

HOUDINI & DOYLE

written by

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1st Studio Draft
3rd Revision
11/3/14

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. SOMEWHERE VERY DARK - DAY (DAY 5) 1

It's pitch black. We hear RUSHING WATER and...

BRITISH MALE (O.S.)

Seems to me the title of 'World's
Greatest Escape Artist' is a bit
oversold.

AMERICAN MALE (O.S.)

Yeah, well unlike writing 'stories',
my escapes take a lot of planning.
And I think it's safe to say, I
couldn't have seen this coming,
especially in a convent.

The Brit LIGHTS A MATCH, illuminating himself, ARTHUR CONAN
DOYLE, 38, and HARRY HOUDINI, 29, both chest deep in water,
trapped in a windowless dungeon-like cell. And the water is
GUSHING IN and rising fast.

DOYLE

Do you have any matches?

HOUDINI

Smoking's bad for you.

DOYLE

Rubbish; it actually extends one's
life. Although, right now, that
issue seems rather moot.

HOUDINI

Luckily, I can hold my breath longer
than anyone else in the world.

DOYLE

That's wonderful. Except that the
Thames is a tidal river. Which means
that we have a good hour and a half
before the water starts to retreat.

HOUDINI

I'm not saying I'm gonna live, I'm
just saying I'm gonna outlive you.

As the water reaches their throats...

1 CONTINUED: 1

DOYLE
Quite stirring, your pettiness in
the face of adversity.

As his MATCH GOES OUT...

SUPER: *1901, four days earlier.*

2 EXT. LONDON STREET, ST LUKE'S - NIGHT (DAY 1) 2

As night falls, a driver lights the oil lamps on his horse-drawn carriage, then looks up as a motorcar loudly CHUGS by him, its tires SLAPPING against the cobblestones. Then a WHINE and a CLUNK, and nighttime is suddenly arrested as electric carbon arc street lamps come to life, illuminating...

A hulking red-brick ELIZABETHAN BUILDING. A descending fog swirls around it and its dark windows stare back at us like angry eyes. If this place isn't already haunted, it should be.

3 INT. ELIZABETHAN BUILDING, HALLWAY - NIGHT 3

It's an oppressive place; ancient and dark, riddled with cold corridors. The only sound is the distant, incongruous CRY OF AN INFANT. Then a monstrous, lurching SHADOW appears on the wall -- it's inhuman with a huge square head and shapeless body. It's getting closer. As it rounds the corner we see it's...

A young NUN, small and frail, in a black habit with the squared-off white veil of a novitiate. This is WINNIE, 19, carrying a lantern, making sure the doors are locked for the night. From her outfit and the occasional CRUCIFIX on the wall, we're thinking this is some kind of church or convent.

Winnie stops when she notices a light under a door. She knocks gently, the tiniest RAP echoing in the hallway, but nothing. Strange. She checks the door. It's locked.

WINNIE
Sister Fabian?

No response. Nervously, she takes out a set of KEYS, unlocks the door and slowly pushes it open to find...

4 INT. SISTER FABIAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 4

SISTER FABIAN, 50s, is in her chair, her back to the door. All we can see is her hand and arm, in black habit, resting peacefully on the arm of her desk chair.

An OIL LAMP casts shadows around the spartan room, and on the desk sits a half empty bottle of SACRAMENTAL WINE.

4 CONTINUED:

4

Now Winnie gets it -- and it seems this isn't the first time this has happened. Winnie walks in, corks the wine and puts it back on its ornamental tray. But when she comes around to rouse Fabian, she finds a horrible sight...

One DEAD NUN. Fabian's hair has been crudely HACKED OFF and her THROAT CUT. Winnie staggers back in shock, unable to cry out...

But that's when she feels a strange sensation. A CHILL rushes over her.

ON her hands as GOOSEBUMPS appear.

Then she sees something moving out of the corner of her eye. She whirls around and SCREAMS.

CUT TO:

LATER. The place is now brightly lit and bustling with activity. Several POLICE OFFICERS investigate the crime scene as SERGEANT GEORGE GUDGETT, 30s, brusque, interviews a shell-shocked Winnie. But it's no-nonsense SISTER MATHILDE, late 40s, in the black veil of a full-fledged nun, who answers most of the questions.

SISTER MATHILDE

(more annoyed than worried)

If that's all, Sergeant Gudgett?

Our girls are quite prone to hysteria and the sooner we can put this behind us, the better.

GUDGETT

(annoyed)

Can't rush these things, Sister.

(to Winnie)

Right, then Winnie. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Winnie looks up at him hesitantly; apparently there is.

GUDGETT (CONT'D)

Now's the time.

She looks over at Sister Mathilde.

SISTER MATHILDE

(exasperated)

Don't look at me, girl, if you have something to say, out with it.

There is a pause, then...

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

WINNIE

I...I saw who did it.

Gudgett and Mathilde trade looks -- that's a fairly important detail.

SISTER MATHILDE

(to Winnie)

And you're just now arriving at the conclusion that this might be relevant?

GUDGETT

Who did you see?

Winnie takes a deep breath...

WINNIE

(whispering)

Lucy Allthorpe.

But Mathilde just shakes her head.

SISTER MATHILDE

I'm sorry Sergeant, the girl is obviously confused.

GUDGETT

Why? Do you know this Lucy--

SISTER MATHILDE

She was a resident here. Until she died, six months ago.

OFF Winnie, terrified--

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

5 INT. UNDER WATER - NIGHT 5

BACK ON Houdini's face, now completely under water, his eyes desperate, his face trembling. He's drowning?

But as we INVERT OUR SHOT, we see he's UPSIDE DOWN, hanging by his ankles and handcuffed in a glass tank of water -- his CHINESE WATER TORTURE CELL. As he struggles to free himself...

We PULL BACK to reveal we are in...

6 INT. THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE - NIGHT 6

Before an ENTHRALLED, PACKED HOUSE. The well-heeled crowd, in formal attire, fill the seats and boxes of the sumptuous theater, resplendent in gold leaf and blue velvet. They watch as a CURTAIN IS LOWERED around the torture cell.

FLORRIE, 20s, Houdini's attractive female stage assistant, anxiously awaits with a FIRE AX in hand, in case of emergency.

The crowd grows nervous as time passes. Has something gone wrong? Even Florrie looks worried. Some CALL OUT to rescue him. Finally, Florrie desperately signals for the curtain to be lifted and readies her ax. But it rises to reveal...

Houdini, standing atop the cell, dripping wet and free. Amazing then, amazing now. The crowd GOES NUTS and he basks in his glory. Think Elvis -- if he was Pope.

7 INT. THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE, BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS 7

As soon as Houdini and Florrie are offstage, Houdini winces in pain.

FLORRIE
Great show, Harry.

HOUDINI
My ankle didn't enjoy it too much.
You know, the ankle in the yoke that
you forgot to tighten?

FLORRIE
Oh God, Harry, I'm sorry; I'll fix
it right now.

7 CONTINUED:

7

HOUDINI
You're beautiful, Florrie.
(off Florrie's smile)
Which is the only reason I'm not
firing you.

Florrie exits. As Houdini dries off, he notices a newspaper headline: *Ghost Killer Stalks Convent*. He sighs, annoyed.

8 INT. SCOTLAND YARD, MERRING'S OFFICE - DAY (DAY 2)

8

DEPUTY CHIEF INSPECTOR HORACE MERRING, 50s -- a Victorian man in the Edwardian age -- is at his desk, with Gudgett standing nearby, when Houdini barges in, NEWSPAPER in hand.

HOUDINI
Chief, I have a prediction to make.

Merring's face falls; seems he knows Houdini and doesn't like him, or this rude interruption.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)
You'll soon be visited by Arthur Conan Doyle, who's dying to stick his nose in this...
(waving the newspaper)
Junk. But you gotta ignore him; after all, if ghosts could kill, Poe would've murdered Doyle years ago for plagiarizing Dupin.

Houdini hears a CLINK of china and turns to see Doyle, pouring himself a cup of tea. But rather than being embarrassed...

HOUDINI (CONT'D)
Ha! Did I call it or what?
(to Doyle)
Bet you think I'm a medium now, huh?

DOYLE
Hello, Mr. Houdini.
(pointed)
Skeptics often confuse receptiveness with gullibility.

HOUDINI
Please, 'Harry'. I'm surprised you've heard of skepticism.

DOYLE
I'm surprised you've heard of Dupin.
And you may call me Dr. Doyle.

The two greats shake hands.

MERRING

I'm surprised you've never met.

DOYLE

We move in different circles. As a Spiritualist, I try to open minds to the possibility of communicating with the afterlife. As part of his act, Harry tries to close those minds -- he's added a new trick called 'embarrass the medium'.

HOUDINI

The act pays the bills; exposing frauds is a public service. The ghost dopes don't understand that.

DOYLE

Dopes like Charles Dickens and Marie Curie?

HOUDINI

Fads attract all sorts.

DOYLE

Spiritualism has been around longer than Marx and Darwin; it's hardly a fad--

MERRING

Delighted as I am to have hosted this momentous occasion, we do have a murder to solve and--

HOUDINI

And that's exactly why I'm here: to ensure this is a manhunt, not a ghosthunt, as Doyle would have it. Am I right?

DOYLE

I think it's possible that the supernatural may have played a role--

Houdini pulls a WAD OF CASH out of his pocket.

