

Brian Guehring  
Omaha Theater Company for Young People at the Rose  
2001 Farnam St., Omaha, NE 68102  
(402) 502-4636 [briang@rosetheater.org](mailto:briang@rosetheater.org)  
[www.brianguehring.com](http://www.brianguehring.com)

## **SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE FIRST BAKER STREET IRREGULAR**

based on the classic characters and mysteries by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

adapted for the stage by Brian Guehring

a play for a minimum of six adults (4m/2f) and 6 youth performers (3 f, 3m)

Draft #2.07 draft

On a dare from other street urchins, fourteen year-old Wiggins tries to pickpocket a strange old man. Not only is Wiggins unsuccessful, but the old man managed to take the gold ring that was in Wiggins' pocket. When Wiggins goes to 221B Baker Street to retrieve the ring, she is shocked to find out how much Sherlock Holmes knows about her based on a quick observation. After Wiggins sees Sherlock use the gold ring to solve a case, Wiggins proposes to work as Sherlock's assistant. Intrigued by her potential, Sherlock agrees to begin training Wiggins on a trial basis. Wiggins and Sherlock must learn to trust each other as Wiggins and the group of street youth help Sherlock Holmes solve two dangerous mysteries.

*Sherlock Holmes and The First Baker Street Irregular* is a new 75 minute adaptation for young audiences based on the classic characters and mysteries of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle including *The Red Headed League* and *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*. *Sherlock Holmes and The First Baker Street Irregulars* is scheduled to be produced by the Omaha Theater Company for school groups and public audiences in November 2015

Copyright 2014 Brian Guehring

# SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE FIRST BAKER STREET IRREGULAR

based on the classic characters and mysteries by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

adapted for the stage by Brian Guehring

a play for a minimum of six adults (4m/2f) and 6 youth performers (3f/3m)

## Character List

SHERLOCK Sherlock Holmes is a brilliant detective  
WATSON Dr. Watson is his kind-hearted assistant  
MS. HUDSON the tough landlady of 221B Baker Street  
LESTRADE the pompous inspector from Scotland Yard

## Baker Street Irregulars

WIGGINS street-smart, tough 14 year old leader of the gang  
TOBY a challenger who is new to the gang, Anna's brother (14)  
ANNA smartest one in the gang, walks with crutches, Toby's sister (12)  
GEORGE the biggest kid in the group, but gentle (16)  
LUCY a fearless, impulsive small girl in the group (10)  
OLIVER the youngest and smallest one in the group (8)

## A Study in Scarlet

HOPE a desperate criminal looking for a ring  
CONSTABLE a police man

## The League of Red Headed Gentlemen

WILSON pawnbroker with flaming red hair  
SPAULDING (alias) pawnbroker's new assistant  
MARY Fourteen year old girl who helps clean Wilson's home  
ROSS Trustee of the League of Red Headed Gentleman  
MERRYWEATHER Bank Official  
LANDLADY a landlady at the offices of Red Headed League

## The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle

BAKER tall man who lost his hat and goose  
HORNER plumber at Cosmopolitan Hotel  
RYDER senior attendant at Cosmopolitan Hotel  
CATHERINE maid of countess and pregnant girlfriend of Ryder  
BRECKINRIDGE poultry dealer  
MRS. OAKSHOT sister of Ryder  
TOUGHS a gang of rough street kids

## Settings

Outdoor London Streets: Coburg Square home to a market, pawnshop and bank  
221B Baker St (the home of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson)

The Basement of the Bank

## Time

1880's

Copyright 2014 Brian Guehring

*Suggested Doubling for 12 person cast*

Adults:

Actor 1: Old Gentleman/Sherlock Holmes  
Actor 2: Dr. Watson  
Actress 3: Ms Hudson/Merryweather/Mrs. Oakshott  
Actress 4: Spaulding/Landlady/Tough #3/Catherine/Londoner  
Actor 5: Hope/ Mrs. Sawyer/Ross/Baker/Horner/Breckinridge  
Actor 6: Constable/ Lestrade/Wilson/Ryder

