The Hound of the Baskervilles.

Chapters 1-x.

Summary.

Chapter 1.

As the narration begins we can see Sherlock Holmes having breakfast. Meanwhile, his friend Dr. Watson examines a cane that was left behind by their visitor the night before. As Holmes notices his friend’s interest of the cane he inquires Watson of his inferences about it and its owner. After the inference is heard, Holmes claims Watson to be a little bit erroneous and makes his own. And yet Holmes appears to be not completely precise in the end and the visitor’s request remains unclear because he has left no notion of his errand. The mystery reveals after the owner of the cane has appeared.

The man turns out to be Mr. James Mortimer who is a former consulting practitioner at Charing Cross Hospital and owner of a curly-haired spaniel. He left the hospital due to the occasion of his marriage. James Mortimer is a very tall, thin man with a nose like a beak. Though young, his long back was already bowed. He was happy to find the cane he thought had been lost.

Chapter 2.

James Mortimer brings an old manuscript along. It was committed to his care by Sir Charles Baskerville before his death. Mr. Mortimer used to be his friend and medical attendant. The manuscript contains a tale of the origin of the Hound of Baskervilles. It says there once was the foulest man called Hugo Baskerville. The man came to fall in love with the daughter of the yeoman who held lands near the Baskerville estate. But the maiden would ever avoid him, for she feared his evil name.

One night, when the maiden’s father and brothers were away, Hugo and his friends kidnapped her. Later the lass managed to escape as Hugo and his lads were carousing. Once the fact of her escape was revealed Hugo became furious and swore that he would give his body and soul to the Powers of Evil, if he could capture the girl. Hugo then began the hunt astride his horse along his hounds. Hugo and the maiden’s bodies were found together along with a huge dog-like monster, plucking at Hugo’s throat, that night.

After the story we get to know that Charles wanted to restore Baskervilles’ grandeur. Sadly, his health had been impaired for some time. He also had a habit of walking down the famous yew alley of Baskerville Hall every night before going to bed. One night he never returned. That night Barrymores, the Hall’s staff, came alarmed when they noticed the hall’s door still open and went out to look for their master. His body was found a bit further from the moor gate. A cardiac exhaustion was stated as the public death cause due to the absence of any traces of violence.

However, one evening when James Mortimer was driving to the Baskerville Hall he saw Sir Baskerville at the gate. After James had stopped and came to Charles he noticed his friend looking behind him with an expression of the most dreadful fear. When James whisked round he saw a glimpse of something that looked like a black calf. He investigated the place where it had been spotted, but the creature was gone forever. James withheld it during the judicial interrogation. Then he tells Holmes that he found unnoticed footprints of a gigantic hound a bit further from Charles’ body.

Chapter 3.

After the announcement Holmes asks Mortimer about details of the place where Charles’ body was found. In the end of their conversation James wants Holmes to advise him whether he should bring Charles’ heir, his brother’s son Henry Baskerville who has recently returned from Canada, to the Baskerville Hall. He is afraid of Henry sharing Charles’ fate. He believes the tragedy to have the supernatural origin. Yet Holmes advises to tell Henry nothing. Then he makes an appointment for next morning and asks Mortimer to bring the heir along. After Mortimer left to meet Henry at Waterloo station, Holmes asks Watson to leave so he can make up his mind in seclusion and solitude. Watson returns in the evening. He and Holmes discuss the case, Devonshire landscape features in particular, make some deductions, then postpone the rest until the morning appointment.