

# Excerpt terms and conditions



This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

*Dramatic Publishing*

Colorized covers are for web display only. Most covers are printed in black and white.

# The Hound of the Baskervilles:

A Comic Thriller Starring  
Shirley Holmes  
and  
Jennie Watson

ADAPTED BY  
KENT R. BROWN

INSPIRED BY  
SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S NOVEL



# The Hound of the Baskervilles:

A Comic Thriller Starring  
Shirley Holmes and Jennie Watson



*Adapted by Kent R. Brown. Inspired by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel. Cast: 6m., 7w., plus 11 to 40 either gender. Sherlock Holmes and his faithful sidekick, Dr. John Watson, have left on an extended holiday throughout Europe, leaving their nieces—Shirley Holmes and Jennie Watson—to keep an eye on the famous flat at 221B Baker Street. Shirley, studying logic, and Jennie, studying medicine, are busy preparing for upcoming exams when there's a knock on the door. It's Dr. Maxine Mortimer and Sir Henry Baskerville, who've come to seek the assistance of the famous Sherlock Holmes. Sir Charles Baskerville has died a mysterious death. Is he the most recent victim of the Curse of the Baskervilles—a curse linked to the nightmarish tales of a supernatural hound that haunts the murky moors of Devonshire? But wait, there's more! The young Sir Henry, the only surviving heir to the Baskerville legacy, has received a threat against his life! Something must be done! There's no time to recall Holmes and Watson from their trip. "We're all you've got," says Shirley. "We're up to the challenge," chimes Jennie. And indeed they are! In this fast-paced adaptation, full of wailing hounds, thundering hooves, and the slithering mists of the moor, Shirley and Jennie follow the trail of evidence and intrigue until, at last, they are confronted by the ravenous Hound itself! Flexible staging. Approximate running time: 90 minutes. Code: HA6.*

ISBN-10 1-58342-659-0  
ISBN-13 978-1-58342-659-3



9 781583 426593



*Dramatic Publishing*

311 Washington St.  
Woodstock, IL 60098  
ph: 800-448-7469



Printed on recycled paper

[www.dramaticpublishing.com](http://www.dramaticpublishing.com)

© Dramatic Publishing Company, Woodstock, Illinois.

# **The Hound of the Baskervilles:**

**A Comic Thriller Starring Shirley  
Holmes and Jennie Watson**

Adapted and dramatized

by

**KENT R. BROWN**

Inspired by the novel by

**SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE**



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

© Dramatic Publishing Company, Woodstock, Illinois.

\*\*\* NOTICE \*\*\*

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website: [www.dramaticpublishing.com](http://www.dramaticpublishing.com), or we may be contacted by mail at: DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, 311 Washington St., Woodstock IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

©MMX by

KENT R. BROWN

Printed in the United States of America

*All Rights Reserved*

(THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES: A COMIC THRILLER  
STARRING SHIRLEY HOLMES AND JENNIE WATSON)

ISBN: 978-1-58342-659-3

## **IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS**

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent (50%) the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with  
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois”

# **The Hound of the Baskervilles:** **A Comic Thriller Starring Shirley Holmes** **and Jennie Watson**

A Play in Two Acts  
for 6 men, 7 women, plus 11-40 either gender

## **CHARACTERS:**

**JENNIE WATSON:** The niece of John Watson. Studying medicine. Methodical, loyal, courageous.

**SHIRLEY HOLMES:** The niece of Sherlock Holmes. Studying law and philosophy. Keen, quick-witted, determined to make her uncle proud.