HOUDINI

And here's 10,000 American greenbacks that say you can't prove it.

DOYLE

You Americans and your money. You just can't wait to pull it out of your pants.

8 CONTINUED: (2)

8

Everyone LAUGHS, except Houdini, who SNIFFS the air. He approaches Doyle, SNIFFING.

HOUDINI
 You guys smell that? Smells like...
 some kinda poultry.

Doyle sighs, seeing where this is going.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)
 Oh yeah. It's chicken.

He then reaches beneath Doyle and pulls out...an EGG.
 Everyone LAUGHS -- except Doyle.

DOYLE
 I'll accept your bet, but only because
 it's time you were challenged by
 someone other than half-wit
 charlatans. And for my end, I'll
 put up a first edition of my new
 book, *The Great Boer War*.

HOUDINI
 No more stories? You actually wrote
 a whole book?

DOYLE
 Worth more than your 'greenbacks'.

HOUDINI
 What the hell -- even if you did put
 the word 'bore' right in the title.

DOYLE
 Right. I'd like to visit the crime
 scene and examine the evidence.

HOUDINI
 Then so would I; wouldn't want you
 'finding' any evidence without me--

MERRING
 As much as I'd love to accommodate
 your request, gentlemen, I cannot.

HOUDINI
 Don't tell me you're still upset
 about our photo...

FLASH of: A NEWSPAPER PHOTO of a grinning Houdini, holding
 empty handcuffs, an arm around a perplexed Merring, with the
 headline: *Jailbreak! Houdini Outwits Scotland Yard.*

8 CONTINUED: (3)

8

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

I thought you looked very commanding.
With just a hint of befuddlement.

Merring steams; apparently he is still upset about that.

MERRING

This is a police matter--

DOYLE

I assure you, I'm quite familiar
with the protocols of detection.

GUDGETT

(bitterly)

Most of London seems to think your
Mr. Holmes knows it even better than
we do.

MERRING

I'm afraid I have to insist.

HOUDINI

Then I'm afraid I have to play the
Nicky card.

This hits a nerve with Merring. After a beat...

MERRING

I suppose I can allow you access as
long as you're assisted by one of my
officers.

HOUDINI

We could use a referee anyway.

MERRING

Right. Sergeant, please retrieve
Constable Stratton.

Gudgett looks at Merring as if this is a strange request.
Finally, Gudgett nods and exits.

9 INT. SCOTLAND YARD, VARIOUS - DAY

9

We follow Gudgett through a busy squad room, down stairs,
into the deserted bowels of Scotland Yard until he comes to
a lonely, isolated desk in a dark corner where a PERSON
hunches over the desk.

GUDGETT

(disdainfully)

Merring wants to see you.

10 INT. SCOTLAND YARD, MERRING'S OFFICE - DAY

10

Houdini and Doyle wait impatiently with Merring.

HOUDINI

I'll send you a copy of that photo;
it'd look great over that chair.

He looks up as an attractive young WOMAN enters.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

Oh hey. Think you could find me a
cup of coffee? Your tea is like
your weather: sad and gray.

The woman shoots a confused look at Merring.

MERRING

This is Constable Stratton.

And so we meet CONSTABLE ADELAIDE STRATTON, 20s. Doyle smiles
and approaches her.

DOYLE

Adelaide Stratton, I presume; the
Yard's first female constable. Arthur
Conan Doyle; a pleasure.

ADELAIDE

Pleased to meet you.

As she turns to Houdini, he looks at Merring.

HOUDINI

You're kidding, right? No, I guess
that'd be impossible without a sense
of humor.

ADELAIDE

It's an honor, Mr. Houdini.

HOUDINI

I'm sure it is.

MERRING

Constable, as Police Liaison Pro
Tem, you'll be assisting these
gentlemen with their concurrent
investigation into the murder of
Sister Fabian.

Adelaide nods, not sure what to make of this 'promotion'.

10 CONTINUED:

10

ADELAIDE

Thank you, sir.

DOYLE

(to Houdini)

Shall we go settle our bet?

As Houdini and Doyle head for the door...

HOUDINI

Absolutely.

(sarcastic)

Can't wait to get my hands on that
book of yours.

As they exit, Merring motions for Adelaide to approach.

MERRING

By 'concurrent investigation', I
mean 'extraneous and unnecessary',
so while they play detective, you
play nurse maid, nothing more.
Understand, Missy?

Now Adelaide understands. But she hides her disappointment.

ADELAIDE

Yes Deputy Chief Inspector.

11 EXT. ELIZABETHAN BUILDING - DAY

11

As Doyle, Houdini, and Adelaide approach the residence,
Houdini KNOCKS on the door, noting the SIGN: *The Sisters of
Mercy of the Magdalene, Residence for Young Women.*

HOUDINI

What kind of young women?

DOYLE

Your favorite kind, I imagine: fallen.

Before he responds, the door is opened by SISTER GRACE, 30s,
soft-spoken, kindly; Good Nun to Sister Mathilde's Bad Nun.

ADELAIDE

Good morning, Sister...?

SISTER GRACE

Grace. Good morning.

ADELAIDE

I'm Constable Stratton and I've
brought two special investigators--

11 CONTINUED:

11

SISTER GRACE
(recognizing Houdini)
Oh my goodness...are you...

HOUDINI
(beaming)
I am, Sister.

SISTER GRACE
Well gracious me; please come in.

ON Adelaide; that was easy. OFF Houdini, enjoying his 'fan'--

12 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

12

As Grace leads them to Fabian's office, the sound of BABIES CRYING grows louder and as they pass a WINDOW to another room, they look in to see...

A few NUNS looking after several BABIES AND TODDLERS.

HOUDINI
I thought this was a convent.

ADELAIDE
It's a Magdalene Laundry. They take in girls, some with children. And in return, the girls work in the laundry.

HOUDINI
(re the children)
When the women fall, they fall hard.

SISTER GRACE
(a bit ominously)
Fortunately, there's no shortage of good Christian homes.

They go through a large door into...

13 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, LAUNDRY - CONTINUOUS

13

In the cavernous hall, dozens of 'Maggies' scrub, wring, fold, and bundle piles of laundry. But everything is GRAY -- the walls, the shapeless SMOCKS the Maggies wear, even the faces of the girls. They all look up as the four enter.

SISTER GRACE
It's alright, girls; back to work.

The girls return to work but can't help stealing furtive glances at the visitors, as Grace leads them through the laundry, enroute to Fabian's office.

13 CONTINUED:

13

SISTER GRACE (CONT'D)

The poor things are all so very
frightened; such a horrible act.

DOYLE

How many girls do you have here?

SISTER GRACE

Ninety-three but that number's rising
all the time.

DOYLE

They don't leave?

SISTER GRACE

Most of them have nowhere to go.

ON the girls as they pass by: many of them are very young,
15, 16, 17. They look tired, worn, scared.

ON Adelaide, feeling for these poor girls.

DOYLE

Do you think this murder could have
been committed by a spirit?

SISTER GRACE

(crossing herself)

Oh yes, I do.

Doyle eyes her, hearing the chilling conviction in her voice.

SISTER GRACE (CONT'D)

A few of the girls started seeing
Lucy just after she died -- I haven't,
mind you -- so they were already
quite scared. But Lucy's obviously
a restless soul.

Doyle shoots a look at Houdini.

HOUDINI

Or the murderer is taking advantage
of these ghost stories.

SISTER GRACE

I'm sorry, Mr. Houdini, but I don't
think of them as 'stories'.

Houdini sighs -- his fan just went from gullible to idiot.

14 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, SISTER FABIAN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS 14
LATERS

Grace opens the door, then stops, refusing to enter.

ADELAIDE

The young woman who found the body,
Winnie? Could we speak to her?

Grace nods and leaves to retrieve her. Houdini examines the door while Doyle checks the window.

HOUDINI

(re Grace/sarcastic)
You're even turning nuns into
Spiritualists; well done.

DOYLE

One finds enlightenment in the darkest
of places.

(beat)

The door was locked and there's no
sign of force. So the first question
is: how many keys were there and who
had them?

Adelaide pulls out a REPORT.

ADELAIDE

Police report says there were two
sets. Winnie had one, and the
other...

She points to a set of KEYS on Fabian's desk. Doyle picks up the keys, closes the door -- shutting Houdini on the other side -- and locks it.

DOYLE

How does a human get in and out of a
locked room without a key?

The door swings open to reveal Houdini, holding a PAPER CLIP.

HOUDINI

Maybe with a paper clip. Wonderful
little inventions, aren't they?

ADELAIDE

You're assuming the killer is as
handy with a lockpick as the Great
Houdini.

14 CONTINUED:

14

HOUDINI

Criticism disguised as flattery; I like it.

ADELAIDE

(re the report)

Winnie said the ghost appeared here, crossed the room, and passed through this wall...

DOYLE

(knocking on the wall)

A very solid wall.

HOUDINI

People see things all the time, especially frustrated young women who've taken a vow of celibacy.

ADELAIDE

Have you ever met one?

HOUDINI

Yes, but I've never left one. The simplest answer is Winnie did it; she had the opportunity and a ghost to pin it on.

Doyle notes the few personal items in the room: a wooden CRUCIFIX, an old mantle CLOCK, a single DAISY in a small vase. Houdini flips through one of Fabian's RECORD BOOKS.

