

# **Sherlock Holmes**

music by Nick DeGregorio  
book & lyrics by Scott Guy

## **CAST**

Sherlock Holmes  
Dr. Watson  
Irene Adler  
Professor James Moriarty  
Mrs. Hudson  
Kitty Winter/Polly Breckinridge  
Constable/cameos

# Musical Numbers

## ACT ONE

<i>A Three-Pipe Problem</i> .....	Mrs. Hudson, Watson
<i>Impromptu on Deduction</i> .....	Holmes
<i>Impromptu on a Calabash Pipe</i> .....	Holmes
<i>Elementary, My Dear Watson</i> .....	Holmes, Watson, Mrs. Hudson
<i>The Lining of a Hat</i> .....	Holmes, Watson, Mrs. Hudson, Constable
<i>A Visit From a Masked Man</i> .....	Holmes, King Wilhelm
<i>Love Me if You Dare</i> .....	Irene, Holmes
<i>The Napoleon of Crime</i> .....	Moriarty
<i>I'd Give My Life for You</i> .....	Holmes
<i>The Game's Afoot!</i> .....	Holmes, Watson, Mrs. Hudson
<i>Impromptu on a Goose Club</i> .....	Holmes
<i>The Devil's Bait</i> .....	Holmes
<i>Elementary - Reprise</i> .....	Holmes, Watson

## ACT TWO

<i>Sherlock Holmes</i> .....	Watson
<i>You're No Good For Me</i> .....	Holmes
<i>All We Can Get</i> .....	Kitty
<i>Impromptu on the Crimes of London</i> .....	Holmes
<i>The Attack</i> .....	Watson
<i>The Game's Afoot/Elementary - Reprise</i> .....	Holmes, Watson, Mrs. Hudson
<i>The Porcelain of China</i> .....	Watson, Moriarty
<i>The Oath of the An Hua</i> .....	Watson, Moriarty
<i>Love Me If You Dare - Reprise</i> .....	Irene
<i>The Game's Afoot/Elementary/Sherlock Holmes - Reprise</i> .....	Company

SHERLOCK HOLMES

music by Nick DeGregorio  
 book and lyrics by Scott Guy

The scene is the untidy and almost random interior of 221B Baker Street, London: an acid-charred bench of chemicals, a violin-case leaning in the corner, scientific charts upon the wall, trunks of disguises and costumes, a coal-scuttle which contains pipes and tobacco, and of course, books, books, papers, and more books.

SHERLOCK HOLMES sits in the window bay, in deep contemplation, smoking his pipe. A slight ruckus on the stairs as an ebullient DR. WATSON is ushered in by a shushing MRS. HUDSON. DR. WATSON carries a medical model of a man's torso and head, with bright red and blue veins, arteries and removable organs. HOLMES is concentrating so intently, he does not notice them.

WATSON

Holmes summoned me, stating his urgent need of my anatomical --

MRS. HUDSON

Shh! We mustn't disturb him, Dr. Watson. I thought he'd be ready for you by now, but he's preoccupied with a -- one...two -- yes, it appears to be a three-pipe problem!

(MRS. HUDSON and WATSON sing. **A Three-Pipe Problem.**  
 MRS. HUDSON serves tea to WATSON.)

MRS. HUDSON

IF THE THOUGHTS THAT HE IS RUMINATING  
 CAUSE A SECOND PIPE,  
 THE SOLUTION HE IS PROPAGATING'S  
 NOT OF COMMON TYPE.  
 RARELY CAN WE BE EXPECTED  
 TWO-PIPE ANSWERS WE MAY FIND,  
 SO WHEN A THIRD PIPE IS SELECTED,  
 IT REQUIRES HIS MASTER MIND.

MRS. HUDSON & WATSON

IT'S A THREE-PIPE PROBLEM,  
BEYOND OUR MEAGER KEN.  
A THREE-PIPE PROBLEM,  
UNSOLVED BY LESSER MEN.  
WITH REASON SO EXPRESSIVE  
AND KNOWLEDGE SO EXCESSIVE  
WE FIND WITH EACH SUCCESSIVE  
SOLUTION HE'S IMPRESSIVE.

MRS. HUDSON

WE KNOW TO GIVE FAR REACHING BERTH  
TO LET HIM DO HIS SLEUTHINGS  
AND OFTEN TIMES HE WILL UNEARTH  
NOT ONE THING, NO, BUT TWO THINGS.

WATSON

A THREE-PIPE PROBLEM,  
A THREE-PIPE PROBLEM.  
IT'S A THREE, I AGREE  
NOT A TWO, BUT A THREE,  
NOT ONE THING, NO, BUT TWO THINGS.

WATSON

THOUGH I FANCY I'M A FAIR DETECTIVE,  
REALLY I'M QUITE POOR.  
NEXT TO HOLMES' INTROSPECTION,  
I'M AN AMATEUR.  
I CAN SOLVE THE TWO-PIPE KIND,  
THE SIMPLE OR SOCRITICAL.  
BUT THOSE THAT LEAVE ME FAR BEHIND  
ARE THREE-PIPE PROBLEMATICAL.

