

*Chapter Nine*

*The Hidden Shadow*

*30 September,*  
*From the notes of Dr John Watson*

**I**t had been several days since our visit to Miss Jones. Holmes had been in such high spirits, but his cheerfulness seemed to be wearing off, and he was becoming more fractious. I had stayed away for a few days and went to visit him upon the twenty-eighth of September. I was certain he was missing his evenings he had spent with Miss Jones. It was rare for him to find someone to talk with who had so much in common, other than his brother. I don't know if he looked at her as a woman, necessarily, or more of someone who understood him and could relate. I think if ever there was a perfect woman for him, she was Miss Jones. Although she does not fit my idea of the perfect woman to marry, I must confess, she certainly can turn a gentleman's head at her sight and her character. She is so much like Holmes that it's almost uncanny. She is unlike any woman I have ever met.

"Good morning, Mrs Hudson," I cheerfully pronounced.

"Hardly good morning, Doctor!" uttered Mrs Hudson, throwing a hand up in dismay as she carried away an untouched breakfast.

"That bad, eh?"

"I don't know why I put up with him, sometimes."

I took off my hat with a feeling of dread as I proceeded up the stairs. I stopped just before opening the door to try to appear cheerful as I walked in.

"Good morning, Holmes. I trust you have had good days since I last saw you?"

"Hmm!" he grunted as he sat smoking his long cherry-wood pipe by

the fire. His legs were pulled up in the chair and his eyes fixed onto the dancing flames.

As I went to pick up the morning paper, I uneasily glanced back to my friend's pipe then observed that the paper was not in its usual setting.

"If you are looking for the paper, it is in the fire. There is nothing in it at all. An absolute waste, Watson!" Holmes put forth as he remained in his position now with his eyes languidly shut.

I had just picked up an old paper from the table when my friend informed me of the demise of the paper I was in search of. I slapped it down as I sighed and then voiced, "Every time you choose that pipe, you are in a foul mood, and you were so cheerful the last I saw you. Holmes, really, whatever is the matter?" I took to my chair across from him.

Holmes opened his eyes slightly to peer my direction. He said nothing.

"Holmes, I insist."

"Watson, you can be quite bothersome at times. You are too much like a mother hen. Shouldn't you be with your practice instead of here?"

"Holmes, I am not bothersome. I am only concerned for my dear friend, who seems to not be faring very well since he is not eating his breakfast."

"Nothing is the matter, Watson! That is just it. Well—that is, nothing outside the confines of these walls—with the exception of my boredom, of course. No case, nothing in the papers, and no letters or telegrams. Just utter silence! Nothing!" he growled as he took his pipe out and hit the chair with his fist. I knew it was more than that, so I spoke out.

"Now Holmes, I may not have your brilliant deductions, but I know there is more troubling you than an absence of activity in the old city."

There was only silence. He did not respond or even make a sound.

"You miss her don't you? You miss having her around. That is exactly the case. You have something in common and can relate to her quite well, and now she's not around to converse with."

"Really; however did you come to that conclusion?" He glanced at me swiftly as he stood and walked to the window to peer out.

"All right, if you want me to tell you exactly how. I had a lovely wife whom I loved and adored. I miss her, but I also enjoy my time with you. I know what it is like to miss someone you care about and that is precisely what you are doing. You were moody before you came upon her and are now in your foul mood since you have been away from her. What else could it be? For once, I am right. You are gazing out the window because you don't want to admit to yourself that you miss her. Holmes, go see her or write to her. I am glad to see you finally taking

to a woman. I always worry about you spending the remnants of your years alone. I know we will one day part and go our separate ways.”

Holmes gave a sigh before he spoke again. “I miss ... conversing with her because I find her intriguing; that is all. And I shall not write to her. She may write to me if she wishes. I am not one to go chasing after another simply for companionship because I find them a breath of fresh air in this stale atmosphere.”

“Well if you want to be stubborn that is fine; at least come for a walk and some fresh air. It will do you good. I shall not take no for an answer, Holmes.”

“Very well then. I shall go for a walk, but that is all.”

We grabbed our belongings and strolled down the street for a spell before stopping off at the tobacco shop. We were almost at the door of Baker Street when Lestrade had seen us and called our direction.

“Mr Holmes? What are you doing here?” shrieked Lestrade.

We stopped and Holmes turned with a perplexed look at Lestrade.

“Lestrade, whatever is the matter, man? Why would I not be here? I do live here, remember?” Holmes was being quite snippy and putting his mood towards Lestrade.

“You said you were staying in Forest Row for a few days. Did you find what you were looking for? I did get your telegram.”