ADELAIDE

She would also need a motive.

HOUDINI

Another simple answer: the dead nun was Winnie's boss.

(pointedly to Adelaide)

Lotta people want to kill their boss. Yours isn't exactly progressive, so I doubt he thinks much of you.

ADELAIDE

And that's an opinion you share?

HOUDINI

Don't know yet. But it means he doesn't think much of us. So I'm almost as anxious to prove him wrong as I am Doyle. To that end, where is Winnie, our little demon barber?

14 CONTINUED: (2)

14

DOYLE

Let's hold off judgments until we meet her, shall we?

HOUDINI

Good point, maybe she'll confess.

DOYLE

Or maybe we'll learn something by observing her. Sort of a cornerstone of my 'stories'.

HOUDINI

I really should read one of those.
 (re the record book)
 Couldn't be any worse than this.
 Whoa, this place is taking in 20 pounds a week. What a racket--

He stops as Sister Mathilde, all business, enters.

SISTER MATHILDE

I'm Sister Mathilde and I am assuming the duties of the late Sister Fabian. Winnie is indisposed, which is just as well, since she's been speaking nonsense.

ADELAIDE

Sister, I'm Constable Stratton and--

SISTER MATHILDE

I'm quite aware of what you call yourself, and who these showmen are--

HOUDINI

You recognize Doyle?

SISTER MATHILDE

And they cannot use this place as fodder for their prurient creations.

HOUDINI

Guess she does.
 (to Mathilde)
 You think Winnie did it?

Mathilde comes as close to laughing as she ever will.

SISTER MATHILDE

Our 'nervous novitiate'? No, she didn't do it. But I imagine Sherlock Holmes could tell us who did.

14 CONTINUED: (3)

14

DOYLE

Holmes is dead, Sister. What can you tell us about Lucy Allthorpe?

SISTER MATHILDE

(annoyed/terse)

I can tell you she was an ungrateful wretch, blinded by vanity; so proud of how she could play the piano, and bend her fingers back into ungodly positions. In the end, her pride killed her; the little fool refused to come in from the cold and died of pneumonia. But she too is dead, making this a frivolous discussion.

HOUDINI

Well, I have a very down-to-earth question: where'd you keep the money?

Mathilde opens a CABINET and takes out a LOCKBOX.

SISTER MATHILDE

Sister Fabian was in charge of finances; she kept everything in here. Unfortunately, she had the only key and I've no idea where she--

Doyle takes the box and drolly hands it to Houdini. After a few moves with the PAPER CLIP, Houdini opens it to reveal...

It's empty. Everyone looks surprised but Houdini smiles.

HOUDINI

This was a robbery.

DOYLE

That may explain the murder, but hacking off her hair? That's personal.

HOUDINI

That's persuasion; the thief wanted her to open the box. So, unless the afterlife requires cash, we now have a very human motive.

15 EXT. VICTORIAN TENEMENT, ISLINGTON - NIGHT

15

Doyle walks down the bustling, gaslit street -- no electrics here. He checks a scrap of paper; this is it. He knocks on a door and it CREAKS open. He steps inside.

16 INT. MRS. SULZBACH'S PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

16

The parlor is pure Victoriana: knick knacks decorate every corner of the red flock wallpaper. As Doyle enters he hears MUSIC and notices a record turning on a new GRAMOPHONE, playing *Die Hydropaten Waltz*. He turns to see...

MRS. SULZBACH, motionless, reclined in an armchair, her face in shadow. Nearby is a glass, a dish of sugar cubes, and an absinthe spoon. Is she drunk, asleep, or dead? Then, without looking at him, her voice comes out of the darkness...

MRS. SULZBACH
(a faint German accent)
A pleasure to meet you, Dr Doyle.

DOYLE
Mrs. Sulzbach?

She extends her hand out of the darkness, motioning to a chair and Doyle takes a seat across from her. It's a bit disconcerting talking to an unseen face but he launches in.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
I was wondering if you could tell me anything about the Sisters of Mercy murder.

There is silence, then suddenly she GASPS.

MRS. SULZBACH
A brown man. Not brown of birth but brown of filth. A man of soot.

DOYLE
A living man?

MRS. SULZBACH
A greedy man.

DOYLE
He killed her for money?

MRS. SULZBACH
For the love of it.

DOYLE
Do you know where I might find him?

MRS. SULZBACH
Whitechapel. Discussing his exploits with...a rabbit.

16 CONTINUED:

16

DOYLE

A rabbit?

MRS. SULZBACH

I'm just telling you what I see.

Doyle nods. Then he shifts awkwardly.

DOYLE

There's someone else I'd like to ask
you about... Do you think it'd be
possible to contact...my wife?

And when we see the intensity in his face, we realize this
is the real reason he's here. Mrs. Sulzbach pauses, then
her entire demeanor changes in a very unsettling way...

MRS. SULZBACH

My dearest Arthur...

Her voice is suddenly warm, loving, and British-accented.
She leans forward into the light to reveal Mrs. Sulzbach is
beautiful, 30s. Doyle is speechless.

MRS. SULZBACH (CONT'D)

I miss you so.

DOYLE

Touie?

MRS. SULZBACH

Yes dear, it's me, your loving Touie.

Doyle stares; can it be her?

MRS. SULZBACH (CONT'D)

*I've been watching you. And I see
what a wonderful job you're doing
with the children...*

Doyle fights back the tears. Mrs. Sulzbach suddenly
straightens, her face filling with fear...

MRS. SULZBACH (CONT'D)

*But the new acquaintance you've
made...he is in darkness.*

DOYLE

Is he in danger?

MRS. SULZBACH

No. You are.

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

DOYLE

How am I in danger? Touie?

But Mrs. Sulzbach leans back into the shadows, as if pulling a curtain on her performance. Shaken, Doyle stares at her, then leaves his payment and goes, unnerved.

17 EXT. WHITECHAPEL STREET - NIGHT

17

This is Jack the Ripper's old stomping grounds, where London's 'colorful underbelly' lurks in the dark, foggy alleys: streetwalkers, pickpockets, and beggars. Oh, and...

Doyle and Adelaide. Even though they've dressed down, having all their teeth make them stand-outs. As they walk, they eye each passerby. Adelaide gets many looks in return.

DOYLE

I apologize for dragging you here, but I was hoping this could lead to an arrest.

ADELAIDE

Not at all, this is the life I've chosen and I don't expect any coddling. Besides, solving this case would mean an awful lot to me.

DOYLE

Trying to impress Merring?

ADELAIDE

Trying to humiliate him. Houdini was right; Merring hates me.

DOYLE

I suppose I should warn you that I got this tip from a medium.

ADELAIDE

(disappointed)

I see. I thought a 'man of soot' was unusually vague; a bit like looking for a needle in a haystack.

DOYLE

'Needle in a haystack'...hmm. Quite clever; I'll have to use that. There was one other detail. The medium said she saw him talking to a rabbit.

17 CONTINUED:

17

ADELAIDE

Now I know why you were keeping that
to yourself. But I'm glad you didn't.
Come on.

With that, she heads off. Doyle follows.

18 INT. PUB IN WHITECHAPEL - NIGHT

18

ON a LARGE RABBIT. We PULL BACK to see it's a sign for the
BONNY BLACK HARE PUB. It's a dive bar but a lively one,
full of grubby patrons, laughing, singing, and arguing.

ON Adelaide and Doyle sitting in a corner, two drinks in
front of them, trying, and failing, to look inconspicuous.

DOYLE

How did you know about this place?

ADELAIDE

I've spent a lot of time in this
neighborhood. But I have a question
for you, about mediums. Doesn't it
seem a bit at odds with you being a
'bastion of all things logical'?

DOYLE

I never thought being a Spiritualist
and being logical were mutually
exclusive.

ADELAIDE

Then what about being a Catholic?
The church is clear that when we
die, our souls don't linger here.

DOYLE

I'm a lapsed Catholic, who believes
in the scientific method. And one
day, using that unassailably logical
process, I believe I'll find proof
of the supernatural. And that, would
mean an awful lot to me.

Adelaide hears the emotion in his voice.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Have you seen the man by the stairs?

ON the man, (BOTTLEY) -- big, scarred, mean, and streaked
with sweat and dirt -- sitting with his rowdy mates.

ADELAIDE

He's definitely sooty enough.

18 CONTINUED:

18

Bottley tosses a coin to the barman to pay for the round.

DOYLE

And he's definitely flush. I have
an idea; if he has something to hide,
I imagine he'll run.

ADELAIDE

And if he doesn't?

DOYLE

I imagine he'll beat me rather badly.

Doyle walks over to Bottley whose eyes narrow: who's this
jackass? Adelaide watches anxiously. When Doyle reaches
Bottley, he leans over and whispers in his ear.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

I know what you did.

Bottley jumps to his feet. Doyle's not small but Bottley
towers over him, clenching his massive, meaty fists.

Adelaide doesn't like the look of this...

But then Bottley bolts out the back door. Doyle flashes a
relieved grin at Adelaide, then races after his man.

19 EXT. WHITECHAPEL STREET - CONTINUOUS

19

Bottley darts down a dark alley and Doyle follows. Another
twist, another turn. Bottley's got a long stride but Doyle
is remarkably athletic and soon closes the gap.

