It takes John Watson to save your life.

by Sparkypip

Summary

A series of One shots where John saves Sherlock's life in so many ways. Will be updated sporadically as and when I get any time to write. As always I like my characters hurt, so plenty of angst, H/C, whump and bromance (no slash) will ensue. Please comment if you can.

The purpose of these stories is for people to enjoy a little bit of angst and hurt/comfort from time to time. Reading all chapters at once may be too much for some. Angst ahead, continue if (like me) you're a junkie for the stuff.

Notes

Many thanks to all followers and readers. I really don't get as much time as I wish I could to write. I've got a busy year ahead so I hope I can fit some fiction writing in between work and commitments. Please comment my friends. Always makes my day. I will update as and when I can. Suggestions welcome.

Separate warnings in some chapters so please read notes ahead of story.
Bothersome trees

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"What on earth?" John jolts himself awake in the darkness. He must have fallen asleep, half a cup of tea is resting on the table in front of him and a plate of now cold homemade lasagne is precariously tilting on his knees, threatening to fall at any moment.

"Sherlock?" The doctor looks across to the doorway in the gloom, only to see his friend stagger into the living room, looking more than a little dishevelled. "You ok?"
"Bloody criminal class." Sherlock mumbled. "Not very poetic when they throw you from buildings." He grumbled, wincing as he removed his heavy Belstaff, soaked from the pouring winter rain.

"What?" John was on his feet in a second, the plate of food almost sent to the floor, Mrs Hudson would have been most disappointed, considering she had made it.

"I'm fine John." Sherlock waved him off, "Nothing but a couple of cracked ribs and a sprained wrist, stop worrying like a mother hen." The detective hobbled into the kitchen.

The doctor took three large strides across the room, switching on the main light in the kitchen, making his friend squint at the bright light now glaring on his clearly bruised face.

"Do you mind!" Sherlock shot, frowning with detest. "I said I was fine."

"How far did you fall?" John was already in his friends face, examining the small cuts and bruises on his flatmates skin, clearly from a fist fight. "I really wish you wouldn't go running off without me?"

"I. Am. Fine." The detective pronounced every word carefully and with purpose, trying to bat his friends advances away. "No one win's hand to hand combat with Sherlock Holmes," he gloated. But his face soon changed into a grimace again as he bent to retrieve a mug from the cupboard.

"Sherlock?" John's voice turned serious and he placed his hands on his hips.

The detective sighed. "Why won't you just leave it?"

"Why do you think?"

"I don't think I'm going to decease anytime soon." Sherlock dropped a bag of earl grey into the mug, "Sorry to disappoint you, but I think I will be ok." Sarcasm dripped from every word.

The anger in the kettle began to slowly bubble and as the liquid got closer to boiling point, John's anger slowly began to increase with the ever rising sound of it. He clenched his fists together and then his jaw, trying to hold his tongue from saying something foolish.

Sherlock poured the water into his drink, letting it brew and then disappeared out of the kitchen heading for his room.

"Where are you going?" John hovered in the doorway nervously, he desperately wanted to examine his friend. Falling from a height should not be taken lightly. It could account for any categorical amount of injuries, broken bones, concussion, spinal injury, contusions, he swallowed back the rising panic in his throat, suddenly glad he had barely eaten.

"Changing out of my wet clothes." Sherlock answered after a beat. "That is unless you want me to become hypothermic and catch pneumonia?"

John chose not to reply. He filled the time with rinsing his own cup out and pouring himself a warm tea from the ample water left, opting for chamomile to try and calm his clearly frayed nerves and patience. By the time Sherlock returned over ten minutes later to the living room the doctor had turned up the heating and settled himself into his chair with his warm mug of brew. The consultant had donned his silk pyjama bottoms and dressing gown, his hair was dry and he looked more presentable.

"Now, please. Will you let me take a look at you?" John's voice softened, no use in fighting his
friend for it, he would get nowhere.

"Fine." Sherlock sunk carefully into his own chair opposite. "If only you'll stop flapping and fussing about it."

The doctor obtained his medical bag from the other side of the room and clicked more lighting on.

"Must you make the entire flat like Piccadilly circus?" The detective shielded his eyes from the brightness.

"I do need to see my patients to examine them." John tutted and returned to his seat, sitting forward on it and opening the bag. "Jesus." He muttered as he came to gaze on his friend's face properly finally.

"What?"

"You're as white as a sheet." John's brows furrowed and he looked worriedly at him. "Are you sure it's just the ribs and wrist?" He pulled out a pen torch. "No chance you hit your head? No nausea, dizziness, lack of co-ordination?" He shined the light into each eye, watching the detective's pupils react normally to the stimulus.

"What is it with you and bright lights?" Sherlock grumbled.

"I need to rule out head injuries." John tutted again, "How far did you fall, and onto what?" He quickly inspected each small bruises and cuts on his flat mate's face, each one clearly a blow from a fist, none of which were of any significance, although he may sport a black eye or two by the morning.

"I'm fine. I didn't hit my head. He just hit his, out cold by the time Lestrade arrived. Late as usual." Sherlock rattled off, interrupted by a hiss as the doctor squeezed his tender wrist.

"You should get that x-rayed." John warned.

"No thank you." A curt reply.

"Your pulse is racing." John counted the beats to over 100.

"Probably because you just hurt me." Sherlock grumbled

"Sorry. No neck pain?" the older man then gently palpated the base of his best friend's skull and then down his neck, Sherlock flinched back at the intimateness of the examination. John knew it was not pain related, he was about the only doctor the detective would let touch him, at least while he was conscious anyway.

"I told you." Sherlock took a short intake of breath as if struggling a little. "Ribs and wrist. I must have fallen no more than 15 feet, onto grass and vegetation. The perpetrator was not so lucky when he struck the solid concrete."

"Christ." John swore. "Sherlock, 15 feet is no small distance. You really should get looked over at hospital."

"No." A quiet reply and then another hiss as John gently felt over the cracked ribs on his left.

"Landed on you left? John asked.

"Don't remember." He shrugged.
"Did you lose consciousness then?"

"No"

"How do you know if you don't remember?" John fired back.

"Finished?" Sherlock sneered, pulling his dressing gown back across his bruising chest and rose from his seat.

"No, I'm not finished yet, sit back down." John huffed and pulled his stethoscope from his bag. "At least let me check your lungs are clear?"

"No" Sherlock pottered across towards the kitchen. "I said I'm…" his voice faded off and his tried to catch his breath.

John turned in a second to see his friend steady himself on the wall, leaning heavily. He was up in a flash and by his side. "Whoa. Fine are we?" He mocked, and instantly wanted to take it back as he looked at the detective's white face, paler than moments earlier if it were possible. "Sherlock?" He grabbed his friends arm to guide him back into the living room. "What is it?"

"John?" the consultant looked bewildered, scowling deeply and trying to focus his glazed eyes.

"Why don't you come back and sit down?"

A pause. Sherlock drew a shaky breath and his eyes began to droop. Too late, John saw it coming. The detective's knees seemed to fail under him and his body pitched forward into his friend. The doctor struggled to remain upright himself as the taller form fell. He somehow managed to guide his friend into the floor, gently letting Sherlock's head rest back against the carpet, and his gangly limbs stretch out.

"Sherlock?" John's panic started to rise. "Can you hear me?"

"John..." the detective's voice was weak and slurred and his eyes barely managed to open past a crack.

John placed his fingers on his best friend's carotid. "Fuck." He swore under his breath, pulse rising, nearly 150 beats a minute now, he was going into shock. The doctor surveyed his friends form quickly, scanning him for signs of traumatic wounds or bleeding but finding none. He ran his hands quickly over Sherlock's chest again and stopped at his abdomen. How had he missed this? The detective's stomach was distended and swollen, he gently palpated it, eliciting a weak moan from his friend. In a rush he stood and grabbed his phone from across the room, settling back next to his friend he checked his breathing and quickly dialled 999.

"What?" Sherlock tried hopelessly to speak, but his breath was shallow. He cracked his eyes open to meet his doctors. "Jhn?" he mumbled incoherently.

"It's alright Sherlock, just stay still ok. Your bleeding internally. You're going into shock." Captain John Watson was in charge now, taking control of the situation in a calm voice. The phone connected and John commanded the details to the operator. "Ambulance, 221 Baker Street, internal haemorrhage after a fall from height, approximately fifteen feet, GCS of 9. Yes. Please hurry."

Sherlock mumbled incomprehensibly as John discarded his mobile on the floor. "Just try to stay awake ok?" he shook his friend's shoulders gently and the detective's eyes cracked open again. "Please?" he smiled sadly.
"What's…?" Sherlock's voice was barely audible.

"Don't talk." John took his friend's pulse again, tachycardic, weak, thready. "You've probably ruptured your spleen or something. You must have taken a blow to the abdomen in your fall, even if you don't remember."

The edges of the detective's mouth pulled to attempt a small smile but it was hardly noticeable. He drew a shaky shallow breath "Bothersome tree" His voice whispered on exhale.

"You're a dickhead." John sighed. "An absolute bloody dickhead!"

The next few minutes were filled with nothing but babble from both sides. John desperately managing to keep his friend conscious for as long as possible and Sherlock's voice fading slowly into nothing. By the time the ambulance crew arrived the detective was no longer rousable.

"He needs blood!" John demanded as the man and women met him in the flat by his friend's prone form.

They were on it. Within a few minutes they were bundled into the back of the vehicle, two lines of fluids racing into Sherlock's veins to desperately maintain blood pressure which was dropping dangerously low. UCLH was only minutes down the road, he would be ok once blood was on board and they could open him up to stop the bleeding.

What an utter cock, John thought. The detective would never live this one down. He would be sure to ask about any obstruent trees next time his friend was injured. John couldn't help but not smile.

Chapter End Notes

The recovery/awakening in hospital to this story can be found here.
Open fracture

Chapter Summary

Tracking down a criminal goes awry. John has to save Sherlock in more ways than one. GRAPHIC DEPICTIONS OF INJURIES, so be warned.

Chapter Notes

Managed to crack this chapter out while resting after a week of work from hell. Do enjoy. Comment and any requests or ideas for more chapters welcome.

"Sherlock!" John's voice echoed in the deserted dock yard. The sound of a revving engine drowned him out in an instant.

The silver Audi came tearing around the corner of a container, leaving the detective little to no time to react. John could only watch with horror from a distance as the bonnet connected with his best friend at speed. Sherlock rolled into the windscreen and then was thrown sideways onto the concrete below. The doctor was already at a full sprint before his flat mate had hit the ground. The Audi sped off, tyres screeching, shrill and piercing.

"Sherlock!" John was on him in seconds. The detective was sprawled out, coat framing his awkward limbs spread out. His eyes closed and lips parted slightly as his face was slack, blood was soaking the black curls by his forehead.

"Shit." John felt for a carotid just as his friends eyes snapped open and he took in a lungful of air.

"He'll be back John." Sherlock blinked a couple of times, trying to rid the black spots bouncing across his vision.

"What?"

"He'll be back." Sherlock tried to pull himself up but the doctor gently pushed him back down to the floor. "He's here to finish me off."

"Right." Was all John could say then, as the sound of screeching tyres filled their ears again. The car came back into view, heading in their direction at break neck speed. The doctor stood up, leaving his dazed friend on the ground, he stood in front of him and grabbed for his weapon.

The bullets left John's gun in quick succession. He was a crack shot, but Sherlock had smashed the windscreen of the vehicle on impact, making the drivers silhouette obscured. The car slowed a little but was still on course to hit both of them head on. John turned his shots to the car wheels, taking out two tyres. The car swerved but remained true. Out of bullets the doctor grabbed under his friends arms and dragged him sideways, the car was almost on them.
The Audi just missed them both, but as the back wheel passed by Sherlock howled in agony as it connected with his lower leg. The car skidded to a halt, reverse lights clicking on. John swore under his breath, leaving the detective wrenching in agony he sprinting for the vehicle. Before the driver had hit the accelerator again he arrived at the car door, smashing the window with the butt of the gun. There was a struggle then, the car's wheels spun back into action and John grabbed for the steering wheel, the whole vehicle swerved off course, the doctor held on tightly as he was dragged backwards, shoes unable to maintain purchase on the concrete below. John felt his anger rising with every second, he pitched forwards into the window, sending a hefty punch into the jaw of the criminal and finally the car slowed. The soldier instincts in the man kicked into full steam and John pulled himself out, yanking the door open he grabbed the man by the neck throwing him bodily to the floor below and sending another punch his way, square across the nose. This time the driver growled, blood beginning to pour from his broken appendage.

With what seemed to be renewed vigour the criminal kicked upwards, taking John's leg out from under him and sending him to the floor this time. They tussled, one punch thrown then another, rolling. Until the driver grabbed for his pocket, a switchblade appearing in his hand. The soldier grabbed the driver's wrist, turning the blade from his own neck in the opposite direction. The criminal sneered and clenched his jaw against John's death grip. The doctor then pulled the man up, quickly planting a head butt into his face and then driving the blade home into the man's shoulder. With one last punch across the jaw he sent the criminal into oblivion.

"Sherlock?" John stumbled to his feet and raced a few steps forward falling back to the floor next to his best friend.

The detective's breaths were fast and shallow and eyebrows knitted together as he fought hard against the shearing pain in his leg.

"Helps coming." John puffed, breathless from the struggle. He retrieved his phone and hitting the speed dial, he shouted down the line in a short cropped tone "Lestrade. Get here now. Royal Victoria docks near London city airport. And send an ambulance too."

"Already half way there." Lestrade answered on the end of the line. "What's happening John?"

"He tried to take Sherlock out, but we got him."

"Bloody hell, are you both ok?" Lestrade's voice lowered into worried tones.

"Just get here quick." John didn't continue. He hit the end call and left Lestrade to concentrate on driving, so he could concentrate on his friend's condition.

"Sherlock?" John felt again for a carotid, finding it strong but rapid.

"Good job Doctor Watson." Sherlock's eyes cracked open and he looked to his friend. "Or should I say Captain." He let a small smile pass his lips before he winced again. "That was some combat skills."

"It's what I'm here for you twit." John smiled back, but it soon turned into a frown as he watched the detective fight against the pain and stifle a small whimper.

"Your lip is bleeding." Sherlock slurred and half heartily tried to point to John's lip which was in fact bleeding profusely from a gash sustained in the scuffle.

"Don't worry about that." John hurriedly tried to make an assessment of his patient, starting to become concerned of a head injury. He took a look at the offending leg, and almost gagged. One
thing he always hated as a medic was open fractures and Sherlock certainly had one of those. The two bones from the detectives lower leg were broken through his skin and his trousers and was causing perfuse bleeding onto the surrounding ground.

"Jesus Sherlock." John cried, looking at the twisted limb and knowing for well that the blood supply to his foot would be compromised already.

"Not good?" Sherlock tried to pull himself up on his elbows with a hiss of pain. The doctor pushed him back.

"Stop moving you moron, I can't be sure you don't have a spinal injury either."

"Don't be stupid John" a shaky inhale from pain and the detective carried on, "he was going no more than 38 miles per hour when he hit me, which means coupled with the nature of the impact and trajectory of my body the percentage likelihood of an spinal fracture is only..."

"Shut up now." John warned. "Give me your scarf."

The doctor started to gently remove the wool from around his friends neck and Sherlock moved his head to help. "And stop moving!"

"Good job you wear this damn thing, even in the middle of summer eh?" John balled up the material and pressed it around edged of the bones stemming the blood flow. Sherlock couldn't stifle it this time and cried out, grappling for his coat, his knuckles turned white.

John's heart pounded faster, if the ambulance didn't get there soon he was going to have to straighten the leg himself or risk the detective losing his foot. He shuddered at the thought. It was then the sound of a car came to him again. His body tensed, ready for another onslaught, but within seconds he recognised the BMW as it came to a halt close by and the inspector rushed out the drivers side, Donovan in toe from the passenger side.

"What the hell happened?" Lestrade raced to John's side and the constable quickly went to the criminals side, slapping a pair of handcuffs on the man's hands while he was still unconscious.

"We tracked him down here but must have known we were coming, took Sherlock out with his car and then managed to break his leg on the second go. How long until that ambulance?" John glanced at the detectives face which was beginning to pale, his limbs were starting to tremor, shock was beginning to take hold.

"They said 30 to 40 minutes. They're all backed up at the protests at Parliament, it all got a bit out of hand, lots of people needing medical assistance."

"Damn them." John cried. "He can't wait that long."

"John?" Sherlock eyed him with a sluggish glare, and a with a slur added, "I'm fine, please do stop fussing."

"Donovan." John pointed to the police women who was still inspecting the prisoners injuries. She turned to the sound of her name. "Call the emergency services and ask for them to send HEM's. Tell them the casualty has a compound fracture of the lower leg with compromised blood supply and a potential head injury from a RTC at speed." John disregarded the prisoner with a wave. "He's stable, he can wait for the ground ambulance."

"Hold this." John asked Lestrade and pointed to the scarf in his hands. "Press hard" he let go as the inspector took over. Sherlock winced. John worked on his friends shoe then, gently pulling the
laces apart and then easing the whole thing off his friends foot, much to Sherlocks protests. He peeled his sock off to find the detectives foot pale and already cooling from the lack of blood in the tissues.

"Fuck." John swore.

"10 minutes until the chopper is here." Donavan then said.

"Ok. Good." The doctor exhaled, better, but still too long to wait for his friends blood supply to be compromised to his limb. "I need you both to help me get his leg back aligned."

"What do you need me to do?" Donovan was not her usual snarky self, and John could see some of the colour had drained from her face.

He turned back to the job at hand and focused "I need you to hold here." He pointed to just above Sherlock's knee. "Hold fast and do not let go, no matter what you see or what Sherlock does."

He looked to Lestrade, "I need you at the head end." John motioned, "hold down his shoulders and try and talk to him."

"John what?" Sherlock looked to the three of them crowded around him. His best friend bent over his face for a moment, looking sadly at him.

"I need to realign your leg." He said, "I'm really sorry, the EMT's are too far away for me to wait."

"Okay?" A breathy reply.

"It's going to hurt like hell." John replied and squeezed his friends shoulder. "I'm sorry." He said again before leaving him with Lestrade.

"Alight mate?" The inspector smiled to the consultant, noting the drying bloodied hair sticking to the man's forehead with worry.

"Never better." Sherlock grimaced. "Got your murderer."

"Yeah, saw that, thanks."

"Ready?" John asked Donovan as he placed two hands on his friend bare foot. The constable nodded soundlessly. "I'm so sorry." John whispered before pulling hard on the detectives leg.

Sherlock's body convulsed and he screamed. John flexed the ankle and pulled it back forwards and as the limb realigned the bones crunched and cracked disappearing back into the detectives leg and into place.

Donovan felt herself gag at the noise and feeling of the fracture. She bent forwards, bringing up nothing but bile onto the concrete. "Sorry." She whispered, embarrassed her body had betrayed her.

"Don't worry." John looked sadly at her. "Perfectly normal response, well done for not letting go." He nodded in approval, and then set to checking for blood in his friends foot, happy that he found a strong tarsal pulse. "You can let go gently now." He thanked the constable with a sad smile.

"How's he doing?" John called to the inspector and slowly started to release his friends foot, hoping the leg would remain stable and the muscles would not pull the bones back out of place again.

"Er." Lestrade faltered. "Ok, I think."
John rushed forwards to the detectives face. Sherlock's eyes were staring to the sky, red rimmed with silent tires rolling down his pale cheeks. The look of bewilderment was plastered on his frozen face. His jaw was slack and quick hitched breathes passed his lips. He had retreated inwards from the severe pain.

"Sherlock?" John patted his friends cheek softly. "Hey, come on now?"

Lestrade and John passed a look of worry between them.

"Thanks." The detective finally whispered, barely audible. "Much better." His face came to life, but his gaze still remained fixed on the sky, eyes conveying nothing but torment and agony.

"No trips off to the mind palace just yet." John examined his friends pupils and rechecked his pulse, "just stay awake for me a little bit longer."

"I've been awake the whole time." Sherlock frowned with confusion.

"I know." John sighed, deciding not to fight it out. "Let's just keep it that way." John let himself relax back onto the ground slightly. It was then the sound of distant helicopter blades could be heard and Lestrade smiled to the doctor.

"Let's just stay awake until we're in the chopper eh?" Lestrade squeezed the detectives shoulder in affection.

"Ok." Sherlock replied, clearly without any understanding. "I can do that."

He was true to his word.

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The recovery chapter to this story can be found [Here](#).
Cranial nerves

Chapter Summary

Sherlock wakes in hospital after receiving head trauma.

Chapter Notes

Thanks to all regular readers. I wanted to mention that this chapter contains descriptions of a terror attack. It is not meant to upset anyone so if this triggers you then please skip this chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Sherlock's head felt like it was going to split in two. The unbearable agony which ran entirely across his cranium caused his body to convulse and eyes screw tight.

"Sherlock?" The familiar voice hit his ears and sent shots of pain down his eighth cranial nerve, the vestibulocochlear nerve, and into his throbbing brain. The detective counted the cranial nerves one by one trying to establish his senses again. One, olfactory, he crinkled his nose up and tried to make out any smells, disinfectant, latex and John's aftershave was all he could distinguish. Two, optic, with a enormous amount of effort he tried to crack open his eyelids, only to snap them shut again against the bright white lights. Three, oculomotor, four trochlear, six abducens, he sure as hell wouldn't be trying anything again with his eyes, the pain behind them was just too severe, but by now he could safely deduce he must be in hospital. Five, trigeminal, he clenched his jaw a little and it ached, opening and closing his mouth for a second.

"Come on Sherlock." The doctors voice again, "I know your in there."

Seven, facial. He felt a hand brush away the stray curls from his forehead carefully and the ever present flow of oxygen in his nostrils. Eight, glossopharyngeal, a ridiculous gurgle passed his throat as he tried to speak, hoarse from a clear lack of use.

"John." He finally croaked out, mouth dry and tongue feeling like sticky cotton wool on the roof of his mouth.

"There we go." John's reassuring voice sounded again and the detective gave a small whimper as pain radiated in his head again. Sherlock could practically hear John frown and worry. "Are you in pain?"

The detective did not need to answer, he let out a small whine and within a couple of seconds he felt a familiar rush of opioids in his bloodstream. Morphine pump, he deduced, and with John at the controls by the seems of it, that must come to a stop sharpish.

"I'm just going to call the doctor now your awake, just a second." The man's voice was less agonising to hear this time, so at least that was something.
A short time passed, how long Sherlock somehow did not manage to decipher, his brain seemed a muddle from drugs.

"Hello Mr Holmes." A different doctors voice this time, not one he knew. "Nice to see you back with us again." A pause. "I just need to check that everything is working ok."

Sherlock did not answer, in fact he practically refused to co-operate with the doctor altogether, only briefly speaking his name and getting the date wrong. Why must they always ask such absurd questions? Finally after some time, poking, prodding and a bright light being forced into both eyes the clinician seemed happy with his findings and left.

"You could be a little more co-operative?" John huffed and Sherlock heard him sit back in the plastic chair at the bedside. He had chosen to keep his eyes closed against the harsh lights above so was relaying on his other senses to see the room.

"Why?" He croaked out.

"Because if you do, you might just get out here a little bit quicker, believe it or not." John rustled a paper, and the detective smiled. It must have been evening. John always read the Evening Standard every night when he got in from work, after picking one up on the tube. Except he didn't pick this one up, Mrs Hudson must have brought him this one, she was the only one who really took the tube around London, apart from Molly, who wouldn't have known about John's reading habits to bring one along.

"How is Mrs Hudson?" He asked, trying to steady his voice which seemed to have an intermittent quiver.

"Well at least you haven't lost your ability to deduce I see. She's fine by the way. Worried about you, like we all are."

"Why would you be worried?" Sherlock scrunched his eyebrows together.

"You did take quite a blow to the head you know." John sighed, "for a short while we did wonder if that genius brain of yours had made it out the other side. But the doctors were hopeful."

Sherlock tried to think. Blow to the head? He didn't remember receiving a head injury, in fact he couldn't remember a lot. He supposed that explained the hospital and his immense headache which continued to throb on in the background, despite the morphine. He thought hard, searching his mind palace for any shred of information of how he had come to arrive in the hospital bed but there was nothing.

