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Dramatic Publishing

**SHERLOCK HOLMES'
GREAT GRANDSON
GOES HOLLYWOOD**



by
Bill Majeski



The Dramatic Publishing Company

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(SHERLOCK HOLMES' GREAT GRANDSON
GOES HOLLYWOOD)

SHERLOCK HOLMES' GREAT GRANDSON GOES HOLLYWOOD

A Comedy in Two Acts
For Sixteen Men and Twelve Women

CHARACTERS

- SHERWOOD HOLMES grandson of
the great Sherlock Holmes
- DR. WATSON Sherwood's trusted aide and assistant
- IRVING MOGUL top Hollywood executive
with Golden Studios
- FELICIA FRONTISPIECE Mogul's secretary
attractive, bright, efficient, about 25
- RITA CORDAY ex-film actress
now studio employee, very capable, about 35
- MALVIN PROPSEN free-lance movie producer
given to malaprops, about 40
- SANDRA DU HANDEL sexy starlet, about 25
- WILLARD DRESCHLER over-the-hill novelist
now a studio script writer, thin, haggard-looking, over 50
- REGINALD TWIST fey actor
capable of doing both male and female roles, about 40
- ONO YESSO Oriental poetess
laconic, a trifle mysterious, about 30-35
- POPSY and MOMSY POTSY husband/wife acting team
well established in Hollywood, in their 60's
- BARNEY STENTORIAN actor
with great, deep, rumbling bass voice, forceful, about 40
- JASON DOWNER actor/producer
known for grisly, macabre films, weird-looking, about 45
- ATLAS MAIDENSWOON apollo-like actor
a dandy, handsome, big, vain, shallow, about 30-35

(con't)

GLORIA GOFORTH movie star with wild past
glamorous, about 35-45

JERRY BLOTCH writer/TV producer
aggressive, dynamic, about 35

JUNE and JAMIE JEJUNE . . . film performers, specializing in
stories about endangered species of all types, early 30's

J. J. JONES agent for the Jejunes, aggressive, about 40

RICKY RAUCOUS brash Hollywood comic
known for harsh "put-downs," about 35

TV SHOW NARRATOR perky, brisk woman, about 30

RANDY REYNOLDS . . . fast-talking TV show host/announcer
bouncy, up-tempo, about 35

LESLIE L. SHARRIS . . . ex-con, guest on Reynolds' TV show,
about 40

SAM GREEN wheelchair-bound crime victim
guest on Reynold's TV show, about 55-60

HONEY HIVE . . . up-and-coming starlet, very pretty, about 22

YOUNG WOMAN party guest
pretty, cheerleader-type, about 18

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN party guest, about 45-50

OFF-STAGE VOICES

PRISCILLA PERSIFLAGE Hollywood gossip columnist

FEMALE VOICE summons guests for messages

TIME: The present

PLACE: Irving Mogul's office and the elaborate mansion in
Hollywood.

ACT ONE

SCENE: *Office of famed film producer IRVING MOGUL. It is a basic office set-up with a desk, a couple of chairs, a sofa, lamps, etc. MOGUL straightens out the top of his desk, preparing for a visit. Unseen by MOGUL, SHERWOOD HOLMES, striding tall and confidently, enters. He stands off to one side of the desk. Completing his straightening-out duties, MOGUL talks into the desk intercom.*

MOGUL. Felicia, send in Mr. Holmes. *(He sits back to wait for HOLMES. Then he turns, sees HOLMES and is startled, upsetting some of the things on the desk. Still shaken, MOGUL stands, offers hand to HOLMES, who ignores hand, merely nodding in recognition.)* But... how... *(Gesturing aimlessly.)* how... uh... did you... uh...

HOLMES *(haughtily)*. Learn to form a complete sentence and then give me a call. *(He turns to leave.)*

MOGUL. No... please. I'm sorry. Sit down, Mr. Holmes. You startled me. How did you get in? *(He pulls out chair for HOLMES, who finally decides to sit.)*

HOLMES. Furtive egresses and ingresses are my forte. How can I be of service?

