The Labyrinth of London: Labor

by FarGreenCountrySwiftSunrise

Summary

Sarah never imagined having a child by herself... but she didn't have to worry. During “His Last Trick”.

Notes

The Almighty Disclaimer
Oh Moffat and Gatiss and Thompson,
Henson and Doyle,
To you belongs all the characters
And none so for me!

A/N: This story was inspired by “The Thin White Sleuth…” by Pika-la-Cynique of Girls Next Door fame.
The one thing Fae did not have in abundance was children. Because of this, Joanna had not helped in a delivery since her mother’s last child. When Dante had called upon her in a panic after he had brought Sarah to the hospital, Joanna felt the familiar duty and dread which came with this perilous moment between life and death. After giving Rumpelstiltskin a kiss on his cheek, Joanna came to Sarah’s side and was welcomed to help.

Sarah spoke only about the labor itself for the first two hours. She was calm between contractions and went through necessary arrangements.

The young woman went through her phone contacts. “John knows not to wake up Mary. Molly is on duty at the moment. Karen is already on her way. The rest will be coming in tomorrow. Mrs. Hudson will get the message when she wakes up. She had already taken her herbal soothers, so she will be out for a bit longer. Mycroft is an ass and won’t answer my texts. Sherlock is somewhere in the hospital. Everyone else can find out through social media.” She hissed and dropped her phone.

Joanna stroked Sarah’s hair as the brunette went through another contraction. “You’re doing wonderfully, Sarah.”

“No, I’m not. Why is this taking so long?”

“You are a new mother. First labors take longer.”

“Why did I decide to do this? Jareth was willing to wait, but I went off the pill as soon as we were married. This damn well hurts.”

“Yes, it does,” Joanna said, “It will get worse.”

“I know. I’ve had to help with a few births when they were shorthanded in…” Sarah let out a huff. “You would think the baby would want to get out as quickly as possible.”

“I am sure Edmund is trying to come as quickly as he can. He just needs time.”

Sarah huffed again. “I just want this to be done.”

“Edmund does too.”

Sarah turned away and lay on her side. “Jareth should be here.”

Joanna rubbed Sarah’s back. “I know.”

“Why didn’t you wake me up?” Mary said as she struggled to put on her socks.

John got to his knees and helped. “Sarah asked me not to tell you until you woke up. She was worried about you getting enough sleep with the baby.”

“Oh, the kid is fine. I’m a nurse. I can yell at people.”
“So is Sarah,” John said. He pulled Mary to her feet. “I’ll drive. Okay? I’m sorry I didn’t wake you up.”

Mary kissed John. “Good man. Don’t worry. You’re not in the dog house. Sarah, on the other hand…”

“I thought the ice chips thing was a myth,” Sarah said during the fifth hour.

“Apparently not,” Joanna said, “Tasty?”

“So tasty.”

“I want to kill Jareth,” Joanna said.

Sarah made a distressed sound.

“Oh, not permanently. No. I just want to make him suffer a little bit. Moron. He could have broken the filth’s neck and we wouldn’t be having these problems. We could do this and take you home to the Labyrinth. Instead, we have been rushing about buying baby things at the last moment to put into a cramped little apartment.”

Sarah said nothing… until Mary came in.

“What in the world?” Sarah said.

“Ha! You think you could escape my worry, but not so!” Mary said, “You’re going to get the whole lot.” She dropped a bag on the table by Sarah’s bed. “I have supplies.”

Joanna laughed. “I leave you two ladies alone for a minute. Sarah is several minutes from her next contraction.”

“Nooo…” Sarah said with fake drama, “Don’t leave me with Mary. She’ll feed me!”

Mycroft woke up aware of a presence in his bedroom. “If you are going to murder me, get on with it. Otherwise, please leave me alone. It has been a rather trying day.”

“Where is my brother?” Joanna said.

“Not dead,” Mycroft said with a sigh. He sat up on turned on the light by his bed. “Anything else is beyond what I can tell you.”

“Let him see Sarah,” Joanna said.

“No. We have discussed this.”

“And I disagree. Let him see Sarah.”

“It is out of my hands.”

“Please.”

Mycroft sighed and rubbed his face. “I have no desire to harm Jareth and I certainly have no desire to
harm Sarah. If there was something else I could do to help, I would.”

Joanna rolled her shoulders. “I find your answer unsatisfactory.”

“Life is full of disappointments,” Mycroft said.