“What in the blazes are you jabbering about, Lestrade? I have been here for days now. Why would I be in Forest Row and looking for what?”

“Well ... May I come in, Mr Holmes?”

“Yes, please do and explain.”

We went upstairs and took to our seats.

“Your telegram, Mr Holmes.”

“What telegram?” asked Holmes, throwing his hands up.

“The one you sent me asking for the new information on the Chatham murders and the men. You mean you didn’t—”

“I did not send you a telegram.”

“Well, then who sent it? It had your initials upon it.”

“Where did you send your response back?”

I sent it to Duprey Manor, as you requested.”

Holmes did not look pleased at all. I knew he did not wish to have Lestrade involved in the whole conundrum, so he tried to play it off.

“Ah! Oh yes. I did not mean for the letter to go out. I told Mrs Baker to hold it. I fear I did not get your response in return, however, for I decided it best to return here. I shall have to obtain the letter, then. By chance, have you the telegram I sent you? I would like for Watson to

read it. He has been away and would be keen on writing down my account," he stated with a prompt smile.

I think he had deceived the inspector quite well.

"Oh. Er, yes, I believe I do have it on my person." He reached in a few pockets and finally pulled it out. "Here's your telegram."

Holmes snatched it from his hand, read it briefly; then thrust it in my direction. I knew this could only have meant one thing: Miss Jones had set off after the other man or men. I took the letter and read it carefully.

"Doctor, you may keep it, if you wish. I have it all taken care of at the Yard. I must admit I am surprised to see you here, Mr Holmes. I would have thought you would be out by now. You know, after this professor fellow. You've got quite a bit of information. I have to say, I am at a loss as to how you got all this information when we have tried for weeks to get it. I cannot thank you enough for the help, Mr Holmes. I have some men looking into it, but I don't think we will find anything."

"Of course. Well, we were just leaving when you came upon us. I hope you will excuse us, Lestrade, but we really must be off," uttered Holmes as he stood and rushed Lestrade out, nearly pushing him out of the room.

Lestrade gave a perplexed look, first to Holmes and then to me.

"Er ... yes ... yes, of course, Mr Holmes. I am sorry to take up your time. Good luck finding this man. I doubt anything will come of him."

Holmes shut the door on him as he voiced, "Good-bye, Lestrade!"

My friend twirled around, snatched the letter, and read it once more. He then crumpled it and hurled it upon the floor. He was quite perturbed, and it was rather apparent that he knew who sent the telegram.

"Holmes, what now?"

"She's far too clever for her own good. Foolish! Does she know what she has got herself into? She is a woman, for heaven's sake, Watson. What do I do with a woman who may have more wits about her than I? Heaven only knows where she is. She has no experience in these things. Did you see the telegram she sent? She refers to a professor. This case is quite a conundrum, Watson. Surely, this professor is not a Moriarty; he did have two brothers. Perhaps he is a former pupil repeating his work. Jones is in grave danger. She has no idea. None, Watson, none whatsoever!"

Holmes took his pipe, lit it, and then proceeded to pace to and fro. I thought he was going to tear the room apart, he was so irate. He shoved off all the papers from the table including several books, which lay upon the edge of the desk.

“Well, first we need to go to Duprey,” I put forth.

Holmes looked up and smiled softly as he said, “I am so sorry, my dear friend. Please, forgive me. You are correct.” He came to my side, laid his hand upon my shoulder and added, “I would greatly value your company, if you do not object.”

“I should be more than pleased to go with you, and I do forgive you. It is understandable when you are so concerned for a friend.”

“A friend? Yes, I suppose, but she is a woman, Watson. She’s not you.”

“No, she isn’t me, and that is why you shouldn’t worry so. Remember how she took care of those men? I would have been killed. I wouldn’t know where to start to solve such a problem by myself.”

Holmes smiled and replied, “What would I do without you, old friend? We must be off, then. Mrs Hudson, we are off to Duprey!”

When we arrived at Duprey Manor, Holmes dashed up to the door and pounded it with his stick.

“Why, Mr Holmes? How may I help you?”

“Was there a letter addressed to me?”

“Why, yes, Miss Jones received it. She’s not here, though, if you’re looking for her. Said she was going to Kingston, she did. I just returned, myself, from holiday.”

“Did she leave the letter here?” he asked, gazing in the direction of the sitting room.

“If she did, it’s in the drawing room. You may—”

Her answer appeared to have startled my friend, for he quickly turned upon his heels at that instant.

