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THE DIOGENES CLUB  
PALL MALL

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**Three Patch Podcast – Episode 1**

**January 6, 2013**

*Music voiceover*

**John Watson:** *What are you doing?*

**Sherlock Holmes:** *It's a nicotine patch. It helps me think.*

**John Watson:** *Is that...*

**Sherlock Holmes:** *It's a three-patch problem.*

*Music continues and fades out*

**Rachael:** All right, everybody, welcome to the very first episode of The Three Patch Podcast [<http://www.three-patch.com>], otherwise known as the “support group and therapy session for hardcore *Sherlock* BBC addicts.” We have a good group of addicts here in the room today and I'd say, you know, we're happy addicts. We're here not to recover, 'cause there's no need to recover from addiction to this wonderful television show and its fan community, but to give one another support and to give listeners who also find themselves obsessed with the show some support.

So I'll start off by introducing myself and then we can go around the room and talk about our, well, I'm not going to call it a problem, but . . .

**Shannon:** Our situation.

*(Laughter)*

**Rachael:** Our situation, yeah, that's good! So, my name is Rachael

**Group:** Hi, Rachael.

**Rachael:** and I am a *Sherlock* BBC addict. I first realized that I was addicted when I actually went to the trouble of hiring an interior designer to decorate the living room of my current house in the 221B-

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inspired style and I'll admit that I even partially picked the house because the room reminded me of 221B . . .

*(Laughter)*

**Rachael:** But before my addiction hit these depths, I started watching *Sherlock* actually at a fandom convention called VividCon [<http://vividcon.com/>] on a sheet on the wall, projected, with another fan who was a big fan of the Arthur Conan Doyle series [<http://www.amazon.com/The-Complete-Sherlock-Holmes-ebook/dp/B00AHE20W0>], and she introduced me to the show and I really quickly fell in love with that portrayal of John Watson. I was only a casual viewer of the show until Season 2, after which I became wholeheartedly obsessed and I'd say I'm kind of a 'meta nut' but I also like me some shipping and in *Sherlock*, some JohnLock, and I think with this group we have assembled here, I probably have the biggest soft spot for Jim Moriarty. So, that's me.

Anybody else want to share their story?

**Emma:** I'll go next. My name is Emma Grant.

**Group:** Hi, Emma.

**Emma:** And, yeah, I have an addiction or I have an obsession. I've been in fandom for a long time. I'm a slasher. Yay! Been in quite a few fandoms and I guess it was about a year ago now that I started seeing all the stuff on my Twitter feed about "the new Sherlock," and I had heard about it, of course, and thought, eh, whatever. I'd never been that into it. I saw the Guy Ritchie movies, whatever. Saw some other stuff in my life. Wasn't that interested. Knew about the slash history, of course, and then I think it was Heidi Tandy who sent me a link to illegally download, essentially, some stuff and so I decided I'd watch the first season so that I could go ahead and watch the second season. I think it was maybe four minutes in, five minutes in, pretty much the first scene where Sherlock and John are in the same room together that it kind of hit me like a ton of bricks, essentially, of 'oh my god, I'm going to ship this so hard. I'm going to ship the crap out of this'. And, I did and I've kind of been going full steam ever since.

So, it's been maybe about five or six years since I've felt this way about a pairing. My previous OTP was Harry/Draco in the Harry Potter fandom and yes, I am pretty much here for the porn. I read it. I write it. I rec it. I think about it. So that's what you're going to get from me. Whenever I'm on a segment, you're going to get porn and it's going to be slash, so I'll just warn you all in advance.

**Rachael:** Everybody's been warned.

**Emma:** Yes.

**Shannon:** I'll go next. I'm Shannon.

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**Group:** Hi, Shannon.

**Shannon:** Let's see. I first discovered I had . . . Let's not call it a problem. I don't want to call it a problem . . . Let's just say I first discovered I had a situation, in particular, a Benedict Cumberbatch situation, when I got on Tumblr [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tumblr>] [<http://www.tumblr.com/dashboard>]. Wow! That wasn't too long after I really discovered my obsession with the whole BBC *Sherlock* series, which came around a little bit late. Kind of like Emma, I had some enablers who facilitated this process.

I'd seen the first series on TV when it first came out in the U.S. and I enjoyed it but sort of forgot about it until a group of friends on LJ [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LiveJournal>] [<http://www.livejournal.com/>] were kind of just going nuts over the second series. So, someone slipped me maybe some unlicensed product and I found myself falling in love with the beautiful relationship arc between John and Sherlock as it started kind of unfolding in 'A Scandal in Belgravia' [<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1942612/>].

I remember just falling so hard for that and then having to start looking for that relationship being reflected and built upon in fan fiction. And, so, I spend copious amounts of time on Archive of Our Own [<http://archiveofourown.org/>] reading all over the place, particularly John/Sherlock. So, like Emma, that's my OTP as well. But I love cosplay. I love John's jacket, what can I say? I don't make much of a Sherlock; I'm way too short. But I love seeing that here we've got a man who's a little bit shorter than other men and, being a short person myself, that was a nice target to aim for.

**Rachael:** And if you weren't a John cosplayer, I wouldn't have someone to cosplay Sherlock with. . .

**Shannon:** That's right!

**Rachael:** And so I'm very happy that you're not tall enough to cosplay Sherlock.

**Shannon:** And you do have the cheekbones for Sherlock.

**Emma:** You do.

**Rachael:** I have been told this. I never knew.

**Shannon:** Yeah. But I also spend my time, after reading all this glorious fic, I spend all my time generating fan art. I think it's my goal now; I've bookmarked a bunch of things on Archive of Our Own and it's my goal to illustrate, to draw pictures, for every single one. The first one that I did, and again, one of my enablers is here with us, Emma Grant. . .

**Emma:** Yay.

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**Shannon:** I had barely started watching season two when someone said “Hey, 'A Cure for Boredom'; and I don't remember if you were on chapter three or four, you weren't that far along with it . . .

*(Laughter)*

**Shannon:** Holy cow! So I'm also a slasher, here for the porn, but a lot of squee and you're going to hear a lot of Benedict Cumberbatch nonsense from me.

**Emma:** It's not nonsense at all. It's glorious.

**Dixie:** Okay, I guess that leaves me. I'm Dixie.

**Group:** Hi, Dixie!

**Dixie:** And, just like Rachael, I discovered I had a problem when I redecorated my exercise room to look like my very own 221B Baker Street. I've got the door, the fake fireplace, the crime scene wall, the red phone box door.

**Rachael:** It's awesome!

**Dixie:** It's my own Cumberbatch Cave.

*(Giggling)*

**Dixie:** My very own place to worship and also read lots of JohnLock porn. You can never read enough JohnLock porn. And I've also done a little cosplay as the Speckled Blonde.

**Shannon:** You were very convincing, by the way.

**Rachael:** Oh yes! That was amazing.

**Dixie:** I had my own body bag. I guess that's about it. I'm addicted and I'm not ashamed of it.

**Rachael:** And I'd say your house-decorating addiction is on a whole other level than mine. My stuff just sort of looks like Sherlock-inspired. But, you have a harpoon that's covered in blood. . .

**Dixie:** Oh, yes! I have a beautiful harpoon.

**Rachael:** It's quite impressive. I aspire to your level of addiction.

**Shannon:** That's what you call cosplay for houses, right, Dix?

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**Dixie:** Yes, cosplay for houses.

*(Laughter)*

**Dixie:** I mean, if you don't have enough characters to dress up as, you have to be creative in a different way. So, I just dressed up my house. It seemed reasonable at the time.

**Emma:** I get that, though. I totally get that because when we brought the house that we live in now, that was our idea. We have this really long combo dining room/living room/formal living room and our inspiration was the Great Hall of Hogwarts.

*(various oohs and aahs)*

**Emma:** I totally get that. Complete with these portraits that sort of look like the ones in Hogwarts. It's pretty cool. We tried to get a suit of armor. It didn't work out.

*(Laughter)*

**Emma:** They're really expensive! Oh my god! Anyway. . .

**Rachael:** And so, just to be clear, a few of us are complete, if you couldn't tell from the introductions, repeat offenders and we're back in rehab again. Because we've all had other fannish experiences. Shannon and I might sound familiar to some of you who found themselves obsessed with Severus Snape. We hosted a podcast called Snapecast and Emma Grant has been featured in Slashcast, which is a multi-fandom podcast.

One of the reasons we wanted to do a podcast about *Sherlock* is, first of all, we're all fiending for Season 3, just waiting for it to come out, and we need to occupy ourselves in addition to the Tumblr and the LiveJournal and all the other fandom sites. But also because we felt that there was a need for a place to have a podcast discussion about people who are fans as opposed to people who are enthusiasts. There's a really good article on a blog called Criminal Element [<http://www.criminalelement.com/blogs/2012/11/upon-the-clear-distinction-between-fandom-and-the-baker-street-irregulars-lyndsay-faye-sherlock-holmes-arthur-conan-doyle-elementary>] that touches on this exact point. It's called 'Upon the Clear Distinction Between Fandom and the Baker Street Irregulars'. Does anybody with more history than me want to explain who the Baker Street Irregulars are?

**Shannon:** I'm not an expert in this but I understand that they are, I guess, a literary society is how they often position themselves? And they are very tied in with the ACD canon. They're probably familiar to anyone who's bothering to listen to this podcast at this point. But I thought that was a lovely tongue-in-

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cheek article that kind of outlines some strict...kind of more divisions between where you might identify if you are a fan versus an enthusiast.

**Rachael:** Yeah. So, I encourage everybody to go read it because it's a really very well written article. Some of the distinctions it makes are: fans tend to memorize large amounts of trivia whereas the Baker Street Irregulars were sort of a little bit more of a social club. There's a lot of drinking going on, a lot of . . .

**Shannon:** Wait, that sounds a lot like fans, though.

*(Laughter)*

**Shannon:** You're right.

**Emma:** It does, doesn't it?

**Rachael:** And there's a blurry line, I think. But, here's where I'll tell you I think the line is clear. I should divulge that I'm a huge supporter for Organization for Transformative Works [<http://transformativeworks.org/>] and other endeavors like that and fans tend to take the canon as is and remix it. Write fan fiction, do fan art, make vids as I do, decorate their houses, cosplay and kind of remix and rework the canon as opposed to simply digesting it as is. I think that's the line. I don't know, maybe someone wants to disagree with me.

**Emma:** I don't disagree. I think that my understanding, and again, I don't have much of a background in this either, my understanding is the difference between the Baker Street Irregulars and fandom is there's this long history of it being about playing the game and I think that often, they think of Sherlock as more of a historical figure rather than as a character. So, whereas fans would think of this person as a character and would be really invested in thinking about how this character would react to different situations in fic and in art and things like this, for someone who comes from the other side, the Baker Street Irregulars, it's almost more of a meta kind of canon analysis, from what I understand. But anyone listening should feel free to correct us because we obviously don't know what the fuck we're talking about.

**Shannon:** I think I'm going to build on what you're saying because I think there is a subset of Baker Street Irregulars or perhaps those who identify slightly differently who do talk of Sherlock as having been a historical figure and looking for evidence to that effect. But I guess the way that I would differentiate it, in a sense, would be that I would assume that somebody that identifies as a fan likes to extrapolate and move in new directions away from the canon, although not necessarily. There is kind of a base but we see this coming up in lots of wonderful fan art where they do the gender swap of Sherlock and John or I would even say that. . . Making your house look like 221B might be a kind of homage and I think that there's a lot of that that goes on in the Baker Street Irregulars as well.

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But, trying to, I don't know. . . Some of the things that we see might be a little bit more transgressive, a kind of playing with and pushing back against and reappropriating, I see that as being a big part of what a lot of fans are doing. I think that you could draw a Venn diagram illustrating an overlap between those who might identify as somebody who is an enthusiast versus a fan and I don't know how much overlap there is, but I think people can be both, and are.

