



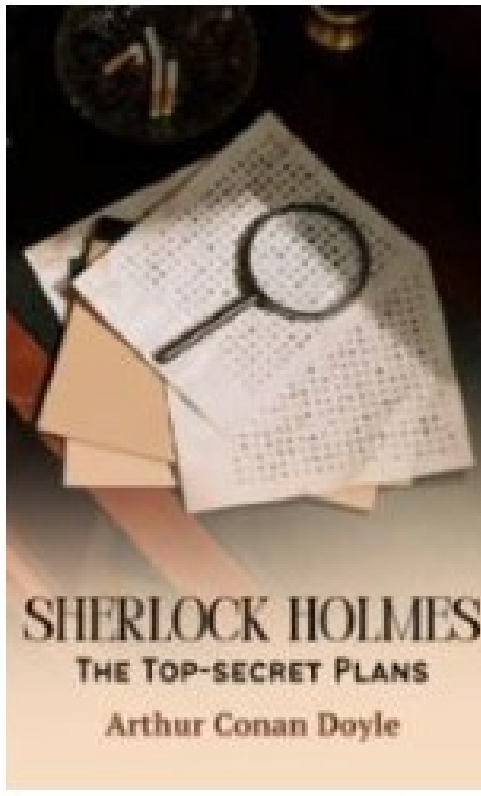
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SHERLOCK HOLMES

THE TOP-SECRET PLANS

Arthur Conan Doyle

Sherlock Holmes: The Top-secret Plans

By Arthur Conan Doyle

CHAPTER ONE

A Visit from Mycroft

It was a dark autumn morning in 1895. My friend Sherlock Holmes, the famous detective, and I, Dr Watson, were in the sitting room of our house in Baker Street in London when a telegram arrived. Holmes opened it at once, and laughed. I looked quickly across the room at him.

'Why are you laughing, Holmes?' I asked.

Holmes looked back at me with his cold, blue eyes.

'Because this telegram is from my brother Mycroft,' he said. 'He wants to speak to me at once about Mr Arthur Cadogan. Do you know this man, Watson?'

'I saw something about him in today's newspaper. But now I can't remember the story,' I answered.

'And my brother Mycroft - what do you remember about him?' asked Holmes with a smile.

'Not much,' I answered. 'I met him once - long ago. Tell me more about him.'

'He's a very clever and important man. He works for the government. He knows everything about everything. So why does he want to speak to me? Why does he want to visit our home in Baker Street? And who is Mr Cadogan?'

I opened The Times and looked for the story.

'Here it is!' I cried suddenly. 'A worker found Cadogan's dead body near Aldgate Station on the London Underground on Tuesday morning.'

'Tell me more, Watson,' said Holmes.

I began to read the story in The Times to him. 'The dead man was Mr Arthur Cadogan. He was twenty-seven years old. He lived with his wife, Violet, in Woolwich and he worked at Woolwich Arsenal.'

'Now I understand!' cried Holmes. 'Mycroft is interested because Cadogan worked for the government!'

'On Monday night,' I said, 'Cadogan was in Woolwich with his wife. They had tickets for the theatre. Suddenly he left her in the street. But why? She doesn't know. At six o'clock the next morning, a worker found his dead body.'

'Near Aldgate Station,' said Holmes. 'I see. And was Cadogan badly injured?'

'Yes, he was.'

'Then he fell from the train - or somebody pushed him.'

Perhaps he was dead before they pushed him out. Tell me more, Watson.'

'Cadogan's train came from West London, but where did he get on? The police don't know,' I said. 'There was no train ticket in his pockets, only some money, two theatre tickets - and some papers.'

'Very interesting,' said Holmes. 'How did he get on the train without a ticket? Perhaps somebody took it. But why?' Holmes stopped and thought. 'Hmm. Cadogan worked for the government at Woolwich Arsenal, he had some important papers, and my brother Mycroft is interested in this. And so, Watson, I am interested, too. Now, where is Mycroft?'

