

CHAUCER / AUSTEN

Personality

Hopelessly idealistic: When you look at yourself in the mirror you don't see a criminal—you see an artist. As long as you follow your own personal code of honour, you can hold your head high.

Charismatic: In your past life you were probably a commander or a guru; even in this grey modern world, others see you as a leader.

Consummate actor: You never lose your cool, whether you're improvising or following a script. As long as the blood is fake and you know there's an happy ending.

Con man

The past: You're one of the most capable hustlers in all of England, and after years spent working with the best you put together a gang worthy of your talent: The Three signatures. The project wasn't born under the best of circumstances—you met them in jail, after getting thrown in for a fistfight—but the last three years were definitely worth the trouble.

The gang: Under your guidance, Marlowe/Woolf stopped being a two-bit lowlife and Byron/Shelley found a purpose for their brilliant mind: They put themselves in your hands and allowed you to shape them into true con artists. You've shared more than a couple of great heists and a good sum of money: You three have a code of honour. It's the only reason you can look in the mirror and see an artist striking fear in the hearts of the greedy instead of a villain living off the poor.

In the end, the Three signatures are more than accomplices to you: They're friends. When one drink too much awakens the sentimental in you, you even find yourself calling them family.

The plight: Even the best stumble sometimes, and you happened to take a nosedive during your last job with the Signatures. You jeopardised the plan and lost the gang a lot of money. This is part of the reason you got into debt with Irene Adler to tackle a hard nut like Moriarty. Even if the others don't seem to resent you and act as if nothing happened, it was a hard blow for you, and your smiling mask is starting to crack. You're not used to losing and it's no coincidence you let Byron/Shelley bask in the limelight this time: They came up with the plan and called all the shots, while you took a backseat in the role of a no-name antiques dealer. In any case, you want to make your comeback with this job, to prove to yourself and the others that you're still the best.

The money: Lying to friends is reprehensible, even for a con artist. Yet you didn't think twice about it. Even though you painted this job as the gang's grand finale, you have no intention of abandoning what has been your life's work. The others go on and on about retiring and settling down, but you still hope you can convince them to keep the legend of the Three signatures alive. In any case, you're going to invest your share of the money in a new, colossal scam; if you have to form a new gang to get it done, so be it.

Quote: "We are artists, digging into the very nature of man, unearthing every last vice and picking at every last wound of the soul".

Antiques dealer

Your role in the hustle is that of a small-time antiques dealer that happened to be in the right place at the right time: A German art scholar, believing the Wanderer above the Sea of Fog in Hamburg to be a forgery, offered to sell you the original in their possession. To get the five hundred thousand pounds they asked of you, you needed a partner to shoulder half of the expenses: You turned to Moriarty, the famed gallery owner, and pretended you knew nothing about their more unsavoury endeavours. The scholar presented a costly forgery to Moriarty's experts, and it managed to pass the first round of tests.

You got them to agree to a business meeting as you wait for the results: You can't waste this chance to talk them into risking a quarter million pounds to gain six. Even if fooling that old fox is not going to be easy, you have a good plan and you're the best in the field.

Quote: "Don't turn your back on luck, Moriarty. Even if right now it looks like you're giving away a cow for a fistful of beans, you can bet they'll turn out to be magical".

Body language

Lynx (Metaphorical reference to help with the physical portrayal of the character, from posture to gestures)