

The Prodiget Goottenberg EBooc ov The Cine ov the Foer, bi Arthher  
Conan Doil

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THE FOER \*\*\*

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The Cine ov the Foer

bi Arthher Conan Doil

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## Chapter I

### The Ciyens ov Deducshon

Sherloc Hoamz tooc hiz bottel from the corner ov the mantel-pece and hiz hipodermic cirinj from its nete morocco cace. Widh hiz long, white, nervous fin'gherz he ajusted the dellicate nedel, and roald bac hiz left shert-cuf. For sum littel time hiz ise rested thautfooly uppon the cinnuwy foerarm and rist aul dotted and scard widh inumerabel puncchure-marx. Finaly he thrust the sharp point home,

prest doun the tiny piston, and sanc bac intoo the velvet-liand arm-chare widh a long ci ov satisfacshon.

Thre tiamz a da for menny munths I had witnest this performans, but custom had not reconciald mi miand too it. On the contrary, from da too da I had becum moer irritabel at the cite, and mi conshens sweld niatly within me at the thaut dhat I had lact the currage too protest. Agane and agane I had redgisterd a vou dhat I shood delivver mi sole uppon the subgect, but dhare wauz dhat in the coole, nonchalant are ov mi companyon which made him the laast man widh whoome wun wood care too take ennithhing aproching too a libberty. Hiz grate pouwerz, hiz maasterly manner, and the expereyens which I had had ov hiz menny extrordinary qwaulitese, aul made me diffident and baqword in croscing him.

Yet uppon dhat aafternoone, whether it wauz the Bone which I had taken widh mi lunch, or the adishonal exasperaishon projuest bi the extreme deliberaishon ov hiz manner, I suddenly felt dhat I cood hoald out no lon'gher.

"Which iz it too-da?" I aasct,— "morfene or cocane?"

He raizd hiz ise lan'gwidly from the oald blac-letter vollume which he had opend. "It iz cocane," he ced,— "a cevven-per-cent. solueshon. Wood u care too tri it?"

"No, indede," I aancerd, bruisclly. "Mi constichueshon haz not got over the Afgan campane yet. I canot afoerd too thro enny extraa strane uppon it."

He smiald at mi veyemens. "Perhaps u ar rite, Wautson," he ced. "I supose dhat its influwens iz fizensicaly a bad wun. I fiand it, houwevver, so traancendently stimmulating and clarrifiying too the miand dhat its

secondary action is a matter of small moment."

"But consider!" I said, earnestly. "Count the cost! Your brain may, as you say, be roused and excited, but it is a pathological and morbid process, which involves increased tissue-change and may at last leave a permanent weakness. You know, too, what a black reaction comes upon you. Surely the game is hardly worth the candle. Why should you, for a mere passing pleasure, risk the loss of those great powers with which you have been endowed? Remember that I speak not only as your comrade too another, but as a medical man too your friend for whose constitution he is to some extent answerable."

He did not seem offended. On the contrary, he put his finger-tips together and leaned his elbow on the arm of his chair, like your friend who has a relish for conversation.

"My friend," he said, "rebel against stagnation. Give me problems, give me work, give me the most abstruse cryptogram or the most intricate anagrams, and I am in my own proper atmosphere. I can dispense then with artificial stimulants. But I abhor the dull routine of existence. I crave for mental exaltation. That is why I have chosen my own particular profession,—or rather created it, for I am the only one in the world."

"The only unorthodox detective?" I said, raising my eyebrows.

"The only unorthodox consulting detective," he answered. "I am the least and highest of men in detection. When Gregson or Lestrade or Athelny Jones are out of their depths—which, by the way, is their normal state—the matter is laid before me. I examine the data, as an expert, and pronounce a specialist's opinion. I claim no credit in such cases. My name figures in no newspaper. The work itself, the pleasure of finding a field for my peculiar powers, is my highest reward. But

u hav yorcelf had sum expereyens ov mi methodz ov werc in the Gefferson Hope cace.”

“Yes, indede,” ced I, corjaly. “I wauz nevver so struc bi ennithing in mi life. I even emboddede it in a smaul broashure widh the sumwhaut fantastic titel ov ‘A Studdy in Scarlet.’”

He shooc hiz hed sadly. “I glaanst over it,” ced he. “Onnestly, I canot con’gratchulate u uppon it. Detecshon iz, or aut too be, an exact ciyens, and shood be treted in the same coald and unnemoashonal manner. U hav atempted too tinj it widh romanticizm, which projucez much the same efect az if u werct a luv-stoery or an eloapment intoo the fifth proposishon ov Ueclid.”

“But the romans wauz dhare,” I remmonstrated. “I cood not tamper widh the facts.”

“Sum facts shood be suprest, or at leest a just cens ov propoershon shood be observd in treting them. The oanly point in the cace which deservd menshon wauz the cureyous analittical rezoning from efects too causez bi which I suxeded in unravveling it.”

I wauz anoid at this critticism ov a werc which had bene speshaly desiand too plese him. I confes, too, dhat I wauz irritated bi the egotizm which ceemd too demaand dhat evvery line ov mi pamflet shood be

devoted too hiz one speshal doowingz. Moer dhan wuns juring the yeez dhat

I had livd widh him in Baker Strete I had observd dhat a smaul vannity underla mi companyonz qwiyet and didactic manner. I made no remarc, houwevver, but sat nercing mi wuinded leg. I had a Gezale boollet throo it sum time befoer, and, dho it did not prevent me from wauking, it aict werily at evvery chainj ov the wether.

“Mi practice haz extended recently too the Continent,” ced Hoamz, aafter a while, filling up hiz oald briyer-roote pipe. “I wauz consulted laast weke bi Fraunswaa Le Veyar, whoo, az u probbably no, haz cum raather too the frunt laitley in the French detective cervice. He haz aul the Keltic pouwer ov qwic inchuwishon, but he iz defishent in the wide rainj ov exact nollej which iz ecenshal too the hiyer devellopments ov hiz art. The cace wauz concernd widh a wil, and posest sum fechuerz ov interest. I wauz abel too refer him too too parralel cacez, the wun at Regaa in 1857, and the uther at St. Loowy in 1871, which hav sugested too him the troo solueshon. Here iz the letter which I had this morning acnolleging mi acistans.” He tost over, az he spoke, a crumpeld shete ov forane notepaper. I glaanst mi ise doun it, catching a profuezhon ov noats ov admiraishon, widh stra “manyifiax,” “coo-de-maitrz,” and “toorz-de-foers,” aul testifiying too the ardent admiraishon ov the Frenchman.

“He speex az a pupil too hiz maaster,” ced I.

“O, he raitz mi acistans too hily,” ced Sherloc Hoamz, liatly.

“He haz concidderabel ghifts himcelf. He posescez too out ov the thre qwaulitese nescesary for the ideyal detective. He haz the pouwer ov observaishon and dhat ov deducshon. He iz oonly waunting in nollej; and dhat ma cum in time. He iz nou traanzlating mi smaul werx intoo French.”

“Yor werx?”

“O, didnt u no?” he cride, laafing. “Yes, I hav bene ghilty ov cevveral monnograafs. Dha ar aul uppon tecnical subjects. Here, for exaampel, iz wun ‘Uppon the Distincshon betwene the Ashez ov the Vareymous Tobaccose.’ In it I enumerate a hundred and forty formz ov cigar-, ciggaret-, and pipe-tobacco, widh cullord plaits illustrating the differens in the ash. It iz a point which iz continnuwaly terning up in

crimminal triyalz, and which iz sumtiamz ov supreme importans az a clu. If u can sa deffiniatly, for exaampel, dhat sum merder haz bene dun bi a man whoo wauz smoking an Injan luncaa, it obveyously narrose yor feeld ov cerch. Too the traind i dhare iz az much differens betwene the blac ash ov a Trikinoppoly and the white fluf ov berdz-i az dhare iz betwene a cabbage and a potato."

"U hav an extrordinary geenys for minuesheya," I remarct.

"I apreesheyate dhare importans. Here iz mi monnograaf uppon the tracing ov footsteps, widh sum remarx uppon the ucez ov plaaster ov Parris az a preserver ov imprescez. Here, too, iz a cureyous littel werc uppon the influwens ov a trade uppon the form ov the hand, widh liathotiaps ov the handz ov slaterz, salorz, corcutterz, compozsitorz, weverz, and dimond-pollisherz. Dhat iz a matter ov grate practical interest too the ciyentiffic detective,—espeshaly in cacez ov unclaimd boddese, or in discuvering the antecedents ov crimminalz. But I wery u widh mi hobby."

"Not at aul," I aancerd, earnestly. "It iz ov the gratest interest too me, espeshaly cins I hav had the oporchunity ov observing yor practical aplicaishon ov it. But u spoke just nou ov observaishon and deducshon. Shuerly the wun too sum extent implise the uther."

"Whi, hardly," he aancerd, lening bac lucshureyously in hiz arm-chare, and cending up thhic blu reeths from hiz pipe. "For exaampel, observaishon shose me dhat u hav bene too the Wigmor Strete Poast-Office this morning, but deducshon lets me no dhat when dhare u dispacht a tellegram."

"Rite!" ced I. "Rite on boath points! But I confes dhat I doant ce hou u ariavd at it. It wauz a sudden impuls uppon mi part, and I hav menshond it too no wun."

"It iz simpliscity itself," he remarct, chucling at mi cerprise,—“so abcerdly cimpel dhat an explanaishon iz superfluwous; and yet it ma cerv too define the limmits ov observaishon and ov deducshon.

Observaishon

telz me dhat u hav a littel reddish moald ad'hering too yor instep. Just opposite the Shimor Strete Office dha hav taken up the paivment and throne up sum erth which lise in such a wa dhat it iz difficult too avoid tredding in it in entering. The erth iz ov this peculeyar reddish tint which iz found, az far az I no, noawhare els in the naborhood. So much iz observaishon. The rest iz deducshon."

"Hou, then, did u dejuce the tellegram?"

"Whi, ov coers I nu dhat u had not ritten a letter, cins I sat opposite too u aul morning. I ce aulso in yor open desc dhare dhat u hav a shete ov stamps and a thhic bundel ov poast-cardz. Whaut cood u go intoo the poast-office for, then, but too cend a wire? Elimminate aul uther factorz, and the wun which remainz must be the truth."

"In this cace it certainly iz so," I replide, aafter a littel thaut.

"The thhing, houwevver, iz, az u sa, ov the cimplest. Wood u thhinc me impertinent if I wer too poot yor ththeyorese too a moer cevere test?"

"On the contrary," he aancerd, "it wood prevent me from taking a cecond doce ov cocane. I shood be delited too looc intoo enny problem which u mite submit too me."

"I hav herd u sa dhat it iz difficult for a man too hav enny obgett in daly uce widhout leving the impres ov hiz indivijuwality upon it in such a wa dhat a traind observer mite rede it. Nou, I hav here a wauch which haz recently cum intoo mi poseshon. Wood u hav the kiandnes too let me hav an opinyon upon the carracter or habbits ov the late oner?"

I handed him over the wauch widh sum slite feling ov amuezmēt in mi hart, for the test wauz, az I thaut, an impossibel wun, and I intended it az a lesson against the sumwhaut dogmattic tone which he ocaizhonalaly ashuemd. He ballanst the wauch in hiz hand, gaizd hard at the diyal, opend the bac, and exammiand the werx, ferst widh hiz naked ise and then widh a pouwerfool convex lenz. I cood hardly kepe from smiling at hiz crestfaulen face when he finaly snapt the cace too and handed it bac.

“Dhare ar hardly enny dataa,” he remarct. “The wauch haz bene recently cleend, which robz me ov mi moast sugestive facts.”

“U ar rite,” I aancerd. “It wauz cleend befoer beying cent too me.” In mi hart I acuezd mi companyon ov pootting forword a moast lame and impotent excuce too cuvver hiz falure. Whaut dataa cood he expect from an uncleend wauch?

“Dho unsatisfactory, mi recerch haz not bene entiarly barren,” he observd, staring up at the celing widh dremy, lac-luster ise.

“Subgett too yor corecshon, I shood juj dhat the wauch belongd too yor elder bruther, whoo inherrited it from yor faather.”

“Dhat u gather, no dout, from the H. W. uppon the bac?”

“Qwite so. The W. sugests yor one name. The date ov the wauch iz neerly fifty yeez bac, and the inishalz ar az oald az the wauch: so it wauz made for the laast generaishon. Juwelry uezhuwaly decendz too the

eldest sun, and he iz moast liacly too hav the same name az the faather. Yor faather haz, if I remember rite, bene ded menny yeez. It haz, dhaerfoer, bene in the handz ov yor eldest bruther.”

“Rite, so far,” ced I. “Ennithhing els?”

“He wauz a man ov untidy habbits,—verry untidy and caerles. He wauz left  
left  
with good prospects, but he throo awa hiz chaancez, livd for sum time  
in povverty with ocaizhonal short intervalz ov prosperrity, and finaly,  
taking too drinc, he dide. Dhat iz aul I can gather.”

I sprang from mi chare and limpt impaishently about the roome with  
concidderabel bitternes in mi hart.

“This iz unwerthy ov u, Hoamz,” I ced. “I cood not hav beleevd  
dhat u wood hav decended too this. U hav made inqwiarz intoo the  
history ov mi unhappy bruther, and u nou pretend too dejuce this  
nollej in sum fancifool wa. U canot expect me too beleve dhat  
u hav red aul this from hiz oald wauch! It iz unkiand, and, too speke  
plainly, haz a tuch ov sharlatanizm in it.”

“Mi dere doctor,” ced he, kiandly, “pra axept mi apollogese. Vuwing  
the matter az an abstract problem, I had forgotten hou personal and  
painfool a thhing it mite be too u. I ashure u, houwevver, dhat I nevver  
even nu dhat u had a bruther until u handed me the wauch.”

“Then hou in the name ov aul dhat iz wunderfool did u ghet these facts?  
Dha ar absolutely corect in evvery particcular.”

“Aa, dhat iz good luc. I cood oonly sa whaut wauz the ballans ov  
probabillity. I did not at aul expect too be so accurate.”

“But it wauz not mere ghes-werc?”

“No, no: I nevver ghes. It iz a shocking habbit,—destructive too the  
lodgical facculty. Whaut ceemz strainj too u iz oonly so becauz u doo  
not follo mi trane ov thaut or observ the smaual facts uppon which  
larj inferencez ma depend. For exaampel, I began bi stating dhat yor

bruther wauz caerles. When u observ the lower part ov dhat wauch-cace u notice dhat it iz not oanly dinted in too placez, but it iz cut and marct aul over from the habbit ov keping uther hard objects, such az coinz or kese, in the same pocket. Shuerly it iz no grate fete too ashume dhat a man whoo treets a fifty-ghinny wauch so cavaleyerly must be a caerles man. Niather iz it a verry far-fecht inferens dhat a man whoo inherrits wun artikel ov such vallu iz pritty wel provided for in uther respects.”

I nodded, too sho dhat I follode hiz rezoning.

“It iz verry customary for paunbrokerz in In’gland, when dha take a wauch, too scrach the number ov the ticket widh a pin-point uppon the incide ov the cace. It iz moer handy dhan a label, az dhare iz no risc ov the number beying lost or traanspoazd. Dhare ar no les dhan foer such numberz vizsibel too mi lenz on the incide ov this cace.

Inferens,—dhat yor bruther wauz often at lo wauter. Ceccondary inferens,—dhat he had ocaizhonal bersts ov prosperrity, or he cood not hav redeemd the plej. Finaly, I aasc u too looc at the inner plate, which containz the ke-hole. Looc at the thousandz ov scratchez aul round the hole,—marx whare the ke haz slipt. Whaut sober manz ke cood hav scoerd dhose gruivz? But u wil nevver ce a druncardz wauch widhout them. He wiandz it at nite, and he leevz these tracez ov hiz unsteddy hand. Whare iz the mistery in aul this?”

“It iz az clere az dalite,” I aancerd. “I regret the injustice which I did u. I shood hav had moer faith in yor marvelous faccully. Ma I aasc whether u hav enny profeshonal inqwiry on foot at prezsent?”

“Nun. Hens the cocane. I canot liv widhout brane-werc. Whaut els iz dhare too liv for? Stand at the windo here. Wauz evver such a drery, dizmal, unproffitabel werld? Ce hou the yello fog swerlz doun the strete and drifts acros the dun-cullord housez. Whaut cood be moer hoaplesly prozayic and matereyal? Whaut iz the uce ov havving pouwerz,

doctor, when wun haz no feeld uppon which too exert them? Crime iz commonplace, existens iz commonplace, and no qwaulitese save dhose which ar commonplace hav enny funcshon uppon erth."

I had opend mi mouth too repli too this tirade, when widh a crisp noc our landlady enterd, baring a card uppon the braas salver.

"A yung lady for u, cer," she ced, adrescing mi companyon.

"Mis Mary Morstan," he red. "Hum! I hav no recolecshon ov the name. Aasc the yung lady too step up, Mrs. Hudson. Doant go, doctor. I shood prefer dhat u remane."

## Chapter 2

### The Staitment ov the Cace

Mis Morstan enterd the roome widh a ferm step and an outword compoazhure ov manner. She wauz a blond yung lady, smaul, dainty, wel gluvd, and drest in the moast perfect taist. Dhare wauz, houwevver, a plain'nes and cimpliscity about her coschume which boer widh it a sugeschon ov limmited meenz. The dres wauz a somber greyish baje, untrimd and unbraded, and she woer a smaul terban ov the same dul hu, releevd oonly bi a suspishon ov white fether in the cide. Her face had niather regularrity ov fechure nor buty ov complecshon, but her expreshon wauz swete and ameyabel, and her larj blu ise wer cin'gularly spirrichuwal and cimpathhettic. In an expereyens ov wimmen which extendz over menny naishonz and thre cepparate continents, I hav nevver looct uppon a face which gave a clerer prommice ov a refiand and cencitive nachure. I cood not

but observ dhat az she tooc the cete which Sherloc Hoamz plaist for her, her lip trembeld, her hand qwivverd, and she shode evvery cine ov intens inword agitaishon.

“I hav cum too u, Mr. Hoamz,” she ced, “becauz u wuns enabeld mi employer, Mrs. Cescil Forrester, too unravvel a littel domestic complicaishon. She wauz much imprest bi yor kiandnes and skil.”

“Mrs. Cescil Forrester,” he repeted thautfooly. “I beleve dhat I wauz ov sum slite cervice too her. The cace, houwevver, az I remember it, wauz a verry cimpel wun.”

“She did not thhinc so. But at leest u canot sa the same ov mine. I can hardly imadgine ennithhing moer strainj, moer utterly inexpliccabel, dhan the cichuwaishon in which I fiand micelf.”

Hoamz rubd hiz handz, and hiz ise gliscend. He leend forword in hiz chare widh an expreshon ov extrordinary concentraishon uppon hiz clere-cut, hauclike fechuerz. “State yor cace,” ced he, in brisc, biznes toanz.

I felt dhat mi posishon wauz an embarrassing wun. “U wil, I am shure, excuse me,” I ced, rising from mi chare.

Too mi cerprise, the yung lady held up her gluvd hand too detane me. “If yor frend,” she ced, “wood be good enuf too stop, he mite be ov inestimabel cervice too me.”

I relapst intoo mi chare.

“Breefly,” she continnude, “the facts ar these. Mi faather wauz an officer in an Injan redgiment whoo cent me home when I wauz qwite a chiald. Mi muther wauz ded, and I had no rellative in In’gland. I wauz plaist, houwevver, in a cumfortabel boerding establishment at Edinburro,

and dhare I remaind until I wauz cevventene yeez ov age. In the yere 1878 mi faather, whoo wauz ceenyor captane ov hiz redgiment, obtaind twelv munths' leve and came home. He tellegraaft too me from Lundon dhat he had ariavd aul safe, and directed me too cum down at wuns, ghivving the Langam Hotel az hiz adres. Hiz message, az I remember, wauz fool ov kiandnes and luv. On reching Lundon I drove too the Langam, and wauz informd dhat Captane Morstan wauz staying dhare, but dhat he had gon out the nite befoer and had not yet reternd. I wated aul da without nuse ov him. Dhat nite, on the advice ov the mannager ov the hotel, I comunicated widh the polece, and next morning we advertiazd in aul the paperz. Our inqwires led too no rezult; and from dhat da too this no werd haz evver bene herd ov mi unforchunate faather. He came home widh hiz hart fool ov hope, too fiand sum pece, sum cumfort, and insted—" She poot her hand too her throte, and a choking sob cut short the centens.

"The date?" aasct Hoamz, opening hiz note-booc.

"He disapeerd uppon the 3rd ov December, 1878,—neerly ten yeez ago."

"Hiz luggage?"

"Remaind at the hotel. Dhare wauz nuthhing in it too sugest a clu,—sum cloadhz, sum boox, and a concidderabel number ov cureyoscitese from the Andaaman Ilandz. He had bene wun ov the officerz in charj ov the convict-gard dhare."

"Had he enny frendz in toun?"

"Oanly wun dhat we no ov,—Major Sholto, ov hiz one redgiment, the 34th Bomba Infantry. The major had retiard sum littel time befoer, and livd at Upper Norwood. We comunicated widh him, ov coers, but he did

not even no dhat hiz bruther officer wauz in In'gland."

"A cin'gular cace," remarct Hoamz.

"I hav not yet descriabd too u the moast cin'gular part. About six yearz ago—too be exact, uppon the 4th ov Ma, 1882—an advertiazment apeerd in the "Tiamz" aasking for the adres ov Mis Mary Morstan and stating dhat it wood be too her advaantage too cum forword. Dhare wauz no

name or adres appended. I had at dhat time just enterd the fammily ov Mrs. Cescil Forrester in the capascity ov guvvernes. Bi her advice I publisht mi adres in the advertiazment collum. The same da dhare ariavd throo the poast a smaul card-boerd box adrest too me, which I found too contane a verry larj and lustrous perl. No werd ov riting wauz encloazd. Cins then evvery yere uppon the same date dhare haz aulwase

apeerd a cimmilar box, contaning a cimmilar perl, widhout enny clu az too the cender. Dha hav bene pronounst bi an expert too be ov a rare varyety and ov concidderabel vallu. U can ce for yorcelvz dhat dha ar verry handsum." She opend a flat box az she spoke, and shode me six ov the finest perlz dhat I had evver cene.

"Yor staitment iz moast interesting," ced Sherloc Hoamz. "Haz ennithhing els okerd too u?"

"Yes, and no later dhan too-da. Dhat iz whi I hav cum too u. This morning I receevd this letter, which u wil perhaps rede for yorcelf."

"Thanc u," ced Hoamz. "The envelope too, plese. Poastmarc, Lundo, S.W. Date, Juli 7. Hum! Manz thum-marc on corner,—probbably poastman. Best qwaulity paper. Enveloaps at cixpens a packet. Particcular man in hiz staishonery. No adres. 'Be at the thherd pillar from the left outcide the Liceyum Theyater too-nite at cevven oacloc. If u ar

distrustfool, bring too frendz. U ar a rongd woomman, and shal hav justice. Doo not bring polece. If u doo, aul wil be in vane. Yor un'none frend.' Wel, reyaly, this iz a verry pritty littel mistery. Whaut doo u intend too doo, Mis Morstan?"

"Dhat iz exactly whaut I waunt too aasc u."

"Then we shal moast certainly go. U and I and—yes, whi, Dr. Wautson iz the verry man. Yor corespondent cez too frendz. He and I hav werct tooghether befoer."

"But wood he cum?" she aasct, widh sumthhing apeling in her vois and expreshon.

"I shood be proud and happy," ced I, fervently, "if I can be ov enny cervice."

"U ar boath verry kiand," she aancerd. "I hav led a retiard life, and hav no frendz whoome I cood apele too. If I am here at cix it wil doo, I supose?"

"U must not be later," ced Hoamz. "Dhare iz wun uther point, houwevver. Iz this handriting the same az dhat uppon the perl-box adrecez?"

"I hav them here," she aancerd, projucing haaf a duzsen pecez ov paper.

"U ar certainly a moddel cliyent. U hav the corect inchuwishon. Let us ce, nou." He spred out the paperz uppon the tabel, and gave littel darting glaancez from wun too the uther. "Dha ar disghiazd handz, exept the letter," he ced, prezently, "but dhare can be no qweschon az too the authorship. Ce hou the ireprescibel Greke e wil brake

out, and ce the twerl ov the final s. Dha ar undoutedly bi the same person. I shood not like too sugest fauls hoaps, Mis Morstan, but iz dhare enny resemblans betwene this hand and dhat ov yor faather?"

"Nuthhing cood be moer unlike."

"I expected too here u sa so. We shal looc out for u, then, at cix. Pra alou me too kepe the paperz. I ma looc intoo the matter befoer then. It iz oonly haaf-paast thre. *Au revoir*, then."

"*Au revoir*," ced our vizsitor, and, widh a brite, kiandly glaans from wun too the uther ov us, she replaist her perl-box in her boozzom and hurrede awa. Standing at the windo, I waucht her wauking briscly doun the strete, until the gra terban and white fether wer but a spec in the somber croud.

"Whaut a verry attractive woomman!" I exclaimd, terning too mi companyon.

He had lit hiz pipe agane, and wauz lening bac widh drooping ilidz. "Iz she?" he ced, lan'gwidly. "I did not observ."

"U reyaly ar an autommaton,—a calculating-mashene!" I cride. "Dhare iz sumthhing pozsitiavly inhuman in u at tiamz."

He smiald gently. "It iz ov the ferst importans," he ced, "not too alou yor jujment too be biyast bi personal qwaulitese. A cliyent iz too me a mere unit,—a factor in a problem. The emoashonal qwaulitese ar antagonistic too clere rezoning. I ashure u dhat the moast winning woomman I evver nu wauz hangd for poizoning thre littel children for dhare inshurans-munny, and the moast repellant man ov mi aqwaintans iz a filanthropist whoo haz spent neerly a qworter ov a milleyon uppon the

Lundon poor.”

“In this cace, houwevver—”

“I nevver make exepshonz. An exepshon dispruivz the roole. Hav u evver had ocaizhon too studdy carracter in handriting? Whaut doo u make ov this fellose scribbel?”

“It iz ledgibel and reggular,” I aancerd. “A man ov biznes habbits and sum foers ov carracter.”

Hoamz shooc hiz hed. “Looc at hiz long letterz,” he ced. “Dha hardly rise abuv the common herd. Dhat *d* mite be an *a*, and dhat *l* an *e*. Men ov carracter aulwase diferensheyate dhare long letterz, houwevver illegibly dha ma rite. Dhare iz vacilaishon in hiz *k*'z and celf-esteme in hiz cappitalz. I am gowing out nou. I hav sum fu refferencez too make. Let me recomend this booc,—wun ov the moast remarcabel evver pend. It iz Winwood Reedz ‘Marterdom ov Man.’ I shal be bac in an our.”

I sat in the windo widh the vollume in mi hand, but mi thauts wer far from the daring speculaishonz ov the riter. Mi miand ran uppon our late vizsitor,—her smialz, the depe rich toanz ov her vois, the strainj mistery which overhung her life. If she wer cevventene at the time ov her faatherz disaperans she must be cevven-and-twenty nou,—a swete age, when ueth haz lost its celf-conshousnes and becum a littel soberd bi expereyens. So I sat and muezd, until such dain’gerous thauts came intoo mi hed dhat I hurrede awa too mi desc and plunjd fureyously intoo the latest tretese uppon pathollogy. Whaut wauz I, an army cerjon widh a weke leg and a weker banking-acount, dhat I shood dare too thhinc ov such thhingz? She wauz a unit, a factor,—nuthhing moer.

If mi fuchure wer blac, it wauz better shuerly too face it like a man dhan too atempt too briten it bi mere wil-o'-the-wisps ov the imaginaishon.

### Chapter 3

#### In Qwest ov a Solueshon

It wauz haaf-paast five befoer Hoamz reternd. He wauz brite, egher, and in exelent spirrits,—a moode which in hiz cace aulternated widh fits ov the blackest depreshon.

“Dhare iz no grate mistery in this matter,” he ced, taking the cup ov te which I had poerd out for him. “The facts apere too admit ov oanly wun explanaishon.”

“Whaut! u hav solvd it aulreddy?”

“Wel, dhat wood be too much too sa. I hav discuvverd a sugestive fact, dhat iz aul. It iz, houwevver, “verry” sugestive. The detailz ar stil too be added. I hav just found, on consulting the bac fialz ov the “Tiamz”, dhat Major Sholto, ov Upper Norword, late ov the 34th Bomba Infantry, dide uppon the 28th ov Aipril, 1882.”

“I ma be verry obchuce, Hoamz, but I fale too ce whaut this sugest.”

“No? U cerprise me. Looc at it in this wa, then. Captane Morstan disapeerz. The oanly person in Lundon whoome he cood hav vizsited iz Major Sholto. Major Sholto denise havving herd dhat he wauz in Lundon. Foer yeerz later Sholto dise. “Within a weke ov hiz deth” Captane Morstanz dauter receevz a vallubel prezsent, which iz repeted from yere too yere, and nou culminaits in a letter which descriabz her az a

rongd woomman. Whaut rong can it refer too exep't this deprivaishon ov her faather? And whi shood the prezents beghin imejaitly aafter Sholtose deth, unles it iz dhat Sholtose are nose sumthhing ov the mistery and desiarz too make compensaishon? Hav u enny aulternative ththeyory which wil mete the facts?"

"But whaut a strainj compensaishon! And hou strainjly made! Whi, too, shood he rite a letter nou, raather dhan six yeerz ago? Agane, the letter speex ov ghivving her justice. Whaut justice can she hav? It iz too much too suppose dhat her faather iz stil alive. Dhare iz no uther injustice in her cace dhat u no ov."

"Dhare ar difficultese; dhare ar certainly difficultese," ced Sherloc Hoamz, penciavly. "But our expedishon ov too-nite wil solv them aul. Aa, here iz a foer-wheler, and Mis Morstan iz incide. Ar u aul reddy? Then we had better go down, for it iz a littel paast the our."

