



Sherlock Holmes
and the Hound of the Basketcases

by Dave Crump

Pantoscripts Perusal

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15 The Metro Centre
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Telephone: 01733 374790
Fax: 01733 237286
Email: info@noda.org.uk
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Characters

Sherlock Holmes:	Male (but can be played by a female as a second principal boy) – the famous detective, brilliantly clever – central character. Should be played completely straight.
Doctor Watson:	Male – Bumbling older character. He is Holmes' comedy sidekick. He of course agrees with everything Holmes says.
Wiggins:	Male/Female – Audience Participation 'Buttons' character. He/She is the head of the Baker Street Irregulars, a group of teenagers who assist Holmes in his cases.
Sir Henry Basketcase:	Female – Principal Boy, slightly daft but heroic American.
Miss Sarah Stapler:	Female – Principal Girl, she is torn between loyalty to her villainous brother and her love for Sir Henry.
Mr John Stapler:	Male – Baddie's Henchman, a slimy oily vain creature, who is pathetically obedient to Moriarty.
Nurse Mortimer:	Dame – nurse to the late Sir Charles Basketcase, a buxom matron type, with a big personality and a libido to match.
Mrs Hudson:	Holmes' housekeeper and the 'good spirit' character. She acts as narrator and a foil for Moriarty's evil intentions.
Professor Moriarty:	Evil criminal mastermind and the central 'evil spirit' character.
Ruff and Ready:	Comedy Double Act – Celebrity Dog Trainers, both camp (think Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen/ Gok Wan) and more concerned about their clothes and appearance than anything else. Ruff is the straight man, Ready the idiot, although neither have a clue what they are doing.
Mrs Barrymore:	Female – battleaxe housekeeper at Basketcase Hall.
Mr Barrymore:	Butler to Sir Charles Basketcase – henpecked and morose.
Seldom:	Mad escaped convict.
Sergeant Le Strange:	Policeman.
Mrs Abernathy:	Post Office manager – small part for older woman in telegraph office.
London Lady in Street:	Small part in scene 1.
Villagers/ policemen/ London Townsfolk	
(3 F, 9M, 2 M/F)	

Scenes

ACT ONE

Prologue

Scene 1: London Street Scene

Scene 2: Holmes' study, 221B Baker Street

Scene 3: Near Basketcase Hall (tabs)

Scene 4: Basketcase Hall Interior

Scene 5: Near Basketcase Hall (tabs)

Scene 6: Telegraph Office

Scene 7: Near Basketcase Hall (tabs)

INTERVAL

ACT TWO

Prologue

Scene 8: On the Moor

Scene 9: Near Basketcase Hall (tabs)

Scene 10: Basketcase Hall Interior

Scene 11: Near Basketcase Hall (tabs)

Scene 12: Nurse's Kitchen

Scene 13: Near Basketcase Hall (tabs)

Scene 14: Basketcase Hall Interior

Scene 15: Near Merrypit Cottage (tabs)

Scene 16: On the Moor

Scene 17: Near Basketcase Hall (tabs)

Scene 18: On the Moor

Scene 19: Near Basketcase Hall (Tabs) (Community Song)

Scene 20: Basketcase Hall (Walkdown)

**ACT ONE
PROLOGUE**

Mrs Hudson enters s.r.

Mrs Hudson: Hello everyone – how lovely to see you all! I suppose I'd better introduce myself – I am Mrs Hudson, I'm not famous or anything like that – I'm just a housekeeper. But I do work for a very famous detective who I'm sure you've heard of, his name is Sherlock Holmes. He's helped all sorts of people with their problems, not to mention solved loads of crimes.

Professor Moriarty enters s.l.

Moriarty: Although he's no match for me.

Mrs Hudson: And who may I ask are you?

Moriarty: Professor James Moriarty, the cleverest, vilest criminal mastermind the world has ever seen.

Mrs Hudson: Moriarty, I've heard of you. Mr Holmes has stopped you in your tracks more than once.

Moriarty: Soon Holmes will find out just how pathetic his attempts to defeat me have been.

