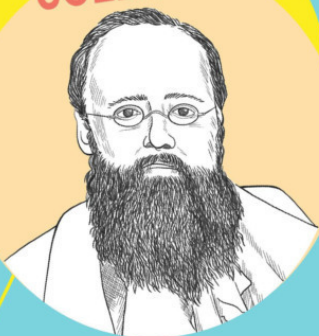


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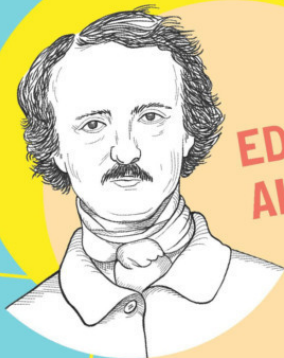
**AGATHA
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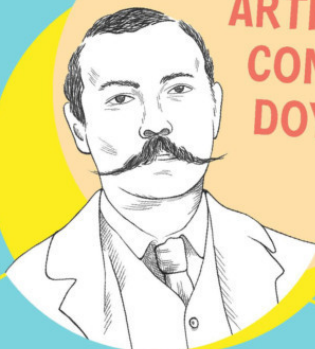
ПО СЛЕДАМ ДЕТЕКТИВОВ

Увлекательные истории
для изучения
английского языка

**EDGAR
ALLAN
POE**



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Роман с английским

Анжелика Ягудена

**По следам детективов:
увлекательные истории для
изучения английского языка**

«Феникс»

2024

УДК 811.111(075)

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Хотите развить понимание прочитанного, расширить словарный запас и прокачать коммуникативные навыки на английском языке? Вам поможет эта книга, рассказывающая о тайнах творческой и личной жизни легендарных писателей. С ней не придется монотонно заучивать материал. Можно совместить приятное с полезным: прикоснуться к жизни и творчеству гениев, а затем, вдохновившись, с удовольствием приступить к отработке основных навыков владения английским. Главной изюминкой книги являются детективные загадки на логику, для решения которых понадобится не просто понять смысл написанного, но также проанализировать все мотивы и факты, чтобы раскрыть запутанное дело. В конце издания есть переводы текстов и ключи к упражнениям, которые помогут проверить себя без помощи преподавателя.

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Анжелика Ягудена
По следам детективов: увлекательные
истории для изучения английского языка

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СЕРИЯ
«РОМАН С АНГЛИЙСКИМ»

Анжелика Ягудена

ПО СЛЕДАМ ДЕТЕКТИВОВ

Увлекательные истории
для изучения
английского языка

Ростов-на-Дону



2024

Introduction

Дорогие читатели, предлагаю вам окунуться в увлекательный мир тайн, загадок и расследований. Перед вами книга, которая познакомит вас с занимательными фактами биографии легендарных писателей детективного жанра и приоткроет завесу тайны над их творческой и личной жизнью. Если вы хотите почувствовать себя настоящим детективом, а заодно эффективно улучшить разговорные навыки английского языка и расширить свой словарный запас, то можно принять участие в расследовании запутанных преступлений. Подобно знаменитым сыщикам, чтобы выйти на след преступника, вы будете искать подозреваемых, проверять их алиби и собирать улики. Эта книга поможет не только узнать много нового о гениях детективного жанра, но также с помощью игровых методов увлекательно и интересно развить внимательность к деталям и логическое мышление. Вам не придется монотонно заучивать материал. Напротив, можно совместить приятное с полезным: прикоснуться к жизни и творчеству гениев, а затем, вдохновившись, с удовольствием приступить к отработке основных навыков владения английским языком. У вас также будет возможность обсудить книги, которые произвели на вас впечатление, и поделиться своими эмоциями.

Книга рассматривает интересные факты из жизни непревзойденных мастеров детективного жанра, таких как Артур Конан Дойл, Агата Кристи, Эдгар Аллан По, Жорж Сименон, Уилки Коллинз и Мэри Робертс Райнхарт. Все биографии сопровождаются актуальной лексикой и заданиями на понимание смысла прочитанного, расширение словарного запаса и развитие коммуникативных навыков. Главной изюминкой книги являются детективные загадки на логику, для решения которых понадобится не просто понять смысл написанного, но также проанализировать все мотивы и факты, чтобы раскрыть запутанное дело. В конце книги есть переводы (не дословные, но полно передающие смысл) текстов и ключи к упражнениям, которые помогут проверить себя без помощи преподавателя. Любители цитат и афоризмов оценят подборку мудрых высказываний великих писателей.

Многие задания этого издания посвящены обсуждению произведений. Чтобы поделиться своими впечатлениями или написать отзыв о прочитанной книге, ознакомьтесь с наиболее популярными и полезными выражениями.

- The book is narrated by... / История ведется от лица...
- The events take place in... / Действие книги происходит в...
- The main characters of the book are... / Главными героями книги являются...
- The book is titled... / Книга носит название...
- This book is a real page-turner! / От этой книги невозможно оторваться!
- This book is exactly what I've been looking for! / Это именно та книга, которую я искал!
- This book captured my imagination like nothing before. / Эта книга захватила мое воображение, как ни одна другая до этого.
- It kept me intrigued from start to end. / Эта книга интригует с первых страниц и до самого конца.
- The book is fast-paced. / Повествование в книге развивается стремительно.
- I really loved an unexpected twist in the story. / Мне безумно понравился неожиданный поворот сюжета.
- The book is worth reading. / Эту книгу стоит прочитать.
- The ending was a tear-jerker. / Концовка книги тронула меня до слез.
- The plot of the story is simple. / Сюжет книги незамысловат.
- informative – информативный, содержательный;
- thought-provoking – наводящий на размышления;
- breathtaking – захватывающий дух;

- **easy to read** – легкий для чтения;
- **amusing** – забавный;
- **exciting** – увлекательный;
- **boring** – скучный;
- **predictable** – предсказуемый;
- **hard to read** – сложный для чтения.

Для решения головоломок (brain-teasers) и раскрытия запутанных преступлений понадобятся следующие полезные слова и выражения.

● **Motive for the crime** – мотив преступления: She has no motive for the crime. У нее нет мотива преступления.

● **To commit a crime** – совершить преступление: I've figured out who committed a crime. Я выяснила, кто совершил преступление.

● **Crime scene** – место преступления: The police arrived at the crime scene. Полиция прибыла на место преступления.

● **To solve the crime** – раскрыть преступление: We have half an hour to solve the crime. У нас есть полчаса, чтобы раскрыть преступление.

● **To have an alibi** – иметь алиби: Each of them has an alibi. У каждого из них есть алиби.

● **To search for clues/evidence** – искать улики: I searched far and wide for clues. Я искала улики повсюду.

● **To interrogate** – проводить допрос, опрашивать: Detective Williams interrogated the suspects. Мистер Уильямс опросил всех подозреваемых.

● **The main suspect** – главный подозреваемый: Mr. Johnson is our main suspect. Мистер Джонсон – наш главный подозреваемый.

● **Disinterested party** – незаинтересованная сторона: Mr. Smith is a disinterested party. Мистер Смит – незаинтересованная сторона.

● **To be guilty/innocent** – быть виновным/невиновным: He is guilty. Он виновен.



Agatha Christie

(September 15, 1890 – January 12, 1976)

“Every family has a skeleton in the cupboard,” as the English say. This famous proverb means that everyone has their own secrets, hidden away from view. The unknown is always intriguing and beckoning. Anyway, we are eager to know the truth that others want to hide. That is how the world really works. Obviously, the secret lives of legendary people seem even more exciting and interesting. As for Agatha Christie, her life itself looked more like an action-packed detective story with an unpredictable ending.

