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# SHERLOCK HOLMES and the Case of the CHRISTMAS ANGELS

*Based on the Characters created by  
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*

by

**Charles Caratti**

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# SHERLOCK HOLMES and the Case of the Christmas Angels

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

**6F / 9M / 7 M or F**

**+ Carolers & Dancers**

(Double Casting Possible)

SHERLOCK HOLMES: *The legendary consulting detective*

DR. JOHN WATSON: *Holmes' friend and chronicler*

MARY WATSON: *Spouse of John Watson and Head of Nursing at the London Foundling Hospital for Exposed and Deserted Children*

MRS. HUDSON: *221B Baker St. landlady*

SHERRINFORD HOLMES (SPIRIT): *Holmes' eldest sibling and guide to the past (M or F)*

THE AUCTIONEER (SPIRIT): *Holmes' second guide (M or F)*

PROF. JAMES MORIARTY (SPIRIT): *Crime lord, perennial Holmes nemesis, and Holmes' guide to the future*

YOUNG HOLMES: *Sherlock Holmes as a young man*

IRENE ADLER: *Reputed to be the St. John's Wood cat burglar*

AGNES HORSTON: *Director of Philanthropy at the children's hospital*

GEORGE SUMMERS: *A new intern at the children's hospital*

SERGEANT LESTRADE: *A young- to middle-aged London policeman*

JANE (or JOE) BLIGH: *A thief (M or F)*

LUCY BROWN: *A thief*

ABBIE THOMSON: *A thief*

DR. BRIXTON: *A doctor at the children's hospital*

MORIARTY CAPTAIN: *A high-ranking criminal in one of Moriarty's early smuggling operations*

OFFICER JENKINS: *A London bobby*

FINLEY OAKES: *A youngster, a 'Baker Street Irregular' (M or F)*

FINLEY OAKES (ADULT): *Twenty years later, still a 'Baker Street Irregular' (M or F)*

PARTY GUEST 1: *Attendee at Mrs. Hudson's Baker Street Christmas party (M or F)*

PARTY GUEST 2: *Another attendee at party (M or F)*

CAROLERS: *Four cast members including Mary Watson*

DANCERS: *Three or four couples from the cast*

## SETTING

*Victoria-era London*

## **SCENES**

### ACT I

SCENE 1: THOSE WHO CAN'T DO

SCENE 2: THE ELDEST SIBLING

SCENE 3: THE 6:32AM SOLUTION

SCENE 4: THE DUCHESS' HOLIDAY MASQUERADE BALL

SCENE 5: THE RELUCTANT BENEFACTOR

SCENE 6: FOLLOWING THE SIGNS

### INTERMISSION

### ACT II

SCENE 1: ANOTHER MORIARTY

SCENE 2: THE AMATEUR SLEUTHS

SCENE 3: NO HOME ON CHRISTMAS MORNING

SCENE 4: A CLEVER NAME

SCENE 5: A DREAM

SCENE 6: SO MUCH TO DO

SCENE 7: SLIGHT THINGS

SCENE 8: THE GAME'S AFOOT... AGAIN!

## **PROPERTIES AND FURNITURE LIST**

*Following Script*

# Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Angels

by Charles Caratti

## PROLOGUE

*(With an English accent)*

In the moments remaining before the show begins, we hope you might consider purchasing a beverage or treat from our concession stand. Regrettably we are all out of figgy pudding, but many other goodies are available.

## ACT I

### SCENE 1: THOSE WHO CAN'T DO...

AT RISE: *SHERLOCK HOLMES' ROOMS AT 221B  
BAKER ST. – EVENING. ALSO THE STREET  
WITHOUT.*

*A signpost is placed roughly CSR with opposing signs reading Baker Street and Westminster. Two street lamps (If available) are placed On either end of the stage.*

*Roughly CS are two armchairs where Holmes and Watson have spent many hours in the past discussing cases. Slightly SR of center stands a traditional English fireplace with mantel. Several items are place on the mantel. In the very center is a medium-sized ornate Silver box that looks as if the contents bear some importance. Also on the mantel are a magnifying glass, a meerschaum pipe, a couple reference books, a spyglass, and a microscope. A black, classic English umbrella is hanging upside down by its handle off the SL end of the mantel or in an umbrella stand near a doorway located SL.*

*Just SL of center is a window with translucent curtains which can be opened or closed; beneath it a small table. On the table is a Bunsen burner and stand along with a sizable chemical flask containing liquid of some sort sealed with a cork.*

*Between the fireplace and the window is a coat rack. Hanging on the coat rack are Holmes' signature Inverness cloak and deerstalker hat.*

*CAROLERS enter the theater and make their way to stage. They form a huddle and talk among themselves. After a few moments, a woman, MARY WATSON, who appears to be the group's leader, arranges them apparently in preparation for performing another carol. MARY inhales deeply and speaks.*

MARY WATSON

Bein' as you were all so nice and such while we were singin' outside... (*Gestures "outside"*)...out there in the snow, we hope we might perform one more Christmas song for you.

*CAROLERS sing "Here We Come a Wassailing" or a similar traditional English Christmas carol or song. As the song ends, the CAROLERS look very pleased with themselves, surprised even.*

MARY WATSON (*Cont'd*)

Well, that were a right proper job!

CAROLER 1

Absobloodylootely brilliant!

CAROLER 2

Thoroughly good and welly!

CAROLER 3

I'm chuffed to bits!

*SFX: bell rings seven times.*

CAROLER 1

*(Looking; pointing)*

Oh, Mary. There's ol' Ben.

CAROLER 2

Best pack it in. Gettin' dark.

CAROLER 3

Yeah, pretty soon the pea soup'll be rollin' in... thicker'n...

CAROLER 1

... uh... pea soup?!

*EVERYONE laughs. MARY begins to collect herself as if to leave.*

MARY WATSON

Best get supper started. *(Beat)* Dr. John Watson likes his supper on the table by 7:30 sharp! *(Chuckles)* And every-once-in-a-while, I actually do it!

*The CAROLERS give one another hugs and goodbyes.*

CAROLER 1

Cheerio! Merry Christmas, Mary!

CAROLER 2

Tata! Merry Christmas!

CAROLER 3

Toodle pip, Mary! Merry Christmas!

MARY WATSON

Merry Christmas, everyone!

*CAROLERS 1, 2, and 3 exit. MARY remains DSC for a moment, continuing to collect herself before her own departure.*

*SFX: Ominous music/thunder.*

*MARY is suddenly aware of something which appears to upset her. Something dark and nameless. She looks SL and shudders. Finally, she crosses herself and exits in the opposite direction of the perceived threat*

*LIGHTS FADE OUT.*

*SFX: Music builds;*

*LIGHTS UP. MORIARTY enters. He is elegantly appointed; dressed immaculately in a black tux or suit, and a black top hat. He might also be appointed with other accessories, but all black. The only item which is not black is his cane, which is pure white. He bows deeply and somewhat facetiously.*

### MORIARTY

Welcome. Professor James Moriarty, your duteous servant and host for the tableau vivant about to be laid before you. (*Chuckles grimly*) I am well aware that some might attribute a certain degree of irony to the fact that an investigation of the (*Almost sarcastically*) greatest criminologist the world has ever known would be prefaced by none other than (*With a flourish*) the greatest criminal the world has ever known. (*Bows*) Don't take my word for it; it was none other than Sherlock Holmes himself who declared me to be – how did he put it? “The Napoleon of crime with a brain of the first order” – and that if he could merely free society of me, he would feel that his own career had reached its summit. (*Flustered*) Well, I must say, I'd be flattered if he hadn't felt the need to add that part about my having (*Suddenly angry*) “hereditary tendencies and a criminal strain in my blood that has been rendered infinitely more dangerous by my extraordinary mental powers.” (*Pedantically*) Sherlock Holmes is my natural enemy. I didn't choose him and he didn't choose me. We're like the fox and the hare. The fox is the natural enemy of the hare. A formidable and redoubtable foe. (*Leans forward as if sharing gossip; holds up one finger*) The only difference is, ONE of us refuses to acknowledge that he is the prey and not the predator... (*Holds up second finger*) And there's one other difference: While the ancient contest between the fox and hare is executed entirely without malice... (*Seethes; makes fist*)... I. HATE. Sherlock. Holmes. I detest all that he is and all that he purports to stand for. (*Collects himself*) But where have I gotten myself off to? This is supposed to be a joyous and blessed time of year! –at least that's what all the Christmas cards no one sends me say! (*Chuckles and gestures toward doorway; with false cheer*) For my act of contrition, how about a little Christmas lilt?

*SFX: A recognizable Christmas tune plays, its melody performed with a violin.*

*SPOT UP on SHERLOCK HOLMES, playing a violin, obscured behind a translucent curtain covering the window.*

*MORIARTY dances to the music, gesturing to the silhouette.*

### MORIARTY (*Cont'd*)

I hope you will enjoy witnessing – as you can be sure I will – the complete demolition of a once mighty intellect. (*Beat*) An end which I am proud to say I had no small part in bringing about.

*MORIARTY bows and exits. At his exit, there plays a loud, angry scrape across the strings of the violin as HOLMES bellows “Arrgh”*

*HOLMES bursts through the doorway. He is dressed in the typical manner of a Victorian Era English gentleman. He crosses toward the fireplace as if he might be preparing to toss the instrument into the fire.*



SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

Not even my Stradivarius is enough to soothe me anymore!

*HOLMES demurs and places the instrument on the mantel. He throws himself frustrated into the armchair. He frets for a short moment, then gets up, goes to the mantel, and picks up the silver box, but just as he's about to open it, MRS. HUDSON, Holmes' landlady, yells from off.*

MRS. HUDSON

*(Yelling)*  
SHERLOCK HOLMES!

*MRS. HUDSON, Holmes' enters. She is carrying a feather duster and a poinsettia plant. She immediately plops the plant down on the table, then begins moving through the room dusting everything in sight, seemingly more to irritate Holmes than to clean. She shoots him occasional looks to see if he's paying attention.*

MRS. HUDSON (*Cont'd*)

*(Coughs)*  
The dust in here is thick enough to plant potatoes!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Wearily)*  
I'm a very busy man, Mrs. Hudson. I can't have you fluffing about. *(Places the box back on the mantel)*

MRS. HUDSON

Sherlock Holmes, I did NOT rent you these rooms so that you could sit around and mope *(Gestures to box)* and do Lord knows what else all day long! *(Continues to dust)*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

So long as you receive your rent in a timely manner my habits should be of no concern to you.

MRS. HUDSON

*(Tenderly)*  
Well... 'sides, love, I worry about ya. Plenty of folks do. *(Wags finger)* But 'afore long, they'll stop worryin' *(Pokes finger at him)* and start forgettin' you ever even existed. Now, wouldn't that be the pity?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

How people do or do not regard me is of supreme unimportance to me, Mrs. Hudson.

MRS. HUDSON

Well, maybe it's time it were... again! And all your strange goings-on of late have got me guts all tied in a knot, they have. My digestion's shot, it is! *(Gestures to her belly)* It's ruinin' me constitution!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

And I most certainly refuse to accept blame for your...constitutional crisis.

MRS. HUDSON

*(Picking at his form)*

And from your pallid color, some good Berkshire beef would do you no harm. As me mum used to say, "Death will come if you lead him on." You keep doin' like you're doin' and it'll take ten years off your life. And considerin' you look like you only got five left, that means... *(Calculates)*... you been dead for five already!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Mrs. Hudson...

*MRS. HUDSON gestures to the Bunsen burner and flask on the table.*

MRS. HUDSON

And then there's all your *(Spooky)* unnatural experimentin'! *(Beat)* Test tubes, pointy needles, explodin' chemicals, *(Beat)*, dead body parts, *(Beat)* LIVE body parts! *(Beat)* Explodin' dead body parts!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Dryly)*

You keep this up, Mrs. Hudson, and there'll be exploding LIVE body parts.

MRS. HUDSON

*(Continuing)*

It's no wonder I've had to cancel the Baker Street Christmas party the past three years runnin'!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Shouts)*

The last thing I need is a lot of people sticking their noses where they don't bel...

*LIGHTS FADE on HOLMES and MRS. HUDSON as they continue to argue.*

*LIGHTS RISE on DR. JOHN WATSON and DR. BRIXTON approaching the door to Holmes' rooms. WATSON is dressed in tweeds and woolens while BRIXTON is wearing a doctor's white coat and carrying a small doctor's bag.*

WATSON

Dr. Brixton, our bumping into one another was providential! I will confess that I held little hope of success before we met but, now, with both of us pleading our case, he can't possibly refuse.

*HOLMES and MRS. HUDSON have gotten themselves more worked up. HOLMES grabs the umbrella hanging nearby.*

BRIXTON

I pray you are right. *(Beat)* He is famously stubborn.

WATSON

Yes, it's true that Holmes can be a great thick head... but I am convinced that if we present ourselves in a logical and forceful manner, he can be counted on to do what is right.

BRIXTON

Dr. Watson, your optimism is contagious!

WATSON

*(Chuckles)*

Good! Now, look, wait here five minutes and follow me inside.

*BRIXTON nods and pulls out a pocket watch and checks it.*

*LIGHTS UP as WATSON enters.*

WATSON *(Cont'd)*

Merry Chris... !

*WATSON is greeted by the sight of HOLMES and MRS. HUDSON locked in faux-combat; MRS. HUDSON apparently about to hit HOLMES with her feather duster and HOLMES holding up the opened umbrella for protection.*

*WATSON waits a beat, then says with genuine emotion:*

WATSON *(Cont'd)*

My God, I've missed you two!

*Turning away from Mrs. Hudson, HOLMES looks surprised to see Watson. They lower their 'weapons.' HOLMES closes the umbrella and sets it on the table. WATSON extends his arms.*

WATSON (*Cont'd*)

Merry Christmas Holmes, Mrs. Hudson! God love it!

*WATSON grabs Holmes' hand before he can react and shakes it enthusiastically.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Watson... I... I thought you were in...

WATSON

India?! No, no. Mary and I have been returned for a fortnight, now, Holmes. She cut her sabbatical short after receiving some very bad news from the hospital...