Youth Performers

Youth Actress 1: Wiggins  
Youth Actress 2: Anna/ Mary  
Youth Actress 3: Lucy  
  
Youth Actor 1: Toby/Tough #1  
Youth Actor 2: George/Tough #2  
Youth Actor 3: Oliver

*Mary could be played by Youth Actress 2 or 3*

*Landlady could be played by Actress 3 or 4*

*Youth Actress #2 and #3 could play a tough*

## PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES:

When reading plays for the 2014-15 season at the Omaha Theater Company, the artistic director Matt Guttschick was looking for an adventurous story for upper elementary school students and middle school students that would appeal to boys and girls. He was interested in producing a play about Sherlock Holmes for this slot, but was struggling to find an adaptation that had a strong young protagonist. Being a HUGE mystery fan, I immediately said that Sherlock Holmes used street kids in London as a spy network to help with some of his cases. If one of those kids told the story of Sherlock Holmes, it would solve the challenge of how to engage young audiences into these classic stories.

So that began one of the most fun research periods I have had in preparing a new play. How cool is it that I got to reread so many original stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle as part of my job? I took copious notes about the characters, the appearances by the Baker Street Irregulars, and which cases might be a good fit for our stage. We did a few script development sessions with the company in the fall of 2014. I even taught a drama class on Sherlock Holmes in the winter of 2015 to explore these stories and some of the early pages with upper elementary drama students.

While I love the new BBC adaptation of Sherlock and the modern *Elementary* on CBS, I knew I wanted to set this play in the original time period of the stories. I also wanted this play to pique interest in young readers in the Sherlock Holmes stories (whether this is their first exposure to the characters, or if they only know modern versions of the story). Inspiring a young person to read books after seeing a production of one of my plays is one of the most satisfying impacts of my work.

I have adapted the mysteries of *The Blue Carbuncle* and *The Red Headed League* for this first draft. I have also included moments and details from *A Study in Scarlet* and *the Sign of Four*. I hope you enjoy reading this draft as much as I enjoyed researching and writing it.

SCENE 1: THE PICKPOCKET

*(Scene opens on Coburg Square in London. It is a late morning in early December. There is a pawnshop, a market stall for selling geese and other meat, a tobacconist and a bank. Men and women of London pass by and ignore the group of dirty children in the alley. The street urchins could even stroll the aisles of the audience begging for money. Projection screens are hidden within the set<sup>1</sup> to highlight clues and observations from the mysteries)*

OLIVER

I'm starving. George, do we have any food left?

GEORGE

Naw. We finished the bread we nicked yesterday.  
*(CONSTABLE makes his rounds)*

TOBY

I say we go the market and steal some more food.

WIGGINS

Not today. Constable Peterson is on duty.

ANNA

He watches us like a hawk.

TOBY

Oliver and George can cause a ruckus and distract 'im while we get bread.

GEORGE

Why do I always have to cause the disturbance?

LUCY

I'll do it!

WIGGINS

No. We did that last time. Constable Peterson won't be tricked by that again.

TOBY

Then Wiggins, what do you suggest? Sit back, do nothing, and just starve?

OLIVER

I'm really hungry.

---

<sup>1</sup> This can add an interactive moment for the audience. When they figure out this convention, they have to practice their observation skills to find what surface on the set will turn into a projection screen next...

Don't worry, I have a plan.

WIGGINS

What is it?

ANNA

I go to the pawnshop and sell this.

WIGGINS  
*(WIGGINS pulls out a gold ring)*

A gold ring? Is it real?

LUCY

You're the best Wiggins!

OLIVER

How did you get that ring?

GEORGE

I wouldn't want to bore you with the story...

WIGGINS

Tell us! Tell us!

ALL except TOBY

We'll eat for a week!

