

**Sherlock Holmes  
and the mystery of the Aquilla Diamond  
by Sid River**

**Background**

Written in the style of a "Round the Horn" or "Goon Show" radio script, this has worked really well in a number of end of year reviews. It contains a few old jokes but it still makes me laugh ten years on! If the actors have good timing and can "over-act" it helps.

<b>Parts</b>	<b>Description</b>
Sherlock Holmes:	Traditional Homes character, intelligent, superior, arrogant and self-confident and always engrossed in the detective work.
Doctor Watson:	A bumbling, upper-class fool. Idolises Holmes but just doesn't understand him. Amazed at everything that Holmes does. Good with a revolver and a stethoscope.
Lady Aquilla: (pronounced "a killer")	Acts incredibly posh and self-important. Thinks that she's the most glamorous thing since sliced bread.
Gertrude L'Es- cargu/Cook	An outrageously OTT French accent masks a supreme criminal and "mistress of disguise". A difficult opponent for Holmes. Plays the cook with warts, a bad back and a West Country accent straight out of a Dickens novel.
Crumpton (the butler)	Dead - that's all!
Narrator:	Straight from "Round the Horn". Can stand on the edge of the stage for dramatic effect.
Voice:	Voice of the play's director offstage. Easily frustrated.

**Notes**

Some haunting violin music sets the scene well. A few props might be needed

## Sherlock Holmes & The mystery of the Aquilla diamond

- Narrator: The story begins inside 221B Baker St. Holmes and Watson are sitting by the fire playing chess. There is a knock at the door.
- Holmes: Get that would you Watson.
- Watson: Certainly Holmes (*goes to the door, opens it, in bursts a woman in very expensive riding gear, boots and a riding hat perched on top of a large nest-like hairdo*) Goodness me!
- Lady Aquilla: Mr Holmes (*addressing Watson*) I need to speak with you immediately! It is of the utmost importance!
- Watson: Well I never.... Goodness me!
- Holmes: (*coolly, without turning round*) And Mr Sherlock Holmes will speak to you when he decides that he is good and ready!
- Lady Aquilla: And who might you be Sir!
- Holmes: (*getting up and turning round*) I, Madame, **might** be Mr Sherlock Holmes. In fact, I definitely was the last time I looked! And you, you are Lady Henrietta Aquilla of Porkington. You have rushed here, directly from riding in the hunt to ask me to recover the famous Aquilla Diamond which was, two days ago, stolen from your country house!
- Watson: Goodness me! Jolly good show Holmes!
- Lady Aquilla: (astonished) How on earth did you know all that Mr Holmes? I haven't breathed a word to anyone!
- Watson: It's just a talent that he has. But I'd like to know anyway.
- Holmes: Elementary, my dear Watson, elementary. First, the knock on the door. Too loud for a hand, but not for the ornate silver riding crop that her Ladyship is holding. As for coming straight from the hunt, well, leather riding boots, fresh mud, and the unmistakable smell of horse manure, simple really.
- Lady Aquilla: But my name! And about the diamond.
- Holmes: Quite straight forward! You have a ridiculously expensive hairdo covered by an extremely sad hat, and your picture is in tonight's paper under the headline "Famous Aquilla diamond stolen from Lady Aquilla". It is *this* that has brought you in such a fervour and so quickly to 221b Baker St!
- Watson: Marvellous! I told you he was a smarty pants! Good show Holmes!
- Lady Aquilla: Yes, Yes! Very clever! But can you help me?
- Holmes: Lady Aquilla, I would only be too pleased to help you. Let us make our way directly to the scene of the crime! Come Watson, the game is afoot!
- Watson: I thought the game was chess Holmes?

Holmes: *(sighs and sounds impatient)* Watson, just call me a cab.

Watson: Righty-ho. You're a cab Holmes.

Holmes: Doh! You just can't get the staff nowadays!

*All three exit.*

Narrator: As night falls over old London town, *(loud bang and scream off stage)* our gallant detective and his trusty sidekick gallop their way through the steaming metropolis. Eventually, they arrive at Lady Aquilla's country mansion tired, travel sore and weary of the endless games of I-spy with my magnified eye. Losing no time they make directly for the scene of the crime, Lady Aquilla's study.

Lady Aquilla: This is where the diamond was kept Holmes, in this glass display cabinet.

Watson: Goodness me, it's been smashed Holmes!

Holmes: *(mockingly)* Well done Watson, very astute. How on earth did you work that out with all this broken glass in the way!

Watson: *(extremely pleased with himself)* Well, just a good guess really!

