

MORIARTY'S REVENGE

A COMEDY IN TWO ACTS

By Christopher Burruto

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SYNOPSIS: Sherlock Holmes is the world's greatest detective...or is he? Imagine if the greatest detective was in fact just an actor HIRED by the REAL brains behind the sleuthing: Dr. Watson! In this imaginative alternate version, Sherlock Holmes is a bumbling, inept actor simply playing the role of the great detective while behind the scenes, Dr. Watson and his fiancée, Catherine, crack the clues.

The play begins with Professor Moriarty being sentenced to prison. He vows retribution against Sherlock Holmes, who summarily quits. Watson and Catherine must audition new Sherlock Holmeses—not always an easy task. Eventually, they find their man, but in the meantime, Moriarty escapes from prison, and plots his elaborate revenge—aided by someone you'll never suspect!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(6 MEN, 3-4 WOMEN, 10-11 EITHER, EXTRAS)

JUDGE (m/f).....	Voiceover. (5 lines)
PROF. JAMES MORIARTY (m).....	The Napoleon of Crime. Played in an over the top manner. (79 lines)
INSPECTOR (m).....	One of Scotland Yard's finest! Should wear a policeman's overcoat and hat. (30 lines)
SHERLOCK HOLMES (m).....	Charlie VanVoodlemyer. He's the first actor who plays Sherlock Holmes. He quits after Moriarty vows revenge on him. (17 lines)
DR. JAMES WATSON (m).....	The real sleuth. Dr. Watson is the brains behind the famous detective agency. (183 lines)
NEWSIE 1 (m/f).....	(5 lines)
NEWSIE 2 (m/f).....	(5 lines)

- CATHERINE (f)..... Watson's fiancée. She is smart and ambitious. She wishes that she was the object of Watson's formidable powers of observation. She eventually turns against him, helping Moriarty escape from prison, inventing the role of Leotold Monte, and eventually skedaddling with the ransom money. Can also play Leotold in disguise. (38 lines)
- GUARD 1 (m/f)..... Bumbling guards played for comic fun. You could have the same two guards, or more. (74 lines)
- GUARD 2 (m/f)..... Bumbling guards played for comic fun. You could have the same two guards, or more. (57 lines)
- JENKINS (m/f)..... A guard. (7 lines)
- MYSTERIOUS GUARD (m/f)..... A mysterious guard. (1 line)
- GUARD 3 (m/f)..... A guard. (1 line)
- GUARD 4 (m/f)..... A guard. (No lines)
- BUBBLES THE CLOWN (m/f)..... An inept applicant for the role of Sherlock Holmes. The name says it all. (1 line)
- PHINEAS (FINNY) (m)..... An actor who auditions for the role of Sherlock Holmes and wins the part. Not the sharpest tool in the detective drawer. (14 lines; As *HOLMES*: 145 lines)
- MRS. ESSEX (f)..... Holmes' and Watson's landlady. She is played broadly. If she can use a thick accent, all the better. (43 lines)

MORIARTY'S REVENGE

- KLAATU (m/f).....Moriarty's comic side kick.
Played very broadly. A cross
between Igor, from Young
Frankenstein and Kramer, from
Seinfeld. He is both a person
AND a thing; he lives under the
streets, not on them... (64 lines)
- LEOTOLD (f).....A fabrication of Catherine's.
This could be played by the
same actress as Catherine, or by
another. (27 lines)
- CONDUCTOR (m).....(2 lines)
- OLD LADY (f).....(3 lines)
- EXTRAS (m/f).....(No lines)

NOTE: Three "prisoner" roles throughout the play are meant to be played by teachers from your school.

DO NOT

ACT ONE, SCENE 1
A PRISON

AT RISE:

MORIARTY, in prison garb, stands between two guards, who hold him.

JUDGE: *(Voiceover.)* James Moriarty, Prisoner No. 4186. The sentencing board has reviewed your case, your probability for rehabilitation, and your threat to the City of London and to Her Majesty's people. The Board further has researched your case history and your past transgressions—

MORIARTY: THIS is a transgression! An abomination!

JUDGE: *(Voiceover continuing.)* After careful, deliberate and thoughtful consideration, the board has unanimously decided to sentence you—

MORIARTY: You have NO AUTHORITY! I am Professor James Moriarty!

JUDGE: *(Voiceover. Louder.)* —to prison for your crimes. The sentence shall not be less than 499 years...

MORIARTY: I am greater than DaVinci! Galileo! Copernicus!

JUDGE: *(Voiceover.)* You, "Professor," shall spend the rest of your life in prison. Without the possibility of parole.

MORIARTY: *(Resisting. Maniacal.)* Fools! You think prison walls can contain me? *(As he is being led off.)* Where are you, Sherlock Holmes? I know you're there! I will creep into your dreams, Holmes! I will find you! I will drag your soul into the pit of my own despair! *(He laughs maniacally.)*

JUDGE: *(Voiceover.)* Take him away!

The police grab MORIARTY and drag him—protesting—off stage. MORIARTY laughs maniacally.