MOGUL. Well... uh... Mr. Holmes... may I call you Sherwood?

HOLMES. Mr. Holmes is fine.

MOGUL *(taken aback)*. Yes... well... we have big problems. We need your help.

HOLMES. Details, please.

MOGUL. We want you to go to Hollywood.

HOLMES *(acting modestly, but sprucing up)*. But I'm just a simple, down-to-earth guy.

MOGUL. You are the greatest detective in the world.

HOLMES. That, too.

MOGUL. Our studio is being victimized by practitioners of evil, trickery, deceit and... murder.

HOLMES. Sounds like my law firm. I *am* busy.

MOGUL. We need you. You have such a fine background. Your great grandfather, your home at 221B Faker Street.

HOLMES. That's *Baker* Street.

MOGUL. Right. And all your fans, those Baker Street Irregulars.

HOLMES. Guess some of them are a trifle weird.

MOGUL. Wait till you see Hollywood!

HOLMES. Mr. Mogul, my schedule. I am due to judge the Alpine Mixed Yodeling Jamboree in Zurich shortly and am currently writing a definitive history of spinach soufflé and quiche in relation to criminal behavior.

MOGUL (*pitching*). The way you solved that Ana-Wordies killing... right to the last letter.

HOLMES (*allowing himself a preen*). Exactly. You *do* know about it.

MOGUL. Yes... and the killer was a Moriarity... a female Moriarity. A woman was the killer.

HOLMES. Equal Rights Amendment and all that.

MOGUL. I must say the world is safer with her behind bars.

HOLMES. But she's not. She escaped last week.

(At this, FELICIA FRONTISPIECE, enters. HOLMES sees her. His eyes pop.)

FELICIA. Mr. Mogul... (*HOLMES leaps up, grabs her, they struggle. She screams. He throws her on the sofa and they tussle.*)

MOGUL. Hey, hey. Take it easy. You're not in Hollywood yet!

HOLMES (*struggling with FELICIA*). She's Moriarity! She's the one. Call the authorities.

MOGUL. Nonsense. Felicia has been my secretary for three years.

HOLMES (*properly chagrined, standing up*). I'm very sorry.

FELICIA (*with a warm smile*). My pleasure. (*With a flirtatious smile and knowing HOLMES is watching, FELICIA sways out of the office.*)

MOGUL. Nice girl. Efficient. Nice background.

HOLMES (*eyeing her as she exits*). Exactly right. On with your tale of woe.

MOGUL. You may have read about the murder of some of Golden Studio's top people.

HOLMES. I have.

MOGUL. First, Dolly Dunn. She recently starred in *What's Mine is Mine, What's Yours is Mine*.

HOLMES. She played a cheerleader in a house of finance.

MOGUL. Right. She died of an overdose of health foods.

HOLMES. Lots of that going around.

MOGUL. Then our director Kermit Shugrue was killed when his cummerbund exploded. Frightening blast.

HOLMES. Fitting exit. His last film was *TNT for Two*.

MOGUL (*impressed*). Say, you know your films.

HOLMES. Yes, I do.

MOGUL. Then came Montmorency Glee, the character actor. He was in Mexico on location filming *José Can You See?* when he ingested a taco laced with strychnine. You just know it was murder.

HOLMES. I saw his last film. Call it justifiable homicide.

MOGUL. Three killings. We want it to end. We're facing ruin. Only you can save our studio.

HOLMES. These people have any enemies?

MOGUL. Enemies? We're talking Hollywood. Jealousy. Greed. Back stabbing. Enemies? I made a list. (*He takes out a roll of paper from desk drawer and rolls it out like wallpaper as HOLMES watches intently.*) Dozens of enemies.

HOLMES. I counted exactly seventy-eight.

MOGUL (*stunned*). You counted the names?

