

The Great Game

MINSK, BELARUS. In a prison visitors' room, Sherlock - wearing the Coat with a fur collar attached - is sitting at one of the many tables in the room. Sitting at the other side of the table is Barry 'Bezza' Berwick, a young Englishman who is wearing an orange jumpsuit and who is obviously a prison inmate. With the exception of a uniformed guard who stands some distance away, they are the only people in the room. It's very cold in the room, as signified by their steaming breath when they speak. Sherlock sounds bored.

SHERLOCK: Just tell me what happened, from the beginning.

BERWICK: We'd been to a bar - a nice place - and, er, I got chattin' with one of the waitresses, and Karen weren't 'appy with that, so ... when we get back to the 'otel, we end up havin' a bit of a ding-dong, don't we?

(Sherlock sighs out a deliberate and noisy breath.)

BERWICK: She was always gettin' at me, sayin' I weren't a real man.

SHERLOCK: Wasn't a real man.

BERWICK: What?

SHERLOCK: It's not "weren't"; it's "wasn't."

BERWICK: Oh.

SHERLOCK: Go on.

BERWICK: Well, then I dunno how it happened, but suddenly there's a knife in my hands. And, you know, me old man was a butcher, so I know how to handle knives.

(Sherlock's gaze lowers to look at Barry's hands which are resting on the table.)

BERWICK: He learned us how to cut up a beast.

SHERLOCK: "Taught."

BERWICK (starting to get angry): What?

SHERLOCK: Taught you how to cut up a beast.

BERWICK: Yeah, well, then-then I done it.

SHERLOCK: "Did it."

BERWICK (losing his temper): Did it! Stabbed 'er ... (he repeatedly slams his hand down on the table) ... over and over and over, and I looked down and she weren't ...

(Sighing out a loud breath through his nose, Sherlock turns his head away. Getting control of his temper, Barry immediately corrects himself.)

BERWICK: ... wasn't movin' no more.

(Sherlock, who had just turned his head back towards Barry, now turns it away again with an annoyed look.)

BERWICK: ... any more.

(He lets out a shaky breath and lowers his head.)

BERWICK (softly): You've gotta help me. I dunno how it happened, but it was an accident. I swear.

(Sherlock gets to his feet and starts to walk away. Barry calls after him frantically.)

BERWICK: You've gotta help me, Mr Holmes!

(Sherlock stops.)

BERWICK: Everyone says you're the best. Without you, I'll get hung for this.

(Sherlock looks over his shoulder at the young man.)

SHERLOCK: No, no, no, Mr Berwick, not at all.

(He looks away thoughtfully for a second.)

SHERLOCK: Hanged, yes.

(He quirks a smile at the man, then turns and walks away.)

Opening titles.

221B BAKER STREET. Two gunshots ring out. The camera pans across the living room and shows Sherlock lying slumped in his armchair, his head on the low back of the chair. His eyes close, then a few moments later he opens them and gazes up towards the ceiling. Downstairs, the front door can be heard opening. Sherlock turns his head to look towards the sofa, and we now see that he is sprawled low in the chair with his legs stretched out in front of him and crossed at the ankles. He is wearing sleepwear and a blue silk dressing gown and his feet are bare. Above the sofa, a smiley face has been spray-painted on the wallpaper using a can of the yellow paint which was so frequently used in the "Blind Banker" case. The can is standing on the coffee table in front of the sofa. As the downstairs door closes Sherlock sighs, turns his head to the front again and then raises his left hand which is holding a pistol. He points the pistol towards the smiley face and - without even looking in that direction - fires two shots at it. A close-up reveals that there are already two bullet holes in the wall where the two eyes had been sprayed, and the two new bullets have impacted the curve of the smile. Sherlock turns his head to look at the face and fires a third shot which either misses the smile or was deliberately aimed to form a 'nose' for the face. As he fires a fourth time, John comes running up the stairs with his fingers in his ears. He stops on the landing, lowers his hands and yells at his flatmate.

JOHN: What the hell are you doing?

SHERLOCK (sulkily): Bored.

JOHN (more quietly, squinting at him in disbelief): What?

SHERLOCK (loudly): Bored!

(He springs up out of the chair. John immediately recoils and covers his ears with his hands.)

JOHN: No ...

(Sherlock switches the pistol to his right hand and turns towards the smiley face, firing at it again. He then swings his arm around his back, twists slightly to his right and fires at the wall from behind his back.)

SHERLOCK (angrily): Bored! Bored!

(As he brings his arm back around, John hurries into the room and Sherlock continues to glare at the smiley face but allows John to snatch the pistol from his hand. John quickly slides the clip out of the gun while Sherlock walks towards the sofa.)

SHERLOCK (sulkily): Don't know what's got into the criminal classes. Good job I'm not one of them.

(John locks the pistol into a small safe on the dining table and then straightens up.)

JOHN: So you take it out on the wall.

SHERLOCK (running his fingers along the painted smile): Ah, the wall had it coming.

(He turns sideways and dramatically flops down onto the sofa on his back, his head landing on a cushion at one end and his feet digging into the arm of the sofa at the end nearest the windows.)

JOHN (taking off his coat): What about that Russian case?

(Sherlock pushes with his feet to shove himself further along the sofa and into a slightly more upright position, and then starts kneading the arm of the sofa with his toes. Your transcriber decides that you really don't need the rest of this transcript any time soon, and puts those few seconds on repeat play for the next several hours before finally getting back to work with a seraphic - if slightly glazed - look on her face.)

SHERLOCK: Belarus. Open and shut domestic murder. Not worth my time.

JOHN (sarcastically): Ah, shame(!)

(He walks into the kitchen and throws up his arms in despair at the mess on the table which greets him. He heads towards the fridge.)

JOHN: Anything in? I'm starving.

(He opens the fridge door.)

JOHN: Oh, f...

(He immediately slams it shut again, unable to believe what he just saw inside. He slumps against the door for a moment, his head lowered, then he straightens up and opens the door again. On the shelf inside is a man's head, cut off at the neck, the face looking towards the door. He stares at it for a couple of seconds, then quietly closes the door again.)

JOHN: It's a head.

(He turns and calls out.)

JOHN: A severed head!

SHERLOCK: Just tea for me, thanks.

JOHN (walking back into the living room): No, there's a head in the fridge.

SHERLOCK (calmly): Yes.

JOHN: A bloody head!

SHERLOCK (stoppily): Well, where else was I supposed to put it? (He looks round at John.) You don't mind, do you?

(John holds out his hands despairingly and looks back towards the fridge.)

SHERLOCK: I got it from Bart's morgue.

(John buries his head in one hand.)

SHERLOCK: I'm measuring the coagulation of saliva after death.

(He waves his hand vaguely in the direction of a nearby laptop.)

SHERLOCK: I see you've written up the taxi driver case.

JOHN (throwing one last glance at the fridge): Uh, yes.

(He walks over to Sherlock's armchair and sits down.)

SHERLOCK: "A Study in Pink." Nice(!)

JOHN: Well, you know, pink lady, pink case, pink phone - there was a lot of pink. Did you like it?

(Even as John has been speaking, Sherlock has picked up a magazine from the coffee table and he now flips it open and addresses his answer to the pages.)

SHERLOCK: Erm, no.

JOHN: Why not? I thought you'd be flattered.

SHERLOCK (lowering the magazine and glaring at him): Flattered? (He raises his index fingers and narrates a section of the blog.) "Sherlock sees through everything and everyone in seconds. What's incredible, though, is how spectacularly ignorant he is about some things."

JOHN: Now hang on a minute. I didn't mean that in a ...

SHERLOCK (interrupting): Oh, you meant "spectacularly ignorant" in a nice way(!) Look, it doesn't matter to me who's Prime Minister ...

JOHN (quietly): I know ...

SHERLOCK: ... or who's sleeping with who ...

[... or whether Mr Grammar Policeman knows that he ought to have said 'who's sleeping with whom' ...]

JOHN (softly): Whether the Earth goes round the Sun ...

SHERLOCK: Not that again. It's not important.

JOHN: Not impor...

(He shifts his position in the chair to face Sherlock.)

JOHN: It's primary school stuff. How can you not know that?

SHERLOCK (pressing the heels of his palms to his eyes): Well, if I ever did, I've deleted it.

JOHN: "Deleted it"?

SHERLOCK (swinging his legs around to the floor and sitting up to face John): Listen. (He points to his head with one finger.) This is my hard drive, and it only makes sense to put things in there that are useful ... really useful.

(He grimaces.)

SHERLOCK: Ordinary people fill their heads with all kinds of rubbish, and that makes it hard to get at the stuff that matters. Do you see?

(John looks at him for a moment, trying to bite his lip but then can't contain himself.)

JOHN: But it's the solar system!

(Sherlock briefly buries his head in his hands.)

SHERLOCK: Oh, hell! What does that matter?!

(He looks at John in frustration.)

SHERLOCK: So we go round the Sun! If we went round the Moon, or round and round the garden like a teddy bear ... (he flails his hands around beside his head while narrating the line from the children's poem) ... it wouldn't make any difference. All that matters to me is the work. Without that, my brain rots.

(He ruffles his hair with both hands, then glares at John.)

SHERLOCK: Put that in your blog. Or better still, stop inflicting your opinions on the world.

(Petulantly shoving the magazine across the coffee table, he lies down on the sofa again, turning over with his back to John and pulling his dressing gown around him while curling up into a ball. John looks away and purses his lips. The front door downstairs opens and closes. John stands up and walks towards the living room door.)

SHERLOCK (looking over his shoulder): Where are you going?

JOHN (tightly, putting on his jacket): Out. I need some air.

(He heads for the stairs, which Mrs Hudson is just coming up.)

JOHN: 'Scuse me, Mrs ...

MRS HUDSON: Oh, sorry, love!

JOHN: Sorry.

(Angrily, Sherlock turns his face away again, pulling the cushion under his head nearer to the back of the sofa and curling up even tighter. Mrs Hudson chuckles at John as he passes her but then turns and looks at him in concern as he hurries down the stairs. She comes to the living room door and knocks.)

MRS HUDSON: Ooh-ooh!

(Sherlock stretches his legs out straight and turns his head enough to acknowledge her existence, but then looks away again. Mrs Hudson carries a couple of shopping bags into the kitchen.)

MRS HUDSON: Have you two had a little domestic?

(Flailing to get himself upright, Sherlock stands up off the sofa and takes the shortest route to his destination, walking over the coffee table and going to the left-hand window just as the downstairs door opens and closes.)

MRS HUDSON: Ooh, it's a bit nippy out there. He should have wrapped himself up a bit more.

(Sherlock watches John as he crosses the street and heads in the general direction of away.)

SHERLOCK: Look at that, Mrs Hudson. (He scans the street.) Quiet, calm, peaceful. (He grimaces and drags in a long breath.) Isn't it hateful?

(Mrs Hudson has unloaded some items from her shopping bags and now brandishes a receipt at Sherlock before putting it down on the kitchen table.)

MRS HUDSON: Oh, I'm sure something'll turn up, Sherlock. A nice murder - that'll cheer you up.

(She chuckles slightly as she carries her bags towards the living room door.)

SHERLOCK (wistfully): Can't come too soon.

MRS HUDSON (stopping when she spots the damaged wall): Hey. What've you done to my bloody wall?!

(Sherlock quirks a smile and turns around to admire his handiwork.)

MRS HUDSON (angrily): I'm putting this on your rent, young man!

(She storms off down the stairs. Sherlock - who has somehow magically relocated without moving and is now in the middle of the room standing just in front of the dining table - grins over-dramatically at the bullet-riddled smiley face, then sighs and turns his head to the front just as a massive explosion goes off in the street behind him. The windows blow in and the blast hurls him forward and to the floor. As the scene fades to black, he groans ...

... and his groan morphs into a groan coming from John, who is just waking up the next morning in the living room of Sarah Sawyer's flat. Sitting up on the sofa with his shirt unbuttoned, he has apparently slept on said sofa and he is grimacing and trying to un-crick his neck. Sarah walks in, wearing a dressing gown.

SARAH: Morning!

JOHN: Oh, mor... (He turns to look at her but grimaces again and grabs at his neck in pain.) Morning.

SARAH: See? Told you you should've gone with the lilo.

JOHN (still rubbing his neck): No, no, no, it's fine. I-I slept fine. It's very kind of you.

(Sarah has been scanning the sofa as he spoke and has now spotted what she was looking for. She reaches behind John's back to pick up the remote control for the TV, then sits on the arm of the sofa and turns on the telly.)

SARAH: Well, maybe next time I'll let you kip at the end of my bed, you know.

(She looks at him suggestively, then turns her head towards the TV screen.)

JOHN (also looking at the screen): What about the time after that?

(She looks at him and grins briefly. John turns his head towards her but doesn't meet her eyes.)

NEWSREADER (on the TV): Experts are hailing it as the artistic find of the century.

(The news item is showing a photo of the Hickman Art Gallery, with a headline at the bottom of the screen saying "The Lost Vermeer.")

NEWSREADER (on the TV): The last time ...

SARAH (putting down the remote): So, d'you want some breakfast?

JOHN: Love some.

SARAH: Yeah, well you'd better make it yourself, 'cause I'm gonna have a shower!

NEWSREADER (on the TV): ... it fetched over twenty million pounds.

(John looks at Sarah as she smiles at him sassily before leaving the room. He chuckles silently and starts buttoning his shirt.)

NEWSREADER (on the TV): This one is anticipated to do even better. Back now to our main story. There's been a massive explosion in central London.

(John looks at the TV screen and his face fills with shock as the picture changes to show live footage of a road where brickwork is scattered all over the pavement, and police cordons have been set up to keep people out. The headline at the bottom of the screen reads, "House destroyed on Baker St.")

NEWSREADER (on the TV): As yet, there are no reports of any casualties, and the police are unable to say if there is any suspicion of terrorist involvement.

(John is already on his feet and he hurries around the sofa to grab his jacket before turning towards the door and calling out.)

JOHN: Sarah!

(He stops and looks at the TV screen briefly.)

NEWSREADER (on the TV): Police have issued an emergency number for friends and relatives ...

JOHN: Sarah!

(He heads towards the front door, not even waiting for Sarah to reply to him.)

JOHN: Sorry - I've got to run.

BAKER STREET. John comes around the corner of the street almost opposite the flat, then stops briefly and stares. Continuing onwards, he heads towards the police cordon and makes his way through the small crowd of gawking onlookers.

JOHN: 'Scuse me, can I get through? 'Scuse me.

(He approaches one of the police officers who is stopping the crowd from getting closer.)

JOHN: Can I go through?

(He points towards 221 and the police officer lets him through. John walks into the main scene of devastation where bricks and dust are scattered all over the road and pavement. A fire engine is still on the scene and fire hoses are lying in the road waiting to be reeled back in. The windows and shop fronts of the buildings either side of Speedy's have been boarded up; Speedy's itself was protected by its metal roll-down screen. John stops and stares at the building directly opposite the café. The front of the ground and first floor has been completely blown out by the explosion and the rooms inside are exposed to the air. John turns and hurries towards 221, where the first floor windows have also been boarded up. A police officer standing outside Speedy's moves to intercept him but John explains.)

JOHN: I live over there.

(The officer steps aside and John unlocks the door and goes inside. He races up the stairs.)

JOHN: Sherlock. Sherlock!

(As he hurries into the living room, his eye is drawn to the boarded-up windows, then to his armchair, but his gaze quickly turns to Sherlock's chair where Sherlock, now dressed and wearing The Purple Shirt of Sex™ under his jacket, is apparently uninjured and is intermittently plucking the strings of the violin he is holding on his chest while he glares petulantly towards John's chair.)

SHERLOCK (looking up at his flatmate): John.

(The reason for Sherlock's annoyance - his brother Mycroft, who is sitting in John's chair - glances round at John.)

JOHN (to Sherlock): I saw it on the telly. Are you okay?

SHERLOCK: Hmm? What? (He looks around at the mess of broken glass and scattered paperwork as if he has forgotten it - which he probably has.) Oh, yeah. Fine. Gas leak, apparently.

(He turns his attention back to his brother, who stares at him pointedly while Sherlock plucks his violin strings again.)

SHERLOCK: I can't.

MYCROFT: "Can't"?

SHERLOCK: The stuff I've got on is just too big. I can't spare the time.

(John looks across to him in disbelief.)

MYCROFT: Never mind your usual trivia. This is of national importance.

SHERLOCK (sulkily flicking his fingers across the strings): How's the diet?

MYCROFT (refusing to rise to the implied insult): Fine. Perhaps you can get through to him, John.

JOHN (who has walked nearer to the windows to investigate the damage): What?

MYCROFT: I'm afraid my brother can be very intransigent.

SHERLOCK: If you're so keen, why don't you investigate it?

MYCROFT: No-no-no-no-no. I can't possibly be away from the office for any length of time - not with the Korean elections so ...

(He trails off as John turns towards him in surprise and Sherlock raises his head from looking at his violin.)

MYCROFT: Well, you don't need to know about that, do you?

(He smiles humourlessly in a clear message to forget what he just said.)

MYCROFT: Besides, a case like this - it requires ... (he grimaces in distaste) ... legwork.

(Sherlock mis-plucks one of his strings, an irritated look on his face. He turns to John, who is absently rubbing the back of his neck with one hand.)

SHERLOCK: How's Sarah, John? How was the lilo?

MYCROFT (consulting his pocket watch and not even looking at John): Sofa, Sherlock. It was the sofa.

(Sherlock briefly looks John up and down.)

SHERLOCK: Oh yes, of course.

JOHN (incredulously): How ...? Oh, never mind.

(He sits down on the coffee table. Mycroft smiles across at him.)

MYCROFT: Sherlock's business seems to be booming since you and he became ... pals.

(Sherlock throws him a dark look.)

MYCROFT (to John): What's he like to live with? Hellish, I imagine.

JOHN: I'm never bored.

MYCROFT (smiling condescendingly): Good! That's good, isn't it?

(Again Sherlock glares at him. Mycroft stands up as Sherlock picks up his bow and whips one end through the air in front of him. Picking up a folder from the table beside him, Mycroft steps forward and offers the folder to his brother but Sherlock just looks back at him stubbornly. Grimacing and poking his tongue into the corner of his mouth, Mycroft turns and offers the folder to John instead.)