Mrs Hudson: What have you got up your sleeve you horrible, vile, evil man?

Moriarty: Ha ha, flattery will get you nowhere Mrs Hudson – soon I will control a crime empire and become so rich I'll be able to buy things from hotel mini-bars!

Mrs Hudson: Well if you're going to be that rich, why carry on committing crimes?

Moriarty: For the pleasure being evil and nasty gives me. There's no nicer feeling than watching innocent people beg for mercy. Ha ha ha.

Mrs Hudson: Ooh, you're like a shiver looking for a spine to run up. Mr Holmes will stop you Moriarty.

Moriarty: I don't think so, and it's Professor Moriarty to you – housekeeper. Holmes is no match for my brilliant mind.

Mrs Hudson: And big head

Moriarty: And big head... Bah! Make jokes if you like – I shall make sure that Holmes and his stupid sidekick Doctor Watson will soon meet a sticky end.

Mrs Hudson: You're forgetting one thing.

Moriarty: I doubt it.

Mrs Hudson: The boys and girls – they'll help Mr Holmes, with them on his side you've got no chance.

Moriarty: This pathetic rabble? They can't even be bothered to put on a shirt and tie to come to the theatre. Look at them – they are the dregs of society. I will crush them with a flick of my hand. Won't I?

Audience: Oh no you won't.

Moriarty: Oh yes I will.

Mrs Hudson: See? You've got no chance.

Moriarty: We'll see – this time next week – Holmes and Watson will be no more – ha ha ha! (*Evil laugh*)

Mrs Hudson: Don't worry boys and girls, with your help we'll beat that horrible Moriarty. Will you help? (*audience shout yes!*) Great, only I can't interfere you see – it's not my place, so I'm relying on you to save the day – I know you won't let me down. See you later.

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Scene 1:
London Street – Morning

Londoners are going about their daily business, Le Strange is on the beat. During the opening chorus Wiggins enters.

SONG 1:

At the end of the opening chorus a passing lady takes a hanky out of her pocket and her purse falls with it. Wiggins picks it up and is pounced upon by Le Strange.

Le Strange: Right, you're nicked.

Wiggins: You what?

Le Strange: You're nicked, h'arrested, helping me with my enquiries.

Wiggins: What's the charge?

Le Strange: Stealing that lady's purse. You'll get life for this – or longer.

Wiggins: I was returning it. (*To the lady*) Here you are madam – you dropped this.

Lady: Oh thank you – what a nice boy (*exit*).

Le Strange: You look very shifty to me.

Wiggins: That's because I work nights.

Le Strange: I'm on the lookout for the villain who's stolen all the toilets from the police station.

Wiggins: I wouldn't waste time with me then – get after him.

Le Strange: I would but we've got nothing to go on. Perhaps you're our man? What's your name?

Wiggins: Wiggins.

Le Strange: And where are you going...Wiggins?

Wiggins: I've got an appointment with Mr Sherlock Holmes, the famous and brilliant detective.

Le Strange: Pull the other one.

Wiggins goes to grab his leg

Le Strange: Gerrof! I know Mr Holmes. He wouldn't mix with the likes of you.

Wiggins: Ask him yourself.

Le Strange: I will (*Starts to exit*) Don't leave the country.

Wiggins: Leave the country? (*To audience now*) I've never been past Wolverhampton (*local place*)! Hello boys and girls, lovely day isn't it? What a fantastic day for investigating. That's what I am you see, an investigator. You know, I solves crimes and that. Me and Mr Holmes are h'associates, he gives me the odd half crown, and I find out things. Me and my gang that is, we're known as the Baker Street Irregulars. I'm off to see him now, do you want to come? You could be in my gang if you like? Would you like to? You would? That's brilliant. Mind you, if you're going to be in the Irregulars you need to know the secret shout. And I can't reveal it, it's very secret. I couldn't possibly tell you. Oh all right you wore me down. Every time you see me, you have to shout - 'What's up Wiggins?' And then I'll know you're an irregular. Shall we try it? Ok I'll come on, only this time I'll try and get me lines right, and then you shout - What's up Wiggins! OK, here goes. (*Runs off, comes on and off as many times as necessary to get the audience shouting loudly*). That was brilliant - right off to Baker Street....

