

THE SIGN OF THREE

Written by

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Address
Phone Number

An armed siege...

Two men in Halloween masks holding up a high street bank with
sawn-off shotguns.

But... the heist has turned sour.

The police have arrived and surrounded the premises. Blue
lights flashing - SWAT team poised. The net tightening. No
way out of here.

CUT TO:

The alarm is ringing inside the building - a deafening
clamour.

BANK EMPLOYEES cower on the floor, trembling, weeping.

One of the GUNMEN keeps them pinned down whilst the other
stands at the front door, ready to negotiate.

CUT TO:

A DETECTIVE in a bullet-proof vest. Camera behind him as he
approaches, step by step...

Cautiously he walks towards the bank with his hands in the
air.

He is the negotiator.

CUT TO:

GUNMAN

They're sending someone in.

Camera turns...

It's LESTRADE.

GUNMAN (CONT'D)

(Yells)

That's close enough.

LESTRADE stops.

GUNMAN (CONT'D)

Try anything - I'll put a bullet in
your leg.

(Beat)

Who are you?

LESTRADE

Your new best friend. Trust me, OK?
We'll find a way to end this.

And then LESTRADE'S mobile phone buzzes in his pocket.
It plays a funny little tune - a trilling xylophone.

LESTRADE (CONT'D)
Sorry. Sorry. I'll turn it off.

Reaches for it...

GUNMAN
Hey! Take your hand away from your
pocket.

LESTRADE
It's alright. I'm not carrying a
weapon.

Trills again.

LESTRADE slowly reaches into his pocket. Retrieves his phone -
glances at the display.

There is a text - we see it flash on screen.

'URGENT. COME TO BAKER STREET. S'.

LESTRADE (CONT'D)
Actually... I need to reply to
this.

GUNMAN
What?

LESTRADE
Give me a sec.

LESTRADE responds.

'BUSY. CAN'T. L'

GUNMAN
(Impatient)
Finished?

LESTRADE
Yep. Done. So. Let's talk about
your demands, yeah?

And his phone immediately pings again. The same cheery little
trill.

'I SAID "URGENT". MOST IMPORTANT CASE EVER.'

And then it trills a third time.

'"NO" IS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE ANSWER.'

LESTRADE (CONT'D)
 (To the Gunman, bit
 embarrassed)
 I need to be somewhere else.

GUNMAN
 What??

LESTRADE
 Do you mind if I just slip away for
 a moment? I'll get someone to stand
 in for me.

LESTRADE turns and bellows at the other officers, fifty yards
 away.

LESTRADE (CONT'D)
 Any of you guys free to take my
 place for the rest of the
 afternoon?

His phone pings yet again.

'WAITING.'

2 **INT. STREET. DAY**

2

LESTRADE running through the street, dives into a police car
 and barks at the OFFICER behind the wheel.

LESTRADE
 Baker Street. I need to be there
 five minutes ago. Move!

Pedal to the metal. And the car speeds off...

3 **INT. 221B. DAY**

3

LESTRADE bursts through the door of 221B. He's moved heaven
 and earth to get here - doused in sweat, panting.

SHERLOCK at his laptop, tapping away. Without a care in the
 world.

Doesn't even look up.

LESTRADE
 What's going on?

SHERLOCK
 This is hard.

LESTRADE
 What?

SHERLOCK
Really hard. Hardest thing I've
ever done. Do you know any funny
stories about John?

LESTRADE
What???

SHERLOCK
Writing my speech.

He's got a book in front of him -

'HOW TO WRITE AN UNFORGETTABLE BEST MAN SPEECH.'

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
I need anecdotes.

LESTRADE
(Short-tempered)
I don't have any.

SHERLOCK
(Shrugs)
Oh. OK.
(Finally looks up)
Didn't go to any trouble to get
here, did you?

And the curtains billow -

The deafening sound of a helicopter taking off from outside
221B Baker Street -

TITLES

4

EXT. CHURCH. DAY

4

A country churchyard -

TIGHT IN on the church doors.

We hear the organ start up - MENDELSSON'S 'Wedding March'.
The ceremony ending.

The doors fly open - the organ swells - and the BRIDE and
GROOM emerge, newly married. JOHN and MARY side by side,
beaming with joy and pride. Her in an elegant ivory gown. Him
in full morning dress.

And SHERLOCK is alongside them.

Right alongside them!

They emerge from church as a threesome, framed in the doorway. JOHN and MARY seem completely un-phased by his intrusion.

A PHOTOGRAPHER is waiting, just out of shot.

PHOTOGRAPHER
OK, stop there. I want to get this shot. The newly weds.

They stop and pose. The PHOTOGRAPHER manhandling them into place.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)
Which is the groom?

JOHN
(Not aggressive)
Sherlock. You'll need to move.

SHERLOCK
Sorry. I just assumed you wanted to include me

And he steps out of the picture.

Click.

A still of JOHN and MARY.

5

INT. CHURCH. DAY

5

More pictures. All our regulars photographed outside the church doors...

Click.

JOHN and MARY with MRS. HUDSON sandwiched between them. She's wearing very large, elaborate hat.

Click.

JOHN, SHERLOCK and LESTRADE. The three boys together. Buddy shot.

Click.

BRIDE and GROOM. BEST MAN and BRIDESMAID.

HOLD on this quartet whilst they wait for the PHOTOGRAPHER to set up the shot.

The BRIDESMAID smiles nervously at SHERLOCK. This is her first chance to say 'Hello' to him. And he is properly famous after all.

BRIDESMAID
You're Sherlock. Hi. Janine.

SHERLOCK
(Polite smile)
There won't be any sex.

BRIDESMAID
I'm sorry?

SHERLOCK
Bridesmaid. Best Man. Traditional
that we sleep together. It's not
going to happen.

BRIDESMAID
(Flustered)
Oh God, no, I didn't expect -

SHERLOCK
Listening to vows raises everyone's
level of estrogen. It's why people
tend to meet their spouses at
weddings.

He points at a YOUNG MAN in the churchyard.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
Chap in beige. Your best bet.

BRIDESMAID
(Really freaked)
Right. Thanks.

SHERLOCK
Happy to help.

He really is trying to be nice.

Click.

Photograph is taken of him smiling sweetly and her looking
massively freaked.

6 **EXT/INT. RECEPTION. DAY**

6

Click. Another still.

Pondicherry Lodge -

A charming country hotel. The location for the reception.

CUT TO:

Entrance hall.

The whole place done out in sprays of yellow and white carnations and gold ribbons.

A sign outside the Reception Room -

'THE WEDDING OF
JOHN HAMISH WATSON AND
MARY ELIZABETH MORSTAN'

7 **INT. RECEPTION. DAY**

7

The receiving line.

MARY, JOHN, SHERLOCK, a few key relatives - all ready to greet the guests. Lots of grip and grin.

First in the queue to say 'Hello' to them is a young man - ED.

Personable, attractive, 30s. Shakes hands warmly with SHERLOCK.

USHER

Ed.

SHERLOCK

I know your name. Mary's Ex.

USHER

(Laughs nervously)

You were watching me in church, I swear.

SHERLOCK

Just checking. Thought you might still have some feelings for her.

USHER

Oh, Lord no. We went our yonks ago.

SHERLOCK

'If anyone has any reason why they shouldn't be lawfully married.'

USHER

(Seeking to make a joke)

What were you gonna do? Rugby tackle me to the floor.

SHERLOCK

(Dead serious)

Sodium thiopental.

ED moves along the line nervously, getting away from SHERLOCK as swiftly as possible.

CUT TO:

A little PAGE BOY is next in line - velvet suit and lace collar.

When he gets to SHERLOCK he bursts into tears. His MUM smiles benevolently and strokes his hair.

MUM

Bit overcome with emotion. Been rehearsing his part for weeks.

SHERLOCK smiles at the little boy and offers his hand.

SHERLOCK

Hello there.

This has the effect of making him howl even louder.

MUM

Sorry.

His MUM ushers him away. JOHN whispers to SHERLOCK.

JOHN

What did you do to him?

SHERLOCK

He had the rings. I thought someone should check if there was any history of criminal behaviour.

JOHN

You threatened him!?

SHERLOCK

No.

Beat.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Mr. Pickles.

JOHN

Who's Mr. Pickles?

(Guesses before he's finished the question)

His teddy bear.

People milling round in the Reception room, before it's time to take their seats. Lively chatter. WAITERS circulate with trays of drinks.

Let's have this scene POV PHOTOGRAPHER. (We don't actually see the PHOTOGRAPHER - we just experience his view of the world. He's a key presence without ever appearing on screen).

Click.

MOLLY with TOM - kissing. Never miss an opportunity.

Click.

MRS. HUDSON putting an empty champagne glass on the tray and retrieving a full - one swift motion.

Click.

SHERLOCK is with MARY - they've become quietly inseparable. Surrounded by JOHN'S family it's as though SHERLOCK has become her comfort blanket.

JOHN sweeps up to them holding the hand of a young woman - LAURA.

JOHN
Chaps, this is Laura.

MARY
Hi.

LAURA
Your dress is lovely.

MARY
Thank you.

JOHN
Laura's my...

SHERLOCK
(Knows)
Ex. Yes.

LAURA
Hi, there. Have we met?

SHERLOCK
No.

LAURA
You've seen photos of me?

SHERLOCK
No.

LAURA
John's talked about me?

SHERLOCK
No.

LAURA
Oh. Lucky guess, then.

MARY and JOHN both shakes their heads as if she's just said something offensive.

JOHN
Doesn't.

SHERLOCK
I don't do guesses.

LAURA
OK. Then - how...?

SHERLOCK
You're the spitting image of Mary.
Same height, weight, hair tone, eye
colour and general complexion.
Obviously it comes down to
personality.

LAURA
What does?

SHERLOCK
The reason he didn't marry you
instead.

LAURA manages a smile - God knows how - and drifts off to get a drink.

JOHN
That went well.

SHERLOCK
Yes.
(Breath)
Did it?

JOHN
No.

MARY
He was trying to introduce you to a
sexy single girl.

SHERLOCK
You did. You introduced me. It went
fine.

JOHN
Until you said she had no
personality. Went down hill a bit.

SHERLOCK
Do you deny there's a resemblance?

JOHN
Coincidence. I don't choose people
according to a template.

And then MARY spots someone in the crowd.

MARY
(Calls out)
Ooh. James? Come and say 'Hello'.

Drags him over- a friend of JOHN'S.

His name is JAMES SHOLTO.

And he's the *spitting image* of SHERLOCK. Except he's wearing
an army uniform.

MARY (CONT'D)
Sherlock. Can I introduce you to
James Sholto - one of John's best
friends?

They shake hands.

SHOLTO
Delighted.

And it's like looking in a mirror. SHOLTO is the same height,
weight, facial shape, hair colour and eye colour as SHERLOCK.

Even has the same bearing and gait.

SHERLOCK
You look familiar.

SHOLTO
(Points straight at
Sherlock, sizing him up)
One elder brother, violinist - but
not concert standard, live alone
but not much of a social life, ex-
smoker, work is everything.

SHERLOCK
(Deeply unimpressed)
That's an interesting trick.

MARY can't keep the smile off her face. She did this
deliberately.

The TOAST MASTER bellows to the room -

TOAST MASTER
Ladies and gentleman. Would you
please take your seats?

INT. RECEPTION. DAY

MARY escorting SHERLOCK and SHOLTO to their places.

SHERLOCK
A friend of John's?

MARY
(Teasing)
Close friend.

SHERLOCK
How close?

SHOLTO
I'm sorry?

MARY
(Still teasing)
Ooh, very.