MRS. HUDSON

IT'S A THREE-PIPE PROBLEM!  
BEYOND OUR MEAGER KEN.

WATSON

A THREE-PIPE PROBLEM:  
UNSOLVED BY LESSER MEN.

MRS. HUDSON

HIS THINKING INTRODUCES  
A LOGIC THAT SEDUCES.

MRS. HUDSON/WATSON

THE REASON THAT HE USES  
EXCUSES ALL HIS RUSES.

WATSON  
A RANSOM NOTE HE CLOSELY COMBS  
FOR ANAGRAMS AND PALINDROMES,  
THE SHARPEST MIND SINCE ANCIENT ROME'S  
THE MIND OF SHERLOCK HOLMES!

MRS. HUDSON  
A THREE-PIPE PROBLEM.  
A THREE-PIPE PROBLEM.  
NOT A ONE OR A TWO,  
BUT A THREE PIPE'LL DO,  
THE MIND OF SHERLOCK HOLMES!

(HOLMES comes out of his reverie.)

HOLMES  
Ah, Watson! I see you've been getting yourself very wet lately,  
and that you have hired a most clumsy and careless new servant  
girl.

WATSON  
Say, what? How did you know that?

HOLMES  
Elementary, my dear Watson: the mud on your shoes.

WATSON  
But -- there isn't any mud.

HOLMES  
Not any longer, no. However, my eyes tell me that on the inside  
of your left shoe, the leather is scored by six almost parallel  
cuts, obviously caused by someone who has very carelessly  
scraped round the edges of the sole in order to remove crusted  
mud from it. Your old servant girl would never have been so  
clumsy; hence my deduction you've hired a new one.

MRS. HUDSON  
Remarkable.

WATSON  
Indubitably.

HOLMES  
(sings)  
FOR A THINKING MAN, DEDUCTION  
IS THE ULTIMATE SEDUCTION.  
ALAS.

WATSON  
What on earth?

HOLMES

An impromptu, Watson. My latest hobby. Composing a musical miniature, as it were, on the spot, as a topic catches my fancy. Observe. An impromptu, say -- on a calabash pipe.

WATSON

(amused; inflated)

An impromptu on a calabash pipe!

HOLMES

Isn't that what I just said?

WATSON

Yes, well, I thought I might introduce it.

HOLMES

And so you did.

WATSON

Yes.

HOLMES

How extemporaneous of you.

WATSON

Indubitably. You were saying?

HOLMES

Yes. An impromptu --

HOLMES & WATSON (unis.)

On a calabash pipe!

(HOLMES sings. **Impromptu on a Calabash Pipe.**)

HOLMES

I PONDER FACTS AS  
THE SMOKE RELAXES.  
AND THESE BOTH ARE EXACT AS  
I PLEASE.

Though I'm not entirely fond of the near-rhyme and "these" and "please" are practically hidden from each other.

WATSON

Would that they were completely hidden.

HOLMES

Cretin. And now, Watson, did you bring that anatomical torso as I requested?

WATSON

I did. Though what you want with it, I cannot think.

(WATSON brings the model over to HOLMES.  
HOLMES inspects it, pulling out a few of its  
removable organs.)

HOLMES

This torso might just determine whether I live or die. Oh, come, Watson, that's a perfectly splendid pun: Liver die? Ha, ha! Really, if already you've chosen to lose your sense of humour, it's going to make for a very long evening together.

WATSON

Don't you mean lung evening?

(Stony silence.)

WATSON

I see; your jokes are funny, mine are not.

HOLMES

So long as that is clear. Now what time is it, Mrs. Hudson?

MRS. HUDSON

Nearly quarter to four, Mr. Holmes.

HOLMES

Nearly quarter to, oh, no, no, Mrs. Hudson, "nearly" won't nearly do as --

(pulls out a pocketwatch)

-- in precisely seven minutes this figure shall save my life by taking a bullet in its head for me. Yes, tonight, in precisely seven minutes, I shall be murdered.

MRS. HUDSON & WATSON

Murdered!

HOLMES

Well, that is, so I would be were I to sit in the window over there.



WATSON

Murdered! How can you be so blasé about it?

HOLMES

All in a day's work. Now help me disguise this fellow; he's to look precisely like me.

(During the following, HOLMES and WATSON apply a hat, coat and pipe to the figure, and eventually set it in HOLMES' chair by the window.)

MRS. HUDSON

Mr. Holmes, I don't approve of your tricks and disguises, I don't. Someone's going to mistake you for the wrong man one of these days, and you'll meet a terrible fate.

HOLMES

Fate is always terrible, Mrs. Hudson, and as for whether I shall meet it one of these days, or one of these years, well, even I have yet been unable to solve that mystery.

WATSON

I agree with Mrs. Hudson, Holmes, I am aghast at your indifference to a life of danger and proximity to crime.

