

SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE QUESTION OF THE FUTURE

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Fog loops in and out of brick chimneys and spires, the roofs and gables of Victorian London. The street below is hidden in the mist, only hints at civilization where lights - street lamps maybe - lighten little patches, and dark tendrils drift where alleys might be. It could be a scene straight out of Dickens.

The curtain of fog stirs... then TEARS open around a fantastic bicycle, more like a motorcycle covered in gears and switches, propelled by a jet of steam. The determined face of its rider, SHERLOCK HOLMES, zooms past.

The gap in the fog is a window onto the streets of a new, steampunk London, filled with a stunning variety of traffic: motorized carriages, mechanized divan chairs riding over the old London Bridge, itself riveted together with huge, copper bolts and girders. Underneath, clockwork boats disgorge ton upon ton of steam that rises and merges with the mist over London - that IS the mist over London.

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Holmes bears down on a RUNNING FIGURE, cloaked in heavy garb, as he runs down an abandoned avenue. The figure's face is always in the shadow of a nearby object or turned away - whenever one looks at him, it is dark. He's lugging a heavy suitcase behind him.

Holmes careens roughly down a flight of mud-caked stairs to the pier, shedding nuts and screws as he goes. The figure skids to a halt in front of a huge, destitute sign that not even the fog can hide. It reads: "East India Docklands" with "Dock" scrawled out and replaced by "Dark." Darklands. The figure stares up at it anxiously, trapped between the docks and Holmes as he brakes on rickety, rotten boards of wood on the other side.

Holmes removes a pair of goggles. He's just a boy of sixteen; in fact he has a schoolboy's uniform on under a heavy, embroidered jacket. The tip of his school's motto is on the chest: "Deo iuvante, impossibilia possibilia fiunt." Only the "Deo iuvante" shows right now.

HOLMES: It's not worth it, you know.

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The figure backs further towards the docks. A loose board creaks underneath his boots. From behind him, bits of rubbish shift and curl out of the spaces. Except they're not bits of junk, but decrepit, hideous people, almost monsters, that stare with evil eyes and limp and crawl.

FIGURE: Really? And how would a boy like you know that?

HOLMES: It's elementary.

The figure reaches for his suitcase.

FIGURE: (grinning) Go on. Explain.

Holmes smiles to himself.

HOLMES: Going into the darklands at this hour would be a terrible mistake; the route you took down here makes it clear that you know the city well enough to realize this.

While Holmes talks, gesturing with proud, superior gestures, the figure fiddles stealthily with his suitcase. He pops off the clasps.

HOLMES: You won't risk your life for a case carrying only half of what you purchased in the slums, unless you can carry 150 pounds at a steady clip, which would be remarkable for a man of your stature.

The Figure extends an antenna from the suitcase.

HOLMES: The figures were easy enough to find when you consider they were paid for in Indian silver, not good, English gold.

We see what the Figure is doing now: ratcheting a mess of gears and wires that fit snugly into the felt compartments of his suitcase.

HOLMES: So what is so special about a hundred photographic apparatuses, common mulch, and ten yards of stripping?

The figure's shoulders hunch as he chuckles to himself.

FIGURE: You may be smart, schoolboy, but you have no imagination.

He turns out the suitcase. Holmes's eyes widen.

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Holmes looks to his sides, and with expert accuracy identifies: a trail of wires leading out from the under the pier connected to: a nitrogen explosive wedged between two boards on the dock, then to: a twisted metal aerial hanging over the water, then to: another explosive clamped to a flagpole under the drooping and tattered flag of the UK.

The figure flicks a trigger switch.

It's all Holmes can do to leap off his bicycle as the pier erupts around him. Two cracking explosions send splinters of wood flying past his face as he plummets into the dirty Thames water with half the wooden catwalk.

Satisfied, the figure walks, totally unperturbed, into the darklands. The hungry inhabitants there shrink away from him, afraid.

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Under the pier, Holmes floats face-down under his jacket in the dirty water. Bits of trash and the parts of his bike float past. A hand from the shore reach-

es out and grabs his arm. JAMES hauls him, thrashing, onto dry land, where Holmes coughs up a lungful of dirty water.

James is a young man of about the same age, dressed in the same uniform and a similar jacket. They'd be very similar in both appearance and manner if it wasn't for James's red hair and more severe dress sense: his jacket buttoned down and his shape less gawky.

HOLMES: My bike.

Holmes crawls back to the water and grabs a floating brass cylinder - some sort of brake - and collapses. James keeps him from plunging back in after the rest.

JAMES: Your *leg*.

HOLMES: Overrated. Where have you been?

JAMES: Several steps behind. I thought that's how you preferred it.

They stare up at the shattered underside of the pier.

HOLMES: (scolding) This is serious business. We need to work together next time.

JAMES: How about we start by getting you back to the Long Hall?

HOLMES: This is the long haul, James. A tough case, I can feel it.

JAMES: (laughing) Mal will have some anesthetic.

James hauls him up onto his shoulder. Holmes's face pulls back into a grimace.

The pair of them limp out of the dockyards, up a steep hill of broken and splintered latter-day ships: sails and timber, great jutting prows replaced by a new generation powered by steam.

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They walk up the twisting road of an evening street in London empty of people. HOMEOWNERS peer here and there through lighted windows, not afraid of them, but just generally anxious. Cobblestones glisten in the mist. A broadsheet newspaper blows past, the VAMPIRE OF LONDON making headlines on the front page, with the picture of a shrugging POLICE CHIEF.

Their backs light up against the glittering lights of the town as they limp under the boughs of a dark heath, the sky crowded above with branches. James holds a beat-up, old discarded candle lantern before him, lighting the way forward.

Holmes and James emerge from the heath and undertake the steep, grassy slope up to Frederick Long College, an extended series of buildings that have filled out the top of a hill and had nowhere else to build from there but upwards. The towers are a little lopsided, and the stones of uneven size.

The front door of their hall opens with a wedge of yellow light and the silhouette of a little PORTER welcomes them in.

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Holmes's and James's room is shared with one other: MALICHI, a fair-haired boy of the same age, who reclines on the middle of three bunks and reads a book from the weak light of their distorting old glass window. He wears a beautiful ROSARY around his neck. A workbench has recently been scraped clean in the corner, but still bears oily rags and curious ratchets and tools.

The door swings open and James carries the still-damp Holmes, now looking quite pale and faint, into the room. Malichi swings his feet from the bed and gapes.

MALICHI: What happened?

JAMES: Nothing. An accident.

MALICHI: In the river? I told you that bike wasn't ready.

James eases Holmes onto the lower bunk. Holmes grits his teeth. Malichi attempts to bandage the leg with a scarf.

HOLMES: What do you reckon? Tear in the achilles tendon?

MALICHI: I know little about medicine.

