

The Legacy of
SHERLOCK HOLMES



a classic Holmes mystery

by
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Great Stage Publishing

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The Legacy of Sherlock Holmes

Act I – Scene 1

[Study at 221B Baker Street]

LIGHTS UP FULL

[Watson is seated at a writing desk and writing while a pre-recorded introduction is played – there can be programmed pauses when he stops writing to look up and think for interest - OR - to better engage the audience, Dr. Watson can be at his desk writing at lights up and after a moment, look up and rise to address the audience with greeting “Welcome” or “Good Evening” and rove stage as he gives the following introduction live]

Watson (Recording)

I am Dr. John Watson – physician and colleague of master Consulting Detective, Sherlock Holmes. Our acquaintance began some years ago when a chap named Stamford tapped me on the shoulder as I stood in front of The Criterion Bar. I recognized him as a dresser of wounds from Barts – oh, St. Bartholomew’s Hospital. I never knew him well, but I was exuberant at the thought of having company for lunch. While sharing a hansom toward The Holborn, I told him about my many adventures in service as a Surgeon with the Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers in the recent Afghan War – and the Jezail bullet that I took at the Battle of Maiwand. Were it not for the devotion and determination of my orderly, Murray, I would surely have landed in the hands of the murderous Ghazis. I was transported with the other wounded to Peshawar – where a medical board ordered that I should be dispatched home to the British Isles on the

SS *Orontes* immediately. A few weeks later, I landed in Portsmouth and eventually made my way to London where I took up residence in a hotel on The Strand. I lived entirely above my means - that which eleven shillings and a sixpence a day would allow - and for a considerable time, I found no purpose in life. I imparted to Stamford my desire to seek more economical accommodations outside of my hotel. He laughed and said that I was the second person to say such a thing on that same day. He told me about a gentleman by the name of Sherlock Holmes - who had expressed a desire to rent a flat at No. 221B Baker Street. He said that the man complained that he couldn't afford it unless the cost was shared, and that he could find no one for this purpose. It seemed like the very arrangement for me - and I suggested an interview with this man on that very day. Stamford and I made our way to a laboratory at Barts where I met Sherlock Holmes for the first time. He was focused intensely on mixing compounds in a series of flasks. Later I was told that he was seeking a reagent to detect human hemoglobin - which was of particular interest to me as a physician. To my astonishment, the very minute that we shook hands, he commented "You've been in Afghanistan." Then he proceeded to rattle off a half dozen or more reasons how he arrived at that conclusion. I scarcely remember a word of what he was saying as I was astonished by his brilliant observations.

After an exchange of our shortcomings, and although I found some of his habits quite peculiar - I concluded that he seemed well meaning enough and was clearly bright such that conversation would never lag. We agreed upon arrangements, viewed the flat, and entered into possession of 221B Baker Street. Little

did I know that this decision would change the direction of my life forever. As I would discover, Sherlock Holmes was a Consulting Detective with superior powers of observation and deduction. His prowess was so great, that Scotland Yard would regularly call upon his services in the event of difficult cases. Over time, we developed a mutual respect, and it has been my great privilege to accompany him to the scenes of some of the most heinous crimes in England.

[Sherlock (unaware of Watson's presence) ENTERs the study – mildly irritated because supper is late. He sits in his chair near the fireplace in contemplation while smoking his Calabash pipe. If still seated, Watson rises to complete his monologue by addressing the audience directly]

Watson

I began to chronicle my memoirs of these remarkable cases with *A Study in Scarlet*. It was during this case that I would first witness his keen powers of intuition and deduction that lent to his considerable reputation. The following is a true account of “The Case of Death at University”

[Watson crosses to the fireplace chair and sits across from Holmes]

Watson

I beg pardon if I delayed your supper, Holmes. I wanted to capture some thoughts before they escaped me.

Holmes

Not at all, Watson. It is young Miss Hudson who may take sole credit for that offense. First breakfast and now supper is late! Whatever possessed Mrs. Hudson to retire?

Watson

Mrs. Hudson's Great-Niece Emma is a fine young woman— and will get used to your schedule and develop skills to suit you in time. It has been a mere five weeks since she arrived.

Holmes

It has been precisely five weeks, four days, and two hours since Mrs. Hudson introduced her - and you would have thought that she should have developed skills enough to serve meals at the proper hour.

Watson

Mrs. Hudson has assured us that she will be exceptionally valuable once she is given the chance to settle in.

Holmes

The question that I have is whether I will still be living at that point in time. (Grumbles) Competence and attention to detail is of short supply in youth today.

Watson

Holmes, there is nothing that you can do about the fact that Mrs. Hudson was getting along in years and felt compelled to pass her service into the hands of one with whom she could trust. Miss Hudson is most agreeable and her aunt speaks highly of her capabilities.

Holmes

Well that is to be determined, is it not?

Watson

Quite so, quite so.