"How long?" He finally said.

"Nearly four days." John answered, a slight twinge in his voice which told the detective that four days was a bit not good with regards to being unconscious, "they had you in an induced coma for just over two. Too much swelling on the brain to risk you waking. Yesterday you were just unconscious on your own accord."

Sherlock grunted in reply. He still wasn't sure what put him here yet.

"Do you remember what happened?" The doctor asked casually.

"No."

A long a pregnant pause. John took a sharp intake of breath in worry. "Nothing at all?" He asked
again. "Do you remember Piccadilly Circus?"

"No." Sherlock remembered the place of course. But nothing significant happening there.

Another pause. "That's ok." The doctor said finally. "Amnesia is perfectly normal in head trauma, it will come back to you."

Sherlock wasn't sure if John was trying to convince himself or reassure him lying in the bed. The detective wasn't too concerned. He was certain even if he didn't remember that John would probably fill him in on the details. He felt himself drift off then, back into unconsciousness and away from the continual ache of his addled brain.

When he did wake up again he was able to crack his eyes open better. The light above him had been turned off and there was only a dull glow across the room. It must have been nighttime. A soft snoring could be heard to his left and the detective flopped his head to the side, wincing when a long line of stitches, still dressed, made contact with the pillow. John was in the chair beside him, chin rested on his chest, a small trickle of drool making its way out of the corner of his slack mouth as he slumbered on peacefully. The newspaper was discarded in his lap, still open where he had clearly been reading prior to sleeping. Sherlock couldn't help but smile at his friend's dedication, but his presence really wasn't necessary.

It was then that Sherlock recognised the slow and steady beep of the ECG machine beside him, he opened his eyes a little more, scowling down at his own body to find most of it covered except his bare arms, both array of wires, bandages and intravenous lines. Dull, he mused, resting back against the pillows careful not to jar his head. He felt himself begin to drift into a light sleep, eyes drooping.

As his eyes fell closed his brain switched on, the sounds of screaming and sirens suddenly coming to his ears. He shuddered involuntarily and the sound of the ECG beeps increased. John's voice came to his subconscious then. 'Sherlock stay awake for me now ok? Your going to be ok.' The sense of panic was evident in his voice. The detectives breath hitched a little, he inhaled shakily. It was not real, he was asleep, this was all in his mind palace. Screaming, sirens and John's voices all sounded, a maelstrom of noise and somewhere in the background he could feel himself shaking uncontrollably.

John woke with a jolt. The ECG machine screaming beside him, his flat mates heart rate racing away with itself.

"Sherlock!" He was on his feet in a flash. The detectives breaths were coming in short harsh gasps and his brows were furrowed tightly. "Hey, Sherlock, open your eyes for me?" He gently took his friends shoulders and gave them a gentle shake. "Wake up." He cried.

The detective groaned in response but did not rouse. His body began to shake, and if John was not medically trained he would have said his friend was having a seizure.

John pushed the assistance button and practically shouted, "Sherlock!"

Sherlock's eyes snapped open and his body stilled all of a sudden. "John?" He moaned in confusion.

"It's alright." The doctor sighed in relief as his friends vitals began to stabilise. "I think you were dreaming. It's alright now." His words echoed that which the detective had said to him many years ago in Baskerville.
"What's happening?" Sherlock whispered, voice barely audible above the machines still beeping their angry alarms.

"Your in hospital. Do you remember?"

"No."

In that moment a nurse then appeared in the room beside them. "I think he was having a nightmare." John explained as the young women set to turning off all the annoying bleeps. "I think we're ok now."

The nurse took Sherlock's pulse, checked the readings and went to his hospital chart. "I'll page the doctor anyway and he'll stop by as soon as he can. Everything else seems in order."

John nodded and thanked her as she left, knowing for well that it was unlikely the junior doctor on overnight would get a moment to pop into to see them, he knew the amount of patients the overstretched doctor would be seeing to. John turned back to his friend to find the detective trying miserably to sit up in the bed, cursing under his breath with a huff.

"I don't think so." John pulled up the bed controls and pressed the button so the back began to raise up.

"Thank you." Sherlock finally said meekly and he pulled his hand up to connect with the left side of his head and the dressing there. "How?" He asked.

"It doesn't matter right now." John smiled sadly, "it will come back to you."

"I need to know." Sherlock started to pick at the edges of the dressing. "I need data."

"Leave that." The doctor batted his hand away. "You were hit by shrapnel, fractured your skull, I would prefer it if you didn't fiddle with it."

Sherlock hummed in reply and let his hand fall back to the sheets. "Explosion then." He replied, "Piccadilly circus."

"That's right." John sat back down, a little too hard and Sherlock saw him wince.

"You're hurt." The detective lifted his head to see him better but let out a cry as pain exploded behind his eyes.

"It's nothing." John waved him off and sighed slowly allowing his damaged body to settle into the chair. "Nothing compared to you." The doctor frowned. "How's the pain?" He asked.

"Bearable." Sherlock rolled his eyes and immediately regretted it. "Tell me." He added, "what happened. How were you hurt?"

Before John had a chance to reply the door of the small hospital room opened quietly and the face of detective inspector Lestrade appeared around it. "Oh." He exclaimed.

"Evening Greg." John greeted him with a sad smile.

Lestrade clamped a reassuring hand on the doctors shoulder. "I didn't think you'd be awake." He said turning to Sherlock. "I was just checking in on you after my shift."

Sherlock narrowed his eyes. It was late, although he couldn't tell what the time was, by the fact the lights in the wards were off and the night doctor was on duty told him it must be past 10pm which
means Lestrade had been working late at the yard. The inspector only worked late when a case was pressing and serious, which probably meant he was working on whatever he and John had been caught up in. It must have been something big.

"You shouldn't be here John." He pulled up a chair next to the man, "you should be resting too." He then patted Sherlock's bandaged lower arm carefully with affection. "And how are you feeling?" He added.

"I wish people would stop asking me." Sherlock grumbled, now unable to think about nothing but the fact that his best friend was hurt and he didn't know how.

"Well you have been out for the last four days mate." Greg said sadly. "I think we all have every right to be asking."

"What happened to John?" The detective exhaled.

"He doesn't remember." The doctor cut in, "I don't think we should be worrying about it right now."

There was a short pause and Lestrade looked from one friend to the other. "You don't remember the bomber?" He asked.

"For god's sake." Sherlock shouted and then hissed as the agony throbbed in his head, "will someone just bloody tell me what the hell happened!" He brought a hand up to his face and rubbed his temples to sooth the pain.

Lestrade looked to John and then back to the detective, "maybe John's right, perhaps we should do this another day."

Sherlock grunted in pain, he pulled at his intravenous catheter and started to move his feet towards the edge of the bed. "Whoa." Lestrade was on his feet and John just behind. "No need for that."

"If no one is going to talk to me then I'll call Mycroft or the doctors or just find out for myself."

"Alright alright." John gently pushed his shoulders back down to the bed. "It's really not that bad. We'll talk about it ok."

Sherlock let himself settle backward into the bed, he really was rather tired and his muscles ached far more than he felt they should have. Both Lestrade and John then sat back into their chairs and John began.

"We were tracking a bomber. Mycroft had put us onto the job, a terror threat in London from an unknown source."

Sherlock nodded as he listened. "We'd tracked him most of the day. We lost him for a while and then found him back in Piccadilly Circus. You knew exactly what he was up to, called Mycroft for backup but it was too late."

"And..." Sherlock prompted but John took a shaky intake of breath and didn't continue. "What?"

Lestrade continued then, and as the story started to come out Sherlock started to remember.....

"Let him go." John shouted, a flash of his pistol appeared. "Let him go or I will kill you right here and now."
"I don't think so." The bomber smiled a toothy grin, pulling his coat open to reveal the explosives strapped to his body, the detonator flashing in readiness. He pulled Sherlock in closer to him, his grip on the detectives throat clamped tighter. Sherlock struggled for a breath, hands scrabbling at the iron grip around him. "Take one more step and I'll blow us all to bits and a second."

John did not doubt the man's intentions. "What do you want?"

"I know who you are." The huge man said, "your Watson and Sherlock." He joked, "your the wrong Holmes though, I'm looking for the other one."

"Already on his way." The detective choked out. "He'll be here in a few minutes."

"Hmm, not here." The terrorist answered.

"Thought that was the whole point?" Sherlock cried. "Maximum number of casualty's in a highly populated area."

"Sherlock?" John warned.

"Partly right." The man answered, clearly not bothered by the detectives cocky response to the request of Mycroft. "Populated area, wrong Holmes. But no problem, he'll give himself up if I have you."

Something changed in the detective then and he struggled anew, kicking back with his feet to try and bring the bomber off balance. John was surprised by the little amount of attention they had brought about until now but suddenly there was chaos around them. Tourists and locals running, screaming and shouting, several screaming bomb at the top of their lungs. John pitched forwards to join the melee, his punch heading towards the man's head stopped short when he took a sharp intake of breath.

"John!" Sherlock cried out, still wreathing in the man's grasp. He doctor stumbled back in shock, hands grasping for his stomach and coming away red with blood. "John!" Sherlock's voice choked off from the hands around his throat.

The doctor crashed to his knees more from shock than pain, he could barely feel the stab wound.

John saw very little of the tussle that carried on. Bomber and detective, one armed, one not. The pair stumbled out into the road, taxis blaring horns and buses swerving as the pair of them struggled on. Until finally John gathered his thoughts, picking up his fallen gun he aimed with precision. He hit the bomber in the leg and the man screamed, reeling in pain.

"Sherlock get back!" John shouted across to them. The detective stumbled backwards for a second before there was a blinding flash of light and both doctor and detective were sent flying backwards from the explosion.

John came to quickly, his face down on the concrete, ears ringing from the deafening noise they had been subjected to. He rolled over carefully, checking all four limbs, it was habit from his army days. Soldier, trauma doctor and best friend to Sherlock Holmes. For a second he wanted to vomit when he saw the smears of blood across the roadway and no sign of his best friend. "Sherlock!" He shouted, realising that half of the square was shouting too. Cries of pain and horror from those injured or those just simply witnessing a terror attack.

The doctor pulled himself to his feet unsteadily and took stock of the situation. He needed to find Sherlock, and he needed to now. He stumbled forward and towards the road where he had last seen his best friend paying no heed to the injured around him. In usual terms he would be triaging the
situation, attending to those wounded and taking charge. But right now all he could think about was his best friend. Finally after making it to the road he saw him, on the opposite side, strewn out in his billowing Belstaff coat. John ran the final few yards dropping to his knees beside his friend.

"Sherlock!" He grabbed his shoulders to rouse him and the detectives eyes cracked open.

"John." He slurred.

"It's ok, just stay still for a moment." John took a second to assess his friend. Cuts and burns to his forearms. His coat and jacket were in tatters and singed beyond recognition. What concerned John more though was the alarming amount of blood pooling around the detectives head. The doctor took a closer look to find a deep gash to the left side, hair soaked and sticky obscuring the view of the injury.

"Jhn..." Sherlock mumbled again, eyes closing.

"Sherlock stay awake for me now ok? Your going to be ok." John began to panic, he pulled apart some of his friend tattered shirt, bunching and then gently pressing it onto the side of his head.

The detective moaned out in pain and then convulsed to vomit. John turned him quickly as not to allow him to choke on his own stomach contents.

"Easy." He soothed. "Take it easy ok."

Sherlock's eyelids grew heavy then, he fought the edges of consciousness, the sounds of distant sirens could be heard among the cries for help and pain.

"No." John shook him lightly, "stay awake now, come on." He tapped his flat mates cheeks. "Sherlock?"

There was no answer, the detective let go to the darkness, and his body relaxed into unconsciousness. John pitched forwards, his wound suddenly seizing with pain, not now he thought, not while he needs me. He groaned in agony, letting his face bury into Sherlock's coat before he too succumbed to the pull of oblivion.

"Thats how I found you both." Lestrade said, "I arrived just before the emergency services did."

"So what's the problem?" Sherlock asked, seeing John's face had turned a worrying shade of white.

"You nearly died." John whispered. "I put your life in jeapordy, I shot him, but you were too close." The doctor felt a small silent tear trickle down his cheek, he wasn't sure if Sherlock saw it or not, but he hoped not.

"But you saved me." The detective replied. "Left without your help and I probably would have asphyxiated on my own vomit."

Trust Sherlock to say it like it was. John couldn't help but smile. "I guess your right." He grabbed his friends hand giving it a loving squeeze. "I'm just glad your awake now that's all."

"Me too." Sherlock let his eyes droop closed again and he fell back to sleep, this time without a hint of a flashback or nightmare, happy with the fact that both he and John were still in one piece.
The recovery chapter to this story can be found here.
"What are you doing?" John left his shopping bag by the fridge and looked to his friend who was busy at the kitchen table. An endless array of wires, cables and electrical equipment was splayed out across its surface in a maelstrom of chaos.

"Working." Sherlock did not turn away from his experiment.

John began to sort and pack away the supermarket shopping, he turned his nose up at the Tupperware boxes stacked in the fridge with what looked like ears and eyes. There really was never a dull day at 221B. "Are you sure you know what your doing?" He added, trying to find space to stack the tins of soup away.

"I did a PhD in chemistry John, I know what I'm doing." The detective tutted, crimping two wires together.

"Chemistry Sherlock. Not electrical engineering." The doctor put his hands on his hips. "What's this all about anyway?"

"The case of the boy killed at Acton Town station while working on the signalling system."

"Not an accident?" John asked.

"Obviously." Sherlock rolled his eyes. "I just need to prove it so."

John watched him for a moment with some suspicion. The victim in question had died after being shocked with over 630 volts of electrics, the idea that Sherlock could be playing with similar sizes of power was not making him feel at ease.

The detective clearly read his mind. "Don't worry, I'm not using 630 volts, just the mains power."
John laughed nervously, "that makes it all better does it, less voltage, still potentially fatal."

"Oh, do stop being so dramatic." Sherlock sighed.

"Fine." The doctor stuffed the last packet of food away. "I'm going for a soak in the bath. Try not to kill yourself while I'm out the room will you."

Sherlock did not answer, John could tell by the look on his face he had pushed his luck enough, there was no point in picking arguments. The doctor left his friend and began to run a bath. He was glad it was the weekend, long days at the surgery had taken its toll on John, the relentless moaning of one patient to the next had caused the week the drag on and on. He hoped that Lestrade didn't have any cases for Sherlock to take him along to in the next few days, he ached.

John spent the next hour soaking in the hot water. His throbbing joints and muscles eased and he fell into a light sleep until the water began to cool. Once he was out the bath and beginning to dress, only then he realised the bathroom lights had been flickering for sometime.

"Sherlock. What are you doing?" He cried from behind the locked door.

"I already told you." A muffled voice returned with an answer.

"Well stop it." John shouted back, pulling a shirt on over his head, "otherwise your going to..."

Before the doctor could finish his sentence there was a pop followed by a thud and the lights flicked off completely. "Bloody cock." John whispered, fumbled and unlocked the bathroom door in the pitch black. It would have to be nighttime when his flatmate wanted to play with the dam electrics wouldn't it. John stepped carefully into the hallway, slowly allowing his eyes to adjust to the darkness, the only light now visible was the orange glow from the street lamps, seeping through the net curtains and into the rooms. Well, at least he hasn't taken out the whole block, John thought, it wouldn't have been the first time.

"Sherlock?" The doctor crept along the hallway towards the kitchen, "do you have a torch, you bloody idiot."

When John heard no answer he hurried along quicker, turning into the kitchen the smell of burning flesh hit his nostrils, an edge of panic settled in. "Sherlock?" He shouted, not seeing his friend for a moment.

A small groan sounded in the living room and John nearly tripped over himself as he rushed around the table, careful not to touch anything. When he reach the living room he found his friend pulling himself to his feet shakily. "Whoa." The doctor steadied him and eyed him with an edge of concern. "Did you get electrocuted?"

"No." Sherlock cleared his throat and swayed a little. "But if you would be so kind as to switch the fuses back on we can perhaps shed a little light back into the flat."

The doctor pulled his unsteady friend to one side, forcing him into a chair. "Stay there." He warned, racing off to the fuse box and before returning he retrieved his medical bag.

Once John had made it back to the living room the lights were back on and his friend was attempting to rise from the chair. Sherlock's legs were not cooperating though.

"What did I tell you." The doctor pushed the man back into the chair a little too easily. "Will you at least let me give you a once over before you carry on."
Sherlock huffed but did not answer, residing to the fact that there was no point in arguing this time, his legs currently felt like jelly and he would get nowhere if he tried fleeing to his room. "Fine." He sighed.

"What happened?" John eyed him.

"Nothing." Sherlock grumbled, "the circuit just shorted out that's all."

"Then what where you doing on the living room floor?"

"I tripped over some spare wiring in the darkness and fell." He said with a air of certainty which John did not buy at all.

The doctor turned and looked at the space between the table and living room to see no sign of cabling, equipment or anything for that matter. "Your a terrible liar." He looked back to his friend and noted he looked a little off colour. "Any loss of consciousness."

"No."

"Honestly Sherlock, I'm not a mind reader, I'm a doctor. I need to know how serious a shock it was."

The detective do not answer, he sat back, planting a scowl on his face while John pulled out his stethoscope and blood pressure monitor.

"Any light headed feelings, numbness, tingling or dizziness?" He listened to the younger man's chest.

"No." the man's deep baritone voice sounded loudly in John's ears through the instrument. "I feel just fine, just took a tumble. Is this really necessary."

"Yes it is." John gave up listening and set to taking his friends blood pressure. He paused, taking several readings before being content about the result. "Now, where was the entry point?"

Sherlock shrugged, and John began to lose a little patience. "Show me your hands." He commanded in his clipped soldier tone and the detective held out his hands palm side down. John quickly turned them over to find the palm of his right hand blackened from the injury, a nasty welt running close to his thumb.

"You twat." The doctor swore, "do you know how bad electrical burns can be?"

"Yes John, I have seen my fair share of them."

"Do you have any idea how much underlying tissue and nerve damage there could be." John pulled out dressing materials and antiseptic from his bag.

"Yes John." Sherlock sighed, "I am well aware of the complications regarding them, there is no need to lecture me on them."

John grumbled under his breath, he set to cleaning up the burn with dilute iodine as Sherlock flinched against the pain. Served him right, he thought as he tended to his friend. He slathered antiseptic cream across the ugly wound with a hiss from the detective and then set a dressing and bandage over the top.

"So where's the exit wound?" John then said as he taped down the end of the bandage.
"Don't know."

"Your really starting to wear thin on my patience." John growled.

"Does that mean you'll leave me alone?" The detective asked optimistically.

"No." John snapped, at that moment finding a suspicious looking tear in his flatmates trousers at the knee. "I've had enough awkward patients to deal with this week, another one doesn't mean a thing. Trousers off." He pointed to the knee.

"What?" Sherlock look perplexed. "No."

"Fine." The doctor had a feeling this would be the case and had already found the scissors in his bag and set to cutting the leg of the garment before the detective had even realised.

"What the hell are you doing?"

"What's it look like." John shot back, he was not in the mood for a stand off. "I'm sure Mycroft can buy you another pair." He smiled, "or is it Mummy and Daddy who send you your clothes?"

"Leave them out of this." Sherlock growled. "Your bedside manner is atrocious. Do you treat all your patients like this?"

"No." John replied, reaching the injury and cringing at the sight of it, at least double the size of the hand wound. Exit wounds were usually the worst of the two. "Only you." He continued on, "because your the worst patient of them all."

"That's because I can deal with things like this myself, I don't need a doctor for minor ailments." Sherlock hitched in a breath when his friend began to flush and clean the burn a little more roughly than the previous.

"No you can't." John was angered. "Your the worst at looking after yourself. How many times have you let your wounds get infected or a cold turn into a chest infection?"

"That was only once." He detective retorted.

"Once too many." John added. "And if you do that again I'll give you more than pneumonia."

Sherlock crossed his arms and sat back in a huff and the doctor couldn't help but chuckle at the sight of his friend looking like a five year old having a tantrum.

"All done." John said finally after several minutes of working on the second wound and dressing it adequately. "I suggest resting up for the night. I'll have another look at the wounds late tomorrow but they might need some antibiotics."

Sherlock only grunted in reply, he stood, albeit still a little unsteadily, to his feet and stormed to his room, closing the door with a thud behind him.

"Thank you too." John rolled his eyes at the childish behaviour. He cleared up the mess, disconnected the detectives experiment from the mains plugs and made himself a decaf tea before heading to bed himself.

It was well past nine o'clock before John woke the next morning, he was shattered, he'd not stirred once during the night. When he had freshened up and made it into the living room he found
Sherlock pacing with what he could only describe as excited energy.

"Ah John. Perfect timing." The detective's eyes lit up when he saw his friend, "Lestrade just called, he has a case. Double murder, locked house. No sign of forced entry. Must be at least a 7."

John sighed. He was hoping for a quiet weekend, he wished he had text Greg last night but then again there was no stopping murders happening.

"Where?" The doctor tried to sound interested.

"Finchley." Sherlock grinned. "Let's go." He headed for the door, grabbing his coat and putting it on as he flew down the stairs.

John barely had a moment to register his friend leaving. He grabbed his own coat and quickly slipping his shoes on and heading down the stairway too. When he reached the hall he found Sherlock leaning up against the front door looking a little worse for wear. "Are you alright?" John queried.

"Waiting for you." The detective ignored the concern and opened the front door letting the morning sunlight stream into the hall.

"You never wait for me." John pulled the door closed and watched his flatmate flag down a taxi.

"Well today I do." Sherlock stepped into the black cab. "Arcadia Avenue, Finchley." He said to the driver as John joined him on the back seat. "Is there a problem?" He asked.

"Well. No." The doctor didn't know what to say. He took a slightly closer look at his friend who had his face turned to the window, already watching the passing traffic and pedestrians. The detective was pale, a light sheen of sweat seemed to be forming on his brow, he certainly didn't look at all well.

"How you feeling?" John couldn't be bothered to try and beat about the bush, he asked outright about his friends health. "How are the burns feeling this morning."

"Perfectly fine." Sherlock brushed off the question hastily, clearly beginning to become annoyed at the regular interruptions in his thoughts.

The doctor remained silent for the rest of the journey, glancing occasionally at his friend, much to the detective's clearly thinning patience.

It wasn't long before they had reached the crime scene. Sherlock had already hopped out before the taxi had even stopped, leaving John, as usual, to the pay the fare. Lestrade greeted them both at the door of the terrace house, a typical small house in need of some attention long ago but like many house owners in London, lacking funds for basic home care. Donovan was loitering in the from garden looking rather unimpressed. John wasn't sure if this was because Sherlock was there or because like him, her weekend had just been interrupted by an inconsiderate murder in the suburbs.

"Thanks for coming." Lestrade smiled. "A bit of a mystery this one." He added.

"I'm sure it is to you lot." Sherlock sneered.

Greg began to lead them inside. "Victim one, Charlotte Leverage, tenant of this property, second victim unidentifiable male, still trying to get a ID." They reached the main sitting room where there was the familiar stench of death.
"They've been dead a while." John cleared his throat and chose to breathe through his mouth to save the risk of gagging at the smell of rotting flesh.

"Forensics think about a week, but being the end of the summer the heat has started to speed up the decomposition. A neighbour alerted us to the smell this morning upon returning from holiday."

"Nice." John replied.

"What do you think?" Lestrade looked to the detective who had not taken another step closer, he was still stood a fair distance from the scene, unusually so. He quickly surveyed the room. "Are you alright mate?" Greg had clearly noted the man's pallor too.

"I'm fine." Sherlock snarled, "I wish people would stop asking me." He swayed a little on his legs, which only John briefly picked up. "Why did you bring me out here, your little locked room is obvious."

"Well why don't you enlighten me." The inspector invited.

"Drunken brawl with estranged lover, accidental death followed by suicide. Obviously." Sherlock quickly deduced before turning with an unsteady gait and leaving.

"Is he alright?" Greg asked before John turned to follow. "I mean, he's only been here two minutes, barely looked at the crime scene, looks like death warmed up."