“I am also disappointed to find out you don’t sleep in a coffin. I lost the bet with my husband,” Joanna smirked, “I will get my brother back.”

“I am sure you will, but not in a way I can foresee.”

“It’s a good thing you don’t know everything then, isn’t it?”

And the Seelie Queen was gone. Mycroft sent a text before trying to return to his slumber. He did not fall asleep.

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Mary opened up another container. “And this is a chocolate mousse pie with heavy whipped cream.”

“You are spoiling me,” Sarah said as she took a bite of the new pie, “Bless you.”

“Thank you,” Mary said, “I may even forgive you for not waking me up.”

“I was worried about your baby,” Sarah said.

“Pshaw. This is a Mary and John co-production. This baby will be able to beat-up full-grown men when they’re born.”

“Still don’t know the sex?”

“John knows. I don’t. I want it to be a surprise.”

Sarah grinned. “Has Sherlock guessed?”

“Nope. It’s quite fun to see him trying to guess, but he has as much chance as the rest of us do. John is enjoying it.”

“I am sure he is.”

Mary poured some water for Sarah. “How bad is the pain?”

“I’ve had worse, but I’m still in the first stage. The second stage is when it is supposed to be really bad.”

“You’re doing great, Sarah. You’re being very brave.”

“No, I’m not. This will happen whether I’m brave or not.”

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Joanna and Mary switched after the next contraction. The next three hours were calm enough that Sarah was able to sleep. Joanna nibbled on some of the cookies Mary had left behind. The Seelie Queen would have to swap recipes at some point with the former assassin.

A quiet knock on the door woke Sarah. “Come in,” Sarah called out.
A woman wearing a surgical mask poked her head in. “How are you doing, Sarah?”

“How are you doing?” Sarah said.

“I’ve been in the morgue. I don’t want to risk coming in until the end of my shift, but I got cleaned up as soon as I heard you were here. How are you?”

“Going through the worst pain possible according to some,” Sarah said. She smiled. “But it could be worse. So far, little Ned is doing well.”

“Good. I’m glad you two are okay. Is there anything I can do for you two?”

“No. Do tell John if you find Sherlock.”

Molly tilted her head. “Sherlock has gone missing?”

“He’s in the hospital. He just doesn’t want to be found,” Sarah said.

“Okay. I’ll inform John if Sherlock pops up.”

“I’m sure he will around you,” Joanna mumbled.

“What?” Molly asked.

“I said I’m sure he will be around,” Joanna said.

After Molly left, Sarah smacked Joanna’s arm. “What was that for, Jo?”

“Are those two morons still so oblivious?”

“Oh, they will probably be oblivious for a while longer.”

Joanna looked up. “Lord have mercy on our souls. I cannot stand anymore of this nonsense.”

Mrs. Hudson was the only one not surprised when Christiana popped into the waiting room during Sarah’s ninth hour of labor. “Give a man some warning next time,” John said as he had one arm on Mary and the other ready to knock an attacker back.

The Goblin King shrugged. “I am sure you will survive. How is the patient?”

“She is still in the first stage, last I heard,” Mary said.

Christiana sighed and sprawled out as much as one could in a waiting room chair. “I hate waiting.”

“We all do, dear,” Mrs. Hudson said, “Would you like a cuppa?”

“No thank you, Mrs. Hudson. It is very kind of you.” She shoved a goblin off her arm. “Is it always this long?”

“Oh, this is rather normal, dear. I was in labor for almost a day with my first,” Mrs. Hudson said.

Christiana groaned and slid to the floor. “I hate being useless.”

“I’m afraid all we can do at this point is wait. Are you sure I can’t get you something?” Mrs. Hudson asked.
“I’m sure. Thank you. Where is that inspector fellow?”

“Greg?” John asked.

“Yes. That one. He would make this much more interesting.”

Mrs. Hudson, John, and Mary silently exchanged bets.

A kiss to her forehead made Sarah open her eyes. She grinned and put her hand against the familiar, sharp cheekbones. “This is a dream, isn’t it?” Sarah asked.

The man smiled. “Why would you say that?”

“Jareth would not be this calm if he saw I was in pain, even if he knew the pain was for a reason.”

“Is it a bad dream, then?” Jareth asked.

“No. It’s a good dream.”

The dream man laid down next to Sarah in her dream hospital room. “You know I want to be here.”