Holmes

Mrs. Hudson retiring...I suppose that we, too, will fade into the abyss of obscurity soon enough.

Watson

Whatever makes you say that? I thought that I had your word that reliance on your “7% solution” was abated. (Note: “7% solution” refers to Holmes’ prior Cocaine habit)

Holmes

And if I said it, then it is...although there are times when I crave the clarity it brings.

Watson

For your general health and well-being, I certainly hope that you refrain from that deplorable habit. It would be the death of you. What are you grouching about anyway? Sherlock Holmes is a well-respected name in England and around the world. A good deal of right has been done by your superior powers of observation and deduction. I would venture to say that you are a legend at The Yard— and that is hardly obscurity, as you say.

Holmes

(disgruntled) A legend...most of whom are likely deceased so that they don’t have to endure the embellished lies that are told about them. For those unfortunate souls who live on past their usefulness,

they are diminished into targets of pity and fodder for gossips.

Watson

Your morbid humor is overwhelming at times, Holmes. What you need is a nice **murder** to solve. That would **cheer** you in no time!

Holmes

I am merely commenting on the inevitable paradox of life.

Watson

What on earth do you mean?

Holmes

We are born without awareness, are educated, hone our vocation – and with the proper dedication and forbearance, we excel at those skills. However, if we have the misfortune to live beyond our prowess, we decline with the ravages of time and return to the state from which we arrived in this world...without awareness – and there it ends.

Watson

Your cheerfulness is in short supply this evening, Holmes. I personally subscribe to a more optimistic philosophy.

Holmes

How can you possibly derive optimism from eventual decrepitude?

Watson

One can achieve immortality by passing on one's knowledge and skills to the subsequent generation,

and they, in turn, do the same. In that, you live on in perpetuity.

Holmes

Did it escape your attention that I never married?

Watson

Certainly not – although sometimes it happens that way. It is never too late in that regard you know.

Holmes

There is no potential for that in my life. Miss Irene Adler would have been the only woman of my acquaintance who would have enticed me to follow that path.

Watson

Are you saying that you have regrets for your choice?

Holmes

I can have no regrets for a choice I was never given. She chose the opera and the theatre – and set out to America for her preferred life. I have neither seen nor heard from her since the day that she announced her choice to me.

Watson

That is tragic indeed, Holmes. And you have never attempted to contact her?

Holmes

No, she made her position clear when she left – to have no ties in order to advance her career. At any rate, it is history.

Watson

I see. (pauses – changes subject) What about your brother Mycroft's ward - young Sherlock Holmes? You could be his mentor. He is your namesake after all.

Holmes

I cringe at the thought of my brother's wicked sense of humor. Clearly, there is no limit to his disdain of me. How could he name some cast-off after me?

Watson

It is hardly disdain when someone honors you by naming a child after you. His mother died in childbirth before he was named, and they could locate no father or other relatives. Mycroft was showing you a kindness as you will likely never marry.

Holmes

I haven't the time for such nonsense....and Mycroft should be ashamed.

Watson

I am told that young Sherlock is completing his studies in sciences this year at University of London. Quite bright, I understand. Mycroft has imparted to me that the young man admires your work and desires to be a detective himself.

Holmes

Oh, this is Mycroft's mischief - I know it! How could an orphan understand the first thing about becoming a detective? It is a commitment to a dedicated lifestyle, to possessing an innate quality to understand something without direct evidence, to honing the skills necessary to solve crimes, and to giving up worldly

pursuits that would interfere with absolute focus. I have observed, that young men today are highly unlikely to master a profession of this nature.

Watson

Certainly not without the tutelage of someone capable such as yourself.

Holmes

I am not interested in charity, Watson.

Watson

As you know, Mycroft has seen to it that he has received the finest care and education since he was only weeks old. You must admire a man with that sort of devotion to a child that is not his own.

Holmes

Mycroft is clearly intent upon goading me.

Watson

Perhaps you will become re-acquainted with young Sherlock soon – now that he is an upperclassman at university?

Holmes

“Re-acquainted” would imply that I had met him before...which I have not.

Watson

I am all astonishment! Mycroft has had his ward these 18 years – and you have never **met** him?

Holmes

As I have stated...I have not.

Watson

I met him several years ago, when the young man and Mycroft were dining at the Diogenes Club just before Young Sherlock left for university.

Holmes

I have never met him because he has been in the care of nannies, and was sent away to boarding schools as soon as he could talk.

Watson

Well, he is a fine young man is what I say. As it happens, I have heard that Inspector LeStrade's son, James, is young Sherlock's chum at university and he also has an interest in detective work.

Holmes

So I have heard. LeStrade is strutting like a peacock that his progeny would follow in his footsteps.

Watson

(chuckling) Quite so, quite so.

[Emma **ENTERS**]

Emma

Are you ready for supper to be served, sirs?