"I don't know." The doctor frowned, "he was a bit odd this morning, you know what he's like, when isn't he odd." "True." The inspector sighed, "look, sorry for dragging you out on a Saturday. Clearly we are a bunch of imbeciles here"

"No worries, didn't cheer him up did it." John chuckled, "he'll be a joy for the rest of the weekend."

"Sorry..."

"Lestrade!" An urgent bellow of Donovan sounded through the house. Both of them bolted for the front door.

Donovan met them but simply pointed to the detective who seemed to have taken a seat on the floor with his back against the wall of the building. "He was fine, in fact insulting me, then he just sort of sat down."

"Sherlock?" John was already on his knees before his friend. "Tell me your symptoms, what's happening?"

"Just give me minute." The detective took a sharp intake of breath and screwed his eyes shut in pain. "Not insulting." He added with difficulty.

"Where's the pain?" The doctor pulled his friends hand up and checked his pulse, weak, thready and irregular.

"John." Sherlock's breath shuddered as he took short intakes of air.

"Where?" John commanded this time, even though he practically knew now, his friends lips where a horrible shade of grey and sweat was beading on his forehead more than earlier.

"Chest." The detective cried out, balling his hand into a fist and plastering his arm tight across his
ribs and sternum.

"Call and ambulance now!" John pointed to Donoven who seemed to already be contacting the emergency services on her intercom.

"What's happening?" Lestrade was by the doctors side.

"His heart has skipped into an arrhythmia I think, although not common heart arrhythmias can develop later after an electrocution, which the idiot did last night. Either that or he's having a heart attack."

"Oh Jesus." The inspector lost his own breath for a moment.

"Help me get him to the ground." John pulled his friend towards himself and the detective let out a short whimper of pain into his friend's shoulder "Sorry Sherlock, I just need you to lay down for me while we wait for the ambulance."

With little problems Lestrade and John managed to get the lanky figure to the concrete, thankful that it was already warming in the sunshine and not raining.

"Sherlock." John patted his friends cheeks to rouse him. "Hey, try to stay awake will you?"

"Can't." Sherlock's eyes remained screwed shut against the agony, short sharp intakes of breath came quickly and his arm remained pulled tightly to his chest, limbs shuddering from the effort.

"Come on, open your eyes." The doctor patted his cheeks harder and the detective's eyes rolled and opened only slits. "There we go." John smiled. "Just keep looking at me ok. No napping on the job now, we need you awake."

The opening of Sherlock's eyes seemed only momentary and within seconds he slipped into full unconsciousness, his shaking limbs slipping down and resting at his sides and head lolling back slightly.

"Fuck you." John swore this time, he placed two fingers onto his friends carotid pulse happy to find it still there although still fluttery and irregular.

"What can I do?" Lestrade piped up, clearly feeling lost.

"Watch his breathing." John said, "there's every chance it might stop between now and the medics arriving. We might have to start CPR if he goes into full cardiac arrest." Even though John had faced these situations enough times before he couldn't help but let his voice waver at the thought of performing cardio-pulmonary resuscitation on his best friend.

"Okay." The inspector dare not say anything else, save his own emotions.

Both John and Greg did not say a word for several minutes, both waiting with bated breath at every rise and fall of the detective's chest, each pause between sending a shot of panic through them as they waited for the next inhale. John's fingers did not leave his friend neck, a constant reminder that his best friend was still alive, his heart was still beating and his body and brain still being perfused with oxygen rich blood, essential for life. Although the grey hue to his skin sent the fear of dread into John, a tinging of blue around his eyes and lips told him cardiac arrest was imminent.

"Where's that bloody ambulance." Lestrade cried.
John didn't answer, his friends pulse as become more erratic by the second, skipping and missing beats every other pulse. "Not now Sherlock, just hang on until they can get the defib here."

John could feel his emotions beginning to crumble, and even as he heard the distant sound of sirens he could see his friends breaths shallow out and slow.

Lestrade went to speak. "I know." The doctor said before the man had a chance. "Once they arrive, tell the medics I need the defibrillator and ECG now."

The inspector felt his own heart begin to flutter uncontrollably with utter horror. Sherlock was literally dying right in front of them, and there was a chance if the ambulance didn't get there soon that he really would die right there.

As the sirens turned into the road Sherlock's breathing ceased altogether and John gave him a breath. "Not now Sherlock please. They're almost here." John's voice quivered.

By the time the medics were out the van John had given two more breaths, and was struggling to find a palpable pulse.

"He's running SVT's." John shouted to the paramedics. "Give me the defib." Both medics looked at one another for a second.

"He's an army doctor, just do what he says." Greg cried, the enormity of the situation doing nothing for his nerves.

John tore Sherlock's shirt open to access his chest, buttons pinged everywhere. He pulled the pads from the EMT's hands placing them on the Sherlock's skin and took the paddles. "Charging?" He commanded and the medic powered the unit.

"Shocking."

Lestrade almost vomited when he watched the detective's body jolt and then relax.

John felt for a pulse but shook his head. "Again." He said, almost calmly, if at all possible.

"Shocking."

Sherlock's body seized and relaxed yet again "Okay." John nodded as he felt for a pulse and found one, letting out a breath he didn't even realise he was holding. "Still apnoeic though."

The second paramedic was on it, sealing a mask over the detective's mouth an nose and breathing for him in steady deep respirations.

"We might need to intubate if he doesn't start soon." John pulled the ECG line from the machine and began applying contact pads to his friends chest with such rehearsed precision. Lestrade watched him work, it wasn't uncommon that he saw John working his doctors magic on members of the public or even Sherlock from time to time but it was thankfully rare he got to see him in full action doing emergency medicine which he was so specialised at doing. The inspector could imagine the man doing similar to now but on the battlefield, shells and gunfire around him. How he did it Greg never knew, but he respected the man highly for it and he trusted him any day with his life. Sherlock was in good hands.

John clipped the last ECG line on and looked at the screen while he secured a blood pressure cuff in place. "Get an IV line in." John barked to the second medic who seemed to be already at his bag for supplies.
"He's running VPC's." The doctor declared, "do you have lidocaine?"

"Yes."

"80mg IV when you've got the line in and start Hartmanns at shock rate, he's hypotensive." The medic nodded and continued his task.

John turned to the other. "Any signs of spontaneous ventilation?"

"None."

"Let's intubate." John pulled out the relevant equipment from the bag closeby and began the process of placing the endotracheal tube into the detective's airway. Not exactly the easiest procedure to do on a human patient, but John performed it with ease and skill only an experienced doctor could show. "We need to get him to hospital soon, now we've got an airway and pulse back lets get sorted to move." John was taking charge of the situation.

Within a few minutes a gurney had arrived and they managed to scoop the light detective onto it, lines, tubing and attachments making their way onto the trolley too. The two medics, John and Lestrade made their way with Sherlock into the back of the ambulance.

"Do you want me to go?" Greg looked lost amongst the busy crew working.

"No." John turned to him in a moment. "I could do with the moral support."

"Of course." Lestrade squeezed his shoulder in appreciation and comfort. "I'm right here."

"Thanks mate." John smiled sadly, turning back to his flat mates form, reading off the screens and monitors. "Let's go." He said.

Lestrade pulled the doors closed and one of the medics jumped into the drivers seat starting the engine. The ambulance lurched into action, speeding down the road, sirens restarting.

"Lidocaine in?" John asked.

"Just coming up to the end of the dose." The paramedic carefully and slowly squeezed the last few drops from the syringe into the IV catheter port.

"Good." John looked to the screen, "he's heading back into sinus rhythm, we're getting somewhere." He checked his friends pulse, happy to feel a stronger thrum under his digits when suddenly something grabbed his wrist with force. He looked down to find a bandaged hand wrapped around his arm.

"Sherlock?" The blogger bent over his friend. The detective's eyes had barely opened but John could see his pupils fixed on his intently. The look of panic was starting to set in as his eyes started to open a little more.

The detective tried to sit up then, arms grasping out for anything he could find, he struggled.

"Midazolam now." John barked to the other man. "He's panicking."

"Sherlock calm down." The older man slowly pushed his friend back to the bed and gently stroked his forehead. The detective calmed somewhat but still waved his arms in an exhausted attempt to fight. "Your on your way to hospital, you can't talk because you have a breathing tube in place, but I promise it will be out very soon. Please try not to panic. It's going to be ok Sherlock. I promise."
The detective's eyes rolled a little once the sedation hit his bloodstream, "there we go." John sighed, "have a little nap, you won't remember a thing about this." The doctor was glad to see his friend lose consciousness this time, happy with the fact he was much more stable and now breathing for himself it seems.

John turned to the inspector. "I've never seen a patient wake up so quickly from a cardiac arrest. He's unbelievable."

"He sure is." Lestrade smiled. "Is he going to be ok?"

"I think so. No out the woods, but I think we're over the worst of it. And in the best place now."

"Good." Greg picked up his ringing phone recognising the number.

"Mycroft."

"Good morning Gregory, I hear my brother is on his way to hospital right now." Mycrofts voice showed no emotion whatsoever.

"Yes. I am in the ambulance now. He's doing ok, stable for now."

"Yes I know." Lestrade could practically hear Mycroft rolling his eyes. Of course he knew. "Please could you advise the ambulance crew that they'll be taking my brother to Harley Street. I have a team of cardiologists and doctors assembling for your arrival as we speak."

"Okay." Greg didn't quite know how to answer.

"May I speak with doctor Watson?"

Lestrade handed the phone over quickly, heading towards the front seat of the ambulance to inform the driver of their new destination.

"John." Mycroft started.

"Now's not the best time for a chat Mycroft what do you want." The doctor was short.

"I am aware of the situation. I just wanted to thank you for taking care of my brothers misfortunes of the last 12 hours, I apologise on his behalf for being such a imbecile shall we say. I am out the country at the moment, but I know my brother is in the best possible hands. I am redirecting you to Harley Street where you'll be met by some of the top cardiologists in Europe. I hope you can work with them. Let me know how you get on."

"Okay." John was also slightly perplexed by the man's tone. "Do I hear an air of concern in there somewhere?"

"Don't push your luck doctor." Mycroft replied. "I'll be in touch." He rang off.

John practically laughed, he pocketed Lestrade's phone as the man himself was still up by the driver. "Looks like big brother's watching out for you." He clasped his best friends hand in his own and smiled sadly, looking down at the array of wires and lines pocking out of or onto Sherlock's body. "Just please don't do that to me again. I'm not sure if yours or even my heart could take that again."

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SVT - supra ventricular tachycardia - an abnormal fast heart rate and rythm, often life threatening,
there are many different types of SVT.

VPC - ventricular premature contraction, were the ventricle (lower chambers of the heart) don't beat at the right time causing irregular rhythms, low blood pressure and potentially death in some cases. They are seen in all sorts of situations and can be caused by many things.

Lidocaine - a drug used to treat VPC's given intravenously (other drugs can also be used but have personally used lidocaine for this)

Apnoeic - lack of breath (when breathing has stopped completely)

Intubation - placing a tube (endotracheal tube) into the trachea (airway) to secure a patent and safe airway so that the patient can be ventilated (breathe for them)

Midazolam - a sedation drug, (also know to cause amnesia during its use which is great for horrible or painful situations as the patient will no remember it)

Chapter End Notes

The recovery story to this chapter can be found [Here](#)
The first time Sherlock showed any signs of his unhealthy lifestyle was following the third chase with their suspect in as many days. The run had been at least a mile through the east end of London, dodging traffic before losing the criminal on a train in Ealing.

The detective stood on the platform, hands on his knees breathing hard. John came to a stop beside him, cursing at the train which had just left the station, watching the electrical sparks light up the dusky evening, turning both their moods just a little more gloomy.

"You alright?" John looked to his friend after some minutes, he was still bent double, catching his breath. Sherlock was the first to recover following a chase, John usually being the one to slow them down.

"Too many cigarettes." Sherlock pulled himself up to full height and smiled, and the doctor noted his cheeks flushed red from the exertion, not his usual pasty pallor.

"Hungry?" John tried, "I'm starving."

"No time." The detective's breathing was almost back to normal. "He'll be on his way to the next victim by now, you go ahead and eat if you must." He started to double back on himself, heading
for the station exit.

"You need to as well. That huge brain of yours can't just run off air."

Sherlock waved him off, much to John's annoyance, he was already almost at the top of the steps before John could catch up, striding out towards the main road.

The doctor ordered takeaway on his way back to Baker Street, perhaps a different approach would work. Once they reached the flat, Sherlock dumped his coat to the floor in an unceremonious heap and went to the sofa, staring at his array of notes and crime scene photographs, fingers steepled together on his chin. 20 minutes later the detective had not moved from his spot and John accepted the Indian at the door. He had ordered far too much for himself, in the hope that his best friend would at least nibble on something.

"Fancy an onion bahji?" John set the food down on the kitchen table, wafting the smell of spices and chilli into the room. He retrieved two plates from the cupboard.

Sherlock did not look over, his face was fixed to a receipt stuck to the wall, studying it closely. He made no attempt to answer.

The blogger spooned out a portion of curry and rice for his friend onto the second plate and then left the food beside the detective who in all that time had not moved an inch, not exactly unusual, but still a little unnerving. John was half way through his dinner by the time Sherlock did actually move again.

"Did you listen to a thing I said?" Sherlock snatched the receipt from the wall and then retrieving his coat from the floor.

"What?" John's muffled reply came though a mouthful of naan. "Where are you going?" He swallowed his food.

"To follow a lead."

"Will you not at least sit for 5 minutes." John cried. "You literally haven't stopped in days Sherlock, you need a rest. Please."

Sherlock cocked his head to the side, much like a dog. "A rest." He sniggered, "there is serial killer out there who has killed four people over last week, and he's not going to stop. The papers have turned half of London into panic at the fear of the 'Shoreditch strangler'. Do you really think that taking a break now is a good idea?"

"Will you at least eat something?" John sounded defeated and somewhat desperate now.

"Why?"

"Because Sherlock," John sighed heavily. "If you don't eat something soon then your body is going to give out and you won't be solving any murders."

"Ever the dramatic." The detective rolled his eyes. "I ate on Sunday, stop panicking like a mother hen."

"Sunday!" John practically fell off his chair. "It's bloody Thursday evening!"

"Yes I am able to recognise days of the week. I did receive a preschool education." Sherlock pulled his gloves on, pocketing the receipt into his coat.
"That's four days ago, how the hell are you still standing!" John's voice was rising a pitch by the second, he stood up, feeling as though perhaps his friend would drop right there and then "Please, for gods sake eat something. Anything."

"Your not my keeper John." Sherlock spat, leaving his friend standing uselessly in the middle of the kitchen. He tore out the flat in anger, slamming the front door so hard that the vibrations made the pots in the kitchen ring.

John swore loudly. He returned to his near empty plate of food, staring uneasily at the full one across the room. For the next two hours he did nothing but clock watch and worry. Finally interrupted as his phone buzzed with a text.

'Suspect sighting. Old street. Come at once. SH.'

John hurried to put his coat and shoes on when his phone buzzed again.

'Bring your gun. SH.'

The doctor stared at the message for a moment, not sure weather asking to bring a gun was a good thing as his friend was asking for his back up or bad due to the fact that the detective thought it was bad enough a gun was needed. He sighed again, retrieving his handgun from the kitchen drawer he left in a hurry.

By the time John made it to Old Street station he was more than a little on edge. It was dark, getting late and he had no idea where his flat mate was and if he was in any kind of trouble. He decided that perhaps this time Lestrade should know about Sherlock's little escapade, in case things started turning ugly, he pinged a text across to the inspector.

'Sherlock thinks he's found the suspect at Old Street, giving you the heads up just in case. Will be in touch.'

Just as he sent the message another arrived in his inbox.

'Southbound platform. Next train. Don't be late. SH.'

John rolled his eyes. Bloody typical, up on street level the doctor didn't have a clue when he next train was due on the northern line. He sprinted down the stairs in haste, through the station concourse, beeped through the barrier and onto the platform in record time. By now it was almost 11pm, the station was near empty and the next train was not for over 5 minutes.

"What's going on Sherlock?" John paced warily up and down the platform, scowling at every stray being that dared come close to him. His heart was racing, ready for another chase down, perhaps this time they would catch the bastard.

Finally as the train pulled into the station he jogged down the length of it, quickly ducking into a carriage when he recognised his best friend stretched out amongst the empty seats.

Sherlock's arms were folded tightly over his chest, hugging his coat close to him, his brows were furrowed tightly and lips pursed together in a serious tone.

"So..." John sat opposite and the doors beeped closed, train jolting to life.

"Two carriages down." Sherlock only motioned with his eyes. "With his next victim by the looks of it" John squinted down the train but failed to see anyone.
"How did you find him?" The blogger had to speak up as the cluttering sounds of the tracks and tunnel drowned out his voice a little,

"I..." Sherlock stumbled over his words and paused.

John looked at him closer, he seemed to be lightly shivering. "Sherlock?"

"Camden town." He spluttered out, not with his usual conviction. "Tracked him from the market..." He trailed off.

"You okay?" John sat forward, wanting to take his friends hand to check a pulse and temperature but knew not to push his luck right now.

"Hmm... What?"

"You alright?" John frowned at his friends perplexed look.

"Cold." The detective finally replied, trying to pull his belstaff closer into himself.

"It's the end of August, it's been over 25 degrees and blaring sunshine today, it's not cold Sherlock." The mind of the doctor started turning, an edge of worry starting to seep into his consciousness.

"Well it is." The detective snarled.

As the train began to slow, coming into Moorgate station and the lanky detective stood up, grabbing the rails for some stabilisation. John watched him carefully, he seemed unsteady on his feet.

"What's the plan?" He stood next to his friend and they made it to the doors. The brakes of the train screeching, the platform coming into view.

"Switch carriages, but don't jump in until the doors are about to close, we can't lose him this time. Once the doors are closed he won't have anywhere to go."

John nodded silently, he followed out onto the platform, slowly making his way down station heading towards the exit, trailing behind Sherlock when moments passed and the familiar beeping doors sounded, Sherlock shot into the nearest door one up and John the next, roughly grabbing the young women and next victim from the train's doorway. He forced her out of the train with a heartfelt 'sorry'. The doors closed behind him, leaving just Sherlock, himself and one angry looking man in the carriage while the train lurched back into action.

"Well that seems to have scuppered your evening plans somewhat don't you think?" Sherlock stood tall but had to hold onto the rails as the train accelerated, John's breath hitched, his friends lack of sustenance was clearly starting to take its toll more than he was letting on, this was not going to end well.

"Piss off." The bald, well muscled man looked from Sherlock to John and back again. "If you think I'm giving up that easy then think again." His heavily tattooed hand delved to his belt, pulling forth a sizeable blade.

"Give it up Daniel." Sherlock shouted over the trains noise. "The MET are on the way."

"No they're not." the man, who was several inches taller than Sherlock laughed. "You two work alone, there's no police to back you up now." The suspect jumped forwards and Sherlock threw a hefty punch towards him which was dodged with ease.
The detective then pitched forwards into him, tackling the larger man to the ground where they brawled momentarily.

John ran into the mealy, feeling the his gun weighting down his coat, ready to be drawn when needed. The doctor could see his best friends ailing strength, the blade drawing far to close to the detective's jugular and in one motion John kicked it from the murderers grasp. He snarled in response and threw Sherlock sideways onto the nearby seats. Sherlock landed with a snarl and struggled to return upright, his breaths were short and ragged.

With the consultant out the way, Daniel came for the blogger. He was almost twice the size of the stocky soldier, but John knew how to hold his own. Several punches later and the murdered howled as his nose was broken in one swift punch. He kicked back with renewed anger, sending John scooting meters backwards down carriage gangway towards the other end, momentarily stunned. The trains motion then began to slow, heading into Bank station where it would stop.

Sherlock jumped forwards with poor aim, he grabbed the man's bloodied shirt and pushed him backwards against the poles. He couldn't lose him now, not once the doors opened, there was a chance the man would bolt. The detective planted a head butt into the suspects already bleeding nose. They tussled, rolling from one side of the train to the other, pinning each other against the doors and planting body punches. As the train braked sharply the detective went down, his balance off, but he did not let go of the man's shirt, pulling him down on top him as the doors behind him opened to an empty platform. Bloody typical, thought Sherlock, not a single member of the public to call the police. The detective then felt a pair of strong hands around his throat, squeezing tight. His head pushed out from the doors and down towards the gap between the train and the platform.

"John!" He choked out.

The doors beeped and Sherlock pushed back with every last ounce of strength, the hands tightened around his throat but he forced himself up. The doors closed millimetres behind him, trapping some stray black curls in between the rubber, far too close for comfort.

John's eyes flicked open as the doors slammed closed. "John!" He quickly came to, the sound of his name bringing him back to full consciousness with a snap.

"Sherlock." He jumped up, grabbing for his gun in haste when he saw his friends prone form on the floor, the murderers hands around his throat, crushing his airway closed.

"Let him go!" John pulled his handgun from his jacket, clicking the safety off he marched forwards. "Let him go right now, or my first and last bullet will be in your skull." John's voice was deadly serious.

"Whoa mate." The suspect let go immediately seeing the guns aim. He sat back on his knees away from the detective. Sherlock coughed and sputtered, drawing in ragged breaths of air, his hands grasping at his bruised neck.

"Back!" The soldier commanded, motioning the man to move back. He bent down to his friend, helping him sit up, but not taking an eye off the game.

"Okay?"

"Never better." Sherlock croaked.

"Don't move." He stood back up and stepped towards the murderer. "Hands on your head." He shouted, the suspect flinched but did as he was told. "Turn around."
The man turned slowly around, dipping his head in somewhat defeat.

"We get off at the next stop." John told him. "Try anything stupid and I won't hesitate to go through with my promise. Understand?" He nodded slowly, remaining still while the train made its way to London Bridge. Within a minute the carriage began to slow.

"Stand up." John commanded, and the man stood, "this way." He guided the man back to the door, barrel pressed hard into his neck.

Sherlock was shakily getting to his feet as the brakes began to sound. "John." He said meekly, barely audible. "I don't feel so well." The doors opened and Sherlock stumbled, nearly falling out the train.

Suddenly, as the doctor's attention was drawn everything happened at once. The murderer ducked sideways, grabbing the gun in John's grasp, fought for purchase on the weapon. It fired, a bullet hitting the ceiling. The gun skittered away down the carriage, John in tow, forced to his hands and knees from the force of the struggle.

Sherlock grabbed out for the suspect to stop his escape but nearly pitched forwards like a drunken man. The suspect simply laughed. He planted a punch square across The detective's cheekbone which sent him reeling backwards, out the train and face first into the platform.

He laughed cruelly. About to step out the door and over the lanky consultant when pain tore through his lower leg, he screamed and was down before he even registered the gunshot.

John threw himself back upright but the doors began their beeping decent into closing, and it was too late. He watched with utter panic as the train pulled away, leaving his friend flat out on the platform edge, John could not see him moving.

The doctor marched forwards, and stood over the man, he placed a heel into the fresh gunshot wound and pressed hard. "You'll regret that move." He growled low. The murderer screamed in agony.

John hit speed dial on his phone, thankful for a little signal. "Lestrade." He said in a swift tone. "Send a squad car to Borough station, your suspect will be on the platform. Oh no. Don't worry, he won't be conscious." Smiled a wicked grin down at the man below him. "And get an ambulance to London Bridge station, Sherlock's been injured." He rang off, not giving the inspector a chance to reply.

By the time the train rolled into Borough station, John dragged the suspect from the carriage and dumped the man's unconscious form on the platform. He bolted for the exit, only one destination in mind now, thankful that London Bridge station was only a couple of blocks down the street.

He sprinted at full speed and arrived within a few minutes, vaulting the ticket barrier he found his friend exactly where he had last seen him. A concerned young teenager, takeaway in hand, was bending over him, and Sherlock was attempting to sit upright.

"Thank you." John said softly. "He's my friend, I'm a doctor."

The young man stepped back, allowing John some space.

"Ah. John." The detective's face lit up when he recognised his friend. "Where have you been, I was waiting do you."

