

MILKER & CARTWRIGHT. Thank you.

MRS. GASNER. Not those magic words, dearies. The ones that go "Here is your money *and I'm not going to stiff you for a change!*" We respectable women require a certain amount of upkeep, and don't you forget it.

CARTWRIGHT. Sorry.

MILKER. Sorry.

(They pay and leave.)

WATSON. We left Gasner's and arrived at King's Cross Station right on time. I could see Holmes on the platform waiting for us, and even at a distance I could tell that his eyes were ablaze with new purpose.

CONDUCTOR. *(Voiceover.) All aboard for Cambridge, stopping at Epping, Harlow and Great Shelford.*

Scene Four: Platform Nine at King's Cross Station

CARTWRIGHT. 'Allo, Mr. 'Olmes.

MILKER. It's good to see ya!

HOLMES. Cartwright. Milker.

(A rude PORTER bustles past pushing a trolley.)

PORTER. Porter! Porter! I'm comin' through!

CARTWRIGHT. Hey, be careful!

MILKER. Watch yer step!

(The PORTER grovels back.)

CARTWRIGHT. So what's the case, Mr. Holmes?

HOLMES. The *case* is to listen to me very carefully. The doctor and I will be in Carriage Seven, Compartment Two, and Cartwright, I want you to patrol the carriage but remain invisible –

CARTWRIGHT. "Invisible."

HOLMES. And if anyone suspicious comes near my compartment, call out loudly. Do not approach him, he is likely to be extremely dangerous.

CARTWRIGHT. Yes sir.

MILKER. And what do I do, sir?

HOLMES. You will travel to the town of Grantchester outside Cambridge by a separate train, then double back to this address. Then at two o'clock precisely – do you hear me? –

MILKER. Two o'clock precisely!

HOLMES. – you will start a fire in the grate in the kitchen.

MILKER. You mean to cook the supper, sir?

HOLMES. No, to burn the house down.

MILKER & CARTWRIGHT. *All right!*

HOLMES. Did you stop at Gasner's?

CARTWRIGHT. Yes, sir. And we got them accessories you asked for.

MILKER. Paraffin.

CARTWRIGHT. Done.

MILKER. Wick.

CARTWRIGHT. Done.

MILKER. And an empty bottle. Are you makin' a table lamp?

HOLMES. No, a bomb.

MILKER & CARTWRIGHT. *Yes!*

("Oweeeee!")

CONDUCTOR. *(Voiceover.) All aboard!*

(Chuggachuggachuggachuggachugga chugga.)

Scene Five: Aboard the Train

WATSON. *(To us.)* Within a few minutes I found myself in the corner of our compartment, flying along en route to Great Shelford, while Sherlock Holmes, his sharp, eager face framed in his traveling cap, brooded in the opposite corner. As it turned out, it was one of the most important discussions of our lives.

HOLMES. ...Watson. I assume that you have never heard of Professor James Moriarty.

WATSON. Never.

HOLMES. And that is the genius of the man. He pervades London and no one has heard of him. That is what puts him on a pinnacle in the history of crime.

WATSON. Crime?

HOLMES. I tell you Watson, in all seriousness, if I could beat the man, I would gladly sacrifice myself in the process.

WATSON. Holmes, really... What has he done?

HOLMES. His career has been remarkable. At the age of twenty he wrote a treatise on the Binomial Theorem and had the Chair of Mathematics at Cambridge just two years later. But it turned out that he had tendencies of a criminal nature. Dark rumors gathered round him at the university and eventually he was compelled to leave.

WATSON. You weren't there at the time...?

HOLMES. Indeed I was. He was my mentor, and I worshipped him. We worked together, we dined together, we were as inseparable as Juno's swans. Then the rumors began and he started avoiding me. It was said that he'd committed the most atrocious crimes, all for money.

WATSON. That's monstrous.