

Task: write an alternative ending to the story. Your characters, setting and plot should remain true to the storyline apart from the last couple of chapters. You may not introduce new characters. Year 9 student name withheld.

Bibliography: Doyle, A C 2003, The Hound of the Baskervilles, Usborne Publishing Ltd, England.

The Hound of the BASKERVILLES

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

‘There! Watson! The Hound!’ Holmes exclaimed as we both instinctively reached for our revolvers. I had never seen anything like it in my life. This hound of the Baskervilles sure seemed like a creature straight from the depths of Hell. Its coat glowed an eerie white and all the pores of its body seemed to have fire sprouting from them. It was bigger than I had imagined and its hellish appearance further paralysed me. I desperately squeezed my trigger, managing to get four shots off at the massive beast but it kept charging towards a petrified Sir Henry. Holmes shrieked in horror as the fiend pounced upon the man we were sworn to protect. I emptied my revolver into the creature’s side, Holmes did the same. It let out an ear-piercing howl just as it hit to ground. The creature was down, however, so was Sir Henry. We rushed over to the two bodies.

I sighed helplessly as I saw the former Lord Baskerville lying motionless on the floor. Holmes bent over and inspected his body.

‘A pulse! A pulse Watson! Quick, fetch the Doctor!’ He excitedly yelled.

I took to my heels without a moment’s hesitation, this could be our last chance. As I ran, I could hear the warnings of Holmes’ voice echoing in my head, “Never let any harm of any sort befall Sir Henry”.

I finally made it back to the Baskerville residence, my heart pounding like a sprinter’s after a dash. I found Doctor Mortimer finishing the last of his supper.

“By St. George, Watson, you looked like you have seen a ghost. Whatever is the matter?” he asked.

Through my relentless panting, I managed to utter one word, ‘Henry’. His eyes widened, and his mouth was agape, resembling a fish out of water. He returned to his senses and rushed over to me, still chewing his food. We left immediately, sprinting as hard as we could. Every step was like a second closer to Sir Henry’s death. After what seemed to be an eternity of endless running, we reached the Stapleton’s house. I could see Lestrade trying to revive our friend.

Fearing the worst, I hurriedly pointed Mortimer in the direction of the scene, though this was not necessary, the good doctor was already dashing towards him. Soon his examination was complete and the three of us looked on anxiously. A cold, fearful shiver ran down my spine as I imagined the thought

of losing Lord Baskerville.

“He’s going to make it.” he breathed.

My heart almost skipped a beat. I was overjoyed to hear the news!

Holmes interrupted. “Stapleton’s still out there, we have to find him. He probably would have run when he heard the shots, so we will have to search for him tomorrow, when the fog clears.”

Lestrade made a quick scan of the house, just to make sure.

“Na’ lad, he ain’t in there.” He said as he emerged from the cottage.

Sir Henry was still unconscious, so we carried him back to Baskerville Hall, where Dr. Mortimer cleaned his wounds before laying him down on his bed. Holmes and Lestrade retired to their quarters but I remained watching over Sir Baskerville. I reflected upon my carelessness and how just by the narrowest margins, I had nearly failed my mission. Soon however, I drifted off to sleep.

When the next morning began, it felt like a great and terrible nightmare was over. Looking around the room, I noticed that Sir Henry’s bed was empty. A great feeling of relief overcame my guilt. As I strolled downstairs, I could see Holmes and Lestrade putting on their coats and hunting hats. I asked Dr. Mortimer of Sir Henry’s condition.

“He’s alright my dear fellow, in fact, he just went for a walk around the grounds!”

Comforted, I eagerly joined Holmes to begin the hunt for this vile Stapleton.

“Coming to join us Watson?” Holmes asked.

“Yes, I think I will.” I replied.

We took a cart over to the Stapleton’s and began the search without delay. It was not long before we picked up a distinct set of footsteps. His feet left obvious impressions in the muddy ground. We tracked them to the deadly Grimpen Mire.

“No way he’d ave gotten through’at in the fog last night.” Lestrade commented.

I nodded in agreement.

“We best make sure though, just in case.” Holmes said.

There were markers that showed the correct route to travel, so we carefully made our way through the foul marshlands. Before long, we came across a rundown shack in the middle of the Grimpen Mire. As we ventured in, a polluting stench filled my nostrils. It was very noticeable that a large dog was kept here. There were a few bones here and there, a collar and chain in the corner and dog litter everywhere.