"You're a twat do you know that?" John couldn't help but smile, helping him into a sitting position.
"It's cold." Sherlock moaned, "why's it so cold?" The detective's body shuddered uncontrollably under his coat and scarf. He tried to stand but his legs would not cooperate.

"Let me guess, you have a headache too." John shook his head sadly, "nausea?" He checked his friends pulse to find it racing, "tachycardia, sweating, lack of coordination and ataxia, weakness." John looked into his friends eyes, "and your pupils are dilated too."

Sherlock did not answer, he simply sat weakly, his body beginning to shake more rapidly.

John pulled the nearby teenagers McDonalds Coke from his grasp, removing the lid he held the paper cup up to the detective's lips. "Drink." He said.

"Why?"

"Because Sherlock." John repeated his earlier words, "your displaying every classic symptom of hypoglycaemia." He pushed the cup forcefully into his friends lips and tipped it gently giving the detective no choice but to swallow some of the sugary liquid. "You've starved yourself for so long your blood glucose has become dangerously low, risking you slipping into a seizure, or worse, a coma."

Sherlock gulped down several mouthfuls of the ice cool Coke, enjoying the soothing feeling on his damaged throat. He scowled in John's direction.

"You will not do this again." The doctor warned. "If I have to pin you down and hand feed you I will."

Sherlock smirked, allowing more fizzing drink to be forced into his mouth, his arms clearly still useless.

"I'm serious." John removed the cup and placed it on the floor. He noted the florescent jackets of the paramedics making their way onto the platform behind his friend. "And this time you are going to hospital to be checked over, no arguments."

Sherlock rolled his eyes for a moment and John moved to his side as the paramedics arrived. The doctor held him up, one arm supporting around his middle. The detective relaxed his head against John's shoulder in defeat. Allowing the medics to poke and prod him while the blogger gave them a run down of the evenings events.

John had won this time.

Chapter End Notes

The recovery chapter to this story can be found Here
"Sherlock?" John dropped the shopping onto the kitchen table, surprised to find it reasonably empty, save a small selection of Petri dishes. "Are you here? I bought milk and some food."

Silence. John put the fridge items away, avoiding the shelves of body parts. He was surprised to find his friend out. Sherlock had texted him as he left the surgery, asking for him to bring milk and of all things lucosade energy drinks on his way home. It wasn't unusual that the detective had the odd request, usually for an experiment of some sort, so it was a surprise to not find the man hard at work with his chemistry set.

It was only when the last item of shopping was finally stowed away John heard the toilet flush. So he was home.

"Sherlock?" The doctor poked his head out the kitchen onto the landing only to see the last wisps of his friends dressing gown disappear behind the bedroom door. "Sherlock?" He stepped closer to the closed off room. "You alright?"

"Go away John, I'm busy." A muffled reply.

"Busy doing what? Sleeping?"

"Go away."

"Not sure I can do that." John mused for a moment. He really didn't want to invade his best friends privacy but in the same sense it wasn't like they'd argued and Sherlock had shut himself in his room in anger. His flatmate also didn't have the best track record with drugs, it always made John twitchy when he was being secretive. Usually the detective was out and about in the flat, pacing, talking, playing his violin or stone still in his chair deep in his mind palace. His bedroom was not usually frequented except for the changing of clothes or the odd stint of actual sleeping. "What are you doing?"

"None of your business." A pause. "Did you bring the drinks?"

"Yes. They're on the kitchen table." John sighed.
"Leave them outside the door."

"Get them yourself." John turned on his heel, he could hear a mumbling tone of annoyance in the detective's voice and chose to leave him be. No point in starting an argument now, he would check back later.

The doctor put the kettle on, and opened a new packet of digestive biscuits as he waited for the water to boil. He squirrelled away two before finally pouring himself a mug of tea. He retreated to the living room and picked up today's paper, in the hope he could lighten his friend's mood by finding an interesting story to get his mind going. Three minutes later the toilet flushed again and John frowned. He looked up to hear his friend's bedroom door close again. He chose not to rise, continued his read into the news and sipped his warm drink. It was only ten minutes later, when the toilet sounded again that he rose from his seat, tea almost finished and half a packet of biscuits gone.

"Sherlock?" John was by his friend's door again.

"What?"

"Are you ill?"

"No." The detective replied a little too quickly.

"Are you sure?" John crossed his arms. He knew that something was not quite right and be damn if he was going to let Sherlock get away with it this time.

"If you're referring to my frequent bathroom visits I can assure you I have drunk a little too much tea. As a doctor you should be familiar with caffeine as a diuretic, I apologise that I could not restrain my biological functions."

"You haven't made any tea today." John smiled, Sherlock had taught him well. Enough for him to notice that the teapot was empty and not one cup or mug was missing after Mrs Hudson's spring clean yesterday afternoon.

"Sod off." A slightly off kilter voice. John hesitated. And then his suspicions were confirmed. From behind the wooden door there was the sound of retching.

"Right thats it." He pulled the door handle down, entering. "I'm coming in."

"Don't..." Sherlock cried, as he retched and coughed again, bending forwards and relieving his stomach of what meagre contents it had.

John stepped sideways to avoid the mess and took in his friend. The detective sat up a little, breathing heavily from the effort of vomiting. His face was pale and sweat ridden and his body was tremoring slightly from what seemed like physical exhaustion.

"So you're sick then." John put his hands on his hips and stared back at his friend like a disappointed school teacher. "Why didn't you say something?"

"Well done Einstein." The detective wiped his face of spittle. "Now would you kindly leave."

"Eh. No." John sighed. "Have you got diarrhoea too?" He asked matter of factly.

Sherlock buried his face in his hands. "Oh, dear God." He moaned.
"Well have you?" John asked again.

"Why do you need to know?" The detective moaned.

"Because I am your doctor." John sighed, "and if your losing too much fluid then we need to set about replacing it before you get too dehydrated. I'll take that as a yes then."

"I'm perfectly fine." Sherlock pulled his feet up onto the bed and curled the duvet around himself. "Now please, go away."

"No."

"Why must you be so intolerable?" The detective pulled the sheets over his head.

"I could ask the same about you being such a child?"

"I'm not a child!" Sherlock sneered, head popping out the duvet, an angry frown planted on it. "I can look after myself."

"Fine." John left, but refused to close the door behind him. His inner doctor nagged at him, uneasy about leaving his friend who was clearly unwell.

It took no more than another 15 minutes before John heard his friend enter the bathroom yet again and the worry settled further into his chest. Vomiting and diarrhoea was nothing new, everyone got a touch of it from time to time, but he knew Sherlock was not the type to do things by halves. He sat on the edge of his seat almost counting the minutes since he last heard his friend, the doctor laughed at himself. This was stupid, his flatmate was perfectly capable of looking after himself wasn't he? John chuckled, who was he kidding, this was Sherlock, the man practically had a death wish when he went up against the criminal class sometimes.

John sat uneasily in the living room, the odd sound of retching travelling from the bathroom making him edge a little further into wanting to move. When finally nearly 20 minutes later the doctor had had enough, be damned Sherlock's pride, he was clearly suffering and John couldn't stand it anymore. When he rose from his seat, a clutter and thud sounded from the small room and the doctor hurried to his friends aid.

Thankfully the bathroom was unlocked. When John entered he found his flatmate slumped into the side of the bath, wedged between the toilet bowl and the porcelain tub, legs askew.

"Ah, John." Sherlock's eyes barely opened slits, "good of you to come."

"You ass." John crouched down, immediately flushing the toilet to rid its contents. "Just stay there a second." He said assessing his friend for both injury and his current state of health.

"Wasn't dreaming of moving." Sherlock shuddered, the cold seeping through his trousers from the harsh tiled floor.

The doctor assessed him quickly and methodically, happy that he had sustained no bumps, bruises or fractures from his little episode down to the floor. His pulse was fast and erratic, not unusual for someone becoming dehydrated, he was pale, sweating perfusely and John frowned at the red edges to his flushed cheeks. Probably running a temperature but unable to say for sure until he'd fetched his med kit.

"Do you think you can sit up a bit for me?" John asked gently.
"Can't I just stay here." the detective slurred and seemed to slump further downward, his chin now resting on his chest, one arm still hooked half over the baths edge like a forgotten appendage.

"You can't lay here all night." John replied, slowing lifting Sherlock's eyelids to take a short look at his pupils, both equal, reactive and normal, no signs of drug abuse. John let out a sigh of relief.

"It's cold." Another small shiver overtook the taller man.

"Exactly." The doctor said, he tentatively placed two hands under each arm of his friend and pulled him a little more upright. He could feel heat radiating from his friends skin even through his clothes, definitely running a temperature.

Sherlock groaned loudly, his world spinning then. He reached forward for the toilet bowl, he heaved violently and unproductively.

"Jesus mate." John frowned, "let me get you something for this ok. Just sit tight."

In the time it took John to locate his medical kit and return to the bathroom Sherlock has retched and coughed several more times, in his bodies poor attempt at emptying his already empty stomach.

"I'm going to give you something for the nausea." John routed around his bag to locate the drug. He turned to his friend to see the detective heave again, his friends eyes were squeezed tightly against the pain in his ribs from repeated strain. He gripped the toilet with white fingers and when he finished he slid backwards again, losing his battle with consciousness.

"You really don't do anything by halves do you?" John acted quickly, pulling his friend from the awkward position by the toilet, out to the middle of the floor and into a recovery position with practiced moves. He then located the antiemetic injection, drew up the dose and quickly administered it into Sherlock's muscle in his leg, hoping the chemical would start its job soon, for his friends sake.

Moments later the detective stirred, he moaned, shuddered and tried to sit up, only to have a gentle hand push him back down again. "Stay right there ok." John commanded, and Sherlock did not fight this time.

"John..." He mumbled, mouth dry and foul tasting. "I'm cold."

"I know. Hang on." The doctor took out his thermometer and placed it into the detective ear canal until it beeped. "Bloody hell." He looked at the figures on the screen and took the reading again to be sure. "38.7." He said after the second beep.

"What." Sherlock's eyes cracked open.

"I need to get you to hospital." John packed the instrument away and pulled out his mobile.

"No." The detective's eyes shot open further, "no hospital."

The doctor looked at his friends pleading gaze, caving to it in moments. "Ok, fine." He cried, "but your getting in the bath right now." He smirked with a little amusement. "And if we can't get your fever down then I'm calling Mycroft."

Sherlock only groaned in response at the mention of his brothers name. John stepped over him briefly, running water into the bath behind him then.
He must have drifted off again because the next thing the detective seemed to realise was John was shaking him, and quite hard too. "Bath. Now." John ordered, pulling his friend up by his middle yet again.

"I little help wouldn't go a miss Sherlock, I'm practically carrying you here," the doctor stifled a short cry at the strain on his back and weakened shoulder. The detective was no help, his body was lax and useless, arms hung loosely at his sides and he didn't even try to stand when John began to pull him upright. John wedged him awkwardly against the wall then, pushing his weight into the lanky mans body while he tested the waters temperature. "Dressing gown, off." He said, already unbuttoning the detective's top.

"Undressing me now." Sherlock whispered breathlessly, clearly drained from his move from the floor. "People will talk." He added, drunkenly.

"People always talk." John pulled the garment from his friends shoulders and let it drop the floor, he couldn't help but let himself blush just a little at the sight of his friends bare skin. It wasn't like he had never seen him topless before, but this was Sherlock after all.

"Embarrassed are we doctor?" Sherlock cracked a small wonky grin on his pale face, "Are you blushing?"

"I'm not." John looked away. "Just get in." He said after a beat. He pulled his body away from his flat mates then, forgetting that the detective was clearly unable to support his own weight. Sherlock crumpled unceremoniously to the floor before he could catch him.

"Shit. Oh god. Sorry." John apologised, pulling his friend up again and this time with an audible grunt of effort and pain he spun his friends legs over the side of the bath and plunged his body into the Luke warm water.

"C...cold." Sherlock's teeth chattered and he shook.

"It's not cold." John poured a small amount of the liquid over his friends shoulders much to a verbal protest, "it's body temperature. It feels cold because your running such a fever."

"Lucosade." Sherlock whined, "n...need electrolytes."

"Yes, I know." The doctor hummed, "soon. Just let the anti nausea drug have a chance and then I promise you can have some."

The detective's teeth chattered some more, vibrating his head which was beginning to ache. "Wasn't s...supposed to be t...this b...bad." He jittered.

"What?" John took a temperature and exhaled in relief to find the numbers slowly dropping, "what do you mean?"

"S...should have only needed electrolyte replacement, n..not fever." Sherlock squeezed his eyes shut again.

"What are you saying?" The doctors eyes narrowed. "You knew you were going to get sick?"

"Of course." The detective's entire body shuddered then, causing the water to ripple and splash. "Adenovirus." He finally added. "Although not fully active of course, just an attenuated version."

"What?" John could feel his voice raising. "are you telling me that all of this is just for a bloody experiment!" The doctor stood.
"Yes." Sherlock opened his lids and frowned at his friend. "The Darrel Crossly case, don't you remember." He sighed loudly and excessively. "Young boy, died on the children's farm of an unknown cause initially. Had been off work for sometime days before with a virus, vomiting and a chest infection apparently. Employer foul play, managed to infect him with a rare form of andenovirus, we just didn't know how. So a made a few to see."

"Right, that's it, I'm calling Mycroft." John shouted, his voice now echoing off the walls of the small bathroom.

"What? Why?" Sherlock huffed, "I'm fine, it's ok."

"Do you have any idea what kind of danger you've put yourself in?" He bellowed, "gastroenteritis for now, then pneumonia, potential endocarditis. Sherlock, you could die!"

"I'm a chemist John, I know what I'm doing." The detective's eyes rolled.

"A chemist Sherlock, not a biologist or doctor." John started to key into his phone. "We'll see about this when you get to hospital and after I've spoken to your brother." The tone dialled out.

Sherlock sunk down into the cooling water and pouted, and just this once he gave in.

Chapter End Notes

The recovery chapter for this story can be found here
"We're being followed." John craned his neck around to look down the road behind him, the long curves and hills making it difficult to see the car in pursuit.

"Yes." Sherlock did not turn, he kept his eyes fixed to the road ahead, hands on the steering wheel.

"Must have found out we were onto them." He stuck his foot to the gas of the Range Rover and the engine could be heard, grumbling at the abuse.

"What now?" John felt the gun in his pocket weighing down, he was glad of its presence.

"Hmm." The detective didn't answer for a moment.

"Come on genius. What now? We have what's probably the bleeding Russian Mafia on our tails, were half way across the country in the middle of nowhere and you don't have a plan." John's voice hitched a little, angered but also feeling adrenalin hit his system ready, soldier awakening. "What's the plan?"

Sherlock shrugged, face displaying not an inch of concern. "Lose them." He replied, spinning the car hard to the left and down another smaller country lane, forest now flying by at break neck speed.

"Lose them?" John sighed, "That's your plan."

"What else do you suppose John?" the detective waved his hands, momentarily removing them from the steering wheel as he flapped them in the air.

John did not answer, his glare was enough to answer for. He gripped the dashboard as they took another sharp corner, wheels spinning on the mud strewn across the road. He stretched backwards
again, not seeing any sign of the black BMW in the distance. "I think we might have…"

John did not finish his sentence, as he turned back ahead the sudden image of a parked tractor filled his vision. "Watch it…" his voice cut off and he took a sharp intake of breath, bracing himself for the crash. Sherlock had grabbed the wheel, steering violently to the right to avoid a head on collision. The car careened sideways, brakes screeching, engine screaming in protest. They left the road, and dipped downwards, into the thick forest and down a short ravine, seconds later neither doctor nor detective remembered the impact at the bottom.

John came to relatively quickly, and the first thing he was aware of was the throbbing pain in his left shoulder. Why did it have to be his left shoulder? He cracked his eyes open, and nearly flinched back when he found half the forest merely inches from his face. An angry branch had broken the windshield and made its way into the car.

"Sher..." he cleared his throat and coughed painfully into his lap noticing blood and then feeling the dull ache which told him his nose was broken. "Sherlock?" He finally managed to say, slowing allowing his head to look to the right, mindful of any neck pain. "Jesus." He inhaled sharply and immediately regretted it, adding cracked ribs to his growing list of injuries.

Sherlock was slumped forwards, draped unceremoniously over the large steering wheel, the seatbelt pulling uncomfortably at his torso in a poor attempt at keeping him back against the seat. He was clearly unconscious but so far John could make out no major injuries except the steady flow of blood from a wound on his scalp. The crimson liquid was dripping in a sluggish flow onto his coat, the detective would curse him later for allowing his beloved garment to get soiled. John pulled his right arm up, checking for a pulse, happy when he felt the steady thrum of his friend's heartbeat under his fingers.

"Bloody brilliant." John sighed, allowing himself just a moment to gather his thoughts of the situation, memory coming back to him of the events running up to the crash. His soldier instincts kicked in quickly as he remembered they were actually being pursued. "Crap." He whispered, and unclipped his seatbelt, he grimaced and leant further over to his best friend.

"Now's no time for napping Sherlock." He tapped his best friends cheeks, "Wake up." He cried. No reply. "Please?" John stifled a small cry when he tried to use his left arm, his shoulder must have been at least dislocated as his range of movement was substandard unless he wanted to feel white hot sheering pain. "Sherlock?" As gentle as he could be pushed his friend back off the steering wheel with one arm. The lanky detective's body hit the seat with jerk and a small groan emitted from his friend's throat but he did not regain consciousness.

"Wake up you cock!" John could feel himself getting more frantic, he needed to calm down. "Sherlock?"

The sound of a car stopping could be heard on the road above them. John tried to look up with difficulty, the forest shrubbery obscuring what little view he had of the roadside several meters back and up on the steep bank. In this part of the country he doubted the occupants of the car were friendly locals, there was not a house for miles out here. His fears were quickly confirmed as he heard the sound of Russian tongue and car doors slamming.

"Fuck." The soldier grabbed for his gun, and opened the Range Rover's door, surprised it was still functional. Stealth not force, John thought, they were outnumbered at least four to one by the sounds of it, or two if you counted the unconscious form of his friend, the doctor bit his lip to stop
the worry edging into his mind. He needed to stay focused. He bent low, covering himself with the nearby nettles and moved to the front of the vehicle, ensuring he was shielded well, mindful that his friend had no shielding whatsoever, he needed to get him out the car, sharpish.

The soldier now taking over, he quickly edged to the other side of vehicle and slowly pulled the driver side door open a crack. He tugged at his friend's coat, half in an attempt to wake him but another in the hope he could pull him from the seat and onto the forest floor. John pulled himself up, realising that the seatbelt was still attached. He leaned quickly over his best friend, unclipped the restraints and started to pull on his friend's body. In that second Sherlock's eyes flew open, he gasped and a sob escaped from his throat. John's hand quickly covered the detective's mouth, face coming close to his flat mates.

"Shhh." John hushed, "Stay quiet, they've found us."

Sherlock's eyes were wide and panic stricken, he was clearly yet to remember the days endeavours. "John." He finally said and the doctor cringed at the noise.

"Shut up." John could hear the sound of the men approaching, they had made their way down the short ravine somehow and where now only meters off the car. "Get out the car." He commanded. He pulled on his friend's body again and the detective let out a short cry.

"Can't." he whispered, finally staying quiet as told. "Stuck."

John followed a shaky pointing hand to the detective's leg, only to see his foot firmly wedged on the brake pedal, the rest of the dashboard and interior crumpled in on itself pinning his friend's leg in position.

"Only you." John grumbled, barely audible. "Just get down." He pushed his friend across the seats, mindful that in moments there would be gunfire, his inner doctor also mindful he had yet to check his friend for further injury, he bit back the worry, pushing it to the back of his mind for now.

"Here." He heard a hushed voice, and then the first man came into view. Your stereotypical gang member, large, muscly, bald and wearing a large array of tribal tattoos just to finish the look off. John smiled to himself, also not the smartest, he pulled the trigger of his gun dispatching the man without a seconds thought.

Within moments all hell broke loose, a round of machine gun fire started and John was back in Afghanistan. He pitched himself forwards and onto Sherlock's body, sheltering his best friend from the risk of stray bullets. Glass shattered and debris flew in all directions. "Stay down." He shouted. More to himself than the detective under him. The round finished and he pulled himself up with a moan, shoulder struggling against the movement. The soldier pushed his back up against the seat, keeping low, but also heedful that the soft furnishing would do nothing to impede the flight of another round of bullets. He rested the butt of his weapon on top of the seat, taking shot, another man went down, bullet to the upper chest. John could not see the other two cronies right now. There was silence for beat and then the bullets started again, these guys where not pulling any punches. The shower of metal was now arriving from the front of the car, they had clearly surrounded them from all sides.

Captain John Watson rolled off his friend then. "Stay there." He shouted over the noise of the machine gun, "Play dead." He added. Sherlock could do nothing but send a glare of anger towards him, the great Sherlock Holmes did not 'play dead.' John rolled out the side of the car, shielding himself with the open door, he took a couple of shots towards the direction of bullets. A short cry of pain sang out in the deafening silence of halted gunfire. The soldier pitched forwards to the man and he came into view, John leapt into him, knocking the stocky man from his feet. There was
already blood on the tanned man's skin, his arm oozing from an ugly gunshot wound. The doctor ground a knee into the appendage and the assassin howled in pain, giving the soldier enough time to dispatch him quickly and instantly.

As soon as the man was dead another noise pierced through the soldier's consciousness, one he always hated to hear. Sherlock's scream went through the man worse than any knife wound. John jumped to his feet quickly, with enough time to see the forth gang member tugging at the detective in the car, trying to extract him roughly.

"Let him go!" John aimed his gun, but before he had a chance to fire another body collided with him and he was send bowling over into the moss and leaves, gun skittering away. Five then, John thought as a fist came into contact with his face, slight miscalculation. The doctor blocked the next punch, kicking out to fight back when another scream of his friend could be heard.

Sherlock was ripped from the car, his howl of agony deafening when his ankle protested, bones crunching and twisting. A burst of intense pain shot up his leg and nearly rendered him unconscious again. The detective found his footing on his other leg and sent a barrage of fists towards the gang man much to the opponents' annoyance.

"I suggest you come quietly Mr 'Olmes." A not so Russian accent and a gun appeared at his head. Sherlock stilled for a moment, "That is unless you want to die?"

"That would depend on the alternative." Sherlock smiled.

"What?"

"Oh never mind." The detective rolled his eyes and grabbed the barrel of the gun, pointing it to the sky, it discharged a round of bullets, both men held fast, the machine vibrating madly in their grasp.

"Son of a…" The criminal tried desperately to maintain grip on the metal but Sherlock yanked hard planting a sturdy head-butt into the man's nose, breaking it. Both men stumbled backwards, Sherlock swayed violently almost losing his footing on his injured ankle. His head wound now profusely bleeding, almost a constant stream from the above his eye and behind his ear. In a second he gained his righting and he pointed the weapon, sending a blast of bullets through the large man's torso. The look of surprise passed the criminals eyes before he fell backwards, dead before he hit the ground.

"John!" Sherlock tried to move towards to the fight only a few meters from him, both gang man and soldier a blur of activity. The detective took one step and collapsed down, his ankle objecting. "John." He huffed, managing to crawl a little way before two shots silenced the scene both soldier and criminal crashing to the floor together.

The detective crawled quickly, almost rolling his eyes at the stupidity of not being able to walk at all. He reached his friends figure, pushing the form of the hefty gang member off the soldier.

"John." Sherlock's voice did not hide the panic within it. He patted his friend's cheek.

"I'm awake, I'm fine." The doctors eyes cracked open and he gazed up to his best friend with a short grin, "just a little winded." He added, sitting up with grunt.

"Sure?" Sherlock grabbed his friends shoulders to steady him and John let out a howl of pain.

"Except that." He puffed a couple of quick breaths against the agony.
"Sorry." The detective sat back on his arms, suddenly feeling a little light headed, and noticing the ever growing patch of crimson now soaking through his shirt to skin below.