ANNA

Alright, alright, calm down. I guess I'll tell you the story.  
*(ANNA, LUCY, GEORGE, and OLIVER sit down to listen to the story. TOBY leans against the wall with arms crossed.)*

WIGGINS

So this is what happened...

*(As WIGGINS starts telling the story to the street urchins, the other side of the stage comes to life and the story is acted out)*

Last night I was out making my rounds, making sure we were safe.  
*(BACKSTORY WIGGINS starts walking around the London street in the middle of the night.)*

TOBY

Couldn't get to sleep is more like it.

ANNA *(to TOBY)*

Hush, Toby.

WIGGINS

I was checkin the bins to see if there was anything edible for you lot. When I heard running boots on the cobblestones. I quickly hid in the shadows.

*(BACKSTORY WIGGINS stops to hear the noise and hides)*

TOBY

‘Cus you were scared.

LUCY

Because Wiggins is smart.

WIGGINS

Because I was looking for a opportunity. From my hiding place I quickly saw a well dressed gentleman running into the street.

*(HOPE comes running into the dark street)*

ANNA

What was a rich gentleman doin’ around here late at night?

WIGGINS

Exactly what I was wondering. The bloke was out of breath and looking around.

*(HOPE looks nervously around)*

GEORGE

Probably nervous he was going to be robbed.

OLIVER

Or running away from someone.

WIGGINS

He looked into the darkness, and absent-mindedly patted his coat pocket.

*(HOPE pats his pocket)*

ANNA

Checking to see if his valuables were still there.

WIGGINS

I hoped so. I then snuck out of the shadows and bumped into the bloke.

*(BACKSTORY WIGGINS bumps into HOPE who is startled and looks around and sees BACKSTORY WIGGINS who puts hands out for a coin)*

BACKSTORY WIGGINS

Spare a coin, mister?

HOPE

What? Get away from me, street urchin. I have nothing for you.

*(BACKSTORY WIGGINS nods as HOPE runs off.  
BACKSTORY WIGGINS then holds up the ring)*

WIGGINS

Ah, but the kind gentleman did have something for me. The gold ring from his pocket.  
*(Lights fade on the night time backstory and back  
to the daytime street scene)*

TOBY

If that is even gold.

OLIVER

Let's take it to the pawnshop today!

TOBY

I don't believe you, Wiggins.

GEORGE

Then where did 'e get that ring?

TOBY

He probably found it on the ground.

LUCY

Wiggins stole it! He is the best pickpocket in London.  
*(LUCY challenges the much bigger TOBY)*

TOBY

Then 'e should prove it.

GEORGE

How?

TOBY

I dare you to pickpocket someone right now. During the daylight. With the Constable still making his rounds.

ANNA

Don't be daft! If he gets caught....

WIGGINS

I'll do it.

GEORGE

You don't have to prove anything, Wiggins.

WIGGINS *(to TOBY)*

You choose the mark, Toby.



*(TOBY looks around and sees a tall well dressed older gentleman with white hair leaving the tobacconist)*

TOBY

Pickpocket that old gentleman who just came out of the tobacconist.

GEORGE

He looks like he has money.

WIGGINS

Fine. Watch and learn.

OLIVER

Good luck, Wiggins!

*(WIGGINS skulks around the market stalking the older gentleman. WIGGINS looks back at the gang then walks out and bumps into the OLDER GENTLEMAN. The older gentleman falls down. This draws the attention of CONSTABLE)*

WIGGINS

A thousand apologies, mister.

*(WIGGINS reaches down to help the OLDER GENTLEMAN up. CONSTABLE grabs WIGGINS by the scruff of the neck)*

CONSTABLE

This street kid bothering you sir?

OLDER GENTLEMAN

Not at all, Constable. I just wasn't watching where I was going. Thank you all the same for your help.

*(OLDER GENTLEMAN exits)*

CONSTABLE

Nice try, Wiggins. But nobody, not even you, gets away with anything on my watch.