Every school kid can tell you who Agatha Christie was, but not everyone knows her secrets. In fact, her life was filled with mysteries. Admirers of Christie’s talent are still puzzling over her mysterious disappearance that shocked the world. Just imagine: police are desperately searching for a missing woman who left her daughter with her nanny and vanished in suspicious circumstances. The next day, her car is found abandoned, about an hour’s drive from home. And what about the main character? She seems to have vanished into thin air, and nobody knows where to find her. Meanwhile, the missing woman is enjoying her stay at the hotel in Yorkshire. Does this episode ring a bell to you? It sounds like a plot of a mystery story, right? Yet, this is the real-life story of the iconic writer Agatha Christie. So, what happened back then? This chapter tells a fascinating story of a woman who became one of the greatest writers of all time, while also lifting the veil on her extremely private life. You’ll find out some lesser-known facts that will probably surprise you.

Agatha Christie is the unsurpassed “Queen of Crime” and one of the world’s best-selling novelists. Her books are outsold only by the Bible and the works of Shakespeare. In her career, Agatha Christie wrote sixty-six mystery novels under her own name and another six under the pen name Mary Westmacott. She also published a number of short story collections, numerous plays, and an autobiography. Among her most famous books are *Murder on the Orient Express*, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, *The ABC Murders*, *Death on the Nile*, and many others. And it’s no secret that Agatha created iconic characters – Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple.

Agatha Mary Clarissa Miller was born on September 15, 1890, in Torquay, a seaside town in south-western England. She was the youngest of three children born to Frederick and Clarissa Miller. Agatha had two older siblings named Margaret and Louis. Curiously, little Agatha never went to school and was educated at home. Since early childhood, she loved books, and by the age of five, she taught herself to read. Little Agatha had a rich imagination. As a child she invented imaginary friends and began writing poems. When she was eleven, her beloved father died of a heart attack. This terrible misfortune came out of the blue. In addition to financial hardships, Agatha had to become a support for her mom, who grieved the loss of her loved one. They managed to overcome all life’s challenges, and over time Agatha took piano and singing lessons. She could have become a great pianist, but her natural shyness and stage fright prevented her from pursuing a career in music.

It was in 1912, when Agatha met her first husband Archibald Christie, a military officer in the Royal Flying Corps. They got married two years later, on Christmas Eve 1914. With the outbreak of the First World War, the married couple was forced to live apart: Agatha remained in her hometown Torquay and worked as a nurse in a Red Cross hospital, while Archie went to France. Over time, Agatha became an assistant pharmacist in a hospital, where she learned much about poisons. It was precisely this fact that left an imprint on her work: poison is among fiction’s most popular murder weapons.

Her first novel *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, Agatha wrote in 1916 and dedicated it to her mother Clarissa. It introduced Hercule Poirot, the eccentric and brilliant detective. However, the journey to publishing this book was a long one. After being turned down by numerous publishers, Agatha Christie published her debut novel only in 1920.

As the years went on, the relationship between Agatha and her husband hit a dead end. Shortly after the birth of their daughter Rosalind, the couple grew significantly apart. One day, on return from his business trip, her husband Archie announced that he had fallen in love with another girl named Nancy Neele. As it turned out, Nancy, unlike Agatha, shared his passion for golf. This news was a terrible blow for the writer. In fact, she loved her husband all those years and waited for him to come back from the war. Her whole world collapsed overnight, and she felt totally devastated. For a while, they tried to save their marriage, especially for their daughter's sake. However, as the saying goes, "A cracked bell can never sound well." One day, after a fierce argument, Archie left their house. The harsh reality was that he was going to divorce her. Later she would write in her memoirs, "I suppose, with those words, that part of my life – my happy, successful, confident life – ended." Actually, separation is always a painful and heartbreaking experience, and everyone reacts differently to breaking up. As it turned out, Agatha Christie was vulnerable and sensitive, yet very strong. So, what do you think happened next? Fiction suddenly became reality: Agatha vanished without a trace.

The mysterious disappearance of Agatha Christie haunts our minds and imagination to this very day. This intrigue deserves an Oscar. So, what happened that night? According to her biographer, before disappearance Agatha Christie wrote a letter to her secretary Carlo Fisher, asking to cancel the hotel reservation in Yorkshire. She also sent letters to her husband Archie and his brother Campbell. Naturally, the question arises: was it all made up? Perhaps, the "Queen of Crime" was preparing her escape plan. However, let's not get ahead of ourselves! Agatha kissed her little daughter goodnight and drove off.

The next morning, her car and personal belongings were found abandoned. Agatha Christie's disappearance caused a great public outcry. There was huge speculation over the causes of this mysterious disappearance. Many predicted the worst-case scenario. The media suspected that Agatha Christie had been kidnapped. Some suggested that her husband Archie was involved in this disappearance, others suggested that she drowned herself. There was also speculation that Agatha took revenge on her husband. According to another version, it was a cunning ploy: she staged the entire disappearance to attract more audience to her new book.

This was one of the biggest country's manhunts: more than a thousand police officers, up to 15,000 volunteers, and even her beloved dog searched for the missing writer. On top of that, two other famous writers – Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Dorothy Sayers – joined in the search.

Agatha Christie had been missing for eleven days. She was found, safe and well, in Harrogate, Yorkshire. It turned out that she had checked into the hotel under the surname of "Neele," the last name of Archie's lady friend, which complicated the search. Agatha Christie didn't comment on what had happened, claiming loss of memory. Doctors suggested she suffered a nervous breakdown. It's still unclear whether her loss of memory was staged or caused by stress. Curiously, she didn't recognize her husband Archie when he came to visit her. Agatha Christie never discussed the circumstances of her disappearance in detail, even with family or friends.

Anyway, the investigation came to a dead end. Amazingly, the mystery still remains unsolved, and we are left with more questions than answers. Who knows, maybe Agatha Christie wanted to let people finish the story for her.

Agatha and Archie split up. The divorce was tough on her. It took a while to cope with painful emotions and move on. Two years after divorcing Archie, Agatha married the archeologist Max Mallowan and joined him for regular expeditions to Iraq and Syria. I guess they bonded over the passion for traveling. Despite the difference in age – Agatha was fourteen years older than her husband – it was a happy marriage.

Agatha Christie was a very private person. And the more famous the writer became, the more she shunned publicity. Even so, she was full of life! Agatha would say, “I have sometimes been wildly despairing, acutely miserable, racked with sorrow, but through it all I still know quite certainly that just to be alive is a grand thing.” As I see it, Agatha Christie was a true adventure seeker. Her wanderlust and spirit of adventure encouraged Agatha and her husband to go on a round-the-world trip for ten months.

Agatha Christie died on January 12, 1976, at age 85, but she will forever remain in the hearts of her devoted readers.

Vocabulary

every family has a skeleton in the cupboard ['evri 'fæm(ə)lɪ hæz ə 'skelɪtn ɪn ði: 'kʌbəd] – в каждой семье есть свои скелеты в шкафу

be eager [bi 'i:gə] – жаждать, очень хотеть, стремиться что-либо сделать

action-packed ['ækʃn pækt] – остросюжетный

puzzle over [pʌzl 'ɔ:və] – ломать голову над чем-то

go missing [gəʊ 'mɪsɪŋ] – пропасть без вести

missing person ['mɪsɪŋ pɜ:sn] – пропавший без вести

suspicious [sə'spiʃəs] – подозрительный, сомнительный

ring a bell [rɪŋ ə bel] – быть знакомым, напоминать о чем-то/ком-то (*идиома*)

vanish/disappear ['væniʃ ,dɪsə'piə] – исчезнуть

without a trace [wi'daʊt ə treɪs] – бесследно

lift the veil [lɪft ði: veɪl] – приоткрыть завесу

unsurpassed [ˌʌnsər'pæst] – непревзойденный

be outsold (by) [bi aut'səʊld baɪ] – иметь меньший спрос, чем что-либо другое

best-selling novelist [ˌbest'selɪŋ 'nɔ:vəlɪst] – автор бестселлеров, самый продаваемый писатель