*WATSON attempts to quickly springboard into the purpose of his visit. He takes a deep breath and plows ahead:*

WATSON (*Cont'd*)

... which, as it just so happens, is a primary reason I'm calling on you today. I want to speak with you ab...

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I can see where this is heading.... Doctor...

*The tension is broken (Not very well) by MRS. HUDSON.*

MRS. HUDSON

Been writin' at all, Dr. Watson? Sure could use one of those thrillin' adventures o' yers... !

WATSON

Well, now, Mrs. Hudson. That would require that I had something – or someONE –to write ABOUT, wouldn't it? (*Casually*) And what have you been up to, Holmes?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Oh, odds and sods. Quite a lot actually. (*Unconvincingly*) I... er... um...

MRS. HUDSON

'Ee's been sittin' on 'is big fat DUFF 'ee has and – you can strike me dead for sayin' it! – indulgin' his Bohemian habits! (*Tsks*) Skulkin' about London all hours of the night!

WATSON

*(Like a doctor)*

Been sleepwalking again, Sherlock?

*HOLMES opens his mouth to speak but is again cut off by Mrs. Hudson.*

MRS. HUDSON

We both seen him like this before, doctor, but never such as this!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Warning)*

Exploding live body parts, Mrs. Hudson...

*MRS. HUDSON squeals and hides behind Watson.*

WATSON

Er... what? *(Moves on)* Now, look, Holmes... I've got a case for you; one of immense importance. Something that would change countless lives for the bett—

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Cuts off Watson)*

No thank you, Watson.

WATSON

But this is urgent, Holmes; something that only you—

SHERLOCK HOLMES

We've talked about this.

WATSON

We talked about it three years ago!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Sighs)*

Watson... !

WATSON

Now, look here, Holmes. Even in your – your cave here – I'm certain you've heard about the Angels...

MRS. HUDSON

Oooo! The Angels! I read about 'em just today in the Times, din't I? *(Brushes away an imaginary tear)* Just about the saddest thing I ever heard! *(Ordering him)* Sherlock Holmes, you should... !

*As MRS. HUDSON is speaking, HOLMES crosses to the table and picks up the flask containing the colored liquid and jiggles it menacingly in her direction.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Mrs. Hudson, in this flask there is enough South American curare extract to kill one thousand...

MRS. HUDSON

I'm goin'! I'm goin'!

*DR. BRIXTON checks his pocket watch, then enters the doorway.*

*MRS. hurriedly rushes to the SL doorway, bumping directly into DR. BRIXTON as he enters.*

MRS. HUDSON (*Cont'd*)

*(Flustered)*

Oh! Good evenin,' sir! A merry Christmas to you!

BRIXTON

And a merry Christmas to you as well, madam!

MRS. HUDSON

*(Coquettishly)*

Well, this looks as if things might get interesting... perhaps I'll just stay a little while longer...

*HOLMES again jiggles the flask of 'curare.'*  
*MRS. HUDSON squeals and runs out the doorway.*

*HOLMES checks to make certain Mrs. Hudson has left then, without comment, uncorks the flask and drinks down its contents. Again without comment, he wipes his mouth with the back of his hand, recorks the flask, and sets it back on the Bunsen burner stand.*

*Despite himself, WATSON, stifles a smile; he's seen Holmes do this before.*

*BRIXTON crosses closer to Holmes, extending his hand. HOLMES does not reciprocate.*

WATSON

Uh... Sherlock Holmes, I'd... er... I'd like you meet... Dr. Brixton.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Uh huh.

*BRIXTON fidgets, shifting his bag from one hand to the other and shuffling his feet nervously.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

What's all this, then, Watson?

*WATSON's tone changes to one that is patronizing and barely contained rage at the same time.*

WATSON

Sherlock, I met Brixton here just this morning outside the children's hospital where Mary works. (*Beat*) Fine fellow; wouldn't kill you to shake his hand. (*Beat*) He's a doctor. He washes them often.

*HOLMES doesn't budge. BRIXTON retracts his hand self-consciously.*

BRIXTON

I knew this was a bad idea, Dr. Watson. (*Nervously*) Mr. Holmes, I'm sorry to have bothered you. (*Moves to leave*) I'll be lea...

*As WATSON protests, HOLMES crosses to BRIXTON and casually brushes something off each of his shoulders.*

WATSON

No. NO! You're going to stay right there. (*To HOLMES*) And YOU are going to pay him -- US -- the courtesy of...

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(To Brixton)*

There you go. All gone.

*Both WATSON and BRIXTON see momentarily perplexed.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

Watson, I've tried my best to politely tell you that I am not interested.

WATSON

Damn it, Sherlock! The least you can do is!...

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Snapping)*

No, the least I can do is not toss the both of you out on your Christmas asses!

BRIXTON

*(Having enough)*

I'm sorry, Dr. Watson. I will take my leave. I can see this isn't going to work. I have my rounds to get back to. *(To Holmes)* Shame on you, sir! Shame!

*BRIXTON exits. HOLMES and WATSON glare at one another. WATSON crosses to the mantel and picks up the silver box.*

WATSON

Spending a lot of time on Upper Swandam Lane these days, Sherlock? *(Waves box)* You know, the answer is not in here. *(Returns the box to the mantel)* I know it's legal in England for toothaches and such, but from what I've been hearing around town about you... *(Gestures to box)*... no one has these many teeth.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Such piety, Watson. You would gainsay the rectitude of a priest!

WATSON

There are people who care for you even if you do not much care for yourself. And people you don't know who need your help. *(Changing approach)* Now, look here, Holmes. It's long past time to still be in a funk over all that happened with Irene Adler.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

No, no. It's not that, Watson. *(Sighs)* Not only that.

WATSON

Sherlock, you're still a vital, middle-aged man with many successes to your name and even greater adventures ahead. *(Referencing the magnifying glass, microscope, etc. on the mantel)* Time to dig out your kit and get back to work.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Also referencing items)*

Oh, I'm done with all of this.

WATSON

What?! These... these items are the tools of your trade, Holmes, like a doctor's stethoscope or a barrister's books on law.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Snorts)*

More like a plumber's stench or a garbage man's stink. They follow me around and I cannot rid myself of the foul odor. *(Waves hand dismissively at items)* No, I'd don't care one whit about these things; tying me down, haunting me with so-called 'past glories.' *(Flippantly)* I'd sooner it were all gone.



WATSON looks at Holmes, sees he's not making much progress.

WATSON

I'm trying to tell you: the wheel has come around again and you have a chance to set this business with the Angels right once and for all.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Shakes head)*

We talked about all this three years ago. It's... it's... all that I have witnessed finally come to a head... the pain... the evil... the sin... the death. No sane man can have seen so much without it changing him, and for the worse. It's just too much for one person. *(Absentmindedly brushes the poinsettia leaves)* And this season depresses me more than any other.

WATSON

You say it's too much for one person, but how about for two? *(Beat)* All those things you witnessed? Have you forgotten I was right there standing beside you?! *(Emphatic)* Let us stand together again!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Bah. You're just an optimist, Watson. *(Beat)* This world cannot be mended. I was naive and an egotist to ever think I could make a difference. *(Resolutely)* I am no longer concerned with this world and its petty affairs.

WATSON

Let's don't have a falling out over this, Holmes. Come this evening to the charity ball at Mary's children's hospital. Meet them. Make a fresh start.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Sighs)*

Why does it matter, Watson? Why does any of it matter?

WATSON

But, Sher...

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Irritated)*

My mind is not like yours. I see many more moves ahead... and all of them end badly.

*HOLMES gauges Watson for a moment before making an irrevocable statement:*

SHERLOCK HOLMES *(Cont'd)*

You've done quite well for yourself, Watson, by chronicling my adventures. *(Cutting deeper)* You're a hanger-on. Those who can't do... write silly stories about... those who DO.

WATSON

*(Hurt)*

I say, have a care, man. One needn't be so... cruel.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Harshly)*

Well... there it is.

WATSON

*(Shaken)*

You cut me, Holmes.

*After a moment, WATSON nods and exits without a word, leaving Holmes alone.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

What's the matter with everyone all of a sudden?

*HOLMES flops into his chair and appears to sulk. He gets up, crosses to the mantel and picks up the silver box. He crosses DC looking intently at the box. After a moment he looks up; and at that instant BLACKOUT.*

## ACT I

### SCENE 2: THE ELDEST SIBLING

AT RISE:

*SHERLOCK HOLMES' ROOMS AT 221B  
BAKER ST. – LATE EVENING/EARLY  
MORNING*

*HOLMES is reclined in his armchair, head far back as if in deep sleep or a stupor. The silver box, closed, is on the floor within arms' reach, closed. We do not know if it was opened or not.*

*SFX: Spectral sounds*

*SHERRINFORD HOLMES enters through the doorway. HOLMES raises his head drowsily, flutters his eyelids, grunts, and looks around to establish his location.*

*SHERRINFORD crosses toward Holmes and smiles. Seeing Sherrinford, HOLMES rubs his eyes in disbelief.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

No. It can't be.

SHERRINFORD

Would you doubt your own eyes... little brother?

*Feebly, HOLMES stands and fearfully extends a hand but cannot quite bring himself to touch Sherrinford.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

But... but... Sherrinford... you're dead; have been for more than ten years. Mycroft and I returned to the family estate to attend your funeral.

SHERRINFORD

Then you believe.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Well... I have trained myself to believe only that which the senses can reveal.

SHERRINFORD

Believe in me or not as you wish, Sherlock, but do not doubt the lessons I have come to share.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Lessons?

SHERRINFORD

Lessons of the past. Your past. *(Extends hand)* Will you join me?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

If I must. *(Beat)* Must I?

SHERRINFORD

*(Chuckles lightly)*

It could be said that it was you yourself who called me... in a frequency beyond your own hearing.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Steels himself)*

Alright, then. Lead on, Sherrinford. *(Puts on his deerstalker hat)* How will we travel?

SHERRINFORD

For these moments you shall travel as I travel. Across time and memory as if on the river. *(Extends a hand, which HOLMES takes.)* Come.

*HOLMES and SHERRINFORD exit as LIGHTS FADE OUT.*

**ACT I**  
**SCENE 3: THE 6:32AM SOLUTION**

*During the scene transition, the following VOICE OVER is heard.*

FINLEY OAKES (*Voice Over*)

Every nipper ‘round London wanted to be part of Mr. ‘olmes’ Baker Street Irregulars, as he called us. (*Beat*) He’d hire us to create a distraction or suss out a lie or maybe follow someone. ‘My unofficial force,’ he would say. (*Beat*) He paid old scale – a few shillings apiece – with a guinea to the one what pulled off the trick, but we’d all ‘ave done it for free just to be doin’ somethin’ that felt like it mattered. (*Beat*) One time I heard him tell Inspector Lestrade of Scotland Yard, (*Impersonates Holmes*) “There’s more work to be got out of one of those little beggars than out of a dozen of your force. And they’re sharp as needles, too. I say ‘go’ and they scurry away like so many rats. All they lack is organization, which I provide.” That’s a ‘cause any man’s lips would seal up tighter’n a frog’s buttocks at the mere sight of an official-looking person—especially one in uniform. But we could go everywhere and hear everything. (*Beat*) Some of the older folk got to play along, too, and had as much fun as we did; puttin’ on all manner of costumes and disguises. To us, it felt like bein’ in a play on the biggest stage in the world. (*Beat*) Yeah, Mr. ‘olmes were one fine right fella.

AT RISE:                    *A FLAT OR ROOM IN A HOUSE – JUST BEFORE DAWN*

*HOLMES and SHERRINFORD enter and pause near the entrance to the room. HOLMES looks around in wonder, still in awe at the manner in which they have traveled to arrive here. He surveys the room.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Ohh... I think... I think I remember this place. Isn’t this... ?

SHERRINFORD

That’s right. This is where one of the defining moments of what would become your legend took place, Sherlock.

*YOUNG HOLMES enters the room. He carries a medium-sized crate, the kind with slats for sides and an open top. A cloth covers the top. On the side of the box is a colorful label which reads “Kensington Farms – the King’s Poulterer!”*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

It’s me!

SHERRINFORD

Quiet, Sherlock!

*SFX: Faint clucking of a chicken.*

*YOUNG HOLMES walks across the entire room. He spies the table and crosses to it. He places the crate on the table. He sees the plant on the mantel, removes it, and places it on the table. He then positions the plant so that it obscures the crate. He pulls up the cloth covering the crate slightly and addresses the chicken inside.*

YOUNG HOLMES

Now, you keep quiet in there, Basil! If I need you (*Chuckles darkly*) you'll be either my savior... or a very bad fellow's supper!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Oh... yes, yes! (*Laughs*) It's all coming back to me now! Always have a backup plan in case it all goes to hard cheese!

*YOUNG HOLMES crosses to the window and pulls the curtains shut. He then pulls out a stick-on-beard from his pocket, and smirking, attaches it to his face. He's having fun.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

*(Points giddily at Young Holmes)*

Quite brilliant if I do say so myself! Watch this bit!

*SHERRINFORD shakes his/her head, nonplussed.*

SHERRINFORD

Sherlock, did you forget that it was I who brought you here?

*HOLMES echoes Sherrinford's earlier admonishment to him.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Quiet, Sherrinford!

*YOUNG HOLMES pulls out a pocket watch, checks the time, goes to the window and peers out.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

Ohhh... I must tell Watson about this! He's never included it in any of his stories!

SHERRINFORD

But Watson is no longer your storyteller, right Sherlock?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Ignoring this)*

I'd been trying to infiltrate a Moriarty smuggling operation that had been eluding Scotland yard for months...

*Seemingly satisfied, YOUNG HOLMES puts back the pocket watch and turns towards the doorway, as if expecting someone.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES *(Cont'd)*

... and I'd finally arranged this meeting with one of Moriarty's captains to obtain a list of locations along the coast where British weapons were being smuggled to aid our enemies in the Anglo-Afghan War.

*MORIARTY CAPTAIN enters furtively. He is wearing a deerstalker hat very similar to the one that Holmes is wearing. He looks around for a moment, then settles his gaze on Young Holmes.*

MORIARTY CAPTAIN

You Smythe?