HOLMES: History. Right.

MALICHI: You should see the Matron.

A knock at the door makes James flinch. From outside, the hall MATRON calls:

MATRON: Lectures begin in fifteen minutes! To the college with you all!

HOLMES: Speak of the devil and she shall appear.

JAMES: Mal, you can't tell anyone about this...

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Mal frowns, puzzled.

MALICHI: But, your leg...

JAMES: It wasn't just an accident.

Malichi raises his eyebrows.

HOLMES: (annoyed) Look what you've done.

JAMES: You have to promise.

MALICHI: I knew something was going on!

JAMES: Mal...

MALICHI: Don't worry. You can trust me. I have a good head on my shoulders.

He stops half way through the doorway, having forgotten his book, and doubles back for it.

Holmes glares at him from the bed. Malichi blushes.

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A cluster of YOUNGER BOYS in an old college hallway with vaulted ceilings whisper to each other as James and Malichi cross an intersection ahead. Brickerbrack lines the walls outside each classroom: discarded tables, shelving, books, hatstands and stacks of paper.

In Theology class, a room littered with religious paraphernalia that looks more like a mausoleum than a study hall, the three Boys filter in late. They duck their heads as a stern LECTURER's eyes follow them to their places:

LECTURER: Death is not the end, but the beginning. The circumstance of our rebirth, either into paradise or into torment, is the only mortal choice. All other choices in life are the consequences of His choice... cause and effect. Reason is the study of consequences. Theology, the study of choices.

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LECTURER: What, then, is Latin? The Natural Sciences? What are the Classics?

James raises his hand. The Lecturer hesitates, then sighs.

LECTURER: Very well James. You may answer.

JAMES: Well, ahm... The classics are the study of the word and breath of God. They are the profound results of our single choice to live.

The lecturer raises his eyebrows. Other students in the class turn, eyebrows raised.

LECTURER: Very eloquently put. Yes. I suppose that is true.

A reedy MESSENGER pokes his head through the door and delivers a letter to the Lecturer at the front. The Lecturer unfurls it and as he reads it, goes pale.

He looks up worriedly at James.

LECTURER: That principle in mind, James, the Headmaster would like to see you right away about... Well, you are, uh, excused.

JAMES: The Headmaster?

The whole class peers at him and Malichi with an intense and jealous interest. Malichi soaks it up. James stands, a puzzled look on his face.

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Back in his room, Holmes glares from his bed out the sunlit wedge of the room's window. He peers down at his injured legs and frowns in concentration.

Slowly, one injured leg swings off the bed. He grimaces.

The workbench in the corner of the room is covered in bolts and frayed pieces of piping. Holmes fits a mechanical brace fashioned out of pipes and bolts to his leg.

HOLMES: No rest for the wicked.

Outside his room (#221), a hand reaches up and knocks on the door. The door swings open and Sherlock, in a work apron, shoves his head through.

HOLMES: I'm busy, Matron...

Holmes frowns. It's not the Matron, but rather a rough-looking gentleman in a coachman's hat. He lifts it and smiles.

AGENT: Good afternoon! My name is Roland.

Holmes studies him.

HOLMES: ... Good afternoon!

Holmes slams the door, but it doesn't go all the way. The Agent has his foot against it.

HOLMES: Go away, whoever you are.

AGENT: Me? I am a busy man, as are you it seems.

HOLMES: Yes. I have work to do. Now begone.

AGENT: Rebuilding a damaged steamcycle, perhaps?

Holmes squints at him.

AGENT: May I come in?

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Back in his room, Holmes sips tea nervously from the corner and watches the Agent set down a briefcase.

HOLMES: How do you know who I am?

The Agent hands him a business card.

AGENT: We've been watching you for a while, now, Mister Holmes. This little detective operation you run... it's impressive.

HOLMES: It seems I am at a disadvantage.

AGENT: Forgive me. I understand it is not a position you find yourself in often.

Holmes frowns at the business card.

HOLMES: What is it you want ... Mister Bart?

AGENT: (smiling) Your services only.

Holmes raises his eyebrows.

HOLMES: ...for?

AGENT: Us.

Holmes's eyes narrow.

HOLMES: I work on my own terms.

AGENT: Your current investigation is a matter about which we are specifically interested. We have been pursuing the same character for weeks. We could help you.

HOLMES: I don't need help.

AGENT: Yes, you are quite the prodigy. Perhaps we are the ones who need help. Name your price.

HOLMES: I have no price.

AGENT: On the contrary, it seems what you lack, good sir, is imagination. We can provide that. We can pay in any manner you like. Oriental opium. Cocaine...

Holmes stares at him, hard.

HOLMES: Can you pay with justice?

AGENT: Any kind you like.

A tense silence reigns as Holmes's perceptive eyes work on the Agent.

Holmes gestures at the door.

HOLMES: I think you ought to leave before the Matron finds you in here. She's quite the dragon, you know.

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James stands nervously in the Headmaster's study. Before him sits a withered man - the HEADMASTER, and behind him a tall Figure, his face completely obscured by the shadows of the old man's study. He stands so still and is so thin he could be mistaken for a shadowy coat and a hat draped on a hatstand.

HEADMASTER: James, I am glad to see you. Perhaps I should not say "glad."

JAMES: Headmaster, sir?

HEADMASTER: I hear you are, as your father promised years ago, a star pupil. You have not disappointed us here at Long College, which is why I hesitate. You have become ... familiar to us.

JAMES: ... Then you know I prefer to get to the heart of things, Headmaster.

HEADMASTER: The heart, yes...

The Figure steps forward, his worn face coming into view. His one arm rises from the gloom, hand clutching a WEDDING RING. He holds it out. James stares at it, confused.

FIGURE: This was your mother's. I don't know what to say.

James's gaze shifts up to the man's black face and studies it.

JAMES: Wait ... father?

The Figure takes his hand and plants the wedding ring in his palm. Then he rests his hand on James's shoulder.

FIGURE: Son.

James's eyes are already filling up. The Headmaster looks uncomfortable.

JAMES: How did she...?

FIGURE: It was my fault.

The Headmaster coughs uncomfortably.

HEADMASTER: Your father takes on more responsibility than he deserves. She was taken unawares in the street.

James steels himself with a deep breath.

JAMES: ... the method?

The Figure frowns.

HEADMASTER: (aside, to the Figure) He has been spending too much time with our amateur detective schoolboy, Sherlock.

FIGURE: She was drained of blood, like the other murders.

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James's composure cracks into a little gasp. He has to turn away. His shoulders shake with tremors: sobs.

The Headmaster looks worriedly at the Figure.

HEADMASTER: (whispering) That was a little harsh, wasn't it?

FIGURE: There's nothing wrong with strong feelings, headmaster. They teach us the things that logic cannot muster.

The Headmaster raises his eyebrows.