HOLMES. Naturally.

MOGUL. Well, will you help us? There's big bucks in it for you.

HOLMES. In the name of law and order and perpetuating your questionable contributions to the cinematic archives, I will.

MOGUL. Welcome aboard. *(He rises happily, all smiles, and places his hand on Holmes' shoulder. HOLMES haughtily shrugs away. MOGUL, chastised.)* Right. Let's go into my private office and talk Tinseltown.

HOLMES. Tell your secretary to summon Dr. Watson and have him wait here for me.

MOGUL. Right, right. *(To intercom.)* Felicia, send in Dr. Watson. *(He grabs the roll of paper and carries it as they head for rear or side exit.)* We'll go over these names. I'm sure you'll find our killer.

HOLMES. Just a matter of time.

(MOGUL and HOLMES leave. The stage is empty momentarily. FELICIA enters with DR. WATSON.)

FELICIA. Make yourself comfortable, Dr. Datsun.

WATSON. That's Watson, Miss Frontispiece.

FELICIA. Oh... sorry. Call me Felicia... anytime. *(She sways out. WATSON watches her exit with great interest. Then he turns to AUDIENCE.)*

WATSON. It's all right, I'm a doctor. *(Very casually.)* Well, it seems Mr. Holmes is going to Hollywood. I'm not surprised. Although he usually is content to be the leading light in all his social, artistic and cultural circles, this foray into the field of footlights will add to his vast storehouse of experiences. He's a man of many moods. He will sit for hours, eyes closed, mired deep in thought. His eyes will open and he will day-dream, looking out over the horizon, his mind constantly at work. At odd hours he'll play Puccini and Spike Jones hits on his electric kazoo. Yes, he's quite a musician and he fervently hears the song of life deep within himself. And when he springs into action... the melody begins...

(HOLMES, at a very vigorous pace, bounds out of Mogul's inner office and out onto the stage. This is duly noted by WATSON.)

WATSON (*smiles, gestures toward the up-tempo HOLMES*). Like this... you can strike up the band.

HOLMES (*talking quickly to MOGUL*). And you'll arrange a greeting party for us.

MOGUL. At the fabled mansion of Harold Tycoon, film giant of yesteryear. You're going out there under the guise of being a film producer, ready to invest big money in pictures.

HOLMES. You have a list of the suspects. Invite them.

MOGUL. Right. You'll have veteran actress Rita Corday introduce you around and serve as your guide. She knows everybody.

HOLMES. Fine.

MOGUL. You may run into some extra work out there. Why don't you take my secretary along to help out?

HOLMES. You mean? (*Gesturing out toward Felicia's office.*)

MOGUL. Yes.

HOLMES. How fast does she type?

MOGUL. Gee... I don't know.

HOLMES. Take dictation?

MOGUL. I never asked.

HOLMES. Tell her to pack her bags.

MOGUL (*into desk phone*). Get ready to leave. You're going to Hollywood.

(The phone on Mogul's desk rings. He picks it up. FELICIA, all smiles, bounds happily into the office.)

MOGUL (*into phone*). Yes, Mabel, I'll take it. Yes. What!? She what!? (*Listens for a moment then hangs up the phone.*) Oh, no... another victim. Donna Dumore. She was driving her new Jag on the freeway when her garter belt broke, slipped, caught onto the floor shift and snapped her all the way to El Segundo.

FELICIA. Oh... that's awful.

WATSON. Tragic.

MOGUL. That's victim number four.