HOLMES

Indifference. I'd hardly characterize it as indifference.

WATSON

Well then, what is it? Tell me, Holmes, why do you do it? Why do you expose yourself to criminals; why dedicate your life to solving crime?

(HOLMES sings. **Elementary, My Dear Watson.**)

HOLMES

Elementary, my dear Watson. Elementary.  
DEDICATION TO DEDUCTION.  
WELL, FIRST OF ALL, IT IS AN ART.  
USING REASON AND INDUCTION  
YOU CAN PEER INTO THE HEART.  
IT'S ASTONISHING WHAT YOU CAN FIND.  
IT'S NOT ALL THAT COMPLEX.  
YOUR ACTIONS OFT BETRAY YOUR MIND.  
I JUST COLLECT THE FACTS.

ELEMENTARY! ELEMENTARY!  
IT'S SIMPLE, IF YOU SIMPLIFY.  
ELEMENTARY! MY DEAR WATSON!  
OBSERVE THE PUBLIC WITH A PRIVATE EYE.

IT'S THE WORKING CLASS I PITY:  
SO GULLIBLE, SO OFTEN FLEECE.  
SWINDLERS SWARMING IN THE CITY  
DUPE THE POOR AND POLICED.  
THEIR CASES DROPPED QUITE HALF THE TIME,  
UNSOLVED BY SCOTLAND YARD.  
BUT JUST WHEN THEY GIVE UP THE CRIME  
IN WITH THE TRUTH I TROD!

That's why I do it, Watson!  
FOR THE INNOCENT.  
TO SAVE THEM.  
IN A SENSE IT'S FOR THE INNOCENTS.  
To save them!

HOLMES, WATSON & MRS. HUDSON

ELEMENTARY, ELEMENTARY!  
IT'S SIMPLE IF YOU SIMPLIFY.  
ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR WATSON!  
OBSERVE THE PUBLIC WITH A PRIVATE EYE.

(Outside, the Tower of London begins to  
announce the striking of the hours.)

HOLMES

And now, as certain as a multiplication table, my seven minutes  
are up and in precisely twenty-three seconds, I shall be  
murdered. Dim the gas and watch the show.

(HOLMES goes about the flat dimming the gas lamps. A sudden tension in the air. HOLMES readies himself at the foot of the wax figure, crouching low out of sight. Pause. The clock strikes one. A SHOT rings out in the street; a window pane breaks, and the wax figure is shot in the head.)

HOLMES

(crying out)

Oh, I've been hit!

(The clock strikes two. A simultaneous second shot. The wax figure is struck a second time. HOLMES hands WATSON a single sheet of paper, all the while crying out with great drama. MRS. HUDSON observes, visibly disturbed.)

HOLMES

A second! Oh, 'tis fatal, Watson. Watson, come here, I want you!

(whispers to WATSON, pointing to the paper)

Now you read your line.

WATSON

(reading from the paper)

Oh, I've been hit!

HOLMES

(whispered still)

No, no, read the lines marked 'Watson'!

WATSON

Watson pawing his medical bag; frantically.

(HOLMES manipulates the wax figure from below, putting its hands to its temples. The clock strikes twice more, but there are no more shots.)

HOLMES

(a bit of an ad-lib)

I'm afraid I'm done for, Watson. Oh, it's all going black, black, inky black! Watson! Have you nothing to say?

WATSON

(baffled; referring to the paper)  
Where does it say "inky black"?

HOLMES

The next line, read the next line!

WATSON

(loud; great drama)  
Oh, Sherlock, there's brood upon your temple!

HOLMES

Blood, blood!

WATSON

(again loud)  
There's brood upon your blood!

HOLMES

For heavens' sakes!

WATSON

Well, you've dimmed the gas so!

(HOLMES snatches back the paper. During the following he knocks the figure to the ground, then races across the room to the hatrack and dons Watson's overcoat, all the while acting out the parts of both Watson and himself.)

HOLMES

(parentheses indicate "Watson" is speaking)  
I'm afraid I'm done for, Watson! (No, no, dear Sherlock, I shall be at your side momentarily. Do not despair, I shall employ all the medical powers at my disposal!) I'm afraid I shall need greater powers than that, Dr. Watson. (No, Holmes, you cannot leave me!) I'm afraid I can. Now cracks a noble heart. (Holmes, no!) Goodnight, sweet prince. (Drink this, drink this!)

(HOLMES makes gargled drinking noises)

(There, all better, you see?) And flights of angels -- (No!)  
-- sing thee to thy rest!

HOLMES

(Dies. As Watson, sobs uncontrollably.)  
(Oh, the tragedy! Here died London's finest detective, the greatest virtuoso violinist, the most astonishing mastermind this age nor any other has ever nor ever will produce --)

WATSON

Laying it on a bit thick, aren't you?

HOLMES

(Mrs. Hudson, it is too much to bear, too, too much!)

WATSON

My words precisely.