**Emma:** I think one thing that I would add to that, too, is that there's a long history of fandom being a very female enterprise and being a way for women to take media that has been created mostly by men, for men, and make it into something that they want. And I think, this is a vast generalization, but most people in fandom are female and most people who would call themselves Baker Street Irregulars are historically male. It's like a very male way of participating in the Sherlock Holmes fandom as opposed to a female way. There's this long history of fandom that comes from media fandom in general. There's a long history there of ways in which women participated, ways that women engage with media and the ways that we transform it and make it into something that satisfies us and satisfies needs that we have and we're not seeing in the media.

**Rachael:** Yeah, and I'd say not just women but any person who doesn't feel like their viewpoint is represented in the mainstream media. Fandom is an awesome way to kind of recapture that and speak your mind. So that's kind of what we're all here to do.

I'm going to walk us through a little bit about what's on the menu for today and then the rest of us will chat about what's to come and whet your appetite for future episodes. So, we have a really good show lined up. We have a little bit of Sherlockian news cause there's tons of Sherlockian news going on so we're going to report on that. We have an interview with IvyBlossom that Emma has conducted to give you a kind of insider view on what's going on with somebody involved in the Sherlock fandom. Denzil, one of our fellow addicts, is going to teach us some Sherlockian skills in a segment entitled '143 Types of Tobacco Ash.' Then, we are kind of going to do a little bit of a fandom remix and blend Harry Potter with Sherlock in our segment called 'Sorting Sherlock,' in which we take a Sherlock BBC character and argue about which Harry Potter house they fit into. I'm excited about that one. And, finally, we're going to end out with some recommendations of fan works that we enjoy or maybe new ones that are out or oldies but goodies.

Maybe we could go around and folks could chat a little bit about the segments that they're most excited about or that they're involved in.

**Shannon:** Well, I'm going to start because you've already mentioned 'Sorting Sherlock' and you've also said before that it's kind of funny to bring Harry Potter into this, but many of us come from the Harry Potter fandom and that's still a deep love and that's really going to be the character analysis segment. We're using Harry Potter's Hogwarts houses as a frame for discussing the major characters within the BBC *Sherlock* series. We thought we'd start with Sherlock, although one of the episodes we're going to get to that I'm really excited about is when we sort John, cause he's pretty contentious.

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**Rachael:** Well, I know one episode that I'm really excited about is the Sherlockian skills. Denzil, for those who don't know him in fandom, he's an amazing person who has mastered a whole bunch of different skills that Sherlock Holmes uses. From, like, Morse code to the violin to how to make a mind palace, and we're going to get a little tutorial in episodes from Denzil about how you can master a skill that Sherlock Holmes in *Sherlock* BBC incorporates into his life. Maybe that is what will kick my butt into learning how to play a violin.

*(Laughter)*

**Emma:** Well, one of the segments I'm very involved in and excited about is the interview segment and, if anyone's ever listened to SlashCast, they know this is what I do on SlashCast, too. So, I'm not exactly going outside my comfort zone here. One of the things I've really enjoyed about podcasting the last seven or so years is that I get to fangirl people whose work I love and also meet new people who have expertise in areas that I don't. I'm really looking forward to interviewing all of our favorite artists and writers and fan creators and people who do amazing things in fandom. So stay tuned for that!

**Dixie:** And I will be co-hosting a segment called 'Extreme Crafting with Mrs. Hudson.' Consulting Crafter Qui and I are going to teach you how to kill ninjas with knitting needles, save the world with a glue gun. Okay, that's a total lie, but we will be talking about Sherlock fan crafting, cooking, creating your own cosplay and answering your crafting conundrums.

**Shannon:** I'm really looking forward to that.

**Rachael:** I'm excited.

**Dixie:** It should be fun!

**Shannon:** One other segment that I'm involved in with Kat. Kat and I are the two...I don't sound like it, but I'm in Europe right now. We're the two folks based in Europe but we're doing 'That's My Division,' also known as the rec segment. That's going to be an opportunity for us to kind of highlight different fan-created products that we really enjoy, whether it be fic or video or art or even some really interesting cosplay.

**Rachael:** Exciting! Well, one of the perhaps not so transformative aspects but, certainly, meta aspects on the menu for this podcast is a segment that I'm really excited about called 'The Reichenbach Fallout.' It is a place in which *Sherlock* fans can speculate about everything leading up to the Reichenbach Fall episode. Analyzing every tiny little thing that happened, predicting what Sherlock did, what he was thinking, and also, most importantly, predicting, discussing and reacting to what happens in Season 3 when, spoiler alert, Sherlock didn't really die and he's going to come back.

*(Laughter)*

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I'm really geeked about that.

**Shannon:** You know what I'm so excited about for that segment? Is having speculation again. I have missed speculation ever since the Harry Potter canon closed. It's been such a change and it's so good to have it back again.

**Dixie:** I've missed it.

**Rachael:** Yeah, I have to admit that I have this competitive. . . The main reason I wanted to do this podcast is I have this competitive need to predict, when there's like a puzzle in a fandom, what will happen and be able to say the fans thought of it first. I know that always happens but it just entertains me.

**Shannon:** There's been such awesome speculation, though. I mean, just great.

**Rachael:** Or the fans thought of a better solution, too. Because we know that definitely happened with Snape.

*(General agreement and laughter)*

**Shannon:** But you know, the collective consciousness of the fandom, there's so many people, so much energy and, even when just one person starts sharing an idea, how it spitballs into something else. There's just no way any two or three writers can match that. It's kind of like people are going to come up with so much great stuff that will be so much more complex. I can't wait for that particular segment. I'm really excited about it.

**Dixie:** It's going to be brilliant.

**Emma:** It's going to be really cool.

**Rachael:** Well, we haven't built that up at all.

So that's kind of a sampling of the menu of things that we have planned. Certainly, as we go along, we might add to that and we'd love to hear from fellow *Sherlock* addicts about what they would like to hear discussed in this forum.

But without ado, I think it's time to get the show going so I'll say, "The game is on."

**Dixie:** Oh, god, yes!

*(Music begins, swells, fades out)*

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**Olivia:** Hello everybody. My name is Olivia, or Octopieces, and I am the deliverer of the Coroner's Report, your news segment for this, the very first episode of The Three Patch Podcast.

As we all, we Sherlock Holmes fans are becoming rather doleful experts at waiting a long time for our heroes to return, regardless of the universe or form. According to Collider [<http://collider.com/sherlock-holmes-3-news-dan-lin/218367/> ], the third installment of Guy Ritchie's Sherlock Holmes trilogy [<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2094116/>] is still in development with Robert Downey, Jr. still filming on *Iron Man 3*. Drew Pierce was hired to write the script for the third installment over a year ago but not much news has come out since then. Producer Dan Lin says in a recent interview that they want to make sure that the script is in top shape so they can make the “right movie.”

Hollywood has been keeping both of our boys busy, Martin and Benedict. So much so that filming and production of Season 3 has been pushed to March as opposed to January of 2013 [<http://www.digitalspy.com/british-tv/s129/sherlock/news/a441150/sherlock-producer-confirms-delay-air-dates-wont-be-affected.html>]. This caused a truly terrifying degree of distress among the fandom but Sue Vertue confirmed on Twitter that it was not expected to affect any transmission dates. That being said, we'll still probably have to wait at least nine to ten months while mulling over the possibilities that “rat,” “wedding,” and “bow” hold. I, myself, am salving my wounds by just imagining all the fic and art that will most likely explode after the airing of Season 3 and just how many gallons of water I'll have to drink in order to replenish all the tears I'll be crying.

Dearest Benedict, sporting his shiny leather coat and a pair of super spiffy space manacles, has made the cover of Empire [<http://nerdreactor.com/2013/01/03/benedict-cumberbatch-gets-cuffed-on-empires-cover>] with his dashing mop of hair and a villainous stare as a part of the *Star Trek: Into Darkness* [<http://www.startrekmovie.com/>] promotion wave. Chris Pine has also made his own cover, one of two collector's editions, and I don't know about anybody else, but I think the production team and the promotion team knew exactly what they were doing to us and had a good evil laugh when they put Benedict on the cover in leather and handcuffs.

Just a few more weeks until *Cabin Pressure's* fourth season airs [<http://johnfinnmore.blogspot.com/2012/11/cabin-pressure-iv-prepare-for-boarding.html>]. The date's set at January 9<sup>th</sup> with only one more recording date which is Sunday, the 6<sup>th</sup> of January.

And, also, a video of John Finnemore being presented with the fan-made book of *Lemons and Landmarks: The Chronicled Adventures of the Traveling Lemon* [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6xqMhMhFI4>] is still circulating Tumblr. So, if you need a smile, definitely check it out. It gets a little bit emotional and it just goes to show you what kind of awesome, awesome people make up fandom and how we can always give back to creators and actors and writers who give us so much, too.

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Well, that concludes this Coroner's Report. I will see you next episode and on this, the 6<sup>th</sup> of January, I must say “Happy Birthday, Sherlock.”

*(Music begins)*

**Watson:** *People want to know you're human.*

**Holmes:** *Why?*

**Watson:** *Cause they're interested.*

**Holmes:** *Why are they?*

*(Music changes)*

**Watson:** *Remember what they told you, don't try to be clever and please, just keep it simple and brief.*

**Holmes:** *I'll just be myself.*

**Watson:** *Are you listening to me?*

*(Music fades out)*

**Emma:** Welcome to the very first interview segment for the Three Patch Podcast. This is Emma Grant and I'm extremely excited today because our very first interview guest is IvyBlossom

[<http://ivyblossom.tumblr.com/>] and, if you have been in the Sherlock fandom for more than about two minutes, then you know who this is and all of the stuff that she's written

[<http://archiveofourown.org/users/ivyblossom>].

First of all, welcome, Ivy. I'm so excited.

**Ivy:** Oh! I'm so excited, thank you.

**Emma:** This is an honor. This is going to be a lot of fun. So, first thing I want to do is have you talk a little bit about how you came to fandom in the first place. How did you find the wonderful world of fandom and fanfic and all of that?

**Ivy:** Ohhh my goodness! This is a long time ago. This is back in 2001. I was a doctoral student at the time and, while that's fascinating, I found it very lonely, shall we say? So, I was kind of, I think, fishing around anyway for something more interesting to do, not that the work wasn't interesting. I was reading all kinds of things at the time and I was reading Harry Potter. Then, I saw on line an article about Harry Potter slash and I thought it was hilarious.

*(Laughter)*

You know, as people generally do when you first ever hear about it, you think it's really funny and then I went looking for it and then, of course, you start reading it and then it's very engrossing, you know?

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Once you've done that, there you are. It kind of ate my head and I was in a position where I kind of wanted something to be really passionate about as well.

You know how it happens. You get passionate about it almost by accident.

**Emma:** So, had you ever written any fanfic before?

**Ivy:** No, or even heard of it at that point. I think most of us have the experience of having written a lot, like, you know, in high school or whatever. I had always been a person that liked to write so I had written a lot and when I started my academic career, I sort of kind of put it to one side because I figured that no, I'm not a writer. I'm an academic. I'm going to do this thing. Then, I got caught up and it was kind of boring and it seems like whenever that gets boring, then I come back to my first love. So, I couldn't stop myself, basically. It just kind of poured out.

**Emma:** So, what's the first fanfic you ever posted online? What fandom was it and what pairing?

**Ivy:** Harry Potter. . .

**Emma:** Yay!

**Ivy:** Harry Potter/Draco Malfoy.

**Emma:** Yay!

**Ivy:** Again, I have to say that the way that those stories are written, it was actually fairly easy to make the argument that Malfoy has a crush on Harry because it was like, all he talks about and, you know, like the Potter Stinks badges, it's all classic crush behavior and it was clearly not deliberate. I mean that from her point, I don't think she was doing that deliberately but it was there and so it was like how do you construct an antagonist, even just the pitfalls of that you're kind of accidentally making it very easy to say, "Well, all he does is talk about Harry. He's obsessed with Harry. Surely that's a crush at that age." So, it was kind of funny, but then, of course, as fandom does, we take things so seriously and we delve into it. Suddenly, it turns into this whole big thing.

**Emma:** When and how did you discover the Sherlock fandom?

**Ivy:** My best friend is Canadian but she's also English and she was raised in England and so she always pays attention to what the BBC is doing. I guess it aired in August and it was right after it aired. She said to me, "You have to watch this." I was very, at the time, really busy, but again, wanted a distraction in life, so she said it. I was like oh, I have a feeling this is going to be a fannish experience, but I said okay.