SHOLTO
I was his commanding officer in the
regiment.

SHERLOCK
(Is he jealous?)
He doesn't mention you. Ever.

MARY
(Teasing)
Does to me. Never shuts up about
him.

SHERLOCK
(Pointedly)
I've never even heard him speak
your name.

SHOLTO
We've not hooked up much over these
past years.

MARY
Mm. Shame.

SHERLOCK
(Competitive)
I see him all the time.

SHOLTO
I don't get out much. My place is
quite secluded - in the country.
Miles away.

SHERLOCK
Good.

SHOLTO

What?

SHERLOCK

Nothing. Fine.

MARY

James is practically a recluse these days. Never comes out to play. Glad you made an exception today.

SHOLTO

Can't let Watters down, can we?

And he swans off to his seat.

SHERLOCK

Who calls him 'Watters'? Noone calls him 'Watters'.

MARY

He does, apparently.

A twinkle in her eye - a grin at the corner of her mouth. Enjoying SHERLOCK'S discomfort.

SHERLOCK

Stop smiling.

MARY

It's my wedding day.

And everyone takes their place.

SHOLTO is on a table with lots and lots of attractive women - LAURA among them. (But oddly, no men.)

SHERLOCK watching SHOLTO like a hawk. His other self.

11 **INT. RECEPTION. DAY**

11

Music plays -

The wedding breakfast served at table.

JUMP CUT through a series of shots of guests gossiping, eating, laughing, drinking. Three courses. Soup and salmon and tart. Followed by coffee. And a constant flow of booze.

Passes by in a sequence of detailed shots.

CUT TO:

Finally... WAITERS filling up everyone's glasses with champagne, ready to toast the happy couple.

Bing bing bing.

Spoon on a wine glass.

TOAST MASTER
Pray silence for the Best Man.

A ripple of applause.

JOHN clutches MARY'S hand - partly in anticipation, partly for comfort - this speech could go either way.

SHERLOCK clears his throat and -

SHERLOCK
Ladies and gentlemen. Family.
Friends. Um... Also...

And then the camera turns round, and we see SHERLOCK'S POV -

A sea of eighty people.

And every single one of them has a text hovering above their head - just as he would see it...

'JOHN: AUNT (NOT POPULAR)';

'MARY: LINE MANAGER';

'JOHN: FIRST SNOG';

'MUTUAL: FRIEND FROM BALLROOM'...

SHERLOCK has every single person in the room pegged as a JOHN-person or a MARY-person.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
Colleagues. Schoolmates. Couple of
exes...

A WOMAN IN A YELLOW HAT is the only one without a label.

Instead she has a line of question marks above her head.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
You in the yellow. Are you in the
right wedding?

WOMAN IN A YELLOW HAT shifts uncomfortably and clutches her boyfriend's hand.

The text above her head changes from '???' To '+1'.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
Some of you have come a very long
way to be with us today.

SHERLOCK'S POV -

Like a fruit machine spinning round, all of the labels above their heads disappear - to be replaced by the places that they've come from.

TIGHT IN on a TANNED WOMAN. The word 'ALICANTE' above her.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 Sorry about your luggage. Glad you managed to borrow something.
 (And as an afterthought)
 Your bag is in Karachi. Terminal two. First carousel.

The TANNED WOMAN looks daggers.

Beat. Deep breath from SHERLOCK.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 John Watson is my friend.
 (Beat)
 He's been my flatmate, my confidante, my colleague and - on more than one occasion - my saviour. I owe him a great deal.
 (Breath)
 Wrong. I owe him *everything*. I wouldn't be standing here without his intervention. He has rescued me - time and again. Sometimes from mortal danger. Often from *myself*. I don't have many people I call 'friend'. It's not a word that comes easily to my lips. John is the very best of them.

A warm ripple in the audience - big smiles - some people dabbing their eyes.

JOHN clearly moved, MARY strokes his back.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 Most people actually thought we were gay.

Oh dear.

They were starting to warm up and now - sudden embarrassed hush, peppered with a little nervous laughter.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 We're weren't.

Beat.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 Aren't.

Beat.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
Never were.

Beat.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
Probably this is the moment to make
that clear.

Beat.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
It's an obvious error. I'm very
blokey and John's quite gentle.

JOHN
(Trying to make light of
it)
No. They thought *I* was the blokey
one.

SHERLOCK
I'm more assertive.

JOHN
Yeah, but I was in the army. I ate
bugs.

MARY
(Mutters)
Boys. Moving on, yeah?

An awkward pause. SHERLOCK gets it together.

SHERLOCK
We've been through a lot together
as flat mates. Bad plumbing;
rewiring; kidnapped by a Chinese
Drug Cartel. But I'd like to begin
by saying what an honour it is that
with so many friends... he picked
me to be the best man.
(Blunt)
Instead of any of you. Bad luck.
(Pointedly at Sholto)
You all came second.

- and we are whisked back to months before -

12

INT. 221B. DAY

12

SHERLOCK'S flat - empty.

We can hear JOHN outside the door, gently knocking.

JOHN (O.S.)
Sherlock?

SHERLOCK not visible anywhere.

JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Sherlock?

SHERLOCK'S voice calls out in reply but it's muffled and distant. Sounds like he's offstage somewhere, in the bathroom or the bedroom.

SHERLOCK (O.S.)
Come in, John.

JOHN enters.

Same old 221B - the place he used to live. Like greeting an old friend. His faces creases into a smile.

But SHERLOCK nowhere to be seen.

JOHN
You in the bedroom?

SHERLOCK (O.S.)
I'll just be a minute. Have a seat.

JOHN does as he is bid.

Everything is just as at it was the day he left. The same experiments piled up in the kitchen, the same mess of books and papers.

But... His eye is drawn to a large sports bag propped up in the corner. Big enough to hold a cricket bat and pads or even fencing swords. Never seen it before.

JOHN waits.

SHERLOCK still doesn't come.

JOHN
(Calls out)
Have I called at a bad time? I can come back.

SHERLOCK (O.S.)
In the middle of something. Can you give me a second?

The kit bag propped up in the corner shudders a little.

JOHN
Sherlock?

The kit bag wobbles more violently and then it falls over.

SHERLOCK (O.S.)
Dammit.

JOHN jumps up and unzips the kit bag.

And there is SHERLOCK'S face peering out at him. He is bent over double so he is staring out between his own knees.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
How did the Crown Prince of Lahore
get past the Caliph's guard?

JOHN
Maybe he climbed into a gym bag.

SHERLOCK
I've been thinking the same thing.

13

INT. 221B. DAY

13

SHERLOCK making calculations. *How long can a man survive inside a bag?* Measuring it with a tape measure. Scribbling down some sums.

JOHN
'Nice to see you, John'.
(Beat)
'Been a while'.
(Beat)
'How are things?'

SHERLOCK
(Blunt)
Why are you here?

JOHN
Ah. The traditional warm welcome.
Could have guessed. I'm on my way
to somewhere.

SHERLOCK
Ah.

JOHN
Tussaud's.

SHERLOCK
Really?

JOHN
No. I needed to see you. Wanted to
have a chat. We have to talk about
something very important.

SHERLOCK
Best Man...

JOHN
What?? Yes.

SHERLOCK

... I ever saw at this was an Indian contortionist. Nine weeks in a tea chest.

JOHN

Great. Good. Spiffing. Can we talk about something else?

SHERLOCK

Your Best Man...

JOHN

Yes!

SHERLOCK

... when it comes to contortionism is a Chinese acrobat.

JOHN

Focus on me for a second.

SHERLOCK

You want to talk about the Best Man.

JOHN waits to see if he's talking about something else....
But he isn't, not this time.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

At your wedding.

JOHN

Yes.

SHERLOCK

The answer's 'Yes...'

JOHN

Well - great...

SHERLOCK

Yes of course, I don't mind at all.

JOHN

Don't mind?

SHERLOCK

You've got other people you want to ask instead of me.

JOHN

No - honestly I haven't...

SHERLOCK

I appreciate you coming to tell me but really - it's alright.

(MORE)

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

I wouldn't want me either. I'd be rubbish.

JOHN

No, wait -

SHERLOCK

Who is it, Graham?

JOHN

Who's Graham?

SHERLOCK

Lestrade.

JOHN

Greg. And no, it's isn't him.

SHERLOCK

Mrs. Hudson? She'll be thrilled.

JOHN

She's baking the cake.

SHERLOCK

She'll have her hands full.

JOHN

Don't be an idiot, Sherlock. I want you to be Best Man. You're my closest friend.

SHERLOCK stares at him - oddly expressionless. It's like he has just frozen.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Say something.

14 **INT. RECEPTION. DAY**

14

SHERLOCK'S speech -

SHERLOCK

I told him I was surprised.
Shocked, even. Deeply honoured that
he would consider me...

15 **INT. 221B. DAY**

15

SHERLOCK has just received the request.

He stands there in silence looking totally bewildered - even a little gormless.

Silence.

SHERLOCK
 (Still shocked)
 What do I have to do?

JOHN
 Start by saying 'Yes'.

Beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Out loud.

SHERLOCK
 Yes.

JOHN
 Brilliant.

Beat.

SHERLOCK
 Do we hug?

JOHN
 It's not a prerequisite.

SHERLOCK
 OK. What comes next?

JOHN
 (Numbering on his fingers)
 Organise a stag do. Write a speech.

SHERLOCK
 (Oh dear)
 Speech?

JOHN
 Touching anecdotes. Funny
 anecdotes. Toast. That's it. That's
 all.

SHERLOCK looks as though JOHN is speaking Swahili.

First time in his life he is out of his depth.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Can you handle it?

SHERLOCK
 You want me to stand up in front of
 everyone - everyone you love -
 and... talk.

JOHN
 Yep. That's what a speech is.

SHERLOCK
You're not worried.

JOHN
About?

SHERLOCK
Arrests.

JOHN
Oh come on, you'll be brilliant. I
know you will. I have every
confidence.

HARD CUT TO:

22

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S FLAT - BEDROOM. NIGHT

22

JOHN wakes up screaming in the middle of the night -

JOHN
Aahhhh!

MARY jumps up in bed beside him.

MARY
John?

JOHN
(Waking from a nightmare)
Everybody I love in one room. They
all turned on me. Came at me with
cake forks.

MARY
Oh sweetheart, not again.

She slumps back down on the pillow.

He's having the same recurring nightmare. But she's bored of
it now. She's finding it hard to be supportive - it's been
going on for so many nights.

MARY (CONT'D)
He'll be fine. He's desperate to do
good job.

JOHN
Anything better than 'train wreck' -
I'll be singing Zip-a-dee-doo-dah.

MARY
He might actually surprise you.

23

INT. RECEPTION. DAY

23

SHERLOCK'S speech in full flow now -

SHERLOCK

This wedding wasn't a total shock to me. John and I had discussed the subject of marriage many times.

(Beat, for effect)

In the past I'd always told him I was flattered. I knew we'd become close. But I felt that marriage was a step too far for us.

A ripple of laughter.

JOHN looks mildly surprised.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

When he told me it was Mary he was marrying - I knew that they were destined to be together forever. Every time he found himself chained up in a dungeon he instinctively thought of her.

(Beat)

The chains reminded him of their nights together.

More laughter. People are enjoying this.

JOHN

(Whispers to Mary)

I told you he'd be good.

MARY

(Total lie)

I remember, yeah. You kept saying.

SHERLOCK

Mary is a wonderful woman. Intelligent, beautiful, talented, deeply caring. She was bound to want a man with the same qualities.

(Beat)

John's just so relieved he managed to snag her, before she got her hands one.

