

Holmes  
by  
George Nicholis

EXT. CLASSON AVENUE, BED-STUY, BROOKLYN - DAY

It's mid-afternoon in early-August and rain is pouring. Tiny rivers spill over a faded blue sign that reads, 'METRO DELI'. The aging CORNER STORE is sandwiched between a row of apartments and a laundromat.

An AFRICAN-AMERICAN MAN (20s) with corn-rows runs through the rain with a newspaper held over his head. He ducks into the corner store.

CUT TO:

INT. METRO DELI - DAY

The floor tiles are covered with scuff marks and flattened cardboard boxes. Each aisle as wide as a shoe.

AN ARABIC MAN (40s) sits on a stool behind the counter. iPod headphones stuffed into his ears. He nods to his rain-soaked customer, who is shivering near the door.

CORN-ROWED MAN

Cats an' dogs, man.

A SLENDER, HOODED FIGURE leans against a newspaper stand, the DAILY NEWS outstretched in front of his face.

The CORN-ROWED MAN grabs a case of MGD from a cooler. A bag of chips. A loaf of bread. When he's finished he sets his items on the counter.

ARABIC MAN

(Pulls a chord from his ear)

Is that all?

CORN-ROWED MAN

(Nods at the wall behind the counter)

Carton'a Menthols.

The Arabic Man turns and grabs a carton from a shelf.

The Corn-Rowed Man burrows a hand into his back pocket and produces a GREEN WALLET.

The Hooded Figure with the Daily News for a face lowers the paper just enough so we can see the NEW YORK METS insignia stitched to the bill of his ball cap.

CUT TO:

METS FAN POV:

We see a POLAROID PHOTO of a Green Wallet stuck to the inside page of the Daily News, where a 'Personals' ad should be.

CUT TO:

As the Arabic Man hands the Corn-Rowed Man his bags, the METS FAN, hat and hood hiding his eyes, folds his newspaper, casually steps past them and exits the store. The DING of the store bell follows him.

The Corn-Rowed Man returns the green wallet to his pocket. Picks up his soggy newspaper from the floor and holds it over his head. He steps out of the store. The bell DINGS after him.

The Arabic Man returns to his stool and plugs the loose chord back into his ear.

CUT TO:

EXT. METRO DELI - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The Corn-Rowed Man power-walks through the rain. He rounds the block, unaware that the METS FAN is rounding the block from the other side. They CRASH into each other, groceries escaping to the wet concrete.

CORN-ROWED MAN

Damn! Watch where you goin, man!

The Mets Fan, hat still tipped over his eyes, crouches to help the Corn-Rowed Man gather his groceries.

METS FAN

Sorry, brotha. Must'a been day dreamin'.

The Corn-Rowed Man clutches his bags and continues around the corner.

The Mets Fan rises. Heads toward us. Lifts the bill of his hat, offering our first look at REGGIE HOLMES (17), African American. Magically, Holmes conjures the GREEN WALLET from his pocket. Checks the contents and stuffs it back into his Jeans.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURT YARD, 221 CLASSON AVENUE - LATER THAT DAY

A black king, a white king and a rook on a CHESS BOARD. A large BLACK HAND moves the black king over a dark square.

HOLMES (V.O.)  
I'm runnin' out of time, Jimmy...

CUT TO:

The rain has cleared and the sun has just begun to break through the gray clouds.

On a PARK BENCH, Holmes sits beside JIMMY JOHNSON (50s), a black man who makes a whale seem slight. Damp, sweat-soaked t-shirt. His sagging jowls liken him to an aging hound-dog. He never removes his eyes from the chess board.

Holmes slides the GREEN WALLET across the table. Jimmy takes it without looking. Opens it. Hands Holmes a TWENTY and passes him a BOTTLE wrapped in a paper bag.

HOLMES (CONT'D)  
(Taking the items)  
Only nineteen days 'til the trial  
and I ain't got a quarter'a what I  
need to get her out.