That's when Bottley whirls around, KNIFE in hand. Oh oh.
Doyle looks around but there's nothing to use as a weapon.
Bottley knows he has him and raises the knife...

Then he GRUNTS, and mysteriously drops to the ground, out
cold... revealing Adelaide behind him, BLACKJACK in hand.
Doyle stares at her, impressed.

DOYLE

Right, no coddling.

Doyle checks Bottley's pockets, and pulls out a large ROLL
OF MONEY. Now it's Adelaide's turn to be impressed.

ADELAIDE

Perhaps there are more things in
heaven and earth, Horatio.

19 CONTINUED:

19

OFF Doyle as it sinks in--

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

20 INT. SCOTLAND YARD, HOLDING CELL - DAY (DAY 3) 20

Doyle and Adelaide are sitting across from Bottley, chained to his chair, stubbornly silent. Adelaide turns to Doyle.

ADELAIDE

You know what might be the problem here? He's worried about his good name; imagine when his mates find out that he was thumped by a girl.

DOYLE

Quite the reputation to have going into prison.

Bottley squirms; this is working. Adelaide turns to him.

ADELAIDE

But who knows, maybe the more you talk, the less we will.

Bottley sighs, relenting. But as he's about to speak, an angry Gudgett bursts in.

GUDGETT

I didn't believe it 'til I saw it with my own eyes. You two, out.

Doyle and Adelaide exit, followed by Gudgett.

21 INT. SCOTLAND YARD, HOLDING CELLS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 21

Just outside the cell, Gudgett confronts Adelaide and Doyle.

GUDGETT

What the hell do you think you're doing, bringing in a suspect?

ADELAIDE

I am a police officer--

GUDGETT

You're a wet nurse--

DOYLE

She just solved your case; I should think you'd be quite grateful.

GUDGETT

That bastard's a thief, not a killer.

21 CONTINUED:

21

DOYLE

I think you'll find he managed to transcend his station in life.

GUDGETT

Wait here 'til I sort out your mess.

He looks at them both with contempt, then heads back into the cell. Doyle and Adelaide can't help a small smile.

ADELAIDE

He seemed rather unhappy.

DOYLE

Bulging veins and all.

(beat)

I can't wait to see Houdini.

HOUDINI (O.S.)

And why would that be?

They turn to see an excited Houdini approaching.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

The killer is flesh and blood, which makes me the winner and you the loser.

DOYLE

You may have won the bet, but I won the war. We were only able to catch our man with the help of a medium. Apparently, quite a legitimate one.

HOUDINI

(instantly deflated)

Then this isn't our man.

ADELAIDE

What are you talking about--

HOUDINI

A fraudulent source renders the product meaningless; garbage in, garbage out.

DOYLE

He had a small fortune in his pocket; you think he just got a raise?

HOUDINI

So he was carrying stolen money, so are most of the men in Whitechapel.

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

ADELAIDE

(to Doyle)

Tell him about the rabbit.

HOUDINI

You're on his side now?

ADELAIDE

This isn't about sides--

DOYLE

The medium saw him talking to a rabbit
and we found him in the Bonny Black
Hare.

Houdini stares at him: wtf? But before he can respond,
Gudgett comes out of the cell, looking smug.

GUDGETT

Well that didn't take long. He robbed
a jeweler on Bethnal Green--

DOYLE

And you believe him--

GUDGETT

I believe the jeweler's description,
which matches him perfectly, and I
believe the fact that his loot matches
the stolen amount perfectly -- minus
a few rounds. So that tears it,
you're all off the case. And for
that, I'm quite grateful.

Gudgett leaves. And the only thing worse than a smug Gudgett
is a smug Houdini.

HOUDINI

Well, that explains the rabbit: it's
called a 'coincidence'. Don't worry,
I'll come up with a real suspect.

(as he goes)

In the meantime, don't talk to any
more ghosts.

Houdini exits, leaving a deflated Adelaide and Doyle.

ADELAIDE

God, he's irritating.

DOYLE

He's also right. We still haven't
questioned our only witness.

21 CONTINUED: (3)

21

ADELAIDE

You heard Gudgett--

DOYLE

Thought you said it meant an awful
lot to you.

He leaves. She hesitates, then hurries after him.

22 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, LAUNDRY - DAY

22

Doyle and Adelaide stand in a quiet corner, near a WINDOW,
talking to Winnie. In the BG, several girls steal glances.

WINNIE

I already told them everything I
know.

DOYLE

But they didn't believe you, did
they, Winnie?
(off her look)
Well, I know that feeling.

WINNIE

Sister Mathilde thinks I'm foolish.

DOYLE

That's why I'm here; if you really
did see a ghost, I want to prove it.

WINNIE

I know what I saw: the same thing I
saw before; same thing the other
girls saw. She came out of nowhere,
floated across the room, and went
right through the wall.

ADELAIDE

You're sure it was Lucy?

WINNIE

I couldn't quite see her face but I
know it was her, gray smock and all.

DOYLE

How do you know?
(off her anxious look)
Winnie, we're on your side.

Adelaide lays a reassuring hand on her shoulder. It works;
Winnie takes a breath, then leans forward and whispers...

22 CONTINUED:

22

WINNIE

I know because Sister Fabian murdered her.

Doyle and Adelaide trade looks. As Winnie looks out the window, MUSIC (SCORE) begins to play: *When You Were Sweet Sixteen*.

WINNIE (CONT'D)

She was so full of life, had the most brilliant head of hair you've ever seen. And she was a wonderful pianist -- her favorite song was *When You Were Sweet Sixteen*. All the girls loved her. Which is why Sister hated her so. And when she took away her baby--

DOYLE

Lucy had a child?

WINNIE

A lovely wee girl. When Lucy lost her, she became a different person; so angry; she stopped playing the piano. One day she talked back and Sister cut off her beautiful hair. Chopped it all off with a razor.

Doyle and Adelaide trade looks as this chilling detail lands.

ADELAIDE

You said she was murdered.

WINNIE

Lucy went to Sister Mathilde, but she dragged her right back to Sister Fabian who soaked her clothes and locked her out for the night.

Doyle winces; this is hard to hear.

WINNIE (CONT'D)

Poor thing caught her death. I went to Sister Grace -- between the three of them, they ran this place -- and I begged her to take Lucy to hospital but all she'd say was, 'I'll pray for her'. Lucy died two days later. Far as I'm concerned, all three of them good as killed her.

Winnie points out the window to...

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

A sunless COURTYARD, in the middle of which stands a STATUE of the Virgin Mary, whose face has been grotesquely disfigured by time, transforming it into a demonic caricature. The only sign of life is a sprinkling of defiant wild DAISIES.

WINNIE (CONT'D)

And that's where they put her. In an unmarked grave, along with all the other poor 'Maggies' they destroyed.

Adelaide looks back across the busy laundry, seeing the scared faces in an even grimmer light.

DOYLE

You're convinced Lucy's ghost killed Sister Fabian.

Winnie turns to Doyle with a haunted look.

WINNIE

Forgive me, but I pray to God she did.

OFF Doyle and Adelaide, shaken--

23 INT. THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE, BACKSTAGE - DAY

23

The place is dark, empty, save for Houdini working on a set of handcuffs. He looks up as Doyle and Adelaide enter.

HOUDINI

Ah, just in time for a game of Whif Whaf. Surely you've heard of it?

He points to a large TABLE with a low board across the middle.

DOYLE

You claim to have solved the crime?

HOUDINI

Indeed. I asked our Constable here to do some research which proved to be somewhat helpful.

ADELAIDE

You're welcome.

HOUDINI

(re the game)
Wanna say a hundred bucks?

DOYLE

You do know you're in England.

23 CONTINUED:

23

Houdini tosses Doyle the lid of a CIGAR BOX and picks up a small CORK BALL. As they begin to play, we realize this is a precursor to ping pong. Houdini is good, Doyle isn't.

HOUDINI

I found our motive in the Sisters' record book. Most of the entries are deadly boring -- except for the ones that don't add up.

DOYLE

Someone was embezzling?

HOUDINI

Someone the dead nun caught and got killed for it; someone who had access to the books and the lockbox.

DOYLE

You're accusing Sister Mathilde -- of embezzlement, lockpicking, and cold-blooded murder?

ADELAIDE

Her real name is Bernadette Downie; when she was 19, she was caught for pickpocketing. After she served her time, she joined the Sisters.

HOUDINI

Any criminal skills she didn't have before she went to jail, she sure did when she got out.

The rally grows competitive; to Houdini's surprise, Doyle is returning every shot.

ADELAIDE

And if you believe what Winnie told us, Sister Mathilde sounds about as cold-blooded as they come.

HOUDINI

You talked to Winnie -- the girl who was 'speaking nonsense'? You gotta face the facts, Doc.

DOYLE

I'm convinced she saw something. She also said Sister Fabian tormented many girls. Took away Lucy's baby, hacked off her hair, and ultimately, caused Lucy's death. That's our motive.

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

With that, Doyle expertly spikes the ball, decisively winning the point. Houdini realizes he's been had.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

We call it 'ping pong'.

HOUDINI

Silly name.

The LIGHTS FLICKER as a GUST of air washes over them. Doyle, Adelaide, and Houdini trade looks. What the hell?

