# THE BANKER'S QUIETUS



Case Seven
11 April, 1890



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*The world's first consulting detective, Sherlock Holmes, turns from the fire where he has restored some measure of warmth to his hands and comes to his seat before his morning breakfast. Sitting with us around the table are Inspector Lestrade and Dr. Watson.*

*"Well, Lestrade, what brings you to our humble abode on this cold, windy morning? An ill wind, I presume."*

*"You presume correctly, Mr. Holmes. Murder."*

*"Ah, indeed. Who was the victim and what are the details?"*

*"The victim was one Oswald Mason, Chief Accountant for the Bank of England. He was found murdered at his home at 10 o'clock last evening by his wife upon her return from an evening out. He seems to have been a simple, hard-working man, leading a quiet and unassuming life, and, on the surface, there seems to be no motive for the murder."*

*"Well, Lestrade, I don't think you came out on a morning like this just to tell me that you have a murder with no motive. I can't believe that Scotland Yard has exhausted all its resources and must now turn to me."*

*Lestrade does not immediately respond. He keeps his dark eyes focused on the plate of kippers in the centre of the table. After a moment, he raises his eyes and looks at Holmes. "You're right, Mr. Holmes. I think it's premature, but I am here at the request of the Exchequer. It seems that Mr. Mason was doing some work for the Treasury, and the Chancellor wants to make sure that Mason's death has nothing to do with the work he was involved in."*

*"Do you have any evidence that the murder was related to the Treasury matter?"*

*"No, none whatsoever. I tried to convince the Chancellor that unless some new evidence turns up it looks as if Mason's death is just another commonplace murder that I am sure the Yard can solve."*

*"I am sure, Lestrade, but as I have said before, and depend upon it, there is nothing so unnatural as the commonplace. Right at the moment I am finishing up a vexatious puzzle, so maybe my friends here will be able to look into the matter until I am free."*



# AREA SE

## 8 SE

*"I can only spare you a few minutes and then I have to get to rehearsal." Sandra Gamble brushes the blonde locks covering her eyes and adjusts her robe before letting us enter her room. "What can I do for you?"*

*"What can you tell us about Violette Blue?"*

*"Well, I've known her for about two years, ever since I arrived in London. We were roommates; that's how we met. She was looking for someone to spare her lodgings. It was a rough time for her. Her fiancé had just been arrested and she was taking it very hard. Then she started getting some good parts and her career took off. She has always been good to me, helping me get parts when she could. She got me the part as her understudy in this revue, so this has been a big break for me."*

*"I hope Miss Blue is not too ill."*

*"Ill? Oh, no. Her fiancé got out of prison two days ago and she wanted to spend a few days with him. Oh, dear, I shouldn't have said that. She told the manager that she was ill. You won't repeat that, will you?"*

*"No, your confidence is safe with us. So you know the name of Miss Blue's fiancé?"*

*"Yes, his name is Errol, Errol Hawk."*

## 11 SE

*Our knock is answered by a young man with pleasant, albeit unremarkable features.*

*"Mr. Hawkins?"*

*"Yes, can I help you?" Mr. Hawkins asks with a puzzled look on his face.*

*"Did you by any chance buy some statues at Evenson and Company Gift Store the day before yesterday?"*

*"No, I certainly did not. I never even heard of such a store. You must have the wrong person."*

*"Sorry to bother you."*

## 15 SE

*Minnie Race, the landlady, is busy sweeping the hallway dust through the front door where it momentarily rests upon the scoop before the April wind picks it up and redeposits it back in the hallway.*

*"Be careful, be careful, don't be trackin' dirt into me house. What's it you be wantin'?"*

*"We understand that Mrs. Small is one of your tenants."*

*"That she is, but she be at work now. Ev'r since her no-good husband died she's had to take care of the business, not that that crum was ev'r much help to her, always comin' home drunk and beatin' her. Aggie lost nothing when she lost him, I say, and were all better off with the likes of him gone. He never did a day's work in his life; Aggie did it all while Johnny an' those bums of his be sittin' in the pub all day. Never did an honest day's work in his life."*

## 18 SE

*At Mr. Kimbel's residence, we're informed that Mr. Kimbel is, as he is every day, at his office at the Bank of England.*

## 20 SE

*"Yeah, I knew John Small," answers Leroy Eakin to our question. Leroy is a small man with the muscular build of a labourer. "I don't see how that has anything to do with you."*

*"We would just like to ask you a few questions. We are trying to ascertain if there might be some connection between Mr. Small and a murder that took place last night."*

*"Boy, I'll tell you. Poor Johnny. Here he is dead a fortnight and being accused of a murder from the grave. When are you going to leave the poor man alone? You people hounded him all his life and now you won't let him rest in peace."*

*"You don't understand. We're not trying to implicate Mr. Small, it's just that our investigation has led us to J. Small and Company, and we are trying to gather information to see how it fits into our investigation."*

*"Then it may be Johnny's old lady that's involved. Gees, I'd do anything to get that bloody old bat. I still think she had something to do with Johnny's death."*

*"Oh, we were under the impression that Small died under natural circumstances."*

*"Yeah, well, that's what Aggie would like everyone to believe, but I don't. I went to St. Thomas Hospital and tried to talk to the doctors, but they wouldn't talk to me. Said there was no reason to suspect foul play. Well, I'll tell you what's foul, Aggie Small, that's what."*

*"Is that why she fired you? Because you accused her of having something to do with her husband's death?"*

*"That's one reason. Her and Johnny didn't get along too well. She blamed a lot of his troubles on his friends. She felt they had led Johnny astray."*

*"And had they?"*

*"Nobody led Johnny anywhere he didn't want to*

go. Sure, Johnny was wild, and I'm not saying he didn't break the law now and then, but growing up in the East End don't give you much respect for the law."

"Do you know of any crimes Mr. Small might have been involved in?"

"Hey, look, I told you I'm not interested in talking about the rumours in Johnny's past. I can see you're only interested in the lies about Johnny. I've said enough, now get out."

"Can sou tell us how to find Nat Cook?"

"No!" The door slams in our face.

## 29 SE

"Small, Small, ah, here it is." Doctor Yates pulls the file from the cabinet and glances through it. "Ah, yes, I remember this case. Small was run over by a delivery wagon. He sustained a broken neck and was dead on arrival. That's about it."

"So there was nothing suspicions in Small's death?"

"Suspicions? Not about his broken neck, it was broken. But the next day this strange little man came in claiming that Small's wife was responsible for her husband's death. I didn't pay much attention to him; death does strange things to the living. Then I talked to Mrs. Small. Her husband's death didn't seem to affect her, but it had a powerful effect upon me."

"What do you mean?"

"It is standard procedure to have the next of kin identify the remains of the deceased. It's the procedure we followed in Small's case. After showing Small's remains to his wife, I sat down with her to fill out the standard forms. I don't know what it was that aroused my suspicion; many things, I guess. The first thing she asked me was 'Do you know what caused his death?,' not 'What caused his death?'"

"I don't understand," says Wiggins.

"As I said before, death affects the living in strange ways, and you get used to that, but you also get a feeling for it. When I first sat down with Mrs. Small she seemed nervous and, ah, ill at case. All very normal under the circumstances, but when I told Mrs. Small that her husband's death was caused by a broken neck, she seemed relieved, almost lighthearted. She asked me to make the arrangements for the burial. That's the last I ever saw of her. She never picked up his belongings; they were sent over to our storerooms on Westminster.

"Something in the back of my mind made me uncomfortable. Possible chronic arsenical poisoning."

"Possible?"

"Yes, possible. Slow poisoning is hard to prove, but I found gastro-intestinal symptoms as well as skin rashes. I then tested the liver and found traces of arsenic. All consistent with being slowly poisoned."

"Did you inform the police?"

"No. His death wasn't caused by arsenic, but by a broken neck. I have no idea how he was being contaminated. It could have been through his work, through medication, any number of ways. Mrs. Small may have been indifferent to her husband's death, but that's not hard evidence of murder. Well, I don't think I can tell you anything more and I must get back to work. Good day."

"Thanks for your time, Doctor."