YOUNG HOLMES

*(With rough accent)*

Yup.

MORIARTY CAPTAIN

I see you found the place.

YOUNG HOLMES

Didja bring the list?

MORIARTY CAPTAIN

*(Pats breast pocket on coat)*

Right here. *(Takes piece of paper out of pocket and holds it out to Young Holmes)* And you're sure you can get weapons to all these ports?

*YOUNG HOLMES holds up the list, then puts it in his pocket.*

YOUNG HOLMES

Absolutely. I'll get my men started on it—

*At that instant, YOUNG FINLEY OAKES rushes in through the doorway.*

YOUNG FINLEY

*(Breathlessly)*

Mr. 'olmes! Mr. 'olmes! 'Ee's comin' like a blue streak up the back stairs right now... *(Seeing the Captain, stops cold and covers mouth)* Uh oh!

*The CAPTAIN steps back a pace and quickly pulls a gun out from under his coat, training it on Young Holmes and the Young Finley.*

*YOUNG HOLMES immediately places his own body between the Captain and the child. The CAPTAIN looks momentarily confused, trying to get his bearings.*

MORIARTY CAPTAIN

Holmes? Holmes?... *(Look of recognition)* Sherlock Holmes? The pain-in-the-arse snooper? *(Squints)* That you under there?

*YOUNG HOLMES sighs and pulls off the beard while continuing to shield the child. He puts the beard in his pocket then looks toward the window.*

MORIARTY CAPTAIN *(Cont'd)*

Huh-ho! It's me lucky day, i'n't it?! And I'll be takin' back that list, now.

YOUNG FINLEY

Ohhh, Mr. 'olmes, I've made a dreadful hash of things!

YOUNG HOLMES

It's not your fault, Finley.

*Surprisingly, YOUNG HOLMES decides this is the perfect time to give the youngster a lesson about proper sleuthing:*

YOUNG HOLMES *(Cont'd)*

Remember, always tail a mark by walking ahead of him not behind.

YOUNG FINLEY

*(Nods nervously)*

Yes, Mr. Holmes!

MORIARTY CAPTAIN

You've sent away some of my best mates to Newgate Prison, Holmes. Moriarty hisse'f is offerin' a nice packet – a full ten quid – for your head, and he's none too particular if'n it don't happen to be attached!

*YOUNG HOLMES again looks toward the window.*

MORIARTY CAPTAIN (*Cont'd*)

*(Gestures to Young Finley)*

And this; this one here. Oh... this must be one o' yer so-called Baker Street Irregulars. *(Looking the child over)* There are people overseas that'll pay plenty for slave labor from a clever English [lass/lad] such as this.

*Again, YOUNG HOLMES looks toward the window, almost as if he's playing for time. Surprisingly, despite his clear disadvantage, he acts as if he has the complete upper hand.*

YOUNG HOLMES

Are you... er... sure you want to do this?

MORIARTY CAPTAIN

From where I come from, it's the one holding the gun gets to ask the questions. *(Muses)* I will shoot you a leg at a time, then one arm, then t'other, then finish you off slow-like. *(Wags the gun)* A little present for each of my mates—in that they're very appreciative of a considerate gesture at this festive time of year. *(Winks)* But that's just me.

*The CAPTAIN raises the gun, preparing to fire. YOUNG HOLMES again looks at his pocket watch. He makes a surprising comment.*

YOUNG HOLMES

Uh... before you shoot me... *(Gestures toward window)* Could I show you something?

*YOUNG HOLMES walks the few paces to the window. The CAPTAIN, more surprised and curious than concerned, moves with Young Holmes, keeping the gun trained on him.*

MORIARTY CAPTAIN

What are you... ?

*YOUNG HOLMES parts the curtains revealing an intensely bright light shining through. It's the sun coming up.*

*SFX: Rooster crows.*

*The CAPTAIN, startled, turns his head quickly toward the crate on the table and the unexpected sound coming from Basil the rooster behind him.*



*It's all the break YOUNG HOLMES needs. He rapidly pushes Young Finley to the floor and lunges for the Captain's gun. The CAPTAIN recovers and punches wildly at the young sleuth. YOUNG HOLMES and the CAPTAIN struggle for a few moments until the CAPTAIN stomps on Young Holmes' foot, causing him to howl and putting him at an obvious disadvantage. At that moment, YOUNG FINLEY lunges at the Captain's leg, holding it with both hands, and sinking his teeth in. The CAPTAIN screams at Young Finley.*

MORIARTY CAPTAIN (*Cont'd*)

You damned little brat!

*YOUNG HOLMES pushes the Captain to the floor and gains control of the gun standing over him triumphantly. During the battle, the deerstalker hat has fallen off the Captain.*

*YOUNG FINLEY stands up.*

YOUNG HOLMES

Good job, Finley. (*To the Captain*) Get up, miscreant.

YOUNG FINLEY

*(Excitedly)*

Yeah, get up, MISS... Creant... uh... (*Aside to Young Holmes*) ... shouldn't it be MISTER Creant?

MORIARTY CAPTAIN

*(Snarls)*

You're not half as clever as you think you are, Holmes!

*YOUNG HOLMES produces the list.*

YOUNG HOLMES

Well, then, that still makes me twice as clever as you, doesn't it?

*YOUNG HOLMES pockets the list as the CAPTAIN, still on the floor, wipes blood from his face.*

YOUNG HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

You will be prosecuted as the vile slag you are and locked away with your mates for many, many years to come. (*Raises gun higher*) But that's just me. (*Gestures with the tip of the gun*) Get up. (*The CAPTAIN stands.*) Out.

*Sullen, the CAPTAIN exits as he entered followed by Young Holmes and Young Finley.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Laughs)*

When I was just starting out, I couldn't afford an alarm clock, so I had to make due with what was available!

SHERRINFORD

This adventure and others cemented your reputation, Sherlock, but it also set the stage for the person you were to become — and the predicament you currently find yourself in.

*HOLMES looks confused.*

SHERRINFORD *(Cont'd)*

Come. There's more to see.

*HOLMES and SHERRINFORD exit. Almost immediately, YOUNG HOLMES returns and takes the deerstalker hat from off the floor. He puts on the hat, modeling it for a nonexistent admirer. He nods with approval and again heads for the exit. Just as he gets to the doorway, he does a double-take and goes back and picks up the crate with the rooster in it.*

YOUNG HOLMES

Excellent work, Basil! I know some fetching hens who will be eager to make your acquaintance!

*YOUNG HOLMES exits as LIGHTS FADE OUT.*

**ACT I**  
**SCENE 4: THE DUCHESS OF YORK'S**  
**HOLIDAY MASQUERADE BALL**

*During the scene transition, the following VOICE OVER is heard.*

IRENE ADLER *(Voice Over)*

I will admit that Sherlock Holmes possesses certain attributes which are to be appreciated *(Grudgingly)* — admired even — but, to my way of thinking, he's far too vainglorious for his breeches with his off-putting deportment and bumptious manner. *(Beat)* He knows his onions, that cannot be denied but, to my mind, his gifts are more a difference in kind than degree. *(Beat)* Sherlock Holmes knows all about forensic science, the valences of elements, statutory law, the penal code, and such. *(Beat)* But he knows next to nothing about women. Especially

IRENE ADLER (*Voice Over, Cont'd*)

women with minds of their own more independent than the times will allow. (*Beat*) I believe my own considerable deductive skills would compare favorably with his own and that, perhaps, he might be prepared to recognize and welcome a kindred spirit. His social behavior with me has not precluded the possibility of that outcome. (*Beat*) Sherlock Holmes' gifts are overrated. (*Beat*) He's good. (*Beat*) But he's not that good.

AT RISE: A MANSION BALLROOM – EVENING

SFX: "Turbulent" music.

*A holiday banner hangs over a room filled with PARTY GUESTS in formal attire and masks, along with a younger-looking MRS. HUDSON. There is a general sense of panic as the GUESTS interact in a hubbub of excitement.*

*SERGEANT LESTRADE, dressed in traditional bobby attire, strides into the room with authority in an attempt to quiet the loud fray.*

SERGEANT LESTRADE

Now, now, now, NOW! Everyone! Everyone! I'm pleased to announce that the danger has passed!

*The GUESTS settle down.*

MRS. HUDSON

*(Crossing to Lestrade)*

Have you caught the criminal, officer? Have you recovered the jewels... officer?

SERGEANT LESTRADE

It's Sergeant, madam. *SERGEANT* Lestrade. (*Uncomfortable*) Uh... er, no. Not yet, but we'll have men searchin' every hidey hole 'tween Regent's Park and Abbey Road this very eve.

MRS. HUDSON

Well, you'll never make Inspector, Lestrade, if you don't catch the criminal and recover the loot! (*The GUESTS erupt in agreement.*)

SERGEANT LESTRADE

Of course, madam. (*To Guests*) Now, everyone, please! Please! The Duchess has retired to her rooms for the evening—all the excitement was a bit much for the old dear. But she asks that all of you remain and enjoy the party. (*To unseen musicians*) Let's have some music!

SFX: *Light Christmas music*

SERGEANT LESTRADE (*Cont'd*)

A Happy Christmas to all!

*As LESTRADE exits, HOLMES and SHERRINFORD enter. The GUESTS continue their lively repartee in silent pantomime. HOLMES sees Mrs. Hudson.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Ahhh, look at Mrs. Hudson! Quite the beauty! What is this place?

SHERRINFORD

*(Gestures to the banner)*

This is the Duchess of York's holiday masquerade ball. I'm surprised you of all people do not remember this evening.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Sputters)*

Well, I...

*YOUNG HOLMES enters through the door where Lestrade exited. He approaches two Guests.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES *(Cont'd)*

Oh, look. *(Points at his younger self)* Here I am again. Not that much older.

SHERRINFORD

Barely a year later. By this time almost everyone in London – and beyond – has heard of Sherlock Holmes.

*MRS. HUDSON crosses towards YOUNG HOLMES. He is unaware of her presence until the GUESTS signal she stands behind him.*

YOUNG HOLMES

*(Turns, extends his hand)*

Good evening Mrs....

MRS. HUDSON

...Hudson. Mrs. Martha Hudson. Mr. Holmes, I hear you are in need of lodgings. I have rooms at 221B Baker St. that might suit.

YOUNG HOLMES

Oh, wonderful, wonderful. *(Suddenly hesitant)* I'll need quite a bit of space...

MRS. HUDSON

Well, there's a sitting room and also two comfortable bedrooms all cheerfully furnished and illuminated by a broad window.

YOUNG HOLMES

*(Musing)*

Hmm... those sound like they might do nicely. I'm currently looking for a flat-mate. He would take one of the bedrooms...

MRS. HUDSON

Well, that would suit me down to the ground, Mr. Holmes.

YOUNG HOLMES

... and I would convert the other one into a workroom – a sort of small laboratory – where I would also sleep.

MRS. HUDSON

*(Becoming worried)*

Oh... a laboratory? Well, now... I'm not sure that would... chemicals, strange substances...

YOUNG HOLMES

Please do not concern yourself in the least Mrs. Hudson *(Raises a hand in solemn oath)* You have my solemn word that nothing untoward, illegal, or dangerous will ever take place at 221B Baker St.!

*HOLMES suddenly bursts out in a fit of uncontrolled laughter. Only SHERRINFORD, of course, hears this.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Wiping away a tear)*

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. *(Trying to get air)* I'd just forgotten... what I was like! *(Getting control of himself)* I wonder what she must have been thinking a year later as she was stitching up my wounds after those thugs attacked me at Channing Station!

MRS. HUDSON

*(Considering)*

Well... I suppose that would be alright. Come around next week and we can sign the lease.

*YOUNG HOLMES nods. MRS HUDSON notices a young woman, IRENE ADLER, who has joined the party. IRENE CROSSES scans the room like a she-panther scenting prey. Her gaze momentarily turns to TWO GUESTS who point secretly at her then lower their heads whispering to one another in a conspiratorial manner.*

MRS. HUDSON *(Cont'd)*

*(To Young Holmes)*

Please excuse me!

*MRS. HUDSON crosses to Irene Adler. THEY greet one another and engage in silent conversation. YOUNG HOLMES crosses to the Two Guests and joins them in conversation.*

PARTY GUEST 1

*(To Young Holmes)*

See that young woman with Mrs. Hudson? (*YOUNG HOLMES nods.*) Well, that's Adler, isn't it?... Irene Adler?

PARTY GUEST 2

She's quite the controversial figure in London, Holmes; a well-known adventuress.

PARTY GUEST 1

There are some who believe she's the cat burglar of St. John's Wood!

PARTY GUEST 2

The very one who pulled off the robbery here this evening!

YOUNG HOLMES

*(Curiosity aroused)*

How brazen – and brilliant – to remain right here on the grounds! Well, then, perhaps we should tell Sergeant Lestrade...

PARTY GUEST 1

*(Laughs)*

It's just a rumor, Holmes. (*Beat*) Actually, she reminds me a bit of you!

YOUNG HOLMES

*(Taken aback; almost offended)*

No, not me.

*SFX: Christmas music become more dramatic*

*MRS. HUDSON takes Irene by the hand and leads her over to Young Holmes. The TWO GUESTS move off.*

MRS. HUDSON

*(Chuckling)*

It's a condition of the lease, sir, that you dance with this lovely creature!

*MRS. HUDSON places Irene's hand in Young Holmes.' YOUNG HOLMES initially looks somewhat put-off but IRENE laughs and sweeps him off to the dance floor where they begin to dance together.*

*MRS. HUDSON looks supremely pleased with herself. Then she joins other guests who continue to partake in silent conversation.*

*HOLMES moves toward Irene and Young Holmes, gesturing towards the young woman.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I never liked pushy women.

SHERRINFORD

You were renowned as having little use for the opposite sex... but this one... this one got through – or under – somehow. *(Beat)* Watch.

*As YOUNG HOLMES and IRENE dance.*

IRENE ADLER

Hello again, Sherlock.

YOUNG HOLMES

Hello Irene. How have you been?

IRENE ADLER

Oh, this and that.

YOUNG HOLMES

So I've heard. Did you know that some people seem to think you're the cat burglar?

