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## A Study in Scarlet: An Exploration of Sherlock Holmes' Paranoid Personality

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### Abstract

*A Study in Scarlet* is a detective novel first published in 1887. The setting of the novel takes place in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The title of the Novel is derived from Sherlock Holmes' speech when he describes the investigation in any murder case as a "study in scarlet" to his friend Dr. Watson (Doyle, 1887, p.53). Conan Doyle introduces an ordinary figure with extraordinary analytic, detective abilities to solve complex cases and challenge the conventional ways that policemen use to solve cases. Holmes was a consulting detective who would become the most important famous detective in English literature. The novel explores different themes like crime, the impact of society on criminal behaviors, the effectiveness of science in solving crimes, and the difference between looking and observation. According to certain symptoms, this paper explores Holmes' paranoid issues in Doyle's novel *A Study in Scarlet*.

**Keywords:** admiration, humiliation, suspiciousness, trust, selfish, delusion.

### **Literature Review**

The character of the famous detective Sherlock Holmes is considered one of the most controversial literary characters. There are many studies that focus on analyzing his character from a psychological perspective and psychological disorder. This study focuses on Holmes as a character suffering from paranoia, and how he exploits its symptoms to achieve justice and success in solving cases to become the most famous and successful detective. In addition to how to use excessive suspicion, sharp focus, and confidence. It clearly shows negative qualities, but, at the same time, it is the main reason for his success. This study is different because it shows this disorder's negative and positive traits and how they reflect positively on solving a case. While various studies show Holmes as an unstable character, such as *Sherlock Holmes Was Wrong: Reopening the Case of the Hound of the Baskervilles* (1999) by Pierre Bayard, the book presents Holmes' negative aspects like arrogance, vanity, isolation, superiority, and superficial relationship with Watson. In addition, his arrogance makes him refuse to accept the opinions and suggestions of others. In this way, it highlights the negative aspects only and how they affect his social relationships and his work as well.

### **Plot of the Novel**

*A Study in Scarlet* is a detective novel first published in 1887. Part one of the novel opens as a part of an Army doctor, Watson's Diary, who narrates the story of his life after his return to England, London after being injured during the Afghan War. He meets his old friend, Stamford. The two speak about how he needs a less expensive place to stay. Stamford notes that he knows someone called Sherlock Holmes who is looking for a suitable roommate. After warning Watson about Holmes' weird behaviors, Stamford introduces them inside the laboratory where Holmes is working. Holmes himself reveals to Watson that he is a consulting detective. After many days, a messenger carries a letter from Tobias Gregson who is asking for Holmes' help in solving a murder case. After approaching the murder scene, Holmes finds stains of blood in different places on the ground, but there is no wound on his body. Later, Lestrade declares that he finds the word "RACHE" written in blood on the wall; however, Holmes discovers that it is a German word that means "revenge." Unfortunately, Lestrade

arrives to inform Holmes that he intends to question Drebbler's secretary in his hotel room, Joseph Stangerson, but he finds him murdered and stabbed to death, and the same word "RACHE" is written on the wall. Lestrade tells them that he does not find any important thing except a pillbox. After examining the two pills on their old sick dog, Holmes discovers that one pill has no effect, but the other pill is poisonous. Meanwhile, Holmes calls a cop driver because he wants to move to another place but immediately arrests him and declares that this is Jefferson Hope the murderer of Drebbler and Stangerson. The second part revolves around the story of Hope's life and how Drebbler and Stangerson hurt him and his lover in several ways until she dies as a result of extreme grief after they have killed her father and forced her to marry Draper.

### **Introduction**

Paranoia is a functional mental disorder, characterized by clear and persistent delusion and delirium. Sigmund Freud argues that holding on to this delusion reflects a distorted sense of truth. The patient has not lost his ability to experience reality, but the psychological pressures make it extremely painful and difficult to admit that his delusions are incorrect. The patient suffers from the delusion of persecution and suspiciousness of others without any exception no matter how kind or good they are. This puts great pressure on the paranoid person to explain the actions and the speech of others. He feels that there is a hidden meaning in every normal speech or behavior. These emotions can significantly hinder the patient's ability to form and maintain close relationships. Additionally, the paranoid patient suffers from a delusion of greatness, has a great personality, or has a supernatural power that is very far from reality or truth. He always denied his weakness or his inability to do anything. However, paranoia is a false belief in one's superiority, high self-confidence, and importance. Later, these disorganized delusions become specific to certain people whom he thinks want to hurt him that Paul Drummond Cameron calls "The Paranoid Pseudo-community" (Meissner, 1978, p.39). The paranoid patient highly observes all the small details around him. Finally, he uses projection, which means refusing to admit self-blame, as a mechanism. Freud believed that the patient uses these delusions to maintain his self-esteem.