“The drawing room?” he interjected, with a slightly puzzled glare. He then swiftly directed his stick at a door on the left wall of the foyer directly across from the sitting room and added, “Of course. Yes, Mrs Baker.”

Holmes bolted into the room and I behind him. The room appeared lived in, yet it was unusually dusty with a peculiar smell about the air. Upon entering, my friend’s curiosity for the room seemed to overpower his desire to find the letter. Holmes somehow knew something about the room I did not. Still wearing his puzzled demeanour, he wiped a bit of dust from the sideboard.

“Rather oddly dusty, I should think,” I muttered. “Well, I believe I shall have a look at that sideboard and the bookshelf. Perhaps the letter has been put there.”

“No! Sorry, Watson, don’t touch anything,” he cried.

His eyes narrowed as he slowly walked round the room, skimming its belongings. His attention seemed to be caught by an old, dusty pipe with its tobacco slightly strewn out, for he had paused briefly to look upon it. Holmes then promptly turned and was drawn towards the piano. At that instant, the thick fog began to lift from in front my friend's face, and a faint curl came to his lips.

"Ah, the wick in this old lamp has finally been raised and lit for the first time in years. It may not be enough to illuminate the entire room, but it is just enough for me to see a bit more clearly. I believe I am beginning to understand now," he murmured with a gleam in his eyes. "Ha! Here it is, Watson!"

"I don't follow. I see only a mass of sheet music, Holmes."

"Ah, yet again, my dear Watson, you see, but you fail to observe. The dust is our clue. Nothing has been disturbed with the exception of the stack of music. Yes, she has played the piano but not the music. The dust has not been disturbed on the music, which lies upon the piano desk and only a slight disturbance upon the stack. You will notice an object the width of a letter has upset the dust on the board just above the keys as well as on the top of the piano. In addition, the stack has been ever so slightly slid over. I don't have time to go into all the details now."

He quickly went through the stack and found both the letter addressed to him as well as the letter Miss Jones had received while at dinner. Holmes did not look ecstatic at all. I could see he was studying the letter. As he read it, his expression changed to a scowl.

"May we keep this, Mrs Baker?" enquired Holmes.

"Why, yes, it is addressed to you, Mr Holmes. Is anything the matter? Please don't tell me she went on one of those chases again. I'll have her skin if she has."

Holmes laid his hand upon her arm and muttered, "I shall not tell you then, Mrs Baker. Thank you."

I was standing by the French doors when Holmes darted to my side.

"Watson, we must be ..." he conveyed but stopped short. His attention turned to the housekeeper. "Mrs Baker, has anyone been outside recently?"

"Why no, not that I'm aware of. Miss Jones hasn't even been out. Her ankle was still giving her a bit of trouble, so she quit her walks."

"Thank you. We shall leave from here. Good day, Mrs Baker," he remarked, as he tipped his hat to her.

"Good day, Sir. I do hope she is safe. Please take care of her, if you

should find her. And tell her to stop this nonsense before she causes my heart to stop. I feel as if I've age ten years just in the past few months."

Holmes nodded and we proceeded out back.

"I knew something was amiss that night. I felt it in my bones. I knew the letter was no good. She tried to play it off, and what a performance she gave. That must have been why she ... Look, Watson! Someone, a man, has been here, standing for some time. He has broken some branches from this shrub, to get through. Someone was watching her and she must have known it. Come, we must go!"

"What of the letter you were reading? Something nefarious was in it, wasn't there?"

"She *is* in grave danger, Watson. It was a letter of threat from someone who has been following her every move. Why did she not tell me? I could have helped her!" spouted Holmes as we climbed back into our cab.

"Her mentality is identical to yours, Holmes. Both Mycroft and I have told you. That is why she did not ask for your help. You would not ask for someone else's if you did not need it."

"Don't start with that again, Watson."

We had arrived back at Baker Street, but the hour was late.

"What now, Holmes?"

"I must sit and think. What would she have done and where in Kingston would she go? We cannot do anything until tomorrow; there are no more trains for the night and the drive is too long in the dark. You may stay and attend to your practice if you need."

"I shall go and make my schedule for the next few days, but I will be back in the morning."

"Splendid! I shall see you then. Sleep well."

"I shall. And, Holmes ... try to get some rest."

I returned to my quarters and worked on my schedule to leave for my nurse. She would not know where to start or what to do if she did not have one.

The morning arrived and it was now the first of October. I stopped off to pick up a paper in case Holmes had thrown this edition into the fire. There was a young man at the paper stand, as I came up. Despite Holmes's current state, I decided I was going to have a pleasant day and be gracious. The young man must have been about seventeen or so for his height, and I took it, he must work for his being out early and getting a paper. He was well dressed and seemed in a daze or a bit of a rush.

