

Three Patch Podcast – Episode 2

Kissing is Tedious

February 1, 2013

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Reichenbach Fallout

Consulting Fans: Fox Estacado, Rachael, Methleigh, Qui

--Consulting Fans Fox, Rachael, Methleigh, and Qui do a close reading of the first few minutes of the rooftop confrontation between two of Britain's most brilliant minds.

(Music intro)

Jim Moriarty: *I want to solve the problem. Our problem. The final problem. It's going to start very soon, Sherlock, the fall. But don't be scared. Falling's just like flying except there's a more permanent destination.*

(Music fades)

Fox: Welcome to the first episode of the Reichenbach Fallout, where we will be discussing, explicating, and speculating about the epic showdown between Sherlock and Moriarty in Season 2's season finale, The Reichenbach Fall. How Sherlock even survived the fall and what he has been up to since.

Today we will be discussing the beginning of the end, our first look at the interchange between these two brilliant minds on the rooftop of St. Bart's. We will be doing a very close reading on Moriarty's taunts to Sherlock. In many ways, this scene is an opening gambit for a life and death chess game where the opponents are arguably two of the most brilliant and chaotic minds of our

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times. I am Fox Estacado and I am joined here today by:

Rachael: Rachael.

Qui: Qui.

Methleigh: And Methleigh.

Fox: So first let's revisit the scene that played out.

(Music voiceover)

Jim Moriarty: *Oh. Here we are at last. You and me, Sherlock, and our problem, the final problem. Staying alive. It's so boring, isn't it? It's just staying! All my life, I've been searching for distractions and you were the best distraction and now I don't even have you. Because I've beaten you. And you know what? In the end, it was easy. It was easy. Now I've got to go back to playing with the ordinary people and it turns out you're ordinary just like all of them. Oh well.*

Fox: At the beginning of this scene, Moriarty says, "Here we are at last. You and me, Sherlock and our problem, the final problem. Staying alive." What do you think Moriarty means when he says to Sherlock on the roof these things?

Qui: I think when he says "the final problem," the final problem isn't staying alive. I think the final problem is each other, or themselves. They've reached a stalemate, you know. I don't mean to go Harry Potter here, but I'm going to Harry Potter.

(Laughter)

Rachael: It's always okay.

Qui: Neither can live while the other survives in a way. They're going to constantly be playing the game with each other until the end of one of them or both of them. I think that's the final problem. And perhaps staying alive is part of the problem, you know, being bored and trying to keep yourself distracted.

Fox: Well, I saw the final problem as their solution to staying alive and Moriarty and Sherlock are plagued with this almost fatal boredom. They feel like life is not worth living, almost, if they're not constantly being intellectually stimulated. Perhaps, this is me just speculating and I'm not trying

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to armchair psychoanalyze Moriarty, but maybe he was really concerned about intellectual simulation and he wanted to constantly be stimulated and he got caught in this – well not caught, but involved – in this consulting criminal cycle that he's doing. He does probably see the end coming and he wants to have that final problem, that final thing that he can just go out and have a really good time and not have to worry about the constant boredom anymore. So that's my take on why he constantly says “staying alive,” I want to stay alive because I want to be constantly simulated and yet he knows that's not sustainable for him. So that's why there is this rooftop scene, because he is playing out his last chess game.

Qui: Yeah, after the game's over, perhaps there is no point in staying alive. He's beaten his greatest nemesis.

Fox: Well, he was planning on killing off his greatest nemesis, which would take away the game! So I thought that was an interesting game to play.

Qui: Torn between winning the game and having the game be over.

(Agreement)

Fox: Methleigh, what do you think?

Methleigh: Well, I pretty much agree with Fox. He states it pretty explicitly that – he says the final problem, staying alive, I think that he means that. As far as doing the last great thing with Sherlock, I think that's probably what he's doing here. His problem is literally staying alive, arranging his life in such a way that it's interesting and that's the way he stays alive.

Rachael: So there are very few times that you will hear me say we are thinking about this too much and putting too much emphasis on it. However, I think this is one scenario where that might be the case. Thinking back to Season One, “staying alive” was basically a big joke from Moffat and Gatiss. It was Moriarty's ringtone in the pool. It was sort of cheeky. People were waiting a year for it to happen. It was kind of a let down and it sort of became a fandom joke because of that. I don't think the reference to staying alive and playing the ringtone at the beginning of this scene is anything more than just telling the joke again.