Across from Jimmy sits MELVIN BANKS (50s), in every way Jimmy's opposite. His loose-fitting clothes drape over his bone-thin frame like a parachute. He ponders his move.

Jimmy reopens his green wallet. Pulls out another TWENTY. Holds it in front of Holmes without looking at him.

JIMMY JOHNSON  
Tell your mom I said hello.

Holmes hesitates, then takes the additional cash.

Melvin finally awakens from his coma. He pushes his White King next to Jimmy's.

MELVIN  
Check mate.

OLD MARGARET (V.O.)  
Said he was an exterminator...

CUT TO:

INT. OLD MARGARET'S APARTMENT - BED-STUY, BROOKLYN

OLD MARGARET (80s), a black woman with a hunched back, stands in the middle of a cramped apartment, worry written across her leathery face. Her white hair wrapped into a tight bun on top of her head.

OLD MARGARET  
I ain't seen no bugs.

Holmes taps a PEN against a note pad.

HOLMES  
You remember anything unusual  
about 'im?

OLD MARGARET  
(Stares into space)  
He was kinda funny lookin.

HOLMES  
Funny-lookin...

OLD MARGARET  
Yeah. Big, bulging eyes...like  
light-bulbs...longest arms I ever  
seen. Walked with a  
hunch...Hispanic or sumpin'.

Holmes brings a stack of POLAROIDS to his chest. He rifles through them.

HOLMES  
I'll look into it.

Old Margaret clasps her wrinkled, blue-veined hands around his. As her hands pull away, a TEN DOLLAR BILL rests in Holmes' palm.

OLD MARGARET  
Half now. Half later.

He eyes the Hamilton, unimpressed. Crams it and the Polaroids into the pocket of his Levis.

OLD MARGARET (CONT'D)  
That diamond ring's for my  
grandson. He proposin' to his  
girlfriend in Atlanta. She  
pregnant.

Holmes scribbles something into his note pad. Closes it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOLMES

I'll find it. Always do.

He pulls out his NEW YORK METS BALL CAP. Heads for the door. Slides the cap backwards onto his head, flashing the NY Mets insignia. He turns to face Old Margaret.

HOLMES (CONT'D)

Anyone asks...I wasn't here.

He opens the door, nods and shuts it behind him.

CUT TO:

EXT. 221 CLASSON AVENUE, BED-STUY - EVENING

A COPPER PLATE with the numbers 221 etched across it.

AUNT HUDSON (V.O.)

You wasn't here...

CUT TO:

The projects. A large, fifteen-story BRICK BUILDING surrounded by several similar government housing units. Dozens of cheap air conditioning units rattle from windows. A long black gate encloses the structure.

AUNT HUDSON (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I ain't cook this steak for no imaginary friend. I cooked it for you, Reggie. And you wasn't here. Again.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLMES' APARTMENT - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

A white glass PLATE. On it lays a burnt hockey puck with a side glob of desert dry mashed potatoes.

AUNT HUDSON's (mid-40s) hands placed in dissatisfaction on her wide hips. She's a strong-looking black woman with muscular-forearms. She looks like she could pull apart your average man.

AUNT HUDSON

Well?

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Holmes stands across from her, eyeing the charred skirt steak with disdain. He finally addresses her.

HOLMES

Sorry, Millie. I was workin.

AUNT HUDSON

(Her eyes light up)

*Workin?* You ain't even eighteen.  
Should be lookin' at colleges.  
Playin with kids your own age. And  
you know we ain't on no first name  
basis. It's AUNT. HUDSON.

HOLMES

Soon as I hit that magic number,  
it's sayonara. *Aunt. Hudson.*

AUNT HUDSON

Go to your room.

HOLMES

Go to my room...?  
(He mumbles as he passes her)  
You ain't my mom, Millie.

AUNT HUDSON

No, I ain't. If I was you wouldn't  
have that mouth on you.