MYCROFT: Andrew West, known as Westie to his friends.

(Looking startled, John takes the folder.)

MYCROFT: A civil servant, found dead on the tracks at Battersea Station this morning with his head smashed in.

(Cut-away flashback to a Tube guard walking along a railway line in the early morning. The beam from his flashlight picks out the body of a young man lying just beside the tracks.)

JOHN: Jumped in front of a train?

MYCROFT: Seems the logical assumption.

JOHN (quirking a brief smile): But ...?

MYCROFT: "But"?

JOHN: Well, you wouldn't be here if it was just an accident.

(Sherlock, who is now applying rosin to his bow with a small cloth, smirks noisily.)

MYCROFT: The M.O.D. is working on a new missile defence system - the Bruce-Partington Programme, it's called.

(He looks at Sherlock while John starts flicking through the folder.)

MYCROFT: The plans for it were on a memory stick.

(John sniggers quietly.)

JOHN: That wasn't very clever.

(Sherlock smiles in agreement.)

MYCROFT (to John): It's not the only copy.

JOHN: Oh.

MYCROFT: But it is secret. And missing.

JOHN: Top secret?

MYCROFT: Very. We think West must have taken the memory stick. We can't possibly risk it falling into the wrong hands.

(He turns back to his brother.)

MYCROFT: You've got to find those plans, Sherlock. Don't make me order you.

(Breathing in sharply through his nose, Sherlock raises the violin to his shoulder, ready to play. He looks calmly at his brother.)

SHERLOCK: I'd like to see you try.

MYCROFT (leaning down to him a little in an attempt to look more threatening): Think it over.

(Sherlock stares back at him, unimpressed. Mycroft turns and walks over to John, offering him his hand to shake.)

MYCROFT: Goodbye, John.

(Politely, John stands and shakes his hand. Mycroft smiles at him creepily.)

MYCROFT: See you very soon.

(John tries not to look nervous. As Mycroft heads back towards the chair to pick up his coat, Sherlock begins to repeatedly play a short irritating sequence of notes. John frowns across to him but Sherlock continues to play until Mycroft has left the room and is on the stairs. Grimacing in the direction of his brother's back, Sherlock finishes his playing and lowers the violin, still looking annoyed. John sits back down on the coffee table and waits until Mycroft has reached the ground floor and is out of earshot before he speaks.)

JOHN: Why'd you lie?

(Sherlock looks across to him as the front door bangs shut.)

JOHN: You've got nothing on - not a single case. That's why the wall took a pounding. Why did you tell your brother you were busy?

SHERLOCK (shrugging): Why shouldn't I?

JOHN: Oh! (He nods.) Oh, I see.

(Sherlock's eyes drift in his direction but he doesn't actually look at him.)

JOHN: Sibling rivalry. Now we're getting somewhere.

(Sherlock turns and opens his mouth but before he can deny everything his phone starts to ring. He irritably whips his bow down again, puts it on the seat beside him and fishes his phone out of his jacket pocket.)

SHERLOCK (into phone): Sherlock Holmes.

(He listens for a moment, then his expression intensifies.)

SHERLOCK: Of course. How could I refuse?

(Standing up and switching off the phone as he puts his violin onto the seat, he heads for the door.)

SHERLOCK: Lestrade. I've been summoned. Coming?

JOHN: If you want me to.

SHERLOCK: Of course.

(Picking up his Coat, he turns back to him.)

SHERLOCK: I'd be lost without my blogger.

After a taxi ride during which, bizarrely, Sherlock has briefly changed into a white shirt [and your transcriber smacks the editors], the boys arrive at New Scotland Yard and are following Detective Inspector Lestrade across the general office towards his office.

LESTRADE: You like the funny cases, don't you? The surprising ones.

SHERLOCK: Obviously.

LESTRADE: You'll love this. That explosion ...

SHERLOCK (briefly exchanging glares with Detective Sergeant Donovan as he walks past her desk): Gas leak, yes?

LESTRADE: No.

SHERLOCK: No?

LESTRADE: No. Made to look like one.

JOHN: What?

(By now they're in Lestrade's office and Sherlock stops and stares down at a white envelope lying on a desk.)

LESTRADE: Hardly anything left of the place except a strong box - a very strong box - and inside it was this.

(He points to what Sherlock's looking at.)

SHERLOCK: You haven't opened it?

LESTRADE: It's addressed to you, isn't it?

(Sherlock reaches towards the envelope.)

LESTRADE: We've X-rayed it. It's not booby-trapped.

SHERLOCK (hesitating slightly): How reassuring(!)

(He picks up the envelope and takes it across the room to another table which has an anglepoise lamp on it. Holding the envelope close to the bulb he examines both sides carefully. On the front in elegant handwriting are the words "Sherlock Holmes - by hand.")

SHERLOCK: Nice stationery. Bohemian.

LESTRADE: What?

SHERLOCK: From the Czech Republic. No fingerprints?

LESTRADE: No.

SHERLOCK (looking closely at the writing): She used a fountain pen. A Parker Duofold - iridium nib.

JOHN: "She"?

SHERLOCK: Obviously.

JOHN (struggling not to sigh): Obviously(!)

(Sherlock picks up a letter opener from the desk and carefully slits the envelope open. He looks inside and his mouth opens a little in surprise as he reaches in and takes out a pink iPhone.)

JOHN (shocked): But that's - that's the phone, the pink phone.

LESTRADE: What, from the Study in Pink?

SHERLOCK: Well, obviously it's not the same phone but it's supposed to look like ...

(He stops when he realises what Lestrade just said. He turns to face him. Sally has come into the room to put some files down on a desk near the door.)

SHERLOCK: The Study in Pink? You read his blog?

LESTRADE: Course I read his blog! We all do. D'you really not know that the Earth goes round the Sun?

(Sally sniggers loudly. Sherlock, who is taking off his gloves, glares at her while John purses his lips in embarrassment. Sally leaves the room and Sherlock turns his concentration back to the phone.)

SHERLOCK: It isn't the same phone. This one's brand new.

(He's looking at the connection sockets, none of which have scratches around them.)

SHERLOCK: Someone's gone to a lot of trouble to make it look like the same phone, which means your blog has a far wider readership.

(He throws an accusatory look at John, who does his best to ignore it. Sherlock switches on the phone and immediately gets a voice alert.)

VOICE ALERT: You have one new message.

(The message plays but there is no voice - just the unmistakeable sound of the Greenwich Time Signal. However, while the "Greenwich pips" - as they're more generally called - consist of five short pips and one longer tone, this recording has only four short pips and the longer one. Strangely, nobody ever comments on this.)

JOHN: Is that it?

SHERLOCK: No. That's not it.

(A photograph has also been uploaded to the phone. He opens it and Lestrade comes across to look over his shoulder. The picture is of an unfurnished room with a fireplace on one wall. The wallpaper is peeling and there's a tall mirror propped up in one corner. A smaller mirror - the type which is usually hung up above a fireplace - is standing on the mantelpiece.)

LESTRADE: What the hell are we supposed to make of that? An estate agent's photo and the bloody Greenwich pips!

SHERLOCK (gazing thoughtfully into the distance): It's a warning.

JOHN: A warning?

SHERLOCK: Some secret societies used to send dried melon seeds, orange pips, things like that. Five pips. They're warning us it's gonna happen again.

(He briefly looks down at the photo again, then brandishes the phone at the others as he starts to leave the office.)

SHERLOCK: And I've seen this place before.

JOHN (following him): H-hang on. What's gonna happen again?

SHERLOCK (turning back and raising his hands dramatically): Boom!

(He heads off with John behind him. Lestrade grabs his coat and hurries after them.)

BAKER STREET. A taxi pulls up outside 221 and Sherlock, John and Lestrade get out. Sherlock unlocks the front door and leads the way inside, bypassing the stairs and heading along the corridor towards Mrs Hudson's front door. Just as he reaches it he stops and turns to the left where there is another door which must lead to a basement flat. Numbers and letters stuck on the door read, "221c". Sherlock turns his head and calls out loudly towards his landlady's front door.

SHERLOCK: Mrs Hudson!

Shortly afterwards, Mrs Hudson opens the front door of 221A and hands Sherlock a set of keys. He has been examining the padlock attached to the other door and now takes the keys and begins to unlock it.

MRS HUDSON: You had a look, didn't you, Sherlock, when you first came to see about your flat.

SHERLOCK (looking closely at the door's keyhole): The door's been opened recently.

MRS HUDSON: No, can't be. That's the only key.

(Pulling the padlock off, Sherlock selects another key and puts it into the door's keyhole.)

MRS HUDSON: I can't get anyone interested in this flat. It's the damp, I expect. That's the curse of basements.

(Sherlock turns the key and pulls open the door. He immediately goes inside and John and Lestrade follow, taking little or no notice of Mrs H as she continues rambling on.)

MRS HUDSON: I had a place once when I was first married. Black mould all up the walls ...

(She trails to a halt as Lestrade closes the door behind him. She turns and heads back into her own flat.)

MRS HUDSON (exasperated): Oh! Men!

Reaching the bottom of the stairs, Sherlock slowly pushes open the door to the living room and walks inside, followed by the other two. The room looks exactly as it did in the photograph on the phone with one exception: there is a pair of trainers placed neatly side by side in the middle of the floor, their toes pointed towards the door. John stops and looks at them before stating the bleeding obvious.

JOHN: Shoes.

(Sherlock starts to walk towards them but John holds out a cautionary hand towards him.)

JOHN: He's a bomber, remember.

(Sherlock stops for a moment, then continues slowly towards the trainers. He crouches down, then puts his hands on the floor and leans forward. Lowering his body down he moves closer to the shoes. Just as his nose is almost touching them, a phone rings. Sherlock jumps, closes his eyes momentarily and then stands up, pulls off his glove and takes the pink iPhone from his coat pocket and looks at the caller I.D. It reads, "NUMBER BLOCKED". He pauses for a second, then switches on the speaker, holding the phone a few inches in front of his mouth.)

SHERLOCK (softly): Hello?

(A female voice draws in a shaky breath before speaking tearfully.)

WOMAN'S VOICE: H-hello ... sexy.

(John and Lestrade exchange a puzzled look as the woman sobs.)

SHERLOCK: Who's this?

WOMAN'S VOICE (tearfully): I've ... sent you ... a little puzzle ... just to say hi.

SHERLOCK: Who's talking? Why are you crying?

WOMAN'S VOICE (shakily and full of tears): I-I'm not ... crying ... I'm typing ...

(We now see that the woman at the other end of the line is sitting in the driver's seat of a car holding a phone to her ear with one shaking hand and holding a pager in the other hand. Her face is covered with tears and she looks terrified as she reads from the pager.)

WOMAN: ... and this ... stupid ... bitch ... is reading it out.

(She sobs again. Sherlock gazes thoughtfully into the distance.)

SHERLOCK (softly): The curtain rises.

JOHN: What?

SHERLOCK: Nothing.

JOHN: No, what did you mean?

SHERLOCK (half turning his head towards him): I've been expecting this for some time.

WOMAN: Twelve hours to solve ... my puzzle, Sherlock ...

(We now see that the car is in a car park. People are going about their everyday business, unaware that a large explosive device is strapped to the woman's chest. A red laser point travels over the device and her neck, suggesting that a sniper is aiming at her from some distance away.)

WOMAN: ... or I'm going ... to be ... so naughty.

(The phone goes dead and the woman looks down at the bomb and the laser light, and sobs in despair.)

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL. Sherlock has brought the trainers to a lab and is putting on a pair of latex gloves while he looks closely at them. He picks them up, examines the laces carefully and peers at the shoes from all directions, then digs out dried mud from the treads in the soles and puts it into a dish. Putting the shoes down again, he looks at them thoughtfully.

Later, he is sitting at a bench looking into a microscope while, beside him, a computer screen shows that a scanner of some sort is running tests. John is wandering up and down on the other side of the bench.

JOHN: So, who d'you suppose it was?

(A phone trills a text alert.)

SHERLOCK (absently, not reacting to the alert): Hmm?

JOHN: The woman on the phone - the crying woman.

SHERLOCK: Oh, she doesn't matter. She's just a hostage. No lead there.

JOHN (exasperated): For God's sake, I wasn't thinking about leads.

SHERLOCK: You're not going to be much use to her.

(He glances across to the scanner as it continues throwing up "NO MATCH" results, then looks back into the microscope.)

JOHN: Are-are they trying to trace it, trace the call?

SHERLOCK: The bomber's too smart for that.

(The same phone as before trills another text alert.)

SHERLOCK: Pass me my phone.

(John looks around the room.)

JOHN: Where is it?

SHERLOCK: Jacket.

(John straightens up slowly, his entire body going rigid in disbelief and his eyes broadcasting the message "I am going to kill him." Turning to his right, he marches stiffly around the table, slams

one hand onto Sherlock's left shoulder and roughly pulls open his jacket with the other as he starts to rummage in his inside pocket.)

SHERLOCK (angrily, still not looking up): Careful.

(John just about holds onto his temper and pulls out the phone and looks at it.)

JOHN: Text from your brother.

SHERLOCK: Delete it.

JOHN: Delete it?

SHERLOCK: Missile plans are out of the country now. Nothing we can do about it.

(John looks at the message again, which reads:

RE: BRUCE-PARTINGTON PLANS

Any progress on Andrew

West's death?

Mycroft

JOHN: Well, Mycroft thinks there is. He's texted you eight times. Must be important.

(Sherlock raises his head in exasperation.)

SHERLOCK: Then why didn't he cancel his dental appointment?

JOHN (sighing tiredly): His what?

SHERLOCK: Mycroft never texts if he can talk. Look, Andrew West stole the missile plans, tried to sell them, got his head smashed in for his pains. End of story. The only mystery is this: why is my brother so determined to bore me when somebody else is being so delightfully interesting?

(He looks back into the microscope again.)

JOHN (switching off the phone): Try and remember there's a woman here who might die.

SHERLOCK: What for?

(He looks up at John.)

SHERLOCK: This hospital's full of people dying, Doctor. Why don't you go and cry by their bedside and see what good it does them?

(John looks away in disbelief. Unmoved, Sherlock looks back into the microscope but just then the computer beeps a result.)

SHERLOCK (delighted): Ah!

(He looks across to the screen which is flashing "SEARCH COMPLETE." At the same moment Molly Hooper comes in the door.)

MOLLY: Any luck?

SHERLOCK (triumphantly): Oh, yes!

(As Molly comes over to look at the screen, a man in his thirties, wearing slacks and a T-shirt, comes in the door and then stops apologetically.)

JIM: Oh, sorry. I didn't ...

MOLLY: Jim! Hi!

(Jim makes as if to leave the room but Molly stops him.)

MOLLY: Come in! Come in!

(Sherlock looks over at her briefly, running his eyes down her body and apparently making an instant deduction, then looks back into the microscope. Molly makes introductions as Jim closes the door and walks over to her.)

MOLLY: Jim, this is Sherlock Holmes.

JIM: Ah!

(John turns towards them, and Molly looks at him blankly.)

MOLLY (apologetically): And, uh ... sorry.

JOHN: John Watson. Hi.

JIM: Hi.

(His eyes are locked on Sherlock's back as he gazes at him admiringly. He speaks in a casual London accent.)

JIM: So you're Sherlock Holmes. Molly's told me all about you. You on one of your cases?

(He walks closer to Sherlock, forcing John to step out of his way.)

MOLLY: Jim works in I.T. upstairs. That's how we met. Office romance.

(She and Jim giggle. Sherlock glances briefly round at Jim before returning to look into the 'scope.)

SHERLOCK: Gay.

(Molly's smile fades.)

MOLLY: Sorry, what?

(Sherlock raises his head as he realises what he's just done.)

SHERLOCK: Nothing. (He smiles round falsely at Jim.) Um, hey.

JIM (smiling admiringly at him): Hey.

(Lowering his hand, he knocks a metal dish off the edge of the table and scrambles to pick it up.)

JIM (giggling nervously): Sorry! Sorry!

(John turns away, face-palming, while Sherlock looks irritated. Jim puts the dish back on the table and then scratches his arm as he wanders back towards Molly.)

JIM: Well, I'd better be off. I'll see you at The Fox, 'bout six-ish?

MOLLY: Yeah!

(He stops beside her, putting a hand on her back, and looks back towards Sherlock.)

JIM: 'Bye.

MOLLY (softly): 'Bye.

JIM (to Sherlock): It was nice to meet you.

(Sherlock doesn't respond, continuing to look into his microscope while Jim gazes wistfully at him. John breaks the embarrassing silence.)

JOHN: You too.

(Jim blinks at him, looking awkward, then turns and leaves the room. Molly waits until the door closes then turns to Sherlock.)

MOLLY: What d'you mean, gay? We're together.

SHERLOCK (looking across to her): And domestic bliss must suit you, Molly. You've put on three pounds since I last saw you.

MOLLY: Two and a half.

SHERLOCK: Nuh, three.

JOHN: Sherlock ...

MOLLY (angrily): He's not gay. Why d'you have to spoil ...? He's not.

SHERLOCK (snorting): With that level of personal grooming?

JOHN: Because he puts a bit of product in his hair? I put product in my hair.

SHERLOCK: You wash your hair. There's a difference. No-no - tinted eyelashes; clear signs of taurine cream around the frown lines; those tired clubber's eyes. Then there's his underwear.

MOLLY: His underwear?

SHERLOCK: Visible above the waistline - very visible; very particular brand.

(He reaches for the metal dish.)

SHERLOCK: That, plus the extremely suggestive fact that he just left his number under this dish here ... (he shows her the card that Jim left under the dish) ... and I'd say you'd better break it off now and save yourself the pain.

(Molly stares at him for a moment, then turns and runs out of the room. Sherlock looks startled by her reaction.)

JOHN: Charming. Well done.

SHERLOCK: Just saving her time. Isn't that kinder?

JOHN: "Kinder"? No, no, Sherlock. That wasn't kind.

(Looking fed up with the conversation, Sherlock puts down Jim's card and then reaches over and moves one of the trainers on the desk closer to John.)

SHERLOCK: Go on, then.

JOHN: Mmm?

SHERLOCK: You know what I do. Off you go.

(He sits back and folds his arms expectantly. John makes incoherent negative noises and looks at his watch.)

JOHN: No.

SHERLOCK: Go on.

