Silver Blaze
Silver Blaze

The Facts of the Case

• The horse Silver Blaze, the favorite for a race was missing, and its trainer murdered.

• One night, as usual, the horse had been locked up in the stable.

• The trainer who lived nearby had retired for the day.

• His maid carried dinner of curried mutton to the stable, for a servant lad who slept there.

• Fitzroy Simpson, a young man looking for a tip to place his bets on the right horse, approached the stable, only to be chased away by the lad.

• On hearing the story later from the maid, the trainer was upset and went out to the stable to check on the horse.

• He never returned home.
The Facts of the Case

• The next morning, the stable door was open, and the lad found in a drugged sleep.

• At a distance was the trainer's body, the head shattered from a blow.

• He held a small knife in one hand, and a cravat in another.

• Simpson had been seen wearing that cravat the night before.

• Suspicion naturally led to Simpson.
Silver Blaze

Police Investigation

• Police enquiry showed that he had squandered a fortune on the turf.

• He had placed large bets against Silver Blaze.

• He was unable to explain the presence of his cravat in the hands of the murdered man.

• His clothes showed he had been out in the rain at night.

• He possessed a heavy stick, which could have dealt the blow that killed the trainer.
Silver Blaze

The Conclusion of the Police

• The police inspector concluded that having drugged the lad's food through the stable window, Simpson obtained a duplicate key to the stable, and stole the horse.

• Then he was confronted by the trainer whom he struck with the stick.

• Simpson had the motive, he was in the proximity of the crime, he had a weapon, and his scarf had been found with the trainer.
Unanswered Questions

• If all that Simpson wanted was to hurt the horse, he did not need to take it out of the stable.

• How could he get a duplicate key, and why was it not found in his possession?

• Which chemist sold him the opium that was added to the curry?

• How could he know that curry, which would disguise the taste of opium, be prepared for dinner that night?

• How did he drug the food?

• Where was the stolen horse?
Silver Blaze

Sherlock Holmes’ Discoveries

• Holmes was not satisfied with the loose ends. He investigated independently.

• In the trainer's pocket was a milliner's bill for an expensive dress, purchased under a different name.

• The trainer’s wife did not possess that dress.

• A surgical knife was found near the scene of crime. Some delicate operation must have been planned.

• The stable dog had not barked.

• Some sheep in the paddock nearby had suddenly gone lame.
Silver Blaze

Holmes’ Conclusions

• The bill for the dress meant that the trainer had a mistress, extra expenditure, and a motive to influence the race unfairly.

• He was the one person who could know that a spicy dish was on the menu that night, and add opium to it.

• The dog did not bark because there was no stranger that night. It was only the trainer.

• The man had bet against the horse, and so wanted to hurt it and influence the race.

• The knife he had was meant to carry out a delicate cut in the horse’s leg. He had practised the operation before on the sheep.

• On the night of the crime, the horse kicked and killed its trainer in fear and bolted.

• Holmes finds Silver Blaze in a neighboring stable, painted to disguise its identity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Police</th>
<th>Sherlock Holmes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Look at the evidence there is</td>
<td>Looks at what is, and also notices what is absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go by physical evidence</td>
<td>Uses imagination and intuition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quick to come to a conclusion</td>
<td>Refuses to be satisfied with a partial explanation</td>
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<tr>
<td>What does not fit within the conceptual framework is conveniently left alone</td>
<td>Every minute detail has to be reconciled</td>
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