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图书基本信息

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内容概要

His Last Bow，中文译名为《最后的致意》，这是一部充满传奇、冒险与智慧的侦探故事，它由英国著名侦探小说家、“英国侦探小说之父”阿瑟·柯南·道尔编著。

在充满雾气的伦敦贝克街上，住着一位富有正义感的侦探福尔摩斯。

他和他忠实的医生朋友华生一起经历了无数千奇百怪的案子，制造了许多经典的侦探故事。

《最后的致意》便是其中的一部。

该书被公认为世界侦探小说的经典之作，至今已被译成世界上多种文字，并曾经多次被改编成电影。

书中所展现主人公福尔摩斯的传奇故事伴随了一代又一代人的美丽童年、少年直至成年。

无论作为语言学习的课本，还是作为通俗的文学读本，本书对当代中国读者，特别是青少年读者都将产生积极的影响。

为了使读者能够了解英文故事概况，进而提高阅读速度和阅读水平，在每章的开始部分增加了中文导读。

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章节摘录

威斯特里亚寓所 The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge 第一章 约翰先生的独特经历 Chapter 1
The Singular Experience of Mr. John Scott Eccles 一八九二年末的一个午餐时间，福尔摩斯收到一位名叫约翰·史考特·艾克立斯的电报，说自己有一次奇怪的经历，要来请教。

于是他草草地回了电报。

一会儿，一个身材高大、长着灰胡子的人走进来，谈起了自己遇到的很奇特的事。

福尔摩斯请史考特·艾克立斯先生坐下，问他发生了什么事。

福尔摩斯从他的打扮中看出他一早就碰到了不愉快的事，便问他为什么现在才来？

他理了理头发说自己一早去了房地产公司，加西亚的房租已缴，威斯特里亚寓所一切正常。

福尔摩斯让他从头讲起。

这时，葛里格森探长来到，向福尔摩斯介绍了舍瑞郡的贝恩斯警探。

探长说他们正在追踪疑犯，说着眼睛落在了艾克立斯身上，又说是为威斯特里亚寓所的艾洛埃雪斯·加西亚昨晚死亡一案而来。

探长说死者的口袋有史考特·艾克立斯的一封信，知道他昨晚在那里过夜。

福尔摩斯告诉探长，艾克立斯刚才正准备叙述经过，现在应让他说完。

于是史考特·艾克立斯接着说自己是单身汉，一天，在退休的酿酒商麦尔菲家的饭桌上认识了西班牙人加西亚。

两人很投缘，两天后加西亚去找他玩，后来又邀请他去威斯特里亚寓所住几天，昨晚他便去了。

史考特·艾克立斯开车去了那里，加西亚热情地接他进去，一个凶悍 1. THE SINGULAR EXPERIENCE OF MR. JOHN SCOTT ECCLES find it recorded in my notebook that it was a bleak and windy day towards the end of March in the year 1892. Holmes had received a telegram while we sat at our lunch, and he had scribbled a reply. He made no remark, but the matter remained in his thoughts, for he stood in front of the fire afterwards with a thoughtful face, smoking his pipe, and casting an occasional glance at the message. Suddenly he turned upon me with a mischievous twinkle in his eyes. "I suppose, Watson, we must look upon you as a man of letters," said he. "How do you define the word grotesque?" "Strange—remarkable," I suggested. He shook his head at my definition. "There is surely something more than that," said he; "some underlying suggestion of the tragic and the terrible. If you cast your mind back to some of those narratives with which you have afflicted a long-suffering public, you will recognize how often the grotesque has deepened into the criminal. Think of that little affair of the red-headed men. That was grotesque enough in the outset, and yet it ended in a desperate attempt at robbery. Or, again, there was that most grotesque affair of the five orange pips, which led straight to a murderous Conspiracy. The word puts me on the alert." "Have you it there?" I asked. He read the telegram aloud. "Have just had most incredible and grotesque experience. May I consult you?" "SCOTT ECCLES, "Post-Office, Charing Cross." "Man or woman?" I asked. "Oh, man, of course. No woman would ever send a reply paid telegram. She would have come." "Will you see him?" "My dear Watson, you know how bored I have been since we locked up Colonel Car-ruthers. My mind is like a racing engine, tearing itself to pieces because it is not connected up with the work for which it was built. Life is commonplace; the papers are sterile; audacity and romance seem to have passed forever from the criminal world. Can you ask me, then, whether I am ready to look into any new problem, however trivial it may prove? But here, unless I am mistaken, is our client." A measured step was heard upon the stairs, and a moment later a stout, tall, gray-whiskered and solemnly respectable person was ushered into the room. His life history was written in his heavy features and pompous manner. From his spats to his gold-rimmed spectacles he was a Conservative, a churchman, a good citizen, orthodox and conventional to the last degree. But some amazing experience had disturbed his native composure and left its traces in his bristling hair, his flushed, angry cheeks, and his flurried, excited manner. He plunged instantly into his business. "I have had a most singular and unpleasant experience, Mr. Holmes," said he. "Never in my life have I been placed in such a situation. It is most improper—most outrageous. I must insist upon some