## 30 SE

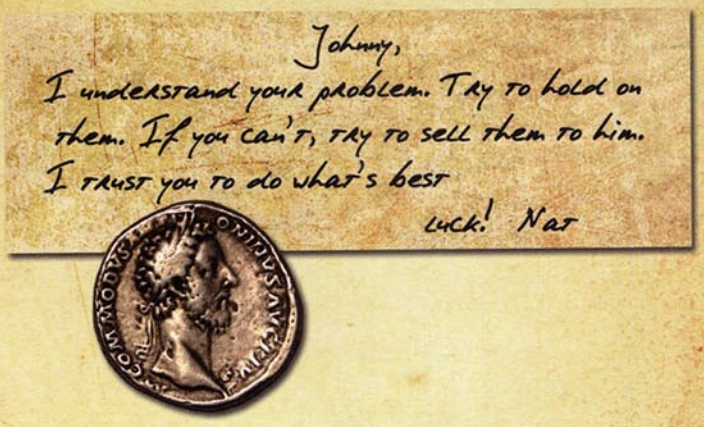
"Small, Jonathan. Personal effects. This must be what you're looking for." The clerk sets the box down in front of us. "Will you be taking them with you?"

"No, we just want to examine them."

"Sure would like to get rid of some of this junk. Don't know why we have to keep it around."

We find the following items among Small's personal effects:

1. One suit of men's clothing with the label Roberts & Parfitt.
2. An old Roman coin.
3. A letter, which reads as follows:




## 31 SE

"St. Thomas Hospital's storage rooms are across the street."

## 32 SE

On arriving at J. Small & Co. ceramics factory one of the workers directs us to Aggie Small who, he informs us, runs the company. She is small and wiry, and moves and speaks with authority. After we introduce ourselves she invites us into a small office cluttered with statuary, miniature reproductions of the world's great art.

"We are interested in obtaining some information on

*the Venus de Milo statues that your company manufactures."*

*"I must say, there certainly has been a lot of interest in those statues."*

*"Could you fill us in?"*

*"Wednesday, a nice gentleman, he said his name was Mr. Hawkins and that he had a shop in Southampton, came to the shop and was so taken by them that he wanted to buy all that I had. Unfortunately, I only had five left in stock, all of which he purchased. He was so impressed by them that he wanted to know where he could find the rest and see if he could buy them back. I told him I was planning to make more and if he could wait a week or so he could have all he wanted. He insisted he could not wait, and I gave him the names of the other buyers."*

*"Could you give us that information?"*

*"Yes, there were only two. Five went to Evenson and Company and five more to the gift shop of the British Museum."*

*"Have these statues always been so popular?"*

*"No. My husband made up fifteen of them three years ago but refused to sell them."*

*"Could we speak to your husband?"*

*"No, he died a fortnight ago."*

*"We're sorry to hear that."*

*"Well, I must say you are probably the only ones. You and the barman at the Red Boar Inn."*

## 34 SE

*The barman greets us amiably and becomes appreciatively talkative after we buy him a pint of bitters.*

*"Ah, old Johnny. He was a wild one, he was. Always expected him to come to a violent end. What a bloke he was."*

*"What could you tell us about him?"*

*"I could tell you a lot of stories, mates. The time he got the two women from the circus and..."*

*"These are not the stories we're interested in. What can you tell us about his business?"*

*"His business? Oh, you mean that ceramics, or whatever you call it, shop? I don't know much about that. He didn't seem to spend much time at it. I think he bought it to satisfy his old lady. Seems like she wanted something respectable. As if anything could've made Johnny respectable."*

*"What did he do before he acquired his ceramics shop?"*

*"Gees, mates, I don't know. I only met Johnny three years ago when he bought his shop. Now Ned, down at the end of the bar, he knew Johnny a long time. Used to work for him until the old lady fired him a few days ago. Want me to have him come down and join us?"*

*"Sure."*

*"Hey, Ned. Come on down here. These blokes want to buy you a pint."*

*Ned drains what is left of the drink in front of him and starts down to our end of the bar. He is a small man, dressed in well-worn work clothes, which are dirty and patched. By the time he reaches us a new pint is waiting, and the barman has taken his 4d. plus tip from the money we have left on the bar.*

*"Gentlemen, this is Ned Blake. Ned, they'd like to know something about Johnny Small."*

*"What do you want to know, mates?"*

*"We understand you knew Jonathan Small before he bought the ceramics works. Could you tell us anything about him?"*

*"I guess I ain't gonna do Johnny no harm now. Yeah, I known him a long time. We growed up together in the East End. He was older than me and I guess he got used to takin' care of me. I used to trail behind those 'Three Musketeers' as everybody used to call Johnny, Leroy Eakin and Nat Cook. I don't know how he made the money to buy the shop. There were tales about the Drummond's Bank robbery and other heists. I don't know for sure about any of this, but I know Johnny wasn't always on the right side of the law. But he was a good bloke, always took care of his mates. Gave me a job when he got the shop, and I held that up until last week when the missus fired me."*

*"Why did she do that?"*

*"She never did like me or any of Johnny's old friends that he hired to help out. So when he kicked off, she kicked us out. Me and old Leroy Eakin. He was Johnny's best friend. But she don't want no reminders of Johnny around."*

## 37 SE

*Constable Parks is standing at the entrance to the station. He recognizes us as we get out of our hansom.*

*"You're a little late, mates. Just missed all the excitement. Mr. Holmes and Inspector Lestrade just left with two reluctant companions. A young man and woman they were, and what a howl that woman put up. She was sure upset, she was. The young man tried to make a run for it but only got as far as the waiting arms of Dr. Watson."*

## 64 SE

*A somewhat reddish majordomo informs us that Sir Adrian Malmquist is at his office, at the Treasury.*

## 88 SE

*The Roberts & Parfit store fits right in with the swarming ambiance that reigns near the river. The store is literally packed with people. It's impossible for us to obtain information on Jonathan Small in such a crowd.*



# AREA SW

## 2 SW

*Langdale Pike seems surprised at our question. "Oswald and Rose Mason were, to state it simply, the most boring couple in London. Mrs. Mason was a thoroughly mediocre whist player, and Oswald rarely showed his face at social functions. In that regard we should figure ourselves lucky since, from what I understand, he was a dismal conversationalist and he laughed at all the wrong jokes. I can't imagine the man inspiring someone to murder."*

## 5 SW

*In Great Art Works of the World we find the listing:*

*Venus de Milo; probably the most admired of all surviving sculptural works of antiquity. Experts generally agree it is a Greek marble from the 4th or 5th century B.C. Found on the island of Melos in 1820, it was taken by the French ambassador to Constantinople, and eventually presented to the Louvre by Louis XVIII. It remains there to this day.*

## 8 SW

*We enter the hall of the Diogenes Club and are met by a doorman. He shows us into the Strangers' Room where he bids us wait while he informs Mr. Mycroft Holmes of our presence.*

*"Wiggins, how are you?" says Mycroft as he manoeuvres his large frame through the door. "I see you have your friends with you. Please be seated, all of you."*

*"Thank you, Mr. Holmes. We are assisting your brother in investigating..."*

*"The death of Oswald Mason. Since I audit the books for various government offices, I was sure Sherlock would want to talk to me about it."*

*"Did you know Mason?"*

*"We had worked together on a number of projects over the years. A good man with a good mind."*

*"Did you work with him on the Treasury project he was engaged in at the time of his death?"*

*"I had talks with him from time to time, but I had no official part in the investigation. Due to the political sensitivity of the situation, the Chancellor wanted an outside audit so there would be no question of 'withheld information.–*

*"Do you think Mason's murder was connected with the audit?"*

"No, I am sure there was no connection. In the first place, there are only a few people who knew what Mason was working on. In the second place, it would have accomplished nothing. We know who was responsible for the embezzlement. The only thing that had to be determined was how deep the damage went and what has to be done."

"Who is the embezzler?"

"Michael Essex and Mitchell Yourke, the Directors of Bacon and Company."

## 12 SW

Sir Adrian Malmquist, K.G., C.B., Under-Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, enters the conference room where we have been kept waiting for the last twenty minutes. He is as imposing in person as he is portrayed to be by the newspapers. At 39, he is one of the youngest members of the present government. He is tall, aristocratic in bearing and moves and talks with great energy.

"Sorry to keep you waiting, but my meeting with the Chancellor ran longer than expected. Throws my whole day's schedule off. "This won't take long, will it?"

"Well, we..."

"The Chancellor asked me to give you all the help I could," interrupts Sir Adrian as he paces up and down the room. "I only met the fellow four or five times. Capable fellow, very capable. Damned inconvenient this murder, damned inconvenient."

"What we..."

"Mason was to have a report for me dealing with some embarrassing irregularities. So far the loyal opposition hasn't got wind of the affair, and it is important that they don't until we have cleared it up and have apprehended the culprit. I assured the Chancellor that the matter would be concluded this week. Bloody inconvenient."

"Could we..."