**DR. MAXINE MORTIMER:** A country doctor. Trustee- executrix of Sir Charles' will.

**SIR HENRY BASKERVILLE:** A distant relative from North America who recently inherited the Baskerville fortune.

**JOHN STAPLETON:** A naturalist living on the moor.

**DOROTHEA STAPLETON:** John Stapleton's sister...or maybe not.

**BARRYMORE:** Old family retainer at the Baskerville mansion.

**MRS. BARRYMORE:** Barrymore's wife.

**HUGO BASKERVILLE:** The family scoundrel. The cause of the curse. (may be doubled with Selden)

**SIR CHARLES BASKERVILLE:** A well-meaning philanthropist.

**SELDEN:** The lunatic brother of Mrs. Barrymore. (may be doubled with Hugo Baskerville)

**LAURA LYONS:** A young woman with a checkered past.

**VICTORIA: LESTRADE:** An eager young sleuth. (could be played by a man as VICTOR)

**ASSORTED GROOMS, MAIDS, SHEPHERDS, HOUNDS, HENCHMEN and PEOPLE IN THE STREETS** – The more the merrier!

**TIME:** 1889. October.

**PLACE:** London, England, and the Murky Moor of Devonshire.

**SETTING:**

The action of the play moves briskly from Sherlock Holmes' study at 221B Baker Street to a passenger railcar, to various rooms and corridors at Baskerville Hall and, of course, to the dark and mysterious Murky Moor beyond. The scenes should be sparsely furnished—a desk, a chair, a window frame and a drape or two here and there; a bench that serves as a railcar seat and so on. Lighting and sound effects will greatly aid in securing the locations in the minds of the audience. Space permitting, platforms and staircases could be used to considerable advantage. Whatever choices are made, scene changes should be executed in front of the audience and completed in the shortest time possible.

Note: See *Production Notes at the end of the script for additional staging options.*



## **BANNERS, SLIDES, SIGNS or POSTERS:**

A series of banners/signs/slides or posters should be used to announce the upcoming scene or to reinforce the identity of a particular location.

## **COSTUMES, LIGHTS, PROPS, SOUND EFFECTS and MUSIC:**

It is suggested that all actors and production personnel viewed by the audience—ushers and ticket takers alike—be costumed appropriately in the period (1870s-1880s). If full costuming is not possible, then signature items from the period such as assorted scarves, hats of all shapes and sizes, and long-sleeved shirts and vests will do nicely.

Lighting should establish a sense of the mysterious and the supernatural—shadows everywhere! Prop requirements for the show are few in number—a tea tray, a handbag, a revolver or two, a candle, a few ledgers and books, a suitcase here and there, that sort of thing.

Sound effects (SFX) should receive considerable attention. The use of onstage sound artists would be great fun! They should be surrounded by all the instruments and items needed to create the diverse and eerie sounds required in the show: the clip-clopping of horses' hooves on cobblestone streets; the sound of hissing steam spewing from a train engine; the howling wind as it races across the moor; as well as assorted moans, muffled screams and the like.

And, of course, of greatest importance is the horrendous and blood-curdling Sound of The Hound itself!

Music should be used to underscore transitions or set the emotional tone of a scene: high-pitched, staccato string arrangements; discordant percussion selections, dark and menacing. If possible, onstage musicians should be integrated into the aesthetic of the production.

### **A NOTE on the STYLE and PACING of the PRODUCTION:**

Traditional time boundaries are often violated in this script. Flashback scenes, for example, are played as “movies” that are being watched by characters in the present tense. On occasion, characters from the present tense will talk with a “movie” character. In several scenes, they will also step into the “movie” reality and interact with “movie” characters. While the script identifies those moments where specific focus choices should be made, the director and cast may find additional moments that favor their distinctive production style.

Much of the comedy in the script is derived from an up-tempo, commedia-like pacing of the action. Quick, rapid-fire line delivery will help underscore the whacky nature of the text. At no time, however, should any action or set of lines overtly be “played for laughs.” All characters must remain seriously engaged in solving the multiple mysteries the script contains. The comedy should derive from the incongruities between the real and the fanciful.

## **LINE ADDITIONS/DELETIONS:**

In a few instances, lines of dialogue and/or stage directions have been placed between brackets [ ] to indicate they may be included or deleted depending on production and audience considerations.

## **At the CURTAIN:**

Houselights and stagelights are up. Pre-show music is playing. Actors and crew members busy themselves putting the last few props in place, calling for a light check, hanging a backdrop or curtain swag. In short: revealing the “back-stage” moments before the actual play begins.

As actors and crew members leave the set, stagelights and houselights begin to fade out. The period pre-show music segues into eerie, unsettling, supernatural sounds followed by a high-pitched, blood-curdling howl—the Sound of The Hound. It reverberates throughout the theater.

And then...the deep, labored breathing of Sir Charles Baskerville running for his life. “No, no, don’t, don’t! Someone help me!” The music and the Sound of The Hound come to a crescendo as the houselights go out. A spotlight keys on JENNIE WATSON.

# ACT ONE

## PROLOGUE

WATSON (*as the Sound of The Hound slowly dies away*).