MORIARTY: Holmes! *(He is dragged off.)* Holmes!

LIGHTS DOWN.

MORIARTY'S REVENGE

Lights up on another part of the stage. SHERLOCK HOLMES, DR. WATSON, and POLICE INSPECTOR stand in a group.

INSPECTOR: That was a messy business. But good work. (*HOLMES bows.*) We couldn't have done it without your diligent work. Yours too, Dr. Watson. (*WATSON bows.*) Thank you.

HOLMES: We thank you, Inspector.

WATSON: It was a most taxing case, indeed.

INSPECTOR: Moriarty will never see the outside of prison again. Given his intelligence and determination, I'm sure he is already plotting his escape. (*HOLMES looks ill at ease, and gulps.*)

WATSON: I understand, Inspector, that his prison cell is considered "escape proof."

INSPECTOR: That's right. It is equipped with all the latest technologies. (*Counting off with his fingers.*) Bars of solid titanium. Cell windows 30 feet above the floor. The only entrance is a door of six-inch solid oak. It will be guarded at all times. And he will be chained to the floor at all times. He will not escape.

HOLMES: Moriarty is a crafty and very determined man...

WATSON: (*Departing.*) Inspector... (*They shake hands.*)

INSPECTOR: Gentlemen, again, thank you for your work. The streets—no doubt—are safer tonight.

HOLMES: Indeed. (*Bows. Departing.*)

LIGHTS DOWN.

**ACT ONE, SCENE 2
STREET SCENE**

On each side of the stage are NEWSIES dressed in knickers and caps, hawking the day's papers. People buy papers and read.

NEWSIE 1: Paper here! Paper! Professor Moriarty in prison! Has 499 year lease on prison cell!

NEWSIE 2: Moriarty vows revenge! Sherlock Holmes told "Beware"!

NEWSIE 1: Paper here! Moriarty vows to escape! Wants retribution!

NEWSIE 2: Absolution!

NEWSIE 1: Criminal-ution!

NEWSIE 2: Revenge solution! Get your paper here!

NEWSIES: Paper here!

ACT ONE, SCENE 3
221B BAKER STREET

A sitting room. As lights rise, we see "HOLMES" busy packing a bag. We see his famous coat and hat sitting prominently upon a table. WATSON enters. They look at one another. There is a long pause.

WATSON: Sherlock... You're not thinking of—

HOLMES: Resigning? Elementary, my dear Watson! I'm outta here!
And please...don't call me Sherlock Holmes ever again! Okay?

WATSON: Holmes, you— (*HOLMES gives WATSON a withering look.*) Charlie...what's this all about?

HOLMES: I signed up for this...this "performance" for a little fun and adventure. Pay the bills! I didn't sign up to be the victim of revenge by a homicidal maniac! No, sir. I quit.

WATSON: (*Pleading.*) You can't quit...

HOLMES: Then I resign. Call it whatever you want! But I've given my last performance. The curtain has dropped on THIS actor! Find someone else to wear this ridiculous hat and pipe! Find another actor to play Sherlock Holmes!

WATSON: But you fit the suit! The hat!

HOLMES: It's over!

WATSON: Charlie! You're the best Sherlock I've ever had! The cases we've solved! Putting Moriarty away was a triumph! A tribute! To your acting! Your talent!

HOLMES: (*More calmly.*) Watson...James...I just want to go back to living a normal life. Using my real name.

WATSON: Um... (*He forgot it.*)

HOLMES: VanVoodlemeyer! Charlie VanVoodlemeyer!

WATSON: Right! Listen... Can't you stay at least until I get a replacement?

HOLMES: (*Pause.*) My last day is...WAS (*checks watch.*) ten minutes ago.

WATSON: Think of all—

HOLMES: *(Softer.)* James, I appreciate all you've done for me. I was just another unemployed actor waiting tables when you discovered me. You gave me a great role—Sherlock Holmes. And I'm grateful. But I draw the line at revenge, murder and mayhem. And the painful death part.

HOLMES: Isn't there anything I can—

WATSON: No. *(He breathes out.)* I feel better already. Goodbye, James.

He takes suitcase. They shake hands. HOLMES exits. CATHERINE enters...

CATHERINE: I didn't mean to eavesdrop...

HOLMES: Catherine, of course not.

CATHERINE: James, is he...

HOLMES: *(Shaking his head.)* He's not coming back...

CATHERINE: *(Pause.)* Back to the drawing board?

HOLMES: *(Sighs.)* ...The drawing board...

CATHERINE: Charlie seemed to be such a good fit... James... Why not work by yourself? You're the brains behind—

HOLMES: *(Holds up hand.)* I know. But the world needs its Sherlock Holmes. The name alone gives people a sense of safety and well-being...

CATHERINE: You know, James... I could play Sherlock... I am an experienced actress, good at disguises...

WATSON: *(Puts up his hand.)* Catherine, my dear... No one would ever be fooled into thinking that my lovely fiancée was the world's foremost detective! We have to find ourselves a new Sherlock Holmes...