IRENE ADLER

*(Stops dancing)*

Well, that's a lie. *(Slight smile)* And shame on that thieving rascal, terrorizing the defenseless citizenry of Britain's filthy rich upper crust.

YOUNG HOLMES

The robbery was rather clever, if I do say so myself. The burglar stole a priceless diamond necklace *(Points "upstairs")* straight out of the Duchess' secret safe, no less. Been trying to figure out all evening how the devil he pulled it off.

*As IRENE and YOUNG HOLMES continue, GUESTS begin to take notice, listening in on the conversation.*

IRENE ADLER *(Cont'd)*

*(Turning so YOUNG HOLMES cannot see her face; smiling)*

Or how *she* pulled it off. *(Beat)* But if I had to guess, I'd guess she managed to get herself invited to the ball, perhaps as the companion of another guest. *(Lightly tosses her dress)* There are so many successful men with an eye for a proper bit of frock!

*IRENE looks at Young Holmes. It is unclear if she's theorizing or relating an actual occurrence.*

IRENE ADLER (*Cont'd*)

Then – I would conjecture – this harpy insinuated herself into a group of ladies bemoaning the onus of being born to the purple and whispered that the cat burglar – himself – had just been spotted on the manor grounds and that they would be wise to ensure that their mink coats and ermine stoles were still safely locked up tight in the manor's cloak room. (*Laughs*) The toffs ran off literally clutching their pearls!

*IRENE casts her eyes back toward Young Holmes for a moment and flutters them flirtatiously.*

IRENE ADLER (*Cont'd*)

– er, I would imagine.

YOUNG HOLMES

Yes, but... how did doing that gain the burglar access to the Duchess' hidden safe? And how did he – er, she – know who the Duchess was behind all the masks?

IRENE ADLER

(*Taunting*)

Oh, that part's easy! (*Beat*) After the rumor took hold, every privileged sow in the place made a beeline for the cloak room... (*Beat*) ... except for one.

YOUNG HOLMES

One?

*IRENE looks supremely proud of herself, smug even.*

IRENE ADLER

The only one who didn't have a fur in the cloak room because hers was locked up safely in her bedroom, of course:

IRENE ADLER AND YOUNG HOLMES (*Together*)

The Duchess of York!

YOUNG HOLMES

Of course!

IRENE ADLER

And, while checking her furs, the Duchess naturally made sure that the diamond necklace was also safe – in the safe. (*Beat*) And it was... (*Light laugh*) For a little while at least. All the thief needed to do was sit quietly in a dark corner sharpening her claws until the Duchess returned to the party, then simply enter the combination she had already seen the Duchess use,



IRENE ADLER, *(Cont'd)*

nab the necklace, and scarp down the trellis outside the manor into the moonlight *(Beat)* or perhaps into the... *(Looks around room, points upward)* ... gaslight.

*YOUNG HOLMES claps gently and sincerely.*

YOUNG HOLMES

Excellent, I must say! First rate!

IRENE ADLER

And she's smart, so she would always make sure she handed off the loot to a confederate in case she was captured.

*HOLMES looks upset. We're not sure why.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

We can go now.

SHERRINFORD

No, wait a moment, Sherlock. Watch.

IRENE ADLER

*(To Young Holmes)*

Dance with me, Sherlock!

*IRENE and YOUNG HOLMES begin to dance again while all the other GUESTS exit quietly.*

SHERRINFORD

It was only a few weeks later that Irene was arrested in Soho, largely on the basis of what she was overheard saying to you this very evening.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I don't need to hear the rest. I remember it.

SHERRINFORD

You were called before the magistrate to testify in the case.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I know.

SHERRINFORD

At trial you recounted the conversation you had with Irene this evening. *(Sighs)* Because no evidence was found, her sentence was relatively light – for a thief who dared to steal from the noble class. But she still spent more than a year in Drake Hall Prison for Women. A cold, hard place. *(Looks carefully at Holmes)* For seventeen years, you told yourself you did merely what the law required.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Enough!

*YOUNG HOLMES and IRENE continue to dance. She puts her head on his shoulder.*

SHERRINFORD

*(Bitingly)*

Your role was neither to acquit nor indict, you told yourself, merely to serve justice.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

No more, Sherrinford!

SHERRINFORD

That sufficed until three years ago when...

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Pleading)*

PLEASE... just... STOP! Let us LEAVE THIS PLACE!

SHERRINFORD

*(Sighs)*

My time with you is over, Sherlock. But there is more yet to learn. Come!

*SHERRINFORD exits. HOLMES turns back and watches Young Holmes and Irene dancing, her head still on his shoulder, blissfully unaware of the tragedy which would soon take place.*

*HOLMES exits as LIGHTS FADE OUT.*

## ACT I

### SCENE 5: THE RELUCTANT BENEFACTOR

*During the scene transition, the following VOICE OVER is heard.*

MYCROFT HOLMES *(Voice Over)*

I am Mycroft Holmes, elder brother to Sherlock and younger brother to Sherrinford. *(Beat)* Certain things didn't matter much when we were younger but, with the passage of time, they have become more important. *(Beat)* Growing up, Sherlock gave little thought to other human beings — so little, that he was almost entirely unaware of the drivers behind his own true nature. *(Beat)* Father, for one. *(Beat)* Sherlock once said to me, "When you go back home everything is smaller than you remembered it. Like Father." *(Beat)* Father was hard on all three of us. But Sherlock and I were lucky... we disappointed him early. *(Beat)* It was Sherrinford — the good child — who stayed home to look after the family estate while Sherlock and I fled to chase careers in the city. *(Beat)* Sherrinford searched in vain for something from

MYCROFT HOLMES (*Voice Over, Cont'd*)

Father that simply wasn't there. And could never be. (*Beat*) Still, after Father passed, it was Sherrinford who went all over the county quietly paying his debts and settling his pub tabs. (*Beat*) Sherlock once told me he keeps a picture of Father on the medicine cabinet over his bathroom sink. One that changes a little bit every day.

AT RISE: *SHERLOCK HOLMES' ROOMS AT 221B  
BAKER ST. – EVENING*

*SFX: Light Christmas music*

*In dim light, Holmes appears to be sleeping in his armchair as he was earlier when Sherrinford first appeared. A figure enters through the doorway. To our surprise, it is SHERLOCK HOLMES. He is carrying a meerschaum pipe and a cane. He is not wearing his Inverness cloak or deerstalker hat, which remain on the coat rack. Understandably, HOLMES reacts with surprise and alarm to the figure in the armchair.*

*SFX: Whimsical music*

*LIGHTS UP.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I say! Who are you, sir? What are you doing here?!

*HOLMES raises the cane like a sword and takes an en garde stance.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

Prepare to defend yourself!

*The figure in the chair, THE AUCTIONEER, wakes with a start, somewhat comically, then takes his time looking around, stretching, and yawning.*

THE AUCTIONEER

Well, that was a fine nap! I clean forgot where I was!

*The AUCTIONEER stands and appears to collect himself. He is impeccably dressed in a formal tuxedo or suit. He is also wearing a cheap plastic halo which lights up.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

What is the meaning of this?! I step out a few moments for my breakfast pipe and return to...  
(*Moves closer, eyes Auctioneer suspiciously*) Wait... are you... are you another spectre like Sherrinford?

THE AUCTIONEER

(*Laughs*)  
Well... can you see me?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I can see you but... can I touch you?

THE AUCTIONEER

(*Winks*)  
Sure, but you might get a slap!

*HOLMES is not amused.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Are you real?

THE AUCTIONEER

Hello? (*Points to halo*) Hayyylow! (*Beat*) And I'm real. You'll see. (*Winces*) I have got to take this thing off. I'm required to wear it, but it starts pinching like Her Majesty's hind quarters in the royal girdle! (*Shoots Holmes a look; sighs*) I guess everybody has to do something they don't want to do. (*Places halo on the table*) Which brings me to the purpose of my visit. (*Crosses DS as if looking out a window*) Come here to the window. Look out; tell me what you see.

*HOLMES crosses and also looks out.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Well, that's obvious... people. (*Darker*) People... and problems. And trouble, if not now, eventually. (*Peers more intently, sees something, points*) Uh... see those boys... there, hiding behind that vendor's cart, skylarking, snickering? They're lying in wait, preparing to assault that unsuspecting older man coming around the corner... (*Points in another direction*) And look at those two men there, acting suspiciously? One is obviously selling stolen jewelry to the other... (*Points elsewhere*) And... see that woman over at the booth by the fountain? She's clearly buying plants with flowers which, when combined, are known to create a powerful poison.

THE AUCTIONEER

You assign every attribute to these people but that which is in their HEARTS, man! Their SOULS! People with cares and worries; things you once understood and accounted for without prejudice. Real, living people. (*Points out window*) Look, look! Those boys are 'lying in wait to assault that older man' – as you put it –with hugs and kisses... because he's their grandfather! (*Points*) And those two men? One is buying an engagement ring for his bride-to-be from the other – a jeweler – and does not want to spoil her surprise. (*Points*) And that

THE AUCTIONEER (*Cont'd*)

woman? Didn't you notice the vase she's carrying? It's for the flowers whose lively colors will make a beautiful arrangement for her family to enjoy.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Waves it off)*

It's just a matter of time. Sooner or later, if they're not involved in wrongdoing now, they eventually will be. It's pointless to getting involved... anymore. *(Looks hard at the Auctioneer)* And you haven't seen what I have seen.

THE AUCTIONEER

Yes, you have become fond of saying that. Your powers of observation are profound, but not when forced to peer through a pinhole.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Waves off again)*

Lives unfettered by logic, belief disguising itself as reason. Sentimentalism, compassion, empathy... it's all a trap -- one I've fallen into for the last time. Everything turns out for the worse in the end.

THE AUCTIONEER

*(Offhandedly)*

Well, yes... people are still people no matter what else they are.

*The AUCTIONEER decides to change the subject, crossing to the mantel.*

THE AUCTIONEER (*Cont'd*)

My, my! Look at all these wonderful things you've collected over the years! So many successes! You must be immensely proud of each and every one!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Dismissive)*

All I see is junk; things which have no meaning anymore... weighing me down. I'd just as soon see all of it gone.

*The AUCTIONEER picks up Holmes' spyglass, looks through it at Holmes.*

THE AUCTIONEER

*(Cheerily)*

Well, then... you certainly won't be needed this old thing anymore, right? Best I get it out of sight, eh?

*HOLMES isn't quite sure what's going on or how he feels about what the Auctioneer is doing but nonetheless waves a hand in dismissal.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Uh... couldn't care a single whit.

THE AUCTIONEER

And... THIS! (*Picks up microscope*) No need for this right?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Uh... well. (*Beat*) Yes, get it out of here! The sooner the better!

*Lightly humming a Christmas tune, the AUCTIONEER delightfully gathers more items; reference books, the flask. Etc.*

THE AUCTIONEER

*(As piling on items)*

And this! and this!... (*Crossing to the coat rack, taking the deerstalker hat*) oh, and this!...

*SFX: Music darkens*

*A book falls off the pile.*

THE AUCTIONEER (*Cont'd*)

I say, be a good chap and pick that up for me, will you? (*HOLMES is momentarily reluctant, then complies.*) Very good. Good. Just put it right on top.

*Finally, the AUCTIONEER picks up Holmes' violin and bow from the mantel. He holds them up.*

THE AUCTIONEER (*Cont'd*)

And this certainly is no longer enough to soothe a fellow, correct?

*Hearing his own line (From Act I, Scene 1) coming back at him causes HOLMES to take pause. The AUCTIONEER watches Holmes carefully.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Better off for it! Good riddance to the lot, I say! I feel lighter already!

THE AUCTIONEER

Thaaat's the ticket!

*SFX: Light music*

*The AUCTIONEER, laden with items, prepares to leave.*

THE AUCTIONEER (*Cont'd*)

Well... must be popping off!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Popping what?! “Off”? Off to where? Aren’t I supposed to go with you? Aren’t you supposed to show me something?

THE AUCTIONEER

Not really necessary, old stick. (*Beat*) ‘Sides... you’ll find me.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Find you? How will I find you?

THE AUCTIONEER

(*Cryptically*)

Just follow the signs, Sherlock. Follow the signs. (*Winks*) They’re everywhere. (*Exits*)

*HOLMES, now alone, looks confused and somewhat annoyed. Finally he exits through the doorway, supposedly to follow the Auctioneer as LIGHTS FADE OUT.*

## ACT I

### SCENE 6: FOLLOWING THE SIGNS

*During the scene transition, the following VOICE OVER is heard.*

MARY WATSON (*Voice Over*)

I worry about John. (*Beat*) I do not understand this devotion he has toward Sherlock Holmes. (*Beat*) What is it about Holmes? Is it hero worship on John’s part? But why? John is a good man with many notable attributes to his credit: A stalwart member of the community. A doctor. A loving husband. It’s a lifetime of achievement anyone should be proud of. Why, he could write his own stories with himself as the dashing, raffish hero. (*Slight giggle*) Well, maybe not dashing, exactly. And... er... certainly not raffish... But *I* would read them! John won’t talk about their falling out three years ago. And Sherlock – true to form – is about as communicative as an oyster, a socially-maladroit mollusk with laryngitis. (*Beat*) I practically had to drag John away on that trip to India. But working with me these past couple of years at the children’s hospital does seem to have benefited him. (*Sighs*) Oh, I don’t know. Maybe these men were destined to be together in some way. (*Beat*) I love John and I will see him happy!