"Let me see that." John cried. The detective hadn't even had a chance to realise where the blood was coming from. The doctor took the man's head in one hand, turning it so he could get a good look at the wound. The ugly gash stretched from just the edge of Sherlock's left eyebrow round to his ear which had torn quite dramatically. It was bleeding far too quickly for John's liking. "Why do head wounds have to bleed so much?" John mused, pulling the scarf from his friend's neck and balling it up. "Here, hold this here." He placed the wool up against the detectives head and Sherlock grimaced. "Hard." He added, pushing it into the flesh causing a small shout of protest.

"Why?"

"Do you want to bleed to death?" John warned. "Just do as you're told."

Sherlock huffed, holding the scarf onto the wound with a frown of both pain an agitation.

"Let me see that ankle of yours." John bent forward.

"No need." The detective sighed, "It's definitely broken, and I would prefer it if you did not touch it right now."

"I just need to…"

"No." Sherlock pulled back as his friend went to look at the twisted foot. "Please John." He cried. "Let's just go home."

"Fine." John eyed him worriedly, giving in for now but knowing he would check him over soon enough. "But you will let me check you over, like it or not." He fished into his coat and brought out his phone clicking the on button. "No signal." He sighed, holding the small item up to the sky as if a mere meter would change the bars on the screen. "How about yours?"

Sherlock mimicked his friend moves, fishing his own phone from deep inside the Belstaff clicking the buttons to no avail. "Broken." He tossed the mobile onto the floor, revealing the smashed screen.

"Damn." The doctor replied, getting to his shaky feet with more than just a small wince of pain.

"Where are you going?"

"To check if any of these guys have a phone on them?" John bent over the nearest body, patting down his coat with one hand, the other arm now pulled close to his body in an attempt to reduce the amount of pain.

"They won't have any. They would have left them in the car, they wouldn't risk the…"

"Just… humour me, ok." John sighed, "Bloody smart ass."

Sherlock sat back, stretching his injured leg out in front of himself he watched John move carefully from one body to another checking for both phones and lasting signs of life. But just as he'd expected, none of them had a mobile or electronic device on them. The doctor then routed in the car, finally returning with a small blanket and first aid kit.

The doctor tossed the blanket over his friend's shoulders and then gently lowered himself to the ground in front of him.
"What's this for?" Sherlock picked the grey fabric up between finger and thumb and looked at it with caution.

"You're going into shock." John said matter of factly.

"I am not." The detective pulled the blanket from his shoulders quickly.

"Then why are you shaking?" the doctor surveyed his friend. Sherlock did not answer. "Your pale, sweating, probably tachycardic and shaking." He added. "All signs your body is going into shock."

"Bugger off." The detective cried, trying to stop his hands slight tremors, now mindful of them.

"Why aren't you in shock?" he grumbled and pushed the blanket into his friend's lap.

"Because I'm trained to deal with this and you are not. And all I've got is a dislocated shoulder and a couple of cracked ribs. I've not bled out all over my clothes and half my ear is not hanging off." John regretted his words immediately, biting his lip.

"What?" Sherlock dropped his now sodden scarf and grasped for his ear, horrified to find it split impressively in the middle.

"It's alright, we can stitch it." John laughed a little but it quickly turned into a frown as Sherlock's face paled several shades to almost white.

"Bloody transport" Sherlock grumbled, watching his jittering hands.

"It's alright." The doctor pulled out several bandages and dressings from the first aid kit. "Just take it easy."

"I'm not in shock." Sherlock snarled.

"Ok whatever." John sighed. "Let me sort out this head wound would you." The doctor unwrapped the bandages and set to dressing his friends head.

"Careful!" The detective growled, eyes scrunching shut as his friend pressed the dressing into the broken angry flesh.

"Shame the bump to the head hasn't made you anymore easy to work with."

Sherlock shot him a death glare and silence remained until John had finished. The white bandage was already staining with red from underneath and the doctor bit back the worry still ebbing away at him. The detective's black locks hung in a disorganised mess over the material in almost a comical fashion, John was not smiling.

The blogger checked his friends pulse and other parameters quickly. Sherlock's eyes had drooped somewhat and he worriedly looked at his pupils to find them normal. He ran his hands over the torso of his friend in the search for any other injuries but found none. He quickly took stock of the twisted ankle, and without even touching it became certain that it was fractured in several places from just it's unnatural angle. He gently checked a pulse in the top of the foot, exhaling with relief when he found one. Deciding that it best to get help rather than cause his flat mate any undue pain he stood up with a grunt.

"Stay awake ok." John patted him on the shoulder.

"Where are you going?"
"To get help." The doctor frowned, he was uneasy about leaving his friend but didn't really have a choice. They needed help, and soon. The pain in his shoulder was slowly building and he was beginning to think that just a basic dislocation was perhaps not so basic after all. "Just stay there, and stay awake."

John rushed up the bank towards the road above, it was steep and the shrubbery thick with nettles and young trees. The Range Rover had done little to clear a path, John looked back at the vehicle wedged tightly up against the huge ash tree. It must had been a spectacular crash, both of them were lucky to make it out with such little injury. The worry ebbed in a little more, Sherlock's head injury sending spikes of concern through him. He hadn't a clue how much of a significant impact the genius's brain had taken, but judging by the car John didn't want to think about it, he needed to get help, now. He reached forward with his right arm in an attempt to pull himself up onto the crumbling Tarmac above. It was useless, the last 8 feet was just too steep to do without physically climbing. With one last stretch he pulled himself up on a nearby branch. In seconds it cracked and snapped sending the doctor crashing back down into the forest breaking his fall with nothing other than his left arm. John howled, his scream echoed off the nearby trees, black dots swam in his vision and he sunk down into the leaves losing consciousness against the unbearable pain.

John didn't know how long he had been unconscious for, but the first thing that roused him was the drip of cool liquid on his face, then another. His eyes shot open and he saw the woodland canopy above, droplets of water dripping down and plopping around him in an acoustic song. It was raining. He closed his eyes against the next barrage of raindrops rolling carefully onto his right side with a short cough which jolted his ribs and arm.

"Damn." John mumbled, coughing again and painfully inhaling, his chest aching with dull discomfort. He added probable lung contusions to the list. With some difficulty he gently pulled his useless phone out and looked at the screen, still no signal. Searching the messages to quickly text Mycroft and Lestrade in the hope that perhaps one would find a satellite and send. Holding the device up again but still to no avail.

"Sherlock?" John struggled to his knees. How could he be this sore? How long has he actually been laying on the forest floor for, he couldn't remember it looking like rain. "Sherlock?" He shouted, "are you okay?" There was no answer and John's heart leapt with panic. He pulled himself up, dots swimming against his vision again, he leant heavily one nearby tree. "Not now." He whispered.

He stumbled forwards and down the short ascent. Sherlock was were he had left him, except that he was somewhat horizontal now.

The detective was half on his side both arms still had his sides, he had clearly not broken his short fall to the mossy ground. John's panic set into a whole new level when he noticed a small patch of vomit next to the man's head.

"Jesus no." John swore for the second time that day and crashed onto his knees beside his best friend.

"John..." Sherlock slurred before the doctor had a second to check him, his eyes opened to slits. "Where are we?"

"Oh thank god." John could feel tears pricking the edges of his eyes. "We're in the middle of the Yorkshire dales Sherlock, on a case. There was an accident and we're stuck in a forest." John looked to the grey sky through the trees. "And to top it off it's now starting to pour with rain."
"Ok." The detective's eyes shut again.

"No." The doctor tapped his cheeks. "Stay awake, you have concussion."

"Hmm."

John tried to rouse him again. "Hey." He shook his friend lightly, whimpering as he left arm was jostled. "Sherlock, please. Just wake up." A sense of déjà vu, the scene not so different to earlier. How much earlier though John thought. How long exactly had they been down here, trapped in the most ridiculous of places.

"Right." The doctor finally said after a beat, "we need to move." He cried, running a hand through his hair which was slowly becoming sodden from the rain leaking through the trees. It was becoming all too clear that staying here was not an option, they would not only receive no help but the edging panic setting into his chest told him not just Sherlock but he was in need of some medical attention sometime soon too.

"Right you git." John carefully curled his good arm around his friends waist. "Your going to have to help me with this." He pulled up, the detective's slight weight straining on his arm. Sherlock moaned, his brows furrowed deeply under bandages. Rain was leaking into the material and mixing with the blood causing a steady steam of reddened water to make its way in rivulets down the man's neck. "Help me." John shot, beginning to lose grip.

"Hmph." Sherlock's eyes peeled open slightly, he braced his arms out and then sat sideways breathing hard, matching the doctors own heaving inhales.

"We're going to have to work together." John sighed, catching his breath. "I can't carry you." He coughed and yelped all at once.

"You can't carry me." Sherlock mumbled, he grabbed out for a nearby tree trunk, gripped the rough surface and forced his legs out under him. "Where is Mrs Hudson?" He tilted wildly and then fell back against the wood holding his injured foot off the floor.

"At Baker Street I hope." John replied, making it shakily to his own feet. At least he hoped she was, and the recent drug gang didn't know of her existence. He would have to check on her as soon as they were out of here. The doctor pulled the phone from his pocket again in the hope of signal. Nothing, both messages displaying 'fail to send' tags. "Damn it." He grumbled.

"Where are we going?" The detective's words slurred dramatically and John looked at him with concern.

"Up that hill." John pointed half heartedly, he bent forward, dipping his head and seeing stars. "But we're going to have to work together ok?"

"Who's idea was this?" Sherlock makes a noise which seems half a snigger and half a groan of pain. John watched him carefully as he struggled to remain in an upright position. He takes a hobble forward, a short cry escaping as he moves and jolts his shattered foot. He lists sideways and John is there then. The blogger presses his good shoulder into his friends torso, wrapping his arm solidly around him to stop him from swaying anymore.

"Oh... God." The detective leans slightly away, gulping quite visibly.

"Nauseous?" The doctor asks.

"No." Sherlock smirks, "I'm feeling quite dandy actually." He straightens up. "Shall we?"
"You're a terrible liar." John takes a tiny step forward waiting for his friend to catch up. "If you vomit on me you'll never hear the end of it." Sherlock tips sideways, placing most of his weight on his blogger before hopping forward another step.

"Sorry what?"

"Never mind." John eyes him and they repeat the sequence, every step bringing them only mere inches closer to their destination. They remain silent for sometime, both concentrating on the task at hand, finding some sort of rhythm in their journey forwards.

The doctor stops after a while. He bends over, breathing hard and ragged and this time Sherlock looks on with worry.

"No far." Sherlock's words slur again, this time barely recognisable as a phrase and John looks to him through the haze of pain.

"You're, getting, worse." He huffs between deep racking breaths.

"My head hurts." Another garbled tone.

The doctor stands up, pushing forwards again. "Come on." He breathes. "We need to keep moving."

"Yes Myc." The detective hobbles a few more steps, stifling a growl.

John ignores Sherlock's calling him Mycroft, he can hear and see his friends head injury beginning to take its toll and his own breathing worsening. They needed to get up to the road.

Minutes pass by for what seems like an absolute lifetime while they are moving at snails pace, but finally they reach the steep jutting ridge only meters from the roadside.

"Right." John stops and feels his friend sag forwards, slumping into him. He curses as the detective leans his full weight over. "Sherlock." He commands urgently, "Sherlock. Stay awake, not now."

"Headache." Sherlock sways back the other way and John holds him fast tilting with him. "Fetch me some cigarettes will you." The final words blur into one stuttering mess barely recognisable.

"Hey, look at me." John tries, his friend mumbles incoherently. "Sherlock, look at me damn it." He tries to look into his friends slitted half moon eyes. "Sherlock bloody Holmes, look at me!" He raises his voice so much it nearly takes his breath away, but it seems to work. The detective opens his eyes a little more and John's stomach twists against the dread setting in. His friends pupils are unequal, his right eye seems somewhat normal but his left pupil is dilated and wide, swallowing up most of the blue iris colour. John gulps back the rising bile in his throat, he knows all too well that coupled with a blow to the head it was likely his friend was suffering an intracranial bleed into the brain.

"Dear god please let us get out of here." John tries to slow his breathing, now beginning to hyperventilate, pain and angst pushing him into shear panic.

"John?" Sherlock pulls a hand up and holds the side of his head for a moment.

"Let's get out of here." John turns his friends shoulders and pushes forwards, hoping to god that his friend can remain conscious enough to climb the remaining couple of meters.

The detective reaches forward and grasps the young sapling trees edging forward into the dense
bushes. John holds him tightly, trying to remain sure footed as he can on the steepening muddy ground, he holds his left arm close to his body protecting it from any branches. "You need to help me." He says finally as Sherlock inches a couple more centimetres ahead. The detective doesn't answer, but a shaky pale hand makes it down to John level and the blogger curl his fingers around his friends, using it to gain a new landing for his feet, he breathes hard, leaning firmly into the dirt. They were nearly there, just a few more feet and they would be able to reach the Tarmac above.

Sherlock's body convulsed for a second, he heaved a breath and gulped loudly. "John." He mumbled, barely audible.

"I'm right here mate." The doctor squeezes his best friends hand in comfort. He bit back the rising panic, if Sherlock lost consciousness now they would both go down, and he was pretty certain that if they did then they wouldn't be making it back up again. Leaving them with no hope of help. "We're almost there." He squeezed the hand again, "come on." His voice shaking, "we can do it. Just a few more steps ok."

The detective seems to half nod. He gains a new footing on the branches and pushes up with his good leg, injured appendage hanging uselessly behind.

John pulls up behind him, feet shifting unsteadily on the soaking wood. "That's it." He whispers. "Just one more step."

Sherlock cries out, his fractured foot hitting the next branch up, his pitches his body up, grabbing for anything on the road above. The doctor pushes from behind, pulling himself upward with one final attempt at climbing, he grunts and finally reaches for the road edge himself. In seconds both men collapse out onto the soaking Tarmac. John breathing heavily, struggling against his now gurgling chest. Sherlock is on all fours, arms shaking from the strain, he bends and vomits into the rainwater running down in streams around them.

"Bloody hell." The doctor rolls onto his side only to see his friends arms give out. Sherlock crashes face down into the ground, unconscious. "Fuck it." He crawls forward, pushing his friend over to assess him. His pulse steady but slow, perhaps too slow.

John routes in his pocket to find his phone, pulling the small object from his coat it almost slips from his grasp in the pouring rain. He squints at the screen. Two new messages. He opens them hurriedly.

'On our way, local force informed. Ambulance on the way. Greg.'

'Located you, assistance on the way. MH.'

Both messages timed as 3 minutes ago. His phone must have sent he texts as they climbed the ravine. John exhaled and looked to the sky as if thanking some unknown force, he blinks away his tears and they mixed into the rainwater saturating his skin and hair. He looks down and pulls his best friend into him, pulling Sherlock's head to rest on his lap.

"They're coming." He coughed, "just hang in there Sherlock." He closed his eyes against the pain in his chest and hoped he could hang in there too.
Crashed (part 2)

Chapter Summary

Help arrives after the crash. Mycroft is a caring brother. (You need to read the chapter crashed before reading this one)

Chapter Notes

No sure where the time has gone but here it is. It's been half written for sometime but works been mental and I had a week off with a chest infection and was poorly but I'm here now. As suggested by many a sequel to the previous chapter. Hope you enjoy, I've written some caring Mycroft in, not my usual type of stuff but enjoyed it. Please comment.

The rain water washed over John Watson’s face in cascades, mixing with the saltwater and dregs of blood around his nose. He watched his friend with unrelenting attention, holding onto consciousness with every effort in his body. He was cold, the rain was beginning to reach his skin and he could feel gooseflesh tingle under his soaked clothes. He was shivering against it in a desperate attempt to maintain body heat. His best friend was practically shivering in time to him, but the tremors seemed all but fiercer. Sherlock was splayed out haphazardly on the drenched tarmac, his head resting at an awkward angle on the doctor’s lap.

“S…Sherlock?” John hiccupped and coughed, jolting his agonising shoulder and ribs. His chest rattled unnaturally and he winced against the pain and abhorrent noise.

Sherlock gave a short goofy grin but did not open his eyes. The bandage on his head was pretty useless now, sodden. The blood from underneath was leaking through, mixing into the drizzle, it made the entire left side of his face a bright hue of crimson which turned John’s stomach.

“S…stay a…awake.” The doctor placed two fingers on his best friend’s carotid pulse and kept them there, a small part of him happy that he could feel enough blood circulating that the detective was still alive.

A moment and Sherlock’s body convulsed violently. It took all John’s strength to push him sideways as he began to gag again. The doctor could do nothing more than watch his friend struggle against the retching, gasping long breaths between each heave. Finally, after what seemed like forever Sherlock’s body gave in, and John, powerless to stop it, knew he had lost consciousness again.

The doctor leant back, coming into contact with the abandoned car of the gang men behind him. He squinted, trying to focus his hazy vision, but it was useless. Where the hell were Mycroft and Greg? Exactly how long had they waited already?

As if on que a shadow blocked his light, and a hand rested on his right shoulder giving it a squeeze. He was thankful it wasn’t the left. He squinted more, trying to focus on the fuzzy profile and face
“Bloody hell mate.” Lestrade’s voice wavered from worry. “When you said you’d had an accident I wasn’t exactly expecting this.”

John merely let out a small moan in reply, clearly his vocal chords had stopped working properly, too cold to co-operate with his commands.

“Hey.” The inspector shook him gently, “You with me?”

Lestrade’s hand was strong and comforting and it kept John grounded. His eyes focused a little better and he could see the inspector’s face lined with fear. John nodded weakly at him.

“Listen.” He continues. “Looks like Mycroft got us here before the emergency services, what can I do?”

John could see a second figure now, a large umbrella was shielding his face from the deluge, he could only guess it was Mycroft Holmes.

“Sherlock.” John mumbled, barely audible above the weather.

“Thank you for taking care of him.” Mycroft was bending low this time, he held the umbrella high to shelter all four of them from the rain.

Lestrade removed his coat, unsure which man to donate it to for a moment but before he had a chance Mycroft’s own garment had made it over the detective, in a futile attempt to keep him at least a little bit warmer. The inspector pulled his own jacket around John.

“About bloody time.” Lestrade’s face then turned to the blue flashing lights coming into view, the constant rain causing the beams of light to gleam and reflect around them more than ever.

The ambulance ground to a halt only meters from them and two medics jumped out in seconds.

“What happened?” one bent down, quickly checking the detective’s pulse and then looking on at John taking a quick assessment of him.

“Car accident.” Mycroft said simply, “Crashed into the forest below, they made it back to the road.”

Let’s get them inside.” The female medic shouted over the rain to the other and they nodded in agreement. “Fetch me the scoop.”

Lestrade wasn’t even sure how they had managed to get them all bundled into the ambulance so quickly, but within just a few minutes the back doors of the vehicle slammed shut against the atrocious weather outside and all of a sudden they were in the warm, standing over one another. Sherlock was stretched out on the main gurney and John had been deposited in one of the seats to the side. The doctor reclined back a little, he extended his neck and took in great gulps of air. Lestrade’s heart quickened as he noted the blue tinge appearing on the doctor’s lips.

“Hey. Take it easy.” He settled himself next to his friend, placing a reassuring hand back on his shoulder again.

The medic was next to them in seconds, securing an oxygen mask over his face and turning on the gas at full flow. The colour quickly returned to the doctor’s pallor, and his breathing eased somewhat, although the terrible rattle deep in his lungs remained. The female medic examined him carefully, listening to his chest, gently palpating and then setting to administering pain relief.
John’s eyes did not close, his weary gaze remained fixed on his best friend. Sherlock was merely feet from him but to John it could have been miles. He watched the other paramedic with scrutinising eyes as he worked, hooking the detective up to oxygen and an array of monitoring equipment, placing his neck swiftly in a brace, standard procedure. John read off the values on screen, even in the haze of pain his doctor’s mind taking stock of Sherlock’s vitals, blood pressure high, heart rate low, ECG p waves abnormal. The spikes of panic returning, his suspicions likely for a bleed to the brain.

With much effort John pulled the mask from his face, “raise his head.” He wheezed, “And administer mannitol… might need to RSI.”

“We’re on it Doctor Watson.” The young lady was bent before him, placing a cannula in his vein which he didn’t even feel. “Just concentrate on your breathing ok.” She pulled the mask back down over his mouth and nose.

“We need to move now. We can’t wait for a second unit.” The medic tending to Sherlock looked over worriedly. “They both need hospital, now.”

"Agreed." She pushed a few drugs into John's IV port and then hooked up a fluid line, and turned to Greg. "You need to watch his breathing. Try to keep him awake if you can, he'll be groggy with what I've given him."

Lestrade could do nothing but nod in a silent reply as she rushed off and towards the front of the vehicle and into the drivers seat. Finally as the ambulance lurched into motion Lestrade's eyes came to gaze on Mycroft Holmes. The older brother leaned heavily on his umbrella which was dripping long puddles onto the lino flooring. His face was set in a steely glare honed on his little brother, a glare which was frighteningly both motionless and tinged with an air of anger. Greg was not sure what he was angry at, except perhaps himself, but self blame was not something Mycroft was known for, perhaps he felt he could have helped his brother more on this case, he didn't know. Lestrade had to wonder for a moment if the man was actually still breathing, he did not blink, and even the unruly roll of the ambulance from one corner to another didn't send the man off by a step. Like Sherlock in so many ways, yet far more terrifying.

"Are you alright mate?" He finally said, unable to take it anymore. An unattainable moan from behind a mask sounded next to him and Greg squeezed the doctors knee, thankful for John's attempt at a reply.

"Mycroft?" He raised his voice a little and finally the mans eyes met his own in a brief passing exchange. "I said are you ok?"

"Why yes, of course." Mycroft's face changed considerably, frowning and then looking from detective to doctor, donning his ever faithful look of a blank facade.

"Sure?"

"My brother and his best friend are currently on he way to hospital with life threatening injuries, following a potential misjudgement on my part." He looked to the floor.

"Huh." Greg smiled. "Anyone would think you cared?"

A brief smile graced the older Holmes lips, so fleeting that the inspector almost missed it."Now where would you get an idea like that from?"

Greg did not reply, he simply thought back to the many a time where he had been greeted by
Mycroft's steely gaze at the custody desk. It had often been in early hours of the morning, when the man had come of collect his junkie brother currently locked in a cell suffering the after affects of another shoot up. Behind the mask Lestrade knew exactly how much Mycroft Holmes cared for his brother, and the fondness seemed to have even been stretched to the faithful doctor. He always had a funny way of showing it though, and Sherlock certainly didn't appreciate the sentiment.

The medic worked tirelessly on Sherlock, Lestrade always wondered how paramedics could cope with the relentless strain of emotion and pressure, John constantly surprised him as a doctor. The medic checked the detective's parameters, administered drugs and rechecked readings. John still followed him, eyes heavy and half lidded, his breath was still heaving and Lestrade frowned deeply. The terrible gurgles from deep in the doctor's chest turned the inspectors heart into ice with worry. Sometimes John was just as bad as his best friend when it came to self preservation.

"John?" A croaked voice sounded above the ambulance sirens and engine, weak but unmistakable.

The doctor leant forward, breath heaving, he reached for his best friends hand with his own, and Lestrade noted the slight tremor now evident in them. John was always a steady hand, even in the most dire situations, more worry etched into the inspector.

"John?" Sherlock's brows were furrowed tightly but his eyes remained closed.

"Sher..." John's breath caught in the throat and he coughed, with each drawing breath his body drooped. Lestrade grasped him to stop the smaller man from pitching forwards.

"Steady mate." The inspector tried to push him upright. "Just take deep breaths ok, you need to calm down."

"John?"

The doctor sucked in ragged inhales, each hacking cough clearly taking every ounce of what little energy he had left within him.

"John!" Sherlock's weak voice was getting more desperate and before the situation started to escalate the older Holmes finally stepped forwards.

"Brother dear." Mycroft wedged himself into the tiny space the other side of the gurney opposite to Lestrade and John.

"John?"

"Sherlock." Mycroft said more firmly this time. He discarded his umbrella and placed his hands either side of the younger man's face, mindful of the wound. "Little brother." He whispered.

"Sherlock, Look at me."

The detective's eyes shot open, staring listlessly at the vehicles ceiling, clearly unfocused. "Myc." He groaned.

"Yes it's me."

"Where's John?"