ACT ONE, SCENE 4
THE PRISON

We hear a lamenting song. "Yes, we have no bananas we have no bananas today." It is MORIARTY.

MORIARTY: *(As if he's been singing a long, long time.)* Yes, we have no bananas, we have no bananas today.

GUARD 1: Shut up, you!

GUARD 2: Who? Me? Who are YOU to tell ME to shut up? I'm head guard!

GUARD 1: Not YOU! I'm talking to the prisoner. That infernal singing all the time. Day in. Day out. It's getting to me.

GUARD 2: Kind of has a catchy melody. Stays with you... "Yes, we 'ave no bananas, we have no—"

GUARD 1: Shut up! And I DO mean YOU this time!

GUARD 2: Someone's a little cross today.

A third GUARD, JENKINS, and a fourth, MYSTERIOUS GUARD, enter. They have a "prisoner"—a teacher.

GUARD 1: Who goes there?

GUARD 2: Who goes there?

GUARD 1: Who GOES there?

TOGETHER: WHO GOES THERE!

JENKINS: I go here. It's me, Jenkins. We're here to relieve you.

GUARD 1: Relieve me? I just went to the little guard's room two minutes ago—

JENKINS: Relieve you of DUTY! You're to take this prisoner to sector four, cell-block Q.

GUARDS: Did you say... Cell block *(Both guards look at one another, frightened.)* Q?

GUARD 1: The Q? You certain? Cell block...Q?

JENKINS: Cell Block Q. That's what I said.

GUARD 1: *(Gulping, visibly frightened.)* Cell Block Q! The WORST, most dangerous criminals of all time are held there.

GUARD 2: The lowest of the low.

JENKINS: Take Mr. Gephardt *(Or another teacher.)* there.

GUARD 1: *(Stuttering.)* W-W-What's he done?

JENKINS: You name it! *(Ticking off on his fingers.)* Too much homework! Too many tests! Practical jokes. Plus, he smells like cheese.

GUARD 1: Where is it?

GUARD 2: How do we get there?

JENKINS: *(Demonstrating.)* Take this corridor all the way down. Then a left, then another left. If you hear the sound of screams and torture, you've gone too far. Then a right. Down a long flight of stairs. Past the museum of torture. It's the first chamber AFTER the soft-serve ice cream stand.

GUARDS: *(Together.)* Got it!

JENKINS: *(Stretching arms.)* I'm going to take a little nap in the guard room. You okay here for awhile?

MYSTERIOUS GUARD gives thumbs up. JENKINS exits. MYSTERIOUS GUARD looks both ways, then backs up to the prison door.

MYSTERIOUS GUARD: Psst...

MORIARTY'S face is seen. Hands reach through the bars and begin to choke MYSTERIOUS GUARD, but quickly, fingers maneuver over face, as if trying to identify the person.

MORIARTY: Hmm... Yours is not a face I recognize...

The MYSTERIOUS GUARD passes a letter through the bars. Two more GUARDS amble across talking. The hands on MYSTERIOUS GUARD'S head freeze. GUARDS walk another "prisoner" by. It's another teacher.

GUARD 3: Afternoon!

GUARDS exit. MORIARTY'S face appears yet again.

MORIARTY: I don't know who you are...but if you can get me out of here, your reward will be great... I will see you soon, my mysterious ally.

LIGHTS DOWN.

ACT ONE, SCENE 5
221B BAKER STREET

WATSON is seated in a chair, pensively watching a clown do tricks.

WATSON: Very...convincing, Mr. uh... *(Looking at resume.)*

BUBBLES: Bubbles. Bubbles the Clown...

WATSON: Uh. Thank you. I'll be in touch.

BUBBLES THE CLOWN exits. After about five seconds, CATHERINE enters.

CATHERINE: A clown? *(Laughing.)* Oh, James! Really!

HOLMES: What could I do? Bubbles is the only one who responded to my ad!

CATHERINE: Don't be discouraged... You'll find another Sherlock...

WATSON: If I don't, I will have to face the unavoidable fact that I am a failure as a detective...

CATHERINE: But if you branched out on your own...I could play Sherlock...

WATSON: My dear...

CATHERINE: I'm an experienced actress—deft enough to fool criminals and Scotland Yard...

WATSON: My dear...I need someone with strength and courage. Someone with personality. Charisma. Someone who can pull off the role of the greatest detective the world has ever seen.

CATHERINE: But *you* are the greatest detective in the world. Doesn't it bother you that the world doesn't know that?

WATSON: *(He smiles.)* Not very often. But when you're solving crimes, finding the truth is the only thing that matters.

A knock at the door. CATHERINE and HOLMES look at one another. CATHERINE leaves stage to open the door. And actor, FINNY, comes blustering in.

WATSON: May I—?

FINNY: Phineas Rogers Carbunkle-Hodges. At your service...

WATSON: Thank you... Can I help yo—

FINNY: *(Over the top acting.)* "The raging rocks, and shivering shocks, Shall break the locks of foolish fates!"

WATSON: I see.

