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THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

Written by Brandon Francis

Based on the stories

of

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

**Writers notes**

**Elements of style.**

So to which style of theatre does this ‘The Hound of the Baskevilles’ belong? It is certainly farce and definitely spoof or parody, but there is a lot of theatre history running through this play. There are elements of pantomime, melodrama, Comedia dell' arte, improvisation and clowning. Here are some of the styles the script contains.

**Farce** “a comic dramatic work using buffoonery and horseplay and typically including crude characterization and ludicrously improbable situations.” This is The Hound of the Baskervilles- right down to the horse. Other characteristics of farce include slapstick, physical humour and word-play.

**Melodrama** is characterized by dramatic action, sensational plots and performances full of heightened emotions and exaggerated physicality. There are some moments of melodrama in The Hound of the Baskervilles such as talking to the audience, cross-dressing, slapstick and physical comedy and actors playing multiple roles.

**The 4th Wall** refers to a proscenium stage with 3 real walls and one imaginary 4th wall invisible to the audience. When actors talk directly to the audience or refer to the fact that they are actors in a play it is called breaking the 4th wall. The actors in The Hound of the Baskervilles break the 4th wall with *gay* abandon. Most of it is scripted. Hopefully many of these moments are improved or added by the actors rather than scripted and can change each night depending on the audience.

**Verisimilitude** is the truthfulness or believability of a work of fiction. Most plays require verisimilitude so the audience can believe what they are seeing and hearing. In The Hound of the Baskervilles quite the opposite is called for. Watson’s ridiculous water pistol gun and impossible gun sound effects are strictly for laughs and serve to remind the young/old audience once again that this has nothing to do with reality. The play has purposeful disregard for verisimilitude.

**Cast The play will be performed by four actors.**

ACTOR 1: Sherlock Holmes-Policeman-Beryl Stapleton-Actor 1

ACTOR 2: Dr Watson-Actor 2

ACTOR 3: Dr Mortimer-Mr/Mrs Barrymore-Stapleton-Hugo Baskerville-Actor 3

ACTOR 4: Sir Henry Baskerville-Village girl-Selden-Actor 4

**OR**

ACTOR 1: Sherlock Holmes-Policeman-Beryl Stapleton-Mrs Barrymore-Actor 1

ACTOR 2: Dr Watson-Actor 2

ACTOR 3: Dr Mortimer-Mr Barrymore-Stapleton-Hugo Baskerville-Actor 3

ACTOR 4: Sir Henry Baskerville-Village girl-Selden-Actor 4

***Actor 1,2,3,4 all walk on stage and face the audience***

ACTOR 1: Ladies and gentleman! Boys and girls. Welcome to a great classic story about the worlds greatest detective. Sherlock Holmes!

ACTOR 3: What a personality!

ACTOR 4: What a mind!

ACTOR 3: And who must we thank for his fame?

ACTOR 2: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle!

ACTOR 1: Conan Doyle created a truly extraordinary character.

ACTOR 4: There are 56 short stories and 4 novels of the Sherlock Holmes mysteries.

ACTOR 3: Did you know Conan Doyle killed off Holmes!

ACTOR 2: But he bought him back.

ACTOR 1: Why did he bring him back?

ACTOR 4: The public loved Sherlock Holmes. They demanded his return.

ACTOR 3: So…

ACTOR 1: The story, or in this case, the play, is set in the late 19th century, in England, London and Dartmoor, Devon.

ACTOR 2: And what is the name of the this play that is about to unfold?

ACTOR 3: (***Dramatic***) “The Hound of the Basketvilles”!

ACTOR 4: You mean Baskervilles!

ACTOR 3: ‘The Hound of the *Baskervilles*!’

ACTOR 2: You will notice that the language is somewhat different. The English language in late Victorian and Edwardian Britain was certainly more formal.

ACTOR 1: Indeed! So, shall we get on with the play? (***Melodramatic***) Ladies and gentleman! Boys and girls. Prepare ye for the tale of The Hound of the Baskervilles…

***Actors 3 and 4 exit***

***SCENE 1***

***ACTOR 1 moves upstage, takes a smoking jacket off a coat stand and puts it on. He takes a pipe out of the pocket.***

WATSON: It was late in the morning. The sun was shining brightly into the windows of 221B Baker street, London. That’s the address of Sherlock Holmes flat. Which he shared with his colleague and *good* friend, Dr Watson. That’s me. The case started simply enough, with a walking stick!

***ACTOR 2 holds out his hand and he catches a walking stick thrown to him from offstage.***

HOLMES: Well, what do you make of it, Watson?

WATSON: *(****Examining the stick****)* It’s well used…a lot of scratches at the base and the handle is worn down. *(****Pause****)* I would say that it belongs to a country gentleman, who is used to walking.

HOLMES: Rightly observed, Watson.

WATSON: Thank you, Holmes. But where did you find it?

HOLMES: It was left on our doorstep. The owner obviously left it there by mistake.

WATSON: Are there any clues as to who the owner could be?

HOLMES: The owner of the stick does indeed live in the country. Devon, to be precise. Like you, Watson, he is a doctor. His name is Dr James Mortimer.

WATSON: Goodness me, Holmes, how on earth do you know all that?

HOLMES: It is my business to know what other people don’t know. In this instance, it was elementary, dear Watson. ***(Taking a card out of his pocket)*** He left his calling card!

***There is the sound of knocking at the door. The knocking continues over the dialogue.***

HOLMES: Ah, that will be him now. What do you deduce from that knocking Watson?

WATSON: Its coming from the door.

HOMLES Yes, what else?

WATSON It’s sounds urgent.

HOMLES Elementary my dear Watson.

***Feeling rather pleased with himself Holmes begins to puff on his pipe.***

WATSON: Well…Should we answer it?

HOLMES: As it’s our dear housekeeper, Mrs Hudson’s, day off…would you, please, be kind enough to open the door.

WATSON: Of course, Holmes.

***WATSON gives the walking stick to HOLMES. He answers the door.***

WATSON: Good day.

MORTIMER: Good day. I’m here to see Mr Sherlock Holmes.

WATSON: Certainly. Please come in. Dr Watson. *(****They shake hands)***

MORTIMER: No, Dr Mortimer.

WATSON: I beg your pardon?

MORTIMER: I am Dr Mortimer…not Dr Watson!

WATSON: No, no…*Dr Watson*.

HOLMES: Sherlock Holmes!

MORTIMER: *(****Shaking his hand****)* Mr Holmes, the famous detective. It is an honour to meet you, sir.

HOLMES: *(****Indicating WATSON****)* And this is my colleague, Dr Watson.

WATSON: *And…*Good friend.

MORTIMER: *(****Shaking hands with WATSON****)* Of course, Dr Watson. Forgive me, I should have known you immediately. After all, it is you that has made Mr Holmes famous writing up all his extraordinary cases.

WATSON: You see Holmes. Where would you be without me?

HOLMES: Indeed Watson. You are a conductor of light. A light that is constantly *turned* on around me. ***(HOLMES ponders)*** Dr Mortimer, I believe this is yours. *(****Handing him the* *walking stick.****)*

MORTIMER: Thank you. I wondered where I had left it.

HOLMES: Now, what can I do for you?

MORTIMER: Mr Holmes…*(****Dramatically****)* It’s a terrible business…terrible business! Sadly, one person…a dear friend…is already *deceased*. And now I fear for the life of another.

HOLMES: Please, continue.

MORTIMER: Three months ago, my good friend, Sir Charles Baskerville, was found lifeless-

HOLMES: Unanimated-

WATSON: Pulseless-

HOLMES: Departed-

WATSON: Stiff…

HOLMES Dead!

WATSON: Touché Holmes touché!

MORTIMER: Yes, indeed Mr Holmes. He had been out for his nightly walk. When he failed to return, his butler, Barrymore, went in search of him. Not far from Baskerville Hall. Barrymore found Sir Charles’s *dead* body at the edge of the moor that borders part of the property. That’s the official version, Dr Watson, but I’m convinced he died of…(***Dramatically***) fright!

HOLMES: Fright?

MORTIMER: (***Dramatically)*** Fright! (***He says it so loudly DR WATSON is thrown off his feet and almost suffers a heart attack himself***) However, something else confirmed my suspicion. As Sir Charles’s body was being taken away, I noticed something the police didn’t…(***Dramatically***) Footprints!

HOLMES: But there would have been many footprints around the body.

MORTIMER: These were no ordinary footprints, Mr Holmes. These were the footprints of a…(***Dramatically***) a large hound!

HOLMES: A hound?

MORTIMER: (***Dramatically****)* A hound from hell! A terrifying monster that haunts the moors near to Baskerville Hall. ***(Pause***) The hound of the Baskervilles!

HOLMES: I must warn you, Dr Mortimer, I am a scientific man. I don’t believe in superstition.

MORTIMER: (***Taking out a manuscript)*** Perhaps this might make you change your mind.

HOLMES: What is it?

MORTIMER: A manuscript, given to me by Sir Charles, some weeks before his death. (***He gives the manuscript to Holme*s**) It tells of a terrifying story that has been a curse to the Baskerville family.

WATSON: A curse?

MORTIMER: Yes, Dr Watson…a curse! (***Dramatically***) The curse of…the hound of the Baskervilles! While you read the manuscript…may I please use your Water Closet?

HOLMES: Certainly.

WATSON: It’s along the hall, on the left.

MORTIMER: Thank you. Excuse me. (***He exits.****)*

WATSON: Well, Holmes…I…I…

HOLMES: What’s wrong *Watson?*

WATSON: I’ve…I’ve forgotten my line.

HOLMES: ***(Actor sighs)*** ‘W-H-A-T *do*’

WATSON: No! Don’t tell me, don’t tell me…

HOLMES: ‘You’-

WATSON: Don’t tell me-

HOLMES: Make-

WATSON: Don’t tell me-

HOLMES: ‘Of it all?’ That’s the line Watson. ‘What do you make of it all?

WATSON: What do you make of it all?

HOLMES: Someone is dead…that is for sure. But Dr Mortimer has got so carried away with this ‘hound business’.

WATSON: And what about this curse?

HOLMES: Well…**(*Suddenly a sound of someone straining very loudly and with great difficultly can be heard off stage.*)**

HOLMES: Dr Mortimer are you…alright?

MORTIMER: (***Off stage***) Yes, yes quite alright. It’s the old pipes you see, not as smooth as they used to be. (***Another straining noise***)

HOLMES: If you wish, I could get Dr Watson to *assist* you?

WATSON: What!

MORTIMER: That’s very kind of you, but I should be ohhhhh! **(*Another straining noise, followed by a long outdrawn sound of relief****) Ahhhhh…*

HOLMES: Well, Watson…it’s story time! (***He opens the manuscript and begins to read.***) “The origins of the curse on the Baskerville family dates back to the 17th century, when Baskerville Hall was lived in by the evil Hugo Baskerville.” **(*Enter Hugo Baskerville, with an evil over the top laugh.)***

HOLMES: “Hugo was a cruel man. To get a lady in his life, he would have to take her! To that end, he set his eyes on a poor, pretty girl from the nearby village.”

**E*nter the Village Girl*** *(****Played by one of the male actors.) What follows is a pantomime of events. The girl is picking flowers. Hugo comes up to her. He bows…she smiles. He moves closer and starts to caress her arm. She backs off. He advances and tries to put his arm around her. She pushes him away and starts to run from him. He catches her. She struggles, frantically. He throws her over his shoulder but can’t as she’s to heavy holding his back in pain Hugo pushes her off stage and exits)***

HOLMES: “He locked the girl in a room at Baskerville Hall. (***Pause***) One night, the girl escaped. From an upstairs window, he saw her running towards the moor. Full of anger, he got on his horse and rode after her.”

***Again, a pantomime of the events. The girl enters. She runs from one side of the stage to another. Enter Hugo, miming riding a horse. He chases after the running girl. He catches up with her. She falls to the ground. Hugo mimes getting off the horse. The girl stands and starts to run. Hugo catches her. Then there is the sound of the howl of a large hound. The girl screams and points offstage. Hugo turns. There is a sound of the hound’s growl. Hugo shrieks in terror. The girl pushes Hugo offstage. There is the sound of the hound attacking and screams from Hugo. The girl runs away and exits. Hugo’s screams stop and, after a moment, the attack sounds also stop. Then there is the sound of the hound’s howl.***

HOLMES: “Their bodies were discovered, the next day. The girl’s body had no marks on it. She had, apparently, died of exhaustion. Baskerville, on the other hand, was covered in blood. On the ground were the footprints of a large hound. (***Pause)*** So that is the story of the coming of the hound, which has haunted the Baskervilles ever since.

(***HOLMES folds up the manuscript.***)

WATSON: Well, Holmes, what do you make of it?

HOLMES: I can’t believe that Dr Mortimer expects me to believe that this superstitious nonsense has anything to do with the death of Sir Charles!

***Enter Dr Mortimer.***

MORTIMER: Did you find the story interesting, Mr Holmes?

HOLMES: If I were a collector of stories to frighten children! (***Handing him the manuscript***) You say that Sir Charles gave you this?

MORTIMER: Yes. He was convinced the curse was true and that he was next to meet his end by the hound.

HOLMES: Dr Mortimer, when you first arrived, you talked about another person whose life you feared for. Who is this person?

MORTIMER: Sir Charles’s nephew and now the only known heir to Baskerville Hall and family fortune…Sir Henry Baskerville.

HOLMES: Does he know the story of the hound and the curse?

MORTIMER: Yes. Although, he has been living in the U.S. and Canada since he was a boy, he knows all about his family’s history. Nevertheless, he is keen to take up residence at Baskerville Hall.

HOLMES: Alone?

MORTIMER: Yes. He is not married.

WATSON: And the curse doesn’t bother him?

MORTIMER: Not at all. However, since he arrived in England, some days ago… strange things have been happening to him.

HOLMES: What things?

MORTIMER: I will let him tell you. If you don’t mind, Mr Holmes, I asked him to call by. In fact, he will be here soon. I must go. And so, gentlemen I will bid you a good day. (***He shakes hands with HOLMES and WATSON***) I will find my own way out.

**Scene 3**

HOLMES: Well, there are very few facts at all in this case.

WATSON: Except that a man is dead.

HOLMES: Yes...but by natural causes.

WATSON: And now we have strange things that are happening to Sir Henry.

HOLMES: Yes. Let’s hope for some facts from him...whatever they might be!

***There is the sound of a door knocking.***

HOLMES: No doubt, that’s him. Watson...if you don’t mind...?

WATSON: Not at all.

***WATSON gives the audience a look of contempt having been asked to answer the door again***

WATSON: Good day.

SIR HENRY: (***with an American accent***) Hi. I’m here to see Mr Sherlock Holmes.

WATSON: Certainly. Please come in. (***Holding out his hand***) Dr Watson.

SIR HENRY: No, I’m Sir Henry Baskerville.

WATSON: (***Gesturing to himself*)** D-O-C-T-O-R W-A-T-S-O-N

SIR HENRY: You might be confusing me with *Dr Mortimer*. Are you the butler?

HOLMES: No. He is my colleague. And I am Sherlock Holmes.

SIR HENRY: (***Shaking HOLMES hand, energetically***) How do you do, Mr Holmes. Great that you can see me at such short notice. And you must be Dr Watson. (***SIR HENRY shakes his hand energetically and WATSON grimaces afterwards.***)

HOLMES: Sir Henry we know about the circumstances surrounding your uncle’s death…and the story about the so called Baskerville curse. Now, what is worrying you?

SIR HENRY: Unexplainable events, Mr Holmes! Since arriving here, in London, someone has been following me. The same figure…the same clothes…face mostly hidden by a hat. He has a black beard.

HOLMES: Have you told the police?

SIR HENRY: No. Only Dr Mortimer. He told me about you, Mr Holmes. And suggested, knowing my family background, that you, a detective, would be the person to tell, rather than the police.

HOLMES: I see.

SIR HENRY: As disturbing as it has been to know someone is following me… today something else has happened that is very scary!

HOLMES: And what is that?

SIR HENRY: Yesterday, as the weather was so bad, I left my shoes outside my hotel room door. This morning, I discovered that one shoe is missing…and…this letter (***He takes out a piece of paper***) was at the hotel reception for me. It reads… (***Reading***) “If you value your life and your reason keep away from the moor” (***He passes the letter to HOLMES***.)

HOLMES: Aha…now this case is getting interesting! (***Reading***) “If you value your life…keep off the moor”…a warning, or a threat? Whatever…this definitely merits looking into. Sir Henry, when did you plan to depart for Baskerville Hall?

SIR HENRY: Tomorrow. Midday train to Dartmoor, in Devon.

HOLMES: Not much time to get ourselves together. **(*Pause*)** Sir Henry, return directly to your hotel. Don’t go out again. I will send word about meeting you tomorrow. I will also send a message to Dr Mortimer. (***Referring to the letter)*** May I keep this?

SIR HENRY: Of course.

HOLMES: Off you go then. Do not worry…Sherlock Holmes is on your case. We will get to the *bottom* of this.

SIR HENRY: Thank you, sir. I will make it worth your while. The Baskerville fortune will make it worth your while!

HOLMES: ***(Thoughtfully)*** The fortune…yes, the fortune…there could lie the root of this case.

SIR HENRY: Goodbye, Dr Watson. (***He holds out his hand*.**)

WATSON: (***Giving a wave*)** Goodbye.

SIR HENRY: I’ll see myself out. So long, gentlemen. ***He exits.***

WATSON: So, Holmes, we will be off on this case…tomorrow?!?

HOLMES: I need to think. My violin please ***(He is passed a violin off stage)***

WATSON: No! Please Holmes no!

HOLMES: Watson, it helps me focus and relax my mind. ***(He proceeds to play the Violin very badly)*** I’ve solved cases for Kings and Queens, Dukes and Duchesses, Prime minsters and Lords. Now they want me to chase a shoe half way around the country! I’ve got it! This case calls for a compete imbecile. Watson!

WATSON: Thank..what! Me!

HOLMES: Yes, you! I have some lose ends to tie up on another case, here in London. I want you to go with Sir Henry. Keep your eye on him…and the people around him. Observe…everything. And send me communications about your observations. ***(He hands the violin to an actor off stage.)***

WATSON: (***Thoughtfully***) So, I should…

HOLMES: Go and pack!

WATSON: Yes. (***Pause***) Holmes, this is all very sudden!

HOLMES: Better go to it, then! Oh, and Watson….

WATSON: Yes.

HOLMES: Make sure you pack your gun!

WATSON: So, you think that this case could be dangerous?

HOLMES: Could be, Watson…could be!

WATSON: Ah!

HOLMES: The game’s afoot, Watson. We are on the hunt…either for a would be murderer, or…the hound of the Baskervilles!

**Exit HOLMES.**

**Scene 4**

WATSON: And so, the next day, the adventure began!

***He is thrown a suitcase from offstage. Enter SIR HENRY, with a suitcase.***

SIR HENRY: Well, Dr Watson, here we are in Devonshire.

WATSON: I’ve not been here before. What desolate countryside! Any sign you were followed today?

SIR HENRY: Nope. Haven’t seen the guy at all.

WATSON: Perhaps he knows you are leaving London.

SIR HENRY: That would be scary!

WATSON: Sir Henry, who, definitely, knew that you were in England now?

SIR HENRY: Dr Mortimer, Mr and Mrs Barrymore, who are the butler and housekeeper at Baskerville Hall.

WATSON: Anyone else?

SIR HENRY: Mr and Miss Stapleton, brother and sister. They live in the small neighbouring house. They were good friends of Sir Charles.

WATSON: The Barrymores…have they been at Baskerville Hall long?

SIR HENRY: Oh, yes. They have been there for years. Sir Charles left them a good amount of money in his will. They practically own the place…they’ve lived in it and looked after it for so long!

WATSON: (***Thoughtfully***) I see.

