

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

by

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FADE IN:

BRASS PLAQUE - DAY

Engraved on it are the words: COX & CO., Bankers. Reflected in its shiny surface are double-decker red buses, and other present-day London traffic.

INT. BANK VAULT - DAY

An iron gate opens, and two bank guards come in. One of them switches on the lights. On the shelves which line the walls are dusty strong-boxes, document cases, wrapped packages, etc. The guards move along the shelves searching for something.

WATSON'S VOICE

Somewhere in the vaults of a bank in London is a tin dispatch box with my name on it. It is not to be opened until fifty years after my death.

The guards find a battered tin dispatch box with the name JOHN H. WATSON, M.D., painted on it. They remove it from the shelf, set it down on a table. The box is tied with heavy cord, the knots sealed with wax. Strung on the cord is the key.

WATSON'S VOICE

It contains certain mementos of my long association with a man who elevated the science of deduction to an art -- the world's first, and undoubtedly most famous, consulting detective.

While one of the guards dusts the box off, the other cuts the cord with a pair of scissors. He then inserts the key in the lock, turns it, raises the lid -- revealing the dusty contents of the box.

OVER THIS, SUPERIMPOSE THE MAIN TITLE.

The guards now start to remove the objects from the box, one at a time: -- A daguerreotype of Holmes, standing, and Watson, seated, in a stiff studio pose; Holmes' deerstalker hat, his curved pipe, his magnifying glass; Watson's stethoscope, Holmes' revolver; a small enamel sign with the number 221B; a pair of handcuffs;

a sheet of music paper which is unrolled to disclose a violin piece composed by Holmes, titled FOR ILSE von H.; A pocket watch, the back of which is opened to reveal a photograph of Gabrielle Valladon; a signet ring bearing the initials S.H. -- under which is concealed a compass; a worn morocco case -- inside which is an early-model hypodermic syringe; a crystal ball which, when shaken, produces a snowstorm - and when the snow settles, we see a bust of Queen Victoria.

OVER THESE OBJECTS, THE REST OF THE CREDIT TITLES ARE SUPERIMPOSED.

The last item out of the box is a thick stack of manuscript paper, bound with green ribbon. The guard undoes the ribbon, dusts off the top page, as CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSER. Written in ink, in the cursive penmanship of the period, is the following paragraph:

To my heirs:

In my lifetime, I have recorded some sixty cases demonstrating the singular gift of my friend Sherlock Holmes -- dealing with everything from The Hound of the Baskervilles to his mysterious brother Mycroft and the devilish Professor Moriarty. But there were other adventures which, for reasons of discretion, I have decided to withhold from the public until this much later date. They involve matters of a delicate and sometimes scandalous nature, as will shortly become apparent.

OVER THIS, WE HEAR THE VOICE OF DR. WATSON, reading the text.

DISSOLVE TO:

YORKSHIRE LANDSCAPE - DAY

A passenger train of the late Nineteenth Century is chugging through the early morning mist.

WATSON'S VOICE

It was August of 1887, and we were returning from Yorkshire, where Holmes had solved the baffling murder of Colonel Abernetty.

INT. COMPARTMENT - MOVING TRAIN - DAWN

There are but two passengers in the compartment -- sitting by the window, facing each other. In fact they are dozing. One wears a deerstalker and an Inverness cape; the other is in a dark overcoat and a black bowler, a furred umbrella between his legs, a medical bag on the seat beside him. The rest of their luggage is on the racks above. They are, of course, SHERLOCK HOLMES and DR. JOHN H. WATSON. This being 1887, they are thirty-three and thirty-five respectively.

WATSON'S VOICE

You may recall that he broke the murderer's alibi by measuring the depth to which the parsley had sunk in the butter on a hot day.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BAKER STREET - DAY

A hansom cab, with Holmes' and Watson's luggage strapped to the rack on top, is proceeding down the busy street.

WATSON'S VOICE

He was the most brilliant man I have ever known -- and I dare say people have envied me for sharing that flat with him in Baker Street.

The cab draws up in front of 221B. The front door opens and MRS. HUDSON, a plump, motherly woman in her fifties, wearing an apron, hurries down the steps. She greets Holmes and Watson warmly as they alight.

WATSON'S VOICE

I'll grant you he was stimulating -- but he could also be moody, unpredictable, egocentric, and more often than not, completely infuriating -- as our landlady, Mrs. Hudson, can attest -- bless her kind soul.

The cabbie starts to unload their luggage. As Holmes, Watson and Mrs. Hudson proceed inside, CAMERA TRAVELS UP THE FACADE OF THE BUILDING, past the number 221B, to the bay window on the second floor.

INT. LIVING ROOM - 221B BAKER STREET - DAY

It's all there -- the fireplace, the coal scuttle, the Persian slipper with the tobacco; the velvet wing chair, the basket chair with the writing-arm, the couch with the cushions; the sideboard with the tantalus and the gasogene; the acid-stained deal-topped table with Holmes' chemical equipment on it, the dining table, the small Moorish table; the bookshelves and the violin case; the gas fixtures and the oil lamps; the dumbwaiter connecting with the kitchen in the basement; and Holmes' desk, piled high with papers, clippings, research material, etc.

Holmes is pulling up the window shades. Watson has removed his hat and coat, and is putting his medical bag down on the sideboard; the cabbie, having deposited their luggage, is just leaving.

MRS. HUDSON

I do wish you'd give me a little more warning when you come home unexpected. I would have roasted a goose -- and had some flowers for you.

HOLMES

My dear Mrs. Hudson -- criminals are as unpredictable as head-colds. You never quite know when you're going to catch one.

He has picked up a dagger, starts opening his mail, which is on the dining table.

MRS. HUDSON

I'll unpack your bags.

She exits into one of the bedrooms. Watson has now taken a magazine out of an envelope.

WATSON

Here's an advance copy of Strand Magazine.

(shows it to Holmes)

They've printed 'The Red-Headed League!'

On the cover is a colored illustration from the story, featuring in obligatory Inverness and deerstalker.

HOLMES
(offhand)
Very impressive.

WATSON
(leafing through the
magazine)
Would you like to see how I treated it?

HOLMES
I can hardly wait. I'm sure I'll find
out all sorts of fascinating things about
the case that I never knew before.

WATSON
Just what do you mean by that?

HOLMES
Oh, come now, Watson, you must admit that
you have a tendency to over-romanticize.
You have taken my simple exercises in
logic and embellished them, exaggerated
them...

WATSON
I deny the accusation.

HOLMES
You have described me as six-foot-four,
whereas I am barely six-foot-one.

WATSON
A bit of poetic license.

HOLMES
(removing Inverness and
deerstalker)
You have saddled me with this improbable
costume, which the public now expects me
to wear.

WATSON
That's not my doing.
(indicating cover of Strand)
Blame it on the illustrator.

HOLMES
You've made me out to be a violin
virtuoso. Here --

(holds out a letter he's been reading)
-- a request from the Liverpool Symphony to appear as soloist in the Mendelssohn Concerto.

WATSON

(excited)
Oh, really?

HOLMES

The fact is that I could barely hold my own in the pit orchestra of a second-rate music hall.

WATSON

You're much too modest.

HOLMES

(busy with the mail)
You have given the reader the distinct impression that I am a misogynist. Actually, I don't dislike women -- I merely distrust them. The twinkle in the eye and the arsenic in the soup.

WATSON

It's those little touches that make you colorful --

HOLMES

Lurid is more like it. You have painted me as a hopeless dope addict -- just because I occasionally take a five per cent solution of cocaine.

WATSON

A seven per cent solution.

HOLMES

Five per cent. Don't you think I'm aware you've been diluting it behind my back?

WATSON

As a doctor -- and as your friend -- I strongly disapprove of this insidious habit of yours.

HOLMES

My dear friend -- as well as my dear doctor -- I only resort to narcotics when I am suffering from acute boredom -- when there are no interesting cases to engage my mind.

(holding out one of the open letters)

Look at this -- an urgent appeal to find six missing midgets.

He tosses the letter down in disgust.

WATSON

Did you say midgets?

He picks up the letter.

HOLMES

Six of them -- the Tumbling Piccolos -- an acrobatic act with some circus.

WATSON

Disappeared between London and Bristol ... Don't you find that intriguing?

HOLMES

Extremely so. You see, they are not only midgets -- but also anarchists.

WATSON

Anarchists?

HOLMES

(nodding)

By now they have been smuggled to Vienna, dressed as little girls in burgundy pinafores. They are to greet the Czar of all the Russias when he arrives at the railway station. They will be carrying bouquets of flowers, concealed in each bouquet will be a bomb with a lit fuse.

WATSON

You really think so?

HOLMES

Not at all. The circus owner offers me five pounds for my services -- that's not even a pound a midget.

So obviously he is a stingy blighter, and the little chaps simply ran off to join another circus.

WATSON

(crestfallen)

Oh. And it sounded so promising --

HOLMES

There are no great crimes anymore, Watson. The criminal class has lost all enterprise and originality. At best they commit some bungling villainy, with a motive so transparent that even a Scotland Yard official can see through it.

He has crossed to the desk, suddenly notices something.

HOLMES

(angrily)

Mrs. Hudson!

(even angrier)

MRS. HUDSON!

Mrs. Hudson comes hurrying out of the bedroom.

MRS. HUDSON

Yes? What is it? What have I done now?

HOLMES

(sternly)

There is something missing from my desk.

MRS. HUDSON

Missing?

HOLMES

Something very crucial.

(picks up a small feather)

You have been tidying up against my explicit orders.

MRS. HUDSON

Oh, I made sure not to disturb anything.

HOLMES

Dust, Mrs. Hudson, is an essential part of my filing system. By the thickness of it, I can date any document immediately.

MRS. HUDSON

Some of the dust was this thick.

She demonstrates with her thumb and forefinger.

HOLMES

(promptly)

That would be March, 1883.

He blows the feather away.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

START on Holmes' foot, operating a bellows. CAMERA PANS UP to the top of the chemistry table, on which an elaborate apparatus of brass, glass and rubber tubing has been set up. Inserted into the ends of the rubber tubes are half a dozen cigarettes, four cigars of different shapes and colors, and four pipes, all lit. Activated by the bellows, they are puffing away like mad, wheezing loudly and filling the screen with smoke. Seated at the table is Holmes, in shirt-sleeves. Occasionally he knocks off an ash onto a glass slide, studies it under a microscope.

Watson, in a dressing gown, is sitting in the chair with the writing arm, documenting the latest Holmes adventure for Strand Magazine. The open mail has now been affixed to the center of the wooden mantelpiece, with a dagger.

Mrs. Hudson is clearing the dinner dishes from the table, and loading them onto the shelf of the dumbwaiter. The accumulation of smoke in the room makes her cough.

MRS. HUDSON

How can you stand this? Why don't you let me air the room out?

WATSON

Please, Mrs. Hudson -- he's working on a definitive study of tobacco ash.

MRS. HUDSON

(drily)

I'm sure there's a crying need for that.

WATSON

In our endeavors, it is sometimes vital to distinguish between, say, the ashes of a Macedonian cigarette and a Jamaican cigar. So far he has classified 140 different kinds of ashes.

MRS. HUDSON

All of which will end up on my rug.

She is now pulling on the rope which lowers the dumbwaiter.

WATSON

That'll be enough, Mrs. Hudson.

MRS. HUDSON

(heading for door)

All right. If you gentlemen want to stay here and suffocate...

She exits, shutting the door. For a while, the two go on working. Then Holmes rises abruptly from the chemistry table.

HOLMES

She's right. I am suffocating.

WATSON

Let me open a window.

HOLMES

Not from lack of air -- from lack of activity. Sitting here week after week -- blowing smoke rings -- staring through a microscope -- there's no challenge in that.

WATSON

Personally, I consider it a major contribution to scientific criminology...

Holmes has opened his violin case and taken out his fiddle.

HOLMES

How I envy you your mind, Watson.

WATSON

You do?

HOLMES

It's placid, imperturbable, prosaic. But my mind rebels against stagnation. It's like a racing engine, tearing itself to pieces because it's not connected up with the work for which it was built.

He has tucked the violin under his chin, starts to improvise a nervous pent-up melody. There is nothing amateurish about it -- he plays quite well.

Watson resumes working on his manuscript. Suddenly the music stops. Watson looks up apprehensively. Holmes has put down the violin, and is crossing to the sideboard. He opens Watson's medical bag, takes out a bottle of cocaine, starts toward his bedroom. Watson pushes the writing arm to the side, rises from his chair.

WATSON

Holmes --

Holmes pays no attention, continues into the bedroom. Watson crosses to the open door. Inside the bedroom, Holmes has put down the cocaine bottle on the washstand, and is rolling up his left sleeve.

WATSON

Holmes, where is your self-control?

HOLMES

Fair question.

From a drawer he takes a morocco case, opens it, removes a hypodermic syringe.

WATSON

Aren't you ashamed of yourself?

HOLMES

Thoroughly. But this will take care of it.

He has removed the stopper from the cocaine bottle, and inserting the hypodermic needle into it, starts to draw up the liquid.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BAKER STREET - DAY

It is raining. A bus comes down the street, the open top deck sprouting umbrellas like black mushrooms.

WATSON'S VOICE

Naturally, I don't mean to imply that my friend was always on cocaine -- sometimes it was opium, sometimes it was hashish. And once he went one of these dreadful binges, there was no telling how long it would last.

INT. LIVING ROOM - 221B BAKER STREET - DAY

Rain beats on the windows. Holmes and Watson are in the middle of an argument.

WATSON

The only reason you moved in with me is to have a steady supply of stimulants.

HOLMES

Now, now, Watson -- you mustn't underestimate your other charms.

He starts into the bedroom.

WATSON

Holmes, I warn you. If you lock yourself in there once more --

HOLMES

I intend to do nothing of the sort.

He takes the hypodermic out of the drawer in the washstand, starts back into the living room with it.

HOLMES

Not until you replace this needle. It is getting rather blunt.

As Watson glares at him, the door opens and Mrs. Hudson comes bustling in. Holmes hides the hypodermic behind his back.

MRS. HUDSON

I made you some tea and cress sandwiches.

She opens the door of the dumbwaiter, starts to pull it up.

WATSON

Mrs. Hudson, I want you to pack my bags.

MRS. HUDSON

Are you going away for the weekend?

WATSON

And beyond. I'm moving out.

MRS. HUDSON

Moving out?

(she looks at Holmes)

HOLMES

I'm just as surprised as you are.

WATSON

You heard me, Mrs. Hudson. And let's not waste any time.

Mrs. Hudson sighs, exits into Watson's bedroom.

HOLMES

May I be so bold as to ask where you'er going?

WATSON

I don't know yet. But I intend to resume my practice. I am, after all, a doctor. And quite a competent one, if I say so as shouldn't.

HOLMES

You'll find it very dull -- snipping out tonsils and flushing out kidneys --

Watson is glancing around the room, searching for something.

HOLMES

If you're looking for your medical bag, you hid it under the Moorish table.

(as Watson crosses to it)

Which shows a little more imagination than last time -- when it was under your bed.

Watson picks up the Moorish table, disclosing the medical bag, standing on end. He sets the bag down on the fender, opens it.

WATSON

I will, of course, continue to pay my half of the rent until you find someone to share these rooms with you.

HOLMES

Where am I going to find anyone who will put up with my rather eccentric habits?

WATSON

(taking hypodermic needle out of bag)

Here's a fresh needle -- and here's my farewell present to you.

He takes out three bottles of narcotics, puts them on the mantel.

WATSON

If you want to destroy yourself, go right ahead. But I won't sit by and watch you doing it.

He snaps his bag shut, carries it toward his bedroom.

HOLMES

Watson...

Watson disappears into the bedroom, slamming the door. Holmes looks after him, then looks at the bottles of dope on the mantelpiece. He starts pacing. After a moment he stops at the chemistry table, studies the assorted glassware on the shelves above.

INT. WATSON'S BEDROOM - DAY

There are two open valises on the bed. Watson is moving around the room, collecting various odds and ends, while Mrs. Hudson packs his clothes.

MRS. HUDSON

It's so sad. You and Mr. Holmes -- after all these years --

(she sobs)

WATSON

Please, Mrs. Hudson -- none of that.

Mrs. Hudson takes a clean handkerchief from the open valise, blows her nose.

MRS. HUDSON

I'll wash this and send it on to you.

WATSON

I'll be at Brown's Hotel.

MRS. HUDSON

(still sniffing)

I know how it feels -- I once went through a divorce myself.

WATSON

(removing diploma from wall)

Actually, I'm rather looking forward to it. Leading a normal life again. Regular office hours -- nine to three -- and if occasionally there's an emergency call in the middle of the night, I know it's going to be appendicitis and not an axe murder. Let Holmes go mucking about in the fog and the sleet, looking for a bloodstained collar-button out on the moors, with some demented hound snapping at his behind --

From the living room comes the sound of a revolver shot. Mrs. Hudson screams and Watson looks off in alarm. Then he races out of the room, diploma in hand, followed by Mrs. Hudson.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

As they burst into the room, they see Holmes sitting on the stool beside the chemistry table, a revolver in his hand. He has shattered one of the narcotics bottles on the mantelpiece, and is aiming at a second one.

MRS. HUDSON

Mr. Holmes...

Holmes fires, smashing the second bottle. As Mrs. Hudson takes a step forward, he waves her away with the gun.

HOLMES

Please, Mrs. Hudson. You're in my line of fire.

Watson jerks Mrs. Hudson back as Holmes lets go with another shot. The bullet disposes of the third bottle, splattering glass and liquid all over the place. Holmes rises calmly from the stool, crosses to the desk, puts the revolver away in a drawer.

MRS. HUDSON

(outraged)

How many times have I told you I will not tolerate pistol practice on my premises? I should have evicted you when you shot them holes in my wall.