I pict up mi hat and mi hevveyest stic, but I observd dhat Hoamz tooc hiz revolver from hiz drauwer and slipt it intoo hiz pocket. It wauz clere dhat he thaut dhat our niats werc mite be a cereyous wun.

Mis Morstan wauz muffeld in a darc cloke, and her cencitive face wauz compoazd, but pale. She must hav bene moer dhan woomman if she did not

fele sum unnesines at the strainj enterprise uppon which we wer embarking, yet her celf-controle wauz perfect, and she reddily aancerd the fu adishonal qweschonz which Sherloc Hoamz poot too her.

"Major Sholto wauz a verry particcular frend ov paapaaz," she ced. "Hiz letterz wer fool ov aluezhonz too the major. He and paapaa wer in comaand ov the truips at the Andaaman Ilandz, so dha wer throne a grate dele tooghether. Bi the wa, a cureyous paper wauz found in paapaaz desc which no wun cood understand. I doant suppose dhat it iz ov the

slitest importans, but I thaut u mite care too ce it, so I braut it widh me. It iz here."

Hoamz unfoalded the paper caerfooly and smuidhd it out uppon hiz ne. He then verry methoddicaly exammiand it aul over widh hiz dubbel lenz.

"It iz paper ov native Injan manufacchure," he remarct. "It haz at sum time bene pind too a boerd. The diyagram uppon it apeerz too be a plan ov part ov a larj bilding widh numerous haulz, corridorz, and passagez. At wun point iz a smaul cros dun in red inc, and abuv it iz '3.37 from left,' in faded pencil-riting. In the left-hand corner iz a cureyous hiyerogliffic like foer croscez in a line widh dhare armz tutching. Becide it iz ritten, in verry ruf and coers carracterz, 'The cine ov the foer,—Jonnathan Smaul, Mahommet Cing, Abdoollaa Caan,

Dust Acbar.' No, I confes dhat I doo not ce hou this baerz uppon the matter. Yet it iz evvidently a document ov importans. It haz bene kept caerfooly in a pocket-booc; for the wun cide iz az clene az the uther."

"It wauz in hiz pocket-booc dhat we found it."

"Preserv it caerfooly, then, Mis Morstan, for it ma proove too be ov uce too us. I beghin too suspect dhat this matter ma tern out too be much deper and moer suttel dhan I at ferst supozd. I must reconcider mi ideyaaz." He leend bac in the cab, and I cood ce bi hiz draun brou and hiz vacant i dhat he wauz thhinking intently. Mis Morstan and I chatted in an undertone about our prezsent expedishon and its poscibel outcum, but our companyon maintaind hiz impennetrabel reserv until the end ov our gerny.

It wauz a Ceptember evening, and not yet cevven oacloc, but the da had bene a drery wun, and a dens drizly fog la lo uppon the grate citty. Mud-cullord cloudz druipt sadly over the muddy streets. Doun the Strand the lamps wer but misty splotchez ov difuezd lite which throo

a febel cercular glimmer uppon the slimy paivment. The yello glare from the shop-windose streemd out intoo the stemy, vaporous are, and throo a merky, shifting rajans acros the crouded thurrofare. Dhare wauz, too mi miand, sumthhing ery and goast-like in the endles proceshon ov facez which flitted acros these narro barz ov lite,—sad facez and glad, haggard and merry. Like aul human kiand, dha flitted from the gloome intoo the lite, and so bac intoo the gloome wuns moer. I am not subject too impreshonz, but the dul, hevvy evening, widh the strainj biznes uppon which we wer en'gaijd, combiand too make me nervous and deprest. I cood ce from Mis Morstanz manner dhat she wauz suffering from the same feling. Hoamz alone cood rise supereyor too petty influwencez. He held hiz open note-booc uppon hiz ne, and from time too time he jotted doun figguerz and memorandaa in the lite ov hiz pocket-lantern.

At the Liceyum Theyater the croudz wer aulreddy thhic at the cide-entrancez. In frunt a continnuwous streme ov hansomz and foer-whelerz wer ratling up, discharging dhare cargose ov shert-frunted men and beshauld, bedimonded wimmen. We had hardly reecht the thherd pillar, which wauz our rondavoo, befoer a smaull, darc, brisc man in the dres ov a coachman acosted us.

“Ar u the partese whoo cum widh Mis Morstan?” he aasct.

“I am Mis Morstan, and these too gentelmen ar mi frendz,” ced she.

He bent a pare ov wunderfooly pennetrating and qweschoning ise uppon us.

“U wil excuse me, mis,” he ced widh a certane dogghed manner, “but I wauz too aasc u too ghiv me yor werd dhat niather ov yor companyonz iz a polece-officer.”

“I ghiv u mi werd on dhat,” she aancerd.

He gave a shril whiscel, on which a strete Arrab led across a foer-wheler and opened the door. The man who had adrest us mounted too the box, while we took our places inside. We had hardly done so before the driver whipt up his horse, and we plunged away at a furious pace through the foggy streets.

The chit-chat was a curious one. We were driving to an un'known place, on an un'known errand. Yet our invitation was rather a complete hoax,—which was an inconceivable hypothesis,—or else we had good reason too think that important issues might hang upon our girth. Miss Morstan's demeanor was as resolute and collected as ever. I endeavored too cheer and amuse her by reminiscences of my adventures in Afghanistan; but, too tell the truth, I was myself so excited at our chit-chat and so curious as too our destination that my stoeress was slightly involved. Too this day she declared that I told her a moving anecdote as too how a musket looted into my tent at the end of night, and how I found a double-barreled tiger cub at it. At first I had some idea as too the direction in which we were driving; but soon, without our pace, the fog, and my one limited notion of London, I lost my bearings, and now nothing, save that we seemed too be going a very long way. Sherlock Holmes was never at fault, however, and he muttered the names as the cab rattled through squares and in and out by torchlit by-ways.

"Rochester Row," said he. "Now Vincent Square. Now we come out on the Vauxhall Bridge Road. We are making for the Surrey side, apparently. Yes, I think so. Now we are on the bridge. You can catch glimpses of the river."

We did indeed get a fleeting view of a stretch of the Thames with the

lamps shining upon the braud, cilent wauter; but our cab dasht on, and wauz soone involvd in a labbirinth ov streets uppon the uthar cide.

“Werdzwerth Rode,” ced mi companyon. “Priyory Rode. Larc Haul Lane. Stoqwel Place. Robbert Strete. Coald Harbor Lane. Our qwest duz not apere too take us too verry fashonabel rejonz.”

We had, indede, reecht a qweschonabel and forbidding naborhood. Long lianz ov dul bric housez wer oonly releevd bi the coers glare and taudry brilleyancy ov public housez at the corner. Then came rose ov too-stoerede villaaz eche widh a frunting ov minnichure garden, and then agane interminabel lianz ov nu staring bric bildingz,—the monster tentakelz which the giyant citty wauz throwing out intoo the cuntry. At laast the cab droo up at the thherd hous in a nu terrace. Nun ov the uthar housez wer inhabbited, and dhat at which we stopt wauz az darc az its naborz, save for a cin’ghel glimmer in the kitchen windo. On our nocking, houwevver, the doer wauz instantly throne open bi a Hindoo cervant clad in a yello terban, white looce-fitting cloadhz, and a yello sash. Dhare wauz sumthhing strainjly incon’groowous in this Oreyental figgure fraimd in the commonplace doerwa ov a thherd-rate suburban dwelling-hous.

“The Sahib awaits u,” ced he, and even az he spoke dhare came a hi piping vois from sum inner roome. “Sho them in too me, kitnutgar,” it cride. “Sho them strate in too me.”

## Chapter 4

### The Stoery ov the Bauld-Hedded Man

We follode the Injan doun a sordid and common passage, il-lit and

wers fernisht, until he came too a doer uppon the rite, which he throo open. A blase ov yello lite streemd out uppon us, and in the center ov the glare dhare stood a smaull man widh a verry hi hed, a briscel ov red hare aul round the frinj ov it, and a bauld, shining scalp which shot out from amung it like a mountane-peke from fer-trese. He riadhd hiz handz tooghether az he stood, and hiz fechuerz wer in a perpetchuwal gerc, nou smiling, nou scouling, but nevver for an instant in repose. Nachure had ghivven him a penjulous lip, and a too vizsibel line ov yello and ireggular teeth, which he strove feebly too concele bi constantly paacing hiz hand over the lower part ov hiz face. In spite ov hiz obtroocive bauldnes, he gave the impreshon ov ueth. In point ov fact he had just ternd hiz thherteyeth yere.

“Yor cervant, Mis Morstan,” he kept repeting, in a thhin, hi vois.  
“Yor cervant, gentelmen. Pra step intoo mi littel sanctum. A smaull place, mis, but fernisht too mi one liking. An owacis ov art in the houling dezsert ov South Lundon.”

We wer aul astonnisht bi the aperans ov the apartment intoo which he invited us. In dhat sorry hous it looct az out ov place az a dimond ov the ferst wauter in a cetting ov braas. The rithest and glosceyest ov kertainz and tappestrese draipt the waulz, luypt bac here and dhare too expose sum richly-mounted painting or Oreyental vaaz. The carpet wauz ov amber-and-blac, so soft and so thhic dhat the foot sanc plezzantly intoo it, az intoo a bed ov mos. Too grate tigher-skinz throne athwort it increest the sugeschon ov Eestern lucshury, az did a huge hoocaa which stood uppon a mat in the corner. A lamp in the fashon ov a silver duv wauz hung from an aulmoast invizsibel goalden wire in the center ov the roome. Az it bernd it fild the are widh a suttel and aromattic odor.

“Mr. Thadjus Sholto,” ced the littel man, stil gerking and smiling.  
“Dhat iz mi name. U ar Mis Morstan, ov coers. And these gentelmen—”

“This iz Mr. Sherloc Hoamz, and this iz Dr. Wautson.”

“A doctor, a?” cride he, much exited. “Hav u yor stethoscope? Mite I aasc u—wood u hav the kiandnes? I hav grave douts az too mi miatral valv, if u wood be so verry good. The ayortic I ma reli uppon, but I shood vally yor opinyon uppon the miatral.”

I liscend too hiz hart, az reqwested, but wauz unnabel too fiand ennithhing amis, save indede dhat he wauz in an extacy ov fere, for he shivverd from hed too foot. “It apeerz too be normal,” I ced. “U hav no cauz for unnesines.”

“U wil excuse mi anxiyety, Mis Morstan,” he remarct, arily. “I am a grate sufferer, and I hav long had suspishonz az too dhat valv. I am delited too here dhat dha ar unworanted. Had yor faather, Mis Morstan, refraind from throwing a strane uppon hiz hart, he mite hav bene alive nou.”

I cood hav struc the man acros the face, so hot wauz I at this callous and of-hand refferens too so dellicate a matter. Mis Morstan sat doun, and her face groo white too the lips. “I nu in mi hart dhat he wauz ded,” ced she.

“I can ghiv u evvery informaishon,” ced he, “and, whaut iz moer, I can doo u justice; and I wil, too, whaut evver Bruther Barthollomu ma sa. I am so glad too hav yor frendz here, not oonly az an escort too u, but aulso az witnecez too whaut I am about too doo and sa. The thre ov us can sho a boald frunt too Bruther Barthollomu. But let us hav no outciderz,—no polece or ofishalz. We can cettel evverithhing satisfactorily amung ourcelvz, widhout enny interferens. Nuthhing wood anoi Bruther Barthollomu moer dhan enny publicity.” He sat doun uppon a

lo cetty and blinct at us inqwiringly widh hiz weke, wautery blu

ise.

“For mi part,” ced Hoamz, “whautevver u ma chuse too sa wil go no ferther.”

I nodded too sho mi agrement.

“Dhat iz wel! Dhat iz wel!” ced he. “Ma I offer u a glaas ov Keyanty, Mis Morstan? Or ov Toca? I kepe no uther wianz. Shal I open a flaasc? No? Wel, then, I trust dhat u hav no obgecshon too tobacco-smoke, too the miald baulsammic odor ov the Eestern tobacco. I am a littel nervous, and I fiand mi hoocaa an invallubel ceddative.” He aplide a taper too the grate bole, and the smoke bubbeld merrily throo the rose-wauter. We sat aul thre in a cemmy-cerkel, widh our hedz advaanst, and our chinz uppon our handz, while the strainj, gerky littel fello, widh hiz hi, shining hed, puft unnesily in the center.

“When I ferst determiand too make this comunicaihon too u,” ced he, “I mite hav ghivven u mi adres, but I feerd dhat u mite disregard mi reqwest and bring unplezzant pepel widh u. I tooc the libberty, dhaerfoer, ov making an apointment in such a wa dhat mi man Willeyamz mite be abel too ce u ferst. I hav complete confidens in hiz discreshon, and he had orderz, if he wer disattisfide, too procede no ferther in the matter. U wil excuse these precaushonz, but I am a man ov sumwhaut retiring, and I mite even sa refiand, taists, and dhare iz nuthhing moer uneesthetic dhan a poleesman. I hav a natchural shrinking from aul formz ov ruf matereyalizm. I celdom cum in contact widh the ruf croud. I liv, az u ce, widh sum littel atmosfere ov ellegans around me. I ma caul micelf a paitron ov the arts. It iz mi weecnes. The landscape iz a genuwine Corot, and, dho a conocer mite perhaps thro a dout uppon dhat Salvator Rozaa, dhare canot be the leest qweschon about the Boughero. I am parshal too the moddern

French scoole.”

“U wil excuse me, Mr. Sholto,” ced Mis Morstan, “but I am here at yor reqwest too lern sumthhing which u desire too tel me. It iz verry late, and I shood desire the intervuu too be az short az poscibel.”

“At the best it must take sum time,” he aancerd; “for we shal certainly hav too go too Norwood and ce Bruther Barthollomu. We shal aul go and tri if we can ghet the better ov Bruther Barthollomu. He iz verry an’gry widh me for taking the coers which haz ceemd rite too me. I had qwite hi werdz widh him laast nite. U canot imadgine whaut a terribel fello he iz when he iz an’gry.”

“If we ar too go too Norwood it wood perhaps be az wel too start at wuns,” I venchuerd too remarck.

He laaft until hiz eerz wer qwite red. “Dhat wood hardly doo,” he cride. “I doant no whaut he wood sa if I braut u in dhat sudden wa. No, I must prepare u bi showing u hou we aul stand too eche uther. In the ferst place, I must tel u dhat dhare ar cevveral points in the stoery ov which I am micelf ignorant. I can oanly la the facts befoer u az far az I no them micelf.

“Mi faather wauz, az u ma hav ghest, Major Jon Sholto, wuns ov the Injan army. He retiard sum elevven yeerz ago, and came too liv at Pondicherry Loj in Upper Norwood. He had prosperd in Injaa, and braut bac widh him a concidderabel sum ov munny, a larj coleschon ov vallubel cureyoscitese, and a staaf ov native cervants. Widh these advaantagez he baut himcelf a hous, and livd in grate lucshury. Mi twin-bruther Barthollomu and I wer the oanly children.

“I verry wel remember the censaishon which wauz cauzd bi the disaperans ov Captane Morstan. We red the detailz in the paperz, and, nowing dhat he had bene a frend ov our faatherz, we discust

the cace frely in hiz prezsens. He uest too join in our speculaishonz az too whaut cood hav happend. Nevver for an instant did we suspect dhat he had the whole ceecret hidden in hiz one brest,—dhat ov aul men he alone nu the fate ov Arthher Morstan.

“We did no, houwevver, dhat sum mistery—sum pozsitive dain’ger—overhung our faather. He wauz verry feerfool ov gowing out alone, and he aulwase empload too prise-fiterz too act az poerterz at Pondicherry Loj. Willeyamz, whoo drove u too-nite, wauz wun ov them. He wauz wuns lite-wate champeyon ov In’gland. Our faather wood nevver tel us whaut it wauz he feerd, but he had a moast marct averzhon too men widh wooden legz. On wun ocaizhon he acchuwaly fiard hiz revolver at a wooden-legged man, whoo pruivd too be a harmles traidzman canvassing for orderz. We had too pa a larj sum too hush the matter up. Mi bruther and I uest too thhinc this a mere whim ov mi faatherz, but events hav cins led us too chainj our opinyon.

“Erly in 1882 mi faather receevd a letter from Injaa which wauz a grate shoc too him. He neerly fainted at the brecfast-table when he openid it, and from dhat da he cickend too hiz deth. Whaut wauz in the letter we cood nevver discuvver, but I cood ce az he held it dhat it wauz short and ritten in a scraulng hand. He had sufferd for yeerz from an enlarjd splene, but he nou became rappidly wers, and toowordz the end ov Aipril we wer informd dhat he wauz beyond aul hope, and dhat he wisht too make a laast comunicaishon too us.

“When we enterd hiz roome he wauz propt up widh pillose and breathing hevvely. He besaut us too loc the doer and too cum uppon iather cide ov the bed. Then, graasping our handz, he made a remarcabel staitment too us, in a vois which wauz broken az much bi emoashon az bi pane. I shal tri and ghiv it too u in hiz one verry werdz.

“I hav oanly wun thhing,’ he ced, ‘which wase uppon mi miand at this supreme moment. It iz mi treetment ov poor Morstanz orfan. The kerst grede which haz bene mi becetting cin throo life haz widheld from her the trezhure, haaf at leest ov which shood hav bene herz. And yet I hav made no uce ov it micelf,—so bliand and foolish a thhing iz avvarice. The mere feling ov poseshon haz bene so dere too me dhat I cood not bare too share it widh anuther. Ce dhat chaplet dipt widh perlz becide the qwinene-bottel. Even dhat I cood not bare too part widh, auldho I had got it out widh the desine ov cending it too her. U, mi sunz, wil ghiv her a fare share ov the Agraa trezhure. But cend her nuthhing—not even the chaplet—until I am gon. Aafter aul, men hav bene az bad az this and hav recuverd.

“I wil tel u hou Morstan dide,’ he continnude. ‘He had sufferd for yearz from a weke hart, but he conceeld it from evvery wun. I alone nu it. When in Injaa, he and I, throo a remarcabel chane ov cercumstaancez, came intoo poseshon ov a concidderabel trezhure. I braut it over too In’gland, and on the nite ov Morstanz arival he came strate over here too clame hiz share. He wauct over from the staishon, and wauz admitted bi mi faithfool oald Lal Choudar, whoo iz nou ded. Morstan and I had a differens ov opinyon az too the divizhon ov the trezhure, and we came too heted werdz. Morstan had sprung out ov hiz chare in a parroxizm ov an’gher, when he suddenly prest hiz hand too hiz cide, hiz face ternd a dusky hu, and he fel baqwordz, cutting hiz hed against the corner ov the trezhure-chest. When I stuipt over him I found, too mi horror, dhat he wauz ded.

“For a long time I sat haaf distracted, wundering whaut I shood doo. Mi ferst impuls wauz, ov coers, too caul for acistans; but I cood not but reccognise dhat dhare wauz evvery chaans dhat I wood be acuezd ov hiz merder. Hiz deth at the moment ov a qworel, and the gash in hiz hed, wood be blac against me. Agane, an ofishal inqwiry cood not be made widhout bringing out sum facts about the trezhure, which I wauz

particularly anxious too kepe secret. He had told me dhat no sole  
uppon  
erth nu whare he had gon. Dhare ceemd too be no necescity whi enny  
sole evver shood no.

“I wauz stil pondering over the matter, when, loocking up, I sau mi  
cervant, Lal Choudar, in the doerwa. He stole in and bolted the doer  
behind him. “Doo not fere, Sahib,” he ced. “No wun nede no dhat u  
hav kild him. Let us hide him awa, and whoo iz the wiser?” “I did  
not kil him,” ced I. Lal Choudar shooc hiz hed and smiald. “I herd  
it aul, Sahib,” ced he. “I herd u qworel, and I herd the blo.  
But mi lips ar ceeld. Aul ar aslepe in the hous. Let us poot him  
awa tooghether.” Dhat wauz enuf too decide me. If mi one cervant cood  
not beleve mi innocens, hou cood I hope too make it good befoer  
twelv foolish traidzmen in a jury-box? Lal Choudar and I dispoazd ov  
the boddy dhat nite, and within a fu dase the Lundon paperz wer fool  
ov the mistereyous disaperans ov Captane Morstan. U wil ce from  
whaut I sa dhat I can hardly be blaimd in the matter. Mi fault lise in  
the fact dhat we conceeld not oonly the boddy, but aulso the trezhure,  
and dhat I hav clung too Morstanz share az wel az too mi one. I wish  
u, dhaerfoer, too make restichueshon. Poot yor eerz doun too mi mouth.  
The trezhure iz hidden in—’

“At this instant a horribel chainj came over hiz expreshon; hiz ise  
staerd wialdly, hiz jau dropt, and he yeld, in a vois which I can  
nevver forghet, ‘Kepe him out! For Criasts sake kepe him out!’ We boath  
staerd round at the windo behind us uppon which hiz gase wauz fixt. A  
face wauz loocking in at us out ov the darcnes. We cood ce the  
whitening ov the nose whare it wauz prest against the glaas. It wauz a  
bearded, hary face, widh wiald croowel ise and an expreshon ov  
concentrated malevvolens. Mi bruther and I rusht toowordz the windo,  
but the man wauz gon. When we reternd too mi faather hiz hed had  
dropt and hiz puls had ceest too bete.

“We cercht the garden dhat nite, but found no cine ov the introoder, save dhat just under the windo a cin’ghel footmarc wauz vizsibel in the flouwer-bed. But for dhat wun trace, we mite hav thaut dhat our imaginaishonz had cunjuerd up dhat wiald, feers face. We soone, houwevver, had anuther and a moer striking prooffe dhat dhare wer ceecret agencese at werc aul round us. The windo ov mi faatherz roome wauz found open in the morning, hiz cubbordz and boxez had bene rifeld, and uppon hiz chest wauz fixt a toern pece ov paper, with the werdz ‘The cine ov the foer’ scrauld acros it. Whaut the frase ment, or whoo our ceecret vizsitor ma hav bene, we nevver nu. Az far az we can juj, nun ov mi faatherz propperty had bene acchuwaly stolen, dho evverithhing had bene ternd out. Mi bruther and I natchuraly asoasheyated this peculeyar incident widh the fere which haunted mi faather juring hiz life; but it iz stil a complete mistery too us.”

The littel man stopt too relite hiz hoocaa and puft thautfooly for a fu moments. We had aul sat abzorbd, liscening too hiz extrordinary narrative. At the short acount ov her faatherz deth Mis Morstan had ternd dedly white, and for a moment I feerd dhat she wauz about too faint. She rallede houwevver, on drinking a glaas ov wauter which I qwiyetly poerd out for her from a Veneeshan caraaf uppon the cide-tabel. Sherlock Hoamz leend bac in hiz chare widh an abstracted expreshon and the lidz draun lo over hiz glittering ise. Az I glaanst at him I cood not but thhinc hou on dhat verry da he had complaind bitterly ov the commonplaisnes ov life. Here at leest wauz a problem which wood tax hiz sagascity too the utmoast. Mr. Thadjus Sholto looct from wun too the uther ov us widh an obveyous pride at the efect which hiz stoery had projuest, and then continnude betwene the pufs ov hiz overgrone pipe.

“Mi bruther and I,” ced he, “wer, az u ma imadgine, much exited az too the trezhure which mi faather had spoken ov. For weex and for munths we dug and delvd in evvery part ov the garden, widhout discuvvering its

wharabouts. It wauz maddening too thhinc dhat the hiding-place wauz on  
hiz

verry lips at the moment dhat he dide. We cood juj the splendor ov  
the miscing ritchez bi the chaplet which he had taken out. Over this  
chaplet mi bruther Barthollomu and I had sum littel discushon. The  
perlz wer evvidently ov grate vallu, and he wauz avers too part with  
them, for, betwene frendz, mi bruther wauz himself a littel incliand too  
mi faatherz fault. He thaut, too, dhat if we parted with the chaplet  
it mite ghiv rise too goscip and finaly bring us intoo trubbel. It wauz  
aul dhat I cood doo too perswade him too let me fiand out Mis Morstanz  
adres and cend her a detach perl at fixt intervalz, so dhat at  
leest she mite nevver fele destichute."

"It wauz a kiandly thaut," ced our companyon, earnestly. "It wauz  
extreemly good ov u."

The littel man waivd hiz hand deprecatingly. "We wer yor trustese,"  
he ced. "Dhat wauz the vu which I tooc ov it, dho Bruther  
Barthollomu cood not aultooghether ce it in dhat lite. We had plenty ov  
munny ourcelvz. I desiard no moer. Beciadz, it wood hav bene such  
bad taist too hav treted a yung lady in so skervy a fashon. 'Le  
mauvais goût mène au crime.' The French hav a verry nete wa ov pooting  
these thhingz. Our differens ov opinyon on this subget went so far  
dhat I thaut it best too cet up ruimz for micelf: so I left  
Pondicherry Loj, taking the oald kitmutgar and Willeyamz with me.  
Yesterda, houwevver, I lern dhat an event ov extreme importans haz  
okerd. The trezhure haz bene discuverd. I instantly comunicated  
with Mis Morstan, and it oanly remainz for us too drive out too Norwood  
and demaand our share. I explaind mi vuse laast nite too Bruther  
Barthollomu: so we shal be expected, if not welcum, vizsitorz."

Mr. Thadjus Sholto ceest, and sat twitching on hiz lucshureyous cetty.  
We aul remaind cilent, with our thauts uppon the nu devellopment  
which the mistereyous biznes had taken. Hoamz wauz the ferst too spring

too hiz fete.

“U hav dun wel, cer, from ferst too laast,” ced he. “It iz poscibel dhat we ma be abel too make u sum smaual retern bi throwing sum lite uppon dhat which iz stil darc too u. But, az Mis Morstan remarct just nou, it iz late, and we had best poot the matter throo widhout dela.”

Our nu aqwaintans verry delibberaitly coild up the chube ov hiz hoocaa, and projuest from behiand a kertane a verry long befrogd topcote widh Astracan collar and cuffs. This he buttond tiatly up, in spite ov the extreme cloasnes ov the nite, and finnisht hiz atire bi pooting on a rabbit-skin cap widh hanging lappets which cuvverd the eerz, so dhat no part ov him wauz vizsibel save hiz mobile and peky face. “Mi helth iz sumwhaut fradgile,” he remarct, az he led the wa doun the passage. “I am compeld too be a valechudinareyan.”

Our cab wauz awating us outcide, and our proagram wauz evvidently preyarainjd, for the driver started of at wuns at a rappid pace. Thadjus Sholto tauct incessantly, in a vois which rose hi abuv the rattel ov the wheelz.

“Barthollomu iz a clevver fello,” ced he. “Hou doo u thhinc he found out whare the trezhure wauz? He had cum too the concluezhon dhat it wauz sumwhare indoerz: so he werct out aul the cubic space ov the hous, and made mezhuerments evveriwahre, so dhat not wun inch shood be unnacounted for. Amung uther thhingz, he found dhat the hite ov the bilding wauz cevventy-foer fete, but on adding toogheter the hiats ov aul the cepparate ruimz, and making evvery alouwans for the space betwene, which he ascertainnd bi boeringz, he cood not bring the total too moer dhan cevventy fete. Dhare wer foer fete unnacounted for. These cood oanly be at the top ov the bilding. He noct a hole, dhaerfoer, in the laath-and-plaaster celing ov the hiyest roome, and dhare, shure

enuf, he came uppon anuther littel garret abuv it, which had bene ceeld up and wauz none too no wun. In the center stood the trezhure-chest, resting uppon too raafterz. He lowerd it throo the hole, and dhare it lise. He compuets the vallu ov the juwelz at not les dhan haaf a milleyon sterling.”

At the menshon ov this gigantic sum we aul staerd at wun anuther open-ide. Mis Morstan, cood we cecure her riats, wood chainj from a nedy guvvernes too the ritchest ares in In’gland. Shuerly it wauz the place ov a loiyal frend too rejois at such nuse; yet I am ashaimd too sa dhat celfishnes tooc me bi the sole, and dhat mi hart ternd az hevvy az led within me. I stammerd out sum fu hauling werdz ov con’grachulaishon, and then sat douncaast, widh mi hed druip, def too the babbel ov our nu aqwaintans. He wauz cleerly a confermd hipocondreyac, and I wauz dremily conshous dhat he wauz poering foerth interminabel trainz ov cimptomz, and imploering informaishon az too the composishon and acshon ov inumerabel qwac nostrumz, sum ov which he boer about in a lether cace in hiz pocket. I trust dhat he ma not remember enny ov the aancerz which I gave him dhat nite. Hoamz declaerz dhat he overherd me caushon him against the grate dain’ger ov taking moer dhan too drops ov caastor oil, while I recomended stricnene in larj docez az a ceddative. Houwevver dhat ma be, I wauz certainly releevd when our cab poold up widh a gerc and the coachman sprang doun too open the doer.

“This, Mis Morstan, iz Pondicherry Loj,” ced Mr. Thadjus Sholto, az he handed her out.

## Chapter 5

### The Tradgedy ov Pondicherry Loj

It wauz neerly elevven oacloc when we reecht this final stage ov our niats advenchuerz. We had left the damp fog ov the grate citty behiand us, and the nite wauz faerly fine. A worm wind blu from the westword, and hevvy cloudz muivd sloly acros the ski, widh haaf a moone peping ocaizhonaly throo the rifts. It wauz clere enuf too ce for sum distans, but Thadjus Sholto tooc doun wun ov the cide-lamps from the carrage too ghiv us a better lite uppon our wa.

Pondicherry Loj stood in its one groundz, and wauz ghert round widh a verry hi stone waul topt widh broken glaas. A cin'ghel narro iarn-clampt doer formd the oonly meenz ov entrans. On this our ghide noct widh a peculeyar poastman-like rat-tat.

“Whoo iz dhare?” cride a gruf vois from within.

“It iz I, McMerdo. U shuerly no mi noc bi this time.”

