



## Clue and Red Herrings in *Enola Holmes* (2020) and *Enola Holmes 2* (2022)

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### Abstract

This research explores the role of clues and red herrings in *Enola Holmes* (2020) and *Enola Holmes 2* (2022), both directed by Harry Bradbeer and produced by Netflix. The detective genre has long relied on the interplay between genuine clues, which guide the detective toward resolution, and red herrings, which intentionally mislead to sustain suspense. While previous studies have examined the detective formula in classic novels or focused on thematic aspects such as gender and adaptation in the *Enola Holmes* films, few have analyzed how cinematic techniques highlight the presence of clues and red herrings in modern screen narratives. This study employs a descriptive qualitative method, with primary data drawn from selected scenes, dialogues, and cinematic elements in both films, analyzed through John G. Cawelti's classical detective formula and supported by secondary references. The findings reveal that clues often appear through symbolic objects, coded texts, and visual motifs, while red herrings are created through misinterpretations or staged evidence. Cinematic techniques such as close-ups, lighting contrasts, and mise-en-scène are used to emphasize both genuine and misleading information, actively involving viewers in the interpretive process. The results show that while *Enola Holmes* (2020) focuses more on personal and familial dimensions, *Enola Holmes 2* (2022) incorporates broader social issues, offering a denser layering of clues and red herrings. This study contributes to detective fiction scholarship by demonstrating how classical narrative structures are adapted in contemporary cinema to balance logic, suspense, and audience engagement.

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## INTRODUCTION

The detective genre in movies or fiction usually attracts audiences through the use of red herrings, which create unexpected twists in the plot. Red herrings are significant because they mislead both the detective and the audience, thereby increasing suspense and engagement (James, 2009; Barzun & Taylor, 1971). The use of red herrings as a narrative strategy can be traced back to classic detective fiction, such as Dorothy L. Sayers' *The Five Red Herrings* (1931), where multiple false leads were deliberately constructed to obscure the truth. Since

then, red herrings have become a crucial element of the detective formula, functioning alongside genuine clues to maintain narrative balance and audience curiosity (The Write Practice, 2016; The Book Decoder, 2021).

The discussion of clues and red herrings as central elements of detective fiction has been highlighted in several major works. Cawelti (1976), in *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance*, emphasized that clues function as the logical thread guiding the detective—and the audience—toward the resolution, while red herrings serve to mislead, maintaining suspense and complexity. Similarly, Barzun and Taylor (1971), in *A Catalogue of Crime*, described red herrings as deliberate misdirections that add richness to the puzzle-solving process, reinforcing their inseparability from genuine clues.

Knight (2004) further explained in *Crime Fiction 1800–2000: Detection, Death, Diversity* that detective stories rely on a dynamic interplay between revealing and concealing information, where clues offer progress while red herrings preserve uncertainty. This tension between truth and deception is what sustains reader engagement throughout the narrative. In line with this, Blakeley and Wimmer (2023) provided a systematic definition of red herrings as misleading clues that divert attention, underscoring their relevance alongside authentic clues in shaping modern detective narratives.

Taken together, these theoretical foundations demonstrate that the presence of both clues and red herrings is what gives detective fiction its enduring appeal. Clues provide logical anchors for unraveling mysteries, while red herrings ensure that the narrative remains unpredictable and suspenseful. Their interplay not only enriches the detective formula but also deepens audience engagement by balancing logic with surprise (Cawelti, 1976; Knight, 2004).

The *Enola Holmes* films, directed by Harry Bradbeer and based on Nancy Springer's young adult novels, offer a modern reimagining of the detective genre through the perspective of Sherlock Holmes's younger sister. The first film, *Enola Holmes* (2020), received widespread recognition not only for its refreshing take on the Holmes universe but also for its commercial and critical success. Produced by Legendary Pictures and released on Netflix, the film quickly became one of the platform's most-watched titles in its debut week, reaching 76 million households in its first 28 days (Netflix, 2020). Critics praised Millie Bobby Brown's performance for bringing youthful energy and feminist nuance to the detective genre, while the film's adventurous tone attracted younger audiences unfamiliar with traditional Sherlock Holmes adaptations. Beyond entertainment, *Enola Holmes* introduced detective conventions such as puzzles, cryptic messages, and misdirections in ways that were visually engaging for modern viewers. These features make the film a particularly rich subject for analyzing how classical detective elements like clues and red herrings are reinterpreted in contemporary cinema.

The sequel, *Enola Holmes 2* (2022), built upon the success of its predecessor, ranking in the Top 10 most-watched films globally on Netflix during its release month. Inspired by the real-life Matchgirls' Strike of 1888, the film intertwines detective mystery with themes of social justice, gender inequality, and labor exploitation. This historical backdrop not only heightened the stakes of Enola's investigation but also added layers of realism and social critique to the narrative. Critical responses highlighted how the sequel delivered a more intricate plot structure, employing multiple layers of clues—including corporate documents, hidden messages, and coded symbols—while also weaving in numerous red herrings to mislead

both the protagonist and the audience. Compared to the first film, which centered more on family ties and personal discovery, the sequel broadened its scope to societal issues, thereby offering a more complex narrative landscape. This makes *Enola Holmes 2* especially compelling for examining how detective formulas adapt when combined with historical and social dimensions.

Movies within the detective genre captivate audiences not only for their entertainment value but also because they invite viewers to actively participate in the narrative. Clues and red herrings encourage audiences to speculate, predict outcomes, and experience surprise when misdirections are revealed (Knight, 2004). As Cawelti (1976:80) defines in his classical detective formula, the genre typically includes a recognizable pattern of situations, actions, characters, and settings, in which clues and red herrings are central to the problem-solving process. While these elements have been extensively analyzed in classical detective novels, such as those by Agatha Christie and Arthur Conan Doyle, their adaptation in contemporary films for younger audiences remains underexplored.

Studies on *red herrings* in detective works have been conducted by several scholars. For instance, Aryani (2024) examined *red herrings* in *A Haunting in Venice* (2023) through the lens of the classic detective formula. The study demonstrated how misleading clues reinforce suspense and guide audience perception. Similarly, Milan (2021) discussed the function of *red herrings* in *modern detective narratives*, emphasizing their role in sustaining narrative tension. In addition, Blakeley and Wimmer (2023) provided a systematic definition of *red herrings* as false clues deliberately designed to mislead both the detective and the audience. These studies show that much of the research has focused on the narrative role of *red herrings*, while less attention has been paid to how they are visualized cinematically in films.