Laughter.

JOHN

He's properly good.

SHERLOCK

What advice can I give them as newlyweds? John - always remember to show Mary how you feel.

(MORE)

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 Hug and kiss her daily.
 (Beat for effect)
 And if her daily won't play ball,
 you could always try the au pair.

JOHN
 (So corny)
 Oh, blimey.

Raucous laughter now.

SHERLOCK
 Now... it's customary for the Best
 Man to share some anecdotes about
 the groom.
 (Jeers and cheers)
 Something touching - something
 funny.
 (Beat)
 I don't have any. Sorry.

A beat for effect, and then he smiles.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 All I have is John's old case book.

And he takes out his Smartphone. A few murmurs. Bit of a surprise.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 Five years as friends. Our time
 together has never been mundane.
 (Surfs)
 Something touching - something
 funny. Here's a case that happened
 whilst we were planning the
 wedding...

Texts wipe across the screen -

What we are seeing is a page from JOHN'S blog. The title of a case:

'The Mystery of the Bloody Grenadier'

MARY and SHERLOCK - up to their ears in wedding preparations.

Stationery samples, material swatches, sample menus, a first, second and third draft table plan. The two of them are preparing the whole event with gusto. SHERLOCK right in the centre of it all.

JOHN, however, is sitting in the corner with his feet up - surfing his iPhone.

MARY

Table ten?

SHERLOCK

Auntie Marjorie. Cousin Norman.
Cousin Sally. Mr. And Mrs.
Winterton. The whole Wilson family.

MARY

Check.

SHERLOCK

Anyone with an interest in
horticulture, home brewing, antique
lace or psychedelic rock pre-1970.

JOHN

(Reading. Mutters, half to
himself)
'Missing heir-loom.'

MARY

Table eleven?

SHERLOCK

Table eleven is a repository for
all the people who need to be kept
away from the bar.

MARY

(Knowing)
Mrs. Lestrade, dare one venture?

SHERLOCK

I've organised a selection of
potted ferns. To minimise access.

MARY

We need to brief the bar staff. 'Be
miserly'.

SHERLOCK

Done.

JOHN

(Still reading)
'My husband is three people'.

MARY

Table twelve?

SHERLOCK

(Reading the name)
James Sholto.
(Doesn't recognise him)
Who?

MARY
John's army chap.

SHERLOCK
(Reads the plan)
With a coterie of single women.

MARY
John says he's rather awkward
around men.

JOHN
(Looks up)
Haven't you two done yet?

SHERLOCK
Version eight point one point one.

MARY
(Playful)
You could make yourself useful,
instead of just sitting there
moaning.

JOHN
(Bored, won't even look
up)
I've smelled eighteen different
perfumes. I've sampled nine
different slices of cake that all
tasted identical. I've told you - I
like the Bridesmaids in yellow.

MARY AND SHERLOCK
(Unison)
Primrose.

JOHN
Surely there are no decisions left
to make.

SHERLOCK
We haven't even begun.

MARY
(Smiles)
Tea for the workers.

And off she trots, leaving them alone.

SHERLOCK still busy busy busy. Now he's studying table
decorations in a Bridal magazine.

Pause. Then -

JOHN
Enjoying yourself?

SHERLOCK

Did we opt for serviettes as fans
or folded up like little orchids?

JOHN

(Hisses)

Sherlock - I don't care. I'm dying
here. If I have to answer one more
question with the words 'colour
scheme' in it I'm going to chew my
own foot off. Stop talking about
weddings.

SHERLOCK

(Not listening)

What about sequins on the table?

JOHN

Sherlock!

SHERLOCK

You can get signature mints with
little 'M's and little 'J's.

JOHN

Did you just say 'signature mints?'

SHERLOCK

Indoor crazy golf. Apparently it's
the thing of the kids during the
speeches. Nine holes or eighteen?

JOHN

Sherlock. Stop it! It's hurting.

JOHN waves the iPhone.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm begging you. Your inbox is
bursting with juicy unsolved cases.
Take the afternoon off, please. No
more lists. No more barn-dance-or-
80s-band. Let's resort to being men
for an hour!

Thrusts his phone under SHERLOCK'S nose.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Anything! Pick one.

SHERLOCK scrolls the list. Unimpressed.

SHERLOCK

'My husband is three people.'

JOHN

Interesting. Says he has three distinct patterns of moles on his skin.

SHERLOCK

Identical triplets. One in half a million births. Solved it without leaving the flat. Now, serviettes...

But JOHN is determined to keep trying. Guides him back to the inbox display.

JOHN

There's loads. Keep looking.

Scrolls through again.

SHERLOCK

'Our lollipop man is a Nazi war criminal.' Why are you telling me? Cosh him and put him on a plane to Tel Aviv.

JOHN

They can't all be boring. There must be something there that grabs your attention. Have a look at this one here...

JOHN taps the inbox and one of the emails floods our screen:

'DEAR MR. HOLMES...'

The voice of the correspondent narrating -

25

EXT/INT. ARMY BARRACKS. DAY

25

The Wellington barracks in London. Birdcage Walk.

The Queen's Grenadier Guard - the Busbies - are barracked here, right in the shadow of Buckingham Palace.

An elegant and imposing Georgian building made of honey-coloured stone. It's surrounded by a high perimeter wall with a row of punitive metal spikes.

A GUARDSMEN on duty outside the barracks in a sentry box. The traditional red tunic, Sam Browne, gold-braided trousers. And the absurdly large hat.

We hear the voice of SECOND LIEUTENANT BAINBRIDGE -

Very plummy - from the upper echelons, your typical GUARDSMAN.

BAINBRIDGE (V.O.)
 Dear Mr. Holmes. My name is
 Bainbridge. I'm a Second Lieutenant
 in Her Majesty's Household Guard...

CUT TO:

Inside the barracks -

The place is old and drenched in tradition. Wood-paneled walls. Flagstone floors.

SOLDIERS in the red coats, braided trousers and busbies marching past.

One of them is BAINBRIDGE.

BAINBRIDGE (V.O.)
 I need hardly tell you - we are an
 elite force of forty soldiers,
 responsible for the security at the
 Royal Palaces in Pall Mall...

26 **INT. ARMY BARRACKS - HALL. DAY**

26

A regimental dinner.

Candlelight and silverware.

Rows and rows of officers and their spouses eating in the grand hall of the barracks.

BAINBRIDGE (V.O.)
 I'm writing to you about a personal
 matter - one I don't care to bring
 before my superiors...

LIEUTENANT BAINBRIDGE is sat at table next to an attractive young female CIVIL SERVANT from the MOD.

BAINBRIDGE (V.O.)
 I'm convinced I'm being followed. I
 never see my shadow but I know he's
 stalking me. It's been going on for
 weeks now...

And we are whisked to -

27 **INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT**

27

That same night -

The flat belonging to the young female CIVIL SERVANT. The place is dark.

She and BAINBRIDGE are in bed together, having met that same night over dinner.

They're having an athletic bout of sex under her duvet.

BAINBRIDGE (V.O.)
I only have a single piece of
evidence. The stalker has the most
unusual ritual...

Camera pans past the open door to the bedroom and then reaches the lounge.

BAINBRIDGE'S dress uniform is discarded on the sofa - the unmistakable red jacket and trousers with gold braid.

BAINBRIDGE (V.O.)
He's not interested in me - but in
my garments...

CUT TO:

Dawn light.

BAINBRIDGE comes to find his clothes. Lifts up his tunic and examines it.

BAINBRIDGE (V.O.)
Whenever I take them off I can tell
that someone else has been wearing
them.

BAINBRIDGE sniffs his own tunic.

Someone else cologne?

And then he pulls a brown hair off the collar. BAINBRIDGE is bright blonde.

28

INT. ARMY GYMNASIUM. DAY

28

BAINBRIDGE at the gym - wearing regulation army PT kit, white shorts and vest.

Doing press-ups on a crash mat. (Oddly, his gym routine and his sex routine are rather similar.)

BAINBRIDGE (V.O.)
I find hairs on my tunic that
aren't mine. A different cologne.
Sometime a button or two is
missing...

CUT TO:

BAINBRIDGE goes to his locker in the army gymnasium -

Finds his red tunic hanging on the peg. Examines it again. Sure enough - a button has gone.

BAINBRIDGE (V.O.)
Sometimes sweat stains. Maybe a crumb of food. And always, after it's been worn, the uniform is returned to where I left it.

29 **INT. BEDROOM. DAY**

29

Another bedroom in another flat...

BAINBRIDGE - the Lothario - is in bed with yet another woman.

This time it's the COLONEL'S wife - rather older than him. There is a photograph of her with her husband on the bedroom wall.

BAINBRIDGE is with her under the sheets, giving it the same amount of gusto that he always does...

BAINBRIDGE (V.O.)
I don't want to mention it to the Colonel. It is, after all, a very trivial matter. But still, I find the affair most puzzling.

Camera pans away from the bed to the floor...

There is the same red tunic, just lying there.

BAINBRIDGE (V.O.)
I would be forever indebted if you could help.

30 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S FLAT. DAY**

30

SHERLOCK and JOHN whispering in the lounge, so MARY cannot hear.

JOHN
Fascinating. Yeah?

SHERLOCK
A uniform fetishist. With a skeleton key. What is there to investigate?

JOHN
I'm climbing the walls here. Please. Let's just go see him. We'll be back to choosing canapes before you know it.

SHERLOCK studies the email. His curiosity is just beginning to be teased.

SHERLOCK
Elite guard.

JOHN
Forty enlisted men and officers.

SHERLOCK
(starting to get
interested)
Why this particular Grenadier?
Curious.

JOHN
Now you're talking.

SHERLOCK
Some lothario? Leaving his clothes
all over London? Simple question of
access, I imagine.

JOHN
OK. Let's go ask him.

31 INT. JOHN AND MARY'S FLAT. DAY

31

MARY has made a tray of tea - swans out of the kitchen.

MARY
Here you go, boys.

JOHN and SHERLOCK have their coats on and are headed for the door. They jump when she enters - guilty expressions.

MARY (CONT'D)
Errands to run?

JOHN
I want Sherlock to help me choose
some...

And he can't think of a single credible lie. So MARY helps him out.

MARY
Why not go with 'socks'?

JOHN
Yep.

MARY
Got to get the right ones.

JOHN
Yep. To go with my outfit.

MARY gives them an indulgent smile.

MARY
It'll probably take you a while,
that.

And they're out of the door.

32

EXT. STREET. DAY

32

JOHN and SHERLOCK leaving JOHN'S flat.

JOHN
You think she knows?

SHERLOCK
Absolutely not.

And they run to hail a cab.

33

EXT. PARK . DAY

33

St. James' Park.

The sparrows flock to be fed. The pond ripples in the
sunshine.

SHERLOCK and JOHN walking through the park, heading for the
barracks in Birdcage Walk.

34

INT. ARMY BARRACKS. DAY

34

A UNIFORMED SOLDIER stationed at the guard house - the red
and gold of the Grenadiers.

JOHN presents himself.

JOHN
Captain John Watson. Fifth
Northumberland Fusiliers. And this
is Sherlock Holmes. We've got an
appointment with Second Lieutenant
Bainbridge.

SOLDIER
You'll have to wait.

JOHN
Oh?

SOLDIER
He's just gone out on duty.

And he points...

They turn.

BAINBRIDGE is marching across the parade ground towards a sentry box. Turns, stands to attention, lifts his rifle to his shoulder and freezes.

Motionless for the next hour.

Damn.

They'll have to wait for him to come off duty.