HEADMASTER: He takes after you.

FIGURE: (not exactly pleased) Yet he is his own man. With your permission, I would stay here at Frederick Long... in order to oversee his development. Constance's death has made me more aware of how easily the spirit corrupts. I will protect him from that influence.

HEADMASTER: You know you don't need my permission, Professor. We would be glad to have your expertise and guidance. What shall I say to the Theology scholar?

FIGURE: That it's God's will.

The Headmaster nods.

James's father goes to James and gently puts his hands on his shoulders, still shaking.

FIGURE: Come, child. We need not all be crucified for the sins of others.

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Holmes sits surrounded by a disasterscape of steampunk toys - metal tubes and springs and gaskets: machine parts laid out in what is to him perfect order. He concentrates on measuring distance across a MAP OF LONDON with the skeleton of a shattered pressure gauge. Behind him, Malichi watches him from the bed.

James comes in, a numbed look on his face.

HOLMES: James, Mal, come and have a look at this. It puzzles me, and that is no small feat.

Malichi gets up and goes over.

James considers Holmes for a moment from across the room. Instead, he goes to his bed and pries away a panel of the wall - it's a little hidden cubby hole with some matches, a bottle of absinthe, and a wind-up automaton doll made of brass. He takes the doll and holds it cupped in his hands. It's of a young boy frozen in mid gesture.

HOLMES: Now that the entrance to the Docklands is no longer open, our shadowy friend will have to find a different route, assuming as we must that he has tamed the vile place and made those premises the theatre of his efforts.

James starts to wind the automaton up - crick, crick, crick - as Holmes talks.

HOLMES: If he has as great a network as we seem to suspect, he will not be able to move his operation so easily and will, for the time being at least, have to ferry his goods across the Thames, an operation not without risk, for it is highly visible. We may be able to catch him, still "wounded," essentially, from our previous encounter. And I am resolute to be healed first.

Holmes frowns down at his injured legs. He stands up.

Behind him, James releases the figurine. It starts to gesture, jerk, and sing.

AUTOMATON:

One is all there was at first,

Two discovered sin.

Three is what becomes of you,

When four attempts,

But fails to win.

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One is where the self should start,

Two where it bends.

Three is when you understand,

That four is where it ends.

One is for t r a g e d y. . .

T w o i s f o r l o

The toy slowly runs out of energy and stands in mid-pose with its hand to its heart.

Holmes looks at it with a raised eyebrow, then grabs his coat.

HOLMES: Shall we go?

James breaks.

JAMES: My mother was just strangled in the street.

MALICHI: What?

Holmes stops.

HOLMES: Where?

JAMES: Outside our house, for God's sake. Sherlock, she's gone. She's my mother! Was...

He hides his face. Malichi goes to comfort him.

MALICHI: My God. James... I'm so sorry.

HOLMES: We were heading that way anyway.

JAMES: Sherlock. I'm not going anywhere, damn you!

HOLMES: I would have expected this event to be motivating.

JAMES: What!

MALICHI: Guys...

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HOLMES: Come on, James. Doesn't it seem likely that the death of your mother is connected to the events of last night?

James pauses, his eyes widening. Then they narrow again.

JAMES: You're trying to make this about yourself. Well, it's not. It's about me. My feelings, this time. My family. This has nothing to do with your petty investigation or how impressive you think you are. Go if you want, but I need time.

HOLMES: Listen to me.

JAMES: I'll listen to my heart! Or to God, and try as you might, you are not he.

Malichi has to hold James back.

MALICHI: James, maybe you should -

A hand held bell rings outside in the hall. The boys go silent.

MATRON: (from outside) Afternoon lectures start in ten minutes. Out you come!

HOLMES: (whispering) We'll finish this later.

James glares.

JAMES: I won't argue with you, Sherlock.

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Later...

Holmes, James, and Malichi sit in class. At the head is the Figure, now PROFESSOR, lecturing to the class. He points to some words he's written on a slate blackboard: "Ecce rex tuus venit tibi." He lectures with one eye on Holmes, bored-looking, and James, who stares out the window at the grey skyline of London,

PROFESSOR: ...James? Perhaps you can explain the context.

James looks startled.

JAMES: What? Oh... The Latin is from Matthew twenty-one. It refers to the advent of the redeemer as he approaches Jerusalem, as an icon of learning and the progress of the child into the man.

The class murmurs in admiration.

PROFESSOR: Eloquently put...

HOLMES: (cocky) Eloquent, perhaps, but not entirely correct.

The Professor smiles to himself as James's face flushes.

PROFESSOR: Go on, Sherlock. Explain.

HOLMES: Certainly. There are four instances of the phrase in the Vulgate; only one refers to Matthew. The others are in Zacharias and John, where it is used as a warning to disbelievers.

From the corner, another student, JOHN WATSON, watches with great admiration as Sherlock speaks. He's a palpable fellow, with a frenzy of blond hair and an open expression.

PROFESSOR: ... Well, James? Your position has been challenged.

James frowns, then slumps back in his chair and looks back out the window.

JAMES: I won't argue with him.

PROFESSOR: Then your argument is moot. Very good, Sherlock. I think after this we should examine the phenomenon of martyrdom, but there is no time today. Until tomorrow, class.. No latecomers next time.

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The Professor writes a letter at his desk in a spare but adequate study, far less impressive than the Headmaster's office. Copper pipes run from ceiling to floor. James approaches his father submissively.

PROFESSOR: James ... come closer. Tell me, why do you let Sherlock treat you like a fool? You should fight back. I can tell you now, he is not your superior.

The Professor continues to scratch at his letter.

JAMES: He is my friend.

PROFESSOR: A false friend. He humiliated you.

JAMES: I have faith that was not his intention.

PROFESSOR: Which is why you could beat him if you tried. People like Sherlock think narrowly, and only believe in what they know. Your faith gives you access to much more. You have real intuition, and he hates you for it.

JAMES: Hates me?

PROFESSOR: Jealousy has already put him on the path. Perhaps it is time for you to think of your own feelings.

James is quiet. He wrestles with his father's words.

PROFESSOR: Come back and live at the manor. I am lonely now, and you need a better role model than Sherlock Holmes.

JAMES: But...

PROFESSOR: I'm asking you to come home, son.

JAMES: ... I will consider it.

The Professor sighs.

PROFESSOR: I won't force you. You will see soon enough. The computerological revolution is not the only one brewing right now. I would see you protected in the only way I can.

The Professor signs the letter. Just visible are the words, "J. Watson." He pours dust over the letter then lifts it and blows the dust off, like a magic spell.

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In his room, James stands moodily over the pieces of Holmes's next steamcycle, maybe half complete on the workbench. He looks from some crumpled diagrams to a mess of copper wires to the crumbs on a greasy plate Holmes has left among them and sighs. A kettle boils in the fireplace behind him. The steam from it powers the little hanging toy of a running man.