novelist ['nɔ:vəlɪst] – романист, писатель

novel ['nɔ:vəl] – роман

mystery novel ['mɪstəri 'nɔ:vəl] – детектив, детективный роман

detective story [dɪ'tektɪv 'stɔ:ri] – детектив, детективный роман

play [pleɪ] – спектакль, пьеса

autobiography [ˌɔ:təbaɪ'ɑ:grəfi] – автобиография

short story collection [ʃɔ:t 'stɔ:ri kə'leɪʃn] – сборник коротких рассказов

pen name [pen neɪm] – литературный псевдоним

maiden name [meɪdn neɪm] – девичья фамилия

publish ['pʌblɪʃ] – публиковать

thrilling ['θrɪlɪŋ] – захватывающий, остросюжетный, увлекательный

iconic character [aɪ'kɔ:nɪk 'kærəktə] – культовый, легендарный персонаж

interestingly ['ɪntrestɪŋli] – любопытно, примечательно

curiously ['kjʊəriəsli] – любопытно, как ни странно

obviously [ə'bvɪəsli] – очевидно, по-видимому

misfortune [mɪs'fɔ:tʃən] – несчастье, беда, горе

out of the blue [aʊt əv ði: blu:] – совершенно неожиданно, как гром среди ясного неба

financial hardship [fæɪ'nænʃ(ə)l 'hɑ:dʃɪp] – финансовые трудности

grieve the loss [grɪ:v ði: lɔ:s] – переживать утрату

overcome challenges [əʊvə'kʌm 'tʃæləndʒɪz] – преодолевать трудности

stage fright [steɪdʒ fraɪt] – боязнь сцены

pursue a career [pə'sju: ə kə'riə] – построить карьеру

live apart [lɪv ə'pɑ:t] – жить раздельно

remain [rɪ'meɪn] – оставаться

poison ['pɔɪzn] – яд

leave an imprint (on) [li:v æn ɪm'prɪnt ə:n] – оставить след, отпечаток

dedicate ['dedɪkeɪt] – посвящать, предназначать

hit a dead end [hɪt ə ded end] – заходить в тупик

grow apart [grəʊ ə'pɑ:t] – отдаляться друг от друга

as it turned out [æz ɪt tɜ:nd əʊt] – как оказалось, выяснилось

overnight [ˌɔːvəˈnaɪt] – в одночасье, неожиданно, мгновенно
devastated [ˈdevəsteɪtɪd] – опустошенный, подавленный
separation [ˌsepəˈreɪʃn] – разлука, расставание
breaking up [ˈbreɪkɪŋ ʌp] – расставание, разрыв
split up [splɪt ʌp] – расставаться, расходиться
divorce [dɪˈvɔːs] – развестись
vulnerable [ˈvʌlnərəbl] – уязвимый, беззащитный
kiss goodnight [kɪs ˌɡʊdˈnaɪt] – поцеловать кого-то на ночь, перед сном
personal belongings [ˈpɜːsənl brɪˈlɔːŋɪŋz] – личные вещи
speculation [spekjuˈleɪʃn] – предположение, домысел, догадка
worst-case scenario [wɜːst keɪs səˈnæriəʊ] – наихудший сценарий
kidnap [ˈkɪdnæp] – похищать
take revenge (on) [teɪk rɪˈvendʒ ə:n] – отомстить, взять реванш
cunning ploy [ˈkʌnɪŋ plɔɪ] – хитрый ход
stage [steɪdʒ] – инсценировать
manhunt [ˈmænhʌnt] – преследование, розыск
cause a public outcry [kɔːz ə ˈpʌblɪk ˈaʊtkraɪ] – вызывать общественный резонанс
nervous breakdown [ˈnɜːvəs ˈbreɪkdaʊn] – нервный срыв
loss of memory [lɔːs əv ˈmeməri] – потеря памяти
bond over [bɔːnd ˈɔːvə] – сходиться, сближаться на почве
passion for traveling [pæʃn fɔː ˈtrævəlɪŋ] – страсть к путешествиям
wanderlust [ˈwɑːndərlʌst] – страсть к путешествиям
adventure seeker [ədˈventʃə ˈsiːkə] – искатель приключений

Exercises

Exercise 1. Answer the following questions:

- 1) What does the English proverb “Every family has a skeleton in the cupboard” mean?
- 2) When and where was Agatha Christie born?
- 3) What was her maiden name?
- 4) Did Agatha have any siblings?
- 5) How many books did Agatha Christie write?
- 6) What famous fictional characters did Agatha Christie create?
- 7) What kind of education did she get?
- 8) At what age did Agatha Christie learn to read?
- 9) What did she like doing in her free time as a child?
- 10) What prevented Agatha from pursuing a career in music?
- 11) What was her first husband’s name?
- 12) What did Agatha Christie do during World War I?
- 13) When was her debut novel published? How much time did it take her to find a publisher?
- 14) Who did Agatha Christie dedicate her first book to?
- 15) Did Agatha have any children?
- 16) What caused her mysterious disappearance?
- 17) Were there any versions of what had happened?
- 18) How long had Agatha been missing before she was found?
- 19) Where was she found?
- 20) What name was the reservation under?
- 21) Did she give an explanation of her disappearance?
- 22) What did doctors say about her condition?
- 23) In your opinion, what was the main reason for her disappearance?
- 24) How long did it take her to get over a divorce?
- 25) What was her second husband’s name?
- 26) What was his profession?
- 27) In your opinion, what kind of person was Agatha Christie?
- 28) Have you ever read any books by Agatha Christie? What is your opinion on it?
- 29) What book have you recently read that really impressed you?
- 30) What kind of books do you like to read?

Exercise 2. Find the equivalents of the following words and phrases in the text:

остросюжетный детектив с непредсказуемой развязкой; инсценировать собственное исчезновение; непревзойденная королева детективного жанра; сборник коротких рассказов; культовый персонаж; горячо любимый отец; воображаемые друзья; переживать утрату; как гром среди ясного неба; жить в разлуке; отношения зашли в тупик; таинственное исчезновение; целая и невредимая; справиться с болезненными эмоциями; страсть к путешествиям; исчезновение вызвало большой общественный резонанс; так устроен мир; они отделились друг от друга; брать уроки фортепиано и пения; менее известные факты; ломать голову; ходили слухи; отомстить мужу; зарегистрироваться в гостинице

Exercise 3. Give the Russian equivalents of the following words and phrases:

the world’s best-selling novelist; a cunning ploy; to go on a round-the-world trip; a true adventure seeker; to overcome all life’s challenges; over time; to vanish without a trace in suspicious circumstances; an hour’s ride from home; financial hardships; to pursue a career in music; a private person; to move on; siblings; to leave an imprint (on); a fierce argument; to be home schooled;

to check into a hotel; military officer; natural shyness; to have a rich imagination; the world collapsed overnight; to prepare an escape plan; to come to a dead end; personal belongings

Exercise 4. Match the words with their definitions:

| Word | Definition |
|---------------------|---|
| 1) to vanish | a) a strong desire to travel |
| 2) wanderlust | b) to stop having a close relationship with somebody over a period of time |
| 3) to grow apart | c) an official examination of the facts about a situation, crime, etc |
| 4) pen name | d) the act of forming opinions about what has happened or what might happen without knowing all the facts |
| 5) investigation | e) to disappear from sight quickly; to become invisible |
| 6) speculation | f) a name used by a writer instead of their real name |
| 7) misfortune | g) bad luck; misery |
| 8) adventure seeker | h) a brother or a sister |
| 9) sibling | i) a person who enjoys exciting new experiences, especially going to unusual places |
| 10) maiden name | j) a woman's family name before marriage |