(Giggling)

Rachael: I don't see any – I think all of what you're saying is true in terms of the characterizations but I'm not so sure that there's some problem with staying alive and that it's a deeper issue for both of them. I just think it's the writers being a little bit cheeky.

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Qui: I agree, but I do think that the final problem is significant, but perhaps it's the final problem and instead of saying staying alive is the final problem, he's just saying "the final problem" and then it kind of gives that shout out back to the pool scene with the "staying alive" bit.

Rachael: Yeah.

Fox: Well, it does bring their relationship full circle as well, right? Because Moriarty created this elaborate kind of game for Sherlock to engage in in The Great Game and it ended with "Staying Alive," the ringtone, just kind of breaking that standoff.

Rachael: Mm-hmm.

Fox: And then now, Moriarty has done it again. He's created a game for Sherlock, but now it's going to end with them both possibly dying.

Qui: Picked up where they left off at their last confrontation.

Fox: Yes.

Rachael: It would be interesting to know if the writers had that full circle envisioned when they wrote the pool scene.

Fox: So Moriarty next says, "It's so boring, isn't it? It's just staying alive! All my life I've been searching for distractions and you were the best distraction and now I don't even have you." So what do you think is the significance of boredom to both Sherlock and Moriarty. What do distractions give them in light of this?

Rachael: So clearly both Sherlock and Moriarty are sort of two peas in a pod. They're both these super geniuses who see the world in a different way and because of their abilities, they're isolated and this leads to boredom. We see Sherlock doing things like shooting the wall and doing these elaborate experiments with heads and fingers in the fridge. We see Moriarty running basically an international crime syndicate. So I think the difference – both of them have the same problem. Both of them need entertainment, they need stimulation. The key difference between them is that Sherlock addresses his boredom by generally doing things that I would say are on the side of the angels. Whereas, not to put a shout out to things that happen later on the roof, but Moriarty tends to play in a dirtier sandbox. He tends to do things that are riskier, that have a disregard for people's lives, for people's safety. He has no morality where Sherlock seems to be restrained by some amount of rules. I'd go as far to say that they're both a little bit maybe on the spectrum in

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terms of autism disorders and that for whatever reason Sherlock still regards human norms as far as being kind to people, not breaking laws generally. Although Sherlock certainly breaks laws. But Moriarty seems to have even more disregard for social norms than Sherlock.

Qui: I tend to think that they are a lot alike in that they need distractions or they begin to self-destruct. I think maybe when Sherlock distracts himself he kind of distracts himself with order, I guess. Maybe not order.

Rachael: Ooh, I love the order and chaos thing with them.

Qui: But Moriarty kind of distracts himself by creating chaos. Whereas when Sherlock isn't distracted, that's when he begins showing signs of chaos. That's when bad things happen and he needs to smoke, self-destruct. So I think they both need to be stimulated.

Fox: Qui, I love your order and chaos interpretation. That's something I never sort of thought about and it's really interesting. Because justice – finding justice – for people, so that people can have closure, that's actually a very on the side of the angels thing. But it's also, you know, bringing order to entropy and in that way, Moriarty and Sherlock are perfect foils for each other. One creates the chaos and one tries to make it right. That's so interesting. Yeah, Sherlock refuses to say that he is a good person. He acknowledges that he's not a good person, he's not a hero and that he's really only doing this for the intellectual puzzle of it all. He takes the emotional element out of it.

Rachael: He says that, but do you think it's true?

Fox: I do think it's true to some extent. Or he wants it to be true.

Qui: He tries very hard for it to be true.

Fox: Yeah, and I think if we really wanted to psychoanalyze him, maybe he doesn't want to trust people or has trust issues himself and he just kind of decided not to invest in people any more and just to invest in the rationality, the puzzle. But, yeah, I think that's a really great interpretation. Methleigh, what do you think?