Mycroft rolled his eyes and tutted audibly. "He's right here." He gestured, and then glanced to find the doctor had lost consciousness. Lestrade looked sadly back at him, holding John's limp frame up against him, the medic was now quickly checking him over.
"Where?" A frantic reply.

"Brother. You need to calm down."

"Why?"

"You've been in an accident. You've hurt your head and you need to stay still for me ok?" Something soft and childlike in Mycroft's voice made the inspector look away, feeling as though he was intruding on a personal conversation. He turned his attention back to John and his pallid, pale skin.

Sherlock groaned, teeth clamping down against a wave of sudden pain. "Myc?"

"Yes, brother mine."

"My head hurts." Another groan.

"I know, it's ok." Mycroft ran a hand through the stray black locks, curled over the top of John's bandage, they were still dripping wet with rain.

Sherlock closed his eyes tightly and let a small shiver take over his body. He moaned again.

"Please can you ensure my brother has pain relief." Mycroft said with an air of danger. He looked up the the busying medic, now finished with John's vitals and returning to the detective's side.

"He's already had a dose of morphine." The young man replied, checking monitors and then his watch, "it should have taken affect."

"I can assure you that my brother will need a considerable amount more." Mycroft looked to the white sheets and the took a sideways glance at the inspector before making eye contact with the medic. "He has a long history of opioid misuse and has developed somewhat of a high tolerance to them."

"Oh." The young man said, pausing for a moment.

"I would strongly advise you give some more young man." This time the tone unfriendly and threatening.

"No." Sherlock huffed a breath, he fist his hands and stifled another groan, replacing it with a wince. "No drugs. I'm clean." He cracked his eyes back open in a pleading glare.

"It's ok." The older Holmes squeezed his brothers shoulder with affection, swallowing back the concern when he looked into his unequal pupils. "Just try to stay calm."

"Where's John?" The detective finally asked again after a beat.

"Right here Sherlock." John's wheeze sounded and Mycroft looked up to see the doctor awake again and lean forward to grasp the detective's hand, giving it a gentle squeeze. All colour seemed devoid from the doctors face, even his lips under oxygen mask seemed transparent.

"John." Sherlock's voice lost its strength and Mycroft watched sadly as his eyes glazed over, the medic emptied a syringe into his brothers IV line and Sherlock's eyes rolled back and he lost consciousness from the drug.

"Nearly there." The medic smiled sadly. "Only a few minutes away now."
"Thank you." Mycroft stepped back. Removing his body from beside the gurney, his indifferent facade replaced onto his face. He moved back to the doors of the ambulance and retrieved his umbrella. Within five minutes the vehicle turned into the entrance of the hospital and ground to a halt.
The warehouse was gloomy and dank, the stench of musky stagnant air and saltwater drifted through the cool room. Boxes and discarded machinery littered all corners of the huge building like an eerie graveyard, casting haphazard shadows around the crime scene. Sherlock Holmes was bent low over the newest cadaver while the team watched on with little interest. The body was that of a young man, well dressed and of wealthy origin. There seemed no outward signs of a struggle, just a clear cause of death. A single bullet hole to the cranium, a neat puddle of blood and brain matter pooled out in a perfect circle around the victim's head framing it in a crimson halo.

"Anything?" Lestrade finally said, his voice echoed off the giant ceiling.

"Perhaps." Sherlock sniffed loudly, bringing his face even closer to the dead man he inhaled the man's cologne deeply and hummed to himself.

"What?" The inspector had his pen and paper out now, he had soon learned his lesson to take notes these days. He licked his thumb and turned to a new page in his book.

"He's still here."

"What?" John spoke up, uncurling his arms from around his middle where they had been folded.

"The murderer. He's still in the building." The detective stood straight quickly, his eyes narrowed and he scanned the huge room in a quick sweep, spinning on the spot, careful not to step in the bloody mess.

"Oh stop being so dramatic." Anderson rolled his eyes. "Are you trying to be a drama queen, no rightful soul would want to hang around at a crime scene like this, he'll be miles away by now."

"Perhaps if he wasn't a cripple, hadn't killed just 20 minutes ago and didn't have a problem with sentiment." The word was twisted into a smile. "Why do people always have sentiment?"

"I'm not sure a freak like you would understand." Donovan this time, she hadn't unfolded her arms.
unlike the doctor. She lent back idly on a nearby desk, the look of disproval etched on her face.

"Cripple?" Lestrade queried, already scribbling in his notepad.

"Hang on a minute." John butted in, "your telling me a murderer is in here somewhere?" The soldier felt for the butt of his gun lodge in the top of his jeans.

Sherlock sighed loudly. "Are you all deaf?" He scowled, "of course he's still here. He's 6'3", probably in a wheelchair or at least walks with aid, the latter more likely as there are no signs of wheels on scene, recently divorced, two kids, has a problem with alcohol and clearly a problem with anger. Used to own the warehouse, the company went into administration not long ago and his brother took it on. Jealously, that's all this is. Petty brotherly feud."

"Oh come on." Anderson stepped towards, "you can't be getting all that from just sniffing a fresh corpse. Can we please just let the professionals in now?"

"Anderson." Lestrade warned.

In a sudden burst of noise there was gunfire around them, the sounds of breaking glass and splintering wood filled the air. "Get down!" John jumped forwards, grabbing Phillip who was closest to him and dragging him down to the dirty tiles.

He hit to floor himself, and quickly looked up to see with utter horror that Sherlock was now running at full pelt towards the gunfire.

"Sherlock!" John's words came out uselessly, trust his flatmate to run headfirst into danger.

As his friends form disappeared behind a pile of boxes the gunfire ceased. John grabbed for his sig and leapt to his feet, gun pointing towards where the detective had taken off. "Everyone ok?" He scanned the parameter in a flash. Someone groaned and turned back to his colleagues. John's eyes widened when he found none of them up, a pregnant pause passed.

"Little help wouldn't go amiss." Anderson spat, "that is unless you want to go after your freak of a boyfriend."

"He's not..." John gave up and crashed back to the floor next to Lestrade, insult forgotten yet friend not. Soldier within him working through the situation, secure the scene, deal with injuries and then deal with the murderer. John looked down, the inspector was propped up against the desk where he had clearly fallen rather than placed himself. Lestrade's eyes where screwed tight shut against the pain and a sluggish flow of red could be seen from underneath Anderson's hands, pressed tightly into the man's torso.

"Let me see." John waved off the hands and Anderson obliged.

"It's nothing." Greg hissed as the pressure was released. "Just a scratch."

John quickly ripped the inspectors shirt back to reveal the flesh wound, it was bleeding in a steady flow from his lower right abdomen. His trousers were already sticky with blood, even from moments ago after being hit. His hands quickly assessed the extent of the wound and he sighed loudly.

"It's through and through." He grimaced in unison with the inspector as he probed the site. "Sorry." He added. "Doesn't look like any major organs are hit but we need to get you to hospital asap, your bleeding heavily." John knew all too well what sorts of mess bullets did to the abdomen.
"Great." Lestrade let out a cry of pain. John removed his coat, bunching it and pressing it hard onto the area. "Armed response will be on the way if the rest of the team heard gunfire." He stifled a moan, struggling against the agony "but medics won't be allowed in until the place is secure and the gunman down." He huffed.

"I'll deal with that." John looked back with worry to where the consulting detective had disappeared.

"Sally's hurt." Anderson had quickly moved to the other officer and John looked over. Sargent Donovan was inspecting her left arm, pulling at the bloodied shirt sleeve.

"A second." The doctor looked down at Lestrade's pale complexion, shock was setting in. "I need you on the floor." He said to his friend.

"What?" Greg looked perplexed, he groaned quietly, dragging in shallow hitching breathes as John pressed harder.

"On the floor." John repeated, "if you pass out sat like that you'll hurt yourself. And that way we can get more pressure on this wound."

"Oh hell." Lestrade gulped back rising nausea. "It's bad isn't it."

"I've seen worse." The doctor didn't lie, he had, but he'd seen better too. "Come on?" He gently pulled the inspector downwards, letting his body slide effortlessly to the cold damp floor. Greg let out a short whimper.

"Right." John finally said, checking his friends pulse, happy that although racing he probably wasn't going into hypovolaemic shock quite yet, but also mindful it wouldn't be long. "Anderson. I need you here." He motioned to the man who was now fussing over Sally. No time for affection yet.

"Now." His tone turned commanding when the officer didn't move immediately. Anderson practically jumped and scrambled back to John.

"What do you want me to do?" His voice had a slight shake to it now.

"Keep pressure on." The doctor nodded to his hands which where held fast over Lestrade's abdomen, "don't hold back, even if he tells you to stop." John gave Greg an apologetic look. "Your stopping him from bleeding to death."

"Ok." Anderson could only manage, he took over his hands in the same position as John's had been. "For how long?"

"Until I get back to you, or the medics arrive." The doctor quickly took another count of Lestrade's carotid pulse. "Try and stay awake ok?" He squeezed his friends shoulder tightly. Greg smiled back grimly but did not say anything, trapped in constant shaking breaths against the pain.

"Show me?" John then turned to Sargent Donovan who was prodding her arm very gently. He ripped the garment so he could easily access the wound.

"Hey?" She protested.

John exhaled, "I'll buy you another." He said halfheartedly. He looked closely at the bloodied mess and gave a relieved brief smile, "Just a graze by the looks of it, more likely from the shrapnel. Here." He pulled harder on the sleeve and ripped an large piece off and used it as a makeshift bandage, Sally hissed loudly as he secured it tightly to stop the ugly wound from oozing anymore.
but John didn't apologise this time.

"Thanks." Sally finally said.

"No trouble."

"What the hell do we do now?" Anderson looked at his bloodied hands and the sight of his boss's pale form. "There's a bloody psychopath running loose with a gun."

"Sherlock's on it." John retrieved his gun.

"Oh that brings me all the joy, one psycho after another."

"Anderson." Lestrade's weak voice was barely audible.

The sound of a firing gun filled ears again, Sally, Phillip and John all ducked down but thankfully felt no nearby bullets. In such a huge building it was hard to say exactly where the weapon was firing. But John knew one thing, Sherlock must have intercepted him. He didn't know if this was a good or a bad thing.

"Stay here." John crouched low, shouting over the din, "keep Lestrade conscious." He looked worriedly at the inspector, his eyes slits and fighting against the pull of blackness. "Get the team on the phone. Make sure they have the parameter surrounded. If you hear more gunfire, don't come looking."

"Got it." Donovan pulled out her phone and it was already dialling out. She crawled next to the inspector.

John jumped to his feet, gun in both hands just at the firing stopped. He trained his own weapon on the spot where he last saw his flatmate. There was still silence and he jumped forwards into action. "Where are you?" He whispered to himself rounding on a stack of boxes he placed his back up against them.

John sized up the situation, considering all things he decided to reveal his position. "Sherlock?" He shouted, his voice echoed several times in the huge place. There was no answer for a moment, he trained his ears on impending silence, moving forwards with a bit more purpose this time, dodging quickly between machinery and desks. "Sherlock?"

"John?" A weak gurgled reply sounded and the doctor ground to a sudden halt, the sound of his friends voice sending a bolt of panic through his chest.

"Where are you?"

"Stay there!" A voice shouted and a figure appeared in the doctors eye line. He spun, raising his gun up to meet the man, who to his horror had a firm grasp on his best friend. "Lower your gun doctor Watson or I'll put a bullet through his brain too." A shiny grey handgun was pressed neatly onto the side of the detective's head.

John lowered his weapon, placing it on the ground with slow precise movements. He swallowed thickly past the lump forming in his throat. He couldn't help but take stock of his best friends current state of health.

Sherlock was sagged in his captors grasp, his hands were clasped tightly around the choke hold of the fugitive. His eyes slits and his face was pale, beads of sweat were clinging to his forehead and upper lip. A small rivulet of blood was on his chin, dribbled from his lax mouth, there was an
impressive split in his lip from a clear scuffle. He struggled to inhale, angling his head upward to open up his airway.

"Let him go." The doctor said, his voice dripping with anger seething beneath the surface.

"No." The man tightened his hold on the detective and Sherlock gurgled out a breath and groan, a fresh mouthful of frothy blood erupted from between his lips. John felt bile rise in his throat, this was a bit not good.

"Let him go or I will take you out. The place is surrounded, there's no where to go."

"John..." A useless moan.

"Call them off." The tall well built man shouted, tightening his hold further. "Or I swear I will put a bullet in his skull for your misfortune." The gun ground harder into the side of the detective's head, Sherlock's eyes closed and he swayed violently, legs weakening from clear lack of oxygen. "Would be a shame, to see such a genius's brain splattered over the floor. Good deductions by the way, shame I'm not actually a cripple." He laughed.

"I can't call them off, I don't even have a phone on me." John cried, swallowing back the panic.

"Then take me to someone who can!"

"You shot him, he won't be able to talk." The doctor almost shouted back but held his tongue.

"Take me!" The man's unbridled anger shon through. He pushed the detective forwards and Sherlock lost his footing, suddenly placing his whole weight onto his neck. He choked madly, scrabbling uselessly for air and to find his feet. "Oh don't be so dramatic." The man let go off the detective's neck and grabbed his coat collar heavily, yanking him upright and then pushing him forward to stumble on his feet, the barrel of the gun did not leave his skin. He then re-established a hold around the lanky mans neck.

The murderer pushed the detective on and Sherlock let out a low and long groan before managing it forwards. John eyed them both with caution and stepped backwards again, heading for the main crime scene. One wrong move and there would be another body to deal with at the very least, let alone the wounded inspector Lestrade. John bit back the guilt of leaving him to search out his friend.

A pause and Sherlock spoke again, voice absent of his usual baritone from lack of oxygen.
"John..."

"Quiet you!" The murdered squeezed tightly on the detective's neck and he choked briefly. "One more word and I'll put another bullet in you."

Another? John clenched his jaw, fighting back the need to jump forwards and kill the bastard right now. The doctor searched for signs of a bullet wound quickly, but found none. The rise of panic was becoming unbearable, now weaponless he felt useless in the situation. John shook his head at his friend, no time for games now, this was serious, not that Sherlock would ever think so.

A few steps on and the detective struggled in his grasp again. The fugitive growled. "Stay still!" He choked harder, cutting off all air to the man's lungs, Sherlock's eyes rolled and he opened his mouth like a fish out of water in a desperate attempt at dragging air into his lungs past his constricted trachea.

The detective's eyes met his best friend's, several emotions passing across his face before he
mouthed two unmistakable words. 'Vatican Cameos' His eyes snapped shut and he went limp in his captures grasp.

It was then several things happened at once. Despite his taller and well muscled stature the captor grappled with Sherlock's apparent dead weight. The detective listed sideways the gun fired and he cried out and went down. Sherlock hit the floor hard but not without a first a precise kick of the doctors gun, sending it scattering forwards. John stooped low, collecting the weapon and then sending a shot towards the now fleeing suspect. The young man screeched, hit in the upper leg he limped forwards still. His gun was suddenly forgotten about, thrown to the ground, he fled.

"Go!" Sherlock coughed, rolling onto his back and gasping loudly for a long breath.

John stood on the spot, teetering on his decision. He took one look at his struggling friend and kept his feet firmly planted in the spot. He'd shot the man. He wouldn't get far, and he knew armed response would not be far away by now.

"You alright?" John bent down and Sherlock pulled himself upright, grimacing as he began to stand.

"Fine!" He cried, teeth gritted, "go after him."

"Nope." John steadied him as he swayed, coughing violently for a moment the detective bent over, dragging in more uneven breaths.

"What?"

"Your a fucking idiot!" The doctor berated. "Why the hell did you go running off like that!" The doctor regretted his words as he listened to his friends gagging coughs. "Are you alright?"

"Never better." Sherlock finally stood straight and John could see his neck now, already red and swelling with bruising, but at least his lips weren't blue anymore. "Lets go." He hurried forwards and back the group and the doctor followed, quickly collecting the fugitives gun.

"Where you not hit?" John dashed after his flatmate's long strides.

"No." Sherlock's voice was still weaker than before, "I faked him shooting me when I found him, he thinks he hit me. Didn't exactly go to plan."

"Clearly." The doctor caught up. "Are you sure your ok?" He eyed the man's paler complexion.

"I said I'm fine." Sherlock batted his hand towards his friend. "Just a little scuffle and nearly throttled to death." He smirked. "Not the first time, I'm sure it won't be the last."

"You'd be dead if I hadn't arrived, you berk."

"Please." He coughed again and then managing a smile, "it was all show."

They rounded back to the main crime scene and to the three colleagues. John hurried back to them. "How's he doing?" He was on his knees back beside the inspector.

"I dunno. I think he's blacked out." Anderson was in the same position, his knuckles white from the pressure on his hands.

John surveyed his friend quickly. Pulse erratic, skin pale and clammy, his breaths were shallow. "Let me see the wound." He moved Anderson away and pulled off his now soaked coat. The
bleeding had slowed but was still far faster than the doctor would have liked. "Greg?" He bent over the inspector, tapping his cheeks lightly. "Lestrade. Can you hear me?"

Greg let out a weakened moan but didn't open his eyes.

"Keep the pressure on.' He turned back to Anderson asking him to go back to his job of stemming the blood flow. John then turned to Sally. "Any luck with the response unit?"

"They're just arriving now. Where's the gunman?" Donovan had her mobile plastered to her ear, she looked at Sherlock up and down. "What happened to you freak?"

"Give me that." John almost grabbed the phone from her grasp. He held it up to his ear. "This is John Watson, we need immediate medical attention in here. We have an officer down and in hypovolaemic shock."

"Sir. I am George Fenton, head of armed response. We cannot send in medics until the area is secure. What's the status of the personnel in there?"

"One officer down with gunshot wound to the abdomen requiring emergency attention, two others walking wounded." He looked to Sally's bloodied arm and then glanced quickly at his best friend, still seemingly breathless from the strangling, he frowned.

"What's the position of the gunman?"

"North side of the building. He retreated that way but has sustained a bullet to the upper leg, I suspect he hasn't got very far. He's unarmed as I'm aware, he discarded his weapon. I have it secure on myself. I suggest moving in."

"Agreed." The commanding officer said. "We'll be with you in a few minutes. Medics just behind."

John put the phone down but left the line open.

"Armed response on the way." He said the them, quickly checking Lestrade's pulse, as if a minute would have made much difference to it. "Just hang on mate, helps on the way."

Within what only felt like seconds there was loud crashing of a door and the sound of men rushing into the building. John's heart pumped a little faster, the sound was unmistakable and something he had come to know for many years. Men shouting 'clear' as they secured areas through the warehouse took the doctor back to Afghanistan. He steadied his breath against the rising panic, he was in London and all was ok, now was not the time to lose it. He looked to his friend to find the detective eyeing him with a scrutinising glare.

"Suspect down." An echo from across the warehouse.

"John?" a breathy detective.

"It's alright Sherlock. I'm alright." John stood to meet the coming officers. They barraged in, guns still drawn, and to anyone not used to armed presence it was more than a little intimidating.

"Fenton." A man held his hand out to John, replacing his rifle onto his shoulder. "Medics just behind." He said. "Dear god, is that Lestrade?"

"It is." John turned back to his friend. "He needs hospital. He's bleeding heavily."

"Where are those medics!" The officer bellowed to the others just as two familiar reflective coats
appeared, medical kit in tow.

"Thanks." One said to Anderson, "we'll take it from here."

"Gunshot wound to the lower right abdomen, through and through. Heavy haemorrhage, direct pressure applied and slowed but he's still heading into hypovolaemia from the blood loss. GCS of 12, tachycardic at 135."

"Thank you." The second medic smiled sadly, "it'll be ok sir, we'll get him into the Royal London."

John did not answer, just simply nodded in response and watched at the two medics got to work on the inspector. Placing ECG lines, an intravenous catheter and oxygen mask, all standard practice. He remained glued to the spot as he watched them without any real thought.

"We should scoop and get out sharpish." One said. "We need to get him into surgery to stop this bleed."

"A second ambulance is here." The doctor jumped at the sound and found George Fenton leading officer was still beside him. "I'll send for a third for the suspect. Get yourselves checked out." He pointed towards the other side of the warehouse, follow Jones here, he'll take you."

The four of them left quickly, longing to see the back of this crime scene. The two ambulance's were waiting close to the warehouse entrance and just as they stepped out into the cool autumnal air the trolly carrying the unconscious Lestrade passed them and he was bundled into the back of the first vehicle.

"Let's take a look at that shall we?" A young blond medic intercepted Sally and motioned to the back of the ambulance. The sergeant followed her in into the doors.

"Sherlock?" John turned to grab him for a check over and before he ran off. Too late. The man was already half way across the car park. The doctor sighed loudly, balling his hands into fists, "cock." He swore under his breath and broke into a run after him.

The detective was almost out the car park exit by the time John caught up with him, the earlier tightness in his chest all but gone after his sprint, breathless he stopped by his best friend to regain his sharp inhales.

"Sherlock, you really should be looked over."

"Pointless." The taller man strode out faster and the doctor had to jog to keep up the pace. "I have no major injuries, just bruising. Nothing but a cold compress will solve." Sherlock crossed the deserted street and cut through to another car park, clearly a shortcut to somewhere. "Besides John, your my doctor I don't need someone else interfering with my care. You know what I'm like about being touched by others."

John frowned, something was off about his friend. Sure, he was used to him rushing off at crime scenes, but usually when the suspect was still at large, not being marched out in handcuffs. "Are you sure your ok?" He watched his friends gait closely, finding him holding his right arm tucked into his body.

Sherlock huffed, deciding to ignore the question.

"What's wrong with your right arm?"

"Just drop it John!" He snarled.
"Where are we going?" John finally gave up.

"Baker Street."

"You'll never find a cab here." The doctor cried. "We're half way to the docks."

"Really?" Sherlock turned to smirk at his friend before turning back to hide the grimace pass his features. He pulled apart a broken wire fencing stepping through, down a short wall and into an ally. Three strides and they were out onto a busy street.

"Oh." John's mouth motioned as the detective put out his left arm to wave down a cab. The ebb of worry started to creep into his being. John looked closer as he came to stand next to his friend waiting for the car to pull over. The detective's brows were furrowed into a tightly knitted frown and John could see the tension in his jaw. Sherlock pulled the door open and stepped inside the vehicle, planting himself on the seat furthest away.

"221 Baker Street." He said before turning his face to the window while John got in. The door shut and car lurched briskly into motion. The detective inhaled sharply.

"Sherlock?" John edged closer. "Come on now. This is not just from being half throttled to death."

"I..." The detective swallowed hard. "I'm fine."

"Stop being a twit and let me look at you." The doctor saw the cabbie raise his eyes to the rear view mirror with interest.

"Piss off." Sherlock curled himself inwards, tucking his head down into his coat collar, he rested his head on the window. John watched his breath mist up the cool window quickly from quickened rate of inhale and exhale. Yes, something was definitely wrong.

The doctor watched for several minutes, trying his best to deduce anything from his friend but could not place anything except perhaps he had injured his right arm, now firmly wedged away from him so he couldn't assess it. The cab suddenly came to a grinding halt.

"Watch it!" Sherlock yelled as he was bounced forwards and back again in his seat. His face suddenly paled and John then noted the light sheen of sweat much like earlier appearing on his forehead.

"Sorry mate." The cabbie replied, "road works. Traffics a mess up here."

"What's wrong with your right arm?" John tried again, knowing now that the directed aggression was more likely due to pain than annoyance.

"I just twisted my wrist in the fight, nothing to be concerned about." The detective inhaled a shaky breath, eyes closing for a brief second before reopening and focusing on the passing city out the window.

"I don't think so." John shook his head. "That's not it. Last time you twisted your wrist you ripped half the ligaments I didn't find out for three days until I saw the bruised swollen hand and that was only when you were playing your bloody violin, now deal!" He was running low on patience now.

"No."

Just as John took a breath to speak the cab bumped down a dip in the road works and Sherlock let out a brief whimper. He closed his eyes against his friends glare,
"Right." The doctor moved to the seat opposite his flat mate. "Coat off. Right now."

"John. Don't." Sherlock didn't reopen his eyes.

"Now!"