Meanwhile, the study of *clues* has also been addressed, particularly in the context of classic detective novels and film adaptations. Rahmawati (2022), for example, analyzed *clues* and *red herrings* in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, comparing both the novel and its film adaptation. Fadhila and Adi (2022) explored female detectives in the *Dublin Murder Squad Series*, highlighting the role of *clues* in structuring investigative narratives. Another relevant study is by Sulastris (2024), who examined crime elements and *clues* in the screenplay of *Enola Holmes 2* (2022). The study concluded that the film employs typical detective genre action patterns to build tension and develop the storyline. However, these works largely emphasize textual and narrative functions of clues, rather than analyzing how *clues* are emphasized visually through camera work, lighting, and mise-en-scène.

As for research specifically on *Enola Holmes*, most studies have concentrated on issues of feminism, gender, and characterization. For example, *Characterization of Enola Holmes in The Case of the Missing Marquess: A Study of Liberal Feminism* (2022), Janice and Mulatsih (2024), and Jayastu (2024) examined feminist perspectives in *Enola Holmes* and its sequel. Similarly, Saskia and Ahmadi (2023) discussed Enola's identity through deconstruction, while Sabani and Istiani (2024) analyzed the adaptation of the detective story formula in the films. These studies indicate that existing research on *Enola Holmes* mainly focuses on feminist themes, identity, and adaptation.

**Table 1. Data Collection Procedure**

Step.	Activity	Focus
1.	Rewatching both films repeatedly	Narrative accuracy and comprehension
2.	Identifying and transcribing key scenes	Dialogue, objects, and storyline relevance
3.	Noting cinematic techniques	Camera angles, lighting, mise-en-scène, editing
4.	Interpreting through theory	Cawelti's detective formula, Pramaggiore & Wallis (2005)

However, the cinematic realization of clues and red herrings—particularly through camera shots, lighting, mise-en-scène, and flashback sequencing—has not been explored in depth. This study addresses that gap by examining specific scenes from *Enola Holmes* (2020) and *Enola Holmes 2* (2022), where visual elements construct misleading cues and authentic clues. By applying Cawelti's theoretical framework in combination with film analysis, this research not only discusses the narrative use of red herrings and clues but also demonstrates how they are visually encoded within the films.

## METHODS

This research employs a descriptive qualitative method. A descriptive qualitative method provides a detailed description of data and facts without relying on statistical calculations. It emphasizes an in-depth understanding of the research object by analyzing its narrative and cinematic elements (Semi, 2012; Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

The primary data of this study are two films directed by Harry Bradbeer and produced by Netflix, *Enola Holmes* (2020) and *Enola Holmes 2* (2022). These films are chosen because they present modern adaptations of the detective genre while integrating classical narrative structures. The data consist of selected scenes, dialogues, and cinematic techniques that indicate the presence of clues and red herrings. To enrich the analysis, relevant screenplay excerpts are also considered.

The data collection procedure involved several steps. First, both films were watched repeatedly to ensure accuracy and comprehension. Second, significant scenes containing potential clues or red herrings were identified and transcribed, including both the dialogue and the visual aspects. Third, cinematic techniques such as camera angles, lighting, mise-en-scène, and editing were noted, since these elements highlight the significance of clues or emphasize misdirection. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), such techniques are essential for guiding audience attention and shaping meaning in film.

The analysis categorizes data into two main groups: clues and red herrings. This categorization is guided by Cawelti's classical detective formula, which outlines the structural role of these elements in detective narratives. The interpretation of cinematic techniques is supported by Pramaggiore and Wallis's (2005) framework, ensuring that the findings examine not only *what* clues and red herrings represent in the story, but also *how* their significance is visually constructed on screen. This dual approach strengthens reliability and validity, while

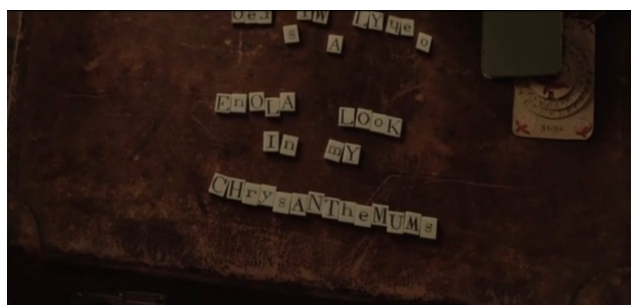
secondary sources such as books, journals, and previous studies provide additional scholarly support.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Clue and Red Herrings in *Enola Holmes* (2020)

#### Clue in *Enola Holmes* (2020)

In *Enola Holmes* (2020), a total of seven clues are identified throughout the film. These clues are embedded in objects, dialogues, and visual signs that help Enola trace her mother's whereabouts. The film emphasizes their importance through cinematic techniques such as close-ups, lighting, and mise-en-scène, guiding both Enola and the audience in the process of discovery.



**Figure 1.** Minute 00:18:39–00:19:05

**Data 1:** Enola discovers a hidden message written on the pencil wrapping: “*Enola look in my chrysanthemums.*”

This clue is revealed through a *close-up shot* of the small piece of paper concealed behind the pencil wrapper. The framing forces the audience to focus exclusively on the writing, emphasizing its significance as the first step in Enola's investigation. The *warm lighting* from the bedroom lamp creates an atmosphere of intimacy and discovery, inviting the audience to share Enola's moment of realization. The *mise-en-scène* is minimal—only a pencil and a wrapper—yet its simplicity underscores Cawelti's (1976) point that detective clues often emerge from ordinary objects that become meaningful within a mystery framework. As Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005) explain, the use of close-ups and focused lighting is a cinematic strategy to assign narrative weight to specific objects. Thus, this scene combines visual emphasis and narrative purpose, showing how a seemingly trivial object becomes a decisive clue.

**Data 2:** Enola realizes the true meaning of her mother's message: “*My chrysanthemums. Not the ones she bought. The ones she painted.*” Upon removing the painting, she discovers hidden money and a flower card that reads “*Our future is up to us.*” (00:19:44–00:20:34)

The revelation of this clue is staged through a shift in camera framing. At first, a *medium shot* shows Enola from the waist up as she examines the painting, establishing her position within the setting. When she removes the frame, the camera transitions to a *close-up* of the hidden objects—money and the flower card—inviting the audience to share in the moment of discovery. The dialogue “*Our future is up to us*” is highlighted through another *close-up* on Enola's face, illuminated by the warm glow of the lamp she holds close. The warm lighting not only ensures that the audience can clearly see her expression but also symbolizes

a sense of hope and determination. According to *Film Studies: An Introduction* (Pramaggiore & Wallis, 2005), the use of camera framing and lighting guides viewers' attention toward objects or expressions that carry narrative weight. In this case, the combined use of medium and close-up shots emphasizes both the contextual action (removing the painting) and the emotional reaction (reading the message). This cinematic technique transforms the written clue into a pivotal narrative device, reinforcing its role in shaping Enola's resolve to continue her search. From Cawelti's perspective, the discovery of the card represents a classic detective clue: textual evidence that provides both direction and thematic resonance for the investigation.