Minutes later, Mycroft Holmes arrived at our door. He was a tall, fat man with a very clever face. With him was our old friend Lestrade, the Scotland Yard detective. Mycroft took off his coat and sat down.

'This is very bad, Sherlock,' he said. 'The government isn't happy. Do you know the story?'

'Watson read it to me from The Times,' answered Sherlock. 'What were the papers in Cadogan's pocket?'

'They were plans for a new British submarine - the Bruce-Partington submarine. They're top-secret, and must always stay in a safe at Woolwich Arsenal.'

'Then why were they in the pocket of a dead man near Aldgate Station?' asked Sherlock.

'We can't understand it, Mr Holmes,' said Lestrade.

'And it's worse than that,' said Mycroft. 'There were ten papers in the safe at Woolwich. But we only found seven papers in Cadogan's pocket. The three most important papers weren't there. Where are they? We don't know!'

'Hmm,' said Sherlock, 'Why did Cadogan have those papers on him? Where are the missing papers? How did Cadogan die? And why was his dead body near Aldgate Station? Lots of questions, but no answers!'

'And so we need you, Sherlock,' said Mycroft.

Sherlock looked at his brother, and at the police detective. 'Tell me more,' he said.

Mycroft smiled, and answered. 'Sir James Walter is responsible for all the papers at Woolwich Arsenal. He's a good man. Most importantly, he has one of the two keys to the safe. The plans were there when he left Woolwich at three o'clock on Monday afternoon for London. He took his key with him.'

'Why did he go to London?' asked Sherlock.

'He needed to meet someone from the government. He left the man's London home late that night.'

'Right. So Sir James didn't help Cadogan take the plans,' said Sherlock. 'Who has the second key to the safe?'

'Mr Sidney Johnson,' answered Mycroft. 'He's forty years old. He lives near Woolwich Arsenal with his wife and five children. He first worked for the government when he was a very young man. He doesn't talk much, and people don't like him, but he's a good worker.'

'And where was Sidney Johnson on Monday evening?' asked Sherlock.

'At home with his wife all evening, he says. And he had his key with him,' Lestrade answered.

'Tell me about Cadogan,' Sherlock said.

'He began working at Woolwich Arsenal ten years ago,' said Mycroft. 'He worked with the plans. Johnson didn't.'

'So Cadogan took the plans from the safe,' said Sherlock. 'Perhaps he wanted to sell them to someone. But how did he get the key to the safe?'

'And the key to the room, and the key to Woolwich Arsenal, too!' said Mycroft. 'We don't know.'

'So what do we know?' asked Sherlock. 'First: Cadogan left his wife in the street in Woolwich. Second: he didn't go to the theatre that night. Third: he went to

London with the plans. And fourth: he died, perhaps near Aldgate Station. Did he sell the plans in London? Then why did he finish in Aldgate, and not back in Woolwich?'

'He wanted to sell the plans but he wanted lots of money for them, we think,' said Lestrade.

'There was a fight over the money, and Cadogan died. Then his killer took the three most important papers from his pocket.'

'But then why did Cadogan have tickets for the theatre that night, and no underground train ticket?' cried Mycroft. 'Sherlock, can you help us?'

Sherlock looked at his brother for some time.

'Yes, I can,' he said in the end, and stood up. 'This is all most interesting. And now I must find some answers to all those questions. Come, Watson.'

CHAPTER TWO

The Body on the Railway Line

An hour later, I stood by a railway line near Aldgate Station with Sherlock Holmes and Lestrade. Underground trains came out of their tunnels near Aldgate, and the railway lines there were open to the sky.

An old station worker with a red face spoke to us. 'My name's Mason,' he said slowly and carefully. And I found the young man's body here. He fell out of a train at about midnight on Monday, we think.'

'Was there a fight on a train on Monday?' asked Holmes.