A banging at the door snaps him out of it.

James opens the door to the wide, fat face of the Matron and next to it, the slim jaw and wide eyes of CHETAN, an Indian girl not much older than him.

JAMES: Hello?

MATRON: For God's sake, would you look at the mess in here! It's shameful. (to Chetan) Boys, eh! James, this is your new chambermaid. She has a foreign name. Now stay out of her way... it looks like she has her work cut out for her. Tut!

JAMES: Wait a moment...

She pushes Chetan in and slams the door behind her. James frowns. Chetan offers her hand, meekly.

CHETAN: (eyes downcast) Hello. I am Chetan. From India.

JAMES: I'm from... uh, what was your name again?

CHETAN: Chetan.

JAMES: Right. I'm, er, James. Would you take a seat? Tea? I think it's from India, actually.

CHETAN: I knew you would be kind.

James raises his eyebrows. Chetan looks over her shoulder to make sure the door is closed and sits down.

JAMES: Have we met?

James pours tea from a pot hung over the fireplace. Behind him, Chetan glances over her shoulder nervously.

CHETAN: No.

He blinks and pours her tea.

JAMES: Forgive me. It's been a difficult day. I am not myself.

He pours himself a cup and sips.

CHETAN: I understand. My mother is dead, too.

James glances up, surprised. Tea spills over the side.

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JAMES: Excuse me?

CHETAN: (sighs) I see things about people, places. That is part of what I saw about you. Never mind. I am truly sorry.

James stares, the cup forgotten in his hand.

JAMES: A second sight?

Chetan smiles.

CHETAN: I am surprised by your open-mindedness. So few Christians have it. Spirits speak to me - spirits of what I once loved but no longer have...

JAMES: Your mother...

CHETAN: My country.

James puts his tea down and swallows.

JAMES: I wonder if you... This sounds ridiculous, but can you see anything about me and someone named Sherlock? Will we stay friends?

CHETAN: I will try.

Chetan scoots forwards and puts her hand on his. She frowns.

CHETAN: Only objects... a spring ripped out of someone's body, a tombstone with the name always in shadow, a letter opener covered in blood, the arrival of the new moon.

Examples seem to reflect in her eyes as she mentions them.

JAMES: What do they mean??

CHETAN: I do not know. But I don't need a third eye to know that this person is important to you. Friendship is a gift, my mother always said, so give it.

James stares down at her hands, which pull back in surprise and a little gasp as:

Sherlock comes in with Malichi. They freeze, warily, when they see Chetan.

SHERLOCK: Who is this?

JAMES: (sighs) Chetan, it's okay. Sherlock, this is our new chambermaid.

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MALICHI: (bowing) Pleased to meet you.

CHETAN: And you. Did you find what you were looking for?

Sherlock frowns.

SHERLOCK: What have you told her?

JAMES: Nothing. Sherlock, she has a second sight.

SHERLOCK: (suspicious) ... Is that what they call it now?

JAMES: I'll vouch for her.

SHERLOCK: Oh, well that's all right then.

MALICHI: Sherlock, stop it.

JAMES: She could help us find who we're looking for, maybe even solve the case.

MALICHI: And James, perhaps you should take a break. You've been through a lot today.

JAMES: She knew that my mother had died.

Sherlock goes over to his half-completed cycle. His eyes narrow. He glances at the steaming teapot and the running man.

SHERLOCK: A puzzle.

JAMES: And you can't resist a puzzle.

CHETAN: (looking behind her) Perhaps I should go.

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Sherlock holds up his hand.

SHERLOCK: Do you know how a steamcycle works?

He gestures at the half-finished contraption. Chetan looks nervous.

CHETAN: No...

SHERLOCK: Hundreds of gears and pistons working in simultaneous action. The power of a horse-drawn carriage drawn from the element of water. It is magical is it not? Or is it just a kind of puzzle?

He picks up a piece of the cycle and slots it firmly into place.

SHERLOCK: I see the pieces where others see fog only. The gears and wheels that drive us; like the uncanny quality of your English; or that you wear rouge, to impress someone, perhaps? I notice things, my dear. Perhaps you are the same. Come with us to the docks tonight.

MALICHI: Sherlock, what?

SHERLOCK: It will be an interesting experiment.

CHETAN: I...

Sherlock glances sideways at Chetan, almost a glare.

SHERLOCK: But be careful. You may have a "second sight," but then so do I. I will be watching you.

She smiles.

CHETAN: Good.

James looks at her from behind, with just a hint of jealousy.

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The East India Darklands sign drifts overhead, barely visible in lantern light as Holmes, James, Chetan, and Malichi punt past the shattered bridge to the docks. Everything is quiet and peaceful, except up on the pier where vague shapes seem to stir after them.

Malichi's head whips around, but the shapes have stopped moving. He frowns.

MALICHI: I don't like this. (to Chetan) Do you see anything?

CHETAN: Only shadows.

On the pier, the stirring shapes have gone, replaced by the Figure from their first encounter. The Figure watches them; his face is, as usual, hidden by the gloom.

The prow of their punt runs up against a low stone landing in the Docklands. Sherlock, the punter, steps off the boat full of confidence while the others get up cautiously, shivering in the mist, and follow.

Malichi puts his hand on Sherlock's shoulder.

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MALICHI: Wait.

From the mist in front of them, a GROTESQUE shambles out and lunges at them. He bares his revolting teeth. One of his eyes is swollen shut and leaking fluid. Sherlock grimaces as the filthy man grabs him by the lapels. Chetan and Malichi shrink back.

GROTESQUE: Save me!

James steps forward.

JAMES: Who are you?

GROTESQUE: I am DAMNED. Can't you see?

The grotesque is the only one who sees the Figure, still watching in the background.

SHERLOCK: Better than you can, surely.

GROTESQUE: Lost to man and God alike... only the devil himself tolerates me now.

MALICHI: He's lost it.

Chetan looks anxiously over her shoulder, but the Figure is gone.

GROTESQUE: Yes! I've lost it. Give it back.

He makes a swipe at the rosary around Malichi's neck.

MALICHI: Hey!

JAMES: Listen! Have you seen a man carrying goods in a heavy briefcase?

GROTESQUE: Yes I have; give *it* to me and I will tell you where he is.

Sherlock and James exchange a glance.

SHERLOCK: Give him your rosary, Mal.

Malichi clutches at it.

MALICHI: Why?

The grotesque pulls away from them and sucks his thumb.

SHERLOCK: (to Malichi) Do you want to find him or not?

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JAMES: Sherlock...

Sherlock scowls at Mal.

SHERLOCK: We have to work together.

The grotesque bursts into tears, madly.

JAMES: Come on.

With disgusted glances, the group move on.