She points up to a spot near the ceiling. Neatly traced in bullet holes are the initials V.R., with a small crown above them.

HOLMES

Merely celebrating Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee.

MRS. HUDSON

Look at that mess you made --

Watson is looking at Holmes with a little smile on his face.

WATSON

It's all right, Mrs. Hudson. I'll clean it up --

(hands her the diploma)

-- while you unpack my things.

MRS. HUDSON

Unpack?

HOLMES

You heard him.

A bewildered Mrs. Hudson goes back into the bedroom. Watson crosses to the fireplace, picks up the whiskbroom and the coal shovel, starts cleaning up the broken glass.

WATSON

Thank you, Holmes. I know how difficult it must've been for you --

HOLMES

Not really. It was simple choice between a bad habit and a good companion.

WATSON

You've made me very happy.

HOLMES

I've often been accused of being cold and unemotional. I admit to it. And yet, in my cold, unemotional way, I'm very fond of you, Watson.

WATSON

I know that. But one likes to hear these things occasionally.

He notices the violin, which has been splattered with the liquid from the shattered bottle, picks it up.

WATSON

Look at this. Covered with that nasty stuff. I'd better dry it off.

HOLMES

I'll do it.

He takes the instrument, and dabbing it with a handkerchief, carries it toward the violin case.

WATSON

For a moment, I was worried that you were going to let me walk out -- that you weren't even going to try to stop me.

HOLMES

Now, Watson -- you know there's nothing I wouldn't do to keep you here.

With a side-glance at the busy Watson, he opens the violin case. Neatly stashed away around the edges are the three original bottles of narcotics. The ones he shot up, of course, were substitutes from the chemistry set. He places the violin carefully among the bottles, closes the case, snaps the locks. As he moves off, we STAY on the violin case.

WATSON'S VOICE

It was not the first not the last time he tricked me like that. Normally, I was inclined to forgive him...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Watson, in his dressing gown, is sitting at the table, finishing his coffee. In front of him is a letter, on blue note-paper, and a pair of theatre tickets.

WATSON'S VOICE

But on one occasion, he did something that was so utterly unforgivable, that I would gladly have murdered him -- had it not been for my saintly disposition.

Watson sets down his coffee cup, picks up the letter and the tickets, rises from his chair. He starts to pace -- addressing Holmes, who is off-scene.

WATSON

Why are you being so stubborn, Holmes? Why won't you go? It's the final performance of the Imperial Russian Ballet -- the house has been sold out for months --

He moves towards the door of --

HOLMES' BEDROOM - DAY

Holmes is sitting in a hip-bath with a high back, soaping himself. Watson appears in the doorway.

WATSON

-- seats are going for a guinea apiece --

HOLMES

That's precisely it. Why should someone send up two free tickets? Anonymously, at that.

WATSON

Whoever sent them must be in great distress. The note says --

(reading it)
'Please! You are the only man in the world who can help me.'

HOLMES
I suspect it's some sort of plot.

WATSON
You mean somebody wants to lure us into a trap...?

HOLMES
Somebody wants to kill me.

WATSON
Kill you?

HOLMES
That's right. It's a plot to bore me to death. I detest ballet.

WATSON
But this isn't just any ballet. It's Swan Lake.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

START ON THE CONDUCTOR, in the orchestra pit, as he gives the downbeat for the second act music of SWAN LAKE. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO INCLUDE THE STAGE, with a mechanical sway crossing the mist-shrouded lake. CAMERA CONTINUES TO PULL BACK, REVEALING Holmes and Watson, in evening clothes, occupying a box in the upper tier.

WATSON
(confidentially)
You know, of course, Holmes -- that swan isn't really a swan -- it's an enchanted princess.

HOLMES
(bored)
H'mmmm.

On the stage now, the hunters appear, carrying lighted torches.

BOX

Watson trains his opera glasses on the stage, Holmes stifles a yawn.

STAGE

PETROVA, as the Queen of the Swans, makes her entrance to loud applause. She is in her forties, but splendidly preserved, undoubtedly the greatest ballerina around.

BOX

Watson nudges Holmes, who has dozed off.

WATSON

Fabulous woman, don't you think so, Holmes?

HOLMES

(coming to)

Who?

WATSON

The great Petrova.

He hands the glasses to Holmes, who focuses them indifferently on the stage.

STAGE

Petrova is making an exit, backwards, on points.

BOX

Holmes lowers the glasses, returns them to Watson.

HOLMES

Very strong arches, I must admit.

WATSON

They say twelve men have died for her.

HOLMES

Really.

WATSON

Six committed suicide, four were killed in duels, and one fell out of the gallery in the Vienna Opera House.

HOLMES

That's only eleven.

WATSON

The man who fell from the gallery landed on top of another man in the orchestra.

HOLMES

That makes an even dozen -- in a messy sort of way.

Watson resumes watching the stage through the glasses.

STAGE

Petrova and the dancer playing the Prince go into the famous pas-de-deux.

BOX

Watson enjoying himself immensely, Holmes sitting there dourly. The red plush curtain at the rear of the box parts, and a man in evening clothes and a top hat enters. He is in his middle fifties, extremely soigne, and somewhat sinister. His name is ROGOZHIN, and he is Russian. Holmes and Watson look around.

ROGOZHIN

Mister Holmes?

HOLMES

Yes.

ROGOZHIN

I am Nicolai Rogozhin, director-general of the Imperial Russian Ballet. So glad you accept invitation.

Holmes and Watson start to get up, but he motions them back into their chairs.

HOLMES

This is Dr. Watson.

ROGOZHIN

Pleased to meet you.
(seating himself behind them)
You are enjoying?

WATSON

Immensely.

ROGOZHIN

(abruptly)
Tell me, Mr. Holmes, how is your health?

HOLMES

My health? Better consult my doctor.

WATSON

(to Rogozhin)
Oh, he's in excellent shape.

ROGOZHIN

(to Holmes)
Any insanity in your family? Diabetes?
Asthma?

HOLMES

Would you mind telling me what this is
all about?

ROGOZHIN

Certainly. Madame Petrova, she has
problem.

HOLMES

Could you be more specific?

ROGOZHIN

Certainly not.

WATSON

A liason with a crowned head?
Compromising letters? Blackmail?

He glances toward the stage.

STAGE

The pas-de-deux finished, to a rousing ovation.

BOX

Rogozhin rises, turns to Holmes.

ROGOZHIN

After performance, there will be little celebration backstage -- and Madame requests your presence.

WATSON

We'd be delighted.

ROGOZHIN

(to Watson)

You are invited, also.

With a parting look he exits, pulling the plush curtains closed.

CUT TO:

STAGE

The performance is over, the curtain is up, the party is on. Tables have been set up, with caviar, vodka and champagne. The members of the orchestra are now playing balalaikas, and crew and cast (the ballerinas still in costume, the male dancers in tights) seem in high spirits.

Holmes and Watson, in silk hats with canes, appear from the wings, stop, survey the scene. Watson's eyes are shining with anticipation. In contrast, Holmes' face is sober and quizzical.

Rogozhin spots the two, detaches himself from a group, hurries over to join them.

ROGOZHIN

There you are, Mr. Holmes. Madame is expecting you in her dressing room. Dr. Watson, you will amuse yourself meanwhile -- we have vodka, caviar, girls.

WATSON

No, thank you.

ROGOZHIN

No girls?

WATSON

No caviar. Makes me break out in hives.

Rogozhin turns to a group of ballerinas, claps his hands.

ROGOZHIN

Dievushki. Siude, siuda, dievushki.
Posnakomtes s docktorum Watsonom.

Half a dozen ballerinas descend on on Dr. Watson. They are giggling and chattering in Russian. Rogozhin leads Holmes off, while Watson takes in the bevy of beauties around him.

WATSON

Any of you girls understand English?

GIRLS

Nyet.

WATSON

Not one single word?

GIRLS

Nyet.

WATSON

In that case, I don't mind telling you that you all have lovely po-pos.

He pats a couple of the po-pos with his cane.

BACKSTAGE

Rogozhin is leading Holmes toward Madame Petrova's dressing room.

ROGOZHIN

Mr. Holmes, I must prepare you -- this is no ordinary case.

HOLMES

It is only the extraordinary that interests me.

ROGOZHIN

Good. Because you will find this extra-
extraordinary.

They have now reached the door of Madame's dressing room. Rogozhin knocks. The door is opened by an elderly Russian maid.

ROGOZHIN

Madame Petrova prinimaet?

MAID

Pozhaluista voidite.

Rogozhin leads Holmes inside. The maid steps out, shuts the door.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

It is small, elegant and sensuous. There is vodka in an ice-bucket, next to a Recliner chaise, a paravent, masses of flowers, and finally Madame Petrova, still in costume, sitting at a dressing table with multiple mirrors, undoing her hair. Candles, in two elaborate candleabra, give Madame's face a special glow.

ROGOZHIN

Ja priviol vam Mistera Sherlock Holmesa,
doragaia.

PETROVA

(to Holmes)

Otchen rada.

She extends her hand, and Holmes takes it.

HOLMES

Madame.

He kisses her hand. Petrova appraises him from head to toe, and back again.

PETROVA

(to Holmes)

Vi menshe rostom chem ja ozhidala.

HOLMES

Madame says you are shorter than she thought.

HOLMES

I didn't mean to be.

PETROVA

No eto nie vazhno. Menia interessujut glavnim obra som vashi mosghi.

ROGOZHIN

Short, tall, who cares? It is the brains that count.

HOLMES

(to Rogozhin)

Thank you.

(catching himself, to Petrova)

Thank you.

Petrova rises, crosses to the paravent.

PETROVA

Ja prochia vsie vashi prikliuchenia. Zamiechatelno! Os sobenno sobaka Baskervillei.

ROGOZHIN

Madame is great admirer of yours. She has read every story -- her favorite is Big Dog from Baskerville.

HOLMES

I'm afraid it loses something in translation.

Petrova is now behind the paravent, undressing, only her head visible.

PETROVA

Nikolai, pokazhite iemu skripku.

Rogozhin picks up a violin case, opens it.

ROGOZHIN

Mr. Holmes, you know about fiddles.
(takes violin out, hands it to him)

What is your opinion of this?

Holmes holds the violin up, peers through one of the sound holes.

HOLMES

(reading)

'Antonius Stradivarius Cremonesis, Anno 1709.' Well, the label is authentic.

(examines violin, plucks strings)

Judging from the shape, the color of the varnish, and the tone, I would say it is a genuine Stradivarius of the best period.

ROGOZHIN

You like?

HOLMES

It's magnificent.

PETROVA

(from behind paravent)

Skazhite jemu chto eto podarok ot menia.

ROGOZHIN

Here -- take it. Madame says it is yours.

HOLMES

Mine?

ROGOZHIN

For services you will render.

HOLMES

My fees as a detective are not exactly trifling -- but a Stradivarius -- you're not serious.

ROGOZHIN

I am not. But Madame is.

Petrova emerges from behind the paravent, in a brocade dressing gown.

PETROVA

Nalejte vodki i obiasnite jemu v chom dielo.

She drapes herself on the chaise.

ROGOZHIN

All right. I will pour vodka and explain.

(starts pouring vodka; it is pink)

Mr. Holmes, what you have seen tonight is last and positively final performance of Madame Petrova. She is retiring.

HOLMES

What a shame.

ROGOZHIN

She has been dancing since she was three years old. And after all, she is now thirty-eight.

HOLMES

(gallantly)

I must say she doesn't look thirty-eight.

ROGOZHIN

That is because she is forty-nine.

(he hands her a glass of vodka, with an exaggerated smile)

So Madame has decided to leave ballet and spend life bringing up her child.

HOLMES

How admirable.

ROGOZHIN

(hands him vodka)

Problem now is to find father.

HOLMES

Oh? Is he missing?

ROGOZHIN

Correct.

HOLMES

And that's why you called me in?

ROGOZHIN

Also correct. We must have father, because without father, how can there be child?

HOLMES

I see. The whole thing is still in the planning stage --

ROGOZHIN

Correct again. Madame would like child to be brilliant and beautiful. Since she is beautiful -- she now needs man who is brilliant.

Holmes' eyes wander slowly toward Petrova. She raises her glass.

PETROVA

Za zdorovie.

ROGOZHIN

(raising his glass)

Za zdorovie.

HOLMES

Za zdrovie.

Petrova and Rogozhin down their vodka bottoms up. Holmes takes one swallow, then stops.

HOLMES

What's in it?

ROGOZHIN

What does it taste like?

HOLMES

Red pepper.

ROGOZHIN

That's what's in it.

While Rogozhin refills Petrova's glass and his own, Holmes takes another tentative sip.

PETROVA

(to Holmes)

Kogda mi smozhem dvinutsa v putj?

HOLMES

I beg your pardon?

ROGOZHIN

Madame wants to know how soon you can be ready.

HOLMES

Ready?

ROGOZHIN

To leave for Venice. All arrangements have been made. You will spend one week there with Madame...

HOLMES

Well, this is all very flattering. But surely there are other me -- better men --

ROGOZHIN

To tell you truth, you were not first choice. We considered Russian writer, Tolstoi --

HOLMES

That's more like it. The man's a genius.

ROGOZHIN

Too old... Then we considered the philosopher, Nietzsche --

HOLMES

Absolutely first-rate mind...

ROGOZHIN

Too German... And we considered Tschaikowski --

HOLMES

Oh, you couldn't go wrong with Tschaikowski --

ROGOZHIN

We could -- and we did. It was catastrophe.

HOLMES

Why?

ROGOZHIN

You don't know? Because Tschaikowski -- how shall put it? Women not his glass of tea.

HOLMES

Pity, that.

PETROVA

(to Rogozhin)

Skazhite jemu chto je otchen dovolna etim resheniem.

ROGOZHIN

Madame is very happy with final choice.

HOLMES

Madame mustn't be too hasty. She must remember I'm an Englishman.

ROGOZHIN

So?

HOLMES

You know what they say about us. If there's one thing more deplorable than our cooking, it's our love-making. We are not exactly the most romantic of people --

ROGOZHIN

Perfect. We don't want sentimental idiots -- falling in love, committing suicide. One week in Venice -- she goes back to St. Petersburg with baby -- you go back to London with fiddle.

HOLMES

An equitable arrangement.

(puts down violin)

About my medical history -- when you asked me -- I neglected to mention a small detail. There is hemophilia in my family. We're all bleeders.

ROGOZHIN

(to Petrova)

On govorit, chto v jevo semie stradajut ghemofilijej.

PETROVA

Pust nie bezpokoitsa. Ja ostrighu sebe noghti.

ROGOZHIN

Madame says not to worry. She will not scratch you.

HOLMES

That's reassuring to know. But --

PETROVA

(to Rogozhin)

Pochemu on kolebletsa? On nie nahodit menia dostatochno privlekatelnoi?

ROGOZHIN

Madame says you talk too much. You find her attractive or no?

Before Holmes can answer, the door opens and Watson sticks his head in. He is flushed and slightly inebriated, and there is a flower tucked behind his ear. From off comes the SOUND of wild balalaika music.

WATSON

Excuse me.

(to Rogozhin)

What does prokanzik mean?

ROGOZHIN

It means 'You little devil.'

WATSON

It does? I am? Thank you.

He hurries off, shutting the door.

ROGOZHIN

(to Holmes)

I repeat question. You find Madame attractive or no?

Holmes is still looking at the door where Watson exited, an idea forming in his mind.

HOLMES

(turning to Rogozhin)

Oh, I find her most attractive -- for a woman, that is.

ROGOZHIN

Then no problem.

HOLMES

Maybe a slight one. You see, I am not a free man.

ROGOZHIN

Not free? You are a bachelor.

HOLMES

A bachelor -- living with another bachelor -- for the last five years. Five very happy years.

ROGOZHIN

What is it you are trying to tell me?

HOLMES

I hoped I could avoid the subject. But some of us -- through a cruel caprice of Mother Nature --

ROGOZHIN

Get to point.

HOLMES

The point is that Tschaikowski is not an isolated case.

ROGOZHIN

You mean, you and Dr. Watson -- ?

(Holmes nods)

He is your glass of tea?

HOLMES

If you want to be picturesque about it.

PETROVA

(slightly agitated)

Chto on govorit? Pri chom tut Chaikovsky?

ROGOZHIN

On pederast.

PETROVA

(on her feet now; flaring)

Jescho odin? Eto stanovitsa odnoobrasno! Kakoi vi idiot!

HOLMES

(picking up his silk hat and
cane)

Believe me, Madame, the loss is all mine.
But I would prefer to disappoint you know
than disappoint you in a gondola in
Venice.

He takes her limp hand, kisses it. Then he crosses to
the door.

HOLMES

(imitating Rogozhin's accent)

It would have been catastrophe.

He exits. Rogozhin starts to pour himself another glass
of vodka. Petrova slaps the glass out of his hand.

PETROVA

(screaming)

Potchemu vi nie vijasnili eto eto ranshe,
prezhde chem posoritj menia!

STAGE

The party has built into a real wingding by now. It's
wild -- drinking, laughing, singing. Everybody is turned
on -- especially Watson. He is dancing with a dozen of
the ballerinas to madly accelerating balalaika music.
Flower behind ear, hair mussed, tie undone, short of
breath -- he is in paradise.

Holmes makes his way through the revelers, approaches
Watson.

HOLMES

Watson!

(Watson pays no attention)

Watson, are you coming?

WATSON

(without missing a step)

What is it, old boy?

HOLMES

We're going home.

WATSON

Home? Not a chance. Not the slightest --
not the remotest chance. Toodle-ooo.

He waves goodbye, and goes on swirling dizzily with the girls. Holmes puts on his silk hat and leaves.