**Scene 5**

SIR HENRY: Barrymore is meeting us. ***Enter BARRYMORE, an odd-looking man, with a hump on his back and a terrible fake black beard and a fake tiny plastic toy hand. He has a limp as he walks.***

BARRYMORE: Good afternoon, gentlemen.

SIR HENRY: Hey! You must be Barrymore, the butler.

BARRYMORE: I am Barrymore, the butler.

SIR HENRY: (***Taking BARRYMORE’s fake tiny hand and shakes it energetically.***) This is my friend, Dr Watson.

BARRYMORE: (***BARRYMORE tries to Shake WATSON’s hand. WATSON dosen't want to shake his fake hand***) I am Barrymore, the butler.

WATSON: How do you do.

BARRYMORE: Welcome to Dartmoor. The carriage is just here, gentlemen.

DR WATSON: Where?

BARRYMORE: Just here sir ***( Barrymore takes the suitcases and they become the seats of the carriage. They mime getting into the carriage. BARRYMORE is the driver. He mimes holding a horse’s reins.***

BARRYMORE: Whoa there! Move along! (***He mimes slapping the reins and neighs like a horse.)***

BARRYMORE: Baskerville Hall is prepared for your arrival, Sir Henry.

SIR HENRY: Excellent! I’m really excited to see it.

BARRYMORE: Is this your first time to Dartmoor, Dr Watson?

WATSON: Yes.

BARRYMORE: It has a stark beauty, Dr Watson…mysterious. (***Dramatically***) Things…happen…on the moor! They can be exciting…and they can be dangerous.

***Enter a POLICEMAN holding his hand up. BARRYMORE mimes pulling up the reins.***

POLICEMAN: Good afternoon, gentlemen. May I ask where you are headed?

SIR HENRY: I am Sir Henry Baskerville. We are on our way to Baskerville Hall. This is my friend, Dr Watson.

BARRYMORE: I am Barrymore, the butler.

SIR HENRY: Is there a problem, officer?

POLICEMAN: Yes. A prisoner escaped from Princetown Prison. He headed for the moor. The man is Selden, a very dangerous criminal.

WATSON: I know about him. He’s supposed to be insane.

POLICEMAN: Insane and dangerous! Be warned…and be on the lookout, gentlemen. (***To BARRYMORE)*** I suggest you drive fast, Mr…what did you say your name was?

BARRYMORE: I am Barrymore, the butler.

POLICEMAN: Well, Mr Barrymore, you’d better get these gentlemen to Baskerville Hall as quick as you can. It will be getting dark soon.

SIR HENRY: Thank you, officer. ***The POLICEMAN exits.***

BARRYMORE: Let’s get a move on! Hold tight, gentlemen! (***He mimes slapping horse reins and neighs like a horse.***) ***Sound effect of a carriage moving quickly. All mime a more bumpy motion, with occasional tossing movements, from side to side. BARRYMORE then mimes pulling up the reins. Sound effect stops. All stop the motion movements, with a jerk.***

BARRYMORE: Welcome to Baskerville Hall. ***They mime getting off the carriage.*** ***BARRYMORE takes their luggage and tries to carry it with his tiny fake hand, but struggles.***

WATSON: Could I lend you a hand? I mean…could I assist you with the luggage?

BARRYMORE: No sir, it’s quite alright. I like to take a hands on approach with my job sir. ***Again he struggles to move the luggage with his tiny fake hand and ends up kicking the luggage off stage.***

WATSON: Barrymore, may I inquire, what was your occupation before working as a butler for the Baskervilles?

BARRYMORE: Always been a butler sir, but I did consider an occupation as a full time Athlete. At school I was known for my physical prowess. I was the tallest in my class sir.

WATSON: Really? Public school?

BARRYMORE: Yes sir.

WATSON: Ah! That would explain it. ***(Gives the teachers in the audience a look)***

SIR HENRY: Thank you, Barrymore. (***Looking around***) Well, this is one helluva place! What do you think, Dr Watson?

WATSON: Well…It’s big and old. It reminds me of my mothers funeral but without the liquor.

SIR HENRY: Oh, I am sorry. What did she die of?

WATSON: Leprosy. But perhaps it was for the best. Towards the end, she wasn’t half the woman she used to be.

BARRYMORE: It’s getting dark, gentlemen. Shall we go inside? (***Dramatically)*** It’s not good to be outside when darkness descends on the moor. Who knows what lurks in its shadows! (***There is the sound of the howl of a hound)***

WATSON: What was that?

SIR HENRY: That sounded like…like the howl of a hound.

BARRYMORE: (***Dramatically***) Yes…the hound of the Baskervilles!

***BARRYMORE exits.***

WATSON: What do you think of this hound story and the curse?

SIR HENRY: I wouldn’t be here if I believed all that ‘mumbo jumbo’! My concerns are my shoe, the note and being followed.

WATSON: You mentioned that the person had a black beard?

SIR HENRY: Yes.

WATSON: Barrymore has a black beard!

SIR HENRY: Ah, come on, Dr Watson, you don’t think that he…?

WATSON: “Rule out nothing, until you are positive of something”…As Holmes would say.

***They exit. After a pause, enter BARRYMORE.***

BARRYMORE: (***Calling offstage***) My dear! They’re here.

***BARRYMORE exits and reenters as MRS BARRYMORE with a cooking bowl in one and a maids hat in the other. (Mr Barrymore and Mrs Barrymore are played by the same actor. He puts on a maids hat everytime he speaks as Mrs Barrymore. The beard remains.)***

BARRYMORE: Sir Henry, this is my wife, Mrs Barrymore, the housekeeper.

MRS BARRYMORE: (***Curtsying***) Delighted to meet you, Sir Henry. I hope you find everything to your satisfaction.

SIR HENRY: (***Looking around, enthusiastically***) Everything is just as I imagined it. Oh, this is a friend…Dr Watson.

MRS BARRYMORE: Good evening, Dr Watson.

WATSON: Good evening.

SIR HENRY: Dr Watson will be staying for a while.

BARRYMORE: The spare bedroom is prepared, and supper will be ready in an hour, Sir Henry.

SIR HENRY: Excellent! What is for supper?

BARRYMORE Homemade stew sir. I made it with my own hands ***(He puts his tiny fake hand into the bowl and proceeds to stir the contents, and then licks his fingers afterwards.)***

SIR HENRY: Great! Watson, will you be joining me for supper?

WATSON: No…I think I’ll get an early night. What’s for breakfast Mrs Barrymore?

MRS BARRYMORE: Homemade Devonshire Sausages, sir

WATSON: That’s more like it!

MRS BARRYMORE: With a special secret ingredient. ***(BARRYMORE picks her nose with the tiny fake hand and eats it.)***

SIR HENRY:Sounds great. I can’t wait to sample your food.

MRS BARRYMORE: Excuse me, I’ll be in the kitchen, if you need me. ***She pretends to exit and reverts back to BARRYMORE.***

DR WATSON. I don’t mean to speak out of turn but I can just say, what a rare and elegant beauty your wife is. You’re a fortunate man Mr Barrymore.

BARRYMORE: If you say so sir. Gentlemen, if you would be so kind as to follow me. ***He exits.***

WATSON: You didn’t notice anything *odd* about Mr and Mrs Barrymore?

SIR HENRY: What do you mean Watson?

WATSON: The similarity?

SIR HENRY: No.

WATSON: The likeness…the same hump, limp, beard, fake hand…

SIR HENRY: Can’t say I noticed. See yer later!

***SIR HENRY exits.***

**Scene 6**

WATSON: Baskerville Hall was as gloomy inside as it was outside. Old furniture, old paintings and family portraits. (***Pause***) Although I was tired, I didn’t sleep very well, at all. A deathly silence filled the old house. Suddenly, I heard a sound…the sound of someone crying. I got out of bed and quietly opened my door…just enough to see…

***Enter MRS BARRYMORE, She is crying uncontrollably. She crosses the stage and exits.***

WATSON: In the morning, I mentioned it to Barrymore. ***Enter BARRYMORE.***

Your wife was upset, last night.

BARRYMORE: Upset, sir?

WATSON: Yes. I heard her…saw her…crying…in the middle of the night.

BARRYMORE: Was she, sir? I was not aware of that.

WATSON: Barrymore, isn’t your lump normally on your left shoulder?

BARRYMORE: ***(Clearly his lump has changed position)*** No sir, always been on right sir. Excuse me, sir, I must get back to work.

***He exits. Enter MRS BARRYMORE.***

WATSON: Are you alright, Mrs. Barrymore?

MRS BARRYMORE: Perfectly alright, sir. Why shouldn’t I be?

WATSON: I heard you crying in the night.

MRS BARRYMORE: No, not me, sir. Maybe it was me husbands passing of wind. It sometimes sounds like cries, in the night.

WATSON: (***Noticing***) Your eyes are all red.

MRS BARRYMORE: (***Clearly covering up***) Really? Well…well, I’ve just been outside. Maybe it’s from the cold morning air. Breakfast is ready in the dining room. Excuse me, sir. ***She exits.***

WATSON: I knew she was lying! (***Pause***) After lunch, I decided to take a walk on the moor. Past the gate of Baskerville Hall, there it was…the moor. A wide expanse of wild, rolling countryside, interrupted with hills, topped with stones of granite. One can easily get lost…so I kept to a path. I hadn’t gone very far when…***Enter JACK STAPLETON. He has a bag over his shoulder and is carrying a butterfly net. He swings the net in the air, as if to catch butterflies.***

STAPLETON: Damned difficult to catch…butterflies! You think you’ve got one… then the blasted thing flies away. So frustrating! (***Pause)*** Sorry…Stapleton is the name…Jack Stapleton. I live nearby, at Merripit House.

WATSON: Good afternoon. My name is Watson…Dr Watson.

STAPLETON: Not Dr Watson…as in THE Dr Watson…good friend and colleague to the famous Sherlock Holmes?

WATSON: (***Surprised***) Yes. But…

STAPLETON: (**S*haking WATSON’s hand)*** Jolly good to meet you, Dr Watson. Dr Mortimer told me he was going to talk to Mr Holmes about the death of Sir Charles.

WATSON: Ah!

STAPLETON: Yes. Damned, awful business…Sir Charles’s death. ***(Dramatically)*** The curse of the hound claims another Baskerville!

WATSON: Then you know about Dr Mortimer’s suspicions?

STAPLETON: Oh yes. We were good friends of Sir Charles. We have lived down here for 2 years. Its a lovely quiet place to live. Sometimes I like to do some *camping*, but I’m not very experienced with the *bush*. I have trouble getting the old *tent up*.

WATSON: I see..You said We?

STAPLETON: My sister and I. ***(Pause)*** Quite right too…not to involve the police in the case.

WATSON: So, you believe that Sir Charles died of fright, at seeing the hound?

STAPLETON: He died seeing something!

WATSON: Then you believe this hound exists?

STAPLETON: (***Suddenly, pointing at seeing something.***) Good Lord…look… there!

WATSON: ***(Startled)*** Where…what?!?

STAPLETON: There! ***(Referring to a butterfly)*** That butterfly you don’t see on the moor, at this time of the year. ***(Swings the net.)*** Damn…thing got away! ***(Pause)*** What were we talking about?

WATSON: The existence of the hound.

STAPLETON: Ah, yes. The local villagers seem to think it exists. And now the famous Sherlock Holmes is going to investigate the legend. Is he here?

WATSON: No. He has business in London. He will come down soon.

STAPLETON: Ah! ***(Seeing a butterfly)*** There it is again! Excuse me, Dr Watson…I must have this one! ***(Talking to the butterfly)*** Come to me, my precious. I will have you! ***He goes after the butterfly, swinging the net and missing…cursing when he does so.*** I’ll be back, Dr Watson…I’ll be back!

***He exits. (Almost immediately after he’s gone off one side, enter BERYL STAPLETON from the other. Once again played by one of the male actors. She runs up to WATSON.)***

BERYL: ***(Intensely)*** Go back! Go back to London…immediately!

WATSON: Why?

BERYL: I cannot explain. But, for God’s sake do as I say! There is danger here. Go back and never set foot on the moor again!

WATSON: What are you saying?

BERYL: Don’t say a word to my brother! ***Enter STAPLETON***.

STAPLETON: Damned thing got away! (***On seeing BERYL***) Ah, you two have bumped into each other. Beryl, this is Dr Watson, good friend and colleague to the famous Sherlock Holmes.

BERYL: Dr Watson? Oh, forgive me…I thought that you were…were Sir Henry Baskerville.

STAPLETON: Dr Watson, this is my sister, Beryl.

WATSON: How do you do.

BERYL: I’m sorry, Dr Watson for what I just said. I was…confused.

STAPLETON: What was that?

BERYL: Oh…nothing! ***There is the sound of a moan, which grows into a howl.***

WATSON: What was that?

STAPLETON: The local people say it is the call of the hound. ***(Dramatically)*** He is hungry for blood!

WATSON: And what do you think it is?

STAPLETON: It could be many things. Sometimes, strange noises come out of Grimpen Mire.

WATSON: Grimpen Mire?

STAPLETON: Near here is the dangerous Grimpen Mire. Looks like wet grassland. However, once a man, or animal, steps into it, they are slowly sucked into its muddy depths.

BERYL: It’s a terrible death, Dr Watson! Be warned…always stick to the path.

STAPLETON: Beryl, we must go. Dr Watson, you and Sir Henry must visit us. After all, we are neighbours. And Mr Holmes, too, when he gets here.

WATSON: Thank you.

STAPLETON: ***(Offering BERYL his arm)*** Come along, my dear. Goodbye, Dr Watson.

BERYL: Goodbye.

WATSON: Goodbye. ***They start to exit. BERYL stops.***

BERYL: My handkerchief…I think I dropped my handkerchief by Dr Watson. Go along, Jack. I’ll catch you up. ***He exits. She comes back to WATSON.*** What I said before was meant for Sir Henry.

WATSON: Is he in danger?

BERYL: You know the story of the hound?

WATSON: Yes.

BERYL: I…I believe it to be true. Therefore, I fear for Sir Henry’s life. I cannot say any more.

STAPLETON: ***(Calling, from offstage)*** Beryl.

BERYL: ***(Calling back)*** I found it. Coming. ***(She takes out her handkerchief)*** Goodbye, Dr Watson. ***She exits.***

**Scene 6**

WATSON: ***(Addressing the audience)*** So far, who do you think is after Sir Henry? Is it Mr Barrymore? Miss Stapleton? Mrs Barrymore? Any guesses? ***(Two or three audience members guess who it is?)*** Well, lets carry on with the play and find out who it is? I thought it best not to tell Sir Henry about what Miss Stapleton had said. I wrote to Holmes, reporting my first 24 hours events.. I decided to go to bed early and have a good night’s sleep. No such luck, I’m afraid! Just after midnight, I heard footsteps on the creaky floorboards in the hall, outside my room. ***Offstage, BARRYMORE makes the sound of creaky floorboards.***

WATSON: I got out of bed and peeped outside my door, to see…

***Enter BARRYMORE, making creaky noises as he walks. He is carrying a candle. He mimes opening a window. Then he waves the candle, from side to side. He makes a loud groan and exits, making the creaky noises.***

WATSON: The next day, I told Sir Henry what I had seen. ***Enter SIR HENRY.***

SIR HENRY: It sounds like he was signalling to someone.

WATSON: Exactly what I thought.

SIR HENRY: I will come to your room tonight and we can check this out together.

WATSON: And so he did. We waited, until…***From offstage comes BARRYMORE’s creaking sound. Enter BARRYMORE, still making the sound as he walks. Again, he is carrying a candle. Again, he mimes opening a window and waves the candle.***

SIR HENRY: What are you doing, Barrymore?

BARRYMORE: ***(Startled)*** Oh, I…I…was…

SIR HENRY: Yes…

BARRYMORE: I was…was…just fixing the window!

SIR HENRY: In the middle of the night! ***(Firmly)*** Tell me the truth, Barrymore. What were you doing at that window?

WATSON: ***(Noticing something outside the window.***) Look…in the dark of the moor…a faint light is moving, from side to side!

SIR HENRY: Who are you signalling to, Barrymore? Tell me at once!

BARRYMORE: I…I…

MRS BARRYMORE: ***(Distressed)*** Please, sir, it’s not my husband’s fault. It’s…it’s mine.

SIR HENRY: What are you talking about, Mrs Barrymore?

MRS BARRYMORE: My husband is signalling to my brother. He is living like a hunted animal on the moor!

WATSON: Your brother? Is he the escaped convict, Selden?

MRS BARRYMORE: Yes, sir.

WATSON: But he’s a criminal!

MRS BARRYMORE: But he’s still my brother. Dr Watson,

SIR HENRY: What the…he’s dangerous! He must be locked away, for the safety of others.

WATSON: What is the signal for?

BARRYMORE: Mrs Barrymore has been putting out food for him. The signal is to let him know when she has done so.

MRS BARRYMORE: Forgive me, Sir Henry.

SIR HENRY: This is outrageous! I will report this to the police tomorrow.

MRS BARRYMORE: Please sir, don’t say anything to the police.

BARRYMORE: In a few days, he won’t be around on the moor. We have arranged for him to be transported, by ship, to South America.

MRS BARRYMORE: I beg of you, sir. Soon my brother will be far away and not cause anyone any more trouble.

WATSON: Except the South Americans!

SIR HENRY: We will talk further about this in the morning. Now, go to bed, the pair of you! ***MR and MRS BARRYMORE bow, with the actor putting the maid hat on and off as he/they exits.***

SIR HENRY: Thank you for bringing this to my attention, Dr Watson. The Barrymores have been so loyal to the family. This ‘incident’ is …how shall I put it… unfortunate. I shall sleep on it. Goodnight. ***He exits.***

WATSON: Sir Henry decided not to tell the police about Selden…at least, for the time being. However, I had a lot to tell Holmes in my next correspondence to him. ***(Pause)*** The day after, the Stapletons kindly invited us to lunch. Their house was quite near to Baskerville Hall…so near that one could easily walk over to them.

**Scene 7**

***Enter STAPLETON and SIR HENRY. WATSON joins them.***

STAPLETON: It’s jolly good to meet another Baskerville, Sir Henry. Your uncle was a good friend. ***Enter BERYL.*** Ah, Beryl…allow me to introduce you to Sir Henry Baskerville. And you’ve already met Dr Watson.

BERYL: ***(Nodding at WATSON)*** Dr Watson. ***(Extending her hand to SIR HENRY)*** Sir Henry, it is a pleasure to meet you.

SIR HENRY: ***(Shaking her hand)*** The pleasure is all mine, *Miss* Stapleton.

BERYL: Beryl, please.

SIR HENRY: Beryl. Dr Watson, you didn’t tell me that our neighbour was so attractive.

BERYL: Oh, Sir Henry!

SIR HENRY: What’s a pretty girl like you doing stuck away in such desolate countryside like this?

STAPLETON: It’s not everybody’s cup of tea, Sir Henry…but we like it. Neither of us are the social, city types! ***(Firmly)*** Are we, Beryl?

BERYL: Yes… I mean…no, Jack.

SIR HENRY: Well…Beryl…we’ll just have to make some fun of our own, out here in the countryside.

STAPLETON: Dinner is ready. Shall we go in? Beryl…***(Offering her his arm)***

SIR HENRY: ***(Offering BERYL his arm)*** Please, may I, Beryl?