Detective Riddle No. 1

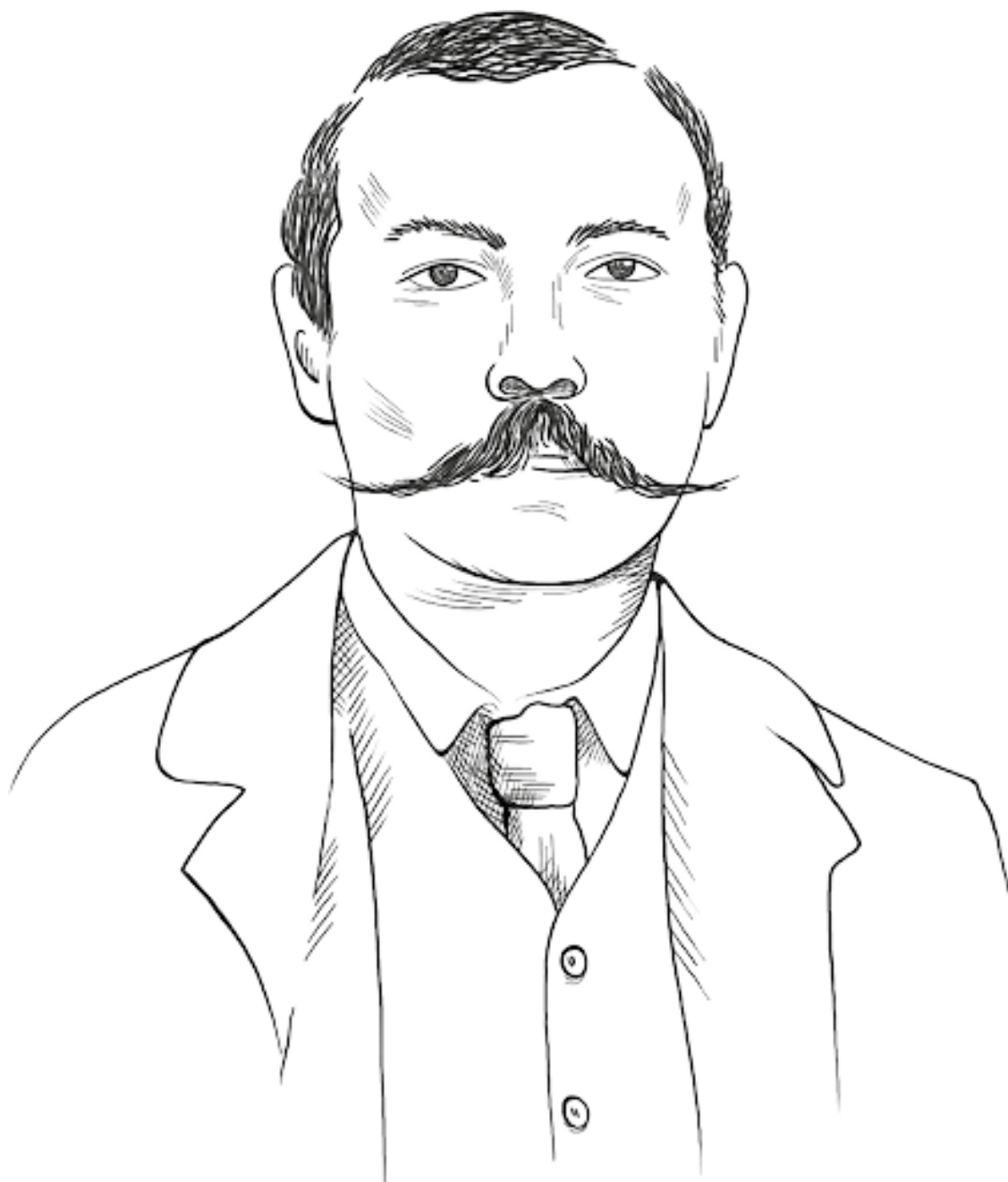
Have you ever dreamed of becoming a detective? If so, let's see if you have the ability to be one. Read the story carefully and collect all the clues that lead to the suspect. Find all the information needed to solve the mystery.

- *Collect the evidence, check out alibis and interrogate each suspect to solve the crime.*
- *Possible suspects: Mr. Johnson, Ann, Pam, Nick, Cindy.*

Ms. Smith, an English teacher, got to school a few minutes before the beginning of the lesson. She came across her colleague Mr. Johnson, in the entrance hall, and they had a small talk. She put her handbag and the classroom key on the table and answered the phone. Three of her students (Ann, Pam, and Nick) were standing nearby. Then Ms. Smith checked her email on her smartphone. There was a message from her student Cindy with a request. The girl explained her reason for not attending school. Then Ms. Smith looked at her watch and hurried to the classroom. The class test was scheduled to start in five minutes.

When Ms. Smith got there, she started feeling that something was wrong. The door was locked, and the students were waiting outside. Ann was helping her classmate with his homework. She was a straight A student and was always ready for school. Pam was playing games on her mobile. She was standing by herself, which was unusual for her. Pam wasn't too nervous because she had prepared for the test the day before. Nick looked upset or puzzled. He did poorly at school and lagged behind his classmates. Yesterday, his mom got a letter from the headmaster about his poor school attendance.

As it turned out, the key was nowhere to be found. Someone had stolen it. Miss Marple entered the crime scene and immediately solved the case. Who was the thief?



Arthur Conan Doyle

(May 22, 1859 – July 7, 1930)

It is no wonder they say that a talented person is talented in everything. This catchphrase fully reflects the personality of Arthur Conan Doyle, the legendary writer, poet, physician, sportsman, and spiritualist. This list goes on indefinitely. Well, I happen to think that Arthur Conan Doyle was an all-rounder, successful in anything he did. He was a man of great intelligence and boundless energy. However, at the same time, his life was full of contradictions and paradoxes. After all, judge for yourself: how could a skilled physician believe in the existence of fairies and ghosts? Could it be that, somewhere deep in his heart, he was still a child? He was so desperate for the supernatural that strange things started to happen in his life. Did you know that his first book was mysteriously lost in the post? Can it really be true that we attract what we believe? Let's look for answers to these and other questions and trace the remarkable life of the greatest writer of all time – Arthur Conan Doyle.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is the “literary father” of Sherlock Holmes, the most popular fictional character in the history of literature. The legendary writer was born on May 22, 1859, in Edinburgh, into a prosperous family. His mother, Mary, was a lively and well-educated woman who had a passion for books. Arthur would often say that he inherited his storytelling talent from her. Doyle's father, Charles, was an illustrator and a watercolorist; a member of a well-respected artistic family. However, a lot of his talent was wasted because of his health issues. Charles always felt he could do more. As I see it, he was constantly haunted by fears, doubts, and unfulfilled dreams of becoming a prominent artist. Among other things, Charles became more and more depressed and frustrated because he was unable to provide for his family. Unfortunately, he spent his later years in asylums and nursing homes. Certainly, the difficult situation in the family couldn't but leave a trace on the character of the legendary writer.

The Doyle family struggled financially. Everything rested on the shoulders of Arthur's mother: running the household, bringing up children, and taking care of the family. She struggled to create a calm home and a peaceful atmosphere and told her children tales of brave knights. As I see it, this circumstance greatly affected the legendary writer's personality and worldview: Arthur Conan Doyle was guided by high moral principles all his life. When little Arthur turned nine, his wealthy relatives offered to pay for his studies. The family council decided to send him to a boarding school. Honestly, it was an unpleasant experience for him as corporal punishment was very common in most boarding schools in England.

Did you know that Arthur Conan Doyle was a keen sportsman? Since his school days, he had been interested in sports and also succeeded in this field. He was the first goalkeeper in the history of Portsmouth. What may come as a surprise is that Arthur Conan Doyle played under the pseudonym “A. C. Smith” rather than under his own name. Apart from football, the legendary writer also played cricket, golf, and rugby. And that was not all. Arthur competed in the amateur billiards championship and was a fan of boxing. Interestingly, Arthur Conan Doyle was a frequent visitor to Switzerland and helped popularize skiing among the English. I guess that, like many creative people, he found inspiration in nature. Many may agree that there's nothing more exciting than watching breathlessly as snow-white clouds, resembling giant mythical creatures, disappear behind a mountain top.