FINNY: "To be...or not TO BE! THAT is the QUEST. Shun."

CATHERINE and WATSON look at one another.

FINNY: *(Pause.)* Life is not just a quest, but...a question. It is a journey in which we *(Beat.)* interrogate the universe...

WATSON: Right.

FINNY: *(Ticking them off on his fingers.)* Summer-stock *Shakespeare at the Mall*. Three weeks on a Caribbean cruise ship as Rum Tum Tugger. AND...CSI: NY—I played a water-logged dead guy...and let me see, what else about me...

WATSON: *(Pause.)* I see that you're left-handed, but play guitar. You were born about 100 miles north of here in Darbyshire—

CATHERINE and WATSON engage almost in a competitive banter.

CATHERINE: —and you've just been, in the last day or so, mining coal.

FINNY: How do you—?

CATHERINE: Elementary, dear Finny!

WATSON: Your accent places you in a small town north of here—

CATHERINE: —there is an ink stain on your left hand, common to left-handers when they are wont to write.

WATSON: Your fingertips are calloused like those of a guitar player—

CATHERINE: —and there is coal dust still upon the tops of your work boots...

FINNY: Amazing!

WATSON: Elemen...tary. *(He looks at CATHERINE, realizing she's already said it.)*

FINNY: And...who are you?

WATSON: Watson!

FINNY: *(Louder.)* "And your name is?"

WATSON: "WATSON!"

FINNY: This is going to take all night, isn't it? I said, *(Louder.)* and you are?

WATSON: *(Extending hand to shake.)* Dr. James Watson. This is Catherine, my fiancée...

FINNY: The ad states an acting job...what is it exactly?

WATSON: You would be playing a detective. The greatest detective the world has ever known—

FINNY: This. Looks. So. Cool! Would I get to wear this?

He has placed the great detective's hat upon his head.

FINNY: And these too? Would I get to wear these?

He puts on cloak and hat and the full regalia for HOLMES.

FINNY: How do I look?

There is a ruckus off-stage.

ALL: Who is it?

ESSEX enters angry and blustering.

ESSEX: You know dern well who 'tis, and it would behoove youse to open t'door.

WATSON: Mrs. Essex! *(Aside to HOLMES.)* Our nefarious landlady...

ESSEX: See here! I don't cotton to passwords or secret handshakes in ma house. And don't give me no sauce, or I'll give you a bellyful of aches upside the head! (*FINNY and WATSON look at each other in confusion.*) Now if'n yer such great detectives, tell me why I've come?

FINNY now assumes the role of SHERLOCK HOLMES.

HOLMES: You've got a case for us to solve!

ESSEX: (*Brightens, exaggerated kindness.*) That's right! A case that needs solvin'. It's called (*Loudly and angrily.*) where's ma disappearin' rent money? You know the name of that tune, now don' ya?

HOLMES: I can name that tune in five notes...

WATSON: Shhh...

ESSEX: If I don't get some rent money soon, you're all out on your skidattles...

WATSON: Our what?

ESSEX: Skiddattles— (*To CATHERINE.*) Pardon me...

HOLMES: Skiddattles...sounds like it would hurt...

ESSEX: I'm afraid it would!

WATSON: Now, now, Mrs. Essex...Don't be afraid.

HOLMES: We have nothing to fear but fear itself!

WATSON: Thank you so much for visiting, it's been such a—

HOLMES: —pleasant...surprise!

BOTH: Come again soon! (*They push her out the door.*)

WATSON: We just don't see enough of you...

HOLMES: Except around the waist! (*She's gone.*)

ESSEX: (*Then pops head back in.*) But what about all the ruckus! And the money?

WATSON: Anytime you wish to make a ruckus, you have our permission.

WATSON: It's your house! Don't worry.

HOLMES: Be happy!

BOTH: Ta ta! (*They usher out MRS. ESSEX.*)

THEY BOTH heave a sigh of relief. That was exhausting.

WATSON: You're hired!

HOLMES: I accept!

They say this almost at the same time; they shake hands.

ACT ONE, SCENE 6
THE PRISON

GUARD 1: This one's quiet.

GUARD 2: *(Beat.)* As a church mouse.

GUARD 1: Ever see one? *(Pause.)* Church mouse?

GUARD 2: Nope. Never did.

GUARD 1: What makes them so quiet. And pious? You know. As opposed to other mice. Other mice are quiet. You don't hear them squeaking around...

The INSPECTOR enters.

GUARD 1: Who goes there?

GUARD 2: Who goes there!

TOGETHER: WHO GOES THERE?

INSPECTOR: Stand down... How's the prisoner?

GUARD 1: Quiet.

GUARD 2: As a mouse. A CHURCH mouse.

GUARD 1: That means REAL quiet, Inspector.

GUARD 2: Quieter than other mouses.

GUARD 1: Who are naturally, by their deceptive nature, quiet, so that means—

INSPECTOR: *(Shouting.)* I know what it means!

GUARD 1: Right!

GUARD 2: Right!

The INSPECTOR peers in to the prison chamber.

GUARD 1: Quiet...

