

THE WORLD'S MOST VIVACIOUS  
BUT MOST VICIOUS VILLAIN...

# THE JOKER

THE CLOWN  
PRINCE OF  
CRIME  
BEING  
STALKED BY  
SHERLOCK  
HOLMES?  
IMPOSSIBLE,  
YOU SAY?  
DON'T BET  
ON IT --  
YOU'RE  
ABOUT  
TO SEE IT  
HAPPEN!

THE CIRCUMSTANCES  
ARE BIZARRE!!!  
THE PURSUIT ABSURD--  
THE WHOLE THING AS  
ZANY AS LIFE ITSELF...  
AND AS GRIM! FOR  
BENEATH THE ANTICS IS  
AS DEADLY AN ADVENTURE  
AS ANY THAT INVOLVED THE  
HARLEQUIN OF HATE, WHEN...

STORY BY:  
DENNY O'NEIL

ART BY:  
IRV NOVICK  
and  
TEX BLAISDELL

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RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO THE MASTER OF  
MYSTERY--SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE!

## SHERLOCK stalks THE JOKER!

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A THEATER IN A MEDIUM-SIZE TOWN  
SEVERAL HUNDRED MILES FROM  
GOTHAM CITY...

CLIVE SIGERSON  
SHERLOCK HOLMES!

...WHERE THE TOURING COMPANY OF A  
CERTAIN RENOWNED MELODRAMA IS  
REHEARSING --

--AND HOLDING CENTER-  
STAGE--CLIVE SIGERSON,  
PLAYING THE GREATEST  
FICTIONAL DETECTIVE  
OF THEM ALL--

SHERLOCK  
HOLMES!

AH, MY OLD NEMESIS--  
PROFESSOR MORIARTY!

YOUR PISTOL  
WILL DO YOU  
NO GOOD--

YOU SURE,  
SHERL. OL'  
SLEUTH?

OUTRAGEOUS!

BANG!

HOW DARE YOU  
DEPART FROM THE  
SCRIPT?

OH, I DUNNO...  
I THOUGHT I'D  
PUNCH IT UP--

--GET IT?

POK!

UNNGH!

YOU'RE A DETECTING  
DUP, SHER!  
DIDN'T YOU DEDUCE THAT  
BENEATH MY  
GREASEPAINT  
WAS A MASK--

--AND BENEATH  
THE MASK...A  
JOKER!

MORIARTY  
IS THE  
JOKER...?!

AH! HERE COME  
THE INEVITABLE  
WOULD-BE  
HEROES!

TALKS  
BIG--

--FOR A GUY  
WHO'S HEADIN'  
FOR JAIL!

THE  
JOKER IS  
MORIARTY...?



FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER...



\* NOTE: THIS AND SUBSEQUENT REFERENCES TAKEN FROM THE WRITINGS OF HOLMES' CREATOR--SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE!





OUTSIDE...

WAIT UP! I'M S'POSED TO WATCHDOG YOU!

MY NAME IS--

--INDEED...

...I'VE HEARD YOU CALLED WATSON!



FROM YOUR ROLLING WALK AND ROPE-SCARRED FINGERS, I PERCEIVE YOU WERE A SAILOR!

I USED TO WORK ON THE DOCKS! IN FACT, MY NICKNAME IS...



ELEMENTARY! YOU'RE... "DOCK" WATSON!



MEANWHILE, AT THE JOKER'S LAIR... THE HA-HACIENDA--

LIKE, THE LAST CAPER WAS INTERESTING, BUT WHAT'S THE POINT, JOKER?

THIS PHOTO ISN'T EXACTLY THE KEY TO THE MINT!

YOU MAY BE MY LEFT-HAND MAN, SOUTH-PAW--



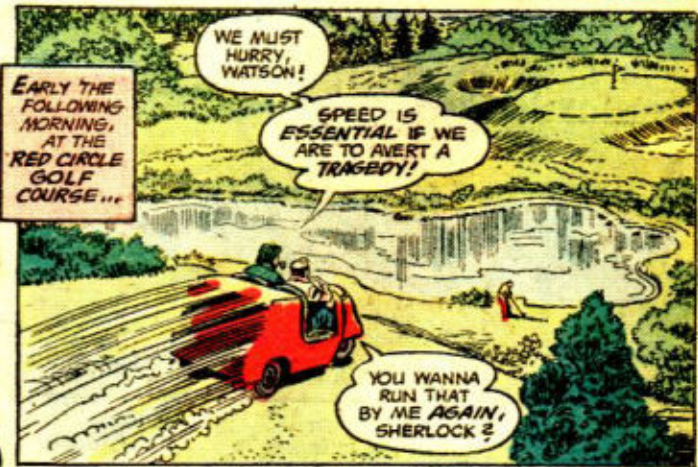
--BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND MY SOUL!

