

In the small town of Little Haven, life is tranquil. Or at least it was until last Saturday morning when something quite extraordinary took place. Up until then, the only crime committed in Little Haven in the last two years was by Farmer Roberts, who waved his cane at children who squashed his garden plants. That was nothing compared to what I am about to share with you. It was a crime that shook the town and all its inhabitants. None more so than Lord Smythe, the intended victim.

Prior to his retirement (two years ago), Lord Smythe owned the local flour mill. The production of flour had made him a very wealthy man. On his 60th birthday, he sold his mill to a businessman, who turned it into a museum. Lord Smythe now lives alone (except for a housekeeper) in an enormous mansion on the outskirts of Little Haven. He was always well-liked by locals but nowadays chooses to live a life in solitude.

On Saturday morning, Lord Smythe sat at his large dining table and awaited his breakfast. Mrs Cotton, his housekeeper, brought to him his daily newspaper and post. The first letter he opened was a gas bill, but it was the second letter that is the subject of his shocking case.

Lord Smythe was so shocked by the contents of the letter that it took four cups of tea to calm him down. He took the threat in the letter very seriously and knew that he could not call the police. Instead, he called a man he had read about in the national newspaper. A man who had recently solved a case in London involving a poisoned letter. A man who would be perfect for the job...Sherlock Holmes.



Exhibit A - The ransom note (received Saturday 1st December at approximately 9:30am)

D e a r L O R d

S m Y t h e ,

I k N O w y O u R

S E c R e t . I t W I L L

c O s t y o u £ 5 0 0 , 0 0 0

t o k E e p I t A

s E c r e T . P u t t h e

m O N e y I n t o A

S E a L E D b A g A N D

I E A V e I T I n t h E

b i N N e x t T O t h e

B e N C h O n P a r k

S u r E E T a T 8 P m O N

S u n D a y N I G H t . I f

Y o u c A I L t H E

P o l i C e , y o u R

s e c r e t I s o u T !

A N O N Y m o u s

Exhibit B - Telephone conversation transcript (Saturday 1st December 2018 at 9:56am)

Lord Smythe – Hello, could I please speak to a Mr Sherlock Holmes?

Sherlock Holmes – Speaking. Though it is very early in the morning, who is this?

Smythe – I do apologise but this is an emergency. My name is Smythe. Lord Horatio Smythe, and I suspect that you're the only person who can help me.

Holmes – Why so? Have you contacted the police?

Smythe – I can't! (a short silence) If I call the police, my secret will be out for all the town to hear and I can't risk that Mr Holmes.

Holmes – I see. Then how may I help you?

Smythe – I've just received a letter in the post. A terrible letter, Mr Holmes. Someone saying they know my secret and they've asked for £500,000 by Sunday night and...

Holmes – (interrupting) Are you the only person who has touched the letter?

Smythe – Of course! Well, not quite. My housekeeper, Mrs Cotton, brought the letter to me this morning and I assume the postman must have touched it too.

Holmes – I see. Well, I shall need to examine it so don't allow anyone else to handle it. Whereabouts do you live?

Smythe – Wellington Manor, on Forest Lane, just outside Little Haven.

Holmes – Ah! That's not too far away. I can be there within the hour. My good friend, Dr Watson, will accompany me.

Smythe – Oh thank you! Do hurry! I don't feel safe at all.

Holmes – We shall see you very soon. Goodbye Lord Smythe.

Smythe – Goodbye Mr Holmes. (line ends)

Call duration – 2:01 minutes.

Exhibit B – Transcript of Interview with Lord Smythe (Saturday 1st December 2018 at 11:06am)

Those present – Lord Smythe (interviewee)
- Sherlock Holmes (Interviewer)
- Dr John Watson (independent witness)

Holmes – Lord Smythe, explain to me what happened this morning.

Smythe – As I told you on the telephone, my housekeeper brought the newspaper and post to me, as she always does. I opened a gas bill and then opened the letter.