Holmes

Yes, Miss Hudson. I should also have been ready to sup some half hour ago had you asked the same question. However, it is clear to me that you have been out on the streets of London in the rain - to purchase some logs of wood, because the wood in the shed was saturated. You knew that it would have filled the flat with smoke had it been used, and thus it

would have been evident that you left the door of the shed open when you removed logs from it earlier in the day.

Watson

(amazed) All right, Holmes, I am all atonishment. Pray tell us with how you have come to this conclusion.

Holmes

Elementry, my dear fellow. Miss Hudson has a line of mud at the base of her muslin petticoat, the only area of clothing that was apparently not covered by her cloak. Her boots are still wet and there is a fine line of mud around the right outer sole which remains after she made an attempt to clean them. However, the boots have not dried completely – and thus, she was in the rain within the last...half hour. There are minute shards of wood in a thick band across her waist in the front where she held the wood inside her cloak to prevent it from also getting wet. She surmised that she would be able to make this purchase, and get back in a reasonable time – but she miscalculated that she would be delayed due to needing to tidy herself afterward and is thus, late for supper. The only reason that she should have undertaken this errand at this unlikely hour and on such an unfavorable and rainy afternoon, is that the wood in the shed was unusable because it had become wet.

[Watson chuckles]

Emma

My utmost apologies, sirs. I wanted to explain that when I when I went out to the woodshed to fetch a

few logs for the oven. As you say, I found that I had not latched the door properly and it was ajar. The entire load of wood was wet from the afternoon rain. I knew that had I used wet wood, the smoke would have been most offensive. I left in haste to acquire logs that were dry. I failed to inform you of my intentions and departure because you were engrossed in your lab experimentation - and I did not want to disturb you. Now I have delayed your supper – and for that, I am most sincerely sorry.

[Watson smiles]

Watson

You never cease to amaze me, Holmes. Yes, Miss Hudson, we are ready to dine. Please announce when you are ready for us to be seated.

Holmes

Yes, please do so, Miss Hudson.

Emma

Thank you, sirs, I will return forthwith.

[SOUND CUE: DOORBELL RINGS]

Emma

Excuse me please. I will answer the bell.

(Emma **EXITS** to answer it)

Watson

As I said, Holmes, I have no doubt that Miss Hudson will become quite suitable once she is familiar with the routine.

Holmes

If only we can maintain our rationality in the interim.

Watson

You are quite the curmudgeon when you have not supped! I wonder who would be calling at this untimely hour.

Holmes

Someone, no doubt, who would suspect that we had already dined by this time.

[Emma **ENTERS** followed by young Sherlock Holmes and James LeStrade. Sherlock has a folded newspaper in one of his pockets]

Emma

Please, sirs – Masters Sherlock Holmes and James LeStrade

[Young Sherlock is attracted to Emma]

Sherlock

(awkward, stammers a bit) Uh, yes...thank you...uh, Miss

[Emma blushes and lowers her head to hide her smile as she assists Sherlock and James to hang their coats on the hat rack (or hall tree) making certain that Sherlock's coat is the first to be placed (so that it is the last to be retrieved later – and his hat is placed in a spot so that it can be easily forgotten later)]

Holmes

Thank you, Miss Hudson. We will look forward to our supper.

Emma

Yes, sir.

[Emma **EXITS** as young Sherlock watches her briefly, awkwardly. He then turns his attention to Holmes who has been studying him since he arrived – Sherlock is suddenly star-struck]

Watson

(breaking the awkward silence] Young Sherlock Holmes, so nice to see you again. It has been several years since we met.

Sherlock

(nods his head in respect) Yes sir, it is good to see you again too, sir. (turns to face Holmes) Mr. Holmes, it is my great pleasure to meet you. My Guardian...uh, your brother Mycroft Holmes...sends his regards.

Holmes

Thank you... I am aware of my only brother's name - and that he is your Guardian. (dryly) I have regards to return to him as well.

Watson

(turning to James) And this would be?

Sherlock

(remembering his manners) Oh, Yes sir! May I please introduce James LeStrade. I believe that you are acquainted with his father, Inspector LeStrade of Scotland Yard. James is my roommate at University this year.

James

(nods his head in respect) It is my pleasure to make your acquaintance, sirs. Mr. Holmes, I have heard so much about you from my father.

Holmes

I have no doubt.

Watson

James, I understand that you want to be a Detective and follow in your father's footsteps.

James

Yes, sir! It is my earnest hope to begin my 2-year training at Scotland Yard upon completion of my studies at University.

Watson

I am sure that your father is pleased.

Holmes

(sarcastically) Yes, he could use the assistance.

Sherlock

I must confess that we are here for a purpose, sir. We would like to ask your counsel regarding detective work.

Holmes

As an extension of your studies?

Sherlock

(uncomfortable, looks at James nervously) No, sir, we have both matriculated to the College of Chemistry

[brief pause as Holmes studies young Sherlock and James]

Holmes

Well then?