GUARD 2: Not a peep!

GUARD 1: Or a cheep.

GUARD 2: Or a beep.

INSPECTOR: (*Alarmed.*) Where is he?

GUARD 1: Oh, he's that lump in the corner over there.

GUARD 2: I thought he was that pile of stink over there...

GUARD 1: Mr. Moriarty? Professor? Time for dinner!

GUARD 2: We've got some real nice soft-serve ice cream...

GUARD 1: Yoo hoo... Professor...

INSPECTOR: We're going in! Arm yourselves...

The two GUARDS throw their arms out.

GUARD 1: Already got some!

GUARD 2: Right here!

INSPECTOR: Imbeciles. Give me the keys!

GUARD 2 searches his pockets for keys... Desperately.

GUARD 2: Um...George?

GUARD 1: What is it, Henry?

GUARD 2: You got the keys?

The other GUARD does the same thing, rummaging in his pockets for the keys...

GUARD 1: I thought you had 'em.

GUARD 2: I thought YOU had them!

GUARD 1: Must have lost them. Last night...

GUARD 2: When that guard transferred prisoner 9386.

INSPECTOR: Prisoner? 9386?

GUARD 1: Ugly fellow. Big. Lumbering oaf...

GUARD 2: UGLY! Smelled bad, too. A teacher... We took him to sector Q!

INSPECTOR: You did what?

GUARD 1: Took him to sector Q

GUARD 2: Sector Q!

INSPECTOR: Idiots! We don't HAVE a SECTOR Q!

BOTH: Wha—?

GUARD 2: But we...

GUARD 1: What do you know? No wonder we had such trouble finding the...well, no matter!

INSPECTOR: Idiots! Moriarty has escaped!. Sound the alarm. Ring Scotland Yard. I'll have your badges for this!

INSPECTOR runs off.

GUARD 1: Wow. He's mad... He's done spoiled my day!

GUARD 2: Angry...

GUARD 1: Not very good about hiding it! Probably the reason he's so cranky!

GUARD 2: If there's no sector Q, then...

GUARD 1: What happened to the prisoner we brought down there?

They stare at audience, then shrug their shoulders.

GUARD 1: *(As they exit.)* I'll sound the alarm. You ring up Scotland Yard.

GUARD 2: Why do YOU always get to sound the alarm? You did it last time.

GUARD 1: We're in trouble, ain't we?

GUARD 2: Aye... Trouble with a capital T-RUBBLE. Maybe we should just SKI-daddle...

GUARD 1: I'm with you... Lead the way, McDuff...

They exit in a sneaky hurry.

ACT ONE, SCENE 7 STREET SCENE

PARTIAL STAGE. People on stage reading newspapers... In the center are two with newspapers in front of their faces...

NEWSIE 1: Paper here! Get your paper here!

NEWSIE 2: Moriarty escapes! City wide manhunt!

NEWSIE 3: Moriarty escapes from maximum security prison!

NEWSIE 1: Moriarty vows to get Sherlock, Watson!

NEWSIE 2: Moriarty escapes, film at 11!

NEWSIE 3: President Palin resigns...cites busy lecture tour...

ALL NEWSIES: Paper here! Get your paper here! Paper here! Get your paper here!

LIGHTS DOWN.

**ACT ONE, SCENE 8
221B BAKER STREET**

HOLMES: So...all I have to do is act the part? Do I...I mean, I hate to ask...

WATSON: We divide reward monies 50/50, right down the middle—

HOLMES: No, I mean...

WATSON: Major medical? Yes. 401K, yes!

HOLMES: *(Pause.)* Do I get to wear this cool hat?

WATSON: Yes...

The doorbell rings.

WATSON: Hmm. Where's Catherine? Come in!

HOLMES: Sounds easy enough. You do the thinking. I do the acting. You're the brains, and I'm—

The INSPECTOR enters.

WATSON: Ah...Inspector Fagan. From Scotland Yard. *(To HOLMES, seriously.)* The curtain rises on your first performance. *(To INSPECTOR.)* What brings you—

INSPECTOR: Gentlemen. Watson. *(Looks at HOLMES surprised.)* Holmes?

The INSPECTOR looks at SHERLOCK as if there is something asked. Like he's seeing him for the first time.

WATSON: Inspector?

INSPECTOR: I say, Holmes, have you lost weight?

HOLMES: *(Flattered.)* It's that new South Beach Diet.

The INSPECTOR measures himself against HOLMES.

INSPECTOR: I could have sworn.,,

WATSON: You forget, my good Inspector, that Holmes is a master of disguise...if he wanted to appear to you as an old woman, or a...a...

HOLMES: Termite!

WATSON: *(Beat.)* You would be none the wiser.

HOLMES: Inspector, you appear to have something preoccupying your faculties.

When the INSPECTOR turns away from HOLMES, HOLMES gives WATSON the “thumbs up.”

INSPECTOR: Very perceptive of you, Holmes. Have you seen this morning's paper? *(He gives it.)*

HOLMES: Newcastle lost to Smithtown! Again!