35

EXT. PARK. DAY

35

JOHN and SHERLOCK sit on a bench in St. James' Park - feeding the sparrows.

Fifty yards away they can see BAINBRIDGE on duty, stock still.

JOHN

You think they give them classes?

SHERLOCK

What classes?

JOHN

Resisting the temptation to scratch your bum.

Beat.

SHERLOCK

Afferent neurons in the peripheral nervous system.

Beat.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Bum itch.

JOHN

Never let one go by, do you?

SHERLOCK

What?

JOHN

A chance to be a smart-arse.

SHERLOCK

I treasure every one.

And their faces creased into a smile simultaneously.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Why steal a uniform?

JOHN
Disguise?

SHERLOCK
Easy enough to make a replica. And
why keep returning it to the owner?

JOHN
You don't know the answer.

SHERLOCK
No.

JOHN
Good. Well. I'm savouring this
moment.

They hear Big Ben chiming.

JOHN checks his watch. Sentry duty is done.

36

EXT. ARMY BARRACKS. DAY

36

BAINBRIDGE walking off the parade ground. JOHN and SHERLOCK
scuttle after him.

SHERLOCK
Lieutenant Bainbridge? Lieutenant
Bainbridge?

He doesn't hear them - slightly too far away.

Instead he marches up to a door marked 'Armoury'. The door
leads directly off the parade ground, just beside the sentry
box.

Opens it with a key and goes in.

JOHN and SHERLOCK scuttle up to the door. SHERLOCK pushes it.
It's locked.

JOHN
He'll be out in a second. Stowing
his rifle.

Silence.

They wait and wait, but he doesn't emerge. And then JOHN
looks down.

There is a trickle of blood seeping out under the door.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Sherlock, look!

Crash!

SHERLOCK kicks in the door of the armoury.

They burst into the room. A cold stone chamber, sparsely furnished. A large rack of ceremonial rifles lined up along one wall.

And there is BAINBRIDGE on the floor in his shirtsleeves.

He is bleeding from a deep wound in his stomach. Blood spilling down on to the floor in a big reservoir. It has started to seep under the door.

JOHN

My God.

JOHN takes his pulse, tries to ascertain if he is still breathing.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Stab wound in the gut. He's losing blood fast.

SHERLOCK scans the whole room at speed - a sea of texts flooding the screen.

The armoury windows all have bars across them...

There is only one door - the door they just kicked in...

No access - other than the way they just came...

SHERLOCK

One exit. Windows barred. No air vents. This is the only way in or out of here.

JOHN

(Examines the body)
He stabbed himself. Crazy lunatic.

SHERLOCK

Suicide victims usually tend to need a weapon, wouldn't you say?

They look around the cubicle - scan the floor of the bathroom.

There is no blade anywhere.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Interesting - he should choose to use a blade when he has two dozen loaded rifles lined up here.

(MORE)

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
Even more interesting when the
blade is invisible.

JOHN checks BAINBRIDGE'S hands but they are empty.

JOHN
It's gone. The knife that did this
isn't in here.

And then there is a sharp intake of breath from the body.
BAINBRIDGE opens his eyes.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Sherlock, he's still conscious.

BAINBRIDGE
(Hisses)
Help me.

JOHN
(To Bainbridge)
It's alright, it's alright.
(To Sherlock)
Give me your scarf. I need to
staunch the bleeding.

SHERLOCK reluctant to part with his precious scarf - but only
for a split second.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You've got others.

JOHN uses it as a makeshift bandage.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Call a Doctor.

SHERLOCK takes out his phone and starts to dial.

And then they hear footsteps.

Two GUARDSMEN enter with their rifles. They see JOHN and
SHERLOCK kneeling over the bleeding body. Instinctively one
of them raises his rifle.

SOLDIER
(To John)
Put your hands up.

JOHN
Got to keep pressure on this wound.

SOLDIER
(To Sherlock)
You - put your hands up.

SHERLOCK
Sorry. Urgent phone call.

38

INT. MILITARY CELL. DAY

38

Clang!

JOHN and SHERLOCK shut up in a military cell - the basement of the barracks.

JOHN
I keep running it in my mind.

Beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Walked on to the parade ground.
Stood there for an hour with us
watching. Nothing apparently wrong
with him. Comes off duty. Presto!
He's pouring blood.

Beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)
How can you make a weapon vanish?

Beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Ice blade.

SHERLOCK raises an eyebrow.

JOHN (CONT'D)
The blade was made of ice. Melted.

SHERLOCK
Brilliant.

JOHN
Really?

SHERLOCK
No. It was only four degrees above
freezing. Draughty old barracks.
Even if it melted, the water
wouldn't evaporate.

JOHN
OK. So... So...

Beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Organic matter.

SHERLOCK
What?

JOHN

A blade made of compacted blood and bone. Broke after piercing his abdomen.

SHERLOCK

You're missing the issue.

JOHN

What's the issue?

SHERLOCK

'Help me' doesn't sound much like a suicide victim talking.

JOHN

No, you're right. Didn't kill himself, did he? So we're saying somebody stabbed him. And then walked out through a locked armoury door, without us noticing.

SHERLOCK

Not just a locked door. A locked door in a guarded barracks, behind a three foot thick perimeter wall.

JOHN

In the grounds of a Royal Palace.

SHERLOCK

Quite some feat, that.

39

INT. MILITARY CELL. DAY

39

Some time after... JOHN and SHERLOCK are lying on the cell beds, waiting for their inquisitors.

SHERLOCK deep in thought.

JOHN decides to test the water.

JOHN

What shape should we fold the napkins?

SHERLOCK

(Short)

I can't think about that now.

JOHN

Excellent. My work here is done.

SHERLOCK

What?

JOHN
No. Nothing.

JOHN smiles. Can't help it. Finally he's managed to steer SHERLOCK away from the wedding plans.

Then... Clang!

Door opens.

The CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD enters. BAINBRIDGE'S commanding officer.

CAPTAIN
I've called the MPs. You two are under arrest.

SHERLOCK
I'm a civilian.

CAPTAIN
(Points at John)
He's a Captain.

JOHN
Not for a long time, sorry.

SHERLOCK
Call Scotland Yard.

JOHN
How's the patient?

CAPTAIN
Unconscious but he'll live. Where's the weapon?

SHERLOCK
Well done. I knew eventually you'd catch up.

CAPTAIN
He's got a wound in his abdomen four inches deep. One of you two fellows put it there.

SHERLOCK
Shortly before John saved his life by staunching the bleeding. Few flaws in your logic, aren't there?

CAPTAIN
Now, listen...

SHERLOCK

What are you going to do? Arrest him with one hand and pin a medal on him with the other? This man is a hero.

CAPTAIN

Who killed him, then? If it wasn't one of you two.

JOHN

Give us a while. We're working on it.

The screen is wiped again by the pages of JOHN'S blog.

'The case of the Bloody Grenadier'

And there is an entry at the bottom of the blog page: 'CASE: UNSOLVED'.

- and suddenly we are whisked back to -

40

INT. RECEPTION. DAY

40

SHERLOCK'S speech -

SHERLOCK

Case was never solved. But I mention it to demonstrate one thing. John Watson is a true hero. Saved the life of that poor Guardsman.

A round of applause.

MARY

(Mutters)

Also shows he's rubbish at planning weddings.

SHERLOCK

Which leads me on to the stag do.

A few jeers and cheers.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Customary for the Best Man to embarrass the Groom with some funny stories. What started as a stag do ended up as another case. Let me tell you about it...

And the texts wipe across the screen again -

Another excerpt from JOHN'S blog.

'The Case of the Mayfly Man.'

41

INT. ST. BART'S LAB. DAY

41

SHERLOCK has come to see MOLLY.

MOLLY
Murder sights?

SHERLOCK
(Pleased with himself)
A pub crawl. Themed.

MOLLY
Yeah, but... Murder sights? Can't
you do... underground stations?

SHERLOCK
Lacks a personal touch. We're gonna
have a drink in every street...

MOLLY
(Finishes his sentence)
Where you've found a corpse. That's
lovely. Why d'you need me?

SHERLOCK
Don't want us getting ill. That
would ruin it. Dull the mood.

MOLLY
The mood being jolly. When you're
visiting murder scenes.

Beat. Stares at her.

SHERLOCK
Was that humour?

MOLLY
Yes.

SHERLOCK
You're cracking jokes. What
happened to you, Molly?

MOLLY
Boyfriend. Not a killer and not
gay.

SHERLOCK
Step in the right direction.

MOLLY
And we're having quite a lot of
sex.

SHERLOCK

OK.

CUT TO:

SHERLOCK digs into his coat and presents MOLLY with a dossier. On JOHN.

JOHN'S exact height, weight, vital statistics.

SHERLOCK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I want to calculate John's ideal
intake - and mine. Want to keep us
in the sweet spot for the whole
evening.

Back at the lab...

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
Light-headed: good.

MOLLY
(Understands)
Vomiting in gutters: bad.

And suddenly we're in...

42

INT. BAR. DAY

42

Busy London bar - music blaring - young people milling around. Noise noise noise.

SHERLOCK stands at the bar, orders a round.

Conspicuously out of place. Stiff as a board and all in black. Won't take his coat off for anyone.

SHERLOCK
Two... er, beers.

BARMAN
Pints?

SHERLOCK
(Shakes his head)
A hundred and forty three point
seven millilitres.

He has brought two glass vessels from the laboratory - graduated cylinders - little graded lines up the side.

Slaps them both on the bar.

JUMP CUT TO:

Slams them on the pub table in front of JOHN, full up to their mark with beer.

Takes out a stopwatch and hits it.

A digital counter starts to run in the corner of the screen...

JOHN
Are we on a schedule?

SHERLOCK
You'll thank me.

CUT TO:

JUMP CUT through a series of pubs and clubs as they travel all over London.

Superimpose a map of London with a red line showing them travelling to the sights of their greatest cases...

43

INT. BAR. NIGHT

43

Downing another.

The stopwatch is still running in the corner of the screen.

They have to raise their voices above the din of the juke box.

SHERLOCK
Who's the Major?
(John can't quite hear)
You've invited him Saturday.

JOHN
(Shouting)
James Sholto. Commanding officer of my company. Brave chap. Lead the raid on Tashkurghan. Lost a lot of men. Made some enemies. His life has been threatened.

SHERLOCK checks his watch.

SHERLOCK
(Nods)
Over there.

JOHN
What?

SHERLOCK
Toilet. Any second you'll need -

JOHN
Hang on. Tell me after. Need the loo.

SHERLOCK
On schedule.

JOHN
What?

SHERLOCK
Nothing. Go.

JOHN bolts to the toilet.

SHERLOCK takes out a chart and unfolds it. Puts a tick on a box marked 'URINE' and records the exact time.

CUT TO:

JOHN comes back, and -

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
How long was it?

JOHN
Sorry?

SHERLOCK
Your 'visit'?

JOHN
Didn't time myself.

SHERLOCK
But if you could estimate,
approximate volume discharged.

JOHN
Stop talking now.

44 **INT. BAR. NIGHT**

44

Different venue -

Two more graduated cylinders filled up to the hundred and forty three point seven millilitre mark.

JOHN getting a little fed up with this insane regime.

He's ordered a short from the bar. Downs it quickly so SHERLOCK cannot see him.

JOHN
(To the barman)
And another one. Quick. He mustn't see.

Tips it into SHERLOCK'S graduated cylinder.

CUT TO:

They drink. And again. And again.

In their cups now.

CUT TO:

Superimpose the red line across London - but, oh look, it starts to get shakier.

CUT TO:

The next beer and the next beer and the next.