BERYL: ***(Uneasily, looking at STAPLETON)*** Thank you, Sir Henry. ***They exit, with STAPLETON following on behind.***

WATSON: Well, the instant attraction of Sir Henry to Beryl Stapleton was very noticeable. ***(The actor playing Beryl tries to touch the actors hand who is playing SIR HENRY. He pushes the actors hand away and mumbles under his breath. Realising the audience might have noticed, they slip back into character.)*** What was also noticeable, to me, was her brother’s disapproval. ***(Sir Henry, Beryl and Stapleton exit, leaving Watson alone on stage.*** Some days passed. Then, on one particular walk, on the moor, I spotted a hooded figure, high on a hill. ***Enter a hooded figure.*** ***The face is hidden***. We’d heard nothing about Selden…except that he was still on the moor. Surely, this figure was not him. Selden would try to keep out of sight. ***(Calling to the figure)*** I say…hello there. ***The figure sees WATSON and quickly runs away. (They run in a circle around the stage)***

WATSON: Strange! ***(Pause)*** I saw it again, the next day. As I made a move towards it, it was gone, in a flash! Whoever this was, they certainly didn’t want to be discovered. ***(Pause)*** Sir Henry, on the other hand, had discovered something…*love!*

***Enter SIR HENRY.***

SIR HENRY: Beryl, Beryl! *Beryl!* What a gal! What…a…gal! ***(Noticing WATSON)*** Dr Watson! ***(He starts singing a romantic song.)***

WATSON: I’m going for a walk on the moor. Do you fancy coming along?

SIR HENRY: No, thank you, Dr Watson. I have some serious *thinking* to do about Beryl – maybe later. ***He exits***

WATSON: Another letter to Holmes…and off I went. I had walked some distance on the moor, when, suddenly, I saw…***Enter the hooded figure.***

WATSON: ***(Calling to the figure)*** Hello there! ***The figure turns and starts running in a circle.***

WATSON: I decided to give chase, this time. ***Watson gives chase. (Calling to the figure)*** Stop…stop, I say! But the figure did not stop. I ran after it…up a hill, on the moor. Up, up, to the stony top! ***(To the figure)*** Stop! ***(He takes out a pistol. Which is clearly a water pistol)*** I am armed and I will shoot. ***The figure stops.***

WATSON: Who are you? ***The figure turns, slowly and removes the hood. It’s HOLMES.***

WATSON: ***(Surprised)*** Holmes!

HOLMES: Forgive me, Watson.

WATSON: Has it been you all along?

HOLMES: I’m afraid so…yes.

WATSON: But…but…I don’t understand. Why this disguise?

HOLMES: I wanted to observe for myself, for a while, some of the things you had reported to me.

WATSON: But, where have you been staying?

HOLMES: In a small, uninhabited cottage, on the edge of the moor.

WATSON: But to go to such lengths, just to remain anonymous!

HOLMES: I had to, Watson. During my time in London, I learned some extraordinary facts about this case and the characters in it.

WATSON: So, you know who it is?

HOLMES: The facts point to one person. However, there is no proof as to his guilt. He plans everything carefully. His target is Sir Henry Baskerville! ***Suddenly, there is the sound of a loud howl, followed by the sound of a man’s scream.***

WATSON: Holmes…it’s…it’s…

HOLMES: It’s the hound of the Baskervilles! Come along, Watson. The game’s afoot! ***They run, downstage. WATSON points, upstage.***

WATSON: ***(Pointing)*** Look, Holmes…up on that craggy overhang! ***There is another howl, followed again by a man’s scream. Then, a growling, attacking sound, followed by another scream. Then, a body falls on to the stage. There is the sound of a hound’s howl. HOLMES and WATSON move to the body.***

WATSON: ***(Feeling the body)*** He’s dead! It’s Sir Henry. I recognise the coat. Then we are too late!

HOLMES: Watson, please! Don’t question my methods. All you had to do was keep Sir Henry inside! That’s all! ***(kicks body. The body groans)*** you had! ***(kicks body. The body groans again )*** to do! ***(kicks body)***

WATSON: ***(shouting)*** Look! It wasn’t so easy! I was really hungry. The foods awful. Especially the chocolate pudding. It’s got these really strange brown bits in it. And anyway, what were you doing? You made me write you all those letters and then I find that you were here the whole time! I don’t understand!

HOLMES: Watson. From the moment Dr. Mortimer told us about this case. I knew I must be here.

WATSON: Why didn’t you just tell me?

HOLMES: It was imperative that no one – not even you.

WATSON: So I was just a decoy?

HOLMES: No, Watson! You were my torch. Your letters were my torch out there in the fog.

WATSON: You burnt them?

HOLMES:…Yes. But only after I had read them. Without them, I would have been lost.

WATSON: Really?

HOLMES: Yes, *really* lost. And cold. Much, much colder. ***(HOLMES bends down to the body and unwraps a scarf that’s covering the face)*** Wait a moment. This is not Sir Henry!

WATSON: What are you saying, Holmes?

HOLMES: Look again, Watson. The coat, maybe belongs to Sir Henry, but this poor unfortunate is not him. ***(Pause)*** It’s Selden, the escaped convict!

WATSON: ***(Looking closer)*** Good Lord, Holmes!

HOLMES: ***(Thinking out loud)*** So, the coat…and the shoe…from the same person… Sir Henry. Just what one would need to set a murderous hound to work.

WATSON: What do you mean, Holmes?

HOLMES: The scent, Watson…the scent. That’s all a hound needs.

WATSON: But how did Selden get the coat?

HOLMES: Stolen, I suppose….or taken by the Barrymores. It’s cold on the moor, at nights. Unfortunately, for Selden, my suspect had also stolen an article of Sir Henry’s clothing…a shoe.

WATSON: The shoe…Sir Henry’s shoe! The one that was stolen from outside his hotel door, in London.

HOLMES: Precisely, Watson! A well-trained hound can easily pick up a scent of a person…once it knows who that scent belongs to. My suspect thought that he was killing Sir Henry. But he got the wrong man!

WATSON: So, your suspect uses the hound to kill?

HOLMES: And the story of the curse of the hound to put fear into people.

WATSON: But, who is your suspect, Holmes?

HOLMES: The puzzle is not quite complete yet, Watson. It’s getting dark, and we are some distance from Baskerville Hall…and we have to navigate our way back, across the moor…avoiding that dangerous Grimpen Mire.

WATSON: It’s a treacherous place, by all accounts! Holmes, What about Selden’s body? ***(Holmes suddenly pulls out his pistol and shoots the dead body.)*** Holmes you just shot a dead body. Why?

HOLMES: He was dead anyway. What difference does it make. ***(A moan comes from the body. Holmes shoots him again)***

WATSON: Did he just moan?

HOLMES: No, just my…*stomach?* ***(Makes farting noises. Pointing offstage)*** It’s best to conceal it, over there. It will be easier for the police to find. ***HOLMES exits, dragging the body offstage.***

**Scene 8**

WATSON: We made it safely back to Baskerville Hall. Mrs Barrymore was extremely upset by the news of her brother’s death. ***From offstage, comes the sound of a loud cry from Mrs BARRYMORE.*** Holmes then told Sir Henry all he had told me.

***Enter SIR HENRY and HOLMES.***

SIR HENRY: That is one helluva story, Mr Holmes! But who is this guy…and why do you think he is responsible for my uncle’s death…and why does he want to kill me?

HOLMES: Sir Henry! I desperately need to see something,

SIR HENRY: What is it? What do you need to see?

HOLMES: Watson, in your description of Baskerville Hall, you mentioned a room with portraits of Sir Henry’s ancestors.

SIR HENRY: Yes, there is such a room. I’ve only passed through it…not taking much notice of the portraits.

HOLMES: I would very much like to see it.

SIR HENRY: Then follow me. ***Exit SIR HENRY and HOLMES.***

WATSON: If Sherlock Holmes had a fault…it would be the frustrating way he would keep one in suspense about his thoughts, until he knew something… definitely! ***Enter, from one side of the stage, HUGO BASKERVILLE, holding up a frame, to make himself look like a portrait. Then enter SIR HENRY (carrying a candle) and HOLMES.***

SIR HENRY: Here you are Mr Holmes, a gallery of the good and bad of my family. May I ask, what, or who, you are looking for?

HOLMES: Someone you and Watson might recognise.

WATSON: Us?

HOLMES: Yes. Please, both of you, look carefully at the portraits. ***They mime looking at portraits.***

SIR HENRY: What are we supposed to be looking for?

HOLMES: I think you’ll know it when you see it. ***They move to the portrait of Hugo.***

SIR HENRY: ***(As if reading a title)*** Hugo Baskerville. Well, what do you know… it’s the guy who started all that curse nonsense!

WATSON: ***(Realising something)*** Good Lord! I don’t believe it!

SIR HENRY: Nope. It’s true. It says so here.

WATSON: But…the portrait…it looks like…it looks like…

HOLMES: Who, Watson, who?

WATSON: It looks like…Stapleton!

SIR HENRY: ***(Looking closer)*** You’re right…it DOES look like Stapleton!

HOLMES: Thank you, gentlemen. I think you have given me the last piece of my puzzle.

WATSON: What a coincidence…Stapleton looking like a Baskerville!

HOLMES: Oh, much more than a coincidence, my dear Watson. He IS a Baskerville!

SIR HENRY: Have you ever noticed how the eyes of a portrait seem to follow you around the room? ***(Hugo follows SIR HENRY with his eyes as he moves around the stage)***

HOLMES: ***(To the portrait)*** Thank you. You can go! ***Exit Hugo’s portrait.***

SIR HENRY: Wow, Mr Holmes…this is all so surreal!

HOLMES: While in London, I took the opportunity to do some research into your family, Sir Henry. Your uncle, Sir Charles, had a brother?

SIR HENRY: Yes, Rodger…an adventurer. He died in South America of a tropical disease.

HOLMES: That’s right. And with his death and the death of your father, your uncle inherited the family fortune and Baskerville Hall. After Sir Charles’s death…the next in line was you.

SIR HENRY: Of course.

HOLMES: The line of inheritance seemed simple…so no one dug deeper into it. But I did! ***(Pause)*** Before he died, Rodger Baskerville had a son…an illegitimate son…he never married the boy’s mother. Digging into his father’s past, he learnt of the Baskerville fortune.

SIR HENRY: And me.

HOLMES: Precisely! He came to England, with his wife. She knew everything. Her name was…Beryl.

SIR HENRY: Oh, no…don’t tell me…

HOLMES: They changed their names and became brother and sister…Jack and Beryl Stapleton.

SIR HENRY: Oh, no!

HOLMES: Conveniently, Merripit House was being sold. Jack bought it. But how to get rid of Sir Charles and you, without suspicion falling on him, before, surprisingly, revealing who he really was? Of course, he learned about the stories of the hound and the curse.

SIR HENRY: So, it was Stapleton who was following me in London…and stole my shoe. And the letter?

HOLMES: No doubt sent by Beryl. ***(Pause)*** I believe there is some good in her, Sir Henry. She is just very afraid of her husband. She tried, by the sound of it, to get you to leave…using the curse of the hound as her way of doing so.

SIR HENRY: Oh, poor Beryl!

WATSON: So, what now, Holmes?

HOLMES: All I have told you is the puzzle I have pieced together. Stapleton still has the upper hand, though.

WATSON: What do you mean?

HOLMES: We have no proof that he is committing any crime.

SIR HENRY: So, how do we prove it?

HOLMES: Set a trap! ***(Pause)*** I’ve given this careful thought. ***(Pause)*** Sir Henry, would you be willing to be used as bait?

WATSON: Can I ask Holmes? What do you propose?

HOLMES: Let us create a little situation that Stapleton is sure to fall for. ***(Pointedly)*** Tomorrow, Sir Henry, visit the Stapleton’s. Use your charm and get a dinner invitation from them.

WATSON: And you and me, Holmes…

HOLMES: We will keep a close eye on Sir Henry…and we will both be armed! So gentlemen, I suggest that we get some sleep. We need all our wits about us to catch a rat and his hound! ***Exit SIR HENRY and HOLMES.***

**Scene 9**

WATSON: Sleep…sleep…did he say? Goodness me, when I got into bed, my mind was buzzing! Holmes always seems so cool about such things! Nevertheless, the next day, his plan was put into motion. ***Enter HOLMES and SIR HENRY.***

SIR HENRY: There was a clear look of surprise on Stapleton’s face when he saw me. He didn’t seem to be particularly happy that the hound had disposed of Selden. Beryl was upset, though – possibly through relief that it wasn’t me. She left the room, in tears. ***(Excitedly)*** Then, guess what?

HOLMES: What?

SIR HENRY: Stapleton invited me over for dinner.

HOLMES: Excellent! He’s taken the bait!

WATSON: Let’s hope for the proof we need to get him, before the hound gets his teeth into you, Sir Henry.

HOLMES: Right, gentlemen…let’s prepare ourselves for what is to come. ***Exit HOLMES and SIR HENRY.***

WATSON: A day full of anticipation for the night to come! Before nightfall, Holmes and I checked our guns and off we went, on foot, to the Stapleton’s. ***Enter HOLMES. He moves to WATSON. They move to one side of the stage.***

STAPLETON: ***(Shaking hands with SIR HENRY)*** Sir Henry…good evening.

SIR HENRY: Good evening, Jack.

STAPLETON: I’m sorry to say that Beryl won’t be joining us. She’s not feeling at all well. She has decided to sleep it off.

SIR HENRY: I’m sorry to hear that.

STAPLETON: Please go along in. I’ll just make sure that your horse is alright in the stable. I’ll be with you in a moment.

SIR HENRY: Thank you. ***SIR HENRY and STAPLETON exit.***

***Enter HOLMES AND WATSON***

HOLMES: Dinner should be over by now. Something worries me, though, Watson.

WATSON: What is it, Holmes?

HOLMES: Look towards the moor. There is a fog coming in. Sir Henry better leave soon. ***Enter SIR HENRY and STAPLETON. STAPLETON is carrying a small bag. HOLMES and WATSON crouch down again.***

STAPLETON: Sir Henry, your horse was perfectly alright when I took him to the stable. Perhaps he got a stone in his hoof, when you rode over. You certainly can’t ride him back now. Why don’t you stay the night?

SIR HENRY: It’s really no problem. I can see my way back ok.

STAPLETON: And the hound?

SIR HENRY: To hell with the hound!

STAPLETON: Goodnight, then.

SIR HENRY: Goodnight. I hope Beryl feels better in the morning. ***SIR HENRY exits and, after a moment, STAPLETON opens the bag and takes out a shoe.***

STAPLETON: Tonight we WILL triumph! ***He lets out an evil laugh and exits.***

HOLMES: Come along, Watson…we must follow Sir Henry. We can’t let him out of our sight. ***HOLMES exits the same way as SIR HENRY.*** ***Enter HOLMES, holding his water pistol.***

HOLMES: ***(Calling)*** Watson!

WATSON: Over here, Holmes.

HOLMES: Stay close! ***(WATSON runs over to HOLMES and stands uncomfortably close to him.)*** Not that close! Any sight of Sir Henry?

WATSON: No. ***They move as if moving through fog.***

HOLMES: Damn it…I didn’t prepare for this, Watson…not at all! ***Suddenly, there is the sound of a loud howl from the hound.***

WATSON: It’s here, Holmes…the hound of the Baskervilles! ***Enter SIR HENRY.***

HOLMES: ***(Pointing at SIR HENRY)*** Look, Watson…there’s Sir Henry! ***SIR HENRY turns. the hound jumps on SIR HENRY. He screams. The hound and SIR HENRY fight. (The hound is a large stuffed toy dog) Out of their struggle come sounds of growls and SIR HENRY’s screams. The hound gets SIR HENRY on the ground and goes for his throat. HOLMES takes aim with his water pistol and fires 6 times at the hound. He does silly sounds of the pistol as he fires…The hound falls off SIR HENRY…(Actor throws it off stage) SIR HENRY moans. WATSON rushes up to him.***

HOLMES: How is he, Watson?

WATSON: Just wounded…but alright…thank goodness. And the hound?

HOLMES: Definitely dead! ***Enter STAPLETON, holding a water pistol.***

STAPLETON: As you all soon will be too, Mr Holmes! ***(Pause)*** Sherlock Holmes finally defeated!

HOLMES: You won’t get away with this, Stapleton.

STAPLETON: Oh, but I will, Mr Holmes…I will. Your gun is now useless. You used up all your bullets on my poor baby. Dr Watson, I’m sure you are carrying a gun. Will you be so kind as to take it out…slowly…and push it over here. ***WATSON does so.***

SIR HENRY: ***(Weakly)*** Beryl…

STAPLETON: She is safely locked away. I feared she might have spoilt my party tonight.

SIR HENRY: ***(Weakly)*** Beryl…

STAPLETON: ***(Angrily)*** Shut up…cousin! ***(Pause)*** So, now…how to end our story? You see, gentlemen, ***(pointing)*** just over there is the start of Grimpen Mire. I will kill all of you and drag your bodies to the Mire. You will be swallowed up…deep into its muddy darkness…never to be seen again. I will then shoot the hound and I will be hailed as a hero…the one who killed the hound of the Baskervilles.

HOLMES: You are mad, Stapleton!

STAPLETON: Yes, yes…go ahead call me anything you like. But I beat you, Sherlock Holmes…***(Pointedly)*** I beat you! I defeated the great Sherlock Holmes.

HOLMES: You sad, sad, little man!

STAPLETON: ***(Moving closer to HOLMES, angrily)*** Shut up…just shut up! You’ve met your match, Mr Holmes.

HOLMES: You’re pathetic!

STAPLETON: ***(Shouting)*** I said shut up! ***HOLMES lunges at STAPLETON. They fight furiously. STAPLETON loses the gun. WATSON goes for his gun. Before he can get to it, HOLMES pushes STAPLETON. He falls backward into the Mire. He starts sinking. (The actor flaps about on the stage floor like a wet fish out of water)***

STAPLETON: ***(Screaming)*** Help me! Help me! I’m sinking into the Mire! ***HOLMES takes off his coat, as STAPLETON sinks deeper. He holds one end of the coat and throws the rest of it at STAPLETON.***

HOLMES: Grab hold of this! Come on, man! ***STAPLETON tries to hold onto the coat. But the Mire is pulling him in deeper. He grasps the coat, screaming. HOLMES can’t help him. (Actor reaches for a glass of water off stage and gargles the water.) The last scream disappears into a gargle, as STAPLETON disappears into the mud. (Actor rolls off stage)***

HOLMES: Well, Watson, you will have an exciting case to write about!

SIR HENRY: ***(Weakly)*** Beryl…

HOLMES: I’m sure she’s alright. ***(Looking around)*** The fog is easing. Let us get back to Baskerville Hall. ***WATSON and HOLMES help SIR HENRY up.***

WATSON: Holmes, how will we find our way back?

HOLMES: Elementary, my dear Watson…with this. ***(He takes a compass out of h***is ***pocket.)*** ***(Pointing)*** this way.

WATSON: A compass…I should have known. Holmes, you think of everything.

SIR HENRY: I don’t know how to thank you, Mr Holmes.

HOLMES: Thank you, Sir Henry. But, as usual, I think I couldn’t have solved this case, without the help of my colleague, *and* good friend Dr Watson.

***HOMLES and SIR HENRY EXIT.***

WATSON: I finished my manuscript of ‘The Hound of the Baskervilles’. I put the document aside, intending to mail it to my publishers at the first opportunity, but after such a challenging case, Holmes and I plan to go to the Opera tonight. So until our next adventure I bid you a fond fair well.

***Actors 1, 3 and 4 join Watson on stage. WATSON reverts back to actor 2.***

ACTOR 1: The Hound of the Baskervilles!

ACTOR 2: What a story!

ACTOR 3: Sherlock Holmes truly lives up to his reputation as the world’s greatest detective.

ACTOR 4: Holmes has inspired many novels, television shows and movies, and you can see why.

ACTOR 1: And did you know he used a process called deductive reasoning. He notices very small details from which he draws conclusions that help him solve his cases.

ACTOR 2: Doyle found inspiration for Sherlock Holmes in a doctor he worked under during medical school, called Dr. Joseph Bell. Bell used deductive reasoning to diagnose his patients.

ACTOR 3: Brilliant!

ACTOR 4: Genius!

ACTOR 1: Elementary!

ACTOR 4: Did you know the phrase ‘Elementary my dear Watson’ is never uttered by Holmes in any of the stories he appeared in.

ACTOR 3: Fascinating!

