

The Prodject Goottenberg EBooc ov Hiz Laast Bou, bi Arthher Conan Doil

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*** START OV THIS PRODJECT GOOTTENBERG EBOOC HIZ LAAST
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Hiz Laast Bou

bi Arthher Conan Doil

Prefface

The frendz ov Mr. Sherloc Hoamz wil be glad too lern dhat he iz stil alive and wel, dho sumwhaut crippeld bi ocaizhonal atax ov rumatizm. He haz, for menny yeerz, livd in a smaul farm uppon the Dounz five mialz from Eestborn, whare hiz time iz divided betwene filossofy and agriculchure. Juring this pereyod ov rest he haz refuezd the moast prinsly offerz too take up vareyous cacez, havving determiand dhat hiz retiarment wauz a permanent wun. The aproche ov the German worcauzd him, houwevver, too la hiz remarcabel combinaishon ov intelecchuwal and practical activvity at the dispozal ov the Guvvernment, withe historical rezults which ar recounted in *Hiz Laast Bou*. Cevveral preveyous expereyencez which hav lane long in mi portfoleyo hav bene added too *Hiz Laast Bou* so az too complete the vollume.

Jon H. Wautson, M.D.

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The Advenchure ov Wistereyaa Loj

The Cin'gular Expereyens ov Mr. Jon Scot Eckelz
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1. The Cin'gular Expereyens ov Mr. Jon Scot Eckelz

I fiand it recorded in mi noatbooc dhat it wauz a bleke and windy da toowordz the end ov March in the yere 1892. Hoamz had receevd a tellegram while we sat at our lunch, and he had scribbeld a repli. He made no remarc, but the matter remaind in hiz thauts, for he stood in frunt ov the fire aafterwordz withe a thautfool face, smoking hiz pipe, and caasting an ocaizhonal glaans at the message. Suddenly he ternd uppon me withe a mischevous twinkel in hiz ise.

"I supose, Wautson, we must looc uppon u az a man ov letterz," ced he. "Hou doo u define the werd 'grotesc'?"

"Strainj—remarcabel," I sugested.

He shooc hiz hed at mi definishon.

“Dhare iz shuerly sumthhing moer dhan dhat,” ced he; “sum underliying sugeschon ov the tradgic and the terribel. If u caast yor miand bac too sum ov dhose narratiavz withe which u hav aflicted a long-suffering public, u wil reccognise hou often the grotesc haz depend intoo the crimminal. Thhinc ov dhat littel afare ov the red-hedded men. Dhat wauz grotesc enuf in the outcet, and yet it ended in a desperate atempt at robbery. Or, agane, dhare wauz dhat moast grotesc afare ov the five oranj pips, which led strate too a merderous consprracy. The werd poots me on the alert.”

“Hav u it dhare?” I aasct.

He red the tellegram aloud.

“Hav just had moast increddibel and grotesc expereyens. Ma I consult u?

“Scot Eckelz,
“Poast Office, Charing Cros.”

“Man or woomman?” I aasct.

“O, man, ov coers. No woomman wood evver cend a repli-pade tellegram. She wood hav cum.”

“Wil u ce him?”

“Mi dere Wautson, u no hou boerd I hav bene cins we loct up Cuunel Carrutherz. Mi miand iz like a racing en’gine, taring itcelf too pecez becauz it iz not conected up withe the werc for which it wauz bilt. Life iz commonplace, the paperz ar sterrile; audascity and

romans ceme too hav paast forevver from the crimminal werld. Can u aasc me, then, whether I am reddy too looc intoo enny nu problem, houwevver trivveyal it ma proove? But here, unles I am mistaken, iz our cliyent.”

A mezhuerd step wauz herd uppon the staerz, and a moment later a stout, taul, gra-whiskerd and sollemly respectabel person wauz usherd intoo the roome. Hiz life history wauz ritten in hiz hevvy fechuerz and pompous manner. From hiz spats too hiz goald-rimnd spektakelz he wauz a Concervative, a cherchman, a good cittisen, orthodox and convenshonal too the laast degry. But sum amasing expereyens had disterbd hiz native compoazhure and left its tracez in hiz brisling hare, hiz flusht, an’gry cheex, and hiz flurrede, exited manner. He plunjd instantly intoo hiz biznes.

“I hav had a moast cin’gular and unplezzant expereyens, Mr. Hoamz,” ced he. “Nevver in mi life hav I bene plaist in such a cichuwaishon. It iz moast improper—moast outrageous. I must incist uppon sum explanaishon.” He sweld and puft in hiz an’gher.

“Pra cit doun, Mr. Scot Eckelz,” ced Hoamz in a suithing vois. “Ma I aasc, in the ferst place, whi u came too me at aul?”

“Wel, cer, it did not apere too be a matter which concernd the polece, and yet, when u hav herd the facts, u must admit dhat I cood not leve it whare it wauz. Private detectiavz ar a claas withe whoome I hav absolutly no cimpathy, but nun the les, havving herd yor name—”

“Qwite so. But, in the cecond place, whi did u not cum at wuns?”

Hoamz glaanst at hiz wauch.

"It iz a qworter-paast too," he ced. "Yor tellegram wauz dispacht about wun. But no wun can glaans at yor toilet and atire widhout ceying dhat yor disterbans daits from the moment ov yor waking."

Our cliyent smuidhd doun hiz unbrusht hare and felt hiz unshaven chin.

"U ar rite, Mr. Hoamz. I nevver gave a thaut too mi toilet. I wauz oanly too glad too ghet out ov such a hous. But I hav bene running round making inqwirese befoer I came too u. I went too the hous agents, u no, and dha ced dhat Mr. Garceyaaz rent wauz pade up aul rite and dhat evverithing wauz in order at Wistereyaa Loj."

"Cum, cum, cer," ced Hoamz, laafing. "U ar like mi frend, Dr. Wautson, whoo haz a bad habbit ov telling hiz stoerese rong end foermoast.

Plese arainj yor thauts and let me no, in dhare ju ceeqwens, exactly whaut dhose events ar which hav cent u out unbrusht and unkempt, withe dres buits and waistcote buttond ari, in cerch ov advice and acistans."

Our cliyent looct doun withe a rufool face at hiz one unconvenshonal aperans.

"Ime shure it must looc verry bad, Mr. Hoamz, and I am not aware dhat in mi whole life such a thhing haz evver happend befoer. But I wil tel u the whole qwere biznes, and when I hav dun so u wil admit, I am shure, dhat dhare haz bene enuf too excuse me."

But hiz narrative wauz nipt in the bud. Dhare wauz a buscel outside, and Mrs. Hudson opened the doer too usher in too robust and ofishal-looking individjuwalz, wun ov whoome wauz wel none too us az Inspector Gregson ov Scotland Yard, an energettic, galant, and, within hiz limitaishonz, a capabel officer. He shooc handz withe Hoamz and

introjuest hiz comrade az Inspector Bainz, ov the Surry Constabulary.

“We ar hunting tooghether, Mr. Hoamz, and our trale la in this direcshon.” He ternd hiz booldog ise uppon our vizsitor. “Ar u Mr. Jon Scot Eckelz, ov Pofam Hous, Le?”

“I am.”

“We hav bene following u about aul the morning.”

“U traist him throo the tellegram, no dout,” ced Hoamz.

“Exactly, Mr. Hoamz. We pict up the cent at Charing Cros Poast-Office and came on here.”

“But whi doo u follo me? Whaut doo u waunt?”

“We wish a staitment, Mr. Scot Eckelz, az too the events which led up too the deth laast nite ov Mr. Alowishus Garceyaa, ov Wistereyaa Loj, nere Eesher.”

Our cliyent had sat up withe staring ise and evvery tinj ov cullor struc from hiz astonnisht face.

“Ded? Did u sa he wauz ded?”

“Yes, cer, he iz ded.”

“But hou? An axident?”

“Merder, if evver dhare wauz wun uppon erth.”

“Good God! This iz aufool! U doant mene—u doant mene dhat I am suspected?”

“A letter ov yorz wauz found in the ded manz pocket, and we no bi it dhat u had pland too paas laast nite at hiz hous.”

“So I did.”

“O, u did, did u?”

Out came the ofishal noatbooc.

“Wate a bit, Gregson,” ced Sherloc Hoamz. “Aul u desire iz a plane staitment, iz it not?”

“And it iz mi juty too worn Mr. Scot Eckelz dhat it ma be uezd against him.”

“Mr. Eckelz wauz gowing too tel us about it when u enterd the roome. I thhinc, Wautson, a brandy and sodaa wood doo him no harm. Nou, cer, I sugest dhat u take no notice ov this adishon too yor augens, and dhat u procede withe yor narrative exactly az u wood hav dun had u nevver bene interupted.”

Our vizsitor had gulpt of the brandy and the cullor had reternd too hiz face. Withe a jubeyous glaans at the inspectorz noatbooc, he plunjd at wuns intoo hiz extrordinary staitment.

“I am a batchelor,” ced he, “and beying ov a soashabel tern I cultivate a larj number ov frendz. Amung these ar the fammily ov a retiard bruwer cauld Melvil, livving at Abermarl Manshon, Kensington. It wauz at hiz tabel dhat I met sum weex ago a yung fello naimd Garceyaa. He wauz, I understood, ov Spannish decent and conected in sum wa withe the embacy. He spoke perfect In’GLISH, wauz plesing in hiz mannerz, and az good-looking a man az evver I sau in mi life.

“In sum wa we struc up qwite a frendship, this yung fello and I. He ceemd too take a fancy too me from the ferst, and within too dase ov our meting he came too ce me at Le. Wun thhing led too anuther, and it ended in hiz inviting me out too spend a fu dase at hiz hous, Wistereyaa Loj, betwene Eesher and Oxshot. Yesterda evening I went too Eesher too foolfil this en’gajment.

“He had descriabd hiz hous’hoald too me befoer I went dhare. He livd withe a faithfool cervant, a cuntriman ov hiz one, whoo looct aafter aul hiz needz. This fello cood speke In’glish and did hiz houskeping for him. Then dhare wauz a wunderfool cooc, he ced, a haaf-brede whoome he had pict up in hiz travvelz, whoo cood cerv an exelent dinner. I remember dhat he remarct whaut a qwere hous’hoald it wauz too fiand in the hart ov Surry, and dhat I agrede withe him, dho it haz pruid a good dele qwerer dhan I thaut.

“I drove too the place—about too mialz on the south cide ov Eesher. The hous wauz a fare-ciazd wun, standing bac from the rode, withe a kerving drive which wauz banct withe hi evergrene shrubz. It wauz an oald, tumbeldoun bilding in a crasy state ov disrepare. When the trap poold up on the graas-grone drive in frunt ov the blocht and wether-staind doer, I had douts az too mi wizdom in vizsiting a man whoome I nu so sliatly. He opend the doer himcelf, houwever, and greted me withe a grate sho ov corjallity. I wauz handed over too the mancervant, a mellancoy, sworthy individjuwal, whoo led the wa, mi bag in hiz hand, too mi bedroome. The whole place wauz deprescing. Our dinner wauz *tête-à-tête*, and dho mi hoast did hiz best too be entertaning, hiz thauts ceemd too continnuwaly waunder, and he tauct so vaigly and wialdly dhat I cood hardly understand him. He continnuwaly drumd hiz fin’gherz on the tabel, naud hiz nailz, and gave uther cianz ov nervous

impaisens. The dinner itself wauz niather wel cervd nor wel cooct, and the gloomy prezsens ov the tascitern cervant did not help too enliven us. I can ashure u dhat menny tiamz in the coers ov the evening I wisht dhat I cood invent sum excuce which wood take me bac too Le.

“Wun thhing cumz bac too mi memmory which ma hav a baring uppon the biznes dhat u too gentelmen ar investigating. I thaut nuthhing ov it at the time. Nere the end ov dinner a note wauz handed in bi the cervant. I notiast dhat aafter mi hoast had red it he ceemd even moer distrate and strainj dhan befoer. He gave up aul pretens at conversaishon and sat, smoking endles ciggarets, lost in hiz one thauts, but he made no remarc az too the contents. About elevven I wauz glad too go too bed. Sum time later Garceyaa looct in at mi doer—the roome wauz darc at the time—and aasct me if I had rung. I ced dhat I had not. He apollogiazd for havving disterbd me so late, saying dhat it wauz neerly wun oacloc. I dropt of aafter this and slept soundly aul nite.

“And nou I cum too the amasing part ov mi tale. When I woke it wauz braud dalite. I glaanst at mi wauch, and the time wauz neerly nine. I had particularly aasct too be cauld at ate, so I wauz verry much astonnisht at this forghetfoolnes. I sprang up and rang for the cervant. Dhare wauz no respons. I rang agane and agane, withe the same rezult. Then I came too the concluezhon dhat the bel wauz out ov order. I huddeld on mi cloadhz and hurrede dounstaerz in an exedingly bad temper too order sum hot wauter. U can imadgine mi cerprise when I found dhat dhare wauz no wun dhare. I shouted in the haul. Dhare wauz no aancer. Then I ran from roome too roome. Aul wer deserted. Mi hoast had shone me which wauz hiz bedroome the nite befoer, so I noct at the doer. No repli. I ternd the handel and wauct in. The roome wauz empty, and the bed had nevver bene slept in. He had gon withe the rest. The forane hoast, the forane footman, the forane cooc, aul had vannisht in the

nite! Dhat wauz the end ov mi vizsit too Wistereyaa Loj."

Sherloc Hoamz wauz rubbing hiz handz and chucling az he added this bizar incident too hiz colecshon ov strainj eppisoadz.

"Yor expereyens iz, so far az I no, perfectly uneke," ced he. "Ma I aasc, cer, whaut u did then?"

"I wauz fureyous. Mi ferst ideyaa wauz dhat I had bene the victim ov sum abcerd practical joke. I pact mi thhingz, bangd the haul doer behiand me, and cet of for Eesher, withe mi bag in mi hand. I cauld at Allan Brutherz', the chefe land agents in the village, and found dhat it wauz from this ferm dhat the villaa had bene rented. It struc me dhat the whole proceding cood hardly be for the perpoce ov making a foole ov me, and dhat the mane obgett must be too ghet out ov the rent. It iz late in March, so qworter-da iz at hand. But this thheyory wood not werc. The agent wauz obliajd too me for mi worning, but toald me dhat the rent had bene pade in advaans. Then I made mi wa too toun and cauld at the Spannish embacy. The man wauz un'none dhare. Aafter this I went too ce Melvil, at whoose hous I had ferst met Garceyaa, but I found dhat he reyaly nu raather les about him dhan I did. Finaly when I got yor repli too mi wire I came out too u, cins I gather dhat u ar a person whoo ghivz advice in difficult cacez. But nou, Mr. Inspector, I understand, from whaut u ced when u enterd the roome, dhat u can carry the stoery on, and dhat sum tradgedy had okerd. I can ashure u dhat evvery werd I hav ced iz the trueth, and dhat, outcide ov whaut I hav toald u, I no absoluetly nuthhing about the fate ov this man. Mi oonly desire iz too help the lau in evvery poscibel wa."

"I am shure ov it, Mr. Scot Eckelz—I am shure ov it," ced Inspector Gregson in a verry ameyabel tone. "I am bound too sa dhat evverithing which u hav ced agrese verry cloasly withe the facts az dha hav cum too our notice. For exaampel, dhare wauz dhat note which ariavd juring dinner. Did u chaans too observ whaut became ov it?"

“Yes, I did. Garceyaa roald it up and thru it intoo the fire.”

“Whaut doo u sa too dhat, Mr. Bainz?”

The cuntry detective wauz a stout, puffy, red man, whose face wauz oonly redeemed from groasnes bi too extrordinarily brite ise, aulmoast hidden behiand the hevvy crecez ov cheke and brou. Withe a slo smile he dru a foalded and discullord scrap ov paper from hiz pocket.

“It wauz a dog-grate, Mr. Hoamz, and he overpicht it. I pict this out unbernd from the bac ov it.”

Hoamz smiald hiz apreesheyaishon.

“U must hav exammiand the hous verry caerfooly too fiand a cin’ghel pellet ov paper.”

“I did, Mr. Hoamz. Its mi wa. Shal I rede it, Mr. Gregson?”

The Lundoner nodded.

“The note iz ritten uppon ordinary creme-lade paper widhout wautermarc. It iz a qworter-shete. The paper iz cut of in too snips withe a short-bladed cizzorz. It haz bene foalded over thre tiamz and ceeld withe perpel wax, poot on hurreedly and prest doun withe sum flat oval object. It iz adrest too Mr. Garceyaa, Wistereyaa Loj. It cez:

“Our one cullorz, grene and white. Grene open, white shut. Mane stare, ferst coridor, cevventh rite, grene base. Godspede. D.

“It iz a woommanz riting, dun withe a sharp-pointed pen, but the adres iz iather dun withe anuther pen or bi sumwun els. It iz thhicker and boalder, az u ce.”

"A verry remarcabel note," ced Hoamz, glaancing it over. "I must compliment u, Mr. Bainz, uppon yor atenshon too detale in yor examinaishon ov it. A fu triafling points mite perhaps be added. The oval cele iz undoutedly a plane sleve-linc—whaut els iz ov such a shape? The cizzorz wer bent nale cizzorz. Short az the too snips ar, u can distinctly ce the same slite kerv in eche."

The cuntry detective chuckeld.

"I thaut I had sqweezd aul the juce out ov it, but I ce dhare wauz a littel over," he ced. "Ime bound too sa dhat I make nuthhing ov the note exept dhat dhare wauz sumthhing on hand, and dhat a woomman, az uezhuwal wauz at the bottom ov it."

Mr. Scot Eckelz had fidgeted in hiz cete juring this conversaishon.

"I am glad u found the note, cins it corobboraits mi stoery," ced he. "But I beg too point out dhat I hav not yet herd whaut haz happend too Mr. Garceyaa, nor whaut haz becum ov hiz hous'hoald."

"Az too Garceyaa," ced Gregson, "dhat iz esily aancerd. He wauz found ded this morning uppon Oxshot Common, neerly a mile from hiz home. Hiz hed had bene smasht too pulp bi hevvy blose ov a sandbag or sum such instrument, which had crusht raather dhan wuinded. It iz a loanly corner, and dhare iz no hous within a qworter ov a mile ov the spot. He had aparrently bene struc down ferst from behiand, but hiz asalant had gon on beting him long aafter he wauz ded. It wauz a moast fureyous asault. Dhare ar no footsteps nor enny clu too the crimminalz."

"Robd?"

"No, dhare wauz no atempt at robbery."

“This iz verry painfool—verry painfool and terribel,” ced Mr. Scot Eckelz in a qwerrulous vois, “but it iz reyaly uncommonly hard on me. I had nuthhing too doo withe mi hoast gowing of uppon a nocternal exkerzhon and meting so sad an end. Hou doo I cum too be mixt up withe the cace?”

“Verry cimply, cer,” Inspector Bainz aancerd. “The oonly document found in the pocket ov the deceest wauz a letter from u saying dhat u wood be withe him on the nite ov hiz deth. It wauz the envelope ov this letter which gave us the ded manz name and adres. It wauz aafter nine this morning when we reecht hiz hous and found niather u nor enniwun els incide it. I wiard too Mr. Gregson too run u doun in Lunden while I exammiand Wistereyaa Loj. Then I came intoo toun, joind Mr. Gregson, and here we ar.”

“I thhinc nou,” ced Gregson, rising, “we had best poot this matter intoo an ofishal shape. U wil cum round withe us too the staishon, Mr. Scot Eckelz, and let us hav yor staitment in riting.”

“Certainly, I wil cum at wuns. But I retane yor cervicez, Mr. Hoamz. I desire u too spare no expens and no painz too ghet at the trueth.”

Mi frend ternd too the cuntry inspector.

“I supose dhat u hav no obgechshon too mi colaborating withe u, Mr. Bainz?”

“Hily onnord, cer, I am shure.”

“U apere too hav bene verry prompt and bizneslike in aul dhat u hav dun. Wauz dhare enny clu, ma I aasc, az too the exact our dhat the man met hiz deth?”

“He had bene dhare cins wun oacloc. Dhare wauz rane about dhat time, and hiz deth had certainly bene befoer the rane.”

“But dhat iz perfectly imposcibel, Mr. Bainz,” cride our cliyent. “Hiz vois iz unmistacabel. I cood sware too it dhat it wauz he whoo adrest me in mi bedroome at dhat verry our.”

“Remarcabel, but bi no meenz imposcibel,” ced Hoamz, smiling.

“U hav a clu?” aasct Gregson.

“On the face ov it the cace iz not a verry complex wun, dho it certainly presents sum novvel and interesting fechuerz. A ferther nollej ov facts iz nescenary befoer I wood venchure too ghiv a final and deffinite opinyon. Bi the wa, Mr. Bainz, did u fiand ennithhing remarcabel beciadz this note in yor examinaishon ov the hous?”

The detective looct at mi frend in a cin’gular wa.

“Dhare wer,” ced he, “wun or too *verry* remarcabel thhingz. Perhaps when I hav finnisht at the polece-staishon u wood care too cum out and ghiv me yor opinyon ov them.”

“I am entiarly at yor cervice,” ced Sherloc Hoamz, ringing the bel. “U wil sho these gentelmen out, Mrs. Hudson, and kiandly cend the boi withe this tellegram. He iz too pa a five-shilling repli.”

We sat for sum time in cilens aafter our vizsitorz had left. Hoamz smoact hard, withe hiz brouz draun doun over hiz kene ise, and hiz hed thrust forword in the egher wa characteristic ov the man.

“Wel, Wautson,” he aasct, terning suddenly uppon me, “whaut doo u make

ov it?"

"I can make nuthhing ov this mistificaishon ov Scot Eckelz."

"But the crime?"

"Wel, taken withe the disaperans ov the manz companyonz, I shood sa dhat dha wer in sum wa concernd in the merder and had fled from justice."

"Dhat iz certainly a poscibel point ov vu. On the face ov it u must admit, houwevver, dhat it iz verry strainj dhat hiz too cervants shood hav bene in a conspurracy against him and shood hav atact him on the wun nite when he had a ghest. Dha had him alone at dhare mercy evvery uther nite in the weke."

"Then whi did dha fli?"

"Qwite so. Whi did dha fli? Dhare iz a big fact. Anuther big fact iz the remarcabel expereyens ov our cliyent, Scot Eckelz. Nou, mi dere Wautson, iz it beyond the limmits ov human in'genuwity too fernish an explanaishon which wood cuvver boath ov these big facts? If it wer wun which wood aulso admit ov the mistereyous note withe its verry cureyous fraseyollogy, whi, then it wood be werth axepting az a temporary hipothhecis. If the fresh facts which cum too our nollej aul fit themcelvz intoo the skeme, then our hipothhecis ma gradjuwaly becum a solueshon."

"But whaut iz our hipothhecis?"

Hoamz leend bac in hiz chare withe haaf-cloazd ise.

"U must admit, mi dere Wautson, dhat the ideyaa ov a joke iz imposcibel. Dhare wer grave events afoot, az the ceeqwel shode, and the coaxing ov

Scot Eckelz too Wistereyaa Loj had sum conecshon withe them.”

“But whaut poscibel conecshon?”

“Let us take it linc bi linc. Dhare iz, on the face ov it, sumthhing un’natchural about this strainj and sudden frendship betwene the yung Spanyard and Scot Eckelz. It wauz the former whoo foerst the pace. He cauld uppon Eckelz at the uther end ov Lundon on the verry da aafter he ferst met him, and he kept in cloce tuch withe him until he got him doun too Eesher. Nou, whaut did he waunt withe Eckelz? Whaut cood Eckelz

supli? I ce no charm in the man. He iz not particcularly intelligent—not a man liacly too be con’geenyal too a qwic-witted Latin. Whi, then, wauz he pict out from aul the uther pepel whoome Garceyaa met

az particcularly suted too hiz perpoce? Haz he enny wun outstanding qwaulity? I sa dhat he haz. He iz the verry tipe ov convenshonal British respectabillity, and the verry man az a witnes too impres anuther Britton. U sau yorcelf hou niather ov the inspectorz dreemd ov qweschoning hiz staitment, extrordinary az it wauz.”

“But whaut wauz he too witnes?”

“Nuthhing, az thhingz ternd out, but evverithhing had dha gon anuther wa. Dhat iz hou I rede the matter.”

“I ce, he mite hav pruivd an allibi.”

“Exactly, mi dere Wautson; he mite hav pruivd an allibi. We wil supose, for arguments sake, dhat the hous’hoald ov Wistereyaa Loj ar confedderaits in sum desine. The atempt, whautevver it ma be, iz too cum of, we wil sa, befoer wun oacloc. Bi sum jugling ov the clox it iz qwite poscibel dhat dha ma hav got Scot Eckelz too bed erleyer dhan he thaut, but in enny cace it iz liacly dhat when Garceyaa

went out ov hiz wa too tel him dhat it wauz wun it wauz reyal not moer dhan twelv. If Garceyaa cood doo whautevver he had too doo and be bac bi the our menshond he had evvidently a pouwerfool repli too enny acuzashon.

Here wauz this irreprochabel In'gliselman reddy too sware in enny coert ov lau dhat the acuezd wauz in the hous aul the time. It wauz an inshurans against the werst."

"Yes, yes, I ce dhat. But hou about the disaperans ov the utherz?"

"I hav not aul mi facts yet, but I doo not thhinc dhare ar enny insuperabel difficultese. Stil, it iz an error too argu in frunt ov yor dataa. U fiand yorcelf incencibly twisting them round too fit yor thheyorese."

"And the message?"

"Hou did it run? 'Our one cullorz, grene and white.' Soundz like racing. 'Grene open, white shut.' Dhat iz cleerly a cignal. 'Mane stare, ferst coridor, cevventh rite, grene base.' This iz an acignaishon. We ma fiand a gellous huzband at the bottom ov it aul. It wauz cleerly a dain'gerous qwest. She wood not hav ced 'Godspede' had it not bene so. 'D'—dhat shood be a ghide."

"The man wauz a Spanyold. I sugest dhat 'D' standz for Dolores, a common female name in Spane."

"Good, Wautson, verry good—but qwite inadmissabel. A Spanyold wood rite too a Spanyold in Spannish. The riter ov this note iz certainly In'glis. Wel, we can oanly poses our sole in paishens until this exelent inspector cum bac for us. Meenwhile we can thanc our lucky fate which haz rescude us for a fu short ourz from the insufferabel fateegz ov idelnes."

An aancer had ariavd too Hoamsez tellegram befoer our Surry officer had reternd. Hoamz red it and wauz about too place it in hiz noatbooc when he caut a glimps ov mi expectant face. He tost it acros withe a laaf.

“We ar mooving in exaulted cerkelz,” ced he.

The tellegram wauz a list ov naimz and adrecez:

Lord Harringby, The Din’ghel; Cer Jorj Folleyot, Oxshot Touwerz; Mr. Hianz Hianz, J.P., Perdly Place; Mr. Jaimz Baker Willeyamz, Forton Oald Haul; Mr. Henderson, Hi Gabel; Rev. Joshuwaa Stone, Nether Walsling.

“This iz a verry obveyous wa ov limmiting our feeld ov operaishonz,” ced Hoamz. “No dout Bainz, withe hiz methoddical miand, haz aulreddy adopted sum cimmilar plan.”

“I doant qwite understand.”

“Wel, mi dere fello, we hav aulreddy ariavd at the concluezhon dhat the message receevd bi Garceyaa at dinner wauz an apointment or an acignaishon. Nou, if the obveyous reding ov it iz corect, and in order too kepe the trist wun haz too acend a mane stare and ceke the cevventh doer in a coridor, it iz perfectly clere dhat the hous iz a verry larj wun. It iz eeqwaly certane dhat this hous canot be moer dhan a mile or too from Oxshot, cins Garceyaa wauz wauking in dhat direcshon and hoapt, acording too mi reding ov the facts, too be bac in Wistereyaa Loj in time too avale himself ov an allibi, which wood oonly be vallid up too wun oacloc. Az the number ov larj housez cloce too Oxshot must be limmited, I adopted the obveyous method ov cending too the agents menshond bi Scot Eckelz and obtaning a list ov them. Here dha ar in this tellegram, and the uthere end ov our tan’gheld scane must li among

them.”

It wauz neerly six oacloc befoer we found ourcelvz in the pritty Surry village ov Eesher, withe Inspector Bainz az our companyon.

Hoamz and I had taken thhingz for the nite, and found cumfortabel qworterz at the Bool. Finaly we cet out in the cumpany ov the detective on our vizsit too Wistereyaa Loj. It wauz a coald, darc March evening, withe a sharp wind and a fine rane beting uppon our facez, a fit cetting for the wiald common over which our rode paast and the tradgic gole too which it led us.

2. The Tigher ov San Pedro

A coald and mellancoly wauc ov a cuppel ov mialz braut us too a hi wooden gate, which opend intoo a gloomy avvenu ov chesnuts. The kervd and shaddode drive led us too a lo, darc hous, pich-blac against a slate-cullord ski. From the frunt windo uppon the left ov the doer dhare peept a glimmer ov a febel lite.

“Dhaerz a cunstabel in poseshon,” ced Bainz. “Ile noc at the windo.” He stept acros the graas plot and tapt withe hiz hand on the pane. Throo the fogd glaas I dimly sau a man spring up from a chare becide the fire, and herd a sharp cri from within the roome. An instant later a white-faist, hard-breething poleesman had opend the doer, the candel wavering in hiz trembling hand.

“Whauts the matter, Waulterz?” aasct Bainz sharply.

The man mopt hiz foerhed withe hiz hankerchefe and gave a long ci ov relefe.

"I am glad u hav cum, cer. It haz bene a long evening, and I doant thhinc mi nerv iz az good az it wauz."

"Yor nerv, Waulterz? I shoood not hav thaut u had a nerv in yor boddy."

"Wel, cer, its this loanly, cilent hous and the qwere thhing in the kitchen. Then when u tapt at the windo I thaut it had cum agane."

"Dhat whaut had cum agane?"

"The devvil, cer, for aul I no. It wauz at the windo."

"Whaut wauz at the windo, and when?"

"It wauz just about too ourz ago. The lite wauz just fading. I wauz citting reding in the chare. I doant no whaut made me looc up, but dhare wauz a face loocking in at me throo the lower pane. Lord, cer, whaut a face it wauz! Ile ce it in mi dreemz."

"Tut, tut, Waulterz. This iz not tauc for a polece-cunstabel."

"I no, cer, I no; but it shooc me, cer, and dhaerz no uce too deni it. It wauznt blac, cer, nor wauz it white, nor enny cullor dhat I no but a kiand ov qwere shade like cla withe a splash ov milc in it. Then dhare wauz the cise ov it—it wauz twice yorz, cer. And the looc ov it—the grate staring gogghel ise, and the line ov white teeth like a hun'gry beest. I tel u, cer, I coodnt moove a fin'gher, nor ghet mi breth, til it whisct awa and wauz gon. Out I ran and throo the shrubbery, but thanc God dhare wauz no wun dhare."

"If I didnt no u wer a good man, Waulterz, I shoood poot a blac marc against u for this. If it wer the devvil himcelf a cunstabel on

juty shood nevver thanc God dhat he cood not la hiz handz uppon him. I suppose the whole thhing iz not a vizhon and a tuch ov nervz?"

"Dhat, at leest, iz verry esily cetteld," ced Hoamz, liting hiz littel pocket lantern. "Yes," he repoerted, aafter a short examinaishon ov the graas bed, "a number twelv shoo, I shood sa. If he wauz aul on the same scale az hiz foot he must certainly hav bene a giyant."

"Whaut became ov him?"

"He ceemz too hav broken throo the shrubbery and made for the rode."

"Wel," ced the inspector withe a grave and thautfool face, "whoowevver he ma hav bene, and whautevver he ma hav waunted, hese gon for the prezsent, and we hav moer imejate thhingz too atend too. Nou, Mr. Hoamz, withe yor permishon, I wil sho u round the hous."

The vareyous bedruimz and citting-ruimz had yeelded nuthhing too a caerfool cerch. Aparrently the tennants had braut littel or nuthhing withe them, and aul the fernichure doun too the smaulest detailz had bene taken over withe the hous. A good dele ov cloathing withe the stamp ov Marx and Co., Hi Hoborn, had bene left behiand. Telegraffic inqwirse had bene aulreddy made which shode dhat Marx nu nuthhing ov hiz customer save dhat he wauz a good payer. Odz and endz, sum piaps, a fu novvelz, too ov them in Spannish, an oald-fashond pinfire revolver, and a ghitar wer among the personal propperty.

"Nuthhing in aul this," ced Bainz, stauking, candel in hand, from roome too roome. "But nou, Mr. Hoamz, I invite yor atenshon too the kitchen."

It wauz a gloomy, hi-celingd roome at the bac ov the hous, withe a strau litter in wun corner, which cervd aparrently az a bed for the cooc. The tabel wauz piald withe haaf-eten dishez and derty plaits, the

daibry ov laast niats dinner.

“Looc at this,” ced Bainz. “Whaut doo u make ov it?”

He held up hiz candel befoer an extraordinary obgett which stood at the bac ov the drescer. It wauz so rinkeld and shrunken and witherd dhat it wauz difficult too sa whaut it mite hav bene. Wun cood but sa dhat it wauz blac and lethery and dhat it boer sum resemblans too a dworfish, human figgure. At ferst, az I exammiand it, I thaut dhat it wauz a mummifide neegro baby, and then it ceemd a verry twisted and ainshent munky. Finaly I wauz left in dout az too whether it wauz annimal or human. A dubbel band ov white shelz wer strung round the center ov it.

“Verry interesting—verry interesting, indede!” ced Hoamz, pering at this cinnister rellic. “Ennithhing moer?”

In cilens Bainz led the wa too the cinc and held forword hiz candel. The limz and boddy ov sum larj, white berd, toern savvajly too pecez withe the fetherz stil on, wer litterd aul over it. Hoamz pointed too the wautelz on the cevverd hed.

“A white coc,” ced he. “Moast interesting! It iz reyaly a verry cureyous cace.”

But Mr. Bainz had kept hiz moast cinnister exhibbit too the laast. From under the cinc he dru a sinc pale which containd a qwauntity ov blud. Then from the tabel he tooc a platter heept withe smaul pecez ov chard bone.

“Sumthhing haz bene kild and sumthhing haz bene bernd. We raict aul these out ov the fire. We had a doctor in this morning. He cez dhat dha ar not human.”

Hoamz smiald and rubd hiz handz.

“I must con’gratchulate u, Inspector, on handling so distinctive and instructive a case. Yor pouwerz, if I ma sa so widhout ofens, ceme supereyor too yor oporchunitese.”

Inspector Bainsez smaul ise twinkeld withe plezhure.

“Yor rite, Mr. Hoamz. We stagnate in the provvincez. A case ov this sort ghivz a man a chaans, and I hope dhat I shal take it. Whaut doo u make ov these boanz?”

“A lam, I shood sa, or a kid.”

“And the white coc?”

“Cureyous, Mr. Bainz, verry cureyous. I shood sa aulmoast uneke.”

“Yes, cer, dhare must hav bene sum verry strainj pepel withe sum verry strainj wase in this hous. Wun ov them iz ded. Did hiz companyonz follo him and kil him? If dha did we shood hav them, for evvery poert iz waucht. But mi one vuse ar different. Yes, cer, mi one vuse ar verry different.”

“U hav a thheyory then?”

“And Ile werc it micelf, Mr. Hoamz. Its oonly ju too mi one credit too doo so. Yor name iz made, but I hav stil too make mine. I shood be glad too be abel too sa aafterwordz dhat I had solvd it widhout yor help.”

Hoamz laaft good-humordly.

“Wel, wel, Inspector,” ced he. “Doo u follo yor paath and I wil follo mine. Mi rezults ar aulwase verry much at yor cervice if u care too apli too me for them. I thhinc dhat I hav cene aul dhat I wish in this hous, and dhat mi time ma be moer proffitably emploid elshware. *O revwar* and good luc!”

I cood tel bi numerous suttel cianz, which mite hav bene lost uppon enniwun but micelf, dhat Hoamz wauz on a hot cent. Az impascive az evver

too the cazhuwal observer, dhare wer nun the les a subjude eghernes and sugeschon ov tenshon in hiz britend ise and brisker manner which ashuerd me dhat the game wauz afoot. Aafter hiz habbit he ced nuthhing, and aafter mine I aasct no qweschonz. Sufishent for me too share the spoert and lend mi humbel help too the capchure widhout distracting dhat intent brane withe needles interupshon. Aul wood cum round too me in ju time.

I wated, dhaerfoer—but too mi evver-depening disapointment I wated in vane. Da suxeded da, and mi frend tooc no step forword. Wun morning he spent in toun, and I lernd from a cazhuwal refferens dhat he had vizsited the Brittish Museyum. Save for this wun exkerzhon, he spent hiz dase in long and often sollitary waux, or in chatting withe a number ov village goscips whoose aqwaintans he had cultivated.

“Ime shure, Wautson, a weke in the cuntry wil be invallubel too u,” he remarct. “It iz verry plezzant too ce the ferst grene shuits uppon the hedgez and the catkinz on the haselz wuns agane. Withe a spud, a tin box, and an elementary booc on bottany, dhare ar instructive dase too be spent.” He prould about withe this eqwipment himcelf, but it wauz a poor sho ov plaants which he wood bring bac ov an evening.

Ocaizhonaly in our rambelz we came acros Inspector Bainz. Hiz fat, red face reedhd itcelf in smialz and hiz smaul ise glitterd az he

greted mi companyon. He ced littel about the cace, but from dhat littel we gatherd dhat he aulso wauz not disattisfide at the coers ov events. I must admit, houwevver, dhat I wauz sumwhaut cerpriazd when, sum five dase aafter the crime, I opend mi morning paper too fiand in larj letterz:

THE OXSHOT MISTERY
A SOLUESHON
AREST OV SUPOSED ASASCIN

Hoamz sprang in hiz chare az if he had bene stung when I red the hedlianz.

“Bi Jove!” he cride. “U doant mene dhat Bainz haz got him?”

“Aparrently,” ced I az I red the following repoert:

“Grate exiatment wauz cauzd in Eesher and the naboring district when it wauz lernd late laast nite dhat an arest had bene efected in conecshon withe the Oxshot merder. It wil be rememberd dhat Mr. Garceyaa, ov Wistereyaa Loj, wauz found ded on Oxshot Common, hiz boddy showing cianz ov extreme viyolens, and dhat on the same nite hiz cervant and hiz cooc fled, which apeerd too sho dhare participaishon in the crime. It wauz sugested, but nevver pruivd, dhat the deceest gentelman ma hav had vallubelz in the hous, and dhat dhare abstracshon wauz the motive ov the crime. Evvery effort wauz made bi Inspector Bainz, whoo haz the cace in hand, too ascertain the hiding place ov the fugitiavz, and he had good rezon too beleve dhat dha had not gon far but wer lerking in sum retrete which had bene aulreddy prepaerd. It wauz certane from the ferst, houwevver, dhat dha wood evenchuwaly be detected, az the cooc, from the evvidens ov wun or too traidzpepel whoo hav caut a glimps ov him throo the windo, wauz a

man ov moast remarcabel aperans—beying a huge and hidjous mulatto, withe yellowish fechuerz ov a pronounst neegroid tipe. This man haz bene cene cins the crime, for he wauz detected and pershude bi Cunstabel Waulterz on the same evening, when he had the audascity too revizsit Wistereyaa Loj. Inspector Bainz, conciddering dhat such a vizsit must hav sum perpoce in vu and wauz liacly, dhaerfoer, too be repeted, abandond the hous but left an ambuscade in the shrubbery. The man wauct intoo the trap and wauz capchuerd laast nite aafter a strugghel in which Cunstabel Douning wauz badly bitten bi the savvage. We understand dhat when the prizzoner iz braut befoer the madgistraits a remaand wil be aplide for bi the polece, and dhat grate devellopments ar hoapt from hiz capchure.”

“Reyaly we must ce Bainz at wuns,” cride Hoamz, picking up hiz hat. “We wil just cach him befoer he starts.” We hurrede down the village strete and found, az we had expected, dhat the inspector wauz just leving hiz lodgingz.

“Uve cene the paper, Mr. Hoamz?” he aasct, hoalding wun out too us.

“Yes, Bainz, Ive cene it. Pra doant thhinc it a libberty if I ghiv u a werd ov frendly worning.”

“Ov worning, Mr. Hoamz?”

“I hav looct intoo this cace withe sum care, and I am not convinst dhat u ar on the rite lianz. I doant waunt u too comit yorcelf too far unles u ar shure.”

“Yor verry kiand, Mr. Hoamz.”

“I ashure u I speke for yor good.”

It ceemd too me dhat sumthhing like a winc qwivverd for an instant over wun ov Mr. Bainsez tiny ise.

“We agrede too werc on our one lianz, Mr. Hoamz. Dhats whaut I am doowing.”

“O, verry good,” ced Hoamz. “Doant blame me.”

“No, cer; I beleve u mene wel bi me. But we aul hav our one cistemz, Mr. Hoamz. U hav yorz, and maby I hav mine.”

“Let us sa no moer about it.”

“Yor welcum aulwase too mi nuse. This fello iz a perfect savvage, az strong az a cart-hors and az feers az the devvil. He chude Douningz thum neerly of befoer dha cood maaster him. He hardly speex a werd ov In’glisch, and we can ghet nuthhing out ov him but grunts.”

“And u thhinc u hav evvidens dhat he merderd hiz late maaster?”

“I didnt sa so, Mr. Hoamz; I didnt sa so. We aul hav our littel wase. U tri yorz and I wil tri mine. Dhats the agrement.”

Hoamz shrugd hiz shoalderz az we wauct awa tooghether. “I caant make the man out. He ceemz too be riding for a faul. Wel, az he cez, we must eche tri our one wa and ce whaut cumz ov it. But dhaerz sumthhing in Inspector Bainz which I caant qwite understand.”

“Just cit doun in dhat chare, Wautson,” ced Sherloc Hoamz when we had reternd too our apartment at the Bool. “I waunt too poot u in tuch withe the cichuwaishon, az I ma nede yor help too-nite. Let me sho u the evolueshon ov this cace so far az I hav bene abel too follo it. Cimpel az it haz bene in its leding fechuerz, it haz nun the les presented

cerprising difficultese in the wa ov an arest. Dhare ar gaps in dhat direcshon which we hav stil too fil.

