

HOLMES & WATSON SAVE THE EMPIRE !

ACT I

SCENE 1

(Lights to black.)

[VIOLIN: SOLO THEME from IRENE DUET]

(From the dark a voice whispers:)

WATSON

Holmes?

(Onstage a match is lit, throwing the archetypal silhouette of the great detective against the back wall.)

HOLMES

What is it, Watson?

WATSON

I haven't a clue where we are.

HOLMES

According to my reckoning, we are less than twenty feet from the back entrance to the Gaiety Music Hall.

WATSON

How can you be so sure? In this blasted fog, I can hardly see my hand in front of my face.

HOLMES

Fog is but a state of mind, Watson. Consider, if you will, the flicker of the lamplight, the vibrations from the applause within. The crunch of gravel beneath our feet, an admixture of clay and sawdust unique to the theatrical West End and finally—a discarded program from last evening's performance attached to the sole of your right shoe.

WATSON

(lifts foot, shakes head)

Amazing.

[UNDERScore "CONNOISSEUR OF CRIME" BEGINS]

HOLMES

There! Do you smell it?

WATSON

Smell what?

HOLMES

The rank odor of foul play. The reeking stench of impending crime.
And I for one stand ready to combat it.

(sings)

WHEN FROM THE SKY THE MOON HAS FLED
LONDON SLUMBERS LIKE THE DEAD
EVERY HOLE AND SHADOW BREEDS
VILLAINS PLOTTING HEINOUS DEEDS.

PURSES SNATCHED, THROATS ARE CUT,
MAYHEM IS CONTAGIOUS.
SCOTLAND YARD IS OVERWHELMED-

WATSON

WHO'LL BE THE ONE TO SAVE US?

HOLMES

WHERE EVIL LURKS, THAT'S WHERE YOU'LL FIND ME.
WHERE DANGER LIES, I'M AT MY PRIME,
THE KING OF CLUES, THE MASTER OF DETECTION,
I'M SHERLOCK HOLMES, THE CONNOISSEUR OF CRIME!

[MUSIC VAMPS]

WATSON

Another case, is it? Who are we after this time?

HOLMES

Not who. What. We are on a mission to retrieve an object of vital importance to the Crown, one that, were it fall into the wrong hands, would shake the very foundations of the Empire.

WATSON

Good lord!

(The stage door opens. Out stumbles
MORTIMER CHIPS, in a loud plaid suit).

MORTIMER

I'm off to shake hands with the vicar. Back in 'arf a mo'.
(exits)

HOLMES

Whatever happens, Watson—do nothing until you hear from me again.

(HOLMES blows out light. The stage is black.
As underscore continues, sounds of a struggle
are heard, someone being knocked
unconscious, groans, etc)

WATSON

What in blazes—? Dear God! What's going on? Holmes, where are you?

(WATSON relights the lantern, the stage is lit
again, but he is alone.)

WATSON

Holmes? HOLMES?

(Lights out on WATSON, as he exits with
lantern, up on FREDDIE FISH at piano; he
plays a fanfare.)

FREDDIE

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen! It gives me great pleasure—as
the bishop said to the actress—to welcome you all to this edifice of
entertainment—the Gaiety Music Hall! (*applause*) Tonight's show
features yours truly, Freddie Fish (*applause*). You're too kind...and that
continental sensation, the Nightingale of Nuremburg! (*cheers*). And as
always our own gorgeous Gaiety Girls (*wolf whistles, shouts*)

(*VIOLINIST steps out in costume, blows a kiss
to crowd*)

Maestro, if you please.

SONG #2: I ALWAYS HAS AN EYE FOR THE LADIES.

FREDDIE

(spoken)

Now no gentleman would ever wish to trumpet
Of his prowess with the fair and gentle sex.
Yet somehow it seems wrong not to report it

(sings)

ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY COO:
"OOH, FREDDIE BOY, YOO HOO!
I DARE SAY YOU'RE THE VERY, VERY BEST!"

I ALWAYS HAS AN EYE FOR THE LADIES
AND THE LADIES ALL SEZ AYE TO ME.
RICH ONES, POOR ONES, SKINNY ONES THE LOT.
WHATEVER IT TIS THEY'RE LOOKING FOR
THEY THINK IT'S WHAT I'VE GOT

AND IT'S A PITY
THAT IN THIS MAD OLD WORLD.
THERE'S JUST ONE LIKELY LAD THEY LONG TO SEE.
OH, I ALWAYS HAS AN EYE FOR THE LADIES
AND THE LADIES ALL SEZ AYE TO ME.
THE LADIES ALL SEZ AYE TO ME.

FREDDIE

Thank you! Thank you! (*picks out ladies in audience*) And you, and
you. And *you*, me darlin'. Whatcher doing after the show? Dump this
ole horse-and-cart and when you're on your own, meet me at the
Bedlam Club. Midnight. I'll give you the address. Watch for me wink!

(Crash from backstage)

Oy! Where's me crust of bread? I almost forgot, I have a bloomin'
partner! Put your hands together for me old pal, Mortimer Chips.

(MORTIMER CHIPS, played by HOLMES,
staggers onstage, wearing an equally eye-
blistering suit, extreme whiskers, etc. He
appears to be drunk.)

MORTIMER

Sorry I'm late, I twisted me ankle.

FREDDIE

That's a lame excuse.

MORTIMER

Then I got another one for you. There was a beautiful woman banging on me dressing room door all through the first act.

FREDDY

What did you do?

MORTIMER

I finally had to let her out!

FREDDIE

Aahhhhhh... You're sauced. Pissed—
(notices something's different about his partner)
—who in bloomin' 'ell are you?

MORTIMER

No, seriously, Freddie, I was very busy writing a song for you.

FREDDIE

A song for me? I'm touched. What kind of song?

MORTIMER

A drinking song. But I could never get past the first two bars.

FREDDIE

Look here, Mortimer?

MORTIMER

Yes, Freddie?

FREDDIE

Do you belong to a club?

MORTIMER

I would never belong to a club.

FREDDIE

And why is that?

MORTIMER

Any club that would have me as a member ain't worth the dues they charge ya.

FREDDIE

Well now, there's clubs and there's clubs.

MORTIMER

Is there now?

FREDDIE

Yes, and I've written a song about a particular one.

[INTRO: MUM'S THE WORD]

(To girl in audience)

Pay close attention, me darlin.' Here goes the song, you can follow along.

SONG #3: MUM'S THE WORD!

BOTH

EVERY DUKE IN LONDON HAS HIS SPECIAL PLACE TO GO
A TONY CLUB FOR GENTLEMEN
TO MEET AND GREET AND SHOW
THEIR CLASS SUPERIORITY,
BELIEVE ME, FOLKS, ITS TRUE
AND ALL YOU NEEDS TO PAY IS LOTS OF DUES
THEY SITS AROUND IN LEATHER CHAIRS
AND DRINK AND SMOKE AND TALK

FREDDIE

YOU HAVE TO BE INVITED

MORTIMER

ME, I'D RATHER NOT!

BOTH

FOR IF YOU'D LIKE A SPOT OF FUN
MUM'S THE WORD!
A PLACE TO GO WHEN DAY IS DONE
MUM'S THE WORD!
ARF A MILE FROM GROSVENER SQUARE
BEHIND FITZWILLIE'S PUB
THAT'S WHERE IT LIES
THAT PARADISE
THE BEDLAM CLUB!

FREDDIE

THE CLIFTON CLUB IN BRISTOL

MORTIMER
IS FOR GENTS SO DEBONAIR

FREDDIE
THEY NOD TO ONE ANOTHER

MORTIMER
WITH THEIR NOSES IN THE AIR

FREDDIE
BUT JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES
I HAVE TO THINK THAT YOU'LL AGREE

BOTH
THE BEDLAM CLUB'S THE PLACE FOR YOU AND ME

FREDDIE
IT CAN'T BE FOUND AROUND THE TOWN
AT ANY FIXED ADDRESS

MORTIMER
BUT ASK AROUND, AND YOU'LL BE BOUND
TO WHERE THE FUN IS BEST.

BOTH
IF YOU AIN'T SO POSH, THEN
MUM'S THE WORD!
IF YOU AIN'T GOT THE DOSH, IT'S
MUM'S THE WORD!
KNOCK THREE TIMES, THEY'LL LET YOU IN
AND GIVE YOUR BACK A RUB
WHERE EVERY GIRL'S
UP FOR A WHIRL!
THE BEDLAM CLUB!

FREDDIE
THE TOFFS AT WHITE'S AND BOODLES
ARE OH, SO LAZY-FAIR

MORTIMER
THEY TALK OF ART AND LIT-RA-CHUR
AS IF THEY DIDN'T CARE

FREDDIE

BUT AT THE BEDLAM CLUB
EVERY NIGHT'S A TRAVELING SHOW
BUT ONLY IF YOU KNOW JUST WHERE TO GO

FROM AULD ITCH ON THE STRAND
IT'S HIGH-HO THE MOLDY TOAD
THEN CROSS THE BOX WITHOUT YOUR SOX
AND MAKE YERSELF AT HOME.

BOTH
FOR IF YOU'D LIKE A SPOT OF FUN
MUM'S THE WORD!
A PLACE TO GO WHEN DAY IS DONE
MUM'S THE WORD!
ARF A MILE FROM GROSVENER SQUARE
BEHIND FITZWILLIE'S PUB
THAT'S WHERE IT LIES
THAT PARADISE
THE BEDLAM CLUB!

(Music vamps during following dialogue.)

MORTIMER
Hey Freddie, did you hear about the drunk what went in front of the judge?

FREDDIE
No, what about the drunk what went in front of the judge?

MORTIMER
The judge said, 'You've been brought 'ere for drinking!'

FREDDIE
What did the drunk say?

MORTIMER
All right, then, let's get started!

(Both laugh—har har)

FREDDIE
Hey Freddy, how did you become a singer?

MORTIMER

How did I become a singer?

FREDDIE

Yeah, how did you become a singer?

MORTIMER

Well, me mother egged me on.