A blood-curdling SCREAM pierces the air and they see the GHOSTLY FIGURE of a NUN, her hair HACKED OFF, THROAT SLIT, and habit drenched in blood, hovering above the ground.

Doyle and Adelaide stare horrified; even Houdini is stunned.

Suddenly the figure flies right at them. They leap out of the way, feeling a chill as the figure brushes by. They turn to see the figure vanish into the darkness.

The place falls silent and the lights FLICKER back on. Doyle, Houdini, and Adelaide look at each other, shell-shocked. After a beat, something catches Adelaide's eye.

ADELAIDE

Look...

She points to where the nun's bloody habit dragged across the floor, leaving SPLATTERS OF BLOOD, that look like letters.

ADELAIDE (CONT'D)

M-A-T-H-I... Mathilde.

Adelaide looks at the others, shaken. But then Doyle bends down and does something strange: he touches the blood, then TASTES IT. He smiles.

DOYLE

Corn syrup and food coloring, aka stage blood. Well played, sir.

Houdini bows.

ADELAIDE

How did you do that?

HOUDINI

Fans, wires, costumes, makeup--
(to the wing)
Very nice, Florrie.

They look over to see...

23 CONTINUED: (3)

23

Florrie, in bloodied habit, unhooking herself from a wire.

DOYLE

You're a master showman--

HOUDINI

I get that a lot.

DOYLE

But Sister Mathilde isn't. Or are you suggesting that's another skill she acquired in prison?

HOUDINI

I'm suggesting that 'unexplained' doesn't have to mean 'supernatural'. Sister Jailbird had opportunity and motive, and should be arrested as soon as possible.

ADELAIDE

You know I can't make another arrest.

HOUDINI

What if you get permission from... oh say, the head of Scotland Yard?

ADELAIDE

Sir Nicholas Humphries?

HOUDINI

Nicky's coming to my place for a drink tonight; join us and ask him yourself.

OFF Adelaide--

24 INT. HOUDINI'S HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

24

Adelaide enters in evening wear, surprised by the sight: it's a massive, gala event. The lavish place is filled with servants, champagne pyramids, and a turn-of-the-century who's who: TESLA, YEATS, CHURCHILL, and DEBUSSY plays a GRAND PIANO. Elegant men in white tie mingle with bejeweled women in elaborate gowns. Houdini, looking dashing in his tux, sidles up to Adelaide.

ADELAIDE

This isn't quite what I expected.

HOUDINI

'Expected' isn't really what I do. Besides, it's my mother's birthday. Oh, you gotta see this...

24 CONTINUED:

24

He leads her over to a large, regal, BEARDED MAN.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

Miss Stratton, may I present His
Royal Highness, King Edward.

Adelaide just stares in awe. The King bows.

KING EDWARD

Delighted.

ADELAIDE

Die Freude ist mein.

But the king looks confused. He smiles and moves on.

HOUDINI

Sprechen sie Deutsch?

ADELAIDE

(confused)

Yes, and so does the King; it's his
first language.

HOUDINI

He's very shy.

ADELAIDE

I don't think that's the real king.

(getting it, off his look)

Of which, you were fully aware. Are
they all fakes?

HOUDINI

Tesla, Yeats, and Churchill will
show up anywhere there's free booze --
same with the French painters. But
the king was busy tonight, so I subbed
him with an actor. And if you tell
my mother, I'll sub you.

ADELAIDE

What about Sir Nicholas? Fake or
real?

HOUDINI

Quite real, but still quite sober.

Wait 'til he's had a few--

(he stops as he sees something)

Ah, look at that...

Adelaide follows his gaze to see...

24 CONTINUED: (2)

24

CECILIA WEISS, 60, radiant in a beautiful gown and DIAMOND NECKLACE, quietly delighted by all the attention.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)
Isn't she beautiful?

ADELAIDE
Your mother's lovely.

HOUDINI
That necklace is her birthday present.

Adelaide sees the love and admiration in Houdini's eyes.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)
Some people say I spoil her. And maybe I do but we never had much growing up. And the best thing about my success is that I can give that wonderful woman the life she deserves.

As Houdini continues to watch his mother, Adelaide sees him in a new light: not as an egotistical performer but as a grateful man and a loving son. Throw in charm and good looks, and yeah, she's smitten. Houdini seems to feel it too.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)
C'mere...

25 INT. HOUDINI'S HOTEL SUITE, PRIVATE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

25

He takes her through a doorway into his private quarters.

HOUDINI
This is my pride and joy.

It's a hall lined with PHOTOS -- but not of Houdini with presidents or celebrities -- they are pictures of him standing next to various ordinary people.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)
These are the bloodsuckers I've exposed.

Adelaide looks at Houdini, confused.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)
I do tricks, nothing more. But the world thinks I do magic, using some paranormal force; and for many, I'm proof of the supernatural.
(MORE)

25 CONTINUED:

25

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

Which allows 'mediums' like these to
prey on the bereaved, telling them
lies and taking their money.

(emotional)

I feel responsible, and I feel it's
up to me to stop them.

Adelaide looks at him, feeling his pain. She's moved.

ADELAIDE

That's a terrible burden you carry.

Houdini looks at her, comforted.

HOUDINI

I'm sure you know the feeling. The
life of a 'modern woman' is not an
easy one.

Adelaide smiles, moved by his empathy.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

I mean it takes a lot of gumption to
be pro-vote, pro-job...free-love.

And as he leans in to her, Adelaide gets it, and steps back.

ADELAIDE

That's what all this was about?
Seducing me?

Houdini stares back at her unapologetically. But before he
can respond...

DOYLE (O.S.)

There you are.

They turn to see Doyle approaching.

HOUDINI

Doc, you made it! C'mere, there's
someone you gotta meet--

DOYLE

This isn't a social visit. Sister
Mathilde has been murdered.

OFF Houdini and Adelaide--

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

26 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, SISTER FABIAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT 26

The halls are filled with the hysterical CRIES OF BABIES, as Houdini and Adelaide (still in evening wear) and Doyle enter. After a YOUNG MAGGIE, pale and trembling, is helped away by two older NUNS, our trio takes in the terrible sight.

DOYLE

I think it's safe to say, it was the same killer.

THEIR POV -- Sister Mathilde's dead body -- complete with slit throat and hacked scalp.

HOUDINI

It's also safe to say I may have been wrong about Sister Mathilde.

Gudgett enters, annoyed to see them there.

GUDGETT

What the hell are you lot doing here?

DOYLE

Checking on your progress; well done, it's now a double murder.

GUDGETT

Get out, all of you.

HOUDINI

But you just enlisted me.

Houdini holds up a NEWSPAPER with the headline: *Yard Enlists Houdini to Stop Killer Ghost.*

GUDGETT

You did this?

DOYLE

Which explains why I'm described as Houdini's 'able assistant', and Adelaide as 'the ornamental Constable'.

HOUDINI

It was mainly Nicky; I just suggested some wording. He thought you could use a little positive publicity.

26 CONTINUED:

26

Gudgett seethes. Meanwhile, Adelaide has been inspecting the room, stopping as she notices something on the window.

ADELAIDE

Look at this...

As the others gather around, Adelaide breathes on the window and a ghostly message appears: '*all things come in threes.*'

They trade looks, shaken by the eerie message.

DOYLE

Someone wants to make this a triple murder.

CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER. Adelaide enters the room, with an anxious looking Sister Grace in tow.

SISTER GRACE

I should get back to the girls; they're absolutely terrified.

GUDGETT

We've found a rather disturbing message--

DOYLE

(taking over)
--Possibly left by the killer, which makes us think you may be the next intended victim.

SISTER GRACE

(shocked)
Me? Why?

DOYLE

Sisters Fabian, Mathilde and yourself were the senior administrators here.
(pointed)
So all three of you were responsible for everything that went on.

SISTER GRACE

(horrified)
Lucy is coming for me...

HOUDINI

Or it could even be a real person.

As Grace grows more upset, Gudgett steps in.

26 CONTINUED: (2)

26

GIDGETT

You'll be fine, Sister. I'll guard
you myself, night and day. Come on.

With that, he escorts the shaken Grace out of the room.
Doyle turns to Houdini.

DOYLE

Surely even you can now see these
are revenge killings.

HOUDINI

I'm less concerned with the killer
having a motive than having a pulse.

ADELAIDE

Maybe you're both right; the killer
is alive and it is a revenge killing.
If Lucy wasn't the only Maggie they
abused, then God knows, there's a
lot of girls out there with a grudge.
I could go through the records and
compile a list of girls who gave up
their babies; that'd give us a place
to start.

DOYLE

Brilliant. But it could be a big
job; we should divide it up.

They look expectantly at Houdini.

HOUDINI

Fifty-fifty sounds fair.

He leaves. OFF Doyle and Adelaide--

27 INT. SCOTLAND YARD, BOWELS - DAY (DAY 4)

27

Adelaide sits at her desk, which is covered with the Sisters'
files and documents: blueprints, admission ledgers, invoices,
etc. She's scanning the last page of one of LEDGERS.

ON the ledger -- rows of handwritten entries: admission date,
name, age, and in some cases, baby's name, birth date, etc.

When she comes to such an entry, she writes down the name of
the mother. Then one entry catches her attention. She
studies it for a moment, noting the initials of the person
who made the entry: AC.

As she finishes, she looks at her long list of names: Amelia,
17, Henrietta, 14, Loretta, 15...so many young girls.

