

Act VI Scene 2



Attila and Lara surveyed the scene.

From their side of the street, everything looked all right. There was some blue and white police tape surrounding the pavement outside the revolving door, and it stretched its way right around the block. As was standard protocol, there were a pair of constables on guard, keeping a lookout for any suspicious activity in and around the scene.

Attila and Lara looked at one another, shrugged simultaneously, and approached the police officers. They had grown accustomed to needing to sweet-talk their way through to the heart of the case.

"Oi! You two! Where do you think you're goin'!?" ordered the taller of the two constables. He wore a peculiar bucket-shaped hat that Lara had never seen before.

Attila stared them down. Then, with a shot of confidence, he responded.

"Top o' the morning, officers. I'm Attila. This is Lara. And we're just travellers, passing on by."

"Ah, well, best be goin' on your way, then. You're disruptin' good poli—"

The shorter of the two constables tugged at his sleeve. She wore a more conventional bowler hat, which, granted, still looked rather bemusing to Lara. The shorter constable spoke in a hushed and urgent tone. The taller constable nodded along.

He straightened and returned Attila's stare.

"Attila and Lara, eh? We've been informed..."

He paused and glanced down at his shorter companion. She nodded for him to continue.

"We've been informed about your arrival by one of our superiors. Superintendent Rubik. Says you lot 'ave a point to prove. Now, we 'aven't made much 'eadway into the case, which is probably why 'e's let you lot in."

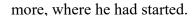
He lifted the police tape. Attila and Lara stooped down low to enter the crime scene.

Right before they stepped through, however, the shorter of the constables got in their way.

"Don't go blowing this case, you two. Scotland Yard's got a lot riding on it," she warned sternly.

Attila responded with an offhand "Yes, ma'am" and strode right past her. Lara was a bit more tactful, nodding along, before being waved on through.

Lara arrived to find her old friend methodically scanning the scene. Starting from his left, his gaze swept slowly to the right, absorbing all of the details that he could see, and then over to the left once



"Interesting," he muttered. "Very, very interesting."

The stranger examined his stash of loot. Broken glass. Broken glass. Cheap-looking earring, and only one of them. More glass. A necklace. An amulet of some description. A ring. Another shard of glass.

He sighed.

He had spent what felt like months casing the joint. And the return on investment was pitifully insubstantial.

Still, he thought. At least I made a clean getaway. And at least nothing was left back at the store...

"Attila, is it?"

The old man turned around to face the man who had just addressed him.

"Who's asking?"

"Detective Inspector Lestrade. Scotland Yard." He produced an official-looking badge.

Attila stared back at him.

"And you must be Lara?"

"Yes," she said, enthusiastically.

The inspector addressed Attila once more.

"So, have you got anything? Any first impressions?"

"Well, looks like your standard break-and-enter. A majority of the back cabinets being smashed suggests that he either knew something valuable was hidden there or that he came in from that way. That can of aerosol spray on the ground implies that he did some research on the alarm system..."

Lestrade glanced at the ground behind him. An empty aerosol spray can lay there, untouched and unexamined. Guiltily, he looked up at Attila again, and attempted to hold his gaze once more. Attila, who was well into his staccato rant, paid no notice to the momentary lapse in eye contact.

"...and the fact that this looks like a smash-and-grab suggests that this was a premeditated attack gone wrong. The store runs on a silent alarm system — the make and model of that laser sensor is one that I'm quite familiar with — which provides us with the preliminary circumstantial evidence to suggest that this may have been an inside job."

Attila paused for air. Lara marvelled at her mentor's newfound confidence.

"Now, I also see some evidence tags, so I assume that you lot have done your due dili—"

"Woah, woah, woah. Hold up. HOLD UP. You got all of that just from looking around!?"

The inspector was sporting a rather perplexed look.

"Oh yes. And as I was saying, since I see some evidence tags, I assume that there has been some evidence recovered from the scene?"

Lestrade was too busy instructing one of his junior constables to take a copious amount of notes.

"What? Oh, yes. We found these."

He reached into his pocket and pulled out a zip-lock bag containing the three skeleton keys.

"Oh. Excellent. Excellent, indeed."