Did you hear that blood-curdling wail? It chills me to the bone even now. And that desperate man running for his life! But wait, I'm getting ahead of myself. First things first. My name is Jennie Watson. The time: 1889. The place: London, England. A lovely Wednesday morning, or so I thought at the time. Stay close now. Don't wander off in the dark. There's so much more to come!

(*SFX: The Sound of The Hound cracks through the theater. Then TRANSITION MUSIC kicks in—something Sherlock Holmes might enjoy.*)

*LIGHTS out on WATSON as she exits and up on DR. MAXINE MORTIMER and SIR HENRY BASKERVILLE as they approach 221B Baker Street.*)

## SCENE 1 – WHERE'S SHERLOCK?

DR. MORTIMER. Hurry along, Sir Henry, there's not a moment to lose.

SIR HENRY. So, is this Sherlock Holmes fellow the right man for the job?

DR. MORTIMER. By all reputation, the very best. A brilliant mind, so I'm told. Ah, here we are.

*(A SIGN/BANNER appears with "221B Baker Street" scrolled across it.*

*SFX: Door chime.*

*LIGHTS shift to Sherlock Holmes' study. A chair or two, a desk and a window frame covered by a heavy set of drapes. Several large books on philosophy and law are piled high on the desk. Behind them is SHIRLEY HOLMES loudly humming or playing a violin concerto. Assorted medical texts are strewn across the floor.*

*WATSON appears from the kitchen carrying a tray of tea and assorted tidbits.)*

WATSON *(to AUDIENCE)*. As I mentioned a moment ago, it was a quiet Wednesday morning. Shirley and I were studying for our upcoming university exams. Yuck! I'd just finished making tea when the door chimed, rang, buzzed...whatever it is that door thingies do.

*(SFX: Door chime.*

*WATSON sets down the tray and opens the door.)*

WATSON *(cont'd)*. Yes?

DR. MORTIMER. Sherlock Holmes, please. Tell him Dr. Maxine Mortimer is here with Sir Henry Baskerville. And hurry!

SIR HENRY (*smiling at WATSON*). Hi, there.

WATSON. Uh, yes, hi. Come in, please. (*To AUDIENCE.*) He had the prettiest eyes.

DR. MORTIMER. No flirting, young lady. We haven't much time.

SIR HENRY. My uncle Charles died mysteriously three months ago from the family curse.

WATSON. Good heavens!

DR. MORTIMER. Sir Henry arrived from North America yesterday to take over the family estate, so we're in a big hurry.

HOLMES (*poping her head up from behind that imposing pile of books*). A family curse, did you say?

SIR HENRY. I did, yes. A curse from the past. The Hound of the Baskervilles.

*(SFX: The Sound of The Hound!)*

*EVERYONE does a "double take" as in "Did you hear something?"*

WATSON. Shirley, did you hear anything?

HOLMES. Not quite sure.

DR. MORTIMER (*pushing forward*). We need the brilliant mind of Sherlock Holmes this very instant! No time to waste.

HOLMES. Uncle Sherlock isn't here, I'm afraid. He's letting us use his flat while we're studying for our exams. I'm his niece, Shirley Holmes.

DR. MORTIMER. Did you say *Uncle Sherlock*?

WATSON. Yes, he's somewhere in Europe—Italy by now, I think—with another two months to go. He's with my uncle John.

DR. MORTIMER. *Uncle John*?

WATSON. Dr. John Watson, yes. They're colleagues, best friends, inseparable. I'm Jennie Watson. How do you do?

DR. MORTIMER. If the famous Sherlock Holmes isn't here, then who will solve this diabolical mystery?

HOLMES. Diabolical, did you say? Then perhaps we can help. Nothing like a diabolical mystery to tweak the imagination, eh, Jennie?

WATSON (*to AUDIENCE*). Anything was better than studying for exams.

SIR HENRY. No offense, ladies, but this is a job for real detectives. Intelligent, strong. Afraid of nothing.

HOLMES. No offense taken, Sir Henry, but you're talking to the best and the brightest.

WATSON. He is?

HOLMES. As for intelligent, Jennie is studying to be a doctor like her famous uncle John.

WATSON. Indeed I am! And Shirley is studying logic and philosophy so she can follow in Uncle Sherlock's fabled footsteps.

HOLMES. And as for strong...well...