Holmes charms the audience with his unique intelligence, high analytic ability, observation, detective reasoning, and nontraditional techniques for crime resolution. His personality makes the reader very tense and excited until the end of the novel. On another occasion, he appears as an anti-social and difficult person. Freud described paranoia as a "mental illness" (Oldham & Bone, 1994, p.70) associated with specific behaviors, which are not related to physical things. Besides that, all individuals are created with the capacity to feel certain emotions, but there are rare conditions where a person cannot express his feelings in a normal way, like certain personality disorders. However, the absence of certain emotions does not mean that there is a complete lack of emotions. Freud also believed that when someone fights to repress his feelings, they will return but in a distorted way. For instance, Holmes has a serious problem with expressing his feelings that leads to incorrect self-definition and has certain clear abnormal behaviors. This incorrect self-definition leads to false belief in his supernatural intelligence, superiority, and exaggerated self-confidence. Following a comprehensive overview of Holmes' personality, it is essential to undertake a more in-depth examination of a key component of his psychological profile, which is paranoia, in order to understand its influence on his thinking and behavior more deeply.

### **Theory and Analysis**

Holmes' primary interest is solving mysteries; he lacks social skills and views anything unrelated to his work or crime as insignificant. He is in good connection with reality, but he interprets everything around him to serve his paranoid thoughts and he uses them as a mechanism to adapt to the environment around him. Holmes is first introduced by Stamford to Dr. Watson. He is the type of person whose even outward appearance attracts anyone who walks by. From the very beginning, the reader, from Stamford's speech, may feel that there is something wrong with Holmes' personality: "[h]e is a little queer in his ideas—an enthusiast in some branches of science" (Doyle, 1887, p.10). Stamford describes him as very talented in many fields such as anatomy and chemistry without organized lessons or without becoming a medical student, but he acquires deep knowledge that surprises everyone. He gains this knowledge through extensive reading in various fields, to the point that he always amazes

Watson with his information. Certainly, there is no person will make any effort to obtain a large amount of accurate information unless he has a certain goal to achieve at the end. A person does not exhaust his mind by studying difficult things without a good reason.

Arwa Mohammed Rabee' in her research on children with autism explains that:

It does not necessarily mean mental retardation, as it is among those children someone who has rare abilities or skills in mathematics, drawing, or music, such as Mozart. Among them are those who have an amazing memory. At an early age, they recite verses of poetry or play or sing melodies that they had heard many years ago. Or get a doctorate like Grandin, who was autistic in her childhood (Rabee', 2017, p.417).

The same thing happens with people suffering from paranoia and Holmes is a very good example of those people who suffer from a personality disorder but have unique abilities. Throughout the course of the novel, the reader can see Holmes as a very ambitious person and his first goal is his work. It is very clear that Holmes always seeks to show his abilities to others; from this point, he makes his knowledge and his work the point that attracts attention. Although Holmes has unique knowledge in different fields, he is ignorant of other fields except what can help him complete his work. Such as philosophy, literature, and even the solar system, which is considered logical to know, but since it has nothing to do with his work, he ignores it.

Holmes lived in the Victorian era, which was considered the era of development, logic, and science where astronomical studies and interest in the solar system witnessed great development that attracted people to study the solar system. Everyone wants to know more about the solar system and the planets. However, Holmes does not care about it: "you say that we go round the sun. If we went round the moon, it would not make a pennyworth of difference to me or to my work" (Doyle, 1887, p.20). On the other hand, with one glance, he can distinguish between soil types. Moreover, one day he shows his trousers to Watson that contain different stains of soil and tells him where from London each stain came by looking at its color. Also, he can tell the type of cigar from its ashes like when he tells the type of the murderer's cigar from observing the ashes on the floor.

One of the most important symptoms that characterize a person with paranoid tendencies is being a cold and emotionless person, something noted from the very beginning of the novel when Stamford notes that Holmes is a very scientific man and cares just for his work to the point that making him "cold-bloodedness" (Doyle, 1887, p.11). However, Stamford also makes it clear that Watson must not blame him if he cannot understand or live with such a difficult person. Later, when Watson begins to live with Holmes, he discovers that Holmes is not a difficult person, rather, he tends to be more normal, but he shows weird behaviors most of the time. Holmes is very anti-social and has no relationships with men or women. Either he works in the chemistry laboratory for days from day to night or avoids it for a long time but when the fancy controls him, he becomes commutative like the first meeting with Dr. Watson. Holmes shows his intelligence to Watson by telling him some information about him from the first look, which makes Watson fascinated by him. Watson is a military doctor returning from the war in Afghanistan who appears to be in a terrible condition as he is alone and traumatized by the war.