A shaken Rogozhin comes up to the buffet, pours himself a stiff drink of vodka. As he drinks his eyes follow the dancing Watson balefully.

Watson spins off several of the girls, grabs another group. His ex-partners wind up close to Rogozhin. He whispers something to them. Their eyes widen, and they stare at Watson with disbelief. Watson again switches partners, and the first girls now whisper intensely to those who just left the floor. The same reaction. Watson, oblivious to all this, is whirling around with another set of girls.

By now some of the girls who are in on the secret are whispering to the male dancers in tights. Their reaction is slightly different. They are seeing Watson in a new light. And before Watson knows what's happening, he has been abandoned by all the girls, and is joined first by one pair then another pair of male dancers, till he is dancing only with gay guys in tights. It gradually dawns on Watson that there is something wrong with this state of affairs. After some difficulty, he breaks away from them.

WATSON

Hold on! Just a moment!

Spotting Rogozhin, he crosses to him. The girls shrink away at his approach.

WATSON

(bewildered)

What's going on? What happened to the girls?

ROGOZHIN

Why? Do you not prefer it this way?

WATSON

What way?

ROGOZHIN

You don't have to pretend. Mr. Holmes told us everything -- about you and him --

WATSON

About me and him?

ROGOZHIN

Come now, no need to be bashful. We are not bourgeois. Maybe with doctors and detectives is unusual -- but in ballet, is very usual.

WATSON

What is?

ROGOZHIN

Caprice of Mother Nature. Look at Pavel and Mischa and Boris and Dmitri --

Watson looks around at the boys in tights, who are standing in a half-circle, grinning at him insolently. It is beginning to dawn on him. He pales.

ROGOZHIN

-- And Ilya and Sergei --
 (breaks off, rocks his hand
 back and forth)
 Sergei -- half and half.

He pours himself another vodka. Watson grabs the glass away from him, downs it with a gulp.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - 221B BAKER STREET - NIGHT

In contrast to the frenetic ambiance of the back-stage party, the room seems doubly placid. Holmes, his dinner coat replaced by a smoking jacket, is sitting in the wing chair, having a quiet pipe after the evening's peculiar adventure. Only the desk lamp is lit. From the street, there is the sound of hurried, angry footsteps approaching the house. Holmes turns his head languidly -- he knows who is coming.

EXT. BAKER STREET - NIGHT

An enraged Watson, cane and opera glasses in hand, and the flower still behind his ear, is jogging down the center of the deserted street.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Holmes rises casually, twists the wing chair so that its back is to the door, crosses to the lamp on the desk, turns the wick down. From off comes the sound of Watson's key rattling in the front door lock.

STAIRCASE - 221B BAKER STREET - NIGHT

The front door opens and Watson storms into the vestibule.

WATSON

Holmes!

He races up the stairs and across the landing, flings open the door of the flat.

WATSON

Holmes!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Watson, grim and breathless, stands in the open doorway. Over the back of the wing chair, he sees smoke curling up from Holmes' pipe.

WATSON

There you are, you wretch! You rotter!
You blackguard! Of all the vile,
unspeakable fabrications. What do you
have to say for yourself?

No answer from Holmes. We now see -- but Watson does not -- that the chair is occupied by a section of Holmes' smoking machine, with the pipe attached.

WATSON

Don't just sit there -- speak up, man!

Still no answer -- just a little pipe smoke drifting up from the wing chair. Incensed, Watson raises the opera glasses, tosses them toward the chair. There is a loud thud, the pipe falls to the floor, then there is silence. Watson suddenly becomes concerned.

WATSON

Holmes...? Are you all right, Holmes?

He approaches the chair apprehensively, shoves it aside -- and there on the floor is the smoking machine, still wheezing slightly. Watson picks it up, and his eyes travel to Holmes, standing in a shadowy corner, working the bellows with his foot.

HOLMES

From the sound of your footsteps, I gathered that you were not in a particularly amiable mood.

WATSON

(with renewed fury)

How could you do a dastardly thing like that to me? What the deuce were you thinking of?

He dashes the smoking machine to the floor.

HOLMES

Watson, you have my most abject apologies. But have you ever been cornered by a madwoman? It seemed like the only way to get out of it without hurting her feelings.

WATSON

What about my feelings? And my reputation? Do you realize the gravity of what you have done? The possible repercussions?

HOLMES

So there'll be a little gossip about you in St. Petersburg...

WATSON

These things spread like wildfire. I can just hear those malicious whispers behind my back. I'll never be able to show my face in polite society...

And if it ever got back to my old regiment -- you don't know the Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers -- they'll strike me off the rolls -- they'll cut off my pension...

HOLMES

Watson, you're running amok.

WATSON

Dishonored, disgraced, ostracized. What am I to do?

HOLMES

Well, for one thing, I'd get rid of that flower.

He points to the flower behind Watson's ear. Watson grabs the flower, hurls it into the fireplace.

WATSON

You may think this is funny, but we're both in the same boat. We must take desperate measures. We must stop this talk...

(a beat, then an idea)

Maybe if we got married...

HOLMES

Then they'd really talk...

WATSON

(starts pacing)

Obviously, we cannot continue to live under the same roof. We must move apart.

HOLMES

Of course, we can still see each other clandestinely -- on remote benches in Hyde Park, and in the waiting rooms of suburban railway stations --

WATSON

(a change in attitude;
defiant)

The whole thing is ridiculous. We have nothing to hide.

HOLMES

That's what I've been trying to tell you.

WATSON

Let somebody start a rumor -- just one ugly word -- and we'll sue them for slander.

HOLMES

Nobody would dare. After all, you have an enviable record with the fair sex.

WATSON

Damn right. I can get women from three continents to testify for me. And you can get women to vouch for you, too -- can't you, Holmes?

No answer from Holmes. Watson is becoming a little concerned.

WATSON

Can you, Holmes?

HOLMES

Good night, Watson.

He starts toward his bedroom.

WATSON

Holmes, let me ask you a question --
 (Holmes stops)
 I hope I'm not being presumptuous -- but there have been women in your life?

HOLMES

The answer is yes.
 (a relieved sigh from Watson)
 You're being presumptuous.
 (Watson's face falls)
 Good night.

He walks into his bedroom, shutting the door. Watson takes a tentative step after him.

WATSON

Holmes...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - 221B BAKER STREET - NIGHT

There is a cheery fire burning in the grate. Holmes is stretched out full-length on the couch, playing a set of Corelli variations on his violin. Watson is in his usual chair, reading the Evening Standard.

WATSON'S VOICE

What, indeed, was his attitude toward women? Was there some secret he was holding back -- or was he just a thinking machine, incapable of any emotion?

EXT. BAKER STREET - NIGHT

Wisps of fog swirl along the street, making yellow haloes around street lamps.

WATSON'S VOICE

I was not to get the answer until we became involved in what I consider to be the most outrageous case in all our years together.

Out of the mist comes a hansom cab, with the dim figure of a woman visible in the passenger seat. The cab stops in front of 221B, and the driver starts to get down. From upstairs comes the faint sound of violin music.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Watson steps up to the window, pulls the curtain aside, looks down toward the street.

EXT. 221B BAKER STREET - NIGHT

The cabbie crosses the pavement, consults an address in his hand, glances up at the number of the house, then rings the bell.

INT. LIVING ROOM - 221B BAKER STREET - NIGHT

Watson turns away from the window, as the BELL downstairs rings again. Holmes stops playing.

WATSON

Were you expecting someone?

HOLMES

Not at this hour.

WATSON

Maybe Mrs. Hudson is entertaining.

HOLMES

I never found her so.

Watson crosses to the door, opens it, steps out. Holmes resumes playing Corelli.

VESTIBULE AND STAIRCASE - 221B BAKER STREET - NIGHT

Mrs. Hudson, in a robe and night-cap, is talking to the cabbie in the open street door when Watson appears on the landing above.

WATSON

What is it, Mrs. Hudson?

MRS. HUDSON

(looking up)

There's a cabbie here -- he says you owe him two-and-six.

WATSON

For what?

CABBIE

(to Watson)

For the fare, guv'nor. The young lady doesn't have any money.

WATSON

What young lady?

CABBIE

This one.

He reaches out the door, pulls in the young lady in question. She is in her early thirties, with strikingly handsome features, but at the moment she is somewhat worse for wear. She is wrapped in a blanket, her hair is wet, and there is a bruise on her temple.

She is wearing and wedding ring and her name, we will subsequently learn, is GABRIELLE.

WATSON

Well. What have we here?
 (he starts down the stairs)
 Who are you, miss? What happened to you?

GABRIELLE

(slight accent)
 I don't know.

CABBIE

That's all she keeps saying -- I don't know, I don't know.

The violin music stops o.s. Watson has now reached the foot of the stairs.

WATSON

Where did she come from?

CABBIE

From the river. I was driving down the Embankment, just below Westminster Bridge, and there she was in the water -- drowning.

Holmes appears on the landing above, violin and bow in his hand.

CABBIE

It wasn't easy, gov'nor -- what with the cold water -- and her fighting me --

HOLMES

(from the upper landing)
 Why did you bring her here?

CABBIE

Because I found this in her hand --
 (gives a square of soggy cardboard to Watson)
 -- 221B Baker Street -- that's right, isn't it?

Watson examines the cardboard, nods.

HOLMES
(to Gabrielle)
Young lady -- what did you want at this
address?

GABRIELLE
(looking up, trying to focus)
I do not remember.

WATSON
(to Holmes)
Rather perplexing, wouldn't you say?

HOLMES
Rather.

CABBIE
Well, gentlemen, you want her? -- it's
two-and-six -- or shall I throw her back
in the river?

MRS. HUDSON
Mr. Holmes. You can't let him --

HOLMES
Watson, you'd better accept delivery.

Watson fishes some coins out of his pocket, hands them to
the cabbie.

WATSON
Keep the change.

CABBIE
Thank you, guv'nor.

He snatches the blanket off Gabrielle, revealing that her
dress is clinging to her damply.

CABBIE
No extra charge for the use of the horse-
blanket.

He exits into the street, shutting the door. Gabrielle
hugs herself for warmth.

WATSON
You're shivering, my dear.
(he puts his arm around her)

Come along. Let me get you out of those wet clothes.

He starts to lead her up the stairs.

EXT. BAKER STREET - NIGHT

The cabbie has tossed the blanket into the hansom, and is mounting the driver's seat. Across the street, a man steps out of the fog into a pool of light cast by one of the street lamps. He is a craggy-faced Prussian of about fifty, and his name is VON TIRPITZ. He looks up toward the Holmes flat. As the hansom makes a U-turn and comes abreast of him, he hops into the cab. The hansom disappears into the fog.

INT. LIVING ROOM - 221B BAKER STREET - NIGHT

Watson is leading Gabrielle to a chair by the fireplace. Holmes is putting his violin down on the table.

WATSON

Sit here, my dear.

He settles her in the chair. Holmes comes over, plucks the square of cardboard from Watson's hand.

WATSON

She's suffering from shock and exposure.

He starts to massage her wrists to restore her circulation.

Holmes is examining the soggy cardboard. On one side is their address, written in pencil. He turns it over, disclosing some smudges of green ink on the other side.

HOLMES

There was some printing on the back of this -- but it seems to have come off in the water.

Watson is now studying the bruise on Gabrielle's temple.

WATSON

Look at this -- she's had a nasty blow on the head.

HOLMES

Could she have hit her head when she fell or jumped into the river?

WATSON

No. The blood has already coagulated. So it would appear that she was the victim of a deliberate attack... Get my bag, will you?

As Holmes fetches the medical bag, Gabrielle looks from one to the other.

GABRIELLE

Who are you?

WATSON

I'm Dr. Watson -- and this is Mr. Sherlock Holmes. Do the names mean anything to you?

GABRIELLE

No.

WATSON

Think.

GABRIELLE

I'm trying.

HOLMES

Can you think of your own name?

GABRIELLE

(a beat, then shakes her head)

No.

WATSON

She's obviously had a concussion -- which often leads to temporary amnesia.

He has now taken some cotton and a bottle of antiseptic out of the medical bag, and is swabbing her wound.

HOLMES

So all we know is that she was coshed on the head, dumped into the Thames, and subsequently dumped into our laps.

WATSON

We know a lot more than that. From her accent, we know she is foreign -- from her ring, we know she is married -- and there is one other clue we have... Something I deduced while I was helping her up the stairs. No corset.

HOLMES

Good work.

He glances down at Gabrielle's shoe, which has slipped off her foot. Inside, slightly worn away, are the words: LA FEMME ELEGANTE.

HOLMES

(to Gabrielle)

Are you French?

(in Berlitz French)

Vous etes Francaise?

GABRIELLE

(concentrating -- then)

Non, je ne suis pas Francaise.

WATSON

How can she say she's not French, in French?

HOLMES

Vous etes Suisse?

GABRIELLE

Non.

HOLMES

Alors, vous etes Belge.

GABRIELLE

(haltingly)

Je suis pas sure.

Holmes reaches behind her, turns back the collar of her dress. Sewn inside is a label reading: BAZAAR MODERN, Bruxelles.

HOLMES

Vous etes Belge -- de Bruxelles!

GABRIELLE

Bruxelles? Oui... Je pense que oui.

Mrs. Hudson has come in with a loaded tea-tray, starts to put it down on the table.

MRS. HUDSON

Oh, dash. Will someone remove the violin, please?

Watson takes the violin off the table, and she sets down the tray.

WATSON

We just found out that she's Belgian.

MRS. HUDSON

Poor thing.

WATSON

From Brussels.

HOLMES

(taking Gabrielle's hand)

If you don't mind.

He slips the wedding ring off her finger, picks up a magnifying glass, examines it. It is made of copper, and engraved on the inside is the inscription: Gabrielle - Emile.

HOLMES

Your name is Gabrielle, is that right?
Gabrielle?

GABRIELLE

I don't know.

HOLMES

And your husband's name is Emile?

GABRIELLE

(vaguely)

Emile...

HOLMES

Where is he? What are you doing in London?

GABRIELLE

I don't know.

HOLMES

When did you arrive from Brussels? Where are you staying?

GABRIELLE

I don't know.

HOLMES

What happened at the river? Think! Pensez! Concentrez vous!

Gabrielle bursts into sobs.

WATSON

(stepping forward)

That's enough, Holmes. I will not permit you to question her in this condition.

(helps the sobbing Gabrielle out of the chair)

Mrs. Hudson, put her to bed. My bed.

(Mrs. Hudson gives him a look)

I'll sleep on the couch.

MRS. HUDSON

Come, my dear.

She puts her arm around Gabrielle, who is still crying, leads her into Watson's bedroom.

WATSON

I'd better mix her a sleeping potion.

He gets a packet of white powder out of his medical bag, and during the following, stirs a spoonful into her teacup.

HOLMES

Watson, I think we should arrange to have her removed to a hospital.

WATSON

Under no circumstances.

HOLMES

She should have medical attention.

WATSON

She can get that from me. But more importantly, she must be protected -- there has already been one attempt on her life.

HOLMES

This temporary amnesia -- how temporary is it?

WATSON

It depends on the extent of the injury. It's like veils shrouding her memory. It could clear up in a few days -- or a few weeks.

HOLMES

Watson, this is a very small flat -- we don't want to clutter it up with women...

WATSON

Holmes, we've never had a case like this. A woman comes to us with a problem -- we don't know who the woman is -- and we don't know what the problem is. Don't you find that challenging?

HOLMES

Quite. But we can't afford to wait for those veils to lift -- we must break through them as quickly as possible.

WATSON

You really feel it's that urgent?

HOLMES

I do. The sooner we solve the case, the sooner we can get rid of her.

WATSON

Oh.

He picks up the cup of tea with the sedative in it, carries it toward the door of his bedroom.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BAKER STREET - DAWN

The street lamps are still lit. A policeman, on patrol duty, is strolling along the sidewalk, swinging his truncheon. Suddenly he sees something up ahead. Alarmed, he ducks into the doorway of a building, flattens himself against the door.

From the opposite direction comes a horse-drawn water-sprinkling wagon. The spray covers the sidewalks as well as the street.

The policeman waits till the wagon is past, then steps out of the doorway relieved, resumes his patrol.

INT. LIVING ROOM - 221B BAKER STREET - DAWN

Watson is asleep on the couch, covered with a blanket. He doesn't look as if he were in a very comfortable position.

INT. HOLMES' BEDROOM - DAWN

Holmes, in a dressing gown, is standing by the window, studying the square of cardboard with the green smudges on it. His bed has not been slept in.

INT. WATSON'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Gabrielle is asleep in Watson's bed. The door opens slowly, and Holmes looks in. He studies the sleeping Gabrielle for a moment, then quietly pulls the door shut. As the latch clicks into place, Gabrielle awakes and sits up in bed, her back to CAMERA. She is nude.

GABRIELLE

Emile?

She starts to get out of bed.

INT. HOLMES' BEDROOM - DAWN

Holmes is back in his room, once more examining the cardboard by the light of the window. The door of Watson's bedroom opens, and Gabrielle comes out.

GABRIELLE

Emile?

Holmes looks up as Gabrielle appears in the open doorway.

GABRIELLE

Emile? Is that you, Emile?

HOLMES

(stepping into shadow)

Yes, Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE

(hurrying toward him)

Ah, Emile. I thought I'd never find you.

(embracing him)

Hold me. Hold me tight.

(Holmes puts his arms around her)

It's been such a long time. So many nights. You know what I did before I left Brussels?

HOLMES

What?

GABRIELLE

I hope you won't be angry with me. I bought myself an expensive negligee.

HOLMES

Did you?

GABRIELLE

(moving toward bed)

A pink negligee with maribou feathers. Don't you think that's a foolish thing for a married woman?

(she gets into bed, beckons to him)

Come.

