

The Nail

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Director's Notes

Theme: This short reader's theater drama brings the cost of the crucifixion up front and personal. The skit fits nicely for Easter or for a communion service.

Reader's Theater: This script is designed for a reader's theater style of drama. In this style all of the readers face the audience and they look straight ahead. It is okay if the readers have their scripts in hand but they should be very familiar with having rehearsed it several times. The pace is quite fast through most of the script with each line delivered just as the previous line is finished.

Characters: the script calls for four characters. They are age and gender neutral. The only requirement is that the reader is articulate and can unpack the emotional energy of the piece.

Tactile Handouts: To enhance the audience experience hand out a spike to each attendee as they come into the room. The experience of holding the nail will add a tactile dimension. They can take the nail home with them to remember the experience.

Graphics: In some performances slides have been placed on the screen of the crucifixion or of hammers and nails. Pastor's DVD volume 8 has some extraordinary realistic crucifixion slides.

Reader One: When we first view the work of art,

Reader Two: we are not struck by its beauty.

Reader Three: Most of us find its coarseness repugnant,

Reader Four: its gritty realism distasteful.

Reader One: How could this grotesque image

Reader Two: even be considered

Reader Three: a work of craftsmanship?

Reader Four: But as we view again,

Reader One: we are strangely drawn in
Reader Two: and ever so gently,
Reader Three: the artwork begins to have its effect on us.

All Readers: It's just a common nail.

Reader One: It's just a common nail;
Reader Two: not a box nail,
Reader Three: or a finishing nail,
Reader Four: or a casing nail,
Reader One: or a brad.

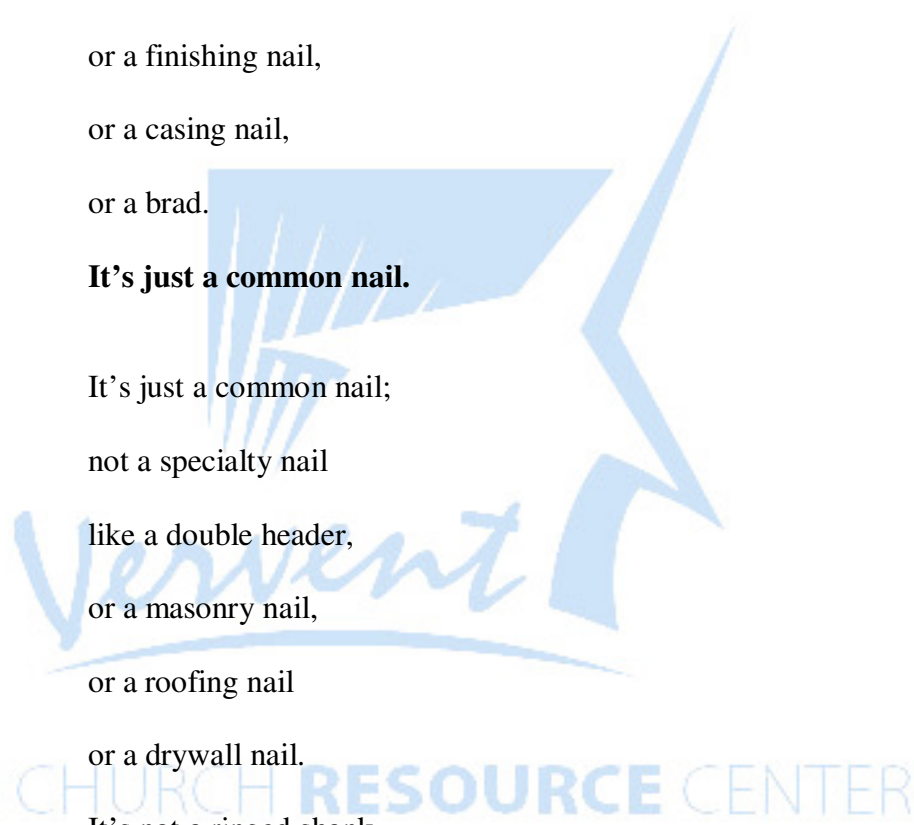
All Readers: It's just a common nail.

Reader One: It's just a common nail;
Reader Two: not a specialty nail
Reader Three: like a double header,
Reader Four: or a masonry nail,
Reader One: or a roofing nail

Reader Two: or a drywall nail.
Reader Three: It's not a ringed shank
Reader Four: or a spiral shank.