ACTOR 2: Can I just say, before we finish. You’ve been a very well behaved audience. In my day if you misbehaved in school, they used to cane your bottom, and you’d have a big black stripe.

ACTOR 1: Black Stripe! What a great name for a Theatre company!

ACTOR 3: Ladies and gentleman! Boys and girls. We thank ye! We hope you enjoyed this version of The Hound of the Baskervilles, and we bid you a good afternoon/evening.

***All actors exit the stage to a silent and stunned audience.***

THE END

HOLMES: I can’t believe that Dr Mortimer expects me to believe that this superstitious nonsense has anything to do with the death of Sir Charles! Enter Dr Mortimer. MORTIMER: Did you find the story interesting, Mr Holmes? HOLMES: If I were a collector of fairy tales… possibly! (Handing him the manuscript) You say that Sir Charles gave you this? MORTIMER: Yes. He was convinced the curse was true and that he was next to meet his end by the hound. HOLMES: Dr Mortimer, when you first arrived, you talked about another person whose life you feared for. Who is this person? MORTIMER: Sir Charles’s nephew and now the only known heir to Baskerville Hall and family fortune2 … Sir Henry Baskerville. HOLMES: Does he know the story of the hound and the curse? MORTIMER: Yes. Although, he has been living in the U.S. and Canada since he was a boy, he knows all about his family’s history. Nevertheless, he is keen to take up residence at Baskerville Hall3 . HHOLMES: I can’t believe that Dr Mortimer expects me to believe that this superstitious nonsense has anything to do with the death of Sir Charles! Enter Dr Mortimer. MORTIMER: Did you find the story interesting, Mr Holmes? HOLMES: If I were a collector of fairy tales… possibly! (Handing him the manuscript) You say that Sir Charles gave you this? MORTIMER: Yes. He was convinced the curse was true and that he was next to meet his end by the hound. HOLMES: Dr Mortimer, when you first arrived, you talked about another person whose life you feared for. Who is this person? MORTIMER: Sir Charles’s nephew and now the only known heir to Baskerville Hall and family fortune2 … Sir Henry Baskerville. HOLMES: Does he know the story of the hound and the curse? MORTIMER: Yes. Although, he has been living in the U.S. and Canada since he was a boy, he knows all about his family’s history. Nevertheless, he is keen to take up residence at Baskerville Hall3 . HOLMES: Alone? MORTIMER: Yes. He is not married. WATSON: And the curse doesn’t bother him? MORTIMER: Not at all. However, since he arrived in England, some days ago… strange things have been happening to him. HOLMES: What things? MORTIMER: I will let him tell you. If you don’t mind, Mr Holmes, I asked him to call by. (He takes out a pocket watch.) In fact, he will be here soon. I must go. As a detective, Mr Holmes, I’m sure what he has to tell you will interest you greatly. But now, at least, you are more aware of the… the background of this case. And so, gentlemen I will bid you a good day. (He shakes hands with HOLMES and WATSON) I will find my own way out. He exits. 1 Das war die erste Erscheinung des Bluthundes … 2 … der einzige bekannte Erbe von Baskerville Hall und dem Familienvermögen… 3 Trotz allem möchte er sich unbedingt in Baskerville Hall niederlassen. 13 Scene 3 WATSON: Well, I say, Holmes, I don’t know if this case needs a priest, or a policeman! HOLMES: What do you mean, Watson? WATSON: A priest for all of the supernatural goings on1 … or a policeman, to make sense of the facts. HOLMES: Well, there are very few facts at all! WATSON: Except that a man is dead. HOLMES: Yes… but by natural causes. WATSON: And now we have the strange things that are happening to Sir Henry. HOLMES: Yes. Let’s hope for some facts from him… whatever they might be! There is the sound of a doorbell. HOLMES: No doubt, that’s him. Watson… if you don’t mind…? WATSON: Not at all. WATSON exits. WATSON: (Offstage) Good day. SIR HENRY: (Offstage, with a North American accent) Hi. I’m here to see Mr Sherlock Holmes. WATSON: (Offstage) Certainly. Please come in. Enter WATSON and SIR HENRY BASKERVILLE. WATSON: (Holding out his hand) Dr Watson. SIR HENRY: No, I’m Sir Henry Baskerville. You might be confusing me with Dr Mortimer. Are you the butler? HOLMES: No. He is Dr Watson… my good friend and colleague. And I am Sherlock Holmes. SIR HENRY: (Shaking WATSON’s hand, energetically) Sorry, Dr Watson! (WATSON grimaces, after the handshake) How do you do, Mr Holmes. (Shaking HOLMES’s hand, energetically) Great that you can see me at such short notice. HOLMES: Not at all. As you are aware, Sir Henry, we know about the circumstances surrounding your uncle’s death… and the story about the socalled Baskerville curse. Now, what is worrying you? SIR HENRY: Unexplainable events, Mr Holmes! Since arriving here, in London, someone has been following me. The same figure… the same clothes… face mostly hidden by a hat. He has a black beard. HOLMES: Have you told the police? SIR HENRY: No. Only Dr Mortimer. He told me about you, Mr Holmes. And suggested, knowing my family background, that you, a detective, would be the person to tell, rather than the police. HOLMES: I see.OBERYL: I cannot explain. But, for God’s sake do as I say! There is danger here.

Go back and never set foot on the moor again!

WATSON: What are you saying?

STAPLETON: (From offstage) Blast3

!

BERYL: Don’t say a word to my brother!

Enter STAPLETON.

STAPLETON: Damned, bloody thing got away! (On seeing BERYL) Ah, you

 two have bumped into each other. Beryl, this is Dr Watson, good friend and

 1 Der Fluch hat ein weiteres Opfer (unter den Baskervilles) gefordert.

2 verdammt (das verdammte Ding) 3 Mist!Verdammt!

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 colleague to the famous Sherlock Holmes.

BERYL: Dr Watson? Oh, forgive me… I thought that you were… were Sir

Henry Baskerville.

STAPLETON: Dr Watson, this is my sister, Beryl.

WATSON: How do you do.

BERYL: I’m sorry, Dr Watson for what I just said. I was… confused.

STAPLETON: What was that?

BERYL: Oh… nothing!

There is the sound of a moan, which grows into a howl.

WATSON: What was that?

STAPLETON: The local people say it is the call of the hound. (Dramatically)

He is hungry for blood!

WATSON: And what do you think it is?

STAPLETON: It could be many things. Sometimes, strange noises come out of

Grimpen Mire.

WATSON: Grimpen Mire?

STAPLETON: Near here is the dangerous Grimpen Mire. Looks like wet

grassland. However, once a man, or animal, steps into it, they are slowly

sucked into its muddy depths1

.

BERYL: It’s a terrible death, Dr Watson! Be warned… always stick to the path.

STAPLETON: Beryl, we must go. Dr Watson, you and Sir Henry must visit us.

After all, we are neighbours. And Mr Holmes, too, when he gets here.

WATSON: Thank you.

STAPLETON: (Offering BERYL his arm) Come along, my dear. Goodbye,

Dr Watson.

BERYL: Goodbye.

WATSON: Goodbye.

They start to exit. BERYL stops.

BERYL: My handkerchief… I think I dropped my handkerchief by Dr Watson.

Go along, Jack. I’ll catch you up.

He exits. She comes back to WATSON.

BERYL: What I said before was meant for Sir Henry.

WATSON: Is he in danger?

BERYL: You know the story of the hound?

WATSON: Yes.

BERYL: I… I believe it to be true. Therefore, I fear for Sir Henry’s life. I cannot

say any more.

STAPLETON: (Calling, from offstage) Beryl.

BERYL: (Calling back) I found it. Coming. (She takes out her handkerchief)

Goodbye, Dr Watson.

She exits.

 1 Gerät ein Mensch oder Tier hinein, wird er/es langsam in die schlammigen Tiefen hinuntergezogen.

24 25

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Scene 6

WATSON: I thought it best not to tell Sir Henry about what Miss Stapleton had

said. I wrote to Holmes, reporting my first 24 hours’ events. The rest of the

day was uneventful. I decided to go to bed early and have a good night’s

sleep. No such luck, I’m afraid! Just after midnight, I heard footsteps on the

creaky floorboards in the hall, outside my room.

Offstage, BARRYMORE makes the sound of creaky floorboards.

WATSON: I got out of bed and peeped outside my door, to see…

Enter BARRYMORE, making creaky noises as he walks. He is carrying a candle.

He mimes opening a window. Then he waves the candle, from side to side. He

makes a loud groan and exits, making the creaky noises.

WATSON: The next day, I told Sir Henry what I had seen.

Enter SIR HENRY.

SIR HENRY: It sounds like he was signalling to someone.

WATSON: Exactly what I thought.

SIR HENRY: I will come to your room tonight and we can check this out together.

WATSON: And so he did. We waited, until…

From offstage comes BARRYMORE’s creaking sound. Enter BARRYMORE, still

making the sound as he walks. Again, he is carrying a candle. Again, he mimes

opening a window and waves the candle.

SIR HENRY: What are you doing, Barrymore?

BARRYMORE: (Startled) Oh, I… I… was…

SIR HENRY: Yes…

BARRYMORE: I was… was… just fixing the window!

SIR HENRY: In the middle of the night! (Firmly) Tell me the truth, Barrymore.

What were you doing at that window?

WATSON: (Noticing something outside the window.) Look… in the dark of the

moor… a faint light is moving, from side to side1

!

SIR HENRY: Who are you signalling to, Barrymore? Tell me at once!

BARRYMORE: I… I…

Enter MRS BARRYMORE.

MRS BARRYMORE: (Distressed) Please, sir, it’s not my husband’s fault. It’s…

it’s mine.

SIR HENRY: What are you talking about, Mrs Barrymore?

MRS BARRYMORE: My husband is signalling to my brother. He is living like a

hunted animal on the moor!

WATSON: Your brother? Is he the escaped convict2

, Selden?

MRS BARRYMORE: Yes, sir.

WATSON: But he’s a criminal… a murderer!

 1 Ein schwacher Lichtschein bewegt sich hin und her.

2 Ist er der entflohene Häftling, Selden?

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MRS BARRYMORE: But he’s still my brother. He’s sick, Dr Watson, he’s sick.

His sickness makes him do terrible things. He can’t help it.

SIR HENRY: What the hell… he’s dangerous! He must be locked away, for the

safety of others.

WATSON: What is the signal for?

BARRYMORE: Mrs Barrymore has been putting out food for him1

. The signal is

to let him know when she has done so.

MRS BARRYMORE: Forgive me, Sir Henry.

SIR HENRY: This is outrageous! I will report this to the police tomorrow.

MRS BARRYMORE: Please sir, don’t say anything to the police.

BARRYMORE: In a few days, he won’t be around on the moor. We have

arranged for him to be transported, by ship, to South America.

MRS BARRYMORE: I beg of you, sir. Soon my brother will be far away and

not cause anyone any more trouble.

WATSON: Except the South Americans!

SIR HENRY: We will talk further about this in the morning. Now, go to bed, the

pair of you!

MR and MRS BARRYMORE bow to him and exit.

SIR HENRY: Thank you for bringing this to my attention, Dr Watson. The

Barrymores have been so loyal to the family. This ‘incident’ is … how shall

I put it… unfortunate. I shall sleep on it. Goodnight.

He exits.

WATSON: Sir Henry decided not to tell the police about Selden… at least, for

the time being. However, I had a lot to tell Holmes in my next corresponddence

to him. (Pause) The day after, the Stapletons kindly invited us to lunch.

Their house was quite near to Baskerville Hall… so near that one could easily

walk over to them.

Scene 7

Enter STAPLETON and SIR HENRY. WATSON joins them.

STAPLETON: It’s jolly good to meet another Baskerville, Sir Henry. Your uncle

was a good friend.

Enter BERYL.

STAPLETON: Ah, Beryl… allow me to introduce you to Sir Henry Baskerville.

And you’ve already met Dr Watson.

BERYL: (Nodding at WATSON) Dr Watson. (Extending her hand to SIR

HENRY) Sir Henry, it is a pleasure to meet you.

SIR HENRY: (Shaking her hand) The pleasure is all mine, Miss Stapleton.

BERYL: Beryl, please.

 1 Mrs Barrymore hat ihn mit Essen versorgt (hat ihm Essen bereitgestellt)

26 27

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SIR HENRY: Beryl. Dr Watson, you didn’t tell me that our neighbour was so

attractive.

BERYL: Oh, Sir Henry!

SIR HENRY: What’s a pretty girl like you doing stuck away in such desolate

countryside like this?

STAPLETON: It’s not everybody’s cup of tea1

, Sir Henry… but we like it.

Neither of us are the social, city types! (Firmly) Are we, Beryl?

BERYL: Yes… I mean… no, Jack.

SIR HENRY: Well… Beryl… we’ll just have to make some fun of our own, out

here in the countryside.

STAPLETON: Dinner is ready. Shall we go in? Beryl… (Offering her his arm)

SIR HENRY: (Offering BERYL his arm) Please, may I, Beryl?

BERYL: (Uneasily, looking at STAPLETON) Thank you, Sir Henry.

They exit, with STAPLETON following on behind.

WATSON: Well, the instant attraction of Sir Henry to Beryl Stapleton was very

noticeable. What was also noticeable, to me, was her brother’s disapproval.

(Pause) Some days passed. I continued my observations and my

correspondence with Holmes. Then, on one particular walk, on the moor, I

spotted a hooded figure, high on a hill.

Enter a hooded figure. The face is hidden.

WATSON: We’d heard nothing about Selden… except that he was still on the

moor. Surely, this figure was not him. Selden would try to keep out of sight.

(Calling to the figure) I say… hello there.

The figure sees WATSON and quickly runs away.

WATSON: Strange! (Pause) I saw it again, the next day. As I made a move

towards it, it was gone, in a flash2

! Whoever this was, they certainly didn’t

want to be discovered. (Pause) Sir Henry, on the other hand, had discovered

something… love!

Enter SIR HENRY.

SIR HENRY: Beryl, Beryl! What a gal3

! What… a… gal! (Noticing WATSON)

Hi Dr Watson! (He starts singing a romantic song.)

WATSON: I’m going for a walk on the moor. Do you fancy coming along?

SIR HENRY: No, thank you, Dr Watson. I have some serious thinking to do

about Beryl – maybe later.

He exits, singing.

WATSON: Another letter to Holmes… and off I went. I had walked some

distance on the moor, when, suddenly, I saw…

Enter the hooded figure.

WATSON: (Calling to the figure) Hello there!

 1 Es ist nicht jedermanns Sache… 2 … es war blitzartig verschwunden.

3 Mädchen (umgangsspr., veraltet, bes. US)

25

The figure turns and starts running.

WATSON: I decided to give chase1

, this time. (Calling to the figure) Stop…

stop, I say! But the figure did not stop. I ran after it… up a hill, on the moor.

Up, up, to the stony top! (To the figure) Stop! (He takes out a gun) I am

armed and I will shoot.

The figure stops.

WATSON: Who are you?

The figure turns, slowly and removes the hood. It’s HOLMES.

WATSON: (Surprised) Holmes!

HOLMES: Forgive me, Watson.

WATSON: Has it been you all along?

HOLMES: I’m afraid so… yes.

WATSON: But… but… I don’t understand. Why this disguise?

HOLMES: I wanted to observe for myself, for a while, some of the things you

had reported to me.

WATSON: But, where have you been staying?

HOLMES: In a small, uninhabited cottage2

, on the edge of the moor. In the past

few days, I have seen and heard much.

WATSON: But to go to such lengths3

, just to remain anonymous!

HOLMES: I had to, Watson. During my time in London, I learned some

extraordinary facts about this case and the characters in it. (Pause) Our

opponent is extremely clever!

WATSON: So, you know who it is?

HOLMES: The facts point to one person. However, there is no proof as to his

guilt. He plans everything carefully, until he is ready to strike4

. His target is

Sir Henry Baskerville!

Suddenly, there is the sound a loud howl, followed by the sound of a man’s

scream.

WATSON: Holmes… it’s… it’s…

HOLMES: It’s the hound of the Baskervilles!

Dramatic music.

HOLMES: (Referring to the music) Thank you! Come along, Watson. The

game’s afoot!

They run, downstage. WATSON points, upstage.

WATSON: (Pointing) Look, Holmes… up on that craggy overhang5

!

There is another howl, followed again by a man’s scream. Then, a growling,

attacking sound, followed by another scream. Then, from a height, a body falls

 1 Ich beschloss, die Verfolgung aufzunehmen…

2 In einer kleinen, unbewohnten Hütte…

3 Aber so einen Aufwand zu treiben… (nur um unerkannt zu bleiben)

4 … bis er bereit ist, zuzuschlagen

5 … da oben auf dem zerklüfteten Überhang

28 29

26

on to the stage. There is the sound of a hound’s howl. HOLMES and WATSON

move to the body.

WATSON: (Feeling the body) He’s dead! It’s Sir Henry. I recognise the coat.

HOLMES: Then we are too late! (HOLMES bends down to the body and unwraps

a scarf that’s covering the face) Wait a moment. This is not Sir Henry!

WATSON: What are you saying, Holmes?

HOLMES: Look again, Watson. The coat, maybe, is Sir Henry’s… and I suspect

that it is. But this poor unfortunate1 is not Sir Henry. (Pause) It’s Selden, the

escaped convict!

WATSON: (Looking closer) Good Lord, Holmes!

HOLMES: (Thinking out loud) So, the coat… and the shoe… from the same

person… Sir Henry. Just what one would need to set a murderous hound to

work2

.

WATSON: What do you mean, Holmes?

HOLMES: The scent, Watson… the scent. That’s all a hound needs.

WATSON: But how did Selden get the coat?

HOLMES: Stolen, I suppose…. or taken by the Barrymores. It’s cold on the

moor, at nights. Unfortunately, for Selden, my suspect had also stolen an

article of Sir Henry’s clothing… a shoe.

WATSON: The shoe… Sir Henry’s shoe! The one that was stolen from outside

his hotel door, in London.

HOLMES: Precisely, Watson! A well-trained hound can easily pick up a scent of

a person… once it knows who that scent belongs to. An article of clothing is

ideal. Also, train a hound to be a killer… and… presto… you have got the

perfect killing machine! My suspect thought that he was killing Sir Henry.

But he got the wrong man!

WATSON: So, your suspect uses the hound to kill?

HOLMES: And the story of the curse of the hound to put fear into people.

WATSON: But, who is your suspect, Holmes?

HOLMES: The puzzle is not quite complete yet, Watson. There is another piece

that I hope you and Sir Henry can help me with. Then I will reveal to you

who it is.

WATSON: What is it, Holmes? How can we help?

HOLMES: It’s getting dark, Watson. We are some distance from Baskerville

Hall… and we have to navigate our way back, across the moor… avoiding

that dangerous Grimpen Mire.

WATSON: It’s a treacherous place3

, by all accounts!

HOLMES: Yes. I heard that it swallowed up a horse, recently. The poor beast

screamed… until it finally disappeared into its muddy depths!

 1 … dieser arme Teufel (dieser Unglückliche) 2 Genau was man braucht, um einen mörderischen Bluthund (auf die Person) zu hetzen. 3 Ein gefährlicher Ort, nach allem, was man hört!

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WATSON: What about Selden’s body?

HOLMES: (Pointing offstage) It’s best to conceal it, over there, by that

distinctive rock formation. It will be easier for the police to find.

HOLMES exits, dragging the body offstage.

Scene 8

WATSON: We made it safely back to Baskerville Hall. Mrs Barrymore was

extremely upset by the news of her brother’s death.

From offstage, comes the sound of a loud cry from Mrs BARRYMORE.

WATSON: Holmes then told Sir Henry all he had told me.

Enter SIR HENRY and HOLMES.

SIR HENRY: That is one helluva story, Mr Holmes! But who is this guy… and

why do you think he is responsible for my uncle’s death… and why does he

want to kill me?

HOLMES: I desperately need to see something, Sir Henry. A second opinion

from you, Watson, would give me the vital clue I require1

.