"We have to get someone to replace Mason. Do you have any idea who murdered Mason? Has it anything to do with his work here?"

"That's what..."

"I must get..."

"Please, Sir Adrian. If you would just answer a few questions we may be able to throw some light on this matter. First, do you feel that Mason's death might have anything to do with his work at the Treasury?"

"I wish I could answer that. I never expected it. There is no question that the investigation dealt with large sums of money, but murder, it just doesn't fit. It won't stop the investigation, just delay it. The papers that Mason was working on are all accounted for, but again, we had copies of all the important papers in our files. So taking them would not have stopped the investigation or saved the culprit."

"That brings us to the next question. Do you have any suspicions as to who the guilty party might be?"

"No, I do not. You must understand the investigation has to come from the outside. The findings must be above reproach, with no question of political advantage. Therefore, I have stayed out of the investigation. All I can do is give you what facts I have."

"That would be a good start."

For the first time since he entered the room, Sir Adrian sits and faces us across the conference table. "Here are the facts. As you know, the Exchequer is responsible for all financial business, I should say the financial well-being, of the Empire. This year we were responsible for the distribution of some 600 million pounds. A large sum to keep check of, but we must.

"Six months ago it came to the government's attention that Bacon and Company, one of London 's largest investment houses, was in financial straits. Their difficulties had arisen because of their extensive commitments in South America, where political unrest, commercial instability and the often irresponsible financial policies of various republics have made any form of investment highly speculative. The firm is solvent, but it is not in possession of sufficient liquid assets to meet its current liabilities. South American politics features largely in the story. Bacon's dealings were with Foreign governments, the National Bank of Uruguay, the Buenos Aires Railways and several other such enterprises. Very early on, when the storm was brewing and it was known in the innermost City circles that Bacon's position was insecure, the Governor of the Bank of England, Lionel Foxcroft, had enquired of the Chancellor whether the Argentine Government might not be persuaded to deal in some way or other with the enormous bulk of discredited South American securities then weighing down the London stock market.

"The interest rates have been at five percent since the first of the year. If the market had to assume Bacon's losses, the interest rate might rise to six percent or even higher. Well, you know what that means."

"Not really. Can you tell..."

"That's what I am trying to do," says Malmquist as he squirms impatiently in his chair. "To make a long story short, Her Majesty's Government and the Bank of England have guaranteed to cover the 'discredited securities' held by Bacon and Company and their investors. An audit of Bacon's books showed short term

liabilities totalling 3,250,000 pounds. A reasonable price to pay for long term stabilization of the economy."

"Sounds good to us." We nod in agreement with 'Wiggins' concession.

"Yes, except for one problem. So far we have redeemed 4,570,000 pounds worth of securities. If the opposition finds out we could end up being the opposition next year. We'll save their Bacon, but damn if they'll profit by it!" Malmquist pushes back his chair, removes a gold watch from his pocket and opens it. "Well, that's all the time I have. Any help you can give us will be greatly appreciated. Good day."

"What are we looking for?"

"1,320,000 pounds! What else? The difference between what the audit showed on Bacon's books and the securities that have been redeemed."

"Where did these securities come from?"

"Damn it, that's what Mason was to tell me!" Sir Adrian bolts out of his chair. "Bloody inconvenient. I certainly hope Holmes will apply his considerable talents to this matter."

"I am sure Mr. Holmes will be interested in this matter if it will throw some light on Mr. Mason's death."

"Yes, of course, we are all concerned with solving Mason's murder. If we can solve the murder and clear up this matter at the same time, so much the better. Good day."

## 13 SW

Inspector Tobias Gregson, a tall, white-faced, flaxen-haired man, receives us in his office.

"I understand that you are helping Holmes in this matter. Well, I must say that Holmes has given me enough help in the past so I will try to answer your questions."

"Thank you. Would you please fill us in on what your investigation has turned up so far?"

"Gladly, although it isn't much. We have determined that entry was made through the upstairs bedroom window. We found footmarks in the flower bed by the back porch and paint scraped off the porch column indicating that the intruder climbed to the roof and the bedroom window. There are marks on the window where it was forced. We then assume that he made his way downstairs, thinking the house was empty. When he opened the study door he came face to face with Mr. Mason, and a fight ensued that ended in Mason's death... the murderer panicked and fled through the study window. That's how we see it."

"Was anything taken? Was there anything worth taking?"

"Well, according to Mrs. Mason, nothing was taken. It is true that she is still very upset, but we did an inventory of her jewellery, which was in their bedroom, and she said it was all accounted for. There were some very valuable pieces, family heirlooms. As far as we can tell, the room wasn't even searched."

"What about the rest of the house?"

"Nothing taken. Nothing of any great value. Some silver, a stamp collection, but all in order."

"What about the government papers that Mason was working on that night?"

"Yes, that was our first thought. As for the papers themselves, they seem to be all accounted for. They were found scattered around the room. We assume they were scattered during the fight. We sent the papers to the Treasury, and I have just heard from them that all the papers are in order. Of course, we have not eliminated the possibility that his work for the Treasury was the reason for the murder."

## 19 SW

Michael Essex is an obviously sick old man, probably closer to 70 than to 60.

"Mr. Essex, we are investigating the death of Oswald Mason. He was working on an audit of Bacon and Company at the time of his death, and we would like to ask you some questions about your company."

"I have nothing to say to you. You can cake any questions to my barrister, Charles Attard."

## 22 SW

We find Dr. H.R. Murray in his laboratory as usual, his white hair wisping wildly about his face.

"What case are you young sleuths working on today?"

"The Oswald Mason murder. Do you have anything to help us?"

"Mason, looks like your Mr. Mason was killed by 'The Man with the Broken Nose.'"

"The man with the broken nose? You mean you know who the murderer is?"

"No, no, not the murderer, the murder weapon." With this, old Murray picks up a marble statue with a cracked head more obvious than a broken nose. "This is a copy of a very early Rodin, 'The Man with the Broken Nose,' sculpted in 1864. You can see the bloodstain here. I understand that this was one of two statues on the fireplace mantel. Apparently the intruder grabbed this one and killed Mason in the struggle. Not much else I can tell you."

"Well, thanks anyway."

## 23 SW

Andrew Devine, the warden of Millbank Prison, re-enters his office where he had asked us to wait. "I am sorry to keep you waiting. I notified Nat Cook that you wished to see him, but he informed me that he doesn't wish to see anyone. You understand that I cannot force him to see you. Is there anything else that I can help you with?"

"What can you tell us about him? What type of prisoner is he?"

"He hasn't given us any trouble, but he hasn't gone out of his way to be cooperative. As you may know, the diamonds from the De Vries robbery have never been recovered, and Cook shows no indication of telling us their whereabouts. I dare say, it must make prison life much easier knowing that there are 100,000 pounds worth of diamonds waiting for you when you get out. He keeps pretty much to himself. The only confidante he seems to have acquired was his cell mate, Errol Hawk. Hawk was released Monday, and we are now thinking of planting one of our men as Cook's new cell mate, hoping he will be able to gain his confidence and learn the whereabouts of the gems. But, to be perfectly frank with you, we are no closer to finding the diamonds, or Cook's accomplices. I am afraid, gentlemen, that's all I can tell you."

## 34 SW

Three years after the fact, Bernard Nims, general manager of De Vries, still gets a pained expression on his face when the robbery is mentioned.

"I will never forget that day. It only took 15 minutes and the Five Sisters were gone. We still haven't recovered from the loss."

"Surely they were insured?"

"Insured, of course, but no amount of money can replace the loss of the gems. Each gem has a soul of its own."

"Soul?"

"Yes. All gems have a soul. No two gems are exactly alike. The Five Sisters were a beautiful match, but part of the beauty was the small individual differences to be found in each gem of such a perfectly matched set. Each diamond was 20 carats, a masterpiece of nature."

"They have never been recovered?"

"No. Not a trace. We follow the black market as best we can, but no sign as yet. Lloyd's offered a reward for the return of the stones, and we even offered to go above the amount of the insurance settlement. But no one took up the offer. I did think we had a chance when, what was his name, oh, yes, Nat Cook. When he was arrested. We offered him a reward, even offered to try and get the charges dropped or reduced. He still wouldn't talk, denied he took part on the robbery."

"How can we be sure he was one of the robbers?"

"I am sure. I was the one who identified him. It was right before closing time when two men entered the shop. They had masks covering their faces. They told me to get the Five Sisters from the sale. Nothing else, just the Five Sisters. They had guns, and as much as I loved the gems, I love my life more. As I handed them over they made for the door.