All Readers: It's just a common nail.

Reader One: It's just a common nail.
Reader Two: It doesn't have a fancy finish.



Reader Three: It hasn't been hot dipped,

Reader Four: galvanized,

Reader One: vinyl coated,

Reader Two: or treated in any way.

All Readers: It's just a common nail.

Reader One: It's just a common nail.

Reader Two: hard...

Reader Three: sharp...

Reader Four: dirty

Reader One: and strong.

Reader Two: We pull back from the nail

Reader Three: and realize

Reader Four: that there is more in the picture.

Reader One: Someone else

Reader Two: is looking at the nail.

Reader Three: We look up to see his eyes.

Reader Four: He sees the nail in his hand.

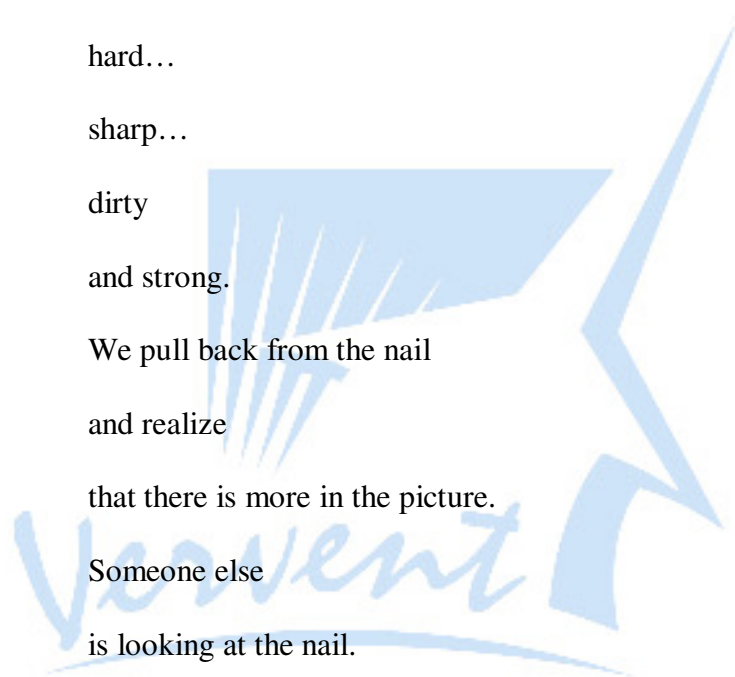
All Readers: It's just a common nail.

Reader One: We are drawn in closer.

Reader Two: and can almost read His thoughts

Reader Three: as He focuses on the nail.

All Readers: It's just a common nail.



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Reader One: He is used to having nails in his hand.

Reader Two: He is the Master Carpenter.

Reader Three: He has held many kinds of nails

Reader Four: He has examined the shafts for strength

Reader One: He has touched the tips for sharpness

Reader Two: He knows about common nails...

Reader Three: ...about finish nails.

Reader Four: He has studied of iron nails...

Reader One: purchased by King David.

Reader Two: He has learned about golden nails...

Reader Three: used in Solomon's temple.

Reader Four: He has had nails in his hands many times

Reader One: He knows just how to hold the nail

Reader Two: He knows how to stagger nails at opposite angles

Reader Three: to provide strength to the joint.

Reader Four: He knows how to drive the nail across the grain

Reader One: not with the grain

Reader Two: to increase holding power

Reader Three: and decrease splitting.

Reader Four: He knows to leave a little extra wood on a joint

Reader One: to be sawed off

Reader Two: after the nails have been driven,

Reader Three: to prevent splitting.

All Readers: He is the Master Carpenter.

Reader Four: He knows to drill pilot holes in hard wood

Reader One: He has learned how to drive the nail,

Reader Two: to keep it from twisting

Reader Three: or bending

Reader Four: as it penetrates the wood.

All Readers: He is the Master Carpenter.

Reader One: He is fascinated

Reader Two: by the different wood

Reader Three: used to make items of furniture.

Reader Four: From local olive wood

Reader One: to the exotic cedar of Lebanon...

Reader Two: this carpenter knows them all.

All Readers: He is the Master Carpenter.

