



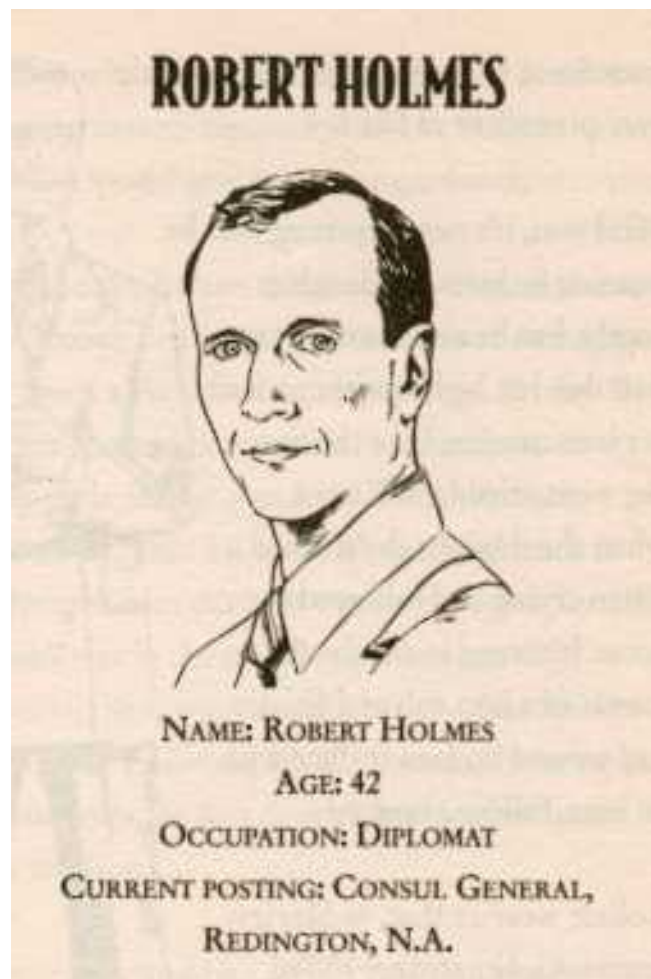
## The Essential Case File : Character Profiles Robert Holmes

NAME : ROBERT HOLMES  
AGE : 42  
OCCUPATION : DIPLOMAT  
CURRENT POSTING : CONSUL GENERAL, REDINGTON, N.A

Robert Holmes has two full time jobs : the first as Shirley's father, and the second as a diplomat ..... and it's difficult to know which is harder work ! he certainly makes a great effort in both - sometimes to the point of being a little over-protective of Shirley.

Mind you, it's not surprising that he worries; he loves his daughter deeply, but also knows very well that her high spirits can lead her into trouble. Like the time she went missing in Kenya, when she thought she heard a kitten crying and followed the noise. It turned out to be the mews of a lion cub and Shirley had wound up face-to-face with an irate, full-sized lioness.

Robert worries that, as Shirley grows up, her strong-willed nature will clash with the expectations of society. He doesn't want to dampen her spirits, but he does want her to get along in the world. That's why he enrolled her at Sussex Academy, hoping that its reputation as an excellent school would give her some guidance.



These days Robert tries to keep his travel to a minimum, but he still works abroad a number of times a year. During these times, Shirley either stays at home with her grandma, or boards at Sussex until he's back. However, after his last trip, the head teacher informed him that she was positive that Shirley had snuck out in the middle of the night. Of course, there was no solid proof - but Robert can't help believing Ms Stratmann all the same. Sometimes, he just doesn't know what to do for the best.

He may sound like an old fuss pot, but he can't help being cautious as he still hasn't got over losing his wife, Joanna - Shirley's mum. After three years, he still misses her terribly. So it's no wonder he tries to keep a close eye on Shirley.

Robert knows that Shirley wants to follow in her great-great uncle's footsteps, but he has no idea that it's practically a full-time occupation ! It's true that his daughter takes after the famous detective, but she also takes after her mother. Joanna was a fearless, headstrong individual - and look what happened to her ! he can't bear the thought of losing them both.

Shirley feels bad that she has to sneak around behind her dad's back to keep up her sleuthing - but, then again, what he doesn't know can't hurt him. And she's certainly not going to give up her detective work for anyone !