*(HOLMES nods her head toward WATSON who masterfully puts SIR HENRY in a hammerlock. Or perhaps she executes a jujitsu hip roll or some other move that would catch the audience by surprise.)*

WATSON (*releasing her grip*). When it gets dark, bad things happen, Sir Henry. A girl has to be prepared.

SIR HENRY (*coughing, sputtering*). Very impressive. Dr. Mortimer, let's give these little ladies a shot at the mystery, what do you think? Time is of the essence.

DR. MORTIMER. Well, if you're half as good as your uncles—

HOLMES. Trust me, Dr. Mortimer. It's all in the DNA.

DR. MORTIMER. The DNA, you say? What's that?

HOLMES. Another time perhaps, Dr. Mortimer. But first, the curse.

*(LIGHTS dim down in Holmes' study.*

*Eerie MUSIC seeps its way under the scene.)*

WATSON (*to AUDIENCE*). Cold shivers ran up and down my arms! What were we getting ourselves into?

## SCENE 2 – THE HUGO AFFAIR

*(LIGHTS remain dim in Holmes' study as LIGHTS come up in the banquet room in Baskerville Hall.*

*A SIGN/BANNER appears with “Baskerville Hall—A Long Time Ago” scrolled upon it.*

*Revealed are HUGO BASKERVILLE—looking lovesick and depressed—and assorted HOUNDS, HENCHMEN, REVELERS, SQUIRES and WENCHES. Note: The char-*



*acters are as numerous and diverse as the director wishes them to be.*

*They are captured in a variety of frozen positions—gesturing, singing, [drinking, kissing], playing cards, wrestling, and so on.*

*HOLMES, WATSON, DR. MORTIMER and SIR HENRY watch HUGO and his HENCHMEN as if they are in a theater watching a “movie.”)*

DR. MORTIMER. It all began in 1742, one dark and shadowy night, when the vile and terrible Hugo Baskerville sat brooding with his henchmen in Baskerville Hall.

HOLMES. Is he the ugly, depressed, cruel-looking dude with a devilish sneer on his face?

DR. MORTIMER. How can you tell?

HOLMES. It’s a talent.

DR. MORTIMER. Hugo had fallen in love with a local maiden. But she refused his advances.

*(LIGHTS reveal the MAIDEN frozen in a “I refuse your advances” pose.)*

MAIDEN. No, no, never!

DR. MORTIMER. But Hugo wouldn’t take no, no, never for an answer.

HUGO. I cannot live without her! Bring her to me now!

*(The HENCHMEN race “across town,” grab the MAIDEN and race back to Baskerville Hall! WENCHS and others who are not involved cheer the HENCHMEN on.)*

HUGO (*con't*). Well done, lads! Put her in the upstairs room.

*(The HENCHMEN plop the MAIDEN down in the upstairs room and then return to the banquet room where everyone freezes once again, this time in advanced states of exhaustion.)*

SIR HENRY. What a fiendish man.

DR. MORTIMER. The worst is yet to come.

WATSON. Oh, good!

HOLMES. Jennie?

WATSON. I mean...oh, bad, bad, very bad.

HUGO (*rising, a lecherous smile on his face*). Be right back, boys. Time for my goodnight kiss. (*HUGO is about to enter the upstairs room.*)

WATSON (*to MAIDEN*). Hurry! He's coming! Climb out the window. Grab the vine.

*(A vine appears. The MAIDEN nods thanks to WATSON.)*

WATSON (*con't*). Good! Good! (*To HOLMES.*) Sorry, just came over me.

*(The MAIDEN grabs the vine and climbs out the window, escaping in the nick of time. But, alas, she has dropped a handkerchief behind. HUGO enters, sees the room is empty and spies the handkerchief on the floor.)*

HUGO (*waving the handkerchief in the air*). She has escaped! Set the hounds upon her!

WATSON (*to AUDIENCE*). Oh, oh, that doesn't sound so good!

(*HUGO rubs the handkerchief over the nose of one of his HOUNDS.*)

HUGO. Good boy! After her! My body and soul I give to the Powers of Evil if I can recapture my maiden!

(*SFX: Assorted barks and yelps as the HOUNDS and HENCHMEN—on “horseback” now—begin to give chase.*)

A SIGN/BANNER appears with “The Dark and Murky Moor” scrolled upon it.