JOHN: I'm not gonna stand here so you can humiliate me while I try and disseminate ...

SHERLOCK (interrupting): An outside eye, a second opinion. It's very useful to me.

JOHN: Yeah, right(!)

SHERLOCK: Really.

(John turns back to him and the two of them have intense eyesex for several seconds. Eventually John nods unhappily because eyesex is all he's going to get for the time being.)

JOHN: Fine.

(Clearing his throat, he picks up the shoe and looks at it and its partner lying on the table.)

JOHN: I dunno - they're just a pair of shoes. (He immediately corrects himself.) Trainers.

SHERLOCK: Good.

(He looks away and picks up his phone while John continues looking at the trainers.)

JOHN: Umm ... they're in good nick. I'd say they were pretty new ... except the sole has been well-worn, so the owner must have had them for a while.

(Sherlock, who had started to look frustrated when John said they were new, breathes out a silent sigh of relief that his friend isn't that stupid.)

JOHN: Uh, they're very eighties - probably one of those retro designs.

SHERLOCK: You're on sparkling form. What else?

JOHN: Well, they're quite big, so a man's.

SHERLOCK: But ...?

JOHN (looking inside both of the trainers and seeing blue smudges at the sides): But there's traces of a name inside in felt-tip. Adults don't write their names inside their shoes, so these belonged to a kid.

SHERLOCK (looking at him proudly): Excellent. What else?

JOHN: Uh ... (he looks again at the shoe he's holding, then puts it down) ... that's it.

SHERLOCK: That's it?

(John nods.)

JOHN: How did I do?

SHERLOCK: Well, John; really well.

(He pauses momentarily.)

SHERLOCK: I mean, you missed almost everything of importance, but, um, you know ...

(He lifts his hand and slowly rotates his wrist to turn his palm upwards, his expression full of sarcasm. With a look of frustration, John picks up the trainer and gives it to him. Sherlock looks at it closely as he goes into deduction mode.)

SHERLOCK: The owner loved these. Scrubbed them clean, whitened them where they got discoloured. Changed the laces three ... no, four times.

(John puts his hands on the desk and lowers his head in despair.)

SHERLOCK: Even so, there are traces of his flaky skin where his fingers have come into contact with them, so he suffered from eczema. Shoes are well-worn, more so on the inside, which means the owner had weak arches. British-made, twenty years old.

JOHN (straightening up): Twenty years?

SHERLOCK: They're not retro - they're original.

(He shows John an image on his phone.)

SHERLOCK: Limited edition: two blue stripes, nineteen eighty-nine.

JOHN: But there's still mud on them. They look new.

SHERLOCK (looking thoughtfully at the trainer): Someone's kept them that way. Quite a bit of mud caked on the soles. Analysis shows it's from Sussex, with London mud overlaying it.

JOHN: How do you know?

SHERLOCK (nodding towards the computer screen): Pollen. Clear as a map reference to me.

(Two dots are flashing on a map of Britain, one around the borders of East and West Sussex and the other to the south-east of London.)

SHERLOCK: South of the river, too. So, the kid who owned these trainers came to London from Sussex twenty years ago and left them behind.

JOHN: So what happened to him?

SHERLOCK: Something bad.

(He looks up at John.)

SHERLOCK: He loved those shoes, remember. He'd never leave them filthy. Wouldn't leave them go unless he had to. So: a child with big feet gets ...

(He trails off, staring ahead of himself.)

SHERLOCK (softly): Oh.

(John looks across the lab, trying to see what his friend is looking at.)

JOHN: What?

SHERLOCK (softly): Carl Powers.

JOHN: Sorry, who?

SHERLOCK (still staring into the distance): Carl Powers, John.

JOHN: What is it?

SHERLOCK: It's where I began.

Later, the boys are in the back of a taxi.

SHERLOCK: Nineteen eighty-nine, a young kid - champion swimmer - came up from Brighton for a school sports tournament; drowned in the pool. Tragic accident.

(He shows John the front page of a newspaper on his phone.)

SHERLOCK: You wouldn't remember it. Why should you?

JOHN: But you remember.

SHERLOCK: Yes.

JOHN: Something fishy about it?

SHERLOCK: Nobody thought so - nobody except me. I was only a kid myself. I read about it in the papers.

JOHN: Started young, didn't you?

SHERLOCK: The boy, Carl Powers, had some kind of fit in the water, but by the time they got him out it was too late. But there was something wrong; something I couldn't get out of my head.

JOHN: What?

SHERLOCK: His shoes.

JOHN: What about them?

SHERLOCK: They weren't there. I made a fuss; I tried to get the police interested, but nobody seemed to think it was important. He'd left all the rest of his clothes in his locker, but there was no sign of his shoes ...

(He leans down and picks up a bag containing the trainers.)

SHERLOCK: ... until now.

SIX HOURS TO GO. As Sherlock sits in the back of the taxi holding the pink phone and lost in thought, the woman who rang him earlier sits in her car crying in despair.

221B. Sherlock has shut himself in the kitchen and is sitting at the table with the trainers nearby - still in the bag - while he looks through photographs and printouts of newspaper reports of Carl Powers' death from 1989. In the living room, on the other side of the closed doors, John is pacing back and forth. He stops and slides open one of the doors.

JOHN: Can I help?

(Sherlock doesn't react to him at all.)

JOHN: I want to help. There's only five hours left.

(His phone sounds a text alert. He gets the phone from his trouser pocket and looks at the message. It reads:

Any developments?

Mycroft Holmes

JOHN: It's your brother. He's texting me now.

(He frowns.)

JOHN: How does he know my number?

SHERLOCK (thoughtfully): Must be a root canal.

(Putting his phone away, John comes into the kitchen.)

JOHN: Look, he did say 'national importance.'

(Sherlock snorts, not looking up from his research.)

SHERLOCK: How quaint.

JOHN: What is?

SHERLOCK: You are. Queen and country.

JOHN (sternly): You can't just ignore it.

SHERLOCK: I'm not ignoring it. Putting my best man onto it right now.

JOHN: Right. Good.

(He folds his arms and nods in satisfaction, then looks at Sherlock in puzzlement.)

JOHN: Who's that?

Some time later John, wearing a jacket and tie, is sitting in a chair opposite a desk in a large, rather intimidating office. He looks anxiously at his watch as if he has been waiting there for some time. The door opens and Mycroft walks in, reading a report.

MYCROFT: John. How nice. I was hoping you wouldn't be long.

(John politely stands up as Mycroft walks towards the desk, still looking at the report.)

MYCROFT: How can I help you?

(He walks straight past John and puts down the report on the desk, imperiously waving a hand in John's direction to signify that he can sit down again.)

JOHN: Thank you. (He sits.) Um, well, I was wanting to ... um, your brother sent me to collect more facts about the stolen plans, the missile plans.

(Mycroft looks over his shoulder and smiles at him.)

MYCROFT: Did he?

JOHN: Yes.

(He smiles back a little nervously as Mycroft turns towards him and leans back against the desk.)

JOHN: He's investigating now.

(Mycroft put his hand to the right side of his mouth as if he is in pain.)

JOHN: He's, er, investigating away.

(Lowering his hand again, Mycroft smiles as if he doesn't believe a word of it.)

JOHN: Um, I just wondered what else you can tell me about the dead man.

MYCROFT: Uh, twenty-seven; a clerk at Vauxhall Cross - er, MI6. He was involved in the Bruce-Partington Programme in a minor capacity. Security checks A-OK; no known terrorist affiliations or sympathies ...

(Cut-away flashback to Andrew West sitting on a living room sofa with a young blonde woman. She snuggles into his shoulder, unaware that he is looking very worried.)

MYCROFT: Last seen by his fiancée at ten thirty yesterday evening.

(In the flashback, Westie is now standing at the window looking out into the night.)

WESTIE: Lucy, love, I've gotta go out. I've gotta see someone.

(He hurries out of the room. Lucy calls after him.)

LUCY: Westie!

(Brief flashback of Westie's dead body lying beside the railway track.)

JOHN: Right. He was found at Battersea, yes? So he got on the train.

MYCROFT: No.

JOHN: What?

MYCROFT: He had an Oyster card ...

(Grimacing, he raises his hand to his mouth again. John frowns as he begins to realise that Sherlock may have been right about Mycroft having had a root canal filling to one of his teeth.)

MYCROFT: ... but it hadn't been used.

JOHN: Must have bought a ticket.

MYCROFT (lowering his hand): There was no ticket on the body.

JOHN: Then ...

MYCROFT: Then how did he end up with a bashed-in brain on the tracks at Battersea? That is the question - the one I was rather hoping Sherlock would provide an answer to. How's he getting on?

JOHN: He—he's fine, yes. Oh, and—and it is going ... very well. It's, um, you know - he's completely focussed on it.

(He grins at Mycroft unconvincingly.)

THREE HOURS TO GO. Darkness has fallen and the woman still sits in the car and sobs.

221B. Sherlock has moved to the side table in the kitchen and is looking into his microscope. Mrs Hudson comes in through the kitchen door with a tray containing a couple of mugs. As she puts them on the kitchen table, Sherlock looks up.

SHERLOCK: Poison.

MRS HUDSON: What you going on about?

(Sherlock slams his hands down on the side table.)

SHERLOCK: Clostridium botulinum!

(Mrs Hudson cringes and flees the kitchen. Sherlock looks round at John as he comes in from the living room.)

SHERLOCK: It's one of the deadliest poisons on the planet!

(John looks at him blankly.)

SHERLOCK: Carl Powers!

JOHN: Oh, wait, are you saying he was murdered?

(Sherlock stands up and walks over to where he has hung up the laces from the trainers.)

SHERLOCK: Remember the shoelaces?

JOHN: Mmm.

SHERLOCK: The boy suffered from eczema. It'd be the easiest thing in the world to introduce the poison into his medication. Two hours later he comes up to London, the poison takes effect, paralyses the muscles and he drowns.

JOHN: What - how-how come the autopsy didn't pick that up?

SHERLOCK: It's virtually undetectable. Nobody would have been looking for it.

(He has walked around the table to where his computer notebook is lying. The page is open at the Forum of his own website, The Science of Deduction, and he now begins to type into the message box:

FOUND. Pair of trainers belonging to Carl Powers (1978-1989).

SHERLOCK (straightening up to point to the laces): But there were still tiny traces of it left inside the trainers from where he put the cream on his feet.

(He bends down and continues to type:

Botulinum toxin still present. Apply 221b Baker St.

He sends the message and straightens up.)

SHERLOCK: That's why they had to go.

JOHN: So how do we let the bomber know ...

SHERLOCK: Get his attention ...

JOHN: Mm-hm.

SHERLOCK (looking at his watch): ... stop the clock.

JOHN: The killer kept the shoes all these years.

SHERLOCK: Yes. (He looks at John.) Meaning ...

JOHN: He's our bomber.

(The pink phone rings on the side table. Sherlock hurries over to it and switches on the speaker. In the car park, the woman sobs in anguish as she reads out the latest message from the pager.)

WOMAN: Well done, you. Come and get me.

SHERLOCK (loudly and clearly): Where are you? Tell us where you are.

Some time later the woman stares anxiously out of the car window as members of a bomb disposal team, dressed in protective padded clothing, make their way towards the car.

MORNING. NEW SCOTLAND YARD. The boys are in Lestrade's office, Sherlock standing at the window which looks into the main office, his hands raised in front of his mouth and his fingers tapping together. John is sitting opposite Lestrade at his desk.

LESTRADE: She lives in Cornwall. Two men broke in wearing masks, forced her to drive to the car park and decked her out in enough explosives to take down a house.

(He looks up at Sherlock who is walking towards the desk.)

LESTRADE: Told her to phone you. She had to read out from this pager.

(He puts the pager onto the desk in front of John, who picks it up to look at it.)

SHERLOCK: And if she deviated by one word, the sniper would set her off.

JOHN: Or if you hadn't solved the case.

SHERLOCK (walking back to the window and speaking softly, as if to himself): Oh. Elegant.

(John raises his head and sighs in exasperation.)

JOHN: "Elegant"?

LESTRADE: But what was the point? Why would anyone do this?

SHERLOCK: Oh - I can't be the only person in the world that gets bored.

(He flashes back in his mind to shooting holes in the wall a couple of days ago. Just then the pink phone beeps a message alert. John turns round to him as Sherlock activates the phone.)

VOICE ALERT: You have one new message.

(As Sherlock walks towards Lestrade's desk, the phone sounds the Greenwich pips again, but this time there are three short pips and one long one.)

JOHN: Four pips.

SHERLOCK: First test passed, it would seem. Here's the second.

(He shows a new photograph to the others. It's a close-up of a car with its driver's door open and the number plate clearly visible. John and Lestrade get up to take a closer look, and outside in the main office a phone rings.)

SHERLOCK: It's abandoned, wouldn't you say?

LESTRADE: I'll see if it's been reported.

(As he picks up his desk phone, Sergeant Donovan comes to the office holding another phone.)

DONOVAN: Freak, it's for you.

(Sherlock walks over to the door and takes the phone from her. John sits down again and Sherlock walks out into the general office and raises the phone to his ear.)

SHERLOCK: Hello?

(The frightened voice of a young man comes over the phone.)

YOUNG MAN: It's okay that you've gone to the police.

SHERLOCK: Who is this? Is this you again?

YOUNG MAN: But don't rely on them.

(In Lestrade's office, John looks round and sits up taller when he sees the look on Sherlock's face.)

YOUNG MAN: Clever you, guessing about Carl Powers.

(We get a glimpse of the young man standing somewhere in a busy street, reading from a pager.)

YOUNG MAN: I never liked him.

(Sherlock looks round sharply at this. We see that the man is wearing a zipped-up jacket with wires sticking out from the bottom. The man fights his tears as he continues to read.)

YOUNG MAN: Carl laughed at me, so I stopped him laughing.

(John comes out of the office and walks closer to Sherlock, looking at him in concern.)

SHERLOCK (into phone): And you've stolen another voice, I presume.

YOUNG MAN: This is about you and me.

(A bus noisily drives past him.)

SHERLOCK: Who are you?

(More traffic goes past.)

SHERLOCK: What's that noise?

(The man looks down at the pager, still struggling not to weep.)

YOUNG MAN: The sounds of life, Sherlock.

(Finally we get a clear view of where the man is. He is standing on a large traffic island at Piccadilly Circus. Pedestrians are walking past him, taking no notice of a distressed tearful man, as is the wont of Londoners [I'm allowed to criticise - I'm a Londoner myself!])

YOUNG MAN (reading from the pager): But don't worry ...

(He looks down in tearful horror when he sees a red laser point on his jacket.)

YOUNG MAN: ... I can soon fix that.

(He cries briefly, then continues to read the pager message.)

YOUNG MAN: You solved my last puzzle in nine hours. This time you have eight.

(In the office, Lestrade is talking into the phone.)

LESTRADE: Okay ... Great.

(Hanging up the phone, he heads towards the door.)

LESTRADE: We've found it.

(Sherlock's phone has gone dead. He turns and follows Lestrade.)

Close to the river, the police have arrived at a large open space where the car was found. Forensics officers in protective clothing are working on the car as Lestrade leads Sherlock towards it. John and Sally Donovan are walking along behind them.

LESTRADE (consulting some notes): The car was hired yesterday morning by an Ian Monkford. Banker of some kind; City boy. Paid in cash.

(Sherlock looks closely as they pass a woman talking with a female police officer.)

LESTRADE: Told his wife he was going away on a business trip, but he never arrived.

(As Sherlock and Lestrade reach the passenger door of the car, Sally turns to John.)

DONOVAN: You're still hanging round him.

JOHN: Yeah, well ...

DONOVAN: Opposites attract, I suppose.

JOHN: No, we're not ...

DONOVAN: You should get yourself a hobby - stamps, maybe. Model trains. Safer.

(She goes to stand beside Lestrade while Sherlock leans into the car to look at the large amount of blood smeared over the island between the two front seats. He opens the glove box.)

LESTRADE: Before you ask, yes, it's Monkford's blood. The DNA checks out.

(Sherlock finds a business card in the glove box and takes it out. Closing the lid he straightens up.)

SHERLOCK: No body.

DONOVAN: Not yet.

SHERLOCK (to Lestrade): Get a sample sent to the lab.

(Lestrade nods and Sherlock walks away. Lestrade turns to Donovan and looks at her pointedly. She stares back at him indignantly but he holds the look and she grunts in exasperation and stomps away. Sherlock walks over to the woman who was talking with the police officer.)

SHERLOCK: Mrs Monkford?

(She turns to him tearfully.)

MRS MONKFORD: Yes.

(She looks at him and John, and sighs.)

MRS MONKFORD: Sorry, but I've already spoken with two policemen.

JOHN: No, we're not from the police; we're ...

(Sherlock holds out his hand to her, his voice suddenly tearful and tremulous.)

SHERLOCK: Sherlock Holmes. Very old friend of your husband's. We, um ...

(As she shakes his hand, he looks down as if fighting back his tears.)

SHERLOCK: ... we grew up together.

MRS MONKFORD: I'm sorry, who? I don't think he ever mentioned you.

SHERLOCK (still tearful): Oh, he must have done. This is ... this is horrible, isn't it?

(John looks away, trying somewhat unsuccessfully to keep his face neutral.)

SHERLOCK: I mean, I just can't believe it. I only saw him the other day. Same old Ian - not a care in the world.

(He smiles tearfully at her.)

MRS MONKFORD: Sorry, but my husband has been depressed for months. Who are you?

(By now Sherlock has tears running down his cheeks.)

SHERLOCK: Really strange that he hired a car. Why would he do that? It's a bit suspicious, isn't it?

MRS MONKFORD: No, it isn't. He forgot to renew the tax on the car, that's all.

SHERLOCK: Oh, well, that was Ian! That was Ian all over!

MRS MONKFORD: No it wasn't.

(Instantly Sherlock's fake persona drops and he looks at her intensely.)

SHERLOCK: Wasn't it? Interesting.

(He turns and walks away. She glares after him as he heads for the police tape with John following. The female police officer goes over to her.)

MRS MONKFORD: Who was I talking to?

JOHN (to Sherlock as they duck under the tape): Why did you lie to her?

SHERLOCK (taking off his gloves to wipe the tears from under his eyes): People don't like telling you things, but they love to contradict you. Past tense, did you notice?

