

**AUDITION
SCENES**

**THE NOVEL ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES:
THE SIGN OF FOUR**

A Play in Three Acts

adapted by
Bart Lovins

based on the Novel by
A. Conan Doyle

CAST

In addition to the roles listed below, all Actors step in as background characters and also serve as Foley artists (see Scene Breakdown in the Appendix.).

ACTOR 1 Male (age 37):	Doctor John H. Watson, retired military and practicing physician
ACTOR 2 Male (age 35):	Sherlock Holmes, a consulting detective Professor of Mathematics
ACTOR 3 Female (age 27):	Mary Morstan, a young governess Lieutenant Wiggins, a Baker Street Irregular
ACTOR 4 Female:	Mrs. Hudson, the landlady of 221b Baker Street Mrs. Bernstone, Pondicherry Lodge's housekeeper Mrs. Smith, wife to Mordecai Smith Fred Porlock, an informant
ACTOR 5 Male (age 50):	Jonathan Small, English prisoner
ACTOR 6 Male:	Achmet, an Indian merchant McMurdo, Pondicherry Lodge's porter and driver and former boxer Athelney Jones, Scotland Yard detective
ACTOR 7 Male (age 30):	Major Sholto, 34 th Bombay Infantry officer and father to Thaddeus and Bartholomew Sholto Dost Akbir, a Sikh associate of Jonathon Small Thaddeus Sholto, an English gentleman Bartholomew Sholto, brother to Thaddeus Sholto
ACTOR 8 Male (age 30):	Captain Morstan, Mary Morstan's father and a British officer serving with Major Sholto Abdullah Khan, a Sikh associate of Jonathon Small Johann Jacobson, a Swedish boat repair yard owner
ACTOR 9 Male (age 30):	Doctor Somerton, a British surgeon Mahomet Singh, a Sikh associate of Jonathon Small Hansom cab driver Tonga, a native Andaman islander Mordecai Smith, owner of the steam ship Aurora

PLACE AND TIME

Various locations around London circa 1888, the Andaman Islands 1877 and Agra in 1857

AUTHOR'S NOTES

As a director and performer, I always avoid reading the “Author’s Notes” section of any play. I certainly won’t be insulted therefore if you skip all I’m about to say. You can always thumb back to this section and read it later should the need arise.

This production has its roots in “guerrilla theatre,” “theatre of the mind” and “radio drama.” It is all about the Actors making something out of nothing and encouraging the Audience to use their imaginations as well to deduce what’s missing. When the play is working your Audience will be leaning forward instead of sitting back in their chairs.

A quick pace is essential to maintaining the tautness of the play’s construction -- not to mention an under two-hour running time. This ain’t Shakespeare! If you linger on any moment too long, you’ll lose the constant forward momentum of the adventure.

Care should be given that the characters remain grounded in realism (even if it is admittedly a “heightened” realism.) and avoid -- except in rare obvious instances -- tipping over into parody.

In addition to being adept at pantomime, dialects and stage combat; the Actors will be called upon to provide the several live sound effects scattered throughout the play from offstage.

Watson has the lion’s share of the narrative duties in the play, but nearly every other Actor will also be called upon to narrate as well. All narrations are more than mere exposition and when done well should reveal as much about the narrator as they will about that which they speaking.

Although this production is intended to be performed with minimal sets and props, it is by no means a simple undertaking. The pressure to transport the Audience to numerous places and times rests squarely on the shoulders of the Actors abetted of course by the Lighting, Sound, Music and Costume Designers:

- **Scenery and Prop Design:** Four straight back Victorian chairs are all that is required and will help facilitate the swift transitions between scenes. The mention of all other scenic elements (mantelpieces, doors, windows, etc.) are only provided as reference points to aid in the blocking process.
- **Costume Design:** Character defining costumes are crucial. Accessories should only be used if essential to the telling of the story. For example, in previous productions, physical hats and scarves were used but personal props such as rings and handkerchiefs were pantomimed.
- **Light Design:** Evocative lighting with bold choices for each setting is essential to guide the Audience through the adventure.
- **Music and Sound Design:** Music and Sound underscoring is used extensively throughout the production. See the appendices for suggested music and sound cues as well as Actor assignments. Note: Licensees are solely responsible for obtaining formal written permission from copyright owners to use copyrighted music and sound in the performance of this play and are strongly cautioned to do so. If no such permissions are obtained by the Licensee, then they must use only original music and sound that the licensee owns and controls. Licensees are solely responsible and liable for all music and sound clearances and shall indemnify the copyright owners of the play and their licensing agent against any costs, expenses, losses and liabilities arising from the use of music and sound by licensees.