Dhare wauz a grumblin sound and a clanking and jaaring ov kese. The doer swung hevvely bac, and a short, depe-chested man stood in the opening, widh the yello lite ov the lantern shining uppon hiz protrooded face and twincling distrustfool ise.

“Dhat u, Mr. Thadjus? But whoo ar the utherz? I had no orderz about them from the maaster.”

“No, McMerdo? U cerprise me! I toald mi bruther laast nite dhat I shood bring sum frendz.”

“He aint bene out o’ hiz roome too-da, Mr. Thadjus, and I hav no orderz. U no verry wel dhat I must stic too regulaishonz. I can let u in, but yor frendz must just stop whare dha ar.”

This wauz an unexpected obstakel. Thadjus Sholto looct about him in a perplext and helples manner. “This iz too bad ov u, McMerdo!” he

ced. "If I garanty them, dhat iz enuf for u. Dhare iz the yung lady, too. She canot wate on the public rode at this our."

"Verry sorry, Mr. Thadjus," ced the poerter, inexorably. "Foke ma be frendz o' yorz, and yet no frendz o' the maasterz. He pase me wel too doo mi juty, and mi juty Ile doo. I doant no nun o' yor frendz."

"O, yes u doo, McMerdo," cride Sherloc Hoamz, geenyaly. "I doant thhinc u can hav forgotten me. Doant u remember the ammater whoo faut thre roundz widh u at Allisonz ruimz on the nite ov yor bennefit foer yeerz bac?"

"Not Mr. Sherloc Hoamz!" roerd the prise-fiter. "Godz truith! hou cood I hav mistooc u? If insted o' standin' dhare so qwiyet u had just stept up and ghivven me dhat cros-hit ov yorz under the jau, Ide haa' none u widhout a qweschon. Aa, yor wun dhat haz waisted yor ghifts, u hav! U mite hav aimd hi, if u had joinnd the fancy."

"U ce, Wautson, if aul els failz me I hav stil wun ov the ciyentiffic profeshonz open too me," ced Hoamz, laafing. "Our frend woant kepe us out in the coald nou, I am shure."

"In u cum, cer, in u cum,—u and yor frendz," he aancerd. "Verry sorry, Mr. Thadjus, but orderz ar verry strict. Had too be certane ov yor frendz befoer I let them in."

Incide, a gravvel paath wound throo dezzolate groundz too a huge clump ov a hous, sqware and prozayic, aul plunjd in shaddo save whare a muinbeme struc wun corner and glimmerd in a garret windo. The vaast cise ov the bilding, widh its gloome and its dethly cilens, struc a chil too the hart. Even Thadjus Sholto ceemd il at ese, and the lantern qwivverd and ratteld in hiz hand.

"I cannot understand it," he said. "Dhars must be some mistake. I distinctly told Bartholomew that we should be here, and yet dhars is no light in his window. I do not know what to do about it."

"Does he always guard the premises in this way?" asked Hoamz.

"Yes; he has followed my father's custom. He was the favorite son, you know, and I sometimes think that my father may have told him more than he ever told me. That is Bartholomew's window up dhars where the moonlight shines. It is quite bright, but dhars is no light from within, I think."

"Nun," said Hoamz. "But I see the glint of a light in that little window beside the door."

"Ah, that is the housekeeper's room. That is where old Mrs. Bernstone sits. She can tell us all about it. But perhaps you would not mind waiting here for a minute or two, for if we all go in together and she has no word of our coming she may be alarmed. But hush! what is that?"

He held up the lantern, and his hand shook until the circles of light flickered and wavered all round us. Miss Morstan seized my wrist, and we all stood with thumping hearts, straining our ears. From the grate below dhars sounded through the silent night the saddest and most pitiful of sounds,—the shrill, broken whimpering of a friendless woman.

"It is Mrs. Bernstone," said Sholto. "She is the only woman in the house. Wait here. I shall be back in a moment." He hurried for the door, and next in his peculiar way. We could see a tall old woman admit him, and saw with pleasure at the very sight of him.

"O, Mr. Thaddeus, dear, I am so glad you have come! I am so glad you have come, Mr. Thaddeus, dear!" We heard her reiterated rejoicings until

the doer wauz cloazd and her vois dide awa intoo a muffeld monnotone.

Our ghide had left us the lantern. Hoamz swung it sloly round, and peerd keenly at the hous, and at the grate rubbish-heeps which cumberd the groundz. Mis Morstan and I stood tooghether, and her hand wauz in mine. A wondrous suttel thhing iz luv, for here wer we too whoo had nevver cene eche uther befoer dhat da, betwene whoome no werd or even

looc ov afecshon had evver paast, and yet nou in an our ov trubbel our handz instinctiavly saut for eche uther. I hav marveld at it cins, but at the time it ceemd the moast natchural thhing dhat I shood go out too her so, and, az she haz often toald me, dhare wauz in her aulso the instinct too tern too me for cumfort and protecshon. So we stood hand in hand, like too children, and dhare wauz pece in our harts for aul the darc thhingz dhat surounded us.

“Whaut a strainj place!” she ced, loocking round.

“It loox az dho aul the moalz in In’gland had bene let looce in it. I hav cene sumthhing ov the sort on the cide ov a hil nere Ballarat, whare the prospectorz had bene at werc.”

“And from the same cauz,” ced Hoamz. “These ar the tracez ov the trezhure-cekerz. U must remember dhat dha wer cix yeerz loocking for it. No wunder dhat the groundz looc like a gravvel-pit.”

At dhat moment the doer ov the hous berst open, and Thadjus Sholto came running out, widh hiz handz throne forword and terror in hiz ise.

“Dhare iz sumthhing amis widh Barthollomu!” he cride. “I am fritend! Mi nervz canot stand it.” He wauz, indede, haaf blubbering widh fere, and hiz twitching febel face peping out from the grate Astracan collar had the helples apeling expreshon ov a terrifide chiald.

"Cum intoo the hous," ced Hoamz, in hiz crisp, ferm wa.

"Yes, doo!" pleded Thadjus Sholto. "I reyalz doo not fele eeqwal too ghivving direcshonz."

We aul follode him intoo the houskeperz roome, which stood uppon the left-hand cide ov the passage. The oald woomman wauz pacing up and down  
with a scaerd looc and restles picking fin'gherz, but the cite ov Mis Morstan apeerd too hav a suithing efect uppon her.

"God bles yor swete caam face!" she cride, with an histerrical sob.  
"It duz me good too ce u. O, but I hav bene soerly tride this da!"

Our companyon patted her thhin, werc-woern hand, and mermerd sum fu werdz ov kiandy woommanly cumfort which braut the cullor bac intoo the  
utherz bludles cheex.

"Maaster haz loct himcelf in and wil not aancer me," she explaind.  
"Aul da I hav wated too here from him, for he often liax too be alone; but an our ago I feerd dhat sumthhing wauz amis, so I went up and peept throo the ke-hole. U must go up, Mr. Thadjus,—u must go up and looc for yorcelf. I hav cene Mr. Barthollomu Sholto in joi and in sorro for ten long yeerz, but I nevver sau him with such a face on him az dhat."

Sherloc Hoamz tooc the lamp and led the wa, for Thadjus Sholtose teeth wer chattering in hiz hed. So shaken wauz he dhat I had too paas mi hand under hiz arm az we went up the staerz, for hiz nese wer trembling under him. Twice az we acended Hoamz whipt hiz lenz out ov hiz pocket and caerfooly exammiand marx which apeerd too me too be

mere shaiples smudgez ov dust uppon the coco-nut matting which cervd az a stare-carpet. He wauct sloly from step too step, hoalding the lamp, and shooting kene glaancez too rite and left. Mis Morstan had remaind behiand widh the fritend houskeper.

The thherd flite ov staerz ended in a strate passage ov sum length, widh a grate picchure in Injan tappestry uppon the rite ov it and thre doerz uppon the left. Hoamz advaanst along it in the same slo and methoddical wa, while we kept cloce at hiz heelz, widh our long blac shaddose streming baqwordz doun the corridoer. The thherd doer wauz dhat

which we wer ceking. Hoamz noct widhout receving enny aancer, and then tride too tern the handel and foers it open. It wauz loct on the incide, houwevver, and bi a braud and pouwerfool bolt, az we cood ce when

we cet our lamp up against it. The ke beying ternd, houwevver, the hole wauz not entiarily cloazd. Sherloc Hoamz bent doun too it, and instantly rose agane widh a sharp intaking ov the breth.

“Dhare iz sumthhing devvilish in this, Wautson,” ced he, moer muivd dhan

I had evver befoer cene him. “Whaut doo u make ov it?”

I stuipt too the hole, and recoild in horror. Muinlite wauz streming intoo the roome, and it wauz brite widh a vaghe and shifty rajans. Looocking strate at me, and suspended, az it wer, in the are, for aul beneeth wauz in shaddo, dhare hung a face,—the verry face ov our companyon Thadjus. Dhare wauz the same hi, shining hed, the same cercular briscel ov red hare, the same bludles countenans. The fechuerz wer cet, houwevver, in a horribel smile, a fixt and un’natchural grin, which in dhat stil and muinlit roome wauz moer jaaring too the nervz dhan enny scoul or contorshon. So like wauz the face too dhat ov our littel frend dhat I looct round at him too make shure dhat he wauz indede widh us. Then I recauld too miand dhat he had menshond too us

dhat hiz bruther and he wer twinz.

“This iz terribel!” I ced too Hoamz. “Whaut iz too be dun?”

“The doer must cum down,” he aancerd, and, springing against it, he poot aul hiz wate uppon the loc. It creect and groand, but did not yeeld. Tooghether we flung ourcelvz uppon it wuns moer, and this time it gave wa widh a sudden snap, and we found ourcelvz within Barthollomu Sholtose chaimber.

It apeerd too hav bene fitted up az a kemmical laboratoery. A dubbel line ov glaas-stopperd bottelz wauz draun up uppon the waul opposite the doer, and the tabel wauz litterd over widh Buncen bernerz, test-chuebz, and retorts. In the cornerz stood carboiz ov ascid in wicker baaskets. Wun ov these apeerd too leke or too hav bene broken, for a streme ov darc-cullord liqwid had trickeld out from it, and the are wauz hevvy widh a peculeyarly pun’gent, tar-like odor. A cet ov steps stood at wun cide ov the roome, in the midst ov a litter ov laath and plaaster, and abuv them dhare wauz an opening in the celing larj enuf for a man too paas throo. At the foot ov the steps a long coil ov rope wauz throne caerlesly tooghether.

Bi the tabel, in a wooden arm-chare, the maaster ov the hous wauz ceted aul in a hepe, widh hiz hed sunc uppon hiz left shoalder, and dhat gaastly, inscrootabel smile uppon hiz face. He wauz stif and coald, and had cleerly bene ded menny ourz. It ceemd too me dhat not oonly hiz fechuerz but aul hiz limz wer twisted and ternd in the moast fantastic fashon. Bi hiz hand uppon the tabel dhare la a peculeyar instrooment,—a broun, cloce-graind stic, widh a stone hed like a hammer, ruidly lasht on widh coers twine. Becide it wauz a toern shete ov note-paper widh sum werdz scrauld uppon it. Hoamz glaanst at it, and then handed it too me.

“U ce,” he ced, widh a cignificant rasing ov the iabrouz.

In the lite ov the lantern I red, widh a thril ov horror, "The cine ov the foer."

"In Godz name, whaut duz it aul mene?" I aasct.

"It meenz merder," ced he, stooping over the ded man. "Aa, I expected it. Looc here!" He pointed too whaut looct like a long, darc thorn stuc in the skin just abuv the ere.

"It loox like a thorn," ced I.

"It iz a thorn. U ma pic it out. But be caerfool, for it iz poizond."

I tooc it up betwene mi fin'gher and thum. It came awa from the skin so reddily dhat hardly enny marc wauz left behiand. Wun tiny spec ov blud shode whare the puncchure had bene.

"This iz aul an insollubel mistery too me," ced I. "It grose darker insted ov clerer."

"On the contrary," he aancerd, "it cleerz evvery instant. I oanly require a fu miscing linx too hav an entiarly conected cace."

We had aulmoast forgotten our companyonz prezsens cins we enterd the chaimber. He wauz stil standing in the doerwa, the verry picchure ov terror, ringing hiz handz and moning too himcelf. Suddenly, houwevver, he broke out intoo a sharp, qwerroolous cri.

"The trezhure iz gon!" he ced. "Dha hav robd him ov the trezhure! Dhare iz the hole throo which we lowerd it. I helpt him too doo it! I wauz the laast person whoo sau him! I left him here laast nite, and I herd him loc the doer az I came dounstaerz."

“Whaut time wauz dhat?”

“It wauz ten oacloc. And nou he iz ded, and the polece wil be cauld in, and I shal be suspected ov havving had a hand in it. O, yes, I am shure I shal. But u doant thhinc so, gentelmen? Shuerly u doant thhinc dhat it wauz I? Iz it liacly dhat I wood hav braut u here if it wer I? O, dere! o, dere! I no dhat I shal go mad!” He gerct hiz armz and stampst hiz fete in a kiand ov convulcive frensy.

“U hav no rezon for fere, Mr. Sholto,” ced Hoamz, kiandly, pootting hiz hand uppon hiz shoalder. “Take mi advice, and drive down too the staishon too repoert this matter too the polece. Offer too acist them in evvery wa. We shal wate here until yor retern.”

The littel man obade in a haaf-schupefide fashon, and we herd him stumbling down the staerz in the darc.

## Chapter 6

### Sherloc Hoamz Ghivz a Demonstraishon

“Nou, Wautson,” ced Hoamz, rubbing hiz handz, “we hav haaf an our too ourcelvz. Let us make good uce ov it. Mi cace iz, az I hav toald u, aulmoast complete; but we must not er on the cide ov over-confidens. Cimpel az the cace ceemz nou, dhare ma be sumthhing deper underlying it.”

“Cimpel!” I ejacculated.

“Shuerly,” ced he, widh sumthhing ov the are ov a clinnical professor expounding too hiz claas. “Just cit in the corner dhare, dhat yor

footprints ma not complicate matterz. Nou too werc! In the ferst place, hou did these foke cum, and hou did dha go? The doer haz not bene opend cins laast nite. Hou ov the windo?" He carrede the lamp across too it, muttering hiz observaishonz aloud the while, but adrescing them too himcelf raather dhan too me. "Windo iz snibd on the inner cide. Fraimwerc iz sollid. No hin'gez at the cide. Let us open it. No wauter-pipe nere. Roofe qwite out ov reche. Yet a man haz mounted bi the windo. It rained a littel laast nite. Here iz the print ov a foot in moald uppon the cil. And here iz a cercular muddy marc, and here agane uppon the floer, and here agane bi the tabel. Ce here, Wautson! This iz reyaly a verry pritty demonstraishon."

I looct at the round, wel-defiand muddy disx. "This iz not a footmarc," ced I.

"It iz sumthhing much moer vallubel too us. It iz the impreshon ov a wooden stump. U ce here on the cil iz the boote-marc, a hevvy boote widh the braud mettal hele, and becide it iz the marc ov the timber-to."

"It iz the wooden-legghed man."

"Qwite so. But dhare haz bene sum wun els,—a verry abel and efishent alli. Cood u scale dhat waul, doctor?"

I looct out ov the open windo. The moone stil shon briatly on dhat an'ghel ov the hous. We wer a good cixty fete from the ground, and, looc whare I wood, I cood ce no foot'hoald, nor az much az a crevvice in the bric-werc.

"It iz absolutly imposcibel," I aancerd.

"Widhout ade it iz so. But supose u had a frend up here whoo lowerd u this good stout rope which I ce in the corner, cecuring wun end ov

it too this grate hooc in the waul. Then, I thhinc, if u wer an active man, U mite swarm up, woodden leg and aul. U wood depart, ov coers, in the same fashon, and yor alli wood drau up the rope, unti it from the hooc, shut the windo, snib it on the incide, and ghet awa in the wa dhat he oridginaly came. Az a minor point it ma be noted," he continnude, fin'ghering the rope, "dhat our woodden-legged frend, dho a fare climer, wauz not a profeshonal salor. Hiz handz wer far from horny. Mi lenz disclosez moer dhan wun blud-marc, espeshaly toowordz the end ov the rope, from which I gather dhat he slipt doun widh such velosity dhat he tooc the skin of hiz hand."

"This iz aul verry wel," ced I, "but the thhing becumz moer unnintelligibel dhan evver. Hou about this mistereyous alli? Hou came he intoo the roome?"

"Yes, the alli!" repeted Hoamz, penciavly. "Dhare ar fechuerz ov interest about this alli. He lifts the cace from the rejonz ov the commonplace. I fancy dhat this alli braix fresh ground in the annalz ov crime in this cuntry,—dho parralel cacez sugest themcelvz from Injaa, and, if mi memmory cervz me, from Cenegambeyaa."

"Hou came he, then?" I reyitterated. "The doer iz loct, the windo iz inaxescibel. Wauz it throo the chimney?"

"The grate iz much too smaual," he aancerd. "I had aulreddy concidderd dhat pocibillity."

"Hou then?" I percisted.

"U wil not apli mi precept," he ced, shaking hiz hed. "Hou often hav I ced too u dhat when u hav eliminated the imposcibel whautevver remainz, "houwevver improbbabel", must be the truth? We no dhat he did not cum throo the doer, the windo, or the chimney. We aulso

no dhat he cood not hav bene conceeld in the roome, az dhare iz no concealment poscibel. Whens, then, did he cum?"

"He came throo the hole in the roofe," I cride.

"Ov coers he did. He must hav dun so. If u wil hav the kiandnes too hoald the lamp for me, we shal nou extend our recerchez too the roome abuv,—the ceecret roome in which the trezhure wauz found."

He mounted the steps, and, cesing a raafter widh iather hand, he swung himcelf up intoo the garret. Then, liying on hiz face, he reecht down for the lamp and held it while I follode him.

The chaimber in which we found ourcelvz wauz about ten fete wun wa and  
and  
cix the uther. The floer wauz formd bi the raafterz, widh thhin  
laath-and-plaaster betwene, so dhat in wauking wun had too step from  
beme  
too beme. The roofe ran up too an apex, and wauz evvidently the inner shel  
ov the troo roofe ov the hous. Dhare wauz no fernichure ov enny sort, and  
the acumulated dust ov yeerz la thhic uppon the floer.

"Here u ar, u ce," ced Sherlock Hoamz, pooting hiz hand against the sloping waul. "This iz a trap-doer which leedz out on too the roofe. I can pres it bac, and here iz the roofe itcelf, sloping at a gentel an'ghel. This, then, iz the wa bi which Number Wun enterd. Let us ce if we can fiand enny uther tracez ov hiz indivijuwality."

He held down the lamp too the floer, and az he did so I sau for the cecond time dhat nite a starteld, cerpriazd looc cum over hiz face. For micelf, az I follode hiz gase mi skin wauz coald under mi cloadhz. The floer wauz cuvverd thhicly widh the prints ov a naked foot,—clere, wel defiand, perfectly formd, but scaers haaf the cise ov dhose ov an ordinary man.

"Hoamz," I ced, in a whisper, "a chiald haz dun the horrid thhing."

He had recuverd hiz celf-posesion in an instant. "I wauz staggherd for the moment," he ced, "but the thhing iz qwite natchural. Mi memmory faild me, or I shood hav bene abel too foertel it. Dhare iz nuthhing moer too be lernd here. Let us go down."

"Whaut iz yor ththeyory, then, az too dhose footmarx?" I aasct, egherly, when we had regaind the lower roome wuns moer.

"Mi dere Wautson, tri a littel anallicis yorcelf," ced he, with a tuch ov impaishens. "U no mi methodz. Apli them, and it wil be instructive too compare rezults."

"I canot conceve ennithing which wil cuvver the facts," I aancerd.

"It wil be clere enuf too u soone," he ced, in an of-hand wa. "I thhinc dhat dhare iz nuthhing els ov importans here, but I wil looc." He whipt out hiz lenz and a tape mezhure, and hurrede about the roome on hiz nese, mezhuring, comparing, exammining, with hiz long thhin nose oonly a fu inchez from the planx, and hiz bedy ise gleming and depe-cet like dhose ov a berd. So swift, cilent, and fertive wer hiz muivments, like dhose ov a traind blud-hound picking out a cent, dhat I cood not but thhinc whaut a terribel crimmlinal he wood hav made had he ternd hiz ennergy and sagascity against the lau, insted ov exerting them in its defens. Az he hunted about, he kept muttering too himcelf, and finaly he broke out intoo a loud cro ov delite.

"We ar certainly in luc," ced he. "We aut too hav verry littel trubbel nou. Number Wun haz had the misforchune too tred in the creyosote. U can ce the outline ov the ej ov hiz smaual foot here at the cide ov this evil-smelling mes. The carboi haz bene cract, U ce, and the stuf haz leect out."

“Whaut then?” I aasct.

“Whi, we hav got him, dhats aul,” ced he. “I no a dog dhat wood follo dhat cent too the werldz end. If a pac can trac a traild herring acros a shire, hou far can a speshaly-traind hound follo so pun’gent a smel az this? It soundz like a sum in the roole ov thre. The aancer shood ghiv us the—But hallo! here ar the accredited representatiavz ov the lau.”

Hevvy steps and the clammor ov loud voicez wer audibel from belo, and the haul doer shut widh a loud crash.

“Befoer dha cum,” ced Hoamz, “just poot yor hand here on this poor fellose arm, and here on hiz leg. Whaut doo u fele?”

“The muscelz ar az hard az a boerd,” I aancerd.

“Qwite so. Dha ar in a state ov extreme contracshon, far exeding the uezhuwal *rigger mortis*. Cuppeld widh this distorshon ov the face, this Hipocrattic smile, or ‘*rizus sardonius*,’ az the oald riterz cauld it, whaut concluezhon wood it sugest too yor miand?”

“Deth from sum pouwerfool vedgetabel alcaloid,” I aancerd,—“sum stricnene-like substans which wood projece tettanus.”

“Dhat wauz the ideyaa which okerd too me the instant I sau the draun muscelz ov the face. On ghetting intoo the roome I at wuns looct for the meenz bi which the poizon had enterd the cistem. Az u sau, I discuverd a thorn which had bene drivven or shot widh no grate foers intoo the scalp. U observ dhat the part struc wauz dhat which wood be ternd toowordz the hole in the celing if the man wer erect in hiz chare. Nou exammine the thorn.”

I tooc it up gin'gerly and held it in the lite ov the lantern. It wauz long, sharp, and blac, widh a glaizd looc nere the point az dho sum gummy substans had dride uppon it. The blunt end had bene trimd and rounded of widh a nife.

"Iz dhat an In'glish thorn?" he aasct.

"No, it certainly iz not."

"Widh aul these dataa u shood be abel too drau sum just inferens. But here ar the reggularz; so the auxilleyary foercez ma bete a retrete."

Az he spoke, the steps which had bene cumming nerer sounded loudly on the passage, and a verry stout, poertly man in a gra sute strode hevvily intoo the roome. He wauz red-faist, berly and plethoric, widh a pare ov verry smaul twinkling ise which looct keenly out from betwene swollen and puffy pouchez. He wauz cloasly follode bi an inspector in uniform, and bi the stil palpitating Thadjus Sholto.

"Heerz a biznes!" he cride, in a muffeld, husky vois. "Heerz a pritty biznes! But whoo ar aul these? Whi, the hous ceemz too be az fool az a rabbit-woren!"

"I thhinc u must recolect me, Mr. Athhelny Joanz," ced Hoamz, qwiyetly.

"Whi, ov coers I doo!" he wheezd. "Its Mr. Sherloc Hoamz, the ththeyorist. Remember u! Ile nevver forghet hou u lecchuerd us aul on causez and inferencez and efects in the Bishopgate juwel cace. Its troo u cet us on the rite trac; but ule one nou dhat it wauz moer bi good luc dhan good ghidans."

"It wauz a pece ov verry cimpel rezoning."

“O, cum, nou, cum! Nevver be ashaimd too one up. But whaut iz aul this? Bad biznes! Bad biznes! Stern facts here,—no roome for ththeyorese. Hou lucky dhat I happend too be out at Norwood over anuther cace! I wauz at the staishon when the message ariavd. Whaut du thhinc the man dide ov?”

“O, this iz hardly a cace for me too ththeyorise over,” ced Hoamz, drily.

“No, no. Stil, we caant deni dhat u hit the nale on the hed sumtiamz. Dere me! Doer loct, I understand. Juwelz werth haaf a milleyon miscing. Hou wauz the windo?”

“Faacend; but dhare ar steps on the cil.”

“Wel, wel, if it wauz faacend the steps cood hav nuthhing too doo widh the matter. Dhats common cens. Man mite hav dide in a fit; but then the juwelz ar miscing. Haa! I hav a ththeyory. These flashez cum uppon me at tiamz.—Just step outcide, sarjant, and u, Mr. Sholto. Yor frend can remane.—Whaut doo u thhinc ov this, Hoamz? Sholto wauz, on hiz one confeshon, widh hiz bruther laast nite. The bruther dide in a fit, on which Sholto wauct of widh the trezhure. Houz dhat?”

“On which the ded man verry concidderaitly got up and loct the doer on the incide.”

“Hum! Dhaerz a flau dhare. Let us apli common cens too the matter. This Thadjus Sholto “wauz” widh hiz bruther; dhare “wauz” a qworel; so much we no. The bruther iz ded and the juwelz ar gon. So much aulso we no. No wun sau the bruther from the time Thadjus left him. Hiz bed had not bene slept in. Thadjus iz evvidently in a moast disterbd state ov miand. Hiz aperans iz—wel, not attractive. U ce dhat I

am weving mi web round Thadjus. The net beghinz too close upon him.”

“U ar not qwite in poseshon ov the facts yet,” ced Hoamz. “This splinter ov wood, which I hav evvery rezon too beleve too be poizond, wauz in the manz scalp whare u stil ce the marc; this card, inscriabd az u ce it, wauz on the tabel; and becide it la this raather cureyous stone-hedded instrooment. Hou duz aul dhat fit intoo yor thheyory?”

“Confermz it in evvery respect,” ced the fat detective, pompously. “Hous iz fool ov Injan cureyoscitese. Thadjus braut this up, and if this splinter be poisonous Thadjus ma az wel hav made merderous uce ov it az enny uther man. The card iz sum hocus-pocus,—a bliand, az like az not. The oonly qweschon iz, hou did he depart? Aa, ov coers, here iz a hole in the roofe.” Widh grate activvity, conciddering hiz bulc, he sprang up the steps and sqweezd throo intoo the garret, and imejaitly aafterwordz we herd hiz exulting vois proclaiming dhat he had found the trap-doer.

“He can fiand sumthhing,” remarct Hoamz, shrugging hiz shoalderz. “He haz ocaizhonal glimmeringz ov rezon. *Il n'y a pas des sots si incommodes que ceux qui ont de l'esprit!*”

“U ce!” ced Athhelny Joanz, reyapering down the steps agane. “Facts ar better dhan mere thheyorese, aafter aul. Mi vu ov the cace iz confermd. Dhare iz a trap-doer comunicating widh the roofe, and it iz partly open.”

“It wauz I whoo opend it.”

“O, indede! U did notice it, then?” He ceemd a littel crestfaulen at the discuvvery. “Wel, whoowevver notiast it, it shose hou our gentelman got awa. Inspector!”

“Yes, cer,” from the passage.

“Aasc Mr. Sholto too step this wa.—Mr. Sholto, it iz mi juty too inform u dhat ennithhing which u ma sa wil be uezd against u. I arest u in the Qweenz name az beying concernd in the deth ov yor bruther.”

“Dhare, nou! Didnt I tel u!” cride the poor littel man, throwing out hiz handz, and loocking from wun too the uther ov us.

“Doant trubbel yorcelf about it, Mr. Sholto,” ced Hoamz. “I thhinc dhat I can en‘gage too clere u ov the charj.”

“Doant prommice too much, Mr. Thheyorist,—doant prommice too much!” snapt the detective. “U ma fiand it a harder matter dhan u thhinc.”

“Not oanly wil I clere him, Mr. Joanz, but I wil make u a fre prezsent ov the name and descripshon ov wun ov the too pepel whoo wer in this roome laast nite. Hiz name, I hav evvery rezon too beleve, iz Jonnathan Smaul. He iz a poorly-edjucated man, smaul, active, widh hiz rite leg of, and waring a wooden stump which iz woern awa uppon the inner cide. Hiz left boote haz a coers, sqware-tode sole, widh an iarn band round the hele. He iz a middel-ajjd man, much sunbernd, and haz bene a convict. These fu indicaishonz ma be ov sum acistans too u, cuppeld widh the fact dhat dhare iz a good dele ov skin miscing from the paam ov hiz hand. The uther man—”

“Aa! the uther man—?” aasct Athhelny Joanz, in a snering vois, but imprest nun the les, az I cood esily ce, bi the precizhon ov the utherz manner.

“Iz a raather cureyous person,” ced Sherloc Hoamz, terning uppon hiz

hele. "I hope befoer verry long too be Abel too introjuce u too the pare ov them.—A werd widh u, Wautson."

He led me out too the hed ov the stare. "This unexpected ocurens," he ced, "haz cauzd us raather too loose cite ov the oridginal perpoce ov our gerny."

"I hav just bene thhinking so," I aancerd. "It iz not rite dhat Mis Morstan shood remane in this stricken hous."

"No. U must escort her home. She livz widh Mrs. Cescil Forrester, in Lower Camberwel: so it iz not verry far. I wil wate for u here if u wil drive out agane. Or perhaps u ar too tiard?"

"Bi no meenz. I doant thhinc I cood rest until I no moer ov this fantastic biznes. I hav cene sumthhing ov the ruf cide ov life, but I ghiv u mi werd dhat this qwic suxeshon ov strainj cerprisez too-nite haz shaken mi nerv compleetly. I shood like, houwevver, too ce the matter throo widh u, nou dhat I hav got so far."