'No,' answered Mason. 'We don't know of any fights. And we never found the young man's train ticket. There were only theatre tickets in his pocket.'

'Did you find any of the trains with an open door?' Holmes asked.

'No,' said Mason.

'We learned something interesting this morning,' said Lestrade. 'Someone in a train from West London heard a noise just before the train came into Aldgate Station. Perhaps it was the noise of Cadogan's dead body when it fell.'

'Perhaps,' said Holmes. 'But what are those things over there, Mr Mason?'

'Those are points, Mr Holmes,' answered Mason. 'Many different railway lines meet here, you see.'

Suddenly Holmes was very excited.

'Ah, and when trains go over points, they change direction! Hmm. Very interesting. Now, was there any blood on the railway line under the body when you found it? I don't see any now.'

'No, Mr Holmes, there wasn't,' said Mason.

'But Cadogan was badly injured, we know, so why was there no blood? What do you say think, Watson?'

I am a doctor, but I had no answer for my friend.

'Now I'm very interested, Watson. Come. We must go to Woolwich. Goodbye, Lestrade. And thank you for your help, Mr Mason,' said Holmes.

He walked away, and I went after him. Lestrade began to say something, but then stopped. He wasn't happy.

We took a train to London Bridge station. Holmes stopped there, and wrote a telegram to his brother.

MYCROFT,

I'M BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND MORE.

PLEASE SEND ME THE NAMES

AND ADDRESSES OF ALL FOREIGN

AGENTS NOW IN BRITAIN.

SHERLOCK

'I need those names, Watson,' said Holmes. 'With them, we can understand more.'

I looked at my friend's face. He was now very excited.

'So why did Cadogan die?' I asked him.

'Why? - I don't know!' answered Holmes, 'But I know something about how he died. He didn't die near Aldgate Station, I know that. He fell from the roof of the train when it moved over those points and changed direction. There was

no blood from his body on the railway line because he didn't die there. We must learn what happened in London on Monday night.'

'So what do we do next, Holmes?' I asked my friend.

'First we need two tickets to Woolwich,' he said. 'Cadogan had no ticket for his journey because he was dead when he began it. But you and I need tickets.'

I brought our tickets back from the ticket office.

'There's a train to Woolwich in ten minutes,' said Holmes.

We found our train and got on it. My friend closed his eyes and thought. I looked out of the window at the station. I thought about Cadogan. He came to London from Woolwich on Monday night, and never went home again. Then I thought about his wife, Violet. She wanted to go to the theatre with her husband that evening, and never saw him again. Suddenly I felt very angry. 'We must find Cadogan's killer, Holmes!' I cried. 'We must do it for his wife.'

Holmes looked at me with his cold, blue eyes, but said nothing. Then he closed his eyes again.

After some minutes, our train left London Bridge Station. How much did my friend truly understand about Cadogan's death?

At Woolwich Station, we got off, and waited for a cab.

'Where are we going now, Holmes?' I asked.

'We need to visit many people,' he answered, 'but first we must go to the house of Sir James Walter. He's responsible for the submarine plans - or was responsible for them before all this happened! He's a good and important man, my brother tells us. So we must begin with him.'

Holmes looked at his watch. 'We can't wait any longer,' he said. 'I need to talk to Sir James now. Come, Watson!'

We walked from the station to Sir James's house.

CHAPTER THREE

A Second Death

We soon arrived at Sir James Walter's house by the river. The weather was better now, and the sun came out. A butler opened the door to us.

'Can I help you?' he asked.

'We'd like to see Sir James Walter,' said Holmes. 'I'm Sherlock Holmes and this is Dr Watson.'

The butler's face went white.

'I'm sorry,' he said, 'But Sir James is dead. He died this morning.'

'Dead!' cried Holmes. 'How?'

The butler looked at us with his tired eyes.

'Please come in,' he said. 'You must speak to Sir James's brother, Colonel Valentine Walter.'