Methleigh: First of all, I think that boredom is basically a short hand for meaninglessness and that they're trying to find meaning and trying to find ways to be in the world. The difference between them is that Sherlock now cares about other things. He's got John. But Moriarty still doesn't have anything. Going back to the pool, if you look at what's happening there in the standoff, Sherlock is about to blow everyone up by shooting the bomb. What happens is –

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Moriarty has just screamed at Sherlock and shouted – that when Sherlock says, “People have died.” – You know, that's the problem here. What Moriarty screams at him is, “That's what people do.” So after Sherlock is going to shoot the bomb – and I'm just going through the scene – but then the phone rings. That's a distraction, so what Moriarty says there, “Wrong day to die.” He's been distracted by this telephone call.

Fox: So having these momentary distractions keeps him alive in some ways, keeps the game going, having those kind of little blips – or, I don't know – rays of distraction happen.

Methleigh: Yes. You know, the various crimes that he does with varying degrees of elaboration, this is probably the most elaborate one he's come up with yet. He's awfully happy with it. But if you look on Twitter for example, if you take the hashtag “stay alive”, it's really about suicide and how to stay alive and prevent yourself from committing suicide. You have to look at that and think about what does Moriarty do next? He shoots himself in the head, so I think that's what happens with boredom. He's trying to give himself reasons to stay alive and those are distractions.

Fox: Well, that's really interesting that you bring up the staying alive hashtag. I actually didn't know that that was a – I guess that people talk about suicide, they talk about staying alive and that's the hashtag they use. I didn't know that and I think I kind of want to look into that. But in my –

Methleigh: It's a self-prevention hashtag.

Fox: Hmm, got it, okay. Yeah, that's really quite significant to me because I used to work in suicide prevention in my previous work. I was a clinical case manager with HIV positive clients and one of the things that we would for suicide prevention was literally – and not just suicide prevention, actually – as a coping mechanism for people who are depressed. We tried to kind of give a schedule. Not give a schedule, but work on a schedule together with the person to fill up their entire day and literally hour by hour, just making sure that they're supposed to be somewhere, that they are involved, engaged in some activity, that there's other people around them, that they get out of the house. So we have all of these different coping mechanisms and perhaps Moriarty having these momentary distractions from minute to minute, that provides his distraction from boredom.

Methleigh: Yes, that's exactly how I see it.

Fox: That's really interesting.

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Methleigh: And not just momentary distractions, but the elaborate plan distractions as well. That's exactly, exactly.

Fox: Do we think that Moriarty has a big plan? Or is it just a series of little distractions that kind of don't add up to anything? Does he have a big, overarching plan for himself? And does Sherlock have big overarching distractions for himself?

Methleigh: Well, I don't think so. I think Sherlock's cases are what he does. And he's got John. John changes everything.

Rachael: I think to analogize Sherlock's use of cases to drug addiction, I don't think – that's clearly the parallel the show draws – you don't have an overarching addictive plan, other than maybe than *Leaving Las Vegas* style, like I'm going to drink myself to death. That's perhaps an overarching plan. But generally drug use is like I need to kill this feeling right now, what am I going to do? You think about one hit to the next, one day to the next. But not necessarily the big picture. So I don't know, I actually just like that comparison I made. Perhaps Moriarty has a *Leaving Las Vegas* style, I'm going to drink myself to death and crash and burn type view along with little plans, little day to day distractions and Sherlock is more focused on the day to day distractions.

Methleigh: Well, I think this is Moriarty's plot.

Fox: That this was his *Leaving Las Vegas*?

Methleigh: Well, I haven't seen *Leaving Las Vegas*, so I don't really get the thing, but I can infer from what you're saying that that's probably what you mean.

Rachael: *Leaving Las Vegas* is just an alcoholic who decides to go to Vegas and drink himself to death. So the end of his plan is just to die.

Methleigh: Yeah, so I think Moriarty is plotting himself up to this rooftop.

Fox: And that his way out is a double-suicide.

Methleigh: Suicide-murder.

Fox: Oh, okay.

Methleigh: Cause a coerced suicide is a murder, as we saw in episode one.

Fox: Oh. Oh, I didn't think of that. Because he engineered those as well and so now it's actually coming really full circle.

Methleigh: Well, I think so.

Fox: Wow. Yeah, I didn't think of that. So Moriarty next says, "Because I've beaten you, and you know what? In the end, it was easy. It was easy." Do you think Moriarty thought he really beat Sherlock at this point? And in what way?