AT RISE: *THE LONDON FOUNDLING HOSPITAL FOR EXPOSED AND DESERTED CHILDREN – EVENING*

*SFX: Up tempo Christmas music*

*The room is arranged for a Charity Gala and Auction. Hanging over the room is a banner reading “Friends of the London Foundling Hospital for Exposed and Deserted Children Charity Gala and Auction Featuring Rare Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia!” There is also a large painting of a woman wearing a diamond necklace hanging on the wall.*

*In the room is a small table with glasses, cups, and wine bottles. Also “hidden” on the table is The Auctioneer’s halo. JOHN WATSON, MARY WATSON, AGNES HORSTON, and GEORGE SUMMERS are seated at chairs nearby.*

*A lively group of DANCERS take advantage of the music, enjoying the festivities. AGNES and GEORGE join in.*

*MARY pops up from her seat and extends her hand to JOHN, inviting him to dance. Laughing, the stout JOHN demurs. MARY, determined, reached out again, this time JOHN sighs and accepts, extending his hands. MARY takes them and pulls but can’t get him up from his chair. Also laughing, she finally pulls so hard she stumbles backward. One of the female DANCERS catches her and offers to dance with her. The dance begins, building in tempo and energy, ending with an exciting crescendo.*

*After the dance, everyone applauds. DANCERS exit. JOHN, MARY, AGNES, and GEORGE return to their seats.*

*Almost immediately, The AUCTIONEER himself sweeps through the doorway dressed in the same formal attire. He has adopted the bearing and manner of a master of ceremonies. He is holding the violin he purloined from Holmes’. The AUCTIONEER faces out, as if there are more Guests, encouraging additional applause for the dancers.*

#### THE AUCTIONEER

Wonderful, wonderful dancing! *(Beat)* Thank you all for attending this evening. We hope you’ve enjoyed meeting the children and taking a tour of the facilities here at the London Foundling Hospital for Exposed and Deserted Children.



*The AUCTIONEER encourages everyone to clap.*

THE AUCTIONEER (*Cont'd*)

And now... (*Holds up violin*) ... best for last. Here we have it, our final auction item of the evening—this exceedingly dear instrument. Mr. Sherlock Holmes 'own Stradivarius violin. (*Calling outward; like an auctioneer*) What am I bid? Do I have six pounds? Thank you! Do I have seven? Well done, sir! How about eight quid? Excellent! I see in the back of the room a bid for ten. Can anyone top that? What a bargain for a tenner! Going once, twice... SOLD! to our most generous silent bidder way in the back! And a heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you for benefiting the children's hospital!

*JOHN, MARY, AGNES, and GEORGE applaud and continue in the background with lively conversation. HOLMES enters carrying two or three signs. The AUCTIONEER acknowledges his arrival, though HOLMES remains unseen by the others.*

THE AUCTIONEER (*Cont'd*)

Ahhh, you made it! See? I wasn't so hard to find.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

(*Dryly*)

I just followed the signs.

*HOLMES turns the signs outward towards The AUCTIONEER; they read "TONIGHT! Children's Hospital Charity Gala and Auction! Featuring Rare Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia!" He then places them aside.*

THE AUCTIONEER

You missed the dance!

*HOLMES shrugs. WATSON's ears perk up.*

WATSON

What's that you say, old chap?

THE AUCTIONEER

Oh, nothing, nothing, Dr. Watson. Just mumbling nonsense to myself as usual!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Watson! Watson!

*WATSON returns his attention to those seated beside him. He clearly does not hear Holmes.*

THE AUCTIONEER

They can't see or hear you.

*HOLMES looks confused. The AUCTIONEER crosses to the others and takes a seat; their conversations now heard.*

MARY WATSON

*(Surveying room)*

It's wonderful so many people came to help.

GEORGE

*(To Dr. Watson)*

The least Mr. Holmes could do was provide a few items for the auction.

WATSON

Well, I'd as sure as swallowed my whistle seeing all of Holmes' stuff here. Maybe I had the chap all wrong.

THE AUCTIONEER

*(Chuckles)*

Uh... no. You had him about right. *(Glibly)* His participation required the tiniest bit of... um... encouragement.

MARY WATSON

Well, personally, I wouldn't give tuppence for the entire lot, but if it helped... What do you say, Miss Horston?

AGNES HORSTON

As Director of Philanthropy for the children's hospital, we regard every offering as a godsend.

*Grimly, the AUCTIONEER pulls a sheet of paper from his coat and hands it to her. She quickly reviews it.*

AGNES HORSTON *(Cont'd)*

In normal times these donations would be the icing on the cake but, in our current situation, *(Sighs)* they're... well, they're barely a nibble. *(Beat)* Mary, as Head of Nursing, you know how dire our situation is.

MARY WATSON

There is simply no other facility in London that can properly treat and house these children.

*SFX: Children giggling and chattering*

MARY WATSON (*Cont'd*)

(*Stands*)

Speaking of whom... (*Pretends to be mean; crossing to right; calling off*) You children, simmer down! Did you forget it's Christmas eve and that Santa flies right past any chimney where he still hears children?!

*SFX: Noises of children fade*

*MARY smiles and rejoins the others.*

MARY WATSON (*Cont'd*)

That should do it! Please go on, Agnes.

AGNES HORSTON

Well, it's simple is all. Without the Angels... (*Beat*)... we are lost.

MARY WATSON

My God, what kind of person would steal from a children's hospital?

WATSON

(*Sighs*)

We're dealing with a rare evil, Mary, beyond anything the world has yet experienced. Professor James Moriarty, along with his organization of thieves and murderers, is a man without a thread of moral fiber, shred of conscience, or ounce of compassion; happy to take anything or hurt anyone to achieve his own foul ends.

GEORGE SUMMERS

I'm just one of the new interns here. What are these Angels everyone's been talking about?

AGNES HORSTON

Well, I've been here for years, and there's plenty about the Angels I still don't know.

*WATSON stands and crosses to the painting.*

WATSON

Here they are. (*Points to painting*) You're looking at a portrait of the Duchess of York. And these... (*Points to necklace on the Duchess*) ... are the Angels, a necklace of perfect white diamonds which were initially smuggled across the English Channel in 1795 during the French Revolution.

AGNES HORSTON

I know a bit about this. Those are the same Angels which were stolen years ago by the St. John's Wood cat burglar from the Duchess herself during a masquerade ball at York mansion. (*Ponders*) When was it... ?

MARY WATSON

Twenty years ago, now.

AGNES HORSTON

Oh, yes, right; stolen by a woman named Adler. Irene Adler. The necklace finally turned up three years ago.

WATSON

I don't blame you for echoing the legend, Agnes. Few people know that the necklace was found in the possession of one of Moriarty's master thieves.

*AGNES looks surprised. WATSON moves a couple steps nearer to group.*

WATSON (*Cont'd*)

Under interrogation at Scotland Yard, the thief revealed that it was he who, at Moriarty's direction, had stolen the necklace at the Duchess' masquerade ball seventeen years earlier.

MARY WATSON

Moriarty was offering the jewels freely to any nation which would promise to use their proceeds to subvert the thing he despises most: the spread of freedom and democracy.

WATSON

Yes, and it took an appallingly short amount of time for him to find a taker.

*GEORGE stands.*

GEORGE SUMMERS

So, wait... hold on a moment... almost missed that. Are you saying that Irene Adler was not the cat burglar?

*WATSON holds up his hands in a helpless gesture.*

WATSON

No, she was not, George.

AGNES HORSTON

I can't believe it! Then why on earth did she tell Sherlock Holmes that she was?

WATSON

*(Sighs)*

A lot of people would like to know that... perhaps none more than Holmes himself.

*HOLMES looks on with growing trepidation.*

WATSON (*Cont'd*)

Irene was a brilliant mind in her own right – possibly Holmes' equal – so it may have been that she was waging something of an intellectual competition. In a strange way, she was sort of flirting with him.

GEORGE SUMMERS

What a queer way of flirting! So it was all just a lark, John?

WATSON

Yes, perhaps. A lark that, for Irene Adler, went horribly awry. The news crushed Holmes. He felt responsible for her incarceration and his part in it.

*HOLMES hangs his head.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

To this day I don't understand why I didn't do more. I failed.

THE AUCTIONEER

Why are all our failures life sentences while our successes are merely temporary reprieves?

*WATSON turns to the Auctioneer.*

WATSON

*(To The Auctioneer)*

Well put, old fellow!

*The AUCTIONEER nods to Watson.*

WATSON (*cont'd*)

*(Returning to the others)*

In any event, Scotland Yard immediately returned the Angels to the Duchess, who promptly declared herself "too old now to cope with any further nonsense" and donated them to this hospital three years ago... *(Sits)* ... at Christmastime.

AGNES HORSTON

And from that time hence they became known as the Christmas Angels.

MARY WATSON

Moriarty vowed to steal back what he called "his necklace."

WATSON

*(Sighs)*

And now he most certainly has.

AGNES HORSTON

Nicked it right off the street in broad daylight as it was being transferred to the bank for reappraisal!

GEORGE SUMMERS

The cheek of the man! I wonder how he knew it would be out of the vault?

MARY WATSON

I wish I knew.

*HOLMES nods his head slowly, pondering.*

AGNES HORSTON

The hospital has relied on the Angels as collateral against several sizable loans for construction and medical equipment.

MARY WATSON

Now, without them, the loans are being called due, putting a hospital full of children in desperate straits.

*SFX: Children giggling and chattering*

*MARY stands and calls again.*

MARY WATSON

Childr... ! *(Thinks)* I'll be right back. This is a job for a beastly, abominable ogre. *(Beat)* Come along, John!

*WATSON winks to the others, replying with a tone that is the exact opposite of 'beastly.'*

WATSON

Yes, dear!

*MARY and WATSON exit.*

*Still seated, George turns his attention to Agnes.*

GEORGE SUMMERS

Agnes, may I speak with you for a moment?

*GEORGE leads AGNES aside, making sure they are out of earshot of the Auctioneer. However, unbeknownst to them, they remain within earshot of Holmes. HOLMES waves his arms and yells, just to be sure he can't be seen or heard.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

HEY! HELLO!

*Satisfied that George and Agnes cannot see or hear him, HOLMES moves closer to listen in on their private conversation.*

GEORGE SUMMERS

Agnes, I've been wanting to speak with you about something for quite some time, now.

AGNES HORSTON

Alright, George, what is it?

GEORGE SUMMERS

I hope this doesn't put you off, but I've been wanting to ask you if you would be interested in...

*GEORGE moves closer to Agnes so that only Agnes can hear. But HOLMES conveys that he can hear them and it appears as if he has learned something interesting.*

*Shortly after, WATSON is heard raging and bellowing off. As MARY and WATSON enter, WATSON continues to play the mean ogre to the amusement of the others as GEORGE and AGNES quickly collect themselves and hurry back to their seats, all smiles, although AGNES looks at George with a modicum of suspicion.*

*SFX: Contemplative music*

*HOLMES does something strange: He sniffs the air. He nods, seemingly having learned something. MARY takes her seat as WATSON continues on to window. He pulls the curtain aside and looks out.*

MARY WATSON

*(Gently)*

John, come away from the window. *(Beat)* He's not coming.

WATSON

I know. I know. If only he could have seen these children, heard their stories...

*HOLMES looks somewhat chastened but remains stubborn.*

MARY WATSON

Well, it certainly would be a welcome change from rattling about his moldy old consulting rooms, glowering as he reads the agony column of the London Times!

WATSON

He's Sherlock Holmes, dear!

MARY WATSON

... whom no one's seen hide-nor-hair of for years now and – well, I'm just going to come out and say it – he was no 'Sherlock Holmes' even when he WAS Sherlock Holmes! *(Laughs)*

*AGNES and GEORGE laugh as well.*

WATSON

Now, now, everyone...

*GEORGE stands, points at Watson.*

GEORGE SUMMERS

Quick! At what school did Holmes learn everything he knows...?

WATSON

*(Smiling)*

Now, George...

GEORGE SUMMERS

*(Beat)*

ELEMENTARY, my dear Watson. Elementary!

*Everyone, including WATSON and the AUCTIONEER laughs good-naturedly. HOLMES firsts glowers at being the brunt of the joke, then joins in as well. WATSON appears to get an idea.*

WATSON

*(Raises glass)*

Alright, alright... we gigglemugs have all had a right old laugh poking bogey at our friend's expense but, on a serious note, I should like to propose a toast: To our principal benefactor for this evening, *(clears throat)*, even if the old boy was not entirely aware of his own beneficence! *(ALL laugh.)* – Mr. Sherlock Holmes!

*EACH ONE stands, raises a glass and cheers – even if somewhat facetiously.*

MARY WATSON

Probably a bunch of junk he no longer wanted anyway!



WATSON

Now, my dear... it's Christmas, a happy time.

MARY WATSON

*(References children off)*

Tell that to those ones...

*WATSON nods as they return to their seats and resume conversing. The AUCTIONEER crosses to HOLMES.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Spirit, tell me, what will become of the children?

THE AUCTIONEER

If the shadows of the future remain, most of the children in this hospital will fare very poorly. Some will die.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

No, spirit!

THE AUCTIONEER

Why should you care? Are you not the man who is “no longer concerned with this world and its petty affairs”? Is that not as you hold? *(Beat)* I am indeed curious what realm this is that you now claim as your own. I have journeyed to many realms, but have yet to visit one which would open its gates to any being with suasions such as yours.

*The AUCTIONEER raises his voice so that those seated take heed.*

THE AUCTIONEER *(Cont'd)*

*(To All)*

What a relief it must be to be absolved from caring for any person but oneself, all-the-while proclaiming that doing so is wisdom! *(Beat)* Which causes me to wonder: In this world of ours which you would happily abandon... *(Beat)*... tell me who would take on the burden of tending for the weak, fighting for the defenseless, educating the naive – and, yes, even the fools – when the hounds and jackals of humankind are set loose upon them—the foulest among us who see victimizing the lesser, perversely, as a God-given right? *(Beat)* Because it is only the merest step from turning one's back on the flock to turning back around again *(Turns; extends fingers like claws)* as the wolf. *(Points at Holmes though others cannot see him)* Those who choose to be involved in this world are forever your betters and will reap every reward in the world which exists after this one. *(Building to crescendo)* Every soul on this earth has a responsibility to its brethren, and the more we are given, the more we owe!

*WATSON MARY, GEORGE and AGNES stand and spontaneously break into applause.*

WATSON

I say, man. Well done! Couldn't have said it better myself!

AGNES HORSTON

Smashing!

GEORGE SUMMERS

Here, here!

MARY WATSON

Brilliant!

*The AUCTIONEER smiles and bows slightly as the others return to their conversations.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Spirit, let us go.

THE AUCTIONEER

My time here is done, but there is much more to see. Be bold, man! The future awaits!