SIR HENRY: What is it? What do you need to see?

HOLMES: Watson, in your description of Baskerville Hall, you mentioned a

room with portraits of Sir Henry’s ancestors2

.

SIR HENRY: Yes, there is such a room. I’ve only passed through it… not taking

much notice of the portraits.

HOLMES: I would very much like to see it.

SIR HENRY: Then follow me.

Exit SIR HENRY and HOLMES.

WATSON: If Sherlock Holmes had a fault… it would be the frustrating way he

would keep one in suspense about his thoughts3

, until he knew something…

definitely!

Enter, from one side of the stage, HUGO BASKERVILLE, holding up a frame, to

make himself look like a portrait. Then enter SIR HENRY (carrying a candle)

and HOLMES.

SIR HENRY: Here you are Mr Holmes, a gallery of the good and bad of my

family. May I ask, what, or who, you are looking for?

HOLMES: Someone you and Watson might recognise.

WATSON: Us?

HOLMES: Yes. Please, both of you, look carefully at the portraits.

They mime looking at portraits.

 1 Eine zweite Einschätzung…, … würde mir den wichtigsten Hinweis geben, den ich noch brauche.

2 … mit Gemälden von Sir Henrys Vorfahren

3 … es war frustrierend, wie er einen auf die Folter spannte, bis er sich sicher war.

30 31

28

SIR HENRY: What are we supposed to be looking for?

HOLMES: I think you’ll know it when you see it.

They move to the portrait of Hugo.

SIR HENRY: (As if reading a title) Hugo Baskerville. Well, what do you

know1

… it’s the guy who started all that curse nonsense!

WATSON: (Realising something) Good Lord! I don’t believe it!

SIR HENRY: Nope. It’s true. It says so here.

WATSON: But… the portrait… it looks like… it looks like…

HOLMES: Who, Watson, who?

WATSON: It looks like… Stapleton!

SIR HENRY: (Looking closer) Well, I’ll be damned2

… you’re right… it DOES

look like Stapleton!

HOLMES: Thank you, gentlemen. I think I you have given me the last piece of

my puzzle.

WATSON: What a coincidence… Stapleton looking like a Baskerville!

HOLMES: Oh, much more than a coincidence, my dear Watson. He IS a

Baskerville! (Pause) Now, gentlemen, I have some serious matters to

communicate. (To the portrait) Thank you. You can go!

Exit Hugo’s portrait.

SIR HENRY: Wow, Mr Holmes… this is all so surreal!

HOLMES: While in London, I took the opportunity3 to do some research into

your family, Sir Henry. Your uncle, Sir Charles, had a brother?

SIR HENRY: Yes, Rodger… an adventurer. He died in South America of a

tropical disease.

HOLMES: That’s right. And with his death and the death of your father, your

uncle inherited the family fortune and Baskerville Hall. After Sir Charles’s

death… the next in line was you.

SIR HENRY: Of course.

HOLMES: The line of inheritance seemed simple… so no one dug deeper into

it4

. But I did! (Pause) Before he died, Rodger Baskerville had a son… an

illegitimate son5

… he never married the boy’s mother. The boy grew up in

Costa Rica and turned to a life of crime. Digging into his father’s past, he

learnt of the Baskerville fortune… and his rightful claim to it. But two people

stood in his way… Sir Charles…

SIR HENRY: And me.

HOLMES: Precisely! He came to England, with his wife. She knew everything.

Her name was… Beryl.

SIR HENRY: Oh, no… don’t tell me…

 1 Na, da schau her… (sieh mal einer an) 2 Ich glaub’s nicht… (gehob. umgangsspr., vgl.bist du deppert) 3 … ich habe die Gelegenheit genutzt, um…

4 Die Erbfolge schien klar, deshalb hat niemand gründlich nachgeforscht. 5 … einen unehelichen Sohn…

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HOLMES: They changed their names and became brother and sister… Jack and

Beryl Stapleton.

SIR HENRY: Oh, no!

WATSON: I’ll be damned!

HOLMES: Conveniently, Merripit House was being sold. Jack bought it. But

how to get rid of Sir Charles and you, without suspicion falling on him1

,

before, surprisingly, revealing who he really was? Of course, he learned

about the stories of the hound and the curse. (Pause) Now, even I, who have

been exposed to some of the greatest criminal minds, have to admire his

ingenious plan!

WATSON: Get a hound… train it to be a vicious killer, at the scent of its victim.

Then, all he would need is an article of his victim’s clothing.

SIR HENRY: So, it was Stapleton who was following me in London… and stole

my shoe. And the letter?

HOLMES: No doubt sent by Beryl. (Pause) I believe there is some good in her,

Sir Henry. She is just very afraid of her husband. She tried, by the sound of it,

to get you to leave… using the curse of the hound as her way of doing so.

SIR HENRY: Oh, poor Beryl!

WATSON: So, what now, Holmes?

HOLMES: All I have told you is the puzzle I have pieced together. Stapleton still

has the upper hand, though.

WATSON: What do you mean?

HOLMES: We have no proof that he is committing any crime.

SIR HENRY: So, how do we get this son-of-a-bitch2

?

HOLMES: Set a trap! (Pause) I’ve given this careful thought. (Pause) Sir Henry,

would you be willing to be used as bait3

?

SIR HENRY: If it means getting this bastard… you bet!

WATSON: What do you propose, Holmes?

HOLMES: Let us create a little situation that Stapleton is sure to fall for4

.

(Pointedly) Tomorrow, Sir Henry, visit the Stapleton’s. Use your charm and

get a dinner invitation from them. Say… you are not worried about the night

and the hound. There’s a full moon… you’ll ride your horse over. (Almost

playfully) Chances are5

, something might happen to your horse… resulting in

which… you will have to walk home.

SIR HENRY: So, that’s the bait!

WATSON: And you and me, Holmes…

HOLMES: We will keep a close eye on Sir Henry… and we will both be armed!

 1 … ohne den Verdacht auf sich zu lenken… 2 Mistkerl (siehe auch: bastard) 3 … dürften wir Sie als Köder benutzen?

4 Wir werden eine Situation erzeugen, auf die Stapleton sicher reinfällt.

5 Höchstwahrscheinlich (in aller Wahrscheinlichkeit)…

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So, gentlemen, I suggest that we get some sleep. We need all our wits about

us to catch a rat and his hound!

Exit SIR HENRY and HOLMES.

Scene 9

WATSON: Sleep… sleep… did he say? Goodness me, when I got into bed, my

mind was buzzing1

! Holmes always seems so cool about such things!

Nevertheless, the next day, his plan was put into motion. Early, Sir Henry

walked over to the Stapleton’s… to inform them about what had happened to

Selden. Sometime, later, Sir Henry returned, excitedly, to say…

Enter HOLMES and SIR HENRY.

SIR HENRY: There was a clear look of surprise on Stapleton’s face when he saw

me. He didn’t seem to be particularly happy that the hound had disposed of

Selden2

. Beryl was upset, though – possibly through relief that it wasn’t me.

She left the room, in tears. (Excitedly) Then, guess what?

HOLMES: What?

SIR HENRY: Stapleton invited me over for dinner.

HOLMES: Excellent! He’s taken the bait!

WATSON: Let’s hope for the proof we need to get him, before the hound gets

his teeth into you, Sir Henry.

HOLMES: Right, gentlemen… let’s prepare ourselves for what is to come.

Exit HOLMES and SIR HENRY.

WATSON: A day full of anticipation3 for the night to come! Before nightfall,

Holmes and I checked our guns and off we went, on foot, to the Stapleton’s.

Enter HOLMES. He moves to WATSON. They move to one side of the stage.

HOLMES: Right, Watson, we have a good view of the house and stable. Let’s lie

low and observe4

. Sir Henry should be here soon.

They both crouch down. Enter SIR HENRY, miming riding a horse. He mimes

getting off. Enter STAPLETON.

STAPLETON: (Shaking hands with SIR HENRY) Sir Henry… good evening.

SIR HENRY: Good evening, Jack.

STAPLETON: I’m sorry to say that Beryl won’t be joining us. She’s not feeling

at all well. She has decided to sleep it off.

SIR HENRY: I’m sorry to hear that.

STAPLETON: Please go along in. I’ll just make sure that your horse is alright in

the stable. I’ll be with you in a moment.

 1 … mir schwirrte der Kopf.

2 Er schien nicht sehr glücklich darüber, dass der Bluthund Selden aus dem Weg geschafft hatte

3 … in Erwartung… 4 Verstecken wir uns hier und passen auf.

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SIR HENRY: Thank you.

He exits. STAPLETON mimes taking the reins of the horse.

STAPLETON: Come along, you… Jack will take care of you. No more riding

tonight!

He makes the sound of a horse neighing and exits.

WATSON: Goodness me, Holmes… just like you said… he plans to do

something to the horse, so Sir Henry can’t ride him.

HOLMES: Precisely, Watson. And no Beryl around to warn Sir Henry… how

convenient!

WATSON: He surely wouldn’t harm her.

HOLMES: I shouldn’t think so. She’s probably well locked away, somewhere in

the house.

WATSON: Now what?

HOLMES: We play the waiting game, Watson.

WATSON: And so we played the waiting game... for nearly 2 hours.

HOLMES: Dinner should be over by now. Something worries me, though, Watson.

WATSON: What is it, Holmes?

HOLMES: Look towards the moor. There is a fog coming in. Sir Henry better

leave soon1

.

Enter SIR HENRY and STAPLETON. STAPLETON is carrying a small bag.

HOLMES and WATSON crouch down again.

STAPLETON: Sir Henry, your horse was perfectly alright when I took him to

the stable. Perhaps he got a stone in his hoof, when you rode over. You

certainly can’t ride him back now. Why don’t you stay the night?

SIR HENRY: It’s really no problem. I can see my way back ok.

STAPLETON: And the hound?

SIR HENRY: I’ve faced up to bears in Canada. To hell with the hound2

!

STAPLETON: Goodnight, then.

SIR HENRY: Goodnight. I hope Beryl feels better in the morning.

SIR HENRY exits and, after a moment, STAPLETON opens the bag and takes

 out a shoe.

STAPLETON: Now, my baby… tonight we WILL triumph!

He lets out an evil laugh and exits.

HOLMES: Come along, Watson… we must follow Sir Henry. We can’t let him

out of our sight.

HOLMES exits the same way as SIR HENRY.

WATSON: We followed. But, the fog closed in quicker than we thought3

. Sir

Henry started running. As did we! We lost the path… and Sir Henry! We

were on the moor, for sure. This was dangerous now.

 1 Sir Henry sollte sich besser bald auf den Weg machen. 2 In Kanada bin ich Bären gegenüber gestanden. Zum Teufel mit dem Bluthund.

3 Der Nebel fiel schneller ein, als wir gedacht hatten.

32

The next bit of action is played out to dramatic music. Enter HOLMES, holding

his gun.

HOLMES: (Calling) Watson!

WATSON: Over here, Holmes.

HOLMES: Stay close! Any sight of Sir Henry?

WATSON: No.

They move as if moving through fog.

HOLMES: Damn it… I didn’t prepare for this, Watson… not at all!

Suddenly, above the music, there is the sound of a loud howl from the hound.

WATSON: It’s here, Holmes… the hound of the Baskervilles!

Dramatic music. Enter SIR HENRY, from upstage.

HOLMES: (Pointing at SIR HENRY) Look, Watson… there’s Sir Henry!

Out of the music comes a loud growl. SIR HENRY turns. From upstage, the

hound jumps on SIR HENRY. He screams. The hound and SIR HENRY fight. Out

of their struggle come sounds of growls and SIR HENRY’s screams. The hound

gets SIR HENRY on the ground and goes for his throat. HOLMES takes aim with

his gun and fires 6 times at the hound. The hound falls off SIR HENRY… dead.

The music stops. SIR HENRY moans. WATSON rushes up to him.

HOLMES: How is he, Watson?

WATSON: Just wounded… but alright… thank goodness. And the hound?

HOLMES: Definitely dead!

Enter STAPLETON, holding a gun.

STAPLETON: As you all soon will be too, Mr Holmes! (Pause) Sherlock

Holmes finally defeated1

! And there’ll be no Dr Watson either to write the

case of ‘The Hound of the Baskervilles’. What a pity. Perhaps I will write it.

It should be worth quite a lot of money.

HOLMES: You won’t get away with this, Stapleton.

STAPLETON: Oh, but I will, Mr Holmes… I will. Your gun is now useless. You

used up all your bullets on my poor baby. Dr Watson, I’m sure you are carrying

a gun. Will you be so kind as to take it out… slowly… and push it over here.

WATSON does so.

SIR HENRY: (Weakly) Beryl…

STAPLETON: She is safely locked away. I feared she might have spoilt my

party tonight2

.

SIR HENRY: (Weakly) Beryl…

STAPLETON: (Angrily) Shut up… cousin! (Pause) So, now… how to end our

story? Well, as it happens, luck is on my side. You see, gentlemen, (pointing)

just over there is the start of Grimpen Mire. I will kill all of you and drag

your bodies to the Mire. You will be swallowed up… deep into its muddy

darkness… never to be seen again. Along with my and Dr Waston’s guns.

 1 Sherlock Holmes – endlich besiegt (geschlagen) 2 Sie hätte mir wahrscheinlich meinen Plan zunichte gemacht.

34 35

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That leaves your empty gun, Mr Holmes. Six bullets in my poor baby and me

with an empty gun. Now, here’s the fun part of the story… what I tell the

police. (Pause) I heard the screams… ran, with my gun, to help… saw you

fighting the hound, by the Mire. It was terrible! The three of you fell into the

Mire and when the hound turned on me… I shot it. Naturally, everyone will

be upset about you. But I… I will be hailed as a hero1

… the one who killed

the hound of the Baskervilles.

HOLMES: You are mad, Stapleton!

STAPLETON: Yes, yes… go ahead call me anything you like. But I beat you,

Sherlock Holmes… (Pointedly) I beat you! I defeated the great Sherlock

Holmes. (He laughs) That will be my own private glory! Along with

inheriting the Baskerville fortune, of course.

HOLMES: You sad, sad, little man!

STAPLETON: (Moving closer to HOLMES, angrily) Shut up… just shut up!

You’ve met your match2

, Mr Holmes.

HOLMES: That’s right, Stapleton… pump yourself up! You’re pathetic3

!

STAPLETON: (Shouting) I said shut up!

HOLMES lunges at STAPLETON. They fight furiously. STAPLETON loses the

gun. WATSON goes for his gun. Before he can get to it, HOLMES pushes

STAPLETON. He falls backward into the Mire. He starts sinking.

STAPLETON: (Screaming) Help me! Help me! I’m sinking into the Mire!

HOLMES takes off his coat, as STAPLETON sinks deeper. He holds one end of

the coat and throws the rest of it at STAPLETON.

HOLMES: Grab hold of this! Come on, man!

STAPLETON tries to hold onto the coat. But the Mire is pulling him in deeper.

He grasps the coat, screaming. HOLMES can’t help him. The last scream

disappears into a gurgle, as STAPLETON disappears into the mud.

HOLMES: Well, Watson, you will have an exciting case to write about!

SIR HENRY: (Weakly) Beryl…

HOLMES: I’m sure she’s alright. (Looking around) The fog is easing4

. Let us get

back to Baskerville Hall.

WATSON and HOLMES help SIR HENRY up.

WATSON: Holmes, how will we find our way back?

HOLMES: Elementary, my dear Watson… with this. (He takes a compass out of

his pocket.)

WATSON: A compass… I should have known. Holmes, you think of everything.

HOLMES: I wouldn’t be who I am, if I didn’t, Watson. I took a reading5

, before

we set out this evening. We know where the Grimpen Mire is. (Looking at the

 1 Ich werde als Held gefeiert werden.

2 Sie haben in mir Ihren Meister gefunden… (d.h. ich bin besser als Sie) 3 Ja, bilden Sie sich nur was ein… Sie sind wirklich armselig!

4 Der Nebel lichtet sich.

5 Ich habe den Kompass abgelesen…

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compass) Now, with that behind us, we go... (Pointing) this way.

SIR HENRY: I don’t know how to thank you, Mr Holmes. You truly live up to

your reputation1 as the world’s greatest detective.

HOLMES: Thank you, Sir Henry. But, as usual, I think I couldn’t have solved

this case, without the help of my good friend and colleague, Dr Watson.

WATSON: Kind of you to say so, Holmes.

HOLMES: Not at all, Watson… not at all. (Pause) Fancy the opera2

, next week?

Dinner at Marcini’s and then a box at Covent Garden?

WATSON: Capital idea3

, Holmes. I must get in touch with The Strand Magazine,

when we get back to London. Tell them I’ve got a new Sherlock Holmes

story for them… ‘The Case of the Hound of the Baskervilles’.

Dramatic music.

WATSON: (Referring to the music) Thank you!

They exit.