Reader Three: He has learned to shape them,

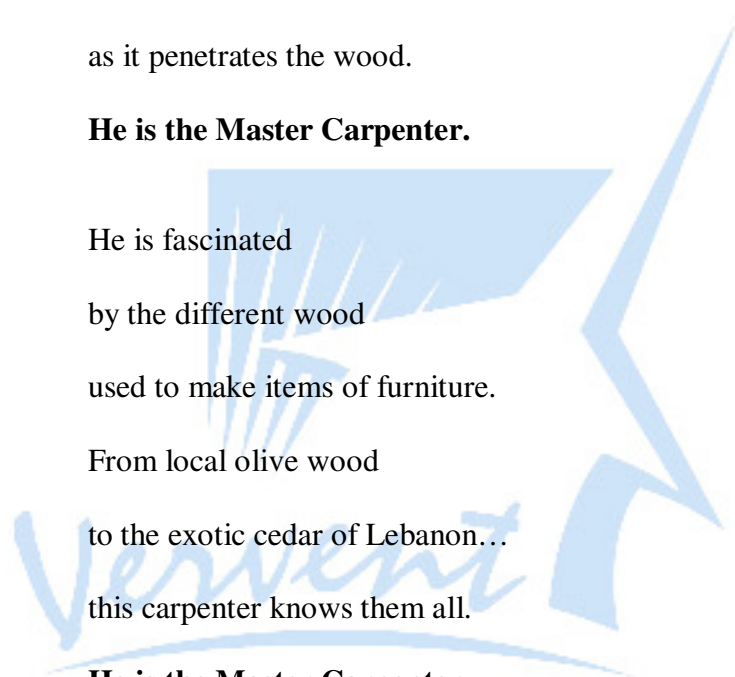
Reader Four: to refine them,

Reader One: fasten them together,

Reader Two: and make them...

Reader Three: into nothing less than works of art.

All Readers: He is the Master Carpenter.



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Reader One: Now,
Reader Two: the master carpenter
Reader Three: finds himself
Reader Four: with nails in his hands again.
Reader One: Only this time,
Reader Two: in this twisted irony of cosmic events,
Reader Three: instead of holding the nails...
Reader Four: The nail is holding him.
All Readers: It's just a common nail.
Reader One: Instead of standing over the work project,
Reader Two: carefully creating a masterpiece,
Reader Three: the master carpenter
Reader Four: is himself the project.
Reader One: His body...
Reader Two: is the raw material.
Reader Three: His flesh...
Reader Four: is to become one with the wood.
Reader One: Instead of the master carpenter crafting the project,
Reader Two: amateurs are holding the hammer,
Reader Three: driving a nail through his hand
Reader Four: into the rough hewn wooden cross beneath.
All Readers: It's just a common nail.

Reader One: We draw back from the picture for a moment...

Reader Two: lest it's grip on our hearts

Reader Three: becomes too strong...

Reader Four: lest the pain grown too large.

Reader One: We search for a place to hide the nail,

Reader Two: least our minds are drawn

Reader Three: any deeper into the artwork.

All Readers: It is just a common nail.

Reader One: And, yet,

Reader Two: unreasonably,

Reader Three: we find ourselves strangely attracted

Reader Four: to this unusual piece of art.

Reader One: we look again,

Reader Two: into the eyes of this man...

All Readers: He is the Master Carpenter.

Reader Three: We watch as the nail

Reader Four: are driven through the tender flesh.