Sherlock

We would like for you to help us solve a murder...(quickly adds) **fictitious**, of course!

Watson

Well then, you have come to right man for the job! **Murder** is Holmes' exceptional prowess!

[Holmes scowls at Watson]

Watson

Well, he knows quite a bit about it after all.

Sherlock

Yes sir, I know – and that is why we have come for your guidance. We would like to know how one goes about unraveling clues that would lead to the capture of a murderer.

Holmes

Fictitious, you say?

Sherlock

Yes sir. Perhaps we could write a work of Fiction for credit at University, much like Dr. Watson writes to chronicle your cases.

James

Yes, we feel that this sort of exercise will help us get into the mindset of a real Detective.

Holmes

I see. Do you happen to have a particular... "fictitious" crime in mind for this lesson?

Sherlock and **James**

Oh yes, sir! Yes!

Sherlock

It is the murder of... a...well, shall we call him a "Knight of Grammar".

Watson

A Professor of Language, do you mean?

Sherlock

I suppose so, yes.

James

Yes sir.

Holmes

And how did this murder take place?

Sherlock

That is what we want to discover sir. (catches himself) I mean...

James

(quickly adds) We have not decided the details of the crime yet, sir.

[Holmes pauses briefly]

Holmes

So pray tell me, what are the circumstances of this crime and what would you know of the crime scene?

James

We weren't permitted to enter the crime scene...(Sherlock cuts him off)

Sherlock

That is...as James mentioned, that we haven't determined what clues our crime scene should yield yet. However, we are clear about certain aspects of the case. The Professor was one of distinction – the sort that most members of his profession would envy. He was hearty and hale –and working on another publication. He was quite prolific, you know.

Holmes

Do you know the nature of this work?

James

No sir, we do not – nor does his son, Henry.

Holmes

His son?

Sherlock

Yes, we felt, sir, that our case should include a history of the family members as well.

Watson

That is quite reasonable, you know - as so often they are involved in these murders.

James

That would not be the case with Henry– because he is a hard-working student who must have made his father very proud.

Sherlock

His motivation to excel would likely be an indication of his affection toward his father.

Holmes

Then the Professor and his son were close?

Sherlock

No sir. Henry was boarded at Westminster School from the time he was 7 years until he was admitted to University of London where he has boarded ever since.

Watson

And Henry spent holidays and weekends with his family?

Sherlock

Very rarely, sir.

Watson

Most peculiar – even sad.

James

His mother died many years ago just before Henry entered Westminster School. Outside of classes, his father - the professor – keeps to himself, presumably to focus on his projects and publications.

Sherlock

Henry's mother died young. It was rumored that there was foul play... but little was done to pursue it and the case went no further.

James

So her killer was never caught.

Holmes

I see. Murdered, you say?

Sherlock

Yes, sir. She was a kind and loving mother to Henry and a devoted wife to the professor.

James

I understand that she took Henry on frequent outings such as picnics and trips to the fair - and the sweet shop for candy floss or chocolate bars.

Watson

How tragic that she would be taken from her family – and when her son was so young.

Holmes

You say that the case was not investigated. What did the Coroner rule as the cause of death?

Sherlock

There was no definitive cause of death found otherwise – and so it was ruled as “natural causes”.

James

She had no issues with ill health – just like the professor.

Watson

I find your murder cases to be most compelling.

Holmes

Westminster is a prestigious school - as is the University of London...and of great expense as well.

Sherlock

It is, indeed, sir – but Henry’s aunt was quite benevolent and afforded him this excellent education. She has been living in her brother’s home since the death of her husband.

Watson

They must have been a great comfort to each other in their grief.

James

Yes, that is what we are given to understand.

Holmes

Please go on with the details of your case. How was the professor’s body found? Were there indications of murder?

Sherlock

No sir, not according to the Coroner. He has stated that the death was of natural causes – with no indications of foul play and no definitive cause of death otherwise. (emphatic) That cannot be, sir, as the Professor was never sick a day in his life and far too young to die of advanced age.

Watson

Death from natural causes can occur at any age.

Sherlock

(very seriously) I am telling you that the Coroner missed something. I know it - and we want to prove it.

James

(covering for him) Yes, we have decided that our “fictitious” case will have an incompetent Coroner who has mis-interpreted the cause of death of the professor.

Sherlock

The true cause of death is murder - and that of his wife as well...although that case may possibly remain unsolved.

Watson

Well this is a case of your creation, you can decide whatever circumstance you like.

James

Yes, of course.

[brief pause as Holmes ponders the situation]

Sherlock

Please, sir – will you advise us on the qualities of a competent detective and give us guidance on how to solve a murder? My Guardian has spoken so highly of your skills and intuition. Can these be learned – and rather quickly?

Holmes

Skills can certainly be learned through training – but intuition cannot. It is innate and of the utmost importance to being a competent detective. But even innate intuition must be practiced to develop a keen sense.