Until the red line is snaking all over London, and looping back in itself in a ridiculous drunken fashion...

45

INT. BAR. NIGHT

45

SHERLOCK, completely blotto, in the middle of a bar fight with a pissed up THUG.

He's pointing at the THUG'S hoodie and yelling.

SHERLOCK

Listen, pal, I'm telling you - the ash on that came from a Marlboro light!

THUG

I never smoke lights. Girls' fags!

SHERLOCK

(Yelling)

I know ash! Don't tell me I don't! I'll punch your ruddy lights out.

JOHN

Sherlock. Bad swearing. Noone says 'ruddy'.

SHERLOCK

(A challenge)

Come on if you want some, dick-brain!

(To John)

Better?

JOHN

Much.

The THUG takes a swing at SHERLOCK which he narrowly dodges.

SHERLOCK takes a swing back. JOHN drags him out...

CUT TO:

Red line crisscrossing London in no ordered fashion whatsoever.

TIGHT IN on BAKER STREET on the map -

46

EXT. 221B. NIGHT

46

Silence -

TIGHT IN on SHERLOCK and JOHN'S faces, lying side by side.

SHERLOCK

(Mumbles)

I've got an international reputation.

Beat.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Have you got an international reputation?

Beat.

JOHN

No. No, I don't have an international reputation.

Beat.

SHERLOCK

Thing is - I can't remember what it's for.

Beat.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Crime-something-or-other.

Wide -

SHERLOCK and JOHN lying prostrate, at the foot of the stoop in BAKER STREET.

Both plastered.

Climbing the small flight of stairs has presented too much of a challenge.

And then MRS. HUDSON comes out to leave the milk bottles.

MRS. HUDSON

What you doing back? I thought you'd be out late.

SHERLOCK

What time is it?

MRS. HUDSON
 (Checks her watch)
 You've only been out an hour.
 Client waiting.

47 **INT. 221B BAKER STREET. NIGHT**

47

Somehow JOHN and SHERLOCK have made it up the stairs -

The client - a WOMAN in her 30s - TESSA. She's just come straight from work. Maid's uniform.

She sits on a high-backed chair to deliver her exposition. Rather a heightened emotional tale.

JOHN and SHERLOCK sit opposite, side by side (backs to us).

TESSA
 I don't... a lot. I mean... I don't date all that much. And he seemed... nice. You know. We seemed just automatically to connect.

No response from them, so she ploughs on.

TESSA (CONT'D)
 We had one night. I spent the whole night. It was lovely. Breakfast. Exchanged numbers. Said it get in touch. And then -
 (Beat)
 Maybe he wasn't quite as keen as I was - but I thought... I just thought... at least he'd call to say we were through.
 (Starts to tear up, this is painful)
 I went round there. To his flat. No trace of him. Mr. Holmes... I honestly believe I was dating a ghost.

TESSA'S face falls.

This was her big reveal and she's disappointed it didn't have more of an effect.

TESSA (CONT'D)
 Mr. Holmes?

Camera turns round.

JOHN and SHERLOCK are asleep, leaning on their fists - eyes half-open.

TESSA leans forward and prods SHERLOCK. His arm falls off his chair and jerks him awake.

SHERLOCK
 (Still pissed)
 Boring boring. No - wait. Sorry.
 Fascinating.
 (Nudges John)
 Pay attention, John. Sorry about my
 colleague. Rude. Rude.

He burps.

TESSA
 I checked with the Landlord. The
 man who lived there died. Heart
 attack. And there we are - having
 dinner one week on.
 (Fishing in her bag)
 I've found this thing online... a
 sort of chat room. For girls who
 think they're dating men from the
 spirit world.

Shows them the printed pages -

SHERLOCK leaps to his feet. The game's afoot. Even though
 they're still pissed.

SHERLOCK
 Ten minutes I'll find him. What was
 the dog's name?

JOHN
 (Murmurs in his sleep)
 Shut up he's my mate. He could have
 you in an ash-fight.

SHERLOCK
 John.

Nudges JOHN awake. Actually nudges him on to the floor.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 Work to do. The game is...

Can't remember.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 Something.

JOHN
 'On'?

SHERLOCK
 Yup. That.

An empty flat -

TESSA with SHERLOCK and JOHN perusing the place - the scene of her one-night stand.

Typical bachelor pad. Sparse but opulent.

The LANDLORD stands at the door, swinging the key. Unimpressed by this late intrusion by two piss-heads claiming to be detectives.

JOHN is forced to prop himself up against a wall for support. Smiles inanely at the LANDLORD, trying to pretend that everything is OK.

JOHN
Nishe plashe.

SHERLOCK - rather boldly - trying to walk the room and do his thing.

TESSA
See anything?
(Beat)
Any clues, Mr. Holmes?

SHERLOCK blinks hard and looks around the room.

SHERLOCK
Erm....

POV SHERLOCK -

The room is filled with texts and every single one of them is out of focus. Can't read them, because he's still pissed!

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
Let me just whip this out -

SHERLOCK tries to whip out his magnifying glass - a ridiculous dance because it's stuck sideways in his pocket.

Eventually retrieves the thing by pulling his coat half inside-out.

Kneels down on the floor to examine the pile of the carpet.

TESSA
(To John)
You alright?

JOHN
Clueing.

TESSA
What?

JOHN
(Points at Sherlock)
He's clueing. For looks.

TESSA
Mr. Holmes?

SHERLOCK has fallen asleep on top of his magnifying glass -
right there on the floor.

TESSA (CONT'D)
Mr. Holmes?

LANDLORD
I'm calling the police.

TESSA
No, no! This is a famous detective.
Sherlock Holmes. And his partner -
John Hamish Watson.

LANDLORD strides across the room to yank him out -

SHERLOCK
Hey, hey. What are you doing? Don't
compromise the integrity of the -
of the -

But he can't finish his sentence.

Because he suddenly vomits.

JOHN
Crime scene.

SHERLOCK
(Wiping his mouth)
Yup. That.

49

INT. POLICE CELL. DAY

49

And they're in a prison cell - *yet again.*

Clang! Cell door opens -

LESTRADE enters and rouses JOHN. He's asleep on the cell
floor.

LESTRADE
Wakey wakey.

Turns JOHN over with his foot.

JOHN
Oh my God.
(Rolls over)
Greg. Is it Greg?

LESTRADE

Get up. I'm putting you two in a taxi. I managed to square things with the Desk Sergeant.

JOHN staggers to his feet.

LESTRADE (CONT'D)

What a couple of lightweights. Couldn't even make it to closing time.

JOHN

Can you whisper?

LESTRADE

Not really.

Slaps JOHN playfully on the back, and nearly decks him.

50

INT. POLICE STATION. DAY

50

Front desk.

JOHN and SHERLOCK signing for their things. Walking like they're badly crippled. The worst of hangovers.

JOHN

Well. Thanks for - you know. An evening.

SHERLOCK

It was awful.

JOHN

Yep. I was gonna pretend. But it was. Truly.

SHERLOCK

The woman.

JOHN

What?

SHERLOCK

Dated a ghost. Most interesting case for months. And I wasted the opportunity.

Oh. JOHN thought he meant something else. Follows SHERLOCK out dutifully.

JOHN

OK.

51 **INT. 221B BAKER STREET. DAY**

51

JOHN with two Aspirins fizzing in a glass.

JOHN
Thank God we didn't have the stag
do the night before the wedding.

But SHERLOCK isn't listening. He's studying the laptop.

TIGHT IN on the screen -

A chat room page. A huge amount of traffic - women sharing
their experiences of being loved by a spectre...

www.i-dated-a-ghost.com

SHERLOCK has become obsessed by this topic -

SHERLOCK
(Nods at the screen)
There's going to be others.

JOHN
What 'others'?

SHERLOCK
Victims. Girls. Most ghosts - they
tend haunt a single house. This
ghost, however, he's willing to
commute. Look.

He has put the locations of the 'haunted shags' on a map -
A series of pins dropped all over North London.

52 **INT. 221B BAKER STREET. DAY**

52

JOHN and SHERLOCK with a procession of women - visiting them
at 221B on different days -

JUMP CUT between them as they tell their tales -

CAPTION: 'TUESDAY' - '4 DAYS BEFORE THE WEDDING'.

GAIL
(Dressed as a gardener)
Oscar.

CUT TO:

CAPTION: 'WEDNESDAY' - '3 DAYS BEFORE'

APRIL
 (Security guard)
 Toby.

CUT TO:

CAPTION: 'THURSDAY' - '2 DAYS BEFORE'

DIANA
 (Dressed as a chef)
 Ronnie.

53

INT. TAILOR'S. DAY

53

JOHN and SHERLOCK have come for a final fitting of their morning dress.

Changing out of their clothes in neighbouring cubicles -

SHERLOCK
 Four women in four nights.

JOHN
 Got to admire him, really.

SHERLOCK
 All dead men. All somewhere on the North Circular, between Harrow and Chiswick.

JOHN
 (Disbelieving)
 Haunted them, shagged them and deserted them.

CUT TO:

Different state of undress - same conversation -

SHERLOCK
 A very clever serial adulterer. Probably married. Stealing the identities of corpses. He's getting the names from the obituary columns.

JOHN
 Oh, I get it. The deceased's flat would be empty for a while. Free love nest.

CUT TO:

Different state of undress - same conversation -

SHERLOCK

Noone wants to sleep in a dead man's home. At least not until it's been cleared.

JOHN

Easy, then. Steals his home - steals his identity.

SHERLOCK

But only for one night. And then he's gone.

(Beat)

He's not a ghost, John. He's a Mayfly.

54 **INT. TAILOR'S. DAY**

54

SHERLOCK and JOHN staring at themselves in the mirror - both of them in their frock coats and hats now.

JOHN straightens his cravat. SHERLOCK fixes his cuffs. They really look the part.

The conversation continues, as if it has never stopped...

SHERLOCK

He'd have a window. A matter of days - from the time the person died to their flat being cleared and sold. This wasn't hit and miss. He targeted those women. Why?

JOHN

Still OK if I stay over tomorrow?

55 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S FLAT. NIGHT**

55

JOHN packing an overnight suitcase -

Zips up his wedding outfit in a bag. MARY is there, kisses him.

JOHN

See you at the altar, then.

MARY

I'll be the one in the...

JOHN

No. Don't tell me. Bad luck.

Another kiss and he's gone.

56

INT. 221B. NIGHT

56

Ringling on the doorbell of 221B. MRS. HUDSON answers.

There is JOHN, on her doorstep. A small wheelie suitcase and a zip-up suit bag. She grins and throws her arms around him.

MRS. HUDSON
Here he is. Going to be just like
old times. Ooh, John.

A bigger squeeze.

JOHN
Yep.

A shower of kisses.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Yep. Can we maybe make it past the
doorstep?

And into the flat -

57

INT. 221B. NIGHT

57

JOHN enters 221B, suit in hand. SHERLOCK crouched over his laptop. Doesn't turn round.

JOHN
Hi.

No response.

JOHN (CONT'D)
'Hello John'. 'Nice to have you
back.'

Beat.

SHERLOCK
(Blunt)
What are you doing here?

JOHN
Ah there it is again. That charming
welcome.
(Claps his hand together)
It's my last evening as a bachelor.
Please tell me you've got something
exciting planned for us.

SHERLOCK grabs his coat. He's headed out the door. Nods for JOHN to follow.

58

EXT. CAB. NIGHT

58

JOHN and SHERLOCK in a taxi.

JOHN
If we're going to drink tonight
let's do it in moderation.

SHERLOCK
Mm-hm.