**Emma:** *(Laughs)*

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**Ivy:** I watched it and fell into it.

**Emma:** So what was it about the show, then, that made you say “I have to write fic for this”?

**Ivy:** On some level, I think it's a combination of whether or not I want to be distracted to the level that's required to write. To write is to give over part of your brain, as I'm sure you know; many people know. There is a sort of absorption that happens and so you have to kind of, first, want that to happen. This was a controlled defense on my part that I definitely did. I thought that would be a good thing to have this other part of my brain given over to it, for one. But, on the other hand, just really well constructed characters and I'm really interested in opposite characteristics, I guess, being in close proximity and, obviously, struggling to work their own relationship. It's about that. This is a series about relationships and it really makes a non-traditional and interesting way that I felt left us lots of places to play.

**Emma:** So, probably like eighty percent of the people in the fandom, you're mostly into John/Sherlock, it seems. I don't know that I've even seen you talk about any other pairing, come to think of it.

**Ivy:** *(Laughs)*

**Emma:** I'm going to throw out the question. So what about that pairing appeals to you?

**Ivy:** I find them both really interesting as characters, in and of themselves. There's sort of something to be said for each. . . Well, generally, there's something interesting to me about writing about Sherlock and there's something interesting to be said about writing about John so I like them both. And, dually, I think their relationship is really interesting and, of course, because they are toying with where that relationship is or ways to perceive that relationship as part of the show, not to say they're asking us to write it. . .

**Emma:** *(Laughs)*

**Ivy:** Not exactly, but there is that. The hooks are there. Any time you are in a situation where you think there's a 'what if' question you'd like to answer here, there's just a lot of 'what if' questions in this particular series. There's a lot of 'what if this' and 'what if that' and I'm interested in that. The little, tiny details and the little, tiny scenes that either you see or you don't and sort of a 'what if it went this way' and 'what if this.' I guess the other thing is I've never written television fandom before because I was writing in a book fandom. Which is different because you have a lot more interiority because presumably you know more about what's going on behind their eyes than you do in a television fandom where there is no interiority in television. You have to presume it. It's not text in the same kind of way, if you know what I mean.

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**Emma:** Uh-huh.

**Ivy:** So that was new to me and so there's something also appealing of having this very rich relationship on a screen and then having the absence of interiority, which then makes me want to rush in and fill it.

**Emma:** Oh yeah. That's really an interesting point, actually. I hadn't thought of that, but yeah.

**Ivy:** You don't know what they're thinking. You can guess. So, that is the other beautiful thing, I think, about the series and those characters' relationship. It's that you can actually make a lot of very well-educated assumptions about the way people are, what is going on behind their eyes.

**Emma:** Let us talk about a couple of your fan fics in particular. I believe that the two fics that come up most often when your name is mentioned are “The Progress of Sherlock Holmes” [<http://archiveofourown.org/works/173274>] and “The Quiet Man” [<http://archiveofourown.org/works/322978>]. Both of these were posted as works in progress, I believe. The way that you've done both those fics. In “The Progress of Sherlock Holmes,” you're very much inside Sherlock's brain. Which is something else that, when I first got into this fandom, that was one of the first fics that I read and, before I read it, I didn't know how it would be possible to write from Sherlock's point of view. I read that, and I went “Oh, there you go.” It was really cool and I think “The Quiet Man” was maybe one of the first post-Reichenbach fics that I started reading. So, both of those fics, everybody knows them. Everybody recs them. Why don't we start with “The Progress of Sherlock Holmes”?

**Ivy:** Actually, your experience in terms of looking at Sherlock's point of view and thinking how on earth could that possibly happen is exactly how I stumbled in on that one, in the first place. Because I didn't think it was possible. I didn't think I could do it. I didn't think it could be done. I'm a bit of a purist on the first person stuff and I'm getting worse as time goes on about that in terms of the rules that I've set for myself for it. So, part of the appeal of it to me, again, as I've said, in the television fandom when there is no interiority, it's open for you to play with and it's not really easily contradicted by anything because you don't get to see what people are thinking.

But I wanted to experiment. I just told myself -- I think like the night before I started writing that, which it was not intended to be long -- I just started playing with it cause I told myself the day before, I said that this was not possible. I cannot do it based on what I think first person needs to be. And lots of people have different interpretations of that, so I'm not saying other people couldn't. But I just thought, for myself and the way I think first person should go, I didn't think this was possible because it would basically be a spread sheet. It would just be a bunch of lists and that would not make a good story. I don't know that he has a narrative brain or at that point, and this is in Series 1, not necessarily a metaphorical brain either. As somebody who's a big fan of the metaphor, I thought that I don't think I could do this. I just don't think it's possible.

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And, then, of course, once you think to yourself that it's not possible, then there's a part of your brain that goes "But how could it be possible?" "Maybe it could be possible!" So there was some part of me that was just trying to work it out and then, well, okay, try. Try a little bit and see what it looks like. I remember I posted it and the first person that looked at it said "Ah, I think there's some words missing in there" because there was either no verb in some, no subject in sentences. Like, the sentences are completely disastrous. And I'm like, yeah, that's completely what I'm going for with him. Actually, I'm just going to go with that. Then, it just sort of exploded on me from there.

I knew . . . Well, to me, it seemed like a really big risk because I wanted to write a Sherlock with feelings. And, at the time, I don't recall it being particularly well received or as being an idea that people would accept. I think I posted saying right at the very beginning, This is probably not your taste because this is not a Sherlock that most people really want to read about because he's supposed to be a sociopath, whatever, and I just have decided that he's not. I just don't want him to be. I don't want to write that story. People would say what if he's just not capable of expressing enough or recognizing what's happening to himself, if he's just distanced from it and separated from it? And I kind of liked that story better for myself in this case. I wanted to write about somebody who had feelings, a lot of feelings about all kinds of things, but just didn't really know how to mesh those into his life or into the way he was trying to rationally look at the world.

If I was going to expect anything, I guess it was that people would say this is the most out-of-character Sherlock ever. That's fine because I just want to write it this way, so I was surprised that I didn't hear more of that, though I did hear that for sure and that's fine. I mean, fandom, generally speaking, is very kind and very open to different interpretations and receptive to things and really like to be entertained and if they find it entertaining, then I'm pleased. I guess, generally, my experience with that has been the discussion about the voice.

That's sort of the 'why first person' and somebody asked me recently why everyone writes in first person. Why does everyone in this fandom write in the first person? I didn't know that was true, first off.

**Emma:** *(Laughter)*

**Ivy:** And, I don't know because I can only really speak for myself on that front.

**Emma:** Do you think that the response was different after Series 2? I was just thinking about the things that you were saying about Sherlock not having emotions and stuff and I'm thinking that the Sherlock we saw in Series 2. . . I came into the fandom after Series 2, and the Sherlock that we saw in Series 2 resonated very much with the Sherlock that you wrote in "Progress."

**Ivy:** Yes. How pleased was I? How pleased was I? Yeah, because there really isn't, if you look at it just from Series 1, there isn't a ton of evidence to support a very emotional Sherlock but there is in Series 2, for sure. So I think that the expectation that I had that people would point out that I was

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taking massive character leaps in “The Progress of Sherlock Holmes” were set to rest and I haven't really heard anything like that since Series 2 because he clearly does have emotions and actually says straight out that he has them but he just puts them aside. He just actually says that right in “Hounds” so I was like “Yay!”

**Emma:** You were like “I was right!”

**Ivy:** *(Laughter)*

**Emma:** I called it! I called it! *(in a singsong voice)*

**Ivy:** I was just like at least I don't have to keep apologizing for that, for wanting to interpret that way, even though it was really just a choice on my part that I just prefer to write. But the other was that we do have a very metaphorical Sherlock in Series 2 as well where he makes great use of metaphor to describe things so I was quite pleased about that. I just can't help it. You know, when you reach a point where you want to write in an authentic voice but at the same time, it's your voice, too. You can't actually decouple those. I write the way I write and I'm probably far too flowery and I keep editing myself back in writing these two characters in order to keep it realistic in my mind. Realistic as an internal voice, a metaphor breaks in, then I kept thinking I'm massively out of character. But then, maybe not quite as badly out of character any more.

*(Laughter)*

**Emma:** Was your approach to “The Quiet Man” any different? Obviously, it's a different character, but I mean the way you were sort of trying to get inside the head of the character and the way that you approached the process of writing it. Was it different or did you take kind of the same approach?

**Ivy:** It was very different, actually. Similar in that writing “The Progress of Sherlock Holmes” and after I finished that one, I wrote a novel-length story that's not fandom, just to take what I've learned, what I've learned writing in “Progress.” So that was between there but there was basically a year gap between those two stories. So at least I had a chance to get rid of the Sherlock voice, which took me months to stop writing like that.

*(Laughter)*

**Ivy:** Stickiest voice of all time. For me, it was very difficult so I had a good gap in there but what I learned along the way, I started writing the first big story, “The Progress of Sherlock Holmes,” with no plan and I developed a plan about, I think, like six or seven chapters, then realized I had a chaptered story and not little vignettes. It was actually going to be something else. So, then I had to stop in the process of that and figure out what that story was so that I knew where I was going and had a very bare-bones outline at the time. By the time I got to writing “The Quiet Man,” I knew that I needed a really good outline and I experimented with several ways of creating them.

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So, I knew when I started writing “The Quiet Man” that it was a long story. I didn't know it was going to be quite as long as it turned out to be, but I knew it was at least as long as “The Progress of Sherlock Holmes.” So, I was a little bit more aware of where I was going and I find everything I sit down to write is a learning experience and I'm sort of taking something from that to learn about how stories work. That's what really, right now, drives me to do all this, is just to try and figure out how narrative works for us and why it's satisfying. But in that case, I really thought that this is a story that to me is incredibly obvious and it's right there. When I watch Series 2, that's what I see. That's what's there and I thought this is intensely obvious and it's just basically like pointing out the color of the furniture but I have to. . . I want to write this! I want to write this! So that's like another process to watch, to walk through, which I enjoy. Somebody's emotional journey.

**Emma:** So, when you're writing stories and posting them serially like this, as you are going along, how much impact does the feedback you get from readers have?

**Ivy:** That's really interesting and I know that's something I think about a lot, too. I think, because, especially that in the last couple of years anyway, I've been pretty good about keeping my outline. . . My outline's pretty secure. So, like, there's not a whole lot of changing the big stuff, the whole narrative arc. But I can't say that there isn't a tremendous impact from what a reader says along the way. I think there are some ways that are really clear because I do a lot of experimenting. I just want to know, especially with voice, I've been playing with that with writing from first person, present tense a lot and I want it to be as close to the experience of just being as I can be.

You can't be perfectly right every time. It's from *Ulysses* forward: how far do you want to go down that crazy path? But I keep playing with it. Sometimes, I'll try something to see what it's like and if it resonates or not or if it's successful. Sometimes, it seems like nobody gets it. It's gone. That's a failure and I have so much of that. There's so many things that I try that just completely fail.

**Emma:** Speaking about the fact that at least traditionally, certainly one hundred years ago, it was much more common for works to be written serially and published in pieces, I mean, like works in progress right now, and then for reader feedback in the form of letters or comments or whatever: that used to be quite common for professional writers.

**Ivy:** Definitely.

**Emma:** It's kind of an interesting way to write, but the idea that you're getting this kind of live feedback about what's working and what's not, which is what you were just talking about, is really tremendously helpful.

**Ivy:** It's very helpful. I think it's like the fast track, honestly, and I know there's always that discussion about is writing fanfiction actually helpful to a professional career, and the answer, of course, is yes. If you just look around at the people on the *New York Times* bestseller list, you can pretty much see that,

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yes, it does actually help us. But I think, in this case, for me, and I'm not a published writer, I definitely learn a lot watching people's responses. Then, I get into these big, long conversations about the nature of narrative and the structure of narrative and the whole experience of writing something, constructing something, putting it out there and people sort of help you see what you can't see.