WIGGINS

I have no idea what you're talking about, Constable Peterson.

CONSTABLE

Turn out your pockets.

WIGGINS

Anything you say, Constable Peterson.

*(WIGGINS turns out empty pockets)*

CONSTABLE

Hmmph. Then it looks like I arrived before you could steal anything. Now get out of here and leave these respectable people alone.

WIGGINS

As you wish sir.

*(CONSTABLE releases WIGGINS who saunters back to the gang)*

OLVIER

Oh, Wiggins, that was too close.

TOBY

I knew you couldn't do it.

*(WIGGINS smiles, reaches into sock and pulls out a pound note)*

LUCY

He did it! He did it!

*(LUCY starts whooping it up)*

OLIVER

Look at that money!

*(OLIVER takes the money)*

GEORGE

See, Toby. Wiggins can pickpocket anyone.

WIGGINS

Toby, I did what you wanted me to do. Now you have to do what I say. Go scrounge around the bins and see if you can find any food for us or papers for our beds.

TOBY

Fine.

*(TOBY stomps off as WIGGINS stares at him)*

ANNA

Please excuse my brother. When you get to know him better, you'll see he can be really nice. It's just been rough for us.

GEORGE

It will be easier now for you two now that you're with us. There's safety in numbers.

ANNA

Thanks.

GEORGE

I'll go and keep Toby company.

*(GEORGE follows)*

OLIVER

Wiggins, take a look at this.

*(OLIVIER shows WIGGINS the note)*

LUCY

How much money did we get?

WIGGINS

Nothing. It's fake.

*(WIGGINS turns the note over. It is mostly blank on the other side)*

LUCY

There is a handwritten note on the back. What does it say?

*(WIGGINS shrugs)*

ANNA

I can read.

*(WIGGINS hands the note to ANNA)*

It says "If you want your ring back, go to 221B Baker Street."

OLIVER

Ring?

*(WIGGINS checks pocket for ring)*

LUCY

That old gentleman pickpocketed your ring while you took his fake money.

ANNA

He knew you had the ring.

LUCY

Who did you just pickpocket?

ANNA

Whose ring did you steal last night?

OLIVER

That ring was going to bring us so much food.

LUCY

You have to get it back, Wiggins.

WIGGINS

I will.

ANNA

It's a trap. I don't trust that old gentleman.

WIGGINS

I don't either. I don't trust any adults.

ANNA

The ring is gone. Let it go, Wiggins.

OLIVER

It's not fair. That old bloke doesn't need money. Not like we do.

ANNA

It's too dangerous.

WIGGINS

Nobody takes advantage of us. I'm going to 221B Baker Street.  
*(WIGGINS exits)*

SCENE 2: 221B BAKER STREET

*(As violin music plays, scene transitions to the reading room in 221B Baker Street. There is a small couch and two reading chairs surrounding a roaring fireplace. DR. WATSON is sitting and reading. A knock on the door)*

DR. WATSON

Yes, Mrs. Hudson?

*(MRS. HUDSON enters with WIGGINS)*

MRS. HUDSON *(a little disgusted)*

This dirty child showed up at the door and demanded to speak to the man of the house.

DR. WATSON

What's your name, young man?

WIGGINS

Wiggins. You live here?

DR. WATSON

I do. My name is Dr. Watson.

WIGGINS

You're too short. Anyone else live here?

MRS. HUDSON

What an utter lack of manners. Should I show him out?

DR. WATSON

No, Mrs. Hudson. Wiggins, someone else does live here too.

MRS. HUDSON

But he's out for the morning.

*(The OLDER GENTLEMAN enters the room and startles MRS. HUDSON)*

MRS. HUDSON

Excuse me, sir! What are you doing? This is a private residence and I did not let you into.  
*(OLDER GENTLEMAN takes off his wig, beard and disguise)*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Ah, Mrs. Hudson, I do appreciate your diligence in monitoring the visitors to the flat.