Our life depends on the decisions we make. So, choosing a career is very important. As I see it, Arthur Conan Doyle made the right decision that changed his life forever. Contrary to the family tradition, Doyle didn't follow in his father's footsteps. He decided to pursue a career in medicine.

While being a medical student, he met his future teacher Dr. Joseph Bell, who later had a strong impact on his works. Arthur was really inspired by his remarkable observation and deductive skills. Dr. Bell was able to determine the occupation of a random stranger just by looking at them. This meeting was significant and life-changing for Arthur Conan Doyle. I think that at that point his career as a writer really started.

At the age of twenty-three, Arthur Conan Doyle wrote his first book and sent it to a publisher. Apparently, he had high hopes, but destiny had its own plans: the manuscript of Conan Doyle's first novel mysteriously was lost in the post. Later, Arthur Conan Doyle would write, "I must admit that my shock at its disappearance would be as nothing to my horror if it were suddenly to appear again – in print." Honestly, I can't even imagine what he must have felt when he realized the misfortune. In my opinion, anyone else in his place would have lost heart, but not him. Arthur Conan Doyle attempted to rewrite the story. For many years, the manuscript was unlisted in his archives. The novel called *The Narrative of John Smith* was published posthumously in 2011 by the British Library. Anyway, Arthur Conan Doyle never got discouraged, whatever happened to him. While studying, he tried his hand at writing short stories to earn some extra money.

Upon receiving his Bachelor of Medicine and Master of Surgery degrees, he worked for a time as a naval surgeon. In a while, Conan Doyle opened his first practice in Portsmouth. His business wasn't blooming, and he was finally able to devote more time to writing books.

In August of 1885, he married a beautiful young girl Louisa Hawkins, who was his patient's sister. As I see it, they were a tight-knit and truly happy family. Their two children, Mary and Kingsley, were raised in the environment of love, kindness, and harmony.

As the years went by, Doyle devoted himself to writing a book which introduced Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. The story first appeared in the British paperback magazine in 1887 and a year later was republished as a single volume. His debut novel was called *A Study in Scarlet*. Curiously, Doyle sold the rights to the story for 25 pounds.

Let us now examine some intriguing facts. According to the Guinness Book of World Records, Sherlock Holmes still remains the most portrayed literary human character in film and TV. There's no one in the world who has never heard of Sherlock Holmes, the iconic fictional detective. Sherlock has long become a household name to describe someone who solves and investigates crimes. What image pops up in your mind when you hear his name? Well, I immediately think of a detective who is wearing a long coat and a legendary cap. Mostly, I think of a person who has exceptional observation and deductive skills. Curiously, few know that Sherlock Holmes' character was inspired by the real person Dr. Joseph Bell, who shared many qualities with the legendary detective. Some even say that Sherlock's character was based on his creator, Arthur Conan Doyle. However, it's all just guesswork. This issue is still open for discussion. Curiously, Sherlock never said, "Elementary, my dear Watson." The line didn't appear in Doyle's books. It was later popularized in Sherlock Holmes' films and became a catchphrase. Did you know why Doyle decided to "kill off" his most iconic character? He just became bored of him and wanted to write more serious books. However, this plot twist provoked outrage among his readers, and Doyle had to "resurrect" the great detective ten years later. Could it be that Doyle didn't want to live in the shadow of Sherlock? I suppose there is some truth to this. Many people know more about Sherlock than they do about his creator.

So, back to the writer's life. As time went on, things changed drastically for Arthur Conan Doyle. As it turned out, his beloved wife was seriously ill: she was expected just a few months to live at the most. However, the great writer didn't seem to agree and was determined to extend her life. And he did it. His love, care, and proper treatment made a miracle. Louisa felt much better and lived another thirteen years. When she passed away, Arthur was deeply affected by the loss.

In 1907, Arthur Conan Doyle married Jean Leckie. The happy couple had a lavish wedding with two hundred and fifty guests. Arthur and Jean had three children. The writer shared many of his wife's activities and lived a measured, quiet life.

Unfortunately, Conan Doyle endured terrible misfortune: he lost many loved ones, including his father, wife, son, brother, and others. It might have been the reason why he showed an interest in spiritualism¹. This may come as a surprise, but he also believed in the existence of magical beings. Have you ever heard of the Cottingley Fairies? This is a curious story about two girls named Elsie and Frances, who supposedly managed to take a series of photos of dancing creatures. To be more precise, it is one of the greatest hoaxes of all time. It may seem incredible, but those photos, which showed tiny figures with transparent wings, came to Conan Doyle's attention. Call it coincidence or providence, but at that time Arthur Conan Doyle was working on the article about fairies for *the Strand Magazine*. When the experts unofficially verified the authenticity of the photos, the writer was so thrilled that he asked Elsie and Frances to use those images of mythical creatures in his publication. The girls' family was confused by the attention of the legendary writer but quickly agreed. Public opinion was mixed: some believed that the magical beings were real, while others thought they were fake. Later Arthur Conan Doyle wrote a book on the topic under the title *The Coming of the Fairies*. Only years later, after the writer's death, the cousins finally confessed that those photos were a hoax, and the wizard creatures were made from paper cut-outs and hat pins. As it turned out, it was Elsie who drew the images and had the wings added to them. When everything was ready, both girls arranged a theme photo shoot. Later Elsie and Frances admitted that they were too embarrassed to tell the truth after fooling the literary genius.

The creator of Sherlock Holmes was once tasked to solve a real-life crime. He helped the wrongly convicted man go free. Do you remember that Doyle also participated in the search for Agatha Christie? He took one of her gloves to a spirit medium to find her location. The visionary supposedly said that Agatha Christie was still alive but was in the "twilight state," and that she'd show up "next Wednesday." Believe it or not, but she was found a week later, safe and alive, claiming memory loss. After that, how can one not believe in miracles?

Apart from detective novels and science fiction, Arthur Conan Doyle also wrote poems, plays, and historical novels. Among his most well-known books are *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, *A Study in Scarlet*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Lost World*, and many others.

The genius writer lived a rich life filled with many ups and downs. He died in 1930, surrounded by his family. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle will always be remembered as one of the greatest writers of all time.

¹ Spiritualism is a movement based on the belief that souls of the dead can communicate with the living through a medium.

Vocabulary

all-rounder [ˌɔ:l'raʊndə] – всесторонне одаренный, развитый человек
boundless energy ['baʊndləs 'enədʒi] – безграничная, неиссякаемая энергия
contradiction [ˌkɒ:ntrə'dɪkʃn] – противоречие
fairy ['feəri] – фея, волшебница
ghost [gəʊst] – привидение, призрак
the supernatural [ði: 'su:pə'nætʃrəl] – сверхъестественное
fictional character ['fɪkʃənl 'kærəktə] – вымышленный персонаж
prosperous family ['prɒ:spərəs 'fæməli] – благополучная, состоятельная семья
well-respected [wel rɪ'spektɪd] – авторитетный, многоуважаемый
have a passion (for) [hæv ə 'pæʃn fɔ:] – обожать, страстно увлекаться чем-то, иметь страсть