"Yor prezsens wil be ov grate cervice too me," he aancerd. "We shal werc the cace out independently, and leve this fello Joanz too exult over enny maerz-nest which he ma chuse too construct. When u hav dropt Mis Morstan I wish u too go on too No. 3, Pinchin Lane, doun nere the wauterz ej at Lambeth. The thherd hous on the rite-hand cide iz a berd-stufferz: Sherman iz the name. U wil ce a wesel hoalding a yung rabbit in the windo. Noc oald Sherman up, and tel him, widh mi compliments, dhat I waunt Toby at wuns. U wil bring Toby bac in the cab widh u."

"A dog, I supose."

"Yes,—a qwere mon'grel, widh a moast amasing pouwer ov cent. I wood raather hav Tobese help dhan dhat ov the whole detective foers ov

Lundon.”

“I shal bring him, then,” ced I. “It iz wun nou. I aut too be bac befoer thre, if I can ghet a fresh hors.”

“And I,” ced Hoamz, “shal ce whaut I can lern from Mrs. Bernstone, and from the Injan cervant, whoo, Mr. Thadjus tel me, sleeps in the next garret. Then I shal studdy the grate Joansez methodz and liscen too hiz not too dellicate sarcasmz. ‘*Wir sind gewohnt das die Menschen verhöhnen was sie nicht verstehen.*’ Guutaa iz aulwase pithhy.”

## Chapter 7

### The Eppisode ov the Barrel

The polece had braut a cab widh them, and in this I escorted Mis Morstan bac too her home. Aafter the an’gelic fashon ov wimmen, she had boern trubbel widh a caam face az long az dhare wauz sum wun weker dhan hercelf too supoert, and I had found her brite and plascid bi the cide ov the fritend houskeper. In the cab, houwevver, she ferst ternd faint, and then berst intoo a pashon ov weping,—so soerly had she bene tride bi the advenchuerz ov the nite. She haz toald me cins dhat she thaut me coald and distant uppon dhat gerny. She littel ghest the strugghel within mi brest, or the effort ov celf-restraint which held me bac. Mi cimpathese and mi luv went out too her, even az mi hand had in the garden. I felt dhat yeerz ov the convenshonallitese ov life cood not teche me too no her swete, brave nachure az had this wun da ov strainj expereyencez. Yet dhare wer too thauts which ceeld the werdz ov afecshon uppon mi lips. She wauz weke and helples, shaken in miand and nerv. It wauz too take her at a disadvaantage too obtroode luv uppon her at such a time. Wers stil, she wauz rich. If Hoamsez recerchez wer suxesfool, she wood be an ares. Wauz it

fare, wauz it onnorabel, dhat a haaf-pa cerjon shood take such advaantage ov an intimacy which chaans had braut about? Mite she not looc uppon me az a mere vulgar forchune-ceker? I cood not bare too risc dhat such a thaut shood cros her miand. This Agraa trezhure interveend like an impaasabel barreyer betwene us.

It wauz neerly too oacloc when we reecht Mrs. Cescil Forresterz. The cervants had retiard ourz ago, but Mrs. Forrester had bene so interested bi the strainj message which Mis Morstan had receevd dhat she had sat up in the hope ov her retern. She opend the doer hercelf, a middel-aijd, graisfool woomman, and it gave me joi too ce hou tenderly her arm stole round the utherz waist and hou mutherly wauz the vois in which she greted her. She wauz cleerly no mere pade dependant, but an onnord frend. I wauz introjuest, and Mrs. Forrester earnestly begd me too step in and tel her our advenchuerz. I explaind, houwevver, the importans ov mi errand, and prommiast faithfooly too caul and repoert enny proagres which we mite make widh the cace. Az we drove awa I stole a glaans bac, and I stil ceme too ce dhat littel groope on the step, the too graisfool, clinging figguerz, the haaf-opend doer, the haul-lite shining throo staind glaas, the barommeter, and the brite stare-rodz. It wauz suithing too cach even dhat paacing glimps ov a tranqwil In'glish home in the midst ov the wiald, darc biznes which had abzorbd us.

And the moer I thaut ov whaut had happend, the wialder and darker it groo. I revude the whole extrordinary ceeqwens ov events az I ratteld on throo the cilent gas-lit streets. Dhare wauz the oridginal problem: dhat at leest wauz pritty clere nou. The deth ov Captane Morstan, the cending ov the perlz, the advertiazment, the letter,—we had had lite uppon aul dhose events. Dha had oanly led us, houwevver, too a deper and far moer tradgic mistery. The Injan trezhure, the cureyous plan found among Morstanz baggage, the strainj cene at Major Sholtose deth, the rediscuvvery ov the trezhure imejaitly follode bi the

merder ov the discuverer, the verry cin'gular acumpaniments too the crime, the footsteps, the remarcabel wepponz, the werdz uppon the card, coresponding widh dhose uppon Captane Morstanz chart,—here wauz indede

a labbirinth in which a man les cin'gularly endoud dhan mi fello-lodger mite wel despare ov evver fianding the clu.

Pinchin Lane wauz a ro ov shabby too-stoerede bric housez in the lower qworter ov Lambeth. I had too noc for sum time at No. 3 befoer I cood make mi impreshon. At laast, houwevver, dhare wauz the glint ov a candel behiand the bliand, and a face looct out at the upper windo.

“Go on, u drunken vagabone,” ced the face. “If u kic up enny moer rou Ile open the kennelz and let out forty-thre dogz uppon u.”

“If ule let wun out its just whaut I hav cum for,” ced I.

“Go on!” yeld the vois. “So help me graishous, I hav a wiper in the bag, an' Ile drop it on yor ed if u doant hooc it.”

“But I waunt a dog,” I cride.

“I woant be argude widh!” shouted Mr. Sherman. “Nou stand clere, for when I sa ‘thre,’ down gose the wiper.”

“Mr. Sherloc Hoamz—” I began, but the werdz had a moast madgical efect, for the windo instantly slamd down, and within a minnute the doer wauz unbard and open. Mr. Sherman wauz a lanky, lene oald man, widh stooping shoalderz, a stringy nec, and blu-tinted glaacez.

“A frend ov Mr. Sherloc iz aulwase welcum,” ced he. “Step in, cer. Kepe clere ov the badger; for he biats. Aa, nauty, nauty, wood u take a nip at the gentelman?” This too a stote which thrust its wicked

hed and red ise betwene the barz ov its cage. "Doant miand dhat, cer: its oonly a slo-werm. It hiant got no fangz, so I ghivz it the run o' the roome, for it keeps the betelz doun. U must not miand mi bene' just a littel short wi' u at ferst, for Ime ghide at bi the children, and dhaerz menny a wun just cumz doun this lane too noc me up. Whaut wauz it dhat Mr. Sherloc Hoamz waunted, cer?"

"He waunted a dog ov yorz."

"Aa! dhat wood be Toby."

"Yes, Toby wauz the name."

"Toby livz at No. 7 on the left here." He muivd sloly forword widh hiz candel amung the qwere annimal fammily which he had gatherd round him. In the uncertane, shaddowy lite I cood ce dimly dhat dhare wer glaancing, glimmering ise peping doun at us from evvery cranny and corner. Even the raafterz abuv our hedz wer liand bi sollem foulz, whoo lasily shifted dhare wate from wun leg too the uther az our voicez disterbd dhare slumberz.

Toby pruivd too be an ugly, long-haerd, lop-eerd crechure, haaf spanyel and haaf lercher, broun-and-white in cullor, widh a verry clumsy waudling gate. It axepted aafter sum hesitaishon a lump ov shooggar which the oald natchuralist handed too me, and, havving dhus ceeld an aliyans, it follode me too the cab, and made no difficultese about acumpanying me. It had just struc thre on the Pallace cloc when I found micelf bac wuns moer at Pondicherry Loj. The ex-prise-fiter McMerdo had, I found, bene arested az an axessory, and boath he and Mr. Sholto had bene marcht of too the staishon. Too cunstabelz garded the narro gate, but dha aloud me too paas widh the dog on mi menshoning the detectiavz name.

Hoamz wauz standing on the doer-step, widh hiz handz in hiz pockets, smoking hiz pipe.

“Aa, u hav him dhare!” ced he. “Good dog, then! Athhelny Joanz haz gon. We hav had an imens displa ov ennergy cins u left. He haz arested not oonly frend Thadjus, but the gaitkeper, the houskeper, and the Injan cervant. We hav the place too ourcelvz, but for a sarjant upstaerz. Leve the dog here, and cum up.”

We tide Toby too the haul tabel, and re-acended the staerz. The roome wauz az he had left it, save dhat a shete had bene draipt over the central figure. A wery-loocking polece-sarjant recliaed in the corner.

“Lend me yor boolz-i, sarjant,” ced mi companyon. “Nou ti this bit ov card round mi nec, so az too hang it in frunt ov me. Thanx u. Nou I must kic of mi buits and stockingz.—Just u carry them down widh u, Wautson. I am gowing too doo a littel climing. And dip mi hankerchefe intoo the crezote. Dhat wil doo. Nou cum up intoo the garret widh me for a moment.”

We clamberd up throo the hole. Hoamz ternd hiz lite wuns moer uppon the footsteps in the dust.

“I wish u particularly too notice these footmarx,” he ced. “Doo u observ ennithing noatwerthy about them?”

“Dha belong,” I ced, “too a chiald or a smaual woomman.”

“Apart from dhare cise, dho. Iz dhare nuthhing els?”

“Dha apere too be much az uther footmarx.”

“Not at aul. Looc here! This iz the print ov a rite foot in the dust. Nou I make wun widh mi naked foot beside it. Whaut iz the chefe

differens?"

"Yor tose ar aul crampt toogheter. The uther print haz eche to distinctly divided."

"Qwite so. Dhat iz the point. Bare dhat in miand. Nou, wood u kiandly step over too dhat flap-windo and smel the ej ov the wood-werc? I shal sta here, az I hav this hankerchefe in mi hand."

I did az he directed, and wauz instantly conshous ov a strong taary smel.

"Dhat iz whare he poot hiz foot in ghetting out. If "u" can trace him, I shood thhinc dhat Toby wil hav no difficulty. Nou run dounstaerz, looce the dog, and looc out for Blondin."

Bi the time dhat I got out intoo the groundz Sherlock Hoamz wauz on the roofe, and I cood ce him like an enormous glo-werm crawling verry sloly along the rij. I lost cite ov him behiand a stac ov chimnese, but he prezently reyapeerd, and then vannisht wuns moer uppon the opposite cide. When I made mi wa round dhare I found him ceted at wun ov the corner eevz.

"Dhat u, Wautson?" he cride.

"Yes."

"This iz the place. Whaut iz dhat blac thhing doun dhare?"

"A wauter-barrel."

"Top on it?"

"Yes."

"No cine ov a ladder?"

"No."

"Confound the fello! Its a moast brake-nec place. I aut too be abel too cum down whare he cood clime up. The wauter-pipe feelz pritty ferm. Here gose, ennihou."

Dhare wauz a scuffling ov fete, and the lantern began too cum steddily doun the cide ov the waul. Then widh a lite spring he came on too the barrel, and from dhare too the erth.

"It wauz esy too follo him," he ced, drauwing on hiz stockingz and buits. "Tialz wer loocend the whole wa along, and in hiz hurry he had dropt this. It confermz mi diyagnocis, az u doctorz expres it."

The obgett which he held up too me wauz a smaull pocket or pouch woven out ov cullord graacez and widh a fu taudry beedz strung round it. In shape and cise it wauz not unlike a ciggaret-cace. Incide wer haaf a duzsen spianz ov darc wood, sharp at wun end and rounded at the uther, like dhat which had struc Barthollomu Sholto.

"Dha ar hellish thhingz," ced he. "Looc out dhat u doant pric yorcelf. Ime delited too hav them, for the chaancez ar dhat dha ar aul he haz. Dhare iz the les fere ov u or me fianding wun in our skin befoer long. I wood sooner face a Marteny boollet, micelf. Ar u game for a cix-mile truj, Wautson?"

"Certainly," I aancerd.

"Yor leg wil stand it?"

“O, yes.”

“Here u ar, dogghy! Good oald Toby! Smel it, Toby, smel it!” He poosht the crezote hankerchefe under the dogz nose, while the crechure stood widh its fluffy legz cepparated, and widh a moast commical coc too its hed, like a conocer sniffing the *booca* ov a famous vintage. Hoamz then throo the hankerchefe too a distans, faacend a stout cord too the mon’grelz collar, and led him too the foot ov the wauter-barrel. The crechure instantly broke intoo a suxeshon ov hi, tremmulous yelps, and, widh hiz nose on the ground, and hiz tale in the are, patterd of uppon the trale at a pace which straind hiz leesh and kept us at the top ov our spede.

The eest had bene gradjuwaly whitening, and we cood nou ce sum distans in the coald gra lite. The sqware, mascive hous, widh its blac, empty windose and hi, bare waulz, touwerd up, sad and forlorn, behiand us. Our coers led rite acros the groundz, in and out amung the trenchez and pits widh which dha wer scard and intercected. The whole place, widh its scatterd dert-heeps and il-grone shrubz, had a blited, il-omend looc which harmoniazd widh the blac tradgedy which hung over it.

On reching the boundary waul Toby ran along, whining egherly, underneeth its shaddo, and stopt finaly in a corner screend bi a yung beche. Whare the too waulz joind, cevveral brix had bene loocend, and the crevvicez left wer woern doun and rounded uppon the lower cide, az dho dha had freeqwently bene uezd az a ladder. Hoamz clamberd up, and, taking the dog from me, he dropt it over uppon the uther cide.

“Dhaerz the print ov woodden-legz hand,” he remarct, az I mounted up beside him. “U ce the slite smuj ov blud uppon the white plaaster. Whaut a lucky thhing it iz dhat we hav had no verry hevvy rane cins

yesterda! The cent wil li upon the rode in spite ov dhare ate-and-twenty ourz' start."

I confes dhat I had mi douts micelf when I reflected uppon the grate traffic which had paast along the Lundon rode in the interval. Mi feerz wer soone apeeze, houwevver. Toby nevver hezsitated or swervd, but waudeld on in hiz peculeyar roling fashon. Cleerly, the pun'gent smel ov the crezote rose hi abuv aul uther contending cents.

"Doo not imadgine," ced Hoamz, "dhat I depend for mi suxes in this cace uppon the mere chaans ov wun ov these fellose havving poot hiz foot in the kemmical. I hav nollej nou which wood enabel me too trace them in menny different wase. This, houwevver, iz the reddeyest and, cins forchune haz poot it intoo our handz, I shood be culpabel if I neglected it. It haz, houwevver, prevented the cace from becumming the pritty littel intelecchuwal problem which it at wun time prommiast too be. Dhare mite hav bene sum credit too be gaind out ov it, but for this too palpabel clu."

"Dhare iz credit, and too spare," ced I. "I ashure u, Hoamz, dhat I marvel at the meenz bi which u obtane yor rezults in this cace, even moer dhan I did in the Gefferson Hope Merder. The thhing ceemz too me too be deper and moer inexpliccabel. Hou, for exaampel, cood u describe widh such confidens the wooden-legged man?"

"Pshau, mi dere boi! it wauz cimplycity itcelf. I doant wish too be ththeyatrical. It iz aul patent and abuv-boerd. Too officerz whoo ar in comaand ov a convict-gard lern an important ceecret az too berrede trezhure. A map iz draun for them bi an In'glisshman naimd Jonnathan Smaul. U remember dhat we sau the name uppon the chart in Captane Morstanz poseshon. He had ciand it in behaaf ov himcelf and hiz asoasheyaits,—the cine ov the foer, az he sumwhaut dramatticaly cauld it. Aded bi this chart, the officerz—or wun ov them—ghets the trezhure

and bringz it too In'gland, leving, we wil suppose, sum condishon under which he receevd it unfoolfild. Nou, then, whi did not Jonnathan Smaul ghet the trezhure himcelf? The aancer iz obveyous. The chart iz dated at a time when Morstan wauz braut intoo cloce asoasheyaishon widh convicts. Jonnathan Smaul did not ghet the trezhure becauz he and hiz asoasheyaits wer themcelvz convicts and cood not ghet awa."

"But dhat iz mere speculaishon," ced I.

"It iz moer dhan dhat. It iz the oonly hipothhecis which cuvverz the facts. Let us ce hou it fits in widh the ceeqwel. Major Sholto remainz at pece for sum yeerz, happy in the poseshon ov hiz trezhure. Then he receevz a letter from Injaa which ghivz him a grate frite. Whaut wauz dhat?"

"A letter too sa dhat the men whoome he had rongd had bene cet fre."

"Or had escaipt. Dhat iz much moer liacly, for he wood hav none whaut dhare term ov imprizzonment wauz. It wood not hav bene a cerprise too him. Whaut duz he doo then? He gardz himcelf against a wooden-legged man,—a white man, marc u, for he mistaix a white traidzman for him, and acchuwaly fiarz a pistol at him. Nou, oonly wun white manz name iz on the chart. The utherz ar Hindoos or Mohammedanz. Dhare iz no uther white man. Dhaerfoer we ma sa widh confidens dhat the wooden-legged man iz identical widh Jonnathan Smaul. Duz the rezoning strike u az beying faulty?"

"No: it iz clere and concice."

"Wel, nou, let us poot ourcelvz in the place ov Jonnathan Smaul. Let us looc at it from hiz point ov vu. He cumz too In'gland widh the dubbel ideyaa ov reganing whaut he wood concidder too be hiz riats and ov havving

hiz revenj uppon the man whoo had rongd him. He found out whare Sholto livd, and verry poscibly he establisht comunicashonz widh sum wun incide the hous. Dhare iz this butler, Lal Rou, whoome we hav not cene. Mrs. Bernstone ghivz him far from a good carracter. Smaul cood not fiand out, houwevver, whare the trezhure wauz hid, for no wun evver nu, save the major and wun faithfool cervant whoo had dide. Suddenly Smaul lernz dhat the major iz on hiz deth-bed. In a frensy lest the ceecret ov the trezhure di widh him, he runz the gauntlet ov the gardz, maix hiz wa too the diying manz windo, and iz oanly deterd from entering bi the prezsens ov hiz too sunz. Mad widh hate, houwevver, against the ded man, he enterz the roome dhat nite, cerchez hiz private paperz in the hope ov discuvering sum memorandum relating too the trezhure, and finally leevz a momento ov hiz vizsit in the short inscripshon uppon the card. He had doutles pland befoerhand dhat shood he sla the major he wood leve sum such reccord uppon the boddy az a cine dhat it wauz not a common merder, but, from the point ov vu ov the foer asoasheyaits, sumthhing in the nachure ov an act ov justice. Whimsical and bizar conceets ov this kiand ar common enuf in the annalz ov crime, and uezhuwaly afoerd vallubel indicaishonz az too the crimminal. Doo u follo aul this?"

"Verry cleerly."

"Nou, whaut cood Jonnathan Smaul doo? He cood oanly continnu too kepe a ceecret wauch uppon the efforts made too fiand the trezhure. Poscibly he leevz In'gland and oanly cumz bac at intervalz. Then cumz the discuverry ov the garret, and he iz instantly informd ov it. We agane trace the prezsens ov sum confedderate in the hous'hoald. Jonnathan, widh hiz wooden leg, iz utterly unnabel too reche the lofty roome ov Barthollomu Sholto. He taix widh him, houwevver, a raather cureyous asoasheyate, whoo ghets over this difficulty, but dips hiz naked foot intoo crezote, whens cumz Toby, and a cix-mile limp for a haaf-pa officer

widh a dammaijd tendo Akillis.”

“But it wauz the asoasheyate, and not Jonnathan, whoo comitted the crime.”

“Qwite so. And raather too Jonnathanz disgust, too juj bi the wa he stampt about when he got intoo the roome. He boer no gruj against Barthollomu Sholto, and wood hav preferd if he cood hav bene simply bound and gagd. He did not wish too poot hiz hed in a haulter. Dhare wauz no help for it, houwevver: the savvage instincts ov hiz companyon had broken out, and the poizon had dun its werc: so Jonnathan Smaul left hiz reccord, lowerd the trezhure-box too the ground, and follode it himcelf. Dhat wauz the trane ov events az far az I can decifer them. Ov coers az too hiz personal aperans he must be middel-aijd, and must be sunbernd aafter cerving hiz time in such an uvven az the Andaamanz. Hiz hite iz reddily calculated from the length ov hiz stride, and we no dhat he wauz bearded. Hiz harines wauz the wun point which imprest itcelf uppon Thadjus Sholto when he sau him at the windo. I doant no dhat dhare iz ennithing els.”

“The asoasheyate?”

“Aa, wel, dhare iz no grate mistery in dhat. But u wil no aul about it soone enuf. Hou swete the morning are iz! Ce hou dhat wun littel cloud floats like a pinc fether from sum gigantic flamin’go. Nou the red rim ov the sun pooshez itcelf over the Lundon cloud-banc. It shianz on a good menny foke, but on nun, I dare bet, whoo ar on a strain’ger errand dhan u and I. Hou smaul we fele widh our petty ambishonz and strivingz in the prezsens ov the grate elemental foercez ov nachure! Ar u wel up in yor Zhon Paul?”

“Faerly so. I werct bac too him throo Carlile.”

“Dhat wauz like following the brooc too the parent lake. He maix wun

cureyous but profound remarc. It iz dhat the chefe prooffe ov manz reyal graitnes lise in hiz percepshon ov hiz one smaules. It arguse, u ce, a pouwer ov comparrison and ov apreesheyaishon which iz in itself a prooffe ov nobillity. Dhare iz much foode for thaut in Rikhter. U hav not a pistol, hav u?"

"I hav mi stic."

"It iz just poscibel dhat we ma nede sumthhing ov the sort if we ghet too dhare lare. Jonnathan I shal leve too u, but if the uther ternz naasty I shal shoote him ded." He tooc out hiz revolver az he spoke, and, havving loded too ov the chaimberz, he poot it bac intoo the rite-hand pocket ov hiz jacket.

We had juring this time bene following the ghidans ov Toby doun the haaf-rooral villaa-liand roadz which lede too the metroppolis. Nou, houwevver, we wer beghinning too cum amung continnuwous streets, whare laborerz and docmen wer aulreddy aster, and slatternly wimmen wer taking doun shutterz and brushing doer-steps. At the sqware-topt corner public housez biznes wauz just beghinning, and ruf-loocking men wer emerging, rubbing dhare sleevz acros dhare beerdz aafter dhare morning wet. Strainj dogz saunterd up and staerd wunderingly at us az we paast, but our inimmitabel Toby looct niather too the rite nor too the left, but trotted onwordz widh hiz nose too the ground and an ocaizhonal egher whine which spoke ov a hot cent.

We had traversed Stretton, Brixton, Camberwell, and nou found ourselvz in Kennington Lane, havving boern awa throo the cide-streets too the eest ov the Oval. The men whoome we pershude ceemd too hav taken a cureyously sigzag rode, widh the ideyaa probbably ov escaping observaishon. Dha had nevver kept too the mane rode if a parralel

cide-strete wood cerv dhare tern. At the foot ov Kennington Lane dha had ejd awa too the left throo Bond Strete and Mialz Strete. Whare the latter strete ternz intoo Niats Place, Toby ceest too advaans, but began too run baqwordz and forwordz widh wun ere coct and the uther drooping, the verry picchure ov canine indecizhon. Then he waudeld round in cerkelz, loocking up too us from time too time, az if too aasc for cimpathy in hiz embarrasment.

“Whaut the juce iz the matter widh the dog?” groud Hoamz. “Dha shuerly wood not take a cab, or go of in a baloone.”

“Perhaps dha stood here for sum time,” I sugested.

“Aa! its aul rite. Hese of agane,” ced mi companyon, in a tone ov relefe.

He wauz indede of, for aafter sniffing round agane he suddenly made up hiz miand, and darted awa widh an ennergy and determinaihon such az he had not yet shone. The cent apeerd too be much hotter dhan befoer, for he had not even too poot hiz nose on the ground, but tugd at hiz leesh and tride too brake intoo a run. I coald ce bi the gleme in Hoamsez ise dhat he thaut we wer nering the end ov our gerny.

Our coers nou ran doun Nine Elmz until we came too Brodderic and Nelsonz larj timber-yard, just paast the White Eghel tavvern. Here the dog, frantic widh exiatment, ternd doun throo the cide-gate intoo the encloazhure, whare the soiyerz wer aulreddy at werc. On the dog raist throo saudust and shavingz, doun an ally, round a passage, betwene too wood-pialz, and finaly, widh a triyumfant yelp, sprang uppon a larj barrel which stil stood uppon the hand-trolly on which it had bene braut. Widh lolling tung and blinking ise, Toby stood uppon the caasc, loocking from wun too the uther ov us for sum cine ov apreesheyaishon. The stauvz ov the barrel and the wheelz ov the trolly

wer smeerd widh a darc liqwid, and the whole are wauz hevvy widh the smel ov crezote.

Sherloc Hoamz and I looct blantly at eche uther, and then berst cimultainyously intoo an uncontrolabel fit ov laafter.

## Chapter 8

### The Baker Strete Ireggularz

“Whaut nou?” I aasct. “Toby haz lost hiz carracter for infalibillity.”

“He acted acording too hiz liats,” ced Hoamz, lifting him doun from the barrel and wauking him out ov the timber-yard. “If u concidder hou much crezote iz carted about Lundon in wun da, it iz no grate wunder dhat our trale shood hav bene crost. It iz much uezd nou, espeshaly for the cezonning ov wood. Poor Toby iz not too blame.”

“We must ghet on the mane cent agane, I supose.”

“Yes. And, forchunaitly, we hav no distans too go. Evvidently whaut puzseld the dog at the corner ov Niats Place wauz dhat dhare wer too different trailz running in opposite direcshonz. We tooc the rong wun. It oonly remainz too follo the uther.”

Dhare wauz no difficulty about this. On leding Toby too the place whare he had comitted hiz fault, he caast about in a wide cerkel and finaly dasht of in a fresh direcshon.

“We must take care dhat he duz not nou bring us too the place whare the crezote-barrel came from,” I observd.

“I had thaut ov dhat. But u notice dhat he keeps on the paivment, wharaz the barrel paast down the roadwa. No, we ar on the troo cent nou.”

It tended down toowordz the rivver-side, running throo Belmont Place and Princez Strete. At the end ov Braud Strete it ran rite down too the wauterz ej, whare dhare wauz a smaul wooden whorf. Toby led us too the verry ej ov this, and dhare stood whining, loocking out on the darc current beyond.

“We ar out ov luc,” ced Hoamz. “Dha hav taken too a bote here.” Cevveral smaul punts and skifs wer liying about in the wauter and on the ej ov the whorf. We tooc Toby round too eche in tern, but, dho he snift earnestly, he made no cine.

Cloce too the roode landing-stage wauz a smaul bric hous, with a wooden placard slung out throo the cecond windo. “Mordeki Smith” wauz printed acros it in larj letterz, and, underneeth, “Boats too hire bi the our or da.” A cecond inscripshon abuv the doer informd us dhat a steme launch wauz kept,—a staitment which wauz confermd bi a grate pile ov coke uppon the getty. Sherloc Hoamz looct sloly round, and hiz face ashuemd an omminous expreshon.

“This loox bad,” ced he. “These fellose ar sharper dhan I expected. Dha ceme too hav cuvverd dhare trax. Dhare haz, I fere, bene preconcerted mannajment here.”

He wauz aproching the doer ov the hous, when it opend, and a littel, kerly-hedded lad ov cix came running out, follode bi a stoutish, red-faist woomman widh a larj spunj in her hand.

“U cum bac and be wausht, Jac,” she shouted. “Cum bac, u yung imp; for if yor faather cumz home and fiandz u like dhat, heeyl let

us here ov it."

"Dere littel chap!" ced Hoamz, strategicaly. "Whaut a rosy-cheect yung raascal! Nou, Jac, iz dhare ennithhing u wood like?"

The ueth ponderd for a moment. "Ide like a shillin'," ced he.

"Nuthhing u wood like better?"

"Ide like too shillin' better," the proddigy aancerd, aafter sum thaut.

"Here u ar, then! Cach!—A fine chiald, Mrs. Smith!"

"Lor' bles u, cer, he iz dhat, and forword. He ghets amost too much for me too mannage, speshaly when mi man iz awa dase at a time."

"Awa, iz he?" ced Hoamz, in a disapointed vois. "I am sorry for dhat, for I waunted too speke too Mr. Smith."

"Hese bene awa cins yesterda mornin', cer, and, truth too tel, I am beginnin' too fele fritend about him. But if it wauz about a bote, cer, maby I cood cerv az wel."

"I waunted too hire hiz steme launch."

"Whi, bles u, cer, it iz in the steme launch dhat he haz gon. Dhats whaut puzselz me; for I no dhare aint moer coalz in her dhan wood take her too about Woollich and bac. If hede bene awa in the barj Ide haa' thaut nuthhin'; for menny a time a job haz taken him az far az Graivsend, and then if dhare wauz much doowin' dhare he mite haa' stade over. But whaut good iz a steme launch widhout coalz?"

"He mite hav baut sum at a whorf doun the rivver."

“He mite, cer, but it wernt hiz wa. Menny a time Ive herd him caul out at the pricez dha charj for a fu od bagz. Beciadz, I doant like dhat wooden-legghed man, wi’ hiz ugly face and outlandish tauc. Whaut did he waunt aulwase nockin’ about here for?”

“A wooden-legghed man?” ced Hoamz, widh bland cerprise.

“Yes, cer, a broun, munky-faist chap dhats cauld moren wuns for mi oald man. It wauz him dhat rouzd him up yesternite, and, whauts moer, mi man nu he wauz comin’, for he had steme up in the launch. I tel u strate, cer, I doant fele esy in mi miand about it.”

“But, mi dere Mrs. Smith,” ced Hoamz, shrugging hiz shoalderz, “U ar fritening yorcelf about nuthhing. Hou cood u pocsibly tel dhat it wauz the wooden-legghed man whoo came in the nite? I doant qwrite understand hou u can be so shure.”

“Hiz vois, cer. I nu hiz vois, which iz kiand o’ thhic and fogghy. He tapt at the wiander,—about thre it wood be. ‘Sho a leg, maty,’ cez he: ‘time too tern out gard.’ Mi oald man woke up Gim,—dhats mi eldest,—and awa dha went, widhout so much az a werd too me. I cood here the wooden leg clackin’ on the stoanz.”