Sherlock

We will be grateful for any of your help. We are, in earnest, motivated to learn, sir.

James

Yes sir, we will follow any instruction that you can give us.

[Holmes pauses briefly to observe Sherlock and James]

Holmes

The first thing about solving a crime is to gather the clues – which involves certain skills. The second task is to interpret the clues correctly – which requires intuition. You can present the same clues to many, and they may or may not come to the proper conclusion to solve the crime.

Sherlock

So a good place to start is the crime scene. We should look for clues that may have been missed by the Coroner.

James

(looking at Sherlock eagerly) Yes, we should start at the crime scene.

Holmes

So where have you decided that your “fictitious” murder will have taken place?

Sherlock Oh, yes – it would have happened in the study of the professor’s home. Don’t you agree, James?

James

Yes, yes it would have happened there. He should be collapsed over his typewriter – presumably working on a publication – presumably of his current research.

Watson

This is tragic. You have placed your professor in a situation where he would never get credit for his laborious work. Couldn't you re-create your victim to be murdered **after** he published his final work? It would bring a shred of justice to your story after all.

Sherlock

No, I am afraid not, sir – because it could possibly lead to a different conclusion.

Watson

Poor fellow.

Holmes

Well, gentlemen, I propose that we meet again tomorrow once you have had the opportunity to decide what evidence you want to devise as clues in your case. Remember, that despite your initial impression, never let your assumptions mislead you when considering the importance of a clue. Should you possess the quality of intuition, it should guide you toward merging and making sense of the clues.

Sherlock

Thank you, sir. We are happy to have this guidance and shall return with further discussion.

Holmes

Please call earlier in the day - as we hope to be supping at this hour tomorrow.

James

Of course, sincerest apologies, sirs. We will call in the morning if that is agreeable.

[Holmes nods as Watson rises and **RINGS** for Emma as Sherlock and James get their coats (don't put them on) and only James gets his hat]

Watson

I will ring for Miss Hudson to show you out.

James

Oh no, sir, that won't be necessary.

Sherlock

Don't be rude, James...if he **insists**.

James

But Sherlock...

Sherlock

(ignores James) Many thanks for your help, sir – many, many thanks!

[Emma **ENTERS**. Only James gets his hat as Emma has distracted Sherlock who leaves his hat]

Emma

You called me, sir?

Watson

Yes, Miss Hudson, will you please show these gentlemen to the door?

Emma

Yes, sir. (blushing as Sherlock approaches) Follow me, please.

[Emma **EXITS** as the two follow. James begins to follow Emma – but Sherlock quickly pushes in front of him to be closer to Emma – James is annoyed but shakes his head as he follows]

Watson

Well, Holmes – you have two rather eager young students, do you not?

Holmes

Yes, and I thought that I would see one of them **drool** for a moment. Well Watson, we have a crime to solve.

Watson

Whatever do you mean?

Holmes

I mean that young Sherlock and his friend James are great storytellers – but very poor liars.

Watson

What is it that you say?

Holmes

I say that young Sherlock and James want to investigate the death of Professor William Blakely as a murder and

were suggesting that the death of his wife, Sarah Blakely, some ten years ago was the same.

Watson

How do you know that?

Holmes

Young Sherlock and James stammered and stuttered their way through the details of their “fictitious” murder case as if they had an affliction. Also, I noticed today’s copy of The London News in the pocket of young Sherlock’s jacket. I read the article this morning that chronicles the life and awards for distinction of Professor Blakely - as well as mentioning that the body was discovered in his study of his home across his typewriter. The suggested cause of death by the Coroner – was deemed to be from “natural causes”.

Watson

Extraordinary!

Holmes

Also, his supposed “fictitious” son named Henry is a nickname for Harry – a shortened form of Harrison - the son of Professor Blakely. No doubt a schoolmate of these two aspiring young detectives who want to solve this mystery and find justice for their friend.

Watson

Come to think of it, I do recall that bit in the morning news. Holmes, do you think that there is any chance that this could be, in fact, murder?

Holmes

I don’t know yet, Watson – but I assure you that it will be investigated thoroughly. I must admit that I find two early

deaths from natural causes in one family to be a curious coincidence, don't you, Watson?

[Holmes grabs his capecoat and Top Hat – and quickly heads toward the door]

Watson

I suppose so - if you put it that way. Where are you going?

Holmes

We are going to Professor Blakely's study, of course. I want to arrive before our aspiring young detectives get there and destroy any evidence that remains.

Watson

Won't we have time for a bit of supper before we depart?

Holmes

(smiles wryly at Watson) Come along, Watson – “the game is afoot!”

(Holmes **EXITS** quickly as Watson less enthusiastically reaches for his Top Hat and coat and follows him – Watson sighs in resignation as he **EXITS**)

[Emma **ENTERS** immediately after their exit]

Emma

(proudly) Supper is served, sirs. (brief pause as she sees they are not there) Sirs?