FREDDIE

Then the audience egged him off!

MORTIMER

Now hold on. I've sung twice before the Queen.

FREDDIE

Why? Didn't get it right the first time?

MORTIMER'S

Well, as me dear old dad used to say—

(long pause)

Dad wasn't much of a talker.

BOTH

FOR IF YOU'D LIKE A SPOT OF FUN
MUM'S THE WORD!
A PLACE TO GO WHEN DAY IS DONE
MUM'S THE WORD!
ARF A MILE FROM GROSVENER SQUARE
BEHIND FITZWILLIE'S PUB
THAT'S WHERE IT LIES
THAT PARADISE
THE BEDLAM CLUB!

(During the final chorus FREDDIE plucks a silver cigarette case from FREDDIE's suit.)

FREDDIE

(stage whispers)

Here now! What'cher doing?

HOLMES

(as himself, whispers back)

Picking your pocket.

FREDDIE

'Oo the devil are you?

HOLMES

Holmes. Sherlock Holmes.

(leaps off the stage and runs up the aisle)

FREDDIE

Sherlock Holmes!?! Stop, thief! Somebody stop that man!

(Lights dim as police whistles shriek. The music hall disappears and the scene shifts to a foggy alley.)

[MUSIC VAMPS]

SCENE 3

SONG #4: THE CONNOISSEUR OF CRIME REPRISE

(HOLMES runs into the alley, grabs a carpetbag from its hiding place. As he sings, he removes his MORTIMER CHIPS disguise, stuffs it in bag, takes out and dons his cape coat and deerstalker hat.)

HOLMES

WHERE EVIL LURKS,
THAT'S WHERE YOU'LL FIND ME.
WHERE DANGER LIES,
I'M AT MY PRIME.
NO ONE CAN MATCH
THE MASTER OF DETECTION,
I'M SHERLOCK HOLMES,
THE CONNOISSEUR OF CRIME!

(hears a noise in the outer street)

WHAT'S THAT SOUND? COULD IT BE?
WHO DARES ATTEMPT TO FOLLOW ME?

(checks that all is clear, then returns to his task)

THE STREET IS CLEAR, THE SCENT IS LOST,

IN THIS BIN MY RUSE IS TOSSED.
LET THEM SEEK ME IF THEY DARE,
THEN THEY'LL FIND
THAT I'M—NOT—THERE!

WHERE EVIL LURKS
THAT'S WHERE YOU'LL FIND ME
WHERE DANGER LIES
I'M AT MY PRIME
THE KING OF CLUES,
THE MASTER OF DETECTION,
I'M SHERLOCK HOLMES,
THE CONNOISSEUR OF CRIME!

BUT OH,
HOW I FEAR EACH NEW MYSTERY
ONCE SOLVED, WILL BE MY LAST
THIS GOLDEN AGE OF CRIME AND ROMANCE
WILL LAPSE INTO HISTORY
AND MY GREAT BRAIN
WILL WITHER AND FADE
INTO THE PAST

TILL THEN...

WHERE EVIL LURKS
THAT'S WHERE YOU'LL FIND ME
WHERE DANGER LIES
I'M AT MY PRIME
I SAY TO MALEFACTORS EVERYWHERE
NO ONE CAN MATCH
THE CONNOISSEUR OF CRIME!

(The clip-clops of a horse carriage are heard.
HOLMES whistles, the horse stops and he
disappears out of the alley.)

SCENE 4

(A sitting room at 221b Baker Street. In the center, a lit fireplace. Two armchairs are in front of the fire. Up right of the fireplace is a hallway that leads to Holmes and Watson's

rooms. Down right is the door to the flat. Downstage of that is a desk piled high with papers. To the left of the fireplace is a casement window with window seat. Downstage of the seat lies a table holding Holmes' chemistry experiments—beakers, retorts, and glass tubing and a Praxeniscopes. On every shelf and wall are souvenirs from Holmes and Watson's adventures. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's portraits frame the room; Albert's is hung with black crepe.

As lights come up, WATSON stands at the mantle by the fire, working on his chronicles.)

WATSON

Holmes had been gone for six days. Six. And not a single word. No message delivered; no lines posted in the Times. Just silence. Mind-numbing silence. I was beside myself with worry. No...

(scratches out line and corrects)

I was ... concerned. We had been on a mission for Her Majesty the Queen.

(Sits at desk. Picks up note that is on the desk as he sings.)

SONG #5: CLUELESS

WATSON

A WEEK AGO
OR MAYBE MORE
A MAN CAME KNOCKING
AT OUR DOOR
HE HELD A NOTE
TIGHT IN HIS HAND
SAID, "THERE'S A DIRE THREAT TO THIS LAND.
HER MAJESTY NEEDS YOUR BRAIN
TO PREVENT A DISASTER THAT THREATENS HER REIGN."

WATSON

The man was the new Home Minister (writes in journal) Sir Hugh P. Fullbuck.

WATSON

BUT I HAVEN'T A CLUE WHAT THE GAME IS,
HAVEN'T A CLUE AT ALL.
THE MINISTER'S FACE,
HIS IMPENDING DISGRACE,
SHOWED WHAT WAS AT STAKE
TOUCHED THE FATE OF US ALL.

BUT I HAVEN'T A CLUE WHAT THE GAME IS,
I HAVEN'T A CLUE AT ALL.
HE SPOKE OF A CRIME,
SAID THERE WASN'T MUCH TIME,
THEN HE HAILED A CAB
AND THAT IS ALL
I RECALL.

(writes)

We went to the Gaiety Music Hall to find the author of the note.

(sings)

BUT I DON'T KNOW
THE VILLAIN'S NAME,
PERHAPS EXTORTION
WAS HIS AIM.
IT REALLY IS A MYSTERY
WHY WE WENT TO THE GAIETY.
THERE WAS TO BE AN EXCHANGE
FOR AN ITEM HE HAD
THAT WOULD BRING US ALL SHAME.

BUT I HAVEN'T A CLUE WHAT THE FIEND HAD,
HAVEN'T A CLUE AT ALL.
SOMEONE MUST HAVE BEEN CAUGHT
DOING WHAT THEY SHOULD NOT,
BUT NO ONE'S EXPLAINED TO ME
WHO, WHERE OR WHAT.

(speaks)

Holmes never fills me in. He always says there isn't time and he'll give me the details in the coach. But he never does. He left me standing there—waiting! Totally in the dark. Utterly clueless.

HE NEVER TELLS ME ANYTHING!
I SAY, IT REALLY STINGS.
HE DISAPPEARS

WITHOUT A WORD
AND THERE I AM,
IT'S SO ABSURD!
HE LEADS ME ON A WILD GOOSE CHASE,
NOW I'VE GOT NOTHING BUT EGG ON MY FACE!

SO I HAVEN'T A CLUE WHAT THE GAME IS.
I HAVEN'T A CLUE AND HERE'S WHY:
WHEN IT COMES TO DEDUCTION
I NEED SOME INSTRUCTION,
A PARTNER BESIDE ME
TO ACT AS MY GUIDE.

SO I HAVEN'T A CLUE WHAT THE GAME IS,
NOT ONE BLOODY CLUE AT ALL.
WHILE HOLMES IS OFF SPYING,
I'M LEFT WONDER WHYING,
I'M ON MY OWN
AND ALL ALONE
IN THE DARK!

YOU CAN'T SOLVE A MYSTERY
THAT COMES WITH NO HISTORY,
JUST INTRIGUE AND DARING
AND ME IN HERE SWEARING

AND WHAT IF I AM?
CAN'T HE SEE THAT I'M LOSING MY MIND?
OH, NO ONE WAS EVER MORE CLUELESS
THAN I!

(The casement window flies open, and
HOLMES, in deerstalker and cape coat, appears
on the sill.)

HOLMES

Watson!

WATSON
(screams in surprise.)

AHHHH!

HOLMES

Like Caesar, I return triumphant!

WATSON

Holmes, do you realize you left me there like a bloody fool waiting for your return—

HOLMES

Yes.

WATSON

With no clue as to your whereabouts—

HOLMES

Yes.

WATSON

Or well being, or what you've been up to for the last six days?

HOLMES

Yes and yes. But it was all worth it, my friend. I have returned triumphant and we must celebrate! What do you say to a light repast at Simpson's?

(Drops coat or jacket onstage with silver cigarette case in a pocket and leaves the stage to change into his usual vest and jacket.)

WATSON

(crosses arms and sits.)

No. I absolutely refuse.

HOLMES

(pops his head in the door.)

What's that?

WATSON

I'm not taking a step out of these rooms until you explain to me what you've been up to and why you couldn't manage to give me the slightest hint as to what this whole nasty business was about.

HOLMES

Now, doctor, don't be cross. I was sent to retrieve an object and I did just that. In point of fact, I lifted it from Freddie Fish onstage during the show this very evening.

WATSON

Freddie Fish? Of Fish and Chips? Marvelous duo. Seen their act a hundred times.

HOLMES

The very same. Freddie Fish—music hall artiste, petty thief, extortionist—and criminal lackey to the highest bidder.

WATSON

What were you doing with Freddie?

HOLMES

Mortimer Chips met with an, ahem, unfortunate accident and it fell upon me to replace him to keep an eye on Mr. Fish. And you know my flair for the dramatic—

WATSON

Too well.

HOLMES

Music hall artiste was a role I could not resist.

WATSON

What did Freddie have?

HOLMES

An item of great worth to the royal family. And here it—
(crosses to coat, looks in the pocket)
Where is it? Watson, did you move this coat?

WATSON

I haven't touched it.

HOLMES

You must have.

WATSON

I swear I haven't—

HOLMES

It was right...Ah! Here it is. Behold! A Britannic silver cigarette case.

WATSON

A cigarette case? Why, it appears rather ordinary.

HOLMES

Ah, Watson...you observe but you do not see. This silver case speaks volumes.

WATSON

Really?

HOLMES

(pulls a magnifying glass from his pocket)

Observe. The lower part of the case is not only dented in two places but it is cut and marked all over from the habit of keeping other hard objects in the same pocket. An individual who treats a silver cigarette case so cavalierly is a careless man.