“A bit cold this morning is it not?” I put forth, as I glanced his way.

“It is,” the young man muttered.

That was all he said, and he only glanced up once. It was rather strange. He walked off and so did I, but I decided to turn and glance back to the man. What if he was the one following Miss Jones? I thought no more of the matter and made my way up to Baker Street.

“Good morning, Holmes.”

“What is good about it?” contested Holmes as he stared out the window.

“Here’s the morning paper,” I said as I sat down.

I decided to mention the man I had seen. “I met the most peculiar young man, at the paper stand. He must have been about seventeen or so for his height and voice, but he was rather well dressed.”

“And this makes him peculiar?” Holmes retorted in a somewhat irritated voice.

“Well, it wasn’t just that, Holmes. It was his entire nature. He tried not to make eye contact and spoke quickly. His eyes met mine for just a second. Something seemed familiar about him. He had the most remarkable grey eyes. Do you suppose he is the man following Miss Jones?”

“What else can you tell me about this man?” Holmes requested as he twirled about on his toes and sprinted for the chair across from me.

“Well, he had very light brown hair. I couldn’t tell much because he had his collar pulled up. Height must have been around five feet six inches, give or take. His voice sounded young, from what I heard. Oh! And when I turned back to look at him, he had a slight limp in his right ... Holmes!”

“That was not the man following Miss Jones.”

“You don’t mean he was—?”

“Yes, he was she: Jones!” Holmes sprang to his feet and snatched his hat and coat.

“Surely not?”

Holmes voiced from the other room, “Think, Watson, think! You said you felt as if you knew those eyes, and the limp from the right ankle. She hasn’t left, yet. She is dodging someone. Quick, my friend, we must catch her. Lead the way!”

We bolted out the door and dashed down the street to where I had seen the man leave, but to no avail. The person was nowhere in sight.

“What if this is a wild goose chase, Holmes?” I asked, gasping for air from our run.

“No, if it is not her, then it is still someone we need.”

We caught a cab and headed off quickly.

“Where to?” I asked, still trying to catch my breath.

“The train station: King’s Cross! We must get there and get to Kingston.”

We arrived to the station but had no luck finding her. Holmes scurried about, looking into all the compartments, as well did I. I finally saw her, or him, in one of the compartments as the train was leaving.

“Holmes, here!” I yelled.

He dashed to my side. “Where?”

“There! The third compartment!”

Despite our effort to gain upon the compartment, it was already moving too swiftly. I saw her quickly gaze at us. Holmes’s eyes were fixed on her and hers on him; then her eyes swiftly turned away and did not look back. Holmes was furious. He slammed his walking stick onto the pavement and threw his hat upon ground. His look then turned to despair.

I finally spoke up. “Holmes, hurry, we can catch the next train out.”

“Right, Watson! You are up on your game, today. Thank you, my friend. What would I do without you?” Holmes snatched his hat from its resting place and grasped my arm.

We rushed to the window to purchase our tickets.

“The train that just left, where was it headed?” asked Holmes.

The station clerk replied, “That one was going to Cambridge, sir.”

“Then we need the next available train to Cambridge,” requested Holmes.

“Here you are, gentlemen. It leaves in ten minutes but has a stop to make before.”

“Holmes, why would she be going to Cambridge when Mrs Baker said she was going to Kingston days ago?” I queried.

“I don’t know, Watson. Perhaps she never went to Kingston, or perhaps she has been there and is on a trail leading her to Cambridge. One thing I can be certain of is she would not be in disguise if she were not in fear of being found.”

Holmes was fuming yet again. I said not a word to him and left him to his thoughts. We boarded our train, but I knew we would not arrive in time to find Miss Jones. Holmes sat in silence for the remainder of our journey.

*Chapter Ten*  
*The Trap*

*1 October,  
Selena Jones*

I knew Dr Watson had seen me as I walked away from the paper stand. I tried not to limp, but I am afraid he had taken notice. Perhaps he would not think of me being dressed up as a young man. I could only hope. I was off to catch the train to Cambridge and was soon on my way.

I had been wrong about Watson, or conceivably, he had told Holmes about the incident, and Holmes deduced the young man was not a man. I saw, in my peripheral sight, two men running towards the train. I had, at first, thought it to be the men chasing me, but as I turned slowly, I discovered the men to be Watson and Holmes. Holmes glared directly into my eyes, and my heart sank into despair as I gazed back at his. I wanted to open the door and call to him. I wanted to have him at my side. I needed someone to talk with, someone to help, someone who cared and understood. I was not missing him for all the other days, but the sight of him had changed my being. I cannot say what had happened in my mind. My thoughts were becoming hazed like a damp windowpane in the wintry air. I could not see through no matter how hard I tried. I must stay away from him for my own sake. A man will only hold me down. Even Mr Holmes. I hurriedly took my eyes off him and did not look back.