We took off our hats, and went into the sitting room. Minutes later, a tall man in a black suit came in and sat down. He was about fifty years old, nervous, and he spoke very quickly.

'My brother was a good man,' he began. 'When the plans disappeared, he felt very bad. He felt responsible, you see, because he had the key to the safe. When this happened, he didn't want to live any more. He broke down and died.'

'I'm very sorry,' I said.

'We wanted to speak to your brother,' said Holmes, 'because the most important plans are now missing, and we need to find them.'

'But why did Cadogan do this?' asked Colonel Walter. 'And how did he take the plans from the safe at Woolwich Arsenal? My brother couldn't understand it.'

'And you know nothing about it?' asked Holmes.

'Nothing,' answered the colonel. 'Now, excuse me, but I have many things to do.'

'Of course,' I said.

Holmes gave Colonel Walter a long look before we left.

In the street, Holmes said, 'The colonel is not a happy man, Watson.'

'Of course not!' I said. 'His brother died this morning.'

'That's true. But he didn't tell us everything, I feel.'

Next we went to visit Violet Cadogan. We found her at home in a little house with a nice front garden.

'I can't understand it,' she told us in her sitting room. 'Arthur loved his country.'

'Did he need money?' asked Holmes.

'No,' answered Violet. 'The government paid him well.'

'Then was he worried about something?' asked Holmes.

Violet said nothing for some minutes, but when she spoke, Holmes listened very carefully.

'Yes, he was worried about something in the last week of his life,' she said, 'I asked him about it, and he told me: he was worried about something at work.'

'Did he say any more?' Holmes asked.

'He talked about foreign agents. They were interested in some plans, he said, but I didn't listen very carefully.'

'So he was worried in the last week of his life, but not before?' said Holmes.

'That's right,' answered Violet.

'And what happened on Monday evening?'

'Well, we had tickets for the theatre. We left the house at about seven o'clock in the fog. We were in a street near Woolwich Arsenal when Arthur suddenly ran away.'

'Why?' asked Holmes.

'I don't know,' she answered. 'He didn't say a thing. He disappeared into the fog, and I never saw him again. I walked home. On Tuesday morning, someone from Woolwich Arsenal came and asked about Arthur because he wasn't at work. Then, at twelve o'clock, I heard the news: Arthur was dead.'

Holmes looked at me worriedly.

'Arthur wasn't a thief,' Violet told us. 'He was a good man.'

'Yes, well, thank you for your help, Mrs Cadogan,' said Holmes. And now we must go.'

We left the house, and took a cab to Woolwich Arsenal.

'Now let's talk to Mr Sidney Johnson,' said Holmes.

Johnson met us at the Woolwich Arsenal office. He was a tall man with glasses, and he was about forty years old.

'Did you hear about Sir James?' he asked nervously.

'Yes. We spoke to his brother this morning,' I answered.

'First Cadogan dies, and now Sir James! What is happening? And why did Cadogan take those plans?'

'So he took them, you think,' said Holmes. 'Why?'

'Well, I never thought badly of him before,' answered Johnson, 'but I didn't take those papers - and Sir James didn't take them. So that leaves Cadogan!'

'Right. And what time did you close the office on Monday?' asked Holmes.

'At five o'clock,' said Johnson. 'And the plans were in the safe when I left.'

'Hmm. So the thief needed three different keys for his work that evening. Am I right?'

'Yes,' Johnson answered. 'The key to Woolwich Arsenal, the key to this office, and the key to the safe.'

'But Cadogan didn't have any of those keys, and the police found no keys on his body. So how did he take the plans?' asked Holmes.

'I don't know,' said Johnson. 'My keys were with me, and Sir James took his keys to London when he left.'

'Right. Now, only seven of the ten papers were in Cadogan's pockets,' said Holmes. 'Three papers are missing. Can someone make the submarine with those three papers?'

'No,' Johnson answered. 'They need all ten of them, I think.'

'But the missing papers are the most important,' said Holmes.