HOLMES

(Draw the drapes upon my grief. Out the window is an unendurable sight: London without Sherlock Holmes!  
(more sobbing)

(MRS. HUDSON draws the curtains, tut-tutting over the broken window pane. HOLMES rises.)

HOLMES

I hope you took notes, Watson. I shall expect no less a eulogy upon the real event.

(MRS. HUDSON crosses to the hatrack to put on her cape; preparing to go out.)

MRS. HUDSON

Oh, Mr. Holmes, you chill my spine with talk like that. You and your scheming; I've just about had it. Really, one day I'm going to write you an eviction notice, you see if I don't!

HOLMES

There, there, Mrs. Hudson, all to remain ahead of the would-be assassin.

(MRS. HUDSON huffs out with a swirl of her cape.)

WATSON

But now, this assassin, how did you know?

HOLMES  
Know what?

WATSON  
That he would shoot precisely at four!

HOLMES  
Did you not hear the clock?

WATSON  
I heard the clock.

HOLMES  
And did you hear the shots?

WATSON  
I think I heard the shots.

HOLMES  
Ah, you think you heard the shots!

WATSON  
I don't think I heard the shots?

HOLMES  
I don't think you heard the shots.

WATSON  
Very well, I didn't hear the shots.

HOLMES  
Because they were fired precisely as the clock struck.

WATSON  
Clever!

HOLMES  
Mmmm.

WATSON  
Though it doesn't explain how you knew it would be four o'clock.  
Why not three? Or five?

HOLMES

Because I was not in the window at those hours. And even the sharpest marksman cannot be expected to shoot his mark if he is not within sight.

WATSON

But who, then? Who would lie in wait every hour on the hour in hopes of finding you in the window? Which criminal in London wants so badly to see you dead?

HOLMES

Ah, which criminal in London doesn't?

WATSON

Well, then, we must go to the police.

HOLMES

Go to the police! There's no need to go to the police. When they --

(The door opens; MRS. HUDSON stands there with a CONSTABLE.)

HOLMES

-- will come to you.

CONSTABLE

Evenin', Mr. Omes. I 'eard shots.

WATSON

But -- how did you know --

HOLMES

Oh, Watson, not every deduction is as clever as the rest. When Mrs. Hudson closed the drapes, I saw the good constable walking up our stoop.

CONSTABLE

I can see you're all right, then, sir.

HOLMES

Right as an hypotenuse.

CONSTABLE

An' that's a good thing?

HOLMES

It is, sir.

CONSTABLE

All I 'eard was 'noose.'

HOLMES

We can't all be Euclideans.

CONSTABLE

No, sir, we can't.

WATSON

Did you catch the would-be assassin?

CONSTABLE

Alas, sir, no, I saw but his shadow a-running away, the coward.

HOLMES

Well, we'd hardly expect him to stand around and wait for you constables to arrest him, now, would we?

CONSTABLE

Though that would make our jobs a damn sight easier --  
(a glance at MRS. HUDSON)  
-- begging the lady's pardon.

MRS. HUDSON

One eviction coming right up.

CONSTABLE

Speakin' o' criminals as we was, Mr. Omes, as long as I'm 'ere, I wonder would you lend me some 'elp?

HOLMES

We have an appointment scheduled for later this evening --

WATSON

We do?

HOLMES

(to WATSON)

Everything in its own good time, my man.

(to the CONSTABLE)

Can we assist you before our appointment?



CONSTABLE

Well, see, the thing is, sir, it's a bit of a wild goose chase.

HOLMES

How fun! We like those, don't we, Watson?

WATSON

Indubitably.

CONSTABLE

No, I mean it literally, sir.

(The CONSTABLE reaches into the hallway and retrieves a round black hat and a white Christmas goose, deceased, but as yet unplucked.)

CONSTABLE

If you see what I mean, sir.

MRS. HUDSON

Good Lord!

CONSTABLE

Not to worry, mum, it be dead.

WATSON

Besides, I think it's a domestic.

(Everyone turns to WATSON, confused.)

CONSTABLE

Beggin' your pardon?

WATSON

The goose. You said it was a wild goose chase, but I believe the goose isn't wild, it's a domestic.

CONSTABLE

Oh. I thought you meant her.

WATSON

Ah. Domestic. Very good, constable. No, she's the landlady.

HOLMES

(had enough of this)

Look, if we're to solve your mystery and make our appointment, kindly tell your tale....

CONSTABLE

Very good. 'Ere's 'ow I come by this goose, sir, and the 'at. Just afore the stroke o' four and your assassin's bullets, I spied a little knot o' ruffians approachin' a man carryin' this goose, apparently wantin' it for themselves. One of 'em knocks off the man's 'at, on which he raises his stick to defend himself and, swingin' it over his head, smashes the shop window behind him. By this time, I'm rushing forward to protect the man from his assailants, but the man, shocked at having broken the window and seein' a copper rushing towards him, drops the goose, takes to his heels and vanishes, and the roughs had also fled at the appearance of the law, so 'ere I was left in possession of the field of battle, and also the spoils of victory in the shape of this battered 'at and a most unimpeachable Christmas goose.