WATSON

Interesting!

HOLMES

Yet it has been lovingly polished with the finest chamois cloth, which makes him also caring.

WATSON

Fascinating!

HOLMES

The hinge has been repaired twice, indicating the case has been hurled with some force more than once, thus betraying a high level of emotional instability.

WATSON

Good Lord!

HOLMES

The case was fashioned by Walker and Hall, silversmiths to the Queen.

WATSON

Amazing!

HOLMES

And until three days ago, this case was in the hands of a woman!

WATSON

Brilliant! Absolutely brilliant! How do you do it?

HOLMES

The clues, my dear Watson. The clues! The clues are in the details.

(During song, HOLMES dusts for fingerprints, lights flash paper to sniff the tobacco's aroma, and uses other investigative equipment.)

SONG #6: THE SCIENCE OF DEDUCTION

HOLMES

THE SCIENCE OF DEDUCTION
IS REALLY QUITE AN ART.
ATTENTION TO THE LEAST DETAIL
IS VITAL FROM THE START.
A BIT OF ASH,
A SPECK OF MUD,
THE MEREST SHAFT OF HAIR,
EACH ONE SUGGESTS
A CHAIN OF FACTS
THE PLAIN TRUTH TO DECLARE.

THE STUDY OF MERE TRIFLES
IS MY INSTRUCTIVE BOOK.
I'VE TRAINED MYSELF TO CLEARLY SEE
WHAT OTHERS OVERLOOK.
I NEVER GUESS,
NOR MAKE EXCEPTIONS
THAT DISPROVE THE RULE.
JUST ANALYZE THE FACTS
AND USE DEDUCTION
AS MY TOOL.

I CHAFE
AT IDLENESS,
STAGNATION DRIVES ME MAD.
BUT ONE
CONUNDRUM
AND I AM MORE THAN GLAD.
THIS SILVER BIN
PROCLAIMS A SORDID TALE
OF FEMME FATALES
AND OLD ROUÉS
AND MINDS THAT ARE TOO FRAIL.

WATSON

Femme fatales? A lipstick mark?

HOLMES

THE SCIENCE OF DEDUCTION
REQUIRES MORE WORK THAN THAT.
THERE'S NOTHING MORE DECEPTIVE
THAN THE OBVIOUS FACT.
THESE CIGARETTES SEEM COMMONPLACE
BUT WHEN YOU LOOK AGAIN,
YOU'LL SEE THEY'RE ROLLED BY HAND,
A VERY RARE EGYPTIAN BLEND.

BEHOLD A WOMAN'S TOUCH
UPON THEM, CAN'T YOU SEE?
A HINT OF AMBERGRIS
BETRAYS THEIR PEDIGREE
OF FRENCH PERFUME
FROM LE MAISON GUERLAIN
MADE ONLY FOR THE ROYAL QUEENS
OF ENGLAND AND SPAIN.

WATSON

Ah, yes. I smell it.

BOTH

THE SCIENCE OF DEDUCTION,
IT LIVES IN EACH DETAIL.
WHEN ARMED WITH THESE
ALL MYSTERIES
FALL OPEN WITHOUT FAIL.
OBSERVE EACH RULE
AND BRICK BY BRICK
YOUR CASE IS FIRMLY WROUGHT,
AND SO AT LAST
A LIGHT IS CAST—
YOUR MYSTERY IS NOT!
YOUR MYSTERY IS NOT!

WATSON

But who is the owner of the case?

HOLMES

Queen Victoria's son, of course.

WATSON

The Prince of Wales? Edward? But how can you be sure?

HOLMES

Note the inscription on the inside cover: "To My Darling Boy."

WATSON

"To my darling boy?" Well, there you have it then. Queen Victoria presented it to her son as a gift.

HOLMES

But it is not the just the inscription that makes me certain of the owner. As I told you, these cigarettes are a unique blend hand-rolled in Egypt by special order to His Royal Highness.

WATSON

Surely others must smoke those.

HOLMES

Only one other in all the world: his father, Prince Albert, and he is sadly twenty years in his grave.

(BOTH turn to look at Prince Albert's portrait draped in black.)

WATSON

Entombed at Frogmore.

HOLMES

Poor Queen Victoria.

(BOTH turn to look at the Queen's portrait.)

HOLMES

The grieving widow with a very naughty son. A week doesn't go by when the tabloids aren't reporting the Prince of Wales' exploits with one actress or another.

WATSON

Yes, I remember the Nellie Clifton affair.

HOLMES

According to the agony columns, it was that affair that killed his father.

WATSON

Right after that terrible carriage accident.

HOLMES

A dreadful thing, was it not? I kept the newspaper clippings.

(eagerly crosses the room to get them.)

Here they...where are they? Watson? Did you move my clippings?

WATSON

I haven't touched your clippings.

HOLMES

You must have.

WATSON

I swear I haven't.

HOLMES

They were right...Ah! Here they are.

(Finds box with clippings, holds up yellowing article)

Royal Accident at Coburg.

WATSON

(sits by HOLMES and skims the article)

The carriage smashed to bits...two horses dead and Victoria's husband Prince Albert miraculously unscathed.

HOLMES

Though I hear he was deeply disturbed by the incident. Deeply.

WATSON

I'm not surprised. A trauma of that magnitude would surely have lasting effects on one's well being.

HOLMES

However, instead of taking the time necessary to recuperate, Prince Albert traveled to Oxford to lecture his son on his moral responsibility to the crown, and fell ill. Typhoid fever was the official cause of death. Here are the Spectator's reports of the funeral.

(gives scrapbook to WATSON)

I have them all.

WATSON
(flipping through scrapbook)

Let me see.

HOLMES
She was devastated. Queen Victoria, naturally, blamed her son. That's him, off to the side.

WATSON
Is that the Queen, the one in black?

HOLMES
Watson, they're all in black, it's a funeral.

WATSON
Ah!

HOLMES
Sometimes I think Victoria and Albert would have preferred a more ordinary life, far from the madding crowd.

WATSON
They probably would have been much happier as farmers.

HOLMES
Or beekeepers.

WATSON
Or wandering minstrels.

HOLMES
Aye.

WATSON
Twenty years of mourning.

HOLMES
And all those years insisting that Prince Albert's rooms be kept just as he left them. Fresh clothes laid out and hot water for shaving delivered each and every day.

WATSON
It really is incredible, the longevity of her grief.

HOLMES

Not her grief—her love.

WATSON

Ah yes, love, of course. Powerful emotion, that.

HOLMES

You would know, old man. You had your Mary.

WATSON

She's with the angels now.

HOLMES

God rest her soul. As for me, I wouldn't know.

WATSON

Oh, come now, Holmes. Surely a candle still burns for someone there, in the dark recesses of your heart.

HOLMES

Well, perhaps one.

(crosses to put book away and pulls out photo of Irene Adler)

The woman.

SONG #7: INTO MY ARMS A DREAM COMES

HOLMES

OUT OF THE PAST COMES WAFTING
A SCENT SO EXOTIC, INTOXICATING,
THE HINT OF A MOMENT IN TIME
WHEN ALL THAT I HOPED FOR
MIGHT HAVE BEEN MINE.
INTO MY ARMS A DREAM COMES—
IRENE.

WATSON

Irene Adler?

HOLMES

OUT OF THE PAST A SENSING
OF SOMETHING ARRIVING, SOMETHING COMMENCING
THE SPARK THAT REKINDLES A FIRE

AND STILL I DON'T KNOW
WHAT IT IS I DESIRE.
INTO MY ARMS A DREAM COMES—
IRENE.

(speaks)

I am not on the whole an admirer of women,
My brain's always governed my heart.
A womanly mind is too hard to define
And a man will be lost from the start.
On the turn of a pin
Their behavior can spin.
How can one build on such quicksand?
How can you know where you are?

(sings)

YET, OUT OF THE PAST COMES A WHISPER,
EVER SO NEAR, A VOICE IN MY EAR.
WHY DO I FEAR THAT I'VE MISSED
THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME, LIPS NEVER TO KISS?
INTO MY ARMS A DREAM COMES—
IRENE.

WATSON

(lost in his own reverie)

IN THE MORNING LIGHT,
AT THE END OF NIGHT,
THERE'S A SHADOW THAT LIVES ON THE EDGE OF SIGHT.

THERE'S AN IMAGE THERE,
WAVERING IN THE AIR,
OF MY MARY, MY DARLING WHOSE
LIFE I SHARED.

I CAN BARELY SEE
HER REACH OUT TO ME,
MY HEART LEAPS IN MY THROAT
BUT IN VAIN,
SHE IS GONE.

BOTH

YET—

HOLMES

OUT OF THE PAST A WHISPER

EVER SO NEAR
WATSON

A VOICE IN MY EAR.
WHY?
BOTH

DO I FEAR THAT I'VE MISSED
HOLMES

THE LOVE OF MY LIFETIME
WATSON

LIPS NEVER TO KISS
HOLMES

INTO MY ARMS A DREAM COMES—
BOTH

MARY!
WATSON

IRENE!
HOLMES

THEN SHE'S GONE.
BOTH

HOLMES
(abruptly)

Now to the matter at hand. It appears Victoria's son has stirred the pot again.

Who is Edward with this time?
WATSON

According to the Home Minister, our future king has been spending his evenings at the Gaiety Music Hall with that German sensation, the Nightingale of Nuremburg.
HOLMES

(HOLMES shows WATSON the Gaiety Music Hall program, featuring a saucy engraving of the Nightingale of Nuremburg on the cover.)

WATSON

Good lord! Why, she must be twice his age.

HOLMES

And three times his size. But I suppose she has her good points.

WATSON

Two rather robust ones, I see.

HOLMES

Steady, Watson. This German chanteuse is quite an interesting woman. Each evening after her performance she travels to the Bedlam Club—

WATSON

Not the Bedlam Club?