BLACKOUT

END ACT I , SCENE 1

(set Professor Blakely's Study)

The Legacy of Sherlock Holmes

Act I – Scene 2

[Study of Professor Blakely's home]

LIGHTS UP to FULL

[An extinguished lantern is on a table within an arm's reach of the drapes. An unknown woman in a dark cape (that obscures her identity) is seen looking around the room – but her face is always obscured from the audience. When voices are heard from the veranda, she rushes across the room and turns off the lights.

LIGHTS DIM TO GHOST LIGHTS

She hides behind the drapes. There is a shoestring that is in sight on the floor (optional)– but the lantern is left on the table

After she is hidden, Holmes and Watson are then seen at the veranda (patio) door with Watson holding a lantern while Holmes uses a small tool to pick the lock – it takes him no time to gain entry.]

LIGHTS increase to LOW LIGHT

[...as Holmes & Watson **ENTER** with a lighted lantern. Holmes walks straight to the couch to take a throw blanket and places it at the crack at the bottom of the door as Watson finds the switch to raise the lights, extinguishes his lantern, and places it on a table near the light switch]

LIGHTS to FULL

Watson

I say, Holmes, that is a handy tool for lock picking.

Holmes

Thank you, Watson. Actually, I selected it from your medical bag.

[After Holmes places the blanket at the bottom of the door, he sets a chair against the door to jam it]

Watson

What?? That is a precision medical instrument!

Holmes

Yes - and It is far superior to the tool that I have used in the past for gaining entry.

Watson

(Mumbling indignantly) **Far** superior! Of course, it is! Far superior **cost** as well! Precision medical instrument!

Holmes

There! That should delay their entry sufficiently.

[As Holmes and Watson are drawn to the desk, a hand is seen reaching out from the drapes to retrieve the lantern without being seen. It can happen while Holmes and Watson are talking – but it should be silent and slow enough for the audience to see it happen]

Watson

This would be the desk where the professor was found. The news article stated that he was “collapsed

over his typewriter – where he was presumably working on his next publication.”

Holmes

Hello! This is odd! There is no paper in or around this typewriter [Holmes looks inside the desk drawers] – nothing anywhere.

Watson

Perhaps Inspector LeStrade took it away for evidence?

[Holmes brings out his large magnifying glass and begins to examine the typewriter ribbon rotating it with his finger – stops, looks around and spies a letter opener on the desk that he uses to turn the typewriter ribbon to read what had been written while he speaks]

Holmes

He would not need evidence if the Coroner deemed this a death by natural causes.

Watson

Oh, of course not.

Holmes

(as he continues to turn and study the typewriter ribbon)
Hmmm. Hmmm. Hmmm.

Watson

What have you discovered, Holmes?

Holmes

I can confirm that the professor was indeed working on a “publication” or two – both of which were inflammatory to say the very least.

[Holmes proceeds to examine the room for further clues. As he passes the table where the woman's lantern had been placed, he pauses , then looks at the drapes but doesn't say anything – then continues to search for other clues. He does not make it obvious that he suspects anything. He continues to look for clues in the room]

Watson

How can you be certain that young Sherlock and James will come here at this hour?

Holmes

These two are intent on solving this crime. They will certainly come at an hour when they can gain entry surreptitiously and search for clues undisturbed so as not to give away their purpose. During the day, their young friend Harrison will be up and about - and they would prefer not to tell him what they suspect until they confirm that, in fact, it was murder.

[Holmes stops when he finds a glass and uses his handkerchief to lift it up and examine it. Then he smells the contents and replaces the glass in its exact place and goes directly to the table with a brandy decanter. With his handkerchief, he removes the stopper and places it in his jacket pocket keeping his handkerchief with him. He lifts the decanter with his handkerchief, smells the contents of the decanter and pulls a vial (this can be pre-filled and obscured from view until after it is "filled") from his coat pocket. He collects a small sample of the liquid and places it in his jacket pocket]

Watson

Holmes! You have plenty of your own brandy!
(Mumbling) Stealing a dead man's brandy!

Holmes

I assure you Watson – this is entirely out of forensic interest. I intend to engage in a little “toxicology” and “comparative dactyloscopy”.

Watson

You are going to do **what**?

Holmes

To study the chemical contents of the brandy to determine the presence of any toxin and examine the decanter stopper for fingerprints.

Watson

(a little embarrassed) Of course you are!

Holmes

This will confirm the mode of death and possibly reveal the identity of the murderer.

Watson

Do you think it was murder?

Holmes

Clearly it is. The glass and decanter smell of Cyanide. It is baffling to me that LeStrade would discount a clue that is so obvious.

Watson: Good heavens, Holmes – you have already solved the crime!

Holmes

No, Watson. This suggests how the professor was murdered and his missing publication could possibly yield a motive. I have yet to discover who it is.