The other thing, too, is that I have very little or basically no visual imagination, so I can't "see" the characters that I write, which I know is very weird.

**Emma:** Oh! That is interesting.

**Ivy:** Yeah, so, I thought maybe a television fandom would make that different, but it doesn't. They just vanish. They turn into these hovering balls of feelings. It's like clouds of feelings that kind of interact with each other. Therefore, I will, basically, never describe anybody because I just can't keep track of it. If I'm writing original stories, I'll describe them one way and then ten thousand words later, they'll look completely different because I just can't hold visual information like that in my head. But I've noticed that people seem to think that I describe things well, which I think is hilarious because I never do. I don't describe anything.

**Emma:** Interesting. So there's something about that filling in the details that's happening?

**Ivy:** Yeah, and that I learned just because I know for a fact it's a failing and then people talk to me and say "Wow, this is such a visual scene!" I'm like, really? Because I describe nothing. So, anything that is happening is happening in your head and that's actually the revelation I came to. I say it and people get upset with me when I say it but the writing is not about the words. It's about something else. It's about the story that we are constructing together in the reader's head. It's what's in the reader's head. It's not the words that I'm putting on this page. The words on this page should aid in constructing something in your head but the thing that's in your head is the important thing, not which choice of word I used or whether that's a real pretty phrase.

That sort of got me to understand that that's what story-building is about is what's in your head. If I can avoid describing things so that I'm leaving room for somebody else to view it, because they're very visual. . . So all of this process has sharpened for me not only my own many faults and failings as a writer but also the ways that the reader will fill in for me the things that I can't do.

**Emma:** That is really a fascinating idea and I guess I don't think I had quite thought of fanfic in that way or my own writing in that way. You often think about, sort of, the intellectual texts being sort of like that. Always being left all this room to play and whenever anyone would listen, I'd say I don't want my favorite pairings in any fandoms to become canon because it closes the door to all the different ways it can happen.

So, I'm used to thinking about interacting with the original text that way, but I hadn't thought about fanfic in that way. That's really interesting.

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**Ivy:** For me, it's such an educational playground on so many levels and I've learned so much from everybody in the community and it's such a generosity from everybody, both people creating things and people consuming things and responding to them and actually engaging with us is such a gift.

**Emma:** Oh god, it is! It's amazing!

Do you write on any kind of a schedule, then? Or do you just sort of sit down when you have time and let it come out? Or are you one of those people who says every day, I'm going to write a thousand words or whatever?

**Ivy:** I am not one of those people. My theory on this is I will only write when it's fun, which is what everybody in the world will tell you is the worst possible thing to do. But, I'm genuinely fortunate in that most of the time it's fine so I'm able to do that. But, what I won't do is, again, because I have a full time job which I love and I won't force myself to do something if I don't enjoy it. Or if I'm too tired. I just don't. If it's not fun, there's no point. It turns into a schedule because it will usually be like three or four times a week that I actually want to sit down and write my fifteen hundred or two thousand words, but that's the sort of a schedule that there kind of is. But I try to not force myself to stick to that, again, because I don't want it to become work and I think that the quality of what I'm doing will decrease if I'm not passionate about doing it.

So, I want to make sure that when I'm writing something, it's really something I love, so I write it and if I'm patient enough, someone will look at it, which is nice, because I drop a lot of words and then I post it and then I'm done and I feel great. I don't know how other people do that, when they sort of force themselves into it every day. Maybe I'm wrong about the quality of it. Maybe it just doesn't feel as good, but maybe it looks just fine. I don't know, but if I give myself a couple of days' break, I come at it with so much more energy and joy and I just like that better.

**Emma:** I totally agree with you. I've had conversations with people before where they talk about writing one thousand words a day and I remember having a conversation with someone once where she said that the only problem is that she hits her thousand word mark and then the next thing she really needs to do is go through and edit and she ends up cutting stuff out and she doesn't make her thousand word goal for the day. And, I'm like, if the goal is interfering with turning out good stuff, the goal is wrong. That would not work for me.

**Ivy:** Yeah, that's really well put, and I feel like there's so much writing advice that focuses on that and I kind of get it, like 'don't wait for inspiration' or whatever, but I don't know. Life is short and I like it to be fun, playful, and I like to enjoy everything that I do. So, I'm with you. The goal is for me to enjoy myself, primarily. I obviously am very selfish. I want to have a good time and then I want what I'm writing to be something I like. Whatever makes those two things happen together, then I'm happy.

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I like to write in little tiny bursts and I feel great about posting. Just the act of posting. It's not the feedback or anything else, it's even just the posting feels so good to me like "I did it! I'm done!" And then, I just get such a rush from that so I post frequently, because you can't call them anything but chapters, but they're actually scenes. They're not chapters. I like to keep that glide of enthusiasm, just keep going and feel like I'm so productive, but then I've written these tiny little bits. What's funny is how quickly those tiny little bits add up to some thing just absolutely smack-you-across-the-face massive.

**Emma:** Do you tend to sit on things you've written for a while before you post? It sounds like you just kind of get them out the door.

**Ivy:** If I can sit on something overnight, that takes incredible effort on my part, to be honest, and it drives everybody crazy, so there's Airynothing. She has eyes like lasers for dropped words and all those things that are so easy to miss. I like to get her to look over things even if I'm "oh done." Sometimes I just can't stand it and I have to post it even though she hasn't looked at it yet, which is terrible. I have the worst beta practices, ever. Why I still have any betas at all is a mystery because I can't help it, it's posted already.

**Emma:** So what happens when, and maybe this doesn't happen to you like it happens to me. What happens when someone sends something back to you and says, "No. This is all wrong. This is going the wrong direction. You really need to rethink this or rewrite this." How do you handle that? "Oops! I already posted it" or?

**Ivy:** That happened with something during "The Quiet Man," actually. There was an extra scene in "The Quiet Man" that I finished and then I wasn't feeling as impatient. I kind felt that maybe it wasn't going anywhere. It just didn't push things along. As much as nobody will believe me because there isn't much that happens in that story, each piece has a job. Every little scene has a job to do and if it doesn't, it needs to move from one place to another. Or where the scene starts and the scene ends, the person needs to be changed in some way. There has to be a change so you can't show together with two scenes ago. There has to be a gap. That's sort of the way that I construct things. I want to see what work each scene is doing. So I wrote one and I was kind of okay with it. It was okay but I knew there was sort of something and then my beta said I didn't need it. But in that case, I hadn't posted it and was okay; she was right. You could take that scene out and it would make no difference. Therefore, it was not needed, so I just didn't post it.

But I try to avoid that. Partly, I can avoid it mostly in terms of that conversation with my beta because I outline things to a pretty ridiculous degree. I share that outline so that my beta will know what it is I'm trying to do and can say whether I've done it or not.

**Emma:** So, one of the other kinds of writing that you do that I think a lot of us enjoy over on Tumblr is that you tend to do a lot of meta [<http://ivyblossom.tumblr.com/post/37592181684/ivyblossom-valeria2067-cumbermums>], and what I'll see often is some gif set comes by and then you've written like

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eight paragraphs of this really beautiful meta analysis about John and Sherlock's relationship. I love that you do that!

I'm assuming that's something that's just really fun for you but could you talk a little bit about how you get inspired to write those things?

**Ivy:** Sure. I keep waiting for it because I think it's an effect of not writing, actually. So, part of the appeal for me of this show is the gaps that exist in what is there and so, when I see the gifs and I love the gifs, they're amazing and so information-bearing. There's so much in them, little snippets that summarize so much of a scene or an emotion or something that's going on and I'm, again, just sort of driven to state what I think is shockingly obvious. I guess partly, I really love the gif culture and the way that that contributes to fandom dialogue and I like to contribute to it in some way as well as to why that moment is significant. Why that person was right to get the gif of this particular moment and what that means.

**Emma:** You really hit something there about how the whole practice of putting gifs together, and it's not something that I do but it's something that I appreciate that other people do, is that it does. It highlights these moments in a way that – and when I was in the Harry Potter fandom, we didn't really have a way of doing them. You could transcribe a section of text and then say let's talk about what's going on here. People did that, obviously. But just taking that with this little bit of dialogue and this little bit of a scene and thinking about what these four seconds show us about these characters. That's fascinating.

**Ivy:** I know, it is. It really is.

**Emma:** I think back to my days in, like, *Star Wars* or *Buffy* and I'm thinking about if we could have done that then.

**Ivy:** I know. It's actually really genius and I'm so enamored with it. When you talk about it, people who were down on Tumblr or whatever and talk about it's just a bunch of animated gifs, whatever. We prioritize formats in a particular way. Writing and art? I don't know: which are the highest? There is a priority. There is a list in there, a ranking, and for some reason, the animated gif is like nothing to people, which I don't understand because I think it's absolute genius. I really do, and I think this where you talk about on an academic level. The amount of information it's conveying. It's the ultimate citation.

You embed this piece and because of television, it's only one view. It's only ever watched one. There's no interiority in it, all you have is this. And you have this dialogue which we're lucky enough, with *Sherlock*, is never on the nose. It's always a little bit to one side, so there's always something going on behind it that you can kind of see and talk about. Then it makes me just driven to say look at that moment and how what they are saying is this, but this is what's clearly going on. Here's

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a derivation of what, to me, is clearly going on behind the scenes of that and how that relates back to things that I'm just particularly interested in.

I like the culture of it. I want to see more of it, frankly. I'd love to see people value that animated gif work in the way that I think they probably should because it's bringing something so wonderful to even just discussion of media, generally.

**Emma:** There have been several times when I've looked at this meta commentary that you've written on gifs and it's changed my perspective on the John/Sherlock relationship. This has happened multiple times and I've come away from a gif set and your analysis of it thinking "Oh my god!" The one that kind of came by my dashboard recently where you talk about the difference between Series 1 John and Series 2 John and you said in Series 2, John's pretty much accepting. . . It's about John accepting the fact that he's in a relationship with Sherlock and just trying to figure out what that means. And just the way that you framed it (Link: [<http://ivyblossom.tumblr.com/post/37592181684/ivyblossom-valeria2067-cumbermums>]). There's something about the way that you framed it that just sort of clarified the relationship arc between the two series and I think you hinted at so much that could happen in Series 3 and who knows, right?

**Ivy:** I never want to get into the prediction game but what I think is so beautiful about this series is that it is there to be investigated. It's kind of interesting to watch reactions to that kind of stuff because on the one hand, people have been very supportive and kind to me that I take time to write these things. And there's always sort of this background discussion about how funny it is because we laugh about high school teachers that ask them to do this kind of thing and they don't want to. They laugh at people that think the curtains mean something when they're in the story or whatever and here we are, getting to this level with it. Yeah, this is called an English Degree. This is what you do, actually. Quite honestly, it's also how you look at historical documents. So, this is basic. . .

**Emma:** Quantitative research and social sciences.

**Ivy:** Yeah!

*(Laughter)*

**Ivy:** Basic critical thinking.

**Emma:** I just want to finish up with: I had put a call out on Tumblr for people to submit questions to us and we only have time to tackle one of these but this is from LongSnowMoon and her question is: Do you feel your Sherlock and John are consistent from work to work? Is there an Ivy!Sherlock and Ivy!John and if so, what are they?

**Ivy:** I would have to say yes and no. You construct based on the series that you have, so having written something in Series 1, that was only for me. You can only base it on what you know, so when

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you get to the next series, it's going to change because there's more content. But, no, I have been asked before, like right now, I'm sitting down and writing a Sherlock point of view again and so, I've been asked a few times about whether this is going to be the same Sherlock. Definitely not, and I don't think I could even do that. I don't know that I could even go back and take that character out of a story I've already written. You know that term, "head canon"?

**Emma:** Uh-huh.

**Ivy:** I don't know that I have one because then I just look at it and say, what about this? So what if this is true? So, I don't think I'm consistent, for me, anyway, as to what these people are thinking or doing or who they are from one place to another because there's just so many different directions you can go or different things you can say have happened to them in the past. So, I don't think so. But, the fact because it's me and all of us have a voice of our own or certain ways we like to see things, so there's probably lots of consistency in the things I just happen to enjoy. But, beyond that, I don't think so.