As Holmes walks toward us, Aunt Hudson hollers in the background after him.

AUNT HUDSON (CONT'D)

My sista's a big girl, Reggie.  
Ain't no sense draggin' yoself  
down with her.

We hear a door SLAM shut.

Aunt Hudson lifts the plate of cold steak from the table.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLMES' BEDROOM - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

Holmes leans against his door and sighs.

A shoe-box of a room. Black bars barricade the outside of a window. A small BED with the sheets strewn everywhere. On a dresser, a small TV SET and A FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Above the dresser, a long slab of CORKBOARD. Notes and newspaper articles pinned across it.

CUT TO:

HOLMES POV:

ACROSS the board we see the writing on the notes and articles: "MISSING CAT..." "STOLEN BICYCLE - FIFTEEN DOLLAR REWARD."

Suddenly, a RIP!

Our HAND reaches in and tacks a small sheet of spiraled paper to the board. It reads: "OLD MARGARET - STOLEN DIAMOND RING - TWENTY DOLLAR REWARD."

CUT TO:

From his pocket, Holmes pulls the two twenties from Jimmy. The ten from Old Margaret. He stuffs it all into a can of QUAKER OATS. A label on the front reads, "MAMA".

He sits on the edge of his bed. Counts his money. Not enough. He's frustrated. Glances at a WALL CALENDAR. On August 31st, 'MAMA's TRIAL'.

He moves his attention to the framed photograph on the dresser. He and his MOTHER in a warm embrace.

A loud, MECHANICAL BUZZING interrupts this quiet moment.

CUT TO:

INT. QUEENSBOROUGH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - NEXT DAY

Holmes sits, his back to us, in front of a large WINDOW.

A pot-bellied GUARD opens the door and lets in an African-American WOMAN (late 30s). But she looks much older. Her hair a mess. Cheek bones sunken in. Handcuffs choked around her gaunt wrists. Clad in an orange jumpsuit very baggy on her bony frame. Lowers herself into a metal chair in front of the smudged window. Locks eyes with Holmes. Her bottom lip quivers.

GUARD

Five minutes.

The Guard opens the door and steps out of the room.

Holmes REMOVES his Mets Cap. Lifts a TELEPHONE from a receiver on the paint-chipped white wall. He holds it to his ear. Danelle does the same.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOLMES

They got a salon in here? You look beautiful, mama.

Danelle blushes.

DANELLE

I raised you good. How your Aunt? She feedin you good?

HOLMES

She feedin me. I don't know about *good*, but she feedin me.

They both laugh gently.

(Beat)

HOLMES (CONT'D)

(Concerned)

You eatin, mama?

DANELLE

I'm fine.

HOLMES

When you eat last? Yesterday?  
(Danelle doesn't answer)  
The day before?

DANELLE

(Adopting a serious tone)  
Reggie...I'm fine. Food jus' don't taste good to me no more.

HOLMES

Soon as I get the money, you're comin' home.

DANELLE

Hundred thousand dollars a lotta money. You think I's Bonnie an' Clyde all rolled up in one.

HOLMES

All we need is forty thousand. Bail bondsman will cover the rest.

DANELLE

Forget about me, Reggie. Save that money for college. You got options. A future. When you my age, all you got is memories.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She offers a weak attempt at a smile.

HOLMES

I got five thousand. We still got  
nineteen days til August 31st.  
I'll get the rest.

We hear a CLICK as the door behind Danelle opens. The  
Guard steps out. Danelle turns her head slightly.

GUARD

Time's up.

HOLMES

(To Danelle. Determined)  
I'll get it.

Danelle leans in close, looking Holmes in the eyes.

DANELLE

You a good boy, Reggie. Don't you  
do nothin get you put in here.  
Promise me.  
(Holmes is silent)  
Promise me.

HOLMES

(Finally)  
I promise, mama.