*The AUCTIONEER crosses to the table, unseen or disregarded by those at the table and picks up his halo. He fusses with putting it on correctly.*

THE AUCTIONEER (*Cont'd*)

Uh-oh. Don't want to show up again without having this on!

*The AUCTIONEER exits.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

How does that thing work?

*The AUCTIONEER pokes his head back through the doorway. The halo is lighted for the first time.*

THE AUCTIONEER

(*Matter-of-factly*)

Magic.

*LIGHTS FADE OUT.*

**END ACT I**

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INTERMISSION

**ACT II**  
**SCENE 1: ANOTHER MORIARTY**

AT RISE: *SHERLOCK HOLMES' ROOMS AT 221B  
BAKER ST. – EVENING*

*SFX: Somber music*

*HOLMES is again reclined in his armchair, as if in deep sleep or a stupor. The silver box is closed on the floor, within arms' reach*

*HOLMES stirs just as a man dressed in an impeccable, almost entirely white suit and carrying a solid black cane enters through the doorway. It is his mortal enemy, JAMES MORIARTY. HOLMES leaps to his feet and begins taking swings at Moriarty.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Moriarty, you bastard! I'll have you now!

*HOLMES grasps futilely at the spectre who doesn't even bother evading.*

MORIARTY

*(Chuckles grimly)*

Attempt to kill me if you wish, but it would be something of a redundancy at this point.

*HOLMES finally gives up, but remains guarded and hostile.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Who are you? Have you died, Moriarty? I've heard nothing of it!

MORIARTY

I am largely spirit, now, but I am not the Professor James Moriarty to which you rightly claim such animus.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

But... but you look exactly like him.

MORIARTY

In a sense, I am him – or, more correctly, his exact opposite... *(Chuckles grimly)* ... a cosmological photographic negative of sorts.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I still don't...

MORIARTY

I am, quite literally, James Moriarty's other self, his better self – all the parts of his true personage he freely discarded as he set upon his dark path.

*MORIARTY holds up the black cane.*

MORIARTY (*Cont'd*)

*(Darkly wistful)*

This is all that's left... and I expect, soon, even this last bit will vanish.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Still confused)*

As you say. Tell me, do you miss your other half?

MORIARTY

*(Stopping him)*

No, no, no. We are here to see to the reunion of your own two selves, not mine. (*Crosses to leave*) Come. We have much to see. Both in the near and distant futures.

*HOLMES follows MORIARTY off.*

## ACT II

### SCENE 2: THE AMATEUR SLEUTHS

AT RISE:                   A LONDON STREET OR PARK - EVENING

*SFX: Funeral music*

*The wind blows. A BODY is seen through the fog slumped over a fence near the Baker Street/Westminster signpost. Although it's face is unseen, it is wearing an overcoat, gloves, and other gentleman's clothing consistent with the Victorian period. It also sports a deerstalker hat.*

*HOLMES and MORIARTY enter in time to see a commoner, ABIGAIL THOMSON (ABBIE), approach close to the signpost, for the moment ignoring the body. She shivers and rubs her hands together. A few seconds later, a similarly-dressed woman, LUCY BROWN also enters and joins ABIGAIL.*

She's comin'! She's comin'!

LUCY

(*Shivers*)  
Brrr! It's murder outside!

ABBIE

Seasonable for Christmastime.

LUCY

It's was so cold at home we had to open the ice box... just to warm the place up!

ABBIE

*ABBIE and LUCY can no longer pretend there isn't a dead body just few feet away. Both women look toward it; Lucy shoves Abbie towards the body.*

You touch it, Abbie!

LUCY

(*Pushing back*)  
No! You found it, Lucy; you touch it first!

ABBIE

*JANE BLIGH (or JOE BLIGH) enters. LUCY calls to her.*

Jane, Jane! Over here! (*JANE approaches*) This here is the feller I was tellin' you about at the pub!

LUCY

You sure we should we be doin' this, Lucy?

ABBIE

Well, it ain't no different'n we struck oil or dug up gold in our own backyard, is it?! Why, 'ee's a natural resource!

LUCY

*JANE sizes up the situation. She sniffs at the body and recoils sharply.*

Ugh! Death's perfume! (*Makes a decision*) Well... alright. It's grim work. If it's to be done it best be done quick, a'fore the meat wagon finds 'im.

JANE

*SFX: Hounds baying in distance*

LUCY

Won't take 'em long neither, even in this fog.

*HOLMES cringes.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

These people will take your teeth!

JANE

So, when d' this poor fella come to countin' worms?

LUCY

Don't know much about it, Jane.

ABBIE

Well, hurry up, let's see what 'ee's got!

*The THREE begin poking around the body.*

ABBIE (*Cont'd*)

By the looks of his duds, he weren't no slag.

JANE

These clothes is fine, but lookin' a bit closer... (*Pokes a finger straight through the coat*)... threadbare in many places.

ABBIE

Like he was well-off, but gave up carin' about 'is appearance.

LUCY

Or 'ee were once well-off but his money ran away.

JANE

Maybe both. Wonder what done 'im in?

LUCY

Suppose he might'a just keeled over on accounta the lurgy!

ABBIE

Grim Reaper makin' a call!

JANE

*(Mostly to scare the others)*

Could also 'ave been foul play.

*LUCY and ABBIE gasp. With considerable distaste, LUCY pulls some change out of the body's pants pocket.*

LUCY

*(Counts)*

Some pence and a few shillings! *(Hands the money to Jane)*

JANE

*(Jingles money)*

Well, now. This proves he weren't killed for coin.

ABBIE

*(Surprised)*

Why, Jane, you're quite the detective, you are! A real Sh... a real Sher... Arghh! I forget the name!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Intrigued; to Moriarty)*

Oh, I see why you've brought me here, spirit... to solve this mystery!

*MORIARTY looks at Holmes with an exasperated expression.*

MORIARTY

Watch!

*JANE reaches inside the body's coat pocket. She pulls out a small vial on a chain.*

JANE

Well, lookee here, ladies! Looks like our fella was out doin' a bit o' shoppin'!

LUCY

*(Points)*

That might be what did him in, right there, Jane!

JANE

*(Pondering)*

Maybe, Lucy...

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Becoming more excited)*

The other pockets! Check the other pockets!

*Almost as if she heard Holmes, ABBIE reaches into the opposite coat pocket and pulls out a business card.*

ABBIE

And what do we have 'ere?

*ABBIE hands the card.*

JANE

*(Looks at the card)*

Ahh, the plot thickens! *(Reads)* It reads... Dr. John... Watson.

*As JANE considers what this might mean, ABBIE makes a conjecture.*

ABBIE

Well, it's obvious. This fella's a DOCTOR, 'ee is!

LUCY

Maybe that explains that vial, Abbie!

JANE

No, no. Somethin's not right here. *(Examines card)* This card's OLD, worn on every corner like it was in that pocket for years – decades maybe. It weren't for business... I think it were there as a keepsake or a memento or somethin' like that.

ABBIE

I'm quite serious, Jane. You're a genuine Sher... a bo-nuh fi-dee Sherl... still can't remember that name!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Look further!

*JANE reaches inside the coat and pulls out what looks to be a newspaper clipping.*

JANE

Hmm... maybe this'll help. It's a newspaper article about a fella by the name of... *(Reads)* Sherlock... 'olmes.

ABBIE

Well, that's the very name I was tryin' to remember, Jane! *(Beat)* Sher... Sher... Sher...

JANE

*(Grabbing Abbie by the wrists)*

Snap out of it!



LUCY

*(Remembering)*

He were a real famous shamus quite some time ago. Consorted with royalty and mucky-mucks, 'ee did. *(Gestures over Jane's shoulder at the article)* Ohh... the royal family of Scandinavia, the French republic, the King of Bohemia, and lots more!

ABBIE

And then, *(Snaps fingers)* just like that you never heard another word about him. Like the earth itself just swallowed 'im up!

JANE

And now it's spit 'im back out.

ABBIE

*(Chortles)*

Not for long!

*JANE inspects the article more closely.*

JANE

It's old and tore up, too. *(Muses)* So why was he carryin' this around?

*LUCY again reaches into the coat, pulls out a letter.*

LUCY

Why, it's a letter. It's all worn, too. Like someone's read it a thousand times.

ABBIE

*(Smells it)*

Oo la la!... *(Catcalls and cuts up)* It's a letter from a woman! A woman named... I... I... I...

JANE

*(Snatches the letter)*

Gimme that! *(Looks closely)* I think it says... Eileen... or maybe... Irene. Postmarked from...

*JANE looks at the others with wide eyes.*

ABBIE

...Drake Hall Prison!

*JANE whistles.*

LUCY

Open it, Abbie! Read it!

*SFX: Horses and a cart approaching*

*Hearing approaching horses and a cart, THE THREE turn their heads quickly to listen.*

JANE

Uh oh. We best hook it, ladies. Ditch the evidence!

*They drop the business card, article, and letter on the ground. JANE hangs onto the vial, makes a show of pocketing it.*

JANE (*Cont'd*)

The only mystery we'll be solvin' this night (*Jingles coins*) is how many pints we can get at Chester's pub with this feller's coin!

*They laugh.*

LUCY

I think 'ee were a sawbones!

ABBIE

Well, I think 'ee were a dosser!

JANE

Nahhh, you're both wrong... 'ee were a jack up!

*LUCY, ABBIE and JANE hurriedly exit.*

*HOLMES and MORIARTY are alone with the body. MORIARTY moves closer; HOLMES remains at a distance. MORIARTY points to the body and looks at Holmes.*

MORIARTY

Come, then. Solve the mystery.

*HOLMES refuses to budge.*

MORIARTY (*Cont'd*)

Will you not approach?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Well... no. (*Defensively*) Because... uh... because I already know the solution.

*HOLMES looks at Moriarty, thinks he knows where the spirit is headed.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

That is not me, if that's what you're implying.

MORIARTY

Is this not your coat?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

It's a tweed coat, is all. I bought mine at a popular East Chadwick haberdasher's. Come to think of it, there was another chap there that very day buying the exact same coat. Why... this could be HE! Entirely possible!

*MORIARTY reaches down and picks up the business card.*

MORIARTY

And what about the business card?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Scoffs)*

John Watson has given out hundreds – probably thousands – of cards. This poor fellow... was... er... obviously a patient of his. That explains his... his diminished state of health!

*MORIARTY picks up the letter.*

MORIARTY

*(Smiles ironically)*

Ah... of course. And the letter?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Plenty of Eileens in this world. *(Recalls)* Eileen happens to be the seventh most-common name in Britain, if you didn't know.

MORIARTY

Did she not also say... Irene?

*Resolute, HOLMES continues.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Scoffs)*

This is an utter waste of time. Let us go!

MORIARTY

Fine. Come.

*MORIARTY starts off. HOLMES follows but stops near the body. MORIARTY waits but does not turn back. HOLMES stares at the body.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Sadly)*

Besides, Spirit. This is not how I have envisioned my life's end.

MORIARTY

*(Turns back toward Holmes)*

And what have you envisioned?

*HOLMES seems momentarily lost in thought, then proceeds somberly:*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Well, certainly not like this! Not cast aside. Not forgotten. Not as if it never mattered whether I lived or died. *(Strengthening)* No, I am not this man, Spirit. This man is a loner, a cipher, a recluse; clearly separated from the world he habituates; disremembered from all and by all. *(Beat)* No, I am not this man. The furthest thing from it. I am a person of some renown. I am KNOWN. Respected. A man of considerable standing and reputation in the world. *(With conviction)* And I will not end as a filthy carcass for the vultures to pick over. *(Turns away from the body)* No, I am not this man, Spirit, and I shall not be this man and my life shall not end like this!

MORIARTY

As you say. But that is also what we are here to ascertain. Will you now come? There is more to see nearer to your present time.

*MORIARTY exits. HOLMES nervously regards the body one last time then exits after Moriarty as LIGHTS FADE OUT.*

## ACT II

### SCENE 3: NO HOME ON CHRISTMAS MORNING

AT RISE:

*THE LONDON FOUNDLING HOSPITAL FOR EXPOSED AND DESERTED CHILDREN – EVENING*

*The painting of the Duchess of York hangs on the wall, but otherwise all traces of excitement and hope are gone. Some of the items from the auction and Christmas party remain present, decorations, banner, etc., but they are now in disarray or hanging askew.*

*The floor is piles high with boxes and crates. They have handwritten labels attached such as "Reference Books," "Kitchenware," "Lab Equipment," "Business Records," and the like.*

*A medium box displays a handwritten label slightly askance. It reads "Children's Toys."*

*Two small, unlabeled boxes sit on the table along with a ball of string. WATSON, AGNES, and GEORGE are finishing up packing.*

*GEORGE places a box on the table and pats it with finality as HOLMES and MORIARTY enter.*

WATSON

So... I guess this is it.

GEORGE SUMMERS

I can't believe it's actually happening.

AGNES HORSTON

Where's Mary, John?

WATSON

*(Solemnly)*

Oh... she'll be along soon.

AGNES HORSTON

We've all been so worried about her these past few days.

GEORGE SUMMERS

Hopefully she can see her way past of all this.

WATSON

That's going to be hard for any of us to do, George.

*AS AGNES and WATSON begin to stack the finished boxes, MARY enters and crosses to the table. She picks up some string and starts trying to tie up a box. She's obviously upset, but doing her best to keep herself together.*

WATSON *(Cont'd)*

*(Gently; compassionately)*

Oh, Mary... you were there again, weren't you?

MARY WATSON

Haunting the halls... That's all I am to them, now. A ghost.

WATSON

What did you tell them?

MARY WATSON

I... I didn't know what to tell them. I just stood there. They were so quiet. I told them to get their things together for the lorries but, when they asked me where they would be living, much less getting treatment... I didn't have an answer for them.

*For a moment, MARY tries to act as if tying up a box with string is the most important thing in the world.*

WATSON

Mary, we did the best we could. *(Recognizing the others)* We all did. We truly did.