CAPTAIN MORSTAN
MAJOR SHOLTO
JONATHAN SMALL

SETTING: Penal colony, the Andaman Islands -- 1877. The military quarters consist of four chairs set up facing each other as if for a game of cards. The air is thick with humidity and mosquitoes.

AT RISE: The game has just finished as MAJOR SHOLTO and CAPTAIN MORSTAN throw money on the table. Both are smoking and drinking. JONATHAN SMALL leans against the wall in a corner. He is a good-sized, powerful man, but from the thigh downward there is but a wooden stump upon his right side. He is a reckless-eyed fellow with a network of lines and wrinkles all over his sunburned features which tell of a hard, open-air life. There is a singular prominence about his bearded chin which marks him as a man not easily turned from his purpose. His black, curly hair is thickly shot with gray.

CAPTAIN

Our losses seem more heavy than usual.

MAJOR

(Raving about his losses.)

It's all up, Morstan. I shall have to send in my papers. I am a ruined man.

CAPTAIN

(Slapping him upon the shoulder.)

Nonsense, old chap! I've had a nasty facer myself and I've a daughter back home to support.

MAJOR

And I've got two sons. Ruined, eh? The both of us -- Damned pity!

SMALL

(Having been eavesdropping, SMALL takes a chance.)

Could I have your gentlemen's advice? Major? Captain?

MAJOR

(Paying little attention to SMALL as he lights up his cheroot with the CAPTAIN'S assistance.)

Well, Small, what is it?

SMALL

(Wryly as he nonchalantly rearranges the chairs in the room.)

I wanted to ask you, sirs, who is the proper person to whom hidden treasure should be handed over?

(The CAPTAIN and MAJOR are stopped dead in their tracks.)

CAPTAIN MORSTAN
MAJOR SHOLTO
JONATHAN SMALL

CAPTAIN

(Blowing out the match.)

I beg your pardon?

SMALL

(Knowing in his heart that he has them now.)

You see, I know where half a million worth lies, and being incarcerated I cannot use it myself.

MAJOR

(Looking hard at SMALL to determine if he is in earnest.)

Half a million, Small?

SMALL

Quite that, sir -- in jewels and pearls. It lies there ready for anyone. I thought perhaps the best thing that I could do would be to hand it over to the proper authorities, and then perhaps they would get my sentence shortened for me.

MAJOR (Stammering.)

Well, well, you must not do anything rash. Don't you agree Morstan?

CAPTAIN (Stammering.)

Absolutely, Sholto.

MAJOR

Or that you might repent.

CAPTAIN

Let us hear all about it, Small. Give us the facts.

SMALL

Well sirs, before being caught for murder and sent here to Blair Island penitentiary I was a guard at Fort Agra.

CAPTAIN

Agra? Why, isn't that where the Third Bengal Fusiliers were stationed during the India uprising?

SMALL (Nodding.)

Right you are sir.

(Aside, before following the other two offstage.)

One month India lay still and peaceful, the next the country was a perfect hell.

(END OF SCENE.)

MARY MORSTAN
JOHN WATSON

SETTING: Number 221b Baker Street, London -- 1888. Midday. Two chairs grouped around a table in proximity to a mantelpiece, a sofa, a liquor cabinet, a window overlooking the street, and offstage the bedrooms.

AT RISE: MARY MORSTAN, now 27 years of age, stands in the doorway. She is blonde, small, dainty, well gloved, and dressed in the most perfect taste. Her face has neither regularity of feature nor beauty of complexion. There is, however, a plainness and simplicity about her costume which bears with it a suggestion of limited means. Her dress is a somber grayish beige, untrimmed and unbraided, and she wears a small turban of the same dull hue, relieved only by the suspicion of a white feather in the side. WATSON has barely turned to face HOLMES when the door is opened and he is immediately struck by MARY'S appearance.)

WATSON

(Aside, as he bows slightly to MARY.)

In an experience of women which extends over many nations and three separate continents, I had never looked upon a face which gave a clearer promise of a refined and sensitive nature.