JOHN: Sorry, what?

SHERLOCK: I referred to her husband in the past tense. She joined in. Bit premature - they've only just found the car.

JOHN: You think she murdered her husband?

SHERLOCK: Definitely not. That's not a mistake a murderer would make.

JOHN: I see. No, I don't. What am I seeing?

(As they walk past Donovan, she turns and calls out to John.)

DONOVAN: Fishing! Try fishing!

(John turns around and gives her an exasperated nod before following Sherlock again.)

JOHN: Where now?

SHERLOCK: Janus Cars.

(He hands the business card to John.)

SHERLOCK: Just found this in the glove compartment.

SIX HOURS TO GO.

JANUS CARS. Sherlock and John are in the office of the car hire company. John sits at the other side of the desk to the owner, taking notes while Sherlock looks out into the forecourt.

EWERT: Can't see how I can help you gentlemen.

JOHN: Mr Monkford hired the car from you yesterday.

EWERT: Yeah. Lovely motor. Mazda RX-8. Wouldn't mind one of them myself!

(Sherlock walks over to the other side of the desk so that he's standing beside Ewert, then points into the forecourt.)

SHERLOCK: Is that one?

(Ewert turns his head to look and Sherlock immediately looks closely at the side of the man's neck.)

EWERT: No, they're all Jags. Yeah, I can see you're not a car man, eh?

(Sherlock straightens up as Ewert looks round and smiles at John.)

SHERLOCK: But, er, surely you can afford one - a Mazda, I mean?

EWERT: Yeah, it's a fair point. But you know how it is: it's like working in a sweetshop. Once you start picking at the liquorice allsorts, when does it all stop, eh?

(He starts scratching near the top of his left arm with his right hand. Sherlock looks at him for a moment, then turns away and heads around the room towards the other side of the desk.)

JOHN: But you didn't know Mr Monkford?

EWERT: No, he was just a client. Came in here and hired one of my cars. No idea what happened to him. Poor sod.

(Sherlock has reached the other side of the desk and stops.)

SHERLOCK: Nice holiday, Mr Ewert?

EWERT: Eh?

SHERLOCK: You've been away, haven't you?

EWERT: Oh, the-the ... (He gestures towards his tanned face.) No, it's, er, sunbeds, I'm afraid, yeah. Too busy to get away. My wife would love it, though - bit of sun.

SHERLOCK: Have you got any change for the cigarette machine?

EWERT: What?

SHERLOCK: Well, I noticed one on the way in and I haven't got any change.

(He offers Ewert a bank note.)

SHERLOCK: I'm gasping.

EWERT: Um, well ... (He reaches into his trouser pocket and takes out his wallet.) Hmm.

(He opens the wallet and looks inside.)

EWERT: No, sorry.

SHERLOCK: Oh well. Thank you very much for your time, Mr Ewert.

(He turns and heads for the door.)

SHERLOCK: You've been very helpful. Come on, John.

(They leave the office and walk across the forecourt.)

JOHN: I-I've got change if you still want to, uh ...

SHERLOCK (patting his upper left arm): Nicotine patches, remember? I'm doing well.

JOHN: So what was that all about?

SHERLOCK: I needed to look inside his wallet.

JOHN: Why?

SHERLOCK: Mr Ewert's a liar.

ST BART'S LAB. Sherlock has a large drop of blood in a shallow glass dish. Putting the dish onto the desk, he reaches into a small bag of equipment, opens a bottle and siphons out some liquid with a small dropper. Bending down to the dish, he squeezes out a drop of liquid onto the blood, which starts to fizz. As Sherlock straightens up, the pink phone rings. The Caller I.D. reads "BLOCKED". He picks up the phone and answers it.

SHERLOCK: Hello?

YOUNG MAN (tearfully reading from the pager): The clue's in the name. Janus Cars.

SHERLOCK: Why would you be giving me a clue?

YOUNG MAN: Why does anyone do anything? Because I'm bored. We were made for each other, Sherlock.

SHERLOCK (softly): Then talk to me in your own voice.

YOUNG MAN (tearfully): Patience.

(The line goes dead. Sherlock lowers the phone and looks thoughtfully into the distance for a while. Finally he looks down at the fizzing liquid in the dish, then picks up the dish and looks at it more closely. He begins to smile.)

THREE HOURS TO GO.

POLICE CAR POUND. Sherlock, John and Lestrade are standing around Monkford's car.

SHERLOCK: How much blood was on that seat, would you say?

LESTRADE: How much? About a pint.

SHERLOCK: Not 'about.' Exactly a pint. That was their first mistake. The blood's definitely Ian Monkford's but it's been frozen.

LESTRADE: Frozen?

SHERLOCK: There are clear signs. I think Ian Monkford gave a pint of his blood some time ago and that's what they spread on the seats.

JOHN: Who did?

SHERLOCK: Janus Cars. The clue's in the name.

JOHN: The god with two faces.

SHERLOCK: Exactly.

JOHN: Mmm.

SHERLOCK (to Lestrade): They provide a very special service. If you've got any kind of a problem - money troubles, bad marriage, whatever - Janus Cars will help you disappear. Ian Monkford was up to his eyes in some kind of trouble - financial, at a guess; he's a banker. Couldn't see a way out.

But if he were to vanish, if the car he hired was found abandoned with his blood all over the driver's seat ...

JOHN: So where is he?

SHERLOCK (closing the car door): Colombia.

LESTRADE: Colombia?!

SHERLOCK: Mr Ewert of Janus Cars had a twenty thousand Colombian peso note in his wallet ...

(Flashback to Ewert opening his wallet and Sherlock seeing the foreign note inside.)

SHERLOCK: ... Quite a bit of change, too. He told us he hadn't been abroad recently, but when I asked him about the cars, I could see his tan line clearly.

(Flashback to Sherlock pointing out the window and Ewert turning his head to look while Sherlock sees that his tan finishes at his neck.)

SHERLOCK: No-one wears a shirt on a sunbed. That, plus his arm.

LESTRADE: His arm?

SHERLOCK: Kept scratching it. Obviously irritating him, and bleeding.

(Flashback to a close-up of Ewert scratching his upper arm, and a drop of blood on his shirt sleeve.)

SHERLOCK: Why? Because he'd recently had a booster jab. Hep-B, probably. Difficult to tell at that distance. Conclusion: he'd just come back from settling Ian Monkford into his new life in Colombia. Mrs Monkford cashes in the life insurance and she splits it with Janus Cars.

JOHN: M-Mrs Monkford?

SHERLOCK: Oh yes. She's in on it too.

(Lestrade lowers his head with a look of amazement on his face.)

SHERLOCK: Now go and arrest them, Inspector. That's what you do best.

(He turns to John.)

SHERLOCK: We need to let our friendly bomber know that the case is solved.

(He turns and leads John away. Lestrade watches them, still reeling at all the information that he has just been given. Sherlock clenches his fists triumphantly at his sides as he goes.)

SHERLOCK: I am on fire!

221B. Sitting at the living room table in their coats - presumably because the heating still can't be turned on nor the fire lit after the 'gas leak' (and because the windows are still broken and boarded up) - Sherlock types a new message onto The Science of Deduction:

Congratulations to Ian Monkford on his relocation to Colombia.

He sends the message. A few seconds later another 'blocked' phone call comes in on the pink phone lying on the table beside the computer. Sherlock switches on the speaker.)

YOUNG MAN (tearfully, over speaker): He says you can come and fetch me. Help. Help me, please.

(Shortly afterwards, police officers are running towards the young man from all directions. In 221B, Sherlock looks up at John and smiles. And then they dun sex. *shrugs* Well, you never know.)

MORNING. The boys are sitting opposite each other at a table in a café (not Speedy's). John is tucking into a cooked breakfast and has a mug of tea in front of him while Sherlock is drumming his fingers impatiently on the table waiting for the pink phone - which is lying on the table - to ring.

SHERLOCK: Feeling better?

JOHN: Mmm. You realise we've hardly stopped for breath since this thing started?

(He eats another forkful of food, then looks thoughtful.)

JOHN: Has it occurred to you ...?

SHERLOCK: Probably.

JOHN: No - has it occurred to you that the bomber's playing a game with you? The envelope; breaking into the other flat; the dead kid's shoes - it's all meant for you.

SHERLOCK (smiling slightly): Yes, I know.

JOHN: Is it him, then? Moriarty?

SHERLOCK: Perhaps.

(The pink phone beeps a message alert. Sherlock switches it on and it sounds two short Greenwich pips followed by the longer tone, and a photograph of a smiling middle-aged woman appears on the screen.)

SHERLOCK: That could be anybody.

JOHN: Well, it could be, yeah. Lucky for you, I've been more than a little unemployed.

SHERLOCK: How d'you mean?

JOHN: Lucky for you, Mrs Hudson and I watch far too much telly.

(He stands up and walks over to the counter. Smiling at the woman behind the counter, he picks up a remote control and switches on the small television hung on the wall. He changes channels a couple of times until he finds what he wants. The woman from the photograph is on the screen, partway through her make-over show. She is gesturing to someone just offscreen.)

CONNIE: Thank you, Tyra! Doesn't she look lovely, everybody, now?

(The pink phone rings.)

CONNIE: Anyway, speaking of silk purses and sows' ears ...

(Sherlock picks up the phone and holds it to his ear.)

SHERLOCK: Hello?

(An old woman speaks tremulously in a Yorkshire accent.)

OLD WOMAN: This one ... is a bit ... defective. Sorry.

(We see a close-up of the woman, who is wearing an earpiece.)

OLD WOMAN: She's blind. This is ... a funny one.

(John walks back to the table. At the old woman's location, the camera pulls out to show that she too is strapped to a bomb. Wearing a warm dressing gown and sitting up in bed she is holding a phone to the ear which doesn't have the earpiece in and she is staring blankly ahead of herself as she narrates the words being spoken through the earpiece.)

OLD WOMAN: I'll give you ... twelve hours.

(Sherlock looks at John as he sits down.)

SHERLOCK (into phone): Why are you doing this?

OLD WOMAN: I like ... to watch you ... dance.

(As she finishes speaking, she gasps and sobs in terror. Even though she cannot see it, there is still a laser point from a sniper's rifle running over her body. Sherlock lowers the phone and shakes his head at John, then drops the phone onto the table as he turns to look at the TV.)

CONNIE (on the TV): ... and I see you're back to your bad habits.

(As the footage continues, a voiceover replaces her voice and a news headline at the bottom of the screen reads: Make-over Queen Connie Prince dead at 48.)

NEWS READER: ... continuing into the sudden death of the popular TV personality, Connie Prince. Miss Prince, famous for her make-over programmes, was found dead two days ago by her brother in the house they shared in Hampstead ...

BART'S MORGUE. Connie Prince's body has been laid out on a table in the morgue, with a sheet covering her leaving only her head, arms and upper chest bare. Lestrade leads the boys into the room, reading from a file as he goes.

LESTRADE: Connie Prince, fifty-four. She had one of those make-over shows on the telly. Did you see it?

SHERLOCK: No.

LESTRADE: Very popular. She was going places.

SHERLOCK: Not any more. So: dead two days. According to one of her staff, Raoul de Santos, she cut her hand on a rusty nail in the garden. Nasty wound.

(He and John look at the deep cut in the webbing between her right thumb and index finger.)

SHERLOCK: Tetanus bacteria enters the bloodstream - good night Vienna.

JOHN: I suppose.

SHERLOCK: Something's wrong with this picture.

LESTRADE: Eh?

SHERLOCK: Can't be as simple as it seems, otherwise the bomber wouldn't be directing us towards it. Something's wrong.

(He narrows his eyes as he looks down at the body, then bends closer to look along Connie's right arm as he takes his magnifier from his pocket. There are several scratches on her upper arm which look like claw marks. He moves up to her face and notices some tiny pinpricks on her forehead just above her nose. He looks at them through the magnifier.)

SHERLOCK: John?

JOHN: Mmm.

SHERLOCK: The cut on her hand: it's deep; would have bled a lot, right?

JOHN: Yeah.

SHERLOCK: But the wound's clean - very clean, and fresh.

(He looks up, his eyes flickering while he thinks it through, then straightens up and clicks the magnifier closed.)

SHERLOCK: How long would the bacteria have been incubating inside her?

JOHN: Eight, ten days.

(Sherlock quirks a one-sided grin and turns to John, waiting for him to put it all together. It doesn't take him long.)

JOHN: The cut was made later.

LESTRADE: After she was dead?

SHERLOCK: Must have been. The only question is, how did the tetanus enter the dead woman's system?

(John looks along the body thoughtfully.)

SHERLOCK: You want to help, right?

JOHN: Of course.

SHERLOCK: Connie Prince's background - family history, everything. Give me data.

JOHN: Right.

(He turns and leaves the room. Sherlock looks down at Connie's body one more time, then turns and heads towards the door.)

LESTRADE: There's something else that we haven't thought of.

SHERLOCK (casually): Is there?

LESTRADE: Yes. Why is he doing this, the bomber?

(Sherlock stops, keeping his back to the inspector and looking a little anxious.)

LESTRADE: If this woman's death was suspicious, why point it out?

SHERLOCK (nonchalantly, over his shoulder): Good Samaritan.

(He tries to move away but Lestrade persists.)

LESTRADE: ... who press-gangs suicide bombers?

SHERLOCK: Bad Samaritan.

LESTRADE: I'm - I'm serious, Sherlock. Listen: I'm cutting you slack here; I'm trusting you - but out there somewhere, some poor bastard's covered in Semtex and is just waiting for you to solve the puzzle. So just tell me: what are we dealing with?

(Sherlock looks away thoughtfully, then smiles with delight.)

SHERLOCK: Something new.

EIGHT HOURS TO GO. The old woman sits quietly in her bed while the sniper - who must really love his job, considering that the woman can't see what he's doing - continues to keep his rifle's laser trained on her.

SEVERAL HOURS LATER. 221B. The wall behind the sofa is covered with paperwork: maps, photographs of Connie Prince - both when she was alive and pictures taken in the morgue - photos of Carl Powers, press cuttings and various sheets of paper with notes scribbled on them. Pieces of string are pinned between some of the exhibits, linking them together. Sherlock is pacing back and forth in front of the sofa while Lestrade stands nearby.

SHERLOCK (under his breath): Connection, connection, connection. There must be a connection.

(He stops and gestures towards various spots on the display on the wall as he speaks.)

SHERLOCK: Carl Powers, killed twenty years ago. The bomber knew him; admitted that he knew him. The bomber's iPhone was in stationery from the Czech Republic. First hostage from Cornwall; the second from London; the third from Yorkshire, judging by her accent. What's he doing - working his way round the world? Showing off?

(The pink phone rings. He takes it from his pocket and sees that the Caller I.D. again reads "NUMBER BLOCKED". He switches on the speaker, and the old woman begins to narrate what's being said into her earpiece.)

OLD WOMAN: You're enjoying this, aren't you? Joining the ... dots.

(She sobs.)

OLD WOMAN: Three hours: boom ... boom.

(She cries in terror, then the phone goes dead. Sherlock looks at Lestrade for a moment, then switches off the phone, puts it back in his pocket and raises his hands to his mouth in the prayer position, concentrating on the wall in front of him.)

KENNY PRINCE'S HOUSE. In a beautifully and elegantly decorated house, a hairless cat meows as it wanders about on a sofa in the living room. Kenny Prince, a man in his late fifties who is wearing a very fancy purple shirt which'll never rival Sherlock's, comes into the room. Behind him the much younger and far more dishy 'houseboy' Raoul stops at the doorway and gestures to John to go in.

KENNY: We're devastated. Of course we are.

(As John walks into the living room, Kenny reaches the other side of the room and turns back, propping his arm on the mantelpiece. Looking a little uncomfortable, John sits down on the sofa beside the cat.)

RAOUL: Can I get you anything, sir?

JOHN: Er, no. No, thanks.

(Raoul looks across the room to Kenny, who smiles at him. Raoul returns the smile, then turns and leaves the room.)

KENNY: Raoul is my rock. I don't think I could have managed.

(He looks down sadly.)

KENNY: We didn't always see eye to eye, but my sister was very dear to me.

(The cat has climbed onto John's lap and meows loudly in protest when he picks it up and puts it down beside him.)

JOHN: And - and to the public, Mr Prince.

KENNY: Oh, she was adored. I've seen her take girls who looked like the back end of Routemasters and turn them into princesses.

(John looks down in frustration as the cat climbs into his lap again.)

KENNY: Still, it's a relief in a way to know that she's beyond this veil of tears.

(John is nervously holding the cat while it purrs contentedly on his lap.)

JOHN (awkwardly): Absolutely.

221B. Mrs Hudson has joined Sherlock and Lestrade and is standing between them as they face the paper-covered wall. Sherlock is talking into his own phone.

SHERLOCK: Great. ... Thank you. Thanks again.

(He turns and walks towards the fireplace, still talking into the phone. Mrs Hudson looks sadly at a photo of Connie on the wall.)

MRS HUDSON: It was a real shame. I liked her. She taught you how to do your colours.

(Lestrade - who had turned and was watching Sherlock [well, who wouldn't?] on the other side of the room - now turns back to Mrs H.)

LESTRADE: Colours?

MRS HUDSON: You know ... (she gestures down at her clothes) ... what goes best with what. I should never wear cerise, apparently. Drains me.

(Sherlock has just finished his conversation and walks back to join the others.)

LESTRADE: Who was that?

SHERLOCK (staring at the wall): Home Office.

[Good grief - he wasn't after a posh party invite, was he?]

LESTRADE (surprised): Home Office?

SHERLOCK: Well, Home Secretary, actually. Owes me a favour.

MRS HUDSON (looking at a photo on the wall of Connie holding an award which presumably she won for her show): She was a pretty girl but she messed about with herself too much. They all do these days.

(She looks round at Lestrade.)

MRS HUDSON: People can hardly move their faces. It's silly, isn't it?!

(She giggles, and Lestrade smiles politely. She turns to Sherlock.)

MRS HUDSON: Did you ever see her show?

SHERLOCK: Not until now.

(He turns and picks up his computer notebook and opens it. A video starts to play, showing footage of an episode of Connie's make-over show. She is talking to her brother in the TV studio.)

CONNIE: You look pasty, love!

KENNY: Ah. (He looks at the audience.) Rained every day but one!