“We wil go bac too the note which wauz handed in too Garceyaa uppon the evening ov hiz deth. We ma poot acide this ideyaa ov Bainsez dhat Garceyaaaz cervants wer concernd in the matter. The proofe ov this lise in the fact dhat it wauz *he* whoo had arainjd for the prezsens ov Scot Eckelz, which cood oonly hav bene dun for the perpoce ov an allibi. It wauz Garceyaa, then, whoo had an enterprise, and aparrently a crimminal enterprise, in hand dhat nite in the coers ov which he met hiz deth. I sa ‘crimminal’ becauz oonly a man withe a crimminal enterprise desiarz too establish an allibi. Whoo, then, iz moast liacly too hav taken hiz life? Shuerly the person against whoome the crimminal enterprise wauz directed. So far it ceemz too me dhat we ar on safe ground.

“We can nou ce a rezon for the disaperans ov Garceyaaaz hous’hoald. Dha wer *aul* confedderaits in the same un’none crime. If it came of when Garceyaa reternd, enny poscibel suspishon wood be worded of bi the In’glisshmanz evvidens, and aul wood be wel. But the atempt wauz a dain’gerous wun, and if Garceyaa did *not* retern bi a certane our it wauz probbabel dhat hiz one life had bene sacrifiast. It had bene arainjd, dhaerfoer, dhat in such a cace hiz too subordinaits wer too make for sum preyarainjd spot whare dha cood escape investigaishon and be in a posishon aafterwordz too renu dhare atempt. Dhat wood foolly explane the facts, wood it not?”

The whole inexpliccabel tan’ghel ceemd too straten out befoer me. I wunderd, az I aulwase did, hou it had not bene obveyous too me befoer.

“But whi shood wun cervant retern?”

“We can imadgine dhat in the confuezhon ov flite sumthhing preshous, sumthhing which he cood not bare too part withe, had bene left behiand.

Dhat wood explaine hiz percistens, wood it not?"

"Wel, whaut iz the next step?"

"The next step iz the note receevd bi Garceyaa at the dinner. It indicaits a confedderate at the uther end. Nou, whare wauz the uther end? I hav aulreddy shone u dhat it cood oanly li in sum larj hous, and dhat the number ov larj housez iz limmited. Mi ferst dase in this village wer devoted too a cerese ov waux in which in the intervalz ov mi botannical recerchez I made a reconnasans ov aul the larj housez and an examinaishon ov the fammily history ov the occupants. Wun hous, and oanly wun, rivveted mi atenshon. It iz the famous oald Jacobeyan grainj ov Hi Gabel, wun mile on the farther cide ov Oxshot, and les dhan haaf a mile from the cene ov the tradgedy. The uther manshonz belongd too prozayic and respectabel pepel whoo liv far aloofe from romans. But Mr. Henderson, ov Hi Gabel, wauz bi aul acounts a cureyous man too whoome cureyous advenchuerz mite befaul. I concentrated mi atenshon, dhaerfoer, uppon him and hiz hous'hoald.

"A cin'gular cet ov pepel, Wautson—the man himcelf the moast cin'gular ov them aul. I mannijd too ce him on a plausibel pretext, but I ceemd too rede in hiz darc, deepcet, brooding ise dhat he wauz perfectly aware ov mi tru biznes. He iz a man ov fifty, strong, active, withe iarn-gra hare, grate buncht blac iabrouz, the step ov a dere and the are ov an emperor—a feers, maasterfool man, withe a red-hot spirrit behiand hiz parchment face. He iz iather a foraner or haz livd long in the troppix, for he iz yello and saples, but tuf az whipcord. Hiz frend and cecretary, Mr. Lucas, iz undoutedly a foraner, chocolate broun, wily, swaav, and catlike, withe a poizonous gentelnes ov speche. U ce, Wautson, we hav cum aulreddy uppon too cets ov foraners—wun at Wistereyaa Loj and wun at Hi Gabel—so our gaps ar beghinning too close.

“These too men, cloce and confidenshal frendz, ar the center ov the hous’hoald; but dhare iz wun uther person whoo for our imejate perpoce ma be even moer important. Henderson haz too children—gherlz ov elevven and thhertene. Dhare guvvernes iz a Mis Bernet, an In’gliswoomman ov forty or dharabouts. Dhare iz aulso wun confidenshal mancervant. This littel groope formz the reyal fammily, for dha travvel about tooggether, and Henderson iz a grate travveler, aulwase on the moove. It iz oanly within the laast weex dhat he haz reternd, aafter a yeerz abcens, too Hi Gabel. I ma ad dhat he iz enormously rich, and whautevver hiz whimz ma be he can verry esily sattisfi them. For the rest, hiz hous iz fool ov butlerz, footmen, maidservants, and the uezhuwal overfed, underwerct staaf ov a larj In’glis cuntry hous.

“So much I lernd partly from village goscip and partly from mi one observaishon. Dhare ar no better instruments dhan discharjd cervants withe a grevans, and I wauz lucky enuf too fiand wun. I caul it luc, but it wood not hav cum mi wa had I not bene loocking out for it. Az Bainz remarx, we aul hav our cistemz. It wauz mi cistem which enabeld me too fiand Jon Worner, late gardener ov Hi Gabel, sact in a moment ov temper bi hiz impereyous employier. He in tern had frendz among the indoer cervants whoo unite in dhare fere and dislike ov dhare maaster. So I had mi ke too the ceecrets ov the establishment.

“Cureyous pepel, Wautson! I doant pretend too understand it aul yet, but verry cureyous pepel enniwa. Its a dubbel-wingd hous, and the cervants liv on wun cide, the fammily on the uther. Dhaerz no linc betwene the too save for Hendersonz one cervant, whoo cervz the fammilese meelz. Evverithhing iz carrede too a certane doer, which formz the wun conecshon. Guvvernes and children hardly go out at aul, exept intoo the garden. Henderson nevver bi enny chaans waux alone. Hiz darc secretary iz like hiz shaddo. The goscip among the cervants iz dhat dhare maaster iz terribly afrade ov sumthhing. ‘Soald hiz sole too the

devvil in exchainj for munny,' cez Worner, 'and expects hiz credditor too cum up and clame hiz one.' Whare dha came from, or whoo dha ar, nobody haz an ideyaa. Dha ar verry viyolent. Twice Henderson haz lasht at foke withe hiz dog-whip, and oarly hiz long pers and hevvy compensaishon hav kept him out ov the coerts.

"Wel, nou, Wautson, let us juj the cichuwaishon bi this nu informaishon. We ma take it dhat the letter came out ov this strainj hous'hoald and wauz an invitaishon too Garceyaa too carry out sum atempt which had aulreddy bene pland. Whoo rote the note? It wauz sumwun within the cittadel, and it wauz a woomman. Whoo then but Mis Bernet, the guvvernes? Aul our rezoning ceemz too point dhat wa. At enny rate, we ma take it az a hipothhecis and ce whaut conceqwencez it wood entale. I ma ad dhat Mis Bernets age and carracter make it certane dhat mi ferst ideyaa dhat dhare mite be a luv interest in our stoery iz out ov the qweschon.

"If she rote the note she wauz preezhumably the frend and confedderate ov Garceyaa. Whaut, then, mite she be expected too doo if she herd ov hiz deth? If he met it in sum nefareyous enterprise her lips mite be ceeld. Stil, in her hart, she must retane bitternes and haitred against dhose whoo had kild him and wood preezhumably help so far az she cood too hav revenj uppon them. Cood we ce her, then and tri too use her? Dhat wauz mi ferst thaut. But nou we cum too a cinnister fact. Mis Bernet haz not bene cene bi enny human i cins the nite ov the merder. From dhat evening she haz utterly vannisht. Iz she alive? Haz she perhaps met her end on the same nite az the frend whoome she had summond? Or iz she meerly a prizzoneer? Dhare iz the point which we stil hav too decide.

"U wil apreesheyate the difficulty ov the cichuwaishon, Wautson. Dhare iz nuthhing uppon which we can apli for a worant. Our whole skeme mite ceme fantastic if lade befoer a madgistrate. The woommanz disaperans

counts for nuthing, cins in dhat extrordinary hous'hoald enny member ov it mite be invizibel for a weke. And yet she ma at the prezsent moment be in dain'ger ov her life. Aul I can doo iz too wauch the hous and leve mi agent, Worner, on gard at the gaits. We caant let such a cichuwaishon continu. If the lau can doo nuthing we must take the risc ourcelvz."

"Whaut doo u sugest?"

"I no which iz her roome. It iz axescibel from the top ov an out'hous. Mi sugeschon iz dhat u and I go too-nite and ce if we can strike at the verry hart ov the mistery."

It wauz not, I must confes, a verry aluring prospect. The oald hous withe its atmosfere ov merder, the cin'gular and formiddabel inhabbitants, the un'none dain'gerz ov the aproche, and the fact dhat we wer pooting ourcelvz legaly in a fauls posishon aul combiand too damp mi ardor. But dhare wauz sumthhing in the ice-coald rezoning ov Hoamz which made it imposcibel too shrinc from enny advenchure which he mite recomend. Wun nu dhat dhus, and oanly dhus, cood a solueshon be found. I claaspt hiz hand in cilens, and the di wauz caast.

But it wauz not destiand dhat our investigaishon shood hav so advenchurous an ending. It wauz about five oacloc, and the shaddose ov the March evening wer beghinning too faul, when an exited rustic rusht intoo our roome.

"Dhave gon, Mr. Hoamz. Dha went bi the laast trane. The lady broke awa, and Ive got her in a cab dounstaerz."

"Exelent, Worner!" cride Hoamz, springing too hiz fete. "Wautson, the gaps ar closing rappidly."

In the cab wauz a woomman, haaf-colapst from nervous exauschon. She

boer uppon her aqwiline and emaishated face the tracez ov sum recent tradgedy. Her hed hung listlesly uppon her brest, but az she raizd it and ternd her dul ise uppon us I sau dhat her pupilz wer darc dots in the center ov the braud gra iris. She wauz drugd withe opeyum.

“I waucht at the gate, same az u adviazd, Mr. Hoamz,” ced our emmisary, the discharjd gardener. “When the carrage came out I follode it too the staishon. She wauz like wun wauking in her slepe, but when dha tride too ghet her intoo the trane she came too life and struggheld. Dha poosht her intoo the carrage. She faut her wa out agane. I tooc her part, got her intoo a cab, and here we ar. I shaant forghet the face at the carrage windo az I led her awa. Ide hav a short life if he had hiz wa—the blac-ide, scouling, yello devvil.”

We carrede her upstaerz, lade her on the sofaa, and a cuppel ov cups ov the stron’ghest coffy soone cleerd her brane from the mists ov the drug. Bainz had bene summond bi Hoamz, and the cichuwaishon rappidly explaind too him.

“Whi, cer, uve got me the verry evvidens I waunt,” ced the inspector wormly, shaking mi frend bi the hand. “I wauz on the same cent az u from the ferst.”

“Whaut! U wer aafter Henderson?”

“Whi, Mr. Hoamz, when u wer crawling in the shrubbery at Hi Gabel I wauz up wun ov the trese in the plaantaishon and sau u doun belo. It wauz just whoo wood ghet hiz evvidens ferst.”

“Then whi did u arest the mulatto?”

Bainz chuckeld.

“I wauz shure Henderson, az he caulz himcelf, felt dhat he wauz suspected,
and dhat he wood li lo and make no moove so long az he thaut he wauz
in enny dain’ger. I arested the rong man too make him beleve dhat our
ise wer of him. I nu he wood be liacly too clere of then and ghiv
us a chaans ov ghetting at Mis Bernet.”

Hoamz lade hiz hand uppon the inspectorz shoalder.

“U wil rise hi in yor profeshon. U hav instinct and
inchuwishon,” ced he.

Bainz flusht withe plezhure.

“Ive had a plane-cloadhz man wating at the staishon aul the weke.
Wharevver the Hi Gabel foke go he wil kepe them in cite. But he must
hav bene hard poot too it when Mis Bernet broke awa. Houwevver, yor
man
pict her up, and it aul endz wel. We caant arest widhout her
evvidens, dhat iz clere, so the sooner we ghet a staitment the better.”

“Evvery minnute she ghets stron’gher,” ced Hoamz, glaancing at the
guvvernes. “But tel me, Bainz, whoo iz this man Henderson?”

“Henderson,” the inspector aancerd, “iz Don Murillo, wuns cauld the
Tigher ov San Pedro.”

The Tigher ov San Pedro! The whole history ov the man came bac too me in
a flash. He had made hiz name az the moast lude and bludthhersty tirant
dhat had evver guvvernd enny cuntry withe a pretens too civilizaishon.
Strong, feerles, and energetic, he had sufishent verchu too enabel him
too impose hiz ojous vicez uppon a couwering pepel for ten or twelv
yeerz. Hiz name wauz a terror throo aul Central Amerricaa. At the end ov
dhat time dhare wauz a universal rising against him. But he wauz az

cunning az he wauz cruwel, and at the ferst whisper ov cumming trubbel he had ceecretly convade hiz trezhuerz aboard a ship which wauz mand bi devoted ad'herents. It wauz an empty pallace which wauz stormd bi the incergents next da. The dictator, hiz too children, hiz ceecretary, and hiz welth had aul escaipt them. From dhat moment he had vannisht from the werld, and hiz identity had bene a freeqwent subject for comment in the Uropeyan pres.

"Yes, cer, Don Murillo, the Tigher ov San Pedro," ced Bainz. "If u looc it up u wil fiand dhat the San Pedro cullorz ar grene and white, same az in the note, Mr. Hoamz. Henderson he cauld himcelf, but I traist him bac, Parris and Rome and Madrid too Barcelonaa, whare hiz ship came in in '86. Dhave bene loocking for him aul the time for dhare revenj, but it iz oonly nou dhat dha hav begun too fiand him out."

"Dha discuvverd him a yere ago," ced Mis Bernet, whoo had sat up and wauz nou intently following the conversaishon. "Wuns aulreddy hiz life haz bene atempted, but sum evil spirrit sheelded him. Nou, agane, it iz the nobel, shivvalrous Garceyaa whoo haz faulen, while the monster gose safe. But anuther wil cum, and yet anuther, until sum da justice wil be dun; dhat iz az certane az the rise ov too-morose sun." Her thhin handz clencht, and her woern face blaansht withe the pashon ov her haitred.

"But hou cum u intoo this matter, Mis Bernet?" aasct Hoamz. "Hou can an In'glish lady join in such a merderous afare?"

"I join in it becauz dhare iz no uther wa in the werld bi which justice can be gaind. Whaut duz the lau ov In'gland care for the rivverz ov blud shed yeez ago in San Pedro, or for the shiplode ov trezhure which this man haz stolen? Too u dha ar like criamz comitted in

sum uther plannet. But *we* no. We hav lernd the trueth in soro and in suffering. Too us dhare iz no feend in hel like Hwaan Murillo, and no pece in life while hiz victimz stil cri for venjans.”

“No dout,” ced Hoamz, “he wauz az u sa. I hav herd dhat he wauz atroashous. But hou ar u afected?”

“I wil tel u it aul. This villainz pollicy wauz too merder, on wun pretext or anuther, evvery man whoo shode such prommice dhat he mite in time cum too be a dain’gerous rival. Mi huzband—yes, mi reyal name iz Cinyoraa Victor Jurando—wauz the San Pedro minnister in Lundon. He met me and marrede me dhare. A noabler man nevver livd uppon erth. Unhappily, Murillo herd ov hiz exelens, recauld him on sum pretext, and had him shot. Withe a premonishon ov hiz fate he had refuezd too take me withe him. Hiz estaits wer confiscated, and I wauz left withe a pittans and a broken hart.

“Then came the dounfaul ov the tirant. He escaipt az u hav just descriabd. But the menny whoose liavz he had ruwind, whoose nerest and derest had sufferd torchure and deth at hiz handz, wood not let the matter rest. Dha banded themcelvz intoo a sociyety which shood nevver be dizolvd until the werc wauz dun. It wauz mi part aafter we had discuverd in the traansformd Henderson the faulen despot, too atach micelf too hiz hous’hoald and kepe the utherz in tuch withe hiz muivments. This I wauz abel too doo bi ceuring the posishon ov guvvernes in hiz fammily. He littel nu dhat the woomman whoo faist him at evvery mele wauz the woomman whoose huzband he had hurrede at an ourz notice intoo eternity. I smiald on him, did mi juty too hiz children, and bided mi time. An atempt wauz made in Parris and faild. We sig-zagd swiftly

here and dhare over Urope too thro of the pershuwerz and finally reternd too this hous, which he had taken uppon hiz ferst arival in In'gland.

“But here aulso the minnisterz ov justice wer wating. Nowing dhat he wood retern dhare, Garceyaa, whoo iz the sun ov the former hiyest dignitary in San Pedro, wauz wating withe too trusty companyonz ov humbel staishon, aul thre fiard withe the same rezonz for revenj. He cood doo littel juring the da, for Murillo tooc evvery precaushon and nevver went out save withe hiz sattelite Lucas, or Lopez az he wauz none in the dase ov hiz graitnes. At nite, houwevver, he slept alone, and the aven'ger mite fiand him. On a certane evening, which had bene preyarainjd, I cent mi frend final instrucshonz, for the man wauz forevver on the alert and continnuwaly chainjd hiz roome. I wauz too ce dhat the doerz wer open and the cignal ov a grene or white lite in a windo which faist the drive wauz too ghiv notice if aul wauz safe or if the atempt had better be poastpoand.

“But evverithhing went rong withe us. In sum wa I had exited the suspishon ov Lopez, the secretery. He crept up behiand me and sprang uppon me just az I had finnisht the note. He and hiz maaster dragd me too mi roome and held jujment uppon me az a convicted traitres. Then and dhare dha wood hav plunjd dhare niavz intoo me cood dha hav cene hou too escape the conceqvencez ov the dede. Finally, aafter much debate, dha concluded dhat mi merder wauz too dain'gerous. But dha determiand too

ghet rid forevver ov Garceyaa. Dha had gagd me, and Murillo twisted mi arm round until I gave him the adres. I sware dhat he mite hav twisted it of had I understood whaut it wood mene too Garceyaa. Lopez adrest the note which I had ritten, ceeld it withe hiz sleve-linc, and cent it bi the hand ov the cervant, Hoza. Hou dha merderd him I doo not no, save dhat it wauz Murillose hand whoo struc him doun, for Lopez had remaind too gard me. I beleve he must hav wated among the gors booshez throo which the paath wiandz and struc him doun az he

paast. At ferst dha wer ov a miand too let him enter the hous and too kil him az a detected berglar; but dha argude dhat if dha wer mixt up in an inqwiry dhare one identity wood at wuns be publicly discloazd and dha wood be open too ferther atax. Withe the deth ov Garceyaa, the persute mite cece, cins such a deth mite friten utherz from the taasc.

“Aul wood nou hav bene wel for them had it not bene for mi nollej ov whaut dha had dun. I hav no dout dhat dhare wer tiamz when mi life hung in the ballans. I wauz confiand too mi roome, terroriazd bi the moast horibel threts, cruwely il-uest too brake mi spirrit—ce this stab on mi shoalder and the brusez from end too end ov mi armz—and a gag wauz thrust intoo mi mouth on the wun ocaizhon when I tride too caul from the windo. For five dase this cruwel imprizzonment continnude, withe hardly enuf foode too hoald boddy and sole tooghether. This aafternoone a good lunch wauz braut me, but the moment aafter I tooc it I nu dhat I had bene drugd. In a sort ov dreme I remember beying haaf-led, haaf-carrede too the carrage; in the same state I wauz convade too the trane. Oonly then, when the wheelz wer aulmoast mooving, did I suddenly reyalise dhat mi libberty la in mi one handz. I sprang out, dha tride too drag me bac, and had it not bene for the help ov this good man, whoo led me too the cab, I shood nevver had broken awa. Nou, thanc God, I am beyond dhare pouwer forevver.”

We had aul liscend intently too this remarcabel staitment. It wauz Hoamz whoo broke the cilens.

“Our difficultese ar not over,” he remarct, shaking hiz hed. “Our polece werc endz, but our legal werc beghinz.”

“Exactly,” ced I. “A plausibel lauyer cood make it out az an act ov celf-defens. Dhare ma be a hundred criamz in the bacground, but it iz oonly on this wun dhat dha can be tride.”

“Cum, cum,” ced Bainz cherily, “I thhinc better ov the lau dhan dhat. Celf-defens iz wun thhing. Too entice a man in coald blud withe the object ov merdering him iz anuther, whautevver dain’ger u ma fere from him. No, no, we shal aul be justifide when we ce the tennants ov Hi Gabel at the next Ghilford Acisez.”

It iz a matter ov history, houwevver, dhat a littel time wauz stil too elaps befoer the Tigher ov San Pedro shood mete withe hiz deserts. Wily and boald, he and hiz companyon thru dhare pershuwer of dhare trac bi entering a lodging-hous in Edmonton Strete and leving bi the bac-gate intoo Kerzon Sqware. From dhat da dha wer cene no moer in In’gland. Sum cix munths aafterwordz the Marqwes ov Montalvaa and Cinyor

Rully, hiz cecretary, wer boath merderd in dhare ruimz at the Hotel Escureyal at Madrid. The crime wauz ascriabd too Niyilizm, and the merdererz wer nevver arested. Inspector Bainz vizsited us at Baker Strete withe a printed descripshon ov the darc face ov the cecretary, and ov the maasterfool fechuerz, the magnetic blac ise, and the tufted brouz ov hiz maaster. We cood not dout dhat justice, if belated, had cum at laast.

“A cayottic cace, mi dere Wautson,” ced Hoamz over an evening pipe. “It wil not be poscibel for u too present in dhat compact form which iz dere too yor hart. It cuvverz too continents, concernz too gruijs ov mistereyous personz, and iz ferther complicated bi the hily respectabel prezsens ov our frend, Scot Eckelz, whoose incluezhon shose me dhat the deceest Garceyaa had a skeming miand and a wel-devellopt instinct ov celf-preservaishon. It iz remarcabel oonly for the fact dhat amid a perfect jun’ghel ov pocibillitese we, withe our werthy colaborator, the inspector, hav kept our cloce hoald on the ecenshalz and so bene ghided along the croocked and wianding paath. Iz dhare enny point which iz not qwite clere too u?”

“The obgett ov the mulatto coox retern?”

“I thhinc dhat the strainj crechure in the kitchen ma acount for it. The man wauz a primmitive savvage from the baqwoodz ov San Pedro, and this wauz hiz fettish. When hiz companyon and he had fled too sum preyarainjd retrete—aulreddy occupide, no dout bi a confedderate—the companyon had perswaded him too leve so compromising an artikel ov fernichure. But the mulattose hart wauz withe it, and he wauz drivven bac too it next da, when, on reconoitering throo the windo, he found poleesman Waulterz in poseshon. He wated thre dase lon’gher, and then hiz piyety or hiz superstishon drove him too tri wuns moer. Inspector Bainz, whoo, withe hiz uezhuwal aschuetnes, had minnimiazd the incident befoer me, had reyaly reccogniazd its importans and had left a trap intoo which the crechure wauct. Enny uther point, Wautson?”

“The toern berd, the pale ov blud, the chard boanz, aul the mistery ov dhat weerd kitchen?”

Hoamz smiald az he ternd up an entry in hiz note-booc.

“I spent a morning in the Brittish Museyum reding up on dhat and uther points. Here iz a qwotaishon from Eckermanz *Voodoowizm and the Neegroid*

Relidjonz:

“The tru voodoo-wershiper atempts nuthhing ov importans widhout certane sacrificez which ar intended too propisheyate hiz unclene godz. In extreme cacez these riats take the form ov human sacrificez follode bi cannibalizm. The moer uezhuwal victimz ar a white coc, which iz pluct in pecez alive, or a blac gote, whose throte iz cut and boddy bernd.’

“So u ce our savvage frend wauz verry orthodox in hiz ritchuwal. It iz grotesc, Wautson,” Hoamz added, az he sloly faacend hiz noatbooc, “but, az I hav had ocaizhon too remarck, dhare iz but wun step from the grotesc too the horibel.”

The Advenchure ov the Bruce-Partington Planz

In the thherd weke ov November, in the yere 1895, a dens yello fog cetteld down uppon Lunden. From the Munda too the Thherzda I dout whether it wauz ever poscibel from our windose in Baker Strete too ce the loome ov the opposite housez. The ferst da Hoamz had spent in cros-indexing hiz huge booc ov refferencez. The cecond and thherd had bene paishently occupide uppon a subject which he had recently made hiz hobby—the music ov the Middel Agez. But when, for the foerth time, aafter pooshing bac our chaerz from breccfast we sau the greyc, hevvy broun swerl stil drifting paast us and condencing in oily drops uppon the windo-painz, mi comraidz impaishent and active nachure cood enjure this drab existens no lon'gher. He paist restlesly about our citting-roome in a fever ov suprest ennergy, biting hiz nailz, tapping the fernichure, and chafing against inacshon.

“Nuthhing ov interest in the paper, Wautson?” he ced.

I wauz aware dhat bi ennithhing ov interest, Hoamz ment ennithhing ov crimmlal interest. Dhare wauz the nuse ov a revolueshon, ov a poscibel wor, and ov an impending chainj ov guvvernment; but these did not cum within the horizon ov mi companyon. I cood ce nuthhing recorded in the shape ov crime which wauz not commonplace and futile. Hoamz groand and rezhuemd hiz restles meyanderingz.

“The Lunden criminal iz certainly a dul fello,” ced he in the qwerrulous vois ov the spoertsman whoose game haz faild him. “Looc out this windo, Wautson. Ce hou the figguerz loome up, ar dimly cene, and then blend wuns moer intoo the cloud-banc. The thhefe or the merderer cood rome Lunden on such a da az the tigher duz the jun’ghel, uncene until he pouncez, and then evvident oanly too hiz victim.”

“Dhare hav,” ced I, “bene numerous petty thhefts.”

Hoamz snorted hiz contempt.

“This grate and somber stage iz cet for sumthhing moer werthy dhan dhat,” ced he. “It iz forchunate for this comunity dhat I am not a crimminal.”

“It iz, indede!” ced I hartily.

“Supose dhat I wer Broox or Wood’hous, or enny ov the fifty men whoo hav good rezon for taking mi life, hou long cood I cervive against mi one persute? A summonz, a bogus apointment, and aul wood be over. It iz wel dha doant hav dase ov fog in the Latin cuntrese—the cuntrese ov asacinaishon. Bi Jove! here cumz sumthhing at laast too brake our ded monottony.”

It wauz the made withe a tellegram. Hoamz toer it open and berst out laafing.

“Wel, wel! Whaut next?” ced he. “Bruther Miacroft iz cumming round.”

“Whi not?” I aasct.

“Whi not? It iz az if u met a tram-car cumming doun a cuntry lane. Miacroft haz hiz railz and he runz on them. Hiz Pal Mal lodgingz, the

Diyodgenese Club, Whiat'haul—dhat iz hiz cikel. Wuns, and oanly wuns, he haz bene here. Whaut upheval can poscibly hav deraild him?"

"Duz he not explane?"

Hoamz handed me hiz brutherz tellegram.

"Must ce u over Caduggan West. Cumming at wuns." MIACROFT.

"Caduggan West? I hav herd the name."

"It recaulz nuthhing too mi miand. But dhat Miacroft shood brake out in this erattic fashon! A plannet mite az wel leve its orbit. Bi the wa, doo u no whaut Miacroft iz?"

I had sum vaghe recolecshon ov an explanaishon at the time ov the Advenchure ov the Greke Interpreter.

"U toald me dhat he had sum smaual office under the Brittish guvvernment."

Hoamz chuckeld.

"I did not no u qwite so wel in dhose dase. Wun haz too be discrete when wun taux ov hi matterz ov state. U ar rite in thhinking dhat he iz under the Brittish guvvernment. U wood aulso be rite in a cens if u ced dhat ocaizhonaly he iz the Brittish guvvernment."

"Mi dere Hoamz!"

"I thaut I mite cerprise u. Miacroft drauz foer hundred and fifty

poundz a yere, remainz a subordinate, haz no ambishonz ov enny kiand, wil receve niather onnor nor titel, but remainz the moast indispensabel man in the cuntry.”

“But hou?”

“Wel, hiz posishon iz uneke. He haz made it for himself. Dhare haz nevver bene ennithhing like it befoer, nor wil be agane. He haz the tideyest and moast orderly brane, withe the gratest capascity for storing facts, ov enny man livving. The same grate pouwerz which I hav ternd too the detecshon ov crime he haz uezd for this particcular biznes. The concluezhonz ov evvery department ar paast too him, and he iz the central exchainj, the clering’houz, which maix out the ballans. Aul uther men ar speshalists, but hiz speshalizm iz omnishens. We wil suppose dhat a minnister needz informaishon az too a point which involvz the Navy, Injaa, Cannadaa and the bimetallic qweschon; he cood ghet hiz cepparate advicez from vareyous departments uppon eche, but oanly Miacroft

can focus them aul, and sa ofhand hou eche factor wood afect the uther. Dha began bi using him az a short-cut, a conveenyens; nou he haz made himself an ecenshal. In dhat grate brane ov hiz evverithhing iz pidjon-hoald and can be handed out in an instant. Agane and agane hiz werd haz decided the nashonal pollicy. He livz in it. He thhinx ov nuthhing els save when, az an intelecchuwal exercise, he unbendz if I caul uppon him and aasc him too advise me on wun ov mi littel problemz. But Jupiter iz decending too-da. Whaut on erth can it mene? Whoo iz Caduggan West, and whaut iz he too Miacroft?”

“I hav it,” I cride, and plunjed among the litter ov paperz uppon the sofaa. “Yes, yes, here he iz, shure enuf! Caduggan West wauz the yung man whoo wauz found ded on the Underground on Chuezda morning.”

Hoamz sat up at atenshon, hiz pipe haafwa too hiz lips.

“This must be cereyous, Wautson. A deth which haz cauzd mi bruther too aulter hiz habbits can be no ordinary wun. Whaut in the werld can he hav too doo withe it? The cace wauz fechuerles az I remember it. The yung man had aparrently faulen out ov the trane and kild himself. He had not bene robd, and dhare wauz no particcular rezon too suspect viyolens. Iz dhat not so?”

“Dhare haz bene an inqwest,” ced I, “and a good menny fresh facts hav cum out. Loot at moer cloasly, I shood certainly sa dhat it wauz a cureyous cace.”

“Judging bi its efect uppon mi bruther, I shood thhinc it must be a moast extrordinary wun.” He snuggheld doun in hiz armchare. “Nou, Wautson, let us hav the facts.”

“The manz name wauz Arthher Caduggan West. He wauz twenty-cevven yearz ov age, unmarrede, and a clarc at Woollich Arcenal.”

“Guvvernment emploi. Behoald the linc withe Bruther Miacroft!”

“He left Woollich suddenly on Munda nite. Wauz laast cene bi hiz feyaansa, Mis Viyolet Westbury, whoome he left abruptly in the fog about 7:30 dhat evening. Dhare wauz no qworel betwene them and she can ghiv no motive for hiz acshon. The next thhing herd ov him wauz when hiz ded boddy wauz discuverd bi a plate-layer naimd Mason, just outside Auldgate Staishon on the Underground cistem in Lundon.”

“When?”

“The boddy wauz found at six on Chueзда morning. It wauz liying wide ov the mettalz uppon the left hand ov the trac az wun gose eestword, at a point

cloce too the staishon, whare the line emergez from the tunnel in which it runz. The hed wauz badly crusht—an injury which mite wel hav bene cauzd bi a faul from the trane. The boddy cood oanly hav cum on the line in dhat wa. Had it bene carrede down from enny naboring strete, it must hav paast the staishon barreyerz, whare a colector iz aulwase standing. This point ceemz absoluetly certane.”

“Verry good. The cace iz deffinite enuf. The man, ded or alive, iather fel or wauz precippitated from a trane. So much iz clere too me. Continnu.”

“The trainz which travers the lianz ov rale becide which the boddy wauz found ar dhose which run from west too eest, sum beying puerly Metropollitan, and sum from Wilzden and outliying juncshonz. It can be stated for certane dhat this yung man, when he met hiz deth, wauz traveling in this direcshon at sum late our ov the nite, but at whaut point he enterd the trane it iz imposcibel too state.”

“Hiz ticket, ov coers, wood sho dhat.”

“Dhare wauz no ticket in hiz pockets.”

“No ticket! Dere me, Wautson, this iz reyaly verry cin’gular. Acording too mi expereyens it iz not poscibel too reche the platform ov a Metropollitan trane widhout exhibbiting wunz ticket. Preezhumably, then, the yung man had wun. Wauz it taken from him in order too concele the staishon from which he came? It iz poscibel. Or did he drop it in the carrage? Dhat iz aulso poscibel. But the point iz ov cureyous interest. I understand dhat dhare wauz no cine ov robbery?”

“Aparrently not. Dhare iz a list here ov hiz posesshonz. Hiz pers containd too poundz fiftene. He had aulso a chec-booc on the Woollich braanch ov the Cappital and Countese Banc. Throo this hiz identity wauz establisht. Dhare wer aulso too dres-cerkel tickets for the Woollich

Theyater, dated for dhat verry evening. Aulso a smaul packet ov tecncial paperz.”

Hoamz gave an exclamaishon ov satisfacshon.

“Dhare we hav it at laast, Wautson! Brittish guvvernment—Woollich. Arcenal—tecncial paperz—Bruther Miacroft, the chane iz complete. But here he cumz, if I am not mistaken, too speke for himcelf.”

A moment later the taul and poertly form ov Miacroft Hoamz wauz usherd intoo the roome. Hevvily bilt and mascive, dhare wauz a sugeschon ov uncuith fyszical inershaa in the figgure, but abuv this unweedy frame dhare wauz perchd a hed so maasterfool in its brou, so alert in its stele-gra, depe-cet ise, so ferm in its lips, and so suttel in its pla ov expreshon, dhat aafter the ferst glaans wun forgot the groce boddy and rememberd oonly the domminant miand.

At hiz heelz came our oald frend Lestrade, ov Scotland Yard—thhin and austere. The gravvity ov boath dhare facez foertoald sum waty qwest. The detective shooc handz widhout a werd. Miacroft Hoamz struggheld out ov hiz overcote and subcided intoo an armchare.

“A moast anoiying biznes, Sherloc,” ced he. “I extreemly dislike aultering mi habbits, but the pouwerz dhat be wood take no deniyal. In the prezsent state ov Ciyam it iz moast auqword dhat I shood be awa from the office. But it iz a reyal cricis. I hav nevver cene the Prime Minnister so upcet. Az too the Admiralty—it iz buzsing like an overternd be-hive. Hav u red up the cace?”

“We hav just dun so. Whaut wer the tecncial paperz?”

“Aa, dhaerz the point! Forchunaitly, it haz not cum out. The pres wood be fureyous if it did. The paperz which this retched ueth had in

hiz pocket wer the planz ov the Bruce-Partington submarine.”

Miacroft Hoamz spoke withe a solemnity which shode hiz cens ov the importans ov the subject. Hiz bruther and I sat expectant.

“Shuerly u hav herd ov it? I thaut evveriwun had herd ov it.”

“Oanly az a name.”

“Its importans can hardly be exadgerated. It haz bene the moast gellously garded ov aul guvvernment ceecrets. U ma take it from me dhat naval worfare becumz imposcibel within the rajus ov a Bruce-Partingtonz operaishon. Too yeerz ago a verry larj sum wauz smuggheld throo the Estimaitz and wauz expended in aqwiring a monoppoly ov the invenshon. Evvery effort haz bene made too kepe the ceecret. The planz, which ar exedingly intricate, comprising sum thherty ceeparate patents, eche ecenshal too the werking ov the whole, ar kept in an elabborate safe in a confidenshal office ajoining the arcenal, withe berglar-proofe doerz and windose. Under no concevabel circumstaancez wer the planz too be taken from the office. If the chefe constructor ov the Navy desiard too consult them, even he wauz foerst too go too the Woollich office for the perpoce. And yet here we fiand them in the pocket ov a ded juenyor clarc in the hart ov Lundo. From an ofishal point ov vu its cimply afool.”

“But u hav recuverd them?”

“No, Sherlock, no! Dhats the pinch. We hav not. Ten paperz wer taken from Woollich. Dhare wer cevven in the pocket ov Caduggan West. The thre moast ecenshal ar gon—stolen, vannisht. U must drop evverithhing, Sherlock. Nevver miand yor uezhuwal petty puzselz ov the polece-coert. Its a vital internashonal problem dhat u hav too solv. Whi did Caduggan West take the paperz, whare ar the miscing

wunz, hou did he di, hou came hiz boddy whare it wauz found, hou can the evil be cet rite? Fiand an aancer too aul these qweschonz, and u wil hav dun good cervice for yor cuntry.”

“Whi doo u not solv it yorcelf, Miacroft? U can ce az far az I.”

“Poscibly, Sherloc. But it iz a qweschon ov ghetting detailz. Ghiv me yor detailz, and from an armchare I wil retern u an exelent expert opinyon. But too run here and run dhare, too cros-qweschon railwa gardz, and li on mi face withe a lenz too mi i—it iz not mi mateya. No, u ar the wun man whoo can clere the matter up. If u hav a fancy too ce yor name in the next onnorz list—”

Mi frend smiald and shooc hiz hed.

“I pla the game for the gaimz one sake,” ced he. “But the problem certainly presents sum points ov interest, and I shal be verry pleezd too looc intoo it. Sum moer facts, plese.”

“I hav jotted doun the moer ecenshal wunz uppon this shete ov paper, tooghether withe a fu adrecez which u wil fiand ov cervice. The acchuwal ofishal garjan ov the paperz iz the famous guvvernment expert, Cer Jaimz Waulter, whoose decoraishonz and sub-titelz fil too lianz ov a booc ov refferens. He haz grone gra in the cervice, iz a gentelman, a favord ghest in the moast exaulted housez, and, abuv aul, a man whoose patreyotizm iz beyond suspishon. He iz wun ov too whoo hav a ke ov the safe. I ma ad dhat the paperz wer undoutedly in the office juring werking ourz on Munda, and dhat Cer Jaimz left for Lundon about thre oacloc taking hiz ke withe him. He wauz at the hous ov Admiral Cinclore at Barcla Sqware juring the whole ov the evening when this incident okerd.”

“Haz the fact bene verrifide?”

“Yes; hiz bruther, Cuunel Vallentine Waulter, haz testifide too hiz deparchure from Woollich, and Admiral Cinclare too hiz arival in Lunden; so Cer Jaimz iz no lon‘gher a direct factor in the problem.”

“Whoo wauz the uther man withe a ke?”

“The ceenyor clarc and draaftzman, Mr. Cidny Jonson. He iz a man ov forty, marrede, withe five children. He iz a cilent, moroce man, but he haz, on the whole, an exelent reccord in the public cervice. He iz unpopular withe hiz colleegz, but a hard werker. Acording too hiz one acount, corobborated oonly bi the werd ov hiz wife, he wauz at home the whole ov Munda evening aafter office ourz, and hiz ke haz nevver left the wauch-chane uppon which it hangz.”

“Tel us about Caduggan West.”

“He haz bene ten yeerz in the cervice and haz dun good werc. He haz the reputaishon ov beying hot-hedded and impereyous, but a strate, onnest man. We hav nuthhing against him. He wauz next Cidny Jonson in the office. Hiz jutese braut him intoo daly, personal contact withe the planz. No wun els had the handling ov them.”

“Whoo loct up the planz dhat nite?”

“Mr. Cidny Jonson, the ceenyor clarc.”

“Wel, it iz shuerly perfectly clere whoo tooc them awa. Dha ar acchuwaly found uppon the person ov this juenyor clarc, Caduggan West. Dhat ceemz final, duz it not?”

“It duz, Sherloc, and yet it leevz so much unnexplaind. In the ferst place, whi did he take them?”

"I prezume dha wer ov vallu?"

"He cood hav got cevveral thousandz for them verry esily."

"Can u sugest enny poscibel motive for taking the paperz too Lunden exept too cel them?"

"No, I canot."

"Then we must take dhat az our werking hipothhecis. Yung West tooc the paperz. Nou this cood oanly be dun bi havving a fauls ke—"

"Cevveral fauls kese. He had too open the bilding and the roome."

"He had, then, cevveral fauls kese. He tooc the paperz too Lunden too cel the ceecret, intending, no dout, too hav the planz themcelvz bac in the safe next morning befoer dha wer mist. While in Lunden on this trezonabel mishon he met hiz end."

"Hou?"

"We wil supose dhat he wauz travveling bac too Woollich when he wauz kild and throne out ov the compartment."

"Auldgate, whare the boddy wauz found, iz concidderably paast the staishon Lunden Brij, which wood be hiz roote too Woollich."

"Menny circumstaancez cood be imadgiand under which he wood paas Lunden

Brij. Dhare wauz sumwun in the carrage, for exaampel, withe whoome he wauz havving an abzorbing intervju. This intervju led too a viyolent cene in which he lost hiz life. Poscibly he tride too leve the

carrage, fel out on the line, and so met hiz end. The uther cloazd the doer. Dhare wauz a thhic fog, and nuthhing cood be cene."

"No better explanaishon can be ghivven withe our prezsent nollej; and yet concidder, Sherloc, hou much u leve untucht. We wil supose, for arguments sake, dhat yung Caduggan West *had* determiand too conva these paperz too Lundon. He wood natchuraly hav made an apointment withe the forane agent and kept hiz evening clere. Insted ov dhat he tooc too tickets for the ththeyater, escorted hiz feyaansa haafwa dhare, and then suddenly disapeerd."

"A bliand," ced Lestrade, whoo had sat liscening withe sum impaishens too the conversaishon.

"A verry cin'gular wun. Dhat iz obgecshon No. 1. Obgecshon No. 2: We wil supose dhat he rechez Lundon and cese the forane agent. He must bring bac the paperz befoer morning or the los wil be discuvverd. He tooc awa ten. Oanly cevven wer in hiz pocket. Whaut had becum ov the uther thre? He certainly wood not leve them ov hiz one fre wil. Then, agane, whare iz the price ov hiz trezon? Wun wood hav expected too fiand a larj sum ov munny in hiz pocket."

