

THE ADVENTURE OF THE MANY JACKS

or, The Strange Case of Dr. Jackal and Mr. Hype

An Interactive Musical Comedy Murder Mystery

by Butch Maxwell and Bert Furioli

Mystery Theatre Unlimited

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AT A GLANCE

Genre: Interactive Musical Comedy Murder Mystery

Running Time: To be confirmed.

Cast: 3M, 2W, plus three designated audience participants.

Setting: 1888. 221B Baker Street and London's East End.

Audience Participation: Extensive — designated audience members portray Inspector Lestrade, a British Daily Planet reporter, and Lady Featherbottom, plus a Q&A period and Detective Cards.

Music: Musical parody numbers performed by the cast with prerecorded accompaniment.

Technical Requirements: Recorded music and sound-effects playback, plus hand props.

IDEAL VENUES

- Dinner theatres
- Community theatres
- Fundraisers
- Performing arts organizations
- Civic organizations
- Corporate and private events

THE MYSTERY THEATRE EXPERIENCE

An evening with Mystery Theatre Unlimited begins before the first scene. Upon arrival, guests are seated and receive a program, Detective Card, pen, and one Character Fun Fact Card at their place setting. As the cast mingles in character, guests are encouraged to read their Fun Fact aloud, exchange cards with other tables, and meet the suspects before the mystery officially begins.

THE EVENING'S FORMAT

1. Guest Arrival & Character Mingling — Characters circulate, meet the audience, and establish relationships before the scripted action begins.
2. Act One — Sheerluck Holmes investigates the WhiteCastle murders while Dr. Henry Jackal attempts to cure Prudence Prissywood and accidentally unleashes his hyperactive alter ego.
3. Dinner / Intermission — Characters may remain available for informal interaction as appropriate.
4. Act Two — Holmes's investigation closes in as Jackal's formula spreads, suspects multiply, and Lady Featherbottom becomes the latest victim.
5. Question & Answer Period — Audience members question the suspects directly.
6. Guessing Break — Guests complete Detective Cards identifying the killer and explaining their deductions.
7. Act Three — The solution is revealed, followed by recognition of the evening's successful detectives.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Jackal and Mr. Hype draws its audience participants into scripted bits, selected and coached in the moment by the cast member running that scene. No advance preparation or theatrical experience is required.

The audience roles are:

- Inspector Lestrade — a Scotland Yard inspector who presents the official theory of the WhiteCastle murders.
- British Daily Planet Reporter — a reporter who interviews Dr. Jackal about his medical breakthrough.
- Lady Featherbottom — one of Dr. Jackal's wealthy patients and, later, the mystery's murder victim.

The entire audience also participates throughout the evening — questioning the suspects after Act Two and completing Detective Cards before the solution is revealed.

CHARACTERS

DR. HENRY JACKAL

Nerdish but ambitious scientist and physician whose experimental formula produces an alarming alter ego.

PRUDENCE PRISSYWOOD

Jackal's patient and research subject, afflicted with a condition that causes her to become any animal mentioned in her presence.

RATSO

Dr. Jackal's hunchbacked assistant, devoted to his master and highly suspicious of Prudence.

SHEERLUCK HOLMES

Renowned detective, relentlessly confident in his powers of observation.

DR. JOHN WATSON

Holmes's assistant and an old friend of Dr. Jackal.

CHARACTER FUN FACTS

- Dr. Jackal got his first chemistry set when he was 12 — the same year his sister went mysteriously bald.
- Prudence Prissywood was raised in relative poverty. Her family had only six butlers, seven housemaids, and one partridge in her pear tree.
- Ratso doesn't really have a hump. It's a wart he got from a really big toad.
- Sheerluck Holmes was the smartest student in his class — and the most de-pantsed.
- Dr. Watson met Sheerluck Holmes at school, when Watson de-pantsed Holmes.

