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Dramatic Publishing

An Evening With Sherlock Holmes

Drama by Jules Tasca



A UNIQUE EVENING OF MYSTERY

An Evening With Sherlock Holmes

Drama by Jules Tasca

Cast: 5 to 10m., 2 to 6w. The triad of one acts begins with *The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor* (5m., 2w.), the tale of a British aristocrat, Sir Robert, who marries an American millionaire because his fortune has run out. However, on the wedding day, his young wife disappears. Sir Robert calls on Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson to solve the mystery of her disappearance. The second piece, *The Milverton Adventure* (3m., 2w.), pits Holmes and Watson against a nefarious blackmailer, Charles Milverton, who is blackmailing one of Holmes' clients, a woman who wrote several damning letters that could destroy her impending marriage. Holmes plans to burgle Milverton's house and retrieve the letters, but on the night of the burglary, Holmes' and Watson's attempt is interrupted by an unforeseen incident. It is the original concluding play, *The Disappearance of Adam* (2m., 2w.), that makes this evening with Holmes unique. Holmes must solve one of the existential mysteries. With its theme of life and death, the super sleuth must solve the riddle that has puzzled the most brilliant minds in history! How does a person cope with his or her own demise? A not-to-be-missed climax! *Two int. sets. Approximate running time: 90 minutes. Code: E89.*

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An Evening With Sherlock Holmes

By
JULES TASCA



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An Evening With Sherlock Holmes was produced by the Valley Players Theater Ensemble in the Julia Ball Auditorium at Gwynedd Mercy University, Gwynedd Valley, Penn., from Nov. 6 to 8, 2014.

Cast:

Mrs. Meekly, Hatty	Aubrey Cook
Mysterious Woman, Mrs. Hudson	Amy Hoffman
Sherlock Holmes.....	Wes Hrabina
Sir Robert.....	Ken Mont.
Inspector Lestrade.....	Patrick White
Milverton, Francis Moulton.....	Bill Riccardi
Watson.....	Mike Romito

An Evening With Sherlock Holmes

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Original (2m., 2w.)	

An Evening With Sherlock Holmes employs the Asian theatre technique of using stage assistants. The assistants, dressed in black and wearing white masks, enter scenes as they are in progress and change settings or remove objects. They even change the makeup of the characters when required.

The Disappearance of Adam

CHARACTERS

SHERLOCK HOLMES: Detective.

DOCTOR JOHN WATSON: Holmes' confidant.

MRS. HUDSON: Holmes' housekeeper.

MRS. EVELYN MEEKLY: A British woman.

Time: 1930.

Place: The apartment of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson in London.

(The lights come up on SHERLOCK HOLMES sitting frozen with his bow across his violin. The stage attendants frame DOCTOR JOHN WATSON.)

WATSON *(to audience)*. By way of prologue, there is something I'd like to tell you, but ... but I cannot remember what it is ...

(The attendants remove the frame. WATSON crosses off. HOLMES quickens and tries to play his violin. He tries a few times, but all he produces are discordant sounds. Then he rises. He is obviously concerned about something. WATSON enters from the apartment door.)

WATSON. Holmes ...

HOLMES. Yes, Watson ... Now where is my tobacco? ... That's odd ... I put the can on the desk last night ...

WATSON. Here ... Take mine ...

(He hands HOLMES a pouch.)

HOLMES. Thank you... you're up this early, Watson, because you are upset.

WATSON. How do you know I'm upset?

HOLMES. You're rubbing your thumb and your index finger together. You always do so when you're unsettled.

WATSON. I do?

HOLMES. Yes ...

WATSON. I never noticed that I have that habit.

HOLMES. You do, my friend. Well, then what is it?

WATSON. Holmes, listen to me ...

HOLMES. Yes?

WATSON. I think ... I think it's rather serious. As a doctor, I'd say it's extremely serious ...

HOLMES. Oh?

WATSON. You see ... you see ... It's my thinking. For some reason, Holmes, I'm ... I'm just not functioning ... I'm not ... not ...

HOLMES. In what respect are you not functioning?

WATSON. I'm not sure. But I'm not. I'm wondering, is it my age? Holmes, my thinking has dulled, dulled like an old hacksaw ...

HOLMES. You sound lucid to me.

WATSON. It's more ... It's more my memory. My memory's gone foggy.

HOLMES. Your memory ... This is ... is quite singular ... This is also remarkable ...

WATSON. Holmes, what is remarkable?

HOLMES. Nothing ... Nothing at all ...

WATSON. You do believe me? ...

HOLMES. I believe you. What are you forgetting?

WATSON. Everything ... it seems ...

HOLMES. Come, come, Watson. Everything ... What year is it?

WATSON. Good Lord, I know that. It's 1930.

HOLMES. And you know who I am. And the housekeeper's name?

WATSON. Mrs. Hudson ... But that's not the problem ...

HOLMES. Where then is this sink hole in your memory bank?

WATSON. How can I clarify this?

HOLMES. What don't you remember?

WATSON. You see, I respond to factual questions, but if I try to fill in memories ... Well, the images seem to be gone ...

HOLMES. Watson, where did you take your medical degree?

WATSON. At the University of London ... But, Holmes, I don't remember being at the University of London ...

HOLMES. Hmmm ...

(A stage attendant removes a painting from the wall. Another takes WATSON's tobacco and they cross off.)

WATSON. You don't look surprised. It is that Sherlock Holmes sangfroid or are you ...

HOLMES. No, no, Watson, I am as surprised as you are, I assure you ... I just think there's a bigger problem ...

WATSON. Thank God, you don't think me a lunatic.

HOLMES. Let me continue ... From the University of London, do you ... do you remember your colleagues?

WATSON. My colleagues?

HOLMES. At the University?

WATSON. My ... my ... my colleagues ... I'm a blank there, Holmes... you see?

HOLMES. Try to remember, Watson ... Try ...

WATSON. I ... No ... Nothing ...

HOLMES. Usually, when medical students, say, dissect a cadaver, they do so in small groups.

WATSON. That's so, yes ...

HOLMES. You must remember those you spent weeks with deconstructing a corpse ...

WATSON. No. I ... I remember no one. I swear to you. Now that you raise the time period, I ... Holmes, I don't even remember working on a cadaver ... even though I'm sure I did. I must have, I'm a surgeon ...

HOLMES. Perplexing ...

WATSON. I'll give another example. I know as a surgeon I was attached to the 5th Northumberland Fusiliers, but now now I have no recall of that service. What did you do with my tobacco, Holmes?

HOLMES. I put it on the table.

WATSON. It's not here.

HOLMES. Forget the tobacco ... When you were in the 5th Northumberland, you served where?

WATSON. You know I served in India and in Afghanistan.

HOLMES. I'd forgotten.

WATSON. How could you have forgotten when I told you so many anecdotes? ...

HOLMES. Such as ...

WATSON. Such as ... Such as ... God, Holmes, I've forgotten ...

HOLMES. Then how did you remember that you served in India and Afghanistan?

WATSON. I know I served there, but ... but I ... but I have no memory of being in either India or Afghanistan ... I know I did, that's all. My memory's a flutter. It goes no deeper than that ... a flutter ...

(Stage attendants enter and remove bric-a-brac and liquor bottles and go off.)

HOLMES. This is baffling ... how could we ... Watson, how could you undergo such a change in cognition ...

WATSON. It's more than cognitive functioning, Holmes, I don't quite remember my wife.

HOLMES. Well, she passed away now—how long ago is it?

WATSON. Not so long ago that I would have no memory of all our years together.

HOLMES. I can see why you're so anxious ... yes ...

WATSON. I've been torturing myself trying to remember. I saw the soccer scores in the paper yesterday. And I remember being an excellent player myself, but I don't remember playing soccer ever. Why go on with these complaints?

HOLMES. We know this. Something unexplainable has happened. But we must get to the bottom of it ... Let's try focusing on what precisely is clear in your memory. We all have a vast sea of times gone by. What is vivid to you? You must tell me.

WATSON. Holmes, I didn't mean to alarm you.

HOLMES. Think. What is vivid in your memory?

WATSON. Well ... I ... I remember clearly all the cases that we worked on. I could narrate any of them from *The Study in Scarlet*, *The Sign of Four*, *The Hound of the Baskerville*, *The Milverton Adventure*, *The Adventure of ...*

HOLMES. That's enough, my good man.

WATSON. I'm afraid I'm losing my mind, Holmes ...
stepping into my dotage ...

HOLMES. But you're too young for *Dementia Praecox*, so
we must try to discover ...

(A knock at the door. MRS. HUDSON enters.)

HUDSON. Sorry to interrupt, Mister Holmes.

HOLMES. Not at all, Mrs. Hudson.

HUDSON. There's someone to see you.

HOLMES. A woman, I'd say.

HUDSON. It is. A lady of refinement. How did you guess,
Mister Holmes?

HOLMES. No guess, Mrs. Hudson. When a gentleman calls
for me, you always remove your apron before you admit
him. I assume to look more presentable. When a woman
calls, you leave your apron on, because I suppose you don't
feel the need.

HUDSON. Around you, Mister Holmes, a person has no secrets.

WATSON. I thought you'd be use to it by now, Mrs. Hudson.

HUDSON. I'll never get used to keeping house for a genius,
Doctor Watson. Shall I show the lady up then?

HOLMES. By all means, please.

*(MRS. HUDSON exits. Attendants walk on and remove an
umbrella stand and several canes.)*

WATSON. Perhaps this woman needs assistance. Maybe I
need a new venture to clear my brain. What do you suppose
the woman wants so early after dawn?

HOLMES. She's in trouble of some kind. The earlier a lady

of refinement calls on me, the more serious the trouble ...

WATSON. What makes you deduce that?

HOLMES. Watson, at this hour, a lady of refinement would be breakfasting. And afterwards, she'd need so much more preparation time at her *toilette*. Why, she wouldn't arrive here until at least 10:30.

WATSON. That sounds logical ...

HOLMES. Also, since the woman is here so early, she either didn't sleep or she passed a restive night. In either case, she'll be fatigued.

WATSON. Holmes, how can you stand a world so transparent to you?

HOLMES. Some days, Watson, while ruminating, I can see through to my own soul. At such times, I can't even stand myself.

WATSON. Whatever in the world that means ...

(Stage attendants enter and remove books and a small valise. There is a knock on the door.)

HOLMES. Come in, please.

(MRS. HUDSON opens the door and admits MRS. EVELYN MEEKLY.)

HUDSON. Mister Holmes, Doctor Watson ... Mrs. Evelyn Meekly.

WATSON. Good morning.

EVELYN. Good morning.

HOLMES. Do make yourself comfortable, Mrs. Meekly.

EVELYN. Thank you. I'm exhausted. *(She sits.)*

HUDSON. Shall I bring up the breakfast, Mister Holmes?

HOLMES. Yes, please, Mrs. Hudson ... Mrs. Meekly will join us ...

HUDSON. Of course ...

(MRS. HUDSON exits.)

EVELYN. You're a medical doctor, sir?

WATSON. I am ...

HOLMES. To what do we owe the pleasure of this visit?

EVELYN. It's about my husband, Adam Meekly. Has he been to see you, Mister Holmes?

HOLMES. Adam Meekly? No, he has not.

WATSON. No one's been here for quite a while ... It seems ...

EVELYN. Then, Mister Holmes, I fear ... I fear that something's happened to him.

WATSON. Oh, my, no ...

HOLMES. You fear what happened to him?

EVELYN. I don't know, but something has happened to him ... and to me ...

HOLMES. When did you last see your husband?

EVELYN. Not since he got to London. We came by train from Oxford.

HOLMES. I see. And your husband has some business dealings here in London?

EVELYN. I don't think so. Adam's not in business. He's Professor Adam Meekly. He's a don at the University.

WATSON. He must be brilliant, Mrs. Meekly.

HOLMES. His academic discipline is? ...