HOLMES

Where is the negligee?

GABRIELLE

In my luggage... Come here.

HOLMES
 (moving toward her)
 And where is your luggage?

GABRIELLE
 (impatiently)
 I don't know. Come, my love. Come.
 Please.

As she extends her right hand to him, in a beckoning gesture, Holmes notices something on the palm. He takes her hand in his. There, in the same green ink as the smudges on the cardboard, are what appear to be the letters "I", "O", and Greek "E". Crossing to the washstand, he picks up his magnifying shaving mirror, returns to the bed, holds it up against the palm of Gabrielle's hand.

GABRIELLE
 What is it, Emile? What are you doing?

Clearly reflected in the mirror is the reverse image of the lettering on Gabrielle's palm -- the number "301".

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - 221B BAKER STREET - DAY

The table is set for breakfast, and Mrs. Hudson is opening the curtains, flooding the room with sunlight. Then she moves over to the couch, where Watson is sleeping in an awkward position.

MRS. HUDSON
 Dr. Watson!
 (she claps her hands and he
 wakes up)
 Your porridge is getting lumpy. Hadn't
 you better get up?

Watson tries to rise, falls back with a moan.

WATSON
 I would like to very much. But --
 (he turns over on his
 stomach)
 Mrs. Hudson, would you mind planting your
 knee in the small of my back?

MRS. HUDSON

Yes, I would.

WATSON

Please! I'm in excruciating pain.

Mrs. Hudson tentatively rests her knee on Watson's back.

WATSON

A bit higher -- just below my seventh vertebra --

(Mrs. Hudson follows instructions)

That's good. Put your arms under mine -- fold them behind my neck --

Mrs. Hudson presses down harder, and there is a distinct snap.

WATSON

Bless you.

(he rises, rubbing his neck)

That damn couch.

(crossing to table)

You'd better see if our patient is awake.

He seats himself at the table. Mrs. Hudson crosses to the door of Watson's bedroom, opens it, starts inside, then stops.

MRS. HUDSON

Dr. Watson. She's gone.

WATSON

Gone?

He jumps up from the table, joins Mrs. Hudson, looks past her. The bed is empty. Gabrielle's clothes are in evidence, but there is no sign of her.

Watson strides towards Holmes' bedroom.

WATSON

Holmes! Holmes! She's gone!

He throws the door open, is about to step inside when he sees something that makes him freeze.

INT. HOLMES' BEDROOM - DAY

Gabrielle is asleep in Holmes' bed, covered by just a sheet, and obviously naked underneath. Holmes is not in the room.

Mrs. Hudson comes up behind Watson, in the open doorway, peers over his shoulder.

MRS. HUDSON
(scandalized)
Well, I never!

There is the sound of the hall door opening, and they both turn.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Holmes breezes in, carrying a large suitcase, with leather straps around it. Tucked under the straps is a white parasol. And attached to the handle of the suitcase is a cardboard tag with the number 301 on it, in green.

HOLMES
(inhaling deeply)
Mmmmm. I smell porridge. Lumpy as usual, I suppose.

He sets the suitcase down on the couch, as Watson and Mrs. Hudson approach.

WATSON
Oh, there you are, Holmes. We were just wondering -- how --
(points from his bedroom to Holmes')

MRS. HUDSON
(sternly)
We certainly were.

HOLMES
Mrs. Hudson, why don't you go down to the kitchen -- get a towel -- and wipe that look of disapproval off your face.

MRS. HUDSON
 Liberties -- in my house!

She exits huffily.

WATSON
 You can't really blame her -- I mean, the way it looks -- if I didn't know you better, I might suspect you'd taken advantage of the young lady.

HOLMES
 As a matter of fact, I did take advantage of her... Would you hand me the butter-knife, please?

WATSON
 Of course.

He picks up the butter-knife from the table, suddenly turns back with a delayed reaction.

WATSON
 You did what?

HOLMES
 (taking butter-knife from him)
 Thank you.

He starts to pry open the locks of the suitcase with the butter-knife.

WATSON
 (spluttering)
 Holmes, this is reprehensible! Where are your professional ethics? Have you no sense of decency, no shame --

HOLMES
 None whatsoever. If you must know, I found her body quite rewarding.

WATSON
 You cad!

HOLMES
 Especially the palm of her right hand.

WATSON

I'd rather not hear about it!

HOLMES

Very well. Then I won't bother to tell you how I traced her suitcase.

WATSON

That's her suitcase?

HOLMES

Remember that piece of soggy cardboard with our address on it? It was a luggage ticket -- the number rubbed off on her hand. And since she must have arrived from Brussels by the boat train, I concluded that she had checked her belongings at Victoria Station.

WATSON

By Jove! If you're right, we should find a clue to her identity.

Holmes has now forced open the locks.

HOLMES

Or at least a pink negligee with maribou feathers.

He opens the suitcase, lifts out the top piece of clothing, holds it up -- a pink negligee with maribou feathers.

HOLMES

Voila!

WATSON

Let's see - what else is in here?

They start sorting through the clothes in the suitcase. Holmes removes a tied bundle of letters.

HOLMES

Now we're getting somewhere.

As he examines the envelope, Watson takes out a framed photo of a rather attractive man of fifty.

WATSON

Who do you suppose this is?

Gabrielle appears from Holmes' bedroom wearing Holmes' dressing gown. She is unsteady on her feet and somewhat dazed. Holmes looks up.

HOLMES

Come in, Madame Valladon.

(Gabrielle stops)

You are Gabrielle Valladon.

GABRIELLE

Yes.

HOLMES

(holding up photo)

And this is your husband, Emile Valladon?

GABRIELLE

Yes.

Her eyes fall on the open suitcase.

HOLMES

Sorry to have ransacked your valise. But since you came to us for help --

GABRIELLE

Where am I?

WATSON

221B Baker Street.

GABRIELLE

Oh, yes...

(a beat, as she orients herself)

Which of you is Mr. Holmes and which is Dr. Watson?

HOLMES

Dr. Watson is the handsome one.

Watson, pleased, twirls the end of his mustache. Gabrielle sways slightly.

HOLMES

That's the way he affects most women.

He helps her into a chair.

WATSON
(to Gabrielle)
Coffee. You want strong coffee.

He hurries over to the breakfast table.

GABRIELLE
It's all so confusing.

HOLMES
Let's try to sort it out. You came to
London looking for your husband...

GABRIELLE
Yes. He's a mining engineer. We were
married five years ago, in the Congo.

HOLMES
Where your husband was working in a
copper mine.

GABRIELLE
How did you know?

HOLMES
Your wedding ring -- it's made of copper.

He picks it up from the chemistry table, hands it to her.
Gabrielle starts to put it on.

GABRIELLE
Last year he invented a new kind of air
pump, and was hired by an English
company, Jonah Limited.

WATSON
(handing her cup of of
coffee)
Here you are.

HOLMES
Jonah Limited. Go on.

GABRIELLE
We've been writing to each other
regularly. Then suddenly, three weeks
ago, his letters stopped. I kept writing
... but no answer. Finally I decided to
go to that address --

She indicates the bundle of letters. Holmes glances at the return address on the back of the envelope.

HOLMES

32 Ashdown Street.

GABRIELLE

Yes. It's just an empty store -- nobody there. Then I tried to find Jonah Limited. No such company exists.

WATSON

How decidedly odd.

HOLMES

Madame Valladon, can you think of any reason why your husband should have lied to you about theses things?

GABRIELLE

Emile? Never. He loves me -- and I love him.

HOLMES

So I gathered.

GABRIELLE

I went to the police -- they said they would send out a missing persons report -- but they didn't sound too encouraging. Then I went to the Belgian embassy and explained the situation to them -- and they suggested that I consult you...

WATSON

You could have done worse.

GABRIELLE

I was on my way here -- and suddenly there were footsteps behind me -- and a hand over my mouth -- and the smell of choloroform -- and the next thing I knew I was in the water -- and then a man was wrapping me in a blanket --

HOLMES

Madame Valladon, somebody tried to kill you last night. Do you have any idea who could have done it?

GABRIELLE

I don't understand any of it.

(rises, goes to Holmes)

What does it all mean, Mr. Holmes? Where is my husband? You must help me find him.

WATSON

We'll do our best, I assure you.

HOLMES

Madame Valladon, I want you to send one more letter to your husband.

He crosses to the desk, picks up a sheet of paper and an envelope, then leads Gabrielle over to the chair with the writing arm, seats her in it.

HOLMES

To Emile Valladon -- Ashdown Street -- what was that number?

GABRIELLE

(addressing envelope)

32. What do you want me to say in the letter?

HOLMES

Nothing.

He folds the blank sheet of paper, and as Gabrielle finishes addressing the envelope, he inserts the paper in it, starts to seal it.

WATSON

You're sending an empty sheet of paper to an empty shop?

HOLMES

That empty shop is obviously being used as an accomodation address, or letter-drop. But what gets dropped must be picked up. The question is how? -- and by whom? -- and why?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ASHDOWN STREET - DAY

This is a run-down district in the northwestern part of London. On the corner is No. 32 -- a dilapidated abandoned shop, with windows painted halfway up.

As CAMERA APPROACHES the building, we hear sawing from inside.

INT. EMPTY SHOP - DAY

It is dusty, cobwebby, quite forbidding. In the rear wall is a closed sliding door, indented about a foot into the shop. Nearby stands a large, square object, covered with a tarpaulin.

High up in the rear wall is a slanted skylight, fitted with an iron grill. From outside, Holmes, in deerstalker and Inverness, can be seen sawing through the iron bars. Watson and Gabrielle are beside him.

HOLMES

Hammer... Chisel.

Watson hands him the indicated tools. Holmes chips away the cement from the top and bottom of the last bar, then using it as a hinge, swings the grill open. He lets himself through the skylight, drops to the floor. Watson now helps Gabrielle through the skylight, lowers her toward Holmes, who puts his arms around her waist, eases her to the floor. For a brief moment he keeps his arms around her. Watson has now squeezed through the skylight.

WATSON

Here!

He hands the tools to Holmes, jumps to the floor. Gabrielle is looking around the shop.

GABRIELLE

It's so strange to think I've been writing to a place like this all these months.

Watson crosses to the square tarpaulin-covered object. He lifts up one corner of the tarp -- and is greeted by a loud twittering of birds.

What he has uncovered is a large cage -- and about a hundred canaries, suddenly disturbed, are flapping around unside.

WATSON

Look at all these canaries. Do you suppose this could have been a pet shop?

HOLMES

Maybe.
(pointing off)
Here comes our letter.

Through the front window, the silhouette of a postman can be seen approaching. He drops a letter through the slot in the front door, moves on. The letter lands on a section of floor which is solidly covered with dust -- except for a series of double tracks, running to the door and curving back.

HOLMES

Now we are faced with the most nerve-wracking part of the detective's job -- doing nothing.

He reassembles the three tools, fitting each section into another, to form a cane.

GABRIELLE

Mr. Holmes --

HOLMES

Yes?

GABRIELLE

I don't know how I'm going to pay you for all this. The purse with my money is somewhere at the bottom of the Thames.

HOLMES

It could be worse. You could be at the bottom of the Thames -- much to your discomfort -- and much to my chagrin.

WATSON

I don't understand how anybody picks up letters here.

(pointing)

No footprints -- just tracks. What does it mean?

HOLMES

I would surmise somebody is using ice-skates -- if it weren't for a conspicuous absence of ice.

They become aware of a squeaking noise outside the rear of the shop, growing louder as it gets nearer. The noise stops, there is the sound of a lock turning, then the rattle of a chain.

WATSON

(in a frantic whisper)
What do we do now?

HOLMES

(unfazed)
This way.

He leads Gabrielle and Watson toward the rear wall, right next to the door. They flatten themselves with their backs to the wall, just as the door slides open -- concealing them from view.

Revealed is the mews behind the shop. In the door is an old BIDDY with straggly hair, sitting in a wheelchair. In her lap are a bulky paper bag and a tin pitcher filled with water. As she wheels herself inside, the unoiled wheelchair squeaks loudly. She stops in front of the cage, pulls on a rope which runs through a pulley in the ceiling -- and the tarpaulin rises into the air, exposing the canaries.

WOMAN IN WHEELCHAIR

(addressing birds)
Good morning, my pretties. Here's Mum with your breakfast. Did you think I'd forgotten you?

She pours grain from the paper bag into a feeder hanging inside the cage, pours water from the pitcher into a trough.

WOMAN IN WHEELCHAIR

Some of you will be going on a little trip soon -- I hate to lose you -- but even an old woman has to live. Although you might well ask, why?

She cackles to herself, glances toward the front door.

WOMAN IN WHEELCHAIR

Oh. You never told me we had a letter.

She starts to wheel herself toward the front of the shop.

Through a crack in the door behind which our three are hiding, we see Holmes' eye watching her.

The old woman reaches the letter, picks it up, studies the address. Then she hears something, glances toward the open rear door.

A horse-drawn wagon with a canvas top is just pulling into the mews. Two CARTERS jump down from the driver's seat, and one of them takes a small bird-cage from the back of the wagon. As they start in through the door, the old woman drops the letter into her lap, wheels herself toward them.

FIRST CARTER

Morning, Duchess.

WOMAN IN WHEELCHAIR

Morning.

SECOND CARTER

What have you been doing with yourself?

WOMAN IN WHEELCHAIR

What do you think? Taking dancing lessons.

(she stops in front of the cage)

How many do you want this time?

FIRST CARTER

Two dozen.

He opens the door of the small cage, the bottom of which is covered with newspaper, starts transferring canaries into it from the large cage.

WOMAN IN WHEELCHAIR

What are they doing with all those canaries? What's going on up there?

SECOND CARTER

Look, Duchess, we don't know -- and we don't want to know.

FIRST CARTER

When you work for Jonah, it's better not to ask questions.

Through the crack in the door behind which he is hidden, we see Holmes' eye studying the small bird cage, as the canaries are being transferred into it.

We MOVE IN CLOSE on the small cage, and see the soiled newspaper spread on the bottom. The masthead reads: INVERNESS COURIER.

FIRST CARTER

(counting as he transfers canaries)

... twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four.

He closes the doors of the cages, picks up the small cage. His companion indicates the letter in the woman's lap.

SECOND CARTER

How about that letter? Does that go, too?

WOMAN IN WHEELCHAIR

No. That's going to be picked up in person.

She chuckles. The carriers exit into the mews, stash the cage in the back of the wagon, mount the driver's seat.

WOMAN IN WHEELCHAIR

(to birds)

All right, my pretties. Back to sleep you go. See you tomorrow.

She pulls the rope and the tarpaulin drops back over the cage. Then she deposits the letter on top of the covered cage, wheels herself out the rear door. As she slides it shut from outside, our trio is revealed in their hiding places behind the door. There is the sound of the chain rattling, the lock snapping, and the squeaky wheels moving off.

WATSON

(a sigh of relief)

I really thought we were done for.

HOLMES

(casually)

The art of concealment, my dear Watson, is merely a matter of being in the right place at the right time.

They step forward, and through the painted shop window watch the old woman wheel herself down the street.

GABRIELLE

Did you hear what she said? You really think Emile is going to pick up the letter himself?

HOLMES

It certainly would simplify things, wouldn't it?

WATSON

(shaking his head)

Maildrops and canaries and wheelchairs... And what was all that about Jonah? And what do you suppose they're doing up there? And where is up there?

HOLMES

My guess would be Scotland. Inverness, to be more precise.

WATSON

Inverness?

HOLMES

Didn't you notice the paper at the bottom of their cage? The Inverness Courier.

Gabrielle glances casually at the letter the old woman left lying on top of the cage, and her expression changes.

GABRIELLE

Mr. Holmes! This letter --
(she picks it up)

HOLMES

What about it?

GABRIELLE

(holding it out to him)
It's addressed to you.

Holmes takes the letter, examines the envelope. It is indeed addressed to him.

HOLMES

Nevertheless --

With the saw-end of his cane, he slits the envelope open, removes the enclosure, unfolds it. We see the letter in his hand as he reads it out loud. The letterhead says: DIOGENES CLUB, St. James's, London.

HOLMES

(reading)

My Dear Sherlock: I expect you and Dr. Watson to join me at the club immediately upon receipt of this note. According to my calculations, that should be at 11:40 a.m. Your brother, Mycroft.

(looking up)

What time do you make it, Watson?

WATSON

(consulting watch)

11:43.

HOLMES

Either your watch is wrong, or Mycroft has miscalculated. And knowing Mycroft, I suggest you reset your watch.

Watson automatically obeys.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DIOGENES CLUB - DAY

Holmes, cane in hand, and Watson are swiftly ascending the steps of a building with an imposing Palladian facade. Beside the entrance is a discreet sign reading: DIOGENES CLUB. Members Only. As they reach the top of the steps, Watson stops Holmes.

WATSON

I don't mind telling you I'm a bit apprehensive about this.

HOLMES

I'm rather curious myself as to what is going on in that Machiavellian mind of his.

WATSON

I don't mean Mycroft, I mean Madame Valladon.

HOLMES

Don't worry. She's perfectly safe with Mrs. Hudson.

He opens the door and they start in.

INT. LOBBY - DIOGENES CLUB - DAY

Dominating the lobby is a large statue of Queen Victoria. Presiding over the reception desk is a uniformed PORTER of military bearing, with one arm and a chest full of campaign ribbons. Holmes and Watson stride in.

HOLMES

(to porter)

To see Mr. Mycroft Holmes.

PORTER

Right you are. He's expecting you in the upstairs study. Now if you gentlemen will sign in --

(opens leather-bound register, turns it toward them)

Surname, Christian name, address, nature of business --

He holds out the pen to them, but they are gone. He looks around in consternation, sees them hurrying up the majestic staircase, steps out from behind his desk.