Watson explains that his health condition in Afghanistan during the war deteriorated significantly, which made the army send him to England as soon as possible. This deterioration becomes very evident in his appearance because he becomes much thinner, and anyone who sees him realizes that he has suffered a lot; for example, when Stamford sees him, he asks him what makes him reach this condition. Watson is a gentleman from the medical staff, but he also has the appearance of a military man, his skin is white, but it becomes darker in certain areas of his body due to the sun. From the first look, Holmes tells Watson that he has been in Afghanistan, and when Watson asks him how he has discovered that Holmes ignores him and continues speaking about his unique discovery. In fact, Holmes recognizes this because of Watson's sick appearance first. Secondly, since the war is ongoing in Afghanistan, Holmes can easily guess that Watson has been there. With long habituation, the sequence of thoughts runs very smoothly and quickly within his mind. Holmes' detective reasoning makes others believe that he can read others' thoughts as Stamford notes that this is his personal secret, and no one knows how he knows that. Holmes is very fascinated with his new discovery as part of his self-admiration, and he

even believes that many criminals who walked freely for years would be in prison if his test was used.

A paranoid person is always very practical who cares just for his work and who does everything to achieve his goal even through destructive tendencies. However, it does not stop there only but also extends to harming others. Holmes' obsession with success and perfection makes him lead a very strange way of living. From this scene, it is very clear that Holmes will do anything to succeed. Stamford believes that Holmes may give his friend or even himself the "latest vegetable alkaloid" (Doyle, 1887, p.11) to shape a clear understanding of its effects and harms, which clearly shows that Holmes has destructive tendencies for himself and others. He even beats a dead body, which is considered a very strange behavior that no one can do, to know the possibility of some bruises appearing on the body after death and how long they take to appear. Holmes also uses young street homeless boys as detectives and search forces, which is something considered immoral behavior, to provide him with some information related to Drabber's case. From another perception, he uses them to prove his point of view about the uselessness of the policemen to underestimate them, besides proving that what he believes and is right and true. Additionally, by observing Holmes' treatment of the six homeless boys, it becomes clear that he always uses them as an important tool for gathering information.

What caught Watson's attention is that when Holmes wants to show him how his discovery works, he uses his own blood by putting a bodkin in his finger because he needs "some fresh blood" (Doyle, 1887, p.13), although he knows very well that this is very dangerous because he is constantly dealing with different types of poisons that may seep through this wound and lead to his death. His hand, which has many pieces of plaster on it and its color has even changed as a result of the use of many strong acids, reveals that this is not the first time; he has used his blood for his own experiments.

Holmes is a workaholic man who will do anything at any time to prove the correctness of his point of view. Also, it troubles him very much that he has nothing to do. He has a unique and well-trained mind; however,

Holmes believes his greatest asset is his mind, while other aspects of life are trivial in comparison. He even describes himself as nothing but "a brain." Holmes also uses his mind as a tool to impress and get Watson's admiration in many situations, for example when he explains how he can collect the threads of the case and come to a logical explanation. For Holmes, the admiration he sees in Watson's eyes is just a reflection of his self-admiration because he admires himself and loves to see this reflection in the eyes of the people around him.

Holmes believes that he is a man of difficult tasks, and he only intervenes in the very difficult cases that the ordinary, simple policeman cannot solve. For the sake of gaining the attraction of others, Holmes trains his mind well to notice the smallest details, even the most trivial ones. Some days he works for days with full energy and without any rest; nevertheless, some days he just lies on the sofa for the whole day without doing or speaking anything. It is as if his soul is cast down, and even his sharp eyes become pale during this period. This proves that his life is very connected with his work, or he has nothing to do other than work.

One of the most important symptoms that characterize the paranoid personality is the strong belief that all people around him are always against him and plotting to hurt, exploit, and deceive him without any logical justification. In latter cases, the issue becomes more difficult to the point that the patient is afraid that someone will put poison to his food. He also believes that there is no person deserves his trust because anyone at any moment can use any information against him. As a result, he cannot be a friend to anyone and if it is necessary to have a friend, it is very expected that he will end this friendship from the first and simplest misunderstanding that occurs between them. Likewise, Holmes doubts all people and never shares any personal information with others no matter how kind or good they are because he fears that they will use it against him. Stamford tells Watson that no one knows about his work or his study or even from where he has gained this incredible knowledge. Holmes believes that there is a hidden meaning in everything, speech, and behavior around him. In Fact, this one characteristic is considered the most important characteristic of Holmes because it makes him a special character. However, this trait often



benefits him in his work, and at the end, he finds a solution to any case he faces. As a result of this suspiciousness, he cannot trust others and he does not even tell anyone about his work or his personal life: "[a]nd again my delicacy prevented me from forcing another man to confide in me" (Doyle, 1887, p.24). Many times, Watson has the opportunity to ask Holmes about the nature of his work, but each time Holmes' face reacts giving the impression that he does not welcome such a question. Even the simple information that Watson learns about his life or his work, Holmes himself tells him about it. Sometimes even the reader cannot find an answer to certain questions, for example, was he a medical student or not? And from where did he gain his knowledge? This suspiciousness makes him cannot love or trust others and very hard to have close relationships.