Holmes – I must ask you, what is the secret that is mentioned in the letter?

Smythe – Oh, Mr Holmes! It's awful and I'm so ashamed of it. You see, I sold my mill two years ago. (long pause)

Holmes – Do go on.

Smythe – Well, I sold it to make a profit.

Holmes – I see. But, why would this be a problem?

Smythe – People relied on that mill Mr Holmes, and not just for flour. The water mill could generate electricity and a few of the larger buildings nearby got their electricity from it. It was cheaper, you see.

Holmes – I see. But, regardless of whether you were doing it for profit or not, you were still selling the mill. Surely people must still have been disappointed?

Smythe – Not quite. You see, I told them that the businessman I was selling it to was going to keep the mill going. Only...

Holmes – Go on.

Smythe – I knew he wasn't going to keep it going. I knew he wanted to turn the place into a museum. If the town had known, they'd have never allowed me to sell the mill. There would have been protests; a court case; complaints in the local newspaper... I couldn't have that Mr Holmes.

Holmes – Then the most likely suspect must surely be the new owner of the mill. The businessman who you sold it to.

Smythe – No, Mr Holmes. That man died only a year after buying the mill. It was bought again by another family, who keep the museum going. So, you see? No one knows about my secret. The businessman was the only person who knew and he died, having no family to share the secret with. I've managed to keep it a secret for the last two years.

Holmes – Well, clearly not because someone else knows about it.

Smythe – But how? I don't really speak to anyone, and certainly not about that.

Holmes – It doesn't matter. Anyone can go to the local records office and see the contract you made with the businessman when you sold the mill. The contract would also state how much money you sold the mill for.

Smythe – Oh but Holmes who on earth would have the sense to do such a thing?!

Holmes – Someone who relied on the mill and was unhappy about the mill being turned into a museum. Tell me, who relied on your mill? I want their names.

Smythe – Well, let me see. (pause) There's: Cobs & Cakes, a bakery run by Mr Primrose; the school, St Agatha's, run by Mrs Cobalt; the village hall, run by Mr Sage; the local theatre, run by Miss Claret; and Professor Lavender's manor house, just on the other side of the river.

Holmes – Then one of these people knows your secret Lord Smythe. I need to get these people together and I need your help. You've already said you can't go to the police and if you do, your secret will be revealed. Therefore, I can't question them at a police station. I can, however, speak to them at your home.

Smythe – Oh no! No, no, no. If you question them, the culprit will know I've spoken to someone about the letter.

Holmes – I have no intention of interviewing them. I'd like you to invite them all to your house for dinner tomorrow. Tell them you have a friend who wants to spend money on the town and need their help to decide upon where the money is most needed. Money is a very powerful thing Lord Smythe, as you well know. They will most certainly come if they feel they are going to be rewarded in some way.

Smythe – But I have no such friend.

Holmes – You don't understand. I will be that friend. I will be a guest at the dinner and if people think I'm offering the village money, they will speak freely about why they need it.

Smythe – Genius! Very well. I shall ask Mrs Cotton to call them.

Holmes – I'd like her to be present for the meal too.

Smythe – What on earth for? She finishes work at 6pm.

Holmes – Because, Lord Smythe, she has been your housekeeper for a number of years. She could have seen documents or heard phone calls between you and the businessman. Therefore, she is also a suspect.

Smythe – (sighs) Very well. I shall ask her to stay for the meal.

Holmes – Perfect. You must, during the evening, pretend that I am a dear friend of yours. If the writer of the letter suspects that I am investigating your case, they may not show up for the ransom.

Smythe – What ransom? I've no intention of paying anybody!

Holmes – Yes, but the person who sent the letter doesn't know that. I shall scrutinise the guests at the dinner party to try to determine who the culprit is. Meanwhile, Dr Watson will pretend to be your butler. Your housekeeper will be told that you hired him for the evening. He will take their coats and bags as they arrive.

Watson – Yes. And if the guests have anything of interest in their person, I shall report that to my dear friend.