MRS HUDSON: That's the brother. No love lost there, if you can believe the papers.

SHERLOCK: So I gather. I've just been having a very fruitful chat with people who loved this show. Fan sites - indispensable for gossip.

CONNIE (gesturing to the clothes which her brother is wearing): There's really only one thing we can do with that ensemble, don't you think, girls?

(She stands up and claps her hands rhythmically as she begins to chant.)

CONNIE: Off! Off! Off! Off!

(The audience takes up the chant and the clapping. By the third, "Off!" Connie is rhythmically beating her hands quite hard onto Kenny's back as he drops his jacket to the floor and starts to unbutton his shirt. He grimaces in pain but then turns a false smile towards the audience.)

KENNY PRINCE'S HOUSE. Kenny is still standing by the fireplace, looking thoughtfully at a framed photograph of Connie holding her TV award. John is sitting on the sofa looking down at his notebook as he talks.

JOHN: It's more common than people think. The tetanus is in the soil, people cut themselves on rose bushes, garden forks, that sort of thing. If left un...

(He looks up in surprise when Kenny - who has walked across the room unnoticed - now plonks heavily down onto the sofa beside him and stares at him intensely.)

JOHN: ...treated ...

KENNY: I don't know what I'm going to do now.

JOHN (a little nervously): Right.

KENNY: I mean, she's left me this place, which is lovely ...

(John looks around the living room with his eyes narrowed, apparently not agreeing how 'lovely' the place might be.)

KENNY: ... but it's not the same without her.

JOHN (fidgiting as he tries to move further away from Kenny, but unable to do so): Th-that's why my paper wanted to get the, um, the full story straight from the horse's mouth. You sure it's not too soon?

KENNY: No.

JOHN: Right.

KENNY (still staring intensely at him): You fire away.

(The cat meows and trots across the carpet. Watching it, John reaches up to rub the side of his nose. As he pulls his hand away again he suddenly realises something and quickly raises his hand to his nose once more, pretending to rub it while he quietly sniffs at his fingers and looks towards the cat again. He smiles round nervously at Kenny.)

221B. Mrs Hudson has left the room but Sherlock and Lestrade are still standing in front of the wall display. Sherlock's phone rings and he fishes it out of his jacket pocket, looks quickly at the Caller I.D. and then holds the phone to his ear.

SHERLOCK: John.

JOHN (over phone): Hi. Look, get over here quickly. I think I'm onto something. You'll need to pick up some stuff first. You got a pen?

SHERLOCK: I'll remember.

Some time later, Kenny is primping in front of the mirror near the fireplace. Nearby, the entrance door shuts and, on the sofa, John puts down his teacup and starts to get up.

JOHN: That'll be him.

KENNY: What?

(Raoul shows Sherlock into the room. Sherlock has a large bag over his shoulder and is carrying a long narrow case which is presumably designed to hold a photographic tripod. He walks over to Kenny.)

SHERLOCK: Ah, Mr Prince, isn't it?

KENNY: Yes.

SHERLOCK: Very good to meet you.

KENNY: Yes; thank you.

(They shake hands, Sherlock looking closely at Kenny's hand as he does so.)

SHERLOCK: So sorry to hear about ...

KENNY: Yes, yes, very kind.

JOHN: Shall we, er ...

(Sherlock walks over to the sofa, puts down the case and starts rummaging in his bag. Kenny turns back to the mirror and fiddles with his hair again.)

JOHN (quietly): You were right. The bacteria got into her another way.

SHERLOCK (smirking): Oh yes?

JOHN: Yes.

KENNY (turning towards them): Right. We all set?

JOHN: Um, yes.

(He looks at Sherlock, who has taken a camera and flashgun from his bag, and jerks his head towards Kenny.)

JOHN: Can you ...?

(As Kenny leans one arm on the mantelpiece and poses, Sherlock walks closer and starts taking photographs of him.)

KENNY: Not too close. I'm raw from crying.

(The cat meows at Sherlock's feet. He looks down.)

SHERLOCK: Oh, who's this?

KENNY: Sekhmet. Named after the Egyptian goddess.

SHERLOCK: How nice(!) Was she Connie's?

KENNY: Yes.

(John reaches down towards the cat but Kenny beats him to it, bending down and picking it up.)

KENNY: Little present from yours truly.

(Frustrated, John straightens up, then looks at his flatmate.)

JOHN: Sherlock? Uh, light reading?

SHERLOCK: Oh, um ...

(He lifts a second flashgun which he is holding in his other hand and holds it towards Kenny, firing it straight into his face.)

SHERLOCK: Two point eight.

(Kenny squinches his eyes shut against the light.)

KENNY: Bloody hell. What do you think you're playing at?!

(John immediately reaches out and rubs his fingers over one of the cat's front paws. Sherlock keeps firing the flashgun to keep Kenny's eyes closed.)

SHERLOCK: Sorry.

(John lifts his fingers away and sniffs them while Sherlock continues to fire the flashgun.)

KENNY: You're like Laurel and bloody Hardy, you two. What's going on?

JOHN: Actually, I think we've got what we came for. Excuse us.

KENNY: What?

JOHN: Sherlock.

SHERLOCK: What?

JOHN (grabbing the case from the sofa and heading for the door): We've got deadlines.

(Sherlock follows after him.)

KENNY: But you've not taken anything!

(Ignoring him, the boys hurry out of the living room and let themselves out of the house. John chuckles delightedly as they walk down the drive and head towards the main road.)

JOHN: Yes! Ooh, yes!

SHERLOCK (smiling): You think it was the cat. It wasn't the cat.

JOHN: What? No, yes. Yeah, it is. It must be. It's how they got the tetanus into her system. Its paws stink of disinfectant.

SHERLOCK (still smiling): Lovely idea.

JOHN: No, he coated it onto the paws of her cat. It's a new pet - bound to be a bit jumpy around her. A scratch is almost inevitable. She wouldn't have ...

SHERLOCK (interrupting): I thought of it the minute I saw the scratches on her arm, but it's too random and too clever for the brother.

(John chuckles again.)

JOHN: He murdered his sister for her money.

SHERLOCK: Did he?

JOHN (looking at him): Didn't he?

SHERLOCK: No. It was revenge.

JOHN: Revenge? Who wanted revenge?

SHERLOCK: Raoul, the houseboy. Kenny Prince was the butt of his sister's jokes, week in, week out, a virtual bullying campaign. Finally he had enough; fell out with her badly. It's all on the website. She threatened to disinherit Kenny. Raoul had grown accustomed to a certain lifestyle, so ...

JOHN (stopping and turning to him): No, wait, wait. Wait a second.

(Sherlock stops as well.)

JOHN: What about the disinfectant, then, on the cat's claws?

SHERLOCK: Raoul keeps a very clean house. You came through the kitchen door, saw the state of that floor, scrubbed to within an inch of its life. You smell of disinfectant now. No, the cat doesn't come into it.

(John pulls his jacket up to sniff at it as Sherlock looks towards the main road.)

SHERLOCK: Raoul's internet records do, though. Hope we can get a cab from here.

(He walks off. John sighs in exasperation and a touch of disappointment that he hadn't solved the case for once. He glares towards his friend's back and then follows him.)

ONE HOUR TO GO. Still sitting in her bed, the old woman cries in despair.

EVENING/NIGHT TIME. NEW SCOTLAND YARD. Sherlock walks into the main office brandishing a folder at Lestrade.

SHERLOCK: Raoul de Santos is your killer. Kenny Prince's houseboy. Second autopsy shows it wasn't tetanus that poisoned Connie Prince - it was botulinum toxin.

(He puts the folder on the desk. As Lestrade reaches for it, Sherlock leans closer to him.)

SHERLOCK: We've been here before. Carl Powers? Tut-tut. Our bomber's repeated himself.

(Lestrade walks towards his office, Sherlock following. John stares at them in surprise.)

LESTRADE: So how'd he do it?

SHERLOCK: Botox injection.

(Flashback to Sherlock examining the tiny pinpricks in Connie's forehead.)

LESTRADE (turning back to him): Botox?

SHERLOCK: Botox is a diluted form of botulinum. Among other things, Raoul de Santos was employed to give Connie her regular facial injections. My contact at the Home Office gave me the complete records of Raoul's internet purchases. (He points to the folder.) He's been bulk ordering Botox for months.

(Nearby, John has continued to stare at Sherlock, and his expression is becoming more angry.)

SHERLOCK (oblivious to this): Bided his time, then upped the strength to a fatal dose.

LESTRADE: You sure about this?

SHERLOCK: I'm sure.

LESTRADE: All right - my office.

(He turns and walks towards his office. Sherlock starts to follow but John stops him.)

JOHN: Hey, Sherlock. How long?

SHERLOCK: What?

JOHN: How long have you known?

SHERLOCK: Well, this one was quite simple, actually, and like I said, the bomber repeated himself. That was a mistake.

(He tries to walk towards Lestrade's office but again John stops him.)

JOHN: No, but Sherl... The hostage... the old woman. She's been there all this time.

SHERLOCK (leaning closer and looking at him intensely): I knew I could save her. I also knew that the bomber had given us twelve hours. I solved the case quickly; that gave me time to get on with other things. Don't you see? We're one up on him!

(He heads into Lestrade's office. John purses his lips in frustration, then follows.)

Shortly afterwards, Sherlock is sitting at Lestrade's desk where a laptop has been opened to The Science of Deduction website. John and Lestrade are standing either side of him. Sherlock types into the message box:

Raoul de Santos, the house-boy, botox.

(He sends the message and the pink phone on the desk beside the computer rings almost instantly. He picks it up and holds the phone to his ear.)

SHERLOCK: Hello?

OLD WOMAN (in an anguished voice): Help me.

SHERLOCK (clearly): Tell us where you are. Address.

OLD WOMAN: He was so ... His voice ...

SHERLOCK (urgently): No, no, no, no. Tell me nothing about him. Nothing.

OLD WOMAN: He sounded so ... soft.

(The laser point from the sniper's rifle moves onto the bomb. A single shot fires and the phone instantly goes dead.)

SHERLOCK (into phone): Hello?

LESTRADE (seeing his expression): Sherlock?

JOHN: What's happened?

(Slowly, staring ahead of himself, Sherlock lowers the phone from his ear. He bites his lip as Lestrade - realising that something bad must have happened - straightens up and sighs. John braces a hand on the back of Sherlock's chair.)

MORNING. 221B. Sherlock and John are sitting in their armchairs watching the news on the TV. Sherlock has the pink phone on the left arm of his chair. The windows are still broken and boarded up and the traffic is loud outside. On the TV, the picture shows a high-rise block of flats and the headline at the bottom of the screen reads, "12 dead in gas explosion." The picture moves to a close-up, showing a corner of the building many floors up which has been torn open and exposed to the air.

NEWS READER: The explosion, which ripped through several floors, killing twelve people ...

JOHN (briefly glancing over his shoulder to Sherlock): Old block of flats.

NEWS READER: ... is said to have been caused by a faulty gas main. A spokesman from the utilities company ...

JOHN: He certainly gets about.

SHERLOCK: Well, obviously I lost that round - although technically I did solve the case.

(He picks up the remote control and mutes the volume. Lowering his hand again he looks thoughtfully into the distance.)

SHERLOCK: He killed the old lady because she started to describe him.

(He raises a finger on his other hand.)

SHERLOCK: Just once, he put himself in the firing line.

JOHN: What d'you mean?

SHERLOCK: Well, usually, he must stay above it all. He organises these things but no-one ever has direct contact.

JOHN: What ... like the Connie Prince murder - he-he arranged that? So people come to him wanting their crimes fixed up, like booking a holiday?

SHERLOCK (softly, his face full of admiration): Novel.

(John looks at him in disbelief, then turns and looks at the TV screen again, which has moved on to a new story.)

JOHN: Huh.

(He jerks a finger towards the screen and Sherlock looks up to see Raoul de Santos being bundled out of Kenny's house by police officers. The press are there and are shoving each other as they struggle to get close to Raoul and take photographs while interviewers shout questions. The headline on the screen reads: "Connie Prince: man arrested." Raoul is shoved into the back of a police car. John looks round at Sherlock, who is looking down at the pink phone.)

SHERLOCK: Taking his time this time.

(John looks away, clearing his throat uncomfortably. On the TV, the camera is focussing on Kenny who is standing at the window of his house, holding Sekhmet in his arms and watching the chaos outside.)

JOHN: Anything on the Carl Powers case?

SHERLOCK: Nothing. All the living classmates check out spotless. No connection.

JOHN: Maybe the killer was older than Carl?

SHERLOCK: The thought had occurred.

JOHN: So why's he doing this, then - playing this game with you? D'you think he wants to be caught?

(Sherlock presses his fingertips together in front of his mouth and smiles slightly.)

SHERLOCK: I think he wants to be distracted.

(John laughs humourlessly, gets out of his chair and heads towards the kitchen.)

JOHN: I hope you'll be very happy together.

SHERLOCK: Sorry, what?

(John turns back, furious, and leans his hands on the back of his chair.)

JOHN: There are lives at stake, Sherlock - actual human lives... Just - just so I know, do you care about that at all?

SHERLOCK (irritably): Will caring about them help save them?

JOHN: Nope.

SHERLOCK: Then I'll continue not to make that mistake.

JOHN: And you find that easy, do you?

SHERLOCK: Yes, very. Is that news to you?

JOHN: No. (He smiles bitterly.) No.

(They lock eyes for a moment.)

SHERLOCK: I've disappointed you.

JOHN (still smiling angrily as he points at him sarcastically): That's good - that's a good deduction, yeah.

SHERLOCK: Don't make people into heroes, John. Heroes don't exist, and if they did, I wouldn't be one of them.

(They stare at each other for a second but then the pink phone sounds a message alert.)

SHERLOCK: Excellent!

(He picks up the phone and activates it. The phone sounds one short pip and the long tone, and a photograph appears showing a river bank.)

SHERLOCK: View of the Thames. South Bank - somewhere between Southwark Bridge and Waterloo.

(He reaches into his jacket for his own phone.)

SHERLOCK: You check the papers; I'll look online ...

(He looks up and sees that John is standing with his hands braced on the back of his chair and his head lowered.)

SHERLOCK: Oh, you're angry with me, so you won't help.

(John raises his head and shrugs.)

SHERLOCK: Not much cop, this caring lark.

(He loudly clicks the 'k' on the last word. Your transcriber blissfully falls off her chair. Sherlock dismisses John from his mind and begins a search on his phone:

Search:

Thames

+ High Tide

+ Riverside

John stares at him for a moment, then straightens up as he perhaps begins to realise that his friend is never going to change. Sherlock continues his online search, totally focussed on his work and oblivious to the emotional trauma which his flatmate is going through. After a while John sniffs, then walks across the room towards the sofa. Sherlock switches to a search for

Local News

Greenwich

Waterloo

Battersea

He selects Waterloo as John tiredly sits down on the sofa and starts going through the pile of newspapers on the coffee table. Sherlock's phone shows timed reports from the Waterloo area, giving tide times, police reports and other information.)

JOHN (reading from a newspaper): Archway suicide.

SHERLOCK (snapping irritably): Ten a penny.

(John throws him a look as Sherlock goes back to the Local News option and selects Battersea. The page shows "No new reports." He tries "Thames Police Reports" and starts scrolling through the duty log.)

JOHN: Two kids stabbed in Stoke Newington.

(He puts that paper aside and looks at another one.)

JOHN: Ah. Man found on the train line - Andrew West.

(Sherlock looks exasperated when he finds no helpful information in the reports.)

SHERLOCK: Nothing!

(He hits a speed dial and the phone begins to ring out. As soon as it is answered he starts talking.)

SHERLOCK: It's me. Have you found anything on the South Bank between Waterloo Bridge and Southwark Bridge?

On the south bank of the River Thames, the tide has receded to reveal the body of a large man wearing black trousers, a white shirt, black socks and no shoes.

Later, while the police and forensics officers work at the scene, our boys arrive. Sherlock is pulling on a pair of latex gloves. Lestrade is waiting beside the body.

LESTRADE: D'you reckon this is connected, then? The bomber?

SHERLOCK: Must be. Odd, though ... (he holds up the pink phone) ... he hasn't been in touch.

LESTRADE: But we must assume that some poor bugger's primed to explode, yeah?

SHERLOCK: Yes.

(He steps back and takes a long look at the man's body which is now lying on its back on a plastic sheet.)

LESTRADE: Any ideas?

SHERLOCK: Seven ... so far.

LESTRADE: Seven?!

(Sherlock walks closer to the body and squats down to examine the man's face closely with his magnifier. He then looks at the ripped pocket on the shirt before working his way downwards until he reaches the man's feet. He pulls off one of the socks and examines the sole of the foot with his magnifier. Standing up and closing the magnifier, he looks across to John and jerks his head down towards the body in a mute order to examine it. John looks enquiringly at Lestrade for permission; the inspector holds his hand out in a 'be my guest' gesture. John squats down beside the body and reaches out to take hold of the man's wrist while Sherlock walks a few paces away and gets out his phone.)

JOHN: He's dead about twenty-four hours - maybe a bit longer. (He looks up at Lestrade.) Did he drown?

(Sherlock has called up

Interpol

Most Wanted

Criminal Organisations

Regional Activities

LESTRADE: Apparently not. Not enough of the Thames in his lungs. Asphyxiated.

JOHN: Yes, I'd agree.

(Sherlock looks up thoughtfully, then selects the latter option and the screen changes to:

Czech Republic

Gangs

Information

Most Wanted

Contact

JOHN: There's quite a bit of bruising around the nose and mouth. More bruises here and here.

(Sherlock selects the "Most Wanted" option, then looks up as he mentally flashes back to looking at the small round red marks beside the man's mouth and near his hairline.)

SHERLOCK (thoughtfully): Fingertips.

(As John stands up, Sherlock shifts to a new search:

Missing Persons

He scrolls through the options:

Last 36 hrs

Age

Location

Local Search

JOHN: In his late thirties, I'd say. Not in the best condition.

SHERLOCK: He's been in the river a long while. The water's destroyed most of the data.

(He quirks a grin.)

SHERLOCK: But I'll tell you one thing: that lost Vermeer painting's a fake.

LESTRADE: What?

SHERLOCK: We need to identify the corpse. Find out about his friends and associates ...

