckled band.