My trip was a silent one. I sat thinking of what I would do next. I was so close to finding out who this professor was—but was he a

professor? He may simply be using the title as some kind of meaning. He could be anywhere. I knew his description and that was all.

The train slowed as its shrill whistle blew and the mighty engine spewed its steam across the landing. I swiftly set off to roam the streets. I knew he would have to be with the upper-class, so I started with the more well-known areas. My ankle was feeling much better due to the time I had rested on the train.

I walked for over an hour, through the streets, observing the men around me. I decided it was time to eat lunch, so I stopped off at a local restaurant. It was nice to sit again. I did not order much, for too many thoughts were crowding my mind. I was then off to Cambridge University in hopes of finding my man there. I talked to several students and professors to see if they knew of anyone who matched the description I had. I told them I was looking for a professor but lost his name and could not remember it. I had no luck. I was missing something, but I did not know what.

I went to a local commons area to sit and collect my thoughts. He was here in Cambridge, of that I was sure, but he was not a professor at the university. He could be a professor of any university and has taken up residence in Cambridge. I was wasting my time. Holmes may possibly know him through all of his dealings with such criminals. I had no such knowledge and not enough time to grasp it all.

I was growing weary of the make-up and disguise. I would never find him without letting him find me, so I decided to buy a change of clothes and get a room for the night. I was at a loss. This professor had beaten me at this game. I could not find him, and if I did, what would I do? This was a matter for the police, and Lestrade was too far away to catch him even if I found him.

I had my room, changed my clothes, and removed the make-up. It did take some time to get the colour out of my hair and back to my normal colour. I will admit, the trousers were much more comfortable than the dress. I pinned my hair up, tucked my small revolver into my boot, and was out for a walk. It had been several hours and no sign of Holmes or my assailants. All I could do was walk and keep an eye out. The night was beginning to fall, and I knew it would not be safe out, so I made my way back to the hotel. I happened to notice the man from before following me. This was not something I needed right at the moment. I tried to blend with the crowd so as to elude him. I hit a patch of fog, took advantage of it, and ran. I managed back to my hotel and only glanced back briefly to see I had lost him.

I knew Holmes had to be in the city and would be staying the night, but I did not know where. I decided to tell the clerk at the desk who I was.

“If a man, by himself, shows up and asks for me, tell him there is no one here by that name.”

“Yes, madam.”

“If a tall, slender gentleman shows up with a friend and asks for me, then tell him my room. He must say his name is Mr Sherlock Holmes and his friend, Dr Watson. Do you understand?”

“Yes, madam, quite clear.”

I went up to my room to prepare for bed, but I had a feeling I would not be sleeping well. I would be on guard the entire night. My liveliness was gone and I was now left with exhaustion.

I had heard Holmes would stay up during all hours and even not sleep. I cannot fathom how he did such a feat other than just growing accustomed to such a life. I, in turn, was not accustomed to being about so much and travelling. Fatigue had won, and I soon fell into a deep sleep.

I do not know what hour it was when I was roused by the sound of footsteps in my room. I had not heard the door or any voices. My eyes could not focus to see in the dark. I could only see shadows moving towards my bed, so I decided to remain quiet and try to catch them. I did not know if it would have been wiser to yell or do as I had done and say nothing.

The next instant, I was grabbed and my mouth covered by a hand. I could not scream, so I reached up to grab the thumb that covered my mouth and pulled it back as forcefully as I could. The man yelled. I could still not focus on my attackers. I was then struck upon the face by a hard blow and knocked back. I kicked the other one in the face, evidently, for I heard his voice change as he groaned and fell back. My arm was grabbed, so I elbowed the man across his chin with my free arm. The clatter of his teeth hitting could be heard. I leaped out of the bed and tried to find the door. I was still in my dress and boots, and I was glad. I felt a hand grab my foot, and I was down upon the floor. The first man was now on top of me, holding me down while the other one attempted to tie my hands. I kept trying to jab the man, but the other one struck my face with an even harder blow that sent me down. I was turned upon my stomach; hands tied, and then turned over to face them. I struggled but to no avail. A voice then spoke.

“Now, Miss Jones, you should not be so rude to your friends. You certainly are a feisty one—more than I had thought. I will take my