

## Mr Robot - The Blurry Truth

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What I'm about to tell you is a conspiracy bigger than all of us...it is an underlying web of fantasy and cinematic trickery that has been woven into the Mr Robot series from Day One starting with the opening monologue. But now it's time to pull back Mrs. Anderson's fancy new curtains, and expose the Truth...er well the BlurryTruth...of what I think has been a stealth layer beneath the show. With the finale, we now have all the puzzle pieces to form the bigger picture, and perhaps help solve a few of lingering questions about the show, including the meaning of "11:16," the "Red Wheelbarrow" poem, and the significance of all those movie and media references, like Back to the Future, Lolita, etc.

We all have observed that there have been an abundance of movies, cultural themes and clues that have been planted throughout the entire series. These have been discovered and widely discussed on Reddit. But a bigger question is, why they are there and how do they tie together? Stepping back, I have discovered they have one common denominator: **Nearly all are tangled in Conspiracy Theories.** This is the "constant in a sea of variables." This is the "what's above us, not in front of us."

The predominant conspiracy themes are those referencing the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the JFK assassination, and Secret Societies ruling the world. There are also lesser references involving The Simpsons TV show, Berenstain Bears, Crisis Actors, Lolita, and others, which have associated conspiracy theories attached to them.



**But Why?** I think Sam Esmail is using this underlying theme of “Truth Bending” as a cautionary tale to ask us to “look closer” in the real world and to not blindly believe everything that is fed to us. Truthers, Birthers, Alternative Facts, and Fake News are propellers of the Misinformation Age. Secondly, he is using it as an important **indicator device** to the viewers **to tell them what they are watching is not true.** These indicators start immediately in the S1 Pilot opening monologue of Mr. Robot:

**"What I'm about to tell you is top secret. A conspiracy bigger than all of us. There's a powerful group of people out there that are secretly ruling the world."**

But before we go any further, there is an important level of understanding required to digest what we've witnessed in four seasons of Mr Robot: **Nearly all the events in the Mr Robot Series comprise a fantasy story spun from Mastermind Elliot.** The one exception is the final minute of the series with the tunnel through the eye - when True Elliot emerges in full acceptance of himself. Notwithstanding, it is important to note that Elliot's deep history is NOT fantasy....so the molestation, parental abuse, his Dissociative Identity Disorder, the jump out the window and the death of Edward Alderson, are all real and occurred before the main story starts in late 2014.

**Elliot's Psyche:** We know from Krista there are 5 parts to Elliot's psyche:

Mastermind Elliot - The Elliot from most of the series; born a month ago

True Elliot - The Host (the “eye and tear” at the end)

His 3 “Alts” - Mr Robot, Magda and Little Elliot

Us - the Voyeurs

**Mastermind Elliot** - I believe MM Elliot personally scripted the fantastical story about a modern-style hero....Elliot Alderson - brilliant cybersecurity engineer by day and vigilante hacker by night. MM Elliot molded the characters and story, shaped somewhat by his own life struggles and family circle, but also by influences he had from movies, computers, conspiracy theories and the media. Because the story is of no use if it exist only in his head, he needed an Audience

for his story, so he created “Us” the Voyeurs, the “Friend.” This story is visualized in the TV series we are watching. His internal pain caused him to suppress his True Elliot self a year ago by partitioning him in the fantasy F World in a recursive loop. FWorld Elliot’s sketches of hoodie Elliot, Darlene, F Society, Dark Army, Trenton, etc. give credence to the crafting of MM Elliotts tall tale.



MM Elliot is a personality faction whose heart is in the right place and genuinely wants to prevent further harm to himself and others...he wants to be the hero to “save the world.” He is disconnected from society and sought comfort by watching movies and siloing himself with computers. He also must have had influence from conspiracy theories, as they became embedded in the fabric of his fantasy story. Mr Robot has loads of cinematic and media references that are tangled in conspiracy theories or truth benders throughout the show.

The conspiracies are used in two ways:

1. From MM Elliot’s mindset as an element he inserts into the story, and
2. As an indicator by Esmail to Us, the TV show audience, **to signal what we are watching is not real.**

**Let's start with two big movie themes...**

**Back to the Future and Oliver Stone's JFK Movie:** Both movies are heavily referenced throughout Mr Robot. We've often speculated they were just Sam Esmail fan homages, or perhaps foreshadowing time travel. But now I believe both movies were utilized because IRL they were the target of major conspiracy theories. This includes insinuating BTTF knowingly predicted the 9/11 terrorist attacks and that the movie also contained hidden references to JFK's assassination. Oliver Stone's JFK movie brought it's own kind of government conspiracy theories that Kennedy's assassination was part of a secret parallel government scheme embedded in the military industrial complex. I encourage interested readers of this to do an internet search to watch these short conspiracy films for background purposes.