'They are,' said Johnson.

'Then we must move fast!' said Holmes. 'Come, Watson.'

CHAPTER FOUR

Holmes in Kensington

Before we left Woolwich Arsenal, we went into the garden. There was a tree in front of the office window, and Holmes stopped and looked carefully at it.

'Someone went up this tree not long ago,' he said. Then, suddenly, my friend got up into the tree.

'Aha!' he cried. 'You can see everything in the office from here. Perhaps this is important, Watson, but we can learn nothing more here today.'

He got down from the tree, and we walked back to Woolwich Station. At the ticket office, we spoke to a young ticket office worker.

'I saw Mr Cadogan on Monday evening,' he told us. 'He came here at about eight o'clock, and I sold him a ticket to London. He was very nervous when he asked for it. He took the 8.15 train to London Bridge.'

We thanked the man, and took a train back to London. Holmes said nothing on our journey.

Back in London, he asked me, 'So what did we learn in Woolwich, Watson? Let's think. Cadogan was worried in the last week of his life, and very nervous on Monday evening. Why? Perhaps a foreign agent wanted the Bruce-Partington plans, but Cadogan didn't want to help him. He left home with his wife on Monday evening for the theatre. He had two theatre tickets in his pocket, so why did he disappear? Why did he run away, and leave Violet in the street? Perhaps he saw the foreign agent again in the fog that night. Cadogan followed the man, and saw him take the papers from the safe at Woolwich Arsenal - perhaps from the tree by the window.'

'But he didn't call for help,' I said. 'Why was that?'

'A good question, Watson,' answered Holmes. 'Perhaps the thief wasn't a foreign agent, but someone important from Woolwich Arsenal. Perhaps the important man escaped, and Cadogan took a train to London because he knew his address. What happened next? I don't know. But some hours later, Mason found Cadogan's dead body on the underground railway line near Aldgate Station.'

Back at Baker Street, we found a message from Mycroft. It gave the names and addresses of the important foreign agents in London at the time:

Holmes,

I have three names for you:

-Wolfgang Meyer, 13 Great George Street, Westminster

-Louis La Rothiere, Campden Mansions, Notting Hill

-Hugo Oberstein, 13 Caulfield Gardens, Kensington

Oberstein was in London on Monday, but he left the next day. The government is very worried.

Mycroft

Holmes looked at his big map of London, and found the three addresses on it.

'Good!' he said, and smiled. 'I must go out now, Watson. Please wait here.'

I waited three long hours. At about nine o'clock, a boy arrived with a message from Holmes:

Watson,

I'm having dinner at Goldini's Italian Restaurant

in Kensington. Please come at once. And bring a

crowbar, a lamp, and a chisel.

S. H.

I took a cab to the restaurant, and found Holmes at a table by the window. I sat down with him.

'Do you have everything with you?' he asked.

'Yes,' I answered. 'And nobody in the street saw me with it because it's all under my coat.'

'Very good, Watson. Now listen. Cadogan's body didn't fall out of a train but from the roof of a train. This happened when it went over the points at Aldgate and changed direction. So someone put his body on that train roof. But how?'

I couldn't answer.

'Tell me, Holmes,' I said.

'Very well. In West London, some of the underground railway lines leave their tunnels and are open to the sky. The back windows of different houses overlook these open railway lines. When a train stops under one of these windows, a man - or perhaps two men - can put a body on the roof of it. Trains often stop and wait under the back window of a house here in Kensington. The address is 13 Caulfield Gardens. It's the home of a foreign agent, Mr Hugo Oberstein - and he left London on Tuesday!'

'Ah, so you left me at Baker Street for this!' I cried.

'Yes, Watson. Earlier this evening I went and looked at the railway line behind 13 Caulfield Gardens. A train stopped there when I arrived - under Oberstein's back window! Oberstein put Cadogan's body on the roof of a train through that window!'