PORTER

Gentlemen...!

READING ROOM - DIOGENES CLUB - DAY

A huge room, with more marble than a mausoleum, and just about as lively.

A dozen elderly Establishment types are sunk deep in the leather armchairs, buried behind their copies of The Times. Holmes and Watson are proceeding toward the study. Suddenly Holmes stops beside one of the old fossils, who has fallen asleep in his chair, The Times in his lap, and between his fingers a lighted cigar with an ash four inches long. Holmes picks up an ashtray, holds it under the cigar -- just in time to catch the falling ash. As he replaces the ashtray, he scrutinizes the ash.

HOLMES

Jamaican, no doubt -- either Tropical or Golosina -- I'm not quite sure.

He and Watson continue toward the study door.

INT. STUDY - DIOGENES CLUB - DAY

It is a very elegant room -- shelves of leather-bound volumes reach to the high ceiling, there are antique terrestrial and celestial globes, scientific instruments in polished brass, marble busts of English statesmen.

MYCROFT HOLMES is standing at a refectory table, with his back to the door, engaged in a curious operation. A dusty bottle of wine is held in an ingeniously engineered cradle. As he turns the crank, the bottle tilts forward gently, and he decants the wine into three glasses without disturbing the sediment.

Mycroft is an impressive figure of a man, seven years older than Sherlock, impeccably dressed. Behind his snobbish airs and bantering manner, one senses tremendous reserves of strength and authority.

The door opens, and Holmes and Watson enter.

MYCROFT

(without turning)

Come in, come in, Sherlock -- Dr. Watson... Sit down.

(Holmes and Watson seat themselves)

You're looking very fit, both of you.

WATSON

Thank you.

HOLMES

(putting down hat and cane)

And how are you, Mycroft? How's your gout?

MYCROFT

Under control. Except for the occasional twinge.

He brings over two of the glasses of wine to Holmes and Watson.

MYCROFT

I have a treat for you -- a very old Madeira -- 1814. There are only six bottles left in the world. I have two of them, and am negotiating for a third.

WATSON

If you don't mind my saying so, anybody who's susceptible to gout shouldn't be --

Mycroft has moved back to the table and picked up his glass of Madeira.

MYCROFT

The last doctor who warned me about that was crossing Piccadilly, slipped on an orange peel, and was run over by a delivery van from the Fortnum and Mason. Your very good health.

He and Watson sip their drinks, but not Holmes.

HOLMES

Why are you wasting this precious stuff on us?

MYCROFT

Well, I see you so rarely. How long has it been? Not since the case of the Greek interpreter.

(to Watson)

Isn't it ridiculous? Two brothers living in the same town...

HOLMES

In the same town, perhaps -- but not the same world.

WATSON

(taking another sip)

Mmmm. Superb. How old did you say it was?

MYCROFT

1814. One year before Waterloo.

WATSON

One year before Waterloo? Think of that.

MYCROFT

You do know where Waterloo is, don't you, Doctor?

WATSON

Belgium, isn't it?

MYCROFT

Quite.

(turning to Holmes)

And speaking of Belgium, it has come to my attention that you are interested in the whereabouts of a certain engineer.

HOLMES

Yes, I am.

MYCROFT

Well, I can save you a lot of trouble.

HOLMES

I'd be grateful for any suggestion --

MYCROFT

My suggestion is that you pursue it no further.

HOLMES

Any particular reason?

MYCROFT

Because it involves the national security. We are handling this matter ourselves.

WATSON

We? Who's we?

HOLMES

The Diogenes Club, of course.

MYCROFT

I didn't say that.

HOLMES

I have always suspected that there was some underground connection between this stodgy and seemingly calcified establishment and the Foreign Office in Whitehall.

MYCROFT

That's neither here nor there.

HOLMES

It seems to me that The Diogenes Club is here, there and everywhere. When there are rumblings of revolt in the Sudan, an expedition subsidized by your club conveniently shows up to study the source of the Nile. When there is trouble along the Indian frontier, some of your fellow members pop up in the Himalayas, alledgedly looking for the Abominable Snowman.

A YOUNG MAN in morning coat and striped trousers comes in, holding a telegram. Mycroft crosses to him.

MYCROFT

(to Watson)

What a fertile imagination my brother has. At the age of five, by carefully observing a neighbor's house, he deduced that babies were brought not by the stork, but by the mid-wife in her satchel.

WATSON

As good an explanation as any.

Mycroft has taken the telegram, and is coming forward with it. The young man clears his throat.

MYCROFT

Yes, Wiggins?

YOUNG MAN

An immediate answer is requested, sir.

Mycroft inserts a monocle in his eye, opens the telegram, moves toward the desk reading it.

MYCROFT

Tell them that the three boxes go to Glennahurich, and the red runner goes to the castle.

YOUNG MAN

The three boxes to Glennahurich, the red runner to the castle. Very good, sir.

He exits. Holmes glances toward the telegram as Mycroft puts it down on his desk. Catching his look, Mycroft turns his telegram face-down, lets the monocle drop from his eye.

HOLMES

Why don't you crumple it up and swallow it -- to make sure.

MYCROFT

My dear Sherlock, there are certain affairs that do not come within the province of the private detective. They have to be dealt with on an altogether different level.

HOLMES

In other words, you want me to stay within my limits.

MYCROFT

I do indeed.

HOLMES

Speaking of limits, what exactly is Jonah Limited?

MYCROFT

Sherlock, when I said drop this case, it was not merely a suggestion -- it was an order!

HOLMES

By whose authority?

MYCROFT

By the authority of Her Majesty's
government. I hope I've made myself
clear.

WATSON

Perfectly.

In his nervousness he drops his bowler, which rolls along
the floor.

MYCROFT

Now if you'll excuse me, gentlemen --

WATSON

Goodbye, sir.

HOLMES

A pleasure, as always.

He and Watson retrieve their hats, move toward the door.

MYCROFT

(to Holmes)

Just a minute.

(picks up Holmes' cane)

You forgot your tool-kit.

He tosses the cane to Holmes, who catches it.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BAKER STREET - DAY

Holmes and Watson are walking toward 221B. Holmes is
whistling 'Loch Lomond.'

WATSON

You will be gentle, won't you, when you
tell her you're dropping the case?

HOLMES

Watson, what does the word Glennahurich
suggest to you?

WATSON

Absolutely nothing.

HOLMES

It's Scottish.

WATSON

Is it?

HOLMES

And like all Scottish names, it's really a word picture. Glen means valley, na means of the, and Hurich, if memory serves me, means yew tree.

WATSON

You're just trying to impress me.

HOLMES

So the three boxes go to the Valley of the Yew Tree.

He resumes whistling. They start to cross the street, skirting a parked hansom. Feeding the horse is the same cabbie who fished Gabrielle out of the river, and in the passenger seat is Von Tirpitz, the craggy-faced Prussian we saw before. He stares fixedly after Holmes and Watson.

Holmes and Watson come up to the door of 221B, and Watson fishes his key out. Holmes is still whistling.

WATSON

(singing along)

And I'll be in Scotland before ye...

(breaks off, looks at Holmes apprehensively)

You are dropping the case, aren't you, Holmes?

HOLMES

Open the door.

Watson turns the key in the lock, starts to open the door, but is stopped by a chain on the inside. Through the opening a revolver appears, aiming at them point-blank.

HOLMES

Don't shoot, Mrs. Hudson -- you're liable to lose two excellent tenants.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - 221B BAKER STEET - DAY

Mrs. Hudson withdraws the gun, unhooks the chain. She is also holding an embroidery hoop. She opens the door, and Holmes and Watson step into the vestibule.

MRS. HUDSON

Oh, at last. It's been a ghastly experience.

WATSON

Why? What happened?

MRS. HUDSON

Did you ever try doing embroidery with a gun in your hand?

HOLMES

(taking gun from her)

You'll be relieved to know it was not loaded.

He starts up the stairs, followed by Watson.

WATSON

Holmes, you didn't answer my question. Are you planning to disobey Mycroft's orders? He's not just your brother, you know. You'd be defying Her Majesty's government...

No reaction from Holmes. As they reach the landing, Gabrielle is waiting for them in the open doorway of their flat.

GABRIELLE

Any news? Did you find out anything?

INT. LIVING ROOM - 221B BAKER STREET - DAY

Holmes and Watson step inside.

HOLMES

Let's just say I know what the next step will be.

GABRIELLE
(anxious)

Yes?

HOLMES
I want you to pack your things.

GABRIELLE
Where are we going?

WATSON
Holmes, let me caution you ---

Holmes has put the gun down, and is crossing to one of the book-shelves.

HOLMES
(to Gabrielle)
At 7:30 this evening, Dr. Watson and I are going to take you to Victoria Station, and put you on the boat-train.

GABRIELLE
The boat-train?

WATSON
Well, that's better.

Holmes has taken a railway guide from the shelf and is consulting it.

GABRIELLE
You're sending me back to Brussels? Is that it?

WATSON
Madame Valladon, you must understand...

GABRIELLE
(to Holmes, agitated)
I came here to find my husband -- you were going to help me --

WATSON
Yes, my dear. But circumstances have changed --

GABRIELLE
The great detective! Well, maybe this case is too small for you --

WATSON

On the contrary. It's being handled at a much higher level --

GABRIELLE

Well, I won't go back to Brussels. Maybe you're giving up, but I'm not.

(tears welling up in her eyes)

I'm going to go on looking for him. And nobody's going to stop me -- even if they try to kill me.

HOLMES

(looking up from railway guide)

Are you quite finished? If you recall, what I said was that we're going to put you on the boat-train -- I didn't say you were going to stay on it.

WATSON

She's not?

HOLMES

At 7:30, Mr. Holmes and Dr. Watson will be seen waving goodbye to Madame Valladon at Victoria Station. At eight-twelve, Mr. and Mrs. Ashdown accompanied by their valet John --

(a glance at Watson)

-- will appear at Euston Station, and board the Highland Express to Inverness.

WATSON

Mr. and Mrs.... ?

GABRIELLE

(moving toward Holmes)

Thank you. I'm sorry for what I said.
(kisses him on cheek)

HOLMES

That's not necessary.

GABRIELLE

(smiling through tears)

I'll go and pack.

She hurries off toward Watson's room.

WATSON

(acidly)

Maybe I should do it, since I'm the valet.

Holmes replaces the railway guide on the shelf.

WATSON

Holmes, what exactly are you up to?

HOLMES

As you like to put it in your chronicles, the game is afoot.

WATSON

But what game? Are you really that interested in the Belgian engineer?

Without answering, Holmes heads for his bedroom.

WATSON

Or the wife of the Belgian engineer?

Holmes, by this time in his bedroom, shuts the door. Gabrielle reappears from the other bedroom, carrying a glove.

GABRIELLE

You don't like me very much, do you?

She moves toward the couch.

WATSON

Nothing of the sort. Quite the opposite... But there's more to this case than meets the eye --

By this time Gabrielle has picked up her parasol from the couch, and is obviously searching about.

WATSON

Looking for something?

GABRIELLE

My other glove.

WATSON

Let me help you.

He peers under the couch. Gabrielle moves toward the window, shakes the parasol, opens it a few times.

WATSON

Here it is.

He comes up from under the couch with the missing glove.

GABRIELLE

Thank you.

She slowly starts to shut the parasol.

EXT. BAKER STREET - DAY

Through the upstairs window of 221B we see Gabrielle shutting the parasol. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO INCLUDE the hansom parked across the street, and von Tirpitz watching. He signals to the cabbie, who is back on his perch. The cabbie flicks his whip, and the hansom takes off down the street.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

The Highland Express is speeding northward through the moonlit landscape, its steam whistle hooting mournfully.

INT. SLEEPING COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

The upper and lower berths have been made up in the small, gaslit compartment. Gabrielle's dress is on a hanger, but there is no sign of her at the moment. Holmes is just pulling a night-shirt over his head.

HOLMES

All right. You can look now.

Gabrielle's head appears from under the covers of the lower berth.

GABRIELLE

Am I embarrassing you, Mr. Holmes?

HOLMES

Not at all. Would it surprise you if I told you I once spent the night with 121 women?

GABRIELLE

Oh?

HOLMES

On a very interesting case -- in a harem in Constantinople.

He starts to climb up the ladder to the upper berth.

INT. THIRD CLASS CARRIAGE - NIGHT

There is the normal complement of passengers, men, women and children, of the middle and lower classes. The only unusual occupants are a group of seven MONKS, in brown habits and cowls.

Watson, in valet's livery, comes down the aisle, proceeds toward a window-seat where he has left his umbrella and bowler. The rest of the bench is occupied by monks, as is the facing bench. As Watson tries to squeeze between them, he steps on the foot of one of the monks.

WATSON

Sorry, father -- I mean, friar -- or is it abbot?

There is no answer from the monk. Watson picks up his bowler, settles himself in his seat, starts to fan himself with his hat. He turns sociably to the monk beside him, who is absorbed in his Bible.

WATSON

Going to Scotland, you gentlemen? So are we...

As he fans himself the ear-pieces of his stethoscope, which is coiled inside the crown of his bowler, dangle down. He quickly shoves them back inside.

WATSON

I'm a valet. My master and mistress and I are our way to Inverness. Ever been there? Beautiful country.

The monk looks up from his Bible, points to his lips, shakes his head.

WATSON

Oh, forgive me. You must be one of those orders that's taken the vow of silence. Trappists, I believe you're called.

The monk doesn't answer. Watson turns away, looks out the window -- but there's nothing to be seen. Then he folds, bored. He glances casually at the Bible in the monk's hands.

The Good Book is opened to a page headed: JONAH.

WATSON

I see you're reading the book of Jonah. Funny - we were just talking about Johan this morning...

(realizes the hopelessness of the conversation, breaks off)

Never mind.

He pulls down the shade, closes his eyes, tries to compose himself into sleep.

INT. SLEEPING COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

Holmes is stretched out in the upper berth, which is in darkness. In the lower, Gabrielle is propped up against a pillow, reading a magazine by the light of a gas lamp. Other magazines are scattered across her blanket.

GABRIELLE

Women are never to be trusted entirely -- not the best of them.

Holmes raises himself on his elbow, glances down over the edge of his berth.

HOLMES

What did you say?

GABRIELLE

I didn't say it -- you did. According to Dr. Watson.

HOLMES

Oh.

GABRIELLE

He gave me some back issues of Strand Magazine.

HOLMES

The good doctor is constantly putting words into my mouth.

GABRIELLE

Then you deny it?

HOLMES

Not at all. I am not a whole-hearted admirer of womankind.

GABRIELLE

I'm not very fond of them myself.

HOLMES

The most affectionate woman I ever knew was a murderess.

GABRIELLE

Oh?

HOLMES

It was one of those passionate affairs -- at odd hours -- right in my laboratory. And all the time, behind my back, she was stealing cyanide to sprinkle on her husband's steak and kidney pie.

GABRIELLE

You mustn't judge all women by --

HOLMES

Of course not. Only the ones I was involved with. And I don't just mean professionally -- kleptomaniacs, nymphomaniacs, pyromaniacs. Take my fiancée, for instance --

GABRIELLE

Your fiancée?

HOLMES

She was the daughter of my violin teacher -- we were engaged to be married -- the invitations were out, I was being fitted for a tail-coat -- and twenty-four hours before the wedding, she died of influenza.

GABRIELLE

I'm sorry.

HOLMES

It just proves my contention that women are unreliable and not to be trusted.

(a beat)

Good night, Mrs. Ashdown.

He pulls the curtain across his berth.

GABRIELLE

Good night, Mr. Ashdown.

She closes her curtain, as the train whistle sounds.

INT. THIRD CLASS CARRIAGE - NIGHT

Most of the passengers in the car have fallen asleep, in various uncomfortable positions, including Watson. The monk beside Watson looks at him, to make sure he's out, then rises and moves toward a monk seated apart from the others.

MONK

(in a whisper)

Die Spur fuehrt nach Inverness. Die steigen dort aus. Dort muessen wir ihn findend -- den Valladon!

The other monk looks up. Under the cowl we recognize the face of von Tirpitz.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. INVERNESS STATION - DAY

The Highland Express is pulling out of the station. As the last car disappears, and the steam clears from the tracks, we see Holmes, Gabrielle and Watson on the platform. A BAGGAGEMAN is loading their luggage on a hand-cart, under Watson's supervision.

WATSON

Let's see -- two, three, four --

Gabrielle removes her parasol, which has been inserted under the straps of her suitcase.

GABRIELLE

I'll take that.

HOLMES

(to baggageman)

How do you get to Glennahurich? How far is it?

BAGGAGEMAN

Glennahurich?

WATSON

You know -- a valley -- with a yew tree... ?

Gabrielle casually opens her parasol.

BAGGAGEMAN

It's about a mile out of town.

(a beat)

Why would you be wanting to go there?

WATSON

Well, if it's got a view, it might be a nice place for a picnic.

BAGGAGEMAN

It's got a view, right enough -- but it's no place for a picnic.

HOLMES

Why not?

BAGGAGEMAN

Because it's a cemetery.

Gabrielle looks at Holmes. CAMERA PANS UP TOWARD an iron footbridge, spanning the railway tracks. Moving across it in single file are the seven cowed Trappist monks, with von Tirpitz in the lead.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GLENNAHURICH CEMETARY - DAY

Under a leaden sky, the yew trees which give the place its name brood over ancient gravestones.

Holmes, Gabrielle and Watson come down an overgrown path, stop and look off.

A rather meagre funeral procession is moving along the avenue which runs between the rows of graves. It consists of one normal-size pine coffin and two smaller ones, loaded on a cart which is being wheeled by a couple of workmen. Bringing up behind is a MINISTER, with an open prayer book in his hands.

WATSON

(a note of excitement)

The three boxes. Is that it, Holmes?