Methleigh: Basically, he's got this beautiful elaborate plan that really is a work of art and I think that he believes he's arranged it in such a way that it's going to come out. And that's beating Sherlock.

(Agreement)

Fox: Rachael, what do you think?

Rachael: I think he definitely thinks that he's beaten Sherlock. He obviously missed something because we all know how this turns out. Sherlock beats him. I kind of think at the same time he's also on quite a bit of a high, analogizing this to drug use again. This is his distraction. This is his kick and he gets sort of irrational because he's enjoying it so much. He gets arrogant and braggadocio. I think he thinks it, but he's not thinking straight.

Qui: I tend to think that he doesn't know if he's beaten Sherlock yet. I think he's kind of sizing him up at this point.

Rachael: He doesn't have enough data.

Qui: He doesn't really get – he seems to get really upset when he realizes, when Sherlock starts to say, "Beats like digits." He gets very upset that Sherlock has lost the game, or, I don't think he's actually lost the game. Pretending he lost the game. He seems very, very upset. So I think at this point, he's just sizing Sherlock up and kind of calling his bluff a bit.

Fox: I guess I take a completely different view because I think Moriarty really thought he won at this point. Again, using the same evidence that you brought up, Qui. He just seems like he's gloating. He had to point out these little things, did you get it? Did you get it? Did you get this? It's

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almost like he's a little disappointed that he felt like Sherlock wasn't quite following. But then he was a little pleasantly surprised that he did kind of follow, but then he fell, still, for the code. Or so Moriarty thought. I think that because this is his way out, this is Moriarty's final problem, this is the way he's going to finally end his life. So he kind of felt a little disappointed in Sherlock, that he wasn't quite playing along.

Qui: What gets me is the “Oh well.” Like, whatever. He doesn't seem to really be that upset until...

Fox: Mmm.

Qui: I think at this point, he's still sizing up Sherlock, trying to figure out, did he really beat him?

Fox: Mm-hmm. Well I also do think he's at such a high right now, going back to what Rachael said. That he's kind of lost a little bit of his sense of, not reality, but he's lost his edge a little bit at this point. Because he's so high. He thought he did it. To be honest, I was a little disappointed in Moriarty for thinking that. If my reading is wrong of this one, then I would be quite happy. Because I thought Moriarty thinking that he beat Sherlock at this point was really... Moriarty, I expected better of you.

Rachael: So wait, what did you expect? You expected him to what exactly?

Fox: I expected him to be a more brilliant consulting criminal at this point.

Rachael: Uh-huh.

Fox: I expected the game.

Rachael: Cause you don't want the game to end either.

Fox: I don't want the game to end either and I'm kind of confused why Moriarty wants the game to end. Because here he is at the height of his great game, you know the great game continued. He has gotten Sherlock up to this roof. He had Kitty Riley. He had Sherlock being slandered in the media, in everything. And he's got Sherlock.

Qui: Actually, Sherlock got Moriarty on the roof.

Rachael: Yeah, Sherlock got Moriarty on the roof.

Fox: Yeah, but I think Moriarty thinks at this point, still, that he's played Sherlock up the roof. So

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I'm a little disappointed that Moriarty didn't want to drag it out further and that he wanted to end it right there. I think Moriarty was saying the truth, from his perspective, that I've beaten you, in the end it was easy.

Rachael: Do you think at this point he knows he's going to die?

Fox: I think so. I've kind of wavered on that. Last week, I actually thought he was impulsive and he didn't plan the whole thing. This week, I think he planned it. This is his suicide. This is his way out. This is his final swan song, or whatever.

Rachael: See, I'm thinking, I'm leaning towards the impulsive side. I think he went up there with a few different outcomes and I think part of him was hoping that the game would continue. Part of him was hoping that this would end with Sherlock joining him on the side of evil. Then possibly running off towards the sunset together to wreak havoc with all the other ordinary people. I think he foresaw a number of different outcomes and part of his overconfident, frenzied delivery is the excitement of dealing with all that plotting. But at the same time the nervousness because of how high stakes it is. He knows that one of the outcomes is that he might have to die.

Qui: Yeah. He's sizing up the situation still at this point. Testing Sherlock to see his reaction, to because I beat you. Because they're both very arrogant.