Cook held the door open for his accomplice, who held the diamonds. As they were going into the street they removed their masks. Cook then looked back into the shop, and I got a good look at his face. There's no doubt that it was Cook."

"Then there were two involved in the robbery?"

"Three counting the hansom driver. As soon as they walked out of the shop they got into a waiting hansom which drove off at great speed. There were other suspects, friends of Cook, but no proof could be found, and as long as Cook didn't talk the others were free."

## 50 SW

"I would like nothing more than to be able to assist in the identification of my brother's assailant. However, I doubt that I know anything of importance in this case. We have always been very close and he did not indicate that he feared for his safety."

"Do you know anything about his work for the Treasury?"

"He has only spoken of the matter in very general terms. I know only that it involved some irregularities in certain government accounts."

Cecil Mason allows a faint smile to show itself for the first time during our interview. "What a cruel mistress is fate. Oswald had planned a trip for himself and Rose. He was to have surprised her with the tickets at a small family celebration this weekend. He had so enjoyed baffling Rose with no hint of a gift other than the Venus de Milo replica. I am glad he confided in me, so that no doubt could possibly remain on this subject."

# AREA NW

## 8 NW

*Constable Lane answers the door himself. "Hello, you and Holmes aren't leaving any stones unturned in the Mason case, I see. Come in."*

*"Can you tell us what happened last night in Tottenham Court-road?"*

*"I doubt I can add anything new, but I will be glad to tell you. I was having a quiet evening, just making my rounds, when I heard a woman's screams for help. I was just around the corner on Torrington so I was at her door in a flash. I think you already know what I found at the Mason home. The study was a shambles. Mason was dead, but the body was still quite warm."*

*"What about Mrs. Mason?"*

*"She was quite upset, of course, but I was able to get the basic facts of the evening from her. How is the investigation proceeding? I bet you Inspector Gregson is scratching his head over this one."*

*"We have a couple of leads. With Holmes on the case, the Yard has nothing to worry about. The culprit will certainly be apprehended. Thanks for your time."*

*"Not at all."*

## 13 NW

*"It sounds like you're looking for Violette Blue," responds the doorman. "That's her on the poster. Beautiful woman, isn't she? She's not on the stage tonight, wasn't yesterday either."*

*"Do you know why?"*

*"The manager said she's ill. Sandra Gamble is her stand-in. She's a real beauty herself. You should catch the act, you won't be disappointed."*

## 18 NW

*We ask Sam Parsons if there are any messages for us. "Odd it was," he says. "'You know who' came in yesterday, looked around for a while, and then left without leaving a message. He was acting nervous; I think he was being followed. So, nothing today."*

## 22 NW

*We browse around the shop for a few minutes as Mr. Rodney Dachauer, the shopkeeper, concludes a sale of a small blown-glass bird to a young bird-like woman. When she leaves we introduce ourselves to Mr. Dachauer. "We are looking into the murder of Mr. Oswald Mason. Among his papers was a receipt from this shop dated March 31. Can you tell us what he purchased?"*

*"Oh, yes, here it is," he says as he consults his sales records. "He bought two Venus de Milo statues. We delivered them for him."*

*"Where were they delivered?"*

*"They were shipped separately, on Mr. Mason's instructions, one to Mrs. Rose Mason on 42 Tottenham Court-road and the other to a Mrs. Mabel Brown of 40 Devonshire. Those statues have certainly proved to be good sellers. I sold the remaining three to another gentleman Wednesday. I surely hope that I will be able to get more from the manufacturer."*

*"And who might that be?"*

*"J. Small and Company."*

*"Thank you very much, Mr. Dachauer. You have been most helpful."*

*"Not at all."*

## 31 NW

*Mr Smith is a man in his fifties, with imposing red hair and bushy sideburns.*

*"I'm sorry," he answers when we ask him about his wife, "but I'm not married."*

## 36 NW

*Marshall Guilfoyle, manager of the Langham, talks to us in the hotel lobby. "Yes, I knew Mr. Mason. He often used our conference rooms for his business meetings."*

## 40 NW

*We are met at the door of Mrs. Brown's lodgings by her landlady, Mrs. Quinn. After introducing ourselves we inquire if Mrs. Brown is in.*

*"Yes, she is. Poor dear. I've been so worried about her. She hasn't eaten in days, and she didn't go into work today." "Has she been with you long?"*

*"Close to three years, ever since she married Sam. It must be hard on her, Sam being gone so much. He's a merchant seaman with Jardine's, you know."*

*"No, we didn't know. Have you known him long?"*

*"Oh, my, yes. Ever since he was a baby. His mother, God rest her soul, was my dearest friend. Sam has been like a son to me ever since Martha passed away, almost ten years ago now. Oh, where does the time go. Here we are. This is the door to Mabel's rooms. Mabel, dear, there are some people here to see you about poor*

Mr. Mason's death."

"I'll be right there," comes a voice from behind the door. Seconds later the door is opened by a young woman in her early twenties. She has flowing black hair which emphasizes the delicate beauty of her ivory complexion. "Please come in."

"If you need anything, dear, just ring," says Mrs. Quinn who has already started back down the stairs.

"How can I help you?" asks Mabel Brown as we enter the room, and she closes the door behind us.

"We understand that you have heard of Mr. Mason's death."

"Yes, this morning. Joanna, Miss Baily, from the office stopped by and told me the bad news. Ned, Mr. Kimbel, gave her the day off and she stopped by to tell me."

"How long have you been Mr. Mason's secretary?" "Three years, ever since my graduation from Bedford." "Do you know of any reason why anyone would want to murder Mr. Mason?"

"Oh, no! He was such a nice man. He was so considerate. Always remembering everyone's birthday. Last week he gave me a lovely little statue." At this point the tears she has been trying to hold back begin to trickle down her cheeks. "And last night it fell off the table and broke as if it were an omen of his death. Joanna woke me this morning and told me of Mr. Mason's death. As we were talking I turned and saw the broken Venus on the floor, and it struck me as so sad." With this last she breaks into loud sobs. "I am sorry."

"That's alright, we understand. We are sorry to have to intrude at this time, but we have to check with everyone who might shed some light on this tragedy."

"I want to help. Please go on."

"Do you know of anyone at the Bank who might have wished harm on Mr. Mason or anything involving his work that would lead to his murder?"

"No. As I said before he was very considerate of everyone. He was well liked. His work was mainly routine and concerned primarily with the operation of bank audits. He has been involved of late with some work for the Treasury, but I know little of that. Mr. Kates might know more. But he often did work for government agencies. No, there is nothing I can think of that would cause such a consequence."

"Well, thank you for your help. We hope you will soon be feeling better."

"Thank you. I will ring for Mrs. Quinn to show you out." We meet Mrs. Quinn outside the door and she leads us down the stairs.

"I hope Mabel isn't in any trouble."

"No, not at all. Just routine," we assure her.

"She has had so many problems of late. She and Sam always fighting when he is home and then being gone for such long periods of time. A hard life for both of them. I heard her crying last night after she came in. I should have tried to comfort her, but I was already in bed. Life is hard. Well, have a good day."

## 42 NW

We find Holmes in the middle of examining the shelf of his library containing his archives of the Times. "What now, Wiggins, you already have no more inspiration about this case?"

"It's difficult for us to figure out the various motives which could be behind this murder," admits Wiggins with a somewhat embarrassed air. "The world of finance is somewhat alien to us."

Turning to us, Holmes seems a bit disappointed. "But it's so simple. In a case like this one, it's normal to apply the basic methods of an investigation. The scene of the crime should bring indications regarding the modus operandi of the culprit, or at the very least some traces and useful clues, if the newspaper is to be believed. Then, it follows that you should inquire as to his work habits with his employers, and his colleagues. I think you'll quickly come to a conclusion about a possible link between the death of Mason and his work."

"I'll leave you to think over these few ideas, Wiggins" says Holmes as he turns back to his library.

"Let's see, March, March... that case dates back so long ago, already..."

## 44 NW

The Registrar finds the school records of Mabel Jenkins Brown. "Here it is. She graduated December, 1886, with quite a good record. She was 18th in her class. Our last entry shows that she was working for the Bank of England."

## 47 NW

The butler shows us into the library of the Smedley mansion. Dame Agnes Smedley proudly displays her unblemished Venus safely resting under a glass-domed case in the centre of a large table covered by miniature reproductions of the world's great artworks.