HOLMES

Indeed. A peculiar institution. It is a floating “after hours” club. No fixed address but rather, one that changes location nightly. The perfect rendezvous for a little *tête á tête*.

WATSON

Rather.

HOLMES

(points to picture)

The Nightingale is always accompanied by her manager, a gnomish fellow of unsavory mien.

WATSON

Oh, dear. So Freddie Fish lifted the telltale case from the Prince of Wales during his liaison at the Bedlam Club.

HOLMES

That is correct.

WATSON

(crosses to get the blackmail note)

Then Freddie wrote this note of blackmail to the Queen threatening to expose her son.

HOLMES

Precisely.

WATSON

I must say, Holmes, a liaison with a showgirl, tawdry as it is, hardly seems a scandal powerful enough to shake the very foundations of the empire.

HOLMES

What did you say?

WATSON

Many gentlemen go to the Gaiety every night of the week—

HOLMES

What did you just say?

WATSON

About the Gaiety Theatre?

HOLMES

No. Before that.

WATSON

That Freddie Fish wrote this note to the Queen?

HOLMES

Yes, that's it! How could I have been so blind? I congratulate you, Doctor. Once again you have cut straight to the heart of the matter while I, in my desire to conclude this case with all precipitate haste, have overlooked the single most important clue.

WATSON

I—I don't understand.

HOLMES

The letter, Watson, the letter of blackmail!

WATSON

Yes, I agree, Freddie Fish hardly seems the type of criminal to threaten the monarchy.

HOLMES

But Freddie Fish did not—COULD not—write this letter.

WATSON

What? How so, Holmes?

HOLMES

Because Freddie Fish is an illiterate.

WATSON

Good lord!

HOLMES

He can neither read nor write. He signs his name with a mark—a mark I saw him make last night when he signed for his share of the gate at the Gaiety.

WATSON

If this is so, then who wrote the note threatening the Queen? And why?

HOLMES

That, my friend, is precisely what troubles me. There is more here than meets the eye. Much more.

(There are four sharp raps at the door.)

HOLMES

Do not answer that.

WATSON

But it might be Mrs. Hudson.

HOLMES

That is not her knock.

(Three knocks are heard.)

WATSON

Is that?

HOLMES

No.

(A final knock.)

That? WATSON

No. HOLMES

(Footsteps recede down the stairs.)

Are those her footsteps? WATSON

Open the door. HOLMES
(whispers)

(WATSON creeps to door while HOLMES grabs a weapon.
WATSON opens door.)

Ha! BOTH

(No one is there. WATSON discovers a salver on the floor
with a letter upon it.)

A letter! For you! WATSON

(As WATSON carries in the letter HOLMES hurries to
his lab table to retrieve a set of large tweezers.
WATSON starts to pick up the letter when—)

Do not touch that, Doctor! HOLMES

(WATSON drops the salver. HOLMES picks up the letter
with the tweezers and examines it closely.)

Do you know who sent it? WATSON

I have a suspicion. HOLMES

(HOLMES takes his magnifying glass from his coat pocket and scrutinizes the letter.)

HOLMES

Fiendish fellows with the darkest intent are about this very night. We shall be asked to test our bodies and minds, and yes, our courage. For in the end, it will be a battle between good and evil. Ah, yes—just as I suspected!

WATSON

Poisonous ink?

HOLMES

Number 2 pencil.

(HOLMES opens the letter and hands it to WATSON, then assumes a thinking position.)

Read it to me, Watson, if you please.

WATSON

Dear Mr. Holmes. My man will be round this evening to collect the item we discussed. On no account leave your rooms. This is a matter of state and requires immediate dispatch. Sir Hugh P. Fullbuck.

HOLMES

Hugh P. Fullbuck?

WATSON

Yes. Sir Hugh P. Fullbuck.

(HOLMES leaps to his feet and begins searching through the room, under the bench, in drawers, behind pictures.)

HOLMES

Where is it? It's here somewhere...

(HOLMES disappears into his bedroom.)

WATSON

What in heaven's name are you looking for?

HOLMES

My blackboard. Did you take it?

WATSON

I haven't touched it.

HOLMES

You must have!

WATSON

I swear I didn't!

HOLMES

Confound it! Someone has organized my things. Mrs. Hudson?! It was right—aha! Here it is!

(HOLMES returns with a blackboard and props it against the bookcase.)

WATSON

Are you feeling all right?

HOLMES

I'm in perfect health. It is the Home Minister's paper that is defective.

WATSON

It looked fine to me.

HOLMES

Once again, Watson, you observe but you do not see. This is 20-pound linen paper, purchased at Stephenson's. It is of the highest quality BUT ... it is not the paper used by the Home Minister or anyone at Whitehall. As you may recall, I have written a short monograph on the subject and so I happen to know that the paper used at Whitehall is 21-pound linen with the watermark $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch to the right. That, as you see, is only a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.

WATSON

But what does this mean?

HOLMES

It means we are in deep waters, Watson. Very deep waters.

WATSON

Good Lord!

(HOLMES writes the name "Hugh P. Fullbuck" on the board.)

HOLMES

What do you see?

WATSON

The new home minister's name: HUGH P. FULLBUCK.

HOLMES

Why do you think he is the Home Minister?

WATSON

Because he told us so right in this very room.

HOLMES

And that was our first mistake. We received that information without question.

WATSON

Are you saying Sir Hugh P. Fullbuck is not the Home Minister?

HOLMES

I'm saying Sir Hugh P. Fullbuck is *not* Sir Hugh P. Fullbuck. This is an anagram.

WATSON

An anagram for whom?

HOLMES

The Napoleon of crime. The master of deception. The organizer of half that is evil and nearly all that is undetected in this great city.

WATSON

Professor Moriarty?

HOLMES

How could I have been so blind?

WATSON

Holmes, that anagram doesn't contain a single letter from the Professor's name.

HOLMES

Yes, Watson! You have grasped the deviousness of Moriarty's devilish mind. Anyone can create an anagram from an obvious source of letters, but it takes a twisted genius to devise one from the remains.

(HOLMES does some fast scribbling, crossing out letters and writing others on the board.)

You see, he has combined the numerical code with the Aryurvedic. Three-quarters of the letters are prime, when you substitute primes with consonants, multiply the vowels, lower the case and raise the factor by four. We have—

(HOLMES reveals the anagram)

WATSON

Major Timsayer.

HOLMES

What? Oh. Wait a minute...

(HOLMES rearranges the letters to spell:)

WATSON

James Moriarty!

HOLMES

Yes, Professor James Moriarty. The greatest schemer of all time, the organizer of every devilry, the controlling brain of the underworld. Watson! This is a man who can make or mar nations.

WATSON

My god, Holmes! What does he want with us?

HOLMES

That is yet to be discerned. There is material here. There is scope. I am dull indeed not to understand its meaning. Come! We must leave.

WATSON

But the letter...

HOLMES

The letter, may I remind you, was written by Moriarty. He instructs us to stay, which means we must vacate these premises at once.

WATSON

Of course. Why didn't I see that?

HOLMES

We must get to the theatre. Freddie Fish is surely in over his head. A message of warning must be sent to the Queen. Inspector Lestrade and Scotland Yard should be brought in on this. And then there's the Prince of Wales and the Nightingale of Nuremburg. What time do you have?

WATSON

Quarter past eleven.

HOLMES

What we do in the next hour may determine the fate of the empire. Are you ready for adventure?

WATSON

Always!

HOLMES

I trust you have your service revolver close at hand?

WATSON

I'm never without it.

HOLMES

Then what are we waiting for?

(Thunder and lightning)

Grab your umbrella, Burberry and Wellingtons, and every aid that ever man invented to combat this confounded English weather—and follow me!

SONG #8: THE GAME'S AFOOT

HOLMES

A SIMPLE TALE OF BLACKMAIL
THIS CASE PRETENDS TO BE
BUT LOOK A LITTLE CLOSER
AND DISCOVER TREACHERY.
THESE WATERS ARE FAR DEEPER
THAN ANY THAT I'VE KNOWN.
THIS PETTY THIEF IS DEVIOUS

BUT HE IS NOT ALONE.

A DARK, MALIGNANT HAND
IS BEHIND THIS, I CAN TELL,
AS SURELY AS A LEOPARD
TRACKS HIS PREY BY SENSE OF SMELL.
I FEAR THERE IS A SINGLE THREAD
THAT YET WE HAVE NOT GRASPED,
BUT WHEN WE HOLD IT IN OUR HANDS
WE'LL CRACK THIS CASE AT LAST.

FOR THE GAME'S AFOOT!
NOW COMES OUR FINEST HOUR!
THE GAME'S AFOOT!
THE TIME HAS COME TO ACT.
THE GAME'S AFOOT!
I PROMISE THERE'LL BE DANGER.
THE GAME'S AFOOT!
NOW THERE'S NO TURNING BACK.

WATSON

YOU KNOW THAT I'LL STAND BY YOU
AND BE YOUR RIGHT HAND MAN.
IF MORIARTY IS OUR PREY
WE NEED A BETTER PLAN.
THE MAN IS LIKE A SPIDER
HIDING IN ITS LAIR.
WE COULD BE LED INTO A TRAP
SO LET'S TAKE EXTRA CARE.

HOLMES

IT'S OUR DESTINY,
MY DEAR WATSON,
THIS WAS MEANT TO BE,
A FINAL BLOW,
IT'S EITHER HIM
OR ME.

BOTH

EVIL HAUNTS THE ROAD TONIGHT,
A DEADLY MIST THAT CLOUDS OUR SIGHT.
LIKE A FOUL AND NOXIOUS STAIN,
THE KING OF CHAOS MEANS TO REIGN.

WATSON
FOR THE GAME'S AFOOT!

HOLMES
NOW COMES OUR FINEST HOUR!

WATSON
THE GAME'S AFOOT!

HOLMES
THE TIME HAS COME TO ACT.

WATSON
THE GAME'S AFOOT!

HOLMES
I PROMISE THERE'LL BE DANGER.

WATSON
THE GAME'S AFOOT!

HOLMES
NOW THERE'S NO TURNING BACK.