MUSICAL PARODIES AND PERFORMANCE RIGHTS

This play contains musical parodies performed to the tunes of well-known songs. A license to produce this play does not include or grant permission to perform any copyrighted musical compositions.

Responsibility for securing any required public performance rights rests with the producing organization and/or venue. If appropriate licensing is unavailable, the play may be performed without the musical numbers; dialogue may be substituted where necessary.

KEY PROPS AND SOUND NEEDS

- Magnifying glass and prop spider
- Laboratory beakers and tea service
- Dr. Jackal's experimental formula
- Prop blade/saber for the blackout sequence
- Jack-in-the-box and other 'Jack' clue props
- Square hamburger props
- Recorded music, thunder, doorbell, blackout cue, and supporting sound effects

ACT ONE

HOLMES enters, looking through a magnifying glass, searching around the tables.

HOLMES

Has anyone seen a large Mexican tarantula? I was conducting an experiment and it escaped.

Holmes bends down near a table and produces a spider in his hand.

Ah! There you are! How many times have I told you not to bite strangers? There's no telling where she's been.

[To an audience member.]

I'm afraid that bite is fatal, ma'am. But don't worry. You won't die until after you've paid your check.

WATSON enters.

WATSON

Holmes? Holmes? Ah, there you are. You're harder to find than a straight answer.

HOLMES

Ah, Watson. I see that you have just returned from a perilous journey from Westminster where you attended a gathering with strangers and were assaulted by a child with snow cone.

WATSON

Oh, we're playing that game again. All right. How did you surmise all of that, Mr. Know-It-All?

HOLMES

The stain on your coat is a confection peculiar to Piccadilly Circus. It is clearly fresh, partially melted ice, at a level consistent with a small child or dwarf.

WATSON

They prefer "little people," Holmes.

HOLMES

The child was six.

WATSON

Oh. Then "rug rat" is still acceptable.

[Pause.]

And Piccadilly is not literally a circus, you know. Although I saw the Elephant Man there, once. Of course, you are uncannily accurate.

[Pause.]

But how did you know I was at a gathering of strangers?

HOLMES

Because you are still wearing a name tag that says "Hello! My name is Dr. Watson."

WATSON

Why did you send for me? I am a very busy physician. I have a practice to maintain.

HOLMES

Yes, Watson, and I'm certain that if you keep in practice, one day you'll get it right.

WATSON

What is it this time, Holmes? Is the hound of the Baskervilles digging up your garden again?

HOLMES

No, Watson. We have a matter most urgent – a serial killer.

WATSON

Someone's trying to kill Count Chocula?

HOLMES

Worse than that. Listen carefully, because this is the exposition, and I want to get it over with before the audience gets too drunk.

[Aside.]

I think I'm too late for this table.

[To Watson.]

In the past several weeks, five ladies of the evening have been brutally murdered in WhiteCastle. The only consistent clue at the scene of each crime was – little square hamburgers.

WATSON

So, we're looking for the Ham Burglar?

HOLMES

The perpetrator was much deadlier than a fast food icon. You see – All five of the women had their throats cut.

WATSON

Ghastly story for dinner theatre, Holmes. Can't this wait until people are finished with their salads?

HOLMES

[Aside.]

Sorry to give you that gruesome image. The nasty part of the exposition is over. You may resume drinking.

[To Watson.]

There were also other odd items – different at each murder. A bucket. A candlestick. A stalk of a bean sprout. A carved pumpkin. And – a Frosty.

WATSON

New menu items, Holmes?

HOLMES

The game's afoot, Watson.

WATSON

Afoot? Is the door ajar? The girl amiss? The froggy come a-courting?

HOLMES

Watson, this case has Scotland Yard baffled. The square hamburgers were clearly nothing but a red herring sandwich. However, in a letter to the editor of the *London Exaggerator*, responsibility for the murders was claimed by a man calling himself "Jack the Ripper."

WATSON

I don't suppose this Mr. Ripper has a listed telephone number.