Methleigh: I think he absolutely meant to die and to kill Sherlock. He wanted company. At the pool he says, "Dying is what people do," and that's what he was doing. He was doing what people do.

Rachael: But he doesn't consider – I think he says, "Dying is what ordinary people do."

Methleigh: No, he says, "Dying is what people do."

Rachael: Cause he's not an ordinary person.

Methleigh: He's including himself in that and he's including Sherlock in that. He wants company and I think that this whole elaborate plan is exactly what he wants and maybe if Sherlock had been less easy to beat, that might have been enough distraction, but it wasn't. So he may be disappointed in that, but I think this is his plan.

Rachael: I can't take that depressing of a view of Moriarty.

(Laughter)

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Rachael: I love him too much. I don't think Moriarty...

Methleigh: But he shoots himself in the head!

Qui: I can't see him as suicidal. I think he would go there to beat Sherlock. He's not afraid to die to beat Sherlock, but he wouldn't...

Rachael: Yeah, dying is a means to beating Sherlock.

Qui: Exactly.

Rachael: It's not because he really wants to – I think he actually really likes his life.

Qui: He has to win against Sherlock so much that he would die to beat him.

Fox: And Moriarty next says, “And now I have to go back to playing with the ordinary people. And it turns out you're ordinary, just like all of them. Oh well.” So what is the difference between Moriarty and Sherlock and ordinary people and what he perceives about that? Rachael?

Rachael: They sort of already alluded to this. I think the difference is that both of them are obviously highly intelligent. They also see the world in a different way. They disregard some social norms. I'd say if I were to break it down to what's the difference between Sherlock and Moriarty and ordinary people, it's the heightened sense of observation, that desire to distraction and problems and disregarding the rules that other people play by. Ordinary people don't think up these elaborate schemes. They don't even just study tobacco ash, or keep fingers in their fridge. Ordinary people are more concerned with ordinary things. In a way, I guess it's both of them being kind of snots, because –

(Laughter)

Rachael: I'm sure that in this big world, there are people who are equally as intelligent as Sherlock and Moriarty and choose to use their intelligence for different things. But they're unique because they're highly intelligent and they are obsessed with the puzzle.

Qui: Highly intelligent and egotistical. (Laughs)

(Laughter)

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Rachael: Yeah, egotistical and narcissistic.

Qui: Yes.

Fox: Qui, what are your thoughts on the difference between Moriarty and Sherlock and ordinary people?

Qui: Well, the fact that they place all other people into this category, “ordinary.” Again that's very, very kind of egotistical. They seem to kind of place each other on the same level. There's a respect there. Perhaps a bit of jealousy? I don't know. Maybe.

Fox: This really makes me think. Who would Moriarty respect? And who would Sherlock respect? Who in their world is not ordinary?

Qui: Each other.

Fox: Each other and I think Moriarty was also trying to engage Mycroft, right?

Qui: Mycroft.

Fox: Between the three of them one of them is refusing to leave the Diogenes Club. One of them refuses to do leg work. So it's Sherlock and Moriarty on the roof, but potentially it could be Moriarty, Sherlock and Mycroft.

Qui: And maybe even Irene. Cause she definitely captures the attention of all three of those men.

Rachael: And actually, I don't know about that. I think maybe a difference between Sherlock and Moriarty is that they both categorize the world into “ordinary people” and “everybody else” but Sherlock seems to have this third category that becomes very relevant in this episode as “people that interest me.”

Qui: That's true.

Rachael: Those people that interest him, interest him for a genuine reason, not because he can use them, not because they distract him. But because he cares ultimately. Moriarty doesn't have that. Moriarty is interested in Mycroft, for example, because Mycroft gives him information about Sherlock. So for whatever reason, Sherlock has this bubble, this categorization of people, that he is closer with that I don't think Moriarty has. Unless you read a lot of fanfic, he might have it with

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(Laughter)

Fox: So if Moriarty had a John, you know, earlier on in life, would he be a consulting criminal? Would he have turned out different?

Rachael: I think that might be the deciding thing that is the difference between them.

Qui: Sherlock had a brother that probably helped him through his darker times. Whereas, Moriarty, did he have anybody?

Rachael: Probably not. Poor Jim!