Holmes: Lady Aquilla, when was the theft discovered?

Lady Aquilla: At about 4:00pm two days ago. The maid Florence noticed it when she came to polish the silver.

Holmes: And someone, in the meantime, had polished off the diamond!

Watson: *(laughs)* Oh very good Holmes, very good.

Lady Aquilla: This is a very serious matter Dr Watson. Why that diamond has been handed down from generation to generation of Aquilla's I t was only the other day that I was saying....

Holmes: *(Holmes walks to the front of the stage)* Over here Watson! What do you make of this? *(points to something on the floor)*

Watson: *(excitedly)* Why, it's a carpet Holmes!

Holmes: No idiot! On the carpet.

Watson: Goodness me! It's a footprint in the shape of a boot!

Holmes: Yes! And a strange yellow footprint at that. Notice that it is quite small and more pointed at the front and, if I'm not mistaken, has been repaired at least 3 times in the last year. *(leans down and sniffs the footprint)* Hmm.

Watson: What is it Holmes, another clue?

Holmes: Can you smell anything Watson? Apart from Lady Aquilla's boots that is?

Watson: Why, yes! What on Earth is it?

Holmes: Garlic Watson! The overpowering smell of fresh garlic! *(turns to Lady Aquilla)* I would like to speak to the maid if you please.

Lady Aquilla: Certainly. I'll send for her at once.  
*A loud scream is heard off-stage, all gasp and rush off.*

Narrator: With capes flying our dashing duo head off in search of the crime scene, speeding through the underground passages of Gotham City in the fearsome Batmobile and wearing only dark blue underpants and....

Director's voice: *(Interrupting loudly or via a microphone off-stage)* Err . . . Excuse me! That's not right!

Narrator: What?

Director's voice: That's the wrong script, that's Batman!

Narrator: *(confused)* Are we not doing Batman?

Director's voice: *(impatiently)* Err . . . No. That's next week. This is Sherlock Holmes!

Narrator: Oh! Gosh! Sorry! I'll try again. Sorry.

Director's voice: OK! OK! Off you go!

Narrator: What? Am I fired? You want me to go?

Director's voice: *(irritated)* Nooo! Just read the script!

Narrator: Oh *Riiiiight!* *(pause to re-establish dramatic voice)* Our brave detectives head off in the direction of the scream. They arrive panting at the library to find the body of Crumpton, the butler, lying dead on the floor with a large kitchen knife sticking out from the back! *(whispers to voice offstage)* Was that alright?

Director's voice: Yes! Shut up!  
*Holmes rushes over and examines the body. He pulls out the bloody knife and holds it up for all to see.*

Watson: *(urgently)* Is he dead Holmes?

Holmes: *(sarcastically)* I'd say that was a fairly safe bet Watson. Hmm! An interesting weapon.

Watson: Well Holmes, at least we know one thing.

Holmes: What's that Watson?

Watson: *(smugly)* The butler didn't do it!

Holmes: I'm not so sure Watson. Lady Aquilla, all this criminal activity is making me quite hungry. Is there any chance that you could lay on a Roast turkey dinner for us?

Lady Aquilla: Now? But shouldn't we call the police or something?

Holmes: Just trust me on this one Madam, just trust me.  
*All exit stage left and reappear stage right*

Narrator: Just one hour later the great detective and the faithful Watson are seated around a candle-lit table with Lady Aquilla. With no butler, and the maid in shock, the cook herself has had to lay the table and serve the dinner, as well as cook it.

Lady Aquilla: I must apologise gentlemen for the very sparse service. The only member of staff that we have left is the cook and I'm afraid that **she** is best left in the kitchen!

Holmes: Don't you worry Lady Aquilla. Watson here is an Ex Indian Army man, he won't mind roughing it for Sunday dinner. Besides, I am most interested to meet Cookie. Ah here is the good lady herself!

*Enter cook, hobbling with bent back and carrying a large covered roast dish.*

Cook: (*sounding old and servile*) I'm so sorry hit's a bit late your Ladyship, but has we're so short staffed down below, I've 'ad to do everything myself, an' when you get to my age madam you don't want to be running round a field after a distraught Turkey with a large chopper!

Watson: (*jumping up in amazement*) You mean the turkey was armed!

Holmes: Sit down Watson! Shall we begin? Allow me to reveal this evenings savoury delights!

*Holmes whips the top off the meat dish to reveal a decimated carcass.*

Lady Aquilla: (*gasps and stands*) Cookie, what on earth happened to the turkey! It looks like it's been savaged by wild wombats!