(*Sarah enters*)

Sarah: Oh excuse me, can you help me out?

Wiggins: Certainly - which way did you come in?

Sarah: Would you take this letter into that hotel over there, and leave it on reception please, it's for a friend of mine.

Wiggins: Why don't you take it yourself?

Sarah: (*Looking flustered, she is looking over her shoulder as if scared she will be seen*) Will you take it for me or not?

Wiggins: I'm not sure.

Sarah: Do you have trouble making up your mind?

Wiggins: Well, yes and no.

Stapler: (*Offstage*) Sarah?

Sarah: Oh my goodness, please hurry.

Wiggins: All right lady, keep your hair on! *(He takes the letter and starts to exit, Sarah is looking anxiously off stage, Wiggins reads the name on the envelope and addresses the audience).* Sir Henry Basketcase. There's something mysterious about this, fortunately Mysterious is my middle name. Arthur Mysterious Wiggins, that's me. See you later! Don't forget – What's up Wiggins!

Wiggins exits.

John Stapler enters

Stapler: Well?

Sarah: I haven't seen him yet.

Stapler: Stupid girl, I ask you to do one simple job and you can't even get that right.

Sarah: I'm sorry brother.

Stapler: All you have to do is stay out of sight and watch for his arrival at the hotel. When Basketcase arrives, you let me know.

Sarah: Why don't *you* watch for him? You could just wait in reception.

Stapler: I couldn't get in, it's packed. There's a chess players convention and the lobby is full of them all bragging about their victories. It happens every Christmas.

Sarah: Yes.

Stapler/Sarah: *(They both sing)* 'chess nuts boasting by an open foyer.'

Stapler: I'd better get out of here.

Sarah: With jokes like that I think that's best.

Stapler: The Professor wants a report on my progress.

Stapler exits.

Sarah: Wait a minute, *(shouts after him)* What does Sir Henry look like?

Sir Henry enters, he is wearing a loud check suit and is carrying a large suitcase, as he walks on it bursts open and he scrambles around trying to put his belongings back in.

Sarah: My dear sir, let me help you.

Henry: *(Not looking at her)* There's no need, really.

She picks up a large pair of pants, their eyes meet over the pants and they are instantly smitten, he hurriedly grabs them and closes the case.

Henry: Thank you. Miss?

Sarah: Stapler, Sarah Stapler.

Henry: Pleased to meet me, I mean I'm sure you're glad to meet me, no – what I'm trying to say is... sorry I'm from America – Henry Basketcase.

Sarah: What?

Henry: Henry Basketcase.

Sarah: Oh my!

(She runs off at top speed.)

Henry: Well, I've never had that reaction before! And she was beautiful – I'm on the lookout for the future Mrs Basketcase – maybe I'll find her in England.

SONG 2:

(Nurse enters she is carrying a large shopping bag.)

Nurse: Oh there you are, Sir Henry, this your hotel? Is there a bar? *(goes to exit)* Come on.

Henry: Sorry lady, you have the advantage of me.

Nurse: Ooh saucy, there's plenty of time for that sort of thing later.

Henry: I mean, I don't know you.

Nurse: *(Shaking his hand)* Angelina Mortimer, district nurse, Exmouth Welterweight champion 1968 and currently single – you can call me Nurse – since we're alone.

Henry: Actually, we're not. There are people watching.

Nurse: Oooh kinky. *(she notices the audience)*. Oh yes, well they don't look kinky – Oh wait a minute, he does – look at him, the one in the leather tanktop. Are you having a lovely time? Well what do you expect for ten quid? Sir Henry was late, so I've been up Oxford Street shopping – shall I show you what I've got? Oy you behave yourself. Let's see, I've got a fish with no eye.

Henry: What do you call a fish with no eye?