'But where is Oberstein now?' I asked. 'We need to find him, and the Bruce-Partington plans!'

'Oberstein is in Paris,' Holmes answered. 'He wants to sell the plans there - and he's asking a lot of money for them!'

'So what can we do?' I asked.

'We can break into his house,' said Holmes. 'There's nobody there now, but perhaps there's something interesting in the house. Remember: we know Oberstein killed Cadogan and took the plans. But Oberstein doesn't know about us.'

'But do we need to break into his house?' I asked. 'Let's talk to Lestrade about this.'

'There's no time, Watson,' said Holmes. 'You can wait in the street, but I must get into Oberstein's house tonight.'

We got up, Holmes paid, and then we left the restaurant.

'Let's walk there,' said Holmes. 'It's not far. This is going to be a very interesting visit, I think!'

CHAPTER FIVE

Messages from Pierrot

We soon arrived at Caulfield Gardens. The houses there were all very big. Holmes brought me to number 13, and we looked at the front door. It was big and heavy.

'We can never break in here, Holmes,' I said.

'You're right,' he answered. 'People in the street can see us very easily here. And any of them can call the police in a minute. Let's go down to the basement.'

We soon stood by the basement door. 'I don't like this, Holmes,' I said. 'We always work with the police.'

'Look, we're doing this for our country,' answered Holmes coldly. 'Now give me the crowbar.'

Holmes was right, I knew. We had important work that night. I took the crowbar from under my coat and gave it to him. I didn't watch him open the door. I looked up at the street, but saw no police.

The door was soon open, and we went into the house. I closed the door behind us, and we went upstairs. Holmes stopped at a window.

'Watson, this is it!' he cried. He opened the window, and we looked down at the railway line in front of it.

'Was I right?' Holmes asked me.

'Yes, Holmes,' I said. 'You're always right.'

'Not always, Watson, but look: they put the body here before they put it on the roof of the train. There's blood on the window - Cadogan's blood!'

It was true. I could see the blood on the window.

'Let's stay here for a minute or two,' said Holmes.

We didn't need to wait long. A train arrived and stopped under our window. It was easy to put a body on the roof from here, I could see.

'So Oberstein killed Cadogan and put his dead body out of this window!' I cried.

'Yes,' Holmes said. 'Oberstein is our killer, Watson. And now what more can we find in his house?'

We went from room to room, but found nothing.

'Hmm. Oberstein is cleverer than I thought,' said Holmes. 'He took everything to Paris with him.'

'No, look,' I cried. 'There's a money-box on the table over there. Perhaps there's something in it.'

'Very good, my friend,' said Holmes. 'We don't have the key for it, but give me the chisel please, Watson.'

It took some minutes, but in the end my friend opened the box. There were lots of papers in it, with different pictures of a submarine under the sea and lots of numbers all over them. Holmes took the papers out of the box.

'How can these help us?' I said.

'They can't,' Holmes answered. 'But what's this?'

There was an envelope in the box, too. Holmes took this out, and opened it. There were four messages in it.

'These are from a newspaper,' said Holmes. 'Someone put these messages in The Times, I think. Look, Watson, here's the first one, and this is the second.'

Holmes put the messages on the table, and I read them:

Would like to hear from you soon. Happy to pay. Write to me at my address. -
PIERROT

Must have all papers. Bring them at once. Can pay you then. - PIERROT

Need papers now. Write to me. Then wait for my message in newspaper. -
PIERROT

Monday night at nine o'clock. Come to my house Knock three times on door.
Happy to pay when I have papers. - PIERROT

'Pierrot, of course, is Oberstein,' I said.

'Yes, Watson,' Holmes answered. 'But who read these messages? And who came here at nine o'clock on Monday night? Perhaps this man took the top-secret plans from Woolwich! Let's go. We can't do any more here tonight.'

We left the house quietly, and soon found a cab.

'To the offices of The Times,' Holmes told the driver.

'Why there, Holmes?' I asked.