MRS. HUDSON

Oh, Sherlock. You gave me such a start.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

You are everything I could ask for in a landlady.

MRS. HUDSON

You will be the death of me yet, Sherlock.

*(MRS. HUDSON exits)*

DR. WATSON

Were you successful this morning?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I was.

DR. WATSON

You have a visitor. This is Mr. Wiggins.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Which is what makes my morning successful.

WIGGINS

I came to get my ring back.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

It's not your ring, and my need for it is greater than yours.

WIGGINS

It is my ring! Me mother gave it to me.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

No. It is not. You stole it from another gentleman last night.

WIGGINS

I did no such thing! Just give me the ring or I'll call on the police.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

The police are already on their way.

WIGGINS

You are trying to frame me!

DR. WATSON

Sherlock, I am confused. I thought we were working on the Study in Scarlet case.

WIGGINS

Case? What are you two going on about?

DR. WATSON

Sherlock Holmes is a private investigator. The best investigator in all of England.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Watson, you do flatter me so.

WIGGINS (*backing towards the exit*)

You work for the police?

DR. WATSON

Sometimes Scotland Yard asks him to help with crimes they have abandoned as hopeless.

WIGGINS

I don't help the police.

(*WIGGINS turns toward the door.*)

SHERLOCK

I'd rather you not leave, Wiggins. It'd be a waste of time to have to track you down again.

(*WIGGINS laughs*)

WIGGINS

Right, mister! The minute I leave here, I'll disappear among the four million people in this lousy city.

(*WIGGINS opens door to exit*)

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Actually young lady, I would just go down to the empty Old Bengal warehouse on Charterhouse Street where you and your group of street children sleep.

(*WIGGINS stops and turns around*)

DR. WATSON

Young lady?

WIGGINS

How long have you been spying on me?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I haven't been spying on you, Wiggins. I assure you I first met you in Coburg Square this morning when we exchanged my note for this ring.

WIGGINS

Then how do you know so much about me?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I observed and deduced. It is what I do. Your clothes are ragged and dirty, therefore you are obviously poor.

(*As SHERLOCK points out this clue, an image of dirty clothes is projected onto a hidden surface on the set*)

You picked my pocket, which you would have to do to gain enough sustenance to live on the streets.

(*Image of the Wiggins pickpocketing Sherlock is projected onto a hidden surface on the set.*)

SHERLOCK HOLMES *(cont'd)*

You are well known by Constable Peterson therefore you probably sleep near Coburg Square.

*(Image of the constable is projected onto the hidden surfaces on the set)*

Your clothes also smell like fish.

*(Image of fish is projected onto the hidden surfaces on the set)*

Not one mile from Coburg Square is the abandoned Old Bengal Seafood Warehouse which would be a dry and relatively safe place for resourceful street kids to sleep at night.

*(Image of a London map with the Old Bengal Seafood Warehouse is projected onto the hidden surfaces on the set)*

DR. WATSON

How did you know Wiggins is a young lady?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

From the way she moves, it is obvious that she has binded her chest to hide her gender.

*(Image of Wiggins and her jacket is projected onto the set)*

She finds it easier to survive on the streets if others think she is a boy.

WIGGINS

Impressive, mister. So what do you want with me?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I need you here to finish the case. You are the witness who can connect Jefferson Hope with this ring.

WIGGINS

Who is Jefferson Hope?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

The man you stole this ring from.

*(A knock on the door)*

I believe that is Mr. Hope. Wiggins, if you would be so kind as to hide yourself from view until I call you. Yes, Mrs. Hudson.

*(MRS. HUDSON enters)*

MRS. HUDSON

A Mrs. Sawyer to see you Dr. Watson. She is answering your advertisement in the paper.

DR. WATSON

A woman?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

The plot thickens. Please show her in, Mrs. Hudson



*(MRS. HUDSON quickly returns with MRS. SAWYER who is carrying a torn newspaper. The advertisement "GOLD RING FOUND ON ALDERSGATE STREET. CALL ON 221B BAKER STREET TO CLAIM" is projected on set. MRS HUDSON exits)*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Ah, you are here in answer to the newspaper notice.