MARY WATSON

*(Puts down the string)*

Well, it wasn't much at the end, was it? *(Sobs)* One generation names the next. That's the way we do it. And, if we do a good enough job of it, we also manage to not smash things up too badly. *(Between anger and exasperation)* We ask them to trust us. We promise them they will be safe... until they can get their wings. *(More agitated)* Protect the children, then borrow their world. But we couldn't protect them. We couldn't even do that one simple thing.

WATSON

I know dear. I know.

MARY WATSON

*(Breaking down completely)*

Little children. Little CHILDREN! We were all they had and we turned our backs on them!

*WATSON looks on helplessly. He reaches an arm out to Mary, then hesitates. MARY begins to pull herself together.*

MARY WATSON *(Cont'd)*

I'm alright. I'll be alright.

AGNES HORSTON

*(Carefully)*

Sorry, Mary, but we should probably get on with the packing... I guess.

GEORGE SUMMERS

This is pretty much the end. The movers left these last bits for us. I'll... I'll start packing up the equipment cabinet in the office.

*GEORGE picks an empty box from the table along with the string and exits. AGNES picks up a couple of sealed boxes, looks at MARY with sincere sympathy and also exits.*

*MARY crosses to the painting on the wall and takes it down. WATSON crosses to her.*

MARY WATSON

*(Caressing the painting)*

I... I never realized how much I would miss... They were so quiet, John. So quiet.

*WATSON takes the painting and places it on the table. He puts his arm around her.*

WATSON

No home with children should be this quiet on Christmas morning — or any morning.

*MORIARTY crosses down and beckons Holmes to follow.*

MORIARTY

Come.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Crossing to Moriarty)*

Thankfully they found places for the children? Right? Say they did, Spirit!

MORIARTY

They did. *(Moves on further)* Come. *(Exits)*

*HOLMES follows Moriarty off as  
LIGHTS FADE OUT.*

## ACT II

### SCENE 4: A CLEVER NAME

AT RISE:                    *A CEMETERY – EVENING*

*SFX: Gloomy music; howling wind; thunder and lightning; fog*

*A gated archway covered in vines masks the cemetery that lies beyond MORIARTY enters with HOLMES towing behind. As MORIARTY moves to open the gate, HOLMES refuses to follow. MORIARTY beckons but HOLMES remains.*

MORIARTY

How unlike you, Sherlock, to meet a foe unprepared!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

What does it matter, Spirit? What effect can any individual have on the course of lives around them or knowledge of life beyond this one?

MORIARTY

We are as unfamiliar with our next life as the embryo is to birth. *(Beat)* Sherlock, do you believe there's a reason we're here?... a reason you're here? *(HOLMES appears confused.)* One does not have to be an ardent believer to know there's a devil's road.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

With so much corruption, hatred, and evil in this world, how can anyone presume to wish another a merry Christmas?

MORIARTY

I understand that is as you hold. Yes, this world has a fearful capacity for torment and misery. *(Moves closer to Holmes)* But it is because of its injustices that the good must be ever better, never tiring, never relenting – until they prevail. *(Forcefully)* No, you've got it exactly backwards, Sherlock: *(Beat)* How can any person who has seen so much not smile on their sister or brother and wish them the merriest of Christmases?

*HOLMES thinks about this.*

MORIARTY *(Cont'd)*

Earlier, you would not look at that man. *(Beat)* Do you know now that you were that man?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Yes, I now believe you, Spirit.

MORIARTY

Will you now see where the course you are on truly ends?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Spirit, I fear what is beyond that gate.

*MORIARTY pulls away some of the vines and opens the gate. Behind lies many simple, tiny, white crosses receding into the distance.*

MORIARTY

Within a week of the hospital closing they wafted across the city like dandelions, where they were ignored, trod upon, poisoned. Within a month, most had blown here, where they finally found the only soil that would accept them. *(Crying out)* Where does evil come from? *(Beat)* I do not know. But I've got just enough of it left... *(Holding up black cane)*...to enjoy this. *(Taunting; laughing)* Look! NOW! *(Bitingly)* In the end... the best you people could give them was... *(Using his cane to pull the bath of vines covering the sign over the archway)* ... "THE CHRISTMAS ANGELS." *(Laughing; jeering)* ... A CLEVER NAME!

*MORIARTY holds his arms out in triumph.*



MORIARTY (*Cont'd*)

Obey destiny, Sherlock!

*HOLMES screams and collapses to the ground.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Nooooo!

*MORIARTY stands for moment looking at Holmes prone on the ground. Then MORIARTY turns his gaze to the graveyard. Weak and drained, MORIARTY looks at his cane in horror and throws it on the ground like a criminal dropping a gun at the scene of a crime. A cry of agony escapes Moriarty's lips.*

MORIARTY

Ahhhhhhh!

*MORIARTY, his head drooped in shame, staggers off.*

**BLACKOUT.**

## **ACT II**

### **SCENE 5: A DREAM**

**AT RISE:**                    *LOCATION INDETERMINATE – A DREAM SEQUENCE – TIME INDETERMINATE*

*SFX: Ethereal music and sounds; fog*

*As HOLMES continues lying on the ground amidst the fog, a video montage or voice overs play out the thoughts swirling in his head.*

MARY WATSON

Children! Little CHILDREN!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

No, spirit! No! Say they will be spared!

SHERRINFORD

Sherlock, do not doubt the lessons I have come to share.

THE AUCTIONEER

Are you not the man who is “no longer concerned with this world and its petty affairs”?

SHERRINFORD

These adventures set the stage for the person you were to become -- and the predicament you currently find yourself in.

MORIARTY

You’ve got it exactly backwards, Sherlock: How can any person who has seen so much not smile on his brother or sister and wish them the merriest of Christmases?

THE AUCTIONEER

Those who choose to be involved in this world are forever your betters and will reap every reward in the world which exists after this one.

MORIARTY

The good must be ever better, never tiring, never relenting -- until they prevail.

WATSON

The wheel has come around again and you have a chance to set things right once and for all. *(Beat)* Have you forgotten I was right there standing beside you?! Let us stand together again.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I am not this man, Spirit, and I shall not be this man and my life shall not end like this! I will not end as a filthy carcass for the dogs to fight over and the vultures to pick at.

WATSON

You forget that there are people who care for you even if you do not much care for yourself. And people you don’t know who need your help. Sherlock, you’re still a vital, middle-aged man with many successes to your name and even greater adventures ahead. *(Images/voice begins to fade)* There’s so much more to come! *(Fades further)* There’s so much more to come! *(Fading out)* There’s ...

SHERLOCK HOLMES

... so much more to come... more to come... more to...

*LIGHTS FADE OUT.*

**ACT II**

**SCENE 6: SO MUCH TO DO**

AT RISE: *SHERLOCK HOLMES’ ROOMS AT 221B  
BAKER ST. – CHRISTMAS MORNING*

*SFX: Church bells; Lights rise slowly to signify dawn.*

*HOLMES, asleep in his chair, stirs and slowly awakens.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

... more to come... so much more to come... so much more...

*HOLMES stands and looks around the room. An expression of complete delight and wonder spreads across his face.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

I'm back! (*Thinks*) But how long was I gone? No matter! I am returned and whole! (*Beat*) Was it all a dream or was it real? Again, NO MATTER! It's Christmas! My favorite season of the year! (*Looks about*) I'm back in my old rooms! Ahh! Here are my old chairs! (*Pats them lovingly*) Oh, the countless hours my dear chum Watson and I spent in these talking about cases, plotting splendid strategies!

*HOLMES crosses to the fireplace, avoiding looking at what is missing from the mantel.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

(*Bends to warm his hands*)

And here's my glorious fireplace! So many evenings basking in its warm glow!

*HOLMES looks away and speaks slowly, hoping of course that all is well and his beloved items are still on the mantel.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

And upon its mantel, of course, the cherished tools of my trade! My trusty magnifying glass, my beloved books on criminology and anatomy, my invaluable lab equipment, my venerable spyglass, my faithful microscope, and all the rest!

*HOLMES reaches to the mantel, certain the items are there. As surprise registers on his face, he feels all about the top and around the mantel, certain the items must be there. Then he accepts the reality. It wasn't a dream.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

Oh, right. I forgot about that chap. He made off with the lot, didn't he? (*Recovers*) Well, none of it matters because I've got my beloved Stradivarius to comfort and inspire me!

*He looks around the room quickly, but doesn't find what he's looking for.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

(*Scratches chin*)

Oh... right... fella nicked that too! (*Beat*) No matter! NONE of it matters! All that matters is that I am returned and I am whole and I am resolved to begin a new life with an understanding that all persons are divine in nature and deserving of my full compassion and empathy! (*Getting more worked-up*) And, by my talents, I shall correct my egregious past behaviors and endeavor to improve the lives of all those with whom I come in contact to precipitate more perspicacious outcomes! (*Giggles*) And I'll also be a hell of lot nicer! (*Laughs*) Now, I have so much to do; so much to do!

*HOLMES exits through the doorway as LIGHTS  
CROSS FADE TO OUTSIDE.*

**ACT II**  
**SCENE 7: SLIGHT THINGS**

AT RISE:                   OUTSIDE HOLMES' ROOMS AT 221B  
                                  BAKER ST. – CHRISTMAS MORNING

SFX: Christmas music

*OFFICER JENKINS, a London bobby, enters  
swinging his billy club, happily humming a  
Christmas tune. At that moment, SHERLOCK  
HOLMES, just as unkempt and wild-looking  
from the night before, rushes onto the street from  
his rooms.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Good morning, officer Jenkins!

OFFICER JENKINS

Ah, good morning, Mr. Holmes! A merry Christmas to you!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

And a lovely day for it!

*At this moment, DOCTOR BRIXTON enters  
around the corner wearing normal street clothes.  
He does not recognize Holmes at first.*

BRIXTON

Good morning, officer Jenkins!

OFFICER JENKINS

And to you, sir!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Stepping forward)*

Merry Christmas, doctor!

BRIXTON

Ah, who's that there? *(Recognizing)* Is that you, mister Holmes?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Dr..... Brixton, is it not?

BRIXTON

And there's that extraordinary memory. Yes, it's me again, sir. Mr. Holmes, you seem uncharacteristically chipper this morning.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Well it's a brand-new day, isn't it?!

BRIXTON

*(Curtly)*

If you say so, sir.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

How goes your cause with the – er – children's hospital?

BRIXTON

*(Offhand)*

There's little hope left. A great pity.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Yes, yes... now, I must be going!

BRIXTON

*(With no love lost)*

Off you go, Holmes.

OFFICER JENKINS

Mr. Holmes. Uh... before you go, is there anything you might be needin'?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

No, thank you, officer Jenkins. Good day gentlemen!

*HOLMES bows and JENKINS AND BRIXTON wave goodbye, BRIXTON less enthusiastically. HOLMES turns and begins to literally dance away as BRIXTON tips his hat to JENKINS and starts to take his leave. HOLMES suddenly stops and turns back. BRIXTON stops as well.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

You know... constable... come to think of it –there is one thing you could do for me.

OFFICER JENKINS

And what would that be, sir?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Points to Brixton)*

Well, you could arrest this dodgy fellow right here, if you would be so kind!

*JENKINS looks at Brixton, then at Holmes.*

OFFICER JENKINS

*(To Holmes)*

Er... excuse me? On what charge, sir?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Chuckles)*

Well, for conspiring to steal the Christmas Angels and smuggling them out of the country, of course!

OFFICER JENKINS

Blimey!

*JENKINS raises his billy club toward Brixton.*

BRIXTON

Everyone says you're going barmy, Holmes. And now, accusing a doctor!

*HOLMES chuckles and continues.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

You work for Professor Moriarty. When Moriarty learned that Mary Watson had been called back from India to deal with the crisis at the children's hospital, he knew it would only be a matter of time before John Watson approached me about taking up the case. So he instructed you to make Watson's acquaintance so that he could glean my intentions.

BRIXTON

You've finally lost your cork, Holmes.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Your mistake was readily apparent to any person such as I who has finely tuned every human sense to its peak of proficiency.

*BRIXTON moves a step or two towards Holmes.*

BRIXTON

The only thing you've fine-tuned are the drug-addled hallucinations running through your daft brain, Holmes!

OFFICER JENKINS

*(To Holmes)*

Er... so what was the mistake 'e made, sir?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

When Brixton visited my consulting rooms he was wearing a white coat...

BRIXTON

All doctors wear white coats!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

To wear a disguise is to invite others to look beneath it. *(Beat)* Do you recall my brushing off your shoulders *(Makes a brushing movement with his hands)* when we earlier met?

BRIXTON

*(Guardedly)*

Uh... who cares?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Yes, it's a slight thing, but slight things are my stock-in-trade. *(Beat)* A nearly-invisible layer of dust appears on any item of clothing which has been stored on a hanger for an extended period of time. It would not appear on the coat of a doctor who had been making his rounds, as you stated. A query of local costume shops and medical supply houses will, no doubt, reveal that you made a recent purchase.

*BRIXTON's composure begins to crack.  
JENKINS grabs Brixton by the arm.*

BRIXTON

*(Pulling loose)*

You're... you're lying!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Almost to himself)*

And slight things lead to incontrovertible conclusions *(Flutters fingers)* as everything but the truth falls away. *(To Brixton)* For example... that an inquiry of your medical credentials done just this morning revealed that... you have none.

OFFICER JENKINS

Well, that's plenty good enough for me, sir!

*BRIXTON tries to make a dash for it but  
JENKINS deftly grabs him by the collar.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Blithely)*

You're not even a corrupt doctor on Moriarty's payroll; you're not a doctor at all!

*BRIXTON leers at Holmes menacingly.*

BRIXTON

Moriarty is right about you, Holmes. You're clever. And a complete ass. *(Beat)* I'd have gladly killed you when I had the chance if Moriarty hadn't told me to save you for himself!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Offhandedly)*

You could have tried.

BRIXTON

*(Defiantly)*

It was worth it, Holmes, to witness the hell the sale of the Angels will soon unleash on millions of your wretched little countrymen!

*HOLMES laughs and waves his hand  
dismissively.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Take this malefactor away, officer! His mere presence diminishes this joyous season for people of good hearts everywhere!

OFFICER JENKINS

A right pleasure indeed, Mr. Holmes!