к чему-то

inherit [ɪn'herɪt] – унаследовать, перенять
health issues [helθ 'ɪʃu:z] – проблемы со здоровьем
frustrated ['frʌstreɪtɪd] – разочарованный, отчаявшийся
provide for [prə'vaɪd fɔ:] – материально обеспечивать
asylum [ə'saɪləm] – приют
nursing home ['nɜ:sn̩ həʊm] – дом престарелых
boarding school ['bɔ:dn̩ sku:l] – школа-интернат, пансион
corporal punishment ['kɔ:p(ə)rəl 'pʌnɪʃmənt] – телесное наказание
compete [kəm'pi:t] – состязаться, соревноваться
follow in one's footsteps ['fɔ:ləs ɪn wʌnz 'fʊtstɛps] – идти по стопам кого-то
bachelor's/master's degree ['bætʃələz 'mæstəz dɪɡri:] – степень бакалавра/магистра
have an impact (on) [hæv ən 'ɪmpækt ə:n] – оказать сильное влияние (на)
be inspired (by) [bi: ɪn'spaɪəd baɪ] – вдохновляться
observation skills [ˌɒbzə'veɪʃn skɪlz] – наблюдательность
deductive skills [dɪ'dʌktɪv skɪlz] – дедуктивные способности
destiny ['destɪni] – судьба
manuscript ['mænɪskrɪpt] – рукопись
lose heart [lu:z hɑ:t] – унывать, падать духом, опускать руки
attempt [ə'tempt] – пытаться
posthumously ['pɒstjʊməsli] – посмертно
get discouraged [get dɪs'kɜ:rdɪzd] – впадать в уныние
try one's hand (at) [traɪ wʌnz hænd æt] – попробовать свои силы в чем-либо
earn extra money [ɜ:n 'ekstrə 'mʌni] – подзаработать, обеспечить себе дополнительный

доход

devote time (to) [dɪ'vəʊt taɪm tu:] – посвятить время
business is blooming ['bɪznəs ɪz 'blu:mɪŋ] – дела идут в гору, бизнес процветает
surgeon ['sɜ:dʒən] – хирург
surgery ['sɜ:dʒəri] – хирургия, хирургическая операция
patient ['reɪfɪnt] – пациент
tight-knit family [ˌtaɪt 'nɪt 'fæməli] – дружная, сплоченная семья
raise / bring up children [reɪz brɪŋ ʌp 'tʃɪldrən] – растить, воспитывать детей
become a household name [bɪ'kʌm ə 'haʊshəʊld neɪm] – стать именем нарицательным
catchphrase ['kætʃfreɪz] – коронная, крылатая фраза
plot twist [plɒt twɪst] – поворот сюжета

provoke public outrage [prə'vʌsk 'pʌblɪk 'ɑːstreɪdʒ] – вызывать возмущение общественности

resurrect [ˌrezə'rekt] – воскрешать

proper treatment ['prɒpə 'tri:tmənt] – правильное, надлежащее лечение

make a miracle [meɪk ə'mɪrəkl̩] – сотворить чудо

measured life ['meʒəd laɪf] – размеренная жизнь

supposedly [sə'pəʊzɪdli] – предположительно, якобы

hoax [həʊks] – мистификация, выдумка, обман

transparent [træn'spærənt] – прозрачный

mythical creature ['mɪθɪkl̩ 'kri:tʃə] – мифическое существо

be confused [bi kən'fju:zd] – смущаться, растеряться

confess [kən'fes] – признаваться, сознаваться

be embarrassed [bi: ɪm'bærəst] – стесняться, смущаться

wrongly convicted ['rɔ:ŋli kən'vɪktɪd] – несправедливо осужденный

spirit medium ['spɪrɪt 'mi:diəm] – медиум; ясновидящий, который общается с духами

twilight state ['twɑɪlaɪt steɪt] – сумеречное состояние²

show up [ʃəʊ ʌp] – появляться

ups and downs [ʌps ən daʊnz] – взлеты и падения, плюсы и минусы

² Сумеречное состояние – состояние, характеризующееся кратковременной потерей ясности сознания и отрешенностью от окружающего мира.

Exercises

Exercise 1. Answer the following questions:

- 1) When and where was Arthur Conan Doyle born?
- 2) What kind of family was Arthur Conan Doyle born into?
- 3) What was his mother passionate about?
- 4) What was his father's occupation?
- 5) What was Doyle's personality like?
- 6) Did Arthur like going to a boarding school?
- 7) Did Doyle follow in his father's footsteps?
- 8) What sports was Doyle good at?
- 9) Who was Dr. Bell? And how would you describe his personality?
- 10) How old was Arthur Conan Doyle when he wrote his first book? When was it published?
- 11) How many times did Arthur Conan Doyle get married? How many children did he have?
- 12) How did Arthur Conan Doyle meet his first wife?
- 13) What happened to his first wife, Louisa?
- 14) What was his reaction when he realized how serious her condition was?
- 15) Why did he become interested in spiritualism?
- 16) When was his first novel published? And what was it called?
- 17) Was Sherlock Holmes' character inspired by a real person?
- 18) What image pops up in your mind when you hear the name Sherlock?
- 19) What kind of stories did Arthur Conan Doyle write?
- 20) Were the Cottingley Fairies real or fake?
- 21) What are Doyle's greatest books of all time?
- 22) In your opinion, what are the best mystery novels of all time?
- 23) What are your favorite mystery novels?
- 24) Who are your favorite writers and why?
- 25) What book genres do you love?
- 26) Did someone read to you when you were a child?
- 27) Are there any genres you dislike?

Exercise 2. Find the equivalents of the following words and phrases in the text:

вымышленный персонаж; блестящий рассказчик; испытывать финансовые трудности; получить степень бакалавра; его талант не был полностью раскрыт; многоуважаемая творческая семья; какой образ возникает в вашем представлении; это лишь предположения; крылатое выражение; тяжело переживать утрату; страсть к чтению; неприятный опыт; посвятить себя медицине; журнал в мягкой обложке; расследовать преступление; как ни странно; пышная свадьба; дела не шли в гору

Exercise 3. Give the Russian equivalents of the following words and phrases:

to be born into a prosperous family; to have a strong impact (on); to be surrounded by family; to earn some extra money; to be raised in the environment of love; to devote time (to); to extend life; to live a measured, quiet life; a science fiction novel; to be inspired (by); to be common; exceptional skills; to try one's hand (at); life filled with ups and downs; to live another thirteen years; things changed drastically; to show an interest (in)

Exercise 4. Match each word with its synonym:

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1) mysterious | a) well-off |
| 2) prosperous | b) enigmatic |
| 3) to look for | c) to search |
| 4) nursing home | d) to be similar to |
| 5) to resemble | e) retirement home |
| 6) to disappear | f) to prolong |
| 7) to extend | g) to emerge |
| 8) to show up | h) to vanish |
| 9) skilled | i) to influence |
| 10) to affect | j) qualified |

Detective Riddle No. 2

Do you like solving mysteries? If so, put your detective hat on and have fun! Read the story carefully and collect all the clues that lead to the suspect. Find all the information needed to solve the mystery.

● *Collect the evidence, check out alibis, and interrogate each suspect to solve the crime.*

● *Possible suspects: Jessica, Linda, Grace, Jane, Jeremy.*

The night before the wedding, Mary was having some close friends over: Jessica, Linda, and Grace. They were watching romantic comedies, singing songs, and gossiping. Mary was so excited and happy because her dream was about to come true. She had been dating Mark since high school, and he finally proposed to her.