(Laughter)

Rachael: Poor little Jim. I love stories of Jim as a kid, by the way.

Qui: An evil child.

Fox: Methleigh, what do you think about this? Ordinary people, Mycroft – I mean, not Mycroft – Moriarty and Sherlock.

Methleigh: I think I'd put Mycroft into that category, too. They are brilliant, more brilliant than ordinary people. But I don't think that that's really enough. There's brilliant people that get on in other ways. There's several other things that make them, that they consider makes them other than ordinary. One of those is the ability to plan and to sacrifice for plans and to commit themselves to plans, absolutely. Another is the amorality. They're going to do what they're going to do and they're not really going to think so much about right or wrong, or good or evil. They're going to do what they believe despite that sort of thing. Another thing that I think makes them different, you know you mentioned the autism spectrum. I read a really nice interview with Benedict once where he said that he didn't think that it was Asperger's, but that he thinks that what happened was that something happened to Sherlock and he tried to turn himself into a robot, that it was more deliberate than something organic.

Rachael: Interesting.

Methleigh: It was a beautiful interview, I loved it. But I think that that and the whole “Caring is not an advantage” thing that Mycroft says. The whole “Sentiment is a chemical defect.” I think that

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those things play a really large part in what makes them extraordinary and I think that they know that and there's not that many people like that. What they've got – they've got Mycroft, they've got Sherlock, they've got Moriarty and now Sherlock has John. I think that those are the things that make them see themselves as extraordinary and where they draw that line between “ordinary people” and extraordinary people.

Rachael: So you put Mycroft in that category? Because I think Mycroft certainly cares about rules. I mean, he is the British government. Granted, he makes some of them but I think Mycroft cares more about what society thinks. I don't know if I'd put Mycroft in that category.

Methleigh: I'd put him in that category except for the amorality part. But all the rest of those things apply to Mycroft, yes.

Fox: Well, it's interesting you bring up the whole, like, little talk that Mycroft gave to Sherlock and I just can't help but think that this is how Mycroft kind of schooled young Sherlock when they were children.

Methleigh: Yes, I think so.

Fox: Yeah, and he told young Sherlock, for some reason, “Caring is not an advantage.” For this entire time Sherlock has been carrying that ideal. Yet, what does Mycroft do? Mycroft cares so much about Sherlock.

Methleigh: It's a bit ironic.

Fox: I don't get it. Yes, it is very ironic.

Qui: Maybe Mycroft knew that was his greatest weakness, how much he cares for his little brother.

Rachael: Mm-hmm.

Methleigh: I think we see that in the airplane episode.

Fox: Right. Any final thoughts on this question?

Methleigh: Well, I think it makes him alone in the world. They've got each other and how many times do you see people like that? Not often.

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Fox: And Moriarty wanted to take out two of the three more interesting –

Methleigh: I would suggest three of them.

Fox: All three. Because how would Mycroft react to Sherlock's death?

Methleigh: And he's also trying to take down Mycroft in the airplane episode, I would argue.

Fox: Mm-hmm, and I think he would actually accomplish that by causing Sherlock's suicide.

Qui: I think he was trying to get Mycroft's attention and motivate him into detaining him. It was part of the game. That would be my argument. All chess pieces.

Methleigh: Well, maybe he does leave out Mycroft because of the morality part of that whole thing.

Fox: That actually makes me very very scared for people, for everybody, for society! What would happen if Mycroft went off his rocker?

Qui: Bad things would probably happen.

Rachael: I don't think Mycroft was remotely even close to going off his rocker. I think he's incredibly restrained. I fundamentally disagree with the characterization that Mycroft is in the same pool of people as Sherlock and Jim. I think yes, they're similar and they're both highly intelligent and they are a little bit quirky, but the similarities end there. If they were more similar, Sherlock and Mycroft wouldn't have such disdain for each other.

Qui: Right.

Methleigh: Going back to the boredom thing, Mycroft is not bored. He's got the whole world in his hands. He's the British government. That's going to be meaning right there. He's not going to be bored and he's not going to have all those other constraints. He's not going to need distractions. He's got the whole world in his hands. He's the British government. And sometimes the CIA on a freelance basis.

Qui: Yeah, he has to go on diets.