**Data 3:** Enola recalls her mother's riddle: "...our choices: the bankmen met, entangle herb, or Ellie Houseman." (00:45:30–00:46:24)

This scene is constructed through a series of *flashbacks* combined with *medium shots* of each figure associated with her mother's secret society. Each phrase of the riddle is paired with a visual recall, reinforcing the connection between words and memory. The turning point comes when Enola examines a bomb in a box, marked with a dragon insignia, shown in an emphatic *close-up shot*. The camera isolates the dragon symbol, signaling its role as the key to decoding her mother's cryptic message. The *mise-en-scène*—the wooden box, firework-like bombs, and dragon emblem—creates both danger and mystery, embedding the clue in a visually striking setting. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), the use of *flashbacks* and *close-ups* directs the audience's gaze toward significant narrative details that might otherwise be overlooked, ensuring that the riddle's meaning is visually underscored. In line with Cawelti's (1976) classical detective formula, the dragon insignia functions as a narrative clue that simultaneously advances the plot while preserving suspense, as its full implications are revealed gradually rather than immediately.

**Data 4:** Enola finds a purple ribbon hanging from a padlock on a building. The ribbon reminds her of the gift from her mother and of the attire worn by the mysterious women associated with her. (00:47:11–00:47:30)

This scene is framed with a *medium shot* of Enola standing in front of a locked door, before shifting to a *close-up* of the purple ribbon tied around the padlock. The ribbon becomes the central object of focus, emphasized through visual isolation. The *mise-en-scène*—the heavy door, iron padlock, and vibrant purple ribbon—creates a stark contrast, symbolically linking Enola's personal memories with external evidence. As she picks up the ribbon, the camera lingers in *close-up*, and Enola briefly smiles directly at the camera, breaking the fourth wall and inviting the audience to share in her realization. The low-key outdoor *lighting* reinforces the sense of secrecy and tension, highlighting the ribbon as a meaningful clue. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), *close-ups* and symbolic *mise-en-scène* elements guide viewers' interpretive focus toward details that drive the narrative. Within Cawelti's (1976) classical detective formula, this ribbon exemplifies how seemingly ordinary objects can become crucial clues, bridging the detective's subjective memory with the objective trail of evidence.

**Data 5:** Enola discovers a newspaper with information about the Orsini bombing, gunpowder, and pamphlets advocating for women's suffrage. Upon entering the structure, she also finds a laboratory filled with explosives, reminding her of experiments she once did with her mother. (00:47:41–00:49:09)

The scene begins with a *low-angle shot* as Enola walks into the abandoned building, making her appear small against the looming structure, foreshadowing the danger inside. Once she enters the room, the camera shifts to *close-ups* on her expression as she realizes her mother's involvement in political extremism: "Mycroft was right. You are dangerous. And Sherlock was right, too. You do have a plant." This shift emphasizes her emotional response to the discovery. The *mise-en-scène* includes scattered gunpowder, laboratory equipment, pamphlets on women's suffrage, a newspaper referencing the Orsini bombing, and a wooden box filled with bombs, visually constructing an atmosphere of both political urgency and personal danger. The *lighting* relies on natural daylight entering through the windows, which contrasts with the dim interior. This interplay of light and shadow symbolizes both revelation and threat—the sunlight exposes hidden objects while reminding viewers of the risk embedded in them. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), such contrasts in lighting and *mise-en-scène* visually communicate narrative tension by blending everyday realism (daylight) with dramatic suspense (explosives). Within Cawelti's (1976) classical detective formula, this clue expands the mystery beyond a private family matter, situating Enola's search within broader socio-political conflict. Thus, the discovery intensifies the narrative stakes by tying personal investigation to collective historical struggles.

**Data 6:** Enola discovers Tewkesbury's hiding place after piecing together misleading trails. Among his belongings, she finds a book with "Covent Garden Market" written on its pages, along with a bookmark of dried flowers. Enola says: "*This must be why Bowler Hat was there, following your breadcrumb trail. So what was your real plan? Oh, you tickle me, Viscount Tewkesbury, you magnificent Marquess of blooming Basilwether.*" (01:07:41–01:08:02)

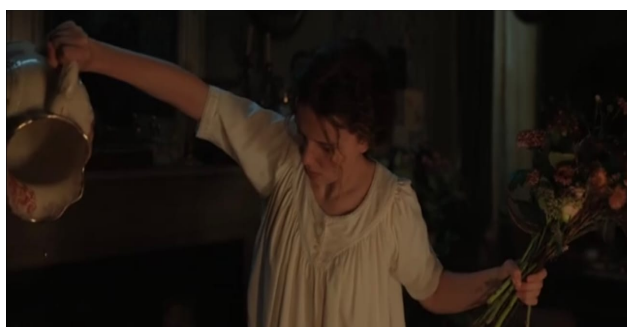
The scene emphasizes Enola's process of deduction through a series of *close-up shots*: first on her facial expressions as she recognizes the hiding place, then on each object she touches, such as the book and the dried flowers. These close-ups invite the audience to observe every detail alongside Enola, reinforcing the clue's importance. The final *close-up on the marked book* highlights its role as the key to confirming Tewkesbury's location. The *mise-en-scène* is richly detailed, featuring books, potted plants, carpentry tools, and a suspended makeshift bed, all of which create a naturalistic yet secretive atmosphere for Tewkesbury's refuge. The *soft, natural lighting* of the outdoor setting adds warmth and comfort, contrasting with the darker, more threatening spaces earlier in the film. This use of light conveys safety and calm, reinforcing the idea that the hideout is not only a physical refuge but also a symbolic one. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), close-up shots and lighting can shape the audience's perception of space, guiding them to view certain places as secure or dangerous. Within Cawelti's (1976) detective formula, this discovery functions as a pivotal clue that advances the plot from uncertainty toward resolution, narrowing down the mystery through physical evidence. The combination of *mise-en-scène* and cinematography ensures that the audience shares Enola's sense of triumph in uncovering the truth.

**Data 7:** Sherlock Holmes explains: “*The medals on his chest. He wasn’t in the country when the boy’s father was killed, rather serving in the Afghan War.*” The medal visible in a newspaper photograph serves as a decisive alibi, proving that Uncle Tewkesbury could not have committed the murder. (01:44:06–01:45:18)

The scene begins with a *medium shot* of Sherlock Holmes conversing with Inspector Lestrade, underscoring the intellectual exchange between detective and authority. The revelation moment is reinforced through a *close-up shot* of the medal in the newspaper, visually isolating the crucial piece of evidence. This cinematic choice compels the audience to focus on the medal as the single detail capable of dismantling earlier suspicions. The *mise-en-scène* includes the newspaper, Sherlock’s magnifying glass, and the wooden-paneled room, which conveys a formal investigative atmosphere. Natural *lighting filtered through the window* reflects onto the objects, blending with the brown tones of the wooden interior. This lighting composition creates a sense of authenticity and clarity, visually echoing the process of uncovering the truth. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), the use of close-up is essential in guiding the audience to reframe their interpretation of narrative details. Meanwhile, Cawelti’s (1976) theory highlights how authentic clues act as correctives to red herrings, steering the detective back toward logical reasoning. In this scene, the medal functions as that corrective element: a small but decisive detail that restores narrative balance, demonstrating the genre’s emphasis on precision, logic, and the ultimate triumph of truth over misdirection.

