

SCENE SAMPLES: Sherlock: The Ramsgate Puzzle
Based on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 'The Reigate Puzzle'

By

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INT. JOHN'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - MORNING

JOHN WATSON and hugely pregnant wife MARY WATSON sit at the kitchen table over tea and toast. Mary reads a paper, John reads a letter.

MARY
Heard about these burglaries recently? Really odd, they're only taking balls of yarn-

JOHN
(ignoring her)
Mmm.

MARY
What is it?

JOHN
My old acquaintance Colonel Hayter - Ben - uh, he's invited me down to his beach house in Ramsgate.

MARY
Oh. Sounds like a nice getaway. You should go.

John shrugs.

JOHN
Wasn't ever really that close with him. Seems a little out of the blue.

They chew. Sip. Read.

MARY
How's Sherlock doing? Still going off his rocker being stuck at home all day?

JOHN
Haven't had any middle-of-the-night rings from Mrs. Hudson so I'd say he's probably stable.

John's cell phone rings.

JOHN
...maybe. (into phone) Hello?

INTERCUT phone call with a very worried MRS. HUDSON - BAKER STREET/STAIRS

(CONTINUED)

MRS. HUDSON
John? John you - you'd better come
quick. He's ill.

INT. 221B BAKER STREET BUILDING

Bam! A frazzled Mrs. Hudson throws the front door open,
letting in John.

JOHN
Where is he?

MRS. HUDSON
In his chair-

John walks past her into -

INT. 221B/LIVING ROOM

-the living room, where SHERLOCK HOLMES is slumped in his
chair. Wearing pajamas and his silk dressing gown, staring
morosely ahead, still as a corpse. A breakfast tray of
untouched food beside him. Mrs. Hudson appears in the
doorway behind John.

MRS. HUDSON
(whispering)
He hasn't eaten. Won't sleep or
speak. He's just been in that chair
for days. I've been afraid to go
near him.

Slowly, John approaches Sherlock and kneels down next to the
chair.

JOHN
Sherlock?

Nothing.

JOHN
...Sherlock? You alright, mate?

Nothing. John glances at Mrs. Hudson. She shrugs
frantically. John touches Sherlock's shoulder and gasps,
pulling his hand away.

JOHN
What the -

(CONTINUED)

He tears Sherlock's pajama shirt open to reveal the body of a stuffed dummy. Mrs. Hudson screams. John whirls around and stares at Mrs. Hudson wide-eyed. They share a look that says, "Oh shit, Sherlock."

FADE OUT.

After finding Sherlock at Colonel Hayter's house, Sherlock clues him in on the case.

INT. BEACHHOUSE/LIVING ROOM

We track John and Sherlock as Sherlock leads the way down a bright corridor to an open living room. Glass windows line one wall overlooking the ocean - and one is smashed, with a sheet taped over it. COLONEL BEN HAYTER, a handsome man of 40, sits on a couch, reading a paper. A housekeeper serves tea.

COLONEL
(standing)
John! My god, how great it is to see you!

SHERLOCK
John, you know Colonel Benjamin Hayter, of course.

COLONEL
Oh, actually - it's not Benjamin. It's Benedict.

SHERLOCK
Ah. Your parents must have hated you.

JOHN
I'm sorry, I'm a little bit confused -

SHERLOCK
There have been a couple break-ins in the area. That's why I invited you here. Have a seat.

JOHN
(sitting on the settee)
You - you invited me? You sent the Colonel's letter?

SHERLOCK
Obviously. I couldn't invite you myself, what with my house-arrest.

COLONEL
House-arrest?

(CONTINUED)

SHERLOCK

I had a little, um, argument with my brother - he made me promise not to take on any new cases-

JOHN

Yet here you are! In Ramsgate! I wouldn't be surprised if Mycroft helicoptered in here right now.

SHERLOCK

-but I found staying in my flat all day long far too suffocating.