WATSON

Which surely you intend to restore to its owner.

CONSTABLE

Ah, there, sir, there lies the problem. It is true that "for Mrs. 'Enry Baker" is printed upon a small card tied to the bird's left leg --

MRS. HUDSON

(reading the card)

"Mrs. Henry Baker."

CONSTABLE

There, y'see? And it is also true that the initials "H.B." is legitable upon the lining of this 'at --

(HOLMES examines the hat.)

CONSTABLE

-- but as there is some thousands of Bakers, and some hundreds of 'Enry Bakers in this city of ours, it is not so easy to restore lost property to any of them, which is why I turns to you, Mr. Omes, sir.

HOLMES

Yes. Well, we ought to be able to pinpoint the very Henry Baker who owns this hat as he is highly intellectual, leads a sedentary life, goes out little, is middle-aged, has grizzled hair which he has cut within the last few days and which he anoints with lime-cream, that his finances have declined within the last three years, and that his wife has ceased to love him.

WATSON

My dear Holmes -- but how?

HOLMES

Ah. There's much that you can tell from the lining of a hat.

WATSON

Is there?

(HOLMES sings; very Gilbert & Sullivan. **The Lining of a Hat.**)

HOLMES

Oh yes.

THE BRIMS ARE CURLED AS YOU CAN SEE  
ON THIS HAT OF VERY BEST QUALITY,  
THE CLOTH IS RARE, THE BAND IS SILK.  
THERE'S VERY FEW AFFORD A HAT OF THIS FINE ILK.

CONSTABLE/WATSON/MRS. HUDSON

THERE'S VERY FEW AFFORD A HAT OF THIS FINE ILK.

HOLMES

AND YET IT'S OLD, IT'S THREE YEARS OLD;  
HE HASN'T BOUGHT A HAT IN ALL THE TIME THAT'S TOLLED.  
HIS FORTUNE'S GONE, HIS LUCK IS FLAT  
AND ALL THAT FROM A LINING OF A HAT.

CONSTABLE/WATSON/MRS. HUDSON

HIS FORTUNE'S GONE, HIS LUCK IS FLAT  
AND ALL THAT FROM A LINING OF A HAT.

HOLMES

OBSERVE THIS SMALL ELASTIC BAND:  
ORDERED EXTRA, ONLY UPON DEMAND,  
SECURES THE HAT IF WINDS DO BLOW,  
WHAT FORESIGHT DOES THIS EVER CLEVER FALLEN FELLOW SHOW!

CONSTABLE/WATSON/MRS. HUDSON  
WHAT FORESIGHT DOES THIS EVER CLEVER FALLEN FELLOW SHOW!

HOLMES  
AND YET, ALAS, THE BAND HAS SPLIT  
BUT THE OWNER HASN'T GOT AROUND TO FIXING IT:  
IT PROVES HIS FORESIGHT'S GONE HEREAT.  
AND THAT ALL FROM THE LINING OF A HAT.

CONSTABLE/WATSON/MRS. HUDSON  
IT PROVES HIS FORESIGHT'S GONE HEREAT.  
AND THAT ALL FROM THE LINING OF A HAT.

WATSON  
But you said he was middle-aged and his wife doesn't love him.

HOLMES  
Yes, I'm coming to that.  
IN EXAMINING THE HAIRS UPON THE LINING HERE,  
GRIZZLED ONES SHOW THAT MIDDLE-AGE IS NEAR.  
AND MARKS OF MOISTURE AT THE NAPE  
SHOW THE MAN'S NO LONGER IN THE BEST OF SHAPE.

CONSTABLE/WATSON/MRS. HUDSON  
SHOW THE MAN'S NO LONGER IN THE BEST OF SHAPE.

HOLMES  
(slower)  
AND AS FOR HIS WIFE...WELL, THE DUST ON THE BRIM  
BETRAYS THAT SHE NO LONGER CLEANS HIS HAT FOR HIM.  
AND AFTER THAT, THE INEVITABLE SPAT.  
AND ALL THAT FROM THE LINING OF A HAT!

CONSTABLE/WATSON/MRS. HUDSON  
AND AFTER THAT, THE INEVITABLE SPAT.  
AND ALL THAT FROM THE LINING OF A HAT!

WATSON  
But how do you know he's married? He might be a bachelor. Ha!

HOLMES  
(reads the card on the goose's leg)  
"Mrs. Henry Baker: 'My dear sweet wife...'"

WATSON  
You have an answer to everything.

CONSTABLE

All very impressive, sir, but that won't work for every 'at.

HOLMES

Oh, I think it will.

CONSTABLE

My 'at's regulation, sir. 'Ow could it tell you anything about me what it don't tell you about any other man on the force?

HOLMES

Well, let's have a look, then.