“And wauz this wooden-legghed man alone?”

“Coodnt sa, I am shure, cer. I didnt here no wun els.”

“I am sorry, Mrs. Smith, for I waunted a steme launch, and I hav herd good repoerts ov the—Let me ce, whaut iz her name?”

“The “Oroeraa”, cer.”

“Aa! Shese not dhat oald grene launch widh a yello line, verry braud in the beme?”

“No, indede. Shese az trim a littel thhing az enny on the rivver. Shese bene fresh painted, blac widh too red streex.”

“Thanx. I hope dhat u wil here soone from Mr. Smith. I am gowing doun the rivver; and if I shood ce ennithhing ov the “Oroeraa” I shal let him no dhat u ar unnesy. A blac funnel, u sa?”

“No, cer. Blac widh a white band.”

“Aa, ov coers. It wauz the ciadz which wer blac. Good-morning, Mrs. Smith.—Dhare iz a boatman here widh a wherry, Wautson. We shal take it and cros the rivver.

“The mane thhing widh pepel ov dhat sort,” ced Hoamz, az we sat in the sheets ov the wherry, “iz nevvver too let them thhinc dhat dhare informaishon can be ov the slitest importans too u. If u doo, dha wil instantly shut up like an oister. If u liscen too them under protest, az it wer, u ar verry liacly too ghet whaut u waunt.”

“Our coers nou ceemz pritty clere,” ced I.

“Whaut wood u doo, then?”

“I wood en‘gage a launch and go doun the rivver on the trac ov the “Oroeraa”.”

“Mi dere fello, it wood be a colossal taasc. She ma hav tucht at enny whorf on iather cide ov the streme betwene here and Grennich. Belo the brij dhare iz a perfect labbirinth ov landing-placez for mialz. It wood take u dase and dase too exhaust them, if u cet

about it alone.”

“Emploi the polece, then.”

“No. I shal probbably caul Athhelny Joanz in at the laast moment. He iz not a bad fello, and I shood not like too doo ennithing which wood injure him profeshonaly. But I hav a fancy for werking it out micelf, nou dhat we hav gon so far.”

“Cood we advertise, then, aasking for informaishon from whorfingerz?”

“Wers and wers! Our men wood no dhat the chace wauz hot at dhare heelz, and dha wood be of out ov the cuntry. Az it iz, dha ar liacly enuf too leve, but az long az dha thhinc dha ar perfectly safe dha wil be in no hurry. Joansez ennergy wil be ov uce too us dhare, for hiz vu ov the cace iz shure too poosh itcelf intoo the daly pres, and the runnawase wil thhinc dhat evvery wun iz of on the rong cent.”

“Whaut ar we too doo, then?” I aasct, az we landed nere Milbanc Penitenshary.

“Take this hansom, drive home, hav sum brecfast, and ghet an ourz slepe. It iz qwite on the cardz dhat we ma be afoot too-nite agane. Stop at a tellegraaf-office, cabby! We wil kepe Toby, for he ma be ov uce too us yet.”

We poold up at the Grate Peter Strete poast-office, and Hoamz despacht hiz wire. “Whoome doo u thhinc dhat iz too?” he aasct, az we rezhuemd our gerny.

“I am shure I doant no.”

“U remember the Baker Strete divizhon ov the detective polece foers

whoome I emloid in the Gefferson Hope cace?"

"Wel," ced I, laafing.

"This iz just the cace whare dha mite be invallubel. If dha fale, I hav uther rezoercez; but I shal tri them ferst. Dhat wire wauz too mi derty littel leftenant, Wigghinz, and I expect dhat he and hiz gang wil be widh us befoer we hav finnisht our brecfast."

It wauz betwene ate and nine oacloc nou, and I wauz consmous ov a strong reyacshon aafter the suxescive exiatments ov the nite. I wauz limp and wery, befogd in miand and fateegd in boddy. I had not the profeshonal enthuseyazm which carrede mi companyon on, nor cood I looc at the matter az a mere abstract intelecchuwal problem. Az far az the deth ov Barthollomu Sholto went, I had herd littel good ov him, and cood fele no intens antipathy too hiz merdererz. The trezhure, houwevver, wauz a different matter. Dhat, or part ov it, belongd riatfooly too Mis Morstan. While dhare wauz a chaans ov recuvvering it I wauz reddy too devote mi life too the won obgett. Troo, if I found it it wood probbably poot her forevver beyond mi reche. Yet it wood be a petty and celfish luv which wood be influwenst bi such a thaut az dhat. If Hoamz cood werc too fiand the crimminalz, I had a tenfoald stron'gher rezon too erj me on too fiand the trezhure.

A baath at Baker Strete and a complete chainj freshend me up wunderfooly. When I came doun too our roome I found the brecfast lade and Hoamz poering out the coffy.

"Here it iz," ced he, laafing, and pointing too an open nuespaper. "The energettik Joanz and the ubiqwitous repoerter hav fixt it up betwene them. But u hav had enuf ov the cace. Better hav yor ham and egz ferst."

I tooc the paper from him and red the short notice, which wauz hedded

“Mistereyous Biznes at Upper Norwood.”

“About twelv oacloc laast nite,” ced the “Standard”, “Mr. Barthollomu Sholto, ov Pondicherry Loj, Upper Norwood, wauz found ded in hiz roome under cercumstaancez which point too foul pla. Az far az we can lern, no acchuwal tracez ov viyolens wer found uppon Mr. Sholtose person, but a vallubel colecshon ov Injan gemz which the deceest gentelman had inherrited from hiz faather haz bene carrede of. The discuvvery wauz ferst made bi Mr. Sherloc Hoamz and Dr. Wautson, whoo had

cauld at the hous widh Mr. Thadjus Sholto, bruther ov the deceest. Bi a cin’gular pece ov good forchune, Mr. Athhelny Joanz, the wel-none member ov the detective polece foers, happend too be at the Norwood Polece Staishon, and wauz on the ground within haaf an our ov the ferst alarm. Hiz traind and expereyenst faccultese wer at wuns directed toowordz the detecshon ov the crimminalz, widh the grattifiying rezult dhat

the bruther, Thadjus Sholto, haz aulreddy bene arested, toogheter widh the houskeper, Mrs. Bernstone, an Injan butler naimd Lal Rou, and a poerter, or gaitkeper, naimd McMerdo. It iz qwhite certane dhat the thhefe or thheevz wer wel aqwainted widh the hous, for Mr. Joansez wel-none tecnical nollej and hiz pouwerz ov minute observaishon hav enabeld him too proove concluciavly dhat the miscreyants cood not hav enterd bi the doer or bi the windo, but must hav made dhare wa acros the roofe ov the bilding, and so throo a trap-doeer intoo a roome which comunicated widh dhat in which the boddy wauz found. This fact, which haz bene verry cleerly made out, pruivz concluciavly dhat it wauz no mere haphazard berglary. The prompt and energettacshon ov the officerz ov the lau shose the grate advaantage ov the prezsens on such ocaizhonz ov a cin’ghel viggorous and maasterfool miand. We canot but thhinc

dhat it suplise an argument too dhose whoo wood wish too ce our detectiavz moer decentraliazd, and so braut intoo clocer and moer efective tuch widh the cacez which it iz dhare juty too investigate.”

"Iznt it gorjous!" ced Hoamz, grinning over hiz coffy-cup. "Whaut doo u thhinc ov it?"

"I thhinc dhat we hav had a cloce shave ourcelvz ov beying arested for the crime."

"So doo I. I woodnt aancer for our saifty nou, if he shood happen too hav anuther ov hiz atax ov ennergy."

At this moment dhare wauz a loud ring at the bel, and I cood here Mrs. Hudson, our landlady, rasing her vois in a wale ov exposchulaishon and disma.

"Bi hevven, Hoamz," I ced, haaf rising, "I beleve dhat dha ar reyaly aafter us."

"No, its not qwite so bad az dhat. It iz the unnofishal foers,—the Baker Strete ireggularz."

Az he spoke, dhare came a swift pattering ov naked fete uppon the staerz, a clatter ov hi voicez, and in rusht a duzsen derty and ragghed littel strete-Arrabz. Dhare wauz sum sho ov discipline among them, despite dhare chumulchuwous entry, for dha instantly droo up in line and stood facing us widh expectant facez. Wun ov dhare number, tauler and oalder dhan the utherz, stood forword widh an are ov loun'ging supereyorrity which wauz verry funny in such a disrepputabel littel scaercro.

"Got yor message, cer," ced he, "and braut em on sharp. Thre bob and a tanner for tickets."

"Here u ar," ced Hoamz, projucing sum silver. "In fuchure dha can repoert too u, Wigghinz, and u too me. I canot hav the hous invaded

in this wa. Houwevver, it iz just az wel dhat u shood aul here the instrucshonz. I waunt too fiand the wharabouts ov a steme launch cauld the "Oroeraa", oner Mordeki Smith, blac widh too red stree, funnel blac widh a white band. She iz down the rivver sumwhare. I waunt wun boi too be at Mordeki Smiths landing-stage opposite Milbanc too sa if the bote cumz bac. U must divide it out amung yorcelvz, and doo both banx thurroly. Let me no the moment u hav nuse. Iz dhat aul clere?"

"Yes, guvnor," ced Wigghinz.

"The oald scale ov pa, and a ghinny too the boi whoo fiandz the bote. Heerz a da in advaans. Nou of u go!" He handed them a shilling eche, and awa dha buzd down the staerz, and I sau them a moment later streming down the strete.

"If the launch iz abuv wauter dha wil fiand her," ced Hoamz, az he rose from the tabel and lit hiz pipe. "Dha can go evverihware, ce evverithhing, overhere evvery wun. I expect too here befoer evening dhat dha hav spotted her. In the meenwhile, we can doo nuthhing but awate rezults. We canot pic up the broken trale until we fiand iather the "Oroeraa" or Mr. Mordeki Smith."

"Toby cood ete these scraps, I dare sa. Ar u gowing too bed, Hoamz?"

"No; I am not tiard. I hav a cureyous constichueshon. I nevver remember feling tiard bi werc, dho idelnes exausts me compleetly. I am gowing too smoke and too thhinc over this qwere biznes too which mi fare cliyent haz introjuest us. If evver man had an esy taasc, this ov ourz aut too be. Woodden-legghed men ar not so common, but the uther man must, I shood thhinc, be absoluetly uneke."

"Dhat uther man agane!"

"I hav no wish too make a mistery ov him,—too u, enniwa. But u must hav formd yor one opinyon. Nou, doo concidder the dataa. Diminutive footmarx, tose nevver fetterd bi buits, naked fete, stone-hedded wooden mace, grate agillity, smaул poizond darts. Whaut doo u make ov aul this?"

"A savvage!" I exclaimd. "Perhaps wun ov dhose Injanz whoo wer the asoasheyaits ov Jonnathan Smaul."

"Hardly dhat," ced he. "When ferst I sau cianz ov strainj wepponz I wauz incliand too thhinc so; but the remarcabel carracter ov the footmarx cauzd me too reconcider mi vuse. Sum ov the inhabbitants ov the Injan Peninshulaa ar smaул men, but nun cood hav left such marx az dhat. The Hindoo propper haz long and thhin fete. The sandal-waring Mohammedan haz the grate to wel cepparated from the utherz, becauz the thong iz commonly paast betwene. These littel darts, too, cood oonly be shot in wun wa. Dha ar from a blo-pipe. Nou, then, whare ar we too fiand our savvage?"

"South Amerrikan," I hazzarded.

He strecht hiz hand up, and tooc doun a bulky vollume from the shelf. "This iz the ferst vollume ov a gasetere which iz nou beying publisht. It ma be looct uppon az the verry latest authorrity. Whaut hav we here? 'Andaaman Ilandz, citchuwated 340 mialz too the north ov Sumaatraa, in the Ba ov Ben'gaul.' Hum! hum! Whauts aul this? Moist climate, coral reefs, sharx, Poert Blare, convict-barrax, Rutland Iland, cottonwoodz—Aa, here we ar. 'The aboriginese ov the Andaaman Ilandz ma perhaps clame the distincshon ov beying the smaulest race uppon this erth, dho sum anthropollogists prefer the Booshmen ov Africaa, the Digger Injanz ov

Amerricaa, and the Terraa del Fwagheyanz. The avverage hite iz raather belo

foer fete, auldho menny fool-grone adults ma be found whoo ar verry much smauler dhan this. Dha ar a feers, moroce, and intractabel pepel, dho capabel ov forming moast devoted frendships when dhare confidens haz wuns bene gaind.' Marc dhat, Wautson. Nou, then, liscen too this. 'Dha ar natchuraly hidjous, havving larj, misshapen hedz, smaul, feers ise, and distorted fechuerz. Dhare fete and handz, houwevver, ar remarcably smaul. So intractabel and feers ar dha dhat aul the efforts ov the Brittish ofishal hav faild too win them over in enny degy. Dha hav aulwase bene a terror too shiprect croose, braning the cervivorz widh dhare stone-hedded clubz, or shooting them widh dhare poizond arrose. These massakerz ar invareyably concluded bi a cannibal feest.' Nice, ameyabel pepel, Wautson! If this fello had bene left too hiz one unnaded devicez this afare mite hav taken an even moer gaastly tern. I fancy dhat, even az it iz, Jonnathan Smaul wood ghiv a good dele not too hav emploid him."

"But hou came he too hav so cin'gular a companyon?"

"Aa, dhat iz moer dhan I can tel. Cins, houwevver, we had aulreddy determiand dhat Smaul had cum from the Andaamanz, it iz not so verry wunderfool dhat this ilander shood be widh him. No dout we shal no aul about it in time. Looc here, Wautson; u looc reggularly dun. Li doun dhare on the sofaa, and ce if I can poot u too slepe."

He tooc up hiz viyolin from the corner, and az I strecht micelf out he began too pla sum lo, dremy, melojous are,—hiz one, no dout, for he had a remarcabel ghift for improvizaishon. I hav a vaghe remembrans ov hiz gaunt limz, hiz ernest face, and the rise and faul ov hiz bou. Then I ceemd too be floted peesfooly awa uppon a soft ce ov sound, until I found micelf in dreemland, widh the swete face ov Mary Morstan loocking doun uppon me.

## Chapter 9

### A Brake in the Chane

It wauz late in the aafternoone befoer I woke, strengthhend and refresht. Sherlock Hoamz stil sat exactly az I had left him, save dhat he had lade acide hiz viyolin and wauz depe in a booc. He looct acros at me, az I sterd, and I notiazt dhat hiz face wauz darc and trubheld.

“U hav slept soundly,” he ced. “I feerd dhat our tauc wood wake u.”

“I herd nuthhing,” I aancerd. “Hav u had fresh nuse, then?”

“Unforchunaitly, no. I confes dhat I am cerpriazd and disapointed. I expected sumthhing deffinite bi this time. Wigghinz haz just bene up too repoert. He cez dhat no trace can be found ov the launch. It iz a provoking chec, for evvery our iz ov importans.”

“Can I doo ennithhing? I am perfectly fresh nou, and qwite reddy for anuther niats outing.”

“No, we can doo nuthhing. We can oonly wate. If we go ourcelvz, the message mite cum in our abcens, and dela be cauzd. U can doo whaut u wil, but I must remane on gard.”

“Then I shal run over too Camberwel and caul uppon Mrs. Cescil Forrester. She aasct me too, yesterda.”

“On Mrs. Cescil Forrester?” aasct Hoamz, widh the twinkel ov a smile in hiz ise.

“Wel, ov coers Mis Morstan too. Dha wer ancshous too here whaut happend.”

“I wood not tel them too much,” ced Hoamz. “Wimmen ar nevver too be entiarly trusted,—not the best ov them.”

I did not pauz too argu over this atroashous centiment. “I shal be bac in an our or too,” I remarct.

“Aul rite! Good luc! But, I sa, if u ar crossing the rivver u ma az wel retern Toby, for I doant thhinc it iz at aul liacly dhat we shal hav enny uce for him nou.”

I tooc our mon'grel acordingly, and left him, tooggether with a haaf-sovverane, at the oald natchuralists in Pinchin Lane. At Camberwel I found Mis Morstan a littel wery aafter her niats advenchuerz, but verry egher too here the nuse. Mrs. Forrester, too, wauz fool ov cureyosity. I toald them aul dhat we had dun, suprescing, houwevver, the moer dredfool parts ov the tradgedy. Dhus, auldho I spoke ov Mr. Sholtose deth, I ced nuthhing ov the exact manner and method ov it. Widh aul mi omishonz, houwevver, dhare wauz enuf too startel and amase them.

“It iz a romans!” cride Mrs. Forrester. “An injuerd lady, haaf a milleyon in trezhure, a blac cannibal, and a wooden-legged ruffeyan. Dha take the place ov the convenshonal draggon or wicked erl.”

“And too nite-errants too the rescu,” added Mis Morstan, with a brite glaans at me.

“Whi, Mary, yor forchune dependz uppon the ishu ov this cerch. I doant thhinc dhat u ar neerly exited enuf. Just imadgine whaut it must be too be so rich, and too hav the werld at yor fete!”

It cent a littel thril ov joi too mi hart too notice dhat she shode no cine ov elashon at the prospect. On the contrary, she gave a tos ov her proud hed, az dho the matter wer wun in which she tooc smaull interest.

“It iz for Mr. Thadjus Sholto dhat I am ancshous,” she ced. “Nuthhing els iz ov enny conceqwens; but I thhinc dhat he haz behavid moast kiandly and onnorably throwout. It iz our juty too clere him ov this dredfool and unfounded charj.”

It wauz evening befoer I left Camberwel, and qwite darc bi the time I reecht home. Mi companyonz booc and pipe la bi hiz chare, but he had disapeerd. I looct about in the hope ov ceying a note, but dhare wauz nun.

“I supose dhat Mr. Sherloc Hoamz haz gon out,” I ced too Mrs. Hudson az she came up too lower the bliandz.

“No, cer. He haz gon too hiz roome, cer. Doo u no, cer,” cinking her vois intoo an imprescive whisper, “I am afrade for hiz helth?”

“Whi so, Mrs. Hudson?”

“Wel, hese dhat strainj, cer. Aafter u wauz gon he wauct and he wauct, up and doun, and up and doun, until I wauz wery ov the sound ov hiz footstep. Then I herd him tauking too himcelf and muttering, and evvery time the bel rang out he came on the staerhed, widh ‘Whaut iz dhat, Mrs. Hudson?’ And nou he haz slamd of too hiz roome, but I can here him wauking awa the same az evver. I hope hese not gowing too be il, cer. I venchuerd too sa sumthhing too him about cooling meddicine, but he ternd on me, cer, widh such a looc dhat I doant no hou evver I got out ov the roome.”

“I doant thhinc dhat u hav enny cauz too be unnesy, Mrs. Hudson,” I

aancerd. "I hav cene him like this befoer. He haz sum smaul matter uppon hiz miand which maix him restles." I tride too speke liatly too our werthy landlady, but I wauz micelf sumwhaut unnesy when throo the long nite I stil from time too time herd the dul sound ov hiz tred, and nu hou hiz kene spirrit wauz chafing against this involluntary inacshon.

At brecfast-time he looct woern and haggard, widh a littel flec ov feverish cullor uppon iather cheke.

"U ar nocking yorcelf up, oald man," I remarct. "I herd u marching about in the nite."

"No, I cood not slepe," he aancerd. "This infernal problem iz conshuming me. It iz too much too be baulct bi so petty an obstakel, when aul els had bene overcum. I no the men, the launch, evverithhing; and yet I can ghet no nuse. I hav cet uther agencese at werc, and uezd evvery meenz at mi dispozal. The whole rivver haz bene cercht on iather cide, but dhare iz no nuse, nor haz Mrs. Smith herd ov her huzband. I shal cum too the concluezhon soone dhat dha hav scutteld the craaft. But dhare ar obgecshonz too dhat."

"Or dhat Mrs. Smith haz poot us on a rong cent."

"No, I thhinc dhat ma be dismiss. I had inqwirese made, and dhare iz a launch ov dhat descriphon."

"Cood it hav gon up the rivver?"

"I hav concidderd dhat pocibillity too, and dhare iz a cerch-party whoo wil werc up az far az Richmond. If no nuse cumz too-da, I shal start of micelf too-morro, and go for the men raather dhan the bote. But shuerly, shuerly, we shal here sumthhing."

We did not, houwevver. Not a werd came too us iather from Wigghinz or from the uther agencese. Dhare wer artikelz in moast ov the paperz uppon the Norwood tradgedy. Dha aul apeerd too be raather hostile too the unforchunate Thadjus Sholto. No fresh detailz wer too be found, houwevver, in enny ov them, save dhat an inqwest wauz too be held uppon the following da. I wauct over too Camberwel in the evening too repoert our il suxes too the ladese, and on mi retern I found Hoamz degeded and sumwhaut moroce. He wood hardly repli too mi qweschonz, and bizsede himcelf aul evening in an abstrooce kemmical anallicis which involvd much heting ov retorts and distilling ov vaporz, ending at laast in a smel which faerly drove me out ov the apartment. Up too the smaul ourz ov the morning I cood here the clinking ov hiz test-chuebz which toald me dhat he wauz stil en'gaijd in hiz maloddorous experriment.

In the erly daun I woke widh a start, and wauz cerpriazd too fiand him standing bi mi bedcide, clad in a roode salor dres widh a pe-jacket, and a coers red scarf round hiz nec.

"I am of down the rivver, Wautson," ced he. "I hav bene terning it over in mi miand, and I can ce oonly wun wa out ov it. It iz werth triying, at aul events."

"Shuerly I can cum widh u, then?" ced I.

"No; u can be much moer uesfool if u wil remane here az mi representative. I am loath too go, for it iz qwite on the cardz dhat sum message ma cum juring the da, dho Wigghinz wauz despondent about it laast nite. I waunt u too open aul noats and tellegramz, and too act on yor one jujment if enny nuse shood cum. Can I reli uppon u?"

"Moast certainly."

"I am afrade dhat u wil not be abel too wire too me, for I can hardly tel yet whare I ma fiand micelf. If I am in luc, houwevver, I ma not be gon so verry long. I shal hav nuse ov sum sort or uther befoer I ghet bac."

I had herd nuthhing ov him bi brecfast-time. On opening the "Standard", houwevver, I found dhat dhare wauz a fresh aluezhon too the biznes. "Widh refferens too the Upper Norwood tradgedy," it remarct, "we hav rezon too beleve dhat the matter prommicez too be even moer complex and mistereyous dhan wauz oridginaly supozd. Fresh evvidens haz shone dhat it iz qwite impscibel dhat Mr. Thadjus Sholto cood hav bene in enny wa concernd in the matter. He and the houskeper, Mrs. Bernstone, wer boath releest yesterda evening. It iz beleevd, houwevver, dhat the polece hav a clu az too the reyal culprits, and dhat it iz beying proscecuted bi Mr. Athhelny Joanz, ov Scotland Yard, widh aul hiz wel-none ennergy and sagascity. Ferther arests ma be expected at enny moment."

"Dhat iz satisfactory so far az it gose," thaut I. "Frend Sholto iz safe, at enny rate. I wunder whaut the fresh clu ma be; dho it ceemz too be a stereyotiapt form whenever the polece hav made a blunder."

I tost the paper doun uppon the tabel, but at dhat moment mi i caut an advertiazment in the agony collum. It ran in this wa:

"Lost.—Wharaz Mordeki Smith, boatman, and hiz sun, Gim, left Smiths Whorf at or about thre oacloc laast Chueзда morning in the steme launch "Oroeraa", blac widh too red striaps, funnel blac widh a white band, the sum ov five poundz wil be pade too enny wun whoo can ghiv informaishon too Mrs. Smith, at Smiths Whorf, or at 221b Baker Strete, az too the wharabouts ov the ced Mordeki Smith and the launch "Oroeraa"."

This wauz cleerly Hoamsez doowing. The Baker Strete adres wauz enuf too proove dhat. It struc me az raather in'geenyous, becauz it mite be red bi the fugitiavz widhout dhare ceying in it moer dhan the natchural anxiyety ov a wife for her miscing huzband.

It wauz a long da. Evvery time dhat a noc came too the doer, or a sharp step paast in the strete, I imadgiand dhat it wauz iather Hoamz reterning or an aancer too hiz advertiazment. I tride too rede, but mi thauts wood waunder of too our strainj qwest and too the il-assorted and villanous pare whoome we wer pershuwing. Cood dhare be, I wunderd, sum raddical flau in mi companyonz rezoning. Mite he be suffering from sum huge celf-decepshon? Wauz it not poscibel dhat hiz nimbel and specculative miand had bilt up this wiald ththeyory uppon faulty premmicez? I had nevver none him too be rong; and yet the kenest rezoner ma ocaizhonaly be deceevd. He wauz liacly, I thaut, too faul intoo error throo the over-refianment ov hiz lodgic,—hiz prefferens for a suttel and bizar explanaishon when a planer and moer commonplace wun la reddy too hiz hand. Yet, on the uther hand, I had micelf cene the evvidens, and I had herd the rezonz for hiz deducshonz. When I looct bac on the long chane ov cureyous cercumstaancez, menny ov them trivveyal in themcelvz, but aul tending in the same direcshon, I cood not disghise from micelf dhat even if Hoamsez explanaishon wer incorrect the troo ththeyory must be eeqwaly *uitra* and startling.

At thre oacloc in the aafternoone dhare wauz a loud pele at the bel, an authorritative vois in the haul, and, too mi cerprise, no les a person dhan Mr. Athhelny Joanz wauz shone up too me. Verry different wauz he, houwevver, from the bruisc and maasterfool professor ov common cens whoo

had taken over the case so confidently at Upper Norwood. His expression was downcast, and his bearing meek and even apologetic.

"Good-da, cer; good-da," said he. "Mr. Sherlock Holmes is out, I understand."

"Yes, and I cannot be sure when he will be back. But perhaps you would care to wait. Take that chair and try one of these cigars."

"Thank you; I do not mind if I do," said he, mopping his face with a red bandanna handkerchief.

"And a whisky-and-soda?"

"Well, have a glass. It is very hot for the time of year; and I have had a good deal to worry and try me. You know my theory about this Norwood case?"

"I remember that you expect one."

"Well, I have been obliged to reconsider it. I had my net drawn tightly round Mr. Sholto, cer, when he went through a hole in the middle of it. He was able to prove an alibi which could not be shaken. From the time that he left his brother's room he was never out of sight of some one or other. So it could not be he who climbed over the roof and through the trap-door. It is a very dark case, and my professional credit is at stake. I should be very glad of a little assistance."

"We will need help somehow," said I.

"Your friend Mr. Sherlock Holmes is a wonderful man, cer," said he, in a husky and confidential voice. "Here is a man who is not too big to be beaten. I have known that young man go into a good many cases, but I never saw the case yet that he could not throw a light upon. He is irregular in

hiz methodz, and a littel qwic perhaps in jumping at ththeyorese, but, on the whole, I thhinc he wood hav made a moast prommicing officer, and I doant care whoo nose it. I hav had a wire from him this morning, bi which I understand dhat he haz got sum clu too this Sholto biznes. Here iz the message.”

He tooc the tellegram out ov hiz pocket, and handed it too me. It wauz dated from Poplar at twelv oacloc. “Go too Baker Strete at wuns,” it ced. “If I hav not reternd, wate for me. I am cloce on the trac ov the Sholto gang. U can cum widh us too-nite if u waunt too be in at the finnish.”

“This soundz wel. He haz evvidently pict up the cent agane,” ced I.

“Aa, then he haz bene at fault too,” exclaimd Joanz, widh evvident satisfacshon. “Even the best ov us ar throne of sumtiamz. Ov coers this ma prove too be a fauls alarm; but it iz mi juty az an officer ov the lau too alou no chaans too slip. But dhare iz sum wun at the doer. Perhaps this iz he.”

A hevvy step wauz herd acending the stare, widh a grate whesing and ratling az from a man whoo wauz soerly poot too it for breth. Wuns or twice he stopt, az dho the clime wer too much for him, but at laast he made hiz wa too our doer and enterd. Hiz aperans coresponded too the soundz which we had herd. He wauz an aijd man, clad in cefaring garb, widh an oald pe-jacket buttond up too hiz throte. Hiz bac wauz boud, hiz nese wer shaky, and hiz breething wauz painfooly asthmatic. Az he leend uppon a thhic oken cudgel hiz shoalderz heevd in the effort too drau the are intoo hiz lungz. He had a cullord scarf round hiz chin, and I cood ce littel ov hiz face save a pare ov kene darc ise, overhung bi booshy white brouz, and long gra cide-whiskerz. Aultooghether he gave me the impreshon ov a respectabel maaster marriner whoo had faulen intoo yeerz and povverty.

"Whaut iz it, mi man?" I aasct.

He looct about him in the slo methoddical fashon ov oald age.

"Iz Mr. Sherloc Hoamz here?" ced he.

"No; but I am acting for him. U can tel me enny message u hav for him."

"It wauz too him himcelf I wauz too tel it," ced he.

"But I tel u dhat I am acting for him. Wauz it about Mordeki Smiths bote?"

"Yes. I nose wel whare it iz. An' I nose whare the men he iz aafter ar. An' I nose whare the trezhure iz. I nose aul about it."

"Then tel me, and I shal let him no."

"It wauz too him I wauz too tel it," he repeted, with the petchulant obstinacy ov a verry oald man.

"Wel, u must wate for him."

"No, no; I aint gowin' too loose a whole da too plese no wun. If Mr. Hoamz aint here, then Mr. Hoamz must fiand it aul out for himcelf. I doant care about the looc ov iather ov u, and I woant tel a werd."

He shuffeld toowordz the doer, but Athhelny Joanz got in frunt ov him.

"Wate a bit, mi frend," ced he. "U hav important informaishon, and u must not wauc of. We shal kepe u, whether u like or not, until our frend reternz."

The oald man made a littel run toowordz the doer, but, az Athhelny Joanz poot hiz braud bac up against it, he reccogniazd the ueslesnes ov resistans.