Methleigh: He doesn't have the same problems as the others do.

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Rachael: But I still disagree cause I don't think having the British government at their disposal would entertain Sherlock or Moriarty. So Mycroft has a lower threshold of what it takes to entertain him. I don't see them together. Maybe other people do. This is partially because I like Sherlock and Moriarty to be in their own special bubble.

(Laughter)

Methleigh: I don't see it as having the British government at his disposal, but what he does all day is run the British government, which is running a huge part of the world. Do you want to be a mastermind who controls the world, you know, the villains, brains of the cartoon shows – Mycroft's got all that. He's got everything.

Fox: I think it's interesting that Moriarty and Mycroft, those two names together – they're really similar names. In fact, I think one of the rules... I don't know if Conan Doyle knew, if these rules were around when Conan Doyle was writing or if they were, he probably didn't listen to them. But one of the rules with creative writing is in a novel, or a long book, you can't have two characters with the same first letter.

Qui: It's like Sauron and Saruman in *Lord of the Rings*.

Fox: Yeah! I don't know! Was this deliberate to have Moriarty and Mycroft both have names that sound a little alike, or the same number of letters almost, and start with the same letter.

Qui: No telling.

Methleigh: They're not etymologically similar.

Fox: But Morcroft – sorry!

(Laughter)

Rachael: Morcroft!

(Laughter)

Fox: Mycroft! Moriarty! (Laughs) I've actually confused those two before when I was reading.

Methleigh: I just did it.

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Qui: Is that the Mycroft/Moriarty ship? Morcroft?

(Laughter)

Rachael: Morcroft.

Qui: Morcroft! If that's not the name...

(Laughter)

Qui: Because you want more!

Rachael: Morcroft.

Fox: Okay, so finally Moriarty gives Sherlock an incentive: "Let me give you a little extra incentive. Your friends will die if you don't." Sherlock says, "John." Moriarty says, "Oh, not just John. Everyone." "Mrs. Hudson." "Everyone." "Lestrade." "Three bullets, three gunmen, three victims. There's no stopping them now, unless my people see you jump." So the million dollar question: would Sherlock have jumped if it had only been Lestrade and Mrs. Hudson? If there had been no John? And would Moriarty have arranged this at all if there had been no John?

Rachael: Hmm. If there'd been no John. So, meaning John just didn't exist?

Fox: If John was never walking, he never ran into Stamford and Stamford never introduced John to Sherlock and they never became flatmates.

Rachael: Yeah, I think. First of all, if that were the case, Moriarty would have to completely reconstruct his plan. Sherlock would not have this separate bubble of people that he thinks are interesting. I think that bubble sort of existed before John but part of what John did for Sherlock was solidify that bubble and make it clear that these people are not only people that interest him for entertainment but that he has some feeling for, that he cares about, that mean more to him – help him bring himself outside of himself, and outside of his brain. So without John, Moriarty would have to think of a whole new scheme. If Moriarty were to construct this scheme and not put an assassin on John, he would be an extremely ineffective planner.

(Laughter)

Rachael: And I would be very very disappointed in Moriarty then.

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Fox: Methleigh, what are your thoughts? I know this was a question you were very much looking forward to.

Methleigh: I like this question. I think it's the million dollar question because John's changed everything, as far as I'm concerned. I think that the whole arrangement of this is Moriarty's jealousy that Sherlock now has a heart and that heart is John. Before that, Sherlock would have been very much like Moriarty, I think. They would have worked in parallel, in tandem. But now Sherlock's got something Moriarty doesn't have, so I don't think he would have arranged this at all. And looking at Sherlock himself: he values Lestrade. He values Mrs. Hudson. But as for jumping off a roof for them, giving up his life, in essence what he does, his reputation, his goodwill of everyone he knows, his profession, his home, everything that he owns. Even with the plan where he survives, he's giving up all of that, so I don't think he would have done that if it were just Lestrade and Mrs. Hudson. He wouldn't have put that commitment into it. He would have maybe told Mycroft and arranged to have them protected, or whisked off to the Canary Islands or something.

(Laughter)

Methleigh: I think this is really a significant question. That's what I think about this.

Fox: I agree. Qui?