Nursey: Fsh. Oh and we're having Chinese tonight so I've got this (*In the basket is a duck glove puppet, she has her hand in, and which now appears over the edge of the basket and then quickly disappears.*) Come on now, don't be shy (*business with Duck popping up over the basket*).

Henry: What's the matter with him?

Nursey: He's quackers, and obviously nervous – he's dinner.

Henry: Is it a wild duck?

Nursey: Wild? He's furious! Now come on, say hello to the boys and girls. (*Duck peeks up again*).

Henry: He doesn't look very Chinese.

Nursey: Of course he is – he's a Peking duck. Although I'm going off it now, he's such a cutie.

Henry: Do ducks like you?

Nursey: Only when I'm carrying bread.

Henry: What else have you got?

Nursey: I've got some sweets – would you like some kiddies? Will you help me Sir Henry?

They throw sweets out into the audience.

Nursey: Now, this is the last toffee so you'll have to suck it and pass it on.

Henry: So Nursey, what can I do for you?

Nursey: Well in that suit I'm not sure.

Henry: I love this suit, it fits me like a glove.

Nursey: If only it fitted you like a suit. I'm here to meet you my love, I was a friend of your late Uncle Charles (*she bursts into tears*)

Henry: I never met him, I just got this telegram telling me he'd died.

Nursey: I was his nurse, and I couldn't save him

Henry: I'm sure there was nothing anyone could do.

Nursey: Oh, there's not much I can't do - I know a few tricks that'll make your slippers curl up. Now tell me, how did you get here?

Henry: A very long boat trip.

Nursey: But why?

Henry: They haven't invented planes yet.

Nursey: I mean why have you come?

Henry: To claim my inheritance.

Nursey: I should go back home to America Sir Henry, it's so dangerous - what with the family curse and everything.

Henry: What are you talking about?

Nursey: It's a long story, come on I'll let you buy me a pint of sherry, and me and the duck will tell you all about it.

They exit.

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Scene 2:
Holmes Study, 221B Baker Street

Holmes is sat by the fire smoking a pipe, Mrs Hudson enters carrying a tray.

Mrs Hudson: Your tea Mr Holmes.

Holmes: Thank you Mrs Hudson.

Mrs Hudson: You had a caller yesterday afternoon – a nurse Mortimer. She said she'd call back this morning.

Holmes: Yes I know.

Mrs Hudson: How could you possibly know?

Holmes: Because she left this behind. *(holds up a chamber pot)* It is inscribed Angelina Mortimer R.N. *(he puts it on the table centre stage)*

Mrs Hudson: I see, and I thought it was something clever.

(Mrs Hudson exits. Holmes picks up his violin and begins tuning it. Watson enters.)

Watson: What you doing Holmes?

Holmes: Just adjusting my G string Watson.

Watson: Oh, beg your pardon, I'll wait outside.

Holmes: What do you make of this?

(Holmes picks up the chamber pot and passes it to Watson).

Watson: *(Reading the inscription)* Angelina Mortimer R.N. To celebrate the happiest of events – all at C.C.H.

Holmes: *(Crosses to the window)* Well?

Watson: Well she's a nurse and must have been given this as a gift, Her retirement perhaps?

Holmes: I missed a visitor last night, clearly a nurse and the C.C.H. obviously stands for Charing Cross Hospital.

Watson: Oh yes, obviously.

Holmes: She is undoubtedly an overweight, ugly, absent minded old spinster.

Watson: How can you possibly deduce all that?

Holmes: She must be absent minded to leave her chamber pot.

Watson: All right, but how can you know she is overweight and ugly?

Holmes: I've just seen her out of the window.

Watson: Amazing. Working with you is an inspiration.

Holmes: I couldn't do it without you Watson – we've been together a long time now.

SONG 3:

(Mrs Hudson enters.)

Mrs Hudson: Nurse Mortimer sir.

(Mrs Hudson exits, Nursey enters.)

Nursey: Oh thank goodness you've found me pot, I didn't know what I'd done with it, until this morning – I was in the garden having a wee wee into the wind and suddenly it all came back to me.

Holmes: A gift from your work colleagues no doubt.