MALICHI: I have a bad feeling about this.

The group move off into the mist, the grotesque wringing his hands.

Walking through the docklands, bits and pieces of twisted metal, trash, even the buildings and supports of broken bridges hanging overhead - they all seem to shift in every different frame to a subtly different position. The fog drifts in and out between them, great swaths of it dumped into the atmosphere by dirigibles that cruise past overhead like dirty, flying watermelons.

Trails of steam seep out of any and every hole in the ground, making everything damp and steamy and difficult to see.

On the riverside, a huddle of CHINESE IMMIGRANTS stop scrounging from the corpse of a gigantic fish ripped open at the ribs. They stare at Holmes's party and vice versa until they are past.

PAGE 27

In the middle of the Docklands, the wedge of a terrace house stands alone, without anything on either side, in the middle of the scrapyards. James stops short, his eyes widening.

JAMES: My house??

They approach closer to the house; a thin stream of smoke billowing out of it adds to the ethereal jungle of shapes around them. They stop in front of it. Malichi looks decidedly uncomfortable.

The door swings open, then, and a cup of tea appears at the end of an arm. It is shortly followed by the body, that of a hideous HAG.

HAG: My son! My son has come home, just in time for tea!

She dashes up to him and embraces him wholly. Tea sloshes out of the cup and onto him.

SHERLOCK: I thought your mother was dead.

James pushes her away with a cry.

JAMES: You aren't she!

HAG: Oh, he doesn't recognize me after so long. Nine years can be cruel. Look, my son.

She holds up her hand with the wedding ring and a big grin. James backs away.

HAG: I own you.

JAMES: I ... don't understand.

He pulls the ring his mother gave him out of his pocket and glances between it and her.

Then, absurdly, she begins to laugh, as if he had just told the funniest joke in the world.

HAG: Or are you my husband? It is so hard to tell!

She makes a false lunge at him and he turns tail. He runs into the mist.

HAG: Boo!

SHERLOCK: James, wait!

But he can't keep up; he stumbles on his wounded leg. The hag cackles as he goes.

PAGE 28

James rushes through the mist, the shapes of other, distorted characters flash past, themselves made of mist: the laughing faces of schoolboys from Long Hall, the Matron, with a scolding expression, turns into Sherlock, his face disapproving, then Chetan, dressed in a camisole, and finally HIMSELF.

The mist clears then and he comes straight up against the Figure, face still obscured by shadows and mist.

FIGURE: Welcome home.

James shouts, terrified.

PAGE 29

Lost in the mist, Sherlock looks up as he hears the shout.

SHERLOCK: James!

Through the fog, he sees the shape of a person. He rushes towards it and finds CHETAN.

CHETAN: Sherlock! What is this place? We have to get out of here!

She clings to him and rests her head on his shoulder. Sherlock eyes her suspiciously, without a hint of reciprocity.

CHETAN: I have never been anywhere that so clouds the mind. I see... I see...

She gasps. Her eyes go wide and seem to reflect something that isn't there.

CHETAN: Your friend, he is that way.

SHERLOCK: James?

PAGE 30

James leaps at the Figure, who dodges away easily as if James were fighting his own shadow. Then the Figure steps in and knocks him into a heap of trash lying on the road.

FIGURE: You can't fight your own nature.

James pulls himself up again and grabs the Figure's coat, tearing off a portion.

JAMES: What is that supposed to mean?

The Figure catches James's hand as he reaches out again and twists it around, sending him back to the cobblestones. James's nose crunches against the ground and starts to bleed.

FIGURE: It means your blood is not your own.

James glares and wipes his face. The Figure waits for his next attack.

JAMES: It's certainly not yours.

FIGURE: We'll see.

JAMES: So you're the so-called "vampire of London."

The Figure laughs.

FIGURE: What a prosaic title; but it cuts to the heart of things. Ha.

JAMES: You killed my mother.

FIGURE: I never meant to hurt her.

PAGE 31

With a cry, James leaps at the Figure, dodges a riposte, then punches him in the face. The Figure staggers back, his jaw swinging barely into the light. A brief glimpse. James presses forward with another punch to his gut. James swings again, but the Figure is too fast and gets in before him. James gasps as the Figure seizes his throat and raises him against a brick wall.

PAGE 32

He squeezes harder, and James begins to choke.

FIGURE: (panting) No. You have too much to learn.

He hurls James away from the wall and retreats into the darkness just as Sherlock and Chetan come through the mist. Chetan goes to his side, concerned.

CHETAN: James, are you hurt?

JAMES: Ugh. Where is Mal?

Sherlock kneels in the mud where a steady rain has begun to drip and splatter. He reaches down and picks up MALICHI'S ROSARY, dangling in the slight breeze.

PAGE 33

Back at Long Hall, the Matron stoops over James and straps a bandage around his middle. He has a black eye and several cuts and bruises. She glares at them both.

MATRON: There. Now where is Malichi?

Sherlock matches her gaze.

SHERLOCK: We don't know. We haven't seen him for days.

James looks sideways at Sherlock, anxiously.

MATRON: James?

JAMES: (uncomfortable) Uh, I'll vouch for that.

MATRON: Typical.

James looks hurt.

SHERLOCK: We weren't really friends. The fool did his own thing. Probably got himself into some mess.

MATRON: I find it amazing that you're friends with anyone, Sherlock. (to James) You shouldn't let him push you around so much.

She dabs his black eye with a cloth, and he winces. Then, with a withering glance, she leaves. Sherlock makes a face at her as she goes.

SHERLOCK: Old goat.

JAMES: How can you say he wasn't your friend?

SHERLOCK: It worked, didn't it?

JAMES: Look, maybe we should just tell them, Sherl. The police...

SHERLOCK: Are corrupt. We'll finish what we started.

JAMES: Smuggling? Kidnapping? We're in way over our heads.

SHERLOCK: I'm not.

He grins; James looks back at him disgusted.

SHERLOCK: Don't you want to find Mal again?

PAGE 34

James turns to a book of Latin on his bed, either offended or ignoring the question.

SHERLOCK: Interesting.

It's not clear whether Holmes is talking about James or the steamcycle, which he goes to and caresses.

After a knock on the door, Chetan comes in. James puts down his book and smiles.

JAMES: Chetan!

CHETAN: Hi.

But she brushes past him and goes to Holmes. She puts a tender hand on his arm. He glances at her sideways, slightly suspicious.

CHETAN: What is the situation?

James looks at them jealously.

SHERLOCK: The cycle is almost complete. I just need one more piece to make it work. A metal spring.

WATSON: Hello!

They all turn abruptly to the left-open door. Watson is poking his head through, trying to balance an armful of books and belongings while still waiting for an invitation to enter. He doesn't get one.

WATSON: Umm, right. What a good impression I make! So sorry. My name is John. John Watson.