MARY

(With a trembling lip, quivering hands, and every other sign of intense inward agitation.)

I can hardly imagine anything more strange, more utterly inexplicable, than the situation in which I find myself. Briefly, the facts are these. My mother passed away shortly after my birth and my father who was senior captain of his regiment in the Andaman Islands, sent me to a boarding school where I remained until I turned seventeen. That same year my father obtained twelve months' leave and came home. He arrived and at once telegraphed me to meet him at his hotel. I did so and waited there all day without news of him. That night, on the advice of the manager of the hotel, I communicated with the police. That was nearly ten years ago --

(Putting her hand to her throat, a choking sob cuts short the sentence.)

And from that day to this no word has ever been heard of my unfortunate father --

WATSON

Had he any friends in town?

MARY

Only one that I know of -- Major Sholto. He and papa were in command of the same Indian regiment I mentioned earlier at the Blair Island penitentiary. The major had retired some little time before and lived at Upper Norwood. I communicated with him, of course, but he did not even know that his brother officer was in England.

MARY MORSTAN
JOHN WATSON

WATSON

A singular case.

MARY

I have not yet described to you the most singular part. About six years ago -- to be exact, upon the fourth of May, 1882 -- there arrived through the post a small cardboard box addressed to me, which I found to contain a very large and lustrous pearl.

(Reaching into her jacket and producing a small flat box.)

Since then, every year upon the same date, there has always appeared a similar box containing a similar pearl without any clue as to the sender.

(Opening the box to show six lustrous pearls.)

You can see for yourself that they are very handsome.

WATSON

Has anything else occurred?

MARY

(Producing an envelope from her jacket.)

Yes, and no later than today. That is why I have come to you.

(END OF SCENE.)

JONATHAN SMALL
ABDULLAH KHAN

SETTING: Agra Fort, India -- 1857. Evening.

AT RISE: SMALL (age 19) enters in the darkness carrying a musket and continuing his story.

SMALL

(Aside as he is lit in a small pool of light.)

Back before the Indian Rebellion of 1857, I was stationed as a guard at the old fort of Agra. It's a very queer place, full of winding passages and long corridors twisting in and out, so that it is easy enough for folk to get lost in it.

(Resting his weight on his musket as he takes out a cheroot and searches his pockets for a match.)

Each gate of the old fort had to be guarded, of course, and I was put in charge of guarding a small isolated door upon the southwest side of the building.

(SMALL strikes the match revealing the fierce ABDULAH.)

SMALL

I had two Sikh troopers under my command. They could talk English pretty well, but I could get little out of them.

(In an instant ABDULLAH grabs him from behind and holds a great knife to his throat.)

ABDULLAH

(Swearing between his teeth.)

I will plunge this into your throat if you move a step.

(Though feeling the point of the knife at his throat, SMALL opens his mouth with the intention of giving a scream, even though it be his last one.)

ABDULLAH

Listen to me, sahib. You must either be with us now, or you must be silenced forever. Which is it to be -- death or life?

SMALL

(Sensing a way out of his predicament.)

How can I decide? You have not told me what you want of me.

ABDULLAH

(The fiercer of the pair whispers with the ring of truth.)

It is nothing against the fort. We only ask you to be rich. If you will be one of us this night, a quarter of the treasure shall be yours.

JONATHAN SMALL
ABDULLAH KHAN

SMALL

I am as ready to be rich as anyone --

ABDULLAH

You will swear, then, to raise no hand and speak no word against us, either now or afterwards?

SMALL

I will swear it.

ABDULLAH

(Letting SMALL go and pointing offstage.)

Hearken to what I have to say. There is a merchant by the name of Achmet on his way to this fort. He brings with him the most precious stones and the choicest pearls. These he carries in an iron box. Here he will come presently, and after this night the world shall know the merchant Achmet no more. What say you to it, sahib?

(SMALL hesitates.)

ABDULLAH

(Pressing the matter more closely.)

There will be enough treasure to make every one of us rich men. Here in these passageways we are cut off from all other men. What could be better for the purpose? Say again, then, sahib, whether you are with us, or if we must look upon you as an enemy.

(END OF SCENE.)

MCMURDO
SHERLOCK

SETTING: Outside the Lyceum Theatre, London -- 1887; and simultaneously at the Agra Fort, India -- 1857.