*LIGHTS* down in the banquet room and up on the Murky Moor, a place of rolling mists, frightening sounds and dark shadows...everywhere. And, on top of it all, rain is falling.

*The movements described by DR. MORTIMER should be pantomimed in slow motion.*)

DR. MORTIMER. It was a terrible night. Rain was falling. (*SFX*) The hounds were howling (*SFX*) and the horses were galloping across the moor (*SFX*). Soon, Hugo and his hounds were out of sight. His henchmen lost the trail and asked two shepherds if they had seen Sir Hugo go by.

(*LIGHTS* key on the SHEPHERDS.)

SHEPHERD ONE. Hugo Baskerville passed us sitting high in the saddle upon his black mare. His eyes were crazed!  
SHEPHERD TWO. And running behind him...

*(Both SHEPHERDS fall to their knees.)*

SHEPHERD ONE. ...was a massive hound of such evil proportions that we fell to our knees just like this and prayed to the saints for deliverance!

*(SFX: The Sound of The Hound!*

*The SHEPHERDS and HENCHMEN respond to the howling, then look at HOLMES as if waiting for instructions.)*

HOLMES. What are you looking at me for? Push on! Go!  
Go!

*(LIGHTS out on the SHEPHERDS as the HENCHMEN are back in the chase.)*

DR. MORTIMER. As Hugo's henchmen rode forward, their skins turned cold. Coming at them from out of the mist was Hugo's black mare (*SFX*), running for its very life. But its saddle was empty.

*(All the HENCHMEN follow the "mare" as it passes by. They are visibly shaken by the sight of the empty saddle.)*

DR. MORTIMER (*con't*). But, undaunted, they rode on. Soon they came upon the hounds...all whimpering (*SFX*) and cowering together.

*(The HENCHMEN dismount, draw their pistols and cautiously gather at the edge of the stage where they peer into the "audience space.")*

DR. MORTIMER (*con't*). With their pistols raised...they slowly approached the rim of a small clearing where...in the cold light of the moon...the fair maiden had fallen dead from fear and fatigue.

HENCHMEN ADLIBS. The poor girl. Where's Hugo? It's creepy out here. [I want a beer!]

DR. MORTIMER. Then a sudden movement caught their eyes!

*(The HENCHMEN gasp, scream!)*

*MUSIC: Beast on the Murky Moor stuff!)*

DR. MORTIMER (*con't*). A great, black, foul thing, a beast shaped like a hound larger than any mortal eye has ever seen and its teeth were... [tearing out the throat of Hugo Baskerville!] ...it was a horrid sight to see...Hugo so dead and lifeless. Then the beast's red, blazing eyes turned upon Hugo's henchmen who shrieked with fear and rode away for dear life, screaming across the moor.

*(SFX: Lots of screaming and a few frantic pistol shots as the HENCHMEN escape for their lives!)*

*Note: The Hound itself should not be seen quite yet. Let the actors' reactions to the death of the MAIDEN and HUGO carry the moment.*

*LIGHTS down on the moor and up full in Holmes' study.)*

WATSON (*to AUDIENCE*). What a fantastic story! I could tell Shirley was as thrilled by the danger of it all as I was.

HOLMES (*restrained, always the steely-eyed professional*).

An amusing little fairy tale, Dr. Mortimer, but what does it have to do with Sir Henry?

SIR HENRY. Ever since that night, Miss Holmes, the men of Baskerville Hall have died in bloody, often mysterious ways.

HOLMES. Is that a fact?

DR. MORTIMER. Indeed. And then, a few months ago, poor Sir Charles took a late-night walk down his garden path.

WATSON (*to AUDIENCE*). Ah! More pieces of the puzzle.

The following pages contain: Scene & Character Breakdown and Production Notes.