Nursey: Oh Mr Holmes you're just as brilliant as I've heard – and good looking, *(to audience)* Oooh, isn't he gorgeous?

Holmes: Why did you leave Charing Cross?

Nursey: To get married, my husband was a doctor. And we decided to begin a country practice on Dartmore.

Watson: And what happened to the practice?

Nursey: Well eventually we learnt how to do it properly.

Watson: *(To Holmes with a self-satisfied smile)* Old spinster eh?

Holmes: Where is your husband madam?

Nursey: He's dead.

Watson: Bah!

Holmes: Are you sure he's not just using that as an excuse?

Nurse: No, I was there - I kissed him and he died.

Watson: Then it's murder!

Nurse: *(To Holmes)* Who's this then making h'accusations?

Holmes: This is Doctor Watson - he lives here with me.

Nurse: Well, fair play to you *(to Watson)*. That's it my love, you ignore the gossips.

Holmes: What can we do for you Nurse Mortimer?

Nurse: I'm hoping you can set my mind at rest.

Watson: We may have to find it first.

Nurse: *(Gets paper from pocket)* This paper was entrusted to me by Sir Charles Basketcase before he died.

Holmes: Did you read of his death in the Times obituaries Watson?

Watson: Yes and have you noticed how everyone keeps dying in alphabetical order?

Holmes: *(Reading the note)* Let me see, listen to this Watson. *(Reading)* "Here is the legend of the curse upon this house of the Basketcases, Lords of the Manor of Grimpen Mire. *(to Nurse)* Was Sir Charles a fan of the supernatural?"

Nurse: Well he once glued four chunky Kitkats together and pretended he was a pixie.

Holmes: *(Reading - increasingly dramatically)* The estate was once held by Sir Hugo Basketcase and there was never a more evil villain. He set his mind on marrying a girl but she refused his proposal, so one night he stole her away from the village and held her captive in Basketcase Hall. She escaped on to the moor and Hugo vowed to give his soul to the devil if he were able to catch her. He was never seen alive again. Villagers heard his screams and when they found him - over his body stood a huge ghostly hound with eyes like lightning, breathing fire. Those that were not driven mad with fear, ran for their lives believing this hound to be the devil himself. The young woman was later found in the next village, where she'd stopped to get some chips. Ever since, the Lord's of Basketcase Hall have met terrible fates - all should fear the Hound of the Basketcases!

Nurse: Blimey, that's unbelievable.

Watson: I thought you'd heard it.

Nurse: I have but not read like that - he bought it to life didn't he?

Watson: Extraordinary story!

Nursey: Sir Charles believed it. He reckoned he'd heard the hound howling on the Moor late at night. And then it happened.

Holmes: What did?

Nursey: It.

Watson: What?

Nurse: He dropped down dead (*bursts into tears*).

Watson: Go on.

Nursey: Hang on I'm acting.

Holmes: Sorry we didn't recognise it.

Nursey: Sir Charles lived alone, attended to by the Barrymores, his butler, and housekeeper and I looked after his other needs.

Watson: Oh yes?

Nursey: On the fateful night, Mr Barrymore knocked me up and asked me to come at once, as Sir Charles had suffered an attack in the azaleas (*she cries*).

Holmes: Natsy

Watson: Now, now, don't upset yourself. Have a little brandy.

He gives her a glass and pours a brandy, she tips up the bottle so the glass fills up.

Nursey: He'd had heart attack but it was very unusual.

Holmes: How so?

Nursey: The expression of terror on his face. He was all contortificated. (*She pulls a face -audience laugh*). I haven't done it yet (*pulls face again*).

Watson: Have you ever known a man look so scared before?

Nursey: Only my Alfie on our wedding night.

Holmes: Was it unusual for Sir Charles to be out so late?

Nursey: Well, he always told me that if he wasn't in bed by ten, he'd go home.

Holmes: Anything else you'd like to tell us?

Nursey: Yes, by the light of my solar powered torch, I could see that next to the body – were the footprints of a gigantic hound!