I HAVE A BURNING NEED TO HUMILIATE, HARASS, HUMBLE AND PUT EGG ON THE FACE OF ALL DETECTIVES!



ALAS, SHERLOCK HOLMES IS BEYOND MY REACH... FOR THE VERY REEKY REASON THAT HE ISN'T REAL... AND I AM!

STILL I LONG TO LAY HIM LOW! THEREFORE, I SHALL RECREATE HIS CASES--

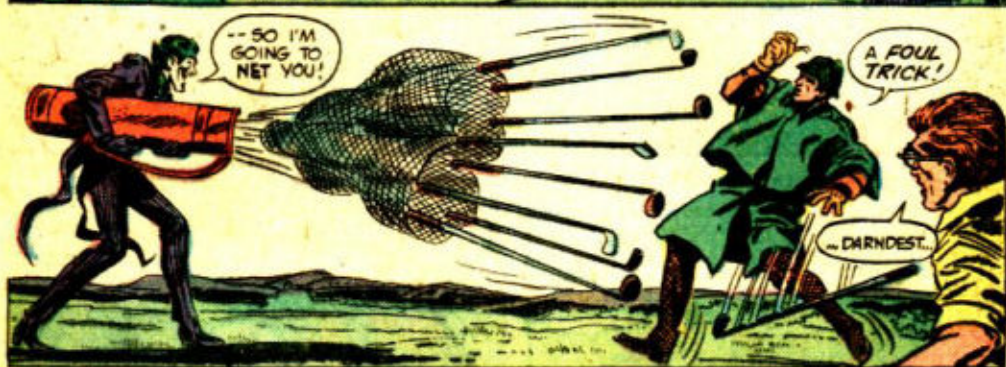














AH! OUR FAILURE IS NOT TOTAL!

WE HAVE NOT PUT THE CRIMINALS BEHIND BARS-- BUT WE HAVE FRIGHTENED THEM OFF!



I REJOICE WE RESCUED YOU, SIR!

THANKS... I GUESS!



COME, WATSON! THE GAME IS STILL AFOOT-- FOR I KNOW WHERE THE MASTER OF VILLAINY WILL STRIKE NEXT!

HOW--?



ONE FACT I HAVE DEDUCED... ONE INCONVERTIBLE FACT!

REASON IT OUT FOR YOURSELF! YOU KNOW MY METHODS, WATSON!

I... DO??



AT THAT MOMENT, THE JOKER'S MOBILE HO-HOME IS SPEEDING TOWARD THE HA-NACIENDA...

TELL US, BOSS--



--WAS THE CAPER A SUCCESS?

I GOT WHAT I WANTED... THIS FLAG FROM THE FOUR GREEN--



--"THE SIGN OF THE FOUR"... THE TITLE OF AN EARLY SHERLOCK HOLMES NOVEL!



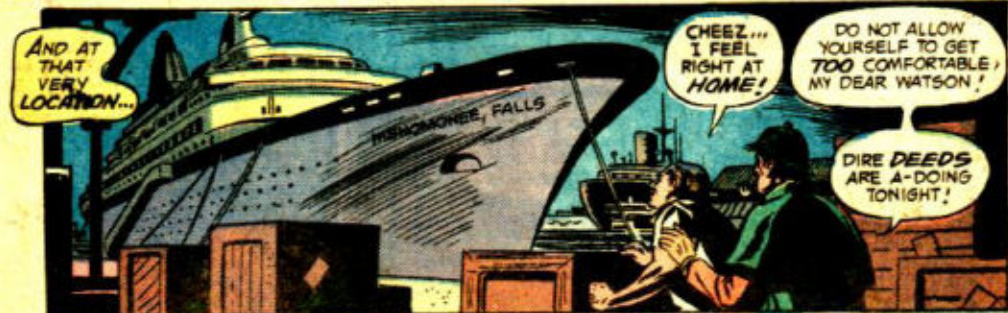
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE ACTOR AND THE STAGEHAND WERE DOING...

... BUT I'M GLAD THEY WERE THERE! I LIKE COMPETITION!



