

Watson: Good evening, sir. May I help you?

Wilson: I hope so. I am looking for the famous detective, Sherlock Holmes.

As Wilson enters stage right, Holmes moves toward him while speaking.

Holmes: You have found me, good sir. What can I do to help you?

Watson: Let me take your hat, sir. Sherry?

Wilson: Sherry... can't say I know a Sherry. I knew a Shelley once, and 2 Shirleys, but no Sherry.

Watson: I mean Sherry to drink. Would you like some sherry to drink?

Wilson: Ooohh! Yes, please.

*Watson pours sherry for Wilson and refills his and Holmes' glasses.
Wilson turns to Holmes.*

Wilson: My name is Jabez Wilson. And I need help with a strange event that could effect my money.

Holmes looks Wilson up and down, as if examining him.

Holmes: I see, Mr. Wilson that you are used to manual labor;
You like snuff.
You have been to China,
and you have done a great deal of writing lately.

Wilson: Great Scott! How do you know all that just by looking at me?

Holmes: It is quite obvious, sir: First of all, your right hand is larger and rougher than your left—that is due to hard work
As for the snuff—you have little white circles under your nose from sniffing it.

Watson: What about China and the writing?

Holmes: I figured out China from the Chinese coin on your watch chain. And your shirt cuffs have ink marks all over them from lots of writing.

Wilson: That is simply amazing, Mr. Holmes! I used to grow tea in China, which was hard labor. I use snuff, and I have been doing lots of writing. You are brilliant!!

Holmes: Nonsense, just good eyes and superior intelligence. Please sit down and tell us your story.

They all take seats around the coffee table.

Wilson: Well, I own a pawnshop. Over the last few years, business has not been very good. I barely make enough to take care of myself, my outstanding assistant, Vincent Spaulding, and the young girl who cooks and cleans my house.

While Wilson is talking, the "imagination area" is formed upstage right by a drop with curvy edge and blank in the center like a thought balloon. The assistant enters stage right and moves into the imagination area and bows. Then the young girl enters the same way and curtsies.

Holmes: Your outstanding assistant, you say?

Wilson: Oh yes. An amazing man. He works hard and is very smart. He took one-half the usual pay just to learn the business. I am very lucky to have him.

Assistant in imagination area puts hand on his chest so he seems noble.

Holmes: It is very unusual for such a noble and smart person to take such a low wage. Please go on.

Assistant in imagination area puts hands on hips and scowls at Holmes like he is insulted.

Wilson: Well, one evening, my assistant came into the room all excited and showed me a newspaper article.

Assistant moves across imagination area with a newspaper, then looks around as if looking for Wilson.

Wilson: Oh, please excuse me for a moment. I need to be on the other set.

Wilson picks up his chair and moves it to the imagination area. Then sits down. Holmes and Watson just look at each other, confused. Assistant shows the newspaper to Wilson.