AT RISE: WATSON, HOLMES and MARY enter. She is muffled in a dark cloak. Her face is composed but pale. The three of them weave in and out of the Lyceum Theatre columns in search of the person they were sent to meet. They are suddenly accosted by a deep-chested man with a protruding face and twinkling distrustful eyes in the dress of a coachman (MCMURDO).

MCMURDO

(Gruffly bending a pair of penetrating eyes upon them.)

Very sorry, Madame. These gentlemen may be friends o' yours, and yet no friends o' the master's. He pays me well to do my duty, and my duty I'll do. I don't know none o' your friends.

SHERLOCK (Genially.)

Oh, yes you do, McMurdo. I don't think you can have forgotten me. Don't you remember the amateur who fought three rounds with you on the night of your benefit four years back?

MCMURDO (Roaring.)

Not Mr. Sherlock Holmes! God's truth! how could I have mistook you for a copper? If instead o' standin' there so quiet you had just stepped up and given me that cross-hit of yours under the jaw, I'd ha' known you without a question. Ah, you're one that has wasted your gifts, you have! You might have aimed high, if you had joined the fancy.

SHERLOCK (Laughing.)

You see, Watson, if all else fails me I have still one of the scientific professions open to me. Our friend McMurdo, won't delay our interview any longer, I am sure.

MCMURDO

Very sorry, Madame, but the master's orders were very strict. Had to be certain of your friends. Good, then. Come, we must go. The master awaits you.

(END OF SCENE.)

THADDEUS SHOLTO
MAJOR SHOLTO
BARTHOLOMEW SHOLTO

SETTING: Thaddeus Sholto's apartment, Surrey -- 1888. Later that night.

AT RISE: Clad in white loose-fitting clothes, and a yellow sash, THADDEUS SHOLTO enters to greet his visitors. He is a small man with a very high head, a bristle of red hair all-round the fringe of it and a bald, shining scalp which shot out from among it like a mountain-peak from fir-trees. He writhes his hands together as he enters, and his features are in a perpetual jerk, now smiling, now scowling, but never for an instant in repose. He has a pendulous lip, and a too visible line of yellow and irregular teeth, which he strives feebly to conceal by constantly passing his hand over the lower part of his face. In spite of his obtrusive baldness he gives the impression of youth.)

THADDEUS

(Puffing on the hookah.)

I trust that you have no objection to the balsamic odor of the Eastern tobacco. I am a little nervous, and I find my hookah an invaluable sedative.

(Beginning his tale with a cleansing sigh.)

My father was, as you may have guessed, Major John Sholto. He retired from the Indian Army some eleven years ago and came to live at Pondicherry Lodge in Upper Norwood. Six years ago, early in 1882, my father received a letter from India. What was in the letter my brother Bartholomew and I could never discover but whatever it had to say was a great shock to him and from that day he sickened to his death.

(THADDEUS inhales too deeply from his hookah and he breaks out into a coughing fit. Then resting back upon the reclining chairs, he speaks as his father, MAJOR SHOLTO, in a voice which is broken as much by emotion as by pain and age.)

MAJOR

(Grasping each of his son's hands as he turns from one to the next.)

Ah! Thaddeus, Bartholomew, I have only one thing which weighs upon my mind at this supreme moment. It is my treatment of poor Captain Morstan's orphan, Mary. The cursed greed which has been my besetting sin through life has withheld from her the treasure, half at least of which should have been hers.

(Picking up a pearl necklace from the bed's side table.)

See this string of pearls. Even these I could not bear to part with, although I had got them out with the intent of sending them to her. You, my sons, will give her a fair share of the Agra treasure. But send her nothing -- until I am gone.

(With a laugh that turns into an ailing cough.)

After all, men have been as bad as this and have recovered. The treasure is hidden in --

(At this instant a horrible change comes over the MAJOR as from out of the darkness, SMALL'S face appears.)

THADDEUS SHOLTO
MAJOR SHOLTO
BARTHOLOMEW SHOLTO

MAJOR

(His eyes stare wildly; his jaw drops and he points at SMALL.)

There! In the window! Keep him out! For Christ's sake keep him out!

(The MAJOR grabs his chest and then his head drops. His body is lifeless. The MAJOR'S story ended, the Actor springs to life as THADDEUS once more much to the surprise of his guests.)