# AREA WC

## 3 WC

*Willoughby Smith is absent. His majordomo explains to us that he'd at the Abney Park cemetery, as this day is the anniversary of his wife's death.*

## 5 WC

*One cabbie remembers taking on a fare at around 9,50 last night near the corner of Tottenham Court-road and Torrington-place. "A right fancy-lookin' lady, it was. All decked out with white gloves an' high heels an' such. Not in a rush at all. Stopped an' chatted a bit. Said she was off to party of some sort. Dropped 'er off at Charing Cross Station, I did. A dainty young thing – a fine tipper too."*

## 12 WC

*Mrs. Oswald Mason was a regular player in the weekly whist game and had left about 9 o'clock last night.*

## 14 WC

*Disraeli O'Brian shows us the files on the names we had requested:*

*Nat Cook – Convicted of stealing diamonds in 1887. Awaiting release from Millbank Prison.*

*Leroy Eakin – Convicted of pickpocketry in 1878. Served one year. Arrested in connection with armed robbery attempt in 1883. Tried and acquitted. Cited for public drunkenness and disturbing the peace, twice in 1882, once each in 1885 and 1886.*

*Jonathan Small – Convicted of selling stolen goods in 1880. Served six-month prison term. Cited on public drunkenness and disturbing the peace in 1885 and 1886 and twice in 1882. Suspect in the Drummond's Bank robbery 1886. Never brought to trial.*

## 17 WC

*We finally find the door marked Audit Office and enter. Wiggins at last gains the attention of the harried clerk. "Excuse me, we're assisting Scotland Yard in a murder investigation and are interested in a government audit. Can you help us?"*

*"What year?"*

*"This year, now. The Bacon & Company audit."*

*"Oh, we can't discuss that particular audit, I'm afraid. You will have to talk to Sir Adrian Malmquist himself at the Treasury. But I don't know if he will talk to you or not."*

## 19 WC

*The Romano restaurant is clearly a chic place, but full of simplicity. The staff at the entrance were extremely eager to answer our queries.*

*"I actually do have a reservation under the name of Mr Mason and Kempfield for last night. The two men stayed until about half past nine."*

## 20 WC

*We are informed that due to the advice of their solicitor, the directors of Bacon & Company will not discuss the matter now under investigation.*

## 26 WC

*At the Drummond bank, the director greets us in a large office.*

*"I'm not really aware of this robbery case, as I arrived here only last year."*

## 33 WC

*Mrs. Rose Mason, her face pale against the black of her mourning dress, joins us in the parlour. She is a handsome woman in her late thirties. We offer our condolences before asking the deceased accountant's wife to tell us just what she remembers of the previous evening's events.*

*"I went to the West End Social Club for my weekly whist game as I do every Thursday night. I left Oswald alone at home working on the papers he had brought there from the office. He's been so busy lately that he has had time for very little other than work. When I returned home about ten o'clock, I went immediately to the study." Mrs. Mason almost loses her composure but continues stoically, "The place was such a mess! Books were strewn about, furniture overturned, and there in the midst of the wreckage was poor Oswald! I can't think of who would want to hurt him. He was the dearest man on earth. Why only last week he gave me a Venus de Milo replica to commemorate our seventeenth wedding anniversary. We spent our honeymoon in Paris, and we often went to the Louvre to see the original. When I saw the statue broken into pieces...." The rest of her sentence is lost in her sobs.*

*"We're sorry to trouble you at this time. We know it's hard on you, but we only have one or two more questions." "No, please, I want to help."*

*"Was your husband expecting any visitors last night?"*

*"No. In fact he was looking forward to being alone. He said he only had a few hours' work left and that he could do the report for the Treasury at the bank the next day. Cecil, his brother, was to give us an anniversary party on Friday, and he..." Mrs. Mason is unable to continue. Tearfully, she leaves the room on the arm of her sister.*

## 38 WC

*"Yes, we received a shipment of statues from J. Small and Company. I remember it well, five reproductions of the Venus de Milo. As a matter of fact, we sold the last four to-day. All to the same person, a beautiful young lady, with long red hair and fair skin, who gave her name as Mrs. Smith. I am sure I have seen her on the stage, though not under that name, but for the life of me, I can't remember what her name is."*

*"Do you know who purchased the other statue?"*

*"Yes, I do. Mrs. Smith asked the same question. It was purchased by Dame Smedley on April 3."*

## 42 WC

*Constable Parks, on duty at the Mason house, shows us the study, the scene of the crime. We find the study in shambles. The office chair has fallen back and all elements which were on the desk are scattered on the ground. The inkwell has spilled its contents on the carpet and the stain has extended to a book which was apparently on the desk. The knickknacks from the commode have also been knocked over, but the furniture from the back of the room is intact. At the foot of the window, we also find the fragments of a completely destroyed plaster statuette.*

*Wiggins is near the window, a magnifying glass in hand, examining the windowsill.*

*"There's a palm print here on the window sill. It looks like it was left in a residue of plaster dust," says Wiggins as he replaces his magnifying glass in his coat pocket. "Where was the body found, Parks?"*

*"It was sprawled across the desk. You can see the blood stain on the top. The blighter put up quite a fight, I must say."*

*"How was he killed?"*

*"Head was bashed in by a statue. It was sent over to the lab for old Murray to look at."*

*"Is there any indication of how the murderer got into the house?"*

*"It looks as if he entered by the upstairs window. It was found open and it shows signs of forced entry."*

*"Who found the body?"*

*"His wife. She said she was at her weekly whist game at the West End Social Club. She arrived home around 10 o'clock and found her husband dead."*

*"Did she see anyone in or around the house?"*

*"She said she saw and heard nothing."*

*"Is the room as she found it?"*

*"Yes. She said that as soon as she saw her husband lying sprawled across the desk she ran outside for help. Constable Lane came at the sound of her cries and took charge. The only things removed were the body, which was taken to Bart's, and some of Mr. Mason's papers which were taken to Scotland Yard. Oh, yes, and the statue which was sent to the Criminology Lab."*

*"And where is Mrs. Mason?"*

*"She was in a state of shock and was taken to her sister, Mrs. Edward Farmer."*

## 51 WC

*We knock on the door of Flavius Nast's residence, but no one answers.*

*"Hmm, at this time of the day, he might be at his office," sighs Wiggins.*

## 60 WC

*Brenda Smith's maid tells us that Mrs. Smith is on vacation on the continent and has been for the past two weeks.*



## AREA EC

### 6 EC

*A young well-groomed Richard Kates invites us in after we introduce ourselves.*

*"I really don't know what I can tell you. Mr. Mason was always a perfect gentleman and was truly well liked at the bank."*

*"Can you tell us anything about the work he had taken home with him yesterday?"*

*"No, I'm afraid not. I sometimes worked very closely with him on projects, but in this case he was handling it all himself. He had turned over much of the routine work to me, encouraging me to take responsibility and make decisions. But I know nothing more than that he was working directly for the Chancellor of the Exchequer on this highly confidential project. Perhaps Mr. Kimbel could tell you more."*

### 15 EC

*A check of the personnel lists shows that Sam Brown left on the Nanking on 3 March. The ship is scheduled to arrive in Hong Kong on 28 April.*

### 18 EC

*"Please come in and have a seat." An energetic woman with extraordinary, big hazel eyes ushers us into a small parlour. She is in her mid-forties, but her greying hair is less noticeable than her spirit of youthfulness. "Isn't it terrible! 'The good the young,' they say. They certainly don't come any better than Mr. Mason."*

*"Miss Baily, is there anything you can tell us about Mr. Mason's work or his personal relationships which might aid us in our investigation?"*

*"No, I can't imagine anyone wanting to kill that nice man. I went into work early to-day and Mr. Kimbel told me the tragic news and gave us the day off. I was so upset when I heard the news that I went by to see Mabel, Mabel Brown. Poor Mabel seems to be having such a hard time. I know she has not been entirely happy with her husband Sam. It must be difficult with him at sea so much. When I told Mabel about poor Mr. Mason she was shocked."*

*"Thank you, Miss Baily. If you think of anything else which might help, please let us know."*

*"Yes, of course. I certainly hope you catch that killer. London's just not safe anymore."*

### 22 EC

*"Wiggins, how nice to see you. What can I do for you today?"*

*"Hello, Mr. Allen. We have some questions about the investment house, Bacon and Company, and their involvement in South American stock issues. What can you tell us about this situation?"*

*"The Government is making a mess of the affair, as usual. There certainly were 'irregularities', but it's common knowledge that the culprits are members of Bacon's own house, although I wouldn't want to name any names. The Government should have simply suspended trading in those stocks months ago. A few innocent investors might have lost a bit, quite a bit for some, but the Government wouldn't be courting the disaster they have been. Lord Salisbury's party almost caused a fiasco, but the marketplace is strong enough to handle this type of situation."*