Danelle smiles a sorrowful smile. She returns the phone  
to the receiver and pulls herself to her feet. She takes  
one long look at her boy, then turns toward the Guard.

Holmes works his jaw back and forth, then lays his phone  
on the receiver to rest.

CUT TO:

INT. B103 METRO BUS - DAY

Holmes' head rests against a large Plexiglas window. He  
stares out, eyes glued to a fenced-in, blacktop  
PLAYGROUND across the street as the bus passes by.  
Several BOYS his own age throwing basketballs into  
NETLESS HOOPS. GIRLS jumping rope. Holmes is miles away.

The bus SCREECHES to a halt, jarring Holmes from his  
daze.

The HISS of hydraulics and double doors SPRINGING open.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Holmes gazes nonchalantly to the front of the bus and his eyes stop cold on SOMETHING.

CUT TO:

A young, PUERTO RICAN MAN (late 20s) with long arms and enormous bug eyes bulging from his sockets shuffles toward the back of the bus. The expression on his face is that of a comatose man. Disconnected from the world. He finds a seat next to a middle-aged ASIAN WOMAN.

Holmes sits up and grabs a small note pad from his bookbag. Studies it. He looks up through narrow eyes at the back of the Puerto Rican man's head. FROG SANCHEZ.

CUT TO:

EXT. 221 CLASSON AVENUE, BED-STUY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The double doors CLUNK open.

Frog Sanchez hops down the steps and onto the pavement, toward US. His back is stooped. He carries the Neanderthalic gate of a caveman with a slight limp.

After a pregnant moment, Holmes rushes to the front of the bus.

CUT TO:

INT. 15TH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Holmes trails behind Frog down a brown-carpeted hallway. It's like the seventies left this place behind.

Wrapping a hand around the doorknob, Frog checks his back with dead eyes.

Holmes ducks behind a sunken wall, becoming part of it.

The coast clear, Frog steps into his apartment. Closes the door - but it doesn't close all the way.

Holmes cranes his head from behind the sunken wall. Makes for the door. As he nears it, we hear PISS SPLASHING into water. He nudges the front door open.

CUT TO:

HOLMES POV:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Through the crack, we see a person-less apartment. Old furniture. Junk piled everywhere. Brown fabric curtains hiding the room from sun. A secondhand store paradise.

We ease the door open a little further. No sound. God bless the hinge. We step in.

CUT TO:

INT. FROG'S APARTMENT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Dusty particles float around what light is able to seep in. A TV TRAY sitting in front of a green COUCH. On it, a bowl of milk and soggy bran floating at the surface.

On the left wall, two CLOSET DOORS with OPEN SHUTTERS.

The BATHROOM DOOR is cracked open, a light on inside. Within, we see a hand spread on a wall above a toilet. We hear FAINT GRUNTS, as another hand closer to the toilet bowl slides back and forth.

CUT TO:

Holmes brings the front door closed behind him. He casts a pair of searching eyes over the room until they STOP. On a small TABLE beside the green couch, a 2-CARAT DIAMOND RING sits next to a BLUE PURSE.

Holmes creeps over to the table. The frequency of the GRUNTS within the bathroom quickens. As he reaches for the watch, he notices something ahead.

CUT TO:

Beside the bathroom, another DOOR cracked open. Inside, a naked, TAN LEG sprawled atop a mess of green sheets.

CUT TO:

As Holmes moves his head forward to get a better look, a fistful of knuckles RAP against the front door. And then, a COMMOTION in the bathroom. A toilet FLUSHES and the light inside slams off. Holmes springs for the closet doors. Rips them open. Shuts himself in.

This time, a fist THUMPS against the front door long enough to give the impression of impatience.

CUT TO:

HOLMES POV:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We peer through the shutters, our vision compromised. The bathroom door SWINGS open, and Frog leaps out, fastening his belt around his thin waist.

FROG

Hold ya damn horses!