**Emma:** I think, like you said, everybody's kind of got their head canon for how these characters are and I think, you've probably had the experience, too, of getting feedback on the same story from some people that say it was the most in-character John and Sherlock they ever read. Then, on the other hand, this is so OOC but, whatever, if that's how you want to go with it. How can these two comments exist in the same [story] except for, as you say, everyone is constructing that narrative in their head and it's something that some of the words that you've written are jiving with what's in their head or caused them to construct something that's different; whatever they're filling in isn't working.

So that's really fascinating. I think everything that you said, in different stories, you're putting the characters in different situations and one of the things that is fantastic about fanfiction that I love is this idea of taking these two characters, putting them in those situations, and seeing what happens. Which, I think every story that I've ever written has kind of been like, "I wonder what would happen if. . ." and you've mentioned this before, too. This whole what if, right? Then, if they don't change over the course of the story, then you haven't done your job, basically. So, at the end of the story, you've got these two characters that have been very profoundly affected by what happened in your story. When you go to write another story, they're not going to be the same characters because you're picking another starting point and there's going to be a different ending point so you end up with all these different versions of the characters. So, I don't know if. . . Maybe you have a starting point that's consistent for you but the ending point is never going to be the same.

**Ivy:** I completely agree. I write in fair volume but not a lot of stories so I don't have a ton of Series 1 or a ton of Series 2. There's even the gap in time where you sort of change what you're thinking the character is or things you would do differently and there are some things in other stories I've written that I think I'd just should go back and change that because that's driving me crazy. That will keep me up at night because there's one thing in "Progress of Sherlock Holmes" that I want to change but I can't do that. That happens.

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**Emma:** How much would you say you're influenced by what you read from other people? I mean, how much is this fandom co-constructed experience? How much of that influenced your perspectives on the characters you write?

**Ivy:** Really interesting question. I find once I start writing, I have to stop reading because I'm afraid, I don't know why, but almost like I don't want to steal from somebody else or I don't want to get caught up in somebody else's vision that I forget what mine was or I just don't like mine anymore. I think that's the bigger fear, really, is that I'll see something somebody's done I'll like so much better. People say that all the time that they read this or that and now they don't want to write anything. It's so sad to see anybody say that ever but then, I feel it, too. I totally get that feeling.

Another thing I don't do when I'm writing, I don't re-watch the show cause I'm afraid that also will jolt me out. So, that I think definitely fandom discussion shapes what we do. There is that constant drive to be novel. That's already been done so I can't write it, which I really wish everybody would stop. How could we as a fandom decide we would all write the exact same story because, you know what? It will never be the exact same story. We have a zillion. Who cares if it's been done? I'm sort of always fighting a battle in my head with that idea, that somebody did something like that so I can't. Then there's this whole sort of back and forth. I'm aware of it. I'm shaped by that. But I still need to back off and say, "I'm going to do this my way."

**Emma:** I'm a person that loves tropes. I think you often know that you're done in a fandom when you think you can't stand to read another one of these blah blah blah fics. You move on to another fandom where it's exciting to read that exact same trope again, right? I love that and as much as I love seeing people put a new spin on an old trope, they're often things where I am perfectly happy knowing kind of how this is going to turn out.

I saw someone complain about a month or so ago that they were just getting tired of reading all the Sherlock fics where John and Sherlock are on a case and something about the case makes them notice each other and they end up having sex. I'm like. . .

**Ivy:** Stop reading.

**Emma:** Go find another fandom. Go off to *Avengers* for a while and come back. That trope is my thing. Oh my god, I love it.

**Ivy:** And it covers everything. You can put anything between those bookends. To me, that's like the real joy of fanfiction. Goalposts exist and there's just that means the world is infinite in between them and just go and bring what you are and who you are and your thoughts to it because it's always going to be new. That's a wonderful thing, isn't it?

**Emma:** Yeah, it really is. It's just amazing.

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Well, on that note, I think we'll go ahead and wrap up our discussion so I just want to say thank you, again. This has been a fantastic conversation and I hope that our listeners have enjoyed it.

Listeners, if you have any comments or questions for Ivy about any of the stuff that's come up, please feel free to comment on our show post on Tumblr or on our webpage or on LJ or wherever you found it. Or you can drop us an email at [bored@three-patch.com](mailto:bored@three-patch.com).

Thanks, Ivy. Thank you so much.

**Ivy:** Thank you. This was really fun.

**Emma:** Tune in to the next episode where we'll have another exciting fan creator to be interviewed. Bye.

*(Music)*

**Sherlock:** *All that matters to me is the work. Without that, my brain rots.*

**Denzil:** Welcome to 243 Types of Tobacco Ash: Sherlockian Skills.

My name is Methleigh, and I will be your host for this area of our show. In fandom, I write about the ideas in Sherlock Holmes. I like to work to solve the Final Problem, as the show so nicely frames it. In addition, I cosplay Sherlock, and I am keenly interested in Sherlock's skills.

Today I am going to focus on the Mind Palace. I will tell you a little about the context in which I encountered this wonderful thing, then its origin, and then I will explain how you may construct your very own, using examples from mine.

The Mind Palace! Such attractive words conjuring intriguing pictures. In "Hound of the Baskervilles," Sherlock tells John and Dr. Stapleton that he needs to go to his Mind Palace. He then searches through various words and related words and accompanying ideas. John describes it as "...a memory technique. It doesn't have to be an actual place. The way it works, you put information there, and theoretically you'll never forget it, you just have to find your way back to it."

Dr. Stapleton says, "So this imaginary place could be anything? A house, a street, whatever? But he said 'palace.' He called it a palace."

John answers, "Yes, well, he would, wouldn't he?"

But that is the actual name! It *is* a Mind Palace, also called a Memory Palace! A palace! Upon Googling it, I see it is attributed to Simonides of Ceos in the fifth or sixth century BC, which information is taken from a book called *The Art of Memory* [<http://ebookbrowse.com/yates-the-art-of-memory-pdf-d203046783>] by Frances Yates, written in 1966.

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How happy I was to see they were using it in the show! So many things are wonderful about Sherlock, but I get extra joy from the small references to things that already have a special status for me.

In another part of my life I dabble in prestidigitation, cards, and parlour magic. This is the context in which I first encountered the Mind Palace. We had a lecture by a casino protection expert from New York named Sal Piacente [[http://www.xellentlectureseries.com/sal\\_piacente\\_magic.html](http://www.xellentlectureseries.com/sal_piacente_magic.html)]. One of the things at which he excels, along with 3-card-Monte, is memorising decks of cards, which is very useful indeed for magicians. There is a quote from a magician named Cardini, which I always use for such examples of what I would call true magic. He says, in paraphrase, that real magic is that which is more astonishing when you know how it is done than it was when you were mystified.

In the show Sherlock says to Sebastian, "It's not a trick" about his analysis of people by observation, and the Mind Palace is also one of those truly magical things. So many of the things Sherlock does are like this. It is not a trick. No, it is better and more magical still. And it is something one may learn!

Sal Piacente uses his Mind Palace to memorise a deck of cards, among other things, and he can do it in less than a minute using this technique. I've seen him. So, here is his Mind Palace construction and technique, and I will give you examples from the palace I built.

The first thing you need to do is to choose a place that you know very well. After that, you memorise every element of the place and learn to walk through it looking at all the things it contains. John and Dr. Stapleton are right. It could be a house, a street, a country path, a place of work, a school, a bus route. The important thing is that you know it well enough to be able to picture the things it holds and that it has a stable route over which you can travel. You can even construct your own building, a palace perhaps, if you can recall it in such elaborate and specific detail that you know it perfectly and can imagine walking through it.

I use my grandmother's house, which I have always tried to remember after she passed away because she was special to me, and because it was magical in itself. It was like a museum.

I begin at the front gate with the hedge and its sticky seed pods with their distinctive tang. Then I move to the gate itself, with its cold iron and the dull clang as it closes. Then the cracked paving stone with the line and the hint of moss at the edges of the crack. Then a pine cone on the grass, then the big pine to the left of the house, even the lowest branches too high for easy climbing, the trunk also sticky with sap. Then the sight of the basement window of my uncle's chemistry laboratory, the door to which is rarely opened so the window has dust in the upper left corner. It looks like a spider web at a glance, but it is just dust on the glass, and I can imagine how the old dust smells and how it feels, soft and grainy but less granular than I would expect.

One of the great things about concentrating on the house and looking carefully at the various elements and items is that they appear more clear and detailed than I had expected to remember them. If I look at the stairs carefully I can see the wood grain and the nails, the way the lip of the step is constructed, and things to which I would never otherwise have given thought. It is like magic in itself.

After you have fixed the elements you have chosen in your mind, you must learn to move through your chosen place, encountering the remembered or conjured objects in exactly the same order. This takes

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some time, diligence, and concentration, but another wonderful thing about the Mind Palace is that you do not need anything at all but your own mind, not even a pencil.

First the hedge, then the gate, then the paving stone, then the pinecone, then the tree. For a deck of cards you need at least 52 items of focus. As well as a Mind Palace, or a Memory Palace, this is also apparently called the 'Method of Loci' [[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Method\\_of\\_loci](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Method_of_loci)] so I will call these items 'loci' also.

Once you have set the loci, you can begin to use your Palace for memorisation. You do this by mentally placing elements you want to remember on the loci. You might, for instance, place a mental picture of a Knave of Spades on the hedge, a Nine of Hearts on the lock of the gate, a Seven of Clubs on the cracked paving stone, and so forth. If you want to remember things in sequence, such as a deck of cards, or perhaps verses of an epic poem, or route on a map, you place the elements - the cards, or the verses, or the turns and landmarks - on your now intimately familiar loci. Thus your memories are stored.

To retrieve them, you walk through your Palace, looking at the loci, and on each one you will see the superimposed image you set there. This is what Sherlock, presumably, is doing alone in the laboratory in Hound of the Baskervilles. He is walking through his Mind Palace, looking at his loci to see if there are incidents of the word HOUND which he has set there, and looking at nearby loci for facts related to the word HOUND which he would have set there, or superimposed, at the same time.

The sense of smell is often cited as a trigger to recall memory. The reason that this technique works is that another such trigger is spatial relations. As you walk through your mind palace, contemplating your loci, which are fixed points in the virtually 3D world in your mind, these trigger the spatial relations between the things you have deliberately set over your loci.

You can also combine other memory tricks into the items you place on your loci. Going back to Sal Piacente and the cards, he recommended creating a visual image for each card that you can infallibly remember. He suggested combining the first letter of the suits - H, C, D, S with a rhyme for the name of the card. Thus one would have, perhaps Honey for the ace of hearts (H + 1) and a picture of Winnie the Pooh with a Honey Jar, or one could have a picture of a Cluedo set for the deuce of Clubs (C + 2 .) And one could superimpose these pictures over the hedge, the lock of the gate, the cracked paving stone.

The Mind Palace is a thing of beauty, exquisite and complex, and it is freely available to anyone, lying waiting just for you to create. Your very own Palace, within your very own Mind.

Thank you very much for listening. If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to email [bored@three-patch.com](mailto:bored@three-patch.com). The email address is also available on our website.

Thank you very much.

*(Music)*

**Watson:** *This is your living, Sherlock. Not 240 different types of tobacco ash.*

**Sherlock:** 243.

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**Watson:** *We don't know a thing about each other. I don't know where we're meeting. I don't even know your name.*

*(Music returns)*

**Sherlock:** *I know you're an army doctor and you've been invalidated home from Afghanistan. I know you've got a brother who's worried about you, but you won't go to him for help because you don't approve of him—possibly because he's an alcoholic, more likely because he recently walked out on his wife. And I know that your therapist thinks your limp's psychosomatic, quite correctly, I'm afraid. That's enough to be going on with, don't you think?*

*(Music rises)*

**Shannon:** Welcome to the Sorting Sherlock segment of the Three Patch Podcast. In this segment, we take something of a Harry Potter twist and use the Hogwarts Houses' sorting as a way to analyze characters from the show. And, for our first round table, we're tackling Sherlock Holmes, himself.