Watson

What of our young **detectives**? If young Sherlock and James come to investigate this crime scene, will they be deprived of any important clues?

Holmes

Not at all, Watson, it will test their prowess as detectives. I have left the glass and the remainder of the decanter - which adequately reveals the cause of death to any detective "valet sal est scriptor"

Watson

What kind of detective?

Holmes

Worth - one's - salt.

[Holmes picks up a match from an ashtray and examines it and touches the tip, glances toward the drapes, then replaces it in the ashtray]

Watson (amused) Yes, of course. What have you found?

Holmes

Clearly evidence of an untidy room.

Watson

As you say.

Holmes

I have what I need from this scene. Let's return to my study where I can confirm my suspicions.

[Indistinct voices of Sherlock and James are heard outside the door to the hallway – someone turns the

door knob - and then gently shakes the door to find it jammed]

Holmes

(stage whisper) As expected! Watson, get the lights! Be certain to take the lantern - then leave!

Watson

(stage whisper) But Holmes, where will you be?

Holmes

(stage whisper) I will meet you in the garden off the veranda. Now hurry!

Watson

(stage whisper) What are you going to do?

Holmes

(stage whisper) I'll remove the barricade and join you. Go!

[Low, indistinct mumbling of Sherlock and James continue to be heard. Watson looks at the veranda door, shuts the lights off]

LIGHTS DIM to GHOST LIGHTS

[Watson rushes out the veranda door and **EXITS**. Holmes quickly removes the blanket and waits for the door to be shaken. Voices of Sherlock and James are now heard outside of the door]

Sherlock

Hurry up, James, open the door!

James

I'm telling you, it's jammed!

Sherlock

Try again!

James

Move away!

[The door is shaken again. Holmes quickly removes the chair off to the side and **EXITS** the veranda door. The unknown caped woman peaks out from the drape and then quickly **EXITS** out the veranda door with her extinguished lantern. Voices of Sherlock and James are heard outside the door]

Sherlock

Let **me** give it a go!

James

Give it a go if you will – but it is jammed!

[**ENTER** - Sherlock gently opens the door and calmly walks in the room, goes to the switch to turn up the lights]

LIGHTS UP FULL

[Sherlock looks back at James who follows him - dumbfounded]

James

What?? It was jammed I say!

Sherlock

(sarcastically) It is quite all right, old boy, Shall I get you spectacles and a walking cane for your next birthday?

James

I am certain that this door would not open!

Sherlock

Here - let me extinguish that lantern for you.

[James pulls the lantern away from Sherlock, then extinguishes it out of view of the audience]

James

I am perfectly capable of extinguishing a lantern!

Sherlock

Good! We have work to do now, James. Search for clues – and take nothing for granted. You take that side!

James

How did you know that Harrison's key was under the flower pot at the front door?

Sherlock

(triumphantly) Elementary, LeStrade. He was always forgetting his key – and so he has kept a spare there since he was a child (as he notices the veranda door) I say, I had forgotten that there is another door in the study.

[Sherlock goes over to investigate. James follows and sets the lantern on a table near the veranda door. Sherlock opens the door and finds it unlocked]

Sherlock

As I recall, this leads to a veranda. It is peculiar that it is unlocked though.

James

That would have been a much preferred entry for us since we took quite the risk of being discovered as we made our way through the house...and then the dog!

Sherlock

Yes, we were rather lucky that Thomas has known me since he was a pup.

James

My heart skipped a beat when he met us at the front door. I was certain that he would give us away.

Sherlock

No, he's a good boy! (as he crosses back to the hallway door) I had best block this door – to give us more time to depart in the event that someone should hear us – or that Thomas should change his mind and decide to announce us.

[Sherlock sets a chair to jam the door (but does not put a blanket at the base of the door to block the light) – Sherlock and James move in different directions - looking closely for clues.

Sherlock spots the glass on the side table. Sherlock takes out his handkerchief to pick it up and then smells the contents.

[He looks at James with a serious look of discovery on his face]

James

What did you find?

Sherlock

Almonds!

James

You found almonds! Why is that a clue?

Sherlock

It is a clue because the drink on this table was likely the professor's bedtime brandy. It smells like almonds.

James

Cyanide!

Sherlock

Hydrogen Cyanide to be exact.

James

I am happy to know that my chemistry is, in fact, useful.

Sherlock

We are right – it **was** murder! The professor was **poisoned**.

[James comes to view the evidence – and glances around the room]

James

(looking around) There - a decanter! I an open decanter. I don't see a stopper though.

[Sherlock goes to the decanter and picks it up with his handkerchief to examine it – then smells it]

Sherlock

The killer put the Cyanide in the decanter and Professor Blakely must have unknowingly poured his death along with his evening nightcap.

James

There is no sign of a struggle – no furniture up-ended or disturbed.