HOLMES

I would think so.

GABRIELLE

The two small ones -- they must be children's coffins.

Holmes starts to cut across between the graves, Gabrielle and Watson following.

At the grave-site, the workmen are removing the coffins from the cart. There is one large grave, two smaller ones. A couple of grave-diggers stand by respectfully, caps in hands.

Holmes, Gabrielle and Watson come up behind a nearby headstone, stop and watch.

At the grave-site, the minister is finishing the service.

MINISTER

... earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

In sure and certain hope of the
resurrection to eternal life through our
Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

The workmen trundle the cart off, the minister following.
The grave-diggers don their caps, pick up their shovels.

From their vantage point, Holmes, Gabrielle and Watson
are watching.

GABRIELLE

It's so sad.

HOLMES

Sad -- and rather odd. There are no
flowers -- and no mourners.

The grave-diggers have finished filling in the graves
when Holmes, Gabrielle and Watson come up.

HOLMES

Morning.

GRAVE-DIGGER

(looking up)

Morning.

HOLMES

Working you hard, Dad?

GRAVE-DIGGER

Not really. This is healthy country.
Sometimes you sit around for weeks with
nothing to do. Then you get three in one
day.

HOLMES

What happened?

GRAVE-DIGGER

An accident. Aye. Father and two sons,
they say -- they were found floating in
the loch.

HOLMES

Local people?

GRAVE-DIGGER

No. Nobody around here knows them. The
story is that their boat capsized in a
swell -- but I don't believe it.

HOLMES

What do you believe?

GRAVE-DIGGER

You may think I'm an old fool or an old drunk -- but I've living around Loch Ness all my life...

WATSON

Are you trying to tell us it was the monster?

GRAVE-DIGGER

Damn right. MacLarnin saw the kids' faces when they were pulled out of the water -- looked like old men -- must've died of fright.

WATSON

Incredible.

GRAVE-DIGGER

Is it? Last Easter Sunday my wife and me, we were on our way to services, when suddenly... But what's the use?

He picks up a white-washed wooden cross, plants it at the head of the grave. The other grave-digger has inserted smaller crosses into the other two mounds of earth.

HOLMES

(taking some coins out of his pocket)

Here you are, Dad.

(hands them to the grave-digger)

GRAVE-DIGGER

Thank you... You look like nice people. If you're wanting a holiday in Scotland, go to Loch Lomond, go to Holy Loch -- but stay away from Loch Ness.

He and his partner shoulder their shovels, move off.

WATSON

(snorting)

To think that people still believe in that nonsense. Here we are, living in the Nineteenth Century --

GABRIELLE

I'm ashamed to admit it -- but I was relieved when he mentioned a father and two boys. It could possibly have anything to do with Emile.

HOLMES

It would appear not.

WATSON

However, there still remains the clue of the castle and the red runner -- wherever it may be.

They are about to get under way when suddenly Holmes stops them.

Coming down the avenue toward them are four small boys, in knickerbockers and caps, carrying bouquets of flowers.

Without a word, Holmes draws Gabrielle and Watson back to their hiding place, behind the headstone.

The four boys approach the freshly-filled graves. They remove their caps, lay their flowers on each of the two small graves, then kneel down and bow their heads in prayer.

From their position behind the headstone, Holmes, Watson and Gabrielle are watching the four boys, who have their backs to them.

WATSON

If they're unidentified graves, why are those boys bringing flowers?

HOLMES

Because it's their brothers who have just been buried.

WATSON

Their brothers?

HOLMES

And they're not boys. They're as tall as they'll ever grow. Hand me some pebbles, will you?

WATSON

Pebbles.

He picks some up from the ground, hands them to Holmes, who tosses them in the direction of the graves. The pebbles strike a granite cross. At the sound, the four boys simultaneously turn their heads over their shoulders. Despite their slight bodies they have the features of mature men.

Gabrielle and Watson react to the sight.

GABRIELLE

They are -- how do you say it in English?
-- nains.

WATSON

Midgets.

HOLMES

(nodding)
Boys with the faces of old men...

WATSON

I still don't see --

HOLMES

Would it help if I told you they were acrobats?

WATSON

Not at all.

HOLMES

Do you remember a tumbling act -- six brothers -- missing from the circus?

WATSON

Oh, yes -- that case you turned down -- I completely forgot.

HOLMES

Some of us are cursed with memories like flypaper. And stuck there is a staggering of miscellaneous date, mostly useless.

The four midgets have now risen, and putting on their caps, move off down the avenue. Holmes, Gabrielle and Watson emerge from their place of concealment.

GABRIELLE

(worriedly)

Mr. Holmes, is those are not children,
then -- ?

HOLMES

Quite. The question now is -- who's in
the third grave?

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENNAHURICH CEMETARY - NIGHT

The point of a crowbar digs under the edge of a coffin lid, which starts to give with a squealing protest of nails. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL Holmes, standing in the large grave, from which the earth has been removed. Kneeling beside the grave, watching anxiously, are Gabrielle and Watson, the latter holding a bullseye lantern.

Holmes pries the lid open, disclosing the corpse of a middle-aged man. His arms are folded across his chest, and on the third finger of his left hand is a wedding ring similar to Gabrielle's. From the picture of him we have seen earlier, we recognize the face as that of Emile Valladon.

Gabrielle lets out a piercing scream, collapses in a faint. Watson catches her.

WATSON

Holmes! She's fainted.

HOLMES

(preoccupied)

Hand me that lantern.

Watson passes down the lantern, and Holmes slowly shines the beam along the length of the coffin.

WATSON

It is Valladon, isn't it?

HOLMES

Obviously. What is not so obvious is why
his wedding ring has turned green --

The lantern beam now reveals that laid out at Valladon's feet are three canaries -- their plumage bleached a grey-white color.

HOLMES

-- and why there are three dead canaries in the coffin. White canaries.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CALEDONIAN HOTEL - DAWN

An open carriage is proceeding along the driveway toward the hotel, scutting a flock of sheep grazing nearby. Watson is sitting beside the coachman. Holmes and Gabrielle are in the passenger seat, their luggage is strapped to the back. Through the trees which line the road we glimpse Loch Ness, which is partly obscured by a low-lying mist.

The carriage pulls up in front of the hotel, which is identified by a sign above the entrance, and Holmes, Watson and Gabrielle get out.

CLOSE SHOT - HOTEL REGISTER

Holmes' hand is writing: Mr. And Mrs. Ashdown and valet, London.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAWN

The MANAGER, in kilts, is just opening the curtains -- disclosing a view of the mist-shrouded lake through the window.

The room is on the second floor, and is furnished in a style which has been described as Scotch Baronial -- twin beds with a night-table between them, wardrobe, chiffonier, desk, a couple of chairs, and several mounted stags' heads.

Holmes and Gabrielle are in the room, Watson is bringing their bags through the door.

MANAGER

You have a lovely view of the loch from here -- as soon as the morning mist rolls away.

(crosses to desk, picks up
guide book)

If you've a mind to do any sight-seeing, here's a guide to the local points of interest.

HOLMES

Thank you.

The manager starts toward the door, nodding to Watson.

MANAGER

This way, please. I will show you to your room.

Watson picks up his suitcase, follows him.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - DAY

The manager and Watson come out, the latter shutting the door.

WATSON

I suppose you're putting me in the basement.

MANAGER

No, your room is in the attic.

WATSON

Good.

MANAGER

It's the privy that's in the basement.

Watson grunts as the manager leads him up a narrow flight of stairs.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Holmes removes his coat, turns to Gabrielle.

HOLMES

May I have your wedding ring, please?

Gabrielle tearfully removes her ring, hands it to Holmes. From his vest pocket he now produces Valladon's ring -- the copper has a greenish tinge to it. He crosses to the window, compares the two rings in the light. Gabrielle sinks down on the edge of one of the beds.

HOLMES

Just as I thought. There is a distinct difference in color between your ring and your husband's.

(a sob from Gabrielle)

Which leads me to believe that the cause of death was not drowning...

(Gabrielle is now crying)

I wish you would stop that.

(crossing to her)

Stop it!

GABRIELLE

I'm sorry.

HOLMES

I know it's not easy. But you must remember that we're that nice couple from London, on Holiday in the Highlands.

GABRIELLE

(a final sniffle)

I'll try.

HOLMES

That's much better.

GABRIELLE

Thank you.

She manages a tentative smile. Holmes looks at her for a long moment, then --

HOLMES

(gruffly)

Now, if I may proceed without further interruptions --

WATSON'S VOICE

(from off)

Mr. Ashdown!

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - DAY

Watson comes dashing down the narrow stairs from the attic, races toward the door of Holmes' room.

WATSON

Mr. Ashdown!

He flings the door open.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Watson bursts in breathlessly.

WATSON

Holmes! I saw it! I saw it from the attic! It's out there in the lake!

HOLMES

You saw what?

WATSON

(looking around desperately)
The telescope. Where's the telescope?

HOLMES

What did you see?

WATSON

The monster!

HOLMES

The monster?

Watson fishes a small telescope out of Holmes' suitcase, rushes through the open French window to the balcony.

EXT. BALCONY - DAY

Watson focuses the telescope on the lake.

LOCH NESS THROUGH TELESCOPE - DAY

Through the swirling mist which clings to the surface of the lake, a shadowy figure with a long, monster-like neck can be seen gliding along.

EXT. BALCONY - DAY

Watson almost drops the telescope in excitement.

WATSON

There it is! There it is!

Holmes joins him on the balcony.

WATSON

Look for yourself.

He hands the telescope to Holmes. Gabrielle comes up to the window behind them. Holmes trains the telescope on the lake.

WATSON

See it? See it?

LOCH NESS - THROUGH TELESCOPE - DAY

Holmes' eye slowly scans the lake, but there is no sign of Watson's monster -- just the rolling mist.

EXT. BALCONY - DAY

Holmes lowers the telescope.

HOLMES

I see nothing.

WATSON

Nothing?

He grabs the telescope from Holmes, looks toward the lake.

WATSON

It's gone.

HOLMES

Gone? Maybe it was never there.

WATSON

I swear to you -- I saw it -- clear as anything --

HOLMES

Watson, as you so succinctly put it, we are living in the Nineteenth Century --

He steps back into the room.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Watson comes halfway through the French window.

WATSON

Maybe that grave-digger was right -- the swell, and the boat overturning --

HOLMES

Monsieur Valladon may have been found in the lake -- but he did not drown. He died of asphyxiation.

GABRIELLE

Asphyxiation.

HOLMES

(holding up wedding rings)
There is only one substance that can turn a copper ring green and bleach the color out of canaries -- chlorine gas.

WATSON

That may be. But the fact remains that I saw something out there.

HOLMES

A figment of your imagination. Now let us be logical. The only concrete lead we have is the reference to the castle --
(picks up guide book from desk, opens it to map)
The question is, which castle?

WATSON

You call yourself logical? You're the least logical man I know.

HOLMES

Am I?

WATSON

How can you say it's a figment of my imagination, when for years you've been saying I have no imagination whatsoever!

He looks at Holmes almost triumphantly.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS - DAY

Holmes, Gabrielle, and Watson bicycling away from the hotel. Holmes, in knickerbockers and a Norfolk jacket, and Gabrielle, holding her parasol, are on a tandem. Watson is behind them, on a bicycle with a picnic basket attached to the rack. He is in his valet's outfit, with metal clips around his trouser cuffs.

The three of them bicycling past a long stone wall.

They pedal up to an imposing castle. Holmes dismounts, knocks on the front door.

Our trio bicycling through a copse of trees.

They approach another castle.

On a steep road, they ride through a flock of sheep.

They are proceeding along a causeway, away from a third castle.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE SHORE - DAY

Holmes and Gabrielle are sitting on a blanket, the contents of the picnic basket spread before them, having lunch. Watson is pouring the wine. Their bicycles are resting nearby.

WATSON

We have so far investigated eight drafty castles -- had our bicycles attacked by sheep and our ears assaulted by bagpipes -- and we are exactly where we started.

HOLMES
 (to Gabrielle)
 Would you like some cranberry sauce,
 dear?

GABRIELLE
 Yes, dear.

HOLMES
 Would you pass the cranberry sauce,
 please, John?

WATSON
 Yes, dear.

As he does so, he catches sight of something o.s.

WATSON
 (calling)
 I say there. Good afternoon. Remember
 me?

On the road above, approaching a bridge which spans the
 lake where it narrows into a stream, are the seven
 Trappist monks, walking slowly in single file.

Watson waves to them, but the monks pay no attention to
 him.

WATSON
 (to Holmes)
 Some chaps I met on the train. We had a
 long conversation -- or rather, I had a
 long conversation -- because they're not
 allowed to talk -- Trappists, you know.
 Just study their Bibles. You'll never
 guess what the one next to me was reading
 -- the Book of Jonah -- isn't that odd?

HOLMES
 (looking after the monks)
 Quite.

As he turns back, he notices that Gabrielle is
 manipulating her parasol in the air.

HOLMES
 What is it, dear? What's the matter?

GABRIELLE

A bee.

She continues to work the parasol, alternately opening it and partially closing it.

On the bridge von Tirpitz, who is at the rear of the file of monks, glances back toward the lakeshore.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. URQUHART CASTLE - DAY

On a promontory jutting into Loch Ness stand the remains of a medieval fortress. Around the Tower, the Motte, and the ruins of the East wall, wooden scaffolding has been erected, and a couple of dozen men are engaged in what appears to be repair work. Amidst the rubble of the Nether Bailey, an encampment of tents has been set up.

Holmes, Gabrielle and Watson come bicycling up along a fence on the heights overlooking the castle, dismount in front of the locked gates. Attached to the gatepost is a sign reading: WARNING: No Unauthorized Person Permitted Beyond This Point.

WATSON

Well, I don't think we have to bother with this castle. It's just a pile of rubble.

GABRIELLE

Then why are they taking precautions?

She points to the sign -- and to a guard coming up the driveway, with a couple of huge mastiffs on leashes.

HOLMES

Why, indeed?
(turning the tandem around)
Let's go.

WATSON

Go where?

HOLMES

When rebuffed at the front door, one's only choice is to try the tradesmen's entrance.

They move off.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. URQUHART CASTLE - DAY

Holmes, Gabrielle and Watson are coming up a path from the lakeside, leading their bicycles. They lean the cycles against a ruined wall, start across the courtyard. A middle-aged MAN in kilts emerges from the tumbled-down gatehouse, comes toward them.

GUIDE

Sorry. No visitors allowed.

HOLMES

Are you the guide here?

GUIDE

Yes. The castle is closed to the public while work is going on.

HOLMES

What are they doing?

GUIDE

It's being restored by the Society for the Preservation of Scottish Monuments.

HOLMES

Too bad. I particularly wanted my wife to see Urquhart Castle. The tower is one of the most interesting examples of -- about 1400, wasn't it?

GUIDE

That's right.

HOLMES

Let me see -- was it built under James the Second or James the Third?

GUIDE

The Thrid... If you come back next year, we'll be all done here, and I'll be glad to show you around.

HOLMES

Thank you.

As the three of them move off, a canvas-topped wagon comes through the stone archway, stops at the front of the steps leading to the inner courtyard.

WATSON

Pleasant sort, isn't he?

HOLMES

Pleasant, but ignorant. He was off one hundred years and one James.

(taps guide-book in his pocket)

It's actually 1500 and James the Fourth.

GABRIELLE

If he's an official guide, shouldn't he know... ?

HOLMES

If he's an official guide.

They have now reached the wall against which they left their bicycles. Suddenly Holmes stops, attracted by the sound of birds chirping.

HOLMES

Listen... Do you hear anything, Watson?

WATSON

(concentrating)

No. Those birds are making too much of a racket.

HOLMES

(looking off)

They're not just birds -- they're our old friends.

Watson and Gabrielle follow his gaze.

From the back of the wagon, the carriers have removed the small bird-cage we saw in the mail-drop on Ashdown Street. They hand it to a workman, who starts up the steps with it. To another couple of workmen they pass down an open-sided crate in which rest two heavy glass bottles protected by wicker. Stencilled on the wooden slate of the crate are the words: SULPHURIC ACID - CORROSIVE.

Holmes is watching thoughtfully, Gabrielle and Watson are puzzled.

WATSON

Sulphuric acid?

GABRIELLE

The more we find out the less sense it makes.

HOLMES

To a graduate chemist it makes a great deal of sense. Sulphuric acid, when exposed to salt-water, produces chlorine gas.

(a beat)

Would you mind clasping your hands, Watson?

WATSON

(obeying)

Like this?

HOLMES

A little lower... Thank you.

Watson has lowered his clasped hands, and Holmes uses them as a foothold to go scrambling up the scaffolding of the nearby wall. Reaching the top, he looks off in the direction of the tower.

The workman carrying the canary cage, and the two carrying the crate of sulphuric acid are approaching the tower. A draw-bridge comes down, and the three men cross the moat and enter the tower.

HOLMES

(looking off)

That tower may be more interesting than I thought -- and not just architecturally.

Out of the ruined gatehouse comes the guard with the two mastiffs on leashes. The dogs start to snarl viciously.

WATSON

Holmes, I have a feeling we're redundant here.

Holmes leaps down from the scaffolding, wheels the tandem around, starts back in the direction from which they came. Gabrielle follows. Watson hurries after them with his bicycle, casting anxious glances over his shoulder as the dogs continue barking.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOCH NESS - EARLY EVENING

The sun has just gone down behind the hills, but there is still light in the sky. An ominous mist is beginning to settle on the water.

Gabrielle is sitting in the stern of a rowboat, her parasol in her lap. She is wearing Holmes' Norfolk jacket over her dress to ward off the chill.

On the rowing seat, facing her, are Watson and Holmes, the latter in his waistcoat. Their oars are pulled in, and they are watching Urquhart Castle, on the opposite side of the lake.