MRS. SAWYER

It's this as has brought me, good gentleman. "A gold wedding ring found on Aldersgate Street." It belongs to my daughter Sally, as was married only this time twelvemonth. She went to a circus last night....

*(HOLMES shows ring)*

HOLMES

Is this her ring?

MRS. SAWYER

The Lord be thanked! Sally will be a glad woman this night. That's the ring.

DR. WATSON

And what is your address?

MRS. SAWYER

13 Duncan Street, Houndsditch. A weary way from here.

*(A Map of London with Houndsditch, Peckham Astley's Ampitheater and Aldersgate highlighted is projected on the set)*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Aldersgate Street does not lie between any circus and Houndsditch.

MRS. SAWYER

The gentleman asked me for *my* address. Sally lives in lodgings at 3 Mayfield Place, Peckham.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Here is your ring, Mrs. Sawyer. It clearly belongs to your daughter, and I am glad to be able to restore it to the rightful owner.

*(SHERLOCK HOLMES hands her the ring)*

MRS. SAWYER

I am very thankful for your kindness and honesty.

*(MRS. SAWYER gets up to leave)*

I won't take up any more of your time.

*(WIGGINS pops up)*

WIGGINS

Oy! You aren't goin' anywhere!

*(WIGGINS runs and trips MRS. SAWYER. WATSON pulls WIGGINS away as WIGGINS picks WATSON's pocket)*

DR. WATSON

Wiggins! My apologies, Mrs. Sawyer.

WIGGINS

That is no woman.

*(WIGGINS takes off the hat and wig)*  
I saw her Adam's apple. This is the bloke I bumped into last night in Coburg Square.  
*(JEFFERSON HOPE then runs to the exit as SHERLOCK HOLMES quickly blocks the exit. THEY get into a big fight and struggle. WIGGINS joins in. Finally, SHERLOCK manages to click handcuffs on JEFFERSON HOPE. MRS. HUDSON rushes in with INSPECTOR LESTRADE. WIGGINS goes back to her hiding place at sight of inspector)*

MRS. HUDSON

What is happening?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Ah, Inspector Lestrade from Scotland Yard, you got my note.

JEFFERSON HOPE

Inspector, I am being imprisoned against my wishes by this man.

INSPECTOR LESTRADE

Sherlock Holmes, what is going on?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Inspector Lestrade, may I introduce Jefferson Hope, the murderer of Joseph Strangerson.  
*(HOPE is stunned)*

JEFFERSON HOPE

How did you find me, Sherlock Holmes?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

It is what I do.

JEFFERSON HOPE

I don't deny the charge. And I don't regret it.

INSPECTOR LESTRADE

Ah, yes, Sherlock. I concur with your conclusion. After examining all the evidence, I too had discovered the culprit was this Jefferson Mope.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Hope.

INSPECTOR LESTRADE

Yes, yes. Jefferson Hope. Even though I was about to arrest Mr. Hope myself, I do appreciate your help Sherlock Holmes.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Glad I can be of assistance.

INSPECTOR LESTRADE

Jefferson Hope, you are under arrest.

*(LESTRADE leads HOPE out)*

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Inspector Lestrade, you will need this wedding ring as evidence.

*(HOLMES holds out ring)*

INSPECTOR LESTRADE

Yes, of course. Sherlock, perhaps I will return here later so we can....compare notes on the case.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Of course, Inspector Lestrade. As always, I am at your service.

*(LESTRADE exits with HOPE. WIGGINS comes out of her hiding place)*

WIGGINS

That bloke never would have solved that mystery.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

No. No, he wouldn't have.

WIGGINS

Why did you let him take credit for the capture?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

What do I care for attention and credit? Give me problems, give me work, give me the most obtuse cryptogram. That is what I hunger for.