**“JFK” movie (Oliver Stone)** - This movie/conspiracy is cleverly bookended in Mr Robot at the very beginning as well as at the very end finale:

-In S1E1 here is the first line:

**"What I'm about to tell you is top secret.  
A conspiracy bigger than all of us."**

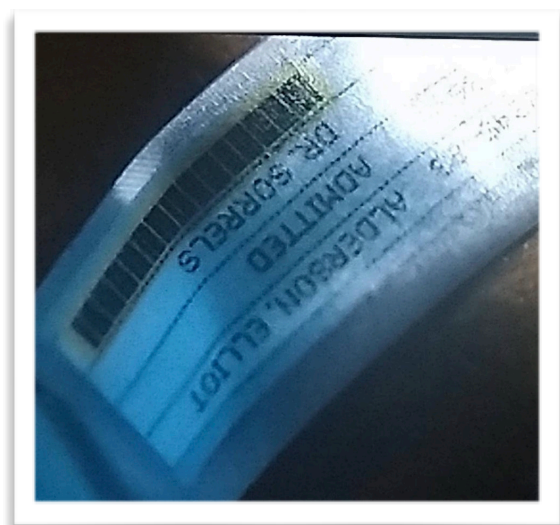
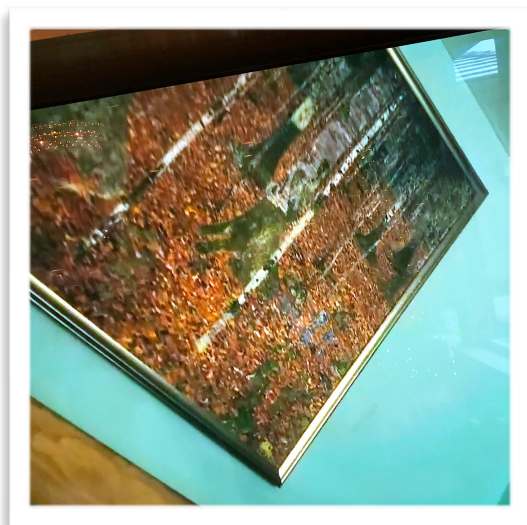
This is nearly identical to this statement by “Mr X” in the JFK movie:  
**“Everything I’m going to tell you is classified Top Secret.”**

- In S1E2, JFK is referenced when Tyrell’s driver Sutherland drops off Elliot and tells him to call him “Mr. X.” He adds,

**“Come on, you’ve never seen JFK? Oliver Stone movie?”**

Also of note, Mr. X is played by Donald Sutherland.

- The last direct reference comes in the finale in the hospital room. When Elliot first awakens, he looks across the room and sees the painting of a **Forest**, then scans down and looks at his hospital wrist band that says **“Dr Sorrells.”**



Put those two together and you have **Forest Sorrells**, the agent in charge of the infamous Zapruder film footage of JFK’s assassination.

Also, as a there is an unusual sign on the wall that says **JFK Memorial Hospital** “Discharge time is approximately at 11 a.m.” which is silly unto itself (11:16, hello).



Add to that the heart monitor is in demo mode...**all indications that this conversation is all still part of MM Elliot’s delusional self.** So when Darlene lists off all the events as having really happened (5/9 hack, prison, cyber bombings, robbing Deus Group, Angela, Mobley, Trenton dying) what this scene is really saying is that **these events DID NOT happen.** Even MM Elliot acknowledges that his persona in this scene is not real.

**There is also another JFK nugget in S4E1n that was even hinted by Sam Esmail on Twitter:**



This is when Elliot and Mr Robot go to the mysterious John Garcin's apartment, which turns out to be a honeypot. Elliot opens the book of Sartre's "No Exit" from the shelf and there is a library sleeve on the inside from "Dallas Public Library." This library houses the **Six Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza, which is the most extensive available collection of JFK films and documents.**

**Back to the Future movie(s):** This movie is heavily referenced throughout Mr. Robot TV Series, and is also cleverly bookended in both the first and final episodes. In S1E1 Angela arrives at Elliot's apartment with a copy of BTTF II and talks about how it is their favorite movie. It is also visually referenced in the finale S4E12 when Elliot enters FWorld and the signage, buildings and clocktower are all facsimiles of key scenes in BTTF. Also, **BTTF II was released on Nov. 22...the day and month JFK was killed.**

In conspiracy land, tinfoil theorists IRL have composed elaborate short films with the purpose of suggesting the movie predicted the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Again, do a search and watch these videos. In one ridiculous segment, they go so far as to show the time on the **Back To The Future clock** as being **1:16 right-side up,...but if you put it upside down, it reads "911."**