CATHERINE: You don't seem worried. At all?

HOLMES: Should I be? We've got a good team!

INSPECTOR: *(Looks to WATSON.)* I say, you do have a spine of steel, Holmes! Courageous! Most people would be shaking in their boots.

HOLMES: *(Seriously.)* My boots fit as tightly as they ever did...

INSPECTOR: My hat's off to you.

HOLMES: And mine *(He doffs the iconic hat on his head.)* is ready to go on at a moment's notice!

INSPECTOR: Bravo, Holmes! Bravo! That's just the ticket! Good to know! I'll tell Scotland Yard you're on the case, in spite of the imminent threat of death! Thank you. I'll let myself out!

CATHERINE enters.

CATHERINE: Inspector...

INSPECTOR: Catherine. Just on my way out... You've got two very brave lads there! Very brave, indeed!

CATHERINE: Thanks you, sir... Good day...

INSPECTOR exits. HOLMES continues to page through paper.

HOLMES: Watson...did you see this article? A Professor Moriarty has escaped from jail. And has vowed revenge...on the guy who put him away!

WATSON clears throat.

CATHERINE: I'll make some tea...

WATSON: *(Concerned.)* Holmes...

HOLMES: This Professor Moriarty. What does he teach?

WATSON: Teach?

HOLMES: What I mean, is, what's he a professor OF exactly?

WATSON: He's a master criminal! Professor Moriarty is the Napoleon of Crime!

HOLMES: He's a PROFESSOR? Of crime? That's a college MAJOR? Our educational system has really gone downhill, hasn't it? *(CATHERINE and WATSON react.)* We can't have kids majoring in crime! Like THAT'S a good idea! *(Mockingly.)* Look at me! I majored in safe-cracking with a minor in armed robbery!

WATSON: He's called the Professor because he has a diabolical and cunning mind...

HOLMES: *(Nodding.)* Of course! Like all teachers!

WATSON: Holmes. He escaped from prison. The prison Sherlock Holmes sent him to after his last diabolical caper.

HOLMES: *(Clueless.)* Oh...

WATSON: And he's seeking...revenge...

HOLMES: *(Quietly. It just sunk in... Stuttering.)* Against Shh...Shh...Sherlock Holmes...?

It takes a second for the news to sink in, when it does, HOLMES panics.

HOLMES: But... *(Breathing hard.)* I didn't...I mean...whoa...

WATSON: Don't worry...we put him away before, and we'll do it again...

HOLMES: But I...

CATHERINE: Breathe... Breathe...

WATSON: We'll be alert! Extra cautious! Keep our eyes peeled!

HOLMES: Peeled? He's going to peel my eyes? Oh. I hate that! I don't wanna have my eyes peeled!

CATHERINE: Breathe...breathe...

As the lights fade.

HOLMES: Seriously. No peeling of the eyes. Or the lids. Or skin. Nothing really. The less of me peeled, the better...

**ACT ONE, SCENE 9
MORIARTY'S LAIR**

KLAATU sits in a chair which has seen better times. Thunder peals in the distance, and KLAATU eagerly seeks the prize inside a cereal box. He digs but has trouble finding it.

KLAATU: *(Digging.)* Where are you, my tiny little prize? Drat! *(Struggling.)* My hand. Is. Stuck. Why do they put cereal in these things anyway?

MORIARTY enters unseen. KLAATU freezes. He doesn't even have to turn around. He senses MORIARTY'S presence.

KLAATU: I feel a presence I have not felt for some time. My old master, Obi Wan— No...

KLAATU sniffs the air, waves his hand in front of him to waft up the fumes.

KLAATU: A slightly acidic air, the smell of charcoal and kerosene, a hint of lavender, and the unmistakable odor of...yes! HIGH KARATE! MASTER'S COME HOME!

MORIARTY: *(Angrily.)* Klaatu...

KLAATU: I don't even like cereal!

MORIARTY: Yes... Many boxes of cereal, but without prizes. Like a body without a soul, eh, Klaatu...

KLAATU: You would know, Master!

MORIARTY: *(Sniffing box.)* Ah...toasted wheat. A scent of honey and oats linger in the air. Expiration date March 26, NO! April 1st, and at the bottom right, by your index finger, is the toy prize you so desperately seek! It is a brass compass, which points due east...

KLAATU moves his hand to the direction indicated. Look of surprise and delight passes eyes and he withdraws hand with prize.

KLAATU: You are magnificent! An absolute Kreskin! How do you—?

MORIARTY: Elementary, my dear Klaatu! I. Am. MORIARTY!

KLAATU: 'Nuff said.

MORIARTY: My chair!

KLAATU: Ummm. I, yes...your chair. I'm sorry!

MORIARTY: NEVER sit in my chair!

KLAATU: Not the chair...

MORIARTY: Don't go near it...

KLAATU: Stay... Far away...

MORIARTY: I don't even want you to look at it. Is that clear?

KLAATU: Clear, oh cankered souled master.

MORIARTY: Where are my things? Get them...