They stare, waiting for the punchline.

WATSON: I'm your new roommate!

PAGE 35

James and Sherlock exchange glances.

JAMES: There must be some mistake. We already have three.

Watson eyes Chetan.

WATSON: Oh... really?

JAMES: You had better go back and talk to the Head-

WATSON: I say, is that a steamcycle?

James flushes while Watson ignores him and goes over to Holmes, who raises his eyebrows.

SHERLOCK: (pleasantly surprised) A twin-combustible lock-and-trap.

WATSON: ...using a hybrid chamber mechanism! Spiffing.

Chetan disengages from Holmes as Watson moves in. She and James glare jealously at the intruder. They share a moment while Holmes and Watson talk on.

SHERLOCK: I had to rebuild it. The old model used a locomotive train belt.

WATSON: Never! What happened?

Sherlock opens his mouth, but James coughs loudly.

JAMES: Sherl, we know nothing about this person.

SHERLOCK: Don't be ridiculous. I know people, remember?

James swallows a retort.

WATSON: Are the two of you friends?

JAMES: (small, to himself) I don't know.

WATSON: I would not have guessed it from Theology class!

PAGE 36

SHERLOCK: We work together.

WATSON: On what dashing enterprise, may I ask?

JAMES: (arch) You mayn't.

Sherlock eyes him, annoyed.

SHERLOCK: We're tracking down a smuggler and a murderer - the vampire of London.

Watson's eyes widen.

WATSON: I salute you.

JAMES: There *is* something military about you.

WATSON: Yes. My father is with the army in India.

CHETAN: India?

SHERLOCK: Fighting for the Queen?

WATSON: In a sense. He is a medic.

SHERLOCK: Brave man.

James rolls his eyes. Chetan steels herself.

CHETAN: That is one way to put it.

WATSON: I would join him in a heartbeat if I could. But your cause is also brave, a combination of fervor and virtue.

Sherlock smiles to himself.

JAMES: You aren't "joining" our "cause!"

CHETAN: I have a bad feeling about this..

SHERLOCK: You jealous twits! I finally meet someone who understands me and you can't bear it!

PAGE 37

Frederick Long college looks out over the city of London from some high heath, high enough that the steam from the city collects in a low carpet of clouds punctured here and there by the odd tower and dome. Crude steam-punk imitations of the Gherkin and London Eye mark the skyline - artefacts of a parallel universe that has grown up too quickly.

On a sunny spot on the hill, in front of Long Hall, James, Sherlock and Chetan look out over the vista. Chetan hangs one arm on an impassive Holmes, while James watches them jealously from behind.

The ticking sound of a machine or a bomb punctuates the whole scene.

The Porter releases the Matron and Watson out of the great double-doors of the school. They make their way over to the group, where Watson approaches James and smiles.

He continues to smile, and the ticking continues, as Watson reaches out and OPENS JAMES'S CHEST. James looks down. Inside his body, gears and

gaskets tick away like the innards of a bizarre clock meant to imitate his liver and lungs. Where his heart would be - the nitrogen explosive from the encounter at the docks PULSES to the ticking of the rhythm.

James looks up and the whole group of them - the Matron, Watson, Sherlock, Chetan, begin to laugh. They laugh mechanically, exactly in time with the ticking of his body. His face melts into a horrific, inhuman mask of anguish, but no scream comes.

Then his heart explodes.

PAGE 38

James wakes with a gasp. The ticking sound continues in the background. He hears it and rummages urgently through his bedclothes, then his shirt and trousers which he has fallen asleep in, and finds his POCKET WATCH.

He pops it open - 14:15. He groans and drags himself out of bed.

James staggers through the odd corridors of Long Hall, mazelike when they're empty, His footsteps echo against the high ceilings which seem bent and twisted, like he's still dreaming.

He comes to the doors of his classroom, wedged open a crack, and peers in.

Inside, the Professor lectures with wide mouth at the other children. He points at Holmes, who answers a question with a smug expression on his face. Watson grins at him in admiration from the next seat over.

PAGE 39

The whole class turns as the door CREAKS open and a bashful James inches through. The Professor narrows his eyes.

PROFESSOR: We're flattered, James. You do know I take a very dim view of disobedience.

James nods, sullenly.

PROFESSOR: Come here.

James shuffles over to the front. The Professor brandishes a cane. He yanks down James's trousers and begins to SMACK him, over and over again, in front of the class. He grimaces.

The SMACKS punctuate the scene as James glares at Sherlock and Watson. Sherlock looks on, impassive; Watson, guilty.

Eventually James closes his eyes and the smacks recede into the background. Mere "ticks."

PAGE 40

James stands before the Professor's desk. The older man gestures at one of his chairs.

PROFESSOR: Sit?

James shifts uncomfortably but does not sit. The Professor grins.

JAMES: It wasn't my fault, sir. Sherlock and Watson, they were up all night, talking about -

The Professor waves a hand.

PROFESSOR: I'll take care of that problem.

JAMES: You will?

PROFESSOR: Just as I caused it.

James's eyebrows raise.

PROFESSOR: I transferred Watson to your room on purpose. It was the only way to show you that Holmes thinks only of himself; he befriends only those disposed to flattery. And Watson is of the most simpering breed. I knew it would not take long.

JAMES: You were right...

PROFESSOR: Yes... I was right. You need a better role model.

JAMES: Yes.

PROFESSOR: Come back with me to the manor.

JAMES: I will.

PROFESSOR: And be blessed.

The Professor reaches into a little cistern on his desk and scatters water onto James.

PAGE 41

Back in the dormitory, Sherlock watches Chetan suspiciously. She's meditating on a mat in the middle of the room. Watson tinkers with the steamcycle in the background.

With a frustrated grunt, she gives up and leans back.

CHETAN: The heavens are unclear. Tonight is a time of change, only that is certain.

SHERLOCK: (smug) In other words: nothing.

WATSON: Why you indulge such an obvious farce eludes me.

CHETAN: Why you refuse to have the boils on your bottom lanced eludes me.

Watson goes red. Sherlock chuckles to himself.

SHERLOCK: Still, there's no denying she has a skill of some kind. The question is: a skill in what?

WATSON: She cleans up nicely enough.

He laughs at his own pun. Chetan stands up, seething.

CHETAN: That's it. I have elsewhere to be.

SHERLOCK: Indeed?

They lock eyes for a moment. She blinks first then turns around and slams the door shut behind her.

WATSON: You don't really believe her, do you?

SHERLOCK: Of course not. I intend to follow her.

Watson reaches for his bag.

SHERLOCK: No. You stay here and keep an eye out for James. I feel I have not been as kind to him lately as I should.

Watson is disappointed, but he submits with a little nod. Holmes is already half out the door.