We see Frog hop over to the bedroom door, drag it closed, then limp over to the front door. He ZIPS his fly.

Beneath the door frame hangs a colorful painting. SONNY BOY MARQUES (mid 30s) and PERCY MARQUES (late 30s). Percy, an athletic Puerto Rican in a three-piece suit who takes pride in his pristine appearance, slithers in. Makes himself at home.

PERCY

Don't mind if I do.

Percy moves like a snake, settling his threatening frame onto Frog's couch. He crosses his legs. Cases the joint.

Sonny Boy, also Puerto Rican, steps in but stops beside the door like a guard. He's built like the Berlin Wall. Broad-shouldered and hard to pull down. He wears a permanent scowl and a dated brown suit several steps below Percy's calibre. His hands the size of pot holders. Even under the suit, his shoulders are round melons.

PERCY (CONT'D)

(Picks up the diamond ring  
from the table, examines it)  
Still pawnin stolen junk? What's  
the matter, Froggie? Mr. Garcia  
ain't payin you enough?

He drops the ring onto the table. Stretches his hard arms over the back of the couch. He carries himself well. Could be a nice guy. But the devil often wears disguises.

PERCY (CONT'D)

Where is it, Fortuno?  
(Frog offers no response)  
You know the drill. Whores for  
money. Or have you forgotten?

After a quiet moment, Frog smiles. His smile soon fades into a chuckle. Then a laugh.

FROG

Funny thing, that money...

Percy coughs out a dim laugh, as well. Suddenly they seem like old friends.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PERCY

Funny thing. Sonny Boy's quite the comedian, too.

Sonny Boy is unmoving. His stone-serious face fixed on Frog is as cold as ice.

PERCY (CONT'D)

Sonny Boy. Tell im that joke you know.

A statue come to life, Sonny Boy lumbers over to Frog and grabs his hand.

The struggling Frog attempts to back away, but Sonny Boy overpowers him. Summons a KNIFE BLADE. Brings it to Frog's trembling right hand.

FROG

No...please...

With a FLICK of his wrist, Sonny Boy sends Frog's tanned index finger spiraling to the ground, a fine mist spray-painting the carpet red.

A guttural belch of agony escapes Frog's throat. Almost sounds like a CROAK. He drops to his knees, clasping his newly shorn nub. Blood spills down his quaking hand.

FROG (CONT'D)

Por Dios!!

Sonny Boy's thick fist wrapped around the back of Frog's neck.

Percy erupts into a fit of laughter. He slaps his muscular knee.

PERCY

Pretty good, huh?

CUT TO:

Inside the dark closet, Holmes' face goes white. His expression that of a man who's just witnessed a car crash. He clamps a hand over his mouth.

CUT TO:

HOLMES POV. Our view is still obstructed by the shutters from within the closet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

We see Percy lift himself up from the couch and amble over to Sonny Boy. He kneels before Frog, as if to console a bereaved child. Looks him dead in the eyes.

PERCY (CONT'D)

He ain't even got to the punch line yet, Sanchez.

FROG

Please...I don't...I don't have it.

Suddenly, the bedroom door BURSTS open, and we see a BEAUTIFUL PUERTO RICAN WOMAN dash out, nothing more than a blue silk robe over her buxom frame. She sports a noticeable CLEFT LIP. She's IRENE GARCIA (mid 20s).

IRENE GARCIA

Stop! Leave him alone!

CUT TO:

In the living room, Percy leers at Irene in shock, then at Frog, putting two and two together and getting four.

PERCY

Am I seein what I think I'm seein, Sonny Boy?

SONNY BOY

Must be. 'Cause I see it too.

PERCY

You already in the shit can with Mr. Garcia, Froggy. He ain't gonna like this on top.

IRENE GARCIA

You're nothin but a bully, Percy Marques.

PERCY

My reputation precedes me.

IRENE GARCIA

Doin his bitch work...you know why? Cause you're scared...