LESTRADE: Wait-wait-wait-wait-wait. What painting? What are you - what are you on about?

SHERLOCK: It's all over the place. Haven't you seen the posters? Dutch Old Master, supposed to have been destroyed centuries ago; now it's turned up. Worth thirty million pounds.

LESTRADE: Okay. So what has that got to do with the stiff?

SHERLOCK (grinning briefly): Everything. Have you ever heard of the Golem?

LESTRADE: Golem?

JOHN: It's a horror story, isn't it? What are you saying?

SHERLOCK: Jewish folk story. A gigantic man made of clay. It's also the name of an assassin - real name Oskar Dzunga - one of the deadliest assassins in the world.

(He points down to the body.)

SHERLOCK: That is his trademark style.

LESTRADE: So this is a hit?

SHERLOCK: Definitely. The Golem squeezes the life out of his victims with his bare hands.

LESTRADE: But what has this gotta do with that painting? I don't see ...

SHERLOCK (exasperated): You do see - you just don't observe.

JOHN: All right, all right, girls, calm down. Sherlock? D'you wanna take us through it?

(Taking a moment before he responds, Sherlock eventually steps back and points to the body.)

SHERLOCK: What do we know about this corpse? The killer's not left us with much - just the shirt and the trousers. They're pretty formal - maybe he was going out for the night, but the trousers are heavy-duty, polyester, nasty, same as the shirt - cheap. They're both too big for him, so some kind of standard-issue uniform. Dressed for work, then. What kind of work? There's a hook on his belt for a walkie-talkie.

LESTRADE: Tube driver?

(Sherlock throws him a look which blatantly says 'idiot.')

JOHN: Security guard?

SHERLOCK: More likely. That'll be borne out by his backside.

LESTRADE: Backside?!

SHERLOCK: Flabby. You'd think that he'd led a sedentary life, yet the soles of his feet and the nascent varicose veins in his legs show otherwise. So, a lot of walking and a lot of sitting around. Security guard's looking good. And the watch helps, too. The alarm shows he did regular night shifts.

(Flashback to Sherlock pushing buttons on the man's wristwatch and it showing an alarm time of 2:30.)

LESTRADE: Why regular? Maybe he just set his alarm like that the night before he died.

SHERLOCK: No-no-no, the buttons are stiff, hardly touched. He set his alarm like that a long time ago. His routine never varied. But there's something else. The killer must have been interrupted, otherwise he would have stripped the corpse completely. There was some kind of badge or insignia on the shirt front that he tore off, suggesting the dead man worked somewhere recognisable, some kind of institution.

(He takes something from his pocket.)

SHERLOCK: Found this inside his trouser pockets.

(He is holding a small scrunched-up ball of paper.)

SHERLOCK: Sodden by the river but still recognisably ...

JOHN (peering at the ball of paper): Tickets?

SHERLOCK: Ticket stubs. He worked in a museum or gallery. Did a quick check - the Hickman Gallery has reported one of its attendants as missing.

(He points down to the body.)

SHERLOCK: Alex Woodbridge. Tonight they unveil the re-discovered masterpiece. Now why would anyone want to pay the Golem to suffocate a perfectly ordinary gallery attendant? Inference: the dead man knew something about it - something that would stop the owner getting paid thirty million pounds. The picture's a fake.

JOHN (admiringly): Fantastic.

SHERLOCK (shrugging, apparently still peeved about their earlier argument): Meretricious.

LESTRADE: And a Happy New Year!

(John throws him a 'seriously?!' look. Lestrade grins sheepishly, then John looks down at the body again.)

JOHN: Poor sod.

LESTRADE: I'd better get my feelers out for this Golem character.

SHERLOCK: Pointless. You'll never find him. But I know a man who can.

LESTRADE: Who?

SHERLOCK (grinning): Me.

(He turns and walks away. John sighs, his entire body radiating 'Oh, here we go again,' but he dutifully follows his friend.)

TAXI. As the boys sit in the back of the cab, Sherlock is looking at the pink phone in frustration.

SHERLOCK: Why hasn't he phoned? He's broken his pattern. Why?

(A thought strikes him and he leans forward to the taxi driver.)

SHERLOCK: Waterloo Bridge.

JOHN: Where now? The Gallery?

SHERLOCK: In a bit.

JOHN: The Hickman's contemporary art, isn't it? Why have they got hold of an Old Master?

SHERLOCK: Dunno. Dangerous to jump to conclusions. Need data.

(He has taken his notebook from his pocket and now writes something on a page before tearing it out and folding a bank note inside it. He puts the paper into his pocket, then a few seconds later calls out to the driver.)

SHERLOCK: Stop!

(The cab pulls over to the side of the road.)

SHERLOCK: You wait here. I won't be a moment.

(He gets out, goes to the railings at the edge of the pavement and easily vaults over them.)

JOHN (also getting out of the cab): Sherlock ...

(As Sherlock walks off, John shakes his head in exasperation, then scrambles over the railings and follows him. Sherlock trots up some steps to where a young woman is sitting on a bench under Waterloo Bridge. She has a large bag beside her with a handwritten cardboard sign poking out of the top. The first two words on the sign say, "HUNGRY AND". Presumably the next word, obscured by some of her possessions, is 'HOMELESS'.)

HOMELESS GIRL: Change? Any change?

SHERLOCK: What for?

HOMELESS GIRL: Cup of tea, of course.

SHERLOCK (handing her the piece of paper from his pocket): Here you go - fifty.

HOMELESS GIRL (smiling): Thanks.

(He immediately turns and walks away again. John looks at him in bewilderment before turning and following, pointing back towards the girl.)

JOHN: What are you doing?

SHERLOCK: Investing.

(John looks back to where the girl is unfolding the note and reading it. Sherlock goes to the railings and easily leaps over them again. He opens the rear door of the cab.)

SHERLOCK: Now we go to the Gallery.

(He stops and looks back at John.)

SHERLOCK: Have you got any cash?

(John - just offscreen - presumably nods because Sherlock gets into the cab and John follows.)

HICKMAN GALLERY. The taxi pulls up and Sherlock steps out. John is about to follow but Sherlock stops him.

SHERLOCK: No. I need you to find out all you can about the gallery attendant. Lestrade will give you the address.

JOHN: Okay.

(He closes the cab door and gives a new instruction to the driver. Sherlock walks away towards the gallery.)

ALEX WOODBRIDGE'S HOME. A woman leads John into Alex's tiny attic bedroom. It's messy with clothes scattered everywhere. The window in the canted ceiling looks up into the sky, and standing below it is a large object covered with a sheet.

JULIE: We'd been sharing about a year. Just sharing.

JOHN: Mmm.

(Julie stops and gestures around the room. John walks in and looks around, not touching anything. He looks at the sheet-covered object and points to it.)

JOHN: May I?

JULIE: Yeah.

(John tries to lift just the top of the sheet but it slips from his fingers and falls to the floor.)

JOHN: Sorry.

(He looks at the telescope on a tripod which has been revealed.)

JOHN: Stargazer, was he?

JULIE: God, yeah. Mad about it. It's all he ever did in his spare time.

(She looks away sadly.)

JULIE: He was a nice guy, Alex. I liked him.

(She looks around the room.)

JULIE: He was, er, never much of a one for hoovering.

(She laughs nervously. John smiles at her, then pulls a face as she looks away.)

JOHN: What about art? Did he know anything about that?

JULIE (shaking her head): It was just a job, you know?

JOHN: Hmm.

(He bends down and peers at the items on the bedside table.)

JOHN: Has anyone else been round asking about Alex?

JULIE: No. We had a break-in, though.

JOHN (straightening up): Hmm? When?

JULIE: Last night. There was nothing taken. Oh - there was a message left for Alex on the landline.

JOHN: Who was it from?

JULIE: Well, I can play it for you if you like. I'll get the phone.

JOHN: Please.

(She goes out of the room briefly and comes back with the phone and plays the message.)

WOMAN'S VOICE: Oh, should I speak now? Alex? Love, it's Professor Cairns. Listen, you were right. You were bloody right! Give us a call when ...

(The message ends.)

JOHN: Professor Cairns?

JULIE: No, no idea, sorry.

JOHN: Mm. Can I try and ring back?

JULIE: Well, no good. I mean, I've had other calls since - sympathy ones, you know.

(He nods and Julie leaves the room again just as John's phone trills a text alert. He gets out the phone and looks at the message which reads:

RE: BRUCE-PARTINGTON PLANS

Have you spoken to West's

fiancée yet?

Mycroft Holmes

John grimaces and puts away the phone.)

HICKMAN GALLERY. An elegantly dressed woman walks into the large white-painted room which is displaying the Vermeer painting. There is no other artwork or furniture of any kind in the room, but two rows of free-standing posts are roped together to form a path to the picture. The woman stops at the sight of a security man in a black jacket and black cap standing in front of the painting with his back to her.

MISS WENCESLAS (in an Eastern European accent): Don't you have something to do?

SHERLOCK (for it is he): Just admiring the view.

MISS WENCESLAS: Yes. Lovely. Now get back to work. We open tonight.

(Sherlock looks over his shoulder and then turns and walks towards her.)

SHERLOCK: Doesn't it bother you?

MISS WENCESLAS: What?

SHERLOCK: That the painting's a fake.

MISS WENCESLAS (angrily): What?

SHERLOCK: It's a fake. It has to be. It's the only possible explanation.

(Getting closer to her, he looks at her I.D. badge.)

SHERLOCK: You're in charge, aren't you, Miss Wenceslas?

[And yes, he does call her Miss Wenceslas both here and later. I can only presume that this is a Benedict thing rather than a Sherlock thing - that's a lot of sibilance to pronounce when you have a tendency to lisp.]

MISS WENCESLAS: Who are you?

SHERLOCK (getting into her face and staring into her eyes): Alex Woodbridge knew that the painting was a fake, so somebody sent the Golem to take care of him. Was it you?

MISS WENCESLAS: Golem? What the hell are you talking about?

SHERLOCK: Or are you working for someone else? Did you fake it for them?

MISS WENCESLAS: It's not a fake.

SHERLOCK: It is a fake. Don't know why, but there's something wrong with it. There has to be.

MISS WENCESLAS: What the hell are you on about? You know, I could have you sacked on the spot.

SHERLOCK: Not a problem.

MISS WENCESLAS: No?

SHERLOCK: No. I don't work here, you see. Just popped in to give you a bit of friendly advice.

MISS WENCESLAS: How did you get in?

SHERLOCK (scornfully): Please.

MISS WENCESLAS: I want to know.

SHERLOCK: The art of disguise is knowing how to hide in plain sight.

(He turns and begins to walk away, taking off his cap.)

MISS WENCESLAS: Who are you?

SHERLOCK: Sherlock Holmes.

(He drops the cap onto the top of one of the railing posts and continues onwards.)

MISS WENCESLAS: Am I supposed to be impressed?

SHERLOCK: You should be.

(Taking off the jacket, he looks round at her as he deliberately drops it on the floor. Reaching the doors, he flamboyantly shoves one open, almost dancing out of the room.)

SHERLOCK: Have a nice day!

(Miss Wenceslas walks closer to the painting and looks at it as the door slowly and squeakily swings closed.)

WESTIE'S FLAT. John is sitting on the sofa beside Andrew West's fiancée. He has been there long enough for her to have made them mugs of something which are on the coffee table in front of them. Lucy is upset throughout the ensuing conversation.

LUCY: He wouldn't. He just wouldn't.

JOHN (gently): Well, stranger things have happened.

LUCY: Westie wasn't a traitor. It's a horrible thing to say!

JOHN: I'm sorry, but you must understand that's ...

LUCY: That's what they think, isn't it, his bosses?

JOHN (nodding): He was a young man, about to get married. He had debts ...

LUCY: Everyone's got debts; and Westie wouldn't wanna clear them by selling out his country.

JOHN: Can you, um, can you tell me exactly what happened that night?

LUCY: We were having a night in, just watching a DVD.

(She smiles at the memory.)

LUCY: He normally falls asleep, you know, but he sat through this one. He was quiet.

(She becomes tearful.)

LUCY: Out of the blue, he said he just had to go and see someone.

JOHN: And you've no idea who?

(Shaking her head, Lucy begins to cry.)

Later, she opens the front door and shows John out. A cycle courier walks along the pavement towards the house, wheeling his pushbike.

JOE: Oh, hi, Luce. You okay, love?

LUCY: Yeah.

JOE: Who's this?

JOHN: John Watson. Hi.

LUCY (to John): This is my brother, Joe. (She turns to her brother.) John's trying to find out what happened to Westie, Joe.

JOE (looking John up and down): You with the police?

JOHN: Uh, sort of, yeah.

JOE: Well, tell 'em to get off their arses, will you? It's bloody ridiculous.

JOHN: I'll do my best.

(Nodding, Joe turns and puts a comforting hand on his sister's shoulder for a moment before wheeling his bike inside the house. John clears his throat and steps closer to Lucy.)

JOHN: Well, er, thanks very much for your help; and again, I'm very, very sorry.

(He turns to leave but Lucy calls after him.)

LUCY: He didn't steal those things, Mr Watson.

(John turns back to her.)

LUCY: I knew Westie. He was a good man. (She starts to cry.) He was my good man.

(She turns and goes back indoors. John walks away looking like one awesome BAMF and melting ovaries everywhere. Hang on, why did I strike that out? Edit: John walks away, looking like one awesome BAMF and melting ovaries everywhere. There, fixed it for you me.)

NIGHT TIME. John is in the back of a taxi heading along Baker Street. Further along the road, the homeless girl is standing by the railings at the other side of Speedy's, shaking a paper cup at people as they pass by.

HOMELESS GIRL: Spare change? Any spare change?

(Sherlock comes out of 221 and stops, looking down the road towards her. The taxi pulls up and John gets out. Sherlock walks over to him.)

JOHN: Alex Woodbridge didn't know anything special about art.

SHERLOCK: And?

JOHN: And ...

(Sherlock looks towards the girl again and starts to walk towards her while still talking to John.)

SHERLOCK: Is that it? No habits, hobbies, personality?

JOHN: No, give us a chance! He was an amateur astronomer.

(Sherlock stops dead, turns and points towards the taxi.)

SHERLOCK: Hold that cab.

(John trots back to the taxi while Sherlock goes over to the girl.)

HOMELESS GIRL: Spare change, sir?

SHERLOCK: Don't mind if I do.

JOHN (to the cab driver): Can you wait here?

(The girl hands Sherlock a piece of paper. Unfolding it, he sees that she has written "VAUXHALL ARCHES" on it. Smiling briefly, he turns and walks back to John.)

SHERLOCK: Fortunately, I haven't been idle.

(He opens the cab door and gets in.)

SHERLOCK: Come on.

(John climbs in and the taxi heads off.)

VAUXHALL. The boys have got out of the cab and are walking along, Sherlock buttoning his coat as he gazes up at the sky.

SHERLOCK: Beautiful, isn't it?

(John looks up [and sees an impossibly dense star field that you would never see in central London in a million years].)

JOHN: I thought you didn't care about things like that.

SHERLOCK: Doesn't mean I can't appreciate it.

(They walk into the Arches.)

JOHN: Listen: Alex Woodbridge had a message on the answerphone at his flat - a Professor Cairns?

SHERLOCK: This way.

JOHN: Nice(!) Nice part of town. Er, any time you wanna explain.

SHERLOCK: Homeless network - really is indispensable.

JOHN (getting a small flashlight from his pocket and switching it on): Homeless network?

SHERLOCK: My eyes and ears all over the city.

JOHN: Oh, that's clever. So you scratch their backs and ...

SHERLOCK: Yes, then I disinfect myself.

(He has also brought a torch and shines it around as they continue into the darkness of the Arches. Their beams pick out homeless people all around the place, most of them settling down for the night. Suddenly, in the distance, the shadow of a man shows on a wall as he begins to stand up. The man is incredibly tall.)

JOHN: Sherlock!

SHERLOCK: Come on!

(They duck to the side of a wall while the man continues straightening up for ages until he is over seven feet tall.)

JOHN (in a whisper): What's he doing sleeping rough?

SHERLOCK (peering around the corner): Well, he has a very distinctive look. He has to hide somewhere where tongues won't wag - much.

(John looks down as he realises that he has come out without something essential.)

JOHN: Oh shi...

SHERLOCK (taking John's pistol from his coat pocket): What?

JOHN: I wish I'd ...

SHERLOCK (handing him the gun): Don't mention it.

(The man breaks into a run and hurries away down another tunnel. The boys chase across towards where he was and reach the tunnel just in time to see him climbing into a waiting car which immediately speeds off. Sherlock punches the air in frustration.)

SHERLOCK: No, no, no, no! It'll take us weeks to find him again.

JOHN: Or not. I have an idea where he might be going.

SHERLOCK: What?

JOHN: I told you: someone left Alex Woodbridge a message. There can't be that many Professor Cairns in the book. Come on.

PLANETARIUM. Professor Cairns is alone in the planetarium's theatre. As Gustav Holst's "Mars" plays over the sound system, she is standing at the mixing desk in front of a huge screen and watching footage of a film which is played to visitors. Other than the light coming from the screen, the room is in darkness.

NARRATOR (over the footage): Jupiter, the fifth planet in our solar system and the largest. Jupiter is a gas giant. Planet Earth would fit into it eleven times.

CAIRNS (bored): Yes, we know that.

(She stops the recording and fast-forwards it for a moment because starting the playback again.)

NARRATOR: Titan is the largest moon.

CAIRNS (fast-forwarding again): Come on, Neptune, where're you hiding?

(Behind her, a hand pushes open the door to the theatre. A moment later, just as Cairns starts the playback again, the door bangs shut. She looks round.)

NARRATOR: Many are actually long dead ...

(Cairns peers up to the projection room.)

CAIRNS: Tom? Is that you?

NARRATOR: ... exploded into supernovas.

(She turns back to the desk. Behind her a long arm reaches out towards her.)

NARRATOR: ... discovered by Urbain Le Verrier in 1846.

(A tall figure steps up behind Cairns and clamps one hand over her mouth and nose, pulling her backwards.)

CAIRNS (muffled): Oh my God!

(She claws at the hand, crying out in muffled panic, and her other hand flails out and drags several of the sliders down the mixing desk. The footage begins to jump randomly as Cairns' attacker continues to suffocate her.)