Cook: (*looking distressed*) I . . . don't know what you mean madam? I . . . Is there something wrong?

Lady Aquilla: (*sounding hysterical*) Something wrong! We can't serve that to guests! It looks like it's been carved with a wood axe! Take it away this instant!

Cook: Yes madam, I'll remove it directly!

Holmes: (*Leaping up and placing his hand on the meat dish as cookie tries to remove it*) Not so fast Cookie! Watson, stand by the door if you please. Perhaps Lady Aquilla, I can shed some light on the matter.

Watson: I wish you would Holmes, it's rather dark in here!

Holmes: (*Ignoring Watson*) Now, Cookie. Could you please tell us all just what exactly, did you use to carve the joint?

Cook: (*nervously*) Why, a carvin' knife o'course!

Holmes: Would it be a carving knife similar to. . . THIS ONE . . . perchance!

*Holmes whips out knife and bangs it on the table.*

Cook: (*getting agitated*) I . . . I . . . suppose so, yes!

Holmes: (*pointing his finger upwards as though a solicitor in court*) Impossible! Because this was the **very** knife used to stab Crumpton, the butler!

Cook: It . . . It must have been another one, I was mistaken!

Holmes: (*Still gesturing*) Impossible again! Just before dinner your Ladyship, I took the liberty of checking the kitchen for another carving knife, and I found NONE! What do you say to that Cookie! (*Holmes walks up to Cook*) Or should I say (*pulls off her hat and wig*) MADAME GERTRUDE L'ESAGO. Otherwise known . . . as 'Garlic Gertie' of Burgundy!

Garlic Gertie: (*French accent*) Oh no! I am undone! You'll never take me alive!

Watson: Goodness me Holmes!

Holmes: Watson, your service revolver!

*Gertie runs towards Watson, He draws his gun and points it directly at her nose. Gertie stops and puts up her hands. Watson forces her backwards at gunpoint.*

Garlic Gertie: OK! OK! Take me alive! I surrender!

*She is led to chair and Watson ties her hands behind.*

Lady Aquilla: Goodness me Mr Holmes, this is just too much to believe. Are you saying that Cookie here is responsible for the murder of Crumpton and the theft of the diamond?

Holmes: I certainly am Madam.

Lady Aquilla: But how on Earth did you see through it all?

Holmes: Elementary Your Ladyship. You see, the "modus operandi" of Garlic Gertie is known across the whole of Europe! I recognised it and was on to her from the very beginning. The smashed display cabinet; a cook who cannot carve a Sunday joint and who leaves footprints made by spilled custard powder; and of course, that tell tale smell of fresh garlic! It all added up to only one thing, Gertrude L'Escago! A fiendishly clever plot though!

Cook: Yes, and if it hadn't been for you meddling kids I'd 'ave gotten away with it!

Watson: All that remains then Holmes, is for her to tell us where she hid the diamond.

Holmes: Ah Watson, sadly that is the one thing that she cannot tell us. For up until now only one person knew the hiding place of the Aquilla diamond and he, unfortunately, lies dead in the library.

Watson: Crumpton! The butler did do it after all!

Lady Aquilla: Surely you must be wrong!

Holmes: I'm not wrong, and please don't call me Shirley! Crumpton had the misfortune to see Gertie take the diamond in the first place and thought that he could have it for himself. He stole it from her, hid it quickly but then paid the price when he would not give up the hiding place.

*Holmes walks to the sideboard to pour everyone a drink. As he picks up the cut glass decanter, he pauses, and slowly holds up the top of the decanter (which is in fact the missing diamond) to the light.*

Lady Aquilla: So what your saying Mr Holmes is that we are still no further on than when we started!

Watson: She's right Holmes, you can't deny her that!

Holmes: There is only one thing Watson, that I cannot deny Lady Aquilla, and that . . . is a celebratory drink.

Lady Aquilla: But Mr Holmes, what could there possibly be to celebrate?

Holmes: Only two things , your Ladyship. Firstly, that the great Sherlock Holmes has once again successfully resolved a baffling case and, secondly . . . (*Holmes holds up the decanter stopper and slowly hands it to Lady Aquilla as he speaks*) . . . the recovery of the .... beautiful...Aquilla ...DI AMOND!

*Lady Aqilla gasps and hold the diamond up to the sudience with a frozen look of amazement.*

Watson: By Jove Holmes, how ever do you do it?

Holmes: Ah, Elementary my dear Watson, Elementary!

*Whole cast freeze whilst ending music (Crossroads theme works really well and is funny) plays then audience erupts into applause!*

END