*"Thank you for your time, Mr. Allen."*

*"You're welcome. And the offer for the tour of the Exchange is still good."*

### 23 EC

*Mr. Ned Kimbel, the Chief Cashier of the Bank, receives us in his office. We find him behind a massive desk which does his large frame justice, as we reckon his bulk to be well over 15 stones in weight. The silver-haired Kimbel greets us affably, although he speaks with gravity and a shake of his head at the tragedy of Mason's murder. "I just can't imagine why anyone would want to do such a thing. He was certainly well-liked by all of his fellow workers here at the bank."*

*"How long has he been with the Bank of England?"*

*"He started with us more than fifteen years ago. He has always been one of our most trusted and valued employees, and five years ago he was enthusiastically approved as a choice for Chief Accountant despite his relative youth. As you may know, the bank is controlled by its Directors. But they have little to do with the day-to-day operation of business. That is my responsibility. Mason was my second in command."*

*"Was he ever involved in any controversy or quarrel over bank business of which you are aware?"*

*"Most certainly not. As I said, he was well-liked and did his job superbly."*

*"What do you know about his work with the Treasury?"*

*"Very little. One of our responsibilities is to oversee government audits. This was Oswald's area of respon-*

*sibility. This work is highly confidential. You will have to talk to the Governor, Lionel Foxcroft, if you have questions about this. I'm sorry, that's all I know."*

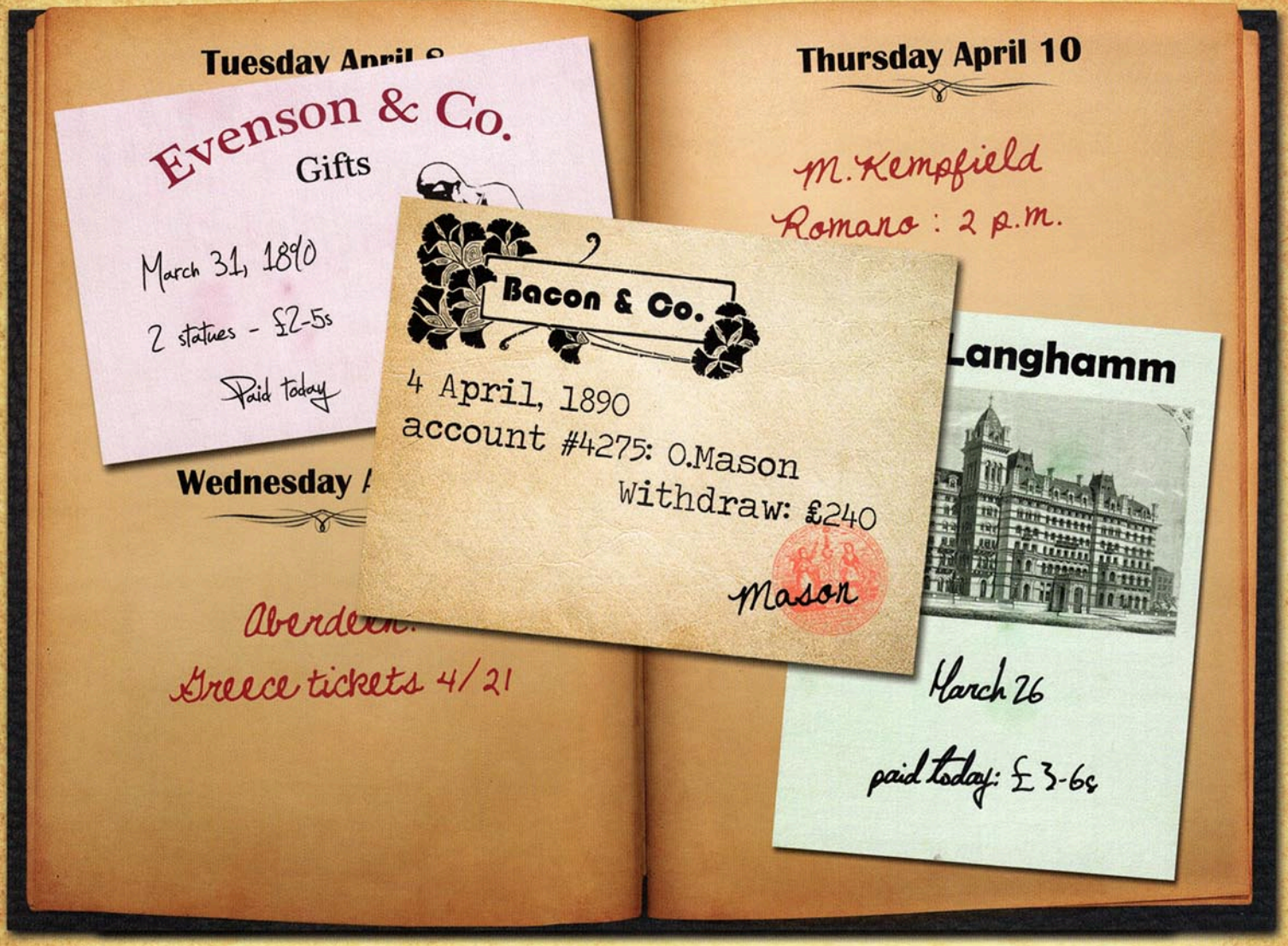
*"Would you object to our checking out his office?"*

*"No, I suppose that would be acceptable. I thought that Mason's secretary, Mrs. Mabel Brown, would be the best person to sort through his papers, but as she reported in ill to-day, nothing has been done in that regard."*

*"Could you give us a list of the other members of Mason's staff?"*

*"Yes, I would be glad to. None of them are here right now as I gave them the day off." He takes the pen out of his inkwell and begins to write. "If I can give you any further assistance, please let me know." With these words he hands us the following list and shows us the door: Richard Kates, Mason's Assistant - Miss Joanna Baily, Head Clerk - Mrs. Mabel Brown, Mason's Secretary*

*A check of Mason's desk reveals the following items:*



## 26 EC

*Oswald Mason, purchased two tickets on the Grecian Queen, departing April 21st, bound for Athens.*

## 29 EC

*We knock on the door of Flavius Nast's residence, but no one answers.*

*"Hmm, at this time of the day, he might be at his office," sighs Wiggins.*

## 30 EC

*"The Mason Case? Oh, the accountant chap, right. Don't worry yourself over that one," grins Harry Ellis. "Some of the fellows here in the office were gabbing about some work he was doing for the Government, but that has nothing to do with it. From what I understand, nothing he was working on was worth killing him. It's only paperwork that some other accountant could do if Mason died. No, what you have is a simple case of breaking and entering. What the thief was trying to steal – now that's another question entirely."*

## 35 EC

*We find Quintin Hogg busily at work. His desk is covered with paper, folders and newspapers. His head is resting on his left hand, his right is beating out a steady cadence with the pencil it holds. He doesn't notice us standing at the door until Wiggins calls his name. Hogg's eyes, which had been fixed on the papers in front of him, now focus on us.*

*"Ah, Wiggins. Come in, if you can find space."*

*"Thanks." We all make our way into the cluttered office. Hogg pushes his chair away from his desk and leans back in his chair, replacing his pencil with a cigarette.*

*"Keeping you busy, Quin?" asks Wiggins.*

*"To be sure, but it is because of Holmes that I'm in this mess." With a sweep of his hand over the cluttered desk he lets us know that this is the mess of which he speaks. "You know, Wiggins, how Holmes is always ranting and raving about Moriarty and 'how his organization covers the city of London like a spider's web.' Well, to be perfectly honest with you, I didn't take it very seriously, but now I'm convinced he is right. I've been going over a number of cases and a pattern is discernible in many of these crimes. What I am finding is that it extends into the Justice System itself, with some very well-known solicitors, barristers and maybe even a judge or two on the payroll of Moriarty. My God, I'm starting to sound like Holmes. I cannot trace anything on Moriarty, but I'm starting to believe in him."*

*"I am sure that Holmes will be interested in anything you uncover. Do you plan to do an article on Moriarty?"*

*"That's the frightening thing! I can't find any evidence that leads to Moriarty and if I said otherwise I would end up in court for slander, and I might be the one who ends up in Millbank."*