27 CONTINUED: 27

She closes the ledger, only to see the building BLUEPRINT lying underneath. She stares at the ancient document...

EST. SHOT - UNDERSHAW - DAY

This is Undershaw, Doyle's stately manor.

28 INT. UNDERSHAW, DEN - CONTINUOUS 28

It's a richly paneled, book-lined room, warm and comfortable. Doyle is at his desk, poring over a similar LEDGER, compiling a similar list of names. He stops when he comes to...

ON the ledger -- the entry for *Lucy Allthorpe*. He traces his finger to her date of death. Just 16 years old. Then he sees the baby's birth date, adoption date, and baby's name: *DAISY*.

ON Doyle as something resonates...

29 INT. HOUDINI'S HOTEL SUITE - DAY 29

Houdini opens his door, delighted to see an excited Adelaide standing there, BLUEPRINT in hand.

ADELAIDE

You won't believe what I found...

As Adelaide hurries past him...

HOUDINI

Please, come in.

She unrolls the blueprint on a table.

ADELAIDE

This is the Sisters' residence; it was constructed in 1604 as a distillery but when liquor tax laws were introduced in 1690, a secret passageway to the Thames was built so they could come and go without alerting the taxman.

FLASHES of: an unseen FIGURE moving through an ancient, dark passageway.

ADELAIDE (CONT'D)

And that passageway, now sealed up, runs from Sister Fabian's office -- in the very spot that Lucy disappeared into the wall. And where does it lead?

29 CONTINUED:

29

ON the blueprint as her finger traces along the passageway.

ADELAIDE (CONT'D)

Down a stairway and out to the
courtyard -- the courtyard where
Lucy is buried.

FLASHES of: the disfigured statue of the Virgin Mary 'watches'
a figure emerge from the residence into the shadowy COURTYARD.

ADELAIDE (CONT'D)

(triumphantly)

You see? This makes Lucy our best
suspect: motive, witnesses, and now,
opportunity.

She looks at him expectantly as Houdini nods.

HOUDINI

Quite compelling.

(off her smile)

I'm just confused about one thing.
If a ghost can pass through walls,
why does it need a passageway? And
when it takes the subway, does it
have to pay a fare or can it just
drift through the turnstile?

ADELAIDE

Is this because I snubbed you?

HOUDINI

(sarcastic)

Yes; otherwise, I'd totally accept
this fairy tale as irrefutable proof
of the afterlife.

(beat)

This is because I thought you were a
smart girl who thought for herself,
but now I see you're just a girl.
Quit your job and go find a man who'll
buy you pretty dresses.

ADELAIDE

(pissed)

This may be just a bet or publicity
stunt for you, but for me, it's my
life. You saw all those hopeless
girls in the laundry; you know how
many women live in fear of that fate?
This isn't a job, it's a hope that
we can avoid not only the laundries,
but something almost as bad: a life
of pretty dresses and condescension.

29 CONTINUED: (2)

29

HOUDINI
(impressed)
Well said.
(beat)
Still not sleeping with me though,
are you?

Adelaide leaves.

30 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, FRONT DOOR - DAY

30

Doyle KNOCKS and after a beat, the door is opened by a tired Gudgett, not happy to see Doyle.

DOYLE
Hello, Sergeant. I just need a quick
look in Sister Fabian's office.

But Gudgett doesn't move, relishing Doyle being at his mercy.

GUDGETT
You want to know something? I'm
glad the great Sherlock Holmes is
dead. All I ever heard was 'Sherlock
Holmes would've solved it by now',
'too bad you don't have Sherlock
Holmes on the case'. But he's
rubbish; my four-year-old knows more
about crime-solving than that made-
up pillock, Sherlock bloody Holmes.

DOYLE
(forcing a smile)
I always appreciate a heartfelt
critique. Now can I come in?

With a satisfied grin, Gudgett opens the door.

31 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, SISTER FABIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

31

Doyle enters and eyes the side table in the corner. In the vase there are now TWO SMALL DAISIES. Just as he thought.

Then as he turns, the floorboard CREAKS beneath his foot.
He looks down to see...

The weight of his foot is lifting the far end of the board,
just a hair. He bends down and tugs on the board -- lifting
it up to reveal...

A secret compartment.

CUT TO:

31 CONTINUED:

31

LATER. There's tension between Houdini and Adelaide as they arrive, but Doyle is intent on showing them his discoveries.

DOYLE

A person's office is a reflection of their life. And the first time I looked around this room, I noted a distinct lack of personal touches.

HOUDINI

She was a nun, not a Bohemian.

DOYLE

Except for one incongruity: the daisy in the vase.

ADELAIDE

There're two daisies.

DOYLE

There wasn't after Sister Fabian was killed.

ADELAIDE

The murderer added a daisy each time they killed?

HOUDINI

A real daisy or a ghost daisy?

DOYLE

And the *piece de resistance*: guess the name of Lucy's baby.

HOUDINI

Petunia. Is this why you dragged me here? More claptrap about 'ghost motive'? It's about the money, Doc, the money!

DOYLE

Which is why I really dragged you here.

He smiles, opens the secret compartment, and pulls out...

The MISSING MONEY.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Sister Fabian was putting away a little something for herself.

ADELAIDE

Point is, this wasn't a robbery.

31 CONTINUED: (2)

31

HOUDINI

(annoyed)

So maybe our ornamental constable was right; it was one of the girls -- who knew Lucy and the name of her baby and liked to pick flowers. Gimme the list; I'll interview them myself.

ADELAIDE

You'd like that.

HOUDINI

Point is, this doesn't prove the existence of a ghost--

But he suddenly falls silent as they are struck by a CHILL. Doyle turns to Houdini.

DOYLE

What is this, an encore?

HOUDINI

(sincerely)

This isn't me.

Then, lo and behold, they -- and WE -- see...

A GHOSTLY SHAPE appears and floats across the room. It's tall, slim, and GRAY -- like the Maggies' smocks. They step back in horror and watch as it disappears into the wall.

Doyle looks at Houdini and sees something almost as frightening: Houdini is pale, shaken, speechless -- this really wasn't him.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

32 EXT. SISTERS OF MERCY - NIGHT 32

Houdini exits the residence, as Doyle and Adelaide follow. Houdini is shaken but Doyle is excited.

DOYLE
That was Lucy.

ADELAIDE
(to Houdini)
I know you saw her; we all did.

HOUDINI
I saw something -- some reflection,
shadow, hallucination--

DOYLE
(angrily cutting him off)
You saw proof of the paranormal; you
have to accept that--

HOUDINI
(snapping)
No! You two can believe in whatever
garbage you want but don't ever tell
me what I have to accept!

Houdini, frustrated and confused, turns and walks off. Doyle, exasperated, watches him go.

DOYLE
So much for 'facing the facts'.

ADELAIDE
How are you supposed to stop a ghost?

DOYLE
You find out what it wants.

33 INT. MRS. SULZBACH'S PARLOR - NIGHT 33

Once again, Doyle is sitting across from Mrs. Sulzbach in her armchair, her glass of absinthe nearby. The same record, *Die Hydropaten Waltz*, is playing but as the gramophone winds down, the MUSIC SLOWS, creating an unnerving sound.

DOYLE
You were wrong about the sooty man.

MRS. SULZBACH

And yet here you are.

DOYLE

Because you were right about other things; he was a criminal, just not the one we were looking for.

MRS. SULZBACH

The visions can be...confusing.

DOYLE

I need to ask you about someone else. Lucy Allthorpe, a young woman who died six months ago. I need to know what she wants.

Mrs. Sulzbach closes her eyes, and after a moment...

MRS. SULZBACH

No confusion... Lucy wants redress.

Before Doyle can react, Mrs. Sulzbach begins channeling his wife again -- with British accent and warm, loving tone.

MRS. SULZBACH (CONT'D)

But I know you really came here for me, dearest Arthur.

Doyle stares at her surprised. She's right, of course.

MRS. SULZBACH (CONT'D)

Just promise you'll keep coming back.

DOYLE

Yes...of course I will.

MRS. SULZBACH

It's wonderful to hear your voice again.

DOYLE

(eyes welling)

And yours.

MRS. SULZBACH

Since I passed, I've been so terribly lonely.

Doyle suddenly looks wounded.

DOYLE

Since you passed?

33 CONTINUED: (2) 33

MRS. SULZBACH
*Darling, I know it's difficult to
 hear but--*

But Doyle has a strange reaction: he abruptly stands, tosses some money on the table and walks out.

Taken aback, Mrs. Sulzbach watches him go, as the MUSIC finally grinds to an eerie halt.

34 INT. HOUDINI'S HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT 34

Clothes are strewn on the floor, and the distinctive sound of rhythmic THUMPING fills the room. Sure enough, we see Houdini in his grand bed, pounding away at his pretty stage assistant, Florrie. But for Houdini, this is more of an act of anger than passion. Suddenly, something catches his eye...

A single GLASS OF CHAMPAGNE on the bedside table. A faint RIPPLE crosses the surface of the liquid with each thrust.

ON Houdini, staring at the glass, entranced, the woman under him completely forgotten.

35 INT. SANATORIUM, HALLWAY - NIGHT 35

Doyle walks down an endless white hallway. As he passes each room, we get a glimpse of an emaciated, dying soul, lying in bed, some COUGHING violently, some just silent. Finally he enters a room to find...