Freud also argued that the main reason behind paranoid suspicion is social humiliation that leads to a constant feeling without any sufficient basis that others around him have evil intentions. This puts great pressure on the patient to explain any action or behavior of others. Suspiciousness cannot be seen in trusting others and not giving personal information, but it can also be seen in not trusting his fellows. Holmes does not believe a word Lestrade and Gregson say, nor does he believe any conclusions the two reach in any case. When the ring falls from Drebber's body, Gregson complains that this will make the case more complicated, while Holmes mocks him saying that this will make the case easier. Holmes believes that he should be in the place of these two detectives and that the credit for solving the case should go to him, not to the detectives whose abilities are much less than his: "we find a large number of dangerous professions carried out by individuals without preparation or abilities, and it has also been reported that individuals with great preparations and abilities perform small, simple professions" (Khalil, 2021, P.291).

Additionally, in the latter case of paranoid disorder, the patient feels grandiosity, he is always correct, must be obeyed, must be respected, and is superior to others. Underestimating these two detectives always makes Holmes feel that he is superior. He tends to be selfish and does not allow them to work with him; rather, he always deliberately misleads them to get them out of his way and solve the case alone. In the same way,

Holmes mocks Rance a policeman who and his fellows are responsible for protecting Brixton Road:

"There's a half-sovereign for you," my companion said, standing up and taking his hat. "I am afraid. Rance, that you will never rise in the force. That head of yours should be for use as well as ornament. You might have gained your sergeant's stripes last night. The man whom you held in your hands is the man who holds the clue of this mystery, and whom we are seeking. There is no use of arguing about it now; I tell you that it is so" (Doyle, 1887, p.52).

As a policeman assigned to protect the street at night, Rance discovers the crime without knowing the full circumstances of the crime; as a result, he cannot suspect the drunk man outside the house at that time. However, Holmes mocks him harshly and describes him as a fool man.

Psychiatrists believe also that any paranoid patient has a selfish personality because he wants everyone to obey, respect, and do what he wants without any argument due to his deep feelings of suspicion. He sees the world as hostile, and he always needs to protect himself. The patient's selfish tendencies are just a mechanism to protect himself and control his feelings of insecurity or fear. He also puts his needs above others' needs. Holmes has some selfish tendencies that can be seen when he decides to use the sitting room of the apartment for his work. During their first meeting, Holmes begins to dictate to his colleague the things he will have to endure if he will live with him. This makes Watson describe his conversation as an examination to see if Watson fits his strange personality. While he and Watson have their own separate rooms at the apartment, whenever a customer visits him, he uses the sitting room as a meeting place instead of using his own room and Watson should retire to his bedroom. This disturbs Watson's freedom inside the apartment; however, during their first meeting, Holmes tells Watson about his shortcomings like smoking, not talking for a few days, and playing music to show himself as a nice person. In fact, Holmes does not tell Watson about this point beforehand to get his approval.

Freud hypothesized that social humiliation may initially cause a lack of self-confidence, but later the patient believes that this social humiliation is because he is a great person. Hence, it reverses to become a great and absolute self-admiration and self-confidence. Also, the patient believes that he deserves special attention and appreciation from society. Self-admiration and the desire to be seen as he sees himself are very clear in the first meeting between Watson and Holmes. When Holmes sees Watson and Stamford, he jumps and without any introduction declares that he has discovered something that will help the police determine whether a certain spot is a blood stain or something else, before even Stamford has the chance to introduce them. Holmes begins to showcase his experience in front of them as if he is very thirsty for someone to be with him to exert his paranoid tendencies on him. He wants to attract Watson's attention as a stranger he meets for the first time in order to prove first to himself and second to Watson that he is not an ordinary person but rather someone talented and has a different mentality. This behavior helps him maintain his self-esteem and self-confidence.

Holmes explains to the two men how this test works to attract their attention more. His delusion of greatness makes him demonstrate that his test is better than any other test that exists in the world even before it proves its effectiveness: "[w]hat do you think of that?" (Doyle, 1887, p.41). This question demonstrates Holmes' desire to know Watson's opinion of what he sees as if he is waiting for a unique compliment and praise for his effort. However, when Watson gives his opinion, Holmes shows that he does not care about his compliments as he does many times. The greatest evidence that Holmes loves praise especially that is related to his work is what Watson says about his reaction after he has praised him one time, saying:

"I shall never do that," I answered; "you have brought detection as near an exact science as it ever will be brought in this world." My companion flushed up with pleasure at my words, and the earnest way in which I uttered them. I had already observed that he was as sensitive to flattery on the score of his art as any girl could be of her beauty (Doyle, 1887, p.48).