*"Who got you started on this?"*

*"Remember the murder a couple of years ago of the hansom driver? The one with the bag of Roman coins around his neck? Well, Holmes is still working on that one and we have had some talks about it. I couldn't understand why he was so interested in it and I sort of put it out of my mind. Then I started to notice these Roman coins appearing on the bodies of murder victims every now and then. Knowing how much Holmes likes these little problems, I mentioned it to him. Of course, he already knew about it and he felt they were used by Moriarty as a sign whenever he murdered someone who crossed his organization.*

*"It's like a jigsaw puzzle, Wiggins. I have a lot of the pieces and some of them are going together, but I can't tell what the final picture will look like."*

*"Maybe Holmes can put some of the pieces together for you."*

*"You know Holmes. He loves to see us lesser mortals sweat a little. He gives me enough help to keep me going, enough information to keep me on the track, hoping that we will turn up that one little piece of information that he doesn't have which will clear up the mystery. Oh well, that's what the game is about.*

*"Speaking of mysteries, what are you working on?"*
*"The murder of Oswald Mason."*

*"Yes, I read about that in The Times. Anything of interest there?"*

*"I was hoping you could tell us."*

*"Sorry, don't know anything about it. Let me know if it's anything I should look into."*

*"Will do. Thanks Quin."*

*"Hey, Wiggins," shouts Hogg as we are leaving. "Any Roman coins found on the body?"*

*"Not that I know of."*

*"Damn, don't know if it makes me happy or not."*

## 36 EC

*Edward Hall remembers Johnny Small, Leroy Eakin and Nat Cook. "They were petty criminals. Did it for fun more than anything else. No one took*

*them seriously until a few major robberies three or four years ago. They were among the prime suspects, but there was insufficient evidence for a conviction or even an arrest. Then Cook was caught in a jewel heist – that broke that gang up. I haven't seen any of them coming through here since then."*

## 38 EC

*Sir Jasper looks up from the report he is writing as we enter. "Hello, come in. If you keep company with Holmes much longer I think you'll soon know more of murder than I. What can I do for you?"*

*"We're investigating the death of Oswald Mason. Have you done the autopsy, Doctor?"*

*"Yes, I did it first thing this morning. I was just finishing the report. Let's see. The body of Oswald Mason arrived at the hospital at half-past midnight, 11 April. The deceased was in his early forties, in good health. Death was caused by a blow to the side of the head by a heavy blunt object. Death probably occurred in a matter of a very few minutes. Blood found on his knuckles and under his fingernails was of a different blood type than his own."*

*Sir Jasper lays the paper aside and looks up. "Nothing very exciting or informative, I'm afraid."*

*"Thanks anyway."*

*"Anytime, and good luck."*

## 46 EC

*Lionel Foxcroft, Governor of the Bank of England, stands in front of his window looking into the court yard. At our entrance he turns and addresses us. "Please sit down. I understand that you are looking into Oswald's death. I will give you all the help I can. What is it that you want to know?"*

*"Well, the obvious question is who killed Oswald Mason?"*

*"I wish I knew. He was a good man and I can't imagine anyone who would want to murder Oswald. 'We had great hope for him here at the Bank."*

*"We understand that Mr. Mason was working on a special assignment at the Treasury."*

*"Yes, he was."*

*"Could there be any connection between Mason's assignment at the Treasury and his murder?"*

*"Mmm...I wouldn't think so. Great sums of money were involved, it's true, but I don't think there's any connection. Very few people knew of Mason's involvement in the investigation – no reason that they should.*

*"Who knew?"*

*"Well, to my knowledge, there were only three people who knew what he was working on for the Treasury. Sir Adrian Malmquist, at the Treasury, Richard Kates, Mason's assistant, and myself."*

*"Could you tell us what Mason was working on?"*

*"It is rather complicated, but if you think it will help, I'll try. To understand what is involved you must understand that the history of the Bank, financially, is to all intents and purposes nothing more than a history of the Bank Rate and that's what this whole investigation is concerned with. Since the Bank Act of 1844, the interrelationship between the Bank and the Government has become more intertwined. I am sure you understand the significance of the interest rate on the business of and thus, the well-being of the Empire. And the most important factor influencing that Bank Rate is stability–"*

*"Uh, Mr. Foxcroft, I think that's all we need to know at this time. You've been most, uh, informative. Good day."*

## 48 EC

*"Yes, I am. Michael Kempfield. What can I do for you?" "We are investigating the murder of Oswald Mason. Did you see him recently?"*

*"Isn't that terrible! I was so shocked by the news. Yes, I saw Ozzie just yesterday. We had a late lunch together. Why?"*

*"Did he say anything which might have indicated that he was worried or that he feared for his life?"*

*"No, nothing at all. I thought the police suspected a burglar. Why would anyone want to murder Oswald?"*

*"The police do suspect a burglar, but we have to check out every angle. Did you see each other often? Is there anything at all that you can tell us?"*

*"We got together much less often than either of us wished. We were friends at school and have maintained that friendship for over twenty years. Ozzie didn't seem worried at all yesterday. He was looking forward to finishing a project at work and taking Rose to Greece. It's always so hard to see someone one day, a vital, alive person, and to realize the next that they're gone. How is Rose taking all this? I really must call on her."*

*"She's staying with her sister. Thank you for your help, Mr. Kempfield. If you think of anything which might help, anything at all, please let us know."*

## 49 EC

*Alfie Kent, the doorman, informs us that Violette Blue does have rooms there, but is not in at present. A bob convinces Alfie to show us Violette's rooms.*

*As we enter Violette Blue's rooms we are immediately struck by their chaotic disarray. Near the fireplace grate lie the shattered remains of at least ten Venus de Milos. On a nearby table are two wrapped packages bearing the label of the British Museum which, when opened, reveal another pair of Venus statues.*

*A check of the bedroom shows dresser drawers open and empty. The wardrobe had been stripped of its contents. The remaining three odd shoes and faded house coat are the only indicators of the departed occupant's feminine gender.*

*"If it's Miss Violette you be wantin' I might be able ta help you out, mates."*

*Another bob to Alfie and his tongue begins ta wag. "Miss Violette left about twenty minutes ago in the company of a young gent. Quite a hurry they was in. I'd say, maybe trying to catch a train. I was putting their luggage in a four-wheeler, and I hears the young man tell the cabbie to take 'em to Waterloo Station."*

*"Thanks, Alfie, much obliged."*

## 52 EC

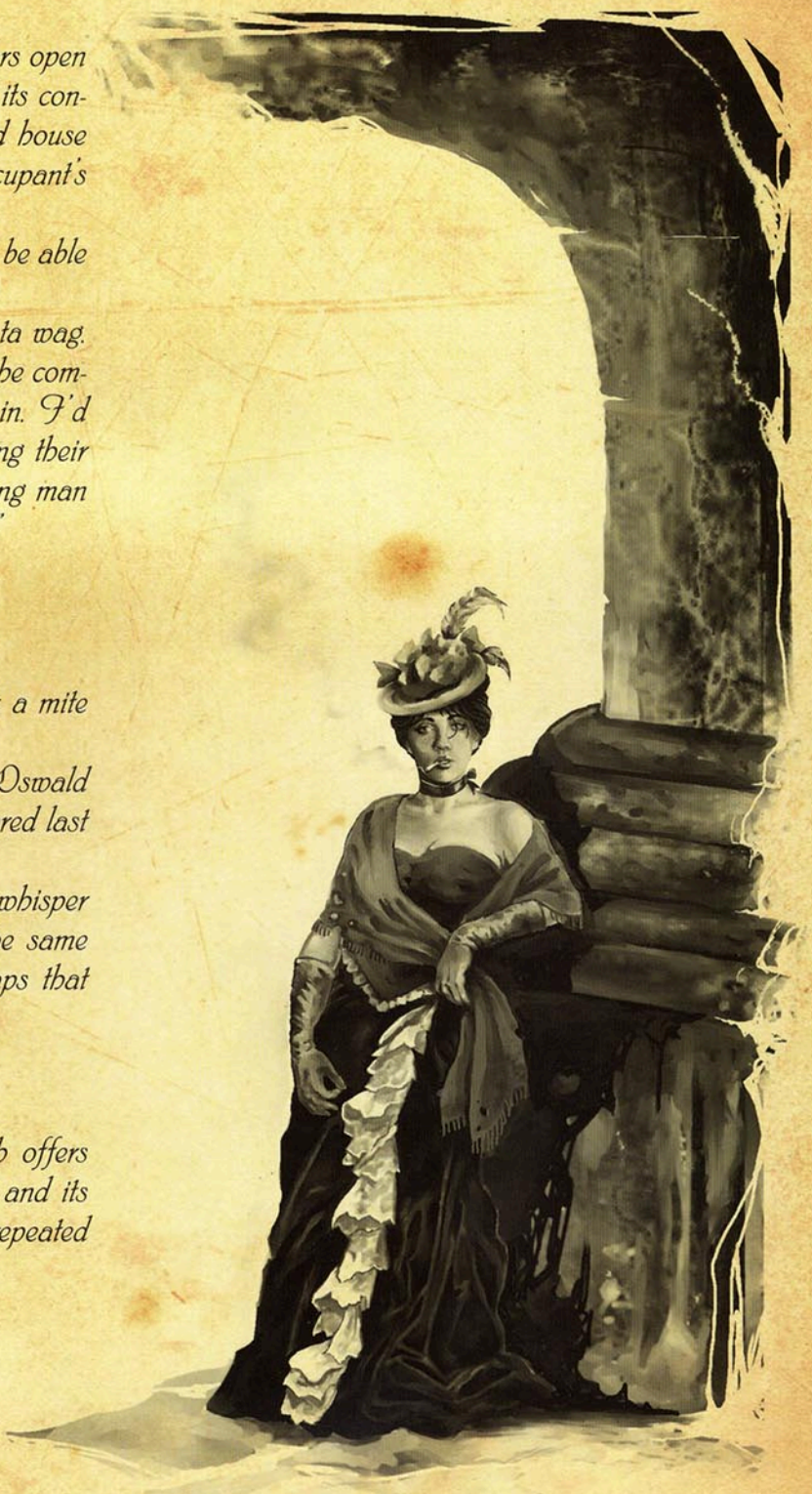
*"Wiggins, my boy, how are you? You look a mite thirsty."*