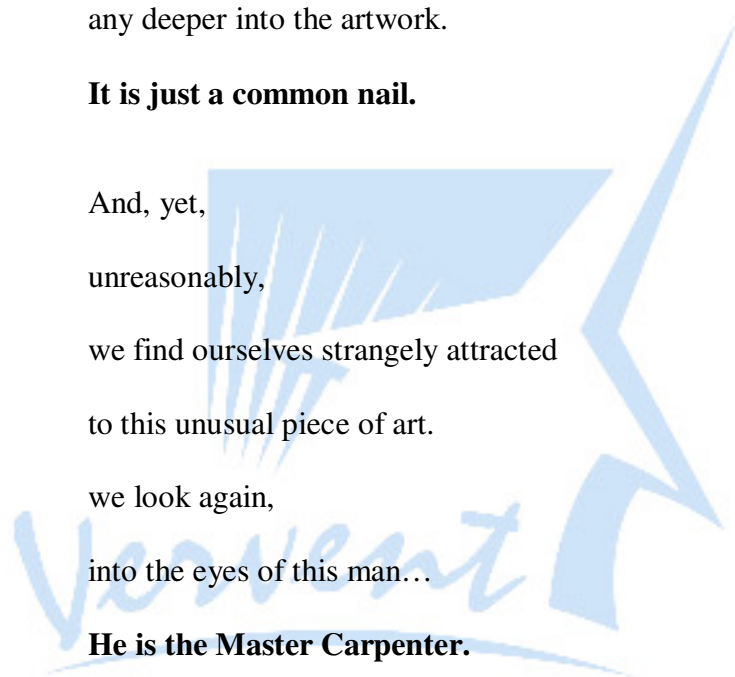
Reader One: We sense His pain,

Reader Two: even though he does not wince

Reader Three: at the blows of the hammer.

Reader Four: The hurt comes from another nail,

Reader One: this one is driven



Reader Two: straight into his heart.

Reader One: This...

Reader Two: is no ordinary nail

Reader Three: or iron

Reader Four: or even gold.

Reader One: This nail...

Reader Two: is the nail

Reader Three: of our sins.

All Readers: This is no ordinary nail.

Reader One: It is a nail of our evil thoughts,

Reader Two: our wrong doings

Reader Three: our lustful acts,

Reader Four: our jealous desires.

Reader One: It is a nail of our separation

Reader Two: it is a nail of turning away

Reader Three: it is a nail of emotional abandonment

Reader Four: it is a nail of apathy.

All Readers: It is no ordinary nail.

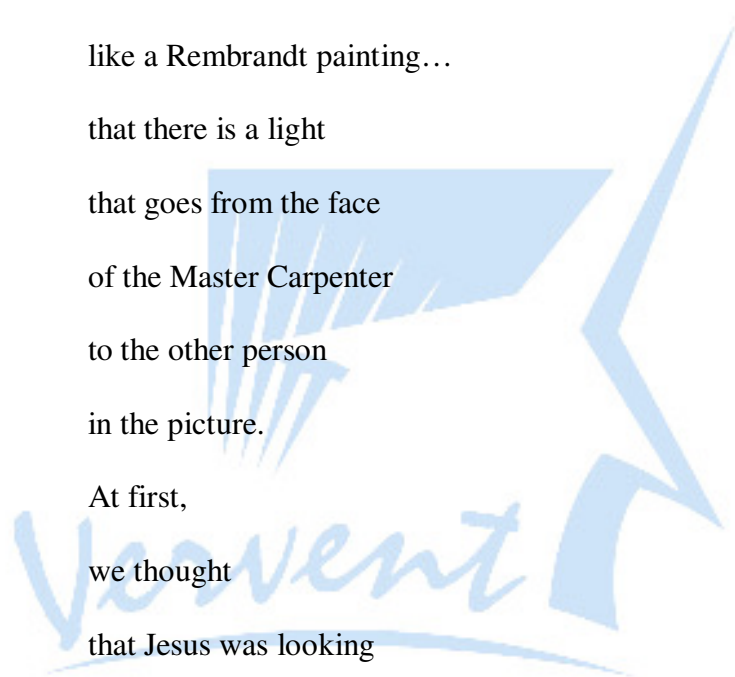
Reader Four: Out of the wound

Reader One: carved out by this spike,

Reader Two: His life hemorrhages.

All Readers: This is no ordinary nail.

Reader One: We cannot bear...
Reader Two: to see his eyes any longer.
Reader Three: We pull back again from the picture...
Reader Four: We see someone else.
Reader One: As we look more carefully,
Reader Two: we can see,...
Reader Three: like a Rembrandt painting...
Reader Four: that there is a light
Reader One: that goes from the face
Reader Two: of the Master Carpenter
Reader Three: to the other person
Reader Four: in the picture.
Reader One: At first,
Reader Two: we thought
Reader Three: that Jesus was looking
Reader Four: at the nail in his hand.
Reader One: But, now we see...
Reader Two: that he is looking beyond the nail.
All Readers: This is no ordinary nail.
Reader Three: Jesus is looking
Reader Four: into the face of someone else.
Reader One: We look,



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Reader Two: but can't quite see the face.

Reader Three: Off to the side

Reader Four: against blackness

Reader One: is an arm.

Reader Two: hanging from the dark hand

Reader Three: at the base of the arm,

Reader Four: is the hammer.

Reader One: We view this picture

Reader Two: as if from a long distance away.