NARRATOR: ... composed mainly of hydrogen. Their light takes so long to reach us ...

(Sherlock and John race into the theatre through another door. As John stops and aims his pistol towards the attacker, Sherlock yells at the top of his voice.)

SHERLOCK: Golem!

NARRATOR ... many are actually long-dead, exploded into supernovas.

(The Golem looks up, grunts in surprise, then snaps Cairns' neck and drops her to the floor. Her fingers drag along the mixing desk and the footage goes into fast-forward again, plunging the theatre into darkness. The Golem ducks down out of sight.)

SHERLOCK: John!

JOHN: I can't see him. I'll go round. I'll go!

(As the footage continues spooling and then stopping and playing before spooling again, light comes and goes in the room. Sherlock stares around as John hurries off.)

SHERLOCK (loudly): Who are you working for this time, Dzundza?

(Behind him, the Golem steps out of the fluctuating darkness and clamps one hand around Sherlock's mouth and nose while gripping his neck with the other. Sherlock grabs at the hand on his face, struggling to pull it free as he is slowly suffocated. John races over and stops in front of them, his pistol held in both hands.)

JOHN: Golem!

(He cocks the gun and points it at the Golem's face, his hands and voice steady.)

JOHN: Let him go, or I will kill you.

(Sherlock, whimpering in his efforts, continues trying to pull the man's hand from his face. The Golem swings him around to the left and lashes out with his long right leg during a moment of darkness, kicking the pistol from John's hands. Dropping Sherlock to the ground, he surges forward and wrestles with John. As Sherlock gets to his feet, the Golem shoves John into him, sending both of the boys tumbling to the floor. Sherlock scrambles up again and takes up a boxing stance in front of him, holding up his clenched fists. He swings a punch at the man but Dzundza grabs his hand and swings his other arm down heavily onto Sherlock's shoulder, dropping him to the floor yet again. The Golem follows him down and clamps both hands over his face, leaning his weight onto them. Behind him, John throws himself onto his back. The Golem roars, releasing Sherlock as he claws at the hobbit on his back. He stands up with John still clinging to his back and spins around several times before finally managing to shake him off onto the floor. As John groggily tries to get up, the Golem turns, picks up Sherlock and skims him across the floor towards John. Sliding across the floor, Sherlock grabs at the pistol and manages to pick it up. The Golem runs for the doors. Sherlock rolls over onto his back and fires twice towards him but the Golem makes it to the doors and disappears through them.)

NARRATOR: ... long dead, exploded into supernovas.

(As the image of a supernova dramatically explodes on the screen behind him, Sherlock angrily slams his hand down on the floor in front of him.)

MORNING. HICKMAN GALLERY. Sherlock is standing in front of the Vermeer painting, looking up information on his phone. He calls up subjects such as "Vermeer brush strokes," "Pigment analysis," "Canvas degradation," "UV Light damage," "Delft Skyline, 1600," and "Vermeer influences." John, Lestrade and Miss Wenceslas are standing behind him.

SHERLOCK: It's a fake. It has to be.

MISS WENCESLAS: That painting has been subjected to every test known to science.

SHERLOCK: It's a very good fake, then.

(He spins around and glares at her.)

SHERLOCK: You know about this, don't you? This is you, isn't it?

(Miss Wenceslas turns to Lestrade, looking exasperated.)

MISS WENCESLAS: Inspector, my time is being wasted. Would you mind showing yourself and your friends out?

(The pink phone rings. Sherlock snatches it from his pocket and switches on the speaker.)

SHERLOCK: The painting is a fake.

(There's a faint sound of breathing over the speaker but otherwise there is no response.)

SHERLOCK: It's a fake. That's why Woodbridge and Cairns were killed.

(Still there's nothing more than breathing.)

SHERLOCK: Oh, come on. Proving it's just the detail. The painting is a fake. I've solved it. I've figured it out. It's a fake! That's the answer. That's why they were killed.

(When the phone remains silent, Sherlock takes a deep breath to calm himself.)

SHERLOCK: Okay, I'll prove it. Give me time. Will you give me time?

(After a moment, the tremulous voice of a very young boy comes over the phone's speaker.)

BOY'S VOICE: Ten ...

(Instantly Sherlock spins and looks closely at the painting.)

LESTRAD (shocked): It's a kid. Oh, God, it's a kid!

JOHN: What did he say?

SHERLOCK: "Ten."

BOY's VOICE: Nine ...

SHERLOCK (narrowing his eyes as he scans every inch of the painting): It's a countdown. He's giving me time.

LESTRADE: Jesus!

SHERLOCK: The painting is a fake, but how can I prove it? How? How?

BOY's VOICE: Eight ...

SHERLOCK (turning and glaring at Miss Wenceslas): This kid will die. Tell me why the painting is a fake. Tell me!

(Miss Wenceslas flinches and opens her mouth, but Sherlock immediately holds up his hand to stop her.)

BOY's VOICE: Seven ...

SHERLOCK: No, shut up. Don't say anything. It only works if I figure it out.

(He turns back to the painting again. Unable to stand the tension, John turns and walks away a few paces. Lestrade turns to watch him, probably wanting to join in the pacing as well.)

SHERLOCK (to himself, continuing to scan the painting): Must be possible. Must be staring me in the face.

BOY's VOICE: Six ...

JOHN (urgently under his breath as he turns back): Come on.

SHERLOCK: Woodbridge knew, but how?

BOY's VOICE: Five ...

LESTRADE: It's speeding up!

JOHN (urgently): Sherlock.

(Sherlock's gaze falls on three tiny white dots of paint in the night sky. His mouth falls open as the penny finally drops.)

SHERLOCK: Oh!

BOY's VOICE: Four ...

SHERLOCK: In the planetarium! You heard it too. Oh, that is brilliant! That is gorgeous!

(Turning and shoving the pink phone into John's hands, he walks away from the painting, grinning as he pulls out his own phone from his pocket.)

BOY's VOICE: Three ...

JOHN: What's brilliant? What is?

(Sherlock rapidly types "Astronomers" and "Supernovas" into his phone, then turns back and walks towards the others, laughing in delight.)

SHERLOCK: This is beautiful. I love this!

BOY's VOICE: Two ...

LESTRADE (furiously): Sherlock!

(Sherlock grabs the pink phone from John and yells into it.)

SHERLOCK: The Van Buren Supernova!

(There's a short pause, then the boy's plaintive voice comes from the speaker.)

BOY's VOICE: Please. Is somebody there?

(Sherlock sighs out a relieved breath.)

BOY's VOICE: Somebody help me!

SHERLOCK (turning and handing the phone to Lestrade): There you go. Go find out where he is and pick him up.

(He gives John a long look, promising him a jolly good seeing-to later, then turns and points to one of the dots in the sky of the painting.)

SHERLOCK: The Van Buren Supernova, so-called. (He holds up his phone over his shoulder so that Miss Wenceslas can see the screen.) Exploding star, only appeared in the sky in eighteen fifty-eight.

(He turns and throws her a triumphant look, then walks away. John drags in a relieved breath, then walks closer to look at the painting.)

JOHN: So how could it have been painted in the sixteen forties?

(He grins over his shoulder at Miss Wenceslas, then looks back to the picture again. His phone trills a text alert.)

JOHN: Oh.

(He digs out his phone, still breathing heavily, and looks at the message which reads:

My patience is
wearing thin.
Mycroft Holmes

He growls slightly, then looks up at the painting one last time.)

JOHN: Oh Sherl...

(He switches off the phone and walks away. Miss Wenceslas stares at the painting in shock.)

NEW SCOTLAND YARD. Sherlock and Miss Wenceslas are sitting side by side in front of Lestrade's desk while the inspector sits in a chair to the side of the desk. Sherlock has his hands in the prayer position under his chin.

SHERLOCK: You know, it's interesting. Bohemian stationery, an assassin named after a Prague legend, and you, Miss Wenceslas. This whole case has a distinctly Czech feeling about it. Is that where this leads?

(She looks down and doesn't answer.)

SHERLOCK: What are we looking at, Inspector?

LESTRADE (thoughtfully): Well, um, criminal conspiracy, fraud, accessory after the fact at the very least. The murder of the old woman, all the people in the flats ...

MISS WENCESLAS (panicked, to Lestrade): I didn't know anything about that! All those things! Please believe me.

(As she continues to stare at Lestrade, Sherlock gives him a tiny nod to confirm that she's telling the truth.)

MISS WENCESLAS: I just wanted my share - the thirty million.

(She looks across to Sherlock, then sighs and lowers her head again.)

MISS WENCESLAS: I found a little old man in Argentina. Genius. I mean, really: brushwork immaculate, could fool anyone.

SHERLOCK (sarcastically): Hm!

MISS WENCESLAS (looking at him briefly): Well, nearly anyone. (She turns back to Lestrade.) But I didn't know how to go about convincing the world the picture was genuine. It was just an idea - a spark which he blew into a flame.

SHERLOCK (sharply): Who?

MISS WENCESLAS (shaking her head): I don't know.

(Lestrade gives a disbelieving laugh.)

MISS WENCESLAS: It's true! I mean, it took a long time, but eventually I was put in touch with people ... his people.

(Sherlock slowly begins to sit up in his chair, his expression becoming more concentrated.)

MISS WENCESLAS: Well, there was never any real contact; just messages ... whispers.

(Sherlock leans closer to her, his face intense.)

SHERLOCK: And did those whispers have a name?

(She gazes ahead of herself for a moment, then looks across to Lestrade before nodding. She turns her head to Sherlock.)

MISS WENCESLAS: Moriarty.

(Slowly Sherlock sinks back in his chair. As Miss Wenceslas looks anxiously at Lestrade again, Sherlock gazes into the distance, his eyes full of thought. Eventually he raises his hands into the prayer position in front of his mouth, then grins.)

BATTERSEA. Wearing a high-vis jacket over his coat, John is walking along the railway lines with the Tube guard who found Andrew West's body.

JOHN: So this is where West was found?

TUBE GUARD: Yeah.

JOHN: Uh-huh.

TUBE GUARD: You gonna be long?

JOHN: I might be.

TUBE GUARD: You with the police, then?

JOHN: Sort of.

TUBE GUARD: I hate 'em.

JOHN: The police?

TUBE GUARD: No. Jumpers.

[Be careful, there, son. This will show you that you don't insult jumpers in the presence of John Watson, jumper-wearer extraordinaire.]

TUBE GUARD: People who chuck themselves in front of trains.

[Oh. Sorry. As you were.]

TUBE GUARD: Selfish bastards.

JOHN: Well, that's one way of looking at it.

(He squats down to look more closely at the railway track.)

TUBE GUARD: I mean it. It's all right for them. It's over in a split second - strawberry jam all over the lines. What about the drivers, hmm? They've gotta live with it, haven't they?

(John runs his fingers along the track, then lifts his hand to look at it.)

JOHN: Yeah, speaking of strawberry jam, there's no blood on the line. (He stands up again.) Has it been cleaned off?

TUBE GUARD: No, there wasn't that much.

JOHN: You said his head was smashed in.

TUBE GUARD: Well, it was, but there wasn't much blood.

JOHN: Okay.

(He turns and looks along the line thoughtfully.)

TUBE GUARD: Well, I'll leave you to it then.

(John walks a few yards further down the line and then squats down again.)

TUBE GUARD: Just give us a shout when you're off.

JOHN: Right.

(The guard walks away. John stands up again and talks to himself.)

JOHN: Right: so, uh, Andrew West got on the train somewhere - or did he? There's no ticket on the body. Then how did he end up here?

(Beside him, the points change and a set of the tracks slides sideways into a new layout. John squats down again and looks at the tracks thoughtfully.)

SHERLOCK (from behind him): Points.

JOHN: Yes!

(He springs to his feet and turns around to see his flatmate standing nearby.)

SHERLOCK: Knew you'd get there eventually. West wasn't killed here; that's why there was so little blood.

JOHN: How long have you been following me?

SHERLOCK: Since the start. You don't think I'd give up on a case like this just to spite my brother, do you?

(He turns and starts walking away.)

SHERLOCK: Come on. Got a bit of burglary to do.

Shortly afterwards the boys are walking along a street.

SHERLOCK: The missile defence plans haven't left the country, otherwise Mycroft's people would have heard about it. Despite what people think, we do still have a Secret Service.

JOHN: Yeah, I know. I've met them.

SHERLOCK: Which means whoever stole the memory stick can't sell it or doesn't know what to do with it. My money's on the latter. We're here.

JOHN: Where?

(Sherlock turns into the drive of a maisonette and trots up the steps at the side of the building which lead to the front door of flat 21A on the first floor. As he rummages in his pocket, John whispers to him urgently.)

JOHN: Sherlock! What if there's someone in?

SHERLOCK: There isn't.

(He picks the lock and goes inside.)

JOHN (softly): Jesus!

(He hurries inside and shuts the door. Sherlock trots up the short flight of stairs ahead of him and walks into the living room.)

JOHN: Where are we?

SHERLOCK: Oh, sorry, didn't I say? Joe Harrison's flat.

JOHN: Joe ...?

(Sherlock goes straight over to the window and pulls back the net curtain. He grins in satisfaction at the sight which greets him outside.)

SHERLOCK: Brother of West's fiancée.

(Outside the window is a one-storey extension, the roof of which can be easily climbed onto from the window. The extension goes all the way to the bottom of the garden which ends in a wall, and directly on the other side of the wall is the railway line.)

SHERLOCK: He stole the memory stick; killed his prospective brother-in-law.

(Dropping to his knees, he gets out his magnifier and uses it to slowly examine the edge of the window sill. John walks across to him and peers over his shoulder as Sherlock finds some tiny blood-red spots on the white paint.)

JOHN: Then why'd he do it?

(He straightens up and turns at the sound of someone unlocking the front door. Sherlock also stands.)

SHERLOCK: Let's ask him.

(Reaching round to the back of his jeans, John walks quietly to the door of the living room as the front door slams. He steps out onto the landing just as Joe, wearing his courier gear, is leaning his bicycle against the wall. When he sees John he picks up the bike as if he intends to use it as a weapon or simply to throw it at him. John instantly raises his right hand and points his pistol at him.)

JOHN (sternly): Don't.

(For a moment Joe keeps coming but John shakes his head.)

JOHN: Don't.

(Joe stops and lowers the bike, sighing in a mixture of frustration and fear.)

Shortly afterwards he is sitting on the sofa while the boys stand nearby. He is very distressed.

JOE: It wasn't meant to ...

(Sherlock looks away, exasperated.)

JOE: God. (He rubs his hand over his face.) What's Lucy gonna say? Jesus.

(He sinks back on the sofa.)

JOHN: Why did you kill him?

JOE: It was an accident.

(Sherlock snorts.)

JOE: I swear it was.

SHERLOCK (sternly): But stealing the plans for the missile defence programme wasn't an accident, was it?

JOE: I started dealing drugs. I mean, the bike thing's a great cover, right? I dunno - I dunno how it started; I just got out of my depth. I owed people thousands - serious people. Then at Westie's engagement do, he starts talking about his job.

(Throughout the next part of the scene there are flashbacks to Joe and Westie in a pub which re-enact what Joe is describing.)

JOE: I mean, usually he's so careful; but that night after a few pints he really opened up. He told me about these missile plans - beyond top secret. He showed me the memory stick; he waved it in front of me. You hear about these things getting lost, ending up on rubbish tips and what-not. And there it was, and I thought ... well, I thought it could be worth a fortune.

(In flashback, Joe helps a very drunk Westie into his jacket and slips the memory stick out of his shirt pocket while he's doing so.)

JOE: It was pretty easy to get the thing off him, he was so plastered. Next time I saw him, I could tell by the look on his face that he knew.

(In flashback, Joe is letting himself into his flat at night time when Westie hurries up the steps and grabs him.)

WESTIE (in flashback): I know you took it.

JOE (in flashback): What are you doin' 'ere?

WESTIE (in flashback): What have you done with it?

JOE (in flashback): What are you talking about?

WESTIE (in flashback): What have you done with the plans?

(In the present, Joe looks up guiltily at John.)

JOHN: What happened?

(In flashback, Westie and Joe scuffle on the small landing outside the front door. Joe angrily shoves Westie and he loses his footing and rolls down the steps, landing heavily on the ground.)

JOE: I was gonna call an ambulance, but it was too late.

(In flashback, Joe has hauled Westie's limp body into the living room, his face full of anguish.)

JOE: I just didn't have a clue what to do, so I dragged him in 'ere, and I just sat in the dark, thinking.

SHERLOCK: When a neat little idea popped into your head.

(As Joe hauls Westie across to the window, a train pulls up on the tracks outside, its brakes squealing noisily. Shortly afterwards, Joe has dragged Westie out of the window and is tugging him across the extension roof. Pulling him over the top of the wall, he steps across onto the roof of the train and drags the body over, settling it into a position along the slightly curved roof so that it won't easily fall off. He steps back onto the wall and the train sounds its horn and then continues on down the track.)

SHERLOCK (pushing the net curtain aside and looking out of the window): Carrying Andrew West way away from here. His body would have gone on for ages if the train hadn't met a stretch of track that curved.

(In flashback, the train rockets through the area that John was recently investigating. The combination of the curve and the jolting of the train as it passes over the points throws Westie's body off the roof and onto the trackside.)

JOHN: And points.

SHERLOCK: Exactly.

(And the Tube guard walks along the track and finds Westie's body the next morning.)

[And can your transcriber interject at this point to say that the next moment - when John walks across the screen and wipes that trackside scene away, returning us to the flat - combined with the glorious music all through the latter part of the scene, makes it in her opinion the absolutely best moment of the entire series so far.]

JOHN: D'you still have it, then? The memory stick?

(Joe nods.)

SHERLOCK: Fetch it for me - if you wouldn't mind.

(Sighing unhappily, Joe stands up and walks into another room. Sherlock walks closer to John.)

SHERLOCK (quietly): Distraction over, the game continues.

JOHN: Well, maybe that's over, too. We've heard nothing from the bomber.

SHERLOCK: Five pips, remember, John? It's a countdown. We've only had four.

NIGHT TIME. 221B. Both Sherlock and John are in their coats because the windows still haven't been replaced. Sherlock is sitting in his armchair with his feet up on the seat and his arms folded tightly around him, trying to conserve heat. The pink phone is on the arm of the chair. Behind him, John is sitting at the dining table, typing on his laptop. The TV is on and a Jerry Springer/Jeremy Kyle-type show is playing. As the audience boos noisily, Sherlock yells indignantly at the telly.

