

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 Wisateria 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 waist-