JOHN
I mean... I don't mind getting a
little bit pissed up. But... you
know.

Beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Wonder what she's doing tonight?

SHERLOCK
'She'?

JOHN
Mary.

The cab stops. JOHN looks out of the window.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Sherlock. This is where I live.

SHERLOCK
Indeed. Don't have to wonder long,
do you?

59

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S FLAT. NIGHT

59

Knock on the door.

MARY opens it a tiny crack, dressed in her wedding dress -
she's trying it on, as JOHN guessed.

JOHN and SHERLOCK are on the doorstep. JOHN has his eyes
closed.

MARY
What the hell are you doing back
here!?

JOHN
(Eyes tight shut)
I'm not looking. I'm not looking.

MARY has changed out of her dress now. JOHN and SHERLOCK waiting for her in the lounge.

JOHN

I'm sure I recognise your face. I saw you somewhere. Oh yeah - its was about half an hour ago. Right here.

MARY

I've locked everything away you're not supposed to see.

JOHN

What are we doing back here?

SHERLOCK

We need a woman for this.

JOHN

This?

SHERLOCK

This case. The Mayfly.

SHERLOCK opens JOHN'S laptop.

Logs on to *Facebook* -

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Four women... all visited by the same lover. Exists only for a single day. This is the way we're going to catch him, John.

JOHN

'We'?

SHERLOCK opens instant messaging on Facebook.

Four windows pop up. TESSA, GAIL, APRIL, DIANA. He has been communicating with them all as friends.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You want to solve this tonight? That's your idea of fun? No - stupid question.

Plonks himself down on a chair.

SHERLOCK writes the same message on each of the four windows.

'Hi. I'm back again'.

SHERLOCK
I've made contact with them all.
And I've arranged for each of them
to be online this evening.

JOHN
Oh, spiffing.

Gets four messages back in return.

'Hello Mr. Holmes'

'Hi'

'Hi Sherlock'

'Hello again'

JOHN (CONT'D)
What's the plan?

SHERLOCK
Mary. I need you to guide me. These
four girls have all got one thing
in common.

JOHN
Other than the fact that they're
all deluded.

SHERLOCK
Yes alright, two. What links them?
Same questions to each. And I don't
get up from this chair until I get
an answer that's identical.

61 **INT. 221B. NIGHT**

61

SHERLOCK deep into the problem, sits at his laptop - MARY
hurling suggestions.

JOHN just on the edge of the discussion, not really engaged.

MARY
Start with the basics. Job.

Tapping away on the keys.

He writes -

'Job?'

They reply -

'Maid'

'Freelance gardener'

'Cook'

'I do security work'

MARY (CONT'D)

Er... Where did they meet him?

Taps the keys.

'Where did you meet your ghost-boyfriend?'

They reply -

'Came up to me in a pub'

'Same gym as me'

'Just started chatting on the bus'

'He was doing a delivery at work'

SHERLOCK

It can't be that random. Don't they realise? He chose them for a specific reason.

MARY

OK. Let's do all the trivia next. Make-up?

He writes -

'Make-up brand?'

They reply -

'Clarins'

'No.7'

'Nothing in particular'

'Whatever's cheap'

SHERLOCK

Tsk.

MARY

Perfume?

He writes -

'Perfume?'

They reply -

'Chanel'

'Chanel'

'Chanel'

'Estee Lauder'

SHERLOCK

(Sighs)

Damn. Thought we had it for a moment.

MARY

Where do they hang out?

SHERLOCK writes -

'Favourite leisure pursuit?'

They reply -

'Clay pigeons'

'Latin dancing'

'Bottle of wine in front of the telly'

'I run a quilting club'

JOHN

Bet she's a riot.

SHERLOCK

Sh. Thinking.

MARY

Let me.

She takes over at the keyboard. Going to try something a bit left field, she writes -

'What do you look for in a man?'

They reply -

'Home-loving'

'Someone who will just cuddle me'

'Soft and caring'

JOHN

God, what a bunch of wet haddocks.

Final reply -

'Ten things'

JOHN (CONT'D)
She's easy to please, then.

'1. Someone who isn't competitive with other men. Someone who isn't constantly trying to define themselves in macho ways. 3...'

JOHN (CONT'D)
Do you want to stop her before you get her whole shopping list?

MARY writes -

'Got the gist'

Long pause. MARY'S fingers hovering.

SHERLOCK
What else?

JOHN
Sherlock, this is hopeless.

SHERLOCK
Not hopeless. There's a unifying factor. He wanted something from them all.

JOHN
Sex.

SHERLOCK
(Clicks)
Information. None of them reported anything stolen. There's only one thing he got. He wanted to interrogate them.

MARY
OK. Maybe the answer is... embarrassing.

SHERLOCK
Like?

MARY
They might be concealing it deliberately?

SHERLOCK
Why would they do that?

MARY
God, for a genius you don't know much about people, do you? Maybe they met him somewhere seedy and they don't want to admit it.

She writes -

'Are you into S and M?'

They write -

'Not my thing'

'No way'

'Tried it with my ex. Just one time'

Long pause. They are waiting for the fourth reply.

And then it comes back.

'Would you like to see some pictures?'

JOHN

And she's the one that does the quilting. Can never tell about people, can you?

62

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S FLAT. NIGHT

62

Question, questions, questions.

Crowding the screen - a sea of texts - the questions that form the basis of their interrogation...

'Where did he take you on your date?'

'What did you talk about?'

Trying every question under the sun to get a link between these women.

SHERLOCK

Nothing. No common thread.

MARY

I've been through every question I can think of.

JOHN watching them from the corner.

JOHN

It can only be deliberate.

MARY

What do you mean?

JOHN

They're deliberately concealing the truth from us.

MARY
Why would they do that?

JOHN
Obvious. They were asked to keep a
secret.

JOHN takes his turn at the laptop, types -

'Do you have a secret that you've never told anyone?'

Beat.

And then they reply -

'No'

'No'

'No'

'No'

JOHN (CONT'D)
Dammit.

SHERLOCK
No, that's it. We've found it.

JOHN
Think they're lying?

MARY
Obviously they're lying. Everyone
has secrets. They replied way too
fast.

SHERLOCK
Excellent deduction.

MARY
Thank you.

JOHN
(Miffed, he deserves the
credit)
Fine, I'll pass the ball over - you
can knock it in the net.

MARY
Still - we're nowhere. If they're
not going to tell us.

SHERLOCK
We have to trick them with our
questions, somehow.

JOHN
 (Checks his watch)
 Look at the time.

MARY
 We have to get this solved. I won't
 enjoy tomorrow with this hanging
 over me.

JOHN
 Oh, great. Do you want to postpone?

She kisses him.

MARY
 Didn't mean that how it sounded.

And then she's tapping the keys again, furiously. Determined
 to get an answer that links the four of them.

63

INT. JOHN AND MARY'S FLAT. DAY

63

Middle of the night -

SHERLOCK is still hammering away at the keys, but ever so
 slowly now.

JOHN is asleep on his shoulder. And MARY is asleep on JOHN'S
 lap. They are sort of scrunched together as a three.

MARY eventually yawns and wakes up. Blinks at the clock.

MARY
 God, what time is it?

SHERLOCK
 Five.

MARY
 Oh, sod it.
 (Rouses John)
 John. We've got to get ready in a
 couple of hours.

JOHN
 What's going on?

MARY
 We're getting married later today.
 (Apologetic smile)
 Say 'Goodbye' to your friends.
 You've got to go now.

She clambers to her feet and boils the kettle.

SHERLOCK types -

'Got to go'

But he doesn't stay to see their replies -

He drags JOHN to his feet.

JOHN
See you at the altar.
(Kisses Mary)
Wait. This conversation sounds
familiar.

Another kiss. JOHN and SHERLOCK plod to the door.

Camera pans back to the screen to catch the replies from
their four correspondents...

'Good luck for today'

'Hope it goes smoothly'

'Best wishes to the Bride and Groom'

'Have a great day'

HOLD on those four answers...

*And then the screen is wiped clean by the entry from JOHN'S
blog - 'The Mystery of the Mayfly Man'*

'CASE: unsolved.'

64

INT. RECEPTION. DAY

64

SHERLOCK'S speech.

SHERLOCK
I enjoyed that very rare privilege
that not many Best Men can claim.
I've slept with the bride and
groom.
(Laugh from the crowd)
At the same time.
(Laugh)
On the night before their wedding.

Big laugh. Ripple of applause.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
Most people bond through day-to-day
experience - the simple daily
rituals of living. Shopping
together. Eating together. Sharing
a flat. Sharing a drink in the pub.
Not John and me.
(MORE)

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Our lives have been peppered by mysteries, murders, kidnaps, every form of danger. But it hasn't just been a life. Thank you, John. It's been an adventure.

Puts down his Smartphone - closing the blog. The end of his speech.

Big round of applause.

SHERLOCK offers his hand to JOHN and they shake.

And then that shake becomes a hug. A proper impromptu hug. Deeply touching. SHERLOCK even looks like he might be welling up.

JOHN

(Mutters to Sherlock)

Not a tear, is it?

SHERLOCK

Don't be ridiculous.

JOHN

I knew you'd be brilliant.

He sits, mutters to MARY.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I knew he'd be brilliant.

MARY

Yeah. I remember you saying.

Applause dies.

SHERLOCK

So, finally.

(Raises his glass)

Ladies and gentlemen. If you'd like to raise your glasses please. I'd like to end...

JOHN

(Joking)

Finally. Yes!

SHERLOCK

...by proposing a toast. To...

Pause.

Really absurdly long pause.

Goes on longer than you can possibly imagine.

And then some.

The toast never comes. SHERLOCK just leaves them all hanging there, glass raised.

JOHN
(Whispers)
Sherlock?

SHERLOCK
Mm?

JOHN
Toast?

SHERLOCK
Mm?

JOHN
John and Mary. That's our names.

Pause.

Another ridiculously long one.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Er...

JOHN puts a hand on him to break his reverie.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Sherlock?

SHERLOCK
It's *not* your names.

JOHN
What?

SHERLOCK
Not today. It's not your names.
Your names aren't 'John and Mary'.
Not on this occasion.

JOHN
What are you on about?

SHERLOCK
What did she call you?

JOHN
What?

SHERLOCK
Tessa. What did she call you? When we went to the flat. What name did she say?

JOHN
I don't remember.

65 **INT. FLAT. NIGHT**

65

FLASHBACK - night of the stag do -

JOHN and SHERLOCK pissed, stumbling around the flat in front of TESSA and the Landlord.

TESSA

Sherlock Holmes. And his partner -
John Hamish Watson.

66 **INT. WEDDING RECEPTION. DAY**

66

SHERLOCK'S speech.

SHERLOCK

She called you John Hamish.

Beat. What's the big deal?

JOHN

It's my name.

SHERLOCK

What's it make you think of?

JOHN

My Mum, telling me off. How is this relevant?

SHERLOCK

Only one time in your adult life
you're addressed by both your
forenames.

JOHN

What?

SHERLOCK

Think, John!
(Deliberate)
Today is one of them.

SHERLOCK points at the printed menu cards on the table:

*'Menu for the wedding breakfast of John Hamish Watson and
Mary Elizabeth Morstan'.*

JOHN just stares at it.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

It's written on the menu. It's
written on the notice board
outside. It's written on the order
of service. Today - for one day -
you're John Hamish instead of
simply John!

Takes a moment for JOHN to catch up, and then...

JOHN
(Excited now)
She knew that I was getting
married.

SHERLOCK
Yes.

JOHN
I never told her but she knew.