TLMES: Alone? MORTIMER: Yes. He is not married. WATSON: And the curse doesn’t bother him? MORTIMER: Not at all. However, since he arrived in England, some days ago… strange things have been happening to him. HOLMES: What things? MORTIMER: I will let him tell you. If you don’t mind, Mr Holmes, I asked him to call by. (He takes out a pocket watch.) In fact, he will be here soon. I must go. As a detective, Mr Holmes, I’m sure what he has to tell you will interest you greatly. But now, at least, you are more aware of the… the background of this case. And so, gentlemen I will bid you a good day. (He shakes hands with HOLMES and WATSON) I will find my own way out. He exits. 1 Das war die erste Erscheinung des Bluthundes … 2 … der einzige bekannte Erbe von Baskerville Hall und dem Familienvermögen… 3 Trotz allem möchte er sich unbedingt in Baskerville Hall niederlassen. 13 Scene 3 WATSON: Well, I say, Holmes, I don’t know if this case needs a priest, or a policeman! HOLMES: What do you mean, Watson? WATSON: A priest for all of the supernatural goings on1 … or a policeman, to make sense of the facts. HOLMES: Well, there are very few facts at all! WATSON: Except that a man is dead. HOLMES: Yes… but by natural causes. WATSON: And now we have the strange things that are happening to Sir Henry. HOLMES: Yes. Let’s hope for some facts from him… whatever they might be! There is the sound of a doorbell. HOLMES: No doubt, that’s him. Watson… if you don’t mind…? WATSON: Not at all. WATSON exits. WATBERYL: I cannot explain. But, for God’s sake do as I say! There is danger here. Go back and never set foot on the moor again! WATSON: What are you saying? STAPLETON: (From offstage) Blast3 ! BERYL: Don’t say a word to my brother! Enter STAPLETON. STAPLETON: Damned, bloody thing got away! (On seeing BERYL) Ah, you two have bumped into each other. Beryl, this is Dr Watson, good friend and 1 Der Fluch hat ein weiteres Opfer (unter den Baskervilles) gefordert. 2 verdammt (das verdammte Ding) 3 Mist!Verdammt! 21 colleague to the famous Sherlock Holmes. BERYL: Dr Watson? Oh, forgive me… I thought that you were… were Sir Henry Baskerville. STAPLETON: Dr Watson, this is my sister, Beryl. WATSON: How do you do. BERYL: I’m sorry, Dr Watson for what I just said. I was… confused. STAPLETON: What was that? BERYL: Oh… nothing! There is the sound of a moan, which grows into a howl. WATSON: What was that? STAPLETON: The local people say it is the call of the hound. (Dramatically) He is hungry for blood! WATSON: And what do you think it is? STAPLETON: It could be many things. Sometimes, strange noises come out of Grimpen Mire. WATSON: Grimpen Mire? STAPLETON: Near here is the dangerous Grimpen Mire. Looks like wet grassland. However, once a man, or animal, steps into it, they are slowly sucked into its muddy depths1 . BERYL: It’s a terrible death, Dr Watson! Be warned… always stick to the path. STAPLETON: Beryl, we must go. Dr Watson, you and Sir Henry must visit us. After all, we are neighbours. And Mr Holmes, too, when he gets here. WATSON: Thank you. STAPLETON: (Offering BERYL his arm) Come along, my dear. Goodbye, Dr Watson. BERYL: Goodbye. WATSON: Goodbye. They start to exit. BERYL stops. BERYL: My handkerchief… I think I dropped my handkerchief by Dr Watson. Go along, Jack. I’ll catch you up. He exits. She comes back to WATSON. BERYL: What I said before was meant for Sir Henry. WATSON: Is he in danger? BERYL: You know the story of the hound? WATSON: Yes. BERYL: I… I believe it to be true. Therefore, I fear for Sir Henry’s life. I cannot say any more. STAPLETON: (Calling, from offstage) Beryl. BERYL: (Calling back) I found it. Coming. (She takes out her handkerchief) Goodbye, Dr Watson. She exits. 1 Gerät ein Mensch oder Tier hinein, wird er/es langsam in die schlammigen Tiefen hinuntergezogen. 24 25 22 Scene 6 WATSON: I thought it best not to tell Sir Henry about what Miss Stapleton had said. I wrote to Holmes, reporting my first 24 hours’ events. The rest of the day was uneventful. I decided to go to bed early and have a good night’s sleep. No such luck, I’m afraid! Just after midnight, I heard footsteps on the creaky floorboards in the hall, outside my room. Offstage, BARRYMORE makes the sound of creaky floorboards. WATSON: I got out of bed and peeped outside my door, to see… Enter BARRYMORE, making creaky noises as he walks. He is carrying a candle. He mimes opening a window. Then he waves the candle, from side to side. He makes a loud groan and exits, making the creaky noises. WATSON: The next day, I told Sir Henry what I had seen. Enter SIR HENRY. SIR HENRY: It sounds like he was signalling to someone. WATSON: Exactly what I thought. SIR HENRY: I will come to your room tonight and we can check this out together. WATSON: And so he did. We waited, until… From offstage comes BARRYMORE’s creaking sound. Enter BARRYMORE, still making the sound as he walks. Again, he is carrying a candle. Again, he mimes opening a window and waves the candle. SIR HENRY: What are you doing, Barrymore? BARRYMORE: (Startled) Oh, I… I… was… SIR HENRY: Yes… BARRYMORE: I was… was… just fixing the window! SIR HENRY: In the middle of the night! (Firmly) Tell me the truth, Barrymore. What were you doing at that window? WATSON: (Noticing something outside the window.) Look… in the dark of the moor… a faint light is moving, from side to side1 ! SIR HENRY: Who are you signalling to, Barrymore? Tell me at once! BARRYMORE: I… I… Enter MRS BARRYMORE. MRS BARRYMORE: (Distressed) Please, sir, it’s not my husband’s fault. It’s… it’s mine. SIR HENRY: What are you talking about, Mrs Barrymore? MRS BARRYMORE: My husband is signalling to my brother. He is living like a hunted animal on the moor! WATSON: Your brother? Is he the escaped convict2 , Selden? MRS BARRYMORE: Yes, sir. WATSON: But he’s a criminal… a murderer! 1 Ein schwacher Lichtschein bewegt sich hin und her. 2 Ist er der entflohene Häftling, Selden? 23 MRS BARRYMORE: But he’s still my brother. He’s sick, Dr Watson, he’s sick. His sickness makes him do terrible things. He can’t help it. SIR HENRY: What the hell… he’s dangerous! He must be locked away, for the safety of others. WATSON: What is the signal for? BARRYMORE: Mrs Barrymore has been putting out food for him1 . The signal is to let him know when she has done so. MRS BARRYMORE: Forgive me, Sir Henry. SIR HENRY: This is outrageous! I will report this to the police tomorrow. MRS BARRYMORE: Please sir, don’t say anything to the police. BARRYMORE: In a few days, he won’t be around on the moor. We have arranged for him to be transported, by ship, to South America. MRS BARRYMORE: I beg of you, sir. Soon my brother will be far away and not cause anyone any more trouble. WATSON: Except the South Americans! SIR HENRY: We will talk further about this in the morning. Now, go to bed, the pair of you! MR and MRS BARRYMORE bow to him and exit. SIR HENRY: Thank you for bringing this to my attention, Dr Watson. The Barrymores have been so loyal to the family. This ‘incident’ is … how shall I put it… unfortunate. I shall sleep on it. Goodnight. He exits. WATSON: Sir Henry decided not to tell the police about Selden… at least, for the time being. However, I had a lot to tell Holmes in my next corresponddence to him. (Pause) The day after, the Stapletons kindly invited us to lunch. Their house was quite near to Baskerville Hall… so near that one could easily walk over to them. Scene 7 Enter STAPLETON and SIR HENRY. WATSON joins them. STAPLETON: It’s jolly good to meet another Baskerville, Sir Henry. Your uncle was a good friend. Enter BERYL. STAPLETON: Ah, Beryl… allow me to introduce you to Sir Henry Baskerville. And you’ve already met Dr Watson. BERYL: (Nodding at WATSON) Dr Watson. (Extending her hand to SIR HENRY) Sir Henry, it is a pleasure to meet you. SIR HENRY: (Shaking her hand) The pleasure is all mine, Miss Stapleton. BERYL: Beryl, please. 1 Mrs Barrymore hat ihn mit Essen versorgt (hat ihm Essen bereitgestellt) 26 27 24 SIR HENRY: Beryl. Dr Watson, you didn’t tell me that our neighbour was so attractive. BERYL: Oh, Sir Henry! SIR HENRY: What’s a pretty girl like you doing stuck away in such desolate countryside like this? STAPLETON: It’s not everybody’s cup of tea1 , Sir Henry… but we like it. Neither of us are the social, city types! (Firmly) Are we, Beryl? BERYL: Yes… I mean… no, Jack. SIR HENRY: Well… Beryl… we’ll just have to make some fun of our own, out here in the countryside. STAPLETON: Dinner is ready. Shall we go in? Beryl… (Offering her his arm) SIR HENRY: (Offering BERYL his arm) Please, may I, Beryl? BERYL: (Uneasily, looking at STAPLETON) Thank you, Sir Henry. They exit, with STAPLETON following on behind. WATSON: Well, the instant attraction of Sir Henry to Beryl Stapleton was very noticeable. What was also noticeable, to me, was her brother’s disapproval. (Pause) Some days passed. I continued my observations and my correspondence with Holmes. Then, on one particular walk, on the moor, I spotted a hooded figure, high on a hill. Enter a hooded figure. The face is hidden. WATSON: We’d heard nothing about Selden… except that he was still on the moor. Surely, this figure was not him. Selden would try to keep out of sight. (Calling to the figure) I say… hello there. The figure sees WATSON and quickly runs away. WATSON: Strange! (Pause) I saw it again, the next day. As I made a move towards it, it was gone, in a flash2 ! Whoever this was, they certainly didn’t want to be discovered. (Pause) Sir Henry, on the other hand, had discovered something… love! Enter SIR HENRY. SIR HENRY: Beryl, Beryl! What a gal3 ! What… a… gal! (Noticing WATSON) Hi Dr Watson! (He starts singing a romantic song.) WATSON: I’m going for a walk on the moor. Do you fancy coming along? SIR HENRY: No, thank you, Dr Watson. I have some serious thinking to do about Beryl – maybe later. He exits, singing. WATSON: Another letter to Holmes… and off I went. I had walked some distance on the moor, when, suddenly, I saw… Enter the hooded figure. WATSON: (Calling to the figure) Hello there! 1 Es ist nicht jedermanns Sache… 2 … es war blitzartig verschwunden. 3 Mädchen (umgangsspr., veraltet, bes. US) 25 The figure turns and starts running. WATSON: I decided to give chase1 , this time. (Calling to the figure) Stop… stop, I say! But the figure did not stop. I ran after it… up a hill, on the moor. Up, up, to the stony top! (To the figure) Stop! (He takes out a gun) I am armed and I will shoot. The figure stops. WATSON: Who are you? The figure turns, slowly and removes the hood. It’s HOLMES. WATSON: (Surprised) Holmes! HOLMES: Forgive me, Watson. WATSON: Has it been you all along? HOLMES: I’m afraid so… yes. WATSON: But… but… I don’t understand. Why this disguise? HOLMES: I wanted to observe for myself, for a while, some of the things you had reported to me. WATSON: But, where have you been staying? HOLMES: In a small, uninhabited cottage2 , on the edge of the moor. In the past few days, I have seen and heard much. WATSON: But to go to such lengths3 , just to remain anonymous! HOLMES: I had to, Watson. During my time in London, I learned some extraordinary facts about this case and the characters in it. (Pause) Our opponent is extremely clever! WATSON: So, you know who it is? HOLMES: The facts point to one person. However, there is no proof as to his guilt. He plans everything carefully, until he is ready to strike4 . His target is Sir Henry Baskerville! Suddenly, there is the sound a loud howl, followed by the sound of a man’s scream. WATSON: Holmes… it’s… it’s… HOLMES: It’s the hound of the Baskervilles! Dramatic music. HOLMES: (Referring to the music) Thank you! Come along, Watson. The game’s afoot! They run, downstage. WATSON points, upstage. WATSON: (Pointing) Look, Holmes… up on that craggy overhang5 ! There is another howl, followed again by a man’s scream. Then, a growling, attacking sound, followed by another scream. Then, from a height, a body falls 1 Ich beschloss, die Verfolgung aufzunehmen… 2 In einer kleinen, unbewohnten Hütte… 3 Aber so einen Aufwand zu treiben… (nur um unerkannt zu bleiben) 4 … bis er bereit ist, zuzuschlagen 5 … da oben auf dem zerklüfteten Überhang 28 29 26 on to the stage. There is the sound of a hound’s howl. HOLMES and WATSON move to the body. WATSON: (Feeling the body) He’s dead! It’s Sir Henry. I recognise the coat. HOLMES: Then we are too late! (HOLMES bends down to the body and unwraps a scarf that’s covering the face) Wait a moment. This is not Sir Henry! WATSON: What are you saying, Holmes? HOLMES: Look again, Watson. The coat, maybe, is Sir Henry’s… and I suspect that it is. But this poor unfortunate1 is not Sir Henry. (Pause) It’s Selden, the escaped convict! WATSON: (Looking closer) Good Lord, Holmes! HOLMES: (Thinking out loud) So, the coat… and the shoe… from the same person… Sir Henry. Just what one would need to set a murderous hound to work2 . WATSON: What do you mean, Holmes? HOLMES: The scent, Watson… the scent. That’s all a hound needs. WATSON: But how did Selden get the coat? HOLMES: Stolen, I suppose…. or taken by the Barrymores. It’s cold on the moor, at nights. Unfortunately, for Selden, my suspect had also stolen an article of Sir Henry’s clothing… a shoe. WATSON: The shoe… Sir Henry’s shoe! The one that was stolen from outside his hotel door, in London. HOLMES: Precisely, Watson! A well-trained hound can easily pick up a scent of a person… once it knows who that scent belongs to. An article of clothing is ideal. Also, train a hound to be a killer… and… presto… you have got the perfect killing machine! My suspect thought that he was killing Sir Henry. But he got the wrong man! WATSON: So, your suspect uses the hound to kill? HOLMES: And the story of the curse of the hound to put fear into people. WATSON: But, who is your suspect, Holmes? HOLMES: The puzzle is not quite complete yet, Watson. There is another piece that I hope you and Sir Henry can help me with. Then I will reveal to you who it is. WATSON: What is it, Holmes? How can we help? HOLMES: It’s getting dark, Watson. We are some distance from Baskerville Hall… and we have to navigate our way back, across the moor… avoiding that dangerous Grimpen Mire. WATSON: It’s a treacherous place3 , by all accounts! HOLMES: Yes. I heard that it swallowed up a horse, recently. The poor beast screamed… until it finally disappeared into its muddy depths! 1 … dieser arme Teufel (dieser Unglückliche) 2 Genau was man braucht, um einen mörderischen Bluthund (auf die Person) zu hetzen. 3 Ein gefährlicher Ort, nach allem, was man hört! 27 WATSON: What about Selden’s body? HOLMES: (Pointing offstage) It’s best to conceal it, over there, by that distinctive rock formation. It will be easier for the police to find. HOLMES exits, dragging the body offstage. Scene 8 WATSON: We made it safely back to Baskerville Hall. Mrs Barrymore was extremely upset by the news of her brother’s death. From offstage, comes the sound of a loud cry from Mrs BARRYMORE. WATSON: Holmes then told Sir Henry all he had told me. Enter SIR HENRY and HOLMES. SIR HENRY: That is one helluva story, Mr Holmes! But who is this guy… and why do you think he is responsible for my uncle’s death… and why does he want to kill me? HOLMES: I desperately need to see something, Sir Henry. A second opinion from you, Watson, would give me the vital clue I require1 . SIR HENRY: What is it? What do you need to see? HOLMES: Watson, in your description of Baskerville Hall, you mentioned a room with portraits of Sir Henry’s ancestors2 . SIR HENRY: Yes, there is such a room. I’ve only passed through it… not taking much notice of the portraits. HOLMES: I would very much like to see it. SIR HENRY: Then follow me. Exit SIR HENRY and HOLMES. WATSON: If Sherlock Holmes had a fault… it would be the frustrating way he would keep one in suspense about his thoughts3 , until he knew something… definitely! Enter, from one side of the stage, HUGO BASKERVILLE, holding up a frame, to make himself look like a portrait. Then enter SIR HENRY (carrying a candle) and HOLMES. SIR HENRY: Here you are Mr Holmes, a gallery of the good and bad of my family. May I ask, what, or who, you are looking for? HOLMES: Someone you and Watson might recognise. WATSON: Us? HOLMES: Yes. Please, both of you, look carefully at the portraits. They mime looking at portraits. 1 Eine zweite Einschätzung…, … würde mir den wichtigsten Hinweis geben, den ich noch brauche. 2 … mit Gemälden von Sir Henrys Vorfahren 3 … es war frustrierend, wie er einen auf die Folter spannte, bis er sich sicher war. 30 31 28 SIR HENRY: What are we supposed to be looking for? HOLMES: I think you’ll know it when you see it. They move to the portrait of Hugo. SIR HENRY: (As if reading a title) Hugo Baskerville. Well, what do you know1 … it’s the guy who started all that curse nonsense! WATSON: (Realising something) Good Lord! I don’t believe it! SIR HENRY: Nope. It’s true. It says so here. WATSON: But… the portrait… it looks like… it looks like… HOLMES: Who, Watson, who? WATSON: It looks like… Stapleton! SIR HENRY: (Looking closer) Well, I’ll be damned2 … you’re right… it DOES look like Stapleton! HOLMES: Thank you, gentlemen. I think I you have given me the last piece of my puzzle. WATSON: What a coincidence… Stapleton looking like a Baskerville! HOLMES: Oh, much more than a coincidence, my dear Watson. He IS a Baskerville! (Pause) Now, gentlemen, I have some serious matters to communicate. (To the portrait) Thank you. You can go! Exit Hugo’s portrait. SIR HENRY: Wow, Mr Holmes… this is all so surreal! HOLMES: While in London, I took the opportunity3 to do some research into your family, Sir Henry. Your uncle, Sir Charles, had a brother? SIR HENRY: Yes, Rodger… an adventurer. He died in South America of a tropical disease. HOLMES: That’s right. And with his death and the death of your father, your uncle inherited the family fortune and Baskerville Hall. After Sir Charles’s death… the next in line was you. SIR HENRY: Of course. HOLMES: The line of inheritance seemed simple… so no one dug deeper into it4 . But I did! (Pause) Before he died, Rodger Baskerville had a son… an illegitimate son5 … he never married the boy’s mother. The boy grew up in Costa Rica and turned to a life of crime. Digging into his father’s past, he learnt of the Baskerville fortune… and his rightful claim to it. But two people stood in his way… Sir Charles… SIR HENRY: And me. HOLMES: Precisely! He came to England, with his wife. She knew everything. Her name was… Beryl. SIR HENRY: Oh, no… don’t tell me… 1 Na, da schau her… (sieh mal einer an) 2 Ich glaub’s nicht… (gehob. umgangsspr., vgl.bist du deppert) 3 … ich habe die Gelegenheit genutzt, um… 4 Die Erbfolge schien klar, deshalb hat niemand gründlich nachgeforscht. 5 … einen unehelichen Sohn… 29 HOLMES: They changed their names and became brother and sister… Jack and Beryl Stapleton. SIR HENRY: Oh, no! WATSON: I’ll be damned! HOLMES: Conveniently, Merripit House was being sold. Jack bought it. But how to get rid of Sir Charles and you, without suspicion falling on him1 , before, surprisingly, revealing who he really was? Of course, he learned about the stories of the hound and the curse. (Pause) Now, even I, who have been exposed to some of the greatest criminal minds, have to admire his ingenious plan! WATSON: Get a hound… train it to be a vicious killer, at the scent of its victim. Then, all he would need is an article of his victim’s clothing. SIR HENRY: So, it was Stapleton who was following me in London… and stole my shoe. And the letter? HOLMES: No doubt sent by Beryl. (Pause) I believe there is some good in her, Sir Henry. She is just very afraid of her husband. She tried, by the sound of it, to get you to leave… using the curse of the hound as her way of doing so. SIR HENRY: Oh, poor Beryl! WATSON: So, what now, Holmes? HOLMES: All I have told you is the puzzle I have pieced together. Stapleton still has the upper hand, though. WATSON: What do you mean? HOLMES: We have no proof that he is committing any crime. SIR HENRY: So, how do we get this son-of-a-bitch2 ? HOLMES: Set a trap! (Pause) I’ve given this careful thought. (Pause) Sir Henry, would you be willing to be used as bait3 ? SIR HENRY: If it means getting this bastard… you bet! WATSON: What do you propose, Holmes? HOLMES: Let us create a little situation that Stapleton is sure to fall for4 . (Pointedly) Tomorrow, Sir Henry, visit the Stapleton’s. Use your charm and get a dinner invitation from them. Say… you are not worried about the night and the hound. There’s a full moon… you’ll ride your horse over. (Almost playfully) Chances are5 , something might happen to your horse… resulting in which… you will have to walk home. SIR HENRY: So, that’s the bait! WATSON: And you and me, Holmes… HOLMES: We will keep a close eye on Sir Henry… and we will both be armed! 1 … ohne den Verdacht auf sich zu lenken… 2 Mistkerl (siehe auch: bastard) 3 … dürften wir Sie als Köder benutzen? 4 Wir werden eine Situation erzeugen, auf die Stapleton sicher reinfällt. 5 Höchstwahrscheinlich (in aller Wahrscheinlichkeit)… 32 30 So, gentlemen, I suggest that we get some sleep. We need all our wits about us to catch a rat and his hound! Exit SIR HENRY and HOLMES. Scene 9 WATSON: Sleep… sleep… did he say? Goodness me, when I got into bed, my mind was buzzing1 ! Holmes always seems so cool about such things! Nevertheless, the next day, his plan was put into motion. Early, Sir Henry walked over to the Stapleton’s… to inform them about what had happened to Selden. Sometime, later, Sir Henry returned, excitedly, to say… Enter HOLMES and SIR HENRY. SIR HENRY: There was a clear look of surprise on Stapleton’s face when he saw me. He didn’t seem to be particularly happy that the hound had disposed of Selden2 . Beryl was upset, though – possibly through relief that it wasn’t me. She left the room, in tears. (Excitedly) Then, guess what? HOLMES: What? SIR HENRY: Stapleton invited me over for dinner. HOLMES: Excellent! He’s taken the bait! WATSON: Let’s hope for the proof we need to get him, before the hound gets his teeth into you, Sir Henry. HOLMES: Right, gentlemen… let’s prepare ourselves for what is to come. Exit HOLMES and SIR HENRY. WATSON: A day full of anticipation3 for the night to come! Before nightfall, Holmes and I checked our guns and off we went, on foot, to the Stapleton’s. Enter HOLMES. He moves to WATSON. They move to one side of the stage. HOLMES: Right, Watson, we have a good view of the house and stable. Let’s lie low and observe4 . Sir Henry should be here soon. They both crouch down. Enter SIR HENRY, miming riding a horse. He mimes getting off. Enter STAPLETON. STAPLETON: (Shaking hands with SIR HENRY) Sir Henry… good evening. SIR HENRY: Good evening, Jack. STAPLETON: I’m sorry to say that Beryl won’t be joining us. She’s not feeling at all well. She has decided to sleep it off. SIR HENRY: I’m sorry to hear that. STAPLETON: Please go along in. I’ll just make sure that your horse is alright in the stable. I’ll be with you in a moment. 1 … mir schwirrte der Kopf. 2 Er schien nicht sehr glücklich darüber, dass der Bluthund Selden aus dem Weg geschafft hatte 3 … in Erwartung… 4 Verstecken wir uns hier und passen auf. 33 31 SIR HENRY: Thank you. He exits. STAPLETON mimes taking the reins of the horse. STAPLETON: Come along, you… Jack will take care of you. No more riding tonight! He makes the sound of a horse neighing and exits. WATSON: Goodness me, Holmes… just like you said… he plans to do something to the horse, so Sir Henry can’t ride him. HOLMES: Precisely, Watson. And no Beryl around to warn Sir Henry… how convenient! WATSON: He surely wouldn’t harm her. HOLMES: I shouldn’t think so. She’s probably well locked away, somewhere in the house. WATSON: Now what? HOLMES: We play the waiting game, Watson. WATSON: And so we played the waiting game... for nearly 2 hours. HOLMES: Dinner should be over by now. Something worries me, though, Watson. WATSON: What is it, Holmes? HOLMES: Look towards the moor. There is a fog coming in. Sir Henry better leave soon1 . Enter SIR HENRY and STAPLETON. STAPLETON is carrying a small bag. HOLMES and WATSON crouch down again. STAPLETON: Sir Henry, your horse was perfectly alright when I took him to the stable. Perhaps he got a stone in his hoof, when you rode over. You certainly can’t ride him back now. Why don’t you stay the night? SIR HENRY: It’s really no problem. I can see my way back ok. STAPLETON: And the hound? SIR HENRY: I’ve faced up to bears in Canada. To hell with the hound2 ! STAPLETON: Goodnight, then. SIR HENRY: Goodnight. I hope Beryl feels better in the morning. SIR HENRY exits and, after a moment, STAPLETON opens the bag and takes out a shoe. STAPLETON: Now, my baby… tonight we WILL triumph! He lets out an evil laugh and exits. HOLMES: Come along, Watson… we must follow Sir Henry. We can’t let him out of our sight. HOLMES exits the same way as SIR HENRY. WATSON: We followed. But, the fog closed in quicker than we thought3 . Sir Henry started running. As did we! We lost the path… and Sir Henry! We were on the moor, for sure. This was dangerous now. 1 Sir Henry sollte sich besser bald auf den Weg machen. 2 In Kanada bin ich Bären gegenüber gestanden. Zum Teufel mit dem Bluthund. 3 Der Nebel fiel schneller ein, als wir gedacht hatten. 32 The next bit of action is played out to dramatic music. Enter HOLMES, holding his gun. HOLMES: (Calling) Watson! WATSON: Over here, Holmes. HOLMES: Stay close! Any sight of Sir Henry? WATSON: No. They move as if moving through fog. HOLMES: Damn it… I didn’t prepare for this, Watson… not at all! Suddenly, above the music, there is the sound of a loud howl from the hound. WATSON: It’s here, Holmes… the hound of the Baskervilles! Dramatic music. Enter SIR HENRY, from upstage. HOLMES: (Pointing at SIR HENRY) Look, Watson… there’s Sir Henry! Out of the music comes a loud growl. SIR HENRY turns. From upstage, the hound jumps on SIR HENRY. He screams. The hound and SIR HENRY fight. Out of their struggle come sounds of growls and SIR HENRY’s screams. The hound gets SIR HENRY on the ground and goes for his throat. HOLMES takes aim with his gun and fires 6 times at the hound. The hound falls off SIR HENRY… dead. The music stops. SIR HENRY moans. WATSON rushes up to him. HOLMES: How is he, Watson? WATSON: Just wounded… but alright… thank goodness. And the hound? HOLMES: Definitely dead! Enter STAPLETON, holding a gun. STAPLETON: As you all soon will be too, Mr Holmes! (Pause) Sherlock Holmes finally defeated1 ! And there’ll be no Dr Watson either to write the case of ‘The Hound of the Baskervilles’. What a pity. Perhaps I will write it. It should be worth quite a lot of money. HOLMES: You won’t get away with this, Stapleton. STAPLETON: Oh, but I will, Mr Holmes… I will. Your gun is now useless. You used up all your bullets on my poor baby. Dr Watson, I’m sure you are carrying a gun. Will you be so kind as to take it out… slowly… and push it over here. WATSON does so. SIR HENRY: (Weakly) Beryl… STAPLETON: She is safely locked away. I feared she might have spoilt my party tonight2 . SIR HENRY: (Weakly) Beryl… STAPLETON: (Angrily) Shut up… cousin! (Pause) So, now… how to end our story? Well, as it happens, luck is on my side. You see, gentlemen, (pointing) just over there is the start of Grimpen Mire. I will kill all of you and drag your bodies to the Mire. You will be swallowed up… deep into its muddy darkness… never to be seen again. Along with my and Dr Waston’s guns. 1 Sherlock Holmes – endlich besiegt (geschlagen) 2 Sie hätte mir wahrscheinlich meinen Plan zunichte gemacht. 34 35 33 That leaves your empty gun, Mr Holmes. Six bullets in my poor baby and me with an empty gun. Now, here’s the fun part of the story… what I tell the police. (Pause) I heard the screams… ran, with my gun, to help… saw you fighting the hound, by the Mire. It was terrible! The three of you fell into the Mire and when the hound turned on me… I shot it. Naturally, everyone will be upset about you. But I… I will be hailed as a hero1 … the one who killed the hound of the Baskervilles. HOLMES: You are mad, Stapleton! STAPLETON: Yes, yes… go ahead call me anything you like. But I beat you, Sherlock Holmes… (Pointedly) I beat you! I defeated the great Sherlock Holmes. (He laughs) That will be my own private glory! Along with inheriting the Baskerville fortune, of course. HOLMES: You sad, sad, little man! STAPLETON: (Moving closer to HOLMES, angrily) Shut up… just shut up! You’ve met your match2 , Mr Holmes. HOLMES: That’s right, Stapleton… pump yourself up! You’re pathetic3 ! STAPLETON: (Shouting) I said shut up! HOLMES lunges at STAPLETON. They fight furiously. STAPLETON loses the gun. WATSON goes for his gun. Before he can get to it, HOLMES pushes STAPLETON. He falls backward into the Mire. He starts sinking. STAPLETON: (Screaming) Help me! Help me! I’m sinking into the Mire!BERYL: I cannot explain. But, for God’s sake do as I say! There is danger here. Go back and never set foot on the moor again! WATSON: What are you saying? STAPLETON: (From offstage) Blast3 ! BERYL: Don’t say a word to my brother! Enter STAPLETON. STAPLETON: Damned, bloody thing got away! (On seeing BERYL) Ah, you two have bumped into each other. Beryl, this is Dr Watson, good friend and 1 Der Fluch hat ein weiteres Opfer (unter den Baskervilles) gefordert. 2 verdammt (das verdammte Ding) 3 Mist!Verdammt! 21 colleague to the famous Sherlock Holmes. BERYL: Dr Watson? Oh, forgive me… I thought that you were… were Sir Henry Baskerville. STAPLETON: Dr Watson, this is my sister, Beryl. WATSON: How do you do. BERYL: I’m sorry, Dr Watson for what I just said. I was… confused. STAPLETON: What was that? BERYL: Oh… nothing! There is the sound of a moan, which grows into a howl. WATSON: What was that? STAPLETON: The local people say it is the call of the hound. (Dramatically) He is hungry for blood! WATSON: And what do you think it is? STAPLETON: It could be many things. Sometimes, strange noises come out of Grimpen Mire. WATSON: Grimpen Mire? STAPLETON: Near here is the dangerous Grimpen Mire. Looks like wet grassland. However, once a man, or animal, steps into it, they are slowly sucked into its muddy depths1 . BERYL: It’s a terrible death, Dr Watson! Be warned… always stick to the path. STAPLETON: Beryl, we must go. Dr Watson, you and Sir Henry must visit us. After all, we are neighbours. And Mr Holmes, too, when he gets here. WATSON: Thank you. STAPLETON: (Offering BERYL his arm) Come along, my dear. Goodbye, Dr Watson. BERYL: Goodbye. WATSON: Goodbye. They start to exit. BERYL stops. BERYL: My handkerchief… I think I dropped my handkerchief by Dr Watson. Go along, Jack. I’ll catch you up. He exits. She comes back to WATSON. BERYL: What I said before was meant for Sir Henry. WATSON: Is he in danger? BERYL: You know the story of the hound? WATSON: Yes. BERYL: I… I believe it to be true. Therefore, I fear for Sir Henry’s life. I cannot say any more. STAPLETON: (Calling, from offstage) Beryl. BERYL: (Calling back) I found it. Coming. (She takes out her handkerchief) Goodbye, Dr Watson. She exits. 1 Gerät ein Mensch oder Tier hinein, wird er/es langsam in die schlammigen Tiefen hinuntergezogen. 24 25 22 Scene 6 WATSON: I thought it best not to tell Sir Henry about what Miss Stapleton had said. I wrote to Holmes, reporting my first 24 hours’ events. The rest of the day was uneventful. I decided to go to bed early and have a good night’s sleep. No such luck, I’m afraid! Just after midnight, I heard footsteps on the creaky floorboards in the hall, outside my room. Offstage, BARRYMORE makes the sound of creaky floorboards. WATSON: I got out of bed and peeped outside my door, to see… Enter BARRYMORE, making creaky noises as he walks. He is carrying a candle. He mimes opening a window. Then he waves the candle, from side to side. He makes a loud groan and exits, making the creaky noises. WATSON: The next day, I told Sir Henry what I had seen. Enter SIR HENRY. SIR HENRY: It sounds like he was signalling to someone. WATSON: Exactly what I thought. SIR HENRY: I will come to your room tonight and we can check this out together. WATSON: And so he did. We waited, until… From offstage comes BARRYMORE’s creaking sound. Enter BARRYMORE, still making the sound as he walks. Again, he is carrying a candle. Again, he mimes opening a window and waves the candle. SIR HENRY: What are you doing, Barrymore? BARRYMORE: (Startled) Oh, I… I… was… SIR HENRY: Yes… BARRYMORE: I was… was… just fixing the window! SIR HENRY: In the middle of the night! (Firmly) Tell me the truth, Barrymore. What were you doing at that window? WATSON: (Noticing something outside the window.) Look… in the dark of the moor… a faint light is moving, from side to side1 ! SIR HENRY: Who are you signalling to, Barrymore? Tell me at once! BARRYMORE: I… I… Enter MRS BARRYMORE. MRS BARRYMORE: (Distressed) Please, sir, it’s not my husband’s fault. It’s… it’s mine. SIR HENRY: What are you talking about, Mrs Barrymore? MRS BARRYMORE: My husband is signalling to my brother. He is living like a hunted animal on the moor! WATSON: Your brother? Is he the escaped convict2 , Selden? MRS BARRYMORE: Yes, sir. WATSON: But he’s a criminal… a murderer! 1 Ein schwacher Lichtschein bewegt sich hin und her. 2 Ist er der entflohene Häftling, Selden? 23 MRS BARRYMORE: But he’s still my brother. He’s sick, Dr Watson, he’s sick. His sickness makes him do terrible things. He can’t help it. SIR HENRY: What the hell… he’s dangerous! He must be locked away, for the safety of others. WATSON: What is the signal for? BARRYMORE: Mrs Barrymore has been putting out food for him1 . The signal is to let him know when she has done so. MRS BARRYMORE: Forgive me, Sir Henry. SIR HENRY: This is outrageous! I will report this to the police tomorrow. MRS BARRYMORE: Please sir, don’t say anything to the police. BARRYMORE: In a few days, he won’t be around on the moor. We have arranged for him to be transported, by ship, to South America. MRS BARRYMORE: I beg of you, sir. Soon my brother will be far away and not cause anyone any more trouble. WATSON: Except the South Americans! SIR HENRY: We will talk further about this in the morning. Now, go to bed, the pair of you! MR and MRS BARRYMORE bow to him and exit. SIR HENRY: Thank you for bringing this to my attention, Dr Watson. The Barrymores have been so loyal to the family. This ‘incident’ is … how shall I put it… unfortunate. I shall sleep on it. Goodnight. He exits. WATSON: Sir Henry decided not to tell the police about Selden… at least, for the time being. However, I had a lot to tell Holmes in my next corresponddence to him. (Pause) The day after, the Stapletons kindly invited us to lunch. Their house was quite near to Baskerville Hall… so near that one could easily walk over to them. Scene 7 Enter STAPLETON and SIR HENRY. WATSON joins them. STAPLETON: It’s jolly good to meet another Baskerville, Sir Henry. Your uncle was a good friend. Enter BERYL. STAPLETON: Ah, Beryl… allow me to introduce you to Sir Henry Baskerville. And you’ve already met Dr Watson. BERYL: (Nodding at WATSON) Dr Watson. (Extending her hand to SIR HENRY) Sir Henry, it is a pleasure to meet you. SIR HENRY: (Shaking her hand) The pleasure is all mine, Miss Stapleton. BERYL: Beryl, please. 1 Mrs Barrymore hat ihn mit Essen versorgt (hat ihm Essen bereitgestellt) 26 27 24 SIR HENRY: Beryl. Dr Watson, you didn’t tell me that our neighbour was so attractive. BERYL: Oh, Sir Henry! SIR HENRY: What’s a pretty girl like you doing stuck away in such desolate countryside like this? STAPLETON: It’s not everybody’s cup of tea1 , Sir Henry… but we like it. Neither of us are the social, city types! (Firmly) Are we, Beryl? BERYL: Yes… I mean… no, Jack. SIR HENRY: Well… Beryl… we’ll just have to make some fun of our own, out here in the countryside. STAPLETON: Dinner is ready. Shall we go in? Beryl… (Offering her his arm) SIR HENRY: (Offering BERYL his arm) Please, may I, Beryl? BERYL: (Uneasily, looking at STAPLETON) Thank you, Sir Henry. They exit, with STAPLETON following on behind. WATSON: Well, the instant attraction of Sir Henry to Beryl Stapleton was very noticeable. What was also noticeable, to me, was her brother’s disapproval. (Pause) Some days passed. I continued my observations and my correspondence with Holmes. Then, on one particular walk, on the moor, I spotted a hooded figure, high on a hill. Enter a hooded figure. The face is hidden. WATSON: We’d heard nothing about Selden… except that he was still on the moor. Surely, this figure was not him. Selden would try to keep out of sight. (Calling to the figure) I say… hello there. The figure sees WATSON and quickly runs away. WATSON: Strange! (Pause) I saw it again, the next day. As I made a move towards it, it was gone, in a flash2 ! Whoever this was, they certainly didn’t want to be discovered. (Pause) Sir Henry, on the other hand, had discovered something… love! Enter SIR HENRY. SIR HENRY: Beryl, Beryl! What a gal3 ! What… a… gal! (Noticing WATSON) Hi Dr Watson! (He starts singing a romantic song.) WATSON: I’m going for a walk on the moor. Do you fancy coming along? SIR HENRY: No, thank you, Dr Watson. I have some serious thinking to do about Beryl – maybe later. He exits, singing. WATSON: Another letter to Holmes… and off I went. I had walked some distance on the moor, when, suddenly, I saw… Enter the hooded figure. WATSON: (Calling to the figure) Hello there! 1 Es ist nicht jedermanns Sache… 2 … es war blitzartig verschwunden. 3 Mädchen (umgangsspr., veraltet, bes. US) 25 The figure turns and starts running. WATSON: I decided to give chase1 , this time. (Calling to the figure) Stop… stop, I say! But the figure did not stop. I ran after it… up a hill, on the moor. Up, up, to the stony top! (To the figure) Stop! (He takes out a gun) I am armed and I will shoot. The figure stops. WATSON: Who are you? The figure turns, slowly and removes the hood. It’s HOLMES. WATSON: (Surprised) Holmes! HOLMES: Forgive me, Watson. WATSON: Has it been you all along? HOLMES: I’m afraid so… yes. WATSON: But… but… I don’t understand. Why this disguise? HOLMES: I wanted to observe for myself, for a while, some of the things you had reported to me. WATSON: But, where have you been staying? HOLMES: In a small, uninhabited cottage2 , on the edge of the moor. In the past few days, I have seen and heard much. WATSON: But to go to such lengths3 , just to remain anonymous! HOLMES: I had to, Watson. During my time in London, I learned some extraordinary facts about this case and the characters in it. (Pause) Our opponent is extremely clever! WATSON: So, you know who it is? HOLMES: The facts point to one person. However, there is no proof as to his guilt. He plans everything carefully, until he is ready to strike4 . His target is Sir Henry Baskerville! Suddenly, there is the sound a loud howl, followed by the sound of a man’s scream. WATSON: Holmes… it’s… it’s… HOLMES: It’s the hound of the Baskervilles! Dramatic music. HOLMES: (Referring to the music) Thank you! Come along, Watson. The game’s afoot! They run, downstage. WATSON points, upstage. WATSON: (Pointing) Look, Holmes… up on that craggy overhang5 ! There is another howl, followed again by a man’s scream. Then, a growling, attacking sound, followed by another scream. Then, from a height, a body falls 1 Ich beschloss, die Verfolgung aufzunehmen… 2 In einer kleinen, unbewohnten Hütte… 3 Aber so einen Aufwand zu treiben… (nur um unerkannt zu bleiben) 4 … bis er bereit ist, zuzuschlagen 5 … da oben auf dem zerklüfteten Überhang 28 29 26 on to the stage. There is the sound of a hound’s howl. HOLMES and WATSON move to the body. WATSON: (Feeling the body) He’s dead! It’s Sir Henry. I recognise the coat. HOLMES: Then we are too late! (HOLMES bends down to the body and unwraps a scarf that’s covering the face) Wait a moment. This is not Sir Henry! WATSON: What are you saying, Holmes? HOLMES: Look again, Watson. The coat, maybe, is Sir Henry’s… and I suspect that it is. But this poor unfortunate1 is not Sir Henry. (Pause) It’s Selden, the escaped convict! WATSON: (Looking closer) Good Lord, Holmes! HOLMES: (Thinking out loud) So, the coat… and the shoe… from the same person… Sir Henry. Just what one would need to set a murderous hound to work2 . WATSON: What do you mean, Holmes? HOLMES: The scent, Watson… the scent. That’s all a hound needs. WATSON: But how did Selden get the coat? HOLMES: Stolen, I suppose…. or taken by the Barrymores. It’s cold on the moor, at nights. Unfortunately, for Selden, my suspect had also stolen an article of Sir Henry’s clothing… a shoe. WATSON: The shoe… Sir Henry’s shoe! The one that was stolen from outside his hotel door, in London. HOLMES: Precisely, Watson! A well-trained hound can easily pick up a scent of a person… once it knows who that scent belongs to. An article of clothing is ideal. Also, train a hound to be a killer… and… presto… you have got the perfect killing machine! My suspect thought that he was killing Sir Henry. But he got the wrong man! WATSON: So, your suspect uses the hound to kill? HOLMES: And the story of the curse of the hound to put fear into people. WATSON: But, who is your suspect, Holmes? HOLMES: The puzzle is not quite complete yet, Watson. There is another piece that I hope you and Sir Henry can help me with. Then I will reveal to you who it is. WATSON: What is it, Holmes? How can we help? HOLMES: It’s getting dark, Watson. We are some distance from Baskerville Hall… and we have to navigate our way back, across the moor… avoiding that dangerous Grimpen Mire. WATSON: It’s a treacherous place3 , by all accounts! HOLMES: Yes. I heard that it swallowed up a horse, recently. The poor beast screamed… until it finally disappeared into its muddy depths! 1 … dieser arme Teufel (dieser Unglückliche) 2 Genau was man braucht, um einen mörderischen Bluthund (auf die Person) zu hetzen. 3 Ein gefährlicher Ort, nach allem, was man hört! 27 WATSON: What about Selden’s body? HOLMES: (Pointing offstage) It’s best to conceal it, over there, by that distinctive rock formation. It will be easier for the police to find. HOLMES exits, dragging the body offstage. Scene 8 WATSON: We made it safely back to Baskerville Hall. Mrs Barrymore was extremely upset by the news of her brother’s death. From offstage, comes the sound of a loud cry from Mrs BARRYMORE. WATSON: Holmes then told Sir Henry all he had told me. Enter SIR HENRY and HOLMES. SIR HENRY: That is one helluva story, Mr Holmes! But who is this guy… and why do you think he is responsible for my uncle’s death… and why does he want to kill me? HOLMES: I desperately need to see something, Sir Henry. A second opinion from you, Watson, would give me the vital clue I require1 . SIR HENRY: What is it? What do you need to see? HOLMES: Watson, in your description of Baskerville Hall, you mentioned a room with portraits of Sir Henry’s ancestors2 . SIR HENRY: Yes, there is such a room. I’ve only passed through it… not taking much notice of the portraits. HOLMES: I would very much like to see it. SIR HENRY: Then follow me. Exit SIR HENRY and HOLMES. WATSON: If Sherlock Holmes had a fault… it would be the frustrating way he would keep one in suspense about his thoughts3 , until he knew something… definitely! Enter, from one side of the stage, HUGO BASKERVILLE, holding up a frame, to make himself look like a portrait. Then enter SIR HENRY (carrying a candle) and HOLMES. SIR HENRY: Here you are Mr Holmes, a gallery of the good and bad of my family. May I ask, what, or who, you are looking for? HOLMES: Someone you and Watson might recognise. WATSON: Us? HOLMES: Yes. Please, both of you, look carefully at the portraits. They mime looking at portraits. 1 Eine zweite Einschätzung…, … würde mir den wichtigsten Hinweis geben, den ich noch brauche. 2 … mit Gemälden von Sir Henrys Vorfahren 3 … es war frustrierend, wie er einen auf die Folter spannte, bis er sich sicher war. 30 31 28 SIR HENRY: What are we supposed to be looking for? HOLMES: I think you’ll know it when you see it. They move to the portrait of Hugo. SIR HENRY: (As if reading a title) Hugo Baskerville. Well, what do you know1 … it’s the guy who started all that curse nonsense! WATSON: (Realising something) Good Lord! I don’t believe it! SIR HENRY: Nope. It’s true. It says so here. WATSON: But… the portrait… it looks like… it looks like… HOLMES: Who, Watson, who? WATSON: It looks like… Stapleton! SIR HENRY: (Looking closer) Well, I’ll be damned2 … you’re right… it DOES look like Stapleton! HOLMES: Thank you, gentlemen. I think I you have given me the last piece of my puzzle. WATSON: What a coincidence… Stapleton looking like a Baskerville! HOLMES: Oh, much more than a coincidence, my dear Watson. He IS a Baskerville! (Pause) Now, gentlemen, I have some serious matters to communicate. (To the portrait) Thank you. You can go! Exit Hugo’s portrait. SIR HENRY: Wow, Mr Holmes… this is all so surreal! HOLMES: While in London, I took the opportunity3 to do some research into your family, Sir Henry. Your uncle, Sir Charles, had a brother? SIR HENRY: Yes, Rodger… an adventurer. He died in South America of a tropical disease. HOLMES: That’s right. And with his death and the death of your father, your uncle inherited the family fortune and Baskerville Hall. After Sir Charles’s death… the next in line was you. SIR HENRY: Of course. HOLMES: The line of inheritance seemed simple… so no one dug deeper into it4 . But I did! (Pause) Before he died, Rodger Baskerville had a son… an illegitimate son5 … he never married the boy’s mother. The boy grew up in Costa Rica and turned to a life of crime. Digging into his father’s past, he learnt of the Baskerville fortune… and his rightful claim to it. But two people stood in his way… Sir Charles… SIR HENRY: And me. HOLMES: Precisely! He came to England, with his wife. She knew everything. Her name was… Beryl. SIR HENRY: Oh, no… don’t tell me… 1 Na, da schau her… (sieh mal einer an) 2 Ich glaub’s nicht… (gehob. umgangsspr., vgl.bist du deppert) 3 … ich habe die Gelegenheit genutzt, um… 4 Die Erbfolge schien klar, deshalb hat niemand gründlich nachgeforscht. 5 … einen unehelichen Sohn… 29 HOLMES: They changed their names and became brother and sister… Jack and Beryl Stapleton. SIR HENRY: Oh, no! WATSON: I’ll be damned! HOLMES: Conveniently, Merripit House was being sold. Jack bought it. But how to get rid of Sir Charles and you, without suspicion falling on him1 , before, surprisingly, revealing who he really was? Of course, he learned about the stories of the hound and the curse. (Pause) Now, even I, who have been exposed to some of the greatest criminal minds, have to admire his ingenious plan! WATSON: Get a hound… train it to be a vicious killer, at the scent of its victim. Then, all he would need is an article of his victim’s clothing. SIR HENRY: So, it was Stapleton who was following me in London… and stole my shoe. And the letter? HOLMES: No doubt sent by Beryl. (Pause) I believe there is some good in her, Sir Henry. She is just very afraid of her husband. She tried, by the sound of it, to get you to leave… using the curse of the hound as her way of doing so. SIR HENRY: Oh, poor Beryl! WATSON: So, what now, Holmes? HOLMES: All I have told you is the puzzle I have pieced together. Stapleton still has the upper hand, though. WATSON: What do you mean? HOLMES: We have no proof that he is committing any crime. SIR HENRY: So, how do we get this son-of-a-bitch2 ? HOLMES: Set a trap! (Pause) I’ve given this careful thought. (Pause) Sir Henry, would you be willing to be used as bait3 ? SIR HENRY: If it means getting this bastard… you bet! WATSON: What do you propose, Holmes? HOLMES: Let us create a little situation that Stapleton is sure to fall for4 . (Pointedly) Tomorrow, Sir Henry, visit the Stapleton’s. Use your charm and get a dinner invitation from them. Say… you are not worried about the night and the hound. There’s a full moon… you’ll ride your horse over. (Almost playfully) Chances are5 , something might happen to your horse… resulting in which… you will have to walk home. SIR HENRY: So, that’s the bait! WATSON: And you and me, Holmes… HOLMES: We will keep a close eye on Sir Henry… and we will both be armed! 1 … ohne den Verdacht auf sich zu lenken… 2 Mistkerl (siehe auch: bastard) 3 … dürften wir Sie als Köder benutzen? 4 Wir werden eine Situation erzeugen, auf die Stapleton sicher reinfällt. 5 Höchstwahrscheinlich (in aller Wahrscheinlichkeit)… 32 30 So, gentlemen, I suggest that we get some sleep. We need all our wits about us to catch a rat and his hound! Exit SIR HENRY and HOLMES. Scene 9 WATSON: Sleep… sleep… did he say? Goodness me, when I got into bed, my mind was buzzing1 ! Holmes always seems so cool about such things! Nevertheless, the next day, his plan was put into motion. Early, Sir Henry walked over to the Stapleton’s… to inform them about what had happened to Selden. Sometime, later, Sir Henry returned, excitedly, to say… Enter HOLMES and SIR HENRY. SIR HENRY: There was a clear look of surprise on Stapleton’s face when he saw me. He didn’t seem to be particularly happy that the hound had disposed of Selden2 . Beryl was upset, though – possibly through relief that it wasn’t me. She left the room, in tears. (Excitedly) Then, guess what? HOLMES: What? SIR HENRY: Stapleton invited me over for dinner. HOLMES: Excellent! He’s taken the bait! WATSON: Let’s hope for the proof we need to get him, before the hound gets his teeth into you, Sir Henry. HOLMES: Right, gentlemen… let’s prepare ourselves for what is to come. Exit HOLMES and SIR HENRY. WATSON: A day full of anticipation3 for the night to come! Before nightfall, Holmes and I checked our guns and off we went, on foot, to the Stapleton’s. Enter HOLMES. He moves to WATSON. They move to one side of the stage. HOLMES: Right, Watson, we have a good view of the house and stable. Let’s lie low and observe4 . Sir Henry should be here soon. They both crouch down. Enter SIR HENRY, miming riding a horse. He mimes getting off. Enter STAPLETON. STAPLETON: (Shaking hands with SIR HENRY) Sir Henry… good evening. SIR HENRY: Good evening, Jack. STAPLETON: I’m sorry to say that Beryl won’t be joining us. She’s not feeling at all well. She has decided to sleep it off. SIR HENRY: I’m sorry to hear that. STAPLETON: Please go along in. I’ll just make sure that your horse is alright in the stable. I’ll be with you in a moment. 1 … mir schwirrte der Kopf. 2 Er schien nicht sehr glücklich darüber, dass der Bluthund Selden aus dem Weg geschafft hatte 3 … in Erwartung… 4 Verstecken wir uns hier und passen auf. 33 31 SIR HENRY: Thank you. He exits. STAPLETON mimes taking the reins of the horse. STAPLETON: Come along, you… Jack will take care of you. No more riding tonight! He makes the sound of a horse neighing and exits. WATSON: Goodness me, Holmes… just like you said… he plans to do something to the horse, so Sir Henry can’t ride him. HOLMES: Precisely, Watson. And no Beryl around to warn Sir Henry… how convenient! WATSON: He surely wouldn’t harm her. HOLMES: I shouldn’t think so. She’s probably well locked away, somewhere in the house. WATSON: Now what? HOLMES: We play the waiting game, Watson. WATSON: And so we played the waiting game... for nearly 2 hours. HOLMES: Dinner should be over by now. Something worries me, though, Watson. WATSON: What is it, Holmes? HOLMES: Look towards the moor. There is a fog coming in. Sir Henry better leave soon1 . Enter SIR HENRY and STAPLETON. STAPLETON is carrying a small bag. HOLMES and WATSON crouch down again. STAPLETON: Sir Henry, your horse was perfectly alright when I took him to the stable. Perhaps he got a stone in his hoof, when you rode over. You certainly can’t ride him back now. Why don’t you stay the night? SIR HENRY: It’s really no problem. I can see my way back ok. STAPLETON: And the hound? SIR HENRY: I’ve faced up to bears in Canada. To hell with the hound2 ! STAPLETON: Goodnight, then. SIR HENRY: Goodnight. I hope Beryl feels better in the morning. SIR HENRY exits and, after a moment, STAPLETON opens the bag and takes out a shoe. STAPLETON: Now, my baby… tonight we WILL triumph! He lets out an evil laugh and exits. HOLMES: Come along, Watson… we must follow Sir Henry. We can’t let him out of our sight. HOLMES exits the same way as SIR HENRY. WATSON: We followed. But, the fog closed in quicker than we thought3 . Sir Henry started running. As did we! We lost the path… and Sir Henry! We were on the moor, for sure. This was dangerous now. 1 Sir Henry sollte sich besser bald auf den Weg machen. 2 In Kanada bin ich Bären gegenüber gestanden. Zum Teufel mit dem Bluthund. 3 Der Nebel fiel schneller ein, als wir gedacht hatten. 32 The next bit of action is played out to dramatic music. Enter HOLMES, holding his gun. HOLMES: (Calling) Watson! WATSON: Over here, Holmes. HOLMES: Stay close! Any sight of Sir Henry? WATSON: No. They move as if moving through fog. HOLMES: Damn it… I didn’t prepare for this, Watson… not at all! Suddenly, above the music, there is the sound of a loud howl from the hound. WATSON: It’s here, Holmes… the hound of the Baskervilles! Dramatic music. Enter SIR HENRY, from upstage. HOLMES: (Pointing at SIR HENRY) Look, Watson… there’s Sir Henry! Out of the music comes a loud growl. SIR HENRY turns. From upstage, the hound jumps on SIR HENRY. He screams. The hound and SIR HENRY fight. Out of their struggle come sounds of growls and SIR HENRY’s screams. The hound gets SIR HENRY on the ground and goes for his throat. HOLMES takes aim with his gun and fires 6 times at the hound. The hound falls off SIR HENRY… dead. The music stops. SIR HENRY moans. WATSON rushes up to him. HOLMES: How is he, Watson? WATSON: Just wounded… but alright… thank goodness. And the hound? HOLMES: Definitely dead! Enter STAPLETON, holding a gun. STAPLETON: As you all soon will be too, Mr Holmes! (Pause) Sherlock Holmes finally defeated1 ! And there’ll be no Dr Watson either to write the case of ‘The Hound of the Baskervilles’. What a pity. Perhaps I will write it. It should be worth quite a lot of money. HOLMES: You won’t get away with this, Stapleton. STAPLETON: Oh, but I will, Mr Holmes… I will. Your gun is now useless. You used up all your bullets on my poor baby. Dr Watson, I’m sure you are carrying a gun. Will you be so kind as to take it out… slowly… and push it over here. WATSON does so. SIR HENRY: (Weakly) Beryl… STAPLETON: She is safely locked away. I feared she might have spoilt my party tonight2 . SIR HENRY: (Weakly) Beryl… STAPLETON: (Angrily) Shut up… cousin! (Pause) So, now… how to end our story? Well, as it happens, luck is on my side. You see, gentlemen, (pointing) just over there is the start of Grimpen Mire. I will kill all of you and drag your bodies to the Mire. You will be swallowed up… deep into its muddy darkness… never to be seen again. Along with my and Dr Waston’s guns. 1 Sherlock Holmes – endlich besiegt (geschlagen) 2 Sie hätte mir wahrscheinlich meinen Plan zunichte gemacht. 34 35 33 That leaves your empty gun, Mr Holmes. Six bullets in my poor baby and me with an empty gun. Now, here’s the fun part of the story… what I tell the police. (Pause) I heard the screams… ran, with my gun, to help… saw you fighting the hound, by the Mire. It was terrible! The three of you fell into the Mire and when the hound turned on me… I shot it. Naturally, everyone will be upset about you. But I… I will be hailed as a hero1 … the one who killed the hound of the Baskervilles. HOLMES: You are mad, Stapleton! STAPLETON: Yes, yes… go ahead call me anything you like. But I beat you, Sherlock Holmes… (Pointedly) I beat you! I defeated the great Sherlock Holmes. (He laughs) That will be my own private glory! Along with inheriting the Baskerville fortune, of course. HOLMES: You sad, sad, little man! STAPLETON: (Moving closer to HOLMES, angrily) Shut up… just shut up! You’ve met your match2 , Mr Holmes. HOLMES: That’s right, Stapleton… pump yourself up! You’re pathetic3 ! STAPLETON: (Shouting) I said shut up! HOLMES lunges at STAPLETON. They fight furiously. STAPLETON loses the gun. WATSON goes for his gun. Before he can get to it, HOLMES pushes STAPLETON. He falls backward into the Mire. He starts sinking. STAPLETON: (Screaming) Help me! Help me! I’m sinking into the Mire! HOLMES takes off his coat, as STAPLETON sinks deeper. He holds one end of the coat and throws the rest of it at STAPLETON. HOLMES: Grab hold of this! Come on, man! STAPLETON tries to hold onto the coat. But the Mire is pulling him in deeper. He grasps the coat, screaming. HOLMES can’t help him. The last scream disappears into a gurgle, as STAPLETON disappears into the mud. HOLMES: Well, Watson, you will have an exciting case to write about! SIR HENRY: (Weakly) Beryl… HOLMES: I’m sure she’s alright. (Looking around) The fog is easing4 . Let us get back to Baskerville Hall. WATSON and HOLMES help SIR HENRY up. WATSON: Holmes, how will we find our way back? HOLMES: Elementary, my dear Watson… with this. (He takes a compass out of his pocket.) WATSON: A compass… I should have known. Holmes, you think of everything. HOLMES: I wouldn’t be who I am, if I didn’t, Watson. I took a reading5 , before we set out this evening. We know where the Grimpen Mire is. (Looking at the 1 Ich werde als Held gefeiert werden. 2 Sie haben in mir Ihren Meister gefunden… (d.h. ich bin besser als Sie) 3 Ja, bilden Sie sich nur was ein… Sie sind wirklich armselig! 4 Der Nebel lichtet sich. 5 Ich habe den Kompass abgelesen… 34 compass) Now, with that behind us, we go... (Pointing) this way. SIR HENRY: I don’t know how to thank you, Mr Holmes. You truly live up to your reputation1 as the world’s greatest detective. HOLMES: Thank you, Sir Henry. But, as usual, I think I couldn’t have solved this case, without the help of my good friend and colleague, Dr Watson. WATSON: Kind of you to say so, Holmes. HOLMES: Not at all, Watson… not at all. (Pause) Fancy the opera2 , next week? Dinner at Marcini’s and then a box at Covent Garden? WATSON: Capital idea3 , Holmes. I must get in touch with The Strand Magazine, when we get back to London. Tell them I’ve got a new Sherlock Holmes story for them… ‘The Case of the Hound of the Baskervilles’. Dramatic music. WATSON: (Referring to the music) Thank you! They exit. T HOLMES takes off his coat, as STAPLETON sinks deeper. He holds one end of the coat and throws the rest of it at STAPLETON. HOLMES: Grab hold of this! Come on, man! STAPLETON tries to hold onto the coat. But the Mire is pulling him in deeper. He grasps the coat, screaming. HOLMES can’t help him. The last scream disappears into a gurgle, as STAPLETON disappears into the mud. HOLMES: Well, Watson, you will have an exciting case to write about! SIR HENRY: (Weakly) Beryl… HOLMES: I’m sure she’s alright. (Looking around) The fog is easing4 . Let us get back to Baskerville Hall. WATSON and HOLMES help SIR HENRY up. WATSON: Holmes, how will we find our way back? HOLMES: Elementary, my dear Watson… with this. (He takes a compass out of his pocket.) WATSON: A compass… I should have known. Holmes, you think of everything. HOLMES: I wouldn’t be who I am, if I didn’t, Watson. I took a reading5 , before we set out this evening. We know where the Grimpen Mire is. (Looking at the 1 Ich werde als Held gefeiert werden. 2 Sie haben in mir Ihren Meister gefunden… (d.h. ich bin besser als Sie) 3 Ja, bilden Sie sich nur was ein… Sie sind wirklich armselig! 4 Der Nebel lichtet sich. 5 Ich habe den Kompass abgelesen… 34 compass) Now, with that behind us, we go... (Pointing) this way. SIR HENRY: I don’t know how to thank you, Mr Holmes. 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You might be confusing me with Dr Mortimer. Are you the butler? HOLMES: No. He is Dr Watson… my good friend and colleague. And I am Sherlock Holmes. SIR HENRY: (Shaking WATSON’s hand, energetically) Sorry, Dr Watson! (WATSON grimaces, after the handshake) How do you do, Mr Holmes. (Shaking HOLMES’s hand, energetically) Great that you can see me at such short notice. HOLMES: Not at all. As you are aware, Sir Henry, we know about the circumstances surrounding your uncle’s death… and the story about the socalled Baskerville curse. Now, what is worrying you? SIR HENRY: Unexplainable events, Mr Holmes! Since arriving here, in London, someone has been following me. The same figure… the same clothes… face mostly hidden by a hat. He has a black beard. HOLMES: Have you told the police? SIR HENRY: No. Only Dr Mortimer. He told me about you, Mr Holmes. And suggested, knowing my family background, that you, a detective, would be the person to tell, rather than the police. HOLMES: I see.