The detective did not budge so John saw this as an invitation to do the deed himself. He lent forward quickly yanking forcefully on the man's left coat sleeve. This time his friend cried out fully, eyes snapped open and wide from pain.

"Stop!" Sherlock shouted, sagging forwards in his seat, he dragged in short sharp breaths and gave out another low moan before sitting back up.

"Then tell me." John's face was turning red from rage.

"I may have made a miscalculation." Sherlock's sentence was broken between hitching inhales. "I thought I would make it out the way before he fired the gun."

"Where?" John sat straight.

"Shoulder." The detective reclined back in his seat and gulped past the rising bile, threatening to vomit at any moment.

The doctor leant forwards, carefully pulling off the large coat from Sherlock's right shoulder, his hands came away sticky with blood. "Christ." He bit back. "Change of plan cabbie." He turned to the driver for a brief second. "Get us to the nearest hospital."

"Right 'o." The driver didn't ask questions, but John could see his eyes tracking them in the mirror with some concern.

How had he not noticed this before? The bloody idiot had been so good at hiding it up until now. John pulled gingerly on his friends shirt, unbuttoning he garment. The detective didn't say a word, the doctor could see his face was now plastered with pain, scrunched into a permanent grimace. He pulled the shirt across his skin and it was slick with blood. John bit back his remarks he wanted to berate to his friend, he felt his own shoulder twinge with pain. The bullet had entered from the side of his friends arm, obviously penetrating up and into the detective's shoulder and collar bone area.

"How the hell are you still conscious and functional Sherlock?" John shook his head. "This is about one of the most painful places to take a bullet. How?"

"Pain management." The detective huffed out in a breath but then let out another short cry as the cab turned a corner wedging his injured appendage into the door.

"What?" John shook his head again. Unbelievable.

"It's all in the mind." Sherlock sat up a little, his eyes opening slits. "It's all about controlling the pain and putting mind over matter. Not hard to learn."

"You preposterous twat." The doctor sighed. "There's a reason why we feel pain, and it's not to hide it from our friends."

"I was going to tell you."

"When?"

"Perhaps once I had cleaned and assessed it myself." He gasped loudly as John removed his scarf
and pressed it into the wound to stem anymore blood flow, thankfully it seemed to have slowed already.

"You deserved that." John didn't look apologetic, he looked mad.

"Why?" The detective bit into his lip hard and closed his eyes against the rising agony.

"Sherlock." The doctor shot, he was furious. "You have a bloody bullet lodged in the bones in your shoulder and you were going to tell me after you assessed it at home and decided it needed medical attention? Or were you going to wait until you went septic from the infection? What planet are you on mate? I mean have you got a bloody death wish or something because your going the right way about it!"

There was silence and for a second John regretted his outburst.

"Sorry."

"No matter." The doctor huffed. "We're here now." He motioned to outside and the entrance to the emergency department coming up.

"Good." Sherlock shot a crooked smile, "make sure they give me morphine." And he passed out.

Chapter End Notes

The recovery story for this chapter can be found here
When John Watson finally cracked his eyes open, the only thing he could concentrate on was the immense pressure he could feel in his chest. His throat was tight and uncomfortable and mouth dry like cotton wool. The doctor picked up echoes of familiar voices around him, but his brain could not make out their words. Suddenly clearly a voice told him to cough, and after a pause it felt like his throat was being torn apart. He gagged violently and lost himself to blackness.

When he finally came to again everything seemed a little more clear, he cracked his eyes open, the world was lit dimly and the room around him was less bright and hectic. The great pressure in his thorax had dulled to a low thrum and the only sound he could hear was the gentle beeping of a familiar ECG monitor. John sat up slightly, immediately regretting the movement and stifling a moan.

"Easy mate." Lestrade said and the doctor cocked his head to the side. The inspector was sat next to his bed in what looked like the most uncomfortable chair a man could possibly make. "You gave us all quite a scare."

John swallowed thickly, his throat protested. "Water." He finally managed to form words.

"Sure." Greg pulled up a cup of water with a straw and held it to his friend's mouth. John eagerly gulped down half the contents, throat soothing in seconds. He took a slow inhale, feeling his chest burn with pain, clearly dulled with drugs. He soon located the morphine drip and a chest drain on both sides of his body. Christ, he must have been bad. "Sherlock?" He asked.

Lestrade pulled a sad smile, one which the doctor could not read. "He's just the other side of the curtain." The inspector pointed to the other side of John and the doctor's head whipped around to face the plain blue hospital curtain. His face paled several shades and he swallowed past the rising bile in his throat.

"He's alive." Lestrade quickly shot, seeing the spikes in heart rate on the monitor and look of horror on his friends face. "Please don't panic."
"Then why?" John's words caught in his voice box and they made it out barely a whisper.

"He's a little out of sorts." The inspector murmured. "They think it's probably the head trauma. He had a bleed to the brain, had to induce a coma initially. They said it was to protect his brain from further trauma."

John nodded slowly, he was familiar with the treatment for traumatic brain injuries. "Exactly how long have we been here?" He furrowed his brows and looked to a clock on the wall reading it at 3.36pm. Ok, so he knew the time, what about the date.

"Five days." Lestrade added. "You've been pretty poorly yourself you know."

"I kind of worked that out, at least." The doctor tested a deeper breath, thankful for every free breath now making its way into his re-inflated albeit damaged lungs. The extra oxygen through his nasal cannula whooshed into his nostrils, and seemed to calm him somewhat, his next question did the opposite.

"How out of sorts?" John braced himself for the coming storm. Sherlock never made life easy did he.

"He woke up well, he was in a coma for a couple of days initially. The doctors say he was fighting through the drugs they had him under with."

John sniggered. "Doesn't surprise me."

"Well the moment he was more lucid he started asking after you. But the doctors wouldn't tell him, after a while he just went a bit nuts. I don't even know how to explain it."

A stab of pain shot through the doctor, this time not a physical but emotional hurt. "Why the hell didn't they let him see me? He probably thought I was dead!" Voice raising, yet his chest refused to allow his usual volume of speech.

Lestrade threw him a disgruntled look. "They told him you were ok, but even so. Letting him in here in the state he was in would have been dangerous. He almost re-broke his foot. I've never seen him like it John, not even on the drugs."

"It's not unusual for someone with a brain injury to be confused and even aggressive." The doctor ran through the symptoms, he was no neurologist.

"Mycroft stepped in. He found you both a private room together."

"So why is he behind the curtain?" John could not take his eyes of the blue flimsy material.

"To keep him settled and also so you don't freak out the moment you wake up." Greg looked to his feet.

"What?" John didn't understand, his head was fuzzy, what an earth were they pumping into him besides opioids, he looked to his IV line and huffed.

"Too much stimulation and he starts to fight through the drugs." The inspector explained, "that and they had to restrain him otherwise he was going to do himself or someone else some real harm."

"Let me see him." John pushed up on his arms, this time groaning audibly.

"Whoa, hang on mate" The inspector looked sadly at him. "Your hooked up like a Christmas tree
right now."

John quickly surveyed himself to confirm his friends observations. Only then did he notice the heavy strapping around his left shoulder, a small jolt of pain from the joint made him inhale sharply. He looked down, two chest drains, an IV line, central jugular catheter, 12 lead ECG, pulse oxymeter, oxygen nasal cannula, blood pressure cuff and a urinary catheter, he cringed, why did they always have to place those. "Ergh." He tugged uselessly at the blood pressure cuff and gave in, resting his head back against the pillows. "Is this all really necessary?"

"You nearly died John." Lestrade cried.

Silence fell over the room and the doctor could do nothing but look at the end of the bed and the two small mounds where his feet were clearly hiding. "Sorry." He said finally.

"No apologising." Greg held a hand out, "but really John," his voice turned a little more serious, "you really do need to take it easy this time. They said both of your lungs collapsed, by the time they wheeled you through the accident department doors you'd stopped breathing. You two caused quite a stir you know, sounds like half the hospital were on yours and Sherlock's case."

John smiled to himself sadly, trust Sherlock to pull him into all this drama, to be fair he crashed the damn car initially, he'd regret that later. His smile fades, if there is a later and the detective is still the same man he was five days ago. Head injuries can do all sorts to the brain and personality.

"Let me see him." The doctor asked again.

"You sure?" Lestrade stood, "I mean you've only just woken up."

"He clearly needs me otherwise Mycroft wouldn't have put us in the same room." John turned back to face the ominous blue curtain and Lestrade did the honours by standing and then finally carefully pushing the screen back to reveal John's best friend.

"Jesus." Was all John could muster for a moment, he took in his friend. Sherlock was flat on his back, his head was propped up on an array of cushions and his head bound tightly with bandaging. John could see these were dressings from surgery not just the annoying scalp wound from the accident. His eyes were half open, semi circles, staring lifelessly into nothing but the bare ceiling. His right foot and ankle was strapped lightly, the appendage was blackened from bruising and a neat external fixator poked out his angry skin in several places, holding the shattered bones in place. What concerned John the most though was the soft restraints around the detective's wrists and one good leg. He was strapped to the sides of his gurney, and not just lightly either, how bad had his really got?

"Good to see you back with us Doctor Watson." John did not turn to look at the older Holmes enter the room. "I see you have been aquatinted with my brothers current state of health."

"I have." The doctors jaw clenched tightly, "and I would prefer it if you would kindly remove the restraints. Christ, he's not a bloody animal Mycroft!" He inhaled a little too deeply and the pain in his chest made him groan reflexively.

"I think many of the staff here may disagree with your statement." The man finally came into John's view, his usual dapper outfit, yet John could see the edge of something in his eye, concern perhaps. "I have had to use my position on a couple of occasions already considering Sherlock has broken the nose and arm of at least one member of the nursing team here."

"What?"
"They tell me a period of confusion and agitation is often normal when ones recovering from a minor brain haemorrhage, sometimes coupled with aggression and anxiety. It would happen, as usual, that my brother has taken this to the extreme."

"Jesus." John echoed again.

"All he seems to ask about is you though. He seems to have latched onto you, not exactly sure why." Mycroft looked somewhat annoyed now, obviously the fact his brother had not asked after him had hit a nerve. "Now that your conscious we can perhaps consider weaning him down off this ridiculous concoction of chemicals."

John looked at the IV line heavily taped into Sherlock's left foot. This must have been the place where he was less likely to pull the catheter out, the doctor could see the dorsal aspect of his hands and forearms were littered with bruising from previous failed and pulled IV's. There were two syringe drivers and a fluid pump whirring away beside the bed pumping what looked like several sedation drugs and one white filled syringe of propofol which John recognised instantly, the drug commonly used to knock out patients for surgery.

"I have called the doctor and he should be here any minute now." Mycroft looked at his pocket watch impatiently.

"Are you sure this is a good idea?" Greg piped up, he had moved to stand at the end of the detective's bed. "John's only just woken up, do you really think waking Sherlock up in the state he's in is fair?"

"The quicker we can get him over this state the better. My brothers brain is his hard drive as he so commonly likes to remind me. If doctor Watson is the answer to bringing him back from the coma then so be it."

"But..."

"It's alright Greg I can handle it." John pushed himself up a little, immediately regretted it. Instead he located the bed controls and allowed the back to rise so he was now in a more comfortable position.

A short Afro-Caribbean lady then appeared at the doorway. She smiled widely, her white teeth showing starkly against her dark skin. "Good to see you awake sir." She bumbled into the room. "My name is Julie Gayle, senior nurse, have been looking after your both since your arrival last week." She came to John's bedside and gently shook his hand, "been a pleasure to meet you, I read your blogs all the time." Her Jamaican accent was strong.

"Thanks." Was all the doctor managed. She let go of his hand and quickly retrieved his file from the end of the bed, noting down his parameters and setting the blood pressure cuff off on a cycle. "You and Mr Holmes here have caused quite a stir here."

John wanted to ask which one, but kept his mouth closed, he could see Mycroft's patience waning.

"There's been all sorts of goings on, the press have had a field day outside. And a small array of visitors to you both."

"That's enough Julie." An older man entered the room, his glasses perched on the end of his nose as he looked down, hair greying at the sides, "you don't need to talk our patients to death now do you?"

John smirked and for a second time in as many minutes he received a hand shake.
"Anthony Dean." The doctor said, "consultant neurologist."

John heard Mycroft sigh loudly, and knew if it had been Sherlock standing there the exact words being said right now. Somewhere along the lines of 'must we waste time with small talk'.

"I see you are inpatient to get started." Clearly Mycroft's audible sigh had not gone unnoticed. "Just let me check your brothers vitals and we'll sort out turning down these infusions."

John watched closely as the neurologist spent the next couple of minutes assessing his friend's vitals and level of consciousness. He noticed he detective's arm muscles flexing lightly in his bonds and his eyes flicked gently. Sherlock was unbelievable, any other man would have been stone dead out cold with the infusions he was on.

"I think we're all ok to give it a go again." The doctor pushed his glasses back up the bridge of his nose and collected Sherlock's file. "Bring Mr Watson closer Julie." He beckoned but did not look up from his scribbling.

John felt sorry for the nurse, she hurried around his bedside, connecting and disconnecting monitors so the bed could be moved merely a couple of meters to the right so he could actually reach out to his friend. "Thank you." He said as she finally put the breaks on the trolly and stood back.

"No problem." She disappeared from the room.

"So we'll start by weaning off the propofol I think, probably the one we least want him on right now." The doctor pressed the syringe driver buttons and the machine beeped annoyingly. He reduced the flow down. "It can take up to a few minutes for he affects to start appearing but considering Mr Holmes's current reputation I would assume he will wake much quicker."

John watched closely as his friends body twitches occasionally, the muscles in his hand contracted and extended and John put his hand over it. "Hey Sherlock, it's alright, I'm right here. It's time to start waking up." The syringe driver beeped again as the flow rate dipped even lower.

The detective inhaled deeply, his eyes closed and reopened but were still glazed and listless.

"Sherlock?" John tried, a small noise, something close to a squeak sounded from his flat mates throat. A few minutes passed.

"Okay, let's try this off shall we?" The syringe driver beeped again and the doctor turned the machine off, clamping the line to the detective to stop anymore flow of the drug.

There was silence for a few more minutes, the air of the room grew thick from some sort of anticipation. John watched closely as his friends chest rose and fell in rhythm, steady and deep, the numbers on the monitors were happy green and it seemed his friend was coming too well.

All of a sudden as if on cue Sherlock's body tensed, he sucked in a great gulp of air and groaned, pulling against his bonds. "John!" He cried, eyes opening wide in panic.

"I'm right here mate, it's ok." The blogger tried to remain calm but the panic in his friends demeanour sent shots of worry through him, his heart started to race and concurrently his ECG monitor started to whale in response. John could see his friend tense further at the noise.

"Will you turn that bloody racket off!" He shot. The doctor obliged quickly, returning the room to near silence.
"John." Sherlock's voice was weak and quiet and his breathing was now hitched into short sharp intakes.

"I'm right here Sherlock, just calm down ok." John squeezed his friends hand and then pulled it into his own. The detectives hand clamped down and the doctor had to stifle a cry from the pain of his crushing grip. "Sherlock?" He tried again.

"Leave me alone!"

With renewed vigour the detective pulled again at his bonds, the leather biting into his skin but not breaking it.

"I want John!"

"I'm right here you imbecile." John tried to pull his second hand across the touch his friend but his shoulder told him otherwise. "It's me you clot, I'm right beside you. You've been in an accident. You banged your head up a bit."

"John?" The pained desperate cry made the doctors heart lurch with worry. Sherlock pulled forwards uselessly again, this time, his fractured foot kicking out against the rails, the metal work clanged together.

"For god sake just get rid of these bloody cuffs." John was losing patience. "And turn whatever else he is on down."

"That's not advisable doctor Watson." The neurologist answered, "last time it took us two hours to get him sedated and back to bed. In the process he broke one of my colleagues arms and required an X-ray of his own foot as he displaced the ex-fix."

"Well that won't be happening this time." John watched as Sherlock seemed to becoming increasing agitated, his eyes were flicking wildly, unfocused and panicked stricken.

"I'm afraid I can't."

"Just do as he says doctor." Mycroft stepped closer to the bed. "I have every faith in doctor Watson's judgement, he is my brothers private physician and whatever he says goes, so I suggest you do as he proposes."

The man simply shook his head, he pulled at the cuffs releasing them quickly and then turned to the second syringe driver, pressing the buttons to turn down the flow rate of the next sedative. "I cannot take responsibility for what may happen." The man stood back a few steps.

"Sherlock?" John pulled his trembling hand free of the restraint and he visibly saw his friend relax a little, his flicking eyes slowed somewhat and finally came to rest on his own. "It's me. I'm here. Please don't worry."

"John?" Finally some sort of recognition in the detectives voice could be heard.

"Yes it's me. Come on now, time to wake up."

"We're am I?" Sherlock pulled his hand up to his face and patted at the dressings. He frowned deeply then took in the room of people who all seemed to have eyes on him. "What is this a spectators sport?" He snarled.

"Sherlock look at me." John edged his fingers out of the iron grip. The detectives eyes drooped a
little. "You were in a car accident, do you remember?"

"No." Sherlock sat up quickly, bracing his arms against the bed. "Let's go home, I don't like it here." He shuffled on the bed and Mycroft stepped forwards along with Lestrade, ready for a fight to keep the man in his bed.

"Alright, alright, calm down." John leaned towards, stifling the moan threatening as his chest tightened and thrummed with agony. "Just. Please. Don't get out of bed." He huffed a couple of pained breaths

"Your hurt?" The detective's face scrunched in confusion yet again, he picked at the edges of his dressing thoughtfully. "What's happening?"

"It's ok." The doctor squeezed his friend's hand, "just lay back down?"

"Why?"

"Because your hurt too." John sighed.

"Oh."

John knew, no matter how confused his friend may be right now, there was one thing that could potentially help. Data. "We were in a car accident, five days ago. You fractured your foot and ankle which has been fixed. You suffered a nasty head wound and a bleed to your brain. You've been in a coma for two days and sedated for another three because you kicked off so much coming round. I injured my shoulder and chest but I'm alright now."

Sherlock paused for a moment, and anyone who was watching him could practically see the cogs turning in his muddled brain. "So can we go home yet?"

"Not yet Sherlock but soon." The doctor looked to Mycroft for confirmation but found none.

"John?"

"Yes?" The use of his name was beginning to become annoying, he had to admit it.

"My head hurts." A small stray tear made its way down the detective's cheek. "I don't remember what happened."

Pain forgotten in an instant John threw himself forwards and pulled his best friend into an embrace. His chest and shoulder protested against the movement but he ignored it all, holding his best friend as tears flowed silently from him.

"Of course your bloody head hurts." John choked back a tear of his own, "that's kind of what happens when you've had surgery on it. And memory loss especially of the accident is normal don't worry. You remember your name right?"

Sherlock snorted and pushed his friend back. "What a stupid question, of course I know my name."

"There we go then." John let himself ease back to his own bed with a light moan. "Not completely brain dead then."

"If I was completely brain stem dead I would be on a ventilator because my medulla oblongata, pons and midbrain were clearly damaged beyond return. And hopefully by now one of you idiots would have realised this and pulled the plug by now. John really, I thought you trained in medical
John smiled and it grew into a grin. "He's back." He glanced to the other two still perched by the end of the detective's bed.

"It would seem so yes." Mycroft looked to his watch again, "only took you 4,698 minutes to come round from a coma, still far longer than anticipated."

"I was hindered by drugs, my prediction of 1,579 minutes is somewhat more accurate. Your bet has no standing as they apparently re-sedated me."

"You made a bet?" John's mouth fell open.

"Of course I made a bet. Clearly it was only a matter of time before it happened." Sherlock smirked, "the average time it takes to come round for a short induced coma from a head injury is two and a half days if your not sedated further, which I clearly was."

"Still, your prediction was way out." Mycroft replied.

"So was yours." Sherlock spat. "In fact, what are you still doing here, shouldn't you be off getting me transport home already?"

Mycroft frowned, pursing his lips tightly in anger. "That's not why I'm here brother mine and you know it."

Sherlock faked a laugh, "here because you care?"

"Now boys that's enough." Greg butted in, the older Holmes simply sent him a death glare that could have killed.

"Okay." Finally the neurologist spoke up. "I suggest we all take a break. I need to assess Mr Holmes, perhaps you could take a quick coffee break so I can speak with my patient. I'm going to have to ask a few questions."

Lestrade and Mycroft decided it best to take this as a good time to exit. Mycroft was already on his phone before he even left the room.

John gave the doctor a weathering look. "I really wouldn't bother, you won't get anything constructive out of him."

"The year is 2016." The detective droned. "My name is Sherlock Holmes and my address is 221B Baker Street London."

The doctor opened his mouth to speak but John spoke first. "Don't even try asking him who the prime minister is right now, he won't be able to tell you. Or if the sun goes round the moon, apparently he deleted all of that."

"Oh not that again." Sherlock groaned. "Could you all kindly shut up, I'm awake aren't I?"

John smiled. Yes, he was definitely back.

Chapter End Notes
The recovery story to this can be found Here

External fixator - a type of bone fracture fixation, usually pins are inserted into the site from the outside and a cage is built around the limb to stabilise the bones while they heal.

Propofol - an induction agent for anaesthesia but can be used to heavily sedate/anaesthetise someone on a constant rate infusion (CRI)

Fluid pump/infusion pump and syringe driver - used to administer fluids and/or drugs into a patient at a set rate

Central jugular catheter - an intravenous catheter inserted into the jugular (neck) vein, it usually is long and sits in the cranial vena cava (the first part of the main vessel to the heart) and is placed in critical patients in hospital.

Pulse oxymeter - measures the amount of oxygen the blood is carrying around the body to ensure the patient is receiving enough oxygen to their tissues and organs.
Chapter Summary

John and Sherlock find themselves in a rather wet and dangerous scenario.

Chapter Notes

Hope you enjoy. I enjoyed writing some of the action in this. Please see the end of the chapter for notes on the river Effra and medical terminology. Please comment. : )

John's was in a fowl mood, and the state of his shoes did nothing to ease his rising annoyance. "Are you really sure about this?" He screwed his nose up in disgust of his soaking wet feet. The water he was standing in was well past his ankles and contained who knew what.

"It's perfectly safe, this is the old course of the river Effra, it's only a sewerage overflow during heavy flooding, or perhaps if too many people flush at once." Sherlock smiled. "If the body was dumped near Stockwell where I think it was then we should find it down this channel, there's been no flooding recently so no reason for it to have made it to the Thames yet." The detective splashed as he strode on down the narrow ledge way, his hawk eyes taking in the dimly lit tunnel with every step, checking each outlet and crevice quickly.

"But all the forensic evidence will be destroyed by now?" John wined, he wished he bought more appropriate footwear for the outing, although saying that he was sure his friend wasn't wearing waterproof boots either, so must be in the same predicament.

"I don't need forensics to catch a murderer John, you know that by now."

"Then why do you even need the body?" John shuddered. This place was horrible and he could think of nowhere worse to be on a mid summers afternoon. The tunnel was dank and dark, shadows stretched around the bends eerily, their torch lights bounced from one side to the other. The stench of the nearby sewers made him want to gag, debris of paper and vegetation clung to the slick walls and the constant sound of running water could be heard in close proximity. He balanced on the narrow ledge, the only thing stopping them from falling into the small river channel. The thought of being trapped in such a place sent dread into John, endless tunnels flooded and leading to nowhere, if they died in here no one would find them for months, years even. Their half decayed corpses would be washed out to the Thames and eaten by seagulls. "It's awful down here," he moaned, shuddering again, "did we really have to go searching, couldn't we have sent the sewerage workers down?"

The detective stopped and turned to his friend. "Not scared are you Captain Watson?"

"No." The blogger shot, standing a little straighter. He puffed his chest, feathers ruffled by the statement, John Watson was afraid of nothing.
"Good." Sherlock continued on, careful as to not overly splash the rancid water more than necessary.

There was a long silence as they trudged on, John watched his feet, his soaked socks doing nothing for his temper. Maybe once they were home he'd remove the sodden fabric and place it inside Sherlock's silk cotton bed. That would teach him to bring them down to this horrendous place. After several minutes the doctor noted the water flow. When they had arrived it had been stagnant, algae clung to the edges of the tunnel but now the water seemed to be flowing with them.

