

[Redacted text block containing several lines of text obscured by yellow and green highlights.]

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.

HOLMES. At first I refused to believe it. But then one day I was in his office, and I found a letter in his handwriting. He was blackmailing another professor for his indiscretions.

WATSON. Good God.

HOLMES. He wanted money and he threatened violence. I was going to go to the police with the letter, but I... I hesitated. I convinced myself I needed more evidence. The truth is, I didn't want to confront him. I loved him and I was frightened of him.

WATSON. Of course you were. Anyone would have been.

HOLMES. I delayed for a week, and then I found it. *Proof after proof.* But alas, by the time I sought him out, he had fled. He got away! And it was my fault!

WATSON. Oh, come now. You can't blame yourself!

HOLMES. Oh I can. And then came the scandal, but it was too late. He was gone because of *me.* Because of my cowardice! Shortly after that, I received a letter, and in it, he admitted all he had done. He swore he would build an empire upon extortion, forgery, murder, anything to acquire power and wealth.

At that moment, I knew my calling. I would become a detective to stop such villainy and atone for my lack of courage. So oddly enough, it was Moriarty who made me what I have tried to become. *But I should have stopped him from the beginning and I failed to do it!*

WATSON. So stop him now. Track him down and have him arrested.

HOLMES. I have tried, Watson. He remains invisible. And yet, he is the seed of all that is evil in our great city. He sits motionless like a spider in the center of its web, and he knows the quiver of every thread. *He is the Napoleon of Crime!*

WATSON. But what can you do? You need him to slip.

HOLMES. Aha. Yes. I do. *And I think he has.*

WATSON. How?

HOLMES. *(His eyes gleam with a new light.) The King's letters. We are on to him early on this one. And it is just possible if we move quickly we can stop him forever. Now listen carefully, I have a plan.*

(As they huddle together, we see CARTWRIGHT patrolling the corridor. After a beat, a VICAR with a clerical collar enters, engrossed in a crossword puzzle.)

VICAR. Seven down. A three-letter palindrome denoting surprise.

(Showing him the puzzle.)

CARTWRIGHT. Wow.

VICAR. "Wow."

(Writing it down.)

Oh very good. Well done, young man.

(He exits, passing the PORTER we met on the platform.)

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

CARTWRIGHT. Oy. 'Ow's business?

PORTER. What's it to you?

CARTWRIGHT. You was the porter in the station, remember? But wait a sec. I thought porters stayed in the station, so what're yâ doin' here in the -...

(Just as CARTWRIGHT realizes the implications of this: Wham! The PORTER slams CARTWRIGHT against the window and starts to strangle him.)