**The Man in Black**

By Harriet Seden

I bid my farewells to the porter as he idly trudged down the winding path leading to York and away from the locomotive station. I knew that I should not have still been present yet, I was still here. I bent down to scoop up some of the many tickets strewn across the concrete floor when, all of sudden, a peculiar noise filled my ears. Every inch of my body quaked and my breath caught in my throat.

I was no longer alone.

I turned in a heart beat. A cloud of dust dirtied my immaculate school uniform and precisely polished shoes. Emerging from the haze was a man: a man entirely dressed in back. Despite my best efforts to scamper behind the ticket box, I was seen.

A calm and low voice called out to me. “Excuse me, is this the way to the city of York?”

In spite of myself, I stepped forward, curious of the gentleman that positioned himself on the opposite side of the platform at the curious time of day. At first glance, all I could see of him was his silhouette against the night’s full moon. I then noticed that he was a tall man with a broad-rimmed hat that submerged the upper half of his face in a twisted shadow – only leaving his sharp chin, of quite the contracting colour to his hat, visible. Beneath his chin, he wore a long overcoat: the sort that you would imagine Sherlock Homles to wear. In the moonlight I could just about discern seven silver buttons: seven silver buttons running down his immaculate overcoat, restraining him from release.

I strained my eyes attentively in an attempt of further observation.

I could make merely make out a slim gloved hand wrapped around the handle of a briefcase. He must have met my gaze as he tightened his grip in trepidation. The briefcase – despite being in his position – was far from extravagant. My gaze then turned to his shoes, curious to discover if they were the cause of a strange clinking sound. His shoes did not differ much to my own: long, pointy and with laces secured with a double bow. The was all I could discern in the dim moonlight. However, one thing that perplexed me still was the question of why he was here at this curious time at this peculiar place.

“Excuse me” he said “is this the way to the city of York?”