"It ceemz too me perfectly clere," ced Lestrade. "I hav no dout at aul az too whaut okerd. He tooc the paperz too cel them. He sau the agent. Dha cood not agry az too price. He started home agane, but the agent went withe him. In the trane the agent merderd him, tooc the moer ecenshal paperz, and thru hiz boddy from the carrage. Dhat wood account for evverithhing, wood it not?"

"Whi had he no ticket?"

"The ticket wood hav shone which staishon wauz nerest the agents

hous. Dhaerfoer he tooc it from the merderd manz pocket.”

“Good, Lestrade, verry good,” ced Hoamz. “Yor ththeyory hoaldz tooghether.

But if this iz tru, then the cace iz at an end. On the wun hand, the trator iz ded. On the uther, the planz ov the Bruce-Partington submarene ar preezhumably aulreddy on the Continent. Whaut iz dhare for us too doo?”

“Too act, Sherloc—too act!” cride Miacroft, springing too hiz fete. “Aul mi instincts ar against this explanaishon. Use yor pouwerz! Go too the cene ov the crime! Ce the pepel concernd! Leve no stone unternd! In aul yor carere u hav nevver had so grate a chaans ov cerving yor cuntry.”

“Wel, wel!” ced Hoamz, shrugging hiz shoalderz. “Cum, Wautson! And u, Lestrade, cood u favor us withe yor cumpany for an our or too? We wil beghin our investigaishon bi a vizsit too Auldgate Staishon. Good-bi, Miacroft. I shal let u hav a repoert befoer evening, but I worn u in advaans dhat u hav littel too expect.”

An our later Hoamz, Lestrade and I stood uppon the Underground railrode at the point whare it emergez from the tunnel imejaitly befoer Auldgate Staishon. A kerchous red-faist oald gentelman represented the railwa cumpany.

“This iz whare the yung manz boddy la,” ced he, indicating a spot about thre fete from the mettalz. “It cood not hav faulen from abuv, for these, az u ce, ar aul blanc waulz. Dhaerfoer, it cood oanly hav cum from a trane, and dhat trane, so far az we can trace it, must hav paast about midnite on Munda.”

“Hav the carragez bene exammiand for enny cine ov viyolens?”

“Dhare ar no such cianz, and no ticket haz bene found.”

“No reccord ov a doer beying found open?”

“Nun.”

“We hav had sum fresh evvidens this morning,” ced Lestrade. “A pascen’ger whoo paast Auldgate in an ordinary Metropollitan trane about 11:40 on Munda nite declaerz dhat he herd a hevvy thud, az ov a boddy striking the line, just befoer the trane reecht the staishon. Dhare wauz dens fog, houwevver, and nuthing cood be cene. He made no repoert ov it at the time. Whi, whautevver iz the matter withe Mr. Hoamz?”

Mi frend wauz standing withe an expreshon ov straind intencity uppon hiz face, staring at the railwa mettalz whare dha kervd out ov the tunnel. Auldgate iz a juncshon, and dhare wauz a netwerc ov points. On these hiz egher, qweschoning ise wer fixt, and I sau on hiz kene, alert face dhat titening ov the lips, dhat qwivver ov the nostrilz, and concentraishon ov the hevvy, tufted brouz which I nu so wel.

“Points,” he mutterd; “the points.”

“Whaut ov it? Whaut doo u mene?”

“I supose dhare ar no grate number ov points on a cistem such az this?”

“No; dha ar verry fu.”

“And a kerv, too. Points, and a kerv. Bi Jove! if it wer oonly so.”

“Whaut iz it, Mr. Hoamz? Hav u a clu?”

“An ideyaa—an indicaishon, no moer. But the cace certainly grose in interest. Uneke, perfectly uneke, and yet whi not? I doo not ce enny indicaishonz ov bleding on the line.”

“Dhare wer hardly enny.”

“But I understand dhat dhare wauz a concidderabel wuind.”

“The bone wauz crusht, but dhare wauz no grate external injury.”

“And yet wun wood hav expected sum bleding. Wood it be poscibel for me too inspect the trane which containd the pascen’ger whoo herd the thud ov a faul in the fog?”

“I fere not, Mr. Hoamz. The trane haz bene broken up befoer nou, and the carragez redistribbuted.”

“I can ashure u, Mr. Hoamz,” ced Lestrade, “dhat evvery carrage haz bene caerfooly exammiand. I sau too it micelf.”

It wauz wun ov mi frendz moast obveyous weecnecez dhat he wauz impaishent
withe les alert intelligencez dhan hiz one.

“Verry liacly,” ced he, terning awa. “Az it happenz, it wauz not the carragez which I desiard too exammine. Wautson, we hav dun aul we can here. We nede not trubbel u enny ferther, Mr. Lestrade. I thhinc our investigaishonz must nou carry us too Woollich.”

At Lunden Brij, Hoamz rote a tellegram too hiz bruther, which he handed too me befoer dispatching it. It ran dhus:

Ce sum lite in the darcnes, but it ma poscibly flicker out.
Meenwhile, plese cend bi mescen’ger, too awate retern at Baker Strete, a

complete list ov aul forane spise or internashonal agents none too be in In'gland, withe fool adres.—Sherloc.

“Dhat shood be helpfool, Wautson,” he remarct az we tooc our ceets in the Woollich trane. “We certainly o Bruther Miacroft a det for havving introjuest us too whaut prommicez too be a reyalv verry remarcabel cace.”

Hiz egher face stil woer dhat expreshon ov intens and hi-strung ennergy, which shode me dhat sum novvel and sugestive cercumstaans had
opend up a stimulating line ov thaut. Ce the foxhound withe hanging eerz and drooping tale az it lolz about the kennelz, and compare it withe the same hound az, withe gleming ise and straning muscelz, it runz uppon a brest-hi cent—such wauz the chainj in Hoamz cins the morning. He wauz a different man from the limp and loun'ging figgure in the mous-cullord drescing-goun whoo had prould so restlesly oonly a fu ourz befoer round the fog-ghert roome.

“Dhare iz matereyal here. Dhare iz scope,” ced he. “I am dul indede not too hav understood its pocibillitese.”

“Even nou dha ar darc too me.”

“The end iz darc too me aulso, but I hav hoald ov wun ideyaa which ma lede us far. The man met hiz deth elswhare, and hiz boddy wauz on the *roofe* ov a carrage.”

“On the roofe!”

“Remarcabel, iz it not? But concidder the facts. Iz it a cowincidens dhat it iz found at the verry point whare the trane pitchez and swase az

it cumz round on the points? Iz not dhat the place whare an obgett uppon the roofe mite be expected too faul of? The points wood afect no obgett incide the trane. Iather the boddy fel from the roofe, or a verry cureyous cowincidens haz okerd. But nou concidder the qweschon ov the blud. Ov coers, dhare wauz no bleding on the line if the boddy had bled elshware. Eche fact iz sugestive in itcelf. Tooghether dha hav a cumulative foers."

"And the ticket, too!" I cride.

"Exactly. We cood not explane the abcens ov a ticket. This wood explane it. Evverithhing fits tooghether."

"But supose it wer so, we ar stil az far az evver from unravveling the mistery ov hiz deth. Indede, it becumz not cimpler but strain'ger."

"Perhaps," ced Hoamz, thautfooly, "perhaps." He relapst intoo a cilent revvery, which laasted until the slo trane dru up at laast in Woollich Staishon. Dhare he cauld a cab and dru Miacrofts paper from hiz pocket.

"We hav qwite a littel round ov aafternoone caulz too make," ced he. "I thhinc dhat Cer Jaimz Waulter claimz our ferst atenshon."

The hous ov the famous ofishal wauz a fine villaa withe grene launz stretching down too the Temz. Az we reecht it the fog wauz lifting, and a thhin, wautery sunshine wauz braking throo. A butler aancerd our ring.

"Cer Jaimz, cer!" ced he withe sollem face. "Cer Jaimz dide this morning."

"Good hevvenz!" cride Hoamz in amaizment. "Hou did he di?"

“Perhaps u wood care too step in, cer, and ce hiz bruther, Cuonel Vallentine?”

“Yes, we had best doo so.”

We wer usherd intoo a dim-lit drauwing-roome, whare an instant later we wer joind bi a verry taul, handsum, lite-beerded man ov fifty, the yun’gher bruther ov the ded ciyentist. Hiz wiald ise, staind cheex, and unkempt hare aul spoke ov the sudden blo which had faulen uppon the hous’hoald. He wauz hardly articculate az he spoke ov it.

“It wauz this horibel scandal,” ced he. “Mi bruther, Cer Jaimz, wauz a man ov verry cencitive onnor, and he cood not cervive such an afare. It broke hiz hart. He wauz aulwase so proud ov the effishency ov hiz department, and this wauz a crushing blo.”

“We had hoapt dhat he mite hav ghivven us sum indicaishonz which wood hav helpt us too clere the matter up.”

“I ashure u dhat it wauz aul a mistery too him az it iz too u and too aul ov us. He had aulreddy poot aul hiz nollej at the dispozal ov the polece. Natchuraly he had no dout dhat Caduggan West wauz ghilty. But aul the rest wauz inconcevabel.”

“U canot thro enny nu lite uppon the afare?”

“I no nuthhing micelf save whaut I hav red or herd. I hav no desire too be diskerchous, but u can understand, Mr. Hoamz, dhat we ar much disterbd at prezsent, and I must aasc u too hacen this intervuu too an end.”

“This iz indede an unexpected devellopment,” ced mi frend when we had

regaind the cab. "I wunder if the deth wauz natchural, or whether the poor oald fello kild himcelf! If the latter, ma it be taken az sum cine ov celf-reproche for juty neglected? We must leve dhat qweschon too the fuchure. Nou we shal tern too the Caduggan Wests."

A smaull but wel-kept hous in the outskerts ov the toun shelterd the bereevd muther. The oald lady wauz too daizd withe grefe too be ov enny uce

too us, but at her cide wauz a white-faist yung lady, whoo introjuest hercelf az Mis Violet Westbury, the feyaansa ov the ded man, and the laast too ce him uppon dhat fatal nite.

"I canot explane it, Mr. Hoamz," she ced. "I hav not shut an i cins the tradgedy, thhinking, thhinking, thhinking, nite and da, whaut the tru mening ov it can be. Arthher wauz the moast cin'ghel-mianded, shivvalrous, patreyotic man uppon erth. He wood hav cut hiz rite hand of befoer he wood cel a State ceecret confided too hiz keping. It iz abcerd, impscibel, preposterous too enniwun whoo nu him."

"But the facts, Mis Westbury?"

"Yes, yes; I admit I canot explane them."

"Wauz he in enny waunt ov munny?"

"No; hiz needz wer verry cimpel and hiz sallary ampel. He had saivd a fu hundredz, and we wer too marry at the Nu Yere."

"No cianz ov enny mental exiatment? Cum, Mis Westbury, be absolutly franc withe us."

The qwic i ov mi companyon had noted sum chainj in her manner. She cullord and hezsitated.

“Yes,” she ced at laast, “I had a feling dhat dhare wauz sumthhing on hiz miand.”

“For long?”

“Oanly for the laast weke or so. He wauz thautfool and wurrede. Wuns I prest him about it. He admitted dhat dhare wauz sumthhing, and dhat it wauz concernd withe hiz ofishal life. ‘It iz too cereyou for me too speke about, even too u,’ ced he. I cood ghet nuthhing moer.”

Hoamz looct grave.

“Go on, Mis Westbury. Even if it ceemz too tel against him, go on. We canot sa whaut it ma lede too.”

“Indede, I hav nuthhing moer too tel. Wuns or twice it ceemd too me dhat he wauz on the point ov telling me sumthhing. He spoke wun evening ov the importans ov the ceecret, and I hav sum recolecshon dhat he ced dhat no dout forane spise wood pa a grate dele too hav it.”

Mi frendz face gru graver stil.

“Ennithhing els?”

“He ced dhat we wer slac about such matterz—dhat it wood be esy for a trator too ghet the planz.”

“Wauz it oanly recently dhat he made such remarx?”

“Yes, qwite recently.”

“Nou tel us ov dhat laast evening.”

"We wer too go too the thheyater. The fog wauz so thhic dhat a cab wauz uesles. We wauct, and our wa too us cloce too the office. Suddenly he darted awa intoo the fog."

"Widhout a werd?"

"He gave an exclamaishon; dhat wauz aul. I wated but he nevver reternd. Then I wauct home. Next morning, aafter the office opend, dha came too inqwire. About twelv oacloc we herd the terribel nuse. O, Mr. Hoamz, if u cood oanly, oanly save hiz onnor! It wauz so much too him."

Hoamz shooc hiz hed sadly.

"Cum, Wautson," ced he, "our wase li elshware. Our next staishon must be the office from which the paperz wer taken.

"It wauz blac enuf befoer against this yung man, but our inqwirese make it blacker," he remarct az the cab lumberd of. "Hiz cumming marrage ghivz a motive for the crime. He natchuraly waunted munny. The ideyaa wauz in hiz hed, cins he spoke about it. He neerly made the gherl an acumplice in the trezon bi telling her hiz planz. It iz aul verry bad."

"But shuerly, Hoamz, carracter gose for sumthhing? Then, agane, whi shood he leve the gherl in the strete and dart awa too comit a fellony?"

"Exactly! Dhare ar certainly obgecshonz. But it iz a formiddabel cace which dha hav too mete."

Mr. Cidny Jonson, the ceenyor clarc, met us at the office and receevd us withe dhat respect which mi companyonz card aulwase comaanded. He wauz

a thhin, gruf, bespectakeld man ov middel age, hiz cheex haggard, and hiz handz twitching from the nervous strane too which he had bene subjected.

“It iz bad, Mr. Hoamz, verry bad! Hav u herd ov the deth ov the chefe?”

“We hav just cum from hiz hous.”

“The place iz disorganiazd. The chefe ded, Caduggan West ded, our paperz stolen. And yet, when we cloazd our doer on Munda evening, we wer az efisent an office az enny in the guvvernment cervice. Good God, its dredfool too thhinc ov! Dhat West, ov aul men, shood hav dun such a thhing!”

“U ar shure ov hiz ghilt, then?”

“I can ce no uther wa out ov it. And yet I wood hav trusted him az I trust micelf.”

“At whaut our wauz the office cloazd on Munda?”

“At five.”

“Did u close it?”

“I am aulwase the laast man out.”

“Whare wer the planz?”

“In dhat safe. I poot them dhare micelf.”

“Iz dhare no wauchman too the bilding?”

“Dhare iz, but he haz uther departments too looc aafter az wel. He iz an oald soalger and a moast trustwerthy man. He sau nuthhing dhat evening. Ov coers the fog wauz verry thhic.”

“Supose dhat Caduggan West wisht too make hiz wa intoo the bilding aafter ourz; he wood nede thre kese, wood he not, befoer he cood reche the paperz?”

“Yes, he wood. The ke ov the outer doer, the ke ov the office, and the ke ov the safe.”

“Oonly Cer Jaimz Waulter and u had dhose kese?”

“I had no kese ov the doerz—oonly ov the safe.”

“Wauz Cer Jaimz a man whoo wauz orderly in hiz habbits?”

“Yes, I thhinc he wauz. I no dhat so far az dhose thre kese ar concernd he kept them on the same ring. I hav often cene them dhare.”

“And dhat ring went withe him too Lundon?”

“He ced so.”

“And yor ke nevver left yor poseshon?”

“Nevver.”

“Then West, if he iz the culprit, must hav had a jueplicate. And yet nun wauz found uppon hiz boddy. Wun uther point: if a clarc in this office desiard too cel the planz, wood it not be cimpler too copy the planz for himcelf dhan too take the oridginalz, az wauz acchuwaly dun?”

"It wood take concidderabel tecnicall nollej too cobby the planz in an efective wa."

"But I suppose iather Cer Jaimz, or u, or West haz dhat tecnicall nollej?"

"No dout we had, but I beg u woant tri too drag me intoo the matter, Mr. Hoamz. Whaut iz the uce ov our specculating in this wa when the oridginal planz wer accuwaly found on West?"

"Wel, it iz certainly cin'gular dhat he shood run the risc ov taking oridginalz if he cood saifly hav taken coppese, which wood hav eeqwaly cervd hiz tern."

"Cin'gular, no dout—and yet he did so."

"Evvery inqwiry in this cace reveelz sumthhing inexpliccabel. Nou dhare ar thre paperz stil miscing. Dha ar, az I understand, the vital wunz."

"Yes, dhat iz so."

"Doo u mene too sa dhat enniwun hoalding these thre paperz, and widhout the cevven utherz, cood construct a Bruce-Partington submarene?"

"I repoerted too dhat efect too the Admiralty. But too-da I hav bene over the drauwingz agane, and I am not so shure ov it. The dubbel valvz withe the automattic celf-ajusting slots ar draun in wun ov the paperz which hav bene reternd. Until the foranerz had invented dhat for themcelvz dha cood not make the bote. Ov coers dha mite soone ghet over the difficulty."

"But the thre miscing drauwingz ar the moast important?"

“Undoubtedly.”

“I thhinc, withe yor permishon, I wil nou take a strole round the premmicez. I doo not recaul enny uther qweschon which I desiard too aasc.”

He exammiand the loc ov the safe, the doer ov the roome, and finaly the iarn shutterz ov the windo. It wauz oonly when we wer on the laun outcide dhat hiz interest wauz strongly exited. Dhare wauz a lorel boosh outcide the windo, and cevveral ov the braanchez boer cianz ov havving bene twisted or snapt. He exammiand them caerfooly withe hiz lenz, and then sum dim and vaghe marx uppon the erth beneeth. Finaly he aasct the chefe clarc too close the iarn shutterz, and he pointed out too me dhat dha hardly met in the center, and dhat it wood be poscibel for enniwun outcide too ce whaut wauz gowing on within the roome.

“The indicaishonz ar ruwind bi thre dase’ dela. Dha ma mene sumthhing or nuthhing. Wel, Wautson, I doo not thhinc dhat Woollich can help us ferther. It iz a smaul crop which we hav gatherd. Let us ce if we can doo better in Lundon.”

Yet we added wun moer shefe too our harvest befoer we left Woollich Staishon. The clarc in the ticket office wauz abel too sa withe confidens dhat he sau Caduggan West—whoome he nu wel bi cite—uppon the Munda nite, and dhat he went too Lundon bi the 8:15 too Lundon Brij. He wauz alone and tooc a cin’ghel thherd-claas ticket. The clarc wauz struc at the time bi hiz exited and nervous manner. So shaky wauz he dhat he cood hardly pic up hiz chainj, and the clarc had helpt him withe it. A refferens too the tiamtabel shode dhat the 8:15 wauz the ferst trane which it wauz poscibel for West too take aafter he had left the lady about 7:30.

“Let us reconstruct, Wautson,” ced Hoamz aafter haaf an our ov cilens. “I am not aware dhat in aul our joint recerchez we hav evver had a cace which wauz moer difficult too ghet at. Evvery fresh advaans which we make oanly reveelz a fresh rij beyond. And yet we hav shuerly made sum apreeshabel proagres.

“The efect ov our inqwirese at Woollich haz in the mane bene against yung Caduggan West; but the indicaishonz at the windo wood lend themcelvz too a moer favorabel hipothhecis. Let us suppose, for exaampel, dhat he had bene aproacht bi sum forane agent. It mite hav bene dun under such pledgez az wood hav prevented him from speking ov it, and yet wood hav afected hiz thauts in the direcshon indicated bi hiz remarx too hiz feyaansa. Verry good. We wil nou suppose dhat az he went too the thheyater withe the yung lady he suddenly, in the fog, caut a glimps ov this same agent gowing in the direcshon ov the office. He wauz an impetchuwous man, qwic in hiz decizhonz. Evverithhing gave wa too hiz juty. He follode the man, reecht the windo, sau the abstracshon ov the documents, and pershude the thhefe. In this wa we ghet over the obgecshon dhat no wun wood take oridginalz when he cood make coppese. This outcider had too take oridginalz. So far it hoaldz tooghether.”

“Whaut iz the next step?”

“Then we cum intoo difficultese. Wun wood imadgine dhat under such circumstaancez the ferst act ov yung Caduggan West wood be too cese the villane and rase the alarm. Whi did he not doo so? Cood it hav bene an ofishal supereyor whoo tooc the paperz? Dhat wood explane Wests conduct. Or cood the chefe hav ghivven West the slip in the fog, and West started at wuns too Lundon too hed him of from hiz one ruimz, prezhuming dhat he nu whare the ruimz wer? The caul must hav bene verry prescing, cins he left hiz gherl standing in the fog and made no effort too comunicate withe her. Our cent runz coald here, and dhare iz a vaast gap betwene iather hipothhecis and the laying ov Wests boddy,

withe cevven paperz in hiz pocket, on the roofe ov a Metropollitan trane. Mi instinct nou iz too werc from the uther end. If Miacroft haz ghivven us the list ov adrecez we ma be abel too pic our man and follo too trax insted ov wun."

Shuerly enuf, a note awated us at Baker Strete. A guvvernment mescen'ger had braut it poast-haist. Hoamz glaanst at it and thru it over too me.

Dhare ar numerous smaul fri, but fu whoo wood handel so big an afare. The oanly men werth conciddering ar Adolf Mayer, ov 13, Grate Jorj Strete, Westminster; Loowy Laa Roteyare, ov Campden Manshonz, Notting Hil; and Hugo Oberstine, 13, Caulfeeld Gardenz, Kensington. The latter wauz none too be in toun on Munda and iz nou repoerted az havving left. Glad too here u hav cene sum lite. The Cabbinet awaits yor final repoert withe the utmoast anxiyety. Ergent representaishonz hav ariavd from the verry hiyest qworter. The whole foers ov the State iz at yor bac if u shood nede it.—Miacroft.

"Ime afrade," ced Hoamz, smiling, "dhat aul the Qweenz horcez and aul the Qweenz men canot avale in this matter." He had spred out hiz big map ov Lundon and leend egherly over it. "Wel, wel," ced he prezently withe an exclamaishon ov satisfacshon, "thhingz ar terning a littel in our direcshon at laast. Whi, Wautson, I doo onnestly beleve dhat we ar gowing too pool it of, aafter aul." He slapt me on the shoalder withe a sudden berst ov hilarrity. "I am gowing out nou. It iz oanly a reconnasans. I wil doo nuthhing cereyous widhout mi trusted comrade and biyograafer at mi elbo. Doo u sta here, and the odz ar dhat u wil ce me agane in an our or too. If time hangz hevvy ghet fuilscap and a pen, and beghin yor narrative ov hou we saivd the State."

I felt sum reflecshon ov hiz elashon in mi one miand, for I nu wel

dhat he wood not depart so far from hiz uezhuwal austerrity ov demenor unles dhare wauz good cauz for exultaishon. Aul the long November evening I wated, fild withe impaishens for hiz retern. At laast, shortly aafter nine oacloc, dhare ariavd a mescen'ger withe a note:

Am dining at Goldenese Restorant, Gloster Rode, Kensington. Plese cum at wuns and join me dhare. Bring withe u a gemmy, a darc lantern, a chizsel, and a revolver.—S.H.

It wauz a nice eqwipment for a respectabel cittisen too carry throo the dim, fog-draipt streets. I stode them aul discreetly awa in mi overcote and drove strate too the adres ghivven. Dhare sat mi frend at a littel round tabel nere the doer ov the garish Italleyan restorant.

“Hav u had sumthhing too ete? Then join me in a coffy and curasou. Tri wun ov the propriyetorz cigarz. Dha ar les poizonous dhan wun wood expect. Hav u the tuilz?”

“Dha ar here, in mi overcote.”

“Exelent. Let me ghiv u a short skech ov whaut I hav dun, withe sum indicaishon ov whaut we ar about too doo. Nou it must be evvident too u, Wautson, dhat this yung manz boddy wauz *plaist* on the roofe ov the trane. Dhat wauz clere from the instant dhat I determiand the fact dhat it wauz from the roofe, and not from a carrage, dhat he had faulen.”

“Cood it not hav bene dropt from a brij?”

“I shood sa it wauz imposcibel. If u exammine the ruifs u wil fiand dhat dha ar sliatly rounded, and dhare iz no raling round them. Dhaerfoer, we can sa for certane dhat yung Caduggan West wauz plaist on

it.”

“Hou cood he be plaist dhare?”

“Dhat wauz the qweschon which we had too aancer. Dhare iz oonly wun poscibel wa. U ar aware dhat the Underground runz clere ov tunnelz at sum points in the West End. I had a vaghe memmory dhat az I hav travveld bi it I hav ocaizhonaly cene windose just abuv mi hed. Nou, supose dhat a trane haulted under such a windo, wood dhare be enny difficulty in laying a boddy uppon the roofe?”

“It ceemz moast improbbabel.”

“We must faul bac uppon the oald axeyom dhat when aul uther contin’gencese fale, whautevver remainz, houwevver improbbabel, must be the trueth. Here aul uther contin’gencese *hav* faild. When I found dhat the leding internashonal agent, whoo had just left Lunden, livd in a ro ov housez which abutted uppon the Underground, I wauz so pleezd dhat u wer a littel astonnisht at mi sudden frivollity.”

“O, dhat wauz it, wauz it?”

“Yes, dhat wauz it. Mr. Hugo Oberstine, ov 13, Caulfeeld Gardenz, had becum mi obgetive. I began mi operaishonz at Gloster Rode Staishon, whare a verry helpfool ofishal wauct withe me along the trac and aloud me too sattisfi micelf not oonly dhat the bac-stare windose ov Caulfeeld Gardenz open on the line but the even moer ecenshal fact dhat, owing too the intercecshon ov wun ov the larger railwase, the Underground trainz ar freeqwently held moashonles for sum minnuets at dhat verry spot.”

“Splendid, Hoamz! U hav got it!”

“So far—so far, Wautson. We advaans, but the gole iz afar. Wel, havving cene the bac ov Caulfeeld Gardenz, I vizsited the frunt and sattisfide micelf dhat the berd wauz indede flone. It iz a concidderabel hous, unfernisht, so far az I cood juj, in the upper ruimz. Oberstine livd dhare withe a cin’ghel valla, whoo wauz probbably a confedderate entiarly in hiz confidens. We must bare in miand dhat Oberstine haz gon too the Continent too dispose ov hiz booty, but not withe enny ideyaa ov flite; for he had no rezon too fere a worant, and the ideyaa ov an ammater domicilleyary vizsit wood certainly nevver oker too him. Yet dhat iz preciasly whaut we ar about too make.”

“Cood we not ghet a worant and legalise it?”

“Hardly on the evvidens.”

“Whaut can we hope too doo?”

“We canot tel whaut corespondens ma be dhare.”

“I doant like it, Hoamz.”

“Mi dere fello, u shal kepe wauch in the strete. Ile doo the crimminal part. Its not a time too stic at trifelz. Thhinc ov Miacrofts note, ov the Admiralty, the Cabbinet, the exaulted person whoo waits for nuse. We ar bound too go.”

Mi aancer wauz too rise from the tabel.

“U ar rite, Hoamz. We ar bound too go.”

He sprang up and shooc me bi the hand.

"I nu u wood not shrinc at the laast," ced he, and for a moment I sau sumthhing in hiz ise which wauz nerer too tendernes dhan I had evver cene. The next instant he wauz hiz maasterfool, practical celf wuns moer.

"It iz neerly haaf a mile, but dhare iz no hurry. Let us wauc," ced he. "Doant drop the instruments, I beg. Yor arest az a suspishous carracter wood be a moast unforchunate complicaishon."

Caulfeeld Gardenz wauz wun ov dhose lianz ov flat-faist pillard, and porticode housez which ar so promminent a product ov the middel Victoereyan epoc in the West End ov Lundon. Next doer dhare apeerd too be a childrenz party, for the merry buz ov yung voicez and the clatter ov a peyaano rezounded throo the nite. The fog stil hung about and screend us withe its frendly shade. Hoamz had lit hiz lantern and flasht it uppon the mascive doer.

"This iz a cereyous proposishon," ced he. "It iz certainly bolted az wel az loct. We wood doo better in the areyaa. Dhare iz an exelent archwa doun yonder in cace a too sellous poleesman shood intrude. Ghiv me a hand, Wautson, and Ile doo the same for u."

A minnute later we wer boath in the areyaa. Hardly had we reecht the darc shaddose befoer the step ov the poleesman wauz herd in the fog abuv. Az its soft ridhm dide awa, Hoamz cet too werc uppon the lower doer. I sau him stoope and strane until withe a sharp crash it flu open. We sprang throo intoo the darc passage, closing the areyaa doer behiand us. Hoamz led the wa up the kerving, uncarpeted stare. Hiz littel fan ov yello lite shon uppon a lo windo.

"Here we ar, Wautson—this must be the wun." He thru it open, and az he did so dhare wauz a lo, harsh mermer, growing steddily intoo a loud roer az a trane dasht paast us in the darcnes. Hoamz swept hiz lite along

the windo-cil. It wauz thhicly coted withe soot from the paacing en'gianz, but the blac cerface wauz blerd and rubd in placez.

“U can ce whare dha rested the boddy. Hallo, Wautson! whaut iz this? Dhare can be no dout dhat it iz a blud marc.” He wauz pointing too faint disculloraishonz along the woodwerc ov the windo. “Here it iz on the stone ov the stare aulso. The demonstraishon iz complete. Let us sta here until a trane stops.”

We had not long too wate. The verry next trane roerd from the tunnel az befoer, but slode in the open, and then, withe a creking ov braix, poold up imejaitly beneeth us. It wauz not foer fete from the windo-lej too the roofe ov the carragez. Hoamz softly cloazd the windo.

“So far we ar justifide,” ced he. “Whaut doo u thhinc ov it, Wautson?”

“A maasterpece. U hav nevver rizsen too a grater hite.”

“I canot agry withe u dhare. From the moment dhat I conceevd the ideyaa ov the boddy beying uppon the roofe, which shuerly wauz not a verry abstruce wun, aul the rest wauz inevvitabel. If it wer not for the grave interests involvd the afare up too this point wood be incignificant. Our difficultese ar stil befoer us. But perhaps we ma fiand sumthhing here which ma help us.”

We had acended the kitchen stare and enterd the swete ov ruimz uppon the ferst floer. Wun wauz a dining-roome, ceveerly fernisht and contaning nuthhing ov interest. A cecond wauz a bedroome, which aulso dru blanc. The remaning roome apeerd moer prommicng, and mi companyon cetteld doun too a cistemattic examinaishon. It wauz litterd withe boox

and paperz, and wauz evvidently uezd az a studdy. Swiftly and methoddicaly

Hoamz ternd over the contents ov drauwer aafter drauwer and cubbord aafter cubbord, but no gleme ov suxes came too briten hiz austere face. At the end ov an our he wauz no ferther dhan when he started.

“The cunning dog haz cuvverd hiz trax,” ced he. “He haz left nuthhing too incrimminate him. Hiz dain’gerous corespondens haz bene destroid or remuivd. This iz our laast chaans.”

It wauz a smaul tin cash-box which stood uppon the riting-desc. Hoamz pride it open withe hiz chizsel. Cevveral roalz ov paper wer within, cuvverd withe figguerz and calculaishonz, widhout enny note too sho too whaut

dha referd. The recuuring werdz, “wauter presure” and “presure too the sqware inch” sugested sum poscibel relaishon too a submarene. Hoamz tost them aul impaishently acide. Dhare oonly remaind an envelope withe sum smaul nuesday slips incide it. He shooc them out on the tabel, and at wuns I sau bi hiz egher face dhat hiz hoaps had bene raizd.

“Whauts this, Wautson? A? Whauts this? Reccord ov a cerese ov messagez in the advertiazments ov a paper. *Daly Tellegraaf* agony collum bi the print and paper. Rite-hand top corner ov a page. No daits—but messagez arainj themcelvz. This must be the ferst:

“Hoapt too here sooner. Termz agrede too. Rite folly too adres ghivven on card.—Peyerro.

“Next cumz:

“Too complex for descriphon. Must hav fool repoert. Stuf awaits u

when goodz delivverd.—Peyerro.

“Then cumz:

“Matter prescez. Must widhdrau offer unles contract completed. Make apointment bi letter. Wil conform bi advertiazment.—Peyerro.

“Finaly:

“Munda nite aafter nine. Too taps. Oonly ourcelvz. Doo not be so suspishous. Pament in hard cash when goodz delivverd.—Peyerro.

“A faerly complete reccord, Wautson! If we cood oonly ghet at the man at the uther end!” He sat lost in thaut, tapping hiz fin’ gherz on the tabel. Finaly he sprang too hiz fete.

“Wel, perhaps it woant be so difficult, aafter aul. Dhare iz nuthhing moer too be dun here, Wautson. I thhinc we mite drive round too the officez ov the *Daly Tellegraaf*, and so bring a good dase werc too a concluezhon.”

Miacroft Hoamz and Lestrade had cum round bi apointment aafter brecfast next da and Sherloc Hoamz had recounted too them our procedingz ov the da befoer. The profeshonal shooc hiz hed over our confest berglary.

“We caant doo these thhingz in the foers, Mr. Hoamz,” ced he. “No wunder u ghet rezults dhat ar beyond us. But sum ov these dase ule go too far, and ule fiand yorcelf and yor frend in trubbel.”

“For In’gland, home and buty—a, Wautson? Marterz on the aultar ov our cuntry. But whaut doo u thhinc ov it, Miacroft?”

“Exelent, Sherloc! Admirabel! But whaut uce wil u make ov it?”

Hoamz pict up the *Daly Tellegraaf* which la uppon the tabel.

“Hav u cene Peyerrose advertiazment too-da?”

“Whaut? Anuther wun?”

“Yes, here it iz:

“Too-nite. Same our. Same place. Too taps. Moast vitaly important. Yor one saifty at stake.—Peyerro.

“Bi Jorj!” cride Lestrade. “If he aancerz dhat weve got him!”

“Dhat wauz mi ideyaa when I poot it in. I thhinc if u cood boath make it conveyent too cum withe us about ate oacloc too Caulfeeld Gardenz we mite poscibly ghet a littel nerer too a solueshon.”

Wun ov the moast remarcabel caracteristix ov Sherloc Hoamz wauz hiz pouwer ov throwing hiz brane out ov acshon and switching aul hiz thauts on too liter thhingz whenever he had convinst himcelf dhat he cood no lon’gher werc too advaantage. I remember dhat juring the whole ov dhat memmorabel da he lost himcelf in a monnograaf which he had undertaken uppon the Polifonnic Motets ov Lassus. For mi one part I had nun ov this pouwer ov detachment, and the da, in conceqwens, apeerd too be interminabel. The grate nashonal importans ov the ishu, the

suspens in hi qworterz, the direct nachure ov the experriment which we wer triying—aul combiand too werc uppon mi nerv. It wauz a relefe too me when at laast, aafter a lite dinner, we cet out uppon our expedishon. Lestrade and Miacroft met us bi apointment at the outside ov Gloster Rode Staishon. The areyaa doer ov Oberstianz hous had bene left open the nite befoer, and it wauz nescenary for me, az Miacroft Hoamz absolutly and indignantly decliand too clime the ralingz, too paas in and open the haul doer. Bi nine oacloc we wer aul ceted in the studdy, wating paishently for our man.

An our paast and yet anuther. When elevven struc, the mezhuerd bete ov the grate cherc hloc ceemd too sound the derj ov our hoaps. Lestrade and Miacroft wer fidgeting in dhare ceets and loocking twice a minnute at dhare wauchez. Hoamz sat cilent and compoazd, hiz ilidz haaf shut, but evvery cens on the alert. He raizd hiz hed withe a sudden gerc.

“He iz cumming,” ced he.

Dhare had bene a fertive step paast the doer. Nou it reternd. We herd a shuffling sound outside, and then too sharp taps withe the nocker. Hoamz rose, moashonning us too remane ceted. The gas in the haul wauz a mere point ov lite. He opend the outer doer, and then az a darc figgure slipt paast him he cloazd and faacend it. “This wa!” we herd him sa, and a moment later our man stood befoer us. Hoamz had follode him cloasly, and az the man ternd withe a cri ov cerprise and alarm he caut him bi the collar and thru him bac intoo the roome. Befoer our prizzoner had recuvverd hiz ballans the doer wauz shut and Hoamz standing withe hiz bac against it. The man glaerd round him, staggherd, and fel censles uppon the floer. Withe the shoc, hiz braud-brimd hat flu from hiz hed, hiz cravat slipt down from hiz lips, and dhare wer the long lite beard and the soft, handsum dellicate fechuerz ov Cuunel Vallentine Waulter.

Hoamz gave a whiscel ov cerprise.

“U can rite me doun an as this time, Wautson,” ced he. “This wauz not the berd dhat I wauz loocking for.”

“Whoo iz he?” aasct Miacroft egherly.

“The yun’gher bruther ov the late Cer Jaimz Waulter, the hed ov the Submarene Department. Yes, yes; I ce the faul ov the cardz. He iz cumming too. I thhinc dhat u had best leve hiz examinaishon too me.”

We had carrede the prostrate boddy too the sofaa. Nou our prizzoner sat up, looct round him withe a horror-stricken face, and paast hiz hand over hiz foerhed, like wun whoo canot beleve hiz one cencez.

“Whaut iz this?” he aasct. “I came here too vizsit Mr. Oberstine.”

“Evverithhing iz none, Cuunel Waulter,” ced Hoamz. “Hou an In’GLISH gentelman cood behave in such a manner iz beyond mi comprehenshon. But

yor whole corespondens and relaishonz withe Oberstine ar within our nollej. So aulso ar the cercumstaancez conected withe the deth ov yung Caduggan West. Let me advise u too gane at leest the smaull credit for repentans and confeshon, cins dhare ar stil sum detailz which we can oanly lern from yor lips.”

The man groand and sanc hiz face in hiz handz. We wated, but he wauz cilent.

“I can ashure u,” ced Hoamz, “dhat evvery ecenshal iz aulreddy none. We no dhat u wer prest for munny; dhat u tooc an impres ov the kese which yor bruther held; and dhat u enterd intoo a corespondens withe Oberstine, whoo aancerd yor letterz throo the

advertiazment collumz ov the *Daly Tellegraaf*. We ar aware dhat u went doun too the office in the fog on Munda nite, but dhat u wer cene and follode bi yung Caduggan West, whoo had probbably sum preveyous rezon too suspect u. He sau yor thheft, but cood not ghiv the alarm, az it wauz just poscibel dhat u wer taking the paperz too yor bruther in Lunden. Leving aul hiz private concernz, like the good cittisen dhat he wauz, he follode u cloasly in the fog and kept at yor heelz until u reecht this verry hous. Dhare he interveend, and then it wauz, Cuunel Waulter, dhat too trezon u added the moer terribel crime ov merder."

"I did not! I did not! Befoer God I sware dhat I did not!" cride our retched prizzoner.

"Tel us, then, hou Caduggan West met hiz end befoer u lade him uppon the roofe ov a railwa carrage."

"I wil. I sware too u dhat I wil. I did the rest. I confes it. It wauz just az u sa. A Stoc Exchainj det had too be pade. I neded the munny badly. Oberstine offerd me five thouzand. It wauz too save micelf from ruwin. But az too merder, I am az innocent az u."

"Whaut happend, then?"

"He had hiz suspishonz befoer, and he follode me az u describe. I nevver nu it until I wauz at the verry doer. It wauz thhic fog, and wun cood not ce thre yardz. I had ghivven too taps and Oberstine had cum too the doer. The yung man rusht up and demaanded too no whaut we wer about too doo withe the paperz. Oberstine had a short life-preserver. He aulwase carrede it withe him. Az West foerst hiz wa aafter us intoo the hous Oberstine struc him on the hed. The blo wauz a fatal wun. He wauz ded within five minnuets. Dhare he la in the haul, and we wer at

our wits' end whaut too doo. Then Oberstine had this ideyaa about the trainz which halted under hiz bac windo. But ferst he exammiand the paperz which I had braut. He ced dhat thre ov them wer ecenshal, and dhat he must kepe them. 'U canot kepe them,' ced I. 'Dhare wil be a dredfool rou at Woollich if dha ar not reternd.' 'I must kepe them,' ced he, 'for dha ar so tecnical dhat it iz imposcibel in the time too make coppese.' 'Then dha must aul go bac toogheter too-nite,' ced I. He thaut for a littel, and then he cride out dhat he had it. 'Thre I wil kepe,' ced he. 'The utherz we wil stuf intoo the pocket ov this yung man. When he iz found the whole biznes wil ashuerdly be poot too hiz acount.' I cood ce no uther wa out ov it, so we did az he sugested. We wated haaf an our at the windo befoer a trane stopt. It wauz so thhic dhat nuthhing cood be cene, and we had no difficulty in lowering Wests boddy on too the trane. Dhat wauz the end ov the matter so far az I wauz concernd."

"And yor bruther?"

"He ced nuthhing, but he had caut me wuns withe hiz kese, and I thhinc dhat he suspected. I red in hiz ise dhat he suspected. Az u no, he nevver held up hiz hed agane."

Dhare wauz cilens in the roome. It wauz broken bi Miacroft Hoamz.

"Can u not make reparaishon? It wood ese yor conshens, and poscibly yor punnishment."

"Whaut reparaishon can I make?"

"Whare iz Oberstine withe the paperz?"

"I doo not no."

“Did he ghiv u no adres?”

“He ced dhat letterz too the Hotel du Luivr, Parris, wood evenchuwaly reche him.”

“Then reparaishon iz stil within yor pouwer,” ced Sherlock Hoamz.

“I wil doo ennithhing I can. I o this fello no particcular good-wil. He haz bene mi ruwin and mi dounfaul.”

“Here ar paper and pen. Cit at this desc and rite too mi dictaishon. Direct the envelope too the adres ghivven. Dhat iz rite. Nou the letter:

“Dere Cer:

“Withe regard too our traanzacshon, u wil no dout hav observd bi nou dhat wun ecenshal detale iz miscing. I hav a tracing which wil make it complete. This haz involvd me in extraa trubbel, houwever, and I must aasc u for a ferther advaans ov five hundred poundz. I wil not trust it too the poast, nor wil I take ennithhing but goald or noats. I wood cum too u abraud, but it wood exite remarc if I left the cuntry at prezsent. Dhaerfoer I shal expect too mete u in the smoking-roome ov the Charing Cros Hotel at noone on Satterda. Remember dhat oonly In’glis
noats, or goald, wil be taken.

