

The Adventure of the Dancing Men

The Adventure of the Dancing Men is one of the 56 Sherlock Holmes short stories written by British author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. It is one of 13 stories in the cycle collected as *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*.

The story begins when Hilton Cubitt asks Holmes to help him. His wife, Elsie, who is American, received a letter from the United States, which she threw the letter to the fire unopened. Then, some drawings of dancing men appeared scrawled in chalk on a windowsill and afterwards on a piece of paper. Each time Elsie sees these drawings, she seems terrified, but she will not tell her husband what is going on.

Holmes tells Cubitt that he wants to see every occurrence of the dancing men. They are to be copied down and brought or sent to him at 221B Baker Street. Cubitt does this, and it provides Holmes with the most important clue in the mystery.

As Sherlock deciphers the messages, he suddenly realises that the Cubitts are in danger so he rushes to their house. There, he finds Mr Cubitt has been shot dead and his wife is in critical condition after having been shot as well.

Watch the video and answer the following questions:

1. Who is Abe Slaney?
a. a dangerous man b. a policeman c. a politician from Chicago
2. The servants say that they could smell the gunpowder upstairs while the shooting took place downstairs. How do you think this is possible?
3. Why does Holmes suggest that the window was open only for a short time? Notice the screen carefully to understand how he came to this conclusion.
4. Why does Holmes say that the servants were telling the truth and lying without realising it?
5. Who did Mrs Cubitt shoot?
a. her husband b. another man c. herself
6. What is the most common letter in the English language?
a. A b. E c. I
7. How did Holmes manage to decipher the messages?
8. Who invented the dancing men?
a. Elsie b. Abe Slaney c. Elsie's father