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explanation." He swelled and puffed in his anger. "Pray sit down, Mr. Scott Eccles," said Holmes in a soothing voice. "May I ask, in the first place, why you came to me at all?" "Well, sir, it did not appear to be a matter which concerned the police, and yet, when you have heard the facts, you must admit that I could not leave it where it was. Private detectives are a class with whom I have absolutely no sympathy, but none the less, having heard your name—" "Quite so. But, in the second place, why did you not come at once?"

"What do you mean?" Holmes glanced at his watch. "It is a quarter-past two," he said. "Your telegram was dispatched about one. But no one can glance at your toilet and attire without seeing that your disturbance dates from the moment of your waking." Our client smoothed down his unbrushed hair and felt his unshaven chin.

"You are right, Mr. Holmes. I never gave a thought to my toilet. I was only too glad to get out of such a house. But I have been running round making inquiries before I came to you. I went to the house agents, you know, and they said that Mr. Garcia's rent was paid up all right and that everything was in order at Wisteria Lodge." "Come, come, sir," said Holmes, laughing. "You are like my friend, Dr. Watson, who has a bad habit of telling his stories wrong end foremost. Please arrange your thoughts and let me know, in their due sequence, exactly what those events are which have sent you out unbrushed and unkempt, with dress boots and waistcoat buttoned awry, in search of advice and assistance," Our client looked down with a rueful face at his own unconventional appearance. "I'm sure it must look very bad, Mr. Holmes, and I am not aware that in my whole life such a thing has ever happened before. But I will tell you the whole queer business, and when I have done so you will admit, I am sure, that there has been enough to excuse me." But his narrative was nipped in the bud. There was a bustle outside, and Mrs. Hudson opened the door to usher in two robust and official-looking individuals, one of whom was well known to us as Inspector Gregson of Scotland Yard, an energetic, gallant, and, within his limitations, a capable officer. He shook hands with Holmes and introduced his comrade as Inspector Baynes, of the Surrey Constabulary.

"We are hunting together, Mr. Holmes, and our trail lay in this direction." He turned his bulldog eyes upon our visitor. "Are you Mr. John Scott Eccles, of Popham House, Lee?" "I am." "We have been following you about all the morning." "You traced him through the telegram, no doubt," said Holmes. "Exactly, Mr. Holmes. We picked up the scent at Charing Cross Post-Office and came on here." "But why do you follow me? What do you want?" "We wish a statement, Mr. Scott Eccles, as to the events which led up to the death last night of Mr. Aloysius Garcia, of Wisteria Lodge, near Esher." Our client had sat up with staring eyes and every tinge of colour struck from his astonished face. "Dead? Did you say he was dead?" "Yes, sir, he is dead."

"But how? An accident?" "Murder, if ever there was one upon earth." "Good God!

This is awful!

