

Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Blue Diamond

Note: This play is written so that each character may be played as male or female, to fit casting needs.

Synopsis:

Shirley/Sherlock Holmes is a renowned London detective with amazing powers of deductive reasoning, a knack for strategy, and a refreshingly easy way with people. Holmes' assistant Watson may struggle with deduction, but makes up for it with loyalty. When a Christmas goose turns out to hold more than just stuffing, our master sleuth jumps in to save a friend from sure condemnation.

Characters

Sherlock/Shirley Holmes	The famous detective.
John/Joan Watson	The famous detective's friend & assistant.
Peterson	Hotel doorman, friend of Holmes.
James/Jane Ryder	Manager of the hotel where Peterson works.
Henry/Henrietta Baker	Hat and goose owner. Once rich, now poor.
Mr/Mrs Windigate	Pub owner.
Mr/Mrs Oakshott	Goose farmer.
Narrators	Storytellers. Greek Chorus. Movie trailer announcers.

Director's Notes:

1. *This show is meant to offer everyone in the cast the opportunity to play one of the main roles as Holmes, Watson, or Peterson. This is accomplished by changing actors between each scene. Likewise, everyone should be a Narrator, as well.*
2. *To mitigate confusion, characters must have very recognizable costume pieces that make for easy identification, regardless of who plays them. For example, Holmes can have the deerstalker hat and hunting jacket. Peterson has a uniform hat and coat.*
3. *Each role is written as male or female. Use is left to the director's discretion.*

Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Blue Diamond

Adapted by Jason Richards

Part of the stage is Holmes' apartment—with two comfortable chairs, one small table, and perhaps an area rug. The rest of the stage may also be set with 2-3 brick flats to define other play areas, or remain open.

Scene 1 - Introduction. Holmes' London Apartment

Holmes uses a magnifying glass to examine an old hat.

NARRATOR 1

(Grandiose) The time...is London. The place...is Christmas Eve, 1895.

NARRATOR 2

Hold on... *(Crosses to Narrator 1, and whispers something in their ear)*

NARRATOR 1

The time...is Christmas Eve, 1895. The place...is...is...*(to NARRATOR 2)* What was it?

NARRATOR 2

London, England.

NARRATOR 1

Yep. And the name is...

WATSON 1

Holmes!

NARRATORS 1 & 2

Yep.

WATSON 1

Holmes! *(Still no response. Finally...)* Sherlock Holmes!

HOLMES 1

Oh hello, Watson. You'll never guess what I'm doing.

WATSON 1

You're examining a hat.

HOLMES 1

Yes. Excellent observation! *(Hands Watson the hat.)* Have a look. What can you deduce?

WATSON 1

It's a hat.

HOLMES 1

Watson, Watson, Watson. You see, but you do not see.

WATSON 1

I'm not even sure I'm hearing you right now.

HOLMES 1

There are three things we can learn from this hat. One... See the label? This was a very expensive hat—three years ago.

WATSON 1

So the owner is rich.

HOLMES 1

The owner *was* rich. Because Two... See the hat band? It's worn. Rich people don't wear worn out hats.

WATSON 1

So the owner *used to be* rich, but is now not so well-off.

HOLMES 1

Exactly!

WATSON 1

What's the third thing?

HOLMES 1

The owner's name is Henry Baker.

WATSON 1

How in the world did you...?

HOLMES 1

(Reading) "for Henry Baker." *(Shows the inside of the hat.)* And in here are written the initials "H.B."

WATSON 1

Where did you get the name tag?

HOLMES 1

It was on the leg of a dead goose. Which came with the hat. From Peterson.

WATSON 1

You mean Peterson, the doorman at the Hotel Cosmopolitan?

HOLMES 1

That's the one.

WATSON 1

Is he about this tall (*shows height with hand*), with brown, straight hair? [*Edit hair description to match Peterson actor*]

HOLMES 1

I'd say so.

WATSON 1

Smells a little funny sometimes?

WATSON 1 (cont'd)

Ah, yes. (*Laughs and tries to play it off. To Peterson,*) Of course I'm kidding about the 'smelly' bit.

PETERSON 1

(*To Watson*) Of course.

HOLMES 1

Say, how's that goose cooking up, Peterson?

PETERSON 1

Oh yes...the goose! You won't believe what we found inside that blasted goose!

WATSON 1

Stuffing?

HOLMES 1

I actually would believe that.

PETERSON 1

Well, yes, there was stuffing. (*Exasperated*) No, not the stuffing! We found this! (*takes out handkerchief with gem*)

WATSON 1

Stunning!

HOLMES 1

You know, Watson, you're looking at twenty thousand pounds.

WATSON 1

(Stunned) Peterson! You must be the strongest person in the world! How do you lift it?

Peterson and Holmes stare incredulously at Watson. Finally, Watson figures it out.

WATSON 1 (CONT'D)

Oh—money! *(Embarrassed)* That is expensive, yes. *(To Holmes)* How do you know it's worth twenty thousand pounds?

HOLMES 1

From keen observation... *(Picks up a newspaper)* ...of the headlines. Look! *(Hands paper to Watson and points out the headline in question)*

WATSON 1

(Reading) "Hotel Cosmopolitan Jewel Robbery." Wait—Peterson, isn't that your hotel?

PETERSON 1

No...but I do work the door there. *(Beat)* I came to beg your—

WATSON 1

(Interrupting. Reading) "A large diamond worth twenty thousand pounds has been stolen from the Countess of Morcam during her stay at the Hotel Cosmopolitan. Jane Ryder, general manager, is working with police to recover the missing stone."

PETERSON 1

Yes she is. In fact—

WATSON 1

(Again interrupting. Reading) "While there are no suspects yet, the Countess is offering a reward of one thousand pounds for the return of her diamond." Aren't you lucky. That's a large reward!

PETERSON 1

It is. But there's no way I could—

WATSON 1

(Interrupting. Reading) "Last night at two A.M. the countess discovered the jewel box empty and reported it to the night manager, Ryder, who immediately sounded the alarm. Detective LaStrade from—"

PETERSON 1

(Interrupting) Listen—I can't turn in this diamond! They would think I stole it.

HOLMES 1

Of course you can't turn it in, Peterson.

WATSON 1

Dear me! Why would they think you stole it?

HOLMES 1

Many years ago, our friend Peterson here was imprisoned for theft.

WATSON 1

He's a thief! How did you deduce that?

PETERSON 1

I told him. We're friends.

WATSON 1

Fascinating.

PETERSON 1

I didn't steal this stone. *(Desperate)* I'm not a thief...anymore. You've got to help me, Holmes!

Holmes 1, Watson 1, and Peterson 1 strike notable poses.

SFX - DUNT, DUNT, DUNN!

(Alternatively, this could be a music cue that builds to crescendo during Peterson's line.)

Holmes 2 and Watson 2 and Peterson 2 relieve Holmes 1, Watson 1, and Peterson 1 first striking the same poses, and afterward taking over the roles of Holmes and Watson. Narrators speak over the exchange.

NARRATOR 3

Will Sherlock Holmes help Peterson solve the case and clear his name?

NARRATOR 4

Or will Peterson go back to prison for a crime he did not commit?

NARRATOR 3

Will Watson develop the slightest deductive powers?

NARRATOR 4

Will anyone notice we changed narrators?

NARRATOR 3

Or that we're swapping out other actors?

NARRATOR 4

(To Narrator 3) They definitely will, now that you've called attention to it.

NARRATOR 3

Good point. *(To audience again)* Will anyone be able to follow this mysterious story?

NARRATOR 4

Will we ever stop asking questions?

Scene 2 - Tell Me Everything

HOLMES 2

Of course I will help you, Peterson.

PETERSON 2

Oh, thank Heaven.

WATSON 2

As will I.

PETERSON 2

(Unsure about Watson) Well...I *am* desperate.

HOLMES 2

Tell us everything! From the beginning.

WATSON 2

Spare not the slightest detail!

PETERSON 2

Let's see... It started with Henry Baker.

As Peterson tells the story, it is acted out on stage as a flashback (perhaps with a change in lighting) by other actors in their own separate play area.

WATSON 2

The one with the hat and the goose!

PETERSON 2

None other. I'm on the night shift, and I'd been on duty for about two-and-a-half hours when Ryder sounded the alarm.

WATSON 2

Because of the robbery.

PETERSON 2

Yes, because of the robbery. Later she had all kinds of questions for me.

RYDER (FLASHBACK)

Are you sure you didn't see anyone suspicious go out this door?

PETERSON 1 (FLASHBACK)

The only suspicious person I've seen is you. You'd just as soon hang me as look at me!

RYDER (FLASHBACK)

Let's be honest, Peterson. I know your record.

PETERSON 1 (FLASHBACK)

I was here at the door the whole time, Miss Ryder. Anybody'll tell you that.

RYDER (FLASHBACK)

(Suspicious) Well...if you hear anything, bring it to me straight away. *(Beat)* And if you're hiding something from me...I will find out. *(exits)*

HOLMES 2

What time would you say that was?

PETERSON 2

Around two-thirty in the A.M.

HOLMES 2

And what happened next?

PETERSON 2

Nothing really happened...until the next night, around four in the morning.

WATSON 2

And then?

PETERSON 2

That's when I saw the man with the hat and the goose.

HOLMES 2

Henry Baker. What was Baker doing?

PETERSON 2

He was leaving the pub next door.

WATSON 2

With a goose? At four in the morning?

Ruffians enter.

PETERSON 2

I wondered at that, too. Not for long, though. Because a couple of ruffians came out from the shadows, bent on giving the old boy a hard time.

HOLMES 2

Did Baker run?

Baker 1 drops the goose, pulls his hat off, and wields the cane like a sword.

PETERSON 2

No time. He dropped the goose and fended 'em off with his cane. I went to help. But when the cane smashed a window—

Baker 1 swings the cane at one of the ruffians, misses, and falls.

SFX - WINDOW BREAKS

PETERSON 2 (CONT'D)

—the ruffians took off.

Ruffians exit in a rush.