(Dramatic chord)

**Holmes/
Watson:** Good Lord!

Nursey: I know *(Looking at orchestra)* I didn't even know he could play the black notes. Anyway, now I don't know what to do for the best, Henry Basketcase, Sir Charles's nephew, arrived in London from America yesterday.

Holmes: Henry is heir to the fortune?

Nursey: Yes – he inherits the lot. There was another nephew John, but he died of yellow fever exploring the Amazon – he bumped into a tribe of colour-blind cannibals who thought he was a banana.

Holmes: Watson, find me a map of Dartmore. Nursey – go and fetch Sir Henry, I think this is going to be a most interesting case.

(Watson exits and Nursey makes for the door. Wiggins enters and bumps into her.)

Wiggins: Hello folks!

Audience: What's up Wiggins?

Nursey: *(grabbing him)* What an interesting catchphrase – is anything up Wiggins?

Wiggins: Blimey!

Holmes: Nurse Mortimer, he's much too young for you.

Nursey: *(To Holmes)* What a cheek! Haven't you seen The Graduate?

(Nursey exits)

Wiggins: Thanks Mr Holmes.

Holmes: Don't mention it, I need your help with an equally desperate situation.

(Mrs Hudson and Le Strange enter. Mrs H is carrying the Times newspaper.)

Mrs Hudson: Your Times sir, and Sergeant Le Strange to see you. *(exits)*

Holmes: What is it Le Strange?

Le Strange: (*pointing to Wiggins*) Do you know this lad Mr Holmes?

Holmes: Yes he has an appointment.

Wiggins: (*To Le Strange*) Told you.

Holmes: Will that be all Le Strange?

Le Strange: Well, er, I was wondering, you know if there was anything interesting I could help with?

Holmes: I'll let you know (*escorting Le Strange out of the door*) goodbye. Now where were we? Ah yes – Wiggins, do you like dogs?

Wiggins: I've always hated 'em sir, ever since I went to that fancy dress party as a lamp post.

Holmes: Shame I could have done with your help – this is a very mysterious case.

Wiggins: That's my middle name Mr Holmes. I'll do it!

Holmes: Capital – then get yourself to Dartmore at once.

Wiggins: Dartmore – Wow! This is really exciting.

Holmes: Is it your first time?

Wiggins: No, I've been excited before.

Holmes: Get the next train to Bodmin, but listen, not a word to Dr Watson.

Wiggins: Right you are. (*exits*)

(*Watson enters with a map of Dartmoor and passes it to Holmes.*)

Watson: One map of Dartmore.

Holmes: (*Looking at the map*) Here we are, Grimpen Mire – it's a huge area of marshland almost inhospitable for humans. Much like Walsall (*local town*) town centre. And there right in the middle is Basketcase Hall.

Watson: Had any more thoughts on the Nurse's story?

Holmes: Well, what can the body tell us?

Watson: Not much, he's dead.

(*Nurse and Sir Henry Enter. Sir Henry is wearing his loud check suit but only one boot.*)

Nurse: Here he is.

Holmes: Sir Henry. I am Holmes.

(They shake hands.)

Henry: The famous detective.

Watson: And brilliant.

Henry: Sorry?

Watson: Famous and brilliant.

Holmes: Yes, thank you Watson.

Henry: It's a strange business Mr Holmes. *(takes letter from his pocket)* This arrived at my hotel this morning.

Nursey: What is it?

Holmes: A folded up piece of paper.

Watson: Amazing Holmes, don't know how you do it.

Henry: *(Reading)* If you value your life, stay away from the Moor. It's made up of printed letters stuck on the page.

Watson: Well I never did!

Nursey: Oh you should, you'd like it.

Holmes: Watson. The Times.

Watson: Half past nine.

Holmes: The paper, the paper. *(hands him the Times – Holmes holds it up as if reading it)* I knew it – Watson, these words have been cut from this mornings Edition.

Henry: But how can you be so sure?

Holmes: It's elementary Sir Henry. *(Holmes holds up paper with words cut out).* Sir Henry is obviously being followed.

Henry: Gee Whiz!