SHERLOCK: No, no, no! Of course he's not the boy's father! (He gestures at the screen.) Look at the turn-ups on his jeans!

(Sighing, he folds his arms again. John, who has looked round to see what Sherlock is protesting about, gets back to his typing.)

JOHN: Knew it was dangerous.

SHERLOCK: Hmm?

JOHN: Getting you into crap telly.

SHERLOCK: Hmm. Not a patch on Connie Prince.

JOHN: Have you given Mycroft the memory stick yet?

SHERLOCK: Yep. He was over the moon. Threatened me with a knighthood - again.

JOHN: You know, I'm still waiting.

SHERLOCK: Hmm?

JOHN: For you to admit that a little knowledge of the solar system and you'd have cleared up the fake painting a lot quicker.

SHERLOCK: Didn't do you any good, did it?

JOHN: No, but I'm not the world's only consulting detective.

SHERLOCK (smiling): True.

(John has closed the lid of his laptop and now stands up.)

JOHN: I won't be in for tea. I'm going to Sarah's. There's still some of that risotto left in the fridge.

SHERLOCK (his eyes still fixed on the TV): Mm!

(John stops at the door.)

JOHN: Uh, milk. We need milk.

SHERLOCK: I'll get some.

JOHN (turning back with a look of disbelief on his face): Really?!

SHERLOCK: Really.

JOHN: And some beans, then?

SHERLOCK (still not looking away from the TV): Mm.

(John hesitates, still surprised, but then nods and walks away. Sherlock continues to gaze at the TV until he hears the downstairs door open and close, then he picks up his computer notebook from where it was tucked down beside him. Putting it on his lap and opening the lid, he stares at the message box on The Science of Deduction website before starting to type.

Found. The Bruce-Partington plans. Please collect.

He lifts his eyes in thought for a moment, then quirks a small smile before returning to his typing.

The Pool. Midnight.

He sends the message, then closes the lid, gazing thoughtfully into the distance.)

SWIMMING POOL. Sherlock opens a door leading into the area surrounding an indoor swimming pool. The lights are on but there is nobody visible in the area. Somewhere between Baker Street and here, he has taken off his Coat and is just wearing his suit, so presumably the heating is on as well. He walks slowly towards the shallow end of the pool, probably very aware that the upper gallery where people sit and watch the swimmers is still in darkness. He stops at the edge of the pool and turns, trying to see up into the viewing gallery. Finally he turns towards the pool again, raising one hand and holding up the memory stick.

SHERLOCK (loudly): Brought you a little getting-to-know-you present. Oh, that's what it's all been for, hasn't it? All your little puzzles; making me dance - all to distract me from this.

(He gestures with the memory stick, then begins to turn in a slow circle while he waits for a response. When his back is turned to the pool, a door opens halfway down the room. Sherlock looks over his shoulder, still holding the memory stick aloft. And John Watson walks through the door and into the pool area, wrapped snugly in a hooded jacket with his hands tucked into the pockets. He turns and looks at Sherlock as the detective stares back at him in absolute shock.)

JOHN: Evening.

(Sherlock's raised hand begins to lower slowly but otherwise he doesn't move, still staring over his shoulder in utter disbelief.)

JOHN: This is a turn-up, isn't it, Sherlock?

SHERLOCK (softly, shocked): John. What the hell ...?

JOHN: Bet you never saw this coming.

(Finally Sherlock manages to move, and starts to walk slowly towards the man he had believed to be his friend until now. The shock and bewilderment on his face make him look about twelve years old. Then, with a look of despair which matches Sherlock's, John takes his hands from his pockets and pulls open his jacket to reveal the bomb strapped to his chest. From somewhere in the upper gallery, a sniper's laser immediately begins to dance around over the bomb.)

JOHN: What ... would you like me ... to make him say ... next?

(Sherlock continues to step towards him but now he is looking everywhere but at John as he tries to see who else is in the area.)

JOHN (obviously narrating words spoken into an earpiece): Gottle o' geer ... gottle o' geer ... gottle o' geer.

(His voice almost breaks on the last phrase.)

SHERLOCK: Stop it.

JOHN (narrating): Nice touch, this: the pool where little Carl died. I stopped him. (He tries not to cringe as he listens to the next words.) I can stop John Watson too. (He looks down at the laser point on his chest.) Stop his heart.

SHERLOCK (turning on the spot while he tries to look in all directions): Who are you?

(A door opens at the far end of the pool and a soft male voice with an Irish accent speaks from that direction.)

VOICE: I gave you my number.

(We get a brief glimpse of a man wearing a suit and tie, but he is currently mostly obscured by a column.)

VOICE (plaintively): I thought you might call.

(Sherlock turns towards the new arrival, who now slowly walks out into the open. It's Jim, Molly's boyfriend. But this isn't the fumble-fingered casually-dressed Londoner who did indeed leave his number for Sherlock in the lab at Bart's; this is a sharply-dressed man with immaculate hair and a murderous look on his face. With his hands in his pockets, he casually begins to stroll alongside the deep end of the pool, heading towards Sherlock and John. All hint of plaintiveness has now gone from his voice.)

JIM: Is that a British Army Browning L9A1 in your pocket ...

(Sherlock reaches down to his trouser pocket and removes a pistol from it.)

JIM: ... or are you just pleased to see me?

SHERLOCK (raising the pistol and aiming it towards Jim): Both.

(Jim stops and looks back at him, unafraid.)

JIM: Jim Moriarty. Hi!

(Sherlock tilts his head as he looks more closely at the man. Jim acts as if he needs to remind Sherlock who he is.)

JIM: Jim? Jim from the hospital?

(He begins to walk alongside the deep end again. Sherlock brings up his other hand to support the one aiming the gun. Jim bites his lip as if disappointed.)

JIM: Oh. Did I really make such a fleeting impression? But then, I suppose, that was rather the point. (He turns to face Sherlock just as the sniper's laser flickers over John's upper chest. Sherlock briefly turns his head towards John, a questioning look on his face.)

JIM (starting to walk again): Don't be silly. Someone else is holding the rifle. I don't like getting my hands dirty.

(He reaches the corner of the pool and stops.)

JIM: I've given you a glimpse, Sherlock, just a teensy glimpse of what I've got going on out there in the big bad world. I'm a specialist, you see ...

(He looks surprised, as if he has only just realised the connection.)

JIM: ... like you!

SHERLOCK: "Dear Jim. Please will you fix it for me to get rid of my lover's nasty sister?"

(Starting to walk forward again, Jim grins as he recognises the TV show and catchphrase that Sherlock is quoting.) [See footnotes]

SHERLOCK: "Dear Jim. Please will you fix it for me to disappear to South America?"

JIM (stopping again): Just so.

SHERLOCK: Consulting criminal. (softly) Brilliant.

JIM (smiling proudly): Isn't it? No-one ever gets to me - and no-one ever will.

SHERLOCK (cocking the pistol): I did.

JIM: You've come the closest. Now you're in my way.

SHERLOCK: Thank you.

JIM: Didn't mean it as a compliment.

SHERLOCK: Yes you did.

JIM (shrugging): Yeah, okay, I did. But the flirting's over, Sherlock ... (His voice becomes high-pitched and sing-song.) Daddy's had enough now!

(He again starts to stroll closer.)

JIM (back to his normal tone): I've shown you what I can do. I cut loose all those people, all those little problems, even thirty million quid just to get you to come out and play.

(John is starting to feel the strain and closes his eyes briefly. Sherlock's eyes can't help but flicker across to him a couple of times as he tries to keep his focus on the man approaching them.)

JIM: So take this as a friendly warning, my dear. Back off.

(He smiles.)

JIM: Although I have loved this - this little game of ours. (He puts on his London accent for a moment.) Playing Jim from I.T. (He switches back to his Irish accent.) Playing gay. Did you like the little touch with the underwear?

SHERLOCK: People have died.

JIM: That's what people DO!

(He screams the last word furiously, his personality changing in an instant.)

SHERLOCK (softly): I will stop you.

JIM (calmer again): No you won't.

(Sherlock looks across to John.)

SHERLOCK: You all right?

(John deliberately keeps his gaze away from his friend, presumably having been given instructions earlier about not talking to him. Jim walks forward again and reaches his side.)

JIM: You can talk, Johnny-boy. Go ahead.

(Refusing to specifically obey Jim's orders, John meets Sherlock's eyes and nods once. Sherlock takes one hand off the pistol and holds out the memory stick towards Jim.)

SHERLOCK: Take it.

JIM: Huh? Oh! That!

(He strolls past John and reaches out for the stick, grinning.)

JIM: The missile plans!

(He takes the stick from Sherlock's fingers and brings it to his mouth, kissing it. Behind him, John is silently murmuring to himself, perhaps trying to keep himself focussed, perhaps winding himself up to take action. Jim lowers the memory stick and looks at it.)

JIM (sing-song): Boring!

(He shakes his head.)

JIM: I could have got them anywhere.

(He nonchalantly tosses the stick into the pool. Seeing his opportunity, John races forward and slams himself up against Jim's back, wrapping one arm around his neck and the other around his chest. Sherlock backs up a step in surprise but keeps the pistol raised and aimed at Jim.)

JOHN: Sherlock, run!

(Jim laughs in delight.)

JIM: Good! Very good.

(Sherlock doesn't move, still aiming his gun at Jim's head but now starting to look up a little anxiously, as if wondering what action the hidden sniper might take.)

JOHN (savagely): If your sniper pulls that trigger, Mr Moriarty, then we both go up.

JIM (calmly, to Sherlock): Isn't he sweet? I can see why you like having him around. But then people do get so sentimental about their pets.

(Grimacing angrily, John pulls him even closer onto the bomb which is now sandwiched between them. Jim scowls round at him.)

JIM: They're so touchingly loyal. But, oops!

(He grins briefly at John, then looks towards Sherlock.)

JIM: You've rather shown your hand there, Doctor Watson.

(He chuckles as a new laser point appears in the middle of Sherlock's forehead. John stares in horror as Jim looks round at him expectantly. Sherlock, either seeing the edge of the laser beam shining from the gallery or realising what's happening from John's expression, shakes his head slightly.)

JIM (sing-song): Gotcha!

(He chuckles as John releases his grip on him and steps back, holding his hands up to signal to the sniper that he won't be trying anything else. Jim glances round at him, then turns back towards Sherlock while brushing his hands down his suit to straighten it. He gestures to it indignantly.)

JIM: Westwood! [See footnotes.]

(He lowers his hands and stands calmly in front of Sherlock who is still aiming the pistol at his head.)

JIM: D'you know what happens if you don't leave me alone, Sherlock, to you?

SHERLOCK (sounding bored): Oh, let me guess: I get killed.

JIM: Kill you? (He grimaces.) N-no, don't be obvious. I mean, I'm gonna kill you anyway some day. I don't wanna rush it, though. I'm saving it up for something special. No-no-no-no-no. If you don't stop prying, I'll burn you.

(He runs his eyes briefly down Sherlock's body, then meets his eyes again and his voice becomes vicious.)

JIM: I'll burn the heart out of you.

(His face is a snarl as he says the word 'heart' but at the end of the sentence he looks almost regretful.)

SHERLOCK (softly): I have been reliably informed that I don't have one.

JIM: But we both know that's not quite true.

(Sherlock blinks involuntarily. Jim looks down, smiling, then shrugs.)

JIM: Well, I'd better be off.

(He nonchalantly looks around, perhaps checking his exit route, before turning back to Sherlock.)

JIM: Well, so nice to have had a proper chat.

(Sherlock raises the pistol higher and extends it closer to Jim's head.)

SHERLOCK: What if I was to shoot you now - right now?

JIM (completely unperturbed): Then you could cherish the look of surprise on my face.

(He opens his eyes and mouth wide, mimicking surprise, then grins at Sherlock.)

JIM: 'Cause I'd be surprised, Sherlock; really I would.

(He screws up his nose.)

JIM: And just a teensy bit disappointed. And of course you wouldn't be able to cherish it for very long.

(Slowly he begins to turn away.)

JIM: Ciao, Sherlock Holmes.

(Looking back at Sherlock with some distaste, he walks calmly towards the side door through which John came earlier. Sherlock slowly steps forward to keep him in his sights.)

SHERLOCK: Catch ... you ... later.

(The door opens and Jim's voice can be heard, high-pitched and sing-song.)

JIM: No you won't!

(The door closes. Sherlock doesn't move for a few seconds, his gun still aimed towards the door, then his gaze drifts across to John and he instantly bends, putting the pistol on the floor, then drops to his knees in front of John [hush now ...] and starts unfastening the vest to which the bomb is attached.)

SHERLOCK: All right?

(John tilts his head back, breathing heavily [I said hush now ...].)

SHERLOCK (urgently): Are you all right?

JOHN: Yeah-yeah, I'm fine.

(Having unfastened the vest, Sherlock jumps up and hurries round behind John, starting to pull off the jacket and the bomb vest.)

JOHN: I'm fine.

(Sherlock, also breathing too fast, continues tugging at the jacket and vest.)

JOHN: Sherlock.

(Finally Sherlock manages to roughly strip the jacket and vest off John's arms.)

JOHN: Sh-Sherlock!

(Sherlock bends and skims the items as far away along the floor as he can, while John staggers at the vehemence with which his friend just ripped them off him.)

JOHN (softly): Jesus.

(He reaches up and pulls the earpiece from his ear, breathing heavily as delayed shock begins to hit him. Sherlock turns and stares at him for a moment, then hurries back to pick up the pistol before racing towards the door through which Moriarty left. John's knees buckle and he staggers towards the nearest support, the edge of one of the changing cubicles.)

JOHN: Oh, Christ.

(He turns and drops down into a squat, bracing his back against the cubicle's edge as he blows out a long breath and tries to calm himself down. Sherlock comes back in, having apparently seen no sign of Moriarty outside. He starts to pace up and down near John, so hyper and distracted that he doesn't even realise that he is scratching his head with the business end of a loaded and cocked pistol.)

JOHN (breathlessly): Are you okay?

SHERLOCK (quick fire, still pacing and scratching his head with the gun): Me? Yeah, I'm fine, I'm fine. Fine.

(He turns to John, wide-eyed and breathless.)

SHERLOCK: That, er ... thing that you, er, that you did - that, um ... (he clears his throat) ... you offered to do. That was, um ... good.

JOHN (staring blankly ahead of himself): I'm glad no-one saw that.

(Sherlock had temporarily lowered his hand long enough not to be risking accidentally shooting himself in the head, although he had terrible jitters as he held the gun down by his side. Now he lifts the gun again as he raises his hand to rub his chin while looking down at John in confusion.)

SHERLOCK: Hmm?

JOHN (still not meeting his eyes): You, ripping my clothes off in a darkened swimming pool. People might talk.

(Sherlock shrugs.)

SHERLOCK: People do little else.

(He looks down at John, then grins. John snorts laughter, then leans forward and prepares to stand up. But before he can move, the beam from a sniper's laser begins to dance over his chest. John looks down at it and his face fills with horror.)

JOHN (anguished): Oh ...

(A door near the deep end of the pool opens and Jim comes through, clapping his hands together and turning to face our heroes.)

JIM (cheerfully): Sorry, boys! I'm soooooo changeable!

(John grimaces in disbelief. Sherlock keeps his back to Jim, looking up into the gallery to try and judge how many snipers there might be up there. It's becoming clear that there are quite a few because there are at least two laser points hovering over John, and at least three more travelling over Sherlock's body. Jim laughs and spread his arms wide.)

JIM: It is a weakness with me but, to be fair to myself, it is my only weakness.

(He lowers his hands and puts them in his pockets. Sherlock turns his head and looks down at John, who lifts his own head to meet his gaze.)

JIM: You can't be allowed to continue. You just can't. I would try to convince you but ... (he laughs and his voice becomes sing-song again) ... everything I have to say has already crossed your mind!

(Sherlock, who had looked away from John for a moment, now turns and looks down at him again, his face showing no emotion but his eyes screaming a silent request. John responds instantly with a tiny nod, giving him full permission to do whatever he deems necessary.)

SHERLOCK (turning to face Jim): Probably my answer has crossed yours.

(He raises the pistol and aims it at him. Jim smiles confidently with no fear in his expression. Slowly Sherlock lowers the pistol downwards until it's pointing directly at the bomb jacket. All three sets of eyes lock onto the jacket, John breathing heavily, Sherlock calm. Jim tilts his head, looking a little anxious for the first time. As Sherlock holds his hand steady, continuing to aim towards the jacket, Jim lifts his head and locks eyes with his nemesis. Sherlock gazes back at him and Jim begins to smile. Sherlock's eyes narrow slightly.)

And the scream that went up from the viewers in August 2010 as the end credits began to roll still echoes around the universe to this day.

To clarify a couple of points which I've seen raised elsewhere, and which may be helpful for non-British readers in particular:

(1) "Dear Jim": Sherlock is mock-quoting a standard format from a very well-known TV show called "Jim'll Fix It" which ran on the BBC from 1975 to 1994 and was hosted by Jimmy Savile. Viewers - mostly children - would write to the show and would always begin their letter, "Dear Jim, please can you fix it for me to ..." and would ask for their wildest dream to be met, e.g. to be a train driver for a day, or to meet their favourite athlete, or to work in a chocolate factory for a few hours. Nowadays we would all be writing in and saying, "Dear Jim, please can you fix it for me to meet Benedict Cumberbatch/Martin Freeman," or "... to be the make-up girl on the next season of 'Sherlock'," or "... to be Steve Thompson's beta reader and point out all his plot inconsistencies to him," etc. [What? Don't look at me like that third request is from me ...]

In a rather unfortunate piece of timing, within the last couple of weeks (in mid-October 2012 when this transcript was published) the reputation of the late Jimmy Savile has plummeted after terrible allegations have recently surfaced about his behaviour during his years at the BBC. If you haven't heard of this show before, now is not the time to be googling it.

(2) "Westwood": Jim is wearing a suit designed by Dame Vivienne Westwood, which will therefore have been very expensive, hence his mock-indignation at John ruffling it up. He directs the comment to Sherlock rather than to John because he knows that Sherlock is more likely to be appreciative of the expense of his clothing.