### Red Herrings in *Enola Holmes* (2020)

In *Enola Holmes* (2020), a total of two red herrings are identified throughout the film. These red herrings appear through symbolic objects and misleading dialogues that momentarily divert Enola—and the audience—from the real solution. The film highlights their deceptive function using cinematic techniques such as medium shots, low-key lighting, and symbolic *mise-en-scène*. By doing so, the narrative sustains suspense and tension, demonstrating how red herrings are indispensable in the classical detective formula.



**Figure 8. Minute 00:19:25–00:19:38**

**Data 8:** Enola says: “*The bestowing of chrysanthemums indicates familiar attachment and by implication, affection.*” Enola initially assumes that the chrysanthemums in the vase are her mother’s intended clue due to their symbolic meaning. However, this interpretation misleads her, as there is no hidden message within the flowers.

The sequence is captured primarily through a *medium shot* of Enola inspecting the vase of chrysanthemums, which allows the audience to focus both on her gestures and the supposed clue. The atmosphere is dark, with *low-key lighting* from the portable lamp Enola carries,



intensifying the sense of secrecy and anticipation. When Enola realizes the flowers hold no real message, the camera shifts into a *close-up* of her disappointed expression, visually transferring her frustration to the audience. The *mise-en-scène* consists of the vase of chrysanthemums, the book on flower symbolism, and the handheld lamp, each reinforcing the sense of scholarly but misguided investigation. The flowers are framed as if they hold narrative importance, but their emptiness underscores the deceptive power of a red herring.

According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), such use of lighting and close-up emphasizes emotional response, making the audience share Enola's disappointment. Cawelti (1976) explains that red herrings are indispensable in detective fiction, as they prolong the process of discovery by diverting both detective and audience from the truth. This scene exemplifies that principle: the false symbolism of the chrysanthemums sustains narrative tension and delays resolution, enhancing the eventual impact of uncovering the genuine clue.

**Data 9:** Enola asks, “*And who stands to gain the estate with your father dead and if you die?*” Tewkesbury responds, “*My uncles.*” Based on this reasoning, Enola assumes that Tewkesbury's uncle is the one orchestrating the murder attempt, since he stands to benefit most from Tewkesbury's death. (01:33:24–01:34:06)

This conversation is presented through a *medium shot*, maintaining focus on the dialogue between Enola and Tewkesbury rather than emphasizing individual expressions. The *bright natural lighting* of the outdoor setting softens environment, highlighting how suspicion can emerge even in seemingly calm contexts. The *mise-en-scène* consists of the carriage they are riding in and the presence of newspapers that reinforce the theme of inheritance and family intrigue. The absence of close-ups here reflects the tentative and speculative nature of Enola's reasoning—her suspicion is not grounded in concrete evidence but rather in logical deduction that later proves misleading.

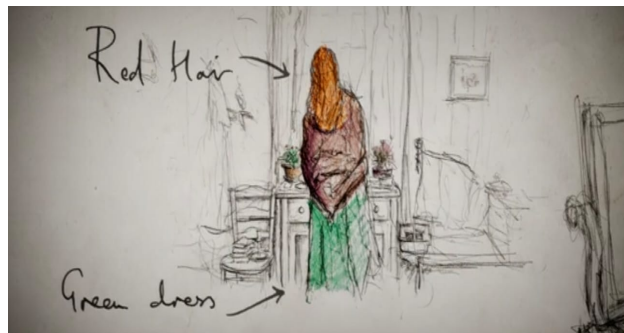
According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), cinematic choices such as medium shots and natural lighting allow dialogue to drive the narrative forward without overemphasizing visual cues, leaving space for the audience to interpret the characters' reasoning. Cawelti (1976) argues that red herrings are essential in detective fiction as they sustain narrative uncertainty and direct both detective and audience toward false conclusions. In this case, the suspicion of the uncle serves as a textbook red herring: it heightens dramatic stakes, deepens audience investment in the mystery, and ultimately strengthens the impact when the real culprit is revealed.

## **Clue and Red Herrings in Enola Holmes 2 (2022)**

### **Clue in Enola Holmes 2 (2022)**

In *Enola Holmes 2* (2022), a total of fourteen clues are identified throughout the film. These clues appear in the form of physical evidence, symbolic objects, coded letters, and verbal testimonies that steadily guide Enola toward solving the mystery. Cinematic techniques such as medium shots, warm and low-key lighting, and symbolic *mise-en-scène*—ranging from personal letters, flowers, and song lyrics to factory documents—highlight their narrative importance. Each clue not only propels the story forward but also emphasizes Enola's intellectual growth as a detective, as she learns to interpret hidden meanings and decode

misleading information. By integrating both personal and socio-political contexts, the film presents clues as essential narrative threads that connect individual experiences with broader systemic issues, reflecting the richness of the classical detective formula.



**Figure 10. Minute 00:07:15–00:07:27**

**Data 10:** Enola asks, “What does she look like, Sarah?” and Bessie replies, “About this tall. Pretty. Very pretty. Green eyes, red hair, freckles—.” Bessie’s physical description of Sarah Chapman provides Enola with her first concrete lead in the second film.

This conversation is captured through a *medium shot*, allowing both characters to remain visible in the frame while emphasizing the intimacy of their dialogue. The scene then shifts to *close-ups of the objects Enola touches*, such as Sarah’s makeup tools, bed, and two potted plants, guiding the audience’s gaze toward items connected to Sarah’s daily life. The *dim lighting*, produced primarily by candlelight, casts shadows across the room, creating an atmosphere of secrecy and uncertainty that matches the mysterious disappearance being discussed. The *mise-en-scène* strengthens this impression: Sarah’s makeup set and personal belongings emphasize her femininity, while the modest furniture and plants indicate an ordinary domestic space that hides extraordinary secrets. This environment positions Sarah as a character caught between the private sphere of home and the public struggle later revealed in the narrative.

According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), cinematic techniques like medium shots combined with low-key lighting foster a sense of intimacy and tension, making the audience attentive to small narrative details. Within Cawelti’s (1976) classical detective formula, physical descriptions serve as *entry-level clues*, providing a foundation for the detective’s reasoning. In this case, Sarah’s red hair becomes a narrative anchor: a simple but crucial detail that transitions the story from uncertainty to the first step of discovery.