Watson: But whoever sent that note appears to be warning you away from danger rather than being a threat – don't you think Holmes?

Holmes: Watson you've surpassed yourself.

Watson: Sorry I'll go and change my trousers.

Holmes: I mean, that's an excellent point.

Nursey: Do you think he should go to Dartmore?

Watson: After this warning? Never it would be too risky.

Holmes: You should go to Basketcase Hall at once.

Watson: Of course, quite right - catch the first train down there.

Holmes: Sir Henry, has anything else unusual happened since you've arrived in London?

Henry: There was one thing. I put my boots outside my room last night to be polished and this morning one of them had disappeared.

Holmes: (*Pointing at his boot*) Does it look like this one?

Henry: Yes I always try to get two to match. What a thief would do with one boot beats me.

Watson: Perhaps he's got three legs.

Holmes: Or he could have a one-legged friend.

Nursey: I knew a girl once with one leg, she met this bloke who completely swept her off her feet.

Watson: Really?

Nursey: Yes, they got engaged but then he found out she'd got a wooden leg and broke it off.

Henry: So Mr Holmes, will you take the case?

Holmes: Yes, we'll need something to carry our clothes in. However, I regret I cannot come with you to Dartmore, I have other pressing cases here in London, I will join you when I can. In the meantime Watson will look after you.

Watson: But I've never done it on my own before.

Nursey: I doubt that very much.

Holmes: Now you must get going. Watson will meet you at the station.

Henry: Thank you for your help Holmes, I hope you can join us soon. *(To Nursey)* Shall we take one of your handsome cabs?

Nursey: No need, I have a very good-looking carriage outside.

(Nursey and Henry exit.)

Holmes: What an ugly business.

Watson: Yes, but she's got a nice personality.

Holmes: You must send me a daily telegram with details of everything that happens.

Watson: You can rely on me.

Holmes: And whatever you do – don't let Sir Henry go onto the Moor alone, especially at night. Come on, I'll walk with you to the station.

(Holmes and Watson exit. Mrs Hudson enters.)

Mrs Hudson: Well boys and girls, it's very exciting isn't? Now remember, you have to help Mr Holmes, Doctor Watson and Wiggins as much as you can – and you have to boo and hiss Moriarty and his henchman. Shall we practice? Let's all try a good Boo! *(Audience boo)* That was very good – now let's have one good long hiss then you won't need another one till the interval *(audience hiss)* oh its like frying bacon – now I know they'll be all right with you to help them. See you later!

(Blackout.)

Scene 3:
Near Basketcase Hall (Tabs) - Evening

(Moriarty enters)

Moriarty: *(To audience)* Shut up, you snivelling do good-ers. I have to concentrate – my evil plot is being hatched. Ha ha ha!

(Stapler and Sarah enter.)

Stapler: Professor, welcome to Dartmore, this is my sister, Sarah.

Moriarty: Ah, excellent! *(He grabs her cheeks and inspects her)* Miss Stapler, you know I have been employing the services of your brother.

Sarah: And therefore depriving the village of its idiot.

Moriarty: Quite – perhaps you will be more valuable to me.

Sarah: I will be no such thing.

Stapler: Now Sarah, you know I work for the Professor.

Moriarty: I understand you have already aided your brother when in London?

Sarah: I don't know what you're talking about.

Moriarty: Don't play stupid with me, I'm better at it.

Sarah: I'm going back to the cottage *(exits)*.

Stapler: *(Shouting after her)* Sarah! Don't worry Professor, she'll do as she's told.

Moriarty: Good. She will be useful in my plan. So, what's the news?

Stapler: It's that thing that comes on just before The One Show *(or whatever show is on after the news!)*.

Moriarty: I mean how did you get on in London?

Stapler: I followed Sir Henry, and as you suspected he has consulted Sherlock Holmes.

Moriarty: I see, then we need to make plans.

Stapler: That's very flattering Professor but I'm busy every night till Friday.

Moriarty: Idiot! With Holmes on our tail we need to hurry. We have eliminated Sir Charles and Sir Henry is next – is the hound ready to answer to my command?