HOLMES. Disastrous. Imagine... El Segundo. (*Coolly again.*)
Come Watson, let's submerge ourselves into this slippery, slimy sea of self-seeking sybarites, into this sleazy cesspool of slithering, sensuous seductiveness. (*HOLMES and WATSON start out.*)

FELICIA (*joyfully jumping up and down*). Hooray for Hollywood! (*She races off happily behind them. Blackout of curtain.*)

SCENE TWO

SCENE: *Main room in Hollywood mansion. Numerous chairs, sofas, lamps, tables and buffet, set tastefully about. Stage is empty. We hear from off, the voice of PRISCILLA PERSIFLAGE. As she speaks the room begins to fill up with the assorted characters who have been invited to the party.*

PRISCILLA (*off*). This is Priscilla Persiflage and the latest doings in the way-out world of Hollywood. Zsa Zsa Schwengali said there's no truth to the rumor that she married for the eighth time recently just to keep busy between pictures. Said she: "Not true. I really love... er... what's-his-name."

George Hammerling, known for his many marriages to young beauties, suffered severe injuries at the wedding chapel when he was being married to youthful, precocious teen-ager Angel Blastner. After exchanging vows, Angel's bubble gum burst, sending George smashing through the chapel wall.

Friends aren't predicting a long marriage between Edith Krip and Wallace Wispner because at the ceremony she was wearing a wash 'n wear wedding gown.

Reason for the sudden divorce of newlyweds Sonia Bird and Gilbert Cage is that their honeymoon got bad reviews from the critics.

A warning to all you young film people out there thinking of marriages: Remember... many Hollywood marriages start off as "Love Me Tender"... and end up "Gone With the Wind."

(As the room fills, HOLMES and WATSON, along with FELICIA enter, led and escorted by RITA CORDAY. They create a varied impression among the party-goers, from elaborate look-the-other-ways, to dropped silverware to hushed whispers. The foursome passes a long table set with a buffet. HOLMES looks out over the gathering.)

CORDAY. Quite a varied gathering, Mr. Holmes.

HOLMES. About the sleaziest looking group I've ever seen outside of deep water.

CORDAY. You might find some to be quite interesting.

(MALVIN PROPSÉN rushes over to them.)

CORDAY. Malvin, meet my guests. Sherwood Holmes, Dr. Watson, Felicia Frontispiece. This is Malvin Propsén. *(PROPSÉN shakes hands eagerly with HOLMES.)*

PROPSÉN. You're my favorite sleuth, Mr. Holmes. Glad you're jumping into the movie game. With your class you'll lend this business some mobility.

WATSON. *Mobility?*

PROPSÉN. You bet. Lots of these people never went to school. They're crude. Clowns... a bunch of bassoons.

CORDAY. Maybe buffoons?

PROPSÉN. That, too. Hey, Mr. Holmes. Got something you might like to get in on with me. Crime. Death penalty. We'll cover all the pros and cons on elecution.

CORDAY. *Electrocu...* oh, never mind.

PROPSÉN. Hero is a convict. Nothing bad, mind you. Something light like assault and flattery. There's a big shoot-out. He gets caught. The police chief gets shot. Our hero saves the chief's life by giving him mouth-to-mouth restitution.

HOLMES. Let me mull it.

PROPSSEN. Sure, mull already. We'll do lunch someday, sit down and have a long, serious concussion. (*Looks away and calls off.*) Hey, Farley, hear anything from the bank about that loan? (*He moves off.*)

CORDAY. One of the many loquacious ones. And they're all after something.

HOLMES. Indeed. (*To WATSON.*) Note his law-and-order theme with violent implications. Gun play.

WATSON. Yessir.

(He jots on small pad. They start to move slowly about when SANDRA DuHANDEL comes over to them.)

CORDAY (*introducing her*). This is that up-and-coming starlet, Sandra DuHandel. (*She is very forward, pressing right up against HOLMES.*)

SANDRA. I love detectives. I love men who pursue other people, guilty or not. (*She gushes as she stands close.*)

HOLMES. I'm here on film business, Miss DuHandel.

SANDRA. Call me Sandra.

CORDAY. Sandra's just done a film video on food and diet.