**Data 11:** During her investigation, Enola questions a man about Sarah’s connections. The man explains: “There was this gent, society type, and he came regular. Very keen on him she was. He’d send flowers, letters.” When asked his name, the man replies, “Never gave one.” Later, Enola searches Sarah’s jewelry box and discovers a secret letter adorned with the image of a red flower and a green stalk. The love letters represent Sarah’s hidden relationship with a mysterious figure. (00:21:08–00:22:12)

The dialogue between Enola and the man is framed with a *medium shot*, establishing a conversational tone while subtly highlighting the evasiveness of the man’s responses. When the scene shifts to Enola’s discovery of the letter, the camera moves into a *close-up of Enola’s face*, capturing her focused expression and drawing the audience into the intimacy of the

moment of revelation. The *lighting is minimal*, relying on dim candlelight that casts dramatic shadows across the backstage area of the theater, creating an atmosphere of secrecy and hidden truths. The *mise-en-scène* reinforces the narrative symbolism: the *jewelry box*, an object associated with personal treasures, becomes the container of secrets; the *hidden letter*, marked with the red flower, introduces a motif that will later be reinterpreted; and the cramped backstage room itself underscores the sense of concealment and mystery.

According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), such use of close-ups and dim lighting is a cinematic strategy to emphasize objects of narrative importance, guiding the audience's attention toward seemingly minor details that gain weight over time. Within Cawelti's (1976) classical detective framework, this moment functions as a *delayed-reveal clue*, where evidence acquires meaning only after later discoveries connect the fragments into a coherent puzzle. The red flower motif thus acts as a visual marker, preparing both Enola and the audience for reinterpretations that will shift the direction of the investigation.

**Data 12:** Enola deciphers Sarah's poetic letter and discovers that its metaphors conceal a literal address: "*28 Bell Place, Whitechapel.*" She interprets the phrases step by step—"Blossoms white" as "Whitechapel," "A bell did ring" as "Bell," "So wonder that place" as "Place," and the number twenty-eight from the line "As we two ate of the fruit of love." (00:30:45–00:31:19)

This scene emphasizes Enola's role as an active decoder of hidden meanings, with the camera employing *extreme close-ups* on the letter to highlight individual words as she speaks them aloud. Each close-up isolates a fragment of the text, allowing the audience to follow her interpretive reasoning in real time. The *lighting is bright and natural*, as the scene takes place outdoors in a garden, suggesting clarity and intellectual illumination in contrast to the earlier dimly lit sequences. The *mise-en-scène* is minimal yet symbolic: Enola sits on a simple *park chair*, the *letter* laid across her lap, with a piece of cake beside her. These everyday objects emphasize the contrast between the casual setting and the significance of the coded message she is unraveling.

According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), extreme close-ups are often used to direct audience attention to small textual or visual details that carry narrative weight. Here, the technique underscores the gradual process of decoding, mirroring the step-by-step logic characteristic of detective fiction. Within Cawelti's (1976) classical detective framework, this moment illustrates the *puzzle-solving function of clues*: what appears poetic and obscure becomes a precise revelation when subjected to the detective's reasoning. Enola's interpretation demonstrates her intellectual agency, reinforcing the detective genre's celebration of logic and the triumph of deduction over uncertainty.

**Data 13:** From Mae's pocket, Enola discovers a sheet of paper containing song lyrics titled "*The Truth of the Gods.*" Mae, already stabbed and on the verge of death, uses her final strength to gesture toward this hidden clue. (00:33:53–00:34:01)

The scene is framed with *close-up shots* alternating between Mae's weakened face and Enola's reaction, emphasizing the emotional urgency of the moment. The *warm lighting* softens the otherwise tragic atmosphere, highlighting the intimacy of Mae's last attempt to communicate with Enola. This visual choice draws the audience's focus to the symbolic

transfer of knowledge, framing the paper as an object of great narrative importance. The *mise-en-scène* strengthens the tension: the *song note paper* clutched in Mae's pocket, the *bedroom setting* where the attack took place, and the *knife lodged in her abdomen* all underline both the danger of the situation and the desperate need for Enola to continue Mae's mission.

According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), close-ups are often used to intensify emotional resonance and signal the narrative weight of small objects. Here, the paper becomes more than a trivial detail; it is framed as a vital key to the mystery. Within Cawelti's (1976) classical detective framework, this clue operates as a transitional device, propelling the investigation while still cloaked in ambiguity. By embedding the clue in symbolic cultural material—song lyrics—the film reinforces how detective narratives often require the decoding of metaphorical or indirect information. Mae's sacrifice elevates the significance of the clue, marking it as essential to unraveling the conspiracy.

**Data 14:** Enola says, "*Matchmaker's ball. Hosted by Henry and Hilda Lyon. 12 Marchmont Square. It's not a date at all.*" She realizes that the earlier burnt paper with "12 March" was not a date, but an address. This moment redefines what was initially considered meaningless into a crucial clue. (00:46:45–00:46:58)

The scene employs a *close-up shot* of the newspaper, directing the audience's gaze to the printed words that carry hidden significance. By zooming into the paper, the film ensures viewers follow Enola's shift in perception—what once seemed a misleading red herring now gains clarity as a valid clue. The *warm lighting* reflects a sense of revelation, bathing Enola in a glow that symbolizes intellectual discovery and narrative progress. The *mise-en-scène* is simple yet effective: the *newspaper as the central prop*, Enola's *focused gaze*, and the intimate framing that transforms a mundane object into a pivotal turning point. This aligns with Pramaggiore and Wallis's (2005) observation that cinematic emphasis through close-up and lighting constructs narrative importance by isolating small but decisive details.

Within Cawelti's (1976) detective formula, this moment illustrates the structural shift from misdirection to revelation. A red herring (the mistaken "date") evolves into a clue, dramatizing the detective's persistence in reinterpreting evidence. The reinterpretation not only restores narrative balance but also underscores the intellectual labor that defines detective work—progress toward truth is built on continuously questioning appearances.

**Data 15:** Enola says, "*And all along, I thought you were a poppy. Let's see how sweet you are, Sweet William.*" She realizes that the flower image on the mysterious letter was not a poppy but a *Sweet William*, which overturns her earlier misinterpretation. (00:47:02–00:47:21)

The scene is constructed using an *extreme close-up* of the flower drawing on the letter, allowing the audience to clearly recognize the distinction between the two flowers. This is followed by a *medium shot* of Enola as she verbalizes her realization, situating the intellectual discovery within her visible expression. The *bright natural lighting* streaming in from a wide window emphasizes clarity and enlightenment, visually marking the shift from misinterpretation to truth. The *mise-en-scène* centers on the *letter from Sarah's jewelry box*, the *newspaper*, and Enola's analytical engagement with them. By isolating these objects in the frame, the film highlights how seemingly minor semiotic details—like the specific species of a flower—carry immense weight in detective narratives.