PERCY

(Chuckles gravely)  
You the one should be scared, Irene. Sure I ain't the first t'tell ya. Lie down with frogs, you get fleas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

He raises a ring-clad fist to strike Irene...

FROG

Wait!

PERCY

(Smiles at Irene)

I'm all ears, you bastard. Spill.

FROG

I can get the money...give me two days...I'll have it, man. Honest Injun.

Percy motions for Sonny Boy to release his grip. Sonny obeys.

PERCY

Call me sentimental, but I believe you. I dunno how you'll get the dough. But you'll get it.

Irene cradles Frog. Clots of blood color her blue robe. Percy and Sonny Boy make for the door.

PERCY (CONT'D)

Two days. Or me an' Sonny Boy come back wit' the knife. Cook us up some frog legs.

Sonny Boy's face is that of a gargoyle. Maybe uglier. Percy winks at Irene as the door SLAMS behind them.

CUT TO:

HOLMES POV:

From between the shutters, we see Irene help the shivering Frog to his feet.

FROG

I know where we can get it. Get it and run away for good.

IRENE GARCIA

No. You want *two* people after you?

With a free hand, she rummages through her BLUE PURSE. As her hand exits with a HANDKERCHIEF, a small business-sized CARD tumbles out and floats to the carpet unnoticed by either of them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

FROG

If I don't...I'm dead. I have an idea.

She wraps the handkerchief around his fist and grabs his good hand. They head into the BATHROOM. Shut themselves inside.

The apartment is quiet once again, save for MUFFLED VOICES within the bathroom.

The closet doors slowly open. Holmes peeks his head out. The coast is clear. He sneaks over to the small table beside the green couch. Pockets Old Margaret's diamond ring. But SOMETHING on the floor catches his eye. He crouches and grabs the small card from the carpet. Scribbled on it in black pen are the words "BRING ME A DREAM". Below it, 42 147TH STREET, WASHINGTON HEIGHTS.

He stuffs the card in his jeans, sneaks to the front door. Gently TWISTS the knob. Eases it closed behind him.

Then we hear LOUD, DEEP MOANING, like deep sea pressure crushing the hull of a submarine.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLMES' BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

Holmes' eyes FLICK open. They scan the room, trying to make sense of this new sound.

Another wave of deep RUMBLING causes Holmes to sit up and toss away his covers. He stares at the wall ahead. It's SHAKING like a Motel 8 mattress.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Holmes shuffles into the kitchen, still half asleep. Bags under his eyes.

We hear loud CLANKING, metal against metal.

Aunt Hudson returns dishes to the cupboards.

AUNT HUDSON

Somethin wrong with the plumbin.  
Mr. Jones here come to have a look.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Two Blue Jean-clad LEGS stick out like fallen timber from beneath the sink. An old TOOL BOX lays next to two beige WORK BOOTS, speckled with WHITE PAINT.

Holmes steals a chair from the kitchen table. Turns it toward the sink. Has a seat.

HOLMES

What's wit' the noise, Al? You know I need my beauty sleep.

The legs beneath the sink slowly make their way out, revealing a black man with gray hair. This is ALBERT JONES (50s), the building's Super. He rests his arms on his knees. A WRENCH gripped in one of his hands.

ALBERT

Hey Holmes.

He runs a worker's hand over his stubbly head.

AUNT HUDSON

(Over her shoulder)  
It's Reggie.

Holmes rolls his eyes.

ALBERT

Whole place is backed up, Reggie. Some clown probably stuffed too much toilet paper in the can. Yours looks OK, though...

AUNT HUDSON

(Turns to face them)  
While you at it, the lock on the front door broke, too.

ALBERT

What's wrong with it?

AUNT HUDSON

It don't lock.  
(Turns back to the cupboard to finish the dishes)  
That mom'a yours let this whole place go to hell...