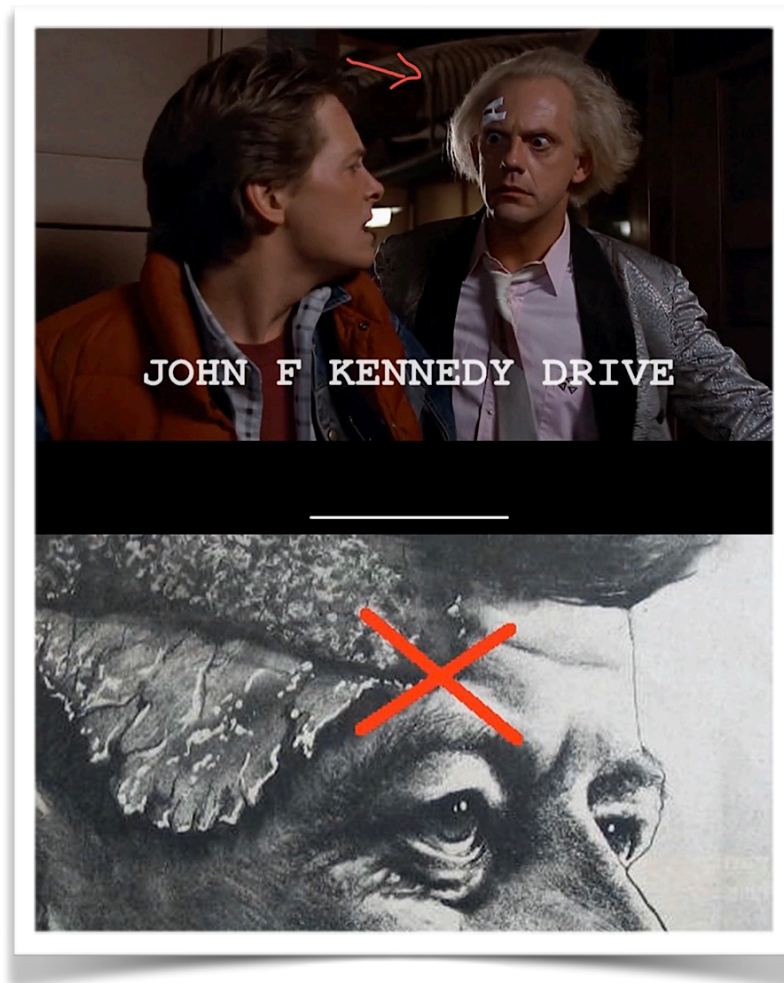
## 11:16

This brings us back to that nagging Mr Robot question of the recurring time reference of 11:16. Well if you take the mindset of a conspiracy theorist and turn that digital clock upside down, **guess what you get...9/11/1**. Sam Esmail is trolling us.





Also interestingly in BTTF, Conspiracy theorists contend the bandage on Doc's head is in the same location as the bullet wound in JFK's head.



This of course reminds us of Elliot when he had these head wounds:



## **Additional cultural references in Mr. Robot that are entangled in conspiracy themes:**

**The Simpsons** - There is a big conspiracy theory IRL that The Simpsons predicted the terrorist attacks of 9/11. There is also another one (more fact, than conspiracy) that the Simpsons were prophetic when Homer wrote on a chalkboard what turned out to be an extremely close formula for the Higgs Boson “God” Particle from the Hadron Collider. As we know, White Rose’s “machine” symbolically looks like the Large CERN Hadron Collider.

Also, in the car with young Elliot, Edward talks about being fired by a bald-headed man that looks like the guy on The Simpsons.

Then in the “Itchy and Scratchy episode,” Homer utters the words “Mr Robot”. The Simpsons are also possibly an inspiration for the Mr. Robot name with the “Them Robot” episode.

**Stanley Kubrick** - There are multiple Kubrick movie references in Mr Robot. There is also a conspiracy documentary film by Rodney Ascher called “Room 237” that suggests there are devious hidden clues in Kubrick movies like The Shining. The film also suggest that Kubrick may have filmed footage to help “Fake the Moon Landing.”

**Lolita** - There is a contention theory that suggests a real-life kidnapping inspired Nabokov’s classic Lolita. Trace this back to Darlene’s comment about being kidnapped when she was young. Her heart-shaped glasses are zingers for the Kubrick film version and there are many other Lolita references in Mr Robot.

**Seinfeld** - We know Leon loves Seinfeld. There is a famous Seinfeld episode called “The Boyfriend,” which features the main characters participating in what they called “The Magic Loogie,” which is a spoof re-enactment on the movie JFK and the “magic bullet theory” scene.

**The Illuminati** - Likely the influence for the Deus Group. The “Illuminati” are a supposed secret privileged society that some surmise are running the world. Also there was a S4 Easter egg when Krista buys some “Bey and Jay” Christmas

stockings. Beyoncé and Jay Z IRL have been subject to conspiracy folklore that they belong to the Illuminati. Also the artwork in Krista's apartment is eerily similar to the "Eye of Providence" logo, one of their icons.