WIGGINS

And what about payment?

*(SHERLOCK HOLMES brushes this away)*

DR. WATSON

Sherlock has been given enough rewards from thankful clients, that he does not need to worry much about money.

WIGGINS

You're a strange bloke, Mr. Sherlock Holmes.

DR WATSON

And Wiggins you were a great help in solving that case.

MRS. HUDSON

I suppose you have earned you a nice warm lunch then.

*(MRS. HUDSON exits)*

DR. WATSON

And a shilling for payment for your assistance.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

After you eat, you can be on your way.

DR. WATSON

Sherlock, we cannot turn her out on the streets again.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Why not?

DR. WATSON

It is not safe, nor healthy, for a young woman to live on the streets.

WIGGINS

I can fend for meself, Doctor.

DR. WATSON

I am sure you can, Wiggins. However, wouldn't you prefer to go to a nice orphanage where you have a roof over your head and three meals a day?

*(WIGGINS stands angrily)*

WIGGINS

I am not going to ANY orphanage.

DR. WATSON

What about a workhouse? You can have shelter, food, medical care, and learn a trade.

WIGGINS

You mean they'll give me a stupid dress and teach me how to be a maid. No thank you. I'm not servin' stuffy rich blokes. No offense to you two.

DR. WATSON

We can't let you just live on the streets.

WIGGINS

Just 'cus our great system works for you, Doc, doesn't mean it works for everyone.  
*(MRS. HUDSON returns with food which she places in front of WIGGINS.)*

MRS. HUDSON

Here you are.

WIGGINS

Thank you! You are the best, ma'am.

MRS. HUDSON

Sherlock, you could learn some manners from our young guest here.  
*(WIGGINS starts scarfing it down with her fingers)*  
If not proper eating habits.  
*(MRS HUDSON puts a spoon in WIGGINS hand)*

DR. WATSON

We can't just let her go back to the streets.

MRS. HUDSON

Her?  
*(DR. WATSON points to WIGGINS. MRS HUDSON turns questioningly to SHERLOCK who nods)*

DR. WATSON

She can come here daily. Mrs. Hudson can teach her to read and write.

MRS. HUDSON

When would I have time for that?

WIGGINS *(to SHERLOCK)*

I want lessons from you.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

From me?

WIGGINS

I can learn a thing or two from you about being a detective.

DR. WATSON

Wiggins, you are a bit young to be a detective.

MRS. HUDSON

And shabby. We should get you cleaned up and put you a proper dress.

WIGGINS

I don't wear dresses.

DR. WATSON

Nobody would hire you.

WIGGINS

Sherlock Holmes will. I am going to work for him. My entire gang is.

MRS. HUDSON

Sherlock, this will not become a boarding house for dirty street beggars.

WIGGINS

We'll still live on the streets. We like it there.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Why should I hire you?

WIGGINS

Nobody notices us beggars. We can see and hear things that you can't.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Interesting point.

WIGGINS

And people will tell us things. The mere sight of an official looking person seals men's lips. A well dressed bloke like you makes poor folk wary.

DR. WATSON

I'm not so sure about that.

WIGGINS

My group goes everywhere and hears everything. We're sharp as needles, too.

DR. WATSON

That you are. You saw right through Hope's disguise. Wiggins does have some potential, Sherlock.

WIGGINS

And I'm quick. If I hadn't tripped that bloke, he would have run out of here.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

While I did have a carriage waiting ready to follow him, you undoubtedly saved me quite a bit of time, Wiggins.

WIGGINS

So we have a deal?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

No. Not yet. I agree to train you only on a trial basis.

WIGGINS

Great. Let's begin. Teach me your tricks on how to pick pockets. You're bloody brilliant.

MRS. HUDSON

That hardly seems like the type of schooling a young lady needs.

DR. WATSON

Wiggins, Sherlock Holmes is not going to teach you to be a better criminal.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

No, Wiggins. Your first lesson will be tomorrow. Mrs. Hudson will teach you reading.

MRS. HUDSON

Then she will do two hours of chores.

WIGGINS

Oy, I am not signing on to be your servant!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

You need to read notes, street signs and clues. And you will have to pay Mrs. Hudson back for her time.

WIGGINS

I want to learn to be a detective, not a maid.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

After your reading lesson and chores are done to the satisfaction of Mrs. Hudson, I might give you a first lesson in detection.

WIGGINS

Might? What kind of deal is this?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

I don't think you will put in the work. I think this will be too much for you. You have to earn my trust.

WIGGINS

Oh, I can work hard, Mister! I'm just not stupid enough to work for free!

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Fine. Thank you for your help on this case, Wiggins. Have a nice life.

WIGGINS

Another balmy bloke trying to take advantage of me. Never trust adults.

*(WIGGINS shoves lunch in her pocket as she stomps out)*

DR. WATSON

I'm afraid that is the last we will see of her. She is too mistrusting.

MRS. HUDSON

I don't know. She might be stubborn enough to return. What do you expect, Mr. Holmes?

SHERLOCK HOLMES

There isn't enough information to make a conclusion. We will have to wait until tomorrow to get our answer.

*( SHERLOCK HOLMES picks up his violin)*



**Brian Guehring** is the Playwright in Residence of the Omaha Theater Company, one of the nation's largest professional theaters for young people. Brian has adapted the world premiere scripts of the Newberry Award winning novel **Julie of the Wolves** (directed by Everett Quinton), **Miss Bindergarten, If You Give a Cat a Cupcake, The Grocer's Goblin and The Little Mermaid, Holidays Around the World** and **Sacagawea: Discovering History**. Brian's scripts have won several national and regional awards. His adaptations of **Where the Red Fern Grows** and **Old Yeller** and his original Theater in Education play **The Super Adventures of Pyramid Man and Dr. Nutrition** won AATE (American Alliance for Theater and Education) Unpublished Play Project Awards. His script **The Bully Show** was selected for the 2002 New Visions/New Voices new play development workshop at the Kennedy Center. His adaptation of the **The Misfits** was honored as one of the best theater productions of 2010 in Omaha by the Omaha World Herald and was one of two plays honored by AATE's Playwrights in Our Schools program in 2011. Brian received a playwriting fellowship from the Nebraska Arts Council in 2002. His new adaptation of the Newberry Award winning novel **The Giver** was honored as one of the best theater productions of 2008 in Omaha by the Omaha World Herald. His original script **King Chemo** won the Southwest Theater Association's 1997 Best New Play for Children, and his original play **Creating Haley's World** was selected in 2003 for development in the inaugural Playwrights in Our Schools program. His plays have been produced by Imagination Stage in Washington, D.C., Lexington Children's Theater, Walnut Street Theater in Philadelphia, Barter Theater of Virginia, South Carolina Children's Theater, A. D. Players in Houston, Apple Tree Theater for Young Audiences in Chicago, Town Hall Theater in Dayton, and other schools and theaters. **The Brave Little Tailor, Stronger than Strong: Great American Tall Tale Heroines, King Chemo** and **The Bully Show** are published by Dramatic Publishing Company and his short play **Mindless Drooling Teenage Zombie Bullies** is included in the Dramatic Publishing anthology **The Bully Plays**.

Brian is also the Education Director of the Omaha Theater Company which does drama education outreach for every single child in over 70 local schools each year. His teen theater troupe **Pride Players** (which uses improvisation to explore issues facing gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and straight allied teens) won a Human and Civil Rights Award from the National Education Association in 2006. In 2010, Brian was elected to the Board of Theater For Young Audiences/USA. He also served as the founding co-president of the Pride Youth Theater Alliance. Brian also previously served on the National Endowment for Arts grant review committee. Brian earned his MFA in Children's Theater and Creative Drama from the University of Texas at Austin.