Holmes' paranoid tendencies make him believe that he is superior to others especially people who are in the same field of work, no matter how smart or genius they are. Holmes cannot accept that there are people like him or superior to him even if they are fictional characters. When Watson puts him equally with his favorite fictional detectives Dupin and Lecoq, he seems upset and begins to criticize them harshly in order to underestimate them. Holmes does not accept Watson's compliment and describes Dupin as "a very inferior fellow" (Doyle, 1887, p.28) who has some genius in his analysis but not as much as Holmes himself. Additionally, Holmes describes Lecoq as an unhappy and anarchist person and his only good characteristic is his energy. In fact, these qualifications, which Holmes considers negative and do not qualify Lecoq to be a successful detective, are essential qualifications present in Holmes' personality as well. However, Holmes proves his arrogance and sense of superiority by demonstrating that Lecoq spent six months discovering the identity of an unknown prisoner, while he can solve the problem in less than twenty-four hours. Holmes goes very far in his superiority tendencies to the point that makes him a paranoid character by definition. He points out that he introduces countless important studies to the detection of crime and no one lived before his time or is alive now who is able to do the same.

Psychologists argue that delusions in the later case of paranoia disorder become more complex. The patient believes that he has supernatural powers and a great personality not like other people around him. Freud hypothesized that the paranoid patient maintains his self-esteem and self-confidence by seeing himself as a great person, which is just a delusion inside his mind (Sagher, 2013). Holmes' grandiosity is an important characteristic of his personality that distinguishes him as a paranoid character. He sees himself as a great character and has supernatural power with a special talent that with one glance can distinguish any person's history, profession, or craft. He also like any paranoid person believes that if he wants, he can easily be a famous person "that I have it in me to make my name famous" (Doyle, 1887, p.29). However, Holmes also believes that he is the only one in the world who works as a consulting detective, which is something very difficult or impossible to verify because he cannot be certain that there is no other

person practicing the same profession as Holmes. As the same matter with the fictional detectives, Holmes never accepts to be in the same thread with others to satisfy his sense of superiority. Holmes' mind always depicts him as great and possessing exceptional abilities, especially in his work. Holmes points out that he is superior to other detectives and even points out that Gregson "knows that I am his superior" (Doyle, 1887, p.33). This puts great pressure on Holmes because he demands himself to achieve successive successes and does not accept any misfortune.

Apparently, Holmes is praising his fellows all the time but in fact, he is mocking them, which makes them feel that they are on the right path to solve the case like when he says, "with two such men as yourself and Lestrade upon the ground, there will not be much for a third party to find out" (Doyle, 1887, p.36). This is one of Holmes' ways of belittling his fellows. He feels his greatness by belittling others who work with him in the same field; however, he feels that he can solve difficult cases and crises by looking at the evidence that other detectives bring to his apartment without leaving his room to attend the crime scene even though they see all the details by themselves. Unless there is an extremely complex case that requires him to undertake the investigation himself. As for his fellows, he always mocks them and their method of being detectives even those who are considered as the smartest detectives like Lestrade and Gregson:

Here in London we have lots of government detectives and lots of private ones. When these fellows are at fault, they come to me, and I manage to put them on the right scent. They lay all the evidence before me, and I am generally able, by the help of my knowledge of the history of crime, to set them straight (Doyle, 1887, p.26).

The same thing happens when he underestimates the importance of the police and decides to use the street boys to collect information that helps him solve several cases. For Holmes, these kids work better than the policemen: "[t]here's more work to be got out of one of those little beggars than out of a dozen of the force" (Doyle, 1887, p.66). Logically, as homeless boys and inexperienced, they cannot be better than the experienced policemen, but Holmes will do anything to belittle them and prove his point of view. Furthermore, through this way of disrespecting the efforts of others, the paranoid personality maintains his self-esteem, self-

confidence, and his sense of superiority or greatness. All the great qualities he tries to display just to fulfill the impotence in his personality, like being alone and having nothing to do other than work.