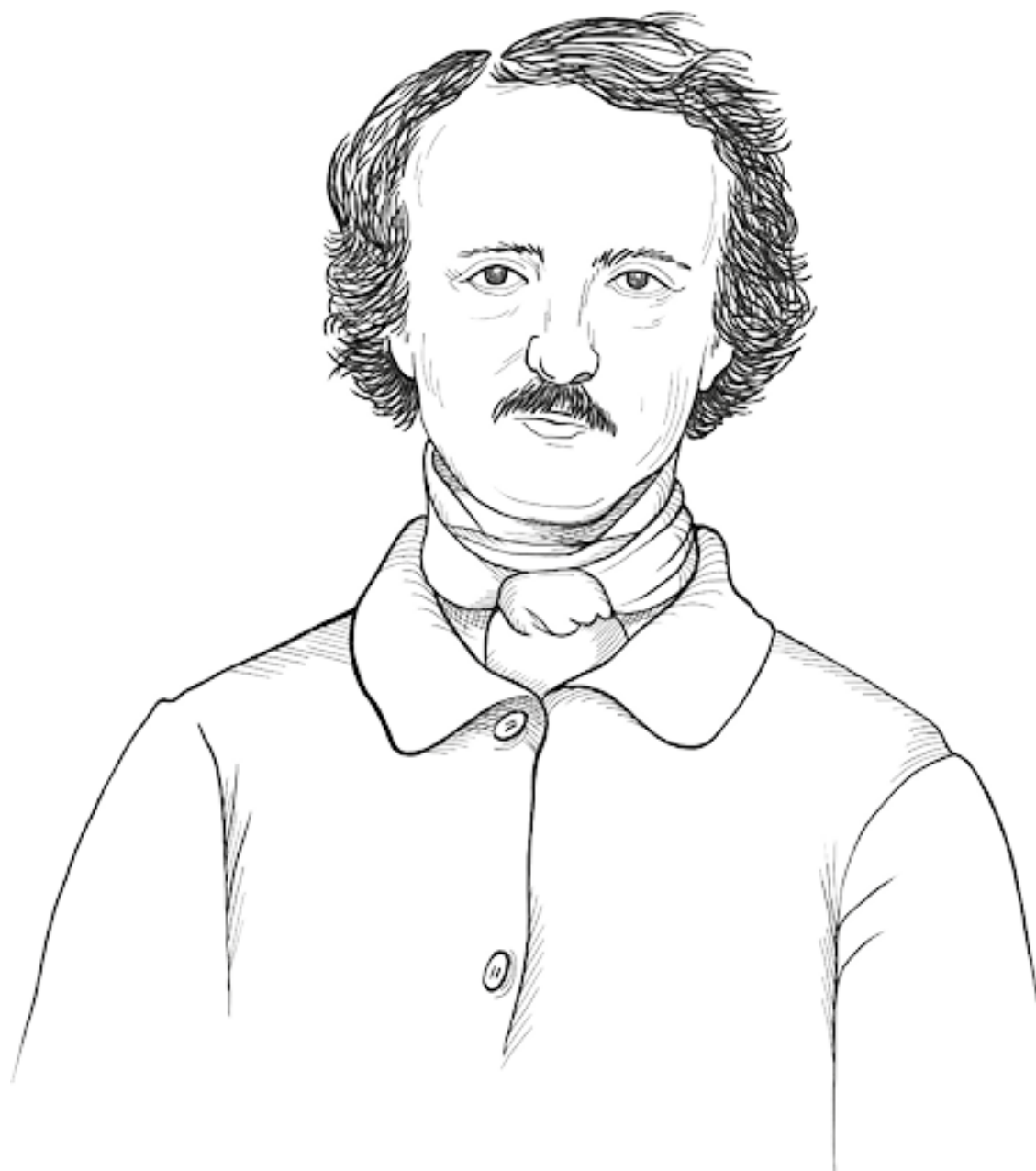
Everyone was laughing, cheering, and clapping their hands when Mary showed her elegant wedding dress to them. She looked like a queen in it. She said that it was a present from her mom Jane. As a parent, Jane wanted only the best for her daughter. Her eyes were filled with tears of happiness, and she was proud of Mary. Jane was on good terms with Mark and hoped they would make a loving couple. Everyone seemed to be having fun. Actually, all of them had their own secrets.

Jessica was secretly in love with Mark but kept her feelings hidden. Mark lived in her neighborhood and sometimes gave her a ride home. They had much in common: they had exactly the same taste in music, films, sports, etc. Jessica hoped that one day he and Mary would split up. She was not going to give up.

Linda disliked Mark, and she had her own deeply personal reasons as well. First, Linda's brother Jeremy was in love with Mary. Second, Mark pretended to be something he wasn't. He was a gambler and constantly lost large sums of money. Linda had discussed it with Mary, but she didn't want to believe her. So, Linda made peace with Mary's choice. She hoped that Mark would change after marriage.

Grace had a secret as well. She saw Mark with another girl last week, but she didn't tell Mary about it. She didn't want to upset her best friend or destroy other people's relationship.

When the party ended and all the guests left, Mary immediately went to bed. She woke up about five hours after her alarm was supposed to go off. She felt dizzy and sick. When she went into the dining room, she had a strange feeling that something really bad might have happened. When she looked at her watch, Mary realized that she overslept and was late for her own wedding. She also discovered that her wedding dress had been ruined. Mary felt even worse and called an ambulance. The doctors found it was an attempted poisoning and called Sherlock Holmes. When the detective came to the crime scene, he immediately got a clue. The offender endangered Mary's life and secretly put sleeping pills into her cocktail. Who was the criminal?



Edgar Allan Poe

(January 19, 1809 – October 7, 1849)

Some people are born under a lucky star, while others are forced to resist the heavy blows of fate all their life. That's how the world really works. However, we all must realize that hardships are a part of the precious gift called life. They make us stronger and wiser. They purify our souls. As the saying goes, "When life gives you a hundred reasons to cry, show life that you have a thousand reasons to smile." Unfortunately, the life of Edgar Allan Poe was filled with losses, trials, and sadness and ended in a horrible tragedy. He died very young, but he managed to leave a significant mark on the world of literature. Poe's contribution to the development of detective fiction was so great that, according to many, without him, we wouldn't even have Sherlock Homes. Years later, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle would say that Edgar Poe was "a model for all time." The legendary writer's last moments were the biggest mystery covered in darkness. The causes of Edgar Poe's mysterious death are still unknown, though they have been the topic of persistent speculation over the years. Many theories exist, including serious illness and even murder. However, the circumstances of the incident and the sequence of events remain unclear. As I see it, the undisputed "father" of the detective story left behind him a mystery so puzzling that even the most illustrious detective Auguste Dupin, a fictional character created by Edgar Allan Poe, wouldn't be able to solve it. Let's together touch the enigmatic life of the greatest writer of all time and the man of extraordinary fate.

Edgar Allan Poe, an American writer, poet, literary critic, and the inventor of the detective novel, was born in Boston, on January 19, 1809, into the family of traveling actors Elizabeth and David Poe. Since childhood his life was full of tragic events. The legendary writer never really knew his parents. Just a year after Edgar Poe's birth, his father abandoned their family and never returned. No one knows exactly about his fate, but reportedly he died the same year the writer's mother did. By the age of three, little Edgar was orphaned. He was unofficially adopted by John Allan and his wife Frances, a well-to-do childless couple. His older brother Henry and younger sister Rosalie went to live with other families.

Poe was never reunited with his siblings as a family. Sadly, things weren't easy for Rosalie and Henry, as if fortune turned back on them. For many years, Henry sailed around the world. On returning to Baltimore, he started writing short stories and poems. One of his works called "The Pirate" described the first relationship between Edgar Poe and his adolescent sweetheart Sarah Elmira Royster. Unfortunately, Henry died very young, when he was just twenty-four years old. Interestingly, his sister's life was also covered in mystery and misfortunes. Even her exact date of birth was unknown. There was speculation that Rosalie was not the true child of either David or Eliza Poe, and that her real father was supposedly the prominent actor John Howard Payne. Even Edgar Poe added fuel to the fire when he once said that Rosalie was actually his older sister. Rumors persist that when Rosalie was still a child, a wealthy resident of Richmond left her an enormous fortune. She was the sole heiress in his will, which gave rise to many curious speculations, rumors, and legends. As for her foster family, no one knows exactly whether she was treated like a family member or merely a ward. Unfortunately, Rosalie's adult life was also a failure. She was said to walk the streets trying to sell postcards of her famous brother. As I see it, she was devastated and scared. Being unemployed, it was the only possible way to earn her living. She had no one to rely on and was left alone to survive in this world. Eventually, she lost heart. Rosalie spent her last days in a charity home.