Albert lifts an eyebrow. Holmes shrugs. Good luck arguing with her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALBERT

Next time. Gotta meet with a couple guys from the IRS this afternoon...

(Snapping his toolbox shut)  
And I gotta check every apartment to find this clog. I'll put it on my list.

AUNT HUDSON

You don't fix that lock, you be on my list.

Suddenly, the WHIRLING CRY of a siren POWER-DRILLS its way into the kitchen.

Holmes makes his way over to the WINDOW above the sink. Peers out. Albert joins him, their backs now facing us.

Over their shoulders, we see an AMBULANCE with blaring lights pull up to the front of their building, flanked by two SQUAD CARS. Several APPROPRIATE FIGURES clad in suits and blue uniforms emerge from their vehicles.

ALBERT

If it's another suicide I'm quitting.

HOLMES

Worried it'll bring down the property value?

CUT TO:

INT. 15TH FLOOR HALLWAY - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

An ELEVATOR DOOR with chipped brown paint.

DING! The gnarled door SLIDES open, revealing Holmes and Albert. As soon as they step out, they're immediately halted by a MEDIC wheeling a GURNEY past them.

They follow the gurney down the hall.

CUT TO:

EXT. FROG'S APARTMENT - DAY

A BLACK MAN (late 40s) clad in a gray suit stands underneath an open door frame, his back to us. His broad shoulders sloped forward. Head lowered as he listens to an ELDERLY WOMAN at his side. He writes on a note pad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Steps out of the way as the gurney is wheeled into the apartment. As he turns toward us we get our first look at his face. Rough. Square-jawed. Salt and pepper hair. Carrying an extra twenty pounds in his gut. DETECTIVE STEVE WATSON. He catches sight of someone approaching.

Holmes and Albert stop a few feet shy of Watson.

HOLMES

What's the verdict, officer?

Flashbulbs POP and a succession of shutters CLICK inside the apartment.

WATSON

*Detective.* Who're you?

HOLMES

A concerned citizen.

ALBERT

(Extending a hand)  
Albert Jones. I'm the super.

WATSON

(To Albert)  
You can stay. The kid leaves.

HOLMES

Kid?

WATSON

There's nothing to see here.

HOLMES

Was it Frog Sanchez?

Watson pauses for a moment, sizing Holmes and Albert up. The last thing he needs is an additional annoyance.

WATSON

(Calling into the apartment,  
his eyes fixed on Holmes)  
Barnes!

OFFICER BARNES emerges from the apartment, sucking on a bottle of PEPTO BISMAL. Fresh out of the Academy, he looks like he spends too many hours at the gym. His white head shaved skin-head close. He looks at Holmes with a sneer that of a bear awoken from deep hibernation.

BARNES

(Through narrowed eyes)  
Yeah?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WATSON

Please escort this gentleman away  
from the premises.

BARNES

(Moves toward Holmes)  
Those flashbulbs'll be the death  
of me. Got a hangover could  
cripple an elephant.

(Grabs Holmes' arm)  
Let's go.

HOLMES

(Pulls his arm back)  
I didn't do nothin. I got as much  
right to be here as you.

WATSON

This is a crime scene. It's under  
investigation.

HOLMES

For what?

BARNES

(Makes another attempt at  
Holmes' arm)  
C'mon.

Holmes jerks his arm away. He's ready to scrap. So is  
Barnes. He SHOVES Holmes back a few feet. Holmes RETURNS  
the favor.

Before the matter escalates, Watson jumps between the  
two, keeping them at bay.

BARNES (CONT'D)

(Chest rising and falling  
rapidly)  
You better watch it or you'll be  
eatin' teeth, you little punk.

HOLMES

(Behind Watson's arm)  
Know what you can eat?

Holmes clutches his balls suggestively.

WATSON

Barnes, get back inside.  
(Addressing Holmes through  
his teeth)  
Kid...beat it.

(CONTINUED)

Copyright 2010 George Nicholis -- All Rights Reserved