Watson's impression of Holmes is that he is terribly arrogant and proud, and it is worth noting that every time Watson tries to reduce Holmes' arrogance, he ultimately fails. For example, when they both see a man walking in the street, Watson wonders about his job, and Holmes tells him that he is a retired naval officer. Watson is very sure that Holmes said that because Watson will not be able to check whether his guess is correct or not. Even Watson suspects that it might just be a pre-planned show to impress him especially when he sees Holmes' reaction every time Watson expresses his admiration for him: "I thought from his expression that he was pleased at my evident surprise and admiration," (Doyle, 1887, p.32) even though he believes there is no good reason for him to do so. However, Holmes' paranoid tendencies force him to do various things to prove to Watson that he is a great person and worthy of being admired.

It is clear that Holmes wants to become a great person in Watson's eyes all the time and often when Watson asks him about a mystery and how he has solved it, Holmes is cautious not to tell him all the details in order to not ruin his great image in Watson's eyes:

"I'm not going to tell you much more of the case, Doctor. You know a conjurer gets no credit when once he has explained his trick; and if I show you too much of my method of working, you will come to the conclusion that I am a very ordinary individual after all" (Doyle, 1887, p.47,48).

The same thing happens when Watson and Holmes go to meet Rance, the policeman who discovers the crime. Holmes constantly interrupts him and narrates the events for him, which makes Rance very impressed by his personality. Although Holmes visits him because he wants to hear the whole story from Rance himself. Moreover, Rance thought that Holmes was standing at the crime scene and observing what was happening.

Holmes always feels that he plays a very important role in Mr. J. Drebber's case and any other cases in which he participates. Nonetheless, he makes it clear that no one appreciates his effort and intelligence, and

despite all, the glory will go to other detectives like Lestrade and Gregson. Watson watches Holmes all the time, and he notices that when he has nothing to do, he becomes very depressed and does not say a word. However, when Gregson sends him to help him solve a very difficult and confusing case, he says, "I'm not sure about whether I shall go" (Doyle, 1887, p.33).

As time passes and the condition develops further, the paranoid patient organizes his delusions into a small group of people, whom he believes are conspiring against him. Assuming that they are trying to cause him physical or emotional harm and talking badly about him. As a result, this idea of persecution is deeply rooted in his psyche. Holmes' delusion of persecution makes him very sure that after the case is solved, no one will mention his name or thank him. He feels that everyone around him is mistreating him; for instance, Gregson many times asks Holmes for help and declares that Holmes is much better than him, but he will not declare that in front of others. Throughout the course of the novel, Holmes keeps repeating this idea of being neglected by people, which supports his sense of persecution:

"Oh, bless you, it doesn't matter in the least. If the man is caught, it will be *on account* of their exertions; if he escapes, it will be *in spite* of their exertions. It's heads I win and tails you lose. Whatever they do, they will have followers." "Un sot trouve toujours un plus sot qui l'admire" (Doyle, 1887, p.65).

Consequently, the paranoid patient has a good connection with reality, which makes him smarter than others because it evokes his observation of things around him. This can be seen in his ability to find hidden meanings in the smallest and simplest things around them. Also, his ability to collect details and evidence of the place he is in and put them together to reach a specific result that is difficult for others to reach. Holmes has a high observation that allows him to see the great details that are hidden from others, and he uses it as a weapon to achieve his goals:

Individuals usually make judgments about events in the environment through the knowledge or experiences they have regarding previous events, not from careful examination of events and tracking of possibilities, but

rather intellectual judgments based on mental processing characterized by irrational possibility (Abbas, 2021, p.181).

Holmes uses a careful examination of events, unlike others who depend on their previous experience. What is seen by Lestrade and Gregson as trivial things, they are for Holmes very important and he reaches his conclusion depending on these trivial details. However, Holmes is aware that Lestrade, Gregson, and Watson see but do not observe; as a result, anyone can realize that through logical thinking and deep observation of the details, the most difficult cases can be solved. He always misleads the police and puts them on a path very far from the truth. The matter goes so far that Holmes becomes very nervous when he meets with one of the detectives to find out what they have found. For example, when Gregson informs him that they arrested the criminal he becomes very nervous but when he knows that they arrested the wrong one, a relaxed smile appears on his face. It is assumed that Holmes is there at the request of Gregson to help him and Lestrade solve the case of Mr. Drebber, but throughout the course of the novel, it becomes clear that Holmes is using them as essential elements to prove that he is intelligent and to maintain his self-esteem. It is considered something essential for any paranoid patient because of the negatives that social humiliation reflects in the patient's mentality. This forces him to do certain things or to behave in certain ways to maintain his social appearance, his good image, and his self-esteem, as Freud asserted (Oldham & Bone, 1994).

Holmes gives them a few hints, but these hints usually increase their confusion. He leads them in the wrong direction, which will only lead them to nothing. Usually, Holmes because of his high self-esteem, he does not depend on anyone to help him in his work. Even Watson, who is supposed to be his partner and friend, never tells him the detailed information of his vision of the crime in order to prevent him from participating in solving the crime:

When I returned with the pistol, the table had been cleared, and Holmes was engaged in My favorite occupation of scraping upon his violin.