ON TO THE WATERFRONT--

--AND OUR NEXT COUP!



AND AT THAT VERY LOCATION...

CHEEZ... I FEEL RIGHT AT HOME!

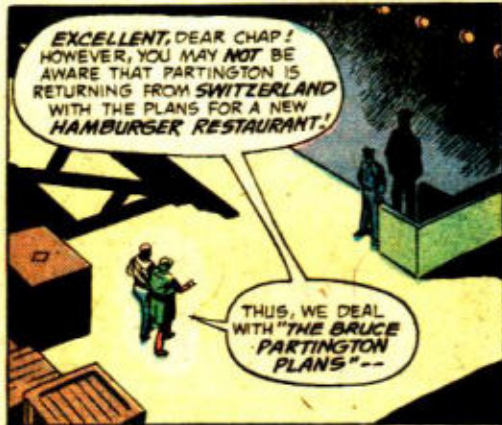
DO NOT ALLOW YOURSELF TO GET TOO COMFORTABLE, MY DEAR WATSON!

DIRE DEEDS ARE A-DOING TONIGHT!



NOTICE A GALA ABOARD THE SHIP-- A PARTY IN HONOR OF BRUCE C. PARTINGTON!

AIN'T HE THE HAMBURGER KING?



EXCELLENT, DEAR CHAP! HOWEVER, YOU MAY NOT BE AWARE THAT PARTINGTON IS RETURNING FROM SWITZERLAND WITH THE PLANS FOR A NEW HAMBURGER RESTAURANT!

THIS, WE DEAL WITH "THE BRUCE PARTINGTON PLANS"--



--AND THIS IS THE TITLE GIVEN TO ONE OF MY MORE INSTRUCTIVE CASES!

HOLD IT! THIS HERE'S A PRIVATE PARTY!



YEAH? I'M GONNA SMACK YOU SO HARD THEY'LL FIND YOUR TEETH IN AUSTRALIA!

NO, WATSON! NO VIOLENCE!

WE SHALL RESORT TO CUNNING!



NEE FALLS

INDEED! FOR I KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT HIM-- SOMETHING OBVIOUS ONLY TO ME!



STAND WATCH, WATSON, WHILE I INSERT MYSELF INTO PERIL!



EVEN AS "SHERLOCK HOLMES"-- NEE CLIVE SIGERSON-- BEGINS TO STRUGGLE UP THE TARRED LINE, THE JOKER'S HENCHMAN, TOOTH, IS AT THE TOP AND TOSSING...

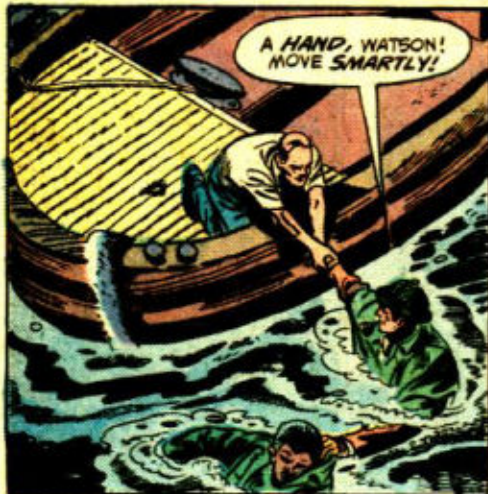


--A SMOKE-BOMB INTO THE MIDST OF THE PARTYSERS ON THE DECK OF THE VESSEL...

EEEEK!







A HAND, WATSON!  
MOVE SMARTLY!



LOOKS LIKE  
THEY'RE HAVIN'  
A REAL  
MARSHMALLOW  
ROAST  
ABOARD  
THAT TUB!

SOMETHING THIS  
FOOTPAD SAID  
LEADS  
ME TO BELIEVE  
THE  
SMOKE IS BUT  
A DECOY!

THE REAL  
VILLAINY LIES  
ELSEWHERE!



BUT  
WHERE?

### THE BASKERVILLES

I CONFESS EVEN  
MY COGNITIVE  
POWERS ARE  
SOBERLY TAXED!

FUNNY NAME  
FOR A  
TUGBOAT,  
AIN'T IT!



### THE BASKERVILLES

WHAT--?!

SPLENDID, WATSON!  
I UNDERESTIMATED  
YOU!

YOU'VE  
PROVIDED ME  
WITH THE VITAL  
CLUE!



### THE BASKERVILLES

TREACHERY  
IS BENEATH  
OUR VERY  
FEET...  
ON THE  
BASKERVILLES!