**Crisis Actors** - The scene when Gideon is killed echoes the real life absurd conspiracy theory that Sandy Hook was "staged" by crisis actors. In Mr Robot, Gideon is killed by "Brock", a Five/Nine truther who accuses him of being a "crisis actor" in the ongoing financial meltdown.

**Trenton and Mobley** - Their deaths are staged to create a false conspiracy that they were Muslims planning to down airplanes, in the vein of 9/11.

**"Pizza-gate"** - this infamous and debunked conspiracy theory concerning Hillary Clinton is loosely paralleled in the pilot episode with Ron's Coffee Shop.

**"Berenstein Bears"** - This much documented memory-blurring phenomenon was referenced in Mr. Robot by Dom as "Operation Berenstain," a secret warrantless surveillance FBI program.

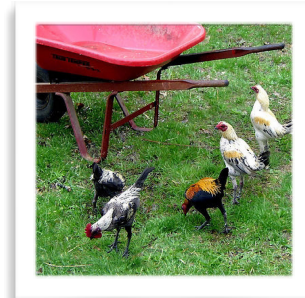
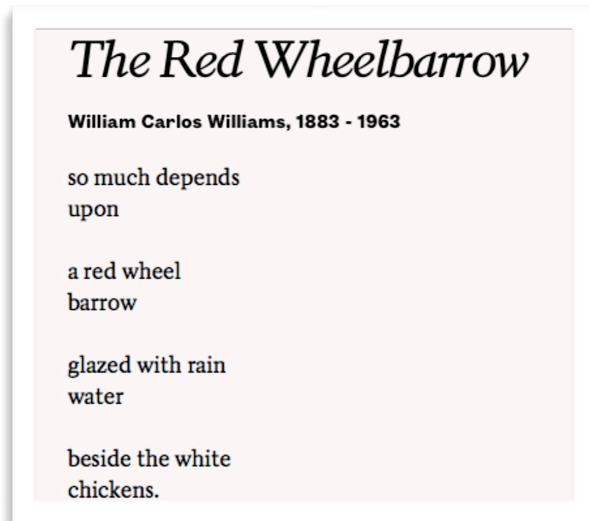
**Frank Cody (Let's be Frank with Frank Cody)** - Was used in Mr Robot as a TV personality who embraces conspiracy theories, much in the vein of real life conspiracy personality Alex Jones of InfoWars.

**QWERTY & Fish references** - Well QWERTY, the Betta fish, does have a Tall Tail...and, this is a **TALL TALE**. And much of the story is, well...outright "**FISHY**."

**Joanna's strange interaction with Elliot** - May be a bit of a stretch but could be that when she says "Ollie" in a strange way, it is a wink to Oliver as in Oliver Stone.

**A general note about Conspiracy Theories.** We live in a world full of them. Lies, half truths, fake news. They are mostly fictional, with just enough "plausibility" to be believed...a kernel of truth that goes a long way toward believability. Psychologists have written that Conspiracy Theories are so often accepted because they provide comfort in a world where we sometimes feel little sense of control. And as Mr Robot reminds Elliot, "Control is an Illusion."

## And then there's the Red Wheelbarrow Poem:



One poetry analyst says of this poem that it represents

**“The desperate need to find great significance, in that which is small and insignificant.”**

Another analyst says it can be interpreted as a

**“A meditation in Perception....that Perception is presented as subjective and fallible, rather than an objective reflection of reality.”**

I think this interpretation is a fitting analogy for those who spin big conspiracy theories on limited loose facts. Plain and simple.

Sam Esmail has been quoted as saying that young Elliot is basically “a thinly veiled version of himself” and that his parents would drop him off alone at the movie theaters for the entire days. This is also echoed in S3E8 with little Mohammed, whose parents also leave him alone for large swaths of time and he wants to go to the movies with Elliot. And furthermore, **I think it's symbolically important that the series ends with Elliot in a Movie Theater.**

So those are some examples, and there are many more. Prior to the finale, it felt very much that something was “off” on the show and somehow things couldn’t be believed. Monumental events would happen in mere hours of time, which gave pause to whether this could be real or something else. Now understanding where it is based, it explains the unexplainable at times. It is all rooted in Elliot’s delusion of grandeur, as Krista has noted in S1. The men in black suits following him were part of his fantastical delusion. Hats off to everyone on Reddit who have contributed enormously to exposing the impressive attention to detail in Mr Robot, which has helped all of us find our way in this series.

One final thought is that I think the show still entertaining on a less granular level without this awareness. Even those with lesser understanding or that believe everything is real, can still have a great viewing experience, as the journey is very fascinating and the story is solid. This is a testament to Sam Esmail and all the writers, music, cinematography and production staff that have kept the storytelling exciting and deep on many levels.

For me, I will continue looking closer.

Cheers All.