WATSON
THE GAME'S AFOOT!

HOLMES
THE FATE OF OUR GREAT EMPIRE

WATSON
THE GAME'S AFOOT!

HOLMES
IS THREATENED TO THE CORE!

BOTH
THE GAME'S AFOOT!
IT'S TIME FOR US
TO LEARN—
THE TRUTH THAT LIES BEYOND
THIS DOOR!

(HOLMES reaches for the doorknob.)

HOLMES
It's locked.

WATSON
I beg your pardon?

HOLMES
This door is locked! From the outside!

WATSON
What the devil...? How can that be? I just opened it moments ago!

(WATSON struggles with the doorknob as HOLMES kneels to peer through the keyhole.)

HOLMES
Someone—or something—is preventing it from opening.

(Smoke begins to seep under the door.)

WATSON
Holmes, smoke! They've set the house afire!

HOLMES
No, my friend. That is gas. Poisonous gas. The window!

WATSON
(rushes to the window)
It's jammed.

HOLMES
I just came through there. What did you do!?

WATSON
I didn't do anything!

HOLMES
You must have done something!

WATSON

I swear I didn't!

(More thunder and lightning)

We're trapped!

HOLMES

That would appear to be the case.

(HOLMES and WATSON stand center stage, back to back.)

WATSON

Then this is it.

HOLMES

Yes, I believe so.

WATSON

The end.

HOLMES

The final problem.

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT I

ACT II

(Lights come up on HOLMES and WATSON sitting on either side of an elaborate brass Turkish hookah. They are wearing a fez and exotic pasha hat and breathing through tubes attached to the hookah. A newspaper has been stuffed under the door. The gurgle of the water filter can be heard. A retort full of red liquid bubbles on the chemistry set. The light in the room has a bluish haze reflecting the lingering presence of poison gas. Author's Note: Remember, they need to take breaths from the hookah before they talk, sing, etc.)

I say, Holmes?

WATSON

Umm.

HOLMES

WATSON

How long do we have to breathe through this contraption of yours?

HOLMES

Until that red liquid in the retort on my lab desk turns green.

WATSON

I see. And how did you know breathing through this pipe would save us from the gas?

HOLMES

Not the pipe, Watson. The water. I detected immediately that the gas was anhydrous-trimethyl-bicarbonate.

WATSON

And...?

HOLMES

Elementary, my dear Watson. When dissolved in water, anhydrous-trimethyl-bicarbonate becomes inert. And thereby harmless.

WATSON

Fascinating. But there's something else in air, something...familiar. Charcoal?

HOLMES

Of a sort.

WATSON

I believe I smelled something like it when I was stationed in the Hindu Kush.

HOLMES

Well done, Watson! You've deduced the filtering agent itself. A medicinal plant cultivated throughout the Orient known as *cannabis sativa indica*.

WATSON

You mean?

HOLMES

The Pashtun call it hashish.

WATSON

It has a peculiar aroma.

HOLMES

But it certainly does the job.

WATSON

Rather.

(pause)

And we're to smoke this until the beaker turns green.

HOLMES

That is correct.

WATSON

I suppose, if it must be done...

SONG #9: HOOKAH!

WATSON

HIGH IN THE HIMALAYAS,
WAY UP NORTH OF THE HINDU KUSH,
WHERE THE CAMELS HAVE TWO LUMPY BUMPS
THAT ARE HARD UPON THE TUSH,
I LEARNED OF A HERB WITH A NAME ABSURD
AND THE SCENT OF AN ANTIQUE PEW,
WHERE A WHIFF OF A SPLIFF
WILL MAKE YOU COME UNGLUED.
HOOKAH!

HOLMES

HOOKAH!

BOTH

THAT'S WHAT THE PASHTUN SAY.

WATSON

HOOKAH!

HOLMES

HOOKAH!

BOTH

IT TAKES YOUR BREATH AWAY.
YES, JUST ONE PUFF
FROM THE BUBBLING BOWL
WILL MAKE A MAN A FOOL.
HOOKAH!

WATSON
FROM OLD TASHKENT TO SAMARKAND,
FROM SWAT TO KANDAHAR,
ON CAMEL-BACK TO PESHAWAR,
I WANDERED NEAR AND FAR
WHERE EV'RY DREAM ISN'T WHAT IT SEEMS,
EACH MEM'RY'S JUST A RUSE
TOO RIPE FOR THE PIPE
FRESH IN FROM OLD KABUL!
HOOKAH!

HOLMES
HOOKAH!

BOTH
FROM DELHI TO BOMBAY!

WATSON
HOOKAH!

HOLMES
HOOKAH!

BOTH
AND DOWN TO MANDALAY!
OH, THE SMOKE FROM A TOKE
CAN MAKE YOU SEE
STRAIGHT THROUGH THE MASQUERADE
HOOKAH!

HOLMES
Watson, the smoke from this pipe can expand your very
consciousness. If you're open to it, there's no telling what you'll find.
Tell me now—what do you see?

(HOLMES covers his extended arm with a scarf.)

WATSON
Your arm with a scarf on it.

HOLMES
And now?

(HOLMES whips the scarf off his arm at the same time tucking his straight arm behind his back so it looks like he only has one arm.)

WATSON

Good Lord! Where did it go?

(HOLMES blows on his thumb and the arm shoots out to the side—amazing! In the next verse he covers his hand with a scarf to look like a gun, then pulls scarf off revealing a hand pretending to be a gun.)

HOLMES

IF YOU'RE NOT QUICK THIS MAGIC TRICK
WILL MAKE YOU THINK AGAIN,
AND A MAN WITH A GUN IS A HAND WITH A THUMB
IF YOU LET YOUR SENSES LOOK WITHIN.
HOOKAH!

WATSON

HOOKAH!

BOTH

SOME THINGS AREN'T WHAT THEY SEEM.

HOLMES

HOOKAH!

WATSON

HOOKAH!

BOTH

THEY'RE MORE THAN JUST A DREAM.
YES, JUST BREATHE IN
AND THE SMOKE WITHIN
WILL MAKE A MAN SEE TRUE.
HOOKAH!

(HOLMES disappears into his room and reappears with small oriental carpet.)

HOLMES

See here, Watson—what am I holding in my hand?

WATSON

Why, that's my bathmat, Holmes.

HOLMES

Oh, really...?

(HOLMES disappears behind the doorsill, then reappears—first his finger tips, then his body with his hands extended like Superman. We see only the top half of his body, so it looks like he's flying.)

HOLMES

UPON THIS MAGIC CARPET
I AM FLYING THROUGH THE SKY
AND IF IT PLUMMETS TO THE GROUND
THEN I WILL SURELY CRASH AND DIE.
HOOKAH!

WATSON

HOOKAH!

BOTH

IT'S AMAZING WHAT YOU FIND

HOLMES

HOOKAH!

WATSON

HOOKAH!

BOTH

WHEN A MAN EXPANDS HIS MIND.
YES, JUST ONE PUFF
OF THE MAGIC STUFF
BRINGS EYESIGHT TO THE BLIND!
HOOKAH!

WATSON

All right, Holmes. Two can play at this game. Now—what am I sitting on?

HOLMES

The window seat, of course.

WATSON

Ah! And now...

(WATSON changes the direction he's facing.)

Presto change-oh!

HOLMES

It's still a window seat.

WATSON

Not with this!

(Dons an imaginary hat)

And this.

(Grabs an imaginary paddle)

And this!

(Starts paddling.)

HOLMES

I give up.

WATSON

A MAN AT THE PROW
OF A BOAT ON THE CHAO

(speaks in a rush)

Praya River in Bangkok, and he's wearing a hat to protect himself from the sun because he's been toiling all day in the rice paddies, just to earn enough money for his—I say, Holmes. I'm hungry!

(WATSON bolts for the tin of biscuits)

HOLMES

HOOKAH!

WATSON

HOOKAH!

BOTH

THERE'S A STORY TO BE TOLD.

HOLMES

HOOKAH!

WATSON
HOOKAH!

BOTH
THE TRUTH WILL SOON UNFOLD
YES, JUST ONE HIT
FROM A PIPE OF IT
WILL TURN GRAY ASH TO GOLD.
HOOKAH!

(The red liquid in the retort on HOLMES' chemistry table has changed color with a "ding" like a timer.)

WATSON
It's green!

HOLMES
We are now free to move about our chambers. I'll open the window.
You check the door.

WATSON
Right.

HOLMES
Still jammed. Did you—?

WATSON
I didn't touch it!

HOLMES
You must have!

WATSON
I swear I didn't!

HOLMES
(pops it with his fist.)
Ah, that's got it.

WATSON
We're still locked in.

HOLMES
Then we must be sure that they are locked out.

(HOLMES secures the front door lock)

WATSON

That will fix them!

HOLMES

Ah, Watson, the clouds lighten, but I should not venture to say the danger is over. Be on the ready.

WATSON

I always am.

(As HOLMES pulls out the newspaper stuffed under the door an article catches his eye.)

HOLMES

These are much deeper waters than I first surmised.

WATSON

(devours biscuits as he speaks.)

It seems clear enough to me, Holmes. I assume the Prince of Wales was at the Gaiety Music Hall, became entangled with the Nightingale of Nuremburg and Moriarty hired Freddie Fish to secure the damning evidence. Then Moriarty wrote the note of blackmail—

HOLMES

May I remind you, my dear friend, that it is critical, in all cases, to assume nothing.

WATSON

Well, it's a rather good guess.

HOLMES

It's a good guess—but an incorrect one.

(reads the paper)

In point of fact, the Prince of Wales has not been at the Gaiety Music Hall or the Bedlam Club this week, or any day of any week this month.

WATSON

Come now, Holmes, how can you know that so definitively?

HOLMES

The Spectator gives us the answer.

(shows WATSON the paper)

The Prince of Wales and his wife Alexandra have spent the past two weeks at Sandringham House in Norfolk, where he is pictured here, leading a grouse hunting party.

WATSON

Good Lord! Then how did Freddie Fish acquire the Prince of Wales' cigarette case?