According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), extreme close-ups function as a cinematic cue that assigns significance to small details, transforming them into narrative pivots. Within Cawelti's (1976) *classical detective formula*, this reinterpretation demonstrates the genre's reliance on precision and correction: a false reading (red herring) gives way to the accurate decoding (clue). Such shifts reinforce the intellectual rigor of the detective's role, where meaning is continuously renegotiated until the correct thread emerges to guide the case forward.

**Data 16:** Sherlock Holmes says, "*Perhaps a genius mathematics. It's a cipher. The polka. The promenade. The two-step. They're all dances. Yes, the language of the dance. Twenty-seven dances. I've got you.*" Sherlock identifies the numerical codes as a cipher built from dance terms, transforming sequences of numbers into letters. (00:52:13–00:52:52)

This scene is presented with a combination of *close-up shots* on the coded notes pinned to the wall and intercut visuals of Enola at the dance, which reinforces the cipher's cultural context. The *warm lighting*, dominated by the glow of candlelight, emphasizes an atmosphere of concentration and intellectual intensity. The *mise-en-scène* highlights the investigative space: a wall crowded with pinned notes, numbers, and coded messages, symbolizing Sherlock's analytical environment, and the book *The Language of the Dance*.

By juxtaposing the abstract sequence of numbers with the familiar cultural framework of dances like *the polka* or *the promenade*, the film visually and narratively transforms obscurity into revelation. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), such close-ups on symbolic objects direct audience attention to narrative meaning, turning visual fragments into storytelling anchors. Within Cawelti's (1976) *classical detective formula*, coded puzzles embody the rational problem-solving core of the genre, where the detective's intellectual skill triumphs over uncertainty. This moment also dramatizes the detective's dual role as both logical analyst and cultural interpreter, making the act of decoding not just a technical feat but an engaging narrative experience for the audience.

**Data 17:** Sherlock Holmes arranges the cipher and deciphers the hidden message: "*Good to meet you, Sherlock Holmes.*" From this, he discovers the key name, "*Moriarty.*" This becomes a breakthrough for Sherlock, as he realizes that behind the unfolding cases stands a powerful and influential figure—Moriarty. (01:02:34–01:03:02)

The scene is constructed with *close-up shots* both on Sherlock's face—capturing his look of curiosity and realization—and on the coded notes pinned to the wall. The *lighting* is notably darker than in previous sequences, with minimal illumination that evokes mystery, enhanced by the background sound of distant thunder suggesting an approaching storm. This atmospheric design reinforces the weight of the revelation. The *mise-en-scène* remains consistent with the investigative setting: the wall covered with notes, scattered letters forming partial words, and a significant prop, the book *The Language of the Dance*, which provides the key to the cipher.

According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), the close-up technique guides the audience to recognize the narrative weight of small visual details, while lighting and sound amplify the mood of discovery. Within Cawelti's (1976) *detective formula*, the revelation of a hidden antagonist like Moriarty illustrates the genre's structural logic: the detective's persistence

gradually unmask forces operating behind the scenes. By explicitly naming Moriarty, the narrative shifts from solving a single puzzle to confronting a larger conspiracy, thereby intensifying suspense and expanding the detective framework beyond immediate resolution.

**Data 18:** Enola investigates the soil in Sarah's flowerpots and notices two distinct chemical traces: one red and one white. This prompts her to recall Lord McIntyre's speech at the dance, where he remarked, "*In two years, he's turned red into black. Or should I say red into white?*" The red and white powders serve as a concrete clue, linking Sarah's case to dangerous experiments in match production. (01:21:24–01:22:51)

The scene employs a series of *extreme close-up shots* that emphasize each critical detail: the shift from red to white matches, the dead fly poisoned by white phosphorus dust, and the powder residues in the soil. This visual strategy guides the audience to notice elements that might otherwise remain overlooked, reinforcing the investigative process step by step. The *lighting* is provided by a hanging lamp, creating a warm yet bright atmosphere that illuminates the room and contrasts with the deadly implications of the discovery. The *mise-en-scène* intensifies the scientific realism: two flowerpots (one wilted, one healthy), a dead mouse beside cheese contaminated with powder, and a scientific book on chemistry—all arranged to signify both domestic space and laboratory-like danger.

According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), such cinematic strategies—close-ups combined with focused lighting—are designed to emphasize narrative clues and signal their importance to viewers. Within Cawelti's detective formula, the powders represent more than mere evidence: they embody industrial greed and negligence, transforming the detective's task into a moral pursuit. This layering illustrates how detective narratives blend personal mystery-solving with larger critiques of corruption and exploitation, making the clue both narratively and thematically significant.

**Data 19:** Tewkesbury's statement about Sarah working on a bill to reform factory laws triggers Enola's realization. Through a flashback sequence, she connects Cicely's disguise with Sarah's true identity. Details that once seemed insignificant—Cicely's lack of a chaperone at the ball, her purple-stained fingernails resembling those of match factory workers—reveal the truth: "*She didn't have a chaperone. I have been blind. I have missed everything. Sarah is Cicely. Cicely is Sarah.*" (01:25:52–01:27:12)

The scene employs *flashbacks combined with extreme close-up shots*, drawing the audience's attention to crucial visual markers: the gown Cicely wore, displayed backstage at the opera, and the purple stains on her fingernails. These details, once overlooked, are reframed as decisive clues. A *close-up of Enola's face*—her widened eyes and shocked expression—further conveys the weight of the revelation, allowing viewers to share her moment of recognition. The *lighting* blends warm tones with greenish hues inside Tewkesbury's home, producing a layered atmosphere of comfort disrupted by sudden insight.

The *mise-en-scène* enriches the detective's realization: Cicely's gown, the single glove exposing her stained fingernails, and the elegant setting of the opera house contrast sharply with the hidden truth of industrial exploitation. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), the use of extreme close-ups and symbolic *mise-en-scène* directs the audience's interpretative

focus, ensuring that small but significant details achieve narrative prominence. Within Cawelti's framework, this moment underscores how deception in detective stories operates not only through red herrings but also through deliberate concealment of identity. The revelation that Cicely and Sarah are the same person demonstrates the detective genre's reliance on re-evaluation, where clarity emerges only after fragments are pieced together with precision and logic.

**Data 20:** Tewkesbury deciphers the meaning of Sarah's fan gesture—"It means I love you." This revelation allows Enola to connect the pieces, realizing that Sarah (disguised as Cicely) and William were not only romantically involved but also united in a political mission to expose corruption within the match factory. (01:27:44–01:28:25)

The scene is primarily presented through *medium shots*, emphasizing the interaction between Enola and Tewkesbury as they piece together the meaning of the gesture. By framing both characters within the same visual space, the camera highlights their shared role in decoding the mystery. The discovery is further anchored by the *mise-en-scène*, particularly the fan that serves as both a romantic symbol and a narrative clue, carrying layered significance that only becomes clear in retrospect.