I'm Shannon and joining me today are:

**Fox:** Fox Estacado. Fox for short.

**Tqoh:** Queen of Hearts.

**Denzil:** And Methleigh.

**Shannon:** All right. So, just an easy background bit of question. I just want to find out or want all of us to share what house we're in and what background we're bringing to this discussion. So, I'll start. I'm a Ravenclaw. It doesn't matter what Pottermore seems to think because it puts me in Slytherin. And my analysis is heavily influenced both by the reading of Rowling's books and a lot of reading of fannish meta analysis and fan fiction.

**Tqoh:** And I am a hardcore Slytherin, big believer in that. Mostly, I'm basing my analysis on J.K. Rowling's canon and a Harry Potter astrology website [<http://www.spencial.com/birdsofafeather/astrology.htm>] that I found.

**Denzil:** My house is, I say, SlytherinClaw, which was the first thing that I had chosen when I read the books. I kind of chose both and then I went to Slytherin but I think we're back with Ravenclaw because that's what it really is. What I'm basing my interpretation on is A Wondering but Purposeful Study of Alienation and Pride Through Various Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. All I've ever wanted to do was to solve the Final Problem and, here in Sherlock, it's presented so beautifully.

**Shannon:** I like that you want to solve The Final Problem.

**Denzil:** That's what I want to do.

**Fox:** Well, I asked the Sorting Hat to put me in Gryffindor so that's what I identify as but I'm probably more accurately Ravenclaw. What I bring to the table: the Sherlock canon, including Arthur Conan Doyle canon. Also, different other pastiches [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pastiche>] and works including Laurie R. King's Mary Russell works and the Guy Ritchie films as well as the Harry Potter canon. And there's also a lot of fanon and head canon kind of all in there as well because I believe part

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of who Sherlock is now is something of a collective fandom kind of consciousness, which is a somewhat heightened or maybe even exaggerated super-focused interpretation of who Sherlock Holmes is. . .

**Shannon:** Excellent.

**Fox:** Throughout the decades. So, there we go. That's my interpretation.

**Shannon:** I think we're bringing a lot of different directions even though we only have three houses represented here, so no Hufflepuffs among us. I think we'll start with a really easy one and I was just wondering, what three words would you use to describe Sherlock? Just really simple.

Denzil: Okay, so I've got three words here: brilliant, driven, alienated.

Shannon: I had brilliant, too. I thought that was really. . .

**Tqoh:** (squeals) I had brilliant, too!

**Denzil:** Yeah, it's kind of obvious.

*(Laughter)*

**Fox:** I describe Sherlock as: genius, child, addict.

**Denzil:** Interesting.

**Shannon:** What I find really interesting is that you selected nouns. All of yours were nouns.

**Fox:** Oh!

**Shannon:** Yeah. So, I also used brilliant but I came up with a phrase, 'emotionally fragile'.

**Fox:** I was going to write that, yeah.

**Shannon:** Those were my three.

**Tqoh:** I saw him as scientific, brilliant and ignorant.

**Denzil:** Interesting!

**Tqoh:** Which is ignorant of the more emotional aspects of people, which is interesting, because, Shannon, you said 'emotionally fragile,' so I think that's cool.

**Shannon:** Now getting back to a more Sorting Hat base-type question. This is one that I had come up with. So, we've come across this sometimes in discussions of the stories, but you can see this also mentioned in the Harry Potter wiki, that the Sorting Hat tends to sort students based on qualities they value and not necessarily the qualities they personify. You see this coming up when people would talk about Neville early on. What makes him brave, that sort of thing. But, based on Sherlock's own words and actions, and relationships with other characters, what qualities do you think Sherlock values but doesn't necessarily exhibit?

**Fox:** When I was thinking about this question, I thought this might be the shipper interpretation. But I believe his values, Sherlock's values, are personified by John. John is the personification of values that

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he values but does not exhibit. And that is being determined, loyal, and moral. I think Sherlock has determination but maybe loyalty and morality are more abstract values that he probably values on an idealistic level but has not ever been quite able to rationalize or exhibit himself. So I think these are values that he values.

**Shannon:** It's funny that you mention the JohnLock shipper interpretation because I feel the same way. That who he's drawn to, who he has the greatest relationships with, maybe that's a reflection of the qualities and characteristics he values and that he's hoping to develop more or maybe not. But I saw the same thing in John. They both have kind of a wry sense of humor. John's a bit sassier than Sherlock. But I think it's clear that Sherlock appreciates John's loyalty and sense of adventures. I think Sherlock's quite adventurous on his own, but I think that by Season 2, or across Season 2, we're meant to see that he's kind of started to internalize and appreciate John's ability to be friends with others, and that whole friend arc is really crucial at the end. He ends up making this huge sacrifice despite all that he says about sentimentality and how he seems to sneer on making yourself vulnerable through emotions to others.

But that same time, he is vulnerable. He does exhibit. . . You often see facial expressions throughout, the way Benedict Cumberbatch seems to depict Sherlock. He does have these glimpses of these vulnerable moments. But his desire to remain above emotion and remain above sentiment, I think, or his desire to be emotionally distant, I don't think that's a value or quality that is as inherent in him as it might be in Mycroft. This is where I think, to some degree, even though he's always at odds with Mycroft, he does maybe value this older brother. And I think some of his desire to be above sentimentality is kind of a reflection of his desire to be a bit like or better than his brother. That sibling rivalry? I don't think that's quite as inherent in Sherlock. I think he has to work at it harder than Mycroft has done.

**Tqoh:** I totally agree with you guys about the John thing. I didn't really piece that all the way together when I was thinking about this question, but I think he values morality and general goodness but I don't think he's always moral or always good. You know, he tends to be rude to people or he's definitely manipulative in a lot of situations.

**Denzil:** He's on the side of the angels but he's not one of them.

**Shannon:** That's right.

And with that, let's see. We also wanted to do kind of a house-by-house analysis looking at specific qualities that are tied directly to the houses. Fox, we'll start with you. Does Sherlock exhibit any Gryffindor qualities that you see?

**Fox:** Absolutely. I probably wouldn't – Well, we're going to get to that later on, what house I believe he belongs in – but he definitely exhibits a lot of the qualities of Gryffindor House, including bravery, nerve. These traits came from the Harry Potter Wiki [[http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page)] so it includes chivalry. I'm not sure about that one.

**Shannon:** No.

**Fox:** Courage. He definitely has courage.

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**Denzil:** He is with Mrs. Hudson.

**Shannon:** Oh yeah, that's true.

**Fox:** He definitely does there. So these are very much like Harry, himself. Sherlock, I think, has a little bit of Harry's idealism as well, but it's definitely secondary to his rationality. But he does rush headlong into situations, which is probably not very smart to do sometimes. I don't think he always has a back-up plan; I think he just says that. Because he believes that what he's doing is absolutely right and there should be no circumstance in which he fails, even though he will say later on that he does have statistical probabilities on how things happen, always.

**Shannon:** Do you think he's stubborn, too?

**Fox:** He is stubborn. He's very proud and I think that's a quality that is characteristic of many Gryffindors as well. So, I believe he definitely has Gryffindor qualities.

**Shannon:** What do the rest of you guys think?

**Denzil:** There's some arguments for Gryffindor.

**Tqoh:** Yeah, I think I can see a lot of Gryffindor qualities in him. The one I'd highlight is bravery, even bravery to the point of stupidity. Which is not to say that he's stupid. He's obviously a genius, but, for example, when he got in the cab in Study in Pink, you are like 'why are you doing that, don't do that, why would you ever do that?'

**Shannon:** He is a bit of an idiot. I don't know if idiot is necessary for Gryffindor.

**Tqoh:** I think bravery turning into being an idiot. Think about Harry Potter. He did so many dumb things because he's brave.

**Denzil:** John says he wants to risk his life to prove he's clever.

**Tqoh:** Yeah.

**Shannon:** Yes.

That's something that Rowling was talking recently about Hufflepuffs and I was trying to find the quote and I couldn't find it again. I felt around that time, she made a comment about certain types of Gryffindors, that they had a certain kind of tendency towards being a show-off. Sherlock also has that quality of loving the attention, loving John's admiration. But in that exchange he has in Baskervilles with John, he admits he is a show-off, that's what he does. So, he's aware of that side of himself. That gets to the kind of flashy bravery he has. It's rare for him to take a personal risk but he might take a risk if it gets him the attention or admiration or gets to what he wants, gets to his means, in a sense. That's kind of leading us into the Slytherin one, though.

Let's see, Queen, I think that was you.

**Tqoh:** Yeah, I can definitely also see an argument for Slytherin. There are so many reasons I could see that he would be Slytherin but one, as I mentioned earlier, is he's pretty manipulative. When he compliments Molly on her hair in "The Blind Banker" so he can access the bodies in the morgue. He

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knows exactly how to play her. He's cunning. He's manipulative. And I'm a Slytherin; I don't have any problem with these qualities. I feel like it's only fair to point them out.

**Denzil:** I've got a quote here from an anonymous source for Slytherin: He's a brilliant loner who doesn't care about general knowledge, spends all day manipulating people into letting him solve crimes for him and started a blog to show the world how brilliant he is. He really cares about his publicity photos.

**Shannon:** Your anonymous source is right about using whatever means he can to get to solving cases. You see how he tries to manipulate John by offering him the winning lottery tickets to get cigarettes and he tries. . . I mean, think about it. You always see him with his puppy dog face to try to, like, getting into the flat above or with Molly. He not only compliments her but looks sweet when he asks her questions. Or he can be a complete asshole when he needs to be. Like the headmistress at the school in "Reichenbach Fall" where he tries to get her to speak quickly so he is definitely about getting the facts, getting the information, but also getting access to the crime scene. I could see that.

**Denzil:** Well, I think it's means to an end.

**Fox:** Well, I think he knows how to get what he wants so, I'm not entirely sure, I believe it's resourcefulness. He's very resourceful and he uses the resources around him and that includes using people. I'm not sure how this is very Slytherin of him, actually. Definitely, I see the resourcefulness of Sherlock.

**Shannon:** Well, can't resourcefulness be a nice way of saying Slytherin cunning?

**Fox:** Absolutely. Yeah.

**Tqoh:** I've heard resourceful listed just under Slytherin, normally.

**Denzil:** The Sorting Hat says something about 'using any means to reach their end.' I forget the exact words but the Sorting Hat says that about Slytherin.

**Shannon:** I have that written down here, exactly. "Or perhaps in Slytherin, you'll make your real friends. Those cunning folks use any means to achieve their ends."

**Denzil:** They get real friends, too.

**Fox:** I definitely see that.

**Shannon:** Well, are we ready for Ravenclaw? I'm going to start off with that one because, my house. It seems clear for all of us that he's in possession of a great deal of wit or cleverness and, you know, wit beyond measure is man's greatest treasure. I think that's something that he values in himself as well. If we look at his brilliance and his intelligence, he wears it like a badge and it seems to be the quality he leads with, so I would almost say that Sherlock, himself, would self-identify with Ravenclaw, if he were into that sort of stuff.

But I also think, and this is going a bit beyond canon, and this is pulling a lot from my reading of canon text but also my reading of a fair amount of fanfiction dealing with Ravenclaw characters who we don't see as much of in the canon text, and I think of them and I identified Sherlock as being emotionally

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fragile, and I think we see some of that. That there's the brilliance goes hand in hand with a kind of sensitivity and fragility.

I think Luna is an example of that. She's maybe a bit of an outsider as well, but she seems to be kind of sensitive to the feelings of others at times in some of the things she says. The Grey Lady, I thought, was a really good example of how her jealousy of her mother, her relationship problems with the Bloody Baron, kind of manifested themselves in a kind of unfortunate way. So, I think we see some examples of Ravenclaw characters who have some either great emotional maturity or great emotional immaturity. But that emotional side, that emotional fragility, is, I would say, another characteristic.

**Tqoh:** Shannon, this is really funny, so, basically, I do agree with you, that he would self-identify as a Ravenclaw. He's smart. He's witty. But what you call emotional fragility, I kind of called social awkwardness.