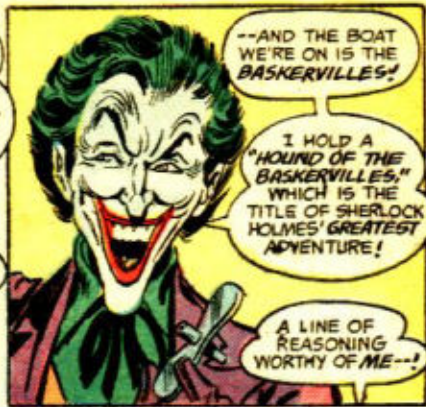
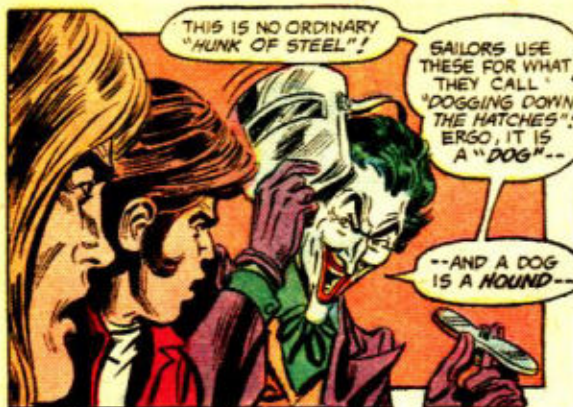


YES--FOR AT THAT INSTANT...

JOKER-- YOU'RE CUTTIN'  
A HUNK OF STEEL!

IT'LL BRING  
MAYBE  
SEVENTY  
CENTS AS  
SCRAP!

YOUR CHIEF  
FAULT,  
AMONG OTHERS,  
SOUTHPAW,  
IS THAT YOU LACK  
AN ARTIST'S  
SOUL!







PISH AND TOSH!

YOU'RE NOT SHERLOCK HOLMES. NOT...NOT...NOT!



YOU'RE JUST AN ACTOR!

AS ARE WE ALL, IN THE PLAY OF LIFE!



DESTINY HAS DECREED YOUR DOWNFALL... AIDED BY ME-- WHOEVER I AM!

RUNNING IS FUTILE!

OH, STICK THE FANCY TALK IN YOUR NOSE!

REACHING THE TUG'S MAINDECK, THE JOKER STARES AROUND WILDLY FOR AN EXIT... SPOTS A GARBAGE SCOW MOORED NEARBY--



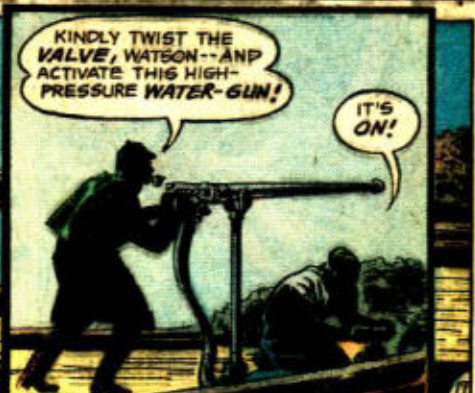
--AND REALIZING HE CAN SKIP FROM THE SCOW TO SAFETY ON THE DOCK-- JUMPS!



HE'S GETTIN' AWAY--CLEAN!

ON THE CONTRARY, DEAR CHAP!

I KNOW SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT HIM!



KINDLY TWIST THE VALVE, WATSON-- AND ACTIVATE THIS HIGH-PRESSURE WATER-GUN!

IT'S ON!



RECALL, IF YOU WILL...

PROFESSOR MORIARTY PERISHED BY WATER... AT REICHENBACH FALLS!

WE HAVE HERE A PLENTIFUL SUPPLY OF WATER--



--AND OBSERVE THAT OUR QUARRY IS... FALLING!



A SATISFACTORY NIGHT'S WORK, EH, WATSON?

YEAH... BUT YOU BEEN SAYIN' YOU KNOW SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT HIM ...

...THAT PUT YOU ON HIS TRAIL!



IT'S SIMPLY THAT WHETHER I AM SHERLOCK HOLMES OR CLIVE SIGERSON--



--THE JOKER IS PROFESSOR MORIARTY!

AND HOLMES CAN ALWAYS DEPUCE WHERE MORIARTY WILL STRIKE!



A SIMPLE CASE OF IDENTITY, WATSON!

END