Smythe – Oh I do hope you find something of use without getting caught.

Watson – I assure you, I am quite discrete. I am also hoping that the guests will arrive with their mobile phones. I should hopefully be able to retrieve their text messages to see if there is anything of interest to us.

Smyth – Oh I do hope there is! Though I can't imagine the culprit would talk to anyone about their plans, would they?

Holmes – Perhaps not. But there may be other revealing clues. Anyway, we shall see you tomorrow evening before the dinner, which must begin at 6pm sharp.

Smythe – But Holmes, if we start at 6 then the dinner will finish close to 8 o'clock. The culprit is expecting to pick up the ransom money at that time.

Holmes – Precisely. This person, of course, will want to leave the dinner party in good time. Your home is a 10 minute walk away from the place where the ransom money is to be collected, so the culprit must leave before 8pm to make it in time.

Smythe – I knew there was a reason why I called you Holmes! What a marvelous plan!

Holmes – Then we shall see you tomorrow, Lord Smythe. Good afternoon.

Interview terminated at 11:23am.

EXAMINATION REPORT

Item examined: *Ransom letter and envelope*

Analysis carried out by: *Dr. John Watson*

Date: *Saturday 1st December 2018*

Results:

The note is written on white writing paper that can be found in any printing or stationery shop. The letters have been cut from magazines and glued on with thin glue.

Upon closer inspection, a small hair was found trapped just underneath one of the letters. The hair is white and does not appear to be human.

The letter has been dusted for fingerprints and the only prints on the letter itself belonged to Lord Smythe.

The envelope is white, with a first-class stamp in the top right corner. The date stamp on the envelope shows that it was posted on Wednesday 28th November, just four days before Lord Smythe received it. Strangely, the envelope has a slight scent of mint.

The address written on the front of the envelope has been typed on a computer and stuck on with thin glue.

The envelope was dusted for fingerprints and contained three sets of prints. One belonging to Lord Smythe and the other two are unknown. It is assumed at this stage that the other prints belong to Mrs Cotton and the postman.



Background Information - Suspect 1 - Miss Claret

Miss Claret, aged 37, has been working at 'Palace Theatre' for the past 20 years. At first, she was an aspiring actress, with dreams of making it to Hollywood. But after several poor reviews, she was no longer chosen for acting roles. Instead, she worked behind the scenes, before eventually taking over as manager of the theatre. She regularly holds productions, but they are often poorly attended by locals. Over the last two years, prices for tickets to her performances have steadily decreased.

Other information – She has no criminal record.

Her theatre relied on electricity from the mill.



Background Information - Suspect 2 – Mrs Cotton

Mrs Cotton, aged 65, has been working as a housekeeper for Lord Smythe for the last 9 years. Her role involves cleaning; cooking all meals; delivering post regularly; and serving any guests who visit. She is widowed, as her husband died 9 years ago, and she has two older sons, who both live abroad. In her younger days, she was a ballet dancer for The Royal Ballet.

Other information - She has no criminal record.

Her husband worked at the mill before he died.

Mrs Cotton is highly trusted by Lord Smythe.



Background Information - Suspect 3 – Ms Cobalt

Ms Cobalt, aged 54, has been headteacher at St Agatha's School for the past 20 years. She is known for being strict but devoted to her students. In recent years, she has campaigned for better funding for schools and appeared in the local newspaper for one of her protests last month. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her three cats – Tiddles, Mittens and Buttons. She is unmarried and has no children.

Other information – She was arrested at age 19 for causing a riot at her college.

St Agatha's School relied on electricity from the mill.