(HOLMES inspects the CONSTABLE's hat.)

HOLMES

Mmmm. A treasure trove.

THE STRAP ATOP A COPPER'S TOP, IT FITS THE CHIN  
BUT YOURS IS SHORT AND SO IT WON'T PULL IN.  
THE BOWL'S TOO SMALL TO FIT YOUR CROWN;  
IT SITS UPON YOUR HEAD TOO HIGH AND WON'T PUSH DOWN.

CONSTABLE/WATSON/MRS. HUDSON

IT SITS UPON MY/YOUR HEAD TOO HIGH AND WON'T PUSH DOWN.

HOLMES

YOU'RE TRICKING ME. YOU'RE HAVING FUN.  
YOU FORGOT YOUR OWN THIS MORNING AND YOU BORROWED ONE.  
YOU'RE FORGETFUL, SIR, BUT YOU LIKE A GOOD PRAT,  
AND ALL THAT FROM THE LINING OF YOUR HAT.

CONSTABLE/WATSON/MRS. HUDSON

I'M/YOU'RE FORGETFUL, SIR, BUT I/YOU LIKE A GOOD PRAT,  
AND ALL THAT FROM THE LINING OF MY/YOUR HAT.

ALL

ALL THAT FROM THE LINING OF A HAT!

CONSTABLE

Well, it's all well done, Mr. Holmes, well done. I see I leave the goose in exceptionally capatable 'ands.

HOLMES

Oh, not my hands, surely, but the hands of the venerable Mrs. Hudson, who will keep the bird cool in the larder until its rightful owner can be found.

CONSTABLE

But you will find 'im, Mr. Omes?

WATSON

Indubitably.

CONSTABLE

Very well, then, I shall go now to 'elp prevent what few crimes you 'ave left to us mere policemen, Mr. Omes.

HOLMES

Oh, sir, you flatter me.

(The CONSTABLE leaves.)

HOLMES

-- with good reason.

MRS. HUDSON

You might've asked your landlady first did she mind quartering the goose.

HOLMES

No, no, keep it whole, Mrs. Hudson.

MRS. HUDSON

You know what I meant.

HOLMES

I do.

MRS. HUDSON

And -- there's an apology forthcoming?

HOLMES

For not asking you?

MRS. HUDSON

It's as if you'd read my mind.

HOLMES

(genuinely sincere)

My apologies, dear Mrs. Hudson. I should've consulted with you first about the goose.

MRS. HUDSON

(melts)

Well....

(turns to go; then:)

You know you're not the easiest tenant, Mr. Holmes.

HOLMES

Mmmm.

MRS. HUDSON

Not only is my own flat invaded at all hours by throngs of singular and I might add often undesirable characters, but I must also contend with your incredible untidiness, your addiction to music at strange hours, your occasional revolver practice indoors --

HOLMES

Those were mathematical measurements of ballistic trajectory --

MRS. HUDSON

-- your malodorous scientific experiments, not to mention the atmosphere of violence and danger which hangs round you. I trow, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, you are the very worst tenant in all of London.

HOLMES

On the other hand, my payments are princely.

MRS. HUDSON

Exactly why your near murder earlier this afternoon rattled me so.

HOLMES

All in good fun, Mrs. Hudson, all in good fun.

MRS. HUDSON

One of these days you will try my patience too far and you shall be Mr. Sherlock Without a Homes!

(SHE leaves 221B Baker Street in a huff.)

WATSON

Dear Mrs. Hudson. She's really quite fond of you, you know.

HOLMES

Oh, but she utterly denies it.

WATSON

Well, that's not final, is it? Wait! A moment, Holmes. I've an inspiration for an impromptu myself.

HOLMES

On Mrs. Hudson.

WATSON

Yes. An Impromptu on Mrs. Hudson. I believe I'll give it a go.

HOLMES

Floor's all yours.

WATSON

(haltingly)

MRS. HUDSON, THE LANDLADY  
GROWN QUITE FOND OF HER TENANT --

Oh, I see the problem now. It has to rhyme, hasn't it? Wait, wait!

QUITE FOND OF HER TENANT  
WHO NEVER JOINED THE ARMY  
OR BECAME A LIEUTENANT --

Oh, tenant/tenant. Hang on. Dweller, resident, far too hesitant

MRS. HUDSON, FAR TOO HESITANT  
TO EXPRESS HER FONDNESS  
FOR HER CHIEF RESIDENT, RESITANT --

Blast, I thought I had it.

HOLMES

Is that the conclusion?

WATSON

(defeated)

'Tis.

HOLMES

You make it look so easy. In comparison. And now -- to the real purpose for which I summoned you this evening, Dr. John H. Watson!



WATSON

You mean it wasn't so I could witness myself eulogizing you so eloquently?

HOLMES

I hope you have brought your pistol. It would be well for you to have it ready when we go on our appointment tonight.

WATSON

About this appointment -- Is it the assassin we're to meet tonight?

HOLMES

Worse.