Let's go back to the childhood of Edgar Poe. Taking pity on the baby, John and Frances Allan became his foster family, but they never adopted him officially. Poe seemed to have a strong bond with

his foster mother, but he couldn't find a common language with his foster father. In fact, John Allan was a wealthy merchant and wanted Edgar to follow in his footsteps. He didn't approve of his passion for literature. Edgar, in turn, had no interest in taking up the family business. It's not surprising that they didn't get along well with each other. Though it's commonly believed that opposites attract, in reality, the reverse is true. As I see it, Edgar Poe lived for his ideas and, like most writers, needed inspiration and privacy. Poe was a dreamer who lived in his little world, while his foster father was more down-to-earth and focused on material goods. Money had always been a touchy subject for John Allan, and he often accused Edgar of being ungrateful. No matter how complicated the relationship between Edgar and his foster father was, he got education at expensive boarding schools. Frances Allan was the complete opposite of her husband. She always gave Edgar care and attention and even encouraged his desire to become a poet.

In his teens, Poe fell in love with his neighbor Sarah Elmira Royster. They were secretly engaged to get married soon. Unfortunately, their plans were not destined to come true. At the time, they were too young: Sarah was fifteen and Edgar was sixteen. Besides, Sarah's father was against their relationship and disapproved of his daughter's choice. Later, Mr. Royster would confess that his disapproval was only because of their young age. Personally, I believe that Edgar was seen as an unsuitable match for his daughter because he was an orphan. So, when Poe went to the University of Virginia, he sent love letters to his sweetheart but got no answer. As it turned out later, Mr. Royster intercepted and destroyed his letters, and Sarah thought that Edgar had forgotten her. Heartbroken, she married Alexander Shelton, a merchant from a well-to-do family. Nobody knows how the life of Edgar and Sarah would have turned out if Mr. Royster hadn't interfered with their relationship. However, it's definitely clear that those events changed the course of Poe's life forever. What may come as a surprise is that fate brought them together anyway, but that was many years later.

In 1827, after a year of studying at the University of Virginia, Poe dropped out. It is said that money was not enough for Edgar to pay for classes, textbooks, and a room. Mr. Allan gave him about a third of what he needed for his studies. It could have been one of the reasons why he started gambling and got into debt. The second most probable reason could have been longing for his lost love. Anyway, Edgar abandoned his studies and decided not to return to Richmond. You might have guessed why. His fiancée married another man, and that was a terrible blow for him. He headed back to his birthplace city Boston. I wonder why our hearts leap when we return to the place where we were born or grew up. As I see it, Edgar returned to his hearth and home to reflect on his family and to find spiritual harmony. Besides, he seemingly decided to burn his bridges with his foster father. Having started his life afresh, Edgar worked at any job that would allow him some income. Yet, money was tight, and things went wrong at work. When he realized that he had no means of livelihood, Poe enlisted in the army, hiding his real name and age. It was 1827, and he was just eighteen. While serving in the army, Edgar Allan Poe devoted his time to writing. His first literary work, a short collection of poems called *Tamerlane and Other Poems*, was published anonymously (the author was listed as "A Bostonian"). Today, it's believed that only twelve of approximately fifty copies of the collection still exist. Unfortunately, this work wasn't an immediate success.

He served for two years and even became a sergeant major of artillery. However, like a caged bird who dreams of flying in the sky, the legendary writer was also dreaming of freedom. He didn't want to serve in the army anymore. When he revealed his true age and name, his commanding officer agreed to release him on one condition: Poe was to get in touch with his foster father, but it was not that easy. Shortly after, it turned out that Frances Allan was seriously ill, and Edgar was unable even to see her on her last journey. Her passing away was a big loss for both Edgar and Mr. Allan. The writer felt he had to work things out with his foster father. They were able to reconcile but not for long. They would have frequent fights and disputes. At the end of his life path, John Allan didn't even mention Edgar in his will.

In 1829, Edgar Poe entered the U.S. Military Academy at West Point but soon realized that it wasn't for him. What do you think happened next? He was expelled from the Academy for disciplinary reasons. As I see it, it was a way to rebel against his foster father, teachers, or society. He was trying to find himself, the purpose of life, and his true calling by breaking rules. That same year, Edgar Poe headed to New York, where he planned to focus on writing stories. No sooner had he settled in a new place than he received terrible news: it turned out that his older brother Henry was seriously ill. Edgar left everything and went to Baltimore. As the saying goes, "Every cloud has a silver lining." For a short while he reunited with his relatives: his older brother, aunt Maria Clemm, and grandparents. Unfortunately, shortly after, Henry died. Poe had a hard time, but all hardships, defeats, and setbacks seemingly built his character.

His personal life was also clouded in mystery. The genius writer married his cousin Virginia Clemm, who was many years younger than him, but the nature of their relationship was controversial. Some biographers speculate that Poe treated his wife like a sister, and his mother-in-law, Maria Clemm, like a mother. One thing is for sure: the iconic writer finally found a family. Virginia admired her husband. She filled his life with joy and meaning. She would often follow him on walks or sing songs for him sitting by the fireplace. The legendary writer taught her French and encouraged her to take singing and piano lessons. Poe's friends mentioned that he flourished after getting married. The family was poor but happy, indeed.

Do you know that Edgar Poe had his muse? His inspirer was a tortoiseshell cat named Cattarina. Poe really enjoyed Cattarina's company and would let her sit on his shoulder while he was writing. When his wife Virginia became seriously ill, the cat would curl up in the bed beside her. Historians believe that Cattarina became a part of Poe's family. In 1847, Edgar suffered another terrible blow: Virginia died of tuberculosis. He was devastated and couldn't cope with the pain of losing his beloved wife for a long time.

After much suffering, fortune seemed to smile on Edgar. He began seeing his adolescent sweetheart Sarah Royster Shelton, who had been widowed by then. It turned out that she had cherished the memory of her childhood love for all those years. Poe became engaged to her again, but their dreams weren't destined to come true – the writer died under suspicious circumstances. Not long before he was to be married, Edgar Allan Poe disappeared, and no one knew where he had been for nearly a week. On September 27, 1849, he left his home in Richmond and had to go first to Philadelphia on business and then to New York to escort his aunt back to Richmond for his upcoming wedding. As it turned out, he never made it to either. On October 7, Poe was found semi-conscious wandering outside a local pub in Baltimore. How he could get there is still unknown. Poe never gave any explanation about what had happened to him, leaving crucial questions unanswered. The legendary writer was delirious and wearing someone else's cheap clothes: a spotted worn-out coat, a pair of old shoes, and a straw hat. The man who found Edgar Poe recognized the well-known writer and offered his help. Then Poe was taken to hospital where he spent his last four days. The cause of his death remains a mystery, as all medical records, including his death certificate, have been lost. It's known that Poe was kept in a windowless room, and the only one who interacted with him was Dr. John Moran. However, the question about the accuracy of the information provided by him remains controversial. Poe is said to call out the name Reynolds, but it's still unclear to whom he referred. There was much speculation about the cause of his death including rabies, murder, alcohol, and illness. One of the most popular theories was that Poe was a victim of "cooping" – a common pre-election tactic by which people were kidnapped on the streets and forced to vote for a certain candidate against their will. This theory was supported by the fact that Poe was found on Election Day. There were rumors that Poe drank himself to death. However, the truth was that, according to many historians, Poe couldn't handle alcohol. It had been documented that after a glass of wine he got drunk very quickly. Besides, a physician who tested Edgar Poe's hair samples claimed that he had been avoiding alcohol for a few months. As for the rabies theory, some suggest that he

could contract it from his cat Cattarina, who went to her eternal rest within weeks after his death. In fact, at the time there were no vaccines for pets. Another theory suggests that Poe could die of the flu complications – pneumonia. A few days before his departure from Richmond, he visited a physician complaining of illness. Surprisingly, his fiancée, Sarah, confirmed this theory, claiming that Edgar had a fever and a weak pulse. There were also rumors that Poe was likely murdered by Sarah's brothers, who were against their marriage and might have threatened Edgar. The legendary writer like his fictional characters may have disguised himself and disappeared for a week, but was eventually found and beaten. However, none of these theories explain the mysterious death of the greatest writer.

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