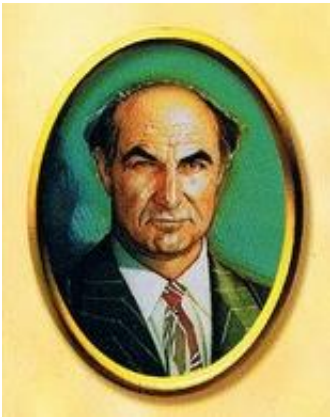


Background Information - Suspect 4 – Professor Lavender

Professor Lavender, aged 42, is a scientist who, for many years, worked at the Scientific Centre of Research in London. Four years ago, he was sacked from his job because his bosses felt he had wasted money on his bizarre research project into whether plants have feelings. Since then, he has worked from home, trying to fund his own research. He is a recluse and lives alone with his two hamsters – Darwin and Galileo.

Other information – He was charged with wasting public funds 4 years ago and was ordered to serve 2 months in prison.

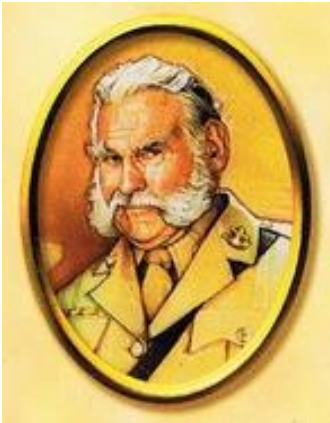
His manor house relied on electricity from the mill.



Background Information - Suspect 5 – Mr Sage

Mr Sage, aged 52, has worked as director of the local village hall for the past 13 years. He regularly holds charity events to bring the community together. For the past 6 months, he has attempted to raise funds to replace the roof of the village hall by holding sponsored events and hosting cake sales. However, he is yet to raise the required amount. He lives with his wife, Olive, and their pet dog Emerald. He also has a daughter who lives with her family in the next village.

Other information – He was arrested for theft at the age of 20.
His village hall relied on electricity from the mill.



Background Information - Suspect 6 – Mr Primrose

Mr Sage, aged 60, has worked as a baker at the local bakery, Cobs & Cakes, for the last 35 years. He lives with his wife Mary and their dog Rosy. He has three adult children who live in London. His bakery had been very successful for many years but, for the past 18 months, his cakes and breads have steadily been seen to be sold at discounted prices. There have been rumours for years that the bakery will soon have to close.

Other information – He has no criminal record.
His bakery relied on flour production.

Exhibit E - Photographs of the suspects' belongings, taken from coats and bags

Mr Primrose



Mr Sage



C & J Building Contractors Ltd.
46 Church Way
Little Haven
L16 – 4BA

26th November 2018

Dear Mr Sage,

Thank you for recently contacting us about the roof of the village hall. After much consideration, we have decided to drop the price of the original quote that we gave you. The new cost of repairs will be £10,000, instead of £15,000. We hope that you are happy with the new quote and will choose us to do the repair work that you need.

Kind regards

Mr Clive Hill
Director of C & J Contractors Ltd.

Professor Lavender



Miss Claret



Austrian Airlines	Sun, 25 Nov 2018 STN 20:00 London	23h 45m 1 STOP	14:45 +1 JFK New York
Austrian Airlines	Wed, 28 Nov 2018 JFK 18:00 New York	22h 25m 1 STOP	21:25 +1 LHR London

[See details](#) [+5 more](#) [Traveasy 302 GBP](#) [TravelCenteruk 278 GBP](#) [WorldAirFares 266 GBP](#)



CASTING CALL

20TH CENTURY FOX
DIRECTED BY **STEVEN SPIELBERG**
ADAPTED BY **TONY KUSHNER**

SEARCHING FOR TONY, MARIA, ANITA & BERNARDO

- TONY is CAUCASIAN • MARIA & ANITA are LATINA • BERNARDO is LATINO
- SHOULD BE BETWEEN 21 - 35
- MUST BE ABLE TO SING
- DANCE EXPERIENCE A PLUS

WEST SIDE STORY

To submit,
please email a photo & video of yourself singing to
westsidestorycastingsearch@gmail.com

Ms Cobalt



*Little Haven
News*
07777555001



Mrs Cotton



Exhibit F - Last text messages on suspects' phones.