WATSON

His entire nest of fellow cut-throats?

HOLMES

Worse still.

WATSON

Some blackguard whom you once imprisoned, now escaped and come back for revenge? A snake in the grass? A sansculotte, a garroter, a rival at Scotland Yard?

HOLMES

Worse, Watson, worse than all of those things combined: a woman! It all began in the middle of a thunderstorm not three nights ago.

(Dramatic but very unrealistic lighting change; suddenly the upper landing becomes a sort of a playacting area, as the characters in Holmes' colourful narration appear and disappear. Holmes, too, is able to join them or not join them as he desires; it's all very melodramatic and unrealistic, though Watson can look at the upper landing and "see" what Holmes is describing.

There is a great flash of lightning, and a rumble of melodramatic music. Holmes dives into his armchair. **A Visit from a Masked Man.**)

HOLMES

I was in my armchair as usual when I was visited by a man in a mask.

(A MAN IN A MASK appears on the landing.  
More lightning; overdone but still effective  
*strum und drang.*)

HOLMES

His dress was rich with an Eastern European richness which would have been, had it been English, looked upon as akin to bad taste.

MAN IN THE MASK

I MUST BEGIN --

HOLMES

The man said,

MAN IN THE MASK

BY BINDING YOU TO SECRECY FOR TWO WHOLE YEARS.  
MY IDENTITY MUST BE AN ABSOLUTE MYSTERY  
AS MY CRISIS MIGHT AFFECT MANY LIVES AND CAREERS  
AND MAY INFLUENCE ALL OF EUROPEAN HISTORY.

HOLMES

"A bit dramatic," I said, "but I promise your secrecy."

MAN IN THE MASK

PLEASE EXCUSE THE MASK --

HOLMES

He said --

MAN IN THE MASK

I WOULD NOT ASK --

HOLMES

He continued --

MAN IN THE MASK

BUT IT MAY INFLUENCE ALL OF EUROPEAN HISTORY.

HOLMES

"Specifically," I said, "specifically the Great House of Ormstein, am I not correct, from which come the hereditary Kings of Bohemia."

MAN IN THE MASK

GOOD LORD! HOW DID YOU KNOW?

HOLMES

The heavy bands of astrakhan  
DISPLAYED ON YOUR SLEEVES.

(breaking; addressing Watson directly)

I tell you, Watson, I can never bring you to realize the importance of sleeves, the suggestiveness of thumb-nails, or the great issues that may hang from a boot-lace.

WATSON

Noted.

MAN IN THE MASK

YOU MAY ADDRESS ME AS THE COUNT VON KRAMM,  
A NOBLEMAN FROM BOHEMIA.

HOLMES

"You are much more than that," I said,  
YOU'RE ITS VERY KING.  
AND IF YOUR MAJESTY WOULD STATE HIS CASE,  
I'LL NOT INSIST YOU UNMASK YOUR FACE.

MAN IN THE MASK

Remarkable.

HOLMES

Elementary.

MAN IN THE MASK

You are everything they say of you.

HOLMES

How may I help you, your Majesty?

KING WILHELM

I have become scandalously involved with a blackmailer. A woman. An actress! I should have known, but I was young then, I was only Crown Prince when I became entangled with her and wrote her some compromising letters.

HOLMES

We shall prove them inauthentic.

KING WILHELM

THEY'RE IN MY HANDWRITING.

HOLMES

Forgery.

KING WILHELM

THEY'RE ON MY OWN PRIVATE NOTEPAPER.

HOLMES

Stolen.

KING WILHELM

MY OWN SEAL.

HOLMES

Imitated.

KING WILHELM

MY PHOTOGRAPH.

HOLMES

Bought.

KING WILHELM

WE'RE BOTH IN THAT PHOTOGRAPH.

HOLMES

TROUBLE.

KING WILHELM

WEARING VERY LITTLE.

HOLMES

IT'S GETTING WORSE.

KING WILHELM

IN FACT, THE PHOTOGRAPH DEPICTS --

HOLMES

Stop! I get the picture. I mean, you desire me to get the picture. From her. Your Majesty must pay. It must be bought.

KING WILHELM

She will not sell.

HOLMES

It must be stolen, then.

KING WILHELM

Five attempts have been made to steal the photograph. She must have it deeply hidden.

HOLMES

And the actress? What is her name?

KING WILHELM

Her name -- is Irene Adler.

(IRENE ADLER appears on the landing. SHE is a striking woman, assured, regal, powerful, mature, and hypnotically beautiful. **Love Me if You Dare.**)

WATSON

(alarmed)

Irene Adler! You've not spoken of her for years, Holmes.

HOLMES

There is a reason I have not spoken of her. She is the devil to me, Watson. I resisted her once. I may be unable a second time.

WATSON

Wasn't she a blackmailer before? Accused of poisoning her first husband.

HOLMES

Poisoned much more than that, Watson. I had evidence to convict her, but she charmed me, Watson, like a black adder, she snake-charmed me, and I let her go. Oh, why, Watson, why did I let her go?