Reader Three: But, in a frenzied moment,

Reader Four: we begin to see double...

Reader One: our eyes go in and out.

Reader Two: of the picture.

Reader Three: For a brief instant,

Reader Four: we become one with the picture.

Reader One: We fight to keep our distance,

Reader Two: but at last,

Reader Three: we regretfully realize,

Reader Four: that the person with the hammer...

All Readers: is you and I.

Reader One: The Master Carpenter looks at us...

Reader Two: "Father", he says

Reader Three: "Forgive them."

All Readers: This is no ordinary nail.

Reader One: The masterpiece is now complete.

Reader Two: There on the cross,

Reader Three: lies the Master Carpenter.

Reader Four: Beside him,

Reader One: stand you and me,

Reader Two: the amateur carpenters,

Reader Three: with the hammers

Reader Four: still in our hands.

Reader One: The words

Reader Two: “Forgive Them”,

Reader Three: complete the work.

All Readers: He is the Master Carpenter.

Reader Four: Even though the work is only displayed

Reader One: for a few hours...

Reader Two: the impact of the masterpiece

Reader Three: is for eternity.

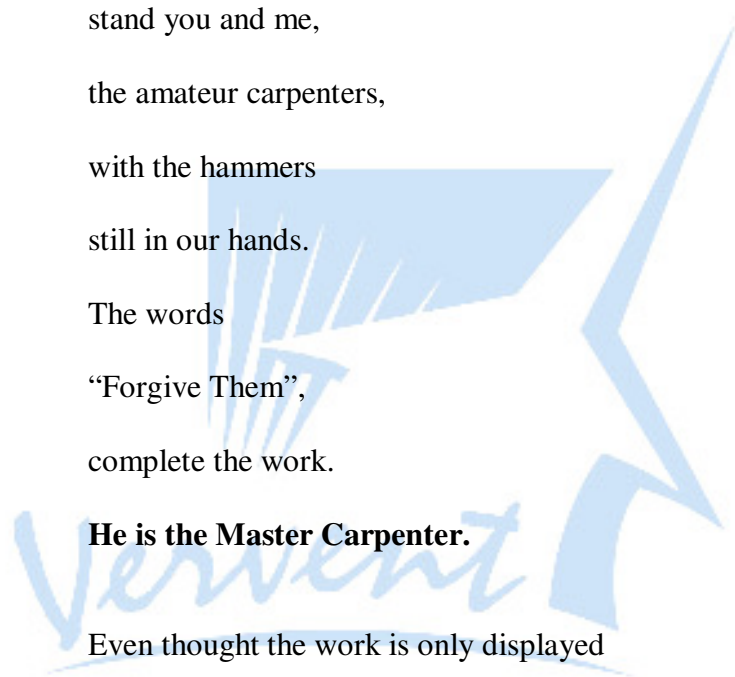
Reader Four: No existing artifact...

Reader One: from the great pyramids...

Reader Two: to the Mona Lisa,

Reader Three: can outlive the memory

Reader Four: of that one work of craftsmanship.



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All Readers: He is the Master Carpenter.

Reader One: The memory...

Reader Two: stretches across the universe...

Reader Three: in the hands of the only one

Reader Four: who has crucifixion scars.

Reader One: And, sp, we find Christ,

Reader Two: in the greatest work of His life,

Reader Three: in the greatest masterpiece ever created...

Reader Four: the crucifix.

All Readers: He is the Master Carpenter.

Reader One: And now,

Reader Two: this priceless piece of craftsmanship,

Reader Three: is offered to us.

All Readers: What will we do with it?

Reader One: What is to be done,

Reader Two: with the most expensive work

Reader Three: in all creation?

Reader Four: Are we disgusted with it?

Reader One: Will we throw this priceless antiquity

Reader Two: in the trash heap?

Reader Three: Or, will we wrap it up neatly,

Reader Four: with tissue paper,

Reader One: bury it in a cardboard box,

Reader Two: and stuff it in the attic

Reader Three: for future generations?

Reader Four: Or, will we make it...

All Readers: the focal point of our lives?

Reader One: As we contemplate the nail-embedded cross...

Reader Two: we become moved by it...

Reader Three: changed by it...

Reader Four: transformed by it...

Reader One: Renewed by it...

Reader Two: and energized it...

Reader Three: knowing that this piece of work

Reader Four: was created for you and me.

All Readers: He is the Master Carpenter.