“I know. That’s why it hurts so much.” She kissed the dream. “I only wanted to go through this with you. I wanted you to be the father to my child. I knew you would be a good one.”

“Thank you, precious.” He kissed her forehead. “And you will be a great mother.”

“I don’t know that. What if I turn out like mine?”

“You won’t. You have been through that heartache and you will not cause such harm to another person. You certainly won’t hurt your own child.”

“Are you so sure?”

“Yes. Aren’t you?”

“I would rather die than abandon Edmund and I haven’t even met him yet.”

“Hold onto that, precious, and you will not be your mother.”

Sarah woke up to a contraction far worse than the previous ones. “That’s… not…”

“I think you might be moving to the second stage,” Joanna said.

Sarah was told both during and after the birth she did well and everything was normal. But platitudes were no help to a woman nearing the end of childbirth.

“I can’t do this Jo,” Sarah said, “I’m never going to get him out.”

“You will, Sarah. You will make it.”

“I can’t. I just… can I have my Mom?”

Jo stiffened. “Are you ill?”
“No! I want Karen! She’s my Mom. I want her here. I’m sorry, Jo. I just want my Mom. If I can’t have Jareth here, I want Karen.”

Joanna smiled. “I think she’ll be here soon.”

Karen was not as orderly in her appearance as she normally was when she met Joanna outside of the hospital room. “Is Sarah alright? The baby?”

“Yes. They’re both fine,” Joanna said, “Sarah has been asking for you.”

The human woman stood up straighter and smoothed her shirt. “Yes. Let’s get this done. And, no offense ma’am, but I am going to kill your brother for not being here.”

“You’ll have to get in line,” Joanna said, “I called dibs.”

Sarah felt cliché as she went through the labor. She went through all the pain, swore at her own stupidity and Jareth’s for ever deciding to have sex, cursed Eve and a few fertility gods and goddesses, and it all melted away when the small, blond babe was placed in her arms.

There was a small crowd outside of the nursery. “Five quid it’s the one screaming the loudest,” John said.

“I think it is safe to say that child is Jareth’s,” Mrs. Hudson said, “Look at the hair.”

Christiana elbowed Dante. “Come on. Move over. I want to see him.”

“Wait your turn, sister”

“Children,” Rumpelstiltskin said as he pulled both of them back, “Age before beauty.”

“Oh, the kid knows we’re here for him. Look at that face,” Mary said.

“He looks just like Jareth did,” Joanna said.

“What did we miss?” Sherlock asked.

“What happened to you two? You look like you fell out of a clothes dryer,” John said.

Molly adjusted her lab coat. “Just rushed to get here is all.”

“We’re even now,” Joanna said to Rumpelstiltskin.

“Oh, let’s wait until they actually announce something,” the Seelie King said.

“You just don’t want to pay up,” Jo said.

Rumpelstiltskin pulled Jo closed and whispered, “Oh, I would love to pay you back.”

“Gross,” Dante and Christiana said at the same time.

Beyond the hullabaloo, Mycroft watched with a smile of regret. “Sentiment.” He then left to tell the
father the good news.

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After Sarah and Ned had been taken care of, they had been left alone with Karen. The older woman fell asleep in her chair after her long day.

Sarah spoke softly to her son. "I love you, Edmund. I love you so much. Your Daddy loves you too. There are so many more who love you already. You are loved. Never forget that Edmund.

"You were named after a fairy tale king: King Edmund the Just. He was a cruel and selfish boy who became a good king because he realized his mistakes and asked for forgiveness. A debt still had to be paid, and the True King gave up his life to save little Edmund. The good news is that the King came back to life. Edmund never forgot that he was forgiven and so was always just to people, even those considered beyond redemption.

"Your father was not always a good man, but he became one. I wasn't always a good person and sometimes I'm not, but I always remember that we can have redemption, no matter how far we fall. Always remember that, Edmund, and know to give forgiveness to others, no matter how undeserving.

"I have a story to tell you, Ned. It is a story about how the Goblin King fell in love with the girl and how it was only the beginning of their story. The best part? It is still happening. Let me tell you what has happened so far..."

And so, Sarah told her story and Jareth's story and eventually, the story of their family and friends. It was a story of hope, redemption, and love. It was always a story about love.

And like all the best stories of love, it would never end. Even if the storyteller's voice cracked or the pages ran out, the story would never end.

End Notes

A/N: I wanted to write this for a bit, but it didn’t fit into the flow of the main story.

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