“Pritty sort o’ treetment this!” he cride, stamping hiz stic. “I cum here too ce a gentelman, and u too, whoo I nevver sau in mi life, cese me and trete me in this fashon!”

“U wil be nun the wers,” I ced. “We shal recompens u for the los ov yor time. Cit over here on the sofaa, and u wil not hav long too wate.”

He came acros sullenly enuf, and ceted himcelf widh hiz face resting on hiz handz. Joanz and I rezhuemd our cigarz and our tauc. Suddenly, houwevver, Hoamsez vois broke in uppon us.

“I thhinc dhat u mite offer me a cigar too,” he ced.

We boath started in our chaerz. Dhare wauz Hoamz citting cloce too us widh an are ov qwiyet amuezment.

“Hoamz!” I exclaimd. “U here! But whare iz the oald man?”

“Here iz the oald man,” ced he, hoalding out a hepe ov white hare. “Here he iz,—wig, whiskerz, iabrouz, and aul. I thaut mi disghise wauz pritty good, but I hardly expected dhat it wood stand dhat test.”

“Aa, U roghe!” cride Joanz, hily delited. “U wood hav made an actor, and a rare wun. U had the propper werc’hous cof, and dhose weke legz ov yorz ar werth ten poundz a weke. I thaut I nu the glint ov yor i, dho. U didnt ghet awa from us so esily, U ce.”

"I hav bene werking in dhat ghet-up aul da," ced he, liting hiz cigar. "U ce, a good menny ov the crimminal claacez beghin too no me,—espeshaly cins our frend here tooc too publishing sum ov mi cacez: so I can oanly go on the wor-paath under sum cimpel disghise like this. U got mi wire?"

"Yes; dhat wauz whaut braut me here."

"Hou haz yor cace prosperd?"

"It haz aul cum too nuthhing. I hav had too relece too ov mi prizzonerz, and dhare iz no evvidens against the uther too."

"Nevver miand. We shal ghiv u too utherz in the place ov them. But u must poot yorcelf under mi orderz. U ar welcum too aul the ofishal credit, but u must act on the line dhat I point out. Iz dhat agrede?"

"Entiarly, if u wil help me too the men."

"Wel, then, in the first place I shal waunt a faast polece-bote—a steme launch—too be at the Westminster Staerz at cevven oacloc."

"Dhat iz esily mannijd. Dhare iz aulwase wun about dhare; but I can step acros the rode and tellefone too make shure."

"Then I shal waunt too staanch men, in cace ov resistans."

"Dhare wil be too or thre in the bote. Whaut els?"

"When we ceure the men we shal ghet the trezhure. I thhinc dhat it wood be a plezhure too mi frend here too take the box round too the yung lady too whoome haaf ov it riatfooly belongz. Let her be the first too open it.—A, Wautson?"

“It wood be a grate plezhure too me.”

“Raather an ireggular proceding,” ced Joanz, shaking hiz hed.

“Houwevver, the whole thhing iz ireggular, and I supose we must winc at it. The trezhure must aafterwordz be handed over too the authorritese until aafter the ofishal investigaishon.”

“Certainly. Dhat iz esily mannaijd. Wun uther point. I shood much like too hav a fu detailz about this matter from the lips ov Jonnathan Smaul himcelf. U no I like too werc the detale ov mi cacez out. Dhare iz no obgecshon too mi havving an unnofishal intervü widh him, iather here in mi ruimz or elshware, az long az he iz efishly garded?”

“Wel, u ar maaster ov the cichuwaishon. I hav had no proofe yet ov the existens ov this Jonnathan Smaul. Houwevver, if u can cach him I doant ce hou I can refuse u an intervü widh him.”

“Dhat iz understood, then?”

“Perfectly. Iz dhare ennithhing els?”

“Oonly dhat I incist uppon yor dining widh us. It wil be reddy in haaf an our. I hav oisterz and a brace ov grous, widh sumthhing a littel chois in white wianz.—Wautson, u hav nevver yet reccogniazd mi merrits az a houskeper.”

## Chapter 10

### The End ov the Ilander

Our mele wauz a merry wun. Hoamz cood tauc exedingly wel when he chose, and dhat nite he did chuse. He apeerd too be in a state ov

nervous exaultaishon. I hav nevver none him so brilleyant. He spoke on a qwic suxeshon ov subjects,—on mirrakel-plase, on meddeyeval pottery, on Stradivareyus viyolinz, on the Booddizm ov Cillon, and on the wor-ships ov the fuchure,—handling eche az dho he had made a speshal studdy ov it. Hiz brite humor marct the reyacshon from hiz blac depreshon ov the preceding dase. Athhelny Joanz pruivd too be a soashabel sole in hiz ourz ov relaxaishon, and faist hiz dinner with the are ov a *bon vevon*. For micelf, I felt elated at the thaut dhat we wer nering the end ov our taasc, and I caut sumthhing ov Hoamsez gayety. Nun ov us aluded juring dinner too the cauz which had braut us tooghether.

When the cloth wauz cleerd, Hoamz glaanst at hiz wauch, and fild up thre glaacez widh poert. “Wun bumper,” ced he, “too the suxes ov our littel expedishon. And nou it iz hi time we wer of. Hav u a pistol, Wautson?”

“I hav mi oald cervice-revolver in mi desc.”

“U had best take it, then. It iz wel too be prepaerd. I ce dhat the cab iz at the doer. I orderd it for haaf-paast cix.”

It wauz a littel paast cevven befoer we reecht the Westminster whorf, and found our launch awating us. Hoamz ide it critically.

“Iz dhare ennithhing too marc it az a polece-bote?”

“Yes,—dhat grene lamp at the side.”

“Then take it of.”

The smaul chainj wauz made, we stept on boerd, and the roaps wer caast of. Joanz, Hoamz, and I sat in the stern. Dhare wauz wun man at the rudder, wun too tend the en'gianz, and too berly polece-inspectorz

forward.

“Whare too?” aasct Joanz.

“Too the Touwer. Tel them too stop opposite Jacobsonz Yard.”

Our craaft wauz evvidently a verry faast wun. We shot paast the long lianz  
ov

loded bargez az dho dha wer staishonary. Hoamz smiald widh  
satisfacshon az we overhauld a rivver stemer and left her behiand us.

“We aut too be abel too cach ennithhing on the rivver,” he ced.

“Wel, hardly dhat. But dhare ar not menny launchez too bete us.”

“We shal hav too cach the “Oroeraa”, and she haz a name for beying a  
clipper. I wil tel u hou the land lise, Wautson. U recolect hou  
anoid I wauz at beying baulct bi so smaul a thhing?”

“Yes.”

“Wel, I gave mi miand a thurro rest bi plun’ging intoo a kemmical  
anallcis. Wun ov our gratest staitsmen haz ced dhat a chainj ov werc  
iz the best rest. So it iz. When I had suxeded in dizolving the  
hiadrocarbon which I wauz at werc at, I came bac too our problem ov the  
Sholtose, and thaut the whole matter out agane. Mi boiz had bene up  
the rivver and doun the rivver widhout rezult. The launch wauz not at  
enny

landing-stage or whorf, nor had it reternd. Yet it cood hardly hav  
bene scutteld too hide dhare tracez,—dho dhat aulwase remaind az a  
poscibel hipothhecis if aul els faild. I nu this man Smaul had a  
certane degry ov lo cunning, but I did not thhinc him capabel ov  
ennithhing in the nachure ov dellicate fines. Dhat iz uezhuwaly a product  
ov hiyer ejucaishon. I then reflected dhat cins he had certainly bene

in Lunden sum time—az we had evvidens dhat he maintaind a  
continnuwal  
wauch over Pondicherry Loj—he cood hardly leve at a moments  
notice, but wood nede sum littel time, if it wer oonly a da, too  
arainj hiz afaerz. Dhat wauz the ballans ov probabillity, at enny rate.”

“It ceemz too me too be a littel weke,” ced I. “It iz moer probbabel dhat  
he had arainjd hiz afaerz befoer evver he cet out uppon hiz  
expedishon.”

“No, I hardly thhinc so. This lare ov hiz wood be too vallubel a  
retrete in cace ov nede for him too ghiv it up until he wauz shure dhat he  
cood doo widhout it. But a cecond concideraishon struc me. Jonnathan  
Smaul must hav felt dhat the peculeyar aperans ov hiz companyon,  
houwevver much he ma hav top-coted him, wood ghiv rise too goscip, and  
poscibly be asoasheyated widh this Norwood tradgedy. He wauz qwite  
sharp  
enuf too ce dhat. Dha had started from dhare hed-qworterz under  
cuvver ov darcnes, and he wood wish too ghet bac befoer it wauz braud  
lite. Nou, it wauz paast thre oacloc, acording too Mrs. Smith, when  
dha got the bote. It wood be qwite brite, and pepel wood be about  
in an our or so. Dhaerfoer, I argude, dha did not go verry far. Dha  
pade Smith wel too hoald hiz tung, reservd hiz launch for the final  
escape, and hurrede too dhare lodgingz widh the trezhure-box. In a  
cuppel ov niats, when dha had time too ce whaut vu the paperz tooc,  
and whether dhare wauz enny suspishon, dha wood make dhare wa under  
cuvver ov darcnes too sum ship at Graivsend or in the Dounz, whare no  
dout dha had aulreddy arainjd for passagez too Amerricaa or the  
Collonese.”

“But the launch? Dha cood not hav taken dhat too dhare lodgingz.”

“Qwite so. I argude dhat the launch must be no grate wa of, in spite  
ov its invisibillity. I then poot micelf in the place ov Smaul, and

looct at it az a man ov hiz capascity wood. He wood probbably concidder dhat too cend bac the launch or too kepe it at a whorf wood make persute esy if the polece did happen too ghet on hiz trac. Hou, then, cood he concele the launch and yet hav her at hand when waunted? I wunderd whaut I shood doo micelf if I wer in hiz shoose. I cood oanly thhinc ov wun wa ov doowing it. I mite land the launch over too sum bote-bilder or reparer, widh direcshonz too make a triafing chainj in her. She wood then be remuivd too hiz shed or yard, and so be efecchuwaly conceeld, while at the same time I cood hav her at a fu ourz' notice."

"Dhat ceemz cimpel enuf."

"It iz just these verry cimpel thhingz which ar extreemly liyabel too be overllooct. Houwevver, I determiand too act on the ideyaa. I started at wuns in this harmles cemanz rig and inqwiard at aul the yardz down the rivver. I droo blanc at fiftene, but at the sixteenth—Jacobsonz—I lernd dhat the "Oroeraa" had bene handed over too them too dase ago bi a wooden-legghed man, widh sum trivveyal direcshonz az too her rudder.

'Dhare aint naut amis widh her rudder,' ced the foerman. 'Dhare she lise, widh the red streex.' At dhat moment whoo shood cum doun but Mordeki Smith, the miscing oner? He wauz raather the wers for liccor. I shood not, ov coers, hav none him, but he bellode out hiz name and the name ov hiz launch. 'I waunt her too-nite at ate oacloc,' ced he,—'ate oacloc sharp, miand, for I hav too gentelmen whoo woant be kept wating.' Dha had evvidently pade him wel, for he wauz verry flush ov munny, chucking shillingz about too the men. I follode him sum distans, but he subcided intoo an ale-hous: so I went bac too the yard, and, happening too pic up wun ov mi boiz on the wa, I staishond him az a centry over the launch. He iz too stand at wauterz ej and wave hiz hankerchefe too us when dha start. We shal be liying of in the streme, and it wil be a strainj thhing if we doo not take men, trezhure, and aul."

“U hav pland it aul verry neetly, whether dha ar the rite men or not,” ced Joanz; “but if the afare wer in mi handz I shood hav had a boddy ov polece in Jacobsonz Yard, and arested them when dha came doun.”

“Which wood hav bene nevver. This man Smaul iz a pritty shroode fello. He wood cend a scout on ahead, and if ennithing made him suspishous li snug for anuther weke.”

“But u mite hav stuc too Mordeki Smith, and so bene led too dhare hiding-place,” ced I.

“In dhat cace I shood hav waisted mi da. I thhinc dhat it iz a hundred too wun against Smith nowing whare dha liv. Az long az he haz liccor and good pa, whi shood he aasc qweschonz? Dha cend him messagez whaut too doo. No, I thaut over evvery poscibel coers, and this iz the best.”

While this conversaishon had bene proceding, we had bene shooting the long cerese ov bridgez which span the Temz. Az we paast the Citty the laast rase ov the sun wer ghilding the cros uppon the summit ov St. Paulz. It wauz twilite befoer we reecht the Touwer.

“Dhat iz Jacobsonz Yard,” ced Hoamz, pointing too a briscel ov maasts and rigging on the Surry cide. “Croose gently up and doun here under cuvver ov this string ov literz.” He tooc a pare ov nite-glaacez from hiz pocket and gaizd sum time at the shoer. “I ce mi centry at hiz poast,” he remarct, “but no cine ov a hankerchefe.”

“Supose we go doun-streme a short wa and li in wate for them,” ced Joanz, egherly. We wer aul egher bi this time, even the poleesmen and stokerz, whoo had a verry vaghe ideyaa ov whaut wauz gowing forward.

"We hav no rite too take ennithhing for graanted," Hoamz aancerd. "It iz certainly ten too wun dhat dha go doun-streme, but we canot be certane. From this point we can ce the entrans ov the yard, and dha can hardly ce us. It wil be a clere nite and plenty ov lite. We must sta whare we ar. Ce hou the foke swarm over yonder in the gaslite."

"Dha ar cumming from werc in the yard."

"Derty-loocking raascalz, but I supose evvery wun haz sum littel imortal sparc conceeld about him. U wood not thhinc it, too looc at them. Dhare iz no *a priori* probabillity about it. A strainj enigmaa iz man!"

"Sum wun caulz him a sole conceeld in an annimal," I sugested.

"Winwood Rede iz good uppon the subgect," ced Hoamz. "He remarx dhat, while the individjuwal man iz an insollubel puzsel, in the agregate he becumz a mathhemattical certainty. U can, for exaampel, nevver foertel whaut enny wun man wil doo, but u can sa widh precizhon whaut an avverage number wil be up too. Individjuwalz vary, but percentagez remane constant. So cez the statistishan. But doo I ce a hankerchefe? Shuerly dhare iz a white flutter over yonder."

"Yes, it iz yor boi," I cride. "I can ce him plainly."

"And dhare iz the "Oroeraa"," exclaimd Hoamz, "and gowing like the devvil! Fool spede ahead, en'ginere. Make aafter dhat launch widh the yello lite. Bi hevven, I shal nevver forghiv micelf if she prui vz too hav the heelz ov us!"

She had slipt uncene throo the yard-entrans and paast behiand too or thre smaul craaft, so dhat she had faerly got her spede up befoer we

sau her. Nou she wauz fliying doun the streme, nere in too the shoer, gowing at a tremendous rate. Joanz looct graivly at her and shooc hiz hed.

“She iz verry faast,” he ced. “I dout if we shal cach her.”

“We “must” cach her!” cride Hoamz, betwene hiz teeth. “Hepe it on, stokerz! Make her doo aul she can! If we bern the bote we must hav them!”

We wer faerly aafter her nou. The fernacez roerd, and the pouwerfool en’gians whizd and clanct, like a grate metallic hart. Her sharp, stepe prou cut throo the rivver-wauter and cent too roling waivz too rite and too left ov us. Widh evvery throb ov the en’gians we sprang and qwivverd like a livving thhing. Wun grate yello lantern in our bouz throo a long, flickering funnel ov lite in frunt ov us. Rite ahed a darc bler uppon the wauter shode whare the “Oroeraa” la, and the swerl ov white fome behiand her spoke ov the pace at which she wauz gowing. We

flasht paast bargez, stemerz, merchant-vescelz, in and out, behiand this wun and round the uther. Voicez haild us out ov the darcnes, but stil the “Oroeraa” thunderd on, and stil we follode cloce uppon her trac.

“Pile it on, men, pile it on!” cride Hoamz, loocking doun intoo the en’gine-roome, while the feers glo from belo bete uppon hiz egher, aqwiline face. “Ghet evvery pound ov steme u can.”

“I thhinc we gane a littel,” ced Joanz, widh hiz ise on the “Oroeraa”.

“I am shure ov it,” ced I. “We shal be up widh her in a verry fu minnuets.”

At dhat moment, houwevver, az our evil fate wood hav it, a tug widh

thre bargez in to blunderd in betwene us. It wauz oanly bi pootting our helm hard doun dhat we avoided a colizhon, and befoer we cood round them and recuvver our wa the "Oroeraa" had gaind a good too hundred yardz. She wauz stil, houwevver, wel in vu, and the merky uncertane twilite wauz cetting intoo a clere starlit nite. Our boilerz wer straind too dhare utmoast, and the frale shel viabrated and creect with the feers ennergy which wauz driving us along. We had shot throo the Poole, paast the West Injaa Dox, doun the long Detford Reche, and up agane aafter rounding the Ile ov Dogz. The dul bler in frunt ov us rezolvd itcelf nou cleerly enuf intoo the dainty "Oroeraa". Joanz ternd our cerch-lite uppon her, so dhat we cood plainly ce the figguerz uppon her dec. Wun man sat bi the stern, with sumthhing blac betwene hiz nese over which he stuipt. Becide him la a darc mas which looct like a Nufoundland dog. The boi held the tiller, while against the red glare ov the fernace I cood ce oald Smith, stript too the waist, and shuvveling coalz for dere life. Dha ma hav had sum dout at ferst az too whether we wer reyaly pershuwing them, but nou az we follode evvery wianding and terning which dha tooc dhare cood no lon'gher be enny qweschon about it. At Grennich we wer about thre hundred pacez behiand them. At Blaqwaul we cood not hav bene moer dhan too hundred and fifty. I hav coerst menny crechuerz in menny cuntrese juring mi checkerd carere, but nevver did spoert ghiv me such a wiald thril az this mad, fliying man-hunt doun the Temz. Steddily we droo in uppon them, yard bi yard. In the cilens ov the nite we cood here the panting and clanking ov dhare mashenery. The man in the stern stil croucht uppon the dec, and hiz armz wer mooving az dho he wer bizsy, while evvery nou and then he wood looc up and mezhure with a glaans the distans which stil cepparated us. Nerer we came and nerer. Joanz yeld too them too stop. We wer not moer dhan foer boats lengths behiand them, boath boats fliying at a tremendous pace. It wauz a clere reche ov the rivver, with Barking Levvel uppon wun cide and the mellancoly Plumsted Marshez uppon the uther. At our hale the man in the stern sprang up from the dec and shooc hiz too clincht fists at us,

kercing the while in a hi, cract vois. He wauz a good-ciazd, pouwerfool man, and az he stood poising himcelf widh legz astride I cood ce dhat from the thhi dounwordz dhare wauz but a wooden stump uppon the

rite cide. At the sound ov hiz strident, an'gry crise dhare wauz muivment in the huddeld bundel uppon the dec. It stratend itcelf intoo a littel blac man—the smaulest I hav evver cene—widh a grate, misshapen hed and a shoc ov tan'gheld, dishevveld hare. Hoamz had aulreddy draun hiz revolver, and I whipt out mine at the cite ov this savvage, distorted crechure. He wauz rapt in sum sort ov darc ulster or blanket, which left oonly hiz face expoazd; but dhat face wauz enuf too ghiv a man a sleeples nite. Nevver hav I cene fechuerz so deeply marct widh aul beschallity and croowelty. Hiz smaule isse glode and bernd widh a somber lite, and hiz thhic lips wer riadhd bac from hiz teeth, which grind and chatterd at us widh a haaf annimal fury.

“Fire if he rasez hiz hand,” ced Hoamz, qwiyetly. We wer within a boats-length bi this time, and aulmoast within tuch ov our qwory. I can ce the too ov them nou az dha stood, the white man widh hiz legz far apart, shreking out kercez, and the unhallode dworf widh hiz hidjous face, and hiz strong yello teeth nashing at us in the lite ov our lantern.

It wauz wel dhat we had so clere a vu ov him. Even az we looct he pluct out from under hiz cuvvering a short, round pece ov wood, like a scoole-rooler, and clapt it too hiz lips. Our pistolz rang out tooghether. He wherld round, throo up hiz armz, and widh a kiand ov choking cof fel ciadwase intoo the streme. I caut wun glimps ov hiz venomous, mennacing isse amid the white swerl ov the wauterz. At the same moment the wooden-legged man throo himcelf uppon the rudder and poot

it hard doun, so dhat hiz bote made strate in for the suthern banc, while we shot paast her stern, oonly clering her bi a fu fete. We wer round aafter her in an instant, but she wauz aulreddy neerly at the banc.

It wauz a wiald and dezzolate place, whare the moone glimmerd uppon a wide  
expans ov marsh-land, widh puilz ov stagnant wauter and bedz ov  
decaying vegetaishon. The launch widh a dul thud ran up uppon the  
mud-banc, widh her bou in the are and her stern flush widh the wauter.  
The fugitive sprang out, but hiz stump instantly sanc its whole length  
intoo the sodden soil. In vane he struggheld and riadh. Not wun step  
cood he poscibly take iather forwordz or baqwordz. He yeld in  
impotent rage, and kict frantically intoo the mud widh hiz uther foot,  
but hiz strugghelz oanly boerd hiz woodden pin the deper intoo the sticky  
banc. When we braut our launch alongcide he wauz so fermly ancord  
dhat it wauz oanly bi throwing the end ov a rope over hiz shoalderz dhat  
we wer abel too haul him out, and too drag him, like sum evil fish,  
over our cide. The too Smiths, faather and sun, sat sullenly in dhare  
launch, but came aboard meecly enuf when comaanded. The "Oroeraa"  
hercelf we hauld of and made faast too our stern. A sollid iarn chest ov  
Injan wercmanship stood uppon the dec. This, dhare cood be no  
qweschon, wauz the same dhat had containd the il-omend trezhure ov  
the Sholtose. Dhare wauz no ke, but it wauz ov concidderabel wate, so we  
traansferd it caerfooly too our one littel cabbinn. Az we steemd sloly  
up-streme agane, we flasht our cerch-lite in evvery direcshon, but  
dhare wauz no cine ov the Ilander. Sumwhare in the darc oose at the  
bottom ov the Temz li the boanz ov dhat strainj vizsitor too our  
shoerz.

"Ce here," ced Hoamz, pointing too the woodden hachwa. "We wer  
hardly qwic enuf widh our pistolz." Dhare, shure enuf, just behiand  
whare we had bene standing, stuc wun ov dhose merderous darts which  
we  
nu so wel. It must hav whizd betwene us at the instant dhat we  
fiard. Hoamz smiald at it and shrugd hiz shoalderz in hiz esy  
fashon, but I confes dhat it ternd me cic too thhinc ov the horribel  
deth which had paast so cloce too us dhat nite.

## Chapter 11

### The Grate Agraa Trezhure

Our captive sat in the cabbinn opposite too the iarn box which he had dun so much and wated so long too gane. He wauz a sunbernd, recles-ide fello, widh a netwerc ov lianz and rinkelz aul over hiz mahoggany fechuerz, which toald ov a hard, open-are life. Dhare wauz a cin'gular promminens about hiz beereded chin which marct a man whoo wauz not too be

esily ternd from hiz perpoce. Hiz age ma hav bene fifty or dharabouts, for hiz blac, kerly hare wauz thhicly shot widh gra. Hiz face in repose wauz not an unplesing wun, dho hiz hevvy brouz and agrescive chin gave him, az I had laitly cene, a terribel expreshon when muivd too an'gher. He sat nou widh hiz handcuft handz uppon hiz lap,

and hiz hed sunc uppon hiz brest, while he looct widh hiz kene, twincling ise at the box which had bene the cauz ov hiz il-doowingz. It ceemd too me dhat dhare wauz moer sorro dhan an'gher in hiz ridgid and

containd countenans. Wuns he looct up at me widh a gleme ov sumthhing like humor in hiz ise.

"Wel, Jonnathan Smaul," ced Hoamz, liting a cigar, "I am sorry dhat it haz cum too this."

"And so am I, cer," he aancerd, francly. "I doant beleve dhat I can swing over the job. I ghiv u mi werd on the booc dhat I nevver raizd hand against Mr. Sholto. It wauz dhat littel hel-hound Ton'gaa whoo shot wun ov hiz kerst darts intoo him. I had no part in it, cer. I wauz az greevd az if it had bene mi blud-relaishon. I welted the littel devvil widh the slac end ov the rope for it, but it wauz dun, and I cood not

undoo it agane.”

“Hav a cigar,” ced Hoamz; “and u had best take a pool out ov mi flaasc, for u ar verry wet. Hou cood u expect so smaul and weke a man az this blac fello too overpouwer Mr. Sholto and hoald him while u wer climing the rope?”

“U ceme too no az much about it az if u wer dhare, cer. The truth iz dhat I hoapt too fiand the roome clere. I nu the habbits ov the hous pritty wel, and it wauz the time when Mr. Sholto uezhuwaly went doun too

hiz supper. I shal make no ceecret ov the biznes. The best defens dhat I can make iz just the cimpel truth. Nou, if it had bene the oald major I wood hav swung for him widh a lite hart. I wood hav thaut no moer ov nifing him dhan ov smoking this cigar. But its kerst hard dhat I shood be lagd over this yung Sholto, widh whoome I had no qworel whautevver.”

“U ar under the charj ov Mr. Athhelny Joanz, ov Scotland Yard. He iz gowing too bring u up too mi ruimz, and I shal aasc u for a troo acount ov the matter. U must make a clene brest ov it, for if u doo I hope dhat I ma be ov uce too u. I thhinc I can proove dhat the poizon acts so qwicly dhat the man wauz ded befoer evver u reecht the roome.”

“Dhat he wauz, cer. I nevver got such a tern in mi life az when I sau him grinning at me widh hiz hed on hiz shoalder az I cliamd throo the windo. It faerly shooc me, cer. Ide hav haaf kild Ton’gaa for it if he had not scambeld of. Dhat wauz hou he came too leve hiz club, and sum ov hiz darts too, az he telz me, which I dare sa helpt too poot u on our trac; dho hou u kept on it iz moer dhan I can tel. I doant fele no mallice against u for it. But it duz ceme a qwere thhing,” he added, widh a bitter smile, “dhat I whoo hav a fare clame too ni uppon haaf a milleyon ov munny shood spend the ferst haaf ov mi

life bilding a braiqwauter in the Andaamanz, and am like too spend the uther haaf digghing drainz at Dartmoor. It wauz an evil da for me when ferst I clapt ise uppon the merchant Aakhmet and had too doo with the Agraa trezhure, which nevver braut ennithhing but a kers yet uppon the man whoo oand it. Too him it braut merder, too Major Sholto it braut fere and ghilt, too me it haz ment slavery for life."

At this moment Athhelny Joanz thrust hiz braud face and hevvy shoalderz intoo the tiny cabbin. "Qwite a fammily party," he remarct. "I thhinc I shal hav a pool at dhat flaasc, Hoamz. Wel, I thhinc we ma aul con'gratchulate eche uther. Pitty we didnt take the uther alive; but dhare wauz no chois. I sa, Hoamz, u must confes dhat u cut it raather fine. It wauz aul we cood doo too overhaul her."

"Aul iz wel dhat endz wel," ced Hoamz. "But I certainly did not no dhat the "Oroeraa" wauz such a clipper."

"Smith cez she iz wun ov the faastest launchez on the rivver, and dhat if he had had anuther man too help him with the en'gianz we shood nevver hav caut her. He swaerz he nu nuthhing ov this Norwood biznes."

"Niather he did," cride our prizzoner,— "not a werd. I chose hiz launch becauz I herd dhat she wauz a fliyer. We toald him nuthhing, but we pade him wel, and he wauz too ghet sumthhing handsum if we reecht our vescel, the "Ezmeraldaa", at Graivsend, outword bound for the Brasilz."

"Wel, if he haz dun no rong we shal ce dhat no rong cumz too him. If we ar pritty qwic in catching our men, we ar not so qwic in condemming them." It wauz amusing too notice hou the conceqwenshal Joanz wauz aulreddy beghinning too ghiv himcelf aertz on the strength ov the capchure. From the slite smile which plade over Sherloc Hoamsez face, I cood ce dhat the speche had not bene lost uppon him.

“We wil be at Vauxhaul Brij prezently,” ced Joanz, “and shal land u, Dr. Wautson, widh the trezhure-box. I nede hardly tel u dhat I am taking a verry grave responcebilly uppon micelf in doowing this. It iz moast ireggular; but ov coers an agrement iz an agrement. I must, houwevver, az a matter ov juty, cend an inspector widh u, cins u hav so vallubel a charj. U wil drive, no dout?”

“Yes, I shal drive.”

“It iz a pittly dhare iz no ke, dhat we ma make an inventory ferst. U wil hav too brake it open. Whare iz the ke, mi man?”

“At the bottom ov the rivver,” ced Smaul, shortly.

“Hum! Dhare wauz no uce yor ghivving this un‘nescesary trubbel. We hav had werc enuf aulreddy throo u. Houwevver, doctor, I nede not worn u too be caerfool. Bring the box bac widh u too the Baker Strete ruimz. U wil fiand us dhare, on our wa too the staishon.”

Dha landed me at Vauxhaul, widh mi hevvy iarn box, and widh a bluf, geenyal inspector az mi companyon. A qworter ov an ourz drive braut us too Mrs. Cescil Forresterz. The cervant ceemd cerpriazd at so late a vizsitor. Mrs. Cescil Forrester wauz out for the evening, she explaind, and liacly too be verry late. Mis Morstan, houwevver, wauz in the drauwing-roome: so too the drauwing-roome I went, box in hand, leving the obliging inspector in the cab.

She wauz ceted bi the open windo, drest in sum sort ov white diyaffanous materoyal, widh a littel tuch ov scarlet at the nec and waist. The soft lite ov a shaded lamp fel uppon her az she leend bac in the baasket chare, playing over her swete, grave face, and tinting widh a dul, metallic sparkel the rich coilz ov her lucshureyant hare. Wun

white arm and hand driipt over the side ov the chare, and her whole pose and figgure spoke ov an abzorbing mellancoly. At the sound ov mi foot-faul she sprang too her fete, houwevver, and a brite flush ov cerprise and ov plezhure cullord her pale cheex.