Reader One: We become aware, again,

Reader Two: of the price of sin...

Reader Three: and the sacrifice that was made

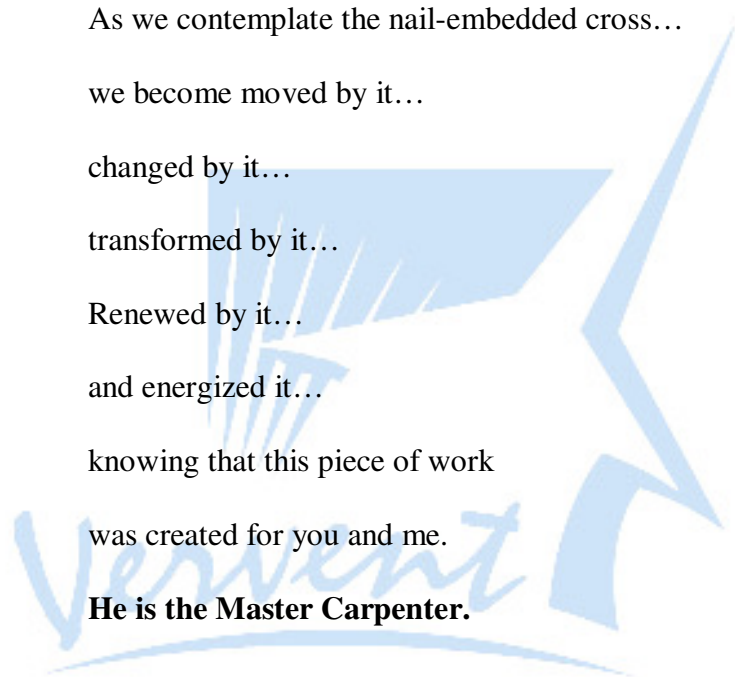
Reader Four: by Him who knew no sin.

Reader One: We realize the risk

Reader Two: the Heavenly Father took.

Reader Three: We sense the value

Reader Four: that is now ours.



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Reader One: For we are forgiven...

Reader Two: we are accepted by God.

All Readers: It was just a common nail....

Reader Three: until it touched the hands of the Master Carpenter.

All Readers: He is the Master Carpenter.

Reader Four: He is looking at us now.

Reader One: What does He see?

Reader Two: A common man?

Reader Three: A common woman?

All Readers: No!

Reader Four: He sees a masterpiece...

Reader One: someone destined to become

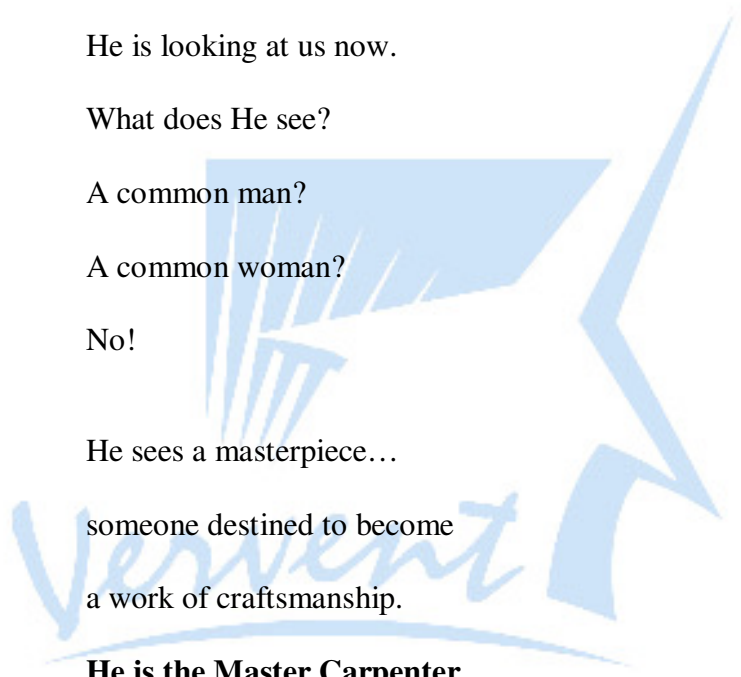
Reader Two: a work of craftsmanship.

All Readers: He is the Master Carpenter.

Reader Three: We lay down on his workbench,

Reader Four: and we place into his nail-scarred hands...

All Readers: ...the hammer.



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