KLAATU: People magazine? Check! Snooki's on the cover! NY Times crossword...and...your favorite musical...CATS.

TOGETHER: *(Singing.)*

MEMORY, ALL ALONE IN THE MOONLIGHT...

KLAATU: And...Mr. Snuggins! *(Hands him stuffed animal.)*

MORIARTY sits in chair and is waited upon by KLAATU, who brings an ottoman, a pipe and the newspaper.

MORIARTY: We are going to even the score with a Mr. Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson.

KLAATU: Before we kill them, could we have the doctor look at this boil? *(Starts to take off his socks.)* It's really causing me a lot of—

MORIARTY: Klaatu! *(KLAATU stops. MORIARTY gestures to the audience.)* Lots of impressionable young minds out there. You can't un-ring the bell from a visit to the ugly farm...

KLAATU: Sorry... As you were saying, my overzealous, overacting master friend? And... *(Punches him playfully on the shoulder.)* good chum?

MORIARTY: Sherlock Holmes is crimping my *(Beat.)* style. And that other guy!

KLAATU: Who guy?

MORIARTY: Watson!

KLAATU: Did you just call me “son”? Oh, Daddy!

MORIARTY: KLAATU! When did the warranty on your lobotomy expire?

KLAATU: *(He checks his watch.)* Tuesday. As you were saying?

MORIARTY: Holmes! And—

KLAATU: Watson—the guy with Holmes? His analog of goodness to my own of evil... For every yin there is a yang, *(Sings.)*

AND A TIME FOR EVERY SEASON UNDER HEAVEN

MORIARTY: Klaatu... It's time...time to extract my sweet revenge! This time, we have an ally... Klaatu...a mysterious benefactor who will help us achieve sweet revenge. And help us pave the way for world domination! Klaatu! Listen! Do you hear that?

KLAATU: *(Anxious and paranoid.)* What? Where? Huh?

MORIARTY: Listen!

KLAATU strains his ears and hearing.

KLAATU: Oh, you mean that baby crying in the third row? *(He points.)*

MORIARTY: No. *(MORIARTY cups KLAATU'S ear.)* It's the sound of freedom. And the sound of sweet revenge! *(Dramatic beat.)*

KLAATU: Ohhhh...BOY! This is going to be so great!

MORIARTY: Klaatu, FETCH THE HORSES!

KLAATU: *(Excited, scrambling.)* Fetch the horses!

MORIARTY: BRING ME MY SACHEL!

KLAATU: Getting the satchel!

MORIARTY: *(Slowly. Ominously.)* Bring me...My. BLACK! BOOK!

KLAATU: *(Shuddering.)* Did you say—? The BLACK BOOK? *(Wailing.)* No! Anything! Anything but the BLACK BOOK book. Must we?

MORIARTY: Yes!

KLAATU: (*KLAATU cowers.*) Are you sure—?

MORIARTY: YES!

KLAATU: Oh, the humanity! (*He cowers, then changes.*) Eh... They'll get over it!

MORIARTY: (*Very dramatic.*) Now...go to the bathroom!

KLAATU: But I don't have to... (*Stern look from MORIARTY.*) Ewww. I do now...

They exit.

ACT ONE, SCENE 10
221B BAKER STREET

WATSON, sitting in a chair with pipe in mouth, doing an experiment or reading a book or newspaper. CATHERINE enters.

CATHERINE pours tea for WATSON.

WATSON: Thank you my dear.

CATHERINE is about to exit. She stops.

CATHERINE: Aren't you going to ask me what I've been doing?

WATSON: I...I...um...

CATHERINE: Aren't you going to say... "You've been darning my socks again and reading the newspaper." And then I'm supposed to say, "James! How—?" And then you say, "Elementary, my dear Catherine! The Band-Aids upon your fingers suggest work with a sharp implement, and your fingers, including the Band-Aids, are smeared with printer's ink..."

WATSON smiles, not realizing the slight edge to her voice.

CATHERINE: I'll get the door...

We hear a knock.

CATHERINE: It's Holmes...

WATSON: But...

It's an interesting knock, like a secret code.

WATSON: How...?

CATHERINE: Elementary, my dear Watson... *(She exits.)*

WATSON: That woman! Amazing!

HOLMES enters.

HOLMES: Look at what I found at the front door!

It is a walking cane.

WATSON: Hmm. What can we deduce about the owner of said walking stick?

HOLMES: Allow me! The owner of this particular walking stick is a male, about 6 foot 4. Has blond hair, green eyes. And...is a Pisces... He enjoys long walks on the beach and *(Beat.)* buffalo-style—

WATSON: Chicken wings?

HOLMES: No! Polka music!

WATSON: *(Laughs.)* Holmes, you are partially correct. *(He stands.)*

The owner of this walking stick is indeed male. Perhaps young to middle-aged. The walking stick has seen much use, but no dirt or mud, so I must deduce that this indicates a city dweller. He is right-handed, is wealthy, but perhaps has fallen upon hard times.

HOLMES: How?