My friend smiled.

'Pierrot is going to put a fifth message in tomorrow's newspaper, I think,' he said.

We were not at the newspaper offices for long. Soon I was back at Baker Street, and in bed. I felt very tired.

The next morning, Holmes and I ate breakfast early. Mycroft and Lestrade arrived at half past eight.

'Good morning, Mycroft,' said Sherlock. 'Good morning, Lestrade. Please sit down.'

Then he told them about our visit to Caulfield Gardens.

'So you broke into the house, Mr Holmes!' said Lestrade. He wasn't very happy.

'Yes, we did, Lestrade. I'm sorry. But we did it for Britain!' Holmes answered.

'Well, the police do things differently,' said Lestrade. 'You must be careful, Mr Holmes.'

'Oh, we were very careful,' said Holmes. 'What do you think, Mycroft?'

'Very good, Sherlock,' Mycroft answered with a big smile. 'But what now?'

Holmes gave The Times to his brother. 'Today's newspaper has a new message from Pierrot - or Sherlock Holmes - in it,' he said.

Mycroft read it to us:

Tonight. Same time, same address. Knock three times. Very important. -
PIERROT

'Good. So we're going to Caulfield Gardens tonight. But who's going to visit us there?' asked Lestrade.

'Let's wait and see,' answered Holmes.

At eight o'clock that evening, Holmes and I took a cab to Kensington. We met Mycroft and Lestrade near Caulfield Gardens. We broke into Oberstein's house

again, and waited. At nine o'clock, we heard three knocks on the heavy front door.

CHAPTER SIX

The Top-Secret Plans come Home

Holmes went downstairs in the dark, and opened the door.

'Come in,' he said. We heard someone come upstairs with him. When they were in the sitting room, Holmes quietly closed the door behind them. I lit the lamp.

The man saw us, pushed past Holmes, and began to run away across the room. Suddenly he fell over something, and hit his head on the door. He gave a cry, closed his eyes at once, and fell back at our feet.

'Sherlock, who is this?' asked Mycroft.

'Colonel Valentine Walter, Sir James's brother,' answered Sherlock. 'You see, Watson, the colonel didn't tell us everything! I felt it. Do you remember?'

'I do,' I answered, 'And you were right.'

I helped Lestrade to put Colonel Walter on a chair. After some minutes, he opened his eyes.

He looked nervously at us all. 'What's happening?' he asked worriedly. 'I wanted to see Mr Oberstein.'

'Or Pierrot, perhaps!' said Holmes. 'Colonel Walter, we know everything. You took the Bruce-Partington plans. You wanted to sell them, and Arthur Cadogan died here!'

The colonel said nothing.

'Tell us your story,' said Holmes. 'Perhaps it can help.'

The colonel put his head in his hands, but didn't speak.

'Then I'm going to tell the story,' said Holmes. 'You needed money quickly because you had money troubles. So you made copies of your brother's keys - to Woolwich Arsenal, to the office, and to the safe.'

'You wrote to Oberstein, and he put messages in The Times for you. On Monday night, you went to Woolwich Arsenal in the fog. You wanted to take

the plans from the safe, but Cadogan saw you in the street and came after you. Perhaps he knew something of your money troubles. At Woolwich Arsenal, he watched you open the safe from a tree in front of the office. You took the papers, left Woolwich, and took a train to London. Cadogan went after you, and took the same train. In London, you walked to Kensington - or perhaps you took a cab - and you came to this address: 13 Caulfield Gardens. When Cadogan arrived some minutes later, you killed him!

'No!' cried Walter. 'I'm not a killer. I took the papers from the safe, it's true, and I came here with them on Monday night, but I didn't kill Cadogan.'

'Then what happened?' asked Holmes. 'How did he die before you put his dead body on the roof of a train?'