THADDEUS

It was a bearded, hairy face with wild cruel eyes and an expression of concentrated malevolence! We searched the garden that night but found no sign of the intruder save that just under the window a single foot mark was visible in the flower-bed. My brother and I were, as you may imagine, much excited as to the treasure which my father had spoken of for we could judge the splendor of the missing riches by the string of pearls which he had taken out. Over this my brother Bartholomew and I had some little discussion.

(The Actor playing THADDEUS now switches between playing both THADDEUS and BARTHOLOMEW.)

BARTHOLOMEW

(Pearls in hand, continuing an argument with his brother.)

The pearls are evidently of great value, Thaddeus.

THADDEUS (Aside.)

Bartholomew was averse to part with them, for, between friends, my brother was himself a little inclined to my father's fault.

BARTHOLOMEW

Besides Thaddeus, if we part with the pearls it might give rise to gossip and finally bring us into trouble.

THADDEUS (Persuading.)

At least let me find out Miss Morstan's address and send her a detached pearl at fixed intervals so that at least she might never feel destitute.

(BARTHOLOMEW throws the pearls at THADDEUS in disgust and THADDEUS catches the pearls and turns back to his guests.)

THADDEUS

(Waving his hand deprecatingly.)

We were your trustees. Besides, it would have been such bad taste to have treated a young lady in so scurvy a fashion.

(END OF SCENE.)

ATHELNEY JONES

SETTING: Pondicherry Lodge. BARTHOLOMEW'S bed chamber.
Immediately following.

AT RISE: BARTHOLOMEW is seated all in a heap, with his head sunk upon his left shoulder and his facial features set in a horrible fixed and unnatural grin. He is stiff and has clearly been dead many hours. He clutches a note in one hand. In another area of the stage stand two chairs back to back. They will later represent a ladder. WATSON and HOLMES enter. Heavy steps and the clamor of loud voices are audible from offstage. A very stout, portly man enters. ATHELNEY JONES is red-faced, burly, and plethoric, with a pair of very small twinkling eyes which look keenly out from between swollen and puffy pouches.

ATHELNEY

(In a muffled, husky voice.)

Here's a business! Here's a pretty business! But who are all these...? Why, the house seems to be as full as a rabbit-warren!

(Wheezing.)

Why, it's Mister Sherlock Holmes, the theorist. I'll never forget how you lectured us all on causes and inferences and effects in the Bishopgate jewel case.

(Shaking HOLMES' hand vigorously.)

It's true you set us on the right track; but you'll own now that it was more by good guess than good guidance.

(With a hearty slap on HOLMES' back.)

Oh, come, now, come! Never be ashamed to own up. But what is all this? Bad business! Bad business! Stern facts here -- no room for theories. What d'you think the man died of? After all, we can't deny that you hit the nail on the head sometimes. Dear me! Door locked; I understand. Jewels worth half a million missing. Man might have died in a fit; but then the jewels are missing. Ha! I have a theory. These flashes come upon me at times. What do you think of this, Holmes? Thaddeus Sholto was, on his own confession, with his brother last night. The brother, Bartholomew, died in a fit, on which Thaddeus Sholto walked off with the treasure? How's that?

HOLMES

On which the dead man very considerately got up and locked the door on the inside.

ATHELNEY (Admittedly.)

Humph! There's a flaw there. Let us apply common sense to the matter. This Thaddeus Sholto was with his brother, there was a quarrel: so much we know. The brother is dead and the jewels are gone. So much also we know. No one saw Bartholomew from the time Thaddeus left him. His bed has not been slept in. Thaddeus is evidently in a most disturbed state of mind. His appearance is -- well, not attractive. You see that I am weaving my web round Thaddeus. The net begins to close upon him.

(END OF SCENE.)

SHERLOCK HOLMES
MRS. MORDECAI SMITH

SETTING: Westminster wharves. Sunrise.

AT RISE: The sounds of busy morning harbor activity in under dialogue. A stout, red-faced woman, MRS. MORDECECAI SMITH, runs on searching for her child.

SMITH

You come back an' be washed, Jack. Ye young imp, if yer fahder comes 'ome an' finds ye gone agin, he'll let us bofe 'ear of it!

HOLMES (Strategically.)

Yes! A fine-looking child, Missus...?

SMITH

(Shaking hands with HOLMES.)