JOHN

But - how did you two -

SHERLOCK

Colonel Hayter came to me with a rather peculiar problem that surprisingly piqued my selective interest.

JOHN

So you...made a doll of yourself to trick Mycroft and Mrs. Hudson?

SHERLOCK

Of course not. Morgan did.

JOHN

Who's Morgan?

SHERLOCK

What? You know her - the mousey girl at the lab -

JOHN

Molly??

SHERLOCK

Right, she made a mannequin of me. Pretty clever, I thought.

JOHN

Pretty - pretty insane, Sherlock!

SHERLOCK

Speaking of insane, the Colonel here has read your blog.

JOHN

Oh? Well - it's just a hobby -

COLONEL

I insisted upon having you on the case, John. You're an old friend, a military man - I trust you. Plus...this one in particular should be documented.

(CONTINUED)

Colonel Hayter regales young and eager Inspector Forrest, Sherlock and John with the details of the night in question.

INT. BEACHHOUSE/DINING ROOM

The men sit around the table. Inspector Forrest takes notes like an overeager schoolboy. Sherlock leans back in his chair, eyes closed.

COLONEL

I was up in my room reading fairly late, as I normally do. My wife was still out at her bridge game. It was an exceptionally hot evening, so I had the window open to try to catch an ocean breeze. I heard some rustling and glanced up to see a dark figure approaching the Cunningham's. I thought it might be their son Alex, but he was moving too quickly, too nervously. He didn't belong there. I was about to call Bill, when another figure approached him from the opposite side of the yard. He was running. He tried to attack the first man, and they struggled, but the first man shot him and left him on the ground. I was shocked of course, terrified - I could hardly move - and I watched the figure leave him there and run through Bill's hedges on the side of the yard. I called Bill, and he called the police who pronounced the man dead on the scene.

INSPECTOR

William Wan. The housekeeper's son.

JOHN

The housekeeper's son? What was he doing there?

INSPECTOR

He and his mother live on the property in the guest house. I had supposed he saw the burglar and thought he could stop him - until I found this in his hand. Just gets more curious.

(CONTINUED)

Inspector Forrest pulls out a plastic sandwich bag possessing a ripped portion of a note. Sherlock takes it.

CLOSE UP on ripped-off corner of a hand-written note. It reads:

"-quarter to twelve

-meet me

-to wait."

Sherlock reads silently for a moment.

SHERLOCK

I'm shocked.

INSPECTOR

Why? Because it has an encrypted code that can solve the crime?

SHERLOCK

No. Because you've proven useful.

FADE OUT.

After viewing the corpse at the morgue, Sherlock and John discuss its wound.

EXT. STREET

Sherlock and John walk briskly down the jetty toward the beach house. They pass a display of tourist brochures - Sherlock grabs a few.

SHERLOCK

Didn't you notice anything?
Anything about that gunshot wound?

JOHN

Nothing out of the ordinary.

SHERLOCK

You wouldn't. Come on, John, see!
You're a military man. That was a
small, small hole. Couldn't have
been larger than a .17 bullet.

JOHN

So?

SHERLOCK

So that is the type of ammo used in
a rifle, John. What kind of burglar
carries around a rifle?

They walk OC.

Suspicious of Colonel Hayter, Sherlock and John devise a plan to get a sample of his handwriting.

INT. BEACHHOUSE/LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Sherlock enters the living room where Colonel Hayter is overseeing the installation of a new window. Handymen clutter the living room and porch.

COLONEL
What a bloody mess.

SHERLOCK
Yes, I'm very sorry. I had half my flat blown up by a mass murderer once.

COLONEL
Well. Then you know how I feel.

Sherlock spots a baseball bat on display on the chimneypiece.

SHERLOCK
Ah, do you play?

COLONEL
(swinging the bat down from its display)
In my boyhood! This is one of my most prized possessions. Signed by Danny Cox.