HOLMES

The cigarette case we have in our possession may not be the one belonging to the Prince of Wales.

(shows WATSON the picture again.)

His own may in fact be protruding from his left coat pocket, as we observe in this photograph.

WATSON

But, if it's not the Prince of Wales' cigarette case, then whose could it be?

HOLMES

Once again, Watson, I must caution you against the folly of making premature assumptions. Let us re-examine the evidence. A silver cigarette case.

(opens the case)

An inscription "To my darling boy." Rare Egyptian cigarettes.

WATSON

May I try one of those?

HOLMES

Of course.

(hands WATSON a cigarette and takes one for himself, sniffs it.)

A lady's perfume. ...But what is here?

WATSON

(examines his cigarette closely)

Forgive me, Holmes, but I don't see a thing.

HOLMES

Not on the cigarette, Doctor. In the case.

(HOLMES dumps the cigarettes on table.)
Under the cigarettes. Read!

WATSON
(Reads the inside of the case)
"With love from your Vicky."

HOLMES
I think, Watson, that you are now standing in the presence of one of the absolute fools of Europe. There it is. Right there—for all the world to see—and *I* missed it!

WATSON
Missed what?

HOLMES
Watson, don't be so dense. The Queen might very well present her son with the gift of a silver cigarette case, but she would hardly inscribe a dedication, "With Love, From Your Vicky." Such sentiments are reserved for lovers or husbands, not one's own children.

WATSON
Perhaps it was his father's case passed down to him.

HOLMES
(gets jeweler's eyepiece from desk, examines case)
The Queen would never part with such a keepsake! There is material here. There is scope. I am dull indeed not to understand its—Aha!

WATSON
What is it, Holmes? What?

HOLMES
The inscription! It is recent, quite recent. See how the silver shines where it is cut? An old scratch would be the same color as the surface. Look at it through this lens. There's the polish, too, like earth on each side of a furrow.

WATSON
Good lord!

HOLMES
That inscription cannot be more than a month old.

WATSON

Amazing!

HOLMES

Doctor, as a medical expert, what would you say might have happened to a man who survives a catastrophic carriage accident with only a bruised forehead, but who from that day forward is a changed man, prone to fits of rage and depression?

WATSON

A bruise on the forehead and a changed personality? Undoubtedly a subdural hematoma—a slow bleeding into the brain. Most often it results in death, but in some rare cases the patient survives, only to spend the rest of his days in an asylum.

HOLMES

Watson, what I am about to say may finally convince you that either my methods of deduction are the work of a titanic charlatan or the most brilliant mind of the nineteenth century.

WATSON

I am ready, Holmes.

HOLMES

What if the Prince Consort did NOT die of typhoid fever, but rather was incapacitated from his earlier carriage accident. Not by a visible physical injury—

WATSON

But a mental one? That changed his personality?

HOLMES

Precisely. And Her Royal Highness, rather than risk having her beloved Albert committed to an asylum has, for twenty years, kept her husband safely ensconced at Balmoral Castle in Scotland.

WATSON

Over five hundred miles from London.

HOLMES

Until October first.

(holds up the headline page of the newspaper)

When the castle was closed for renovations.

WATSON

Then Prince Albert would have to have been transported to London without any one knowing. Undercover, so to speak.

HOLMES

In the QV2.

WATSON

The QV2?

HOLMES

You know the QV2. We've discussed it many times.

WATSON

No, we haven't. Ever. Once again I'm kept completely in the dark.

HOLMES

Now, Watson...

WATSON

Totally clueless.

HOLMES

The QV2 is the Queen's unmarked carriage. The vehicle that allows her to travel the roads of Great Britain *incognito*. It would also allow "Vicky" to take "her darling boy" wherever he wanted to go—including the Gaiety Music Hall.

WATSON

Prince Albert—alive? Impossible!

HOLMES

How oft have I said to you, my dear Watson, that when you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth. This would explain the queen's frequent absence from London. Her failure to appear at public functions. She even refused to open parliament—

WATSON

And insisted that her servants carry on as if Prince Albert were still alive.

HOLMES

Delivering his hot water for shaving every morning. Laying out freshly pressed clothes.

WATSON

Quite shocking.

HOLMES

Quite brilliant! There is Queen Victoria dressed all in black.

WATSON

In perpetual mourning.

HOLMES

Who would presume to question her grief?

WATSON

A lifetime of keeping a secret.

SONG #10: VICTORIA'S SECRET

BOTH

VICTORIA HAD A SECRET,
A ROYAL SECRET,
ALBERT WASN'T RIGHT IN THE HEAD.
OH MY, SHE WAS AFRAID
WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF HE STAYED.

HOLMES

A DOTTY KING
IS NOT A THING
YOU CAN HIDE BENEATH YOUR BED.

BOTH
VICTORIA HAD A SECRET,
A ROYAL SECRET,
ALBERT WASN'T RIGHT IN THE HEAD,
AND ONCE SHE ANALYZED IT
THEN SHE REALIZED THAT

WATSON
IT MADE BETTER SENSE
WITH THIS SAD PRINCE
TO KEEP—HIM—DEAD.

BOTH
BALMORAL CASTLE IS COLD AND IT'S DAMP,
THE PERFECT PLACE FOR A HUSBAND TO DECAMP.
NO ONE WOULD EVER VISIT,
NO ONE WOULD EVER SEE

WATSON
THAT VICTORIA HAD HER ALBERT

HOLMES
AND HE HIS VICKY.

BOTH
VICTORIA HAD A SECRET,
A ROYAL SECRET,
ALBERT WASN'T RIGHT IN THE HEAD.

WATSON
AND SO HIS ROOM REMAINED
QUITE PERFECTLY THE SAME

HOLMES
THE MAIDS PICKED UP
AND TIDIED UP
THEN LEFT THE WAY THEY CAME.

BOTH
VICTORIA HAD A SECRET,
A ROYAL SECRET,
ALBERT WASN'T RIGHT IN THE HEAD.

HOLMES
AND SO HIS BATH WAS BROUGHT
WHETHER HE BATHED OR NOT

WATSON
HIS BEDDING WAS CHANGED
HIS TROUSERS PRESSED

HOLMES
AND HE WAS NEVER CAUGHT.

BOTH
ALBERT'S HAD TWENTY YEARS OF LIVING
THE LIFE OF A DUKE, A PRINCE, A KING,
WITH NO ONE THERE TO MIND HIM,
NO ONE TO CRITICIZE HIM,

HOLMES
WHY, HE CAN DO
WHATEVER HE WANTS

WATSON
INCLUDING DANCE AND SING,
HA HA!

(They dance exultantly.)

BOTH
VICTORIA HAD A SECRET,
A ROYAL SECRET,
ALBERT WASN'T' RIGHT IN THE HEAD.
AND SO SHE STAYED IN SCOTLAND
WHERE SHE KNEW SHE'D GOT HIM
TIGHT
OUT OF SIGHT,
AND FAR FROM PRYING EYES.
AND SO THE ROYAL TWO
LIVED HAPPILY *ENTRE NOUS*.
VICTORIA HAD A SECRET—
WHO KNEW?

HOLMES

It's no wonder that Prince Albert would want to attend a show at the Gaiety. He always loved the theater, and his Rossini. It is a little known fact of history, Watson, that Albert himself possessed one of the finest tenor voices in Europe.

WATSON

I never knew that, Holmes.

HOLMES

Oh, yes. It was often remarked that the Prince-Consort could sing like a bird. (pause) Watson! Quick! Hand me the Debrett's.

WATSON

The Debrett's?

HOLMES

Debrett's Peerage.

WATSON

Of course! The definitive guide to every noble family in England. Here it is.

(WATSON takes down a book and hands it to HOLMES)

HOLMES

"Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. 26th August, 1819—14th December, 1861. As a young adult Albert studied at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, Bonn, where he excelled in Gymnastics and Music. He was captain of his college glee club, "The Bonn Vivants," and due to the purity of his voice often sang the female lead in many all-male productions of German *singspiels*. At the songfest in Nuremberg, his extraordinary vocal pyrotechnics as the Queen of the Night in Mozart's *Die Zauber Flöte*—"The Magic Flute"—earned him the enthusiastic accolades of his fellow students, who crowned him 'The Nightingale of Nuremberg.'"

WATSON

Holmes! Do you know what you're saying?

HOLMES

I believe I do. To the trunk!

WATSON
The trunk?

HOLMES
Good old costume trunk.

WATSON
Costumes? What are you playing at?

HOLMES
Now Watson, I'm following a train of thought. Bear with me. And whatever I ask you to do—take it like a man.

WATSON
All right.

HOLMES
Put on this dress.

WATSON
Now hold on!

(HOLMES pulls costume pieces out of the trunk)

HOLMES
Watson! No grousing.

WATSON
(Faces US while HOLMES dresses him.)
Really, this is absurd.

HOLMES
Hold still.
(tries to fasten the dress.)
This is the tricky part.

WATSON
Good lord!

HOLMES
Suck it in. Suck it in some more.

WATSON

(looks down at his "cleavage.")

I've never seen them from this angle. Quite different, what?

HOLMES

Hmm. Something's missing. Wig!

WATSON

Is this really necessary?

HOLMES

Close your eyes and think of England.

(slams wig/hat combo on WATSON'S head.)

WATSON

Ow!

HOLMES

Very nice. It matches your eyes.

WATSON

Holmes, this is absurd!

(HOLMES slaps a beauty spot on WATSON'S cheek and holds up a hand mirror.)

HOLMES

Et voila! The Nightingale of Nuremburg.

(HOLMES spins WATSON around to face the audience.)

WATSON

(looks in hand mirror)

AHHHHH! This is ghastly!

HOLMES

It's worse than that, Watson. Not only has Prince Albert returned from the dead to appear twice nightly on the stage of the Gaiety Music Hall BUT—

(HOLMES goes to trunk and pulls out a one piece white tie-and-tails fat suit with short legs. He slips his arms into the sleeves and attaches it in back; puts on top hat and appliqué mustache to time with end of next line.)