Oh, Mrs. Smith, beggin' ye' pard'n. Lor' bless ye, sir, he is dat, but he gets a'most too much fer me to manage, 'specially when me man, Mordecai, is away days at a time.

HOLMES

Away, is he? I am sorry for that, for I wanted to hire his steam launch.

SMITH

Why, bless ye, sir, it's in ta steam launch dat he's a-gone. That's wha' puzzles me fer I knows der ain't more coke in her dan would take her to da end of ta river an' back.

HOLMES

He might have bought some at a wharf down the river.

SMITH

He might, sir, he might, but it weren't his way. Many a time I've heard him call out at da prices dey charge fer a few odd bags. Besides, I dohn like dat wooden-legged man, wi' his ugly face an' outlandish talk. What'd he want always knockin' about here in da middle uh da night? Yessir, I tell you straight, I dohn feel easy in me mind about it.

HOLMES

But, my dear Mrs. Smith, how could you possibly tell that it was the wooden-legged man who came in the night?

SMITH

His voice, sir. I knew his voice, which is a kind o' thick and foggy. He tapped at da winder -- about tree in da mornin' it would be. An' away me old man went without so much as a word. What's more, I could 'ear dat wooden leg o' his clammerin' over dat dere heap o' coke an' den a clackin' on da stones as dey leff.

SHERLOCK HOLMES
MRS. MORDECAI SMITH

HOLMES

I am sorry, Mrs. Smith, for I wanted a steam launch, and I have heard good reports of the -- let me see, what is her name?

SMITH

Dee Aurora, sir.

HOLMES

Ah! She's not that old green launch with a yellow line, very broad in the beam?

SMITH (Offended.)

No, indeed. She's as trim a little thing as any on da river. She's been fresh painted, black wit two red streaks.

HOLMES

I am going down the river, and if I should see anything of the Aurora, I shall let him know that you are uneasy. A black funnel, you say?

SMITH

No, sir. Black wit a white band.

HOLMES

Ah, of course it was the sides which were black. Oh, and if we should see young master Jack, we'll send him your way.

SMITH

(Reminded of her task.)

Jack! Lor' love a duck. Dat boy'll be da death er me.

(Running off.)

Jack! If yer not back 'ome before da tide comes in, I swear upon all dat's holy....

(END OF SCENE.)

SHERLOCK HOLMES
WIGGINS

SETTING: Number 221b Baker Street. Morning.

AT RISE: As WATSON speaks, he and HOLMES set up the apartment.
There is a loud clamor offstage.

HOLMES

No cause for concern, Doctor. Unless I miss my mark, it is Lieutenant Wiggins of the unofficial force -- the Baker Street Irregulars.

(As HOLMES speaks, there comes a swift pattering of feet and in through the apartment rushes a dirty ragged little street urchin, WIGGINS. There is some show of discipline in the boy, despite his tumultuous entry for he instantly stands facing HOLMES and WATSON expectantly with an air of lounging superiority which is very funny in such a disreputable little scarecrow.)

WIGGINS

(Indicating that the rest of his crew is awaiting downstairs.)

Got your message, sir, and brought everybody on sharp.

(HOLMES crosses to the door to peer down the staircase as if to inspect the troops.)

HOLMES

(To WIGGINS as he sets his coffee on the mantle.)

Now Wiggins, I want to find the whereabouts of a steam launch called the Aurora. She's black with two red streaks, funnel black with a white band. She is down the river somewhere. You must divide it out among yourselves and do both banks thoroughly. Let me know the moment you have news. Is that all clear?

WIGGINS

Yes, gov'nor. How much?

HOLMES

(Handing him a handkerchief of shillings.)

The old scale of pay, and a guinea to the boy who finds the boat. Now off you go!

WIGGINS

(WIGGINS buzzing out the apartment door and yelling offstage.)

Lissen up! We're to search both banks of the river for the Aurora -- black with two streaks, funnel black with a white band. Regular pay plus a guinea to the boy what finds her!

(WIGGINS runs off to join them. HOLMES shuts the door.)

(END OF SCENE.)

MARY MORSTAN
JOHN WATSON

SETTING: Mary Morstan's dwellings. Dusk.

AT RISE: WATSON speaks and MARY enters.

WATSON (Aside.)

I found Miss Morstan a little weary after her night's adventures but full of curiosity.