Colonel Walter was now happy to tell us everything:

Yes, I had money troubles, and Cadogan knew about them. You were right there, Mr Holmes. I came here to Caulfield Gardens, and I knocked three times on the front door. When Oberstein opened the door, Cadogan arrived. He was very angry. He understood everything. He came into the house after me, and Oberstein suddenly hit him over the head with a big, heavy stick. Cadogan fell at our feet, dead. But what could we do with the body? We didn't know.

Then Oberstein remembered something. 'Trains often stop on the railway line under my back window. So let's put the body on the roof of a train,' he said. 'But first I want to see those top-secret plans from Woolwich Arsenal. Give them to me!'

I gave him the papers. He looked through them, and said, 'I need to take these three papers from you.'

'You can't,' I answered. 'You must copy them. Then I can take all ten papers back to Woolwich and put them in the safe again. Nobody must know of this.'

Oberstein said, 'Look, I can't copy these three papers because they're very detailed.'

'Then I must take them with me tonight,' I told him.

Oberstein thought for a minute, and said, 'No. I'm going to keep these three papers, and we're going to put those seven papers in this young man's pocket. When the police find the plans on his body, he's going to be the thief in their eyes!'

I wasn't happy about this, but I said 'yes' to it. What could I do? We waited for half an hour at the window before a train stopped. We quickly put Cadogan on the roof of it. There was a lot of fog, so nobody saw us. Then I left this house, and went home to Woolwich. I never saw Oberstein again.

Holmes looked at Colonel Walter coldly.

'And what about your brother - Sir James Walter?' he asked.

The colonel's eyes were suddenly old and tired.

'He saw me with his keys once, some weeks ago, and he knew about my money troubles. With my copies of his keys, I went and took those plans for Oberstein. Did my brother know about that, too? Perhaps. But he never spoke to me about it. James was a very good man, Mr Holmes, and this broke him. He died soon after.'

Nobody spoke for some minutes.

Then Mycroft said, 'Colonel Walter, you must help us. We need to find Oberstein. Where is he? Do you know?'

'In France,' answered the colonel. 'I have the address of a hotel in Paris. Oberstein gave it to me before he left. I could write to him there when I needed, he said.'

'Then you must write to him now,' said Holmes, 'and he must come back to London. Are you going to help us?'

'I am,' answered Colonel Walter. 'I didn't plan Cadogan's death, you know I needed money badly - that was all!'

'Then take this pen and write,' said Holmes. He gave a pen and paper to the colonel, and began to speak:

'Oberstein, my friend, you need a fourth paper, you know. I now have a copy of it, and I want more money from you for this. I cannot come to France because people are watching me, so please bring the money to the Charing Cross Hotel in London at eleven o'clock on Saturday morning. I can give you the fourth paper then.'

'Very clever, Mr Holmes,' said Lestrade. 'On Saturday morning we're going to get our man.'

For once, Lestrade was right. Oberstein came back to London after he read Colonel Walter's letter. He arrived at the Charing Cross Hotel on Saturday morning. The colonel wasn't there, but Lestrade and three big, young men from the London Police were. Oberstein couldn't escape. Lestrade arrested him, and he found all three of the missing papers in his bag. Soon after that, Oberstein went to prison. He stayed there for fifteen years, and when he came out of prison, he left Britain, and never came back.

Colonel Walter went to prison, too, and he died there six months later. He felt responsible for Cadogan's death, and for his brother's death, too. And he couldn't live with that.

Mycroft thanked Sherlock and me for our work. Then he disappeared from our lives again for a very long time.

The next year, on a beautiful spring morning, Sherlock Holmes went to Buckingham Palace, and met the Queen there. She thanked him for his clever detective work, and they spoke for some time. Before Holmes left the palace, the Queen gave him a beautiful tie-pin. So when he wears that tie-pin now, perhaps he thinks back to the dark autumn of 1895 and our work for Mycroft and the British government. How could he forget the top-secret Bruce-Partington submarine plans, and their journey out of Britain for a time before they came back home again?

- End -