“I herd a cab drive up,” she ced. “I thaut dhat Mrs. Forrester had cum bac verry erly, but I nevver dreemd dhat it mite be u. Whaut nuse hav u braut me?”

“I hav braut sumthhing better dhan nuse,” ced I, pootting doun the box uppon the tabel and speking joveyaly and boisterously, dho mi hart wauz hevvy within me. “I hav braut u sumthhing which iz werth aul the nuse in the werld. I hav braut u a forchune.”

She glaanst at the iarn box. “Iz dhat the trezhure, then?” she aasct, cooly enuf.

“Yes, this iz the grate Agraa trezhure. Haaf ov it iz yorz and haaf iz Thadjus Sholtose. U wil hav a cuppel ov hundred thouzand eche. Thhinc ov dhat! An anuwity ov ten thouzand poundz. Dhare wil be fu ritcher yung ladese in In’gland. Iz it not gloereyous?”

I thhinc dhat I must hav bene raather overacting mi delite, and dhat she detected a hollo ring in mi con’grachulaishonz, for I sau her iabrouz rise a littel, and she glaanst at me cureyously.

“If I hav it,” ced she, “I o it too u.”

“No, no,” I aancerd, “not too me, but too mi frend Sherloc Hoamz. Widh aul the wil in the werld, I cood nevver hav follode up a clu which haz taxt even hiz analittical geenyus. Az it wauz, we verry neerly lost it at the laast moment.”

“Pra cit doun and tel me aul about it, Dr. Wautson,” ced she.

I narated breefly whaut had okerd cins I had cene her laast,—Hoamsez nu method ov cerch, the discuvvery ov the “Oroeraa”, the aperans ov Athhelny Joanz, our expedishon in the evening, and the wiald chace doun the Temz. She liscend widh parted lips and shining ise too mi recital ov our advenchuerz. When I spoke ov the dart which had so narroly mist us, she ternd so white dhat I feerd dhat she wauz about too faint.

“It iz nuthhing,” she ced, az I hacend too poer her out sum wauter. “I am aul rite agane. It wauz a shoc too me too here dhat I had plaist mi frendz in such horribel perril.”

“Dhat iz aul over,” I aancerd. “It wauz nuthhing. I wil tel u no moer gloomy detailz. Let us tern too sumthhing briter. Dhare iz the trezhure. Whaut cood be briter dhan dhat? I got leve too bring it widh me, thhinking dhat it wood interest u too be the ferst too ce it.”

“It wood be ov the gratest interest too me,” she ced. Dhare wauz no eghernes in her vois, houwevver. It had struc her, doutles, dhat it mite ceme un’graishous uppon her part too be indifferent too a prise which had cost so much too win.

“Whaut a pritty box!” she ced, stooping over it. “This iz Injan werc, I supose?”

“Yes; it iz Benaerz mettal-werc.”

“And so hevvy!” she exclaimd, tryying too rase it. “The box alone must be ov sum vallu. Whare iz the ke?”

“Smaul throo it intoo the Temz,” I aancerd. “I must borro Mrs. Forresterz poker.” Dhare wauz in the frunt a thhic and braud haasp,

raut in the immagine ov a citting Booodaa. Under this I thrust the end ov the poker and twisted it outword az a lever. The haasp sprang open widh a loud snap. Widh trembling fin'gherz I flung bac the lid. We both stood gasing in astonishment. The box wauz empty!

No wunder dhat it wauz hevvy. The iarn-werc wauz too-thherdz ov an inch thhic aul round. It wauz mascive, wel made, and sollid, like a chest constructed too carry thhingz ov grate price, but not wun shred or crum ov mettal or juwelry la within it. It wauz absoluetly and compleetly empty.

“The trezhure iz lost,” ced Mis Morstan, caamly.

Az I liscend too the werdz and reyaliazd whaut dha ment, a grate shaddo ceemd too paas from mi sole. I did not no hou this Agraa trezhure had wade me doun, until nou dhat it wauz finaly remuivd. It wauz celfish, no dout, disloiyal, rong, but I cood reyalise nuthhing save dhat the goalden barreyer wauz gon from betwene us. “Thanc God!” I ejacculated from mi verry hart.

She looct at me widh a qwic, qweschoning smile. “Whi doo u sa dhat?” she aasct.

“Becauz u ar within mi reche agane,” I ced, taking her hand. She did not widhdrau it. “Becauz I luv u, Mary, az trooly az evver a man luvd a woomman. Becauz this trezhure, these ritchez, ceeld mi lips. Nou dhat dha ar gon I can tel u hou I luv u. Dhat iz whi I ced, ‘Thanc God.’”

“Then I sa, ‘Thanc God,’ too,” she whisperd, az I droo her too mi cide. Whoowevver had lost a trezhure, I nu dhat nite dhat I had gaind wun.

## Chapter 12

### The Strainj Stoery ov Jonnathan Smaul

A verry paishent man wauz dhat inspector in the cab, for it wauz a wery time befoer I rejoind him. Hiz face clouded over when I shode him the empty box.

“Dhare gose the reword!” ced he, gloomily. “Whare dhare iz no munny dhare iz no pa. This niats werc wood hav bene werth a tenner eche too Sam Broun and me if the trezhure had bene dhare.”

“Mr. Thadjus Sholto iz a rich man,” I ced. “He wil ce dhat u ar reworded, trezhure or no.”

The inspector shooc hiz hed despondently, houwevver. “Its a bad job,” he repeted; “and so Mr. Athhelny Joanz wil thhinc.”

Hiz foercaast pruivd too be corect, for the detective looct blanc enuf when I got too Baker Strete and shode him the empty box. Dha had oanly just ariavd, Hoamz, the prizzoner, and he, for dha had chainjd dhare planz so far az too repoert themcelvz at a staishon uppon the wa. Mi companyon lounjd in hiz arm-chare widh hiz uezhuwal listles expreshon, while Smaul sat stollidly opposite too him widh hiz wooden leg coct over hiz sound wun. Az I exhibbited the empty box he leend bac in hiz chare and laaft aloud.

“This iz yor doowing, Smaul,” ced Athhelny Joanz, an’grily.

“Yes, I hav poot it awa whare u shal nevver la hand uppon it,” he cride, exultantly. “It iz mi trezhure; and if I caant hav the loote

Ile take darnd good care dhat no wun els duz. I tel u dhat no livving man haz enny rite too it, unles it iz thre men whoo ar in the Andaaman convict-barrax and micelf. I no nou dhat I canot hav the uce ov it, and I no dhat dha canot. I hav acted aul throo for them az much az for micelf. Its bene the cine ov foer widh us aulwase. Wel I no dhat dha wood hav had me doo just whaut I hav dun, and thro the trezhure intoo the Temz raather dhan let it go too kith or kin ov Sholto or ov Morstan. It wauz not too make them rich dhat we did for Aakhmet. Ule fiand the trezhure whare the ke iz, and whare littel Ton'gaa iz. When I sau dhat yor launch must cach us, I poot the loote awa in a safe place. Dhare ar no roopese for u this gerny."

"U ar deceving us, Smaul," ced Athhelny Joanz, sternly. "If u had wisht too thro the trezhure intoo the Temz it wood hav bene eseyer for u too hav throne box and aul."

"Eseyer for me too thro, and eseyer for u too recuvver," he aancerd, widh a shroode, ciadlong looc. "The man dhat wauz clevver enuf too hunt me doun iz clevver enuf too pic an iarn box from the bottom ov a rivver. Nou dhat dha ar scatterd over five mialz or so, it ma be a harder job. It went too mi hart too doo it, dho. I wauz haaf mad when u came up widh us. Houwevver, dhaerz no good greving over it. Ive had ups in mi life, and Ive had dounz, but Ive lernd not too cri over spild milc."

"This iz a verry cereyous matter, Smaul," ced the detective. "If u had helpt justice, insted ov thworting it in this wa, u wood hav had a better chaans at yor triyal."

"Justice!" snarld the ex-convict. "A pritty justice! Whoose loote iz this, if it iz not ourz? Whare iz the justice dhat I shood ghiv it up too dhose whoo hav nevver ernd it? Looc hou I hav ernd it! Twenty long yeerz in dhat fever-ridden swaump, aul da at werc under the man'grove-tre, aul nite chaind up in the filthhy convict-huts, bitten

bi mosketose, ract widh agu, boollede bi evvery kerst blac-faist poleesman whoo luvd too take it out ov a white man. Dhat wauz hou I ernd the Agraa trezhure; and u tauc too me ov justice becauz I canot bare too fele dhat I hav pade this price oanly dhat anuther ma enjoi it! I wood raather swing a scoer ov tiamz, or hav wun ov Ton'gaaz darts in mi hide, dhan liv in a convicts cel and fele dhat anuther man iz at hiz ese in a pallace widh the munny dhat shood be mine." Smaul had dropt hiz maasc ov stowicizm, and aul this came out in a wiald wherl ov werdz, while hiz ise blaizd, and the handcufs clanc tooghether widh the impashond muivment ov hiz handz. I cood understand, az I sau the fury and the pashon ov the man, dhat it wauz no groundles or un'natchural terror which had posest Major Sholto when he ferst lernd dhat the injuerd convict wauz uppon hiz trac.

"U forghet dhat we no nuthhing ov aul this," ced Hoamz qwiyetly. "We hav not herd yor stoery, and we canot tel hou far justice ma oridginaly hav bene on yor cide."

"Wel, cer, u hav bene verry fare-spoken too me, dho I can ce dhat I hav u too thanc dhat I hav these braislets uppon mi rists. Stil, I bare no gruj for dhat. It iz aul fare and abuv-boerd. If u waunt too here mi stoery I hav no wish too hoald it bac. Whaut I sa too u iz Godz truth, evvery werd ov it. Thanc u; u can poot the glaas becide me here, and Ile poot mi lips too it if I am dri.

"I am a Woostershire man micelf,—born nere Pershor. I dare sa u wood fiand a hepe ov Smaulz livving dhare nou if u wer too looc. I hav often thaut ov taking a looc round dhare, but the truth iz dhat I wauz nevver much ov a creddit too the fammily, and I dout if dha wood be so verry glad too ce me. Dha wer aul stedy, chappel-gowing foke, smaul farmerz, wel-none and respected over the cuntry-cide, while I wauz aulwase a bit ov a rover. At laast, houwevver, when I wauz about atene, I gave them no moer trubbel, for I got intoo a mes over a gherl, and cood oanly ghet out ov it agane bi taking the Qweenz shilling

and joining the 3rd Bufs, which wauz just starting for Injaa.

“I wauznt destiand too doo much soalgering, houwevver. I had just got paast the gooce-step, and lernd too handel mi musket, when I wauz foole enuf too go swimming in the Gan’gese. Luckily for me, mi cumpany sarjant, Jon Hoalder, wauz in the wauter at the same time, and he wauz wun ov the finest swimmerz in the cervice. A crocodile tooc me, just az I wauz haaf-wa acros, and nipt of mi rite leg az clene az a cerjon cood hav dun it, just abuv the ne. Whaut widh the shoc and the los ov blud, I fainted, and shood hav dround if Hoalder had not caut hoald ov me and paddeld for the banc. I wauz five munths in hospital over it, and when at laast I wauz abel too limp out ov it widh this timber to strapt too mi stump I found micelf invalided out ov the army and unfitted for enny active ocupaishon.

“I wauz, az u can imadgine, pritty doun on mi luc at this time, for I wauz a uesles crippel dho not yet in mi twenteyeth yere. Houwevver, mi misforchune soone pruivd too be a blescing in disghise. A man naimd Abel White, whoo had cum out dhare az an indigo-plaanter, waunted an overcere too looc aafter hiz coolese and kepe them up too dhare werc. He happend too be a frend ov our cuunelz, whoo had taken an interest in me cins the axident. Too make a long stoery short, the cuunel recomended me strongly for the poast and, az the werc wauz moastly too be dun on horsbac, mi leg wauz no grate obstakel, for I had enuf ne left too kepe good grip on the saddel. Whaut I had too doo wauz too ride over the plaantaishon, too kepe an i on the men az dha werct, and too repoert the iadlerz. The pa wauz fare, I had cumfortabel qworterz, and aultooghether I wauz content too spend the remainder ov mi life in indigo-plaaning. Mr. Abel White wauz a kiand man, and he wood often drop intoo mi littel shanty and smoke a pipe widh me, for white foke out dhare fele dhare harts worm too eche uther az dha nevver doo here at home.

“Wel, I wauz nevver in lux wa long. Suddenly, widhout a note ov morning, the grate mutiny broke uppon us. Wun munth Injaa la az stil and peesfool, too aul aperans, az Surry or Kent; the next dhare wer too hundred thouzand blac devvilz let looce, and the cuntry wauz a perfect hel. Ov coers u no aul about it, gentlemen,—a dele moer dhan I doo, verry like, cins reding iz not in mi line. I oanly no whaut I sau widh mi one ise. Our plaantaishon wauz at a place cauld Mutraa, nere the border ov the Northwest Provincez. Nite aafter nite the whole ski wauz alite widh the barning bun’galose, and da aafter da we had smaual cumpanese ov Uropeyanz paacing throo our estate widh dhare wiavz and children, on dhare wa too Agraa, whare wer the nerest truijs. Mr. Abel White wauz an obstinate man. He had it in hiz hed dhat the afare had bene exadgerated, and dhat it wood blo over az suddenly az it had sprung up. Dhare he sat on hiz verandaa, drinking whisky-pegz and smoking cheruits, while the cuntry wauz in a blase about him. Ov coers we stuc bi him, I and Dauson, whoo, widh hiz wife, uest too doo the booc-werc and the mannaging. Wel, wun fine da the crash came. I had bene awa on a distant plaantaishon, and wauz riding sloly home in the evening, when mi i fel uppon sumthhing aul huddeld tooghether at the bottom ov a stepe nullaa. I rode down too ce whaut it wauz, and the coald struc throo mi hart when I found it wauz Dausonz wife, aul cut intoo ribbonz, and haaf eten bi jaccaulz and native dogz. A littel ferther up the rode Dauson himcelf wauz liying on hiz face, qwite ded, widh an empty revolver in hiz hand and foer Cepoiz liying acros eche uther in frunt ov him. I rained up mi hors, wundering which wa I shood tern, but at dhat moment I sau thhic smoke kerling up from Abel Whiats bun’galo and the flaimz beghinning too berst throo the roofe. I nu then dhat I cood doo mi employier no good, but wood oanly thro mi one life awa if I meddeld in the matter. From whare I stood I cood ce hundredz ov the blac feendz, widh dhare red coats stil on dhare bax, daancing and houling round the barning hous. Sum ov them pointed at me, and a cuppel ov boollets sang paast mi hed; so I broke awa acros the paddy-feeldz, and found micelf late at nite safe

within the waulz at Agraa.

“Az it pruivd, houwevver, dhare wauz no grate saifty dhare, iather. The whole cuntry wauz up like a swarm ov bese. Wharevver the In’glisch cood colect in littel bandz dha held just the ground dhat dhare gunz comaanded. Evveriwere els dha wer helples fugitiavz. It wauz a fite ov the milleyonz against the hundredz; and the croowelest part ov it wauz dhat these men dhat we faut against, foot, hors, and gunnerz, wer our one pict truijs, whoome we had taut and traird, handling our one wepponz, and blowing our one bughel-caulz. At Agraa dhare wer the 3rd Ben’gaul Fusileyerz, sum Ceekhs, too truijs ov hors, and a battery ov artillery. A volluntere coer ov clarx and merchants had bene formd, and this I joind, wooden leg and aul. We went out too mete the rebbelz at Shaagunj erly in Juli, and we bete them bac for a time, but our powder gave out, and we had too faul bac uppon the citty.

“Nuthhing but the werst nuse came too us from evvery cide,—which iz not too be wunderd at, for if u looc at the map u wil ce dhat we wer rite in the hart ov it. Lucno iz raather better dhan a hundred mialz too the eest, and Caunpor about az far too the south. From evvery point on the cumpas dhare wauz nuthhing but torchure and merder and outrage.

“The citty ov Agraa iz a grate place, sworming widh fanattix and feers devvil-wershiperz ov aul sorts. Our handfool ov men wer lost among the narro, wianding streets. Our leder muivd acros the rivver, dhaerfoer, and tooc up hiz posishon in the oald foert at Agraa. I doant no if enny ov u gentelmen hav evver red or herd ennithhing ov dhat oald foert. It iz a verry qwere place,—the qwerest dhat evver I wauz in, and I hav bene in sum rum cornerz, too. Ferst ov aul, it iz enormous in cise. I shood thhinc dhat the encloazhure must be akerz and akerz. Dhare iz a moddern part, which tooc aul our garrison, wimmen, children, stoerz, and evverithhing els, widh plenty ov roome over. But the moddern part iz nuthhing like the cise ov the oald qworter, whare nobody gose, and which

iz ghivven over too the scorpeyonz and the centipeedz. It iz aul fool ov grate deserted haulz, and wianding passagez, and long corridorz twisting in and out, so dhat it iz esy enuf for foke too ghet lost in it. For this rezon it wauz celdom dhat enny wun went intoo it, dho nou and agane a party widh torchez mite go exploering.

“The rivver waushez along the frunt ov the oald foert, and so protects it, but on the ciadz and behiand dhare ar mennu doerz, and these had too be garded, ov coers, in the oald qworter az wel az in dhat which wauz acchuwaly held bi our truijs. We wer short-handed, widh hardly men enuf too man the an’ghelz ov the bilding and too cerv the gunz. It wauz imposcibel for us, dhaerfoer, too staishon a strong gard at evvery wun ov the inumerabel gaitz. Whaut we did wauz too organise a central gard-hous in the middel ov the foert, and too leve eche gate under the charj ov wun white man and too or thre natiavz. I wauz celected too take charj juring certane ourz ov the nite ov a smaul isolated doer uppon the southwest cide ov the bilding. Too Ceekh trooperz wer plaist under mi comaand, and I wauz instructed if ennithhing went rong too fire mi musket, when I mite reli uppon help cumming at wuns from the central gard. Az the gard wauz a good too hundred pacez awa, houwevver, and az the space betwene wauz cut up intoo a labbirinth ov passagez and corridorz, I had grate douts az too whether dha cood arive in time too be ov enny uce in cace ov an acchuwal atac.

“Wel, I wauz pritty proud at havving this smaul comaand ghivven me, cins I wauz a rau recroote, and a game-legghed wun at dhat. For too niats I kept the wauch widh mi Punjaubese. Dha wer taul, feers-loocking chaps, Mahommet Cing and Abdoollaa Caan bi name, boath oald fiting-men whoo had boern armz against us at Chileyan-wallaa. Dha cood tauc In’glisch pritty wel, but I cood ghet littel out ov them. Dha preferd too stand tooghether and jabber aul nite in dhare qwere Ceekh lin’go. For micelf, I uest too stand outside the gaitwa, loocking down on the braud, wianding rivver and on the twincling liats ov the grate citty. The

beting ov drumz, the rattel ov tomtomz, and the yelz and houlz ov the rebbelz, drunc widh opeyum and widh bang, wer enuf too remiand us aul nite ov our dain'gerous naborz acros the streme. Evvery too ourz the officer ov the nite uest too cum round too aul the poasts, too make shure dhat aul wauz wel.

“The thherd nite ov mi wauch wauz darc and derty, widh a smaul, driving rane. It wauz drery werc standing in the gaitwa our aafter our in such wether. I tride agane and agane too make mi Ceekhs tauc, but widhout much suxes. At too in the morning the roundz paast, and broke for a moment the werines ov the nite. Fianding dhat mi companyonz wood not be led intoo conversaishon, I tooc out mi pipe, and lade doun mi musket too strike the mach. In an instant the too Ceekhs wer uppon me. Wun ov them snacht mi fiarloc up and levveld it at mi hed, while the uther held a grate nife too mi throte and swoer betwene hiz teeth dhat he wood plunj it intoo me if I muivd a step.

“Mi ferst thaut wauz dhat these fellose wer in leghe widh the rebbelz, and dhat this wauz the beghinning ov an asault. If our doer wer in the handz ov the Cepoiz the place must faul, and the wimmen and children be treted az dha wer in Caunpor. Maby u gentelmen thhinc dhat I am just making out a cace for micelf, but I ghiv u mi werd dhat when I thaut ov dhat, dho I felt the point ov the nife at mi throte, I opend mi mouth widh the intenshon ov ghivving a screme, if it wauz mi laast wun, which mite alarm the mane gard. The man whoo held me

ceemd too no mi thauts; for, even az I braist micelf too it, he whisperd, ‘Doant make a noiz. The foert iz safe enuf. Dhare ar no rebbel dogz on this cide ov the rivver.’ Dhare wauz the ring ov truth in whaut he ced, and I nu dhat if I raizd mi vois I wauz a ded man. I cood rede it in the fellose broun ise. I wated, dhaerfoer, in cilens, too ce whaut it wauz dhat dha waunted from me.

“Liscen too me, Sahib,’ ced the tauler and feercer ov the pare, the

wun whoome dha cauld Abdoollaa Caan. 'U must iather be widh us nou or u must be cilenst forevver. The thhing iz too grate a wun for us too hezsitate. Iather u ar hart and sole widh us on yor oath on the cros ov the Crischanz, or yor boddy this nite shal be throne intoo the dich and we shal paas over too our brutherz in the rebbel army. Dhare iz no middel wa. Which iz it too be, deth or life? We can oanly ghiv u thre minnuets too decide, for the time iz paacing, and aul must be dun befoer the roundz cum agane.'

"'Hou can I decide?' ced I. 'U hav not toald me whaut u waunt ov me. But I tel u nou dhat if it iz ennithhing against the saifty ov the foert I wil hav no truc widh it, so u can drive home yor nife and welcum.'

"'It iz nuthhing against the foert,' ced he. 'We oanly aasc u too doo dhat which yor cuntrimen cum too this land for. We aasc u too be rich. If u wil be wun ov us this nite, we wil sware too u uppon the naked nife, and bi the threfoald oath which no Ceekh wauz evver none too brake, dhat u shal hav yor fare share ov the loote. A qworter ov the trezhure shal be yorz. We can sa no farer.'

"'But whaut iz the trezhure, then?' I aasct. 'I am az reddy too be rich az u can be, if u wil but sho me hou it can be dun.'

"'U wil sware, then,' ced he, 'bi the boanz ov yor faather, bi the onnor ov yor muther, bi the cros ov yor faith, too rase no hand and speke no werd against us, iather nou or aafterwordz?'

"'I wil sware it,' I aancerd, 'provided dhat the foert iz not endain'gerd.'

"'Then mi comrade and I wil sware dhat u shal hav a qworter ov the trezhure which shal be eeqwaly divided among the foer ov us.'

“‘Dhare ar but thre,’ ced I.

“‘No; Dust Acbar must hav hiz share. We can tel the tale too u while we awate them. Doo u stand at the gate, Mahommet Cing, and ghiv notice ov dhare cumming. The thhing standz dhus, Sahib, and I tel it too u becauz I no dhat an oath iz bianding uppon a Ferin’ ghy, and dhat we ma trust u. Had u bene a liying Hindoo, dho u had swoern bi aul the godz in dhare fauls tempelz, yor blud wood hav bene uppon the nife, and yor boddy in the wauter. But the Ceekh nose the In’ glishman, and the In’ glishman nose the Ceekh. Harken, then, too whaut I hav too sa.

“‘Dhare iz a raajaa in the northern provvincez whoo haz much welth, dho hiz landz ar smaul. Much haz cum too him from hiz faather, and moer stil he haz cet bi himcelf, for he iz ov a lo nachure and hoerdz hiz goald raather dhan spend it. When the trubbelz broke out he wood be frendz boath widh the liyon and the tigher,—widh the Cepoi and widh the Cumpanese Raaj. Soone, houwevver, it ceemd too him dhat the white menz da wauz cum, for throo aul the land he cood here ov nuthhing but ov dhare deth and dhare overthro. Yet, beying a caerfool man, he made such planz dhat, cum whaut mite, haaf at leest ov hiz trezhure shood be left too him. Dhat which wauz in goald and silver he kept bi him in the vaults ov hiz pallace, but the moast preshous stoanz and the choicest perlz dhat he had he poot in an iarn box, and cent it bi a trusty cervant whoo, under the ghise ov a merchant, shood take it too the foert at Agraa, dhare too li until the land iz at pece. Dhus, if the rebbelz wun he wood hav hiz munny, but if the Company conkerd hiz juwelz wood be saivd too him. Havving dhus divided hiz hoerd, he throo himcelf intoo the cauz ov the Cepoiz, cins dha wer strong uppon hiz borderz. Bi doowing this, marc u, Sahib, hiz propperty becumz the ju ov dhose whoo hav bene troo too dhare sault.

“This pretended merchant, whoo travvelz under the name ov Aakhmet, iz nou in the citty ov Agraa, and desiarz too gane hiz wa intoo the foert. He haz widh him az travveling-companyon mi foster-bruther Dust Acbar, whoo nose hiz ceecret. Dust Acbar haz prommiast this nite too lede him too a cide-postern ov the foert, and haz chosen this wun for hiz perpoce. Here he wil cum prezently, and here he wil fiand Mahommet Cing and micelf awating him. The place iz loanly, and nun shal no ov hiz cumming. The werld shal no ov the merchant Aakhmet no moer, but the grate trezhure ov the raajaa shal be divided amung us. Whaut sa u too it, Sahib?’

“In Woostershire the life ov a man ceemz a grate and a saicred thhing; but it iz verry different when dhare iz fire and blud aul round u and u hav bene uest too meting deth at evvery tern. Whether Aakhmet the merchant livd or dide wauz a thhing az lite az are too me, but at the tauc about the trezhure mi hart ternd too it, and I thaut ov whaut I mite doo in the oald cuntry widh it, and hou mi foke wood stare when dha sau dhare nare-doo-wel cumming bac widh hiz pockets fool ov goald moidorz. I had, dhaerfoer, aulreddy made up mi miand. Abdoollaa Caan, houwevver, thhinking dhat I hezsitated, prest the matter moer cloasly.

“Conciddar, Sahib,’ ced he, ‘dhat if this man iz taken bi the comandant he wil be hung or shot, and hiz juwelz taken bi the guvvernment, so dhat no man wil be a roopy the better for them. Nou, cins we doo the taking ov him, whi shood we not doo the rest az wel? The juwelz wil be az wel widh us az in the Cumpanese cofferz. Dhare wil be enuf too make evvery wun ov us rich men and grate cheefs. No wun can no about the matter, for here we ar cut of from aul men. Whaut cood be better for the perpoce? Sa agane, then, Sahib, whether u ar widh us, or if we must looc uppon u az an ennemy.’

“I am widh u hart and sole,’ ced I.

“‘It iz wel,’ he aancerd, handing me bac mi fiarloc. ‘U ce dhat we trust u, for yor werd, like ourz, iz not too be broken. We hav nou oanly too wate for mi bruther and the merchant.’

“‘Duz yor bruther no, then, ov whaut u wil doo?’ I aasct.

“‘The plan iz hiz. He haz deviazd it. We wil go too the gate and share the wauch widh Mahommet Cing.’

“The rane wauz stil fauling steddily, for it wauz just the beghinning ov the wet cezon. Broun, hevvy cloudz wer drifting acros the ski, and it wauz hard too ce moer dhan a stone-caast. A depe mote la in frunt ov our doer, but the wauter wauz in placez neerly dride up, and it cood esily be crost. It wauz strainj too me too be standing dhare widh dhose too wiald Punjaubese wating for the man whoo wauz cumming too hiz deth.

“Suddenly mi i caut the glint ov a shaded lantern at the uther cide ov the mote. It vannisht among the mound-heeps, and then apeerd agane cumming sloly in our direcshon.

“‘Here dha ar!’ I exclaimd.

“‘U wil challenj him, Sahib, az uezhuwal,’ whisperd Abdoollaa. ‘Ghiv him no cauz for fere. Cend us in widh him, and we shal doo the rest while u sta here on gard. Hav the lantern reddy too uncuvver, dhat we ma be shure dhat it iz indede the man.’

“The lite had flickerd onwordz, nou stopping and nou advaancing, until I cood ce too darc figguerz uppon the uther cide ov the mote. I let them scambel doun the sloping banc, splash throo the mire, and clime haaf-wa up too the gate, befoer I challenjd them.

“‘Whoo gose dhare?’ ced I, in a subjude vois.

“‘Frendz,’ came the aancer. I uncuvverd mi lantern and throo a flud ov lite uppon them. The ferst wauz an enormous Ceekh, widh a blac beard which swept neerly down too hiz cummerbund. Outside ov a sho I hav nevver cene so taul a man. The uther wauz a littel, fat, round fello, widh a grate yello terban, and a bundel in hiz hand, dun up in a shaul. He ceemd too be aul in a qwivver widh fere, for hiz handz twicht az if he had the agu, and hiz hed kept terning too left and rite widh too brite littel twincling ise, like a mous when he venchuerz out from hiz hole. It gave me the chilz too thhinc ov killing him, but I thaut ov the trezhure, and mi hart cet az hard az a flint within me. When he sau mi white face he gave a littel chirrup ov joi and came running up toowordz me.

“‘Yor protecshon, Sahib,’ he panted,—‘yor protecshon for the unhappy merchant Aakhmet. I hav travveld acros Rajpootaanaa dhat I mite ceke the shelter ov the foert at Agraa. I hav bene robd and beten and abuezd becauz I hav bene the frend ov the Cumpany. It iz a blesced nite this when I am wuns moer in saifty,—I and mi poor poseshonz.’

“‘Whaut hav u in the bundel?’ I aasct.

“‘An iarn box,’ he aancerd, ‘which containz wun or too littel fammily matterz which ar ov no vallu too utherz, but which I shood be sorry too loose. Yet I am not a beggar; and I shal reword u, yung Sahib, and yor guvvernor aulso, if he wil ghiv me the shelter I aasc.’