"The plot thickens" he said, as I entered; "I have just had an answer to my American telegram. My view of the case is the correct one."

"And that is?" I asked eagerly.



"My fiddle would be the better for new strings," he remarked. "Put your pistol in your pocket. When the fellow comes, speak to him an ordinary way" (Doyle, 1887, p.57).

Although Holmes tells him that the telegram has been answered, Watson eagerly wants to know what they answered him. Holmes quickly speaks about another topic that has nothing to do with the case. This high observation that is found in some paranoid patients can be seen positively because his unique sense of observation makes him see different hidden details and see other clear details differently. However, this is what makes him a very successful detective.

For instance, although that Lestrade is the first one who discovers the word "RACHEL" on the wall, he incorrectly concludes to the wrong meaning that the writer has wanted to write a woman named "RACHEL." In contrast, Holmes, notes that this is an exaggerated German styling of the lettering and concludes that the murderer had written a German word that means "revenge" in order to mislead the police. Holmes in a very skillful way uses both observation and analysis in his work. However, it is not just observation and analytical skills that make him a successful detective, but also he can use them in a careful way. Like other paranoid people, he focuses his delusions on specific people whom he believes that they want to harm him. In Holmes' case, he focuses on Lestrade and Gregson because he believes that they want to climb the ladder of success at his expense. Lestrade, Gregson, and other policemen are part of Holmes' imaginary paranoid pseudo-community.

Furthermore, the paranoid patient has false beliefs in his abilities. He feels that he is a significant figure with special power and great missions. He also believes that God created him as a strong figure who can solve the most difficult problems, in addition to his sense of superiority, importance, intelligence, and self-confidence. All these reasons make it very difficult for him to admit his weakness. As a paranoid character, Holmes denied his weakness or his inability to do something. After he follows the old woman who is actually the killer he is looking for, Holmes later discovers that she has deceived him and jumps out of the cab before

he can arrest her. Actually, this is something that strongly affected his self-esteem, self-confidence, and sense of superiority. Holmes feels humiliated and fails because of his detective reasoning and his unique ways, there is no chance for failure but this time his plan fails, so he returns home disappointed. Inside Holmes' mind is deeply rooted that he is a supernatural person who can solve difficult problems. Watson notes that there is a deep feeling of insult in his voice as if someone has slapped him on his face repeatedly, without being able to catch him. Because of his delusion of greatness and the feeling that he is a unique character who owns a great mind, which is incomparable to anyone, he strongly believes that he can never fail.

As a consequence, if it goes out of what he plans and believes, he immediately gets nervous and frustrated: "[a] person may not accept much about what is going on in his life that he cannot change or fix" which leads to emotional and psychological tension much greater than the situation itself (Hindi & Murtada, 2020, p.247). As a paranoid person who strongly believes in his supernatural abilities, he always emphasizes the idea that there is no place for doubt in his findings, and there is no place for a wrong conclusion. Holmes' paranoid tendencies can be seen in his strong belief that what he thinks and believes is always right. As Freud explained, the paranoid patient always focuses on the idea that they have a mentality that is different from others, and this is what enables him to conclude things that are beyond the reach of others (Meissner, 1978). He always sees himself as someone who can never do wrong; for example, when Lestrade gives him the pillbox, Holmes wants to show them his conclusion about the case, but after the plan fails. Holmes seems very angry and nervous that Watson feels pity on him because he cannot accept that and the "the cover of normalcy which [he] has been keeping can no longer hide [his] inner fragility" (Hussein, p.581):

"It can't be a coincidence," he cried, at last springing from his chair and pacing wildly up and down the room; "it is impossible that it should be a mere coincidence. The very pills which I suspected in the case of Drebbler are actually found after the death of Stangerson. And yet they are inert. What can it mean? Surely my whole chain of reasoning cannot have been

false. It is impossible! And yet this wretched dog is none the worse" (Doyle, 1887, p.80).

As Freud had explained, the patient uses the projection as a mechanism that enables him to ignore self-blame and feelings of weakness. Holmes' behaviors are just ways of projection that he uses because when his plan fails, he cannot accept self-blaming and believes that there is something wrong with the things around him but not with him. He uses projection as a mechanism from what is inside him, like fear of humiliation, failure, and feeling less than others. He uses this mechanism as a result of his need to deny his weakness.