PAGE 42

Sherlock follows Chetan through the back streets of London. She passes, huddled in a shawl against a level rain, by little theatres, groups of PROSTITUTES, and always steam, gushing from drainpipes and vents and the mouths of rough-looking PIPE SMOKERS who line the avenues with their suspicious eyes and newspapers.

She never turns her head to notice, in reflections in the puddles, or on a shadow on a brick wall: Sherlock Holmes, following her the whole time.

He follows her into a district dominated by other INDIANS, and finally up the wide, marble steps to a MANDIR.

PAGE 43

Holmes hangs back at the entrance to an elaborate hall, looking for Chetan among a number of WORSHIPPERS, kneeling at mats laid out in front of an elaborate stage decorated in the Hindu style, like a gigantic wedding cake, punctuated by porcelain statues of several Hindu gods. Several of them acknowledge him with a smile.

He looks around dispiritedly, and is almost ready to leave when the electric lights dim. His eyes narrow as Chetan emerges onstage, her hair braided and wearing a colourful SARI. She bows.

One by one the worshippers produce INSTRUMENTS from under their robes: little drums, a sitar, some of them just have spoons. They start to bang them together as Chetan dances.

PAGE 44

INTERCUT:

Chetan begins to dance. Her braid whips around as she twirls and hops, her arms waving back and forth like waves.

Back at Long Hall, the dark Figure of a man comes down the corridor towards Sherlock's room. His face is in darkness.

Chetan's dance becomes more frantic; she starts to sweat. Holmes is completely bewildered, but captivated.

The Figure stops outside Holmes's room. Through the keyhole he sees: Watson tinkering with the steamcycle, a bored look on his face. Outside, the rain lashes the windows.

MATRON: Excuse me. May I ask what exactly it is that you're doing?

Now Chetan's dance is almost grotesque. Her body waves and bends in an almost inhuman way. The worshippers clash their instruments cacophonously.

The Figure stands startled before the Matron, hands on her hips, her usual angry expression.

MATRON: I think you ought to leave... right now.

The dance culminates as Chetan dances to the center of the stage. A blue light from behind her makes her look like the goddess Kali as she raises her arms and they strobe into THREE PAIRS of arms. Then, in a puff of smoke, she disappears. The worshippers collapse, smiling.

Sherlock stares, utterly stunned, at the motionless scene.

PAGE 45

Holmes wears the same expression as he trudges back to Long Hall in the rain.

He stops on the landing of his dormitory and frowns. The corridor is full of police and college staff. The Porter rolls in a photographic apparatus. One gentleman in a long coat approaches Holmes gravely.

INSPECTOR: Excuse me, sir. Are you one of the students on this floor? My name is...

Holmes pushes past the man and into the circle of staff. His horrified face FLASHES from the camera.

In the middle of them, the Matron hangs from the ceiling by a cord that cuts an inch into her neck. Brown, crusty blood spills all down the front of her uniform.

SHERLOCK: (to himself) ... Watson.

Sherlock bursts through the door to his room and looks around fiercely. Behind him, through the portal, the police peer like idiots.

SHERLOCK: Watson!

He rushes to the window and glares out. Then he glances sideways at his steamcycle.

PAGE 46

He flings open the drawer where James keeps his things and pulls out the figurine. He places it on the workbench (its hand still to its heart). Then he smashes it with a hammer.

Reaching his finger into the hole where its heart would be, he pulls out a METAL SPRING and attaches it to a servo on his cycle. CLICK.

NEXT:

The London fog is TORN open once again as Holmes zooms through the city. People leap for cover as his bike squeals around a bend.

He careens down the stairs to the pier, past the “East India Darklands” sign and LEAPS the gap over the Thames. His bike comes down on the opposite side with a CRASH and a spray of splinters from the wood.

PAGE 47

The Grotesque stirs from an addled sleep against some sacks of rotten grain and GASPS. Holmes looms over him. He dangles Malichi’s rosary in his hands.

SHERLOCK: Take it.

The grotesque snatches it and holds it with a delirious smile. He begins to purr.

SHERLOCK: Now tell me where the vampire is. I’m going to rip his fucking head off.

The grotesque frowns.

GROTESQUE: He will only come alive again, you know.

SHERLOCK: We’ll see about that. Where is he?

GROTESQUE: He is with his new host already, at the house on Alms street. You will need some heart of your own to win back the heart he has stolen...

But when he looks up, Sherlock is already on his bike, kicking up a cloud of steam as he rushes away.

The grotesque stares at the rosary, shrugs, then eats it.

NEXT:

Chetan shields her head with a newspaper as she hurries into a wet alley in the Indian district. It’s stopped raining by now. The headline reads, INDIA DECLARES INDEPENDENCE.

She stops before a squat figure - it’s the AGENT that visited Holmes at the school.

AGENT: Did you shake him?

CHETAN: In several ways, I expect.

AGENT: (smiling) You’ve done very well. What have you discovered?

CHETAN: (distastefully) That he is an egotist of the most profound order. And that college boys are impossibly untidy.

AGENT: Does he know anything about the revolution?

CHETAN: Not yet, but I suspect his investigation will bring information to him faster than it will us.

AGENT: Then he really is as quick as they say...

PAGE 48 - NIGHT

Vengeful, Sherlock pulls up in front of a Regency-era mansion, one of several in a row of wealthy houses on a London street. Light glows from the windows and paints the ample lawn in long strips. He kicks down the bike stand with one boot.

Inside, the Professor and James stand on the landing of a large winged staircase. The Professor's house is of the highest style, decorated with chandeliers and quite a lot of objects imported from India. Some of them resemble the statues from the Mandir. He hands James a cup of tea.

PROFESSOR: Do you like it?

JAMES: (amazed) It's so much bigger than the house we used to have.

PROFESSOR: I've gone up in the world. Or down, depending on your point of view.

JAMES: Mother, you mean.

PROFESSOR: (frowning) She was certainly part of it.

JAMES: Where is my room?

PROFESSOR: Through there, but I'm afraid it is currently occupied.

JAMES: Guests?

PROFESSOR: Of a sort. Tamonash, would you bring our guest out now?

PAGE 49

A tall Indian man, TAMONASH, escorts WATSON from a near hallway.

JAMES: Watson! Why on earth are you here?

WATSON: That's something I would very much like to know as well.

PROFESSOR: (chuckling to himself) He's usurping your rightful place, as usual.

JAMES: I don't understand...

PROFESSOR: I told you I would take care of Mister Watson. But it's up to you to say the word.

Tamonash arm-bars Watson and leans him over the banister. It's at least a 20-foot drop.

WATSON: Ow. Jesus!

JAMES: (confused) What...? I didn't mean...

PROFESSOR: Think of how easily Sherlock abandoned you for this cretin. Think of how satisfying it would be to teach him a lesson, now that you have learned yours.