Stapler: I am struggling to keep control of it.

Moriarty: That's because you're pathetic. I have hired two dog wardens to look after it, Ah here they are now.

(Ruff and Ready enter they are 'life coach'/interior designer types, with flowery shirts and coloured suits. Alternatively they could be Hipsters)

Ruff/ Ready: Good evening.

Stapler: Blimey!

Moriarty: You two – come here, this is Stapler – he is my number one henchman.

Stapler: Oh thank you sir

Moriarty: He is also my only henchman.

Stapler: Oh.

Ruff: I'm Lawrence Lewellyn Ruff, and he's Rupert Sebastian Ready.

Stapler: So you're Ruff and Ready?

**Ruff/
Ready:** Always.

Moriarty: Deal with them Stapler, I have business to attend to in the village (*exits*).

Stapler: So you're the dog wardens are you?

Ready: Please! Celebrity dog trainers; we train theatrical pooches.

Ruff: Adverts, films, personal appearances, pantomimes.

Ready: Perhaps you've seen my face on T.V.?

Stapler: No, I've never been on T.V.

Ruff: I understand you need some advice with a pet?

Stapler: Not quite – I have a giant vicious hound which the whole of Dartmoor thinks is a hound from hell.

Ruff: Any other problems?

Stapler: Well, it chases anyone on a bike.

Ready: Well take its bike away.

Stapler: We need you to train it to attack on command – can you do that?

Ruff: I would think so.

Stapler: Come along then, you can see the beast for yourselves.

(They exit. Watson, Henry and Nursey enter op. side – she is dressed as a country outdoor type.)

Nursey: Hello boys and girls! What do you think of my outfit? It's what all the country set wear, green wellies and a sheepdog bra. It rounds them up and points them in the right direction.

(Le Strange and Holmes enters, Holmes is disguised as a policeman.)

Le Strange: Halt, who goes there? Friend or foe?

Henry: Do you think anyone ever says foe?

Le Strange: Who are you?

Nursey: I'm fine – how are you?

Le Strange: No, who are you?

Henry: I'm Henry Basketcase, and we're going to Basketcase Hall

Le Strange: Oh, I'm sorry Sir Henry, I didn't realise – allow my man to carry your bag.

Henry: It's OK, she can walk.

Watson: Le Strange – what are you doing here?

Le Strange: We're looking for an escaped convict with one eye called Seldom.

Watson: What's his other eye called?

Holmes: He's escaped from Princetown Prison on the other side of the Moor.

Watson: I thought it was top security.

Holmes: Yes, all the exits are heavily guarded.

Henry: Then how did he get out?

Le Strange: He left by one of the entrances. No one's safe while he's on the loose.

Nurse: Oh help! (*Hugs Dr Watson.*)

Holmes: No ones safe while she's on the lose.

(Some more policemen enter.)

Le Strange: Here come the rest of my lads now. Any sign of him then?

Policeman: (*Ad lib*) No, Nothing Sarge.

Nurse: Ooh, look at all them lovely men in uniform.

Le Strange: Well, go on then, keep looking.

SONG 4:

(The policemen chorus exit.)

Le Strange: And keep those knees up!

Henry: Who is this Seldom?

Nurse: He was a cartoonist until he became a murderer.

Watson: A cartoonist? Who did he kill?

Le Strange: The details are still sketchy.

Holmes: He's very dangerous, so we've introduced a curfew.

Le Strange: Everyone has to be in by midnight or we shoot on sight.

(Man enters, Le Strange pulls out his pistol and shoots him – two policemen enter and drag him off)

Watson: So I see.

Henry: But it's only half past six.

Le Strange: Yes, but I know where that bloke lives – he'd never get home by midnight.

Watson: Can the convict survive on the Moor overnight?

Le Strange: Not for long, he'll probably get caught in the quicksand.

Nurse: Old Mr Johnson disappeared last week, a big hole opened up and he fell in.

Le Strange: Yes, we're looking into that. I'm sure we'll get to the bottom of it.