Qui: I was thinking – I had read, would he have jumped if John's life hadn't been threatened? I was thinking that yes, he would have jumped, because he orchestrated the whole thing. We only got to see Moriarty's side of the game. We get to see Sherlock's side, because he lured Moriarty onto that roof for a reason. I doubt he chose Bart's just randomly. But I think you're all right that John is definitely, I mean, he's changed his life, his outlook. If this game had happened with no John, I think it would have been a lot more chaotic. Perhaps a lot more destructive. I think John kind of grounds Sherlock a little bit, helps him put his chaos in order, gives him a reason to care, I guess.

Fox: I agree with everyone's viewpoints, that John has significantly altered the path of Moriarty and Sherlock. I guess if John wasn't there, I can kind of see Sherlock and Moriarty just continuing their epic battle with each other across the globe and it would become, you know. But with John in the picture, Sherlock – I don't know if Sherlock would have jumped off the roof actually.

Qui: I don't think they would have made it that far. I think the pool scene would have happened completely different.

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Rachael: I agree. I like what Methleigh said about there being some jealousy between Moriarty and John. I don't think it ever would have escalated to this point if John hadn't come into the picture. Now it is an interesting question, what if Moriarty just planned really badly?

(Laughter)

Rachael: If you argue that Mrs. Hudson having a gun pointed on her, Mycroft having a gun pointed on him, is not enough to get Sherlock to do what he did, you're kind of arguing that Sherlock is just as amoral as Moriarty. I mean, what's the difference between the two of them if that's the case? Is John the difference? And I think the answer is yes.

Methleigh: Well, I think Sherlock is as amoral as Moriarty, apart from the fact that John's changed that. It hasn't changed his morality, but it's changed his values, which is not exactly the same thing.

Fox: I agree. If Moriarty planned this really badly and did not have an assassin on John –
(Laughter)

Fox: Which, I would be really disappointed with Moriarty by that point, but I would have thought that John and Sherlock would have double-teamed and if Sherlock did actually jump off the roof, he would have somehow involved John in the picture as well. It would not have been a whole act to mislead everybody, including John. John would have been in on it. John would have helped him. I would actually be interested in seeing that. I would love to see that in fanfics. For John to actually know, okay, Sherlock is going to perform a magic trick, he's going to fall off the roof. But he's going to survive and then we're going to go into hiding and then we're going to go and chase down Moriarty and the whole syndicate. The whole criminal network.

Rachael: Yeah.

Qui: I think Sherlock wanted to keep John out of the game as much as he could. Especially after the pool.

Fox: Exactly.

Methleigh: Is Sherlock really going to let John see him jump? John's going to try and stop him. He's not going to let him jump off that building, even if he's figured out the magic trick, I don't think.

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Fox: Yeah, John values Sherlock's brain, very much.

Methleigh: And his heart.

Fox: Mm-hmm, and his heart. But I don't know, a jump from that height, I'm constantly just thinking about cranial damage.

(Laughter)

Fox: So I think John, as a doctor, even if he knew that it was just a stunt, he would be scared so much for Sherlock. Sherlock jumping off the roof was really, really heartwarming to me because it shows that even though he knew he was somehow going to get out of this alive, he was still taking a risk. Because it's not 100% foolproof. I don't see how this could be 100% foolproof. He was still risking the integrity of his mind to some extent and he was doing that, arguably, for John.

Methleigh: I completely agree with that. The other thing, as far as Moriarty is concerned, the other reason that he's up here is because he's not able to continue his game Sherlock's way and all that, but I don't think that's the real reason. The real reason – his real motivation is the thing about John and the fact that Sherlock's different now because he has a heart and he cares.

Qui: I'm looking forward to exploring this further because there's so much more that we haven't looked at yet.

Fox: Well, that concludes our first segment of Reichenbach Fallout. I hope you enjoyed our discussion, explication, and speculation about this epic showdown between Sherlock Holmes and James Moriarty. We look forward to hearing your thoughts, ideas and questions about this pivotal scene. Please leave us a comment at bored@three-patch.com. That is b-o-r-e-d at t-h-r-e-e dash p-a-t-c-h dot com. And your question might be included in a future episode during the mailbag segment.

(Music outro)

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Music

Reichenbach Fallout: Adele: Skyfall (get it [here](#))

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