MARY (Entering.)

Good Afternoon. John.

WATSON

(Bowing slightly.)

Miss Morstan.

MARY (Correcting.)

Mary. Please.

WATSON (Pleased.)

Certainly.

MARY

(Crossing past WATSON.)

I am very eager to hear what news you bring, sir.

WATSON (Aside.)

I told her all that we had done and described to her in greater detail the culprits we were hoping to entrap.

MARY

(Feigning enthusiasm as she turns to face WATSON.)

It is a romance.

WATSON

Excuse me?

MARY (Smiling.)

An injured lady, a half a million in treasure, a ferocious cannibal, and a wooden-legged ruffian.

WATSON

(With a laugh.)

They do take the place of the conventional dragon or wicked king, I suppose.

MARY

(With a bright glance at WATSON.)

And two white knights to the rescue.

MARY MORSTAN
JOHN WATSON

(Playing the role, WATSON bows chivalrously. MARY curtsies graciously. He and MARY laugh.)

WATSON

Just imagine what it will be like to have the world at your feet!

MARY

(With a toss of her proud head, as though the matter were one in which she took small interest.)

It is for Mister Thaddeus Sholto that I am anxious. Nothing else is of any consequence; but I think that he has behaved most kindly and honorably throughout. It is our duty to clear him of this dreadful and unfounded charge.

(WATSON tries unsuccessfully to conceal his own little thrill of joy upon noticing that MARY shows no sign of elation at the prospect of her possible inheritance.)

WATSON

On that we are agreed. But I must take my leave of you now.

MARY

Must you? So soon?

WATSON

Yes. If Holmes should receive some news he will want to move quickly.

MARY

(Offering her hand.)

But of course. Until you have more news.

(WATSON awkwardly kisses her hand and departs. MARY watches him leave. She then cradles the hand that he kissed in the nape of her neck and freezes in a tableau.)

(END OF SCENE.)

MRS. HUDSON
JOHN WATSON

SETTING: Number 221b Baker Street. Evening.

AT RISE: MRS. HUDSON is lighting the oil lamps in the apartment.
WATSON enters through the apartment door to discover her there.

WATSON

(To MRS. HUDSON.)

Mister Holmes has gone out?

HUDSON

(Handing WATSON a note.)

Yes sir. He asked that I give you this note, sir.

(Her voice sinking into an impressive whisper.)

Do you know, sir, I am afraid for his health?

WATSON

(With shared concern and added suspicion that she too may be aware of his fellow lodger's habits.)

Why so, Mrs. Hudson?

(As HUDSON speaks, WATSON makes his way subtly over to the mantelpiece, lays the note down upon it and worriedly fingers the cocaine vial left there by HOLMES.)

HUDSON

(Continuing with her tasks.)

Well, he's that strange, sir. After you was gone, I could hear him from my rooms below. He walked and he walked, up and down, and up and down, until I was weary of the sound of his footstep. Then I heard him muttering to himself, and every time the bell rang, he'd poke his head out the door, with, "What is that, Mrs. Hudson?" And now he's slammed out. I do hope he's not going to be ill, sir.

(Making her way to the door.)

I ventured to offer him cooling medicine but he turned on me, sir, with such a look that I don't know how ever I got out of the room.

(END OF SCENE.)

SHERLOCK HOLMES
JOHANN JACOBSEN
MORDECAI SMITH

SETTING: Number 221b Baker Street. Evening.

AT RISE: As HOLMES redons his wharf disguise, JOHANN JACOBSEN, a tall Swede, enters in rolled up sleeves with grease up to his elbows and wearing a discolored apron. Harbor sounds in under dialogue.

HOLMES

I reasoned that the Aurora must have been hidden somewhere. So I started at once in this harmless old seaman's rig and inquired at all the yards down the river. I drew blank at fifteen, but at the sixteenth --

JACOBSON

(Entering with his hand extended.)

"Yohann Yacobson's." What can I doo fer ya'?

HOLMES

Just visiting old haunts friend. Is that the Aurora over there, friend?

JACOBSON

Yah, fastest boat on dah reever. Two days agoo, Mordecai Smeeth and a whooden-legged man came een wid some trivial directions as to her roodder. But 'twixt you an' me, dere ain't naught amiss wid her rooder.

(At that moment, MORDECAI stumbles in drunkenly.)