## **SCENE AND CHARACTER BREAKDOWN**

### **ACT ONE**

#### **Prologue**

Settings:

- Performance space

Characters:

- Watson, Selected Ensemble Members

#### **SCENE 1 – WHERE’S SHERLOCK?**

Settings:

- Day/Interior – Holmes’ study

Characters:

- Watson, Holmes, Dr. Mortimer, Sir Henry

#### **SCENE 2 – THE HUGO AFFAIR**

Settings:

- Day/Interior – Holmes’ study
- Night/Interior – Baskerville Hall
- Night/Exterior – Murky Moor

Characters:

- Watson, Holmes, Dr. Mortimer, Sir Henry, Hugo Baskerville, Maiden, Shepherd One, Shepherd Two, Revelers/Henchmen/Wenches – as numerous as desired

#### **SCENE 3 – THE DEATH OF POOR SIR CHARLES**

Settings:

- Day/Interior – Holmes’ study
- Night/Exterior – Garden at Baskerville Hall

Characters:

- Watson, Holmes, Dr. Mortimer, Sir Henry, Sir Charles, Optional Characters: garden trees—as numerous as desired

#### **SCENE 4 – A THREATENING LETTER UNDER THE DOOR**

Settings:

- Day/Interior – Holmes’ study

Characters:

- Watson, Holmes, Dr. Mortimer, Sir Henry, Word actors, Selected Ensemble Members: “Five Million Bucks!”

#### **SCENE 5 – THE NIGHT RIDE TO BASKERVILLE HALL**

Settings:

- Night/Interior – Railway passenger car
- Night/Exterior – Horse carriage on the Murky Moor
- Night/Exterior – Baskerville Hall
- Night/Interior – Baskerville Hall

Characters:

- Watson, Dr. Mortimer, Sir Henry, Perkins, Barrymore, Mrs. Barrymore

#### **SCENE 6 – THE MORNING AFTER THE NIGHT BEFORE**

Settings:

- Day/Interior – Baskerville Hall

Characters:

- Watson, Sir Henry, Barrymore, Mrs. Barrymore



## **SCENE 7 – THE MURKY MOOR UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL**

Settings:

- Day/Exterior – Murky Moor

Characters:

- Watson, Stapleton, Miss Stapleton, Selected Ensemble Members: “Lepidoptera”

## **SCENE 8 – FOOTSTEPS DOWN THE HALL**

Settings:

- Night/Interior – Baskerville Hall

Characters:

- Watson, Barrymore, Holmes

## **ACT TWO**

### **Prologue**

Settings:

- Performance space

Characters:

- Watson, Holmes, Sir Henry, Dr. Mortimer, Hugo, Maiden, Hugo’s Entourage, Sir Charles, Barrymore, Mrs. Barrymore, Stapleton, Miss Stapleton, Selected Ensemble Members

## **SCENE 1 – THAT GOOFY LOVE STUFF**

Settings:

- Day/Exterior – Murky Moor

Characters:

- Watson, Holmes, Sir Henry, Stapleton, Miss Stapleton

## **SCENE 2 – BARRYMORE DOES THAT CANDLE THING AGAIN**

Settings:

- Night/Exterior – Baskerville Hall
- Day/Interior – Holmes’ study

Characters:

- Watson, Sir Henry, Holmes, Barrymore, Mrs. Barrymore

## **SCENE 3 – LAURA SPILLS THE BEANS...ALMOST**

Settings:

- Day/Interior – Laura Lyons’ parlor

Characters:

- Barrymore, Mrs. Barrymore, Maid, Laura Lyons, Sir Charles, Stapleton

## **SCENE 4 – DEATH ON THE MOOR**

Settings:

- Night/Interior – Baskerville Hall
- Night/Exterior – Murky Moor

Characters:

- Watson, Holmes, Selden, Stapleton, Dr. Mortimer

## **SCENE 5 – BAITING THE TRAP**

Settings:

- Night/Interior – Baskerville Hall

Characters:

- Holmes, Watson, Dr. Mortimer, Selden, Sir Henry, Barrymore, Mrs. Barrymore

## **SCENE 6 – THE HOUND AT LAST!**

### Settings:

- Night/Exterior – Outside Stapletons’ dining room
- Night/Exterior – Murky Moor

### Characters:

- Holmes, Watson, Sir Henry, Stapleton, Lestrade, Dr. Mortimer, Barrymore, The Hound

## **SCENE 7 – SHIRLEY WRAPS IT ALL UP FOR US**

### Settings:

- Night/Interior – Baskerville Hall

### Characters:

- Holmes, Watson, Sir Henry, Stapleton, Lestrade, Dr. Mortimer, Barrymore, Laura Lyons, Miss Stapleton, Sir Charles, Selected Ensemble Members

## PRODUCTION NOTES

### *Staging Options*

Consider opening up your entire playing space. Show the back walls, any wing spaces you may have, everything! Then utilize the entire space. People coming and going from multiple directions, wagons or set pieces waiting in the shadows of the wings, and so on. In short, instead of attempting a “real” environment, play up the theatricality of the piece. This choice may require considerable tech support, of course, but would also enlist the contributions of many participants.