Sherlock

He would have died rather quickly – and likely the murderer was not present. The Professor may well have realized who it was and gotten to his typewriter before collapsing.

James

The poison could have been placed in the decanter at any time.

Sherlock

(as he sees the ashtray with the match) It could.

[James notices Sherlock picking up a match from the table and examining, smelling, and touching it]

James

Say, isn't that one of those "lucifer matches"?

Sherlock

Well, it is a refined version of it anyway. This would rightly be called a "parlour match", much safer than its predecessor. They added a bit of fire retardant to this

one - in the form of alum, sodium silicate, and salt combination to the wooden stick to make it a bit safer - and longer lasting - as it burns more slowly.

James

I wasn't aware that Professor Blakely indulged in "smokes"...on a Professor's wage?

Sherlock

Nor was I - and your point is well-taken. Perhaps it was here for guests. There is no evidence of ashes having been in this "ash-tray" as they call it now - just this burned match head and most of the stick

James

What do you think that it suggests?

[James goes to the desk and looks sadly at the chair where he was found]

Sherlock

I am not certain that it was here at the time of the professor's death. It seems more recent than that. The odor of the sulfur mixture that burns is still quite strong and the match head is a bit warm.

James

(at the professor's chair at the desk now) It was here that they found him - presumably working on his latest publication.

Sherlock

It was reported that he was sitting in that chair (points to his chair near the glass) to enjoy his evening brandy. After the first sip, he must have realized that

it was poisoned and made it to his desk chair before he collapsed over his typewriter.

James

Poor Professor Blakely.

[Sherlock opens the desk drawers to look for papers. All drawers are empty]

Sherlock

There must be a clue here, James!

James

You think that the professor realized what was happening in time to leave behind a clue?

Sherlock

That is odd! There is no paper in his typewriter.

James

He was supposed to have been writing about his latest research.

Sherlock

As a matter of fact, there are no papers at his desk at all. That seems a bit odd if he was actually typing a publication. He would have at least had a supply of blank paper to use. It seems that everything has been removed.

[Sherlock examines the typewriter ribbon and then looks around and spies the letter opener on the desk – he uses it to wind the the ribbon of the typewriter just as Holmes had done previously. After only seconds of reading, he stops and brings out a small magnifying glass

(considerably smaller than the one used by Holmes - and then continues to read]

James

Perhaps the papers were removed by my father for evidence?

Sherlock

The Inspector would have had no reason to do so. Remember – the Coroner said that the professor's death was from natural causes. They wouldn't remove evidence unless it was a crime scene.

James

Of course.

Sherlock

(still reading the typewriter ribbon) Oh dear!

James

Can you determine what he was typing?

Sherlock

Hmmm – it seems that he **was** going to publish his latest research!

James

You have already read all of that in those few minutes? It was rather short for a research publication.

Sherlock

I've read enough to grasp the intent of what is being said.

[Sherlock continues to read the ribbon until voices are heard in the hallway]

Turner

(off stage) I heard voices coming from within this room – and the light is on!

Bullard

(off stage) I am **certain** that I extinguished it earlier.

[Occasional shakes of the door and knob are heard while the people off stage are trying unsuccessfully to open the door while Sherlock and James act quickly and speak rapidly to one another]

Sherlock

(stage whisper) I forgot to block the light from the door! We need to leave NOW!

Turner

(off stage) Go get the key!

James

(stage whisper) I will extinguish the lights!

Sherlock

(He picks up the decanter with his handkerchief and hands it to James) (stage whisper) No! They already know that the lights are on. If you extinguish them, it will alert them to our presence. Here, take this with you! I'll get the door!

James

(stage whisper) (takes the decanter with the handkerchief quickly but carefully) I can't conceal an entire decanter in my frock coat!

Sherlock

(stage whisper) When we get outside, you can remove your waistcoat and wrap it like a parcel.

James

(stage whisper) **My** waistcoat? And how do **you** factor into this equation?

Sherlock

(stage whisper) I am carrying the lantern. Now, tempus fugit!

James

(stage whisper) Yes, yes, time flies - I was in your Latin class, you know.

Sherlock

Go!

Turner

(off stage) Now, try the key!

Bullard

(offstage) It is not locked, mum. The door is jammed!

[James **EXITS** the veranda door with decanter concealed as best as possible. Sherlock waits for the door to be shaken, then quickly removes the chair and starts to leave. He takes a few steps and remembers the lantern – goes back and grabs it from the table]

[Sherlock **EXITS** quickly out the veranda door]

Turner

(offstage) Let me try it!

BLACKOUT

[End Scene 2]

(set change to 221B Baker Street)

The Legacy of **SHERLOCK HOLMES**

At 221B Baker Street, London, we find Watson and Holmes in their usual routine. Watson is writing in his journal and Holmes is fidgety and surley with no case to solve. Little do they know what awaits when two would-be detectives ask Holmes to help solve a “fictitious” murder.

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