"The waters flowing" he said half heartedly, looking back at their course, a steady flow was now beginning to form.

"Must be a shower upstream." Sherlock did not turn back, he carried on, cat like and spritely he made short work of prancing along ledge and John gulped back the alarm as he noted the wall beside them dropped away to reveal a sewer tunnel below.

John chose not to continue his conversation and concentrated on balancing across the long crag with no wall to aid him. When he finally looked back up the detective seemed to be miles ahead already, navigating the next bend, the doctor could see nothing but his silhouette ahead behind the flashlight. He stopped as he reached the other side, catching his breath and nerve. He looked down and watched the water now flowing by in a hurry.

"Really Sherlock, this waters getting faster." He sucked in a breath, forgetting the stink John heaved involuntarily. The detective really was going to pay for this when they got back to Baker Street.

"Probably a storm then." Sherlock stopped and tilting his head sideways, "this is a flood channel after all."

The doctor hurried on and sped up to meet with his friend almost losing his footing when he was met by an outstretched hand in a stop signal. The detective furrowed his brows in concentration.

"Hm." Sherlock hummed, "storm."

"What?"

"Thunderstorm. Outside." He repeated. "Can't you hear it?"

"No." The sound of running water became louder and something deep in the pit of the doctors stomach told him this was a bit not good.

"You need to learn to hone yours senses John." Sherlock huffed, "your no use to me like every other idiot out there." 

"Is that what I am now?" John's voice rose, his fists clenched, "like every other idiot." He pronounced every word exactly.

"Sometimes." Sherlock stepped on, completely oblivious to his friends anger.

"Shouldn't we be heading out if there's heavy rain?" John shouted as he moved away, the sound of water causing him to have to raise his voice.

"Should be fine." The detective surveyed the next length of the tunnel, flashing his torch from ceiling to river below. "Might get a little wetter than we planned, but we shouldn't be in any danger."
John was not so convinced, the water was swirling grumpily around his ankles, small particles of paper debris were clinging to his trousers. He carried on, struggling to keep up with his friends quick pace. Sherlock did not let up though, he covered the next straight of the river quickly before it headed around another sharp curve.

As the minutes passed John began to grow increasingly worried, the river was heading from a happy tranquil stream to an angry raging beast. The sounds of rushing flow could be heard louder and even John could hear the sound of the pouring rain outside, the grumble of close thunder boomed and echoed, they mustn't be far from the surface now.

"Sherlock?" He called.

"Oh what now!" The detective pivoted on his feet and shon the torchlight directly into his bloggers eyes. Irritated, John snatched the mag light from his grasp.

"Shouldn't we be heading out?" The doctor motioned to the waves of water around them. "It's getting a bit angry now. It's going to start getting dangerous."

"Don't be so dramatic." Sherlock grabbed the light back, shining it's beam back upstream and looking at the small white frothing eddies appearing in the flow once in a while. "The last time the river burst its banks was in 2007."

"That's all very well but right now we don't have any banks!" John shot, his voice having to raise further still against the sounds of the rushing water.

"Well there's no more outlets to outside now, not until we reach the Thames."

"Then we'll have to go back." John turned on his heel to face the oncoming water, he felt the river beginning to tug at his trousers and he swallowed back the now very real panic setting in.

"You can't go back. Not point in fighting the flow." Sherlock stopped his friend quickly.

"Then what do you suppose we do?" The doctor hollered.

The detective froze, he closed his eyes for a second and brought his hands up to his head, heading into his mind palace for a brief moment. John bit his tongue in impatience and then set his jaw in a solid grim frown, now was not the time to be thinking. The river level swam up a little, his lower legs disappeared under the filthy water line.

"Sherlock!" John cried, panic now audible on his voice.

"This is all your fault!" Sherlock snarled suddenly, eyes opening in realisation of there predicament. "If you'd let me catch the perpetrator in the first place there wouldn't be another body in the first place!" The water was now a deafening roar around them.

"My fault?" John could have punched his friend in the face but thought now was perhaps not the time for that. "I wasn't the one who came in here looking for the cadaver!" He shouted. "And don't you look at the bloody weather forecast anyway?"

"Of course I do, but a flash flood and freak storm this bad never happens in the capital, we're just unlucky."

"Unlucky!" The doctor really didn't have the patience for this. "We are trapped in the middle of a bloody underground river and storm drain and the water is rising quicker than we're going to manage it out."
"Your right." Sherlock looked up from his phone he was tapping into and then back up and down the tunnel.

"What?"

"Your right, we should get moving." He pointed down stream, "the outlet to the Thames is not far off this way, Vauxhall bridge, perhaps half a mile."

"You say this now, when the water is almost passed my knees." The blogger shot, the water was swirling up his legs rapidly.

"No need to panic John." Sherlock smiled. "The water will just flush us in out the right direction if need be."

"Not before we drown!"

"Ever the pessimist." Sherlock rolled his eyes but his best friend didn't see it in the gloom.

John's heart was pounding faster by the minute, spikes of adrenalin pulsing with each beat. This is what he lived for, for the adrenalin rush, it was what tied him to his flat mate in the end. But the prospect of drowning in London's sewerage system and being washed out to sea was not really John's ideal afternoon scenario. The dirty white water swirled around his knees, the current was strong and already threatening to push him down if he lost it footing. The ledge below was slick with who knew what and the walls were sticky with the green algae and grease.

"Sherlock!" He shouted above the din, the lanky detective was already a few yards ahead, making his way along the edge still, he turned back to face him. "We need to stick together, if one of us goes down the other needs to be there to keep hold of them."

John could see his friend visibly huff but he did not budge and waited patiently for his blogger to make it the few meters to catch up.

"Perhaps keep a hold of my coat." The detective suggested, waving the now wet outer edge of his belstaff in his friends direction in an annoyed gesture.

John snatched a large amount of the material in one hand and used the other to steady himself on the disgusting wall. "We should hurry." He looked to the rising level now up by his thighs. The cold temperature of the water was now noticeable, even in the middle of summer the water was frozen against his skin.

Sherlock did not reply but simply turned and moved along with the flow, his long legs striding out carefully through the water. John struggled to keep up, his feet slipping continually and in a flash he tripped yanking at the detective's coat as he went down. He landed face first into the white angry water. Two hands grabbed him around the shoulders and pulled him upright, his feet connecting back with the rivers brick ledge. His torch was lost to the torrent and all of a sudden it was a bit darker.

"Do be careful." Sherlock berated loudly, voice booming.

John shook the drips from his soaking hair, he wanted to gag at the taste of the vile liquid he had managed to swallow. His eyes widened at the water level, now past his waist and rising faster than ever. "We're not going to make it!" He shouted, mindful that the detective may well not be able to hear him anymore.

Sherlock strode on, pushing through the water much slower now, even he was beginning to lose
his sure footing, he held his own torch up a shoulder level. The white froth from the current was now flicking upwards into their faces, making vision all but obscured. John grabbed uselessly at the wall, clinging to nothing when he felt his feet begin to lighten from the bottom. "Sherlock!" He shouted.

The detective grabbed John's arm steadying him. "We're going to have to let the flow take us out to the river." He said after a beat, looking down the endless passageway.

"What!" John cried. "No way!" He let go of the belstaff and scrabbled wildly at the wall, finger nails now digging into the mortar as his feet began to lift up, one leg now pulled out into the flow, powerless against the gushing violent eddies.

"Keep your head above the waterline and keep hold of me." Sherlock shouted. The river was now edging up the detective's chest and John could feel it almost upon his shoulders. "The water is going fast enough that we should make it out the other end in under a minute or so!"

"No!" The doctor yelled back. "We won't make it!"

"Let go! Trust me." John resisted but his flat mate grabbed his arm and the doctor lost his footing, swept up into the angry torrent but not without the Sherlock too. He clung uselessly to his friends coat and he went under, momentarily cut off from the deafening noise. When he broke the surface again he could see the water had risen further still, there was now a measly meter or so above them before the brick ceiling. The brickwork was flying by at speed, the river was now clearly flowing at a full force storm torrent. Sherlock's black unruly curls bobbed in front of him above the waterline, he could barely see him in the pitch darkness, the detective's own torch also now lost to the water.

"When we reach the outlet hold your breath!" Sherlock shouted, "the water will suck you down and out."

John's eyes widened. "Great." He said more internally than audibly.

At that moment the detective was snagged backwards, caught on something and the heavy woollen coat was ripped from the doctors grasp. Sherlock went under and John lost him, carried forward with the flow. He had not the breath to shout but turned quickly to see nothing but blackness. "Sherlock!" He finally managed weakly. He kicked upwards desperately trying to keep his head above water, but it was too late, he must have travelled yards now at the speed he was going. He grappled at the wall, hands glancing over the slick bricks until finally his back collided with something solid.

John felt the water pulling him downwards, the undercurrent dragging his feet down fast, the sound was deafening. He gasped in a long breath before finally being sucked under the water. For a moment the blogger felt nothing, his body seemed to tumble in a free fall through the rapids until, when air felt like it was running out he felt compressed and then bright blinding light before falling again.

The doctor rolled sideways, his head connecting with jagged rocks he saw stars briefly, vision turning white for a seconds before coming to again. He drew in a long shaking breath, coughing madly when it caught in his throat. He blinked wildly, clearing his vision he finally found he was laying on his back on the bank of the river Thames, his head resting uncomfortably on the rocky shore and the rain pouring heavily above him. A folk of lightning suddenly lit the grey sky and John jolted back to reality. The thunder boomed overhead and he sat up quickly rubbing his temple. His coat was ripped and right arm coated in a slick flow of blood and water mixed together,
his fore arm had split open to form an angry ragged wound, probably a result of the stones he'd just landed on.

"Sherlock." He finally murmured, staggering shakily. John stood getting his bearings. "Sherlock!" He shouted, the downpour drowning out his voice.

The angry outlet was roaring before him, the water spitting out in a white jet and down the bank into the waiting low tide of the Thames. The gushing flow was overwhelming and John staggered back from it for a moment, he squeezed his eyes shut and opened them again, in the hope to clear the constant haze and growing headache.

"Sherlock?" The doctor squinted against the pouring rain obscuring his dazed vision. Thunder grumbled on again. He craned his neck up and finally spotted his best friend, a black tangled mess of gangly limbs the other side of the white water flow where the river had deposited him. He was clearly unconscious. In a matter of seconds John Watson sprung into action, his woozy head all but forgotten he leapt up and over the top of the storm outlet, avoiding the violent flow below. He dropped down the other side, steadying himself on the wooden pillars before staggering on and crashing down beside his best friend quickly.

Sherlock's coat had all but gone, lost to the torrent somewhere. On the hot summer day the detective had been wearing nothing but a shirt under his famous attire. The purple shirt was all askew, pulled sideways but seemed to be in one piece. The man was spread out on his side, legs pulled in opposite directions and one arm pinned, buried between him and the shoreline below.

"Bloody hell." John placed two fingers onto his friends neck to find a slow steady thrum beneath them, circulatory system functioning, heart beating. The grey hue of the detective's face and sallow closed eyes told him not everything else was though.

The doctor pushed Sherlock onto his back, placing a cheek close to his lax half open mouth and blue lips. Apnoeic, respiratory system not functioning, lack of oxygenation, cyanosis evident. Trauma doctor mode kicked in, re-oxygenate patient, prevent respiratory acidosis and death. He tilted his friends head backwards and opened his mouth, scooping to the back of his throat to remove any debris, airway clear. John sucked in a long breath before sealing his lips over the detective's, pinching his nose and pushing air into his best friends stagnant lungs. Sherlock's chest rose with the doctors ventilation. John pulled another breath and repeated the process.

For 10 long and tense seconds the doctor sat back on his feet and watched, checking for a pulse. Sherlock's mouth gasped but no air passed his lips in the useless attempt to breath again, and then a second fish like gulp yet his chest made no attempt at movement, too congested with water to cooperate.

"Come on now." The doctor shook his head, pinching his friends nose he breathed for him again.

When John pulled back Sherlock's body convulsed violently. His whole body jolted and he vomited forcefully. The doctor pushed him quickly over, clearing his mouth and throat hastily as water and meagre stomach contents pooled out of it. Finally after some seconds the detective sucked in a long drawn breath and expanded his chest.

Sherlock racked with violent coughing followed by desperate gasps, his body screaming out for more oxygen, he curled in on himself, struggling.

"Easy." John held his best friend gently, one hand tightly clasped over the detective's shoulder as it shook with each breath. The doctor looked to the grey sky, the deluge was certainly not letting up anytime soon. Another flash of electricity made him squeeze his eyes shut against the blinding
flash. "Nice slow breaths." He finally said, over the bumbling thunder. "That's it."

The detective sat up quickly, swaying a little, catching his breaths better now. The doctor steadied him while Sherlock blinked back the gathering tears from his eyes. "Thank you." In finally croaked. "That was" he paused to inhale. "Bracing." He coughed.

John half smiled, "perhaps next time watch out for the weather?"

"Point taken." Sherlock gathered his feet up and began to stand. John pulled up with him and both leaned on one another heavily for a moment. The detective pulled his shirt straight and frowned. "Where's my coat?" He cried.

"It's gone." The doctor looked toward the Thames but there was no sign of the dark blue woollen fabric.

"Damn." He grumbled then coughed deeply again, a pause to gather a decent breath. "Let's go home."

"Oh, I don't think so." John retrieved his phone from his sodden pocket, cursing as his injured arm came into contact with the material. "You're going to hospital." He looked to his phone and cursed again when he found the thing dead, although no surprise considering.

"I'm fine." Sherlock stood straighter, "just lost my coat."

"You nearly drowned you cock." John nearly shouted. "You might feel ok now but you need oxygen and at least some antibiotics let alone the chance of secondary pulmonary oedema and pneumonia. You need a doctor Sherlock."

"But your a doctor." The detective smiled. "Your my doctor."

"Not the point." John clenched his hand, testing his arms ability to move. "I don't have anywhere near the amount of medical kit you need at home right now."

"Then perhaps my brother can be of use." Sherlock tilted his head upwards to the solid ground of the Thames path and the doctor followed his eye line.

"Mycroft?" John exclaimed. Stood up by the edge of the pathway was the unmistakable figure of Mycroft Holmes. He was in his usual suit, a large umbrella held above him, protecting the expensive attire from the pouring rainstorm.

"Well done for spectacular performance Sherlock, nearly drowning your friend as well as you and still not locating the missing body. Did you even bother looking at the forecast for heavy storms."

"Piss off Mycroft!" Sherlock spat, he bent double, gasping in air, the short walk clearly taking out more than he would let on.
"He needs oxygen." John shot, "and he needs it now."

"Well it's a good job that we have help right here then isn't it."

Before the doctor could say a word a hype of activity appeared around them. At least three men which looked like medics wearing darkened scrubs approached them, one wheeling a hospital trolly.

"Let's get you both inside." One said, a second had the trolly next to the detective and to John's concern Sherlock accepted the transport without complaint. The detective eased down into the mattress curling sideways and began to cough again.

"Where are we going?" The doctor hurried to his flat mates side. An oxygen mask was being placed onto the detective's face with little protest. Sherlock's eyes were pulled shut against the hacking coughing and gasping breaths, his lips were an awful shade of blue again.

"MI6 medical facility, under orders of Mycroft Holmes."

John rolled his eyes, Mycroft had his fingers in far too many pies for his liking. Yet in times like this he was extremely glad that his best friends brother had a 'minor position of the British government'.

"You'll be fine Sherlock." John found the detective's hand, giving it a squeeze, thankfully his coughing was subsiding. "Looks like we're going to get the best medical treatment the country has to offer."

Chapter End Notes

The river Effra is a real lost underground river of London. It's runs from Norwood recreation ground the south, through Brixton, Stockwell and by the oval cricket grounds at Kennington (where excess earth was deposited when the river was excavated and buried below ground in the 1950's). It then heads out under the MI6 building and into the Thames by Vauxhall bridge, the storm/sewer outlet can be seen at low tide but there is a handy plaque above if you want to spot it when the tides high. If your in the area and wish to visit it the nearest train/tube is Vauxhall and it's a short walk to the bridge. I know very little about the actual river under the ground so some of my story is artist rights but the river does flood during heavy rain and is a sewer overflow so I can imagine it becoming quite torrent at times, not somewhere I would want to be.

Apnoeic - lack of breath, the patient has stopped breathing.

Cynosis - a blue tinge which appears in the mucous membranes (usually most noticeable on lips in humans but also in the skin too), this is due to the lack of oxygen in the tissues. It can be seen in patients with oxygenation issues usually drowning, asphyxiation, heart attacks and during seizures.

Respiratory acidosis - when there is a build up of carbon dioxide from the tissues when a person is not ventilating (breathing) then the PH of the blood can become more
acidic than it should, causing all sorts of electrolyte imbalances.

Pulmonary oedema - fluid build up within the lungs air sacs themselves, due to lung trauma or disease, can eventually cause respiratory failure if not treated.
Cold suspect

Chapter Summary

John solves a crime and Sherlock's life. All in a day's work for Doctor Watson.

Chapter Notes

Many apologise for the lateness in this getting to you, life has been somewhat busy over the past month. But here we are, after 12 hours of none stop writing I've written something. A short story arch, with a touch of hurt comfort and medical drama. Enjoy and do comment.

Please be aware this is set in early season four and was written prior to airing of the show so will likely not be cannon compliant.

"You've fallen out again haven't you?" John could almost hear the smile on Mary's face the other end of the phone line.

"No." John didn't sound so convinced.

"God, you two are like four year olds." Mrs Watson chuckled. "What's he done now?"

"What hasn't he done?" The doctor grumbled, "blown a bloody great hole in the kitchen tiles for one, garbled some rubbish about the suspect being guilty and now he's taken off."

"And you didn't go after him?"

A pause.

"Well I..."

"You shouted at him didn't you?" Mary was shaking her head, John was so predictable sometimes. "You must have had one massive row if you didn't follow him out on a case, you never miss an opportunity like that."

"Mrs Hudson is going to be furious!" The blogger countered, "half the plasterboard is through and at least one cupboard needs replacing, let alone the scorch marks on the remaining wall..."

"John.." Mary interrupted. "It's just a kitchen, it can be replaced." She sighed loudly, "you do know how cold it is out there tonight, don't you?"

To be honest John had completely forgotten the weather forecast for the day, being British it was always a topic in the papers and news or those complaining on the dreary commute. But pacing to the window he remembered now, tonight was meant to hit record lows for January. The pathway below was glistening in the street lamp lighting, compacted snow now turned to ice. Snow was an unusual occurrence for the capital, but like the current forecast had stated, today was clearly not
"It's over minus 10." Mary confirmed his thoughts.

John slowly inhaled to calm his pang of worry, surely Sherlock wouldn't be so stupid to stay out in the middle of January all night just because they had a fight, besides he did say he was going after a suspect. The doctor groaned audibly, suspect chasing didn't always end well did it?

"Go after him?" His wife chimed, "ever since..." She paused, "since he landed back on the plane you've been on his case."

"He nearly died Mary!" John felt a flush of anger redden his face, "why do you think I've been so hot on checking him out?"

"Alright, alright." She soothed, "no matter, we'll talk about it another time. Regardless, tonight isn't the night to be out running down criminals or sulking in the park, with or without his massive coat."

John looked to the coat hook behind the door and let a small amount of relief wash over him, at least the idiot had taken his belstaff and scarf with him on his storm out he door. Exactly how long ago had that been? John had sulked on his laptop and watched tele for sometime. The worry edged back into the doctor, it was not unlike Sherlock to go storming off in a huff, or to chase down London's criminal class, or even stay out all night without an explanation. But since the plane incident both Mycroft and John had agreed to not leave the detective unattended or remotely monitored, it had been less than a fortnight since the man had been given the all clear from his overdose and John had been watching him like a hawk. To top John's stress levels Mary was nearing the end of her term, and their child was due in less than a month.

"Are you still there?" Mary's voice sounded, and John realised he had drifted off into thought leaving her to silence on the end of the phone.

"Sorry. Are you alright?" The doctor asked quickly, "do I need to come home?"

"No, no. I'm perfectly fine, enjoying a hot chocolate and a good film." Mary answered, she let herself sink further under her fleece throw, "I only rang you because I wanted to check if you were staying over there tonight, just because it's getting late now."

"I hadn't planned to." John looked at his watch, almost not believing it was heading towards midnight, "everything was fine until he blew the kitchen up."

"Go after him." Mary could be heard taking a long gulp of her warm drink, "I don't like the idea of him being out tonight, especially that he's only just back on his feet."

"I'm going." John was already sliding his feet into his chunky winter boots.

"Please be careful." Mr Watson cried, "and please call me if you need anything, I don't mind popping out pick you both up."

"Thanks." The doctor smiled, "but I really think you and little one should stay in the warm tonight." He shrugged his coat over his shoulders, zipped it up to the top and donned a thick scarf, tucking it snug into his neck.

"Love you."

"Love you too."
John checked his watch again, as if the last few seconds of talking would have changed the time, but the hands still pointed at 11.45pm. Exactly how long had Sherlock been gone? He was certain it had only been about 8pm when the kitchen nearly went up in flames, he had hollered to the detective about how lucky he was that Mrs Hudson was still out at bingo and not in to see the mess. The landlady had since returned but thankfully not popped in yet. A small pang of guilt made John's stomach turn, he really had said some horrible unforgivable things, he bit his lip to contain the feeling.

The doctor bound down the 17 steps and out into the cold of Baker Street, he took a sharp intake of breath when the bitter air hit his lungs, prickling at his throat, tonight was exceptionally cold. Careful with his footing he teetered slowly down the frozen crisp path and out onto the Euston road to hail a cab. He pulled the door open, relishing in the heat inside and asked the cabbie to take him to Highgate station. Considering the two recent murders had been in the region of Highgate and Kentish Town he assumed the suspect Sherlock had gone skittering after was around there too, balance of probabilities his friend always called it. Once in the back of the warm car he pulled out his phone and pinged his best friend a text. 'Where are you?' He tapped through his contact list about to hit call when the exact person called him.

"Lestrade?" John sounded surprised to find his friend calling at is hour.

"Sherlock with you?"

The guilt now stirred into slight panic. "No." John said. "I was hoping you might have seen him, he left a few hours ago in search of a suspect."

"Well it looks like he found him." An exasperated exhale came from the end of the line, "we were called to an address in Hampstead belonging to one of the suspects after a neighbour heard a lot of shouting a crashing."

"Give me the address." John pulled a pen out his pocket, jotting down the street and number and then reiterating it to the cabbie to change his destination. "What happened?"

There was a long pregnant pause and John felt his heartbeat increase. "Greg?"

"The suspect's been stabbed."

"What?"

"The neighbours said they saw a tall man, dark hair, scarf and in a long dark coat leave the rear of property in a hurry about an hour ago before they phoned the police. By the time we got here there was no sign of Sherlock but the suspect is in a pretty bad way, been blue lighted to the Royal free with a stab wound to the chest, it's not looking good John."

"You can't seriously think that it was Sherlock!" John's voice rose over the phone, "come on Lestrade?"

"Is he clean?" Greg grimaced at the question, knowing the exactly how the doctor would intercept it.

"Of course he's bloody clean!" John was practically shouting now. "How can you think he's not. Last month was a slip it I agree, but we've been watching him closely since and he says he's been off it, and I believe him."

"The victim." Lestrade gulped, "he said he looked crazed, like he was on something."
"And you believe him why?"

"Because he just had a knife plunged into him, I think I'd remember my attacker if I had had the same." Greg countered, "I'm sorry John," he softened, "it's just not looking good. I don't want to believe it either but everything points to Sherlock attacking the man. There's no sign of forced entry, just a lot of mess from a fight and blood everywhere."

"Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be true." John whispered.

"What?"

"Nothing." The doctor answered, "I'll be there in ten minutes." He hit the end call button quickly, swallowing back the rising bile in his throat and not wanting to hear another word of the scene he was about to walk into. Regardless of evidence, he refused to believe his friend was capable of such an attack. Yes, he had killed Magnussen but not without