“‘I cood not trust micelf too speke lon’gher widh the man. The moer I looct at hiz fat, fritend face, the harder did it ceme dhat we shood sla him in coald blud. It wauz best too ghet it over.

“‘Take him too the mane gard,’ ced I. The too Ceekhs cloazd in uppon him on eche cide, and the giyant wauct behiand, while dha marcht in throo the darc gaitwa. Nevver wauz a man so cumpast round widh

deth. I remaind at the gaitwa with the lantern.

“I cood here the mezhuerd tramp ov dhare footsteps sounding throo the loanly corridorz. Suddenly it ceest, and I herd voicez, and a scuffel, with the sound ov blose. A moment later dhare came, too mi horror, a rush ov footsteps cumming in mi direcshon, with the loud breathing ov a running man. I ternd mi lantern down the long, strate passage, and dhare wauz the fat man, running like the wind, with a smere ov blud acros hiz face, and cloce at hiz heelz, bounding like a tigher, the grate blac-beerded Ceekh, with a nife flashing in hiz hand. I hav nevver cene a man run so faast az dhat littel merchant. He wauz ganing on the Ceekh, and I cood ce dhat if he wuns paast me and got too the open are he wood save himcelf yet. Mi hart softend too him, but agane the thaut ov hiz trezhure ternd me hard and bitter. I caast mi fiarloc betwene hiz legz az he raist paast, and he roald twice over like a shot rabbit. Are he cood staggher too hiz fete the Ceekh wauz uppon him, and berrede hiz nife twice in hiz cide. The man nevver utterd mone nor muivd muscel, but la wer he had faulen. I thhinc micelf dhat he ma hav broken hiz nec with the faul. U ce, gentelmen, dhat I am keping mi prommice. I am telling u evvery werc ov the biznes just exactly az it happend, whether it iz in mi favor or not.”

He stopt, and held out hiz mannakeld handz for the whisky-and-wauter which Hoamz had broode for him. For micelf, I confes dhat I had nou conceevd the utmoast horror ov the man, not oonly for this coald-bludded biznes in which he had bene concernd, but even moer for the sumwhaut flippant and caerles wa in which he narated it. Whautevver punnishment wauz in stoer for him, I felt dhat he mite expect no cimpathhy from me. Sherloc Hoamz and Joanz sat with dhare handz uppon dhare nese, deeply interested in the stoery, but with the same disgust ritten uppon dhare facez. He ma hav observd it, for dhare wauz a tuch ov defiyans in hiz vois and manner az he proceded.

“It wauz aul verry bad, no dout,” ced he. “I shood like too no hou

menny fellose in mi shoose wood hav refuezd a share ov this loote when dha nu dhat dha wood hav dhare throats cut for dhare painz.

Beciadz, it wauz mi life or hiz when wuns he wauz in the foert. If he had got out, the whole biznes wood cum too lite, and I shoold hav bene coert-marshald and shot az liacly az not; for pepel wer not verry leenyent at a time like dhat."

"Go on widh yor stoery," ced Hoamz, shortly.

"Wel, we carrede him in, Abdoollaa, Acbar, and I. A fine wate he wauz, too, for aul dhat he wauz so short. Mahommet Cing wauz left too gard the doer. We tooc him too a place which the Ceekhs had aulreddy prepaerd. It wauz sum distans of, whare a wianding passage leedz too a grate empty haul, the bric waulz ov which wer aul crumbling too pecez. The erth floer had sunc in at wun place, making a natchural grave, so we left Aakhmet the merchant dhare, havving ferst cuvverd him over widh looce brix. This dun, we aul went bac too the trezhure.

"It la whare he had dropt it when he wauz ferst atact. The box wauz the same which nou lise open uppon yor tabel. A ke wauz hung bi a cilken cord too dhat carvd handel uppon the top. We opend it, and the lite ov the lantern gleemd uppon a colecshon ov gemz such az I hav red ov and thaut about when I wauz a littel lad at Pershor. It wauz blianding too looc uppon them. When we had feested our ise we tooc them aul out and made a list ov them. Dhare wer wun hundred and forty-thre dimondz ov the ferst wauter, including wun which haz bene cauld, I beleve, 'the Grate Mogul' and iz ced too be the cecond largest stone in existens. Then dhare wer nianty-cevven verry fine emmeraldz, and wun hundred and cevventy roobese, sum ov which, houwevver, wer smaul.

Dhare

wer forty carbunkelz, too hundred and ten saffiarz, cixty-wun aggaits, and a grate qwauntity ov berrilz, onnixez, cats'-ise, terqwoisez, and uther stoanz, the verry naimz ov which I did not no at the time, dho I hav becum moer familleyar widh them cins. Beciadz this, dhare

wer neerly thre hundred verry fine perlz, twelv ov which wer cet in a goald coronet. Bi the wa, these laast had bene taken out ov the chest and wer not dhare when I recuvverd it.

“Aafter we had counted our trezhuerz we poot them bac intoo the chest and carrede them too the gaitwa too sho them too Mahommet Cing. Then we sollemly renude our oath too stand bi eche uther and be troo too our ceecret. We agrede too concele our loote in a safe place until the cuntry shood be at pece agane, and then too divide it eeqwaly among ourcelvz. Dhare wauz no uce dividing it at prezsent, for if gemz ov such vallu wer found uppon us it wood cauz suspishon, and dhare wauz no privacy in the foert nor enny place whare we cood kepe them. We carrede the box, dhaerfoer, intoo the same haul whare we had berrede the boddy, and dhare, under certane brix in the best-preservd waul, we made a hollo and poot our trezhure. We made caerfool note ov the place, and next da I droo foer planz, wun for eche ov us, and poot the cine ov the foer ov us at the bottom, for we had swoern dhat we shood eche aulwase act for aul, so dhat nun mite take advaantage. Dhat iz an oath dhat I can poot mi hand too mi hart and sware dhat I hav nevver broken.

“Wel, dhaerz no uce mi telling u gentelmen whaut came ov the Injan mutiny. Aafter Wilson tooc Delly and Cer Collin releevd Lucno the bac ov the biznes wauz broken. Fresh truijs came poering in, and Naanaa Sahib made himcelf scaers over the frunteyer. A fliying collum under Cuunel Greedhd came round too Agraa and cleerd the Pandese awa from it. Pece ceemd too be cetling uppon the cuntry, and we foer wer beghinning too hope dhat the time wauz at hand when we mite saifly go of widh our shaerz ov the plunder. In a moment, houwevver, our hoaps wer shatterd bi our beying arested az the merdererz ov Aakhmet.

“It came about in this wa. When the raajaa poot hiz juwelz intoo the handz ov Aakhmet he did it becauz he nu dhat he wauz a trusty man. Dha ar suspishous foke in the Eest, houwevver: so whaut duz this raajaa

doo but take a cecond even moer trusty cervant and cet him too pla the spi uppon the ferst? This cecond man wauz orderd nevvver too let Aakhmet out

ov hiz cite, and he follode him like hiz shaddo. He went aafter him dhat nite and sau him paas throo the doerwa. Ov coers he thaut he had taken reffuge in the foert, and aplide for admishon dhare himcelf next da, but cood fiand no trace ov Aakhmet. This ceemd too him so strainj dhat he spoke about it too a sarjant ov ghiadz, whoo braut it too the eerz ov the comandant. A thurro cerch wauz qwicly made, and the boddy wauz discuvverd. Dhus at the verry moment dhat we thaut dhat aul wauz safe we wer aul foer ceezd and braut too triyal on a charj ov merder,—thre ov us becauz we had held the gate dhat nite, and the foerth becauz he wauz none too hav bene in the cumpany ov the merderd man. Not a werd about the juwelz came out at the triyal, for the raajaa had bene depoazd and drivven out ov Injaa: so no wun had enny particcular interest in them. The merder, houwevver, wauz cleerly made out,

and it wauz certane dhat we must aul hav bene concernd in it. The thre Ceekhs got penal cervichude for life, and I wauz condemd too deth, dho mi centens wauz aafterwordz comuted intoo the same az the utherz.

“It wauz raather a qwere posishon dhat we found ourcelvz in then. Dhare we wer aul foer tide bi the leg and widh preshous littel chaans ov evver ghetting out agane, while we eche held a ceecret which mite hav poot eche ov us in a pallace if we cood oanly hav made uce ov it. It wauz enuf too make a man ete hiz hart out too hav too stand the kic and the cuf ov evvery petty jac-in-office, too hav rice too ete and wauter too drinc, when dhat gorjous forchune wauz reddy for him outside, just wating too be pict up. It mite hav drivven me mad; but I wauz aulwase a pritty stubborn wun, so I just held on and bided mi time.

“At laast it ceemd too me too hav cum. I wauz chainjd from Agraa too Madras, and from dhare too Blare Iland in the Andaamanz. Dhare ar verry fu white convicts at this cettelment, and, az I had behaivd wel from

the ferst, I soone found micelf a sort ov privvileejd person. I wauz ghivven a hut in Hope Toun, which iz a smaul place on the sloaps ov Mount Harreyet, and I wauz left pritty much too micelf. It iz a drery, fever-stricken place, and aul beyond our littel cleringz wauz infested widh wiald cannibal natiavz, whoo wer reddy enuf too blo a poizond dart at us if dha sau a chaans. Dhare wauz digghing, and ditching, and yam-plaanting, and a duzsen uther thhingz too be dun, so we wer bizsy enuf aul da; dho in the evening we had a littel time too ourcelvz. Amung uther thhingz, I lernd too dispens drugz for the cerjon, and pict up a smattering ov hiz nollej. Aul the time I wauz on the loocout for a chaans ov escape; but it iz hundredz ov mialz from enny uther land, and dhare iz littel or no wind in dhose cese: so it wauz a terribly difficult job too ghet awa.

“The cerjon, Dr. Summerton, wauz a faast, spoerting yung chap, and the uther yung officerz wood mete in hiz ruimz ov an evening and pla cardz. The cergery, whare I uest too make up mi drugz, wauz next too hiz citting-roome, widh a smaul windo betwene us. Often, if I felt loansum, I uest too tern out the lamp in the cergery, and then, standing dhare, I cood here dhare tauc and wauch dhare pla. I am fond ov a hand at cardz micelf, and it wauz aulmoast az good az havving wun too

wauch the utherz. Dhare wauz Major Sholto, Captane Morstan, and Leftennant Bromly Broun, whoo wer in comaand ov the native truijs, and dhare wauz the cerjon himcelf, and too or thre prizzon-ofishalz, craafy oald handz whoo plade a nice sli safe game. A verry snug littel party dha uest too make.

“Wel, dhare wauz wun thhing which verry soone struc me, and dhat wauz dhat the soalgerz uezd aulwase too loose and the civilleyanz too win. Miand, I doant sa dhat dhare wauz ennithhing unfare, but so it wauz. These prizzon-chaps had dun littel els dhan pla cardz evver cins dha had bene at the Andaamanz, and dha nu eche utherz game too a point, while

the utherz just plade too paas the time and throo dhare cardz doun ennihou. Nite aafter nite the soalgerz got up poorer men, and the poorer dha got the moer kene dha wer too pla. Major Sholto wauz the hardest hit. He uest too pa in noats and goald at ferst, but soone it came too noats ov hand and for big sumz. He sumtiamz wood win for a fu deelz, just too ghiv him hart, and then the luc wood cet in against him wers dhan evver. Aul da he wood waunder about az blac az thunder, and he tooc too drinking a dele moer dhan wauz good for him.

“Wun nite he lost even moer hevvely dhan uezhual. I wauz citting in mi hut when he and Captane Morstan came stumbling along on the wa too dhare qworterz. Dha wer boozom frendz, dhose too, and nevver far apart. The major wauz raving about hiz loscez.

“‘Its aul up, Morstan,’ he wauz saying, az dha paast mi hut. ‘I shal hav too cend in mi paperz. I am a roowind man.’

“‘Noncens, oald chap!’ ced the uther, slapping him uppon the shoalder. ‘Ive had a nasty facer micelf, but—’ Dhat wauz aul I cood here, but it wauz enuf too cet me thhinking.

“A cuppel ov dase later Major Sholto wauz stroling on the beche: so I tooc the chaans ov speking too him.

“‘I wish too hav yor advice, major,’ ced I.

“‘Wel, Smaul, whaut iz it?’ he aasct, taking hiz cheroote from hiz lips.

“‘I waunted too aasc u, cer,’ ced I, ‘whoo iz the propper person too whoome hidden trezhure shood be handed over. I no whare haaf a milleyon werth lise, and, az I canot use it micelf, I thaut perhaps the best thhing dhat I cood doo wood be too hand it over too the propper authorritese, and then perhaps dha wood ghet mi centens shortend for

me.'

"'Haaf a milleyon, Smaul?' he gaaspt, loocking hard at me too ce if I wauz in earnest.

"'Qwite dhat, cer,—in juwelz and perlz. It lise dhare reddy for enny wun. And the qwere thhing about it iz dhat the reyal oner iz outlaud and canot hoald propperty, so dhat it belongz too the ferst cummer.'

"'Too guvvernment, Smaul,' he stammerd,—'too guvvernment.' But he ced it in a hauling fashon, and I nu in mi hart dhat I had got him.

"'U thhinc, then, cer, dhat I shood ghiv the informaishon too the Guvvernor-Genneral?' ced I, qwiyetly.

"'Wel, wel, u must not doo ennithhing rash, or dhat u mite repent. Let me here aul about it, Smaul. Ghiv me the facts.'

"'I toald him the whole stoery, widh smaul chain'gez so dhat he cood not identifi the placez. When I had finnisht he stood stoc stil and fool ov thaut. I cood ce bi the twich ov hiz lip dhat dhare wauz a strugghel gowing on within him.

"'This iz a verry important matter, Smaul,' he ced, at laast. 'U must not sa a werd too enny wun about it, and I shal ce u agane soone.'

"'Too niats later he and hiz frend Captane Morstan came too mi hut in the ded ov the nite widh a lantern.

"'I waunt u just too let Captane Morstan here dhat stoery from yor one lips, Smaul,' ced he.

"'I repeted it az I had toald it befoer.

“It ringz troo, a?’ ced he. ‘Its good enuf too act uppon?’

“Captane Morstan nodded.

“‘Looc here, Smaul,’ ced the major. ‘We hav bene tauking it over, mi frend here and I, and we hav cum too the concluezhon dhat this ceecret ov yorz iz hardly a guvvernment matter, aafter aul, but iz a private concern ov yor one, which ov coers u hav the pouwer ov disposing ov az u thhinc best. Nou, the qweschon iz, whaut price wood u aasc for it? We mite be incliand too take it up, and at leest looc intoo it, if we cood agry az too termz.’ He tride too speke in a coole, caerles wa, but hiz ise wer shining widh exiatment and grede.

“‘Whi, az too dhat, gentelmen,’ I aancerd, triying aulso too be coole, but feling az exited az he did, ‘dhare iz oanly wun bargane which a man in mi posishon can make. I shal waunt u too help me too mi fredom, and too help mi thre companyonz too dhaerz. We shal then take u intoo partnership, and ghiv u a fifth share too divide betwene u.’

“‘Hum!’ ced he. ‘A fifth share! Dhat iz not verry tempting.’

“‘It wood cum too fifty thouzand apece,’ ced I.

“‘But hou can we gane yor fredom? U no verry wel dhat u aasc an impocibillity.’

“‘Nuthhing ov the sort,’ I aancerd. ‘I hav thaut it aul out too the laast detale. The oanly bar too our escape iz dhat we can ghet no bote fit for the voiyage, and no provizhonz too laast us for so long a time. Dhare ar plenty ov littel yauts and yaulz at Calcuttaa or Madras which wood cerv our tern wel. Doo u bring wun over. We shal en’gage too ghet aboard her bi nite, and if u wil drop us on enny part ov the Injan coast u wil hav dun yor part ov the bargane.’

“If dhare wer oonly wun,’ he ced.

“Nun or aul,’ I aancerd. ‘We hav swoern it. The foer ov us must aulwase act tooghether.’

“U ce, Morstan,’ ced he, ‘Smaul iz a man ov hiz werd. He duz not flinch from hiz frend. I thhinc we ma verry wel trust him.’

“Its a derty biznes,’ the uther aancerd. ‘Yet, az u sa, the munny wood save our comishonz handsumly.’

“Wel, Smaul,’ ced the major, ‘we must, I supose, tri and mete u. We must ferst, ov coers, test the truith ov yor stoery. Tel me whare the box iz hid, and I shal ghet leve ov abcens and go bac too Injaa in the munthly relefe-bote too inqwire intoo the afare.’

“Not so faast,’ ced I, growing coalder az he got hot. ‘I must hav the concent ov mi thre comraidz. I tel u dhat it iz foer or nun widh us.’

“Noncens!’ he broke in. ‘Whaut hav thre blac fellose too doo widh our agrement?’

“Blac or blu,’ ced I, ‘dha ar in widh me, and we aul go tooghether.’

“Wel, the matter ended bi a cecond meting, at which Mahommet Cing, Abdoollaa Caan, and Dust Acbar wer aul prezsent. We tauct the matter over agane, and at laast we came too an arainjment. We wer too provide both the officerz widh charts ov the part ov the Agraa foert and marc the place in the waul whare the trezhure wauz hid. Major Sholto wauz too go too

Injaa too test our stoery. If he found the box he wauz too leve it dhare,

too cend out a smaul yaut provizhond for a voiyage, which wauz too li of Rutland Iland, and too which we wer too make our wa, and finaly too retern too hiz jutese. Captane Morstan wauz then too apli for leve ov abcens, too mete us at Agraa, and dhare we wer too hav a final divizhon ov the trezhure, he taking the majorz share az wel az hiz one. Aul this we ceeld bi the moast sollem oaths dhat the miand cood thhinc or the lips utter. I sat up aul nite widh paper and inc, and bi the morning I had the too charts aul reddy, ciand widh the cine ov foer,—dhat iz, ov Abdoollaa, Acbar, Mahommet, and micelf.

“Wel, gentelmen, I wery u widh mi long stoery, and I no dhat mi frend Mr. Joanz iz impaishent too ghet me saifly stode in choky. Ile make it az short az I can. The villane Sholto went of too Injaa, but he nevver came bac agane. Captane Morstan shode me hiz name amung a list ov pascen’gerz in wun ov the male-boats verry shortly aafterwordz. Hiz unkel had dide, leving him a forchune, and he had left the army, yet he cood stoope too trete five men az he had treted us. Morstan went over too Agraa shortly aafterwordz, and found, az we expected, dhat the trezhure wauz indede gon. The scoundrel had stolen it aul, widhout carreying out wun ov the condishonz on which we had soald him the ceecret.

From dhat da I livd oanly for venjans. I thaut ov it bi da and I nerst it bi nite. It became an overpouwering, abzorbing pashon widh me. I caerd nuthhing for the lau,—nuthhing for the gallose. Too escape, too trac doun Sholto, too hav mi hand uppon hiz throte,—dhat wauz mi wun thaut. Even the Agraa trezhure had cum too be a smauler thhing in mi miand dhan the slaying ov Sholto.

“Wel, I hav cet mi miand on menny thhingz in this life, and nevver wun which I did not carry out. But it wauz wery yeerz befoer mi time came. I hav toald u dhat I had pict up sumthhing ov medicine. Wun da when Dr. Summerton wauz doun widh a fever a littel Andaaman Ilander wauz pict up bi a convict-gang in the woodz. He wauz cic too deth, and had

gon too a loanly place too di. I tooc him in hand, dho he wauz az venomous az a yung snake, and aafter a cuppel ov munths I got him aul rite and abel too wauc. He tooc a kiand ov fancy too me then, and wood hardly go bac too hiz woodz, but wauz aulwase hanging about mi hut. I lernd a littel ov hiz lin'go from him, and this made him aul the fonder ov me.

“Ton'gaa—for dhat wauz hiz name—wauz a fine boatman, and oand a big, roomy canoo ov hiz one. When I found dhat he wauz devoted too me and wood ennithhing too cerv me, I sau mi chaans ov escape. I tauct it over widh him. He wauz too bring hiz bote round on a certane nite too an oald whorf which wauz nevver garded, and dhare he wauz too pic me up. I gave him direcshonz too hav cevveral goordz ov wauter and a lot ov yamz, coco-nuts, and swete potatose.

“He wauz staanch and troo, wauz littel Ton'gaa. No man evver had a moer faithfool mate. At the nite naimd he had hiz bote at the whorf. Az it chaanst, houwevver, dhare wauz wun ov the convict-gard doun dhare,—a vile Paithan whoo had nevver mist a chaans ov insulting and injuring me. I had aulwase voud venjans, and nou I had mi chaans. It wauz az if fate had plaist him in mi wa dhat I mite pa mi det befoer I left the iland. He stood on the banc widh hiz bac too me, and hiz carbine on hiz shoalder. I looct about for a stone too bete out hiz brainz widh, but nun cood I ce. Then a qwere thaut came intoo mi hed and shode me whare I cood la mi hand on a weppon. I sat down in the darcnes and unstrapt mi wooden leg. Widh thre long hops I wauz on him. He poot hiz carbine too hiz shoalder, but I struc him fool, and noct the whole frunt ov hiz scul in. U can ce the split in the wood nou whare I hit him. We both went down tooghether, for I cood not kepe mi ballans, but when I got up I found him stil liying qwiyet enuf. I made

for the bote, and in an our we wer wel out at ce. Ton'gaa had braut aul hiz erthly poseschonz widh him, hiz armz and hiz godz. Amung uther thhingz, he had a long bamboo spere, and sum Andaaman coco-nut matting, widh which I made a sort ov sale. For ten dase we wer beting about, trusting too luc, and on the elevventh we wer pict up bi a trader which wauz gowing from Cin'gapoer too Giddaa widh a cargo ov Mala pilgrimz. Dha wer a rum croud, and Ton'gaa and I soone mannaijd too cettel doun amung them. Dha had wun verry good qwaulity: dha let u alone and aasct no qweschonz.

“Wel, if I wer too tel u aul the advenchuerz dhat mi littel chum and I went throo, u wood not thanc me, for I wood hav u here until the sun wauz shining. Here and dhare we drifted about the werld, sumthhing aulwase terning up too kepe us from Lundon. Aul the time, houwevver, I nevver lost cite ov mi perpoce. I wood dreame ov Sholto at nite. A hundred tiamz I hav kild him in mi slepe. At laast, houwevver, sum thre or foer yeerz ago, we found ourcelvz in In'gland. I had no grate difficulty in fianding whare Sholto livd, and I cet too werc too discuvver whether he had reyaliazd the trezhure, or if he stil had it. I made frendz widh sumwun whoo cood help me,—I name no naimz, for I doant waunt too ghet enny wun els in a hole,—and I soone found dhat he stil had the juwelz. Then I tride too ghet at him in menny wase; but he wauz pritty sli, and had aulwase too prise-fiterz, beciadz hiz sunz and hiz kitmutgar, on gard over him.

“Wun da, houwevver, I got werd dhat he wauz diying. I hurrede at wuns too the garden, mad dhat he shood slip out ov mi clutchez like dhat, and, loocking throo the windo, I sau him liying in hiz bed, widh hiz sunz on eche cide ov him. Ide hav cum throo and taken mi chaans widh the thre ov them, oonly even az I looct at him hiz jau dropt, and I nu dhat he wauz gon. I got intoo hiz roome dhat same nite, dho, and I

cercht hiz paperz too ce if dhare wauz enny reccord ov whare he had hidden our juwelz. Dhare wauz not a line, houwevver: so I came awa, bitter and savvage az a man cood be. Befoer I left I bethaut me dhat if I evver met mi Ceekh frendz agane it wood be a satisfacshon too no dhat I had left sum marc ov our haitred; so I scrauld doun the cine ov the foer ov us, az it had bene on the chart, and I pind it on hiz boozom. It wauz too much dhat he shood be taken too the grave widhout sum token from the men whoome he had robd and befuuld.

“We ernd a livving at this time bi mi exhibbeting poor Ton’gaa at faerz and uther such placez az the blac cannibal. He wood ete rau mete and daans hiz wor-daans: so we aulwase had a hatfool ov pennese aafter a dase werc. I stil herd aul the nuse from Pondicherry Loj, and for sum yeerz dhare wauz no nuse too here, exept dhat dha wer hunting for the trezhure. At laast, houwevver, came whaut we had wated for so long. The trezhure had bene found. It wauz up at the top ov the hous, in Mr. Barthollomu Sholtose kemmical laboratoery. I came at wuns and had a looc at the place, but I cood not ce hou widh mi wooden leg I wauz too make mi wa up too it. I lernd, houwevver, about a trap-doer in the roofe, and aulso about Mr. Sholtose supper-our. It ceemd too me dhat I cood mannage the thhing esily throo Ton’gaa. I braut him out widh me widh a long rope wound round hiz waist. He cood clime like a cat, and he soone made hiz wa throo the roofe, but, az il luc wood hav it, Barthollomu Sholto wauz stil in the roome, too hiz cost. Ton’gaa thaut he had dun sumthhing verry clevver in killing him, for when I came up bi the rope I found him strutting about az proud az a pecoc. Verry much cerpriazd wauz he when I made at him widh the roaps end and kerst him for a littel blud-thhersty imp. I tooc the trezhure-box and let it doun, and then slid doun micelf, havving ferst left the cine ov the foer uppon the tabel, too sho dhat the juwelz had cum bac at laast too dhose whoo had moast rite too them. Ton’gaa then poold up the rope, cloazd the windo, and made of the wa dhat he had cum.

“I doant no dhat I hav ennithhing els too tel u. I had herd a

wauterman speke ov the spede ov Smiths launch the "Oroeraa", so I thaut she wood be a handy craaft for our escape. I en'gaijd widh oald Smith, and wauz too ghiv him a big sum if he got us safe too our ship. He nu, no dout, dhat dhare wauz sum scroo looce, but he wauz not in our ceecrets. Aul this iz the truth, and if I tel it too u, gentelmen, it iz not too amuse u,—for u hav not dun me a verry good tern,—but it iz becauz I beleve the best defens I can make iz just too hoald bac nuthhing, but let aul the werld no hou badly I hav micelf bene cervd bi Major Sholto, and hou innocent I am ov the deth ov hiz sun."

"A verry remarcabel acount," ced Sherlock Hoamz. "A fitting wiand-up too an extreemly interesting cace. Dhare iz nuthhing at aul nu too me in the latter part ov yor narrative, exept dhat u braut yor one rope. Dhat I did not no. Bi the wa, I had hoapt dhat Ton'gaa had lost aul hiz darts; yet he mannaijd too shoote wun at us in the bote."

"He had lost them aul, cer, exept the wun which wauz in hiz blo-pipe at the time."

"Aa, ov coers," ced Hoamz. "I had not thaut ov dhat."

"Iz dhare enny uther point which u wood like too aasc about?" aasct the convict, affably.

"I thhinc not, thanc u," mi companyon aancerd.

"Wel, Hoamz," ced Athhelny Joanz, "U ar a man too be humord, and we aul no dhat u ar a conocer ov crime, but juty iz juty, and I hav gon raather far in doowing whaut u and yor frend aasct me. I shal fele moer at ese when we hav our stoery-teller here safe under loc and ke. The cab stil waits, and dhare ar too inspectorz dounstaerz. I am much obliajd too u boath for yor acistans. Ov coers u wil be waunted at the triyal. Good-nite too u."

“Good-nite, gentelmen boath,” ced Jonnathan Smaul.

“U ferst, Smaul,” remarct the wary Joanz az dha left the roome.  
“Ile take particcular care dhat u doant club me widh yor wooden leg,  
whautevver u ma hav dun too the gentelman at the Andaaman Ialz.”

“Wel, and dhare iz the end ov our littel draamaa,” I remarct, aafter we had cet sum time smoking in cilens. “I fere dhat it ma be the laast investigaishon in which I shal hav the chaans ov studdeying yor methodz. Mis Morstan haz dun me the onnor too axept me az a huzband in prospective.”

He gave a moast dizmal grone. “I feerd az much,” ced he. “I reyaly canot con’gratchulate u.”

I wauz a littel hert. “Hav u enny rezon too be disattisfide widh mi chois?” I aasct.

“Not at aul. I thhinc she iz wun ov the moast charming yung ladese I evver met, and mite hav bene moast uesfool in such werc az we hav bene doowing. She had a decided geenyus dhat wa: witnes the wa in which she preservd dhat Agraa plan from aul the uther paperz ov her faather. But luv iz an emoashonal thhing, and whautevver iz emoashonal iz opoazd too dhat troo coald rezon which I place abuv aul thhingz. I shood never marry micelf, lest I biyas mi jujment.”

“I trust,” ced I, laafing, “dhat mi jujment ma cervive the ordele. But u looc wery.”

“Yes, the reyacshon iz aulreddy uppon me. I shal be az limp az a rag for a weke.”

“Strainj,” ced I, “hou termz ov whaut in anuther man I shood caul lasines aulternate widh yor fits ov splendid ennergy and viggor.”

“Yes,” he aanced, “dhare ar in me the makingz ov a verry fine lofer and aulso ov a pritty spri sort ov fello. I often thhinc ov dhose lianz ov oald Guutaa,—

*Schade dass die Natur nur “einen” Mensch aus Dir schuf,  
Denn zum würdigen Mann war und zum Schelmen der Stoff.*

“Bi the wa, *aa propo* ov this Norwood biznes, u ce dhat dha had, az I cermiazd, a confedderate in the hous, whoo cood be nun uther dhan Lal Rou, the butler: so Joanz acchuwaly haz the undivided onnor ov havving caut wun fish in hiz grate haul.”

“The divizhon ceemz raather unfare,” I remarct. “U hav dun aul the werc in this biznes. I ghet a wife out ov it, Joanz ghets the credit, pra whaut remainz for u?”

“For me,” ced Sherloc Hoamz, “dhare stil remainz the cocane-bottel.” And he strecht hiz long white hand up for it.

End ov Prodgect Goottenbergz The Cine ov the Foer, bi Arthher Conan Doil

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