SANDRA. All three meals. And I'm your breakfast cereal girl... I snap... crackle and pop! (*On "pop" she does a sharp hip flip. Despite himself, HOLMES reacts, head snapping back. FELICIA is being upstaged and she doesn't like the competition. She looks off in the distance.*)

FELICIA. Oh, there's someone I know from back East. (*She waves and exits after giving a sharp look at SANDRA.*)

SANDRA (*to HOLMES*). If you need a hard-working soon-to-be star, call me.

HOLMES. I'll give you a buzz.

SANDRA (*coolly*). You already have. (*She comes close, puts hands on his arm.*) A good-luck kiss?

HOLMES. Sorry. Don't touch the stuff until after five.

SANDRA. Okay then, I'll see you at sex.

CORDAY. That's six. (*SANDRA pouts, starlet-style and walks off with a warm glance over her shoulder.*) They say she might make it big.

HOLMES. If she can conquer her shyness. (*To WATSON.*) Sandra... aggressive, pushy, capable of fierce emotion.

(WATSON jots. They watch as SANDRA is accosted by WILLARD DRESCHLER.)

WILLARD (*to SANDRA, in leading-man romantic voice*). "It's you I desire. You're the only one."

SANDRA (*giggling*). Oh, Willard, you and your cornball lines.

CORDAY. That's Willard Dreschler, the writer.

HOLMES. Fine novelist. A bit verbose, almost elephantine in his descriptives, but a good one, nevertheless.

WATSON. Never read any of his stuff anymore.

CORDAY. Came to Hollywood for big bucks. Made him a dialogue writer. Wrote lots of them that became standards. Like that last one. He stopped writing just about. Considers himself a failure, washed-up.

(REGINALD TWIST approaches them dressed in gaudy clothes.)

REGINALD. Helloooo, Rita. Haven't seen you in a month of strawberry sundaes. (*He titters, WATSON frowns, shakes his head.*)

CORDAY (*acknowledging*). Reginald. Keeping busy?

REGINALD. Busy as a spelling bee. Bzzzzz. (*Titters.*) Just finished *Don't Know Which Way to Turn*. Think I'll turn this way. (*He turns and moves away.*)

CORDAY (*explaining*). That's Reginald Twist. Top female impersonator. Big.

HOLMES (*thoughtful*). Interesting. The Titan of Transvestites. Easy to slip into disguises, eh Watson? Mark him down.

WATSON. Yessir. (*Jots on pad.*)

(They walk. We come to FELICIA, talking to ONO YESSO who is dressed in a mid-East type hooded robe.)

ONO *(sing-song, to FELICIA)*. The world lives. I sink. Not swim.
Surreptitious.

FELICIA. That's uh... good poetry.

ONO. Haiku.

FELICIA. Pardon?

ONO. Haiku... haiku.

FELICIA *(smiling politely)*. Oh... I haiku, too.

ONO. Tiger in streets. No certain exit. Pants with missing becket. Philology.

HOLMES *(aside)*. Words to live by. Rambling. Discursive. Jot her down.

WATSON *(making notes)*. That's poetry.

HOLMES. It's called haiku. Big rage. Haiku evolved in seventeenth century Japan. In the original, haiku consisted of seventeen "onji" or sound symbols in a five-seven-five format. The entire poem can be spoken aloud in one breath.

WATSON. Give me "roses are red, violets are blue" any day.

CORDAY. Here's a charming couple you'll want to met.

(She leads them over to MOMSY and POPSY POTSY.)

CORDAY. You remember Momsy and Popsy Potsy. Made dozens of films.

HOLMES. Oh, yes. *(They acknowledge the introductions.)*

CORDAY. *Momsy and Popsy Get Hitched. Momsy and Popsy Discover Gold.*

MOMSY. *Momsy and Popsy Go Bananas.*

HOLMES. Saw them at the Cinema des Artes.

POPSY *(to HOLMES)*. Understand you may do a film or two out here.

HOLMES. Word *does* get around.

MOMSY. If you need a pair of bickering battlers for comedy scenes.

POPSY. Or anything... sword duels, fight scenes.