### *Backdrops and Slides*

It may be possible to paint a series of backdrops and/or dioramas for the play that can be flown in or brought onto the stage by actors who then unfurl the canvas appropriately. The drops might reveal the bookcases in Holmes’ study, the façades of traditional London business shops, the imposing visage of Baskerville Hall, the craggy hills on the Murky Moor, the distant moon, clouds and the like. Slide projections would be equally effective, highlighting the buildings and terrain of the play.

### *Signs*

To quickly establish the setting, mood and locale, consider using placards or signs that can quickly be placed on and removed from standing tripods at either corner of the stage. Or they might be flown in...or even carried across the stage by an actor.

Some signs, as indicated in the script, might identify the location, such as “221B Baker Street” or “Baskerville Hall,” while other signs could be more tongue-in-cheek, such as “Dark & Gloomy Moor—7 km,” “Baskerville Manor—Next Right,” or “Beware Large Drooling Beast.” Let your imagination be your guide.

### *Family Portraits*

Since John Stapleton is revealed to be a Baskerville, we should be able to see a slight resemblance between the actor playing Stapleton and the portrait of Sir Hugo Baskerville. A strong likeness is not necessary, of course, and the portrait would be dark and a bit grimy anyway after enduring years of discoloration due to candle smoke.

### *Baskerville Hall – Using a “dollhouse” Model*

As personnel and resources allow, it might be fun to see a large “dollhouse” model of Baskerville Hall placed rather high on a platform. This could be three to five feet high and a similar width. It might even be placed on a turntable. The front steps could be favored in anticipation of Sir Henry’s arrival. It could then be turned around to give the audience a sense of the back garden with access to the moor.

Small lights might be placed inside the doll house that could illuminate the path Barrymore takes through the hallways on his way to signaling Selden on the moor. Small lighting instruments, flashing on and off, along with appropriate sound effects, could underscore the threatening atmosphere that permeates the moor.

### *Fog and Mist*

While fog machines can be very effective, they also can be a bit costly. Consider taking a page from Asian symbolist staging techniques that enlist actors to move strips of colored cloth in such a manner so as to suggest the movement of rivers or streams. For this production, strips or rolling mounds of white and gray-toned gauze, moved imaginatively by actors and/or crew members, would create an impressive, ever changing, and ominous ground fog.

### *Additional Embellishments*

To underscore the overall look and feel of the production, consider placing a few costume mannequins in the lobby, creating posters and programs using period typeset and design embellishments, playing popular music of the period, displaying copies of books written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, providing tidbits about English manor life and the superstitious beliefs of the period—anything that might enhance the sense of participation in the Baskerville Experience.

### *Act One – Scene 3 – The Death of Poor Sir Charles*

The comic business involving stumbling over and/or stepping on Sir Charles as he lies dead in Baskerville garden is derived from the classic slapstick tradition of commedia farce. Considerable rehearsal is essential to the success of these comic “bits.” If rehearsal time is too short to guarantee the precise execution of the slapstick required, everyone—except Watson—can safely step over Sir Charles in-

stead of making contact with his body. They should be looking elsewhere as they are stepping over Sir Charles so the audience will continue to anticipate that someone will actually step on the body. As well, there are no reasons to mutter any apologies.

Only Watson needs to actually trip over or step on the body directly, and she should do so on her final exit from the garden. Consequently, Sir Charles has no reason to be alive again until Watson makes actual contact with his body. When she does so, Sir Charles should come back to life, shake his fist at Watson, say his line, and then melodramatically slump back into his original “dead” position...with one eye open and cocked at the thundering herd gathered in Holmes’ study! Watson’s exit line remains intact.

#### *Act One – Scene 4 – What Are Those Words I See?*

The newspaper in question is *The Times*, of course, but many Americans think of it—and speak of it—as *The London Times* in order to distinguish it from *The New York Times*. Use your best judgment. Also, the type used was called Times Old Roman. It is difficult to find a visual example of Times Old Roman, but Times Ten Roman will suffice. Examples of Times Ten Roman are plentiful. Fonts.com is a dependable source.