SHERLOCK
That's very American of you.

COLONEL
(laughing)
My father was American. He always said if I couldn't grow up an American, I'd damn well play like one.

Colonel Hayter swings the bat and knocks over a lamp.

COLONEL
Oops! Damn, don't tell Liz. She hates this thing. I'd better be careful or I'll smash that window out again.

(CONTINUED)

SHERLOCK

Again?

COLONEL

(frowns at Sherlock, points at window)

Well, it has been smashed once before...

SHERLOCK

Right.

Sherlock pulls one of his tourist brochures out of his jacket pocket and waves it.

SHERLOCK

Ramsgate Maritime Museum. Really piqued my interest.

COLONEL

Oh, yes?

SHERLOCK

Yes, I've always been so, so fascinated by military weaponry. They're doing a special exhibit. Just started yesterday.

COLONEL

I know. I loaned my rifle to them. Just took it down yesterday, in fact.

SHERLOCK

Oh, really? So the house is unarmed with this thief on the loose?

COLONEL

Don't worry, chap! I've got a shotgun as well. You're very safe here.

SHERLOCK

I don't doubt it.

John enters.

JOHN

Sherlock, d'you want to go grab some food -

(CONTINUED)

SHERLOCK

No thank you, I don't like food.

JOHN

...right then. Well, I do. So I'm running down to the pub.

SHERLOCK

Cheerio!

John gives Sherlock a strange look and exits.

SHERLOCK

Colonel, I'd love to go to the museum today - would you accompany me? There's no better teacher in Ramsgate, I'm sure.

COLONEL

Oh, well, uh - yes, sure, why not. I just have to be back by twelve to pay the window men. I'll go pop on my shoes.

SHERLOCK

Great! I'll leave a note for John. Shouldn't have our phones on in the museum!

Sherlock leans down to the coffee table and starts writing as the Colonel exits the room. A moment as Sherlock writes, and the Colonel returns. Sherlock heads toward the door and opens it as the Colonel passes the note and glances down.

COLONEL

Oh, you've put here that we'll be back at eleven.

SHERLOCK

Oops - my mistake. Would you mind changing it?

The Colonel leans down and scribbles, and then joins Sherlock as they exit the door.

INT. BEACHHOUSE/GUESTROOM

- where John sits on the end of the bed waiting.

SHERLOCK

Get it?

(CONTINUED)

John hands him the note Sherlock left earlier. CLOSE UP shot of note. It reads:

John - gone to museum with Colonel. Back at eleven.

But eleven has been crossed out, and twelve scribbled above it, by the Colonel.

Sherlock's hand delves into his pocket and pulls out the ripped fragment of the letter found in William's hand. He holds the letters side by side - and the words "twelve" match precisely - they are the same handwriting.

After cracking the case and returning to his house arrest, Sherlock is met by Detective Inspector Lestrade and his brother, government official Mycroft, who bring unexpected news of the Sherlock's villainous arch-nemesis, Moriarty.

INT. 221B/LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Sherlock is yawning, exiting his bedroom in a robe - to find MYCROFT and LESTRADE on the couch, the Sherlock dummy between them, John in a chair with a cup of coffee.

MYCROFT

Well, well. You've been busy.

SHERLOCK

Oh god. (to Lestrade) What are you doing here? Come to take photos while my brother has me arrested?

LESTRADE

Oh, if only. No, we're all here, actually, about a letter that came to the station this morning.

SHERLOCK

And?

LESTRADE

It's for you.

He hands him an open letter.

SHERLOCK

Did you open my mail?

MYCROFT

Government business. We're allowed. It is from the gentleman you had arrested last night. It seems he did not want his phone call - only to send you a letter.

CLOSE-UP on the letter as Sherlock's hands pull it out of the envelope. It is a single thank-you card adorned with flowers. Sherlock opens it to find nothing but the following words scrawled in familiar handwriting:

Did you miss me?