The most important question here is: does Holmes have a supernatural mind which makes him a supernatural person, as his paranoid tendencies force him to believe? Or does he reach all these conclusions because of his intense effort? In fact, being a professional person requires many years of serious hard work and investing a lot of time working. However, any person cannot be a professional from the first day. Holmes cannot be an exception to this established rule; his experience is a result of many years of hard work and learning as he spends many days working in the laboratory. This is what explains his knowledge in different fields, but because his paranoid tendencies control him tightly, this leads him to believe that he has a supernatural power and superior mentality. In fact, Holmes cares about his self-development: "individuals with a high level of personal growth initiative show an interest in improving themselves, engaging in motivating and changing their attitudes regularly" (Edan & Rabee', 2022, p.127). On one hand, he has talent and intelligence, and these two features play an important role in shaping his mind, but on the other hand, it is not possible to rely entirely on talent and intelligence alone without hard work like what the paranoid patient believes. Rather, they must be refined well, and this is the main factor that makes Holmes have a unique mentality. Unfortunately, Holmes' paranoid tendencies make him aside his efforts and hard-working to fulfill the desire of these tendencies to be a supernatural person and different from others.

As a result, Holmes' paranoid tendencies make him believe that God created him in this way, a supernatural person, and cannot compare himself

with others because he is superior. Holmes has a serious problem with confessing there is someone better than him. He finds it very difficult to confirm to himself before others that he gains his knowledge by hard work, which helps him maintain his self-esteem and gain admiration. He devotes a very long time for many days to practicing in the laboratory, which gives him superior knowledge to others:

During some periods of his life, the individual goes through changing and different emotional states, as these states are formed from a mixture of different or conflicting emotions, motives, and desires such as sadness and joy, calm and anger, and love and hate. Some of these emotional states are negative and have harmful effects on the individual and society (Hassan, 2022, p.152).

Holmes often experiences this state of altered emotions that is harmful to his soul.

### **Conclusion**

Although Holmes has paranoid tendencies, they can be seen positively because he is "full of high purposes and heroic illusions" (Azeez, 2013, p.221). His strange and unique behaviors make him possess a trait called "prosocial behavior" (W. JenePradana & Widya, 2015) that leads him to help society and all the people around him because of his unique ability to solve different cases. In the beginning, Holmes' goal is to occupy himself with solving cases and get away from the boring and constant life routine. Watson notes that there are many people from different classes visiting him every day, later Holmes explains to him that these people are just customers who come to ask Holmes for assist to solve a specific problem in their lives. However, later this habit develops to provide benefits to others and help not only policemen but the whole society as well.

When Lestrade and Gregson cannot solve certain cases, they immediately ask for Holmes' help, and he always succeeds in reaching and arresting the killer. Each time Holmes solves a specific case, he serves society by throwing a criminal in prison and holding him accountable for his crime who may commit other crimes. Moreover, people keep discovering new tools to help humanity in different aspects of life. After Holmes discovers a new way to identify bloodstains, this discovery can be

considered a new achievement to help others. His prosocial behavior can be seen when Watson says after Holmes announces that he has found a reagent that precipitates with blood only: "[h]ad he discovered a gold mine, greater delight could not have shone upon his feature" (Doyle, 1887, p.12,13). Additionally, the same thing when he explains to Watson and Stamford that if this discovery had existed before, hundreds of criminals who enjoyed their freedom would have paid the price for the crimes they committed. On the contrary, there are many innocent people in prison. Generally speaking, it can be said that Holmes was able to fight crimes in London alongside Lestrade, Gregson, and the policemen. However, it is worth noting that Holmes does not receive any financial sum most of the time.

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## رواية (دراسة في اللون القرمزي): الكشف عن الشخصية الارتياحية لشيرلوك هولمز

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### المستخلص

رواية بوليسية نُشرت لأول مرة عام 1887، تدور أحداث الرواية في أواخر القرن التاسع عشر، عنوانها مشتق من حديث شيرلوك هولمز عندما وصف لصديقه الدكتور واتسون ان التحقيق في أي قضية قتل بأنه "دراسة في اللون القرمزي" (دويل، 1887، ص 53). قدم كونان دويل شخصية عادية تمتعت بقدرات تحليلية، وبوليسية غير عادية لحل القضايا المعقدة، وتحدي الطرق التقليدية التي يستخدمها رجال الشرطة. كان هولمز يعمل محققاً استشارياً، والذي سيصبح أهم، وأشهر محقق في الأدب الإنجليزي. تستكشف الرواية موضوعات مختلفة، مثل الجريمة، وتأثير المجتمع على السلوكيات الإجرامية، وفعالية العلم في حل الجرائم، والفرق بين النظر، والملاحظة. يستكشف هذا البحث وفقاً لأعراض معينة، سلوكيات البارنويا (جنون الارتياب)، التي يعاني منها هولمز.

الكلمات الدالة: الإعجاب، الإهانة، الشك، الثقة، الأنانية، الوهم.