SHERLOCK
She'd seen the invitation. She'd
seen your name embossed in gold.

FLASHBACK -

The invitation printed with their names: JOHN HAMISH WATSON
and MARY ELIZABETH MORSTAN.

Back to the wedding -

MARY
Wait a minute, wait a minute. The
other girls. The way they all
signed off.

FLASHBACK - the Facebook windows from last night.

'Good luck for today'

'Hope it goes smoothly'

'Best wishes to the Bride and Groom'

'Have a great day'

MARY (CONT'D)
Did you tell any of them we were
getting married?

SHERLOCK
No.

MARY
Sherlock - they're all connected
through this wedding somehow. They
all knew about the ceremony. *We're*
the link. *We're* the thing that
we've been searching for.

MARY and JOHN jump to their feet.

They clasp hands with SHERLOCK - they hug.

Great news - they've found the answer after so much searching. JOHN, MARY and SHERLOCK doing high fives and chest bumps and big kisses. Like the team who have just scored a winning goal.

A slightly absurd ritual because it takes place in front of an entire Reception of people who are forced to just sit there silently and watch.

And then JOHN has a moment of clarity. Breaks out of his little group hug.

JOHN

(Mutters)

Er... If they all knew about today it means...

SHERLOCK

Yes. They're all acquainted with someone in this room.

They stop hugging. In unison they turn to the audience of people.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

(Suddenly adopts a big smile)

Ladies and gentleman. Not quite finished. I'd like to keep you all here a little longer.

(And now he's busking)

Hands up who likes John.

Noone puts their hands up.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

We all do. Lovely chap. Can't say it enough times. Let's talk about how much we love him.

LESTRADE

(Mutters)

No. Let's not.

SHERLOCK pushes JOHN back into his chair.

SHERLOCK

I mean I've barely scratched the surface. I could go on all night talking about this amazing guy.

LESTRADE

(Mutters)

Tsk. I'm busting for a pee. Sod it.

JOHN surreptitiously grabs his Smartphone from his pocket.

SHERLOCK
 Snappy dresser. I don't think I've
 mentioned that. Er...

JOHN hastily writes a message.

'SHERLOCK, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?'

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 I've always admired his taste in...
 baggy cardigans.

SHERLOCK'S phone pings.

He reads JOHN'S message:

'SHERLOCK, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?'

And then SHERLOCK'S phone pings a second time. Another
 message.

'WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?'

This one is from MARY. SHERLOCK turns and sees - she too has
 her phone out under the table.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 And he can cook. Wow. Does a great
 lasagne. And he's got a really nice
 singing voice. Bet you never knew
 that.

His phone pings twice in quick succession.

'SIT DOWN'

'SIT DOWN'

Identical texts from both JOHN and MARY.

SHERLOCK hastily writes a reply.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 Hold on a moment.

Presses 'Send'

MARY'S phone and JOHN'S phone ping simultaneously.

*'HE'S HERE! THE MAYFLY MAN IS HERE. SOMEWHERE!! TRY TO STAY
 CALM'*

She screams when she reads it.

JOHN can't stop himself yelling:

JOHN
 Oh my God.

SHERLOCK
Nice job of staying calm.

JOHN
Sorry. But you really think...?

SHERLOCK
Not out loud. Phone.

JOHN
(To the company)
Yes. Sorry everybody. 'Scuse us,
would you?

SHERLOCK texting JOHN and MARY and they're texting back.
Group texts. Between the BRIDE, GROOM and BEST MAN.

A really awkward pause whilst the GUESTS all sit and stare at
the three people on the top table, with their eyes glued to
their phones.

Silence.

And then -

MRS. HUDSON
Should we chat amongst ourselves,
do you think?

MOLLY
Pass that champagne over here.

SHERLOCK'S text:

*'HE WANTED INFORMATION. ABOUT SOMEONE HERE. SOMEONE THEY ALL
KNEW.'*

JOHN:

'WHAT FOR?'

MARY:

'BUT WHY HIDE HIS IDENTITY?'

SHERLOCK:

*'BECAUSE HE'S A KILLER. HE'S GOING TO KILL SOMEONE HERE.
RIGHT NOW. RIGHT IN FRONT OF US ALL.'*

MARY:

'HOW?'

JOHN:

'WE HAVE TO STOP HIM.'

SHERLOCK adopts a ridiculous cheesy grin and smiles at everyone. Slaps his hands in mock glee.

SHERLOCK
Let's all play a game.

LESTRADE
What?

SHERLOCK
Murder. Let's play murder.

TOM
(Mutters to Molly)
He's pissed, isn't he?

MOLLY
No, he's often this weird.

SHERLOCK
Imagine someone's going to get murdered at a wedding. Who exactly would you pick?

MRS. HUDSON
(Mutters)
Charming.

LESTRADE
(Mutters)
I know who'd be top of my list.

SHERLOCK
You wouldn't kill me 'cause you could find me any time. Just knock on the door of Baker Street. Boom. Single shot to the head. The Bride and Groom could be killed in any number of ways. Quick dose of poison on the honeymoon. Hijack room service.

TOM
What's he on about?

SHERLOCK
(Points)
That man's a golfer. You could just put a sniper on the green - take him out.
(Points)
She flew from Alicante. Bomb on the plane.

MRS. HUDSON
(Appalled)
Well, honestly.

SHERLOCK

If someone here was about to get killed - who would it be? And why choose this particular moment? Any ideas?

He stares out over the sea of eighty faces -

And now each one has a label above their heads that says the word: 'TARGET'.

'TARGET'

'TARGET'

'TARGET'

'TARGET'

As he scans the room the texts disappear with a little 'pop'.

As each person is rejected from the list - each person who would be easily accessible to a murderer at another time - their text vanishes: 'Pop'.

Until finally only one person remains.

One label that says 'TARGET'.

And it hovers above the head of JAMES SHOLTO.

SHOLTO

What are you looking at?

And SHERLOCK'S eyes go wide as he realises...

67 **INT. RECEPTION. DAY**

67

FLASHBACK - earlier that day...

SHOLTO with MARY and SHERLOCK.

SHERLOCK

I don't get out much. My place is quite secluded - in the country. Miles away.

68 **INT. RECEPTION. DAY**

68

FLASHBACK - a moment later than that...

SHOLTO with MARY and SHERLOCK.

MARY

James is practically a recluse these days.

69 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S FLAT. DAY**

69

SHERLOCK and MARY - wedding preparations.

MARY
Table twelve?

SHERLOCK
(Reading the name,
uncertain)
James Sholto. Who?

MARY
John's army chap.

SHERLOCK
With a coterie of single women.

MARY
John says he's rather awkward
around men.

70 **INT. PUB. NIGHT**

70

JOHN and SHERLOCK at the stag do.

JOHN
He lead the raid on Tashkurghan.

JUMP CUT TO:

JOHN (CONT'D)
Made some enemies. His life has
been threatened.

71 **INT. RECEPTION. DAY**

71

SHERLOCK'S speech -

An embarrassed hush. Everyone staring at SHOLTO now.

SHOLTO
What the hell is this about?

SHERLOCK
You. You're the victim in this
game. You employ staff at your
private residence?

- and suddenly we are whisked to -

72 **INT. JOHN AND MARY'S FLAT. NIGHT**

72

FLASHBACK -

The Facebook investigation, the night before the wedding.

SHERLOCK writes -

'Job?'

They reply -

'Nurse'

'Freelance gardener'

'Cook'

'I do security work'

73

INT. RECEPTION. DAY

73

SHERLOCK'S speech -

SHOLTO

Yes. What of it?

SHERLOCK

Women.

SHOLTO

I prefer female staff. Yes.

SHERLOCK

And you're a recluse. But it's not people that bother you, is it? It's men.

Indeed - he is surrounded by a table of women.

SHOLTO

Look, here....

SHERLOCK

You don't like to be around men. Specifically men of army enlistment age. Men who might have fought alongside you. You've built yourself a cocoon. Makes murder potentially rather difficult.

SHOLTO

This isn't funny.

SHERLOCK

Every man who comes near you - you have to know everything about him. You've learned his life history by rote...

74 **INT. RECEPTION. DAY**

74

FLASHBACK -

Hours before. The first moment when SHERLOCK and SHOLTO met.

SHOLTO
 (Points straight at
 Sherlock)
 One elder brother, violinist - but
 not concert standard, live alone
 but not much of a social life, ex-
 smoker, work is everything.

75 **INT. RECEPTION. DAY**

75

SHERLOCK facing SHOLTO.

SHERLOCK
 If a man were to get within an inch
 of you you'd swot up on him. Makes
 life very hard for an assassin.
 He'd need a cloak - a disguise to
 get near you. Maybe shroud himself
 in someone else's identity..

JOHN
 (Finishes the thought)
 A dead man.

FLASHBACK -

SHERLOCK taps the keys of the computer.

'Where did you meet your ghost-boyfriend?'

They reply -

*'Came up to me in a pub'**'Same gym as me'**'Just started chatting on the bus'**'He was doing a delivery at work'*

Back to the Reception -

SHERLOCK
 Your employees are the people
 closest to you. The people who
 would know your movements day to
 day. They would know that you were
 coming here, for example. Do they
 have to sign a confidentiality
 agreement? Swear to never give you
 away.

FLASHBACK -

JOHN takes his turn at the laptop last night, types -
 'Do you have a secret that you've never told anyone?'

Beat.

And then they reply -

'No'

'No'

'No'

'No'

Back to the wedding -

SHOLTO

Is this your idea of entertainment?

SHERLOCK

The question is - how, not why? How would anyone accomplish it? Suggestions please. How to bump off the Major.

SHOLTO

Somebody stop him. He's deranged.

JOHN

(Whispers)
 Sherlock. The uniform.

SHERLOCK

What?

JOHN

The stolen uniform. Bainbridge.

TIGHT IN on SHERLOCK'S face - eyes wide. *That's it!!*

76

INT. ARMOURY. DAY

76

BAINBRIDGE in the armoury, wearing his dress uniform. Unbuttoning his tunic as he comes off parade.

CUT TO:

Moments later his body is slumped over in the armoury and he is bleeding profusely from a gash in his stomach.

77

INT. RECEPTION. DAY

77

SHERLOCK'S speech -

JOHN

(Whispers)

That Grenadier. The killer took his uniform away again and again. It must have been to practice the killing. These two cases were linked all along, Sherlock.

SHERLOCK

Yes.

(To Sholto)

Something about your uniform is they key to this, Major. Killing a man in military uniform in a public place. How would you accomplish it?

Silence. Looks around the sea of faces.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

An invisible blade stabbed Bainbridge. Same expertise would work right here. So... How did he manage it?

Silence. Noone has any clues.

TOM

You want us all to call out ideas

SHERLOCK

Depends how intelligent you are.

TOM

I'm a degree chemist.

SHERLOCK

Promising.

TOM

What about a small incendiary device? Could have been planted in the lower intestine.

SHERLOCK

Not intelligent enough. Stop talking.

SHERLOCK is getting into his stride now, pacing around - leading the discussion.

Pulls off his jacket and slings it over a chair.

And that's when JOHN realises. He grips SHERLOCK by the arm.

JOHN
Bainbridge took it off.

MARY
What?

JOHN
His tunic. Instinctive reaction. As he was coming off parade. All the time he was wearing it in the sentry box he was alive and well. As soon as he took it off he bled.

SHERLOCK looks directly at SHOLTO -

FLASHBACK to the image of BAINBRIDGE in the sentry box.

Two different regiments.

Two different uniforms.

Is there anything about the two uniforms that's at all similar.

Yes...

The belt.