**Denzil:** I'm with that totally.

**Tqoh:** The way Shannon says it is true. But I think it's funny that a Ravenclaw perspective is this emotional fragility and I'm a Slytherin and it's social awkwardness. I do think he'd identify as a Ravenclaw, but one example of this kind of awkwardness or fragility is his kind of creepy excitement about crime, which is just really a fascination with knowledge but can totally be interpreted the wrong way. I think a lot of Ravenclaws are interpreted the wrong way.

**Denzil:** It's also opportunity. It's opportunity to shine and to be his best. That's what his fascination with crime is that I can see. Pure knowledge is pure knowledge with an aim.

**Fox:** He's also childlike. It's all about learning things, solving the puzzle. He's all brain, it seems, and the emotional aspects, he's very immature at. But I think for him, rationality, logic, deduction, rational reasoning: those are all things that he holds very dear and places above all things, so in that way, I really identify him as the Ravenclaw.

**Shannon:** Well, then that brings us to the last house. The house that often gets overlooked in many things and, actually, I think, one of my favorite houses, next to Ravenclaw: Hufflepuff. Thoughts on Hufflepuff qualities and Sherlock, guys?

**Denzil:** Yeah, I got nothing.

**Fox:** I... can... see.. hard work.

**Tqoh:** That's true, two hundred and forty three different types of tobacco ash.

**Fox:** Exactly! That takes a fair amount of dedication and patience and. . .

**Denzil:** I don't know. I still see that as a Slytherin thing.

**Tqoh:** I didn't really see any Hufflepuff qualities. I mean, I think he's a loyal friend to John but I don't think he's a friend the way a Hufflepuff is a friend. I think a Hufflepuff friend is very transparently loyal, honest. I guess I see him as a friend more the way a Gryffindor or Slytherin would be a friend to John, which is the only example I could think of that he'd be Hufflepuff-like in his friendship. But I think he's, like, more of a friend that will do anything, like how he lies to John or sometimes even

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insults him. I don't see a Hufflepuff doing that in a friendship. Which isn't necessarily criticism that he lies to John sometimes, because it's to protect him. I just don't see a Hufflepuff dealing with a friendship that way.

**Shannon:** I do believe he does exhibit very focused and limited loyalty. I would say definitely with John, but beyond John, I think that gets what was going on in the Reichenbach episode, that there is a small group of people that he's identified as friends and makes himself vulnerable to, but he's not a nice friend in many ways. He takes advantage. So, I agree with your assessment about his behaviour, or his demonstration of loyalty might be a bit different. Willing to do whatever he has to do to protect them: that's a huge sacrifice. That's a deep display of friendship that most of us aren't asked to do but that he's willing to go to that extreme. That says something about his character.

I also think, getting back to the idea about his hard work: Sherlock goes through these episodes of absolute idleness, which he hates. He likes to be occupied. That's not the same as hard-working, but when he does find something that engages himself, I think he's fixating. So, he has these extreme periods of just focusing on whatever it is to just get that case and puzzling it over and thinking about all the hours he must spend reading or thinking or noticing. There's a lot of work he does that maybe we don't see as work because it's all in the mind.

But then that is counterbalanced by bouts of him whingeing about being bored and sulky and not doing anything around the flat.

**Fox:** Going back to kindness, kindness to John. I suddenly thought, what about the Homeless Network? We don't know too much about the Homeless Network from the *Sherlock* BBC show, but Sherlock Holmes in the Conan Doyle stories, he does show a kind of kindness to the street urchins that he uses, and in *Sherlock* BBC fandom, we see a lot of authors take on this question. Like, how did he get this homeless network? Why are they so loyal to him? Why did he entrust those presumably the Homeless Network to play a roll in his fall? Because they must have known it was all a fake, that it was all a magic trick. And, yet, Sherlock did not even entrust this information to John. He entrusted this to his Homeless Network, if that is who they were, which I think is a high possibility.

So, who are they? How did he get their loyalty? How does he trust them? I think there is a kind of Hufflepuff kindness in how he deals with them, maybe. Maybe it's another side of them that we haven't seen yet. Maybe there's some reason. Maybe he was one of them at one point in his life. I don't know what the backstory is, but I think that's a real interesting area to possibly explore.

Which house would respect be?

**Shannon:** That's true and that's a different quality.

**Denzil:** Well, it would be respect.

**Fox:** Yes I would put being respectful as a Hufflepuff quality.

**Tqoh:** Being respected? Or respecting others?

**Shannon:** Right! Definitely not Anderson!

**Tqoh:** I was going to say, I don't think he's necessarily respectful of people, generally.

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**Denzil:** Take Mrs. Hudson, for instance.

**Shannon:** Is he respectful of her or is he protective?

**Denzil:** He's very respectful of her and that's sort of the same quality that might extend to the Homeless Network as well.

**Shannon:** I believe he admires her or he appreciates her but every now and again, his shooting up the wall, and treating her like a housekeeper.

**Denzil:** He's respectful. He said England would fall without her and I think he was being sincere.

**Shannon:** Maybe he's just not respectful of her property.

**Tqoh:** I don't know if maybe he just sees himself as above her. He sees himself as above most people. So maybe he does respect her but not on the same level as what he needs.

**Shannon:** Interesting guy, this Sherlock.

The next question I wanted to move to, and this kind of built on what we were saying here, but in *Deathly Hallows*, you hear Dumbledore saying to Snape, "Sometimes, I think we sort too soon." So I think a lot of us are leaning towards a particular house here. But, based on the glimpses we have of Sherlock's youth, and they're really very implicit at best in the BBC series, but do you think this might be the case for him? Do you think he might have been sorted differently as an eleven-year-old child than he would be now?

**Fox:** Oh, absolutely. I mean, even just from Season 1 to Season 2, we saw huge character growth. From Sherlock, where I would see him grow from more distant to more whole, from Season 2 we might even be able to argue that John may have had an influence in some emotional capacity. And I think that kind of growth is very telling. Personally, I have a whole head canon of what's going on, but I think maybe when he was younger, he might have had influences or suggestions to go into Slytherin House, to follow his brother on a path toward ambition.

**Shannon:** Denzil, what were you going to say?

**Denzil:** I was just going to say I've got a couple of possibilities that I considered here. Most of the clues to his youth are from Mycroft. Several things he said about younger Sherlock: he wanted to be a pirate, and when he was talking to John at the very beginning, he said 'time to choose a side.' I think the sides are pretty much order and chaos. And, I think that, as a child, he might have been sorted into Gryffindor. Just out of sheer rebellion. Mycroft calls him intractable and all kinds of words like this and that's what we see of young Sherlock through Mycroft. So that's one suggestion.

And the other suggestion is Slytherin, mostly from the "Reichenbach Fall" episode where he's talking about the young boy in the school? He sounds, to me anyway, like he's identifying with this child, would have gone to a similar school and so on. The spy stuff. All those stories about spies and what the young boy did and what he looked at and what he saw and what he was thinking. Even as a child who was focused on ambition and vocation, he's going to the police about the Carl Powers case. For a young child -- he would have been really young if you look at the picture of Carl in the episode -- that's certainly above an eleven-year-old, generally speaking. I think that speaks to Slytherin.

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Two options there, Gryffindor or Slytherin.

**Tqoh:** For this question, I'm pretty new to this fandom, like weeks-old new. I didn't catch as much or think as much about his childhood as some of you, but I guess the main thing that I thought of was the pirate. "He wanted to be a pirate" comment, and that definitely suggests a kind of Gryffindor bravery and knack for mischief that I would put him there. What did you think?

**Shannon:** See, I interpreted that totally different.

**Denzil:** I see it as sheer defiance.

**Shannon:** I guess you could say it is a bit Gryffindorish if you take the position that Gryffindor is about going against rules. Like, if a pirate is an outlaw. But I saw it also as a bit of, you can look at it another way depending on how pirates are perceived in history. Like Robin Hood-type characters, so, in a sense, it's like righting wrongs. But they're also kind of living on the boundaries and fringes of society, so there is a suggestion of being a little bit of an outsider. I think it depends on the moment that. I remember going back again and again. That particular exchange between Mycroft and John always befuddled me. I was trying to figure out what is Mycroft telling us. And it depends on what fic I've been reading at the time how I interpret it.

**Denzil:** You know, I have not read a single fic. Not one.

**Shannon:** Well, we're going to start closing this up a bit and my next question is just of a silly one, a simple one, but we know that the Sorting Hat takes an individual's preference into account when sorting, so what do you think Sherlock's preferences would be regarding his sorting?

**Tqoh:** I think he'd want to be a Ravenclaw. He really values cold hard deduction and intellect and logic. Things I associate with a Ravenclaw. As you said, Shannon, the Ravenclaw slogan is wit beyond measure is man's greatest treasure. I can imagine Sherlock saying that really snarkily to tease Anderson.

**Shannon:** I can't wait till we sort Anderson.

**Fox:** I agree with Queen. Rationality is what he values. Going back to the pirate question, I think part of my head canon is his family would want him in Slytherin. Therefore, to rebel, he'd ask the Sorting Hat for Ravenclaw. That's my head canon.

**Denzil:** I think it's a tricky question, actually. I think Sherlock is trying to be Ravenclaw. I think that's his aim. I'm basing that partly on a trivia that Benedict did with someone and what he was saying was that someone had asked him if he thought Sherlock had Asperger's and he said no, that he was trying to turn himself into a robot. So, my question is, does he want to be a robot or is he turning away from something else in trying to do that? He's very successful at what he does. He's amazingly successful at being that and so that's some sort of victory. But it's sort of a private and conspiratorial pride, the feeling that comes from a victory of that type. What I wonder if that is a symptom of a real desire to be Slytherin because that's pride and that's drive and that's success and ambition to be that robot or to be Ravenclaw. So that's kind of a tricky question for me but that's what I wrote about that.

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**Shannon:** I like your answer. I don't think it's controversial at all because we see this as well. That individuals do possess multiple characteristics that can be stronger or weaker at different times and, getting back to the whole idea of sorting too soon, I think that's maybe not the best way to frame it but you might want or see yourself as something different based on the immediate circumstances or what you've most recently experienced or how you envision yourself. So, when that sorting occurs, you may be moving from one space to another and if Sherlock is aware, he may embrace one side more than another. I'm babbling now, so I'm going to stop.

Cause I was going to say that grown Sherlock, were he to be sorted, would find the whole thing tedious and refused to be labeled. I don't think he would accept a sorting.

*(Laughter)*

**Denzil:** I think I'm kind of that mind also.

**Shannon:** So our final verdict? What house would you place Sherlock in?

**Fox:** Ravenclaw.

**Shannon:** Okay, and I would say Ravenclaw.

**Tqoh:** I'm confident he's a Ravenclaw now, but I was really conflicted at first about what house I thought he belonged in. I considered every house except Hufflepuff. So I did some research and looked up Harry Potter Astrology because Sherlock's birthday is the only one we seemed sure about and I wanted to take advantage of that information because I am a big believer in astrology. So I went to the segment on this website for Capricorns because Sherlock is a Capricorn and I read each of the descriptions. As I read Ravenclaw-Capricorn, I said, "That's Sherlock." Two quotes are: "They have a dry, ironic wit and are fond of making subtle jokes that only those blessed with intelligence and perception can understand." I thought that was cute, and then, "There's not much that these wizards miss. They usually know what is going on long before anyone else." If that's not Sherlock, I don't know what is.

**Shannon:** He definitely doesn't miss things. Maybe social cues.

**Denzil:** My idea here is why I selected Slytherin because he doesn't care about knowledge for knowledge sake. He explicitly rejects realms of knowledge as useless. He has aims and ends and is driven. He looks to prove, possibly to himself, that he's brightest and best. Because Mycroft is Sherlock Holmes' older brother, I think he has to prove something to himself. And he doesn't let anything stand in his way. Not food nor sleep nor roof tops or things that seem impossible.

I've got this image in my head of a harpoon, if you will, thrown in a straight line. A straight line theoretically goes on forever. So, I've got this image of a harpoon thrown in a straight line going up into the sky, getting ever better and ever getting more knowledge and just becoming. I think Sherlock is like that and that's an image of ambition to me and that's why I put him in Slytherin.