You don't mean—you don't mean that I am suspected?" "A letter of yours was found in the dead man's pocket, and we know by it that you had planned to pass last night at his house." "So I did." "Oh, you did, did you?" Out came the official notebook. "Wait a bit, Gregson," said Sherlock Holmes. "All you desire is a plain statement, is it not?" "And it is my duty to warn Mr. Scott Eccles that it may be used against him." "Mr. Eccles was going to tell us about it when you entered the room. I think, Watson, a brandy and soda would do him no harm. Now, sir, I suggest that you take no notice of this addition to your audience, and that you proceed with your narrative exactly as you would have done had you never been interrupted."

Our visitor had gulped off the brandy and the colour had returned to his face. With a dubious glance at the inspectors' notebook, he plunged at once into his extraordinary statement. "I am a bachelor," said he, "and being of a sociable turn I cultivate a large number of friends. Among these are the family of a retired brewer called Melville, living at Albemarle Mansion, Kensington. It was at his table that I met some weeks ago a young fellow named Garcia. He was, I understood, of Spanish descent and connected in some way with the embassy. He spoke perfect English, was pleasing in his manners, and as good-looking a man as ever I saw in my life."

"In some way we struck up quite a friendship, this young fellow and I. He seemed to take a fancy to me from the first, and within two days of our meeting he came to see me at Lee. One thing led to another, and it ended in his inviting me out to spend a few days at his house, Wisteria Lodge, between Esher and Oxshott. Yesterday

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evening I went to Esher to fulfil this engagement. "He had described his household to me before I went there. He lived with a faithful servant , a countryman of his own , who looked after all his needs. This fellow could speak English and did his housekeeping for him. Then there was a wonderful cook , he said , a half-breed whom he had picked up in his travels , who could serve an excellent dinner. I remember that he remarked what a queer household it was to find in the heart of Surrey , and that I agreed with him , though it has proved a good deal queerer than I thought. "I drove to the place—about two miles on the south side of Esher. The house was a fair-sized one , standing back from the road , with a curving drive which was banked with high ever-green shrubs. It was an old , tumble-down building in a crazy state of disrepair. When the trap pulled up on the grass-grown drive in front of the blotched and weather-stained door , I had doubts as to my wisdom in visiting a man whom I knew so slightly. He opened the door himself , however , and greeted me with a great show of cordiality. I was handed over to the manservant , a melancholy , swarthy individual , who led the way , my bag in his hand , to my bedroom. The whole place was depressing. Our dinner was t ê te-a-t ê te , and though my host did his best to be entertaining , his thoughts seemed to continually wander , and he talked so vaguely and wildly that I could hardly understand him. He continually drummed his fingers on the table , gnawed his nails , and gave other signs of nervous impatience. The dinner itself was neither well served nor well cooked , and the gloomy presence of the taciturn servant did not help to enliven us. I can assure you that many times in the course of the evening I wished that I could invent some excuse which would take me back to Lee. "One thing comes back to my memory which may have a bearing upon the business that you two gentlemen are investigating. I thought nothing of it at the time. Near the end of dinner a note was handed in by the servant. I noticed that after my host had read it he seemed even more distraught and strange than before. He gave up all pretence at conversation and sat , smoking endless cigarettes , lost in his own thoughts , but he made no remark as to the contents. About eleven I was glad to go to bed. Some time later Garcia looked in at my door—the room was dark at the time—and asked me if I had rung. I said that I had not. He apologized for having disturbed me so late , saying that it was nearly one o'clock. I dropped off after this and slept soundly all night. "And now I come to the amazing part of my tale. When I woke it was broad daylight. I glanced at my watch , and the time was nearly nine. I had particularly asked to be called at eight , so I was very much astonished at this forgetfulness. I sprang up and rang for the servant. There was no response. I rang again and again , with the same result. Then I came to the conclusion that the bell was out of order. I huddled on my clothes and hurried downstairs in an exceedingly bad temper to order some hot water. You can imagine my surprise when I found that there was no one there. I shouted in the hall. There was no answer. Then I ran from room to room. All were deserted. My host had shown me which was his bedroom the night before , so I knocked at the door. No reply. I turned the handle and walked in. The room was empty , and the bed had never been slept in. He had gone with the rest. The foreign host , the foreign foot-man , the foreign cook , all had vanished in the night !

That was the end of my visit to Wisteria Lodge.

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