James stares hard at Watson, surprised at his own anger.

PROFESSOR: Think of how he has ruined the only friendship you ever cared about.

SHERLOCK: Watson!

At the base of the stairs, Sherlock stands in his riding jacket and gloves. He looks upward, shocked.

WATSON: Help! Sherlock!

JAMES: Sherlock?

PROFESSOR: (smiling) See who your “friend” calls to first?

James nods, subtly.

JAMES: I see.

SHERLOCK: What do you expect? He’s my friend!

JAMES: Then you can have him, Sherl.

PROFESSOR: Tamonash?

PAGE 50

Tamonash pushes Watson off the banister. He plummets to the floor with a CRACK.

WATSON: Aarghh!

SHERLOCK: James... what have you done!

Sherlock stands over his broken body, looking up at the men on the landing, furious. James frowns to himself. The Professor smiles.

PROFESSOR: The apple does not fall so far from the tree. Ha ha.

Sherlock begins marching up the stairs.

SHERLOCK: Vampire or not, I’m going to put a stake through your heart.

James holds his head in confusion. Below, Watson gurgles.

JAMES: Vampire?

PROFESSOR: Leaving your friend to suffer, like you always do?

SHERLOCK: He’ll live, unlike your other victims. Our matron; Malichi; (his eyes shift to James) your own wife...

James’s eyes widen. The Professor’s smirk slips.

JAMES: You mean...?

SHERLOCK: (exasperated) I don’t know why you even bother, James.

PROFESSOR: Because he has spirit. It runs in our blood. You have no idea why I did what I did. The sacrifices I've had to make for my beliefs.

SHERLOCK: Honestly, I'm not so sure I care.

PAGE 51

Sherlock lunges at the Professor, but Tamonash gets in his way. The big Indian absorbs a punch to the chest, then grabs Sherlock with a grin. He's about to pound the boy into a pulp when Sherlock reaches around and grabs one of the INDIAN GODS from a pedestal and holds it in the way.

Tamonash hesitates, then Sherlock smashes him in the face with it. Tamonash staggers back, then falls over as Sherlock knocks him out. The Professor laughs.

PROFESSOR: What martial art is that?

SHERLOCK: Irony?

Sherlock attacks the Professor, who turns out to be a much more able opponent. He reflects a jab, then lands one of his own. Sherlock falls back against the stairs to the next level. He scrambles up them until he can stand again.

PROFESSOR: You have enthusiasm, yes. Energy, yes. But where's the heart?

The Professor kicks him in the chest (right in the heart). Sherlock staggers further back up the staircase.

SHERLOCK: Ooph!

PROFESSOR: See, you're too predictable, like an automaton. Where's your wind-up? Or do you operate on hot air?

SHERLOCK: (sweating now) Funny.

PAGE 52

They reach the next level and continue up the spiral staircase, like a hurricane, knocking precious objects over as they go.

Up and up they fight, until the Professor backs Sherlock against the door to the roof.

PROFESSOR: Let's up the ante, shall we?

Out on the slanted roof, lashed with rain and wind and moonlight, the door smashes open, the lock flying. The Professor and Sherlock burst out, one on top of the other, Sherlock with a bloody nose, the Professor with several nasty bruises.

They roll to the edge of the roof. It's a fearsome drop to the lamplit street below via several stone gargoyles and a pointed metal fence.

PROFESSOR: (panting) But do you want to know the one reason why you'll never be as great as you think you are?

SHERLOCK: (gritting his teeth) Not really.

PROFESSOR: Because you only think of yourself. Trust is the reason I've come so far. It's why I'm part of something bigger. So much bigger. Kill me and another will take my place.

SHERLOCK: Then I'll hunt him down too, in the name of justice.

PROFESSOR: Justice! You're fighting for the establishment!

SHERLOCK: I work only for myself.

PROFESSOR: Exactly.

PAGE 53

The Professor hits Sherlock and he loses his grip. The boy slides to the edge of the roof, gripping a demonic-looking gargoyle spitting runoff water. His legs dangle from the edge. The Professor looms over him.

PROFESSOR: Ecce rex tuus venit tibi.

The Professor pulls his heel back and kicks the stone devil. Its horrific head cracks around the neck and Sherlock's eyes bulge. The Professor raises his foot to do it again.

JAMES: No!

The Professor's head whips around in surprise as James comes up behind him. They grapple for just a moment before James HURLS him from the side of the building. He plummets to the ground.

James pants on the edge of the roof.

He and Sherlock look at each other for a long moment. Then, deliberately, James turns around and walks away.

Sherlock is left face to face with the devil, hanging precariously from the ledge.

PAGE 54

James kneels next to the corpse of his father. The body is illuminated by a pool of yellow light from an electric street lamp, his face fully exposed to the light, wrinkles and blood.

Inside, Sherlock kneels next to the unconscious Watson.

James reaches out and touches the Professor's face and white hair. Slowly, he drops his head. As his face falls, it exits the angle of the streetlight, leaving it obscured by darkness, like his father's once always was.

PAGE 55

A bleak cemetery. Steamy London sprawls in the distance. Rain spits down on James and Chetan. They stare down at the gravestone for EDITH WILLIAMS, 1822-1870 "Matron to many, mother to all."

They break away and move to a second grave: MALICHI DAVIS, 1855-1870, “loyal friend, beloved son, sensible and fair.” Chetan holds a tear.

CHETAN: He was an innocent. That’s the worst thing of all.

JAMES: He trusted us. That’s what counts.

CHETAN: That assumes we’re worth trusting.

JAMES: I trust you. I have from the beginning.

CHETAN: (sad) I know.

They move on, this time to PROFESSOR HERMAN MORIARTY, 1805-1870 “a saint if any ever existed, and a preacher of greatness.” James kneels and deposits a bouquet at the foot of the cross-shaped headstone.

JAMES: He was an evil man.

James’s face crumples and he turns away a little.

CHETAN: Don’t...

JAMES: I’m not sad I did it, you know.

CHETAN: You saved Sherlock’s life.

JAMES: Yet he wouldn’t even come with us.

CHETAN: He’s not sentimental like that.

JAMES: ... Can I ask you something?

CHETAN: Of course.

JAMES: If you really can see the future, is it worth anything if you can’t see the things that really matter?

Chetan is quiet.

CHETAN: I saw that you and Sherlock would be enemies. I saw that from the start.

PAGE 56

A full galleon at half-sail slices through clear blue water under a lemon-like sun. Its crew runs back and forth on deck.

LOOKOUT: Land ahoy!

Through a port hole below decks, MALICHI looks out at a view of the INDIAN COASTLINE. Rough ridge grass, palm trees, and the protrusions of an Indian city greets them from afar.

Around him, a hundred other manacled PRISONERS gaze at the fuchsia coast.

END OF ISSUE 1