*As JENKINS roughly pushes Brixton, HOLMES  
calls out causing JENKINS to hold BRIXTON for  
a moment before taking him away.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Brixton, I pray you will endeavor to view this experience not as an ending but as the beginning of a wondrous new life based on correctitude and incorruptibility, just... you know... in prison!

*BRIXTON growls as JENKINS takes him away  
leaving Holmes alone. HOLMES claps his  
hands, as if ridding them of dust or dirt.*

*FINLEY OAKES enters. He appears to be  
looking for someone but doesn't see Holmes  
immediately.*



FINLEY

Mr. 'olmes?! Mr. 'olmes?!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Here! Ahh, Finley. Good to see you again. Say, how's your father?

FINLEY

*(Smiles)*

He still talks about the adventure you two had with that brilliant rooster. He still around, Mr. 'olmes?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Oh, Basil? Uh... we had him for supper!

*FINLEY laughs.*

FINLEY

Ha! We got all them boxes you wanted from the children's hospital. Beat Moriarty's men to 'em by a mile! Where do you want 'em?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Just stack them in my consulting rooms with what's there already. *(Tosses Finley a coin)* For you and the rest of the lads!

FINLEY

*(Holding up the coin)*

Not necessary, Mr. Holmes! Just proud to be a Baker Street Irregular, like me dad was!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Have a merry Christmas, Finley! Pop by later! Bring your dad and all your excellent family!

FINLEY

Thank you, sir!

*FINLEY waves and exits.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

NOW... I have so much to do! So much to do!

*HOLMES rubs his hands together gleefully and crosses to go back inside his rooms as LIGHTS FADE OUT.*

**ACT II**  
**SCENE 8: THE GAME'S AFOOT... AGAIN!**

AT RISE: *SHERLOCK HOLMES' ROOMS AT 221B  
BAKER ST. – CHRISTMAS; LATER THAT  
MORNING*

*SFX: Christmas music*

*All the boxes from the Children's hospital are  
stacked on the floor. The only item on the  
mantel is the ornate box, which is closed.*

*WATSON, MARY WATSON, AGNES HORSTON,  
and GEORGE SUMMERS enter, all looking  
impatient, confused – and more than a little  
down. AGNES' hands are hidden inside a small  
fur hand muff.*

*MARY WATSON sees at the boxes and appears  
quite surprised.*

MARY WATSON

Wait... these are some of the boxes we packed at the hospital.

AGNES HORSTON

What are they doing here, in Sherlock Holmes' rooms?

WATSON

We got the same summons from him that you did, Agnes... and are just as confused as you are. If everyone will please be patient, I'm sure that Holmes will explain everything. (*Under his breath*) He'd damned well better!

GEORGE SUMMERS

We should be at the hospital helping the children.

AGNES HORSTON

The least we can do is ensure they get to shelters.

GEORGE SUMMERS

What does Holmes think he's doing?...

*HOLMES bursts through the doorway, still  
looking like a happy madman.*

*SFX: Lively Christmas music*

WATSON

Wha...?! What is the meaning of this, Holmes?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Well, to wish everyone the merriest of Christmases, of course!

MARY WATSON

*(Disgustedly)*

You're far past late to be wishing anyone a merry ANYthing, Sherlock Holmes.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Oh, right, yes. The children, of course. Sad. VERY sad. Goes without saying.

WATSON

We failed; badly overstepped the mark.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Well, yes... quite. *(Sincerely)* But, of course, one must always endeavor to collect whatever pieces remain and move forward, mustn't one? *(Resolutely; referring to boxes)* And the very least I can do is help with the packing!

*The OTHERS look as confused as they look sullen. MARY gestures to the boxes.*

MARY WATSON

By all means, placate your conscience... if you think you can.

*HOLMES turns his attention to the pile of boxes. AGNES addresses Holmes as if patronizing a madman.*

AGNES HORSTON

Mr. Holmes, we thank you for your help, but...

GEORGE SUMMERS

Don't waste your time. Most of this is destined for the trash heap.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

No, no. Won't hear of it. These boxes and I are getting along famously. Glad to be of help!

*HOLMES casually picks up the box labeled "Children's Toys" and carefully examines it.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (cont'd)

*(Reads label; winks)*

Ooo... "Children's Toys." We want to be extra careful with this one, don't we? *(Pokes at the label)* What's this? This label seems to not be centered properly. A bit skew-whiff! Here, let me...

*HOLMES pulls at the label. It come off cleanly, revealing a second label underneath which, incredibly, reads, “DANGER! INFECTIOUS WASTE! TO BE OPENED ONLY BY TRAINED PROFESSIONALS AT DECONTAMINATION SITE!”*

*HOLMES, shows the box while reading the label out loud, slowly, almost pedantically:*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

What’s this then? Another label underneath which reads, “Danger! Infectious waste! To be opened only by trained professionals at decontamination site!”

*HOLMES emits a low chuckle. The OTHERS look more confused than ever – but he definitely has their attention.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

Well, that was not expected, was it? (*Ponders*) Oh, I believe I see what happened here. Someone simply put children’s toys into an unused waste box and prudently stuck this label (*Shows “Children’s Toys” label*) over it. No harm done!

AGNES HORSTON

(*Dryly*)

Yes, surely. You’ve solved the case of a mislabeled box. Thank goodness we had a master sleuth to sort that out for us.

GEORGE SUMMERS

(*Moves to leave*)

If no one minds, I really need to be getting back to the children at the hospital...

*SFX: Powerful slam with reverbed tail*

*HOLMES looks at George with a slightly mad – and dangerous – expression.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Oh, I very much mind.

*GEORGE freezes. HOLMES returns to his “dotty” self.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (*Cont'd*)

Well, let’s just pop this box open and make sure all the toys are safe and sound, shall we?!

*HOLMES sets the “Children’s Toys” label on the table and opens the box from the top. He reaches inside and pulls out, of all things... a bone saw.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (Cont'd)

Well, now, this doesn’t look like a very fun toy, does it?

*GEORGE, AGNES, WATSON and MARY look on, surprised and shocked.*

*HOLMES continues, reaching inside and next pulling out... a hypodermic syringe.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES (Cont'd)

Well, this certainly would not make for a very merry Christmas, would it?

*The OTHERS begin to realize what actually must have happened, that a box of infectious waste was incorrectly labeled as children’s toys, and start to panic.*

*At this point, HOLMES seamlessly transitions from being a clumsy buffoon to the Holmes of legend. He takes a moment to survey the group, then very deliberately pulls a single item – a surgical gown with a faint hint of blood on the front, perhaps as if a scalpel had been wiped across it – out of the box and holds it high using two fingers.*

*The OTHERS gasp with horror and outrage, yet remain frozen in place.*

WATSON

Steady on, man!

MARY WATSON

What are you up to, Holmes?!

AGNES HORSTON

Are you mad?! Stop, stop!

GEORGE SUMMERS

I’ve rather had enough of this!

*GEORGE again makes a move toward the doorway.*

*SFX: Another slam with reverbed tail*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(With a hint of evil)*

The doors are locked.

*GEORGE freezes.*

*HOLMES begins walking around the room, and one by one, holds the contaminated gown before each person. HOLMES walks quickly past Watson.*

WATSON

Holmes, for the love of God. Those items are contaminated with diphtheria, smallpox, malaria, heaven-knows-what...

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Heaven has nothing to do with this business, old friend.

*HOLMES walks quickly past MARY who says and does nothing beyond giving him a withering glare. Then he walks over to AGNES who simply looks terrified.*

AGNES HORSTON

Please, Mr. Holmes. Please!

*HOLMES walks to George and lingers for a moment, menacingly holding the item out before him. GEORGE seethes at Holmes, barely able to restrain himself, fists clenched as if he might lunge or take a swing at any moment. Then HOLMES turns his attention back to the entire room.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

One of you has made a fatal mistake. Your master, Professor James Moriarty, will not be pleased.

WATSON

I say, Holmes; I hope you're not pointing the finger at Mary and me!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Disregards)*

This person is a deeply-placed agent of a rogue nation bent on disseminating chaos and anarchy across the globe. To creatures such as they, the lives of sick and helpless children are as insignificant as... *(Hold up the surgical gown)*... as harmless linens and medical supplies. *(Wads-up the gown and tosses it back into the box)* Which is what all of this is.

*HOLMES closes the box as he speaks.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES *(Cont'd)*

Let me step back a bit. There can be no doubt that Moriarty required a second conspirator inside the hospital to facilitate the theft of the Angels and get them to Brixton's people on the outside.

WATSON

Brixton?! What the deuce, Holmes!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Brixton sends his regrets but he will not be attending the hospital Christmas party, Watson.

MARY WATSON

Bixton? Who's Brixton?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(To Mary)*

Precisely. As I suspected... A man you have never met and who has never worked at your hospital.

*MARY and WATSON look completely confused.*

SHERLOCK HOLMES *(Cont'd)*

*(Moving right along)*

Miss Horston, Mr. Summers, I must confess to listening in on your private conversation at the auction.

AGNES HORSTON

At the auction? You were there?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Er... in a manner of speaking...

GEORGE SUMMERS

In one of your famous disguises, no doubt.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Tiny smile)*

Uh... definitely the best one yet.

WATSON

Sleepwalking, Holmes?

*For a brief moment, HOLMES looks like he isn't completely sure.*

GEORGE SUMMERS

*(Interrupting)*

Well, if you did hear us then you know all that transpired before John and Mary returned from quieting down the children... was that I asked Agnes out on a date.

AGNES HORSTON

That's right!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Yes, that is true. *(Beat)* But it wasn't what you said... it was what you smelled like as you said it.

WATSON

I say, Holmes. What are y—

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Cutting off Watson)*

A slight thing... This person, like many who travel, carries with them... their soap from home. One nation in particular uses an indigenous tallow which adds a subtle yet unmistakable scent that is utterly unique in all the world... the very nation to which Moriarty was preparing to send the Angels. *(Gestures to George and Agnes)* But I couldn't prove which of you was the bearer of that scent – and Moriarty's accomplice inside the hospital – until we held our little Christmas soirée here this morning... *(Pauses for optimal dramatic effect)*... and you made your fatal mistake.

WATSON

What mistake, Holmes?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Cryptically)*

Why, the one which this person is moments away from making, of course... *(Again regarding Agnes and George)* ... the person who prepared this box for Moriarty's henchmen to collect from the hospital who, after collecting it, were instructed to remove this label *(Picks up the "Children's Toys" label and shows it)* revealing the infectious waste label beneath knowing that no customs officer would dare to open any container bearing such a label, thereby ensuring its real contents would remain safely hidden under the false panel at the bottom... the Christmas Angels! Here, I'll show you.

**This is Not the End of the Play**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**



## **PROPERTIES AND FURNITURE LIST**

### **ACT I, SCENE 1 (SHERLOCK HOLMES' ROOMS & STRET OUTSIDE)**

Signpost with opposing signs reading Baker Street and Westminster

2 Arm chairs

Small table

Fireplace

Coat rack

Violin and bow

Magnifying glass

Reference books

Spyglass

Flask (plastic) and cork containing a colored liquid (which is consumed by Holmes)

Meerschaum pipe

Microscope

Pocket watch (Dr. Brixton)

Feather duster (Mrs. Hudson)

Umbrella (for Holmes to fend off Mrs. Hudson)

Doctor's white coat (Brixton)

Doctor's bag (Brixton)

### **ACT I, SCENE 2 (SHERRINFORD'S ENTRANCE)**

Same as Act I, Scene 1

### **ACT I, SCENE 3 (ROOSTER SCENE)**

Crate with label reading "Kensington Farms – The King's Poulterer!"

Light effect (installed in window)

Piece of paper (Moriarty Captain)

Gun (Moriarty Captain)

Potted plant with quite a bit of foliage (to hide crate)

### **ACT I, SCENE 4 (DUCHESS OF YORK'S HOLIDAY MASQUERADE BALL)**

Banner which reads "Merry Christmas!"

Masks

ACT I, SCENE 5 (THE AUCTIONEER'S ENTRANCE)

Violin and bow

Silver box

Books

Spyglass

Microscope

Magnifying glass

ACT I, SCENE 6 (THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL)

Banner for children's hospital (reads "London Foundling Hospital for Exposed and Deserted Children Gala and Auction Featuring Rare Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia!")

Chairs

Painting of the Duchess of York

Violin and bow (the Auctioneer)

Two or three hand-held signs which read "Children's Hospital Gala and Auction Featuring Rare Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia!"

Piece of paper (in the Auctioneer's tuxedo coat)

Glasses and bottle(s) (for table)

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ACT II, SCENE 1 (MORIARTY'S ENTRANCE)

Black cane (and an all-white suit, Moriarty)

ACT II, SCENE 2 (THIEVES)

Signpost with opposing signs reading Baker Street and Westminster

Fence

Body with tweed coat, overcoat, gloves, deerstalker hat

Coins (body)

Newspaper clipping (body)

Letter (body)

Vial on a chain (body)

Business card (body)

ACT II, SCENE 3 (THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL)

Painting of the Duchess of York

Table

Small boxes

String or twine

Scissors (if needed)

ACT II, SCENE 4 (CEMETERY)

Black cane (Moriarty)

Archway/gate

White crosses

Vines

Sign “The Christmas Angels”

ACT II, SCENE 5 (MONTAGE)

None

ACT II, SCENE 6 (HOLMES AWAKENS)

Same as Act I, Scene 1 minus personal items on mantel

ACT II, SCENE 7 (DR. BRIXTON OUTED)

Billy club (Jenkins)

Coin (Holmes throws to Finley)

ACT II, SCENE 8 (THE REVEAL)

Same as Act I, Scene 1 minus items on mantel

Box which reads, “DANGER: INFECTIOUS WASTE! OPEN ONLY A DECONTAMINATION SITE!”

Other boxes

Bag with Holmes’ auction items

(magnifying glass, books, microscope, deerstalker hat, violin and bow)

Silver box (Holmes)

Gun (Agnes)

Bone saw

Hypodermic syringe (old style)

Masks

Surgical gowns

Towels

Pillow cases

White clothing

FINALE

Trays with food

Holiday packages & toys

Christmas tree