Mr Sage

Miss Claret

 **Contractors** 



Wed, 28 Nov, 12:21 PM



Thank you for the letter. I'm must happier with the new quote for the roof repairs. I still don't have £10,000 so can I pay you in installments?

I don't normally do this but as you've done so much for the town with your charity events I'll make an exception.

Oh thank you! How does £1000 a month sound?

That would be perfect. Come into the office tomorrow at 9am and we'll draw up a contract.

 iMessage 

 **Austrian Air** 

Wed, 28 Nov, 08:06 AM

Confirmation of your flight today from New York JFK to London Heathrow. Flight time 18:00.



 iMessage 

Exhibit F (continued) - Last text messages on suspects' phones.

Professor Lavender

 **Mum** 

Wed, 28 Nov, 11:00 AM

Hi love. Are you coming over for tea? It would be lovely to see you.

Sorry Mum. I'm working on a very important project.

Oh darling! You're always working. You haven't left your house in months. It's not good for you.



I'm on the verge of a breakthrough in my research. I'm sorry.

If you have extra food, feel free to send some over.

Mum?

 iMessage 

Ms Cobalt

 **Lillian** 

Wed, 28 Nov, 12:21 PM

This is all very dangerous.

You must keep your cool Lillian. If this pays off we will have the money that we need!

But what if people find out? They won't be happy to know that the headmistress has been to the newspaper about something like this.

Nonsense! People need to know the council spent more money on Christmas decorations than on schools. Besides no one will know it was me at the records office.

Well, there was one person from the village there too but they didn't see me. I wonder what they were doing...



 Text Message 

Exhibit F (continued) - Last text messages on suspects' phones.