—He is accompanied in the act by his dearest soul mate in all the world in the form of a squat, mustachioed fat man.

WATSON

Good lord, Holmes! Queen Victoria is the hideous gnome?

HOLMES

(hands WATSON sheet music)

Precisely!

(A spotlight hits HOLMES as he drops to his knees)

Ladies and Gentlemen! May I present for your entertainment—Fraulein Albertina Schplitzkopf—*die Nachtigall von Nürnberg!*

(WATSON, in full drag, steps down to the footlights at the lip of the stage and sings from the sheet music, gradually getting more comfortable, eventually letting go of the music and performing full out.)

SONG #11: A LOTTA GIRL LOOKING FOR A LITTLE LOVE

WATSON

I'M A LOTTA GIRL
LOOKING FOR A LITTLE LOVE,
A PLUMP PIGEON
SEARCHING FOR HER TURTLE DOVE,
MR. WUNDERBAR WHO FITS HER
LIKE A HAND IN GLOVE,
I WONDER WHERE OH WHERE
IS MY HÖNIG-BUNCHEN?

IF YOU'LL BE MY LITTLE LIEBLING
WHEN IT'S COLD AT NIGHT,
IF YOU'LL BE MY SCHNUCKI-PUTZI
THEN I'LL TREAT YOU RIGHT.
I'M YOUR FULL-SCHLANK SCHATZI.

HOLMES

I'M YOUR SCHMALTZI-SPATZI.

BOTH
WE'LL PLAY MAUSIE IN DER HAUSIE
IN DER PALE MOONLIGHT!

WATSON
IN THE FATHERLAND EV'RY MÄDCHEN

HOLMES
WANTS TO FOOTSIE WOOTSIE WITH A GOOD FRIEND.

WATSON
SOMEONE WARM WHO LIKES TO HUG AND KNÜDEL,

HOLMES
WHO'LL COME AND BE THE SCHLAG UPON MY STRUDEL!

WATSON
WHO THRILLS MY HEARTSTRINGS LIKE A BUGLE,
A SERENADE OF LOVE THAT BREAKS THE WIND!

HOLMES
SHE'S A LOTTA GIRL
LOOKING FOR A LITTLE LOVE,

WATSON
A PLUMP PIGEON
SEARCHING FOR HER TURTLE DOVE,

HOLMES
MR. WUNDERBAR, I FITZ HER
LIKE A HAND IN GLOVE,

WATSON
OH KÜSS MICH,
MY GEMÜTLICH LITTLE HÖNIGBUNCHEN!

(HOLMES and WATSON trade off singing the Queen of the Night's aria in falsetto, tickling each other with WATSON telling HOLMES to stop, until WATSON slaps HOLMES on the back.)

HOLMES
(as an indignant Queen Victoria)
We are not amused!

(Song ends. HOLMES and WATSON discuss the case earnestly, oblivious to the fact they are still in absurd costumes.)

WATSON

So Prince Albert and the Queen faked his death after his carriage accident so he might be able to pursue a career as a pantomime dame.

HOLMES

It would appear his head injury brought out his flamboyant side.

WATSON

(removes wig)

That's incredible.

HOLMES

(removes hat and mustache)

Indeed, Watson. Life is infinitely stranger than anything which the mind of man could invent.

WATSON

And that is the real reason why the queen is being blackmailed!

HOLMES

Yes. I believe the kingdom can bear an indiscretion or two but the idea that the Crown faked Prince Albert's death and that he now appears nightly on the stage of a music hall—the prince impersonating a lady—

WATSON

And the queen a man!

HOLMES

Well, that would shatter the moral authority of the monarchy.

SONG #12: VICTORIA'S SECRET REPRISE

BOTH

VICTORIA HAD A SECRET.
A ROYAL SECRET.
ALBERT WASN'T RIGHT IN THE HEAD.
AND SO SHE HATCHED A PLAN
TO KEEP HIM CLOSE AT HAND.

HOLMES
IN THE CASTLE DEEP
SHE TRIED TO KEEP
PRINCE ALBERT IN THE CAN.

BOTH
VICTORIA HAD A SECRET,
A ROYAL SECRET,
ALBERT WASN'T RIGHT IN THE HEAD.
AND SO THEY STAYED UP NORTH
ABOVE THE FIRTH OF FORTH

WATSON
WHERE HER PRINCE
PERFECTED HIS MINCE
WHILE DANCING ON THE GORSE.

BOTH
BUT NO IDYLL LASTS FOREVER.
IT ALL CAME CRASHING TO A STOP.
PRINCE ALBERT GOT A RAGE
TO CAVORT UPON THE STAGE.

HOLMES
OH WHAT A MESS!
HE'S WEARING A DRESS

WATSON
WHETHER IT FITS OR NOT.

BOTH
VICTORIA HAD A SECRET,
A ROYAL SECRET,
ALBERT WASN'T RIGHT IN THE HEAD.
HOW COULD THE LADY KNOW
HER TEUTONIC ROMEO
WAS HOT
TO GAVOTTE
AND WARBLE IN A SHOW
IN FEATHERS, BEADS AND PEARLS
AND SEQUINED SHOES?
VICTORIA HAD A SECRET—
IT'S TRUE!

(HOLMES AND WATSON remove their costumes as they talk.)

HOLMES

Anyone with knowledge of this secret would gain enormous power.

WATSON

And money.

HOLMES

It would be worth millions.

WATSON

Just think what it would do to the monarchy.

HOLMES

Chaos would reign supreme!

WATSON

(struggles to unfasten his bustier)

Can you help me with this torture device?

HOLMES

Of course. The catch is tricky.

WATSON

Why do women do it?

HOLMES

Ah, Vanity, thy name is woman!

WATSON

There's one thing that troubles me.

HOLMES

(eyebrow raise)

Only one?

WATSON

Moriarty could very well have blackmailed the Queen himself and not involved any of us—you, me or Freddie. So why did he solicit our help?

HOLMES

That is the question that whirls 'round my brain like a dervish in a Turkish mosque. Moriarty knew I would answer Her Majesty's plea for assistance. He knew I would be able to retrieve that cigarette case from Freddy Fish *and* decipher its meaning. He also knows that I would never betray Her Majesty. Her secret would be safe with me in perpetuity. All this I know, and yet... and yet... What is Moriarty's game? There is something more to this that I just do not see.

WATSON

Quite a sticky wicket, what?

HOLMES

In solving a problem of this sort, the grand thing is to be able to reason backward.

WATSON

You mean, begin with the end result.

HOLMES

Had we breathed the deadly gas, our deaths would have been pinned on Freddie Fish, who to the world at large appears to be the Queen's blackmailer. Though, of course, you and I know better.

WATSON

But why would we be required to die?

HOLMES

A good question, Watson. And the answer lies in the clues. The clues!
(picks up the note and cigarette case)
They are all here: a silver cigarette case, poisonous gas, and a note from Moriarty that instructs us to stay where we are.

WATSON

That's right.

(reads the note)

"On no account leave your rooms."

HOLMES

Hmm. If Moriarty wanted to be rid of us, he could do it anywhere—backstage at the Gaiety, in the alley by the stage door, along any road or byway.

WATSON

At Simpsons on the Strand.

HOLMES

Exactly, my dear Watson. Why is it so important that we remain here at 221b Baker Street? Tonight? Watson, the map!

WATSON

Of course.

(pulls down a large map of London hanging furled like a window blind above the bookcase.)

HOLMES

We are here. The Gaiety Music Hall is here. In order to travel from the Gaiety to our flat we would need to travel from Aldwych Strand to Drury Lane, up High Holborn Road—

WATSON

(sings to himself)

“Half a mile from Grosvenor Square, behind Fitzwillie’s pub.”

HOLMES

What did you say?

WATSON

Eh? Oh, just that it reminds me of that Fish and Chips song, you know, so clever, with all the streets of London in it.

HOLMES

Sing it again.

WATSON

Really, Holmes, this is hardly the time—

HOLMES

Watson, sing it again!

WATSON

If you insist.

(sings á capella, HOLMES joins him)

THE TOFFS AT WHITE’S AND BOODLES
ARE OH, SO LAISSEZ FAIRE
THEY TALK OF ART AND LIT-RA-CHUR
AS IF THEY DIDN’T CARE

BOTH
BUT AT THE BEDLAM CLUB
EVERY NIGHT'S A TRAVELING SHOW
BUT ONLY IF YOU KNOW JUST WHERE TO GO

HOLMES
FROM AULD ITCH ON THE STRAND
IT'S HIGH-HO THE MOLDY TOAD
THEN CROSS THE BOX WITHOUT YOUR SOX
AND MAKE YERSELF AT HOME.

HOLMES
That's it! That's it! The directions to the Bedlam Club.
(points out each landmark on the map)
"Auld Itch." That's Aldwych on the Strand. "Hi-Ho the Moldy Toad."
That's High Holborn Road. "Cross the box without your sox." To Oxford
Street. To Grosvenor Square, and... here!

WATSON
Why, that's just down the street from 221b.

HOLMES
If Prince Albert, or should I say, the Nightingale of Nuremburg, and the
Queen go to the Bedlam Club this evening—as is their usual habit—the
queen's unmarked carriage—the QV2—will pass directly beneath our
window.

WATSON
Good heavens!

(HOLMES grabs a small hand-held telescope off the
desk, goes to the window)

HOLMES
A skilled marksman would have a perfect shot from this window.

WATSON
My God! You don't mean—

HOLMES
There is but one step from the grotesque to the horrible.

SONG #13: A SINGLE SHOT

HOLMES

A SINGLE SHOT
CAN BRING THE COUNTRY DOWN.
ONE LONE BULLET
WILL ELIMINATE THE CROWN.
AND WHO WILL BE THE GUILTY ONES,
WHO WILL TAKE THE BLAME?
THIS DOCTOR AND DETECTIVE,
THAT'S MORIARTY'S GAME.