WATSON: The insignia suggests someone of wealth and status. It is brass with gold inlays. But it is quite worn; whomever owns it could not afford to have it replaced. He will no doubt be soon entering our humble parlor...

HOLMES: How can you be so sure?

WATSON: If I am correct, he has just seen the renowned Sherlock Holmes enter the dwelling and will most likely be knocking upon our door in *(Counting.)* three...two...one...

MORIARTY'S REVENGE

There is a knock at the door.

WATSON: Catherine? Hmm... A moment, Holmes...

WATSON exits then enters with LEOTOLD (bearded) who slumps down into the chair. LEOTOLD is actually CATHERINE in disguise. The actor COULD be the same as the one playing CATHERINE or another.

LEOTOLD: Am I in the presence of the great detective Sherlock Holmes?

HOLMES stands there, not realizing he is being addressed.

WATSON: You are...

LEOTOLD: *(Breathless.)* I...have a case...

HOLMES: Go on...

LEOTOLD: *(Stuttering.)* I need your help in solving a murder...

WATSON: Murder?

HOLMES: Who's?

LEOTOLD: Mine!

LEOTOLD slumps in chair, grabs his chest, and slides out of the chair onto the ground.

LIGHTS DOWN.

**ACT ONE, SCENE 11
221B BAKER STREET**

LIGHTS UP.

HOLMES: *(Pointing.)* Dead guy! Dead guy!

WATSON checks pulse.

WATSON: Calm yourself.

HOLMES: Live! Breathe! Join the grand parade of humanity!

WATSON: (*Slapping cheeks of LEOTOLD a little.*) He's coming around...

Thunder cracks.

HOLMES: Are you sure?

WATSON: I'm a DOCTOR!

WATSON slaps his cheeks... He revives.

LEOTOLD: Thank you. My name is Leotold Monte. My father was the late James Monte. Of Monte Hall.

WATSON: I read about his death in the paper. A most unfortunate accident!

LEOTOLD: (*Disgusted.*) Accident? It was murder!

They all gasp.

HOLMES: Murder! First YOU'RE dead! And then your FATHER! MURDERED! What scoundrels— What...evil doers!

WATSON: —Holmes! Mr. Monte is clearly with us both in spirit and in the flesh!

HOLMES: (*Beat.*) Right! Exactly! (*Laughs uncomfortably, then seriously.*) Or are you...

WATSON: Please, tell us, Mr. Monte—

LEOTOLD: Leotold—

WATSON: What happened?

LEOTOLD: It all began on a rainy night many weeks ago... Thunder brewed in the heavens. Lightning lit up the sky. And the hills were alive with the sound of—

HOLMES: MUSIC! (*Sings.*)

THE HILLS WERE ALIVE WITH THE SOUND OF MUSI—

LEOTOLD, and WATSON stop to stare at his outburst.

LEOTOLD: Screams. Bloodcurdling. Screams.

HOLMES: Blood? Curdling? (*He sits.*)

WATSON: Holmes— Let Mr. Monte tell his story...

LEOTOLD: There are ghosts, Mr. Holmes. Sprits, apparitions, doppelgangers... Call them what you will, but they are real. And they haunt the Moors of Monte Hall!

WATSON: Ghosts? Spirits? Doppler radar?

LEOTOLD: And...other creatures...

ALL: "Other creatures?"

LEOTOLD: Other. Creatures. The walking dead...

They are silent.

HOLMES: Uh...like...

LEOTOLD: Zombies.

WATSON: *(Trying to change the topic.)* Mr. Monte... The official investigation of your father's death suggests he died of...natural causes. You suggest your father was killed by—

LEOTOLD: There have been stories... Creatures wandering across the moors. Cows found dead, every drop of their blood gone. Children missing.

HOLMES: Sounds like a job for the police...

LEOTOLD: The police? Ha! They think the stories are old wives' tales... Two weeks ago, my father, a brave man of science and reason, took an evening walk across the moors. Soon afterward, we heard otherworldly screams! Ghosts, Mr. Watson! The sounds of the UNDEAD!

HOLMES: The undead...!

LEOTOLD: We found him the next morning, dead. Not a trace of blood around him. Or...

WATSON: Or?

LEOTOLD: In him... There is a curse upon my family, gentlemen. I used to dismiss it, but now...I consider myself a man of science! A man of rational pursuits. But all of my relatives have died under mysterious circumstances... And now, it is I, Leotold Monte, who will be next.

HOLMES: Someone—or some THING— wants to remove you from the gene pool? Make you an ex-person?

WATSON: *(To LEOTOLD.)* What makes you so certain?

LEOTOLD: Already there have been several attempts upon my life... A horse free of its master nearly running me down; a piano, by happenstance, plummeting several stories and crashing right next to me. A large bullseye painted upon my pajamas... And there's something else...I received this note...regarding my sister. She's been kidnapped.

LEOTOLD hands the note to WATSON, who gives it to HOLMES.

WATSON: What do you make of it, Holmes?

HOLMES: Well, I can make a telescope, a swan, or a paper airplane, *(With extreme seriousness.)* but I don't think it's the proper time for origami.

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