HOLMES

Excellent thought, Watson, but the telephone was invented only a decade ago.

WATSON

Then I suppose we'll have to wait until they invent the telephone book.

HOLMES

Luckily, Inspector Lestrade of Scotland Yard has a rather compelling theory.

INSPECTOR LESTRADE

[An audience member.]

That's right, Holmes. We know that all five murders were committed by the same person. Or by quintuplets.

WATSON

Good heavens! The inspector has cleverly disguised himself as a member of the audience!

INSPECTOR LESTRADE

Based on the way the victims were killed, we know that this was no ordinary killer. And that makes you, Dr. Watson, a suspect!

WATSON

Me? Why me?

INSPECTOR LESTRADE

We suspect the killer is a doctor, a butcher, an avid consumer of pornography.

WATSON

That's absurd! I've never been a butcher.

INSPECTOR LESTRADE

You have no alibi on the night of the murders, Dr. Watson, and we have to arrest somebody. Besides, there are only five actors in the show. I've got a 20% chance of being right.

HOLMES

Which is much higher than my seven per cent solution. By the way –

[Sniffing]

I could use a little pick-me-up.

INSPECTOR LESTRADE

I said “eeny meeny minie moe.” You’re “moe.” If you don’t find Jack the Ripper, I’m bringing you in for some standard questioning and torture.

HOLMES

Thank you, Inspector. You may finish your salad now.

WATSON

Damn it, Holmes! I'm a doctor, not a suspect!

HOLMES

And what the Inspector failed to consider is that you are a doctor of philosophy. Not surgery. You are completely irrelevant.

WATSON

I am not an elephant! I'm just a little chubby.

HOLMES

I suspect the official theory is ill-founded. But I need more data. I can't make bricks without clay. I can't make hay without sunshine. I can't put the bomp in the bomp bah bomp bah bomp without a ram in the ram a lam a ding dong.

WATSON

All right. We'll find the bop in the bop shoo bop shoo bop.

[Aside.]

At least we're not going to sing that one.

HOLMES

First, I'd like to interview a forensic scientist familiar with the neighborhood.

WATSON

Why, I have a colleague in WhiteCastle. Brilliant researcher. Dr. Henry Jackal.

HOLMES

Of course, Watson. I know this man. I went to school with the good doctor.

WATSON

Which school, Holmes?

HOLMES

Elementary, my dear Watson.

WATSON

[To audience.]

Ah, come on. You knew we had to do that joke.

Holmes and Watson exit.

SFX: Thunder

RATSO and DR. JACKAL enter. They go to a table where several glass beakers are set.

JACKAL

Come, Ratso! The formula should be nearly ready. I have a feeling that I am on the threshold of a great discovery!

RATSO

Yes, you are, Master! Your fly is down.

JACKAL

[Quickly zipping his pants.]

What I meant was – this formula – at last – will be the cure for – that sweet young thing!

RATSO

Oh, Master! I didn't know you cared.

JACKAL

Not you, you hunchbacked imbecile! I'm talking about Prudence.

PRUDENCE enters.

PRUDENCE

Did you call me, Henry?

RATSO

[To Prudence.]

No, he called you "Prudence."

PRUDENCE

Oh, yes. Well, that is my name.

[Puzzled.]

I think. Oh, I am overcome with the vapors!

[Swooning.]

Swoon! Swoon! Swoon! *[Exit.]*

RATSO

I'm surprised she didn't sing "Swoon River."

JACKAL

You see? That's why I have to cure her. No one wants to hear her sing. She's suffering from an identity crisis!

RATSO

She's suffering from a wardrobe crisis. Those shoes are all wrong for that outfit.

JACKAL

Prudence suffers from a rare disorder of my own discovery: Animalia Nervorsa.

RATSO

You discovered the disease?

JACKAL

I discovered the Latin. That's practically the same thing.

RATSO

It must have been her old boyfriend who made her sick, Master.