A SINGLE SHOT
AIMED AT THE QV2.
A SOLITARY BULLET,
SO MUCH DAMAGE IT CAN DO.
VICTORIA WILL BE BURIED,
PRINCE ALBERT FOUND INSANE,
THE PRINCE OF WALES DISCREDITED,
AND WE WILL TAKE THE BLAME.

IF GUNS ARE FOUND UPON US
AS THE CARRIAGE PASSES BY,

WATSON

WE'D LOOK LIKE CO-CONSPIRATORS,
POOR FREDDY, YOU AND I.
FREDDY'S NOTE INSIDE YOUR COAT,
THE CASE UPON THE CHAIR,

HOLMES

MORIARTY IS A MASTER!
THERE IS NONE THAT CAN COMPARE.

HOLMES (WATSON)

A SINGLE SHOT (A SINGLE SHOT)
CAN BRING THE COUNTRY DOWN.
A SINGLE SHOT (A SINGLE SHOT)
CAN BRING THE COUNTRY DOWN.

HOLMES

A SINGLE SHOT,

BOTH

A SINGLE SHOT

ELIMINATES

HOLMES

THE CROWN.

WATSON

ONE SHOT
CAN BRING THE COUNTRY DOWN.

WATSON

Dear God!

HOLMES

Watson, what time do you have?

WATSON

Five minutes to midnight.

HOLMES

Come, my friend Watson. The curtain rings up for the final act.

WATSON

Are we going to the Bedlam Club?

HOLMES

On the contrary. Bedlam will come to us.

MUSIC UNDERSCORE "THE BATTLE ROYAL" BEGINS

(A murmur of voices on the stairs)

HOLMES

And here they are now.

(HOLMES dims the lights.)

WATSON

Heaven help us!

HOLMES

(whispers)

There are three men. One has a limp.

WATSON

A lisp?

HOLMES

A limp.

WATSON

Ah.

HOLMES

Another is overweight. And they are dragging a captive.

WATSON

A cactus?

HOLMES

A captive!

WATSON

What shall we do? Hide?

HOLMES

I'll go out the window and come down from the roof. I'll surprise the men on the stairs and disarm one of them.

WATSON

What am I to do?

HOLMES

When I rap three times on the door, open up and point your revolver at the other. Till then...

(HOLMES exits out the window. WATSON moves to get his pistol from his coat.)

WATSON

Get revolver. Three raps. Open door and aim.

(There are sounds of a violent struggle outside the door, then three raps. One short one, a pause, then two more.)

WATSON

Three raps!

(Goes to open the door, stops)

Or was it two?

(Three raps are heard again.)

WATSON

Now that's six. (shouts toward door) I say. Was that three raps?

HOLMES (offstage)

Yes!

WATSON

Because it sounded like six. One short. Two quicks. Three more quicks. Six. Definitely six...

HOLMES (offstage)

Watson! Open the door!

(WATSON does. HOLMES falls into the room wrestling a man—which is actually dummy #1. WATSON falls backward in alarm, bumping into the Praxeniscopes and turning it on, creating a strobe effect in the darkened room.)

WATSON

My revolver! Wait, Holmes. It's in my coat pocket.

(WATSON rushes into his bedroom while HOLMES dispatches his assailant and rushes back into the hall.

A bound and gagged FREDDY FISH (played by WATSON) hops into the room—he's the captive.)

FREDDY/WATSON

Help! The bleedin' bastards are trying to kill me.

(FREDDY/WATSON hops towards Watson's room and an arm that looks like Watson's "kabongs" him. FREDDY/WATSON falls out of sight into the bedroom.)

WATSON (off-stage)

Freddy! My mistake.

HOLMES

(runs in)

Watson? Where are you?

(runs out)

(WATSON emerges from his room, carrying his revolver and dragging the feet of dummy #2 representing Freddy Fish, which he leaves extending from the doorway of the bedroom.)

WATSON

Holmes?

(WATSON sees the first body (dummy #1) on the floor and covers it with his own coat and drags it upstage behind HOLMES' chair.)

Poor fellow.

(HOLMES rushes in through the front door.)

HOLMES

He's gone for the roof. Watson, I'll get him with my blowgun!

(checks the shelf.)

Where is it? Did you take my blowgun?

WATSON

I didn't touch your blowgun.

HOLMES

You must have.

WATSON

I swear I didn't.

HOLMES

It was right—Ah, here it is.

(HOLMES opens the window and looks up.)

He's coming down now.

WATSON

Careful!

HOLMES

Excuse me!

(HOLMES shoots at an assailant above his head. Blowgun sound, scream. The scream startles WATSON, who accidentally pulls the trigger on his gun, which discharges.)

The legs of a third villain (Dummy #3) dangle lifelessly outside the window.)

WATSON

Blast it! I've shot my own foot!

(Unseen by HOLMES, WATSON limps off into his bedroom. The fight is over, and HOLMES steps back into the room and turns off the Praxeniscopes.)

HOLMES

That was...invigorating.

(A dark figure wearing a voluminous black cape and wide brimmed hat that obscures his features steps into the doorway, backlit and ominous. It is PROFESSOR MORIARTY, played by WATSON.)

MORIARTY

Good evening, Mr. Holmes.

HOLMES

Ah. Professor Moriarty. Or should I say, Sir Hugh P. Fullback? We meet again.

MORIARTY

I contacted you yesterday. At my request, you joined the company at the Gaiety Music Hall. After the evening performance you took three curtain calls and received four bouquets of roses.

HOLMES

Five.

MORIARTY

By the matinee you had befriended Freddy Fish, and your curtain calls rose to seven.

HOLMES

Eight.

MORIARTY

Today, during the evening performance you took a certain cigarette case, and exited the theatre. The show continued without you. The company took ten curtain calls and the stage was littered with bouquets.

HOLMES

What are you saying?

MORIARTY

Simply this—do not even *think* of giving up your day job.

HOLMES

Your feeble jest falls on deaf ears. Look about you, Professor. Your minions are destroyed, your plans in tatters. Your future is bleak. Once again I have bested you.

MORIARTY

You have won the battle—but not the war. We'll meet again, Mr. Sherlock Holmes—at a time and place of my choosing.

HOLMES

Whatever the time, wherever the place, you'll find me ready. And so I say, so long!

MORIARTY

Farewell!

HOLMES

Auf wiedersehen!

MORIARTY

Good-bye!

(MORIARTY slams door as he leaves.)

HOLMES

Ha ha! Watson, we have triumphed once again!
(turns back to the room)
Watson? Watson! Where are you, my old friend?

(HOLMES sees what he thinks is his friend prone behind the armchair. It is actually Dummy #1 covered in WATSON's overcoat)

HOLMES

Watson? Good god, there was a shot... John? John? What? Dead? I can't bear to look.

SONG# 14: ONE TRUE FRIEND

HOLMES

ONE TRUE FRIEND,
THAT'S ALL YOU HAVE IN THE END.
WHEN ALL THIS LIVING IS DONE,
HE ALWAYS STOOD BY ME
WHEN OTHERS DEFIED ME.

HOLMES

ONE TRUE FRIEND,
THERE TO THE BITTER END.
A MILLION TOMORROWS
WON'T LESSEN MY SORROW
FOR ONE TRUE FRIEND.

(As the music swells, HOLMES picks up his violin.)

HOLMES

This is for you, Watson, old friend.

(Unseen by HOLMES, WATSON has appeared in the bedroom doorway with a huge bandage on his foot and is listening. He is deeply moved.)

WATSON

ONE TRUE FRIEND,
THERE TO THE BITTER END.
NO PLACE FOR REGRET,
I'M JUST HAPPY I MET
ONE TRUE FRIEND!

Holmes! I had no idea you felt that way.

(WATSON embraces HOLMES in a bear hug;
HOLMES recoils at the overt emotionalism.)

HOLMES

Really, Watson. Of course I'm delighted you're still among the living.
But as you know, I am not a man of cheap sentiments.

WATSON

(Nods knowingly.)

Not a man of cheap sentiments at all, of course, old boy, of course.

(The sound of a carriage is heard from the
street outside the window. Both go to look out
the window.)

HOLMES

The QV2! Right on schedule.

(HOLMES raises violin, plays the first measures
of "Rule, Britannia." WATSON sings along,
waves a little Union Jack. They sing.)

BOTH

RULE BRITANNIA
BRITANNIA RULES THE WAVES
ENGLAND WILL NEVER EVER

(The sounds of the carriage fade away.)

HOLMES

You know, Watson, there is nothing more stimulating than a case when
everything goes against you.

(HOLMES steps over a body to fetch his pipe
and shoe full of tobacco at the mantle.)

WATSON

This adventure ranks among the greatest you've ever solved, Holmes.
I can't wait to begin chronicling it.

HOLMES

No, Watson. This is a tale that can never be told. Not even to the
queen.

WATSON

But surely the British public has a right to know Prince Albert is still alive.

HOLMES

That would be catastrophic. The revelation of the queen's deception, however innocent her intent, would permanently sever the reins of power held by the aristocracy. And while the British public has always enjoyed an Englishman dressed in drag, they would never tolerate it in a German.

WATSON

I see your point.

HOLMES

No, my friend, this story must remain forever and all time...Victoria's Secret.

WATSON

May I offer you a brandy?

HOLMES

Watson, you are a treasure.

SONG #15: ONE TRUE FRIEND—REPRISE

HOLMES

ONE TRUE FRIEND!

BOTH

THAT'S ALL WE HAVE IN THE END.
WHEN ALL OUR BATTLES ARE DONE,
WE'LL FACE WHAT COMES AFTER
WITH MEMORIES AND LAUGHTER.

ONE TRUE FRIEND!
THERE TO THE BITTER END.
NO PLACE FOR REGRETS,
I'M JUST HAPPY I MET—

WATSON

There is one problem, Holmes. What do we do with the bodies?

(HOLMES and WATSON look first at the feet in the hall, then the body on the floor, finally the body hanging outside the window. Then HOLMES yells toward the hall.)

HOLMES

Mrs. Hudson!

BOTH

ONE TRUE FRIEND!

BLACKOUT

END OF PLAY