The *lighting* remains warm, reinforcing the intimacy of the moment while contrasting with the darker implications of the conspiracy being revealed. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), medium shots combined with symbolic props allow the audience to grasp both character dynamics and the importance of key objects within the *mise-en-scène*. Within Cawelti's framework, this discovery exemplifies how clues can emerge from unconventional codes, with meaning embedded in everyday gestures that require interpretative effort. Ultimately, the decoding of the fan gesture transforms an overlooked act of courtly behavior into the linchpin of the investigation, merging romantic devotion with the pursuit of justice.

**Data 21:** Enola said, "He was arrested." Sherlock added, "Yes, and searched." Enola looked again. "For the documents he took? A knife? No, something bigger. A sword. Heavy boot prints, and scratches from a metal-tipped cane. Grail." Through their conversation, Enola and Sherlock reconstructed the crime scene by interpreting physical evidence—William's torn clothes, scattered handkerchiefs, the wound on his chin, heavy boot prints, and cane marks. These details point to Grail's involvement in William's capture and death.

The scene employs *extreme close-ups* on key pieces of evidence—the torn fabric, disarranged handkerchief, and William's facial wound—visually guiding the audience to connect the fragments alongside the detectives. This technique corresponds with Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), who note that close-ups highlight the symbolic weight of ordinary objects by turning them into narrative carriers of meaning. The *medium shots* of Enola and Sherlock during dialogue provide contrast, situating their reasoning process in relation to the physical evidence. The *lighting* is warm but muted, with darker tones that evoke a tense and suspenseful mood. Additional *sound design*, including subtle rumbling, further enhances the ominous atmosphere. The *mise-en-scène*—ripped clothing, a fallen handkerchief, and the chair where William sat—underscores the violence of the struggle, making the environment itself a silent witness to the crime. Within the detective genre, this scene embodies the process of reconstruction: piecing together fragmented signs of conflict to form a coherent account of

what transpired. It mirrors Cawelti's view that the detective's role is to transform disorder into narrative clarity by uncovering truth through rational interpretation of material traces.

**Data 22:** Sherlock disproves the red herring by carefully analyzing the staged crime scene. He observes that the chair shows no indentations, the cigar is already cold with no ash, and the glass remains untouched. These details expose the scene as fabricated rather than genuine evidence. Enola also contributes by noting, "*No lips have touched that glass.*" This discovery demonstrates how detective reasoning uncovers manipulation, proving that the apparent clue—linking Lord McIntyre to the crime—was deliberately constructed to mislead. (01:33:46–01:34:25)

The sequence relies on a mix of *medium shots* and a single *extreme close-up* of the glass, underscoring its significance as the most revealing detail among the staged objects. The *lighting* employs a warm tone, creating an atmosphere of calm observation, with sound limited to dialogue between the characters. Only toward the end, as Sherlock remarks that the perpetrator enjoys playing games, does a sinister background sound emerge, signaling the darker undercurrent of deception. The *mise-en-scène* highlights the fabricated evidence: the cigar butt, the untouched glass, and the seemingly occupied chair.

According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), the choice of close-up functions to anchor the viewer's attention on the decisive object, while medium shots contextualize the surrounding evidence. In Cawelti's (1976) framework, this moment exemplifies the *corrective function of genuine detection*, where red herrings are dismantled through logical scrutiny. The scene dramatizes the idea that red herrings in detective fiction are not merely accidental misinterpretations but intentional fabrications, designed to entrap both detective and audience in false conclusions. By revealing the artificiality of the crime scene, the narrative reasserts the detective's role as the agent of truth, restoring order in the face of deception.

**Data 23:** Sherlock, Tewkesbury, and Enola collaboratively interpret Mae's sheet music clue. Initially, Sherlock hypothesizes it could be "biblical" or "mythical," while Tewkesbury suggests a "theatrical" meaning, explaining that "the gods" refers to the top balcony of a theater. Enola then concludes, "*It isn't music. It's a map.*" (01:34:55–01:35:26)

The scene is constructed through *medium shots* of the three characters as they exchange hypotheses, contrasted with a *close-up* of the torn sheet music, which visually anchors the clue as central to the investigation. The *lighting* adopts a warm tone, while the tense background score intensifies the urgency of decoding the clue. The *mise-en-scène* features the torn sheet alongside its fuller musical counterpart, underscoring the puzzle-like nature of fragmented evidence.

According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), the alternation between medium shots and close-ups visualizes both the collective reasoning process and the significance of the object under scrutiny. In Cawelti's (1976) classical detective framework, this trial-and-error approach reflects the genre's dramatization of intellectual persistence, where incorrect or partial readings eventually give way to revelation. By incorporating biblical, mythical, and theatrical possibilities before settling on the spatial interpretation, the scene highlights the detective narrative's reliance on *interdisciplinary deduction*. The collaborative dynamic between Sherlock, Enola, and Tewkesbury enriches the detective formula, showing how clues are not merely solved in isolation but through layered dialogue and collective reasoning.



### Red Herring in *Enola Holmes 2* (2022)

In *Enola Holmes 2* (2022), a total of three red herrings are identified throughout the film. These red herrings are presented through fabricated evidence, ambiguous witness testimonies, and misleading assumptions that temporarily obscure the truth. Cinematic techniques such as close-up shots, chiaroscuro lighting, and detailed mise-en-scène—letters, symbols, and planted documents—emphasize their deceptive role. By strategically embedding these false leads, the film heightens narrative uncertainty and draws both Enola and the audience into a series of misinterpretations before the truth is finally revealed. This consistent interplay of revelation and misdirection illustrates how red herrings remain central to the detective formula, ensuring that suspense and plot twists are sustained throughout the investigation.

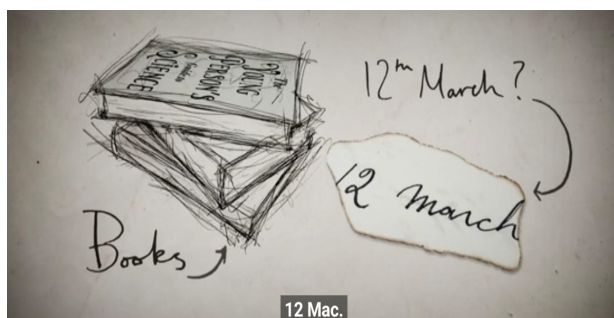


Figure 24. Minute 00:08:43–00:09:00

**Data 24:** Enola discovers a burnt scrap of paper with the writing “12 Marc,” which she interprets as the date *12 March*. She then questions Mae, “*The 12th of March. Does that date mean anything to you?*” Mae responds coldly, “*That’s enough. We don’t need help from people like you.*” This hostile reaction reinforces Enola’s initial assumption that the date is directly tied to Sarah’s disappearance. The clue appears logical at first, but it ultimately misleads both Enola and the audience.