(IRENE sings. **Love Me If You Dare.**)

IRENE

LONG HAVE YOU KEPT HIDDEN NOW  
TAKING A FORBIDDEN VOW  
WITHDRAWING FROM BOTH SIDES OF LIFE,  
FRIGHTENED OF BOTH JOY AND STRIFE.  
TIME YOU TASTED SIN AND VIRTUE,  
TIME YOU LET A PLEASURE HURT YOU,  
TIME YOU'RE IN ANOTHER'S CARE.  
LOVE ME IF YOU DARE.

IT'S TRUE THAT  
ONCE LOVE'S KISSED YOU, IT'S CONTROLLED YOU.  
IT WILL TWIST YOU, IT WILL HOLD YOU.  
BUT OH, ALONG THE WAY  
LOVE WILL HAVE ITS DAY.  
COME CLOSER, BUT BEWARE  
HOW QUICKLY WE DESPAIR.  
LOVE ME IF YOU DARE.

WATSON

Why did you let her go? You let her go, my dear Holmes,  
because --

HOLMES

It was a rhetorical question.

WATSON

A rather long one, then.

HOLMES

She was the devil's bait to me, Watson. With her I lost my  
ability to reason. I first saw her on the stage.

*(Sturm und drang music continues. A Visit  
From a Masked Man, Continued.)*

Appearing in the role of the woman for whom Faust sells his soul  
to Mephistopheles. Even from my box I was fascinated by her,  
Watson, so you can imagine my delirium when she sent a note at  
the interval begging me to meet her backstage after the  
performance. I granted her request and -- oh, Watson....

IRENE

IT'S TRUE THAT  
ONCE LOVE'S KISSED, IT'S CONTROLLED YOU.  
IT WILL TWIST YOU, IT WILL HOLD YOU.  
BUT OH, ALONG THE WAY  
LOVE WILL HAVE ITS DAY.  
COME CLOSER BUT BEWARE  
HOW QUICKLY WE DESPAIR.  
LOVE ME IF YOU DARE.

HOLMES/IRENE

LOVE ME IF YOU DARE.

(The upper landing gives way to a representation of IRENE ADLER in her dressing room, to which HOLMES is paying a visit. NOTE: The scene is unrealistic memory; the scenery mere suggestion.)

IRENE

Mr. Holmes -- I confess with no little shame that I am a woman who gambles. And in Monte Carlo last year I accumulated such debts playing baccarat I did the most ill-considered things, feverishly trying to pay my wicked pipers and I'm afraid, I'm so unpreparedly afraid of what I have done, but I need ten thousand pounds by month's end. Will you help me blackmail an archduke, Mr. Holmes? There's twenty thousand in it for you and -- and -- a month with me.

HOLMES

Watson...in the end, I could not do it. I refused to take her case.

(HOLMES drifts regretfully out of the dressing room, deliberately puts back on his cool mask of dispassion and comes back down to the lower level of 221B Baker Street.)

HOLMES

But another man, as fine a detective as London had to that day seen, he took her case. Rumour was an archduke parted with a terrible sum of money, and the poor detective married Irene Adler and within a month's time was found poisoned. That could have been I, Watson. So when the King of Bohemia --

WATSON

The King of Bohemia?

HOLMES

Yes, you remember....

(HOLMES gestures; another flash of lightning and the KING appears as before. Same musical sting.)

WATSON

Oh yes. With the mask and the sleeves.

HOLMES

Yes. So when he asked me would I help him disentangle him from the black widow spiderwebs of Irene Adler --

KING WILHELM

(as before; returning us to the scene)

We are both in that photograph.

HOLMES

Needless to say, I was of two rather conflicted minds. On the one hand, a chance to imprison her and keep her from devouring other men --

KING WILHELM

Five attempts have been made to steal the photograph. She must have it deeply hidden.

HOLMES

But why now? After all these years she has had these photographs of you as a Crown Prince, why bring them to light now?

KING WILHELM

My wedding is in three days. I have announced it at the last possible moment for fear of this woman. If only she could be reasoned with, if only she could be rescued from her life of blackmail and sins against God and humanity. Will you save her, Holmes? Will you be Lancelot to her sinful Guinevere?

WATSON

Those weren't his actual words! Lancelot to her sinful Guinevere?



HOLMES

Well, possibly I romanticized it a bit.

WATSON

(revelation)

Good God, you're thinking of taking the case! You want to see Irene Adler again, don't you?

HOLMES

No, Watson, there you're wrong: I am not thinking of taking the case.

WATSON

There's my man.

HOLMES

I have taken the case.

WATSON

No.

HOLMES

Yes.

WATSON

Holmes!

HOLMES

Watson. Our appointment this evening --

WATSON

Don't say it.

HOLMES

Is with Irene Adler.

WATSON

You've already been to see her, Holmes!

HOLMES

I have.

WATSON

Holmes!