WATSON

We have now observed the castle from the front, from the back, from the side, from land, from water... what now? Are you planning to spend the night out here?

HOLMES

If necessary.

WATSON

You're going to catch your death of cold.

(to Gabrielle)

Wouldn't it be ironic if Holmes' last case were a case of pneumonia?

(with an embarrassed chuckle)

Sorry.

Gabrielle glances past them, and her eyes widen.

GABRIELLE

(pointing off)

What's that?

Holmes and Watson turn their heads.

About half a mile away, moving in and out of patches of drifting mist, is Watson's monster, its long reptilian neck cutting through the water.

Watson leaps to his feet.

WATSON

Holmes!

Holmes grabs his arm, pulls him back into his seat.

HOLMES

Quick, Watson. After it!

He grabs his oar, and Watson belatedly joins in. They strain at the oars, setting a course which will intercept the monster. Gabrielle leans forward in her seat, trying to peer past them through the curtains of mist.

The monster is much closer now -- no more than a quarter of a mile away.

Suddenly Watson stops rowing.

WATSON

Holmes, what are we doing? We should be going away from it.

HOLMES

Keep rowing, dammit!

Watson resumes pulling on his oar. As they row, Holmes looks over his shoulder.

The monster has started to submerge. Its head disappears beneath the surface of the water, and the wake it leaves behind soon trails off into the mist.

Holmes ships his oar.

HOLMES

We've lost it.

WATSON

(stops rowing)

At least you admit there's an it, not just a figment of my imagination.

HOLMES

Quiet.

He listens intently. There is only the sound of water slapping against the side of the boat. The mist is heavier now, and billowing around them.

HOLMES

(to Watson)

Do you have your stethoscope with you?

WATSON

Never without it.

He removes his bowler, unwinds the stethoscope from the inside the crown, hands it to Holmes. Holmes plugs in the ear-pieces, leans over the side of the boat, extends the other end of the stethoscope to the surface of the water.

WATSON

What is it?

HOLMES

I can hear something...

We become aware of the faint beating of engines, accompanied by a bubbling sound.

HOLMES

It's getting closer -- closer --

Suddenly the surface of the water breaks, about twenty yards away from them, and the head and neck of the monster rear up from the depths. Watson is first to notice it and jumps to his feet, making choking noises. Gabrielle sees it and screams. Watson grabs an oar, throws it at the monster as it comes past. The backwash hits the boat broadside, rocking it, and Holmes, Watson and Gabrielle are spilled into the lake.

The monster moves away from them, heading in the general direction of the castle. It disappears into the mist.

Holmes is the first to come up, looks around, sees Gabrielle surfacing a few yards away, swims to her.

HOLMES

Are you all right?

GABRIELLE

I lost my parasol.

HOLMES

Where's Watson?

He glances around, sees Watson's bowler floating nearby, swims over to it.

HOLMES

Watson?

He lifts the hat -- but Watson isn't under it.

As Gabrielle hoists herself into the boat, Watson clammers over the other side. After a moment Holmes joins them, and they sit there, sopping wet and breathing heavily.

WATSON

I have come face to face with man-eating tigers -- I was once caught in a stampede of wild elephants -- India, you know -- but I wasn't half as frightened. This beast seems to have a personal grudge against us.

GABRIELLE

I just hope it doesn't come back.

HOLMES

I don't think it will.

(pointing off)

Look!

They glance in the indicated direction.

There is no sign of the monster. But the mist has momentarily lifted to reveal the castle, and an odd sight greets their eyes -- the wooden scaffolding in front of the tower is slowly rising into the air.

WATSON

(amazed)

What strange goings-on.

HOLMES

Not really. My guess is that the monster, after a hard day's work, has returned home for his supper.

The scaffolding in front of the tower slowly descends back into the place, as mist once more engulfs the castle.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Holmes, in a different suit of clothes, is pacing across the room, whistling the main theme from "Swan Lake." He stops before the open French window, gazes out toward the lake. Gabrielle is propped up in bed, a blanket drawn up to her chin, watching him. Watson, who has changed into a pair of kilts, is standing in front of the fireplace, warming his backside.

Gabrielle glances at Watson, suppresses a giggle.

WATSON

Yes, I know. But would you believe that you can't borrow a decent pair of trousers in this place?

Holmes resumes pacing, and Watson becomes aware of his whistling.

WATSON

Would you like to confide in us?

No answer from Holmes. Watson turns to Gabrielle.

WATSON

Whenever he starts whistling, I know he's getting close to a solution.

HOLMES

It's nothing new, actually. We've come across this situation before.

WATSON

We have? Where?

HOLMES

At the ballet.

WATSON

Ballet?

HOLMES

There's a lake -- and there's a castle -- and there's a swan that isn't really a swan -- or, in this case, a monster that isn't really a monster --

WATSON

Then what is it?

HOLMES

What is it indeed that feeds on canary birds and sulphuric acid, and has an engine for a heart?

GABRIELLE

An engine?

HOLMES

The stethoscope is a very sensitive instrument, and water is an excellent conductor of sound. There is no doubt that what we are dealing with is a mechanical monster.

WATSON

Oh?

HOLMES

Not only is it equipped with an artificial heart, it also has artificial lungs. Judging from the bubbles on the surface of the lake, it uses some form of air pump.

GABRIELLE

You think my husband was involved in all this?

HOLMES

Yes, Madame Valladon. I'm sure of it.

WATSON

But why would anybody build a mechanical monster? Just to scare people?

HOLMES

Not very likely.

GABRIELLE

Why did they try to keep me from finding my husband? And why was he buried anonymously?

HOLMES

I think I have a pretty good notion of what they're up to -- the Society for the Preservation of Scottish Monuments -- better known as the Diogenes Club.

WATSON

The Diogenes Club?

There is a knock on the door.

HOLMES

Come in.

The door opens and the hotel manager enters, holding a magnum of champagne.

MANAGER

Mr. Ashdown, I have a bottle of champagne for you.

HOLMES

(crossing to him)

A bottle of champagne? I didn't order it.

MANAGER

No, indeed. You are to deliver it. These are my instructions.

He hands the magnum to Holmes.

HOLMES

Instructions from whom? Deliver it where?

MANAGER

I wouldn't know, sir. But there's a carriage waiting for you downstairs.

HOLMES

Are you sure you have the right Mr. Ashdown?

MANAGER

(flatly)

Quite sure, Mr. Holmes.

He turns and exits. Holmes taps the bottle of champagne thoughtfully.

HOLMES

Well, Watson, I would say the curtain is going up on the last act.

WATSON

I don't like the sound of it.

GABRIELLE

Please be careful.

As Holmes starts toward the door, Watson reaches into his sporran.

WATSON

You'd better take this with you.

He produces a revolver, holds it out to Holmes. Holmes ignores it, exits.

EXT. CALEDONIAN HOTEL - NIGHT

A gig is waiting in front of the entrance, and leaning against it is the guide we saw earlier at Urquhart. Holmes comes out, carrying the champagne bottle.

HOLMES

Who's minding the castle?

GUIDE

You'd better get on. It's late.

Holmes climbs into the gig, and the guide mounts the seat beside him.

HOLMES

Where are we going? Some sort of party?

GUIDE

You won't be disappointed in the guest list.

HOLMES

Who's the host?

GUIDE

Jonah.

He flicks the reins. The horse starts off at a trot, and the gig turns into the driveway.

EXT. MOVING GIG - NIGHT

As they drive along, Holmes glances at the guide, who is grim and uncommunicative.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD LEADING TO CASTLE - NIGHT

The gig, with its two passengers, proceeds along the lakeshore, approaching the entrance to Urquhart.

EXT. URQUHART CASTLE - NIGHT

A workman is lighting a couple of torches attached to the ruined gatehouse when the gig comes through the archway. The guide reins up the horse in front of the steps leading to the inner courtyard -- which are now covered with a narrow red carpet.

The guide nods to Holmes, who dismounts, starts up the steps, examining the red carpet. As he reaches the top, he looks off.

The strip of red carpet runs across the courtyard, lit by torches planted in the ground. A couple of workmen are unrolling the rest of the carpet toward the entrance of the tower.

As Holmes passes one of the tents, the flap opens and Mycroft steps out, dressed in his inevitable frock coat.

MYCROFT

Mr. Ashdown, I presume.

HOLMES

(turning)

The red runner, I presume.

(indicates carpet)
 You shouldn't have gone to all this
 trouble just for me.

MYCROFT
 It's not for you.
 (calling into tent)
 McKeller.
 (to Holmes)
 May I have the champagne, please?

HOLMES
 (handing him bottle)
 1886 -- not a very good vintage, is it?

MYCROFT
 Mediocre. But then again, it's not for
 drinking.

A black-suited MAN emerges from the tent, and Mycroft
 gives him the champagne.

MYCROFT
 Tie it up, will you?

The man moves off toward the tower. Mycroft pulls back
 the flap of the tent.

MYCROFT
 In here.

Holmes passes inside, Mycroft following.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

It is lit by a kerosene lamp suspended from the ridge-
 pole. There are several cots, one of them with the
 bedding rolled up. Resting on the stripped cot is a
 trunk with the name E. VALLADON painted on it. Lying on
 a table, among a group of engineering models, are
 Gabrielle's parasol and Watson's stethoscope. There are
 also a couple of drafting tables, with plans and
 blueprints tacked to them.

Holmes moves around the tent, taking all this in.

HOLMES
 Interesting -- and educational.

MYCROFT

Despite my most emphatic warning, you persisted in meddling. It would have served you right if you'd all drowned.

HOLMES

Sorry to be so unobliging.
(stops beside torch)
E. Valladon... H'mm.

MYCROFT

(indicating parasol and
stethoscope)
I imagine this belongs to the pretty lady, and this belongs to your valet... We found them floating in the lake.

HOLMES

Speaking about things floating in the lake --

MYCROFT

How much do you know -- or think you know?

HOLMES

I think you're testing some sort of underwater craft -- camouflaged to mislead the gullible. I think it's an experimental model, operated by a crew of midgets. I think it is powered by sulphuric acid batteries, and uses canaries to detect escaping gas... Altogether a strange contraption.

MYCROFT

Not quite that unique. Right now, four countries are trying to develop what we call a submersible. But none of them could solve the critical problem -- how to stay submerged long enough to make it effective.

HOLMES

What does the Good Book say? "And Jonah lived in the belly of that fish for three days and three nights."

MYCROFT

That was our goal. And thanks to Valladon's air-pump, we got a jump on the rest of them. It's a highly complex system of filtration -- so we had a series of trials --

HOLMES

And at least one error.

MYCROFT

During a test run in Moray Firth, pressure caused a leak in the hull. Sea water mixed with the acid in the batteries to produce chlorine gas. Before they could reach the surface, Valladon and the crew were dead.

HOLMES

So you had them buried in unmarked graves, to preserve your secret.

MYCROFT

It was essential to keep the information from your client.

HOLMES

You went to all those lengths to prevent Madame Valladon from finding her husband?

MYCROFT

Your client isn't Madame Valladon -- it's the Imperial German Government. They were after the Belgian engineer -- or rather, his invention. They knew he was employed by us, but they couldn't find out where -- so they enlisted the best brain in England to help them. You, my dear brother, have been working for the Wilhelmstrasse.

HOLMES

And Madame Valladon -- what part did she play in all this?

MYCROFT

Madame Valladon is dead.

HOLMES

Dead?

Mycroft crosses to the trunk, opens the lid.

MYCROFT

The Germans disposed of her three weeks ago, in Brussels. This is Gabrielle Valladon.

He hands Holmes a small, framed photograph. Holmes looks at it with apprehension, as well he should: the picture is of a somewhat matronly woman, not the glamorous Gabrielle. Holmes lowers the photograph. Behind it, Mycroft is glaring at him with customary arrogance.

MYCROFT

The woman who was brought to your house in the middle of the night -- apparently fished out of the Thames -- and apparently suffering from amnesia -- is, in fact, Ilse von Hoffmanstal, one of their most skillful agents. Am I going too fast for one of the "best brains in England?"

HOLMES

Go on.

As Mycroft continues, Holmes picks up Ilse's water-soaked parasol and examines it.

MYCROFT

They planted her on you quite neatly, I must admit, so that you could lead them to their objective, the air pump. Very much like using a hog to find truffles. And now perhaps you'd care to join me. I am expecting a certain royal personage from Balmoral.

EXT. CASTLE - NIGHT

A coach and escort approach the castle. Painted on the door of the coach are the initials "V.R."

INT. CASTLE COURTYARD

The entourage enters the castle courtyard and stops. Footmen open the door and bow to the lone passenger.

Waiting on top of the steps, outside the tent, are Mycroft and Holmes. Lined up on the other side of the torch-lit red carpet are half a dozen scientists, in their best clothes.

Out of the coach steps a familiar figure -- Her Majesty, QUEEN VICTORIA, Defender of the Faith, Empress of India. She is 69 years old, and dressed entirely in black.

Mycroft comes down the carpeted steps to meet her.

MYCROFT

Your Majesty.

He bows. The Queen extends her hand to him, and he touches it.

MYCROFT

I trust you had a pleasant journey, Ma'am.

QUEEN VICTORIA

It was long and it was tedious. And it had better be worth our while, Mr. Holmes.

MYCROFT

I can assure you, Ma'am, it will be.

A lady-in-waiting and a uniformed equerry have now descended from the coach. Mycroft leads the party up the steps.

QUEEN VICTORIA

Now what is this curious ship we are supposed to christen?

MYCROFT

We call it a submersible, Ma'am. It travels under water.

QUEEN VICTORIA

Under water? What a fantastic idea.

They have now reached the top of the steps.

MYCROFT

Ma'am, may present some of the scientists who were responsible for this achievement. J.W. Ferguson, naval architect --

FIRST SCIENTIST

(bowing)

Your Majesty.

MYCROFT

Professor Simpson, our leading expert on hydraulics --

SECOND SCIENTIST

(bowing)

Your Majesty.

MYCROFT

W.W. Prescott, co-inventor of the revolving periscope --

THIRD SCIENTIST

(bowing)

Your Majesty.

MYCROFT

And this is Sir Arthur Grisby, our authority on maritime ballistics --

QUEEN VICTORIA

We don't claim to understand any of this. But England is proud of you, gentlemen. To think that man can now observe fish in their native habitat --

MYCROFT

(trying to correct her)

Well, not exactly, Ma'am --

QUEEN VICTORIA

-- and underwater plants and coral reefs --

(noticing Holmes)

Young man -- what was your contribution to this project?

HOLMES

I'm afraid it was rather negligible, Your Majesty.

MYCROFT
 (to the Queen)
 This is my brother, Sherlock, Ma'am.

QUEEN VICTORIA
 Ah, yes. Sherlock Holmes. We have been following your exploits with great interest.

Holmes bows, touches the Queen's extended hand.

HOLMES
 Thank you, Ma'am.

QUEEN VICTORIA
 Are you engaged in one of your fascinating cases at the moment?

HOLMES
 In a manner of speaking, Ma'am.

QUEEN VICTORIA
 When can we expect to read Dr. Watson's account of the case?

HOLMES
 I hope never, Ma'am. It has not been one of my more successful endeavors.

Mycroft signals to a bagpiper, who starts playing HIELAN' LADDIE.

QUEEN VICTORIA
 Ah, the ceremonies are about to begin.
 (to Mycroft)
 Now where is this underwater ship of yours?

MYCROFT
 (pointing to tower)
 In the dungeon, Ma'am.

QUEEN VICTORIA
 The dungeon? What a peculiar place to keep it.
 (turning to the others)
 Well, let us get on with it, gentlemen.

Mycroft leads the Queen along the red runner toward the tower. Holmes follows, then the lady-in-waiting and the equerry, then the scientists.

As they cross the inner courtyard, the Highland piper falls in ahead of the procession, leads them toward the drawbridge. Then he steps aside, as the royal party crosses the drawbridge and passes through the door of the tower.

INT. DUNGEON - NIGHT

A high-ceilinged rock chamber, with a spiral iron staircase leading down. The floor is a concrete ramp, the lower end of it covered with water. Beyond is the entrance from the Loch, camouflaged by scaffolding and vegetation.

On the upper part of the ramp is a small, primitive submarine, resting on wheels. Prominently lettered on the bow is the name H.M.S. JONAH, and suspended by a rope from the prow is the magnum of champagne which Holmes delivered. Along the sides are torpedo tubes, and fitted over the conning tower is the head and neck of the "monster" we saw in the lake.

Present are half a dozen naval personnel, commanded by an officer. As the royal party comes down the spiral staircase, the officer snaps to attention. Mycroft is in the lead, followed by the Queen, Holmes, the lady-in-waiting, the equerry and the scientists.

MYCROFT

There she, Ma'am. Her Majesty's Ship
Jonah.

The four surviving midgets appear on the deck, in wool jerseys and navy caps. They start pulling on a chain which slowly raises the detachable head-and-neck of the monster toward the ceiling, disclosing the conning tower and the periscope.

QUEEN VICTORIA

And what, may we ask, is the purpose of
that hideous gargoye?

MYCROFT

It's merely a decoy, Ma'am.

QUEEN VICTORIA

Oh. To frighten away the sharks, we imagine.

MYCROFT

Something of the sort... The crew will now demonstrate the workings of the submersible.

A SAILOR of normal height appears on the deck of the sub.

SAILOR

Stand to.

The midgets scramble down the hatch.

QUEEN VICTORIA

Aren't they rather small for sailors?

MYCROFT

They are. But because of the size of the craft, the Navy made an exception.

QUEEN VICTORIA

They should make it a rule. It's quite fatiguing to pin on all those medals while standing on our toes.