MORDECAI (Bellowing.)

Jacobson! Where the blazes are ya' man. It's me! Mordecai! Ah! There ya be. Look sharp. I wants the Aurora ready ta go tonight at eight o' clock.

JACOBSON

Yah, Meester Smeeth.

MORDECAI

(Chucking shillings to JACOBSON.)

An' that's eight o'clock sharp, mind, for I have two gentlemen who won't be kept waiting.

(MORDECAI and JACOBSON exit opposite each other.)

(END OF SCENE.)

ATHELNEY JONES
JONATHAN SMALL

SETTING: Number 221b Baker Street. Nearing midnight.

AT RISE: WATSON, HOLMES, SMALL and ATHELNEY are present.

ATHELNEY (Angrily.)

This is your doing, Small.

SMALL

(Exultantly leaning back in his chair and laughing aloud.)

Yes, you'll find the treasure where the key is and where little Tonga is.

ATHELNEY (Sternly.)

You are deceiving us, Small. If you had wished to throw the treasure into the Thames it would have been easier for you to have thrown box and all.

SMALL

Easier for me to throw and easier for you to recover.

(With a shrewd, sidelong look to HOLMES.)

The man that was clever enough to hunt me down is clever enough to pick an iron box from the bottom of a river. Now that they are scattered over five miles or so, it may be a harder job.

ATHELNEY

(Giving up the argument and pushing SMALL toward the apartment door.)

Well, Holmes, you are a man to be humored, and we all know that you are a connoisseur of crime; but duty is duty, and I shall feel more at ease when we have our storyteller here safe under lock and key. I am much obliged to you both for your assistance. Goodnight to you.

SMALL

(Opening the door for ATHELNEY.)

Goodnight, gentlemen both.

ATHELNEY

(Starting to exit first then warily.)

You first, Small. I'll take particular care that you don't club me with your wooden leg.

(END OF SCENE.)

EVENT TIMELINE

- 1789 The Andaman Islands penal colony is established
- 1838 Jonathon Small is born.
- 1852 John Watson is born
- 1854 Sherlock Holmes is born
- 1857 Indian Rebellion against British
Jonathon Small (age 19) flees to Agra and becomes a guard
Jonathon Small assists in the robbery and murder of a servant
Jonathon Small sentenced to the Andaman Islands penal colony
- 1858 British authority re-established in India
- 1861 Mary Morstan is born to Captain Morstan.
- 1877 Major Sholto and Captain Morstan are assigned to The Andaman Islands
penal colony
Jonathon Small (age 39) has served 20 years in the penal colony
Jonathon Small cuts a deal with Major Sholto and Captain Morstan
Major Sholto deceives Captain Morstan and Jonathon Small and absconds
with the treasure
- 1878 Captain Morstan is discharged and alerts Mary Morstan (age 17) that he is
returning to England but he disappears before they are reunited
Captain Morstan confronts Major Sholto about the treasure, they fight, he
dies.
Shortly after her father's disappearance, Mary Morstan finishes her
schooling
- 1882 Jonathon Small escapes the penal colony with Tonga
Major Sholto learns of his escape and grows ill and dies
Major Sholto's sons, Thaddeus and Bartholomew argue over the treasure.
Thaddeus Sholto sends Mary Morstan (age 21) the 1st pearl
- 1883 Thaddeus Sholto sends Mary Morstan the 2nd pearl
- 1884 Thaddeus Sholto sends Mary Morstan the 3rd pearl.
- 1885 Thaddeus Sholto sends Mary Morstan the 4th pearl
- 1886 Thaddeus Sholto sends Mary Morstan the 5th pearl
- 1887 "A Study in Scarlet" is published
- 1888 Bartholomew Sholto discovers the treasure
Thaddeus Sholto sends Mary Morstan the 6th pearl and a letter
Jonathon Small (age 50) discovers Bartholomew Sholto and the treasure
Tonga kills Bartholomew Sholto
Mary Morstan (age 27) visits Sherlock Holmes (age 35) and John Watson
(age 37)
- 1889 Doctor Watson (age 38) and Mary Morstan (age 28) are wed
- 1890 "The Sign of the Four" is published
- 1891 Sherlock Holmes apparently dies at the hands of Professor Moriarty
- 1891/1892 Mary Morstan (age 30/34) dies during childbirth or possibly from
tuberculosis