JACKAL

Why do you say that?

RATSO

Because she told me that he gave her "multiples."

JACKAL

Be careful what you say to her, Ratso! If you say the wrong thing, she will turn into an animal.

RATSO

Sounds kinky, Master.

JACKAL

No, no, no! She will think she is an animal. It's a peculiarity of her affliction – Animalia Nervosa. If you mention the name of an animal, she becomes that animal. I told her I was busy as a beaver and she built a dam in the bathtub.

RATSO

Ooh! That's a damn shame.

JACKAL

But I will cure her and become the most famous doctor in the world!

RATSO

Your concern is touching, Master.

JACKAL

Of course I'm concerned! That nutball is my ticket to respectability! To wealth! To a date with that foxy Queen Victoria! Ruff! Now, fix me a spot of tea while I get Prudence.

[Singing, out exit.]

Dear Prudence! Won't you come out to play? Dear Prudence, meet the brand new da-a-ay!

Ratso begins fixing tea in a beaker similar to the formula.

PRUDENCE

Did you call me "Prudence," Henry?

RATSO

No, he didn't call you "Prudence Henry."

JACKAL

Come in! How are you feeling? Still crazy after all these years?

PRUDENCE

[Melodramatically.]

I'm not sure. I'm just a poor, afflicted, but beautiful girl. How are you?

JACKAL

Oh, I'm working like a dog.

Prudence immediately begins to act like a dog. She goes down on all fours, pants and barks.

PRUDENCE

[As a dog.]

Woof! Woof! Woof!

JACKAL

Oh no! Look at what I've done! Heel, girl! Heel!

Prudence begins to lift her leg on Ratso.

RATSO

Make her stop, Master! These clothes aren't drip dry.

JACKAL

Prudence!

Jackal administers the established treatment: three broad, obviously theatrical slapstick slaps, played without actual contact.

PRUDENCE

[Snapping out of it.]

Oh, my! Oh, dear! Oh, poo!

RATSO

Ooo – And I thought we were going to have to call the pound.

JACKAL

Just be glad she wasn't in heat.

[To Prudence.]

Are you all right, now, Prudence?

PRUDENCE

[Melodramatically.]

Yes, but – I'm feeling frightened, Henry. Very frightened. A deep, abiding fear prevails – that by virtue of my madness – I shall be

forever a maiden. And a poor one, at that. A poor, poor maiden.
Without two sixpence to rub together. Or six twopence.

JACKAL

I will find a cure for your madness, Prudence, and become one of
the great doctors! Like Dr. Freud! Dr. Livingston! Dr. Sues!

RATSO

Dr. Scholl's!

JACKAL

Dr. Who!

RATSO

Dr. Pepper.

PRUDENCE

[Melodramatically.]

Love would surely cure my madness!

[Aside.]

I always wanted to be a doctor's wife. Mrs. Dr. Prudence
Prissywood Jackal! That name just rolls off the tongue.

RATSO

I think it rolled under this table and died.

JACKAL

[Oblivious.]

This formula is the key to your cure. The ingredients came from
the Mediterranean. It's a Grecian formula.

PRUDENCE

[Melodramatically.]

But, Henry, all I need to be cured is the love of a good man. A
noble man. A handsome man.

[Aside.]

I'll settle for good and noble.

JACKAL

No, what will cure you is – science!

RATSO

[Confidentially.]

Master, this woman isn't interested in a cure. She just wants to
marry you for your money. And you appear to be blinded by your
desire to save her.

JACKAL

Yes! With science!

SFX: Music - "She Blinded Me with Science"

PRUDENCE

[Singing.]
I'm poetry in motion

JACKAL

[Singing.]
She turned her tender eyes to me

PRUDENCE

[Singing.]
As deep as any ocean – As sweet as any harmony

JACKAL

[Singing.]
Mmm – but she blinded me with science

RATSO

[Speaking.]
She blinded him with science!

PRUDENCE

[Singing.]
He promised matrimo-ony.

JACKAL

[Singing.]
When I'm dancing close to her

PRUDENCE

[Singing.]
Blinding him with science.

RATSO

[Speaking.]
Science!

JACKAL

[Speaking.]
Science!

[Singing.]
I can smell the chemicals

PRUDENCE

[Singing.]
Blinding him with science!

RATSO

Science!

JACKAL

Science!

PRUDENCE

[Singing.]

I'm poetry in motion

JACKAL

[Singing.]

And soon she's making love to me

PRUDENCE

[Singing.]

If he shows me the notion – Of happily-ever-after-ing

JACKAL

[Speaking.]

Good heavens Miss Prissywood – you're beautiful!

I – I don't believe it! There she goes again!

She's tidied up, and I can't find anything!

All my tubes and wires – And careful notes –

And antiquated notions

PRUDENCE

[Singing.]

Mmm, but – I'm poetry in motion

JACKAL

[Singing.]

And when she turns her eyes to me

PRUDENCE

[Singing.]

As deep as any ocean – If only he would marry me

RATSO

[Speaking.]

She blinded him with science!

JACKAL

[Singing.]

Confounded by technology!

SFX: Song ends

PRUDENCE

Oh, Henry, can you cure me? I'm tired of being a freak –

[Indicating Ratso.]
– like him!

RATSO

I'm not a freak! I like to think of myself as classically gruesome.

JACKAL

Don't worry. I will cure you this very night! You go relax in the parlor while I prepare the formula. Now where is that feta cheese?

PRUDENCE

And now – I exit – melodramatically! Swoon! Swoon! Swoon!
[Exit.]

JACKAL

Ratso, bring me my tea! And don't forget the Splenda!

RATSO

Yes, Master!

Ratso looks at the two beakers with confusion.

Now, which one was the tea and which one was the formula?
Hmm. Eenie, meanie, minie, moe...

JACKAL

Hurry up, you fool!

RATSO

[Quickly.]
Eenie, meanie, minie, moe!

[Choosing one and pouring it into a cup.]
This one smells like Earl Grey.

[Aside, handing it to Jackal.]
And I mean Earl Grey the dead politician – not the tea.

[Checking the other beaker.]
Ooh, this one smells like Lipton. And I mean Lipton tea – not Peggy Lipton.

JACKAL

Ah, excellent tea, Ratso! But, wait! I can't drink this tea without crumpets.

RATSO

Crumpets? You mean those hillbillies who moved into next door?

JACKAL

No, you – you – !

Jackal screams and begins convulsing. As Ratso looks on, Jackal staggers around the room uncontrollably, grabbing furnishings and gasping.

RATSO

Is something wrong, Master? You seem a little jumpy. I'm switching you to decaf.

Jackal falls to the floor and begins to roll around. When he stands, he is transformed to a hideous monster.

JACKAL

[In a monster voice.]

Argh!

[Suddenly transforming into Mr. T.]

I pity the fool that messes with me!

RATSO

[Screaming like a girl.]

Ah! Don't hurt me! I have sensitive skin.

Jackal careens around the room, laughing like a mad man.

JACKAL

[Transforming into Jack Nicholson.]

Heeerrrrre's Johnny!

[To an audience member.]

The name's Hype, sweetie. Mr. Hype. Short for "hyper!"

[Transforming again to Curly from the Three Stooges.]

Oh, wise guy, eh? Nyuk nyuk nuyk nyuk! Ruff! Ruff!

RATSO

Master! What happened to you? You look horrible! You have an American accent. And your hair do is a hair don't.

Jackal, as Mr. Hype, approaches Ratso with menace. Ratso is frightened.

JACKAL

[Transforming into Robert DiNiro.]

Are you talking to me? You talkin' to me?

[Grabbing Ratso.]

You talkin' to *me*? Then who else are you talkin' to? You talkin' to me? Well, I'm the only one here. Who the do you think you're talking to?

RATSO

M-m-m-mister Hype?

JACKAL

[Still as Hype/DiNiro, releasing Ratso.]

Well, fahgedaboudid.

Jackal screams and begins convulsing. As Ratso looks on, Jackal staggers around the room as before, falling to the floor and rolling. When he stands, he is back to normal.

JACKAL

Good heavens. Why was I on the floor? Was I doing "The Worm" again?

RATSO

I think you may have sipped the wrong tea, Master. You were acting like a crazy man.

[Aside.]

If you call that acting.

JACKAL

[Checking the beakers.]

Ratso!

[Hitting Ratso.]

You gave me the wrong drink.

RATSO

Ow! Stop! You're making me welt.

JACKAL

I drank the formula! Again!

RATSO

Again? You drank the formula before?

JACKAL

Several times. Fortunately, this time I only drank a very small amount. When I tested it before, I was transformed for hours. And I have no memory of anything that happened. And I had fresh hickies on my neck.

RATSO

Ooo, I'm glad the formula wore off you tried to make out with me.

JACKAL

What?

[Grabbing Ratso.]

You must tell no one about the effects of this formula!

RATSO

I won't, Master. Cross my heart and hope to lie.

JACKAL

[Going to the beakers.]

I must find out what went wrong with the formula. Oh, yes, of course! I forgot to add the salt.

RATSO

Ooo, just like a Margarita!

SFX: Doorbell.

JACKAL

Ratso! The doorbell.

RATSO

[Standing still.]

Yes, it is, Master.

JACKAL

Well, answer it, you idiot! I must perfect this formula tonight! A reporter is coming to interview me and if I can show her that I can cure Prudence, I'll be famous! This will be the new state of the art of medicine! It will be as revolutionary as bloodletting and leeches!

RATSO

[Exiting.]

Ooo, I do like leeches. Especially covered in chocolate. [Exit.]

JACKAL

[To an audience member.]

Are you the reporter?

REPORTER

[An audience member.]

I'm Lois Lane, from the *British Daily Planet*. Is it true that you have discovered a cure for baldness?

JACKAL

Not baldness. Madness. You're not a very good reporter.

REPORTER

Well, you're not a very good actor, so we're even.

Ratso, Holmes and Watson enter.

WATSON

Ah, there you are, Henry! You're harder to find than the second gunman. Dr. Henry Jackal – this is Sheerluck Holmes – the world's greatest detective – in his own mind.

JACKAL

[Acknowledging.]

Gentlemen. If you will excuse me for a moment, I must confer with my associate.

[To Ratso.]

I told you I was not to be disturbed! What part of "disturbed" don't you understand? The "dis" or the "turbed"?

RATSO

But Master, Holmes seemed to know everything about me. All my deep, dark secrets. He even knew that I liked sprinkles on my birthday cake.

HOLMES

I also observed that your assistant was working on a strange chemical complex known as *camellia sinensis*.

RATSO

You see, Master? He's Mr. Know-It-All!

JACKAL

That's Latin for tea, you moron!

[To Holmes and Watson.]

So, what brings you out to see me on this dark and spooky night?

WATSON

We're investigating a series of murders and we need your forensic expertise. Like CSI: WhiteCastle.

JACKAL

Well, I'm very busy right now. Take two aspirin and call me in the morning.

HOLMES

It is of the utmost urgency that we act now, because I believe the killer will strike again – this very night!

SFX: Thunder.

JACKAL

How does he do that?

WATSON

He pays the sound effects man. Henry, the police suspect me. As an old friend, I would think you would want to help me. If you help me, I won't tell the newspapers your deep, dark secret. They'll never find out about your bedwetting.

RATSO

Ooo. I thought we had a leaky roof.

JACKAL

I'm sorry, Watson, but I can't help you. I'm at a critical stage in my experiment. I'm on a strict deadline. And it's almost tea time.

HOLMES

[Handing Jackal evidence.]

I won't take up much of your tea time. I'd like you to run a chemical analysis of this little square hamburger. I suspect it is high in trans fats.

JACKAL

Very well. Let's get this over with.

[To Ratso.]

Prepare this hamburger for examination, Ratso. Stat!

RATSO

[Taking the burger and unwrapping it.]

Yes, Master.

[To burger, dragging leg.]

Walk this way.

Ratso eats the burger, unnoticed by the others.

HOLMES

I must refresh myself with my seven per cent solution.

[Sniffing.]

This case has all the potential deadliness of Moriarty's Revenge! All the doggedness of the Hound of the Basket-case. All the swing of Giant Rat of Sinatra!

WATSON

He has delusions of adequacy.

HOLMES

[Looking at Jackal's beakers.]

Fascinating concoction you have here, Doctor Jackal. A combination of alloys, steroids, hemorrhoids and sodium magneto titanium super-duper-um. It could use a touch of salt.

JACKAL

If you know so much about chemistry, why do you need me to test the evidence?

HOLMES

Second opinion, Doctor. Besides, Scotland Yard suspects this slasher killer is a doctor. And you live in the neighborhood where all the murders happened.

JACKAL

Surely you aren't accusing me.

PRUDENCE

[Entering.]

Did you call me "Shirley," Henry?

WATSON

Ever feel as if you've walked into a running gag?

JACKAL

Mr. Holmes, Dr. Watson, this is my patient, Miss Prudence Prissywood.

PRUDENCE

[Courtesy.]

Doctor?

[Flirting.]

Pleased to meet you.

WATSON

[Kissing her hand.]

Charmed.

PRUDENCE

[Aside.]

Nice to have a back-up doctor.

[To Holmes.]

And you are the famous Sheerluck Holmes? What does your fabled power of observation tell you about me?

HOLMES

You are 28 years old, are desperate to marry a doctor and have a long and sordid history with a variety of men.

PRUDENCE

That's not true! I'm only 27.

RATSO

You see? I knew she was full of lies, Master! Everything she says is utter bull!

Prudence immediately begins to act like a bull. She affects horns, snorts and charges at Ratso.

RATSO

Ooo, down, Toro! Help, Master! Help!

Holmes pulls out a red handkerchief and dangles it in front of Prudence.

HOLMES

Ole!

Prudence, as a bull, charges the handkerchief.

JACKAL

Prudence!

Jackal administers the usual treatment.

PRUDENCE

[Snapping out of it.]
Oh, my! Oh, dear! Oh, poo!

HOLMES

I see that Miss Prissywood suffers from Animalia Nervosa –an acute case.

PRUDENCE

[Flirting.]
Oh, do you really think I'm cute?

JACKAL

Prudence has the worst case of it I've ever encountered. But, I am resolved to cure her. It is my burden to bear.

Prudence immediately begins to act like a bear. She raises her paws, growls and lumbers towards Ratso.

RATSO

Ooo! Help! Smokey's gone rabid!

JACKAL

Prudence!

Jackal administers the usual treatment.

PRUDENCE

[Snapping out of it.]

Oh, my! Oh, dear! Oh, poo! Oh, I'm frightened. I'm afraid the only thing that will cure me – is to be married!

JACKAL

That's nonsense! Marriage doesn't cure madness. But it often causes it.

PRUDENCE

I've seen some of the other women you've had around here, Henry.

[Eyeing females in the audience.]

Hussies! Tramps! Loose women.

RATSO

Where? Where?

PRUDENCE

If I were not so normal, I would be insanely jealous. Propose to me right now, Henry, or something bad will happen.

WATSON

Well, that was subtle.

[Taking Prudence's arm.]

Don't worry, Miss Prissywood. I can help you. What size straightjacket do you wear?

PRUDENCE

Leave me alone or I'll hurt you! Need I remind you that I'm out of my mind?

JACKAL

She's right about that. She is quite mad.