*"Fine, Porky, thanks. But a fellow named Oswald Mason isn't doing quite so well. He was murdered last night. Have you heard anything about it?"*

*"Mason? No, can't say I've heard even a whisper of the affair. Watson was in earlier asking the same question. Must not've involved any of the chaps that hang about here."*

## 63 EC

*The modest apartment of Constance Smith offers a most remarkable view on the Temple church and its gardens. Unfortunately, no one answers our repeated knocks on the door.*



# QUESTIONS

## Part One

1. Who killed Oswald Mason?

2. Why?

3. What did the Venus de Milos reproductions contain?

4. Who stole the Five Sisters?

5. Who was the murderer's accomplice?

## Part Two

1. Who was responsible for the shortage of funds at Bacon and Co?

2. What is the distinctive sign of murders ordered by Moriarty?

3. What was found in the body of Jonathan Small?

Please read chapter 37 SE (Waterloo station) before proceeding to the solution.

# SOLUTION

*"Well, well. Here are our friends now, Lestrade," says Holmes as he and Inspector Lestrade of Scotland Yard stand flanking Errol Hawk and Violette Blue just in front of the barrier at Waterloo Station.*

*"It was a pretty problem, as my instincts told me this morning. Hawk, here, for all his persona] fastidiousness, was a most untidy thief and a brutal murderer.*

*"Errol Hawk succumbed to the lure of the De Vries diamonds from the first moment that his cellmate at the Millbank Prison, Nat Cook, told him of their whereabouts. Desperate that the death of Jonathan Small, his partner in the 1887 diamond theft, would lead to the dispersal or destruction of the Venus statues, Cook found himself forced to take on a new partner.*

*"Just nine clays after Small's death, Hawk was released from prison, where he had been serving two years for the burglary of a lady's jewelry box. He made straight for the home of Miss Violette Blue. Having reassured himself of her devotion, he set about laying his plans. The next day, he went to J. Small and Company to claim the prize, only to find that but five of the original fifteen statues remained. He purchased them and, posing as a Southampton dealer in objets d'art, he learned from Mrs. Small where the other statues had been sold as a precaution lest the bundles he now carried did not contain the treasure. He took them to Violette's rooms where together they broke them to pieces, in vain. Errol then plunged into devising a scheme to track down the others.*

*"The next morning," continues Holmes, drawing on his disreputable black brier, "Hawk went to Evenson and Company- Gift Shoppe where he purchased the three Venuses still in stock and learned that the other two had been sold. Unable to convince the manager of the shop to reveal the names of the purchasers, he resolved to get his information by reverting to his old trade of burglary. He entered the shop that night and took down the names and addresses of Mrs. Oswald Mason and Mrs. Mabel Brown from the shop shipping register.*

*"Having spent the entire day plotting his actions, Hawk arrived at the Mason home in a state of considerable agitation. He entered through the upstairs bedroom window into a house he thought deserted, until he saw the light in the study. He approached the door, in much the way Mrs. Mason did upon her return. He saw Oswald Mason with his back to the door and the counterfeit Venus on the table in the far corner only a few stops away. At this point Mr. Mason became aware of Hawk's presence and a fight ensued that ended in Mason's death.*

*"After Hawk made sure that Mason was not going to give him any more trouble, he went to the corner table, grabbed the Venus and smashed it upon the floor. As he was sifting through the rubble of the broken statue he heard the sound of the front door latch opening. Seeing that the diamonds were not in Mason's Venus he saw no reason to prolong his stay. He opened the window, threw open the shutters and slipped out, making his escape somewhat more noisily than was comfortable."*

*Inspector Lestrade beams when Holmes adds, "It thus would appear that Scotland Yard was correct in its conclusion that the killer had been surprised by Mrs. Mason's return." Lestrade mumbles something to himself, however, as Holmes continues, "Unfortunately, they missed the obvious fact that it was only the Venus for which the burglar had come.*

*"With one murder done that evening, Hawk was not ready to let anything stand in his way of success and had made for Mrs. Mabel Brown's house. He climbed to the roof and, in the pattern of entry which had made him such a spectacular menace to the fortunes of wealthy matrons before his arrest, he gained access through a second story window. Mercifully, he found no one at home and descending the stairs he located Mabel Brown's facsimile of the Venus de Milo. Not wanting to be seen on the street at night carrying the thing, he smashed it there. Again he had been foiled! One can only imagine the fury, lacking in remorse, which filled his heart at that moment."*

*Holmes interrupts his narrative and casts a contemptuous glance at the now downcast Hawk, slumped against Lestrade beside the sobbing Miss Blue.*

*"As soon as the Museum shop opened, Hawk was there and purchased the four pieces on the shelves and also learned the ominous fact that a fifth Venus de Milo had been sold only the day before. Hardly had he arrived back at Violette Blue's flat, but they were both tearing away at the wrapping and adding the statues one by one to the pile of plaster rubble by the grate. The diamonds, as you no doubt surmised, were in the second of the four Museum copies.*

*"Once in possession of the stones, the two hurriedly completed the packing of their bags and then sped for Waterloo and the hope of a boat-train and freedom on the Continent."*

# HOLMES

Holmes has solved this case by following 7 leads: Mason Home (42 WC), Bank of England (23 EC), Mabel Brown (40 NW), Evenson & Co. Gift Shop (22 NW), J. Small & Co. (32 SE), Millbank Prison (23 SW) and Violette Blue (49 EC). He also used the following article from the newspaper: Deaths (11 April, 1890), Personal - Errol (11 April, 1890), J. Small & Co. - Ceramics (11 April, 1890), Evenson & Co. Gift Shop (11 April, 1890), De Vries Diamond never found (12 March, 1888).

His score is 100 points.

# SCORE

For this case, the lead at 37 SE (Waterloo Station) is "free". Don't count it when totalling your score.

## Part One

1. Who killed Oswald Mason? Errol Hawk (20 points).

2. Why? He surprised Mason while attempting to steal the Venus statue (20 points).

3. What did the Venus de Milos reproductions contain? Precious jewels stolen from the jeweller De Vries (20 points).

4. Who stole the Five Sisters? Nat Cook and Jonathan Small (20 points).

5. Who was the murderer's accomplice? Violette Blue (20 points).

## Part Two

1. Who was responsible for the shortage of funds at Bacon and Co? Michael Essex and Mitchell Yourke, Directors of Bacon & Co. (10 points).

2. What is the distinctive sign of murders ordered by Moriarty? A Roman coin is found on the victims (10 points).

3. What was found in the body of Jonathan Small? Traces of arsenic, probably administered by his wife (15 points).

To tally your score, add the points obtained by answering the questions, then count the number of leads you've followed (don't count the "free" leads indicated above). Then compare the number of leads you've followed to that of Holmes (7 leads in this case).

If you've followed more leads than Holmes, subtract 5 points from your score for each extra lead. If you've followed fewer leads than Holmes, add 5 to your score for each lead fewer. You'll thus get your final score.

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