Mr Primrose

Mrs Cotton does not own a phone

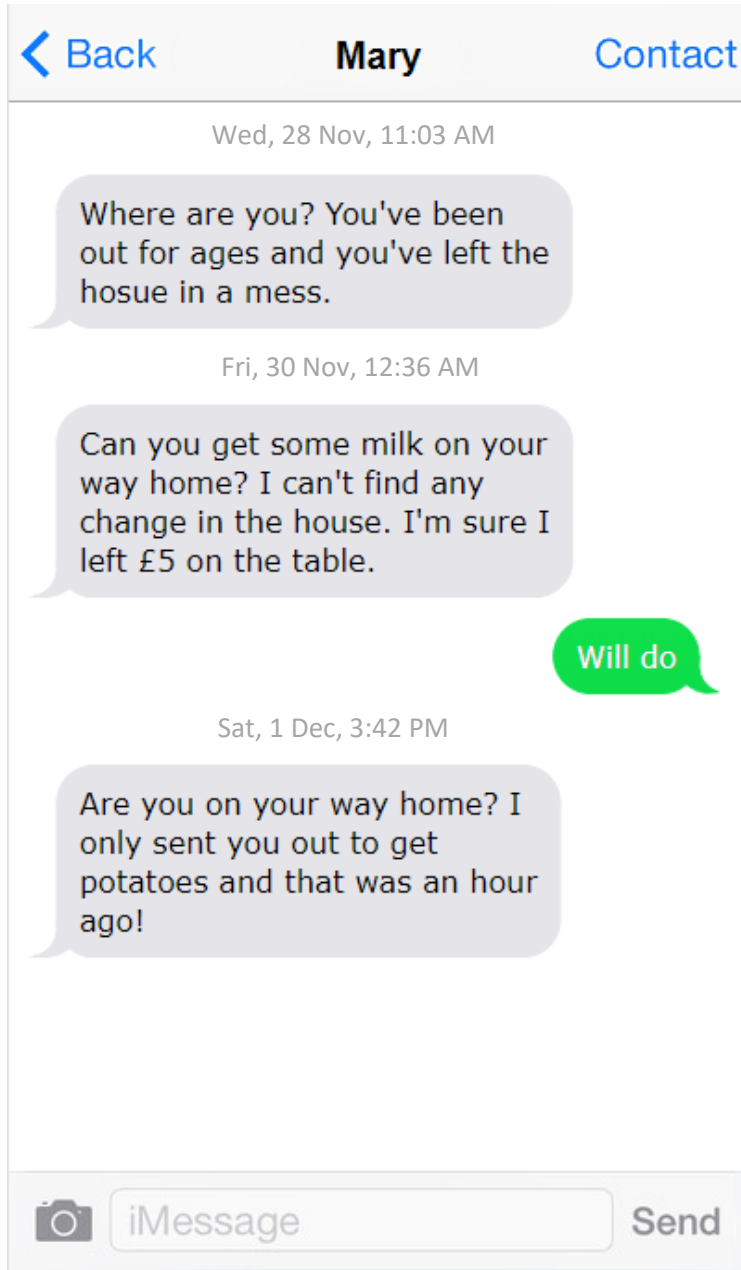








Exhibit G - Dr Watson's notes taken during the meal (Sunday 2nd December 2018).

Suspect	Arrival Time	Demeanor	Key question 1 - Do you have any pets?	Key question 2 - How has life been since the mill closed?	Other information	Time left the meal
Miss Claret 	6:01pm	Calm Greeted Smythe with a smile	Revealed she is allergic to cats so keeps no pets.	Explained that electricity price from her new supplier is high. Her productions are still going but she is having to drop prices because 'people don't appreciate art'.	Sat next to Mrs Cobalt. Sneezed a lot. Mrs Cotton offered her a balsam tissue. Mentioned she had recently returned from New York. Claimed she was offered an acting role but turned it down. Why?	7:27pm Warm goodbye to Smythe. Still sneezing.
Ms Cobalt 	5:57pm	Cool. Smiled when greeted by Smythe but this appeared false. Wore leather gloves.	A white cat called Tiddles; a black cat called Mittens; a ginger cat called Buttons. She talked of them fondly.	Dominated conversation talking about how the rise in electricity prices since the mill closed has been devastating to her school budget.	Ate her meal with her gloves on. Seemed to stare at Mr Primrose a lot. Do they know each other well?	7:40pm One of the last to leave. Talked all the way to the door.
Mr Primrose 	6:03pm	Cool. A firm handshake with Smythe when he arrived. Chewing gum. Wore thick gloves.	A white and black Alsatian dog called Rosy who is very old and will soon need to be put down.	Spoke about how life is good. His cakes are selling well, and he has been unaffected. Ms Cobalt challenged him and asked why his cakes are always half price. His response was, 'I like to treat my customers.'	Seemed very jovial throughout the dinner. Very positive about his bakery. Why 'treat' his customers and lose money?	7:10pm Said he needed to leave promptly as his wife likes to know where he is and he

						has to walk his dog.
<p>Mrs Cotton</p> 	Already present	Looked out of place. Wanted to serve the guests drinks but was told to sit down.	No pets.	Explained that her husband worked in the mill before he died. Spoke about how much she loves her job.	Used to be a ballet dancer and gave her earnings to her two sons years ago so they could move abroad. Does she need the money?	7:45pm Was told to leave as she was not needed to clean up after the guests. She seemed sad about this.
<p>Mr Sage</p> 	6:03pm	Smiled at Smythe upon arrival Firm handshake.	A black Yorkshire Terrier dog called Emerald.	Explained that he needed funds for the church roof but 'it was all in hand'.	Wanted to leave promptly so he could watch Strictly Come Dancing with his wife. What did he mean by his statement?	7:20pm
<p>Professor Lavender</p> 	6:12pm	Looked awkward. Was late and arrived during the starters. Wore woolen gloves.	Two ginger hamsters - Galileo and Darwin.	Hardly spoke. He said it is difficult to find funding for his research but that he is on the verge of a breakthrough. Mr Primrose laughed at this.	Ate quickly. Chewed Polo mints after his dessert. Left very promptly as he wanted to get back to his research. Is it really so urgent?	6:58pm