The uniforms are wildly different except... Both uniforms have the same shaped military-style belt.

SHERLOCK
Sam Browne.

MARY
Who?

JOHN
The belt. It's an army belt. Goes across the chest. Just like the Major is wearing.

Points - SHOLTO is indeed wearing a Sam Browne.

FLASHBACK - *again*, BAINBRIDGE in uniform in the sentry box.

His tunic is also covered by a Sam Browne.

SHERLOCK
Worn high up on the waist.

JOHN
The exact location of the wound.

SHERLOCK
If one could push a tiny blade through the hole...

JOHN

So thin you wouldn't feel it going in...

SHERLOCK

The belt would bind the flesh together, when it was tied tight.

JOHN

Yes.

SHERLOCK

So, only when you took removed it...

JOHN

The wound would start to bleed as soon as the uniform came off. Sherlock - Bainbridge was just a guinea pig. A man discarding his uniform all over town. Anyone could borrow it for an hour or two - experiment.

SHERLOCK

A perfect mechanism for killing by remote control. The killer could be miles away.

JOHN

Bainbridge was stabbed before he ever went on duty that day.

They turn to SHOLTO.

SHERLOCK

This isn't a game. Someone is truly trying to kill you.

SHOLTO

What?

Gasps around the room.

SHERLOCK

They might have already accomplished it. You might be dead and not know it.

All eyes on SHOLTO. He is suddenly white with panic.

SHOLTO

Accomplished it, how?

SHERLOCK

The killer could have just brushed past you and stuck you with the blade - an incredibly fine piece of steel. As soon as you take that thing off the muscles will relax and the wound will start to spill.

SHOLTO in a desperate state. Jumps to his feet.

SHOLTO

What am I going to do?

SHERLOCK

Well... die, obviously.

SHOLTO

There's got to be a way out of this.

SHERLOCK

Yes. Never take your clothes off again.

(To Lestrade)

Find a guest at the hotel. A single man who isn't part of this reception. Staying for just one night.

LESTRADE leaps to his feet and scuttles out of the room...

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

And get me the catering manager.

JUMP CUT TO:

78

INT. RECEPTION. DAY

78

The WAITERS and WAITRESSES are all lined up in front of a silent Reception.

The CATERING MANAGER is inspecting them as though it is a military parade.

CATERING MANAGER

Employed them all personally, Mr. Holmes.

SHERLOCK

Any new faces?

CATERING MANAGER

They've all worked here for at least a year.

JOHN

Before we even chose the venue. No use.

CATERING MANAGER

Is there a problem?

MARY

We thought maybe one was an assassin.

CATERING MANAGER

What??

SHERLOCK

They're not, so off you trot and stop panicking. Cake soon.

He goes in a state of bewilderment.

The WAITING STAFF all go back to their routines.

JOHN

I know all these guests, Sherlock. I swear to you none of them is an imposter.

LESTRADE comes scuttling back into the room.

LESTRADE

No other guests staying.

JOHN

It could be a mistake. We could be wrong about this whole thing.

Beat.

SHERLOCK

Only one way to be certain.
(To Sholto)
Take off the uniform

Silence.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

John is here. He's a skilled Doctor. He saved Lieutenant Bainbridge's life. Take off the uniform, Major. Let's see the marks of the assassin.

Pause. And then, cautiously, SHOLTO begins stripping off.

MOLLY

(Mutters)
Well, this is a boon.

MRS. HUDSON
Can you see from there?

MOLLY
Fine.

Slowly, methodically SHOLTO takes off his Sam Browne.

JOHN on hand in case SHOLTO is already wounded - ready to step in and save him.

Button by button he undoes his tunic, down to his vest - white cotton, standard military issue.

They all just stare.

No blood stains.

SHOLTO
(To Sherlock)
You imbecile. This was all just a fantasy. Some sort of elaborate prank.

JOHN
Oh thank God.

SHERLOCK
I'm sorry, John. I truly thought...

JOHN
So did I, Sherlock. So did I.

MARY
We all did.

And everyone at the Reception relaxes. False alarm.

79

INT. RECEPTION. DAY

79

The speeches are over. Everyone is gossiping wildly about the events of the day. A big noisy hubbub.

The cake is wheeled in front of MARY and JOHN. Big round of applause.

JOHN
Courtesy of Mrs. Hudson.

JOHN and MARY take the knife in both their hands.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Here we go.

The PHOTOGRAPHER scuttles up and takes his place in front of them to get the best possible shot.

Click.

PHOTOGRAPHER
And another. Big smiles.

Click.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)
And just one shot we didn't get. A
group shot of everyone. Can I have
everyone up?

80

INT. RECEPTION. DAY

80

Everybody jumping up from their places and lining up at the far end of the Reception room in a big messy huddle.

A group shot of the whole Reception.

PHOTOGRAPHER
OK. I'll just move you all around a
bit.

The PHOTOGRAPHER steps up and starts manhandling everyone into their various positions.

Pushing people here and there like they were so much putty. Grabbing shoulder and pulling arms - gently coaxing everyone into place.

SHERLOCK watching him. Something about the PHOTOGRAPHER'S behaviour captivates him...

We never ever see the PHOTOGRAPHER'S face as he is moving around the room.

Just a glimpse of an arm or a jawbone. Always just out of our line of vision.

MARY beside SHERLOCK in the big group photo.

SHERLOCK
Sorry about earlier.

MARY
It's fine. Weddings all tend to
blend into one another. At least
this one will stick in the memory.

SHERLOCK
For a murder that didn't actually
take place.

MARY
Yes.

SHERLOCK still watching the PHOTOGRAPHER like a hawk. What is concerning him?

SHERLOCK
(Mutters to himself)
Total access.

MARY
What?

Still he stares.

MARY (CONT'D)
Sherlock, what's wrong?

SHERLOCK
He's invisible, but not.

MARY
What?

SHERLOCK
Can walk up to anyone and manhandle them.

Watching the PHOTOGRAPHER grabbing arms and shoulders and swapping people around -

MARY
You've spotted something. What is it?

SHERLOCK
(Still half to himself)
You never stare into his face. You don't see him. You only ever see the camera.

The PHOTOGRAPHER getting very close to SHOLTO now -

Reaching out his hand to move him to a different place.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
He's been here all day - we've never questioned. At the altar, for the signing. Just fades into the background.

MARY
Who?

SHERLOCK
If you wanted total access... If you wanted to be able to move around the room...

Does SHERLOCK see a flash of something bright and metallic? The PHOTOGRAPHER moves behind SHOLTO and stretches out his hand to manhandle him to a different place.

SHERLOCK suddenly lurches forward, grabs the PHOTOGRAPHER and punches him in the stomach.

The guy collapses on the floor -

Everybody gasps in shock.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)

Sorry. Can't bear being manhandled.

JOHN

He was doing his job! For God's sake.

SHERLOCK

You're right.

(To the Photographer)

Here. Let me help you up.

Reaches out a helping hand.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Get off me!

SHERLOCK

Lestrade, will you give him a hand?

LESTRADE scuttles over and helps the poor battered PHOTOGRAPHER up from the floor.

LESTRADE

Does he need a paramedic?

SHERLOCK

You take charge of him.

LESTRADE

I'm not the guy you want.

SHERLOCK

(Stares straight at him)

No. Actually you are. Take him.

Beat.

LESTRADE staring at SHERLOCK. And he knows.

LESTRADE drags the poor concussed PHOTOGRAPHER away. Has his arm around him - but it's not a benevolent gesture.

Most of the GUESTS are none the wiser.

But MARY looks at SHERLOCK - and she understands. The assassin came within a whisker of succeeding.

SHERLOCK picks up the camera from the floor.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
OK, everybody. Smile now.

Click.

He takes the group shot.

81 **INT. WEDDING RECEPTION. NIGHT**

81

The evening do.

JUMP CUT through the preparations -

WAITERS pulling back the tables, stacking chairs;

BAR STAFF pull up the shutters on the bar, ready to serve;

Band setting up equipment for the entertainment that will follow.

CUT TO:

Lights out.

JOHN and MARY - first dance. Surrounded by a circle of their friends, smiling and taking photos.

Dancing to *'My heart will go on'* from Titanic - instrumental version.

Pan up to the stage.

The solo violinist playing the tune for them is SHERLOCK.

82 **INT. WEDDING RECEPTION. NIGHT**

82

Music plays - something upbeat and lively.

JOHN comes off the dance floor and collapses in a sweaty heap. Next to where MARY is sitting.

JOHN
Mrs. Watson.

MARY
Mr. Watson.

The kiss.

And -

There is a bing bing bing on a wine glass.

Everyone turns.

SHERLOCK steps up to the microphone, raises his hands for silence.

SHERLOCK
Ladies and gentlemen. I failed spectacularly today. I never did the thing I was appointed to do. So. Apologies for getting distracted earlier... Please raise your glasses in a toast.

Mutters of approval - everyone reaches for their glass -

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
To the adorable -

Once again he stops with everyone's glasses raised.

Another long pause.

Absurdly long.

JOHN
Oh blimey, here we go again.

MARY
Sherlock? What's the matter now?

Pause.

SHERLOCK
I've been wondering about a present. Haven't been able to think what to get you.

MARY
You don't really have to decide this at the moment.

A little embarrassed laughter. But SHERLOCK isn't smiling - he's serious.

SHERLOCK
I can give you one thing. A pledge. My pledge.

JOHN
What?

SHERLOCK
I want to make this promise now, in front of everyone. Come up here, would you?

JOHN takes MARY by the hand and leads her up on to the stage.

The three of them side by side.

SHERLOCK (CONT'D)
 I will always be a devoted friend.
 I'll never let anything happen to
 the three of you.

A big collective 'Aah'.

But it stops short, as everyone realises what SHERLOCK has
 just said to them all.

Pause.

JOHN
 Three?

SHERLOCK
 (Caught out)
 Yes.

JOHN
 Three?

SHERLOCK
 (To Mary)
 He doesn't know.

MARY
 Know what?

SHERLOCK
 And nor do you. OK. Probably
 shouldn't have said it into the
 mic.

MARY
 What are you on about?

SHERLOCK
 Obvious. If you know the sign.

JOHN
 Can you speak in sentences just
 once? What do you mean 'sign'? Sign
 of what?

SHERLOCK
 The sign of three, John. The sign
 of three.

JOHN
 Three what?

SHERLOCK
 Three Watsons. Mary's pregnant.

Pause.

JOHN
You've got to be kidding.

Pause.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I...

Pause.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You've got to be kidding.

SHERLOCK
Sorry. Breaking the news like this.
I just assumed you already knew.
Not great timing.

MARY
(Totally taken aback)
Well. Wonderful. I mean -
wonderful.

JOHN
(Equally taken aback)
Yes.

MARY
Isn't it?

JOHN
Yes. It is. It's wonderful.
Absolutely.

And then the feeling of elation floods over them.

A festival of hugging.

JOHN hugs MARY. MARY hugs SHERLOCK. JOHN hugs SHERLOCK. The three of them hug together. Total love fest.

And then they cry.

And everyone cheers.

And suddenly it's the most magnificent present they could ever have, and it's as though SHERLOCK gave it to them.

SHERLOCK
OK, so now I'd like to toast to the three of you. I know you'll be very fine parents.
(Off the mic)
You've had enough practice looking after me.

JOHN

(Off the mic, laughing)
Hey - don't get jealous. I know
kids can get put out - when a baby
comes.

Laughter.

SHERLOCK

I'll do my best, John. I'll do my
best.

Out on SHERLOCK.

Everyone around him is laughing and hugging, but his smile is
a little sad.

END OF EPISODE