There is the sound of the engines starting. Mycroft leads the Queen to an open bulkhead in the side of the sub, with Holmes and rest of the party close behind.

Inside, all is noise and confusion. Metal rods are dipping into glass jars of sulphuric acid, complicated machinery is driving the propeller shaft, bellows are inflating and deflating, etc. The midgets are at their stations in the cramped quarters, pulling switches, oiling the engines, operating the periscope. Overhead is a cageful of canaries, all chirping away. Mycroft points out the various features to the Queen.

MYCROFT

This is the main engine, which propels it under water at the rate of two knots -- the stabilizing mechanism -- the multi-stage compressor -- the ballast tank trimmer -- the air-pump which filters and recirculates the air --

QUEEN VICTORIA

How charming.

MYCROFT

The air pump, Ma'am?

QUEEN VICTORIA

(pointing)

The canaries. Must make the crew feel at home.

MYCROFT

Yes, Ma'am. These are the levers for firing the torpedoes, which are accurate up to as much as 120 feet -- the periscope for scanning the surface of the water --

QUEEN VICTORIA

But where is the glass bottom?

MYCROFT

The what, Ma'am?

QUEEN VICTORIA

The glass bottom.

HOLMES

You know -- to see the fist --

QUEEN VICTORIA

-- and the plants and the corals --

MYCROFT

That's not quite the idea, Ma'am. H.M.S. Jonah is being commissioned as a warship.

QUEEN VICTORIA

A warship?

(waving her hand)

Stop that noise. Stop it!

At a signal from Mycroft, the sub engines are turned off.

MYCROFT

Ma'am, if I may explain --

QUEEN VICTORIA

You had better.

MYCROFT

The Admiralty regards this craft as the ultimate weapon in naval warfare. It can seek out enemy ships and destroy them -- with these torpedoes -- while remaining completely invisible.

QUEEN VICTORIA

You mean in can fire at other vessels while under water?

MYCROFT

Yes, Ma'am.

QUEEN VICTORIA

Without any warning?

MYCROFT

That is correct, Ma'am.

QUEEN VICTORIA

And without showing her colors?

MYCROFT

Indeed, Ma'am.

QUEEN VICTORIA

Mr. Holmes, we are not amused.

(Mycroft stares at her)

It is unsportsmanlike, it is un-English, and it is in very poor taste. We will have none of it!

MYCROFT

I beg your pardon, Ma'am?

He exchanges a look with Holmes.

QUEEN VICTORIA

Sometimes we despair of the state of the world. What will scientists think of next?

MYCROFT

That's precisely it, Ma'am. At this very moment the Germans under Count von Zeppelin, are experimenting with a dirigible --

QUEEN VICTORIA

A dirigible? And what, pray, is that?

MYCROFT

A rigid balloon, which could fly over London and drop a bomb on Buckingham Palace. It is being developed at the express orders of Kaiser Wilhelm the Second.

QUEEN VICTORIA

Nonsense. We refuse to believe that our grandson Willie would do a thing like that.

MYCROFT

We have conclusive proof, Ma'am. Our agent in Friedrichshafen, a man named Ibbetson, actually saw the dirigible, and made a drawing of it. Unfortunately, he was apprehended before he could cross the border.

QUEEN VICTORIA

(indicating sub)

Nevertheless, we don't want any part of this beastly invention. Get rid of it! Scuttle it! The sooner the better.

MYCROFT

May I point out, Ma'am --

QUEEN VICTORIA

And don't concern yourself about that dirigible dropping bombs on us. We shall write a very sharp note to the Kaiser.

(to equerry)

Now we wish to return to Balmoral.

She starts toward the spiral staircase. The equerry precedes her up the stairs, the lady-in-waiting follows, the scientists trail after them. Mycroft and Holmes linger behind.

HOLMES

Well, Mycroft, it seems we have both been undone by a woman.

(Mycroft is staring at the
sub)

What a shame.

All that superb engineering, and all that cunning espionage, for nought.

MYCROFT

Not necessarily. If the Germans want that submersible so badly, why don't we give it to them?

HOLMES

Give it to them?

MYCROFT

Invite them aboard for the final journey -- seven hundred feet -- straight down.

HOLMES

And how are you going to arrange that?

MYCROFT

I'm rather counting on you to do it. Since you are on such intimate terms with Fraulein von Hoffmanstal.

O.s., the bagpiper resumes playing.

MYCROFT

Shall we say goodbye to Her Majesty?

He starts up the spiral staircase. Holmes follows slowly and thoughtfully.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CALEDONIAN HOTEL - DAWN

The gig, with the guide driving and Holmes beside him, comes up the driveway, stops in front of the entrance. Holmes hops down, and twirling Gabrielle's parasol in his hand, walks into the hotel.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAWN

In the half-light, Gabrielle can be seen asleep in her bed. She is wearing the pink negligee with the maribou feathers, which has slipped halfway off her shoulders. The other bed has not been slept in.

The door from the corridor opens and Holmes steps in, carrying the parasol.

He crosses to Gabrielle's bed, looks down at her for a long moment, adjusts the negligee with the tip of the parasol. Then he moves to the French window, opens it, glances out.

LAKEFRONT - FROM HOLMES' ANGLE - DAWN

The seven Trappist monks are standing on the shore, silhouetted against the water, watching the hotel.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAWN

Holmes withdraws from the window, looks at the sleeping Gabrielle, then casually swings the parasol, hitting a metal lamp-shade overhead. Gabrielle sits up abruptly in bed, clutching her negligee around her.

HOLMES

Sorry about that. But as long as you're up -- what is the German word for castle? Schloss, isn't it?

GABRIELLE

(carefully)

I think so.

HOLMES

And how would you say under the castle? Unter das Schlss? Or die Schloss?

GABRIELLE

I don't know. My German isn't that good.

HOLMES

(indicating)

Your Trappist friends are out there waiting to hear from you -- it's a chilly morning -- we don't want to keep them standing around too long, do we, Fraulein Hoffmanstal?

(Gabrielle looks at him without answering)

Come now. It's too late to play cat and mouse.

GABRIELLE

(flatly)

Unter dem Schloss.

HOLMES

Thank you.

(holding out parasol)

Here's your signalling device -- it's a bit damp, I'm afraid -- would you care to let them know where they can find the submersible?

(Gabrielle makes no move to take the parasol)

No? Then I'll just have to do it myself.

(moving toward window)

I only hope my Morse code is adequate to the occasion.

Keeping well to one side of the open window, he extends the parasol outside, opens it, starts sending out a series of long and short signals.

LAKEFRONT - DAWN

von Tirpitz and the other monks strain their eyes in the direction of the hotel.

HOTEL - FROM MONKS' ANGLE - DAWN

Outside the hotel window, Gabrielle's parasol can be seen flashing the message UNTER DEM SCHLOSS in Morse code -- but it is not apparent that Holmes is doing the signalling.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAWN

As Holmes continues opening and closing the parasol, Gabrielle gets out of bed, comes up beside him. Holmes finishes the message, shuts the parasol, draws it back into the room. Then he looks out the window.

LAKEFRONT - FROM HOLMES' ANGLE - DAWN

The monks turn away from the hotel, and with von Tirpitz in the lead, move off along the shore.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAWN

Holmes steps back from the window, faces Gabrielle.

HOLMES

Well, it's up to the good monks now. You can consider your part of the mission accomplished, Fraulein Hoffmanstal.

GABRIELLE

You're all wrong about me. My name isn't Hoffmanstal.

HOLMES

It isn't?

GABRIELLE

It's von Hoffmanstal.

HOLMES

I stand corrected.

GABRIELLE

(glancing toward window)

I suppose once they're in the castle... It must amuse you, Mr. Holmes, Trappists walking into a trap.

HOLMES

It's more amusing than that. Once in the castle, they will encounter surprisingly little resistance -- it will take but a small bottle of chloroform to overcome the guards.

GABRIELLE

(skeptically)

You mean you're going to let them have the air-pump?

HOLMES

Better than that. We're going to let them have the submersible. They will find it with its engines running, all set to go. I assume they're all expert sailors? And since there is a German battleship cruising off the coast of Scotland, I expect they'll try to sail it out of the lock and rendezvous at sea.

GABRIELLE

Did you say try to?

HOLMES

I would suggest you get your things together. Mycroft will be here to take you into custody.

He opens her suitcase, which is on the baggage rack at the foot of the bed. Gabrielle watches him for a beat, then crosses to the wardrobe, starts taking her clothes out.

GABRIELLE

I never had you fooled for a moment, did I? You knew right from the beginning -- when the cabbie brought me to Baker Street.

HOLMES

Let me see -- not quite that soon.

He stretches out on the bed.

GABRIELLE

It's so funny. I asked for this assignment, you know. I was scheduled to go to Japan, but I couldn't resist the challenge of coming up against the best. I'm sorry I didn't give you a closer game.

HOLMES

Close enough.

GABRIELLE

You're just being kind. I failed miserably.

HOLMES

We all have occasional failures. Fortunately, Dr. Watson never writes about mine.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - DAY

Watson, back in his valet's outfit again, comes bounding down the narrow stairs from the attic, races toward the door of Holmes' room.

WATSON
Holmes! Holmes!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Bright sunlight now floods the room. Gabrielle, fully dressed, is standing in front of the mirror, putting on her hat. Her packed bag has been set out in the middle of the room, and resting on it is the parasol.

The door bursts open and Watson dashes in.

WATSON
Holmes!

In his haste he trips over the bag, goes down. As he picks himself up again, Gabrielle points toward the balcony.

EXT. BALCONY - HOTEL - DAY

Holmes is leaning against the parapet, scanning the lake through his telescope. Watson appears through the open French window behind him.

WATSON
(excitedly)
Holmes, I saw it again -- that thing --
it came from the castle -- it's out there
--

LOCH NESS - THROUGH TELESCOPE - DAY

A trail of bubbles is moving along the surface. Suddenly there is a muffled explosion from below, and a geyser of water shoots up into the air.

EXT. BALCONY - HOTEL - DAY

Holmes slowly lowers the telescope.

HOLMES
It was out there. Now it's gone.

WATSON
Gone?

HOLMES

Forever. Look for yourself.

LOCH NESS - THROUGH TELESCOPE - DAY

There is a great turbulence in the water. Up to the surface pops the bottle of christening champagne, with rope and ribbons still attached. Then a copy of the Bible pops up.

EXT. BALCONY - HOTEL - DAY

WATSON

A bottle of champagne?... and a Bible?...

HOLMES

That's all that's left of H.M.S. Jonah.

He steps through the window as a puzzled Watson lowers the telescope.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Watson follows Holmes in from the balcony.

HOLMES

It would seem that somebody carelessly loosened the bolts of the submersible. What a fitting end for Trappists -- now they are resting in eternal silence at the bottom of the lake.

WATSON

(to Gabrielle)

Do you know what he's talking about?

Through the open doorway comes Mycroft. In the corridor behind him is one of his aides.

MYCROFT

Fraulein von Hoffmanstal?

GABRIELLE

Yes, Mr. Holmes. I'm all ready.

MYCROFT

If there's one thing I like about the Prussians, it's their punctuality.

GABRIELLE

If there's one thing I dislike about the British, it's their climate. I understand your jails are quite damp -- and your heating facilities totally inadequate.

MYCROFT

They are. But you're not going to jail. You're going back to Germany.

GABRIELLE

Germany?

MYCROFT

You will be conducted to the Swiss-German border, and be exchanged for one of our agents -- a man named Ibbetson.

GABRIELLE

Thank you.

MYCROFT

Don't thank me. Thank my brother. It was his idea.

Gabrielle looks at Holmes, but he avoids her eyes.

MYCROFT

(to Gabrielle)

Frankly, I think we are making a very poor deal. You much better than most operatives working for British intelligence.

(turning to Holmes)

Don't you agree, Sherlock?

HOLMES

(with a small but gallant bow to Gabrielle)

And better than some consulting detectives.

Mycroft signals to his aide, who comes in from the corridor and picks up Gabrielle's bag.

MYCROFT
 (to Gabrielle)
 Shall we?

GABRIELLE
 (reaching for parasol)
 I'll take that.
 (to Holmes and Watson)
 Gentlemen.

She turns and walks out the door, Mycroft following. Watson's bewilderment has now reached monumental proportions.

WATSON
 (folding his arms)
 All right, Holmes -- you don't have to explain anything to me, if you don't want to.

HOLMES
 I appreciate that, Watson.

WATSON
 After all, I'm only your official biographer --

HOLMES
 Anyway, I don't think she'd care to have this story spread all over Strand Magazine.

WATSON
 The public has a right to know these things. If she's a German spy, why should we concern ourselves about her feelings?

Holmes crosses to a small window overlooking the courtyard of the hotel, opens it, looks out.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Mycroft's aide comes out of the hotel with Gabrielle's suitcase, loads it into an open carriage waiting in front of the entrance. Gabrielle emerges, carrying her parasol, and accompanied by Mycroft. He helps her into the carriage, gets in beside her.

The aide joins the coachman, and the carriage drives off. Gabrielle does not look back toward the hotel.

EXT. SMALL WINDOW - HOTEL - DAY

Holmes is framed in the open window, watching the carriage. Watson comes up behind him.

WATSON

If I promised not to write a word about it, would you enlighten me? As your friend -- as your valet --

HOLMES

Quiet. I'm trying to read a personal message.

WATSON

A message?

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

The carriage is moving away from the hotel. Gabrielle has her parasol over her shoulder, and it opens and closes, opens and closes.

GABRIELLE - IN MOVING CARRIAGE - DAY

She continues to signal with the parasol, unnoticed by Mycroft.

EXT. SMALL WINDOW - HOTEL - DAY

Watson is straining forward to see out the window.

WATSON

What is she saying?

HOLMES

(slowly)
Auf Wiedersehn.

WATSON

Auf Weider---? The nerve!

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

The carriage disappears down an avenue of trees, Gabrielle's parasol still flashing its message.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BAKER STREET - DAY

There is snow on the ground, and drifts of it piled up along the curbs. Traffic is light. Householders are shovelling the snow off the sidewalks, and pedestrians are hurrying along bundled up against the cold.

INT. LIVING ROOM - 221B BAKER STREET - DAY

Holmes, in his dressing gown, and Watson, in his smoking jacket, are at the breakfast table. There is snow on the window-sills, and a cozy fire is burning in the grate. Watson is reading the morning paper. Holmes is sorting through his mail.

HOLMES

(holding up envelope)

H'mmm. A letter from the Diogenes Club.

WATSON

Maybe Mycroft is putting you up for membership.

HOLMES

If only to have the distinct pleasure of blackballing his brother.

He has slit open the envelope. Watson watches him curiously as he reads the letter, but Holmes' face remains expressionless. Slowly he puts down the letter, rises, crosses to the window, stands there staring out into the wintry street.

WATSON

Aren't you going to finish your breakfast?

Holmes doesn't answer. Watson takes a lump of sugar out of the bowl with a pair of tongs, drops it into his coffee.

Then glancing over his shoulder to make sure Holmes isn't watching, he swivels the letter around with the tongs. It is written on Diogenes Club stationery, and reads:

9th December, 1888

Dear Sherlock,

My sources in Tokyo inform me that Ilse von Hoffmanstal was arrested last week by the Japanese counter-intelligence service for spying on naval installations in Yokohama harbour. After a secret trial, she was summarily executed by a firing squad.

It might interest you to know that

The page ends at this point. Watson turns the sheet of paper over with the tongs. The letter continues on the other side.

she had been living in Japan these past few months under the name of Mrs. Ashdown.

Sincerely,

Mycroft

Watson looks toward Holmes, who is still standing with his back to the room, gets up from the table.

WATSON

Holmes -- I'm terribly sorry about this.

HOLMES

(quietly, without turning)
Where is it, Watson?

WATSON

(after a beat)
In the files. May to July, 1885.

Holmes turns to the bookshelves above the desk. From a row of similar volumes, he slides out the three files marked MAY, JUNE, and JULY 1885. Actually, it's the medical bag, standing on end, with the spines of three volumes pasted on the bottom.

HOLMES

You're getting better.

He sets the bag down on the desk, opens it, takes out a bottle of cocaine. Watson watches him with compassion as he crosses to his bedroom with his cocaine, goes in, shuts the door.

Footsteps are heard hurrying up the stairs, and after a moment there is a knock on the door. Watson approaches the door, opens it to reveal INSPECTOR LESTRADE -- a short, nervous man whose features are sharper than his mind. He is wearing an overcoat, his bowler is in his hands, and his fingers are drumming on the crown.

LESTRADE

Good morning, Watson.

(stepping in)

Just happened to be in the neighborhood, and I thought --

WATSON

What is it this time, Inspector Lestrade?

LESTRADE

We've had three rather nasty murders in Whitechapel. All ladies of easy virtue. You may read something about it -- the newspapers are referring to the killer as Jack the Ripper.

WATSON

Yes, I think I have.

LESTRADE

Some of us at Scotland Yard were wondering if perhaps Mr. Holmes would be willing to --

WATSON

(a glance toward the bedroom)

I'm sorry, Lestrade. But at the moment, Holmes is working on another problem.

LESTRADE

(trying to hide his disappointment)

Oh... Well, I just thought it was the kind of case that might interest him. I dare say we can solve it without his help.

WATSON

Oh, I'm sure you will.

From Holmes' bedroom comes the sound of a melancholy tune being played on the violin. Watson starts to ease Lestrade out of the door.

WATSON

Good day, Lestrade.

He shuts the door after him, listens to the sound of the violin for a moment. Then he crosses to the wicker chair, seats himself. He takes some sheets of paper out of the rack and places them on the writing arm, dips his pen in the inkwell, starts to write.

The violin music continues OVER SCENE, infinitely romantic, infinitely sad.

FADE OUT.

THE END