The moment is visualized with an *extreme close-up* of the burnt paper, directing full attention to the fragmentary clue. The *lighting* shifts from warm to dark, symbolizing uncertainty and the potential danger of misinterpretation. The *mise-en-scène* is minimal yet striking: the partially burnt scrap of paper becomes the focal object, embodying both the fragility of evidence and the instability of meaning. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), the use of extreme close-up functions to elevate small, otherwise insignificant objects into central narrative markers. Within Cawelti’s (1976) classical detective framework, this moment exemplifies the function of the *red herring*, where a seemingly promising lead instead diverts the detective away from truth. The deliberate misdirection heightens dramatic tension, compelling both Enola and the audience to reconsider assumptions as the investigation progresses. The scene thus illustrates how detective narratives thrive on uncertainty, with red herrings maintaining suspense and underscoring the detective’s intellectual resilience in confronting misleading evidence.

**Data 25:** Sherlock asks, “*And who killed her? This Poppy fellow?*” to which Enola replies, “*I suspect so.*” Enola interprets the flower symbol in the mysterious letter as a poppy, associating it with death. This leads her to suspect that Sarah’s secret lover—represented by the flower image—was also her murderer. However, this assumption proves incorrect, making it a red herring. (00:42:55–00:43:07)

The scene highlights Enola's misinterpretation through an *extreme close-up* of the flower drawing, visually reinforcing its narrative importance. The *lighting* is warm and bright, reflecting daylight, which contrasts with the ominous implications of the poppy. The absence of tense background music maintains an almost deceptive calmness, emphasizing how the false clue appears natural and credible. The *mise-en-scène* includes the incriminating letter from Sarah's jewelry box and a sheet of suspicious song lyrics, framing the flower as a symbolic anchor of meaning. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), the cinematic technique of extreme close-up elevates symbolic details into narrative pivots, compelling the audience to share the detective's focus. Within Cawelti's (1976) classical detective structure, this moment exemplifies the red herring's narrative function—to sustain suspense by offering seemingly logical but ultimately misleading evidence. The misreading of the flower motif illustrates the ambiguity of symbols in detective fiction, which can be interpreted in multiple ways before their true meaning is revealed. By trapping both Enola and the audience in this uncertainty, the film dramatizes the essential tension of the genre: the struggle between false appearances and hidden truth.

**Data 26:** Sherlock observes, "*But at whose behest? There was another in this room.*" Enola follows, "*This cigar had a holder. And traces of wool.*" Sherlock adds, "*Astrakhan, the finest.*" The discovery of a cigar and strands of astrakhan wool convinces Enola that Lord McIntyre is the mastermind behind the crime. However, this turns out to be a red herring, a fabricated clue deliberately staged to misdirect the investigation. (01:32:34–01:33:25)

The scene employs a combination of close-up on the cigar and extreme close-up on the wool fibers clinging to the chair, emphasizing the deceptive weight of these details. The warm lighting lends the scene a natural sense of credibility, while the restrained but tense sound design builds suspense without overshadowing the dialogue. The *mise-en-scène* consists of the cigar, the wool strands, and the chair, carefully arranged to look like incriminating evidence. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2005), close-up techniques draw the audience's gaze to objects as narrative signifiers, giving them symbolic authority within the story. Within Cawelti's (1976) detective formula, this moment perfectly illustrates the role of red herrings as structural devices that sustain narrative uncertainty. The cigar and wool appear to provide logical connections, yet their staged nature exposes how detective fiction thrives on manufactured doubt. By momentarily persuading both Enola and the audience of Lord McIntyre's guilt, the narrative reinforces the genre's central tension: the delicate interplay between false evidence and genuine truth.

From the analysis of *Enola Holmes* (2020) and *Enola Holmes 2* (2022), it is evident that both films consistently employ clues and red herrings as central narrative devices. Clues often emerge through visual emphasis—such as close-ups, symbolic objects, or coded texts—while red herrings appear as misleading assumptions or fabricated evidence that divert both Enola and the audience. By combining cinematic techniques, including camera work, lighting, and *mise-en-scène*, with narrative strategies, the films illustrate how the detective genre maintains suspense, balances logic with misdirection, and deepens audience engagement. These findings reaffirm Cawelti's classical detective formula, where the interplay of genuine clues and red herrings is essential to sustaining the investigative process and guiding the plot toward resolution.

## CONCLUSION

From *Enola Holmes* (2020) and *Enola Holmes 2* (2022), it is evident that the narrative is constructed through a series of *clues* that guide both the detective and the audience toward the truth. Yet, among these clues lie *misleading signs*, commonly known as *red herrings*, which function to divert attention, sustain suspense, and create unexpected plot twists. Red herrings are not merely narrative distractions but purposeful strategies to intensify audience engagement and maintain the dynamic rhythm of detective storytelling.

This research examined the use of clues and red herrings in *Enola Holmes* (2020) and *Enola Holmes 2* (2022), directed by Harry Bradbeer, analyzed through the lens of John G. Cawelti's classical detective formula. The findings reveal that both films rely heavily on the strategic placement of clues and red herrings to create suspense, guide the detective's reasoning process, and involve the audience in an active search for truth.

In both films, clues appear in diverse forms, such as written codes, symbolic objects, visual details, and verbal riddles, all of which drive the narrative forward and reflect Enola's intellectual growth as a detective. Conversely, red herrings surface through ambiguous dates, misread symbols, or circumstantial evidence, which push both Enola and the viewers into temporary misinterpretations. This interplay between revelation and concealment aligns with Cawelti's assertion that detective stories thrive on the tension between what is disclosed and what is hidden.

When comparing the two films, notable similarities and differences emerge. Both films employ red herrings as deliberate misdirections and frequently embed clues within ordinary objects such as flowers, letters, or books—demonstrating continuity in the franchise's narrative design and adherence to genre conventions. However, *Enola Holmes* (2020) presents clues of a more personal nature, closely tied to Enola's mother and family connections, while its red herrings often result from symbolic misinterpretations, such as the mistaken meaning of chrysanthemums or the suspicion directed at Tewkesbury's uncle. In contrast, *Enola Holmes 2* (2022) expands the scope to social and political contexts, with clues pointing to corruption within the match factory, and red herrings manifesting as deliberate fabrications or planted evidence, most notably the false accusations against Lord McIntyre. This distinction highlights an evolution in narrative complexity—from the personal and familial in the first film to the systemic and societal in the second.

Overall, both films reaffirm the enduring role of clues and red herrings in sustaining the detective structure. Clues operate as logical threads that move the plot forward, while red herrings deliberately delay resolution, thereby heightening suspense and deepening audience involvement. Together, these elements ensure that the films not only modernize the detective genre with a young female protagonist but also remain faithful to the traditions of the classical detective formula.

Future research may build on this study by exploring how clues and red herrings interact with characterization, gender dynamics, and cinematic techniques, providing further insight into how modern adaptations continue to evolve while upholding the conventions of detective fiction.

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