

HILDA. I-I-I-I-I-
MORIARTY. GO!

(**HILDA** runs away as fast as she can.)

(**MORIARTY** points his gun at her retreating back...but he does not shoot her. Instead he laughs and uncocks the gun.)

(And now, for the first time, **HOLMES** and **MORIARTY** face each other, one on one. They both understand the importance of this moment.)

Well, well, well. "Sherlock." My best student. How you have changed.

HOLMES. Villain. You betrayed me. You betrayed us all.

MORIARTY. No. I merely took advantage of your naïveté. You were such an innocent. And so trusting. Now look at you. The light is gone. You look haggard with experience. It's distressing.

HOLMES. I trusted you and you became pathetic.

(Bang!)

(Crack!)

(**MORIARTY** shoots the gun out of **HOLMES**'s hand, sending it flying.)

MORIARTY. I am a very fine shot, you know, and could just as easily have put that bullet through your heart.

IRENE. Monster.

MORIARTY. Not at all, Miss Adler. I'm a very just man. I had no need to kill Hilda so I let her live. I have every reason in the world to kill you and Holmes, and so I will.

IRENE. And my sister?

MORIARTY. Oh that was unfortunate. She merely had to tell me where the letters were. When she wouldn't, I had to put her down like a dog.

IRENE. Yhhhhhh!

(**IRENE** cries out and springs at **MORIARTY**, but **HOLMES** stops her in time.)

(She is so angry that he has to pinion her arms.)

I'll kill you, I'll kill you! Let me go! Let me go!

HOLMES. Stop! Stop it! He is baiting you!

(**IRENE** stops struggling, but still has to be held and is panting hard.)

MORIARTY. Well done, Mr. Holmes. Another step and I would have had to shoot her right here on the spot. **AND I WOULD HAVE DONE IT!**

(For an instant, **MORIARTY** loses control, and we see a snarling madman. Then he calms himself and turns to **HOLMES**.)

Now. "Sherlock." You have been pursuing me and making lists of my confederates. Oh yes. I know everything. But so far you have only a handful of them and I intend to keep it that way.

Don't forget, I taught you everything.

HOLMES. Latin and Greek.

MORIARTY. And how to think. And how to dream!

HOLMES. But not how to steal and cheat.

MORIARTY. Oh, please, you are such a child. I presume you found the microdots.

HOLMES. Yes of course. And they are now in the hands of the British Government. So I'm sorry to tell you, but you've lost a fortune.

MORIARTY. I already *have* a fortune!

HOLMES. And soon you won't. I'm taking it from you. And your plans. And your confederates. Everything's going. You will soon be alone on a naked scaffold, your hands tied behind your back, staring down at your own grave. Does that frighten you?

MORIARTY. Nothing frightens me, Holmes! Because you are nothing. You are a mote of dust. You cannot stand in my way, nor can anyone else. You are all too "high-minded." You say I'm evil. *But evil wins in the end!* It cannot be stopped! "Oh help the poor and helpless. Have a conscience. Have pity." My followers are loyal because I make them *rich*. They know what I'm doing, but they avert their eyes and pretend not to see. They should be in Parliament. And some of them are!

(He laughs.)

Now any last words, "Sherlock"? If you tell me now, I'll have them engraved on your *tombstone*.

HOLMES. None. And you?

MORIARTY. *(Laughs.)* No, Mr. Holmes. I don't need them. Besides, anything I have to say has already crossed your mind.

HOLMES. Then all of my answers have crossed yours.

IRENE. *(A moan.)* No...

MORIARTY. Good-bye, "Sherlock."

(He raises his gun and points it at HOLMES.)

HOLMES. Watson! Take him!

(MORIARTY's eye flickers to the side to look for Watson, and in that instant, HOLMES springs and the two men wrestle furiously. HOLMES gets his hand on MORIARTY's gun

but can't manage to wrest it away. Their struggle is hair-raising, and each man cries out with effort and pain. During the struggle, the gun goes off.)

(Bang!)

(IRENE ducks.)

(In the end, MORIARTY is the victor. He shoves HOLMES across the room, the gun still in his hand. He is furious and panting hard from the struggle.)

MORIARTY. Give me one reason I shouldn't shoot you right *this instant?!*

HOLMES. *(Unperturbed.)* I'll give you three.

(HOLMES holds out his hand and drops three bullets onto the ground - the ones he took from MORIARTY's gun in the struggle.)

Your bullets. It would have been six, but you fired three of them, one just now, one at me, and one at Hilda.

MORIARTY. *(Furious again.) ...CLOWN! CIPHER! THIS ISN'T OVER!*

HOLMES. But it will be soon.

(MORIARTY cries in anger and stalks away.)

IRENE. Stop him. STOP HIM!

(She rushes towards MORIARTY, but HOLMES catches her and holds her back.)

HOLMES. No, not now.

IRENE. Let go of me! He's getting away!

HOLMES. He's not. He's not! Would you listen!

(She stops struggling but is panting hard.)