

HOLMES AND WATSON

BY
JEFFREY HATCHER



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

HOLMES AND WATSON
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The world premiere of HOLMES AND WATSON was originally commissioned and produced by the Arizona Theatre Company (David Ira Goldstein, Artistic Director), Tucson/Phoenix, Arizona, in May 2017. It was directed by David Ira Goldstein, the scenic design was by John Ezell, the costume design was by Matthew LeFebvre, the lighting design was by Don Darnutzer, the sound design was by Brian Jerome Peterson, the projection design was by Jeffrey Teeter, the composer was Roberta Carlson, the dialect coach was David Morden, and the production stage manager was Glenn Bruner. The cast was as follows:

WATSON	R. Hamilton Wright
DR. EVANS	Philip Goodwin
ORDERLY/MORIARTY*/INSPECTOR*	Stephen D'Ambrose
MATRON/THE WOMAN*	Carrie Paff
HOLMES 1/THE CLIENT*	James Michael Reilly
HOLMES 2	Noah Racey
HOLMES 3/SIGNOR FONSECA*	Remi Sandri

* In the original ATC production the asterisked roles were not listed in program credits. Please see note on page 63 for further information regarding character crediting.

CHARACTERS

WATSON

DR. EVANS

ORDERLY

MATRON

HOLMES 1

HOLMES 2

HOLMES 3

MORIARTY

THE WOMAN

THE CLIENT

SIGNOR FONSECA

THE INSPECTOR

HOLMES AND WATSON

Scene 1—Dr. Watson’s Surgery

Lights up on—

*Watson, in an overcoat and hat. At his feet is a doctor’s bag.
He holds a journal.*

WATSON. From the Journal of Dr. John H. Watson, M.D.

Opens journal, reads.

“Of the many unforeseen outcomes of the tragedy that befell Sherlock Holmes at the Falls of Reichenbach, surely the most frustrating fell under the category of ‘False Sightings.’ As Holmes’ body had not been retrieved, it was relatively simple for any number of frauds, fakes, and charlatans to come forward and lay claim to his identity. Naturally the task fell to me to disprove the many impersonators who made their presence known. Off I would go, by train, by boat, by horse and carriage, each time to be disappointed, as I knew each time I would be.”

Closes journal.

Until today. A telegram arrived.

Holds up a telegram.

“Dr. Watson, I write to inform you of a mystery. I have in my care three men, each of whom claims to be the late Mr. Sherlock Holmes. It is imperative that this matter be sorted out at once and in the deepest secrecy. A compartment has been reserved for you on the Scotsman leaving King’s Cross, connecting at Edinburgh to Starkhaven, then via ferry to the asylum.”

SFX: train whistle, steam.

Watson puts the telegram into his coat pocket and the journal into the doctor’s bag.

Lights change.

Scene 2—Arrival

The asylum. The only furniture is a straight-backed chair and a round-topped chess table. On the table are a sherry decanter, two glasses, and a large medical dictionary.

SFX: rain outside.

Dr. Evans enters, in a suit.

DR. EVANS. Dr. Watson. I am Dr. Evans.

WATSON. Dr. Evans.

DR. EVANS. Did you travel well?

WATSON. All connections made.

DR. EVANS. Good.

An Orderly in a white uniform enters and takes Watson's coat and hat.

WATSON. I didn't know the last stage of the journey was to be...

DR. EVANS. An island?

WATSON. An island, yes.

DR. EVANS. Hence, the ferry. The crossing normally takes a quarter of an hour, but rough weather being what it is...

WATSON. Yes, quite.

DR. EVANS. Would you care to see your room and freshen up?

WATSON. My room?

DR. EVANS. The ferry runs only at very specific times, and as it's evening now, you won't be able to return to the mainland until morning.

WATSON. You don't have a boat here on the island?

DR. EVANS. A skiff, but I wouldn't attempt a crossing in this storm. That's why I had the room made up.

WATSON. If we were in a penny dreadful, this would be a ruse to have me locked up as a lunatic.

Watson laughs. Dr. Evans stares at him. Watson's laugh dies.

Joke.

DR. EVANS. I assumed as much.

WATSON. I'll go up later.

DR. EVANS. Would you like a sherry before we start? There may be something stronger.

WATSON. Perhaps when we've finished. I'm rather eager to have done with this.

DR. EVANS. Of course. Oh. Nearly forgot. Do you carry a side arm?

WATSON. I'm sorry?

DR. EVANS. A revolver.

WATSON. On occasion.

DR. EVANS. Do you have it on your person?

Beat.

Watson takes a revolver out of his pocket. The Orderly takes it from him.

WATSON. Here, now—

The Orderly hands the revolver to Dr. Evans, who examines it.

DR. EVANS. It's loaded.

WATSON. Not much good otherwise.

Dr. Evans gives the revolver to the Orderly.

DR. EVANS. It will be returned to you when you leave.

The Orderly exits with the gun, overcoat, doctor's bag, and hat.

WATSON. Dr. Evans, do *you* carry a side arm? Given that you're so security-minded.