36 INT. SANATORIUM, ROOM - CONTINUOUS 36

A pale WOMAN lying in bed, her eyes closed. She is beautiful, peaceful, like a marble statue, her striking black HAIR framing her alabaster face. He stares at her for a beat, then leans over and kisses her.

DOYLE
 My dear Touie...

And we realize this is his wife, LOUISA 'TOUIE' CONAN DOYLE, 30s -- in a tuberculin coma -- but definitely still alive.

As we PULL BACK, he takes his seat next to her motionless body and slowly begins to stroke her hair.

37 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, FABIAN'S OFFICE - DAY (DAY 5) 37

Houdini is in Fabian's office, and he's been there awhile. He sits with his jacket off, riffling a deck of cards, never taking his eyes off the PITCHER OF WATER. And the only sounds are the TICKING of the mantle clock and the distant, mournful CRY OF A LONE BABY, echoing through the empty corridors.

37 CONTINUED: 37

Suddenly, he stops, then shudders as he feels a chill. Here it comes again. And sure enough, a faint RIPPLE appears on the surface of the water in the pitcher.

A smile creeps across his face.

38 INT. UNDERSHAW, DINING ROOM - DAY 38

It's a homey room, bright and colorful. Doyle eats breakfast with his two children: MARY, 11, and KINGSLEY, 8. Kingsley toys with a STRING PHONE (two cans joined by a string).

KINGSLEY

That Italian man who says he can send a message across the sea...how's he expect to do it without a wire?

DOYLE

Marconi. Most people think he can't. What do you think?

KINGSLEY

I don't know but I think it'd be brilliant if he could.

Doyle smiles; good answer.

MARY

Were you able to talk to mother?

DOYLE

(shaking his head)
But I'll keep trying.

MARY

You better.

He looks at her -- that look in her eye, that tone of voice.

DOYLE

You're so like her.

And as he strokes her hair, something dawns on him. But his thoughts are interrupted as...

A CAR HORN HONKS.

MARY

What on earth is that?

Doyle heads to the front door.

39 EXT. UNDERSHAW - CONTINUOUS

39

Doyle exits to see Houdini in a CAR, honking his HORN.

HOUDINI
Brand new Oldsmobile, just off the
boat from Detroit.

DOYLE
We do have automobiles over here,
you know.

HOUDINI
You also have black pudding and I
ain't touching that either. C'mon,
I gotta show you something at the
convent; and if you insist, we can
pick up the ornament on the way.

DOYLE
I may have something to show you.
But there's no time for Adelaide or
your jalopy. I'll take my own motor.

HOUDINI
I smell a race.

CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER, Doyle roars past Houdini in his new WOLSELEY
ROADSTER, at the unnatural speed of 14 mph. It's on.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)
A hundred bucks says Yankee Doodle's
Dandy!

And Houdini takes off after him.

40 EXT. STREET - DAY

40

The two create quite a sight, 'speeding' past horses, carts,
and carriages, CHUGGING and RATTLING loudly. Most people
have barely seen cars, let alone a race. And although it
looks almost slo-mo to us, it's breakneck for 1901.

Houdini's ahead but Doyle's no slouch and gears it up,
scraping past Houdini in a tight turn.

Not to be outdone, Houdini leaves the road to cut a corner --
tricky but effective -- and they're now side by side. But
up ahead is a one lane bridge.

They trade looks -- it's a game of chicken -- and neither is
backing down. Surely one of them has some common sense...

40 CONTINUED:

40

DOYLE
I love black pudding!

Apparently not. And just before the inevitable crash, we...

CUT TO:

41 INT. TUBE CAR - DAY

41

Doyle and Houdini, a bit shook up post-crash, ride the tube, with several other Londoners, as the car CLATTERS and SWAYS along the tracks.

DOYLE
That was a Wolseley Phaeton Twin
Cylinder; one of only 87 made.

HOUDINI
My Olds cost 1100 bucks, plus
shipping.

DOYLE
(sarcastic)
Shame it didn't come with brakes.
(impatiently)
We should've taken a cab.

HOUDINI
This is faster; we'll be there in
less than 9 minutes.

DOYLE
You couldn't know that.

HOUDINI
Hundred bucks says I do.

DOYLE
Oh shut up.

42 EXT. SISTERS OF MERCY, FRONT DOOR - DAY

42

Opening the door once again is Gudgett, unamused to find Houdini and an impatient Doyle standing there.

DOYLE
Sergeant, I need to see Sister Grace
immediately.

GUDGETT
All you need is to know she's safe
and sound.

42 CONTINUED:

42

DOYLE

Listen to me; I think I know who the
killer is--

GUDGETT

You've got it all figured out, eh?
Who'd you consult, Sherlock Bleeding
Holmes? Pop over to Baker Street--

Doyle swings, and in one motion, deftly catches Gudgett under
the chin with an upper cut, knocking him out cold. Houdini
stares at Doyle, surprised but very impressed.

HOUDINI

Damn.

DOYLE

It was quite necessary, time being
of the essence and all that.

43 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, HALLWAY - DAY

43

After dragging the unconscious Gudgett inside, they are just
closing the door when Sister Grace appears down the hall.

DOYLE

Ah, I was just coming to see you.

She sees Gudgett slumped on the floor.

SISTER GRACE

Is that Sergeant Gudgett?

HOUDINI

He's exhausted; it's those double
shifts...

As Sister Grace approaches...

DOYLE

I see you have a limp.

SISTER GRACE

...Surely that's not why you wanted
to see me.

DOYLE

Actually it is.

Then he does a startling thing: he grabs her fingers and
twists them back into what should be an impossible position.
Grace CRIES OUT in shock.

43 CONTINUED:

43

HOUDINI

What the hell? Excuse my French,
Sister.

DOYLE

She has Ehler-Danlos Syndrome,
characterized by hyper-flexible joints
and Trendelenburg's Gait -- a slight
but distinctive limp. And it's quite
hereditary; one could expect that if
Sister Grace were to have a child,
they may be double-jointed like their
mother, or even red-headed.

And he lifts her cowl to reveal her RED HAIR.

HOUDINI

Lucy...was your daughter.

They look at her expectantly, only to see her facade dissolve.

DOYLE

And the killings were a mother's
revenge.

Tears fill Grace's eyes.

SISTER GRACE

Not revenge...a mother's love.

She slumps against the wall, defeated.

SISTER GRACE (CONT'D)

I was a Maggie myself. And I knew I
had committed a great sin against
God. But it cut my heart just the
same when they took my baby away.

(beat)

I tried to put it behind me; I changed
my name, and came here to start a
new life in the sisterhood. But
when my own girl showed up, with a
child of her own...

FLASHES of: Grace seeing Lucy for the first time...her red
hair, a BIRTHMARK on her neck...Grace hides her tears, her
heart breaking.

SISTER GRACE (CONT'D)

I wanted to rush to her and embrace
her -- but I was a nun; I could never
admit to being a 'fallen woman'. I
asked God why He'd sent her to me,
but when they began to torture her...

43 CONTINUED: (2)

43

FLASHES of: Fabian hacking off Lucy's hair...Mathilde holding Lucy as Fabian douses her with water...Lucy shivering outside in wet clothes...her thrashing feverishly in bed.

SISTER GRACE (CONT'D)

...I understood. Watching her die was my penance for the sin I foolishly thought I could leave behind. I had to let them take her; I had to sacrifice my only begotten child.

FLASHES of: A lone groundskeeper burying Lucy's body in an unmarked grave in the forlorn courtyard, 'attended' only by the Virgin Mary...Grace watching through the window, secretly mourning her child's death, tears streaming down her face.

SISTER GRACE (CONT'D)

But still, it wasn't over. I had failed Lucy in life but when the girls started seeing her tormented spirit, I knew I couldn't fail her in death. I had to take the lives of those responsible -- not to avenge Lucy, but to give her peace.

FLASHES of: Grace filing a key, making a copy...entering Fabian's office...taking out a straight razor...hacking Fabian's hair...placing a daisy in the vase.

HOUDINI

You left that message on the window to take the suspicion off you; make us think you'd be the third victim.

DOYLE

I was afraid she would be -- but by her own hand, thus my urgency.

SISTER GRACE

I confess that was my intent. And it still is.

(off their looks)

But the oppressive Sergeant hasn't let me out of his sight. So thank you for taking care of that.

With that, she turns and hurries down the hall.

DOYLE

Sister, please--

HOUDINI

Really? You're gonna outlimp us?

43 CONTINUED: (3) 43

Houdini and Doyle hurry after her.

44 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 44

As they round the corner, they see her ducking through a HIDDEN PANEL in the wall.

HOUDINI

Lookit that; this place is a funhouse.

They follow...

45 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, CELLAR - CONTINUOUS 45

As Houdini and Doyle step through the panel, they fall down...

Into several feet of WATER. They look back up to see Grace in silhouette, standing on a narrow ledge off to the side.

HOUDINI

Sister, whoa, wait!

She quickly steps back out into the hall and SLAMS THE PANEL SHUT, locking it and trapping them in the dark cell.

HOUDINI (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Shit.

(beat)

Excuse my French.

CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER. We pick them up (a bit after we left them in the teaser), dimly illuminated by one of Doyle's MATCHES.