“Dhat wil doo verry wel. I shal be verry much cerpriazd if it duz not fech our man.”

And it did! It iz a matter ov history—dhat ceecret history ov a naishon which iz often so much moer intimate and interesting dhan its public cronnikelz—dhat Oberstine, egher too complete the coo ov hiz liaftime,

came too the lure and wauz saifly en'gulft for fiftene yeerz in a Brittitsh prizzon. In hiz trunc wer found the invallubel Bruce-Partington planz, which he had poot up for aucshon in aul the naval centerz ov Urope.

Cuunel Waulter dide in prizzon toowordz the end ov the cecond yere ov hiz

centens. Az too Hoamz, he reternd refresht too hiz monnograaf uppon the Polifonnic Motets ov Lassus, which haz cins bene printed for private cerculaishon, and iz ced bi experts too be the laast werd uppon the subject. Sum weex aafterwordz I lernd incidentaly dhat mi frend spent a da at Winzor, whens he reternd withe a remarcably fine emmerald ti-pin. When I aasct him if he had baut it, he aancerd dhat it wauz a prezsent from a certane graishous lady in whoose interests he had

wuns bene forchunate enuf too carry out a smaul comishon. He ced no moer; but I fancy dhat I cood ghes at dhat ladese august name, and I hav littel dout dhat the emmerald pin wil forevver recaul too mi frendz memmory the advenchure ov the Bruce-Partington planz.

The Advenchure ov the Devvilz Foot

In recording from time too time sum ov the cureyous expereyencez and interesting recolecshonz which I asoasheyate withe mi long and intimate frendship withe Mr. Sherloc Hoamz, I hav continnuwaly bene faist bi difficultese cauzd bi hiz one averzhon too publiscity. Too hiz somber and cinnical spirrit aul poppular aplauz wauz aulwase abhorent, and nuthing amuezd him moer at the end ov a suxesfool cace dhan too hand over the acchuwal expoazhure too sum orthodox ofishal, and too liscen withe a mocking

smile too the genneral coerus ov misplaist con'grachulaishon. It wauz indede

this attichude uppon the part ov mi frend and certainly not enny lac ov interesting matereyal which haz cauzd me ov late yeerz too la verry fu

ov mi reccordz befoer the public. Mi participaishon in sum ov hiz advenchuerz wauz aulwase a privvilege which entaild discredishon and retticens uppon me.

It wauz, then, withe concidderabel cerprise dhat I receevd a tellegram from Hoamz laast Chueзда—he haz nevver bene none too rite whare a tellegram wood cerv—in the following termz: “Whi not tel them ov the Cornish horror—strain’gest cace I hav handeld.” I hav no ideyaa whaut baqword swepe ov memmory had braut the matter fresh too hiz miand, or whaut freke had cauzd him too desire dhat I shood recount it; but I hacen, befoer anuther canceling tellegram ma arive, too hunt out the noats which ghiv me the exact detailz ov the cace and too la the narrative befoer mi rederz.

It wauz, then, in the spring ov the yere 1897 dhat Hoamsez iarn constichueshon shode sum cimptomz ov ghivving wa in the face ov constant hard werc ov a moast exacting kiand, agravated, perhaps, bi ocaizhonal indiscredishonz ov hiz one. In March ov dhat yere Dr. Moor Agar, ov Harly Strete, whose dramattic introducshon too Hoamz I ma sum da recount, gave pozsitive injuncshonz dhat the famous private agent la acide aul hiz cacez and surender himcelf too complete rest if he wisht too avert an absolute braicdoun. The state ov hiz helth wauz not a matter in which he himcelf tooc the faintest interest, for hiz mental detachment wauz absolute, but he wauz injuest at laast, on the thret ov beying permanently disqwaulifide from werc, too ghiv himcelf a complete chainj ov cene and are. Dhus it wauz dhat in the erly spring ov dhat yere we found ourcelvz tooghether in a smaul cottage nere Pold’hu Ba, at the ferther extremmity ov the Cornish peninshulaa.

It wauz a cin’gular spot, and wun peculeyarly wel suted too the grim humor ov mi paishent. From the windose ov our littel whiatwausht hous, which stood hi uppon a graacy hedland, we looct down uppon the whole cinnister cemmy-cerkel ov Mounts Ba, dhat oald deth trap ov saling

vescelz, withe its frinj ov blac clifs and cerj-swept reefs on which inumerabel cemen hav met dhare end. Withe a northerly brese it lise plascid and shelterd, inviting the storm-tost craaft too tac intoo it for rest and protecshon.

Then cum the sudden swerl round ov the wind, the blistering gale from the south-west, the dragghing ancor, the le shoer, and the laast battel in the creming brakerz. The wise marriner standz far out from dhat evil place.

On the land cide our surroundingz wer az somber az on the ce. It wauz a cuntry ov roling moorz, loanly and dun-cullord, withe an ocaizhonal chersch touwer too marc the cite ov sum oald-werld village. In evvery direcshon uppon these moorz dhare wer tracez ov sum vannisht race which had paast utterly awa, and left az its sole reccord strainj monnuments ov stone, ireggular moundz which containd the bernd ashez ov the ded, and cureyous erthwerx which hinted at prehistoric strife. The glammor and mistery ov the place, withe its cinnister atmosfere ov forgotten naishonz, apeeld too the imaginaishon ov mi frend, and he spent much ov hiz time in long waux and sollitary meditaishonz uppon the moor. The ainshent Cornish lan'gwage had aulso arested hiz atenshon, and he had, I remember, conceevd the ideyaa dhat it wauz akin too the Cauldeyan, and had bene larjly deriavd from the Feneeshan traderz in tin. He had receevd a concianment ov boox uppon filollogy and wauz cetling doun too devellop this thhecis when suddenly, too mi soro and too hiz unfaind delite, we found ourcelvz, even in dhat land ov dreemz, plunjd intoo a problem at our verry doerz which wauz moer intens, moer en'grocing, and infiniatly moer mistereyous dhan enny ov dhose which had

drivven us from Lundon. Our cimpel life and peesfool, helthhy rootene wer viyolently interupted, and we wer precippitated intoo the midst ov a cerese ov events which cauzd the utmoast exiatment not oonly in Cornwaul but throowout the whole west ov In'gland. Menny ov mi rederz ma retane sum recolecshon ov whaut wauz cauld at the time "The

Cornish Horror," dho a moast imperfect acount ov the matter reecht the Lndon pres. Nou, aafter thhertene yeez, I wil ghiv the tru detailz ov this inconcevable afare too the public.

I hav ced dhat scatterd touwerz marct the villagez which dotted this part ov Cornwaul. The nerest ov these wauz the hamlet ov Tredannic Wollaaz, whare the cottages ov a cappel ov hundred inhabitants clusterd round an ainsent, mos-grone cherch. The viccar ov the parrish, Mr. Round'ha, wauz sumthhing ov an arkeyollogist, and az such Hoamz had made

hiz aqwaintans. He wauz a middel-aijd man, poertly and affabel, withe a concidderabel fund ov local loer. At hiz invitaishon we had taken te at the viccarage and had cum too no, aulso, Mr. Mortimer Tregheennis, an independent gentelman, whoo increest the clergimanz scanty rezoercez bi taking ruimz in hiz larj, stragling hous. The viccar, beying a batchelor, wauz glad too cum too such an arainjment, dho he had littel in common withe hiz lodger, whoo wauz a thhin, darc, spectaceld man, withe a

stoope which gave the impreshon ov acchuwal, fizensal deformity. I remember dhat juring our short vizsit we found the viccar garrulous, but hiz lodger strainjly retticient, a sad-faist, introspective man, citting withe averted ise, brooding aparrently uppon hiz one afaerz.

These wer the too men whoo enterd abruptly intoo our littel citting-roome on Chuezda, March the 16th, shortly aafter our breccfast our, az we wer smoking tooghether, preparratoery too our daly exkerzhon uppon the moorz.

"Mr. Hoamz," ced the viccar in an adgitated vois, "the moast extrordinary and tradgic afare haz okerd juring the nite. It iz the moast unherd-ov biznes. We can oanly regard it az a speshal Provvicens dhat u shood chaans too be here at the time, for in aul In'gland u ar the wun man we nede."

I glaerd at the intrucive viccar withe no verry frendly ise; but Hoamz tooc hiz pipe from hiz lips and sat up in hiz chare like an oald hound whoo heerz the vu-hallo. He waivd hiz hand too the sofaa, and our palpitating vizsitor withe hiz adgitated companyon sat cide bi cide uppon it. Mr. Mortimer Treghennis wauz moer celf-containd dhan the clergiman, but the twitching ov hiz thhin handz and the briatnes ov hiz darc ise shode dhat dha shaerd a common emoashon.

“Shal I speke or u?” he aasct ov the viccar.

“Wel, az u ceme too hav made the discuvvery, whautevver it ma be, and the viccar too hav had it cecond-hand, perhaps u had better doo the speking,” ced Hoamz.

I glaanst at the haistily clad clergiman, withe the formaly drest lodger ceted beside him, and wauz amuezd at the cerprise which Hoamsez cimpel deducshon had braut too dhare facez.

“Perhaps I had best sa a fu werdz ferst,” ced the viccar, “and then u can juz if u wil liscen too the detailz from Mr. Treghennis, or whether we shood not hacen at wuns too the cene ov this mistereyous afare. I ma explane, then, dhat our frend here spent laast evening in the cumpany ov hiz too brutherz, Owen and Jorj, and ov hiz cister Brenda, at dhare hous ov Tredannic Wardhaa, which iz nere the oald stone cros uppon the moor. He left them shortly aafter ten oacloc, playing cardz round the dining-roome tabel, in exelent helth and spirrits. This morning, beying an erly riser, he wauct in dhat direcshon befoer brecfast and wauz overtaken bi the carrage ov Dr. Ritchardz, whoo explaind dhat he had just bene cent for on a moast ergent caul too Tredannic Wardhaa. Mr. Mortimer Treghennis natchuraly went withe him. When he ariavd at Tredannic Wardhaa he found an extrordinary state ov thhingz. Hiz too brutherz and hiz cister wer ceted round the tabel exactly az he had left them, the cardz stil spred in frunt ov

them and the candelz bernd doun too dhare sockets. The cister la bac stone-ded in her chare, while the too brutherz sat on eche side ov her laafing, shouting, and cinging, the cencez stricken clene out ov them. Aul thre ov them, the ded woomman and the too demented men, retaind uppon dhare facez an expreshon ov the utmoast horror—a convulshon ov terror which wauz dredfool too looc uppon. Dhare wauz no cine ov the prezsens ov enniwun in the hous, exept Mrs. Poerter, the oald cooc and houskeper, whoo declaerd dhat she had slept deeply and herd no sound juring the nite. Nuthhing had bene stolen or disarainjd, and dhare iz absolutly no explanaishon ov whaut the horror can be which haz fritend a woomman too deth and too strong men out ov dhare cencez. Dhare iz the cichuwaishon, Mr. Hoamz, in a nutshel, and if u can help us too clere it up u wil hav dun a grate werc.”

I had hoapt dhat in sum wa I cood coax mi companyon bac intoo the qwiyet which had bene the obgett ov our gerny; but wun glaans at hiz intens face and contracted iabrouz toald me hou vane wauz nou the expectaishon. He sat for sum littel time in cilens, abzorbd in the strainj draamaa which had broken in uppon our pece.

“I wil looc intoo this matter,” he ced at laast. “On the face ov it, it wood apere too be a cace ov a verry exepshonal nachure. Hav u bene dhare yorcelf, Mr. Round’ha?”

“No, Mr. Hoamz. Mr. Treghennis braut bac the acount too the viccarage, and I at wuns hurrede over withe him too consult u.”

“Hou far iz it too the hous whare this cin’gular tradgedy okerd?”

“About a mile inland.”

“Then we shal wauc over tooghether. But befoer we start I must aasc u a fu qweschon, Mr. Mortimer Treghennis.”

The uther had bene cilent aul this time, but I had observd dhat hiz moer controald exiatment wauz even grater dhan the obtrucive emoashon ov the clergiman. He sat withe a pale, draun face, hiz ancshous gase fixt uppon Hoamz, and hiz thhin handz claaspt convulciavly tooghter. Hiz pale lips qwivverd az he liscend too the dredfool expereyens which had befaulen hiz fammily, and hiz darc ise ceemd too reflect sumthhing ov the horror ov the cene.

“Aasc whaut u like, Mr. Hoamz,” ced he egherly. “It iz a bad thhing too speke ov, but I wil aancer u the trueth.”

“Tel me about laast nite.”

“Wel, Mr. Hoamz, I supt dhare, az the viccar haz ced, and mi elder bruther Jorj propoazd a game ov whist aafterwordz. We sat doun about nine oacloc. It wauz a qworter-paast ten when I muivd too go. I left them aul round the tabel, az merry az cood be.”

“Whoo let u out?”

“Mrs. Poerter had gon too bed, so I let micelf out. I shut the haul doer behiand me. The windo ov the roome in which dha sat wauz cloazd, but the bliand wauz not draun doun. Dhare wauz no chainj in doer or windo this morning, or enny rezon too thhinc dhat enny strain’ger had bene too the hous. Yet dhare dha sat, drivven clene mad withe terror, and Brenda liying ded ov frite, withe her hed hanging over the arm ov the chare. Ile nevver ghet the cite ov dhat roome out ov mi miand so long az I liv.”

“The facts, az u state them, ar certainly moast remarcabel,” ced Hoamz. “I take it dhat u hav no thheyory yorcelf which can in enny wa acount for them?”

"Its devvilish, Mr. Hoamz, devvilish!" cride Mortimer Treghennis. "It iz not ov this werld. Sumthhing haz cum intoo dhat roome which haz dasht the lite ov rezon from dhare miandz. Whaut human contrivans cood doo dhat?"

"I fere," ced Hoamz, "dhat if the matter iz beyond humannity it iz certainly beyond me. Yet we must exhaust aul natchural explanaishonz befoer we faul bac uppon such a thheyory az this. Az too yorcelf, Mr. Treghennis, I take it u wer divided in sum wa from yor fammily, cins dha livd tooghether and u had ruimz apart?"

"Dhat iz so, Mr. Hoamz, dho the matter iz paast and dun withe. We wer a fammily ov tin-minerz at Redrueth, but we soald our venchure too a cumpany, and so retiard withe enuf too kepe us. I woant deni dhat dhare wauz sum feling about the divizhon ov the munny and it stood betwene us for a time, but it wauz aul forghivven and forgotten, and we wer the best ov frendz tooghether."

"Loocking bac at the evening which u spent tooghether, duz ennithhing stand out in yor memmory az throwing enny poscibel lite uppon the tradgedy? Thhinc caerfooly, Mr. Treghennis, for enny clu which can help me."

"Dhare iz nuthhing at aul, cer."

"Yor pepel wer in dhare uezhuwal spirrits?"

"Nevver better."

"Wer dha nervous pepel? Did dha evver sho enny aprehenshon ov cumming dain'ger?"

"Nuthhing ov the kiand."

"U hav nuthhing too ad then, which cood acist me?"

Mortimer Treghennis concidderd earnestly for a moment.

"Dhare iz wun thhing dhat okerz too me," ced he at laast. "Az we sat at the tabel mi bac wauz too the windo, and mi bruther Jorj, he beying mi partner at cardz, wauz facing it. I sau him wuns looc hard over mi shoalder, so I ternd round and looct aulso. The bliand wauz up and the windo shut, but I cood just make out the booshez on the laun, and it ceemd too me for a moment dhat I sau sumthhing mooving among them. I coodnt even sa if it wauz man or annimal, but I just thaut dhare wauz sumthhing dhare. When I aasct him whaut he wauz loocking at, he toald me dhat he had the same feling. Dhat iz aul dhat I can sa."

"Did u not investigate?"

"No; the matter paast az unnimportant."

"U left them, then, widhout enny premonishon ov evil?"

"Nun at aul."

"I am not clere hou u came too here the nuse so erly this morning."

"I am an erly riser and genneraly take a wauc befoer breakfast. This morning I had hardly started when the doctor in hiz carrage overtooc me. He toald me dhat oald Mrs. Poerter had cent a boi doun withe an ergent message. I sprang in becide him and we drove on. When we got dhare we looct intoo dhat dredfool roome. The candelz and the fire must hav bernd out ourz befoer, and dha had bene citting dhare in the darc until daun had broken. The doctor ced Brenda must hav bene ded at leest cix ourz. Dhare wer no cianz ov viyolens. She just la across

the arm ov the chare withe dhat looc on her face. Jorj and Owen wer cinging snatchez ov songz and gibbering like too grate aips. O, it wauz aufool too ce! I coodnt stand it, and the doctor wauz az white az a shete. Indede, he fel intoo a chare in a sort ov faint, and we neerly had him on our handz az wel."

"Remarcabel—moast remarcabel!" ced Hoamz, rising and taking hiz hat. "I thhinc, perhaps, we had better go doun too Tredannic Wardhaa widhout ferther dela. I confes dhat I hav celdom none a cace which at ferst cite presented a moer cin'gular problem."

Our procedingz ov dhat ferst morning did littel too advaans the investigaishon. It wauz marct, houwevver, at the outcet bi an incident which left the moast cinnister impreshon uppon mi miand. The aproche too the spot at which the tradgedy okerd iz doun a narro, wianding, cuntry lane. While we made our wa along it we herd the rattel ov a carrage cumming toowordz us and stood acide too let it paas. Az it drove bi us I caut a glimps throo the cloazd windo ov a horribly contorted, grinning face glaring out at us. Dhose staring ise and nashing teeth flasht paast us like a dredfool vizhon.

"Mi brutherz!" cride Mortimer Treghennis, white too hiz lips. "Dha ar taking them too Helston."

We looct withe horror aafter the blac carrage, lumbering uppon its wa. Then we ternd our steps toowordz this il-omend hous in which dha had met dhare strainj fate.

It wauz a larj and brite dwelling, raather a villaa dhan a cottage, withe a concidderabel garden which wauz aulreddy, in dhat Cornish are, wel fild withe spring flouwerz. Toowordz this garden the windo ov the citting-roome frunted, and from it, acording too Mortimer Treghennis, must hav cum dhat thhing ov evil which had bi shere horror in a cin'ghel instant blaasted dhare miandz. Hoamz wauct sloly and thautfooly

among the flower-plots and along the path before we entered the porch. So absorbed was he in his thoughts, I remember, that he stumbled over the watering-pot, upset its contents, and deluged both our feet and the garden path. Inside the house we were met by the elderly Cornish housekeeper, Mrs. Poerter, who, with the aid of a young girl, looked after the wants of the family. She readily accepted all Hoamsey questions. She had heard nothing in the night. Her employer had all been in excellent spirits lately, and she had never known them more cheerful and prosperous. She had fainted with horror upon entering the room in the morning and seeing that dreadful company round the table. She had, when she recovered, thrown open the window to let the morning air in, and had run down to the lane, when she sent a farm-lad for the doctor. The lady was on her bed upstairs if we cared to see her. It took four strong men to get the brother into the acilum carriage. She would not herself stay in the house another day and was starting that very afternoon to rejoin her family at St. Ives.

We ascended the stairs and found the body. Miss Brenda Tregennis had been a very beautiful girl, though now verging upon middle age. Her dark, clear-cut face was handsome, even in death, but there still lingered upon it something of that convulsion of horror which had been her last human emotion. From her bedroom we descended to the sitting-room, where this strange tragedy had actually occurred. The charred ashes of the overnight fire lay in the grate. On the table were the four guttered and burnt-out candles, with the cards scattered over its surface. The chair had been moved back against the wall, but all else was as it had been the night before. Hoamsey paced with light, swift steps about the room; he sat in the various chairs, drawing them up and reconstructing their positions. He tested how much of the garden was visible; he examined the floor, the ceiling, and the fireplace; but never again did I see that sudden brightening of his eyes and tightening of his lips which would have told me that he saw some gleam of light in this utter darkness.

"Whi a fire?" he aasct wuns. "Had dha aulwase a fire in this smaule roome on a spring evening?"

Mortimer Tregghennis explaine dhat the nite wauz coald and damp. For dhat rezon, aafter hiz arival, the fire wauz lit. "Whaut ar u gowing too doo nou, Mr. Hoamz?" he aasct.

Mi frend smiald and lade hiz hand uppon mi arm. "I thhinc, Wautson, dhat I shal rezhume dhat coers ov tobacco-poizoning which u hav so often and so justly condemd," ced he. "Withe yor permishon, gentelmen, we wil nou retern too our cottage, for I am not aware dhat enny nu factor iz liacly too cum too our notice here. I wil tern the facts over in mi miand, Mr. Tregghennis, and shood ennithhing oker too me I wil certainly comunicate withe u and the viccar. In the meentime I wish u boath good-morning."

It wauz not until long aafter we wer bac in Pold'hu Cottage dhat Hoamz broke hiz complete and abzorbd cilens. He sat coild in hiz armchare, hiz haggard and acettic face hardly vizsibel amid the blu swerl ov hiz tobacco smoke, hiz blac brouz draun doun, hiz foerhed contracted, hiz ise vacant and far awa. Finaly he lade doun hiz pipe and sprang too hiz fete.

"It woant doo, Wautson!" ced he withe a laaf. "Let us wauc along the clifs tooghether and cerch for flint arrose. We ar moer liacly too fiand them dhan cluse too this problem. Too let the brane werc widhout sufishent matereyal iz like racing an en'gine. It rax itcelf too pecez. The ce are, sunshine, and paishens, Wautson—aul els wil cum.

"Nou, let us caalmly define our posishon, Wautson," he continnude az we skerted the clifs tooghether. "Let us ghet a ferm grip ov the verry littel which we *do* no, so dhat when fresh facts arise we ma be reddy too

fit them intoo dhare placez. I take it, in the ferst place, dhat niather ov us iz prepaerd too admit diyabollical intruezhonz intoo the afaerz ov men. Let us beghin bi ruling dhat entiarly out ov our miandz. Verry good. Dhare remane thre personz whoo hav bene grevously stricken bi sum conshous or unconshous human agency. Dhat iz ferm ground. Nou, when did this oker? Evvidently, ashuming hiz narrative too be tru, it wauz imejaitly aafter Mr. Mortimer Tregghennis had left the roome. Dhat iz a verry important point. The prezumpshon iz dhat it wauz within a fu minnuets aafterwordz. The cardz stil la uppon the tabel. It wauz aulreddy paast dhare uezhuwal our for bed. Yet dha had not chainjd dhare posishon or poosht bac dhare chaerz. I repete, then, dhat the ocurrens wauz imejaitly aafter hiz deparchure, and not later dhan elevven oacloc laast nite.

“Our next obveyous step iz too chec, so far az we can, the muivments ov Mortimer Tregghennis aafter he left the roome. In this dhare iz no difficulty, and dha ceme too be abuv suspishon. Nowing mi methodz az u doo, u wer, ov coers, conshous ov the sumwhaut clumsy wauter-pot expegent bi which I obtaind a clerer impres ov hiz foot dhan mite urtherwise hav bene poscibel. The wet, sandy paath tooc it admirably. Laast nite wauz aulso wet, u wil remember, and it wauz not difficult—havving obtaind a saampel print—too pic out hiz trac among urtherz and too follo hiz muivments. He apeerz too hav wauct awa swiftly in the direcshon ov the viccarage.

“If, then, Mortimer Tregghennis disapeerd from the cene, and yet sum outcide person afected the card-playerz, hou can we reconstruct dhat person, and hou wauz such an impreshon ov horror convade? Mrs. Poerter ma be eliminated. She iz evvidently harmles. Iz dhare enny evvidens dhat sumwun crept up too the garden windo and in sum manner projuest so teriffic an efect dhat he drove dhose whoo sau it out ov dhare cencez? The oonly sugeschon in this direcshon cumz from Mortimer Tregghennis himcelf, whoo cez dhat hiz bruther spoke about sum muivment in the garden. Dhat iz certainly remarcabel, az the nite wauz rany,

cloudy, and darc. Enniwun whoo had the desine too alarm these pepel wood

be compeld too place hiz verry face against the glaas befoer he cood be cene. Dhare iz a thre-foot flouwer-border outside this windo, but no indicaishon ov a footmarc. It iz difficult too imadgine, then, hou an outcider cood hav made so terribel an impreshon uppon the cumpany, nor hav we found enny poscibel motive for so strainj and elaborborate an atempt. U perceve our difficultese, Wautson?"

"Dha ar oonly too clere," I aancerd withe convicshon.

"And yet, withe a littel moer matereyal, we ma proove dhat dha ar not incermountabel," ced Hoamz. "I fancy dhat amung yor extencive arkiavz, Wautson, u ma fiand sum which wer neerly az obscure. Meenwhile, we shal poot the cace acide until moer accurate dataa ar avalabel, and devote the rest ov our morning too the persute ov neyolithhic man."

I ma hav commented uppon mi frendz pouwer ov mental detachment, but nevver hav I wunderd at it moer dhan uppon dhat spring morning in Cornwaul when for too ourz he discoerst uppon kelts, arrohedz, and shardz, az liatly az if no cinnister mistery wer wating for hiz solueshon. It wauz not until we had reternd in the aafternoone too our cottage dhat we found a vizsitor awating us, whoo soone braut our miandz bac too the matter in hand. Niather ov us neded too be toald whoo dhat vizsitor wauz. The huge boddy, the cragghy and deeply ceemd face withe the feers ise and hauc-like nose, the grizseld hare which neerly brusht our cottage celing, the beard—goalden at the frin'gez and white nere the lips, save for the niccotene stane from hiz perpetchuwal cigar—aul these wer az wel none in Lundon az in Africaa, and cood oonly be asoasheyated withe the tremendous personallity ov Dr. Leyon Sterndale, the grate liyon-hunter and exploerer.

We had herd ov hiz prezsens in the district and had wuns or twice caut cite ov hiz taul figgure uppon the moorland paaths. He made no advaancez too us, houwevver, nor wood we hav dreemd ov doowing so too him, az it wauz wel none dhat it wauz hiz luv ov cecluezhon which cauzd him too spend the grater part ov the intervalz betwene hiz gernese in a smaul bun'galo berrede in the loanly wood ov Becham Arreyans. Here, amid hiz boox and hiz maps, he livd an absoluetly loanly life, atending too hiz one cimpel waunts and paying littel aparrent hede too the afaerz ov hiz naborz. It wauz a cerprise too me, dhaerfoer, too here him aasking Hoamz in an egher vois whether he had made enny advaans in hiz reconstrucshon ov this mistereyous eppisode. "The county polece ar utterly at fault," ced he, "but perhaps yor wider expereyens haz sugested sum concevabel explanaishon. Mi oanly clame too beying taken intoo yor confidens iz dhat juring mi menny rezsidencez here I hav cum too no this fammily ov Treghennis verry wel—indede, uppon mi Cornish mutherz cide I cood caul them cuzsinz—and dhare strainj fate haz natchuraly bene a grate shoc too me. I ma tel u dhat I had got az far az Plimmouth uppon mi wa too Africaa, but the nuse reecht me this morning, and I came strate bac agane too help in the inqwiry."

Hoamz raizd hiz iabrouz.

"Did u loose yor bote throo it?"

"I wil take the next."

"Dere me! dhat iz frendship indede."

"I tel u dha wer rellatiavz."

"Qwite so—cuzsinz ov yor muther. Wauz yor baggage aboard the ship?"

"Sum ov it, but the mane part at the hotel."

"I ce. But shuerly this event cood not hav found its wa intoo the Plimmouth morning paperz."

"No, cer; I had a tellegram."

"Mite I aasc from whoome?"

A shaddo paast over the gaunt face ov the exploerer.

"U ar verry inqwizsitive, Mr. Hoamz."

"It iz mi biznes."

Withe an effort Dr. Sterndale recuvverd hiz ruffeld compoazhure.

"I hav no obgecshon too telling u," he ced. "It wauz Mr. Round'ha, the viccar, whoo cent me the tellegram which recauld me."

"Thanc u," ced Hoamz. "I ma sa in aancer too yor oridginal qweschon dhat I hav not cleerd mi miand entiarly on the subject ov this cace, but dhat I hav evvery hope ov reching sum concluezhon. It wood be premachure too sa moer."

"Perhaps u wood not miand telling me if yor suspishonz point in enny particcular direcshon?"

"No, I can hardly aancer dhat."

"Then I hav waisted mi time and nede not prolong mi vizsit." The famous doctor strode out ov our cottage in concidderabel il-humor, and within five minnuets Hoamz had follode him. I sau him no moer until the evening, when he reternd withe a slo step and haggard face which ashuerd me dhat he had made no grate proagres withe hiz investigaishon.

He glaanst at a tellegram which awated him and thru it intoo the grate.

“From the Plimmouth hotel, Wautson,” he ced. “I lerned the name ov it from the viccar, and I wiard too make certane dhat Dr. Leyon Sterndailz acount wauz tru. It apeerz dhat he did indede spend laast nite dhare, and dhat he haz acchuwaly aloud sum ov hiz baggage too go on too Africaa, while he reternd too be prezsent at this investigaishon. Whaut doo u make ov dhat, Wautson?”

“He iz deeply interested.”

“Deeply interested—yes. Dhare iz a thred here which we had not yet graaspt and which mite lede us throo the tan’ghel. Chere up, Wautson, for I am verry shure dhat our matereyal haz not yet aul cum too hand.

When

it duz we ma soone leve our difficultese behiand us.”

Littel did I thhinc hou soone the werdz ov Hoamz wood be reyaliazd, or hou strainj and cinnister wood be dhat nu devellopment which opend up an entiarly fresh line ov investigaishon. I wauz shaving at mi windo in the morning when I herd the rattel ov huifs and, loocking up, sau a dog-cart cumming at a gallop down the rode. It poold up at our doer, and our frend, the viccar, sprang from it and rusht up our garden paath. Hoamz wauz aulreddy drest, and we hacend down too mete him.

Our vizsitor wauz so exited dhat he cood hardly articulate, but at laast in gaasps and bersts hiz tradgic stoery came out ov him.

“We ar devvil-ridden, Mr. Hoamz! Mi poor parrish iz devvil-ridden!” he cride. “Satan himcelf iz looce in it! We ar ghivven over intoo hiz handz!” He daanst about in hiz agitaishon, a ludicrous obget if it wer not for hiz ashy face and starteld ise. Finaly he shot out hiz terribel nuse.

“Mr. Mortimer Treghennis dide juring the nite, and withe exactly the same cimptomz az the rest ov hiz fammily.”

Hoamz sprang too hiz fete, aul ennergy in an instant.

“Can u fit us boath intoo yor dog-cart?”

“Yes, I can.”

“Then, Wautson, we wil poastpone our brecfast. Mr. Round‘ha, we ar entiarly at yor dispozal. Hurry—hurry, befoer ththingz ghet disarainjd.”

The lodger occupide too ruimz at the viccarage, which wer in an an‘ghel bi themcelvz, the wun abuv the uther. Belo wauz a larj citting-roome; abuv, hiz bedroom. Dha looct out uppon a croca laun which came up too the windose. We had ariavd befoer the doctor or the polece, so dhat evverithhing wauz absolutely undisterbd. Let me describe exactly the cene az we sau it uppon dhat misty March morning. It haz left an impreshon which can never be effaist from mi miand.

The atmosfere ov the roome wauz ov a horibel and deprescing stuffines. The cervant whoo had ferst enterd had throne up the windo, or it wood hav bene even moer intollerabel. This mite partly be ju too the fact dhat a lamp stood flaring and smoking on the center tabel. Becide it sat the ded man, lening bac in hiz chare, hiz thhin beard progeting, hiz spektakelz poosht up on too hiz foerhed, and hiz lene darc face ternd toowordz the windo and twisted intoo the same distorshon ov terror which had marct the fechuerz ov hiz ded cister. Hiz limz wer convulst and hiz fin‘gherz contorted az dho he had dide in a verry parroxizm ov fere. He wauz foolly cloadhd, dho dhare wer cianz dhat hiz drescing had bene dun in a hurry. We had aulreddy lernd dhat hiz bed had bene slept in, and dhat the tradgic end had cum too him in the erly morning.

Wun reyaliazd the red-hot ennergy which underla Hoamsez flegmattic extereyor when wun sau the sudden chainj which came over him from the moment dhat he enterd the fatal apartment. In an instant he wauz tens and alert, hiz ise shining, hiz face cet, hiz limz qwivvering withe egher activvity. He wauz out on the laun, in throo the windo, round the roome, and up intoo the bedroome, for aul the werld like a dashing foxhound drauwng a cuvver. In the bedroome he made a rappid caast around

and ended bi throwing open the windo, which apeerd too ghiv him sum fresh cauz for exiatment, for he leend out ov it withe loud ejaculaishonz ov interest and delite. Then he rusht doun the stare, out throo the open windo, thru himcelf uppon hiz face on the laun, sprang up and intoo the roome wuns moer, aul withe the ennergy ov the hunter whoo iz at the verry heelz ov hiz qwory. The lamp, which wauz an ordinary standard, he exammiand withe minute care, making certane mezhuerments uppon its bole. He caerfooly scrutiniadz withe hiz lenz the talc sheeld which cuvverd the top ov the chimny and sceipt of sum ashez which ad'heard too its upper cerface, pootting sum ov them intoo an envelope, which he plaist in hiz pocketbooc. Finaly, just az the doctor and the ofishal polece poot in an aperans, he becond too the viccar and we aul thre went out uppon the laun.

"I am glad too sa dhat mi investigaishon haz not bene entiarly barren," he remarct. "I canot remane too discus the matter withe the polece, but I shood be exedingly obliajd, Mr. Round'ha, if u wood ghiv the inspector mi compliments and direct hiz atenshon too the bedroome windo and too the citting-roome lamp. Eche iz sugestive, and toogheter dha ar aulmoast conclucive. If the polece wood desire ferther informaishon I shal be happy too ce enny ov them at the cottage. And nou, Wautson, I thhinc dhat, perhaps, we shal be better emploid elswhare."

It ma be dhat the polece resented the intruezhon ov an ammater, or dhat

dha imadgiand themcelvz too be uppon sum hoapfool line ov
investigaishon;

but it iz certane dhat we herd nuthhing from them for the next too
dase. Juring this time Hoamz spent sum ov hiz time smoking and
dreming in the cottage; but a grater porshon in cuntry waux which
he undertoooc alone, reterning aafter menny ourz widhout remarc az too
whare he had bene. Wun experriment cervd too sho me the line ov hiz
investigaishon. He had baut a lamp which wauz the jueplicate ov the wun
which had bernd in the roome ov Mortimer Tregghennis on the morning ov
the tradgedy. This he fild withe the same oil az dhat uezd at the
viccarage, and he caerfooly tiamd the pereyod which it wood take too be
exhausted. Anuther experriment which he made wauz ov a moer unplezzant
nachure, and wun which I am not liacly evver too forghet.

“U wil remember, Wautson,” he remarct wun aafternoone, “dhat dhare iz
a cin’ghel common point ov resemblans in the vareying repoerts which hav
reecht us. This concernz the efect ov the atmosfere ov the roome in
eche cace uppon dhose whoo had ferst enterd it. U wil recolect dhat
Mortimer Tregghennis, in describing the eppisode ov hiz laast vizsit too hiz
brutherz hous, remarct dhat the doctor on entering the roome fel
intoo a chare? U had forgotten? Wel I can aancer for it dhat it wauz
so. Nou, u wil remember aulso dhat Mrs. Poerter, the houskeper, toald
us dhat she hercelf fainted uppon entering the roome and had aafterwordz
opend the windo. In the cecond cace—dhat ov Mortimer Tregghennis
himecelf—u canot hav forgotten the horibel stuffines ov the roome
when we ariavd, dho the cervant had throne open the windo. Dhat
cervant, I found uppon inqwiry, wauz so il dhat she had gon too her bed.
U wil admit, Wautson, dhat these facts ar verry sugestive. In eche
cace dhare iz evvidens ov a poizonous atmosfere. In eche cace, aulso,
dhare iz combuschon gowing on in the roome—in the wun cace a fire, in
the
uther a lamp. The fire wauz neded, but the lamp wauz lit—az a
comparrison
ov the oil conshuemd wil sho—long aafter it wauz braud dalite. Whi?

Shuerly becauz dhare iz sum conecshon betwene thre thhingz—the barning, the stuffy atmosfere, and, finaly, the madnes or deth ov dhose unforchunate pepel. Dhat iz clere, iz it not?”

“It wood apere so.”

“At leest we ma axept it az a werking hipothhecis. We wil suppose, then, dhat sumthhing wauz bernd in eche cace which projuest an atmosfere causing strainj toxic efects. Verry good. In the ferst instans—dhat ov the Treghennis fammily—this substans wauz plaist in the fire. Nou the windo wauz shut, but the fire wood natchuraly carry fuemz too sum extent up the chimney. Hens wun wood expect the efects ov the poizon too be les dhan in the cecond cace, whare dhare wauz les escape for the vapor. The rezult ceemz too indicate dhat it wauz so, cins in the ferst cace oonly the woomman, whoo had preezhumably the moer cencitive organizm, wauz kild, the utherz exhibbiting dhat temporary or permanent lunacy which iz evvidently the ferst efect ov the drug. In the cecond cace the rezult wauz complete. The facts, dhaerfoer, ceme too bare out the ththeyory ov a poizon which werct bi combuschon.

“Withe this trane ov rezoning in mi hed I natchuraly looct about in Mortimer Treghennicez roome too fiand sum remainz ov this substans. The obveyous place too looc wauz the talc shelf or smoke-gard ov the lamp. Dhare, shure enuf, I perceevd a number ov flaky ashez, and round the edgez a frinj ov brounish pouder, which had not yet bene conshuemd. Haaf ov this I tooc, az u sau, and I plaist it in an envelope.”

“Whi haaf, Hoamz?”

“It iz not for me, mi dere Wautson, too stand in the wa ov the ofishal polece foers. I leve them aul the evvidens which I found. The poizon stil remaind uppon the talc had dha the wit too fiand it. Nou, Wautson, we wil lite our lamp; we wil, houwevver, take the precaushon too open

our windo too avoid the premachure decece ov too deserving memberz ov sociyety, and u wil cete yorcelf nere dhat open windo in an armchare unles, like a cencibel man, u determine too hav nuthhing too doo withe the afare. O, u wil ce it out, wil u? I thaut I nu mi Wautson. This chare I wil place opposite yorz, so dhat we ma be the same distans from the poizon and face too face. The doer we wil leve ajar. Eche iz nou in a posishon too wauch the uther and too bring the experriment too an end shood the cimptomz ceme alarming. Iz dhat aul clere? Wel, then, I take our pouder—or whaut remainz ov it—from the envelope, and I la it abuv the barning lamp. So! Nou, Wautson, let us cit doun and awate devellopments.”

Dha wer not long in cumming. I had hardly cetteld in mi chare befoer I wauz conshous ov a thhic, musky odor, suttel and nauzhous. At the verry ferst whif ov it mi brane and mi imaginaishon wer beyond aul controle. A thhic, blac cloud swerld befoer mi ise, and mi miand toald me dhat in this cloud, uncene az yet, but about too spring out uppon mi apauld cencez, lerct aul dhat wauz vaigly horibel, aul dhat wauz monstrous and inconcevably wicked in the univers. Vaghe shaips swerld and swam amid the darc cloud-banc, eche a mennace and a warning ov sumthhing cumming, the advent ov sum unspecabel dweller uppon the threshoald, whoose verry shaddo wood blaast mi sole. A fresing horror tooc poseshon ov me. I felt dhat mi hare wauz rising, dhat mi ise wer protruding, dhat mi mouth wauz opend, and mi tung like lether. The termoil within mi brane wauz such dhat sumthhing must shuerly snap. I tride too screme and wauz vaigly aware ov sum hoers croke which wauz mi one vois, but distant and detacht from micelf. At the same moment, in sum effort ov escape, I broke throo dhat cloud ov despare and had a glimps ov Hoamsez face, white, ridgid, and draun withe horror—the verry looc which I had cene uppon the fechuerz ov the ded. It wauz dhat vizhon which gave me an instant ov sannity and ov strength. I dasht from mi chare, thru mi armz round Hoamz, and toogheter we lercht throo the doer, and an instant aafterwordz had throne ourcelvz doun uppon the

graas plot and wer liying cide bi cide, conshous oanly ov the gloereyous sunshine which wauz bersting its wa throo the hellish cloud ov terror which had ghert us in. Sloly it rose from our soalz like the mists from a landscape until pece and rezon had reternd, and we wer citting uppon the graas, wiping our clammy foerhedz, and loocking withe aprehenshon at eche uther too marc the laast tracez ov dhat teriffic expereyens which we had undergon.

“Uppon mi werd, Wautson!” ced Hoamz at laast withe an unsteddy vois, “I o u boath mi thanx and an apollogy. It wauz an unjustifiyabel experriment even for wunz celf, and dubly so for a frend. I am reyaly verry sorry.”

“U no,” I aancerd withe sum emoashon, for I hav nevver cene so much ov Hoamsez hart befoer, “dhat it iz mi gratest joi and privvilege too help u.”

He relapst at wuns intoo the haaf-humorous, haaf-cinnical vane which wauz hiz habitchuwal attichude too dhose about him. “It wood be superfluous too drive us mad, mi dere Wautson,” ced he. “A candid observer wood certainly declare dhat we wer so aulreddy befoer we embarct uppon so wiald an experriment. I confes dhat I nevver imadgiand dhat the efect cood be so sudden and so cevere.” He dasht intoo the cottage, and, reyapering withe the bering lamp held at fool armz length, he thru it amung a banc ov brambelz. “We must ghiv the roome a littel time too clere. I take it, Wautson, dhat u hav no lon’gher a shaddo ov a dout az too hou these tradgedese wer projuest?”

“Nun whautevver.”

“But the cauz remainz az obscure az befoer. Cum intoo the arbor here and let us discus it tooghether. Dhat villanous stuf ceemz stil too

lin'gher round mi throte. I thhinc we must admit dhat aul the evvidens points too this man, Mortimer Treghennis, havving bene the crimminal in the ferst tradgedy, dho he wauz the victim in the cecond wun. We must remember, in the ferst place, dhat dhare iz sum stoery ov a fammily qworel, follode bi a reconcileyashon. Hou bitter dhat qworel ma hav bene, or hou hollo the reconcileyashon we canot tel. When I thhinc ov Mortimer Treghennis, withe the foxy face and the smaual shrude, bedy ise behiand the spektakelz, he iz not a man whoome I shoold juj too be ov a particcularly forghivving disposishon. Wel, in the next place, u wil remember dhat this ideyaa ov sumwun mooving in the garden, which tooc our atenshon for a moment from the reyal cauz ov the tradgedy, emmanated from him. He had a motive in misleding us. Finaly, if he did not thro the substans intoo the fire at the moment ov leving the roome, whoo did doo so? The afare happend imejaitly aafter hiz deparchure. Had enniwun els cum in, the fammily wood certainly hav rizens from the tabel. Beciadz, in peesfool Cornwaul, vizsitorz did not arive aafter ten oacloc at nite. We ma take it, then, dhat aul the evvidens points too Mortimer Treghennis az the culprit."

"Then hiz one deth wauz suwicide!"

"Wel, Wautson, it iz on the face ov it a not imposcibel suposishon. The man whoo had the ghilt uppon hiz sole ov havving braut such a fate uppon hiz one fammily mite wel be drivven bi remors too inflict it uppon himcelf. Dhare ar, houwevver, sum cogent rezonz against it. Forchunaitly, dhare iz wun man in In'gland whoo nose aul about it, and I hav made arainjments bi which we shal here the facts this aafternoone from hiz one lips. Aa! he iz a littel befoer hiz time. Perhaps u wood kiandly step this wa, Dr. Leyon Sterndale. We hav bene conjucing a kemmical experriment indoerz which haz left our littel roome hardly fit for the recepshon ov so distin'gwisht a vizsitor."

I had herd the clic ov the garden gate, and nou the magestic figgure ov the grate African exploerer apeerd uppon the paath. He ternd in sum cerprise toowordz the rustic arbor in which we sat.

“U cent for me, Mr. Hoamz. I had yor note about an our ago, and I hav cum, dho I reyaly doo not no whi I shood oba yor summonz.”

“Perhaps we can clere the point up befoer we cepparate,” ced Hoamz. “Meenwhile, I am much obliajd too u for yor kerchous aqweyescens. U wil excuse this informal recepshon in the open are, but mi frend Wautson and I hav neerly fernisht an adishonal chapter too whaut the paperz caul the Cornish Horror, and we prefer a clere atmosfere for the prezsent. Perhaps, cins the matterz which we hav too discus wil afect u personaly in a verry intimate fashon, it iz az wel dhat we shood tauc whare dhare can be no eevzdropping.”

The exploerer tooc hiz cigar from hiz lips and gaizd sternly at mi companyon.

“I am at a los too no, cer,” he ced, “whaut u can hav too speke about which afects me personaly in a verry intimate fashon.”

“The killing ov Mortimer Treghennis,” ced Hoamz.

For a moment I wisht dhat I wer armd. Sterndailz feers face ternd too a dusky red, hiz ise glaerd, and the notted, pashonate vainz started out in hiz foerhed, while he sprang forword withe clencht handz toowordz mi companyon. Then he stopt, and withe a viyolent effort he rezhuemd a coald, ridgid caalmnes, which wauz, perhaps, moer sugestive ov dain’ger dhan hiz hot-hedded outberst.

“I hav livd so long amung savvagez and beyond the lau,” ced he, “dhat I hav got intoo the wa ov beying a lau too micelf. U wood doo wel,

Mr. Hoamz, not too forget it, for I hav no desire too doo u an injury."

"Nor hav I enny desire too doo u an injury, Dr. Sterndale. Shuerly the clerest prooffe ov it iz dhat, nowing whaut I no, I hav cent for u and not for the polece."

Sterndale sat doun withe a gaasp, overaud for, perhaps, the ferst time in hiz advenchurous life. Dhare wauz a caalm ashurans ov pouwer in Hoamsez manner which cood not be widhstood. Our vizsitor stammerd for a moment, hiz grate handz opening and shutting in hiz agitaishon.

"Whaut doo u mene?" he aasct at laast. "If this iz bluf uppon yor part, Mr. Hoamz, u hav chosen a bad man for yor experriment. Let us hav no moer beting about the boosh. Whaut *doo* u mene?"

"I wil tel u," ced Hoamz, "and the rezon whi I tel u iz dhat I hope francnes ma beghet francnes. Whaut mi next step ma be wil depend entiarly uppon the nachure ov yor one defens."

"Mi defens?"

"Yes, cer."

"Mi defens against whaut?"

"Against the charj ov killing Mortimer Treghennis."

Sterndale mopt hiz foerhed withe hiz hankerchefe. "Uppon mi werd, u ar ghetting on," ced he. "Doo aul yor suxescez depend uppon this prodidjous pouwer ov bluf?"

"The bluf," ced Hoamz sternly, "iz uppon yor cide, Dr. Leyon

Sterndale, and not uppon mine. Az a prooffe I wil tel u sum ov the facts uppon which mi concluezhonz ar baist. Ov yor retern from Plimmouth, alouwing much ov yor propperty too go on too Africaa, I wil sa

nuthhing save dhat it ferst informd me dhat u wer wun ov the factorz which had too be taken intoo acount in reconstructing this draamaa—”

“I came bac—”

“I hav herd yor rezonz and regard them az unconvincing and inaddeqwate. We wil paas dhat. U came down here too aasc me whoome I suspected. I refuezd too aancer u. U then went too the viccarage, wated outside it for sum time, and finaly reternd too yor cottage.”

“Hou doo u no dhat?”

“I follode u.”

“I sau no wun.”

“Dhat iz whaut u ma expect too ce when I follo u. U spent a restles nite at yor cottage, and u formd certane planz, which in the erly morning u proceded too poot intoo execueshon. Leving yor doer just az da wauz braking, u fild yor pocket withe sum reddish gravvel dhat wauz liying heept beside yor gate.”

Sterndale gave a viyolent start and looct at Hoamz in amaizment.

“U then wauct swiftly for the mile which cepparated u from the viccarage. U wer waring, I ma remarc, the same pare ov ribd tennis shoose which ar at the prezsent moment uppon yor fete. At the viccarage u paast throo the orchard and the cide hej, cumming out under the windo ov the lodger Treghennis. It wauz nou dalite, but the hous’hoald wauz not yet sturing. U dru sum ov the gravvel from yor

pocket, and u thru it up at the windo abuv u."

Sterndale sprang too hiz fete.

"I beleve dhat u ar the devvil himcelf!" he cride.

Hoamz smiald at the compliment. "It tooc too, or poscibly thre, handfoolz befoer the lodger came too the windo. U becond him too cum doun. He drest hurreedly and decended too hiz citting-roome. U enterd bi the windo. Dhare wauz an intervü—a short wun—juring which u wauct up and doun the roome. Then u paast out and cloazd the windo, standing on the laun outcide smoking a cigar and wauching whaut okerd. Finaly, aafter the deth ov Treghennis, u widhdru az u had cum. Nou, Dr. Sterndale, hou doo u justifi such conduct, and whaut wer the motiavz for yor acshonz? If u prevarricate or trifel withe me, I ghiv u mi ashurans dhat the matter wil paas out ov mi handz forevver."

Our vizsitorz face had ternd ashen gra az he liscend too the werdz ov hiz acuser. Nou he sat for sum time in thaut withe hiz face sunc in hiz handz. Then withe a sudden impulcive geschure he pluct a fotograaf from hiz brest-pocket and thru it on the rustic tabel befoer us.

"Dhat iz whi I hav dun it," ced he.

It shode the bust and face ov a verry butifool woomman. Hoamz stuipt over it.

"Brendaa Treghennis," ced he.

"Yes, Brendaa Treghennis," repeted our vizsitor. "For yeerz I hav luvd her. For yeerz she haz luvd me. Dhare iz the ceecret ov dhat Cornish cecluezhon which pepel hav marveld at. It haz braut me cloce too the wun thhing on erth dhat wauz dere too me. I cood not marry her, for

I hav a wife whoo haz left me for yeez and yet whoome, bi the deplorabel lauz ov In'gland, I cood not divoers. For yeez Brenda wated. For yeez I wated. And this iz whaut we hav wated for." A terribel sob shooc hiz grate frame, and he clucht hiz throte under hiz brindeld beard. Then withe an effort he maasterd himcelf and spoke on:

"The viccar nu. He wauz in our confidens. He wood tel u dhat she wauz an ain'gel uppon erth. Dhat wauz whi he tellegraaft too me and I reternd. Whaut wauz mi baggage or Africaa too me when I lernd dhat such a fate had cum uppon mi darling? Dhare u hav the miscing clu too mi acshon, Mr. Hoamz."

"Procede," ced mi frend.

Dr. Sterndale dru from hiz pocket a paper packet and lade it uppon the tabel. On the outcide wauz ritten "*Radix pedis diaboli*" withe a red poizon label beneeth it. He poosht it toowordz me. "I understand dhat u ar a doctor, cer. Hav u evver herd ov this preparaishon?"

"Devvilz-foot roote! No, I hav nevver herd ov it."

"It iz no reflecshon uppon yor profeshonal nollej," ced he, "for I beleve dhat, save for wun saampel in a laboratoery at Budaa, dhare iz no uther spescimen in Urope. It haz not yet found its wa iather intoo the farmacopeyaa or intoo the litterachure ov toxicollogy. The roote iz shaipt like a foot, haaf human, haaf goatlike; hens the fancifool name ghivven bi a botannical mishonary. It iz uezd az an ordele poizon bi the meddicine-men in certane districts ov West Africaa and iz kept az a ceecret amung them. This particcular spescimen I obtaind under verry extrordinary circumstaancez in the Uban'ghy cuntry." He opened the paper az he spoke and discloazd a hepe ov reddish-broun, snuf-like pouder.

"Wel, cer?" aasct Hoamz sternly.

"I am about to tell you, Mr. Hoamz, and that is certainly of my interest and that you should know. I have already explained the relationship in which I stood to the Tregennis family. For the sake of the sister I was friendly with the brothers. There was a family quarrel about money which estranged this man Mortimer, but it was supposed to be made up, and I afterwards met him as I did the others. He was a sly, subtle, skimming man, and several things arose which gave me a suspicion of him, but I had no cause for any positive quarrel.

"When, only a couple of weeks ago, he came down to my cottage and I showed him some of my African cure-alls. Among other things I exhibited this powder, and I told him of its strange properties, how it stimulates those brain centers which control the emotion of fear, and how either madness or death is the fate of the unhappy native who is subjected to the order of the priest of his tribe. I told him also how powerless European citizens would be to detect it. How he took it I cannot say, for I never left the room, but there is no doubt that it was then, while I was opening cabinets and stooping to boxes, that he manifested some abstract sum of the devil-foot root. I well remember how he plied me with questions as to the amount and the time that was needed for its effect, but I little dreamed that he could have a personal reason for asking.

"I thought no more of the matter until the vicar's telegram reached me at Plimmouth. This villain had thought that I would be at home before the nurse could reach me, and that I should be lost for years in Africa. But I returned at once. Of course, I could not listen to the details without feeling assured that my poison had been used. I came round to see you on the chance that some other explanation had suggested itself to you. But there could be none. I was convinced that Mortimer Tregennis was the murderer; that for the sake of money, and with the

ideyaa, perhaps, dhat if the uther memberz ov hiz fammily wer aul insane he wood be the sole garjan ov dhare joint propperty, he had uezd the devvilz-foot pouder uppon them, drivven too ov them out ov dhare cencez, and kild hiz cister Brendaa, the wun human beying whoome I hav evver luvd or whoo haz evver luvd me. Dhare wauz hiz crime; whaut wauz too be hiz punnishment?

“Shood I apele too the lau? Whare wer mi pruifs? I nu dhat the facts wer tru, but cood I help too make a jury ov cuntrimen beleve so fantastic a stoery? I mite or I mite not. But I cood not afoerd too fale. Mi sole cride out for revenj. I hav ced too u wuns befoer, Mr. Hoamz, dhat I hav spent much ov mi life outside the lau, and dhat I hav cum at laast too be a lau too micelf. So it wauz even nou. I determiand dhat the fate which he had ghivven too utherz shood be shaerd bi himcelf. Iather dhat or I wood doo justice uppon him withe mi one hand. In aul In’gland dhare can be no man whoo cets les vally uppon hiz one life dhan I doo at the prezsent moment.

“Nou I hav toald u aul. U hav yorcelf suplide the rest. I did, az u sa, aafter a restless nite, cet of erly from mi cottage. I foersau the difficulty ov arousing him, so I gatherd sum gravvel from the pile which u hav menshond, and I uezd it too thro up too hiz windo. He came down and admitted me throo the windo ov the citting-roome. I lade hiz ofens befoer him. I toald him dhat I had cum both az juj and execuেশoner. The rech sanc intoo a chare, parraliazd at the cite ov mi revolver. I lit the lamp, poot the pouder abuv it, and stood outside the windo, reddy too carry out mi thret too shoote him shood he tri too leve the roome. In five minnuets he dide. Mi God! hou he dide! But mi hart wauz flint, for he enjuerd nuthhing which mi innocent darling had not felt befoer him. Dhare iz mi stoery, Mr. Hoamz. Perhaps, if u luvd a woomman, u wood hav dun az much yorcelf. At enny rate, I am in yor handz. U can take whaut steps u like. Az I hav aulreddy ced, dhare iz no man livving whoo can fere deth

les dhan I doo."

Hoamz sat for sum littel time in cilens.

"Whaut wer yor planz?" he aasct at laast.

"I had intended too berry micelf in central Africaa. Mi werc dhare iz but haaf finnisht."

"Go and doo the uther haaf," ced Hoamz. "I, at leest, am not prepaerd too prevent u."

Dr. Sterndale raizd hiz giyant figgure, boud graivly, and wauct from the arbor. Hoamz lit hiz pipe and handed me hiz pouch.

"Sum fuemz which ar not poizonous wood be a welcum chainj," ced he. "I thhinc u must agry, Wautson, dhat it iz not a cace in which we ar cauld uppon too interfere. Our investigaishon haz bene independent, and our acshon shal be so aulso. U wood not denouns the man?"

"Certainly not," I aancerd.

"I hav nevver luvd, Wautson, but if I did and if the woomman I luvd had met such an end, I mite act even az our laules liyon-hunter haz dun. Whoo nose? Wel, Wautson, I wil not ofend yor intelligens bi explaning whaut iz obveyous. The gravvel uppon the windo-cil wauz, ov coers, the starting-point ov mi recerch. It wauz unlike ennithhing in the viccarage garden. Oonly when mi atenshon had bene draun too Dr. Sterndale and hiz cottage did I fiand its counterpart. The lamp shining in braud dalite and the remainz ov powder uppon the sheeld wer suxescive linx in a faerly obveyous chane. And nou, mi dere Wautson, I thhinc we ma dismis the matter from our miand and go bac withe a clere conshens too the studdy ov dhose Cauldeyan ruits which ar shuerly too be traist in the Cornish braanch ov the grate Keltic speche."

The Advenchure ov the Red Cerkel

PART I

“Wel, Mrs. Woren, I canot ce dhat u hav enny particcular cauz for unnesines, nor doo I understand whi I, whose time iz ov sum vally, shood interfere in the matter. I reyaly hav uther thhingz too en‘gage me.” So spoke Sherlock Hoamz and ternd bac too the grate scrapbooc in which he wauz arain‘ging and indexing sum ov hiz recent matereyal.

But the landlady had the pertinascity and aulso the cunning ov her cex. She held her ground fermly.

“U arainjd an afare for a lodger ov mine laast yere,” she ced—“Mr. Faerdale Hobz.”

“Aa, yes—a cimpel matter.”

“But he wood nevver cece tauking ov it—yor kiandnes, cer, and the wa in which u braut lite intoo the darcnes. I rememberd hiz werdz when I wauz in dout and darcnes micelf. I no u cood if u oonly wood.”

Hoamz wauz axescibel uppon the cide ov flattery, and aulso, too doo him justice, uppon the cide ov kiandlines. The too foercez made him la doun hiz gum-brush withe a ci ov resignaishon and poosh bac hiz chare.

“Wel, wel, Mrs. Woren, let us here about it, then. U doant obgett too tobacco, I take it? Thanc u, Wautson—the matchez! U ar unnesy, az I understand, becauz yor nu lodger remainz in hiz ruimz and u canot ce him. Whi, bles u, Mrs. Woren, if I wer yor lodger u

often wood not ce me for weex on end.”

“No dout, cer; but this iz different. It fritenz me, Mr. Hoamz. I caant slepe for frite. Too here hiz qwic step mooving here and mooving dhare from erly morning too late at nite, and yet nevver too cach so much az a glimps ov him—its moer dhan I can stand. Mi huzband iz az nervous over it az I am, but he iz out at hiz werc aul da, while I ghet no rest from it. Whaut iz he hiding for? Whaut haz he dun? Exept for the gherl, I am aul alone in the hous withe him, and its moer dhan mi nervz can stand.”

Hoamz leend forword and lade hiz long, thhin fin'gherz uppon the woommanz shoalder. He had an aulmoast hipnottic pouwer ov suithing when he wisht. The scaerd looc faded from her ise, and her adgitated fechuerz smuidhd intoo dhare uezhuwal commonplace. She sat doun in the chare which he had indicated.

“If I take it up I must understand evvery detale,” ced he. “Take time too concidder. The smaulest point ma be the moast ecenshal. U sa dhat the man came ten dase ago and pade u for a fortniats boerd and lodging?”

“He aasct mi termz, cer. I ced fifty shillingz a weke. Dhare iz a smaul citting-roome and bedroome, and aul complete, at the top ov the hous.”

“Wel?”

“He ced, ‘Ile pa u five poundz a weke if I can hav it on mi one termz.’ Ime a poor woomman, cer, and Mr. Woren ernz littel, and the munny ment much too me. He tooc out a ten-pound note, and he held it out too me then and dhare. ‘U can hav the same evvery fortnite for a

long time too cum if u kepe the termz,' he ced. 'If not, Ile hav no moer too doo withe u.'

"Whaut wer the termz?"

"Wel, cer, dha wer dhat he wauz too hav a ke ov the hous. Dhat wauz aul rite. Lodgerz often hav them. Aulso, dhat he wauz too be left entiarly too himcelf and nevver, uppon enny excuce, too be disterbd."

"Nuthhing wunderfool in dhat, shuerly?"

"Not in rezon, cer. But this iz out ov aul rezon. He haz bene dhare for ten dase, and niather Mr. Woren, nor I, nor the gherl haz wuns cet ise uppon him. We can here dhat qwic step ov hiz pacing up and doun, up and doun, nite, morning, and noone; but exept on dhat ferst nite he had nevver wuns gon out ov the hous."

"O, he went out the ferst nite, did he?"

"Yes, cer, and reternd verry late—aafter we wer aul in bed. He toald me aafter he had taken the ruimz dhat he wood doo so and aasct me not too bar the doer. I herd him cum up the stare aafter midnite."

"But hiz meelz?"

"It wauz hiz particcular direcshon dhat we shood aulwase, when he rang, leve hiz mele uppon a chare, outside hiz doer. Then he ringz agane when he haz finnisht, and we take it doun from the same chare. If he waunts ennithhing els he prints it on a slip ov paper and leevz it."

"Prints it?"

"Yes, cer; prints it in pencil. Just the werd, nuthhing moer. Heerz the wun I braut too sho u—SOPE. Heerz anuther—MACH. This iz wun he

left the first morning—DALY GASET. I love that paper with the breakfast every morning.”

“Dere me, Watson,” said Hoamz, staring with the great curiosity at the slip of foolscap which the landlady had handed to him, “this is certainly a little unnewsworthy. Conceivably I can understand; but why print?”

Printing is a clumsy process. Why not write? What would it suggest, Watson?”

“That he desired to conceal his handwriting.”

“But why? What can it matter to him that his landlady should have a word of his writing? Still, it may be as you say. Then, again, why such laconic messages?”

“I cannot imagine.”

“It opens a pleasing field for intelligent speculation. The words are written with a broad-pointed, violet-tinted pencil on a not unnewsworthy pattern. You will observe that the paper is torn away at the side here after the printing was done, so that the ‘S’ of ‘SOPE’ is partly gone. Suggestive, Watson, is it not?”

“Of course?”

“Exactly. There was evidently some mark, some thumbprint, something which might give a clue to the person's identity. Now, Mrs. Wren, you say that the man was of middle size, dark, and bearded. What age would he be?”

“You're gosh, sir—not over thirty.”

“Well, can you give me no further indications?”

“He spoke good In’GLISH, cer, and yet I thaut he wauz a foraner bi hiz axent.”

“And he wauz wel drest?”

“Verry smartly drest, cer—qwite the gentelman. Darc cloadhz—nuthhing u wood note.”

“He gave no name?”

“No, cer.”

“And haz had no letterz or caulerz?”

“Nun.”

“But shuerly u or the gherl enter hiz roome ov a morning?”

“No, cer; he loox aafter himcelf entiarly.”

“Dere me! dhat iz certainly remarcabel. Whaut about hiz luggage?”

“He had wun big broun bag withe him—nuthhing els.”

“Wel, we doant ceme too hav much matereyal too help us. Doo u sa nuthhing haz cum out ov dhat roome—absoluetly nuthhing?”

The landlady dru an envelope from her bag; from it she shooc out too bernt matchez and a ciggaret-end uppon the tabel.

“Dha wer on hiz tra this morning. I braut them becauz I had herd dhat u can rede grate thhingz out ov smaul wunz.”

Hoamz shrugd hiz shoalderz.

“Dhare iz nuthhing here,” ced he. “The matchez hav, ov coers, bene uest too lite ciggarets. Dhat iz obveyous from the shortnes ov the bernt end. Haaf the mach iz consheuend in liting a pipe or cigar. But, dere me! this ciggaret stub iz certainly remarcabel. The gentelman wauz bearded and moostaasht, u sa?”

“Yes, cer.”

“I doant understand dhat. I shood sa dhat oonly a clene-shaven man cood hav smoact this. Whi, Wautson, even yor moddest moostaash wood hav bene cingd.”

“A hoalder?” I sugested.

“No, no; the end iz matted. I supose dhare cood not be too pepel in yor ruimz, Mrs. Woren?”

“No, cer. He eets so littel dhat I often wunder it can kepe life in wun.”

“Wel, I thhinc we must wate for a littel moer matereyal. Aafter aul, u hav nuthhing too complane ov. U hav receevd yor rent, and he iz not a trubbelsum lodger, dho he iz certainly an unnuezhual wun. He pase u wel, and if he chusez too li conceeld it iz no direct biznes ov yorz. We hav no excuce for an intruezhon uppon hiz privacy until we hav sum rezon too thhinc dhat dhare iz a ghilty rezon for it. Ive taken up the matter, and I woant loose cite ov it. Repoert too me if ennithhing fresh okerz, and reli uppon mi acistans if it shood be neded.

“Dhare ar certainly sum points ov interest in this cace, Wautson,” he remarct when the landlady had left us. “It ma, ov coers, be

trivveyal—individjuwal exentriscity; or it ma be verry much deper dhan apeerz on the cerface. The ferst thng dhat striax wun iz the obveyous pocibillity dhat the person nou in the ruimz ma be entiarly different from the wun whoo en'gaijd them."

"Whi shood u thhinc so?"

"Wel, apart from this ciggaret-end, wauz it not sugestive dhat the oanly time the lodger went out wauz imejaitly aafter hiz taking the ruimz? He came bac—or sumwun came bac—when aul witnecez wer out ov the wa. We hav no proofe dhat the person whoo came bac wauz the person whoo went out. Then, agane, the man whoo tooc the ruimz spoke In'glish wel. This uther, houwevver, prints 'mach' when it shood hav bene 'matchez.' I can imadgine dhat the werd wauz taken out ov a dicshonary, which wood ghiv the noun but not the plural. The laconnic stile ma be too concele the abcens ov nollej ov In'glish. Yes, Wautson, dhare ar good rezonz too suspect dhat dhare haz bene a substichueshon ov lodgerz."

"But for whaut poscibel end?"

"Aa! dhare lise our problem. Dhare iz wun raather obveyous line ov investigaishon." He tooc down the grate booc in which, da bi da, he fiald the aggony collumz ov the vareyouz Lundon gernalz. "Dere me!" ced he, terning over the pagez, "whaut a coerus ov groanz, crise, and bletingz! Whaut a rag-bag ov cin'gular happeningz! But shuerly the moast vallubel hunting-ground dhat evver wauz ghivven too a schudent ov the unnuezhual! This person iz alone and canot be aproacht bi letter widhout a breche ov dhat absolute ceecrecy which iz desiard. Hou iz enny nuse or enny message too reche him from widhout? Obveyously bi advertiazment throo a nuespaper. Dhare ceemz no uther wa, and forchunaitly we nede concern ourcelvz withe the wun paper oanly. Here ar the *Daly Gaset* extracts ov the laast fortnite. 'Lady withe a blac

bowaa at Princez Scating Club’—dhat we ma paas. ‘Shuerly Gimmy wil not brake hiz mutherz hart’—dhat apeerz too be irellevant. ‘If the lady whoo fainted on Brixton bus’—she duz not interest me. ‘Evvery da mi hart longz—’ Blete, Wautson—unmitigated blete! Aa, this iz a littel moer poscibel. Liscen too this: ‘Be paishent. Wil fiand sum shure meenz ov comunicaishonz. Meenwhile, this collum. G.’ Dhat iz too dase aafter Mrs. Worenz lodger ariavd. It soundz plausibel, duz it not? The mistereyous wun cood understand In’glis, even if he cood not print it. Let us ce if we can pic up the trace agane. Yes, here we ar—thre dase later. ‘Am making suxesfool arainjments. Paishens and prudens. The cloudz wil paas. G.’ Nuthhing for a weke aafter dhat. Then cumz sumthhing much moer deffinite: ‘The paath iz clering. If I fiand chaans cignal message remember code agrede—Wun A, too B, and so on. U wil here soone. G.’ Dhat wauz in yesterdase paper, and dhare iz nuthhing in too-dase. Its aul verry aproapreyate too Mrs. Worenz lodger. If we wate a littel, Wautson, I doant dout dhat the afare wil gro moer intelligibel.”

So it pruivd; for in the morning I found mi frend standing on the harthrug withe hiz bac too the fire and a smile ov complete satisfacshon uppon hiz face.

“Houz this, Wautson?” he cride, picking up the paper from the tabel.
“Hi red hous withe white stone facingz. Thherd floer. Ceccond windo left. Aafter dusc. G.’ Dhat iz deffinite enuf. I thhinc aafter breccfast we must make a littel reconnasans ov Mrs. Worenz naborhood.
Aa, Mrs. Woren! whaut nuse doo u bring us this morning?”

Our cliyent had suddenly berst intoo the roome withe an explosive ennergy which toald ov sum nu and momentous devellopment.

“Its a polece matter, Mr. Hoamz!” she cride. “Ile hav no moer ov it! He shal pac out ov dhare withe hiz baggage. I wood hav gon

strate up and toald him so, oanly I thaut it wauz but fare too u too take yor opinyon ferst. But Ime at the end ov mi paishens, and when it cumz too nocking mi oald man about—”

“Nocking Mr. Woren about?”

“Using him rufly, enniwa.”

“But whoo uezd him rufly?”

“Aa! dhats whaut we waunt too no! It wauz this morning, cer. Mr. Woren iz a tiamkeper at Morton and Waliats, in Tottenam Coert Rode. He haz too be out ov the hous befoer cevven. Wel, this morning he had not gon ten pacez down the rode when too men came up behiand him, thru a cote over hiz hed, and bundeld him intoo a cab dhat wauz beside the kerb. Dha drove him an our, and then opend the doer and shot him out. He la in the roadwa so shaken in hiz wits dhat he nevver sau whaut became ov the cab. When he pict himcelf up he found he wauz on Hampsted Heeth; so he tooc a bus home, and dhare he lise nou on hiz sofaa, while I came strate round too tel u whaut had happend.”

“Moast interesting,” ced Hoamz. “Did he observ the aperans ov these men—did he here them tauc?”

“No; he iz clene daizd. He just nose dhat he wauz lifted up az if bi madgic and dropt az if bi madgic. Too at leest wer in it, and maby thre.”

“And u conect this atac withe yor lodger?”

“Wel, weve livd dhare fiftene yeerz and no such happeningz evver came befoer. Ive had enuf ov him. Munnese not evverithhing. Ile hav him out ov mi hous befoer the da iz dun.”

“Wate a bit, Mrs. Woren. Doo nuthhing rash. I beghin too thhinc dhat this afare ma be verry much moer important dhan apeerd at ferst cite. It iz clere nou dhat sum dain’ger iz threttening yor lodger. It iz eeqwaly clere dhat hiz ennemese, liying in wate for him nere yor doer, mistooc yor huzband for him in the fogghy morning lite. On discuvvering dhare mistake dha releest him. Whaut dha wood hav dun had it not bene a mistake, we can oanly con’gechure.”

“Wel, whaut am I too doo, Mr. Hoamz?”

“I hav a grate fancy too ce this lodger ov yorz, Mrs. Woren.”

“I doant ce hou dhat iz too be mannaijd, unles u brake in the doer. I aulwase here him unloc it az I go down the stare aafter I leve the tra.”

“He haz too take the tra in. Shuerly we cood concele ourcelvz and ce him doo it.”

The landlady thaut for a moment.

“Wel, cer, dhaerz the box-roome opposite. I cood arainj a loocking-glaas, maby, and if u wer behiand the doer—”

“Exelent!” ced Hoamz. “When duz he lunch?”

“About wun, cer.”

“Then Dr. Wautson and I wil cum round in time. For the prezsent, Mrs. Woren, good-bi.”

At haaf-paast twelv we found ourcelvz uppon the steps ov Mrs. Worenz hous—a hi, thhin, yello-bric eddifice in Grate Orm Strete, a narro thurrofare at the northheest cide ov the Brittish Museyum. Standing az

it duz nere the corner ov the strete, it comaandz a vu doun Hou Strete, withe its moer pretenshous housez. Hoamz pointed withe a chuckel too wun ov these, a ro ov residenshal flats, which projected so dhat dha cood not fale too cach the i.

“Ce, Wautson!” ced he. ““Hi red hous withe stone facingz.’ Dhare iz the cignal staishon aul rite. We no the place, and we no the code; so shuerly our taasc shood be cimpel. Dhaerz a ‘too let’ card in dhat windo. It iz evvidently an empty flat too which the confedderate haz axes. Wel, Mrs. Woren, whaut nou?”

“I hav it aul reddy for u. If u wil boath cum up and leve yor buits belo on the landing, Ile poot u dhare nou.”

It wauz an exelent hiding-place which she had arainjd. The mirror wauz so plaist dhat, ceted in the darc, we cood verry plainly ce the doer opposite. We had hardly cetteld doun in it, and Mrs. Woren left us, when a distant tinkel anounst dhat our mistereyous nabor had rung. Prezently the landlady apeerd withe the tra, lade it doun uppon a chare beside the cloazd doer, and then, tredding hevvely, departed. Crouching tooghether in the an’ghel ov the doer, we kept our ise fixt uppon the mirror. Suddenly, az the landladese footsteps dide awa, dhare wauz the creke ov a terning ke, the handel revolvd, and too thhin handz darted out and lifted the tra from the chare. An instant later it wauz hurreedly replaist, and I caut a glimps ov a darc, butifool, horifide face glaring at the narro opening ov the box-roome. Then the doer crasht too, the ke ternd wuns moer, and aul wauz cilens. Hoamz twicht mi sleve, and tooghether we stole doun the stare.

“I wil caul agane in the evening,” ced he too the expectant landlady. “I thhinc, Wautson, we can discus this biznes better in our one qworterz.”

“Mi cermise, az u sau, pruivd too be corect,” ced he, speking from

the depths ov hiz esy-chare. "Dhare haz bene a substichueshon ov lodgerz. Whaut I did not foercy iz dhat we shood fiand a woomman, and no ordinary woomman, Wautson."

"She sau us."

"Wel, she sau sumthhing too alarm her. Dhat iz certane. The genneral ceeqwens ov events iz pritty clere, iz it not? A cuppel ceke reffuge in Lunden from a verry terribel and instant dain'ger. The mezhure ov dhat dain'ger iz the riggor ov dhare precaushonz. The man, whoo haz sum werc which he must doo, desiarz too leve the woomman in absolute saifty while he duz it. It iz not an esy problem, but he solvd it in an oridginal fashon, and so efectiavly dhat her prezsens wauz not even none too the landlady whoo suplise her withe foode. The printed messagez, az iz nou evvident, wer too prevent her cex beying discuverd bi her riting. The man canot cum nere the woomman, or he wil ghide dhare ennemese too her.

Cins he canot comunicate withe her direct, he haz recors too the agony collum ov a paper. So far aul iz clere."

"But whaut iz at the roote ov it?"

"Aa, yes, Wautson—ceveerly practical, az uezhuwal! Whaut iz at the roote ov it aul? Mrs. Worenz whimsical problem enlargez sumwhaut and ashuemz a moer cinnister aspect az we procede. This much we can sa: dhat it iz no ordinary luv escapade. U sau the woommanz face at the cine ov dain'ger. We hav herd, too, ov the atac uppon the landlord, which wauz undoutedly ment for the lodger. These alarmz, and the desperate nede for ceecrecy, argu dhat the matter iz wun ov life or deth. The atac uppon Mr. Woren ferther shose dhat the ennemy, whoowevver dha ar, ar themcelvz not aware ov the substichueshon ov the female lodger for the male. It iz verry cureyous and complex, Wautson."

“Whi shood u go ferther in it? Whaut hav u too gane from it?”

“Whaut, indede? It iz art for arts sake, Wautson. I supose when u doctord u found yorcelf studdeying cacez widhout thaut ov a fe?”

“For mi ejucaishon, Hoamz.”

“Ejucaishon nevver endz, Wautson. It iz a cerese ov lessonz withe the gratest for the laast. This iz an instructive cace. Dhare iz niather munny nor creddit in it, and yet wun wood wish too tidy it up. When dusc cumz we shood fiand ourcelvz wun stage advaanst in our investigaishon.”

When we reternd too Mrs. Worenz ruimz, the gloome ov a Lundon winter evening had thhickend intoo wun gra kertane, a ded monnotone ov cullor, broken oanly bi the sharp yello sqwaerz ov the windose and the blerd halose ov the gas-lamps. Az we peerd from the darkend citting-roome ov the lodging-hous, wun moer dim lite glimmerd hi up throo the obscurity.

“Sumwun iz mooving in dhat roome,” ced Hoamz in a whisper, hiz gaunt and egher face thrust forword too the windo-pane. “Yes, I can ce hiz shaddo. Dhare he iz agane! He haz a candel in hiz hand. Nou he iz pering acros. He waunts too be shure dhat she iz on the looccout. Nou he beghinz too flash. Take the message aulso, Wautson, dhat we ma chec eche uther. A cin’ghel flash—dhat iz A, shuerly. Nou, then. Hou menny did u make it? Twenty. So did I. Dhat shood mene T. AT—dhats intelligibel enuf. Anuther T. Shuerly this iz the beghinning ov a cecond werd. Nou, then—TENTA. Ded stop. Dhat caant be aul, Wautson? ATTENTA ghivz no cens. Nor iz it enny better az thre werdz AT, TEN, TAA, unles T. A. ar a personz inishalz. Dhare it gose agane! Whauts dhat? ATTE—whi, it iz the same message over agane. Cureyous, Wautson, verry cureyous. Nou he

iz of wuns moer! AT—whi he iz repeting it for the thherd time. ATTENTA
thre tiamz! Hou often wil he repete it? No, dhat ceemz too be the
finnish. He haz widhdraun from the windo. Whaut doo u make ov it,
Wautson?”

“A cifer message, Hoamz.”

Mi companyon gave a sudden chuckel ov comprehenshon. “And not a
verry
obscure cifer, Wautson,” ced he. “Whi, ov coers, it iz Italleyan! The A
meen z dhat it iz adrest too a woomman. ‘Beware! Beware! Beware!’ Houz
dhat, Wautson?”

“I beleve u hav hit it.”

“Not a dout ov it. It iz a verry ergent message, thrice repeted too
make it moer so. But beware ov whaut? Wate a bit, he iz cumming too the
windo wuns moer.”

Agane we sau the dim ciloowet ov a crouching man and the whisc ov the
smaul flame acros the windo az the signalz wer renude. Dha came
moer rappidly dhan befoer—so rappid dhat it wauz hard too follo them.

“PERICOLO—pericolo—a, whauts dhat, Wautson? ‘Dain’ger,’ iznt it? Yes,
bi
Jove, its a dain’ger cignal. Dhare he gose agane! PERI. Hallo, whaut on
erth—”

The lite had suddenly gon out, the glimmering sqware ov windo had
disapeerd, and the thherd floer formd a darc band round the lofty
bilding, withe its teerz ov shining caiments. Dhat laast worning cri
had bene suddenly cut short. Hou, and bi whoome? The same thaut
okerd on the instant too us boath. Hoamz sprang up from whare he
croucht bi the windo.

“This iz cereyous, Wautson,” he cride. “Dhare iz sum devvilry gowing forword! Whi shood such a message stop in such a wa? I shood poot Scotland Yard in tuch withe this biznes—and yet, it iz too prescing for us too leve.”

“Shal I go for the polece?”

“We must define the cichuwaishon a littel moer cleerly. It ma bare sum moer innocent interpretaishon. Cum, Wautson, let us go acros ourcelvz and ce whaut we can make ov it.”

PART 2

Az we wauct rappidly doun Hou Strete I glaanst bac at the bilding which we had left. Dhare, dimly outliand at the top windo, I cood ce the shaddo ov a hed, a woommanz hed, gasing tensly, ridgidly, out intoo the nite, wating withe brethles suspens for the renuwal ov dhat interupted message. At the doerwa ov the Hou Strete flats a man, muffeld in a cravat and graitcote, wauz lening against the raling. He started az the haul-lite fel uppon our facez.

“Hoamz!” he cride.

“Whi, Gregson!” ced mi companyon az he shooc handz withe the Scotland Yard detective. “Gernese end withe luvverz’ metingz. Whaut bringz u here?”

“The same rezonz dhat bring u, I expect,” ced Gregson. “Hou u got on too it I caant imadgine.”

“Different thredz, but leding up too the same tan’ghel. Ive bene taking

the signalz.”

“Signalz?”

“Yes, from dhat windo. Dha broke of in the middel. We came over too ce the rezon. But cins it iz safe in yor handz I ce no obgett in continnuwing this biznes.”

“Wate a bit!” cride Gregson egherly. “Ile doo u this justice, Mr. Hoamz, dhat I wauz nevver in a cace yet dhat I didnt fele stron’gher for havving u on mi cide. Dhaerz oonly the wun exit too these flats, so we hav him safe.”

“Whoo iz he?”

“Wel, wel, we scoer over u for wuns, Mr. Hoamz. U must ghiv us best this time.” He struc hiz stic sharply uppon the ground, on which a cabman, hiz whip in hiz hand, saunterd over from a foer-wheler which stood on the far cide ov the strete. “Ma I introjuce u too Mr. Sherloc Hoamz?” he ced too the cabman. “This iz Mr. Leverton, ov Pinkertonz Amerrican Agency.”

“The hero ov the Long Iland cave mistery?” ced Hoamz. “Cer, I am pleezd too mete u.”

The Amerrican, a qwiyet, bizneslike yung man, withe a clene-shaven, hatchet face, flusht up at the werdz ov comendaishon. “I am on the trale ov mi life nou, Mr. Hoamz,” ced he. “If I can ghet Gorjaano—”

“Whaut! Gorjaano ov the Red Cerkel?”

“O, he haz a Uropeyan fame, haz he? Wel, weve lernd aul about him in Amerricaa. We *no* he iz at the bottom ov fifty merderz, and yet we

hav nuthhing pozsitive we can take him on. I tract him over from Nu Yorc, and Ive bene cloce too him for a weke in Lundon, wating sum excuce too ghet mi hand on hiz collar. Mr. Gregson and I ran him too ground in dhat big tennement hous, and dhaerz oonly wun doer, so he caant slip us. Dhaerz thre foke cum out cins he went in, but Ile sware he wauznt wun ov them.”

“Mr. Hoamz taux ov cignalz,” ced Gregson. “I expect, az uezhuwal, he nose a good dele dhat we doant.”

In a fu clere werdz Hoamz explaind the cichuwaishon az it had apeerd too us. The Amerrican struc hiz handz tooghetheer withe vexaishon.

“Hese on too us!” he cride.

“Whi doo u thhinc so?”

“Wel, it figguerz out dhat wa, duz it not? Here he iz, cending out messagez too an acumplice—dhare ar cevveral ov hiz gang in Lundon.

Then

suddenly, just az bi yor one acount he wauz telling them dhat dhare wauz dain’ger, he broke short of. Whaut cood it mene exept dhat from the windo he had suddenly iather caut cite ov us in the strete, or in sum wa cum too understand hou cloce the dain’ger wauz, and dhat he must

act rite awa if he wauz too avoid it? Whaut doo u sugest, Mr. Hoamz?”

“Dhat we go up at wuns and ce for ourcelvz.”

“But we hav no worant for hiz arest.”

“He iz in unnoccupide premmicez under suspishous circumstaancez,” ced Gregson. “Dhat iz good enuf for the moment. When we hav him bi the heelz we can ce if Nu Yorc caant help us too kepe him. Ile take the

responsibility ov aresting him nou."

Our ofishal detectiavz ma blunder in the matter ov intelligens, but nevver in dhat ov currage. Gregson cliamd the stare too arest this desperate merderer withe the same absolutly qwiyet and bizneslike baring withe which he wood hav acended the ofishal staercace ov Scotland Yard. The Pinkerton man had tride too poosh paast him, but Gregson had fermly elbode him bac. Lundo dain'gerz wer the privvilege ov the Lundo foers.

The doer ov the left-hand flat uppon the thherd landing wauz standing ajar. Gregson poosht it open. Within aul wauz absolute cilens and darcnes. I struc a mach and lit the detectiavz lantern. Az I did so, and az the flicker steddede intoo a flame, we aul gave a gaasp ov cerprise. On the dele boerdz ov the carpetles floer dhare wauz outliand a fresh trac ov blud. The red steps pointed toowordz us and led awa from an inner roome, the doer ov which wauz cloazd. Gregson flung it open and held hiz lite fool blase in frunt ov him, while we aul peerd egherly over hiz shoalderz.

In the middel ov the floer ov the empty roome wauz huddeld the figure ov an enormous man, hiz clene-shaven, sworthy face grotescly horibel in its contorshon and hiz hed encerfeld bi a gaastly crimzon halo ov blud, liying in a braud wet cerkel uppon the white woodwerc. Hiz nese wer draun up, hiz handz throne out in agony, and from the center ov hiz braud, broun, upternd throte dhare proected the white haaft ov a nife drivven blade-depe intoo hiz boddy. Giyant az he wauz, the man must hav gon doun like a pole-axt ox befoer dhat teriffic blo. Becide hiz rite hand a moast formiddabel horn-handeld, too-ejd daggher la uppon the floer, and nere it a blac kid gluv.

"Bi Jorj! its Blac Gorjaano himcelf!" cride the Amerrican detective.

“Sumwun haz got ahed ov us this time.”

“Here iz the candel in the windo, Mr. Hoamz,” ced Gregson. “Whi, whautevver ar u doowing?”

Hoamz had stept acros, had lit the candel, and wauz paacing it baqword and forword acros the windo-painz. Then he peerd into the darcnes, blu the candel out, and thru it on the floer.

“I raather thhinc dhat wil be helpfool,” ced he. He came over and stood in depe thaut while the too profeshonalz wer exammining the boddy. “U sa dhat thre pepel came out from the flat while u wer wating dounstaerz,” ced he at laast. “Did u observ them cloasly?”

“Yes, I did.”

“Wauz dhare a fello about thherty, blac-beerded, darc, ov middel cise?”

“Yes; he wauz the laast too paas me.”

“Dhat iz yor man, I fancy. I can ghiv u hiz descripshon, and we hav a verry exelent outline ov hiz footmarc. Dhat shoold be enuf for u.”

“Not much, Mr. Hoamz, amung the milleyonz ov Lunden.”

“Perhaps not. Dhat iz whi I thaut it best too summon this lady too yor ade.”

We aul ternd round at the werdz. Dhare, fraimd in the doerwa, wauz a taul and butifool woomman—the mistereyous lodger ov Bloomzbury. Sloly she advaanst, her face pale and draun withe a friatfool apreshon, her ise fixt and staring, her terrifide gase rivveted uppon the darc figgure on the floer.

"U hav kild him!" she mutterd. "O, *Deyo meyo*, u hav kild him!" Then I herd a sudden sharp intake ov her breth, and she sprang into the are withe a cri ov joi. Round and round the roome she daanst, her handz clapping, her darc ise gleming withe delited wunder, and a thouzand pritty Italleyan exclamaishonz poering from her lips. It wauz terribel and amasing too ce such a woomman so convulst withe joi at such a cite. Suddenly she stopt and gaizd at us aul withe a qweschoning stare.

"But u! U ar polece, ar u not? U hav kild Juceppy Gorjaano. Iz it not so?"

"We ar polece, maddam."

She looct round intoo the shaddose ov the roome.

"But whare, then, iz Gennaro?" she aasct. "He iz mi huzband, Gennaro Looccaa. I am Emileyaa Looccaa, and we ar boath from Nu Yorc. Whare iz Gennaro? He cauld me this moment from this windo, and I ran withe aul mi spede."

"It wauz I whoo cauld," ced Hoamz.

"U! Hou cood u caul?"

"Yor cifer wauz not difficult, maddam. Yor prezsens here wauz desirabel. I nu dhat I had oanly too flash '*Vieni*' and u wood shuerly cum."

The butifool Italleyan looct withe au at mi companyon.

"I doo not understand hou u no these thhingz," she ced. "Juceppy

Gorjaano—hou did he—” She pauzd, and then suddenly her face lit up with the pride and delite. “Nou I ce it! Mi Gennaro! Mi splendid, butifool Gennaro, whoo haz garded me safe from aul harm, he did it, with the hiz one strong hand he kild the monster! O, Gennaro, hou wunderfool u ar! Whaut woomman cood evver be werthy ov such a man?”

“Wel, Mrs. Looccaa,” ced the prozayic Gregson, laying hiz hand uppon the ladese sleeve with the az littel centiment az if she wer a Notting Hil hooligan, “I am not verry clere yet whoo u ar or whaut u ar; but uve ced enuf too make it verry clere dhat we shal waunt u at the Yard.”

“Wun moment, Gregson,” ced Hoamz. “I raather fancy dhat this lady ma be az ancshous too ghiv us informaishon az we can be too ghet it. U understand, maddam, dhat yor huzband wil be arested and tride for the deth ov the man whoo lise befoer us? Whaut u sa ma be uezd in evvidens. But if u thhinc dhat he haz acted from motiavz which ar not crimminal, and which he wood wish too hav none, then u canot cerv him better dhan bi telling us the whole stoery.”

“Nou dhat Gorjaano iz ded we fere nuthhing,” ced the lady. “He wauz a devvil and a monster, and dhare can be no juj in the werld whoo wood punnish mi huzband for havving kild him.”

“In dhat cace,” ced Hoamz, “mi sugeschon iz dhat we loc this doer, leve thhingz az we found them, go with the this lady too her roome, and form our opinyon aafter we hav herd whaut it iz dhat she haz too sa too us.”

Haaf an our later we wer ceted, aul foer, in the smaull citting-roome ov Cinyoraa Looccaa, liscening too her remarcabel narrative ov dhose cinnister events, the ending ov which we had chaanst too witnes. She spoke in rappid and fluwent but verry unconvenshonal In’glish, which, for the sake ov cleernes, I wil make gramattical.

“I wauz born in Posilippo, nere Napelz,” ced she, “and wauz the dauter ov Augusto Bareilly, whoo wauz the chefe lauyer and wuns the depputy ov dhat part. Gennaro wauz in mi faatherz employment, and I came too luv him, az enny woomman must. He had niather munny nor posishon—nuthhing but hiz buty and strength and ennergy—so mi faather forbade the mach. We fled tooghether, wer marrede at Baary, and soald mi juwelz too gane the munny which wood take us too Amerricaa. This wauz foer yeerz ago, and we hav bene in Nu Yorck evver cins.

“Forchune wauz verry good too us at ferst. Gennaro wauz abel too doo a cervice too an Italleyan gentelman—he saivd him from sum ruffeyanz in the place cauld the Bouwery, and so made a pouwerfool frend. Hiz name wauz Tito Castalot, and he wauz the ceenyor partner ov the grate ferm ov Castalot and Zambaa, whoo ar the chefe frute impoerterz ov Nu Yorck. Cinyor Zambaa iz an invalid, and our nu frend Castalot haz aul pouwer within the ferm, which emploiz moer dhan thre hundred men. He tooc mi huzband intoo hiz employment, made him hed ov a department, and shode hiz good-wil toowordz him in evvery wa. Cinyor Castalot wauz a batchelor, and I beleve dhat he felt az if Gennaro wauz hiz sun, and boath mi huzband and I luvd him az if he wer our faather. We had taken and fernisht a littel hous in Brooclin, and our whole fuchure ceemd ashuerd when dhat blac cloud apeerd which wauz soone too overspred our ski.

“Wun nite, when Gennaro reternd from hiz werc, he braut a fello-cuntriman bac withe him. Hiz name wauz Gorjaano, and he had cum aulso from Posilippo. He wauz a huge man, az u can testifi, for u hav looct uppon hiz corps. Not oonly wauz hiz boddy dhat ov a giyant but evverithhing about him wauz grotesc, gigantic, and terrifying. Hiz vois wauz like thunder in our littel hous. Dhare wauz scaers roome for the wherl ov hiz grate armz az he tauct. Hiz thauts, hiz emoashonz, hiz

pashonz, aul wer exadgerated and monstrous. He tauct, or raather roerd, withe such ennergy dhat utherz cood but cit and liscen, coud withe the mity streme ov werdz. Hiz ise blaizd at u and held u at hiz mercy. He wauz a terribel and wunderfool man. I thanc God dhat he iz ded!

“He came agane and agane. Yet I wauz aware dhat Gennaro wauz no moer happy dhan I wauz in hiz prezsens. Mi poor huzband wood cit pale and listles, liscening too the endles raving uppon pollitix and uppon soashal qweschonz which made up our vizsitorz conversaishon. Gennaro ced nuthhing, but I, whoo nu him so wel, cood rede in hiz face sum emoashon which I had nevver cene dhare befoer. At ferst I thaut dhat it wauz dislike. And then, gradjuwaly, I understood dhat it wauz moer dhan dislike. It wauz fere—a depe, ceecret, shrinking fere. Dhat nite—the nite dhat I red hiz terror—I poot mi armz round him and I imploerd him bi hiz luv for me and bi aul dhat he held dere too hoald nuthhing from me, and too tel me whi this huge man overshaddode him so.

“He toald me, and mi one hart gru coald az ice az I liscend. Mi poor Gennaro, in hiz wiald and firy dase, when aul the werld ceemd against him and hiz miand wauz drivven haaf mad bi the injusticez ov life, had joind a Nyapollitan sociyety, the Red Cerkel, which wauz allide too the oald Carbonary. The oaths and ceecrets ov this brutherhood wer friatfool, but wuns within its rule no escape wauz poscibel. When we had fled too Amerricaa Gennaro thaut dhat he had caast it aul of forever. Whaut wauz hiz horror wun evening too mete in the streets the verry man whoo had inisheyated him in Napelz, the giyant Gorjaano, a man whoo had ernd the name ov ‘Deth’ in the south ov Ittaly, for he wauz red too the elbo in merder! He had cum too Nu Yorc too avoid the Italleyan polece, and he had aulreddy plaanted a braanch ov this dredfool sociyety in hiz nu home. Aul this Gennaro toald me and shode me a summonz which he had receevd dhat verry da, a Red Cerkel draun uppon the hed ov it telling him dhat

a loj wood be held uppon a certane date, and dhat hiz prezsens at it wauz reqwiard and orderd.

“Dhat wauz bad enuf, but wers wauz too cum. I had notiast for sum time dhat when Gorjaano came too us, az he constantly did, in the evening, he spoke much too me; and even when hiz werdz wer too mi huzband dhose terribel, glaring, wiald-beest ise ov hiz wer aulwase ternd uppon me. Wun nite hiz ceecret came out. I had awakend whaut he cauld ‘luv’ within him—the luv ov a brute—a savvage. Gennaro had not yet reternd when he came. He poosht hiz wa in, ceezd me in hiz mity armz, hugd me in hiz baerz embrace, cuvverd me withe kiscez, and imploerd me too cum awa withe him. I wauz strugling and screaming when Gennaro enterd and atact him. He struc Gennaro censles and fled from the hous which he wauz nevver moer too enter. It wauz a dedly ennemy dhat we made dhat nite.

“A fu dase later came the meting. Gennaro reternd from it withe a face which toald me dhat sumthhing dredfool had okerd. It wauz wers dhan we cood hav imadgiand poscibel. The fundz ov the sociyety wer raizd bi blacmaling rich Italleyanz and threttening them withe viyolens shood dha refuse the munny. It ceemz dhat Castalot, our dere frend and benefactor, had bene aproacht. He had refuezd too yeeld too threts, and he had handed the noticez too the polece. It wauz rezolvd nou dhat such an exaampel shood be made ov them az wood prevent enny uther victim from rebelling. At the meting it wauz arainjd dhat he and hiz hous shood be blone up withe dinamite. Dhare wauz a drauwing ov lots az too whoo shood carry out the dede. Gennaro sau our ennemese cruwel face smiling at him az he dipt hiz hand in the bag. No dout it had bene preyarainjd in sum fashon, for it wauz the fatal disc withe the Red Cerkel uppon it, the mandate for merder, which la uppon hiz paalm. He wauz too kil hiz best frend, or he wauz too expose himcelf and me too the

venjans ov hiz comraidz. It wauz part ov dhare feendish cistem too punnish dhose whoome dha feerd or hated bi injuring not oanly dhare one personz but dhose whoome dha luvd, and it wauz the nollej ov this which hung az a terror over mi poor Gennarose hed and drove him neerly crasy withe aprehenshon.

“Aul dhat nite we sat toogheter, our armz round eche uther, eche strengthhenning eche for the trubbelz dhat la befoer us. The verry next evening had bene fixt for the atempt. Bi midda mi huzband and I wer on our wa too Lundon, but not befoer he had ghivven our bennefactor fool warning ov this dain’ger, and had aulso left such informaishon for the polece az wood saifgard hiz life for the fuchure.

“The rest, gentelmen, u no for yorcelvz. We wer shure dhat our ennemese wood be behiand us like our one shaddose. Gorjaano had hiz private rezonz for venjans, but in enny cace we nu hou ruethles, cunning, and untiring he cood be. Boath Ittaly and Amerricaa ar fool ov stoerese ov hiz dredfool pouwerz. If evver dha wer exerted it wood be nou. Mi darling made uce ov the fu clere dase which our start had ghivven us in arain’ging for a reffuge for me in such a fashon dhat no poscibel dain’ger cood reche me. For hiz one part, he wisht too be fre dhat he mite comunicate boath withe the Amerrican and withe the Italleyan polece. I doo not micelf no whare he livd, or hou. Aul dhat I lernd wauz throo the collumz ov a nuespaper. But wuns az I looct throo mi windo, I sau too Italleyanz wauching the hous, and I understood dhat in sum wa Gorjaano had found our retrete. Finaly Gennaro toald me, throo the paper, dhat he wood signal too me from a certane windo, but when the cignalz came dha wer nuthhing but warningz, which wer suddenly interupted. It iz verry clere too me nou dhat he nu Gorjaano too be cloce uppon him, and dhat, thanc God! he wauz reddy for him when he came. And nou, gentelman, I wood aasc u whether we hav ennithhing too fere from the lau, or whether enny juj uppon erth wood condem mi

Gennaro for whaut he haz dun?"

"Wel, Mr. Gregson," ced the Amerrican, loocking acros at the ofishal, "I doant no whaut yor Brittish point ov vu ma be, but I ghes dhat in Nu Yorc this ladese huzband wil receive a pritty genneral vote ov thanx."

"She wil hav too cum withe me and ce the chefe," Gregson aancerd. "If whaut she cez iz corobborated, I doo not thhinc she or her huzband haz much too fere. But whaut I caant make hed or tale ov, Mr. Hoamz, iz hou on erth *u* got yorcelf mixt up in the matter."

"Ejucaishon, Gregson, ejucaishon. Stil ceking nollej at the oald univercity. Wel, Wautson, u hav wun moer spescimen ov the tradgic and grotesc too ad too yor colecshon. Bi the wa, it iz not ate oacloc, and a Wagner nite at Covvent Garden! If we hurry, we mite be in time for the cecond act."

The Disaperans ov Lady Fraances Carfax

"But whi Terkish?" aasct Mr. Sherloc Hoamz, gasing fixtly at mi buits. I wauz reclining in a cane-bact chare at the moment, and mi protruded fete had attracted hiz evver-active atenshon.

"In'glis," I aancerd in sum cerprise. "I got them at Lattimerz, in Oxford Strete."

Hoamz smiald withe an expreshon ov wery paishens.

"The baath!" he ced; "the baath! Whi the relaxing and expencive Terkish raather dhan the inviggorating home-made artikel?"

“Becauz for the laast fu dase I hav bene feling rumattic and oald. A Terkish baath iz whaut we caul an alterative in medicine—a fresh starting-point, a clenser ov the cistem.

“Bi the wa, Hoamz,” I added, “I hav no dout the conecshon betwene mi buits and a Terkish baath iz a perfectly celf-evvident wun too a lodgical miand, and yet I shood be obliajd too u if u wood indicate it.”

“The trane ov rezoning iz not verry obscure, Wautson,” ced Hoamz withe a mischevous twinkel. “It belongz too the same elementary claas ov deducshon which I shood illustrate if I wer too aasc u whoo shaerd yor cab in yor drive this morning.”

“I doant admit dhat a fresh ilustraishon iz an explanaishon,” ced I withe sum asperrity.

“Braavo, Wautson! A verry dignifide and lodgical remonstrans. Let me ce, whaut wer the points? Take the laast wun ferst—the cab. U observ dhat u hav sum splashez on the left sleve and shoalder ov yor cote. Had u sat in the center ov a hansom u wood probbably hav had no splashez, and if u had dha wood certainly hav bene cimmetrical. Dhaerfoer it iz clere dhat u sat at the cide. Dhaerfoer it iz eeqwaly clere dhat u had a companyon.”

“Dhat iz verry evvident.”

“Abcerdly commonplace, iz it not?”

“But the buits and the baath?”

“Eeqwaly chialdish. U ar in the habbit ov doowing up yor buits in a certane wa. I ce them on this ocaizhon faacend withe an elaborare dubbel bo, which iz not yor uezhuwal method ov tying them. U hav,

dhaerfoer, had them of. Whoo haz tide them? A bootmaker—or the boi at the baath. It iz unliacly dhat it iz the bootmaker, cins yor buits ar neerly nu. Wel, whaut remainz? The baath. Abcerd, iz it not? But, for aul dhat, the Turkish baath haz cervd a perpoce.”

“Whaut iz dhat?”

“U sa dhat u hav had it becauz u nede a chainj. Let me sugest dhat u take wun. Hou wood Lozan doo, mi dere Wautson—ferst-claas tickets and aul expencez pade on a prinsly scale?”

“Splendid! But whi?”

Hoamz leend bac in hiz armchare and tooc hiz noatbooc from hiz pocket.

“Wun ov the moast dain’gerous claacez in the werld,” ced he, “iz the drifting and frendles woomman. She iz the moast harmles and often the moast uesfool ov mortalz, but she iz the inevvitabel inciter ov crime in utherz. She iz helples. She iz miagratoery. She haz sufishent meenz too take her from cuntry too cuntry and from hotel too hotel. She iz lost, az often az not, in a mase ov obscure *pensions* and boerding’housez. She iz a stra chicken in a werld ov foxez. When she iz gobbeld up she iz hardly mist. I much fere dhat sum evil haz cum too the Lady Fraances Carfax.”

I wauz releevd at this sudden decent from the genneral too the particcular. Hoamz consulted hiz noats.

“Lady Fraances,” he continnude, “iz the sole cervivor ov the direct fammily ov the late Erl ov Rufton. The estaits went, az u ma remember, in the male line. She wauz left withe limmited meenz, but withe sum verry remarcabel oald Spannish juwelery ov silver and cureyously cut

dimondz too which she wauz fondly atacht—too atacht, for she refuezd too leve them withe her banker and aulwase carrede them about withe her.

A

raather pathhettic figgure, the Lady Fraances, a butifool woomman, stil in fresh middel age, and yet, bi a strainj chainj, the laast derrelict ov whaut oanly twenty yeerz ago wauz a goodly flete.”

“Whaut haz happend too her, then?”

“Aa, whaut haz happend too the Lady Fraances? Iz she alive or ded? Dhare iz our problem. She iz a lady ov precice habbits, and for foer yeerz it haz bene her invareyabel custom too rite evvery cecond weke too Mis Dobny, her oald guvvernes, whoo haz long retiard and livz in Camberwel. It iz this Mis Dobny whoo haz consulted me. Neerly five weex hav paast widhout a werd. The laast letter wauz from the Hotel Nashonal at Lozan. Lady Fraances ceemz too hav left dhare and ghivven no adres. The fammily ar ancshous, and az dha ar exedingly welthhy no sum wil be spaerd if we can clere the matter up.”

“Iz Mis Dobny the oanly soers ov informaishon? Shuerly she had uther corespondents?”

“Dhare iz wun corespondent whoo iz a shure drau, Wautson. Dhat iz the banc. Cin’ghel ladese must liv, and dhare paasboox ar comprest diyarese. She banx at Cilvesterz. I hav glaanst over her acount. The laast chec but wun pade her bil at Lozan, but it wauz a larj wun and probbably left her withe cash in hand. Oanly wun chec haz bene draun cins.”

“Too whoome, and whare?”

“Too Mis Mary Devine. Dhare iz nuthhing too sho whare the chec wauz draun. It wauz casht at the Cradit Leyonnace at Montpelleyer les dhan thre weex ago. The sum wauz fifty poundz.”

“And whoo iz Mis Mary Devine?”

“Dhat aulso I hav bene abel too discuvver. Mis Mary Devine wauz the made ov Lady Fraances Carfax. Whi she shood hav pade her this chec we hav not yet determiand. I hav no dout, houwevver, dhat yor recerchez wil soone clere the matter up.”

“*Mi recerchez!*”

“Hens the helth-ghivving expedishon too Lozan. U no dhat I canot poscibly leve Lundon while oald Aibrahamz iz in such mortal terror ov hiz life. Beciadz, on genneral principelz it iz best dhat I shood not leve the cuntry. Scotland Yard feelz loanly widhout me, and it causez an unhelthhy exiatment amung the crimminal claacez. Go, then, mi dere Wautson, and if mi humbel council can evver be vallude at so extravvagant a rate az too pens a werd, it waits yor dispozal nite and da at the end ov the Continental wire.”

Too dase later found me at the Hotel Nashonal at Lozan, whare I receevd evvery kertecy at the handz ov M. Moser, the wel-none mannager. Lady Fraances, az he informd me, had stade dhare for cevveral weex. She had bene much liact bi aul whoo met her. Her age wauz not moer dhan forty. She wauz stil handsum and boer evvery cine ov havving in her ueth bene a verry luvly woomman. M. Moser nu nuthhing ov enny vallubel juwelery, but it had bene remarct bi the cervants dhat the hevvy trunc in the ladese bedroome wauz aulwase scrupulously loct. Mary Devine, the made, wauz az poppular az her mistres. She wauz acchuwaly en’gajid too wun ov the hed waterz in the hotel, and dhare wauz no

difficulty in ghetting her adres. It wauz 11, Ru de Trajan, Montpelleyer. Aul this I jotted down and felt dhat Hoamz himself cood not hav bene moer adroit in colecting hiz facts.

Oanly wun corner stil remaind in the shaddo. No lite which I posest cood clere up the cauz for the ladese sudden deparchure. She wauz verry happy at Lozan. Dhare wauz evvery rezon too beleve dhat she intended too remane for the cezon in her lucshureyous ruimz overlooking the lake. And yet she had left at a cin'ghel dase notice, which involvd her in the uesles pament ov a weex rent. Oanly Juelz Vebar, the luvver ov the made, had enny sugeschon too offer. He conected the sudden deparchure withe the vizsit too the hotel a da or too befoer ov a taul, darc, beereded man. "*Un sauvage—un veritable sauvage!*" cride Juelz Vebar. The man had ruimz sumwhare in the toun. He had bene cene tauking earnestly too Madam on the prommenaad bi the lake. Then he had cauld. She had refuezd too ce him. He wauz In'glish, but ov hiz name dhare wauz no reccord. Madam had left the place imejaitly aafterwordz. Juelz Vebar, and, whaut wauz ov moer importans, Juelz Vebarz sweet'hart, thaut dhat this caul and the deparchure wer cauz and efect. Oanly wun thhing Juelz wood not discuss. Dhat wauz the rezon whi Mary had left her mistres. Ov dhat he cood or wood sa nuthing. If I wisht too no, I must go too Montpelleyer and aasc her.

So ended the ferst chapter ov mi inqwiry. The cecond wauz devoted too the place which Lady Fraances Carfax had saut when she left Lozan. Concerning this dhare had bene sum ceecrecy, which confermd the ideyaa dhat she had gon withe the intenshon ov throwing sumwun of her trac. Utherwise whi shood not her luggage hav bene openly labeld for Baaden? Boath she and it reecht the Renish spaa bi sum cercuwitous roote. This much I gatherd from the mannager ov Coox local office. So too Baaden I went, aafter dispatching too Hoamz an acount ov aul mi procedingz and receving in repli a tellegram ov haaf-humorous

comendaishon.

At Baaden the trac wauz not difficult too follo. Lady Fraances had stade at the En'glischer Hof for a fortnite. While dhare she had made the aqwaintans ov a Dr. Shlescinger and hiz wife, a mishonary from South Amerricaa. Like moast loanly ladese, Lady Fraances found her cumfort and ocupaishon in relidjon. Dr. Shlescingerz remarcabel personallity, hiz whole harted devoashon, and the fact dhat he wauz recuvvering from a disese contracted in the exercise ov hiz apostolic jutese afected her deeply. She had helpt Mrs. Shlescinger in the nercing ov the convalescent saint. He spent hiz da, az the mannager descriabd it too me, uppon a lounj-chare on the verandaa, withe an atendant lady uppon iather cide ov him. He wauz preparing a map ov the Holy Land, withe speshal refferens too the kingdom ov the Midjaniats, uppon which he wauz riting a monnograaf. Finaly, havving impruivd much in helth, he and hiz wife had reternd too Lundon, and Lady Fraances had started thither in dhare cumpany. This wauz just thre weex befoer, and the mannager had herd nuthhing cins. Az too the made, Mary, she had gon of sum dase befoerhand in fludz ov teerz, aafter informing the uther maidz dhat she wauz leving cervice forevver. Dr. Shlescinger had pade the bil ov the whole party befoer hiz deparchure.

"Bi the wa," ced the landlord in concluezhon, "u ar not the oanly frend ov Lady Fraances Carfax whoo iz inqwiring aafter her just nou. Oanly a weke or so ago we had a man here uppon the same errand."

"Did he ghiv a name?" I aasct.

"Nun; but he wauz an In'GLISHMAN, dho ov an unnuezhual tipe."

"A savvage?" ced I, linking mi facts aafter the fashon ov mi illustreyous frend.

“Exactly. Dhat descriabz him verry wel. He iz a bulky, bearded, sunbernd fello, whoo loox az if he wood be moer at home in a farmerz’ in dhan in a fashonabel hotel. A hard, feers man, I shood thhinc, and wun whoome I shood be sory too ofend.”

Aulreddy the mistery began too define itcelf, az figguerz gro clerer withe the lifting ov a fog. Here wauz this good and piyous lady pershude from place too place bi a cinnister and unrelenting figgure. She feerd him, or she wood not hav fled from Lozan. He had stil follode. Sooner or later he wood overtake her. Had he aulreddy overtaken her? Wauz *dhat* the ceecret ov her continnude cilens? Cood the good pepel whoo wer her companyonz not screne her from hiz viyolens or hiz blacmale? Whaut horibel perpoce, whaut depe desine, la behiand this long persute? Dhare wauz the problem which I had too solv.

Too Hoamz I rote showing hou rappidly and shuerly I had got down too the ruits ov the matter. In repli I had a tellegram aasking for a descripshon ov Dr. Shlescingerz left ere. Hoamsez ideyaaz ov humor ar strainj and ocaizhonaly ofencive, so I tooc no notice ov hiz il-tiamd gest—indede, I had aulreddy reecht Montpelleyer in mi persute ov the made, Mary, befoer hiz message came.

I had no difficulty in fianding the ex-cervant and in lerning aul dhat she cood tel me. She wauz a devoted crechure, whoo had oanly left her mistres becauz she wauz shure dhat she wauz in good handz, and becauz her one aproching marrage made a ceparaihshon inevvitabel in enny cace. Her mistres had, az she confest withe distres, shone sum iritabillity ov temper toowordz her juring dhare sta in Baaden, and had even qweschond her wuns az if she had suspishonz ov her onnesty, and this had made the parting eseyer dhan it wood utherwise hav bene. Lady Fraances had ghivven her fifty poundz az a wedding-prezsent. Like me,

Mary vude withe depe distrust the strain'ger whoo had drivven her mistres from Lozan. Withe her one ise she had cene him cese the ladese rist withe grate viyolens on the public prommenaad bi the lake. He wauz a feers and terribel man. She beleevd dhat it wauz out ov dred ov him dhat Lady Fraances had axepted the escort ov the Shlescingerz too Lundon. She had nevver spoken too Mary about it, but menny littel cianz had convinst the made dhat her mistres livd in a state ov continnuwal nervous aprehenshon. So far she had got in her narrative, when suddenly she sprang from her chare and her face wauz convulst withe cerprise and fere. "Ce!" she cride. "The miscreyant follose stil! Dhare iz the verry man ov whoome I speke."

Throo the open citting-roome windo I sau a huge, sworthy man withe a brisling blac beard wauking sloly down the center ov the strete and staring egherly at the numberz ov the housez. It wauz clere dhat, like micelf, he wauz on the trac ov the made. Acting uppon the impuls ov the moment, I rusht out and acosted him.

"U ar an In'glishman," I ced.

"Whaut if I am?" he aasct withe a moast villanous scoul.

"Ma I aasc whaut yor name iz?"

"No, u ma not," ced he withe decizhon.

The cichuwaishon wauz auqword, but the moast direct wa iz often the best.

"Whare iz the Lady Fraances Carfax?" I aasct.

He staerd at me withe amaizment.

"Whaut hav u dun withe her? Whi hav u pershude her? I incist uppon an aancer!" ced I.

The fello gave a bello ov an'gher and sprang uppon me like a tigher. I hav held mi one in menny a strugghel, but the man had a grip ov iarn and the fury ov a feend. Hiz hand wauz on mi throte and mi cencez wer neerly gon befoer an unshaven French *ouvrier* in a blu blouz darted out from a *cabaret* opposite, withe a cudgel in hiz hand, and struc mi asalant a sharp crac over the foerarm, which made him leve go hiz hoald. He stood for an instant fuming withe rage and uncertane whether he shoold not renu hiz atac. Then, withe a snarl ov an'gher, he left me and enterd the cottage from which I had just cum. I ternd too thanc mi preserver, whoo stood becide me in the roadwa.

"Wel, Wautson," ced he, "a verry pritty hash u hav made ov it! I raather thhinc u had better cum bac withe me too Lundoon bi the nite expres."

An our aafterwordz, Sherloc Hoamz, in hiz uezhuwal garb and stile, wauz ceted in mi private roome at the hotel. Hiz explanaishon ov hiz sudden and oporchune aperans wauz cimply itself, for, fianding dhat he cood ghet awa from Lundoon, he determiand too hed me of at the next obveyous point ov mi travvelz. In the disghise ov a werkingman he had sat in the *cabaret* wating for mi aperans.

"And a cin'gularly concistent investigaishon u hav made, mi dere Wautson," ced he. "I canot at the moment recaul enny poscibel blunder which u hav omitted. The total efect ov yor proceeding haz bene too ghiv the alarm evveriwheare and yet too discuvver nuthhing."

"Perhaps u wood hav dun no better," I aancerd bitterly.

"Dhare iz no 'perhaps' about it. I *hav* dun better. Here iz the On. Phillip Grene, whoo iz a fello-lodger withe u in this hotel, and we ma

fiand him the starting-point for a moer suxesfool investigaishon.”

A card had cum up on a salver, and it wauz follode bi the same bearded ruffeyan whoo had atact me in the strete. He started when he sau me.

“Whaut iz this, Mr. Hoamz?” he aasct. “I had yor note and I hav cum. But whaut haz this man too doo withe the matter?”

“This iz mi oald frend and asoasheyate, Dr. Wautson, whoo iz helping us in this afaire.”

The strain’ger held out a huge, sunbernd hand, withe a fu werdz ov apollogy.

“I hope I didnt harm u. When u acuezd me ov herting her I lost mi grip ov micelf. Indede, Ime not responcibel in these dase. Mi nervz ar like live wiarz. But this cichuwaishon iz beyond me. Whaut I waunt too no, in the ferst place, Mr. Hoamz, iz, hou in the werld u came too here ov mi existens at aul.”

“I am in tuch withe Mis Dobny, Lady Fraancesez guvvernes.”

“Oald Suzan Dobny withe the mob cap! I remember her wel.”

“And she rememberz u. It wauz in the dase befoer—befoer u found it better too go too South Africaa.”

“Aa, I ce u no mi whole stoery. I nede hide nuthhing from u. I sware too u, Mr. Hoamz, dhat dhare nevver wauz in this werld a man whoo luvd a woomman withe a moer whoal’harted luv dhan I had for Fraancez. I wauz a wiald yungster, I no—not wers dhan utherz ov mi claas. But her miand wauz pure az sno. She cood not bare a shaddo ov coersnes. So, when she came too here ov thhingz dhat I had dun, she wood hav no moer

too sa too me. And yet she luvd me—dhat iz the wunder ov it!—lud me wel enuf too remane cin'ghel aul her sainted dase just for mi sake alone. When the yeerz had paast and I had made mi munny at Barberton I thaut perhaps I cood ceke her out and soften her. I had herd dhat she wauz stil unmarrede, I found her at Lozan and tride aul I nu. She wekend, I thhinc, but her wil wauz strong, and when next I cauld she had left the toun. I traist her too Baaden, and then aafter a time herd dhat her made wauz here. Ime a ruf fello, fresh from a ruf life, and when Dr. Wautson spoke too me az he did I lost hoald ov micelf for a moment. But for Godz sake tel me whaut haz becum ov the Lady Fraances."

"Dhat iz for us too fiand out," ced Sherloc Hoamz withe peculeyar gravvity. "Whaut iz yor Lunden adres, Mr. Grene?"

"The Langam Hotel wil fiand me."

"Then ma I recomend dhat u retern dhare and be on hand in cace I shood waunt u? I hav no desire too encurrage fauls hoaps, but u ma rest ashuerd dhat aul dhat can be dun wil be dun for the saifty ov Lady Fraances. I can sa no moer for the instant. I wil leve u this card so dhat u ma be abel too kepe in tuch withe us. Nou, Wautson, if u wil pac yor bag I wil cabel too Mrs. Hudson too make wun ov her best efforts for too hun'gry travvelerz at 7:30 too-moro."

A tellegram wauz awating us when we reecht our Baker Strete ruimz, which Hoamz red withe an exclamaishon ov interest and thru acros too me. "Jagghed or toern," wauz the message, and the place ov origin, Baaden.

"Whaut iz this?" I aasct.

"It iz evverithhing," Hoamz aancerd. "U ma remember mi cemingly irrelevant qweschon az too this clerrical gentelmanz left ere. U did

not aancer it.”

“I had left Baaden and cood not inqwire.”

“Exactly. For this rezon I cent a jueplicate too the mannager ov the En’ glischer Hof, whoose aancer lise here.”

“Whaut duz it sho?”

“It shose, mi dere Wautson, dhat we ar deling withe an exepshonaly aschute and dain’gerous man. The Rev. Dr. Shlescinger, mishonary from South Amerricaa, iz nun uther dhan Holy Peterz, wun ov the moast unscrupulous raascalz dhat Australeyaa haz evver evolvd—and for a yung cuntry it haz ternd out sum verry finnisht tiaps. Hiz particcular speshalty iz the beghiling ov loanly ladese bi playing uppon dhare relidjous felingz, and hiz so-cauld wife, an In’ glishwoomman naimd Fraser, iz a werthy helpmate. The nachure ov hiz tactix sugested hiz identity too me, and this fizsical peculeyarrity—he wauz badly bitten in a saloone-fite at Adelaide in ’89—confermd mi suspishon. This poor lady iz in the handz ov a moast infernal cuppel, whoo wil stic at nuthhing, Wautson. Dhat she iz aulreddy ded iz a verry liacly suposishon. If not, she iz undoutedly in sum sort ov confianment and unnabel too rite too Mis Dobny or her uther frendz. It iz aulwase poscibel dhat she never reecht Lunden, or dhat she haz paast throo it, but the former iz improbbabel, az, withe dhare cistem ov registraishon, it iz not esy for foranerz too pla trix withe the Continental polece; and the latter iz aulso unliacly, az these roagz cood not hope too fiand enny uther place whare it wood be az esy too kepe a person under restraint. Aul mi instincts tel me dhat she iz in Lunden, but az we hav at prezsent no poscibel meenz ov telling whare, we can oanly take the obveyous steps, ete our dinner, and poses our soalz in paishens. Later in the evening I wil strole doun and hav a werd withe frend Lestrade at Scotland Yard.”

But niather the ofishal polece nor Hoamsez one smaul but verry efishent organizaishon sufiast too clere awa the mistery. Amid the crouded milleyonz ov Lundon the thre personz we saut wer az compleetly oblitterated az if dha had nevver livd. Advertiazments wer tride, and faild. Cluse wer follode, and led too nuthhing. Evvery crimminal rezort which Shlescinger mite freqwent wauz draun in vane. Hiz oald asoasheyaits wer waucht, but dha kept clere ov him. And then suddenly, aafter a weke ov helples suspens dhare came a flash ov lite. A cilver-and-brilleyant pendant ov oald Spannish desine had bene paund at Buvvingtonz, in Westminster Rode. The pauner wauz a larj, clene-shaven man ov clerrical aperans. Hiz name and adres wer demonstrably fauls. The ere had escaipt notice, but the descripshon wauz shuerly dhat ov Shlescinger.

Thre tiamz had our beerded frend from the Langam cauld for nuse—the thherd time within an our ov this fresh devellopment. Hiz cloadhz wer ghetting loocer on hiz grate boddy. He ceemd too be wilting awa in hiz anxiyety. “If u wil oanly ghiv me sumthhing too doo!” wauz hiz constant wale. At laast Hoamz cood oblige him.

“He haz begun too paun the juwelz. We shood ghet him nou.”

“But duz this mene dhat enny harm haz befaulen the Lady Fraances?”

Hoamz shooc hiz hed verry graivly.

“Suposing dhat dha hav held her prizzoner up too nou, it iz clere dhat dha canot let her looce widhout dhare one destrucshon. We must prepare for the werst.”

“Whaut can I doo?”

“These pepel doo not no u bi cite?”

“No.”

“It iz poscibel dhat he wil go too sum uther paunbroker in the fuchure. In dhat cace, we must beghin agane. On the uther hand, he haz had a fare price and no qweschonz aasct, so if he iz in nede ov reddy-munny he wil probbably cum bac too Buvvingtonz. I wil ghiv u a note too them, and dha wil let u wate in the shop. If the fello cumz u wil follo him home. But no indiscrechon, and, abuv aul, no viyolens. I poot u on yor onnor dhat u wil take no step widhout mi nollej and concent.”

For too dase the On. Phillip Grene (he wauz, I ma menshon, the sun ov the famous admiral ov dhat name whoo comaanded the Ce ov Azof flete in the Crimeyan Wor) braut us no nuse. On the evening ov the thherd he rusht intoo our citting-roome, pale, trembling, withe evvery muscel ov hiz pouwerfool frame qwivvering withe exiatment.

“We hav him! We hav him!” he cride.

He wauz incoherent in hiz agitaishon. Hoamz suidhd him withe a fu werdz and thrust him intoo an armchare.

“Cum, nou, ghiv us the order ov events,” ced he.

“She came oonly an our ago. It wauz the wife, this time, but the pendant she braut wauz the fello ov the uther. She iz a taul, pale woomman, withe ferret ise.”

“Dhat iz the lady,” ced Hoamz.

“She left the office and I follode her. She wauct up the Kennington Rode, and I kept behiand her. Prezently she went intoo a shop. Mr. Hoamz, it wauz an undertakerz.”

Mi companyon started. "Wel?" he aasct in dhat viabrant vois which toald ov the firy sole behiand the coald gra face.

"She wauz tauking too the woomman behiand the counter. I enterd az wel. 'It iz late,' I herd her sa, or werdz too dhat efect. The woomman wauz excusing hercelf. 'It shood be dhare befoer nou,' she aancerd. 'It tooc lon'gher, beying out ov the ordinary.' Dha boath stopt and looct at me, so I aasct sum qweschonz and then left the shop."

"U did exelently wel. Whaut happend next?"

"The woomman came out, but I had hid micelf in a doerwa. Her suspishonz had bene arouzd, I thhinc, for she looct round her. Then she cauld a cab and got in. I wauz lucky enuf too ghet anuther and so too follo her. She got doun at laast at No. 36, Poultny Sqware, Brixton. I drove paast, left mi cab at the corner ov the sqware, and waucht the hous."

"Did u ce enniwun?"

"The windose wer aul in darcnes save wun on the lower floer. The bliand wauz doun, and I cood not ce in. I wauz standing dhare, wundering whaut I shood doo next, when a cuverd van drove up withe too men in it. Dha decended, tooc sumthhing out ov the van, and carrede it up the steps too the haul doer. Mr. Hoamz, it wauz a coffin."

"Aa!"

"For an instant I wauz on the point ov rushing in. The doer had bene opennd too admit the men and dhare berden. It wauz the woomman whoo had opennd it. But az I stood dhare she caut a glimps ov me, and I thhinc dhat she reccogniazd me. I sau her start, and she haistily cloazd the doer. I rememberd mi prommice too u, and here I am."

“U hav dun exelent werc,” ced Hoamz, scribling a fu werdz uppon a haaf-shete ov paper. “We can doo nuthhing legal widhout a worant, and u can cerv the cauz best bi taking this note doun too the authoritese and ghetting wun. Dhare ma be sum difficulty, but I shood thhinc dhat the sale ov the juwelery shood be sufishent. Lestrade wil ce too aul detailz.”

“But dha ma merder her in the meenwhile. Whaut cood the coffin mene, and for whoome cood it be but for her?”

“We wil doo aul dhat can be dun, Mr. Grene. Not a moment wil be lost. Leve it in our handz. Nou, Wautson,” he added az our cliyent hurrede awa, “he wil cet the reggular foercez on the moove. We ar, az uezhuwal, the ireggularz, and we must take our one line ov acshon. The cichuwaishon striax me az so desperate dhat the moast extreme mezhuerz ar justifide. Not a moment iz too be lost in ghetting too Poultny Square.

“Let us tri too reconstruct the cichuwaishon,” ced he az we drove swiftly paast the Housez ov Parlament and over Westminster Brij. “These villainz hav coaxt this unhappy lady too Lundon, aafter ferst aleyenating her from her faithfool made. If she haz ritten enny letterz dha hav bene intercepted. Throo sum confedderate dha hav en’gaijd a fernisht hous. Wuns incide it, dha hav made her a prizzoner, and dha hav becum posest ov the vallubel juwelery which haz bene dhare obgett from the ferst. Aulreddy dha hav begun too cel part ov it, which ceemz safe enuf too them, cins dha hav no rezon too thhinc dhat enniwun iz interested in the ladese fate. When she iz releest she wil, ov coers, denouns them. Dhaerfoer, she must not be releest. But dha canot kepe her under loc and ke forever. So merder iz dhare oanly solueshon.”

“Dhat ceemz verry clere.”

“Nou we wil take anuther line ov rezoning. When u follo too cepparate chainz ov thaut, Wautson, u wil fiand sum point ov intercecshon which shood aproximate too the trueth. We wil start nou, not from the lady but from the coffin and argu baqword. Dhat incident pruivz, I fere, beyond aul dout dhat the lady iz ded. It points aulso too an orthodox berreyal withe propper acumpaniment ov meddical certifficate

and ofishal sancshon. Had the lady bene obveyously merderd, dha wood hav berrede her in a hole in the bac garden. But here aul iz open and reggular. Whaut duz this mene? Shuerly dhat dha hav dun her too deth in sum wa which haz deceevd the doctor and cimmulated a natchural end—poizoning, perhaps. And yet hou strainj dhat dha shood ever let a doctor aproche her unles he wer a confedderate, which iz hardly a creddibel proposishon.”

“Cood dha hav foerjd a meddical certifficate?”

“Dain’gerous, Wautson, verry dain’gerous. No, I hardly ce them doowing dhat.

Pool up, cabby! This iz evvidently the undertakerz, for we hav just paast the paunbrokerz. Wood u go in, Wautson? Yor aperans inspiarz confidens. Aasc whaut our the Poultny Sqware funeral taix place too-moro.”

The woomman in the shop aancerd me widhout hesitaishon dhat it wauz too be

at ate oacloc in the morning. “U ce, Wautson, no mistery; evverithhing abuv-boerd! In sum wa the legal formz hav undoutedly bene complide withe, and dha thhinc dhat dha hav littel too fere. Wel, dhaerz nuthhing for it nou but a direct fruntal atac. Ar u armd?”

“Mi stic!”

“Wel, wel, we shal be strong enuf. ‘Thrice iz he armd whoo hath hiz qworel just.’ We cimply caant afoerd too wate for the polece or too kepe within the foer cornerz ov the lau. U can drive of, cabby. Nou, Wautson, wele just take our luc tooghether, az we hav ocaizhonaly in the paast.”

He had rung loudly at the doer ov a grate darc hous in the center ov Poultny Sqware. It wauz opend imejaitly, and the figgure ov a taul woomman wauz outliand against the dim-lit haul.

“Wel, whaut doo u waunt?” she aasct sharply, pering at us throo the darcnes.

“I waunt too speke too Dr. Shlescinger,” ced Hoamz.

“Dhare iz no such person here,” she aancerd, and tride too close the doer, but Hoamz had jamd it withe hiz foot.

“Wel, I waunt too ce the man whoo livz here, whautevver he ma caul himcelf,” ced Hoamz fermly.

She hezsitated. Then she thru open the doer. “Wel, cum in!” ced she. “Mi huzband iz not afrade too face enny man in the werld.” She cloazd the doer behiand us and shode us intoo a citting-roome on the rite cide ov the haul, terning up the gas az she left us. “Mr. Peterz wil be withe u in an instant,” she ced.

Her werdz wer litteraly tru, for we had hardly time too looc around the dusty and moth-eten apartment in which we found ourcelvz befoer the doer opend and a big, clene-shaven bauld-hedded man stept liatly intoo the roome. He had a larj red face, withe penjulous cheex, and a genneral are ov superfishal benevvolens which wauz mard bi a cruwel, vishous mouth.

“Dhare iz shuerly sum mistake here, gentelmen,” he ced in an uncshous, make-evverithhing-esy vois. “I fancy dhat u hav bene misdirected. Poscibly if u tride farther doun the strete—”

“Dhat wil doo; we hav no time too waist,” ced mi companyon fermly. “U ar Henry Peterz, ov Adelade, late the Rev. Dr. Shlescinger, ov Baaden and South Amerricaa. I am az shure ov dhat az dhat mi one name iz Sherloc Hoamz.”

Peterz, az I wil nou caul him, started and staerd hard at hiz formiddabel pershuwer. “I ghes yor name duz not friten me, Mr. Hoamz,” ced he cooly. “When a manz conshens iz esy u caant rattel him. Whaut iz yor biznes in mi hous?”

“I waunt too no whaut u hav dun withe the Lady Fraances Carfax, whoome u braut awa withe u from Baaden.”

“Ide be verry glad if u cood tel me whare dhat lady ma be,” Peterz aancerd cooly. “Ive a bil against her for neerly a hundred poundz, and nuthhing too sho for it but a cuppel ov trumpery pendants dhat the deler wood hardly looc at. She atacht hercelf too Mrs. Peterz and me at Baaden—it iz a fact dhat I wauz using anuther name at the time—and she stuc on too us until we came too Lundon. I pade her bil and her ticket. Wuns in Lundon, she gave us the slip, and, az I sa, left these out-ov-date juwelz too pa her bilz. U fiand her, Mr. Hoamz, and Ime yor dettor.”

“I *mene* too fiand her,” ced Sherloc Hoamz. “Ime gowing throo this hous til I doo fiand her.”

“Whare iz yor worant?”

Hoamz haaf dru a revolver from hiz pocket. “This wil hav too cerv til a better wun cumz.”

“Whi, yor a common berglar.”

“So u mite describe me,” ced Hoamz cheerfooly. “Mi companyon iz aulso a dain’gerous ruffeyan. And tooghether we ar gowing throo yor hous.”

Our oponent opend the doer.

“Fech a poleesman, Anny!” ced he. Dhare wauz a whisc ov femminine skerts down the passage, and the haul doer wauz opend and shut.

“Our time iz limmited, Wautson,” ced Hoamz. “If u tri too stop us, Peterz, u wil moast certainly ghet hert. Whare iz dhat coffin which wauz braut intoo yor hous?”

“Whaut doo u waunt withe the coffin? It iz in uce. Dhare iz a boddy in it.”

“I must ce the boddy.”

“Nevver withe mi concent.”

“Then widhout it.” Withe a qwic muivment Hoamz poosht the fello too wun cide and paast intoo the haul. A doer haaf opend stood imejaitly befoer us. We enterd. It wauz the dining-roome. On the tabel, under a haaf-lit chandleyer, the coffin wauz liying. Hoamz ternd up the gas and raizd the lid. Depe down in the rececez ov the coffin la an emaishated figgure. The glare from the liats abuv bete down uppon an aijd and witherd face. Bi no poscibel proces ov cruwelty, starvaishon,

or disese cood this woern-out rec be the stil butifool Lady Fraances. Hoamsez face shode hiz amaizment, and aulso hiz relefe.

“Thanc God!” he mutterd. “Its sumwun els.”

“Aa, uve blunderd badly for wuns, Mr. Sherloc Hoamz,” ced Peterz, whoo had follode us intoo the roome.

“Whoo iz the ded woomman?”

“Wel, if u reyaly must no, she iz an oald ners ov mi wiafs, Rose Spender bi name, whoome we found in the Brixton Werc’haus Infermary.

We

braut her round here, cauld in Dr. Horsom, ov 13, Ferbanc Villaaz—miand u take the adres, Mr. Hoamz—and had her caerfooly tended, az Crischan foke shood. On the thherd da she dide—certifficate cez cenile deca—but dhats oonly the doctorz opinyon, and ov coers u no better. We orderd her funeral too be carrede out bi Stimson and Co., ov the Kennington Rode, whoo wil berry her at ate oacloc too-moro morning. Can u pic enny hole in dhat, Mr. Hoamz? Uve made a cilly blunder, and u ma az wel one up too it. Ide ghiv sumthhing for a fotograaf ov yor gaping, staring face when u poold acide dhat lid expecting too ce the Lady Fraances Carfax and oonly found a poor oald woomman ov nianty.”

Hoamsez expreshon wauz az impascive az evver under the geerz ov hiz antagonist, but hiz clencht handz betrade hiz acute anoiyans.

“I am gowing throo yor hous,” ced he.

“Ar u, dho!” cride Peterz az a woommanz vois and hevvy steps sounded in the passage. “Wele soone ce about dhat. This wa, officerz, if u plese. These men hav foerst dhare wa intoo mi hous, and I canot ghet rid ov them. Help me too poot them out.”

A sarjant and a cunstabel stood in the doerwa. Hoamz dru hiz card from hiz cace.

“This iz mi name and adres. This iz mi frend, Dr. Wautson.”

“Bles u, cer, we no u verry wel,” ced the sarjant, “but u caant sta here widhout a worant.”

“Ov coers not. I qwite understand dhat.”

“Arest him!” cride Peterz.

“We no whare too la our handz on this gentelman if he iz waunted,” ced the sarjant magesticaly, “but ule hav too go, Mr. Hoamz.”

“Yes, Wautson, we shal hav too go.”

A minnute later we wer in the strete wuns moer. Hoamz wauz az coole az evver, but I wauz hot withe an’gher and humileyaishon. The sarjant had follode us.

“Sory, Mr. Hoamz, but dhats the lau.”

“Exactly, Sarjant, u cood not doo utherwise.”

“I expect dhare wauz good rezon for yor prezsens dhare. If dhare iz ennithhing I can doo—”

“Its a miscing lady, Sarjant, and we thhinc she iz in dhat hous. I expect a worant prezsently.”

“Then Ile kepe mi i on the partese, Mr. Hoamz. If ennithhing cumz along, I wil shuerly let u no.”

It wauz oonly nine oacloc, and we wer of fool cri uppon the trale at wuns. Ferst we drove too Brixton Werc'hous Infermary, whare we found dhat it wauz indede the trueth dhat a charritabel cuppel had cauld sum dase befoer, dhat dha had claimd an imbecele oald woomman az a former cervant, and dhat dha had obtaind permishon too take her awa withe them. No cerprise wauz exprest at the nuse dhat she had cins dide.

The doctor wauz our next gole. He had bene cauld in, had found the woomman diyng ov pure cenillity, had acchuwaly cene her paas awa, and had ciand the certifficate in ju form. "I ashure u dhat evverithhing wauz perfectly normal and dhare wauz no roome for foul pla in the matter," ced he. Nuthhing in the hous had struc him az suspishous save dhat for pepel ov dhare claas it wauz remarcabel dhat dha shood hav no cervant. So far and no ferther went the doctor.

Finaly we found our wa too Scotland Yard. Dhare had bene difficultese ov procejure in regard too the worant. Sum dela wauz inevvitabel. The madgistraits cignachure mite not be obtaind until next morning. If Hoamz wood caul about nine he cood go down withe Lestrade and ce it acted uppon. So ended the da, save dhat nere midnite our frend, the sarjant, cauld too sa dhat he had cene flickering liats here and dhare in the windose ov the grate darc hous, but dhat no wun had left it and nun had enterd. We cood but pra for paishens and wate for the moro.

Sherloc Hoamz wauz too irritabel for conversaishon and too restles for slepe. I left him smoking hard, withe hiz hevvy, darc brouz notted tooghether, and hiz long, nervous fin'gherz tapping uppon the armz ov hiz chare, az he ternd over in hiz miand evvery poscibel solueshon ov the mistery. Cevveral tiamz in the coers ov the nite I herd him prouling about the hous. Finaly, just aafter I had bene cauld in the morning, he rusht intoo mi roome. He wauz in hiz drescing-goun, but hiz pale,

hollo-ide face toald me dhat hiz nite had bene a sleeples wun.

“Whaut time wauz the funeral? Ate, wauz it not?” he aasct egherly.
“Wel, it iz 7:20 nou. Good hevvenz, Wautson, whaut haz becum ov enny brainz dhat God haz ghivven me? Qwic, man, qwic! Its life or deth—a hundred chaancez on deth too wun on life. Ile nevver forghiv micelf, nevver, if we ar too late!”

Five minnuets had not paast befoer we wer fliying in a hansom doun Baker Strete. But even so it wauz twenty-five too ate az we paast Big Ben, and ate struc az we toer doun the Brixton Rode. But utherz wer late az wel az we. Ten minnuets aafter the our the hers wauz stil standing at the doer ov the hous, and even az our foming hors came too a halt the coffin, supoerted bi thre men, apeerd on the threshoald. Hoamz darted forword and bard dhare wa.

“Take it bac!” he cride, laying hiz hand on the brest ov the foermoast. “Take it bac this instant!”

“Whaut the devvil doo u mene? Wuns agane I aasc u, whare iz yor worant?” shouted the fureyous Peterz, hiz big red face glaring over the farther end ov the coffin.

“The worant iz on its wa. The coffin shal remane in the hous until it cumz.”

The authority in Hoamsez vois had its efect uppon the barerz. Peterz had suddenly vannisht intoo the hous, and dha obade these nu orderz. “Qwic, Wautson, qwic! Here iz a scru-driver!” he shouted az the coffin wauz replaist uppon the tabel. “Heerz wun for u, mi man! A soverane if the lid cumz of in a minnute! Aasc no qweschonz—werc awa! Dhats good! Anuther! And anuther! Nou pool aul tooggether! Its ghivving! Its ghivving! Aa, dhat duz it at laast.”

Withe a united effort we toer of the coffin-lid. Az we did so dhare came from the incide a schupefying and overpouwering smel ov cloroform.

A boddy la within, its hed aul reedhd in cotton-wool, which had bene soact in the narcottic. Hoamz pluct it of and discloazd the statchuwesc face ov a handsum and spirrichuwal woomman ov middel age. In an instant he had paast hiz arm round the figgure and raizd her too a citting posishon.

“Iz she gon, Wautson? Iz dhare a sparc left? Shuerly we ar not too late!”

For haaf an our it ceemd dhat we wer. Whaut withe acchuwal suffocaishon, and whaut withe the poizonous fuemz ov the cloroform, the Lady Fraances ceemd too hav paast the laast point ov recaul. And then, at laast, withe artifishal respiraishon, withe in’gected eethher, and withe evvery device dhat

ciyens cood sugest, sum flutter ov life, sum qwivver ov the ilidz, sum dimming ov a mirror, spoke ov the sloly reterning life.

A cab had drivven up, and Hoamz, parting the bliand, looct out at it.

“Here iz Lestrade withe hiz worant,” ced he. “He wil fiand dhat hiz berdz hav flone. And here,” he added az a hevvy step hurrede along the passage, “iz sumwun whoo haz a better rite too ners this lady dhan we hav. Good morning, Mr. Grene; I thhinc dhat the sooner we can moove the Lady Fraances the better. Meenwhile, the funeral ma procede, and the poor oald woomman whoo stil lise in dhat coffin ma go too her laast resting-place alone.”

“Shood u care too ad the cace too yor annalz, mi dere Wautson,” ced Hoamz dhat evening, “it can oanly be az an exaampel ov dhat temporary eclips too which even the best-ballanst miand ma be expoazd. Such slips ar common too aul mortalz, and the gratest iz he whoo can reccognise and repare them. Too this moddifide credit I ma, perhaps, make sum clame.

Mi nite wauz haunted bi the thaut dhat sumwhare a clu, a strainj centens, a cureyous observaishon, had cum under mi notice and had bene too esily dismist. Then, suddenly, in the gra ov the morning, the werdz came bac too me. It wauz the remarc ov the undertakerz wife, az repoerted bi Phillip Grene. She had ced, 'It shood be dhare befoer nou. It tooc lon'gher, beying out ov the ordinary.' It wauz the coffin ov which she spoke. It had bene out ov the ordinary. Dhat cood oanly mene dhat it had bene made too sum speshal mezhuerment. But whi? Whi? Then in an instant I rememberd the depe ciadz, and the littel waisted figgure at the bottom. Whi so larj a coffin for so smaul a boddy? Too leve roome for anuther boddy. Boath wood be berrede under the wun certifficate. It had aul bene so clere, if oanly mi one cite had not bene dimd. At ate the Lady Fraances wood be berrede. Our wun chaans wauz too stop the coffin befoer it left the hous.

"It wauz a desperate chaans dhat we mite fiand her alive, but it *wauz* a chaans, az the rezult shode. These pepel had nevver, too mi nollej, dun a merder. Dha mite shrinc from acchuwal viyolens at the laast. The cood berry her withe no cine ov hou she met her end, and even if she wer exhuemd dhare wauz a chaans for them. I hoapt dhat such concideraishonz mite prevale withe them. U can reconstruct the cene wel enuf. U sau the horibel den upstaerz, whare the poor lady had bene kept so long. Dha rusht in and overpouwerd her withe dhare cloroform, carrede her down, poerd moer intoo the coffin too inshure against her waking, and then scrude doun the lid. A clevver device, Wautson. It iz nu too me in the annalz ov crime. If our ex-mishonary frendz escape the clutchez ov Lestrade, I shal expect too here ov sum brilleyant incidents in dhare fuchure carere."

The Advenchure ov the Dying Detective

Mrs. Hudson, the landlady ov Sherloc Hoamz, wauz a long-suffering

woomman. Not oonly wauz her ferst-floer flat invaded at aul ourz bi throngz ov cin'gular and often undesirabel carracterz but her remarcabel lodger shode an exentricity and iregularrrity in hiz life which must hav soerly tride her paishens. Hiz increddibel untidines, hiz adicshon too music at strainj ourz, hiz ocaizhonal revolver practice within doerz, hiz weed and often maloddorous ciyentiffic experriments, and the atmosfere ov viyolens and dain'ger which hung around him made him the verry werst tennant in Lundon. On the uther hand, hiz paments wer prinsly. I hav no dout dhat the hous mite hav bene perchaist at the price which Hoamz pade for hiz ruimz juring the yeez dhat I wauz withe him.

The landlady stood in the depest au ov him and nevvver daerd too interfere withe him, houwevver outrageous hiz proceedingz mite ceme. She wauz fond ov him, too, for he had a remarcabel gentelnes and kertecy in hiz delingz withe wimmen. He disliact and distrusted the cex, but he wauz aulwase a shivvalrous oponent. Nowing hou genuwine wauz her regard for him, I liscend earnestly too her stoery when she came too mi ruimz in the cecond yere ov mi marrede life and toald me ov the sad condishon too which mi poor frend wauz rejuest.

"Hese diying, Dr. Wautson," ced she. "For thre dase he haz bene cinking, and I dout if he wil laast the da. He wood not let me ghet a doctor. This morning when I sau hiz boanz sticking out ov hiz face and hiz grate brite ise loocking at me I cood stand no moer ov it. 'Withe yor leve or widhout it, Mr. Hoamz, I am gowing for a doctor this verry our,' ced I. 'Let it be Wautson, then,' ced he. I woodnt waist an our in cumming too him, cer, or u ma not ce him alive."

I wauz horifide for I had herd nuthhing ov hiz ilnes. I nede not sa dhat I rusht for mi cote and mi hat. Az we drove bac I aasct for the detailz.

“Dhare iz littel I can tel u, cer. He haz bene werking at a cace doun at Rotherhiathe, in an ally nere the rivver, and he haz braut this ilnes bac withe him. He tooc too hiz bed on Wednzda aafternoone and haz nevver muivd cins. For these thre dase niather foode nor drinc haz paast hiz lips.”

“Good God! Whi did u not caul in a doctor?”

“He woodnt hav it, cer. U no hou maasterfool he iz. I didnt dare too disoba him. But hese not long for this werld, az ule ce for yorcelf the moment dhat u cet ise on him.”

He wauz indede a deplorabel spektakel. In the dim lite ov a fogghy November da the cic roome wauz a gloomy spot, but it wauz dhat gaunt, waisted face staring at me from the bed which cent a chil too mi hart. Hiz ise had the briatnes ov fever, dhare wauz a hectic flush uppon iather cheke, and darc crusts clung too hiz lips; the thhin handz uppon the cuvverlet twicht incessantly, hiz vois wauz croking and spazmoddic. He la listlesly az I enterd the roome, but the cite ov me braut a gleme ov recognishon too hiz ise.

“Wel, Wautson, we ceme too hav faulen uppon evil dase,” ced he in a febel vois, but withe sumthhing ov hiz oald caerlesnes ov manner.

“Mi dere fello!” I cride, aproching him.

“Stand bac! Stand rite bac!” ced he withe the sharp impereyousnes which I had asoasheyated oanly withe moments ov cricis. “If u aproche me, Wautson, I shal order u out ov the hous.”

“But whi?”

“Becauz it iz mi desire. Iz dhat not enuf?”

Yes, Mrs. Hudson wauz rite. He wauz moer maasterfool dhan evver. It wauz pittifool, houwevver, too ce hiz exauschon.

“I oanly wisht too help,” I explaind.

“Exactly! U wil help best bi doowing whaut u ar toald.”

“Certainly, Hoamz.”

He relaxt the austerrity ov hiz manner.

“U ar not an’gry?” he aasct, gaasping for breth.

Poor devvil, hou cood I be an’gry when I sau him liying in such a plite befoer me?

“Its for yor one sake, Wautson,” he croact.

“For *mi* sake?”

“I no whaut iz the matter withe me. It iz a cooly disese from Sumaatraa—a thhing dhat the Duch no moer about dhan we, dho dha hav made littel ov it up too date. Wun thhing oanly iz certane. It iz infallibly dedly, and it iz horibly contajous.”

He spoke nou withe a feverish ennergy, the long handz twitching and gerking az he moashond me awa.

“Contajous bi tuch, Wautson—dhats it, bi tuch. Kepe yor distans and aul iz wel.”

“Good hevvenz, Hoamz! Doo u supose dhat such a concideraishon wase

withe me ov an instant? It wood not afect me in the cace ov a strain'ger. Doo u imadgine it wood prevent me from doowing mi juty too so oald a frend?"

Agane I advaanst, but he repulst me withe a looc ov fureyous an'gher.

"If u wil stand dhare I wil tauc. If u doo not u must leve the roome."

I hav so depe a respect for the extrordinary qwaulitese ov Hoamz dhat I hav aulwase deferd too hiz wishez, even when I leest understood them. But nou aul mi profeshonal instincts wer arouzd. Let him be mi maaster elshware, I at leest wauz hiz in a cic roome.

"Hoamz," ced I, "u ar not yorcelf. A cic man iz but a chiald, and so I wil trete u. Whether u like it or not, I wil exammine yor cimptomz and trete u for them."

He looct at me withe venomous ise.

"If I am too hav a doctor whether I wil or not, let me at leest hav sumwun in whoome I hav confidens," ced he.

"Then u hav nun in me?"

"In yor frendship, certainly. But facts ar facts, Wautson, and, aafter aul, u ar oonly a genneral practishoner withe verry limmited expereyens and medeyoker qwaulificaishonz. It iz painfool too hav too sa these thhingz, but u leve me no chois."

I wauz bitterly hert.

“Such a remarc iz unwerthy ov u, Hoamz. It shose me verry cleerly the state ov yor one nervz. But if u hav no confidens in me I wood not intrude mi cervicez. Let me bring Cer Jasper Meke or Penrose Fisher, or enny ov the best men in Lundon. But sumwun u *must* hav, and dhat iz final. If u thhinc dhat I am gowing too stand here and ce u di widhout iather helping u micelf or bringing enniwun els too help u, then u hav mistaken yor man.”

“U mene wel, Wautson,” ced the cic man withe sumthhing betwene a sob and a grone. “Shal I demmonstrate yor one ignorans? Whaut doo u no, pra, ov Tapanuly fever? Whaut doo u no ov the blac Formosaa corrupshon?”

“I hav nevver herd ov iather.”

“Dhare ar menny problemz ov diseze, menny strainj pathological pocibillitese, in the Eest, Wautson.” He pauzd aafter eche centens too colect hiz faling strength. “I hav lernd so much juring sum recent recerchez which hav a medico-crimminal aspect. It wauz in the coers ov them dhat I contracted this complaint. U can doo nuthhing.”

“Poscibly not. But I happen too no dhat Dr. Ainstry, the gratest livving authority uppon troppical diseze, iz nou in Lundon. Aul remonstrans iz uesles, Hoamz, I am gowing this instant too fech him.” I ternd rezzoluetly too the doer.

Nevver hav I had such a shoc! In an instant, withe a tigher-spring, the diyng man had intercepted me. I herd the sharp snap ov a twisted ke. The next moment he had staggherd bac too hiz bed, exausted and panting aafter hiz wun tremendous outflame ov ennergy.

“U woant take the ke from me bi foers, Wautson, Ive got u, mi friend. Here u ar, and here u wil sta until I wil urtherwise.

But Ile humor u." (Aul this in littel gaasps, withe terribel strugghelz for breth betwene.) "Uve oanly mi one good at hart. Ov coers I no dhat verry wel. U shal hav yor wa, but ghiv me time too ghet mi strength. Not nou, Wautson, not nou. Its foer oacloc. At cix u can go."

"This iz insannity, Hoamz."

"Oanly too ourz, Wautson. I prommice u wil go at cix. Ar u content too wate?"

"I ceme too hav no chois."

"Nun in the werld, Wautson. Thanc u, I nede no help in arain'ging the cloadhz. U wil plese kepe yor distans. Nou, Wautson, dhare iz wun uther condishon dhat I wood make. U wil ceke help, not from the man u menshon, but from the wun dhat I chuse."

"Bi aul meenz."

"The ferst thre cencibel werdz dhat u hav utterd cins u enterd this roome, Wautson. U wil fiand sum boox over dhare. I am sumwhaut exhausted; I wunder hou a battery feelz when it poerz electriscity intoo a non-conductor? At cix, Wautson, we rezhume our conversaishon."

But it wauz destiand too be rezhuemd long befoer dhat our, and in cercumstaancez which gave me a shoc hardly cecond too dhat cauzd bi hiz spring too the doer. I had stood for sum minnuets loocking at the cilent figgure in the bed. Hiz face wauz aulmoast cuvverd bi the cloadhz and he apeerd too be aslepe. Then, unnabel too cettel down too reding, I wauct sloly round the roome, exammining the picchuerz ov cellebrated crimminalz withe which evvery waul wauz adornd. Finaly, in mi aimles

perambulaishon, I came too the mantelpece. A litter ov piaps, tobacco-pouchez, cirin'gez, pen'niavz, revolver-cartrigez, and uther *daibry* wauz scatterd over it. In the midst ov these wauz a smaull blac and white ivory box withe a sliding lid. It wauz a nete littel thhing, and I had strecht out mi hand too exammine it moer cloasly, when——

It wauz a dredfool cri dhat he gave—a yel which mite hav bene herd doun the strete. Mi skin went coald and mi hare brisceld at dhat horibel screme. Az I ternd I caut a glimps ov a convulst face and frantic ise. I stood parraliazd, withe the littel box in mi hand.

“Poot it doun! Doun, this instant, Wautson—this instant, I sa!” Hiz hed sanc bac uppon the pillo and he gave a depe ci ov relefe az I replaist the box uppon the mantelpece. “I hate too hav mi thhingz tucht, Wautson. U no dhat I hate it. U fidget me beyond enjurans. U, a doctor—u ar enuf too drive a paishent intoo an acilum. Cit doun, man, and let me hav mi rest!”

The incident left a moast unplezzant impreshon uppon mi miand. The viyolent and cauzles exiatment, follode bi this brutallity ov speche, so far remuivd from hiz uezhuwal swaavity, shode me hou depe wauz the disorganizaishon ov hiz miand. Ov aul ruwinz, dhat ov a nobel miand iz the moast deplorabel. I sat in cilent degecshon until the stippulated time had paast. He ceemd too hav bene wauching the cloc az wel az I, for it wauz hardly cix befoer he began too tauc withe the same feverish animaishon az befoer.

“Nou, Wautson,” ced he. “Hav u enny chainj in yor pocket?”

“Yes.”

“Enny silver?”

"A good dele."

"Hou menny haaf-crounz?"

"I hav five."

"Aa, too fu! Too fu! Hou verry unforchunate, Wautson! Houwevver, such
az
dha ar u can poot them in yor wauchpocket. And aul the rest ov yor
munny in yor left trouser pocket. Thanc u. It wil ballans u so
much better like dhat."

This wauz raving insannity. He shudderd, and agane made a sound
betwene
a cof and a sob.

"U wil nou lite the gas, Wautson, but u wil be verry caerfool dhat
not for wun instant shal it be moer dhan haaf on. I imploer u too be
caerfool, Wautson. Thanc u, dhat iz exelent. No, u nede not drau
the bliand. Nou u wil hav the kiandnes too place sum letterz and
paperz uppon this tabel within mi reche. Thanc u. Nou sum ov dhat
litter from the mantelpece. Exelent, Wautson! Dhare iz a shooggar-tongz
dhare. Kiandly rase dhat smaul ivory box withe its acistans. Place it
here amung the paperz. Good! U can nou go and fech Mr. Culverton
Smith, ov 13, Lower Berc Strete."

Too tel the trueth, mi desire too fech a doctor had sumwhaut wekend,
for poor Hoamz wauz so obveyously delereyous dhat it ceemd dain'gerous
too
leve him. Houwevver, he wauz az egher nou too consult the person naimd
az
he had bene obstinate in refusing.

"I nevvver herd the name," ced I.

"Poscibly not, mi good Wautson. It ma cerprise u too no dhat the man uppon erth whoo iz best verst in this disese iz not a meddical man, but a plaanter. Mr. Culverton Smith iz a wel-none rezident ov Sumaatraa, nou vizsiting Lundon. An outbrake ov the disese uppon hiz plaantaishon, which wauz distant from meddical ade, cauzd him too studdy it himcelf, withe sum raather far-reching conceqvencez. He iz a verry methoddical person, and I did not desire u too start befoer cix, becauz I wauz wel aware dhat u wood not fiand him in hiz studdy. If u cood perswade him too cum here and ghiv us the bennefit ov hiz uneke expereyens ov this disese, the investigaishon ov which haz bene hiz derest hobby, I canot dout dhat he cood help me."

I gave Hoamsez remarx az a conceccutive whole and wil not atempt too indicate hou dha wer interrupted bi gaaspingz for breth and dhose clutchingz ov hiz handz which indicated the pane from which he wauz suffering. Hiz aperans had chainjd for the wers juring the fu ourz dhat I had bene withe him. Dhose hectic spots wer moer pronounst, the ise shon moer briatly out ov darker hollose, and a coald swet glimmerd uppon hiz brou. He stil retaind, houwevver, the jaunty gallantry ov hiz speche. Too the laast gaasp he wood aulwase be the maaster.

"U wil tel him exactly hou u hav left me," ced he. "U wil conva the verry impreshon which iz in yor one miand—a dying man—a dying and delereyous man. Indede, I canot thhinc whi the whole bed ov the oashan iz not wun sollid mas ov oisterz, so proliffic the crechuerz ceme. Aa, I am waundering! Strainj hou the brane controalz the brane! Whaut wauz I saying, Wautson?"

"Mi direcshonz for Mr. Culverton Smith."

“Aa, yes, I remember. Mi life dependz uppon it. Plede withe him, Wautson. Dhare iz no good feling betwene us. Hiz neffu, Wautson—I had suspishonz ov foul pla and I aloud him too ce it. The boi dide horibly. He haz a gruj against me. U wil soften him, Wautson. Beg him, pra him, ghet him here bi enny meenz. He can save me—oonly he!”

“I wil bring him in a cab, if I hav too carry him doun too it.”

“U wil doo nuthhing ov the sort. U wil perswade him too cum. And then u wil retern in frunt ov him. Make enny excuce so az not too cum withe him. Doant forghet, Wautson. U woant fale me. U nevver did fale me. No dout dhare ar natchural ennemese which limmit the increce ov the crechuerz. U and I, Wautson, we hav dun our part. Shal the werld, then, be overrun bi oisterz? No, no; horibel! Ule conva aul dhat iz in yor miand.”

I left him fool ov the immagine ov this magnificent intelect babling like a foolish chiald. He had handed me the ke, and withe a happy thaut I tooc it withe me lest he shood loc himcelf in. Mrs. Hudson wauz wating, trembling and weping, in the passage. Behiand me az I paast from the flat I herd Hoamsez hi, thhin vois in sum delereyous chaant. Belo, az I stood whisling for a cab, a man came on me throo the fog.

“Hou iz Mr. Hoamz, cer?” he aasct.

It wauz an oald aqwaintans, Inspector Morton, ov Scotland Yard, drest in unnofishal tweedz.

“He iz verry il,” I aancerd.

He looct at me in a moast cin’gular fashon. Had it not bene too feendish, I cood hav imadgiand dhat the gleme ov the fanlite shode

exultaishon in hiz face.

“I herd sum rumor ov it,” ced he.

The cab had drivven up, and I left him.

Lower Berc Strete pruivd too be a line ov fine housez liying in the vaghe borderland betwene Notting Hil and Kensington. The particcular wun at which mi cabman poold up had an are ov smug and demure respectabillity in its oald-fashond iarn ralingz, its mascive foalding-doer, and its shining braaswerc. Aul wauz in keping withe a sollem butler whoo apeerd fraimd in the pinc rajans ov a tinted electrical lite behiand him.

“Yes, Mr. Culverton Smith iz in. Dr. Wautson! Verry good, cer, I wil take up yor card.”

Mi humbel name and titel did not apere too impres Mr. Culverton Smith. Throo the haaf-open doer I herd a hi, petchulant, pennetrating vois.

“Whoo iz this person? Whaut duz he waunt? Dere me, Stapelz, hou often hav I ced dhat I am not too be disterbd in mi ourz ov studdy?”

Dhare came a gentel flo ov suithing explanaishon from the butler.

“Wel, I woant ce him, Stapelz. I caant hav mi werc interupted like this. I am not at home. Sa so. Tel him too cum in the morning if he reyaly must ce me.”

Agane the gentel mermer.

“Wel, wel, ghiv him dhat message. He can cum in the morning, or he can sta awa. Mi werc must not be hinderd.”

I thaut ov Hoamz toscing upon hiz bed ov cicnes and counting the minnuets, perhaps, until I cood bring help too him. It wauz not a time too stand upon cerremony. Hiz life depended upon mi promptnes. Befoer the apologetic butler had delivverd hiz message I had poosht paast him and wauz in the roome.

Withe a shril cri ov an'gher a man rose from a reclining chare beside the fire. I sau a grate yello face, coers-graind and greycy, withe hevvy, dubbel-chin, and too sullen, mennacing gra ise which glaerd at me from under tufted and sandy brouz. A hi bauld hed had a smaul velvet smoking-cap poizd cokettishly upon wun cide ov its pinc kerv. The scul wauz ov enormous capascity, and yet az I looct doun I sau too mi amaizment dhat the figgure ov the man wauz smaul and frale, twisted in the shoalderz and bac like wun whoo haz sufferd from rickets in hiz chiald'hood.

"Whauts this?" he cride in a hi, screming vois. "Whaut iz the mening ov this intruezhon? Didnt I cend u werd dhat I wood ce u too-moro morning?"

"I am sorry," ced I, "but the matter cannot be delade. Mr. Sherloc Hoamz—"

The menshon ov mi frendz name had an extrordinary efect upon the littel man. The looc ov an'gher paast in an instant from hiz face. Hiz fechuerz became tens and alert.

"Hav u cum from Hoamz?" he aasct.

"I hav just left him."

"Whaut about Hoamz? Hou iz he?"

“He iz desperaitly il. Dhat iz whi I hav cum.”

The man moashond me too a chare, and ternd too rezhume hiz one. Az he did

so I caut a glimps ov hiz face in the mirror over the mantelpece. I cood hav swoern dhat it wauz cet in a malishous and abomminabel smile. Yet I perswaded micelf dhat it must hav bene sum nervous contracshon which I had cerpriazd, for he ternd too me an instant later withe genuwine concern uppon hiz fechuerz.

“I am sory too here this,” ced he. “I oanly no Mr. Hoamz throo sum biznes delingz which we hav had, but I hav evvery respect for hiz tallents and hiz carracter. He iz an ammater ov crime, az I am ov disese. For him the villane, for me the miacrobe. Dhare ar mi prizzonz,” he continnude, pointing too a ro ov bottelz and jarz which stood uppon a cide tabel. “Amung dhose gellatine cultivaishonz sum ov the verry werst ofenderz in the werld ar nou doowing time.”

“It wauz on acount ov yor speshal nollej dhat Mr. Hoamz desiard too ce u. He haz a hi opinyon ov u and thaut dhat u wer the wun man in Lundon whoo cood help him.”

The littel man started, and the jaunty smoking-cap slid too the floer.

“Whi?” he aasct. “Whi shood Mr. Hoamz thhinc dhat I cood help him in hiz trubbel?”

“Becauz ov yor nollej ov Eestern disesez.”

“But whi shood he thhinc dhat this disese which he haz contracted iz Eestern?”

“Becauz, in sum profeshonal inqwiry, he haz bene werking amung

Chinese salorz doun in the dox."

Mr. Culverton Smith smiald plezzantly and pict up hiz smoking-cap.

"O, dhats it—iz it?" ced he. "I trust the matter iz not so grave az u supose. Hou long haz he bene il?"

"About thre dase."

"Iz he delereyous?"

"Ocaizhonal."

"Tut, tut! This soundz cereyous. It wood be inhuman not too aancer hiz caul. I verry much resent enny interupshon too mi werc, Dr. Wautson, but this cace iz certainly exepshonal. I wil cum withe u at wuns."

I rememberd Hoamsez injuncshon.

"I hav anuther apointment," ced I.

"Verry good. I wil go alone. I hav a note ov Mr. Hoamsez adres. U can reli uppon mi beying dhare within haaf an our at moast."

It wauz withe a cinking hart dhat I reyenterd Hoamsez bedroome. For aul dhat I nu the werst mite hav happend in mi abcens. Too mi enormous relefe, he had impruivd graitley in the interval. Hiz aperans wauz az gaastly az evver, but aul trace ov delereyum had left him and he spoke in a febel vois, it iz tru, but withe even moer dhan hiz uezhuwal crispnes and luciddity.

"Wel, did u ce him, Wautson?"

"Yes; he iz cumming."

“Admirabel, Wautson! Admirabel! U ar the best ov mescen’gerz.”

“He wisht too retern withe me.”

“Dhat wood nevver doo, Wautson. Dhat wood be obveyously imoscibel. Did he aasc whaut aild me?”

“I toald him about the Chinese in the Eest End.”

“Exactly! Wel, Wautson, u hav dun aul dhat a good frend cood. U can nou disapere from the cene.”

“I must wate and here hiz opinyon, Hoamz.”

“Ov coers u must. But I hav rezonz too suppose dhat this opinyon wood be verry much moer franc and vallubel if he imadgiansz dhat we ar alone. Dhare iz just roome behiand the hed ov mi bed, Wautson.”

“Mi dere Hoamz!”

“I fere dhare iz no aulternative, Wautson. The roome duz not lend itcelf too conceelment, which iz az wel, az it iz the les liacly too arouz suspishon. But just dhare, Wautson, I fancy dhat it cood be dun.”

Suddenly he sat up withe a ridgid intentnes uppon hiz haggard face.

“Dhare ar the wheelz, Wautson. Qwic, man, if u luv me! And doant buj, whautevver happenz—whautevver happenz, doo u here? Doant speke!

Doant moove! Just liscen withe aul yor eerz.” Then in an instant hiz sudden axes ov strength departed, and hiz maasterfool, perpoasfool tauc droand awa intoo the lo, vaghe mermeringz ov a cemmy-delereyous man.

From the hiding-place intoo which I had bene so swiftly husceld I herd

the footfaulz uppon the stare, withe the opening and the closing ov the bedroome doer. Then, too mi cerprise, dhare came a long cilens, broken oonly bi the hevvy breethingz and gaaspingz ov the cic man. I cood imadgine dhat our vizsitor wauz standing bi the bedcide and loocking doun at the sufferer. At laast dhat strainj hush wauz broken.

“Hoamz!” he cride. “Hoamz!” in the incistent tone ov wun whoo awakenz a sleper. “Caant u here me, Hoamz?” Dhare wauz a rusling, az if he had shaken the cic man rufly bi the shoalder.

“Iz dhat u, Mr. Smith?” Hoamz whisperd. “I hardly daerd hope dhat u wood cum.”

The uther laaft.

“I shood imadgine not,” he ced. “And yet, u ce, I am here. Coalz ov fire, Hoamz—coalz ov fire!”

“It iz verry good ov u—verry nobel ov u. I apreesheyate yor speshal nollej.”

Our vizsitor sniggherd.

“U doo. U ar, forchunaitly, the oonly man in Lundon whoo duz. Doo u no whaut iz the matter withe u?”

“The same,” ced Hoamz.

“Aa! U reccognise the cimptomz?”

“Oonly too wel.”

“Wel, I shoodnt be cerpriazd, Hoamz. I shoodnt be cerpriazd if it

wer the same. A bad loocout for u if it iz. Poor Victor wauz a ded man on the foerth da—a strong, harty yung fello. It wauz certainly, az u ced, verry cerprising dhat he shood hav contracted an out-ov-the-wa Aizhatic disese in the hart ov Lundon—a disese, too, ov which I had made such a verry speshal studdy. Cin'gular cowincidens, Hoamz. Verry smart ov u too notice it, but raather uncharritabel too sugest dhat it wauz cauz and efect.”

“I nu dhat u did it.”

“O, u did, did u? Wel, u coodnt proove it, ennihou. But whaut doo u thhinc ov yorcelf spredding repoerts about me like dhat, and then crauling too me for help the moment u ar in trubbel? Whaut sort ov a game iz dhat—a?”

I herd the raasping, labord breething ov the cic man. “Ghiv me the wauter!” he gaaspt.

“Yor preshous nere yor end, mi frend, but I doant waunt u too go til I hav had a werd withe u. Dhats whi I ghiv u wauter. Dhare, doant slop it about! Dhats rite. Can u understand whaut I sa?”

Hoamz groand.

“Doo whaut u can for me. Let bigonz be bigonz,” he whisperd. “Ile poot the werdz out ov mi hed—I sware I wil. Oanly cure me, and Ile forghet it.”

“Forghet whaut?”

“Wel, about Victor Savvagez deth. U az good az admitted just nou dhat u had dun it. Ile forghet it.”

“U can forghet it or remember it, just az u like. I doant ce u in the witnesbox. Qwite anuther shaipt box, mi good Hoamz, I ashure u. It matterz nuthhing too me dhat u shood no hou mi neffu dide. Its not him we ar tauking about. Its u.”

“Yes, yes.”

“The fello whoo came for me—Ive forgotten hiz name—ced dhat u contracted it doun in the Eest End amung the salorz.”

“I cood oanly acount for it so.”

“U ar proud ov yor brainz, Hoamz, ar u not? Thhinc yorcelf smart, doant u? U came acros sumwun whoo wauz smarter this time. Nou caast yor miand bac, Hoamz. Can u thhinc ov no uther wa u cood hav got this thhing?”

“I caant thhinc. Mi miand iz gon. For hevvenz sake help me!”

“Yes, I wil help u. Ile help u too understand just whare u ar and hou u got dhare. Ide like u too no befoer u di.”

“Ghiv me sumthhing too ese mi pane.”

“Painfool, iz it? Yes, the coolese uest too doo sum sqweling toowordz the end. Taix u az cramp, I fancy.”

“Yes, yes; it iz cramp.”

“Wel, u can here whaut I sa, ennihou. Liscen nou! Can u remember enny unnuezhuwal incident in yor life just about the time yor cimptomz began?”

“No, no; nuthhing.”

“Thhinc agane.”

“Ime too il too thhinc.”

“Wel, then, Ile help u. Did ennithing cum bi poast?”

“Bi poast?”

“A box bi chaans?”

“Ime fainting—Ime gon!”

“Liscen, Hoamz!” Dhare wauz a sound az if he wauz shaking the diying man,
and it wauz aul dhat I cood doo too hoald micelf qwiyet in mi hiding-place.
“U must here me. U *shal* here me. Doo u remember a box—an ivory box? It came on Wednzda. U opend it—doo u remember?”

“Yes, yes, I opend it. Dhare wauz a sharp spring incide it. Sum joke—”

“It wauz no joke, az u wil fiand too yor cost. U foole, u wood hav it and u hav got it. Whoo aasct u too cros mi paath? If u had left me alone I wood not hav hert u.”

“I remember,” Hoamz gaaspt. “The spring! It dru blud. This box—this on the tabel.”

“The verry wun, bi Jorj! And it ma az wel leve the roome in mi pocket. Dhare gose yor laast shred ov evvidens. But u hav the trueth nou, Hoamz, and u can di withe the nollej dhat I kild u. U nu too much ov the fate ov Victor Savvage, so I hav cent u too share it. U ar verry nere yor end, Hoamz. I wil cit here and I wil

wauch u di."

Hoamsez vois had sunc too an aulmoast inaudibel whisper.

"Whaut iz dhat?" ced Smith. "Tern up the gas? Aa, the shaddose beghin too faul, doo dha? Yes, I wil tern it up, dhat I ma ce u the better."

He crost the roome and the lite suddenly britend. "Iz dhare enny uthel littel cervice dhat I can doo u, mi frend?"

"A mach and a ciggaret."

I neerly cauld out in mi joi and mi amaizment. He wauz speking in hiz natchural vois—a littel weke, perhaps, but the verry vois I nu. Dhare wauz a long pauz, and I felt dhat Culverton Smith wauz standing in cilent amaizment loocking doun at hiz companyon.

"Whauts the mening ov this?" I herd him sa at laast in a dri, raasping tone.

"The best wa ov suxesfooly acting a part iz too be it," ced Hoamz.

"I ghiv u mi werd dhat for thre dase I hav taisted niather foode nor drinc until u wer good enuf too poer me out dhat glaas ov wauter. But it iz the tobacco which I fiand moast erxum. Aa, here *ar* sum ciggarets." I herd the striking ov a mach. "Dhat iz verry much better. Hallo! hallo! Doo I here the step ov a frend?"

Dhare wer footfaulz outside, the doer open, and Inspector Morton apeerd.

"Aul iz in order and this iz yor man," ced Hoamz.

The officer gave the uezhawal caushonz.

"I arest u on the charj ov the merder ov wun Victor Savvage," he concluded.

"And u mite ad ov the attempted merder ov wun Sherlock Hoamz," remarct mi frend withe a chuckel. "Too save an invalid trubbel, Inspector, Mr. Culverton Smith wauz good enuf too ghiv our cignal bi terning up the gas. Bi the wa, the prizzoner haz a smaul box in the rite-hand pocket ov hiz cote which it wood be az wel too remove. Thanc u. I wood handel it gin'gerly if I wer u. Poot it down here. It ma pla its part in the triyal."

Dhare wauz a sudden rush and a scuffel, follode bi the clash ov iarn and a cri ov pane.

"Ule oanly ghet yorcelf hert," ced the inspector. "Stand stil, wil u?" Dhare wauz the clic ov the closing handcufs.

"A nice trap!" cride the hi, snarling vois. "It wil bring *u* intoo the doc, Hoamz, not me. He aasct me too cum here too cure him. I wauz sory for him and I came. Nou he wil pretend, no dout, dhat I hav ced ennithing which he ma invent which wil corobborate hiz insane suspishonz. U can li az u like, Hoamz. Mi werd iz aulwase az good az yorz."

"Good hevvenz!" cride Hoamz. "I had totaly forgotten him. Mi dere Wautson, I o u a thousand apolloge. Too thinc dhat I shood hav overlooct u! I nede not introjuce u too Mr. Culverton Smith, cins I understand dhat u met sumwhaut erleyer in the evening. Hav u the cab belo? I wil follo u when I am drest, for I ma be ov sum uce at the staishon.

"I nevver neded it moer," ced Hoamz az he refresht himcelf withe a glaas ov clarret and sum biskits in the intervalz ov hiz toilet.

“Houwevver, az u no, mi habits ar iregular, and such a fete meenz les too me dhan too moast men. It wauz verry ecenshal dhat I shood impres Mrs. Hudson withe the reyallity ov mi condishon, cins she wauz too

conva it too u, and u in tern too him. U woant be ofended, Wautson? U wil reyalise dhat amung yor menny tallents dicimulaishon fiandz no place, and dhat if u had shaerd mi ceecret u wood nevver hav bene abel too impres Smith withe the ergent necescity ov hiz prezsens, which wauz the vital point ov the whole skeme. Nowing hiz vindictive nachure, I wauz perfectly certane dhat he wood cum too looc uppon hiz handiwerc.”

“But yor aperans, Hoamz—yor gaastly face?”

“Thre dase ov absolute faast duz not improove wunz buty, Wautson. For the rest, dhare iz nuthhing which a spunj ma not cure. Withe vascelene uppon wunz foerhed, beladonnaa in wunz ise, rooje over the cheke-boanz, and crusts ov beezwax round wunz lips, a verry sattisfying efect can be projuest. Malin’ghering iz a subget uppon which I hav sumtiamz thaut ov riting a monnograaf. A littel ocaizhonal tauc about haaf-crounz, oisterz, or enny uther extrainyous subget projucez a plesing efect ov delereyum.”

“But whi wood u not let me nere u, cins dhare wauz in trueth no infecshon?”

“Can u aasc, mi dere Wautson? Doo u imadgine dhat I hav no respect for yor meddical tallents? Cood I fancy dhat yor aschute jujment wood paas a dying man whoo, houwevver weke, had no rise ov puls or temperachure? At foer yardz, I cood deceve u. If I faild too doo so, whoo wood bring mi Smith within mi graasp? No, Wautson, I wood not tuch

dhat box. U can just ce if u looc at it ciadwase whare the sharp spring like a viperz tuith emergez az u open it. I dare sa it wauz

bi sum such device dhat poor Savvage, whoo stood betwene this monster and a reverzhon, wauz dun too deth. Mi corespondens, houwevver, iz, az u no, a varede wun, and I am sumwhaut uppon mi gard against enny paccagez which reche me. It wauz clere too me, houwevver, dhat bi pretending dhat he had reyaly suxeded in hiz desine I mite cerprise a confeshon. Dhat pretens I hav carrede out withe the thurrones ov the tru artist. Thanc u, Wautson, u must help me on withe mi cote. When we hav finnisht at the polece-staishon I thhinc dhat sumthhing nutrishous at Cimpsonz wood not be out ov place.”

Hiz Laast Bou: The Wor Cervice ov Sherloc Hoamz

It wauz nine oacloc at nite uppon the cecond ov August—the moast terribel August in the history ov the werld. Wun mite hav thaut aulreddy dhat Godz kers hung hevvy over a degennerate werld, for dhare wauz an ausum hush and a feling ov vaghe expectancy in the sultry and stagnant are. The sun had long cet, but wun blud-red gash like an open wuind la lo in the distant west. Abuv, the starz wer shining briatly, and belo, the liats ov the shipping glimmerd in the ba. The too famous Germanz stood becide the stone parrapet ov the garden wauc, withe the long, lo, hevvely gabeld hous behiand them, and dha looct doun uppon the braud swepe ov the beche at the foot ov the grate chauc clif in which Von Borc, like sum waundering eghel, had percht himcelf foer yeerz befoer. Dha stood withe dhare hedz cloce toogether, tauking in lo, confidenshal toanz. From belo the too glowing endz ov dhare cigarz mite hav bene the smoaldering ise ov sum malignant feend loocking doun in the darcnes.

A remarcabel man this Von Borc—a man whoo cood hardly be macht amung aul the devoted agents ov the Kiser. It wauz hiz tallents which had ferst recomended him for the In’glisch mishon, the moast important mishon ov aul, but cins he had taken it over dhose tallents had becum

moer and moer mannifest too the haaf-duzsen pepel in the werld whoo wer
realy in tuch withe the trueth. Wun ov these wauz hiz prezsent
companyon,
Barron Von Herling, the chefe cecretary ov the legaishon, whose huge
100-hors-pouwer Benz car wauz blocking the cuntry lane az it wated too
wauft its oner bac too Lunden.

“So far az I can juj the trend ov events, u wil probbably be bac
in Berlin within the weke,” the cecretary wauz saying. “When u ghet
dhare, mi dere Von Borc, I thhinc u wil be cerpriazd at the welcum
u wil receve. I happen too no whaut iz thaut in the hiyest
qworterz ov yor werc in this cuntry.” He wauz a huge man, the
cecretary, depe, braud, and taul, withe a slo, hevvy fashon ov speche
which had bene hiz mane ascet in hiz polittical carere.

Von Borc laaft.

“Dha ar not verry hard too deceve,” he remarct. “A moer docile,
cimpel foke cood not be imadgiand.”

“I doant no about dhat,” ced the uther thautfooly. “Dha hav
strainj limmits and wun must lern too observ them. It iz dhat cerface
cimpliscity ov dhaerz which maix a trap for the strain’ger. Wunz ferst
impreshon iz dhat dha ar entiarly soft. Then wun cumz suddenly uppon
sumthhing verry hard, and u no dhat u hav reecht the limmit and
must adapt yorcelf too the fact. Dha hav, for exaampel, dhare inshular
convenshonz which cimply *must* be observd.”

“Mening ‘good form’ and dhat sort ov thhing?” Von Borc cide az wun
whoo had sufferd much.

“Mening Brittish predjudice in aul its qwere manifestaishonz. Az an

exaampel I ma qwote wun ov mi one werst blunderz—I can afoerd too tauc ov mi blunderz, for u no mi werc wel enuf too be aware ov mi suxescez. It wauz on mi ferst arival. I wauz invited too a weke-end gathering at the cuntry hous ov a cabbinet minnister. The conversaishon wauz amasingly indiscrete.”

Von Borc nodded. “Ive bene dhare,” ced he drily.

“Exactly. Wel, I natchuraly cent a raizhuma ov the informaishon too Berlin. Unforchunaitly our good chaancelor iz a littel hevvy-handed in these matterz, and he traanzmitted a remarc which shode dhat he wauz aware ov whaut had bene ced. This, ov coers, tooc the trale strate up too me. Uve no ideyaa the harm dhat it did me. Dhare wauz nuthhing soft about our Brittish hoasts on dhat ocaizhon, I can ashure u. I wauz too yeerz livving it doun. Nou u, withe this spoerting pose ov yorz—”

“No, no, doant caul it a pose. A pose iz an artifishal thhing. This iz qwite natchural. I am a born spoertsman. I enjoi it.”

“Wel, dhat maix it the moer efective. U yaut against them, u hunt withe them, u pla polo, u mach them in evvery game, yor foer-in-hand taix the prise at Olimpeyaa. I hav even herd dhat u go the length ov boxing withe the yung officerz. Whaut iz the rezult? Nobody taix u cereyously. U ar a ‘good oald spoert’ ‘qwite a decent fello for a German,’ a hard-drinking, nite-club, noc-about-toun, devvil-ma-care yung fello. And aul the time this qwiyet cuntry hous ov yorz iz the center ov haaf the mischefe in In’gland, and the spoerting sqwire the moast aschute ceecret-cervice man in Urope. Geenyus, mi dere Von Borc—geenyus!”

“U flatter me, Barron. But certainly I ma clame mi foer yeerz in this cuntry hav not bene unproductive. Ive nevver shone u mi littel stoer. Wood u miand stepping in for a moment?”

The doer ov the studdy opend strate on too the terrace. Von Borc poosht it bac, and, leding the wa, he clict the swich ov the electric lite. He then cloazd the doer behiand the bulky form which follode him and caerfooly ajusted the hevvy kertane over the lattiat windo. Oanly when aul these precaushonz had bene taken and tested did he tern hiz sunbernd aqwiline face too hiz ghest.

“Sum ov mi paperz hav gon,” ced he. “When mi wife and the hous’hoald left yesterda for Flushing dha tooc the les important withe them. I must, ov coers, clame the protecshon ov the embacy for the utherz.”

“Yor name haz aulreddy bene fiald az wun ov the personal swete. Dhare wil be no difficultese for u or yor baggage. Ov coers, it iz just poscibel dhat we ma not hav too go. In’gland ma leve Fraans too her fate. We ar shure dhat dhare iz no bianding treti betwene them.”

“And Beljum?”

“Yes, and Beljum, too.”

Von Borc shooc hiz hed. “I doant ce hou dhat cood be. Dhare iz a deffinite treti dhare. She cood nevver recuvver from such a humileyaishon.”

“She wood at leest hav pece for the moment.”

“But her onnor?”

“Tut, mi dere cer, we liv in a utilitareyan age. Onnor iz a meddeyeval concepshon. Beciadz In’gland iz not reddy. It iz an inconcevable thhing, but even our speshal wor tax ov fifty milleyon, which wun wood thhinc made our perpoce az clere az if we had advertiazd it on the frunt page ov the *Tiamz*, haz not rouzd these pepel from dhare slumberz. Here

and dhare wun heerz a qweschon. It iz mi biznes too fiand an aancer. Here and dhare aulso dhare iz an iritaishon. It iz mi biznes too suite it. But I can ashure u dhat so far az the ecenshalz go—the stoerage ov munishonz, the preparaishon for submarene atac, the arainjments for making hi explosiavz—nuthhing iz prepaerd. Hou, then, can In'gland cum in, espeshaly when we hav sterd her up such a devvilz bru ov Irish civvil wor, windo-braking Furese, and God nose whaut too kepe her thauts at home."

"She must thhinc ov her fuchure."

"Aa, dhat iz anuther matter. I fancy dhat in the fuchure we hav our one verry deffinite planz about In'gland, and dhat yor informaishon wil be verry vital too us. It iz too-da or too-moro withe Mr. Jon Bool. If he preferz too-da we ar perfectly reddy. If it iz too-moro we shal be moer reddy stil. I shood thhinc dha wood be wiser too fite withe allise dhan widhout them, but dhat iz dhare one afare. This weke iz dhare weke ov destiny. But u wer speking ov yor paperz." He sat in the armchare withe the lite shining uppon hiz braud bauld hed, while he puft cedaitly at hiz cigar.

The larj oke-pannel, booc-liand roome had a kertane hung in the ferther corner. When this wauz draun it discloazd a larj, braas-bound safe. Von Borc detacht a smaul ke from hiz wauch chane, and aafter sum concidderabel manipulaishon ov the loc he swung open the hevvy doer.

"Looc!" ced he, standing clere, withe a wave ov hiz hand.

The lite shon vividly intoo the opend safe, and the cecretary ov the embacy gaizd withe an abzorbd interest at the rose ov stuff pidjon-hoalz withe which it wauz fernisht. Eche pidjon-hole had its label, and hiz ise az he glaanst along them red a long cerese ov such titelz az "Foerdz," "Harbor-defencez," "Aroplainz," "Iarland,"

“Egipt,” “Poertsmouth foerts,” “The Channel,” “Rociathe,” and a scoer ov utherz. Eche compartment wauz brisling withe paperz and planz.

“Colossal!” ced the cecretary. Pootting doun hiz cigar he softly clapt hiz fat handz.

“And aul in foer yeerz, Barron. Not such a bad sho for the hard-drinking, hard-riding cuntry sqwire. But the gem ov mi colecshon iz cumming and dhare iz the cetting aul reddy for it.” He pointed too a space over which “Naval Cignalz” wauz printed.

“But u hav a good dosceyer dhare aulreddy.”

“Out ov date and waist paper. The Admiralty in sum wa got the alarm and evvery code haz bene chainjd. It wauz a blo, Barron—the werst cetbac in mi whole campane. But thanx too mi chec-booc and the good Aultamont aul wil be wel too-nite.”

The Barron looct at hiz wauch and gave a guttooral exclamaishon ov disapointment.

“Wel, I reyaly can wate no lon’gher. U can imadgine dhat thhingz ar mooving at prezsent in Carlton Terrace and dhat we hav aul too be at our poasts. I had hoapt too be abel too bring nuse ov yor grate coo. Did Aultamont name no our?”

Von Borc poosht over a tellegram.

Wil cum widhout fale too-nite and bring nu sparking plugz.—
AULTAMONT.

“Sparking plugz, a?”

“U ce he posez az a motor expert and I kepe a fool garrage. In our code evverithhing liacly too cum up iz naimd aafter sum spare part. If he taux ov a rajator it iz a battelship, ov an oil pump a cruser, and so on. Sparking plugz ar naval signalz.”

“From Poertsmouth at midda,” ced the cecretary, exammining the superscripshon. “Bi the wa, whaut doo u ghiv him?”

“Five hundred poundz for this particcular job. Ov coers he haz a sallary az wel.”

“The gredy roghe. Dha ar uesfool, these tratorz, but I gruj them dhare blud munny.”

“I gruj Aultamont nuthhing. He iz a wunderfool werker. If I pa him wel, at leest he delivverz the goodz, too use hiz one frase. Beciadz he iz not a trator. I ashure u dhat our moast pan-Germanic Uenker iz a sucking duv in hiz felingz toowordz In’gland az compaerd withe a reyal bitter Irish-Amerrican.”

“O, an Irish-Amerrican?”

“If u herd him tauc u wood not dout it. Sumtiamz I ashure u I can hardly understand him. He ceemz too hav declaerd wor on the Kingz In’glish az wel az on the In’glish king. Must u reyal go? He ma be here enny moment.”

“No. Ime sorry, but I hav aulreddy overstade mi time. We shal expect u erly too-moro, and when u ghet dhat cignal booc throo the littel doer on the Juke ov Yorx steps u can poot a triyumfant Finis too yor reccord in In’gland. Whaut! Toca!” He indicated a hevvely ceeld dust-cuvverd bottel which stood withe too hi glaacez uppon a salver.

“Ma I offer u a glaas befoer yor gerny?”

"No, thanx. But it loox like revvelry."

"Aultamont haz a nice taist in wianz, and he tooc a fancy too mi Toca. He iz a tutchy fello and needz humoring in smaual thhingz. I hav too studdy him, I ashure u." Dha had stroald out on too the terrace agane, and along it too the ferther end whare at a tuch from the Barronz shofer the grate car shivverd and chuckeld. "Dhose ar the liats ov Harrich, I supose," ced the cecretary, pooling on hiz dust cote. "Hou stil and peesfool it aul ceemz. Dhare ma be uther liats within the weke, and the In'glish coast a les tranqwil place! The hevvenz, too, ma not be qwite so peesfool if aul dhat the good Seplin prommicez us cumz tru. Bi the wa, whoo iz dhat?"

Only wun windo shode a lite behiand them; in it dhare stood a lamp, and beside it, ceted at a tabel, wauz a dere oald ruddy-faist woomman in a cuntry cap. She wauz bending over her nitting and stopping ocaizhonaly too stroke a larj blac cat uppon a stoole beside her.

"Dhat iz Marthaa, the oonly cervant I hav left."

The cecretary chuckeld.

"She mite aulmoast personnifi Britanyaa," ced he, "withe her complete celf-abzorpshon and genneral are ov cumfortabel somnolens. Wel, o revwar, Von Borc!" Withe a final wave ov hiz hand he sprang intoo the car, and a moment later the too goalden coanz from the hedliats shot throo the darcnes. The cecretary la bac in the cooshonz ov the lucshureyous limoosene, withe hiz thauts so fool ov the impending Uropeyan tradgedy dhat he hardly observd dhat az hiz car swung round the village strete it neerly paast over a littel Foerd cumming in the opposite direcshon.

Von Borc wauct sloly bac too the studdy when the laast gleemz ov the

motor lamps had faded into the distans. Az he paast he observd dhat hiz oald houskeper had poot out her lamp and retiard. It wauz a nu expereyens too him, the cilens and darcnes ov hiz wiadspred hous, for hiz fammily and hous'hoald had bene a larj wun. It wauz a relefe too him, houwevver, too thhinc dhat dha wer aul in saifty and dhat, but for dhat wun oald woomman whoo had lin'gherd in the kitchen, he had the whole

place too himcelf. Dhare wauz a good dele ov tideying up too doo incide hiz

studdy and he cet himcelf too doo it until hiz kene, handsum face wauz flusht withe the hete ov the barning paperz. A lether valse stood beside hiz tabel, and intoo this he began too pac verry neetly and cistematically the preshous contents ov hiz safe. He had hardly got started withe the werc, houwevver, when hiz qwic eerz caut the soundz ov a distant car. Instantly he gave an exclamaishon ov satisfacshon, strapt up the valse, shut the safe, loct it, and hurrede out on too the terrace. He wauz just in time too ce the liats ov a smaul car cum too a halt at the gate. A pascen'ger sprang out ov it and advaanst swiftly toowordz him, while the shofer, a hevvely bilt, elderly man withe a gra moostaash, cetteld doun like wun whoo resianz himcelf too a long vidgil.

"Wel?" aasct Von Borc egherly, running forword too mete hiz vizsitor.

For aancer the man waivd a smaul broun-paper parcel triyumfantly abuv hiz hed.

"U can ghiv me the glad hand too-nite, mister," he cride. "Ime bringing home the bacon at laast."

"The signalz?"

"Same az I ced in mi cabel. Evvery laast wun ov them, cemmafor, lamp code, Marcony—a cobby, miand u, not the oridginal. Dhat wauz too

dain'gerous. But its the reyal goodz, and u can la too dhat." He slapt the German uppon the shoalder withe a ruf famileyarrity from which the uther winst.

"Cum in," he ced. "Ime aul alone in the hous. I wauz oonly wating for this. Ov coers a cobby iz better dhan the oridginal. If an oridginal wer miscing dha wood chainj the whole thhing. U thhinc its aul safe about the cobby?"

The Irish-Amerrican had enterd the studdy and strecht hiz long limz from the armchare. He wauz a taul, gaunt man ov cixty, withe clere-cut fechuerz and a smaul goty beerd which gave him a genneral resemblans too the carricachuerz ov Unkel Sam. A haaf-smoact, sodden cigar hung from the corner ov hiz mouth, and az he sat doun he struc a mach and relit it. "Making reddy for a moove?" he remarct az he looct round him. "Sa, mister," he added, az hiz ise fel uppon the safe from which the kertane wauz nou remuivd, "u doant tel me u kepe yor paperz in dhat?"

"Whi not?"

"Gosh, in a wide-open contrapshon like dhat! And dha reccon u too be sum spi. Whi, a Yanky crooc wood be intoo dhat withe a can-opener. If Ide none dhat enny letter ov mine wauz gowin' too li looce in a thhing like dhat Ide hav bene a mug too rite too u at aul."

"It wood puzsel enny crooc too foers dhat safe," Von Borc aancerd. "U woant cut dhat mettal withe enny toole."

"But the loc?"

"No, its a dubbel combinaishon loc. U no whaut dhat iz?"

"Cerch me," ced the Amerrican.

"Wel, u nede a werd az wel az a cet ov figguerz befoer u can ghet the loc too werc." He rose and shode a dubbel-rajating disc round the kehole. "This outer wun iz for the letterz, the inner wun for the figguerz."

"Wel, wel, dhats fine."

"So its not qwite az cimpel az u thaut. It wauz foer yeerz ago dhat I had it made, and whaut doo u thhinc I chose for the werd and figguerz?"

"Its beyond me."

"Wel, I chose August for the werd, and 1914 for the figguerz, and here we ar."

The Amerricanz face shode hiz cerprise and admiraishon.

"Mi, but dhat wauz smart! U had it doun too a fine thhing."

"Yes, a fu ov us even then cood hav ghest the date. Here it iz, and Ime shutting doun too-moro morning."

"Wel, I ghes ule hav too fix me up aulso. Ime not staying in this goldarnd cuntry aul on mi loansum. In a weke or les, from whaut I ce, Jon Bool wil be on hiz hiand legz and fare ramping. Ide raather wauch him from over the wauter."

"But yor an Amerrican cittisen?"

"Wel, so wauz Jac Jaimz an Amerrican cittisen, but hese doowing time in Poertland aul the same. It cuts no ice withe a Brittish copper too tel him yor an Amerrican cittisen. 'Its Brittish lau and order over here,'

cez he. Bi the wa, mister, tauking ov Jac Jaimz, it ceemz too me u doant doo much too cuvver yor men."

"Whaut doo u mene?" Von Borc aasct sharply.

"Wel, u ar dhare employer, aint u? Its up too u too ce dhat dha doant faul down. But dha doo faul down, and when did u evver pic them up? Dhaerz Jaimz—"

"It wauz Jaimsez one fault. U no dhat yorcelf. He wauz too celf-wild for the job."

"Jaimz wauz a boanhed—I ghiv u dhat. Then dhare wauz Hollis."

"The man wauz mad."

"Wel, he went a bit woosy toowordz the end. Its enuf too make a man bug-hous when he haz too pla a part from morning too nite withe a hundred ghise aul reddy too cet the copperz wise too him. But nou dhare iz Stiner—"

Von Borc started viyolently, and hiz ruddy face ternd a shade paler.

"Whaut about Stiner?"

"Wel, dhave got him, dhats aul. Dha raded hiz stoer laast nite, and he and hiz paperz ar aul in Poertsmouth jale. Ule go of and he, poor devvil, wil hav too stand the racket, and lucky if he ghets of withe hiz life. Dhats whi I waunt too ghet over the wauter az soone az u doo."

Von Borc wauz a strong, celf-containd man, but it wauz esy too ce dhat the nuse had shaken him.

“Hou cood dha hav got on too Stiner?” he muttered. “Dhats the werst blo yet.”

“Wel, u neerly had a wers wun, for I beleve dha ar not far of me.”

“U doant mene dhat!”

“Shure thhing. Mi landlady doun Fratton wa had sum inqwirese, and when I herd ov it I ghest it wauz time for me too huscel. But whaut I waunt too no, mister, iz hou the copperz no these thhingz? Stiner iz the fifth man uve lost cins I ciand on withe u, and I no the name ov the sixth if I doant ghet a moove on. Hou doo u explane it, and aint u ashaimd too ce yor men go doun like this?”

Von Borc flusht crimzon.

“Hou dare u speke in such a wa!”

“If I didnt dare thhingz, mister, I woodnt be in yor cervice. But Ile tel u strate whaut iz in mi miand. Ive herd dhat withe u German politishanz when an agent haz dun hiz werc u ar not sory too ce him poot awa.”

Von Borc sprang too hiz fete.

“Doo u dare too sugest dhat I hav ghivven awa mi one agents!”

“I doant stand for dhat, mister, but dhaerz a stoole pidjon or a cros sumwhare, and its up too u too fiand out whare it iz. Ennihou I am taking no moer chaancez. Its me for littel Holland, and the sooner the better.”

Von Borc had maasterd hiz an'gher.

"We hav bene allise too long too qworel nou at the verry our ov victory," he ced. "Uve dun splendid werc and taken risx, and I caant forghet it. Bi aul meenz go too Holland, and u can ghet a bote from Rotterdam too Nu Yorc. No uthel line wil be safe a weke from nou. Ile take dhat booc and pac it withe the rest."

The Amerrican held the smaule parcel in hiz hand, but made no moashon too ghiv it up.

"Whaut about the do?" he aasct.

"The whaut?"

"The boodel. The reword. The £500. The gunner ternd damd naasty at the laast, and I had too sqware him withe an extraa hundred dollarz or it wood hav bene nitsky for u and me. 'Nuthhin' doowin'!' cez he, and he ment it, too, but the laast hundred did it. Its cost me too hundred pound from ferst too laast, so it iznt liacly Ide ghiv it up widhout gettin' mi waud."

Von Borc smiald withe sum bitternes. "U doant ceme too hav a verry hi opinyon ov mi onnor," ced he, "u waunt the munny befoer u ghiv up the booc."

"Wel, mister, it iz a biznes proposishon."

"Aul rite. Hav yor wa." He sat down at the tabel and scribbeld a chec, which he toer from the booc, but he refraind from handing it too hiz companyon. "Aafter aul, cins we ar too be on such termz, Mr. Aultamont," ced he, "I doant ce whi I shood trust u enny moer dhan u trust me. Doo u understand?" he added, loocking bac over hiz shoalder at the Amerrican. "Dhaerz the chec uppon the tabel. I clame

the rite too exammine dhat parcel befoer u pic the munny up.”

The Amerrican paast it over widhout a werd. Von Borc undid a wianding ov string and too rapperz ov paper. Then he sat gasing for a moment in cilent amaizment at a smaul blu booc which la befoer him. Acros the cuvver wauz printed in goalden letterz *Practical Handbooc ov Be Culchure*. Oanly for wun instant did the maaster spi glare at this strainjly irelevant inscripshon. The next he wauz gript at the bac ov hiz nec bi a graasp ov iarn, and a cloroformd spunj wauz held in frunt ov hiz riathing face.

“Anuther glaas, Wautson!” ced Mr. Sherloc Hoamz az he extended the bottel ov Impereyal Toca.

The thhixet shofer, whoo had ceted himcelf bi the tabel, poosht forword hiz glaas withe sum eghernes.

“It iz a good wine, Hoamz.”

“A remarcabel wine, Wautson. Our frend uppon the sofaa haz ashuerd me dhat it iz from Fraants Yosefs speshal cellar at the Scoanbrun Pallace. Mite I trubbel u too open the windo, for cloroform vapor duz not help the pallate.”

The safe wauz ajar, and Hoamz standing in frunt ov it wauz remooving dosceyer aafter dosceyer, swiftly exammining eche, and then packing it neetly in Von Borx valse. The German la uppon the sofaa sleping stertorously withe a strap round hiz upper armz and anuther round hiz legz.

“We nede not hurry ourcelvz, Wautson. We ar safe from interupshon. Wood u miand tutching the bel? Dhare iz no wun in the hous exept

oald Marthaa, whoo haz plade her part too admiraishon. I got her the chihuwaishon here when ferst I tooc the matter up. Aa, Marthaa, u wil be glad too here dhat aul iz wel."

The plezzant oald lady had apeerd in the doerwa. She kertcede withe a smile too Mr. Hoamz, but glaanst withe sum aprehenshon at the figgure uppon the sofaa.

"It iz aul rite, Marthaa. He haz not bene hert at aul."

"I am glad ov dhat, Mr. Hoamz. Acording too hiz liats he haz bene a kiand maaster. He waunted me too go withe hiz wife too Germany yesterda, but dhat wood hardly hav suted yor planz, wood it, cer?"

"No, indede, Marthaa. So long az u wer here I wauz esy in mi miand. We wated sum time for yor cignal too-nite."

"It wauz the secreetary, cer."

"I no. Hiz car paast ourz."

"I thaut he wood nevver go. I nu dhat it wood not sute yor planz, cer, too fiand him here."

"No, indede. Wel, it oonly ment dhat we wated haaf an our or so until I sau yor lamp go out and nu dhat the coast wauz clere. U can repoert too me too-moro in Lundon, Marthaa, at Clarrigez Hotel."

"Verry good, cer."

"I supose u hav evverithhing reddy too leve."

"Yes, cer. He poasted cevven letterz too-da. I hav the adrecez az

uezhuwal.”

“Verry good, Marthaa. I wil looc intoo them too-moro. Good-nite. These paperz,” he continnude az the oald lady vannisht, “ar not ov verry grate importans, for, ov coers, the informaishon which dha represent haz bene cent of long ago too the German guvvernment. These ar the oridginalz which cood not saifly be got out ov the cuntry.”

“Then dha ar ov no uce.”

“I shood not go so far az too sa dhat, Wautson. Dha wil at leest sho our pepel whaut iz none and whaut iz not. I ma sa dhat a good menny ov these paperz hav cum throo me, and I nede not ad ar thurroly untrustwerthy. It wood britten mi declining yeerz too ce a German cruser navigating the Solent acording too the mine-feeld planz which I hav fernisht. But u, Wautson”—he stopt hiz werc and tooc hiz oald frend bi the shoalderz—“Ive hardly cene u in the lite yet. Hou hav the yeerz uezd u? U looc the same bliathe boi az evver.”

“I fele twenty yeerz yun’gher, Hoamz. I hav celdom felt so happy az when I got yor wire aasking me too mete u at Harrich withe the car. But u, Hoamz—u hav chainjd verry littel—save for dhat horibel goty.”

“These ar the sacrificez wun maix for wunz cuntry, Wautson,” ced Hoamz, pooling at hiz littel tuft. “Too-moro it wil be but a dredfool memmory. Withe mi hare cut and a fu uther superfishal chain’gez I shal no dout reyapere at Clarrigez too-moro az I wauz befoer this Amerrican stunt—I beg yor pardon, Wautson, mi wel ov In’glisch ceemz too be permanently defiald—befoer this Amerrican job came mi wa.”

“But u hav retiard, Hoamz. We herd ov u az livving the life ov a hermit amung yor bese and yor boox in a smaul farm uppon the South

Dounz.”

“Exactly, Wautson. Here iz the frute ov mi lezhuerd ese, the magnum opus ov mi latter yeerz!” He pict up the vollume from the tabel and red out the whole titel, *Practical Handbooc ov Be Culchure, withe Sum Observaishonz uppon the Cegregaishon ov the Qwene*. “Alone I did it. Behoald the frute ov pencive niats and laboereyous dase when I waucht the littel werking gangz az wuns I waucht the crimminal werld ov Lunden.”

“But hou did u ghet too werc agane?”

“Aa, I hav often marveld at it micelf. The Forane Minnister alone I cood hav widhstood, but when the Premeyer aulso daind too vizsit mi humbel roofe—! The fact iz, Wautson, dhat this gentelman uppon the sofaa wauz a bit too good for our pepel. He wauz in a claas bi himcelf. Thhingz wer gowing rong, and no wun cood understand whi dha wer gowing rong. Agents wer suspected or even caut, but dhare wauz evvidens ov sum strong and ceecret central foers. It wauz absolutly nescesary too expose it. Strong preshure wauz braut uppon me too looc intoo the matter. It haz cost me too yeerz, Wautson, but dha hav not bene devoid ov exiatment. When I sa dhat I started mi pilgrimage at Shicaago, gradjuwated in an Irish ceecret sociyety at Buffalo, gave cereyous trubbel too the constabbulary at Skibbarene, and so evenchuwaly caut the i ov a subordinate agent ov Von Borc, whoo recomended me az a liacly man, u wil reyalise dhat the matter wauz complex. Cins then I hav bene onnord bi hiz confidens, which haz not prevented moast ov hiz planz gowing sutly rong and five ov hiz best agents beying in prizzon. I waucht them, Wautson, and I pict them az dha ripend. Wel, cer, I hope dhat u ar nun the wers!”

The laast remarc wauz adrest too Von Borc himcelf, whoo aafter much gaasping and blinking had lane qwiyetly liscening too Hoamsez staitment.

He broke out nou intoo a fureyous streme ov German invective, hiz face convulst withe pashon. Hoamz continnude hiz swift investigaishon ov doccuments while hiz prizzoner kerst and swoer.

“Dho unmusical, German iz the moast exprescive ov aul lan’gwagez,” he observd when Von Borc had stopt from pure exauschon. “Hullo! Hullo!” he added az he looct hard at the corner ov a tracing befoer pootting it in the box. “This shood poot anuther berd in the cage. I had no ideyaa dhat the pamaster wauz such a raascal, dho I hav long had an i uppon him. Mister Von Borc, u hav a grate dele too aancer for.”

The prizzoner had raizd himcelf withe sum difficulty uppon the sofaa and wauz staring withe a strainj mixchure ov amaizment and haitred at hiz captor.

“I shal ghet levvel withe u, Aultamont,” he ced, speking withe slo deliberaishon. “If it taix me aul mi life I shal ghet levvel withe u!”

“The oald swete song,” ced Hoamz. “Hou often hav I herd it in dase gon bi. It wauz a favorite ditty ov the late lamented Professor Moreyarty. Cuunel Cebaschan Moran haz aulso bene none too worbel it. And yet I liv and kepe bese uppon the South Dounz.”

“Kers u, u dubbel trator!” cride the German, straning against hiz bondz and glaring merder from hiz fureyous ise.

“No, no, it iz not so bad az dhat,” ced Hoamz, smiling. “Az mi speche shuerly shose u, Mr. Aultamont ov Shicaago had no existens in fact. I uezd him and he iz gon.”

“Then whoo ar u?”

“It iz reyaly imatereyal whoo I am, but cins the matter ceemz too

interest u, Mr. Von Borc, I ma sa dhat this iz not mi ferst aqwaintans withe the memberz ov yor fammily. I hav dun a good dele ov biznes in Germany in the paast and mi name iz probbably familleyar too u."

"I wood wish too no it," ced the Prushan grimly.

"It wauz I whoo braut about the ceparashon betwene Irene Adler and the late King ov Bohemeyaa when yor cuzsin Hianrikh wauz the Impereyal Envoi.

It wauz I aulso whoo saivd from merder, bi the Niyilist Clopman, Count Von und Zhu Graafenstine, whoo wauz yor mutherz elder bruther. It wauz I—"

Von Borc sat up in amaizment.

"Dhare iz oanly wun man," he cride.

"Exactly," ced Hoamz.

Von Borc groand and sanc bac on the sofaa. "And moast ov dhat informaishon came throo u," he cride. "Whaut iz it werth? Whaut hav I dun? It iz mi ruwin forevver!"

"It iz certainly a littel untrustwerthy," ced Hoamz. "It wil reqwire sum checking and u hav littel time too chec it. Yor admiral ma fiand the nu gunz raather larger dhan he expects, and the cruserz perhaps a trifel faaster."

Von Borc clucht at hiz one throte in despare.

"Dhare ar a good menny uther points ov detale which wil, no dout, cum too lite in good time. But u hav wun qwaulity which iz verry rare in a German, Mr. Von Borc: u ar a spoertsman and u wil bare me no

il-wil when u reyalise dhat u, whoo hav outwitted so menny uther pepel, hav at laast bene outwitted yorcelf. Aafter aul, u hav dun yor best for yor cuntry, and I hav dun mi best for mine, and whaut cood be moer natchural? Beciadz," he added, not unkiandly, az he lade hiz hand uppon the shoalder ov the prostrate man, "it iz better dhan too faul befoer sum ignobel fo. These paperz ar nou reddy, Wautson. If u wil help me withe our prizzoner, I thhinc dhat we ma ghet started for Lundon at wuns."

It wauz no esy taasc too moove Von Borc, for he wauz a strong and a desperate man. Finaly, hoallding iather arm, the too frendz wauct him verry sloly doun the garden wauc which he had trod withe such proud confidens when he receevd the con'grachulaishonz ov the famous diplomatist oonly a fu ourz befoer. Aafter a short, final strugghel he wauz hoisted, stil bound hand and foot, intoo the spare cete ov the littel car. Hiz preshous valse wauz wejd in becide him.

"I trust dhat u ar az cumfortabel az cercumstaancez permit," ced Hoamz when the final arainjments wer made. "Shood I be ghilty ov a libberty if I lit a cigar and plaist it betwene yor lips?"

But aul amenitese wer waisted uppon the an'gry German.

"I supose u reyalise, Mr. Sherloc Hoamz," ced he, "dhat if yor guvvernment baerz u out in this treetment it becumz an act ov wor."

"Whaut about yor guvvernment and aul this treetment?" ced Hoamz, tapping the valse.

"U ar a private individjuwal. U hav no worant for mi arest. The whole proceding iz absolutly ilegal and outrajous."

"Absolutly," ced Hoamz.

“Kidnaping a German subject.”

“And steling hiz private paperz.”

“Wel, u reyalise yor posishon, u and yor acumpllice here. If I wer too shout for help az we paas throo the village—”

“Mi dere cer, if u did ennithhing so foolish u wood probbably enlarj the too limmited titelz ov our village inz bi ghivving us ‘The Dan’gling Prushan’ az a cianpoast. The In’glisshman iz a paishent crechure, but at prezsent hiz temper iz a littel inflaimd, and it wood be az wel not too tri him too far. No, Mr. Von Borc, u wil go withe us in a qwiyet, cencibel fashon too Scotland Yard, whens u can cend for yor frend, Barron Von Herling, and ce if even nou u ma not fil dhat place which he haz reservd for u in the ambassadoreyal swete. Az too u, Wautson, u ar joining us withe yor oald cervice, az I understand, so Lundon woant be out ov yor wa. Stand withe me here uppon the terrace, for it ma be the laast qwiyet tauc dhat we shal evver hav.”

The too frendz chatted in intimate convers for a fu minnuets, recauling wuns agane the dase ov the paast, while dhare prizzoneer vainly riggheld too undoo the bondz dhat held him. Az dha ternd too the car Hoamz pointed bac too the muinlit ce and shooc a thautfool hed.

“Dhaerz an eest wind cumming, Wautson.”

“I thhinc not, Hoamz. It iz verry worm.”

“Good oald Wautson! U ar the wun fixt point in a chain’ging age. Dhaerz an eest wind cumming aul the same, such a wind az nevver blu on In’gland yet. It wil be coald and bitter, Wautson, and a good menny ov us ma wither befoer its blaast. But its Godz one wind nun the les, and a clener, better, stron’gher land wil li in the sunshine when the storm haz cleerd. Start her up, Wautson, for its time dhat we wer on

our wa. I hav a chec for five hundred poundz which shood be casht erly, for the drauwer iz qwite capabel ov stopping it if he can.”

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