DR. EVANS. You have yet to meet our patients.

WATSON. Your patients in general or these three in particular?

DR. EVANS. Most particularly these three. In answer to your question: No, I do not carry a revolver. We prefer to command our patients by other means.

WATSON. Do you mean to say there are *no* firearms on the premises?

DR. EVANS. Just yours.

WATSON. Doctor, how came these men to be under your care?

DR. EVANS. I'm afraid I cannot tell you that.

WATSON. I'm sorry?

DR. EVANS. The matter must be kept in the strictest confidence. When, or rather *if*, you identify one of the three as the man he claims to be, I will make the pertinent details known to you.

WATSON. So I'm to judge which is which, yes or no, without consideration as to *why*?

DR. EVANS. I assure you that I am acting under proper authority.

WATSON. (*After a beat.*) Right, then, let's get this over and done with.

Dr. Evans goes to the table and presses a bell/buzzer.

The Matron enters.

DR. EVANS. Matron, this is the gentleman who is going to assist us in our endeavor. He wishes to see the patients.

MATRON. Yes, doctor.

The Matron exits.

WATSON. May I ask a question?

DR. EVANS. Yes, of course.

WATSON. Was this place always...?

DR. EVANS. An asylum? Not at all. It was a fortress, then a lighthouse. Its isolation is perfect for our needs. There's a well-stocked library that I use as my office. There's even a music room. This was, in the original scheme of things, the great hall.

Lights change.

Scene 3—3X Holmes

*Lights rise on—three men in silhouette U.S. C., facing upstage.
The Orderly stands off to the side. He holds a truncheon.*

DR. EVANS. (*Re: truncheon.*) Did they give you trouble?

ORDERLY. No, sir, not when they see my convincer.

The Orderly slaps the truncheon into his palm.

Watson tentatively takes a step towards the three men.

Sound/lights: flash powder explodes U.S. C., blinding Watson.

WATSON. What in...?

*As the lights adjust we see a camera and tripod upstage of the
three men. The Matron emerges from under its black cloth.*

DR. EVANS. I'm sorry. We're compiling a photographic record of the patients. We hadn't the opportunity before now to catch the three of them together. We have been scrupulous in seeing to it that they do not intermingle.

*The Matron claps her hands three times. The three men turn
to face front. Light illuminates their faces:*

*Holmes 1, Holmes 2, and Holmes 3. Each tall, thin, sharp-
featured, and well-cast as Sherlock Holmes.*

*Holmes 1 is a classic Holmes à la Sidney Paget. He wears a
patient's uniform.*

*Holmes 2 is identical, but has long hair, a mustache and
beard. There is a hint of Christ to him. He wears a straitjacket.*

*Holmes 3 is also identical, but his head is shaved clean. His
face is pale, his cheeks sunken, his eyes glazed. He wears a
patient's uniform.*

Well, doctor, having known Mr. Holmes so well for so many years, this should be quick work for you. You may get closer, but I advise not too close.

*Watson moves closer to Holmes 1. Then he moves on to Holmes
2. Then to Holmes 3. Then he steps away from them.*

HOLMES AND WATSON

by Jeffrey Hatcher

6 men, 1 woman

Sherlock Holmes is dead. Or so it is assumed. The world knows the great detective went over the falls at Reichenbach with his nemesis Professor Moriarty. But as Holmes' body was never retrieved, a number of frauds, fakes, and charlatans have come forward since to lay claim to his identity, and it falls to Dr. Watson to disprove them. Then a telegram arrives informing Watson that three men, each claiming to be Holmes, have been committed to a remote asylum off the coast of Scotland. Now Watson must discover if one of the mad men is the real Sherlock Holmes.

"...the most elaborate and riveting game of What's My Line ever. ...The Jeffrey Hatcher play...is tight and clever and full of suspense—and has enough red herrings to feed a family of 40."
—Arizona Daily Star

"[HOLMES AND WATSON] is a truly smashing play full of twists and turns that will keep you on the edge of your seat... Hatcher has crafted an intelligent mystery thriller..."
—TalkinBroadway.com

"HOLMES AND WATSON keeps you intrigued as a succession of unexpected twists and turns results in an unforeseen finale."
—KBAQ

"...a locked-room mystery driven by jousting dialogue and carefully constructed plot twists. ...Hatcher is too astute a writer to have just one trick up his sleeve, and the face-value mystery is just the first layer of a more complicated puzzle box."
—Arizona Republic

"Wildly enthralling and masterfully penned... Hatcher well knows his way around riddles and is a crafty manipulator of appearances. ...An amazing must-see cliffhanger."
—BroadwayWorld.com

"It begins with a crack of thunder and ends with the haunting, fading strings of a violin. ... Hatcher not only succeeds in keeping us guessing right up until that violin fade, he's also written a crowd-pleaser. ...A thorough delight; a play that keeps you committed to its machinations from beginning to its unexpected end. ...don't reveal the ending. To do so would be committing a criminal act of Moriarty proportions."
—Valley Screen and Stage

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