DOYLE

I really didn't expect a convent to have a death trap.

HOUDINI

It's a tidal trap; part of the secret passageway they built when this place was a distillery--

(off Doyle's CHUCKLE)

Funny stuff, I know.

DOYLE

I'm just picturing tomorrow's headlines: *Houdini Can't Escape Watery Grave.*

HOUDINI

That is rich -- that all the headlines will be about me, not you.

45 CONTINUED:

45

DOYLE

You know what else is amusing?
Someone warned me you were dangerous.

HOUDINI

What kind of shirt are you wearing?

DOYLE

You're delirious, I presume.

HOUDINI

You got a fixed collar? Let me see...

Houdini reaches over and starts to grope Doyle's collar.

DOYLE

What on earth?

HOUDINI

Yes! Stays! You've got collar stays!

He holds up a METAL COLLAR STAY.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

Okay, let me up on your shoulders;
I'll have this baby open in no time.

As the MATCH GOES OUT, Doyle fumbles to LIGHT ANOTHER and keep it above water.

DOYLE

Last match.

HOUDINI

So let me up, already!

Houdini climbs up Doyle's back. But he can barely reach the lock, and Doyle's mouth is now at water level.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

Higher...

Doyle strains to push him higher; Houdini reaches as far as he can but it's hard to get the right angle. The water reaches Doyle's nose. Then Houdini fumbles, dropping the stay.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

Dammit! Gimme the other one!

Doyle struggles to pull out the other stay as the water laps over his nose.

45 CONTINUED: (2)

45

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

Come on!

Doyle hands the stay up to Houdini who quickly turns back to the lock. But Doyle grabs a final breath...

DOYLE

(sincere)

Goodbye, Harry. See you on the other side...

HOUDINI

Hundred bucks says you don't.

The MATCH GOES OUT, plunging them back into total darkness.

HOUDINI (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Doc?

(off silence/panicking)

DOC!

Still nothing. Not good. We hear frantic CLATTERING as Houdini continues to try to open the lock. But that's when the door is UNLOCKED from the outside and swings open to reveal...

Adelaide.

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

I had it.

46 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

46

As Doyle and Houdini crawl back into the hallway...

ADELAIDE

Sister Grace told me where you were; she said you didn't have to die--

DOYLE

(cutting her off, urgently)

--Where is she?

ADELAIDE

Don't worry, I know she's the killer. I handcuffed her--

DOYLE

--Where?

ADELAIDE

Sister Fabian's office.

Doyle and Houdini take off down the hallway.

46 CONTINUED:

46

DOYLE

She's the killer and the third victim.

Adelaide runs after them.

47 INT. SISTERS OF MERCY, SISTER FABIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

47

They burst into the room to find...

Grace, with one hand manacled to the desk, and in the other hand, she has a RAZOR. She's managed to HACK OFF her own hair. Everyone stops as Grace raises the blade to her throat.

ADELAIDE

Sister, please put that down.

SISTER GRACE

No...I have to die.

ON Houdini as something dawns on him. He glances at the MANTLE CLOCK then urgently turns to Doyle.

HOUDINI

You're a Catholic, talk to her; say something in Latin.

ADELAIDE

He's a lapsed Catholic.

HOUDINI

Then say something in pig Latin.

DOYLE

Sister, this isn't what Lucy wants.

SISTER GRACE

Of course it is; I let her die.

DOYLE

That wasn't your fault...

Grace raises the razor. Houdini urges Doyle.

HOUDINI

Keep going...

DOYLE

Wherever Lucy is right now, there is no anger...

(as Grace pauses)

There is no hatred--

Houdini cuts him off with a baleful MOAN and they look as...

47 CONTINUED:

47

Houdini closes his eyes and tips his head back, trance-like, as if something unseen is washing over him.

HOUDINI

I can feel her. I can feel her love.
I can feel her...forgiveness.

Doyle and Adelaide trade looks; what is going on?

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

Lucy, your mother is here...if you
can find it in your heart to forgive
her...show yourself now.

Grace holds her breath, a glimmer of hope in her eyes. But...

Nothing. Grace's eyes go dead and she raises the razor to her throat...

ON the PITCHER as the water faintly RIPPLES.

Houdini throws his hands into the air and cries out:

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

Behold, your daughter!

And, as before, a CHILL runs through the room. Grace gasps.

And sure enough, the GHOSTLY IMAGE reappears. Everyone watches as it crosses the room and disappears into the wall.

SISTER GRACE

My baby...

They all fall into a stunned silence. Grace's eyes well with tears and her hand falls to her side. Adelaide grabs the razor. It's over.

OFF Doyle, staring at Houdini--

CUT TO:

LATER. Adelaide looks quite satisfied as Gudgett, with swollen jaw, takes Grace away. He shoots Adelaide a resentful look; this isn't over. Once he's gone, Doyle and Adelaide turn to Houdini.

DOYLE

What the hell just happened?

Houdini smiles as he pours himself a glass of water.

HOUDINI

The pitcher gave it away. It's a subsonic vibration, one we can't hear or feel but one we react to nevertheless. The waves stimulate the inner ear, causing a fight-or-flight response -- thus 'the chills'.

DOYLE

(makes sense)

They can also excite the fluid around the eyeball, causing irregularities in the peripheral vision.

HOUDINI

Thus 'the fleeing ghost'.

ADELAIDE

How'd you know exactly when it would happen?

HOUDINI

The sound waves had to have a source and I had to look no further than the subway station three blocks away.

DOYLE

Barbican, built less than a year ago; around the same time Lucy died.

HOUDINI

And since then, every 17 minutes, a train passes by and voila, Lucy's ghost appears. That's why I needed you to stall. Luckily it was running on time or we'd have another nun to mop up.

Houdini downs his glass of water, quite pleased with himself.

DOYLE

I have to admit, I'm damn impressed.

HOUDINI

I get that a lot.

DOYLE

As for you, Constable, how did you know Sister Grace was the killer?

ADELAIDE

Handwriting analysis.

(MORE)

47 CONTINUED: (3)

47

ADELAIDE (CONT'D)

I noticed a similarity between the message on the window, and entries made in the ledger by a certain 'AC'; Sister Grace's real name is Alice Carlaw.

DOYLE

Equally impressive.

HOUDINI

Oh come on, equally?

ADELAIDE

How about if you include me saving your life?

HOUDINI

You never saved my life, Sweetie. I escape from liquid coffins five days a week, twice on Sundays.

ADELAIDE

You really are an insufferable ass.

Houdini bows to her as she leaves. He turns to Doyle.

HOUDINI

Well, surprise, surprise, I won the bet. I'm actually looking forward to your book; been having a touch of insomnia.

But Doyle is looking out the window at the COURTYARD, dotted with daisies, troubled by something.

DOYLE

If all we saw was visual irregularity, then why did everyone who saw it...why did we all think it was Lucy?

Houdini answers by holding up a COIN, moving it to his other hand, then opening that hand to reveal the coin's disappeared.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

(gets his point)

Our eyes see what our brain tells them to.

Doyle's not satisfied but Houdini smiles and holds up a NEWSPAPER (perhaps left by one of the cops).

HOUDINI

You see this?

47 CONTINUED: (4)

47

ON the headline: *Little Blue Men Invade Woolpit.*

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

They think Martians are kidnapping
their kids.

As Doyle heads for the door...

HOUDINI (CONT'D)

Whaddaya say, double or nothing?

Something catches Doyle's eye...

The vase which now holds THREE SMALL DAISES.

DOYLE

You're on.

Doyle picks up one of the daisies -- a small moment of triumph --
and exits. OFF Houdini, feeling very satisfied--

48 INT. SCOTLAND YARD, BOWELS - NIGHT

48

Adelaide's at her desk. She looks up, surprised to see Deputy
Chief Inspector Merring approach, looking very uncomfortable.

MERRING

I'm moving you upstairs. Mr. Houdini
seems to think you did a good job.

Adelaide can't help but smile.

MERRING (CONT'D)

I therefore assume you're having an
affair and when I have proof, I'll
not only fire you but I'll make sure
no woman is ever hired again.

As he leaves, OFF Adelaide, rethinking her promotion--

49 INT. ANOTHER MEDIUM'S PARLOR - NIGHT

49

The CAMERA CREEPS through another darkened parlor to FIND
Doyle sitting across from yet ANOTHER MEDIUM.

DOYLE

I do have another question, yes.
About my wife. Do you think it's
possible you could contact her?

OFF Doyle, forever hopeful--

50 INT. HOUDINI'S HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

50

Now empty, the place feels cavernous, uninviting, like a museum after hours.

We FIND Houdini, opening a package to reveal a copy of Doyle's book, *The Great Boer War*.

Houdini reads Doyle's inscription: *Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth - Thoreau.* And it's signed, *Arthur Conan Doyle*.

Houdini smiles, then turns to a bookshelf and carefully shelves the book alongside every other book ever written by Doyle. Houdini has the entire collection.

He flinches as pain shoots through his body. He opens a drawer and removes an OPIUM PIPE. But before he lights it...

He hears the PIANO BEGIN TO PLAY. It's *When You Were Sweet Sixteen* hauntingly picked out on the keyboard. He turns to the GRAND PIANO at the far end of the room...

But there's not a soul in sight.

OFF Houdini as he stands and listens to the song, shaken--

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR