

*[I'm re-upping this 2014 post since the "job-killing regulation" meme has resurfaced at the GOP Convention. The scene is Holmes's apartment at 221B Baker Street.]*

"When the prospective client arrives, Watson, you'll find that he's a politician, that his electoral base is devoted to Fox News, and that he gets campaign contributions from fossil fuel companies."

"Zounds, man, how could you possibly know that?"

"A calculated risk," Holmes said. "His joke about climate change told me his political views, his use of platitudes told me he was a politician, and the rest was obvious."

Once again, Holmes's predictions proved uncannily correct. The client's story was rambling but passionate. It all spilled out as his eyes darkened with anger and fear - a horrifying tale of conspiracy by scientists, abuse by power-mad bureaucrats, and dark machinations by a diabolical chief executive. My heart began to pound as I realized the extent of this dire threat to our nation.

Yet Holmes remained curiously unmoved. He told the client that he would contact him later about taking the case. Once the client had left, he asked me whether the case did not remind me of our Silver Blaze adventure?

Once again, I was left baffled and confused. How could a conspiracy to cripple our economy possibly be compared with a gigantic ravening beast? Sighing, as he often did at my inability to follow his lightning-fast train of thought, he opened a drawer full of newspaper clippings. Pulling out one of them, he asked me to read it aloud.

"Day by day," I read, "job-killing regulation by job-killing regulation, bureaucrat by bureaucrat, this president is crushing the dream." The source was impeccable, a shrewd businessman named Mitt Romney.

"Gads! More evidence of the plot!", I gasped.

"The date, man," Holmes spoke sharply. "What was the date?"

"March 12, 2012."

"Curious, don't you think?"

"In what way?"

"I make a habit, Watson, of studying the economic statistics, so obscure, yet often just as revealing as the type of mud on shoes or the callouses on a person's hand."

My mind boggled once again at Holmes's uncanny attention to minute details.

"And what do those numbers tell me, Watson? Why simply this: in 2012 the unemployment rate was above 8%. Yet today, many regulations later, the unemployment rate is 5.8%."

Just then, there was a knock on the door. A street urchin - one of Holmes's Baker Street Irregulars - whispered in his ear. Holmes turned to me excitedly.

"Just as I thought, Watson, just as I thought. Today's *New York Times* has hit the street. This has been a busy time for regulations - proposed new carbon regulations for power plants, ozone regulations in the works, new guidance on wetlands jurisdiction. Yet, what do I find? What do I find?"

I waited, with bated breath. What could the urchin possibly have told him to produce such excitement?

"This is the clinching evidence I have been waiting for. The economy has just gained 325,000 jobs in the last month, Watson! Far above expectations. And the *Times* says that the total gain in jobs this year is shaping up as the best in fifteen years."

"Gadzooks!" I couldn't help but blurt out. "Then the client - his whole story was false. I'm astounded, Holmes, simply astounded. You've done it again! Yet, I don't see the connection with Silver Blaze. I feel completely at a loss. There's no dog in this case, nor any race horse for that matter."

"Remember the crucial clue in that case, Watson: the dog that didn't bark in the night. Here, it was the jobs that *weren't* lost that gave me the crucial clue."

"Ye gods," I said in stunned admiration, "I can barely believe that a mere human being was able to penetrate this dark mystery. However do you do it?"

"Elementary, my dear Watson."