**Shannon:** Those are good final thoughts to end on and I think we've had a successful sorting roundtable, so thank you, everyone. And we'll just round up and say goodbye!

**All:** Bye!

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*Music*

*Change in music*

**Watson:** *That's fantastic.*

**Sherlock:** *Do you know you do that out loud?*

**Watson:** *Sorry, I'll shut up.*

**Sherlock:** *No, it's fine.*

*Music finishes.*

**Holyfant:** Hi, everyone! I'm Holyfant and I'm doing the reccing segment for this, the first episode of the Three Patch Podcast!

The fic that I want to talk about today is, in fact, a series: The “Harry/Molly Sequence” by marysutherland [<http://archiveofourown.org/series/11479>]. As the title tells us, this story focuses on Harry Watson and Molly Hooper and the meanderings in their relationship. Femslash appears to be even more niche in the Sherlock fandom than most other fandoms, so I know this will probably not be up everyone's alley – but anyone who loves Molly or is interested in Harry should read this story, because these two women get a generous treatment of humanity and backstory and fleshing out.

The way Harry is handled is the main reason why I love this story. She's a whole person, smart, opinionated, funny, generous, and very, very flawed. From the beginning, no matter which story you start to read first in this universe, she has an incredibly unique voice that stays consistent all the way through and just paints her in front of your eyes. I don't think I'll ever be able to think of Harry Watson as anything but the stuttering, clumsy, butch historian that marysutherland portrays her as. Her relationship with Molly is complicated and, in my opinion, realistic, while her relationship with John is fraught yet invested, which seems right for siblings with such a complex history between them.

There is one story in particular that I want to recommend: “Histories” [<http://archiveofourown.org/works/272174/chapters/430300>], which is one of the longer stories in the series. Apart from the Harry and Molly relationship, which is in a bit of a crisis in this story, “Histories” also focuses on John and Sherlock, who are newly in a relationship and are still figuring out how to be together as romantic and sexual partners. In “Histories,” John, with some help from Mycroft, ends up visiting Mummy Holmes on his own, without Sherlock. Mummy Holmes is a fantastic character in her own right in this story. She's witty and sharp-eyed and complex like her sons, but she's not entirely sympathetic. It's lovely to see how her interactions with John change in the course of the story. Meanwhile, while John is off trying to win his boyfriend's mother's approval, Sherlock is helping Harry early in the story. And it's this Sherlock and Harry interaction that makes me love this story just a bit more than the others; they're two very different characters, with extremely different interests – yet they manage to be a strange sort of friends. And it works; as a reader, you can see why they think the other is interesting and why they somehow like each other.

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I really cannot recommend this series enough. And I do think that if anyone starts off reading any of the stories in this verse, you'll likely end up reading all of them. Marysutherland has an incredible talent for recognizable voices and deeply developed characters who you root for and wince for when they mess up and who you just want to get to know better. This whole series is a real gem, and I think it needs to be more widely read.

(*Music*)

**Rachael:** Well, that's a wrap. That's our first therapy session complete and, I don't know about you guys, but I feel treated. I feel supported. I feel pretty excited about Sherlock.

**Shannon:** I feel like I need to get back on Tumblr.

**Emma:** I feel horny.

**Dixie:** Yes, it's time to read some more porn.

**Rachael:** So, other than reading porn, what do you guys occupy yourselves with in between Season 2 and Season 3, while we wait?

**Emma:** Writing porn?

(*Laughter*)

**Dixie:** I went to see *The Hobbit* yesterday, which was wonderful.

**Emma:** I saw it this morning for the second time. I also got to see the *Star Trek* nine-minute footage, which was. . .

**Shannon:** I am so jealous!

**Shannon:** I have not seen it. They didn't even have the *Star Trek* trailer here. They had crazy Swedish comedies as trailers before *The Hobbit*.

**Dixie:** I watched the trailer at least twenty times.

**Emma:** There's very little Benedict in the nine minutes though, I have to say, so that was a little bit disappointing. But there is a glorious shot of him in, like, this incredible jacket. Really asymmetrical collar that was awesome. That was so awesome.

**Rachael:** I want that jacket.

**Shannon:** I think I've seen people cosplaying that already! Have you seen that?

**Emma:** Why am I not surprised? Fandom is amazing that way.

**Shannon:** It's incredible how fast people are. But you know, I am so excited for the crossover. I know people are going nuts about that but I really can't wait to see people running around as Sherlock with Vulcan ears or something.

**Dixie:** Oh, that will be brilliant.

**Emma:** I love that. I love crossovers.

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**Rachael:** I'm going to say that about the Smaug crossover.

**Emma:** I was looking at that earlier. It's on Ao3. I was looking at the Hobbit tag on Ao3 and there was already like a whole pairing of Dragon!Sherlock/Hobbit!John, which was awesome.

**Shannon:** But guys! *Cabin Pressure*! Oh my god, I'm so excited for Season 4.

**Emma:** Oh yes. It's incredibly exciting and also, if everyone hasn't seen it already, the video of John Finnemore getting the *Lemons & Landmarks*, which I think a lot of people listening to this probably contributed pictures.

**Shannon:** Yes, I did.

You did too?

That just made me so happy. I watched that over and over again.

**Rachael:** I will come out and admit it. That I am a bit deficient in that. I'm a huge *Sherlock* fan and I love Benedict Cumberbatch. But I haven't listened to *Cabin Pressure* yet.

*(group intake of breath)*

And I don't know. . .

**Emma:** It's good for while you're working out or something, just put it on there. It's a really good commute or workout kind of listen.

**Shannon** Don't listen to it when you run, especially not "Qikiqtarjuaq," because it's hard to laugh and run at the same time.

**Rachael:** Well, I'm making a vid. I don't know if it will be done, ever, cause those things take a long time, but I am Sherlock vidding again and that is exciting. Because it is a long wait between Season 2 and 3, or Series 2 and 3, I should say. That's the BBC term.

And one of the big questions that everyone is asking, that I think would be good to kind of close out with people's thoughts on this and get a consensus from listeners, is: When Sherlock finally reveals himself in Series 3 and says Hey, I'm not dead, it's okay, is John going to slug him or hug him? So what do you guys think? Slugs or hugs in Series 3?

**Emma:** I think that we're going to get a hug either preceded by or immediately followed by an intense round of swearing. And some anger and then another hug.

**Rachael:** So like hug, almost slug, hug?

**Emma:** Yeah, but I don't think he'll actually hit him. I wish he would kiss him, but you know that would be too fannish. But you know what? If we got like a kiss on the cheek, I would like flip out. That would be amazing. But we're not going to get that. I want a hug. I just don't want John to faint.

**Shannon:** I don't see him fainting, but I can see him, this has been done so nicely in fic, his anger, or whatever, disbelief being such that he's got no reaction initially, like holding back and taking a while for him to warm up. So, I can see him being very cold and then a burst of anger and then followed by reconciliation.

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**Rachael:** So are you saying slug then hug but not quite actually slug?

**Shannon:** I don't know that he'll actually hit him. More of a metaphorical slug.

**Dixie:** I think he is going to hug him, then slug him so hard he passes out that he has to give him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

*(Laughter)*

**Rachael:** That would be great.

**Dixie:** It would work! I don't see why not!

**Rachael:** I guess I'm really the odd one out as I don't see the slug at all. I see John as definitely having resentment and anger but I think he's going to be so happy that that anger's going to come later. It might come out in a little bit of a passive aggressive way down the line.

**Dixie:** He's going to be so mad, he burns the purple shirt. You just watch.

**Emma:** Maybe so.

You know, I really, really want John to figure it out before Sherlock comes back. And so, when Sherlock actually appears, and I've written a fic like this, but what I really want is for John to figure it out from the clues that have been left behind, and so, by the time they actually see each other, it's a done deal. So we get a hug, maybe, but . . .

**Rachael:** Yeah, see, then he has all the time to process it. What I would love to see with John in that scenario is that he thinks he's going to be angry and thinks he's going to slug him but then he just sees him and gets all mushy and smiles at his friend/lover/whatever they are, partner, however you view their relationship and glad to have his other half back.

**Dixie:** Do you think he'll cry, or be all British?

**Emma:** I don't think he'll cry. He's not a crier.

**Shannon:** He's not a crier. Even at the grave, his crying was very minimal and contained. He feels things deeply, but he's not extremely emotive.

**Dixie:** Stiff upper lip.

**Shannon:** But I like the idea of him figuring things out, Emma, or having a clue. I kind of want John to fuck with Sherlock when Sherlock comes back so that he has the upper hand and make Sherlock a little bit vulnerable so that, like, make Sherlock work for it? I would love that. That would be awesome.

**Emma:** I think we all want a little bit of payback there for what he made John go through.

**Rachael:** So I think we have a pretty good consensus of we all like the hugs and the metaphorical slugs but we're going to explore this in much more detail, for sure, in the Reichenbach Fallout. Also, as we get more voices on the podcast, and get more opinions, giving a clearer consensus on the slug versus hug debate. Then those of us who are right can gloat and I guarantee my opinion will change over the course of this podcast.

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So, just to set some expectations, I think we're going to do an episode about once a month, in case we get really manic and crazy and stay up all night like Sherlock making podcasts, which you never know, might happen, but once a month is probably a pretty good expectation and if you keep an eye on the website, which is [three-patch.com](http://three-patch.com), you can keep up to date on our schedule.

**Emma:** So! You've got questions, yes! You've got comments, yes! You've got feedback for us, we want to hear it. Please email us at [bored@three-patch.com](mailto:bored@three-patch.com) or you can check us out on Tumblr. Our url there is <http://threepatchpodcast.tumblr.com/>. Or, we are <http://threepatch.livejournal.com/>. Or you can check out our website, which is [www.three-patch.com](http://www.three-patch.com). So, let us know what you think. If you have ideas for segments. If there's people you want to hear from, there's things you want us to do, please let us know. We want to hear it.

**Shannon:** And, if you do a good Anderson, I think we were looking for an Anderson.

**Rachael:** Yes, we need a volunteer who can do a good impression of Anderson. So, like, any snarky-sounding British guy, we need you. Or Donovan, I think, would work as well. So, if you can do either of them and you would be willing to join the Three Patch cast, we have a call out for that. But, in addition, contact us with any theories, speculation, questions that you'd like to hear some crazy *Sherlock* addicts banter about.

And with that, it's time for us to wrap up and get some take-away.

**Shannon:** Oh yeah! Where should we go?

**Dixie:** Chinese!

**Emma:** Thai! Thai! I vote for Thai!

**Shannon:** I'd like a good curry.

**Emma:** Yes!

**Dixie:** Sounds good.

**Rachael:** All right. Well, bon appétit, and see everyone next time.

*(Closing music)*

*Moriarty: I've given you a glimpse, a teensy glimpse of what I've got going on out there in the big bad world.*

*(Bee Gees "Stayin' Alive" vocals)*

#### Contact

Other consulting fans are encouraged to contribute to the discussion by posting comments on our various social media outlets, sending email, or leaving voicemail. Here's where you can reach us:

Web: [Three Patch Podcast web site](http://Three Patch Podcast web site)

E-mail: [bored@three-patch.com](mailto:bored@three-patch.com)

Twitter: [@threepatch](https://twitter.com/threepatch)

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#### Music

Host Opening: David Arnold and Michael Price, Sherlock: Original Television Soundtrack Music From Series 1: Opening Titles (get it [here](#))

The Coroner's Report: Breaking News, News Music (get it [here](#))

From the Notebook of Kitty Riley: Miles Davis, Kind of Blue: So What (get it [here](#))

243 Types of Tobacco Ash: Camille Saint Saëns/ Performed by Kevin MacLeod, Danse Macabre: Danse Macabre – Violin Hook (get it [here](#))

Sorting Sherlock: David Arnold and Michael Price, Sherlock: Original Television Soundtrack Music From Series 1: The Game is On (get it [here](#))

That's My Division: John Coltrane, My Favorite Things [Deluxe Edition]: My Favorite Things, Part 1 (get it [here](#))

Post Mortem: Bee Gees, Saturday Night Fever [The Original Movie Soundtrack]: Stayin' Alive (get it [here](#))

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