

**Meta: BBC Sherlock , series 1, episode 2, The Blind Banker (TBB)**

by mazaher

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Being my impromptu contribution to the BBC Sherlock rewatch this week, again hosted by fennishjournal at <http://fennishjournal.livejournal.com/>  
Caps from <http://sc.aithine.org>: great job, thank you!

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**The minor things, on order of appearance:**

-- Lovely analysis by Sherlock of the bad logic of inquisition: "You are choosing to ignore anything you see that doesn't comply with it (your hypothesis)".

-- John may be an experienced Army doctor, but he misses completely the reason for Sherlock's being croaky after he comes out of Yao's apartment!

-- Interesting comparison between the pattern for brotherly love in the Yao and the Holmes families...

-- Trope lurking in the museum! When Sherlock runs off after Zhi Zhou, John falls into the usual plot trap of "secure the lady and boldly run into fight", which invariably means that as soon as he's gone, said lady finds herself alone face-to-face with the enemy. The trope is redeemed in a measure by Yao's acceptance of her fate, giving us a caress to his brother's cheek instead of the customary scream.



-- And: no shooting at skulls! "Have a bit of respect! ...Thanks!" =D



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### **The medium-sized things:**

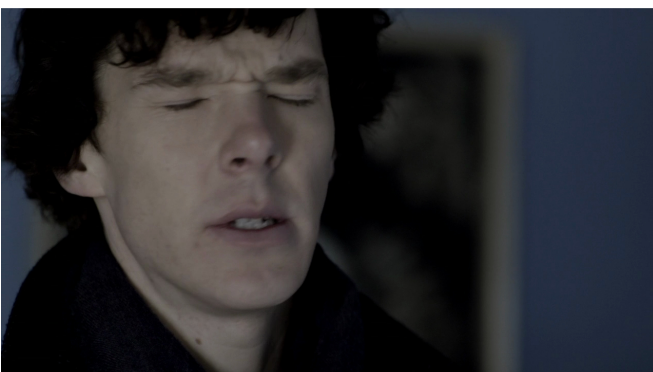
-- Sherlock can very well hold his own in a hand-to-hand fight, even against an armed enemy; the fact that he himself is never armed, however, may involve overconfidence (which he is definitely guilty of), or a distaste for bloodshed (which we indeed see time after time when he's immediate witness to the event), or both (my bet).



-- John seems very ambivalent at this stage, very conflicted, and not very nice at all. He's angry like he feels the world owes him. I don't like the way he tries to be pleasant with Dr. Sarah Sawyer, his hidden agenda about job and sex leaking out at all seams. This is worse than what we see with Dr. Ella Thompson in ASiP, if nothing else because those were obvious lies aimed at shielding, and these are disguised lies aimed at getting from Sawyer what John desperately wants. Not a very nice person, right now.



-- Again in Soo Lin Yao's apartment, Sherlock calls himself "Stupid!" in what is clearly someone else's voice. What's worse, he does that not while he's puzzling over clues, but after he has indeed pieced them together: he has the solution, but he took a little longer than he should have done... The Voice was waiting in silence, ready to pour out acid on his success, when it would hurt most.



-- Sherlock is lamentably exploitative toward Molly, an attitude which in this ep. goes beyond the ruse to keep her at bay, which we saw in ASiP, and preludes to his manoeuvres in TRF. I'm sorry, but I can't find a way to believe him when he makes a show of being nice to her. The only time I believe him is when he apologises at Christmas in ASiB.

-- Sawyer is admirably adaptable, trying to have fun at the show when it's already clear the evening is a failure, saving Sherlock by bravely stepping into the fight, and being actually helpful with the code-breaking. Mrs. Hudson in her turn is miraculously on the spot with her ready-made dinner. What would these guys do without women to save them?!

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### **The big things:**

-- It may not be immediately obvious, but Sherlock is very active in trying to keep John on an even emotional keel. E.g., look how he absorbs and disperses his bad mood after the fight with the chip-and-pin machine, distracting him from his worries about a job, lack of money and (most painful to John) perceived loss of competence. It is quite possible that Sherlock aimed at turning the exploitative demand from Wilkes into a chance to lighten John's mood.

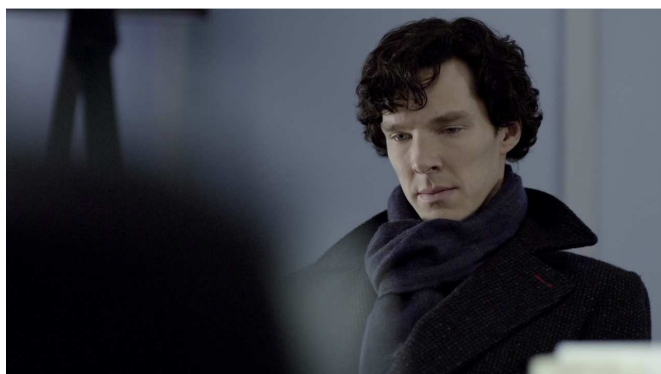
-- John refuses the term "friend" in front of Wilkes, at a moment when having a friend to show is very important for Sherlock. What's happening here? Imo, this.

Sherlock calls John a friend for two reasons: one, to shield himself from Wilkes by showing that he can have and does indeed have friends; the other, to please John by using the term in the common-parlance sense, which he expects John to be flattered by.

John in his turn has only one thing in mind right then and there: not being seen as a battlefield tourist, but as a professional with a specific, valuable competence which Sherlock needs.

The result is that at the only and unique moment when John doesn't want or need to be called a friend, Sherlock does exactly this, believing John will be glad.

-- Sherlock's past... Wilkes treats Sherlock like a whore to be bought, and perhaps also sold or rented. I have a creeping (and creepy) feeling that there may have been an only apparently consensual dom/sub relationship between Wilkes and Sherlock; that Sherlock believed to have gotten rid of it; and that the mishap with John's denial of the quality of friend is enough for him to slip under once again (he looks so sad, and what's worse, so \*defeated\*).



-- Yet, despite his shortcomings in crucial moments, John \*is\* supportive. Sherlock's recovery, shown complete once Sherlock faces Wilkes at the restaurant, begins with John suggesting that Sherlock may have been wanting to irritate Wilkes, and is celebrated with John choosing Sherlock over any wealthy banker in this world or the next ("I thought all bankers were supposed to be heartless bastards").

-- Sherlock is alone. He is so used to being alone, and only having himself or the skull to talk to, that a strange phenomenon happens when he visits Yao's apartment: he doesn't open the door to John, yet he keeps talking to him throughout, well before being attacked by Zhi Zhou.

My idea is that Sherlock is so taken by the chase, so unused to having help, and so used to being forced to work fast ("you have two minutes") in spite of distractions like knocking on doors etc., that he doesn't even think about opening to John.

Alternative explanations: keeping John safe; or avoiding the confusion of another person around.

-- Sherlock doesn't know how to deal with someone else being bright. When he bumps into John near Piccadilly, when John takes a picture of the cypher on the wall, and when Sawyer points out the translation by Yao, Sherlock is more embarrassed than glad for the info.



-- Sherlock doesn't know how to collaborate either, even when help would be useful, and free from the danger of bringing in more confusion than clarity. E.g., when DI Dimmock offers help with the books, he is sent away instead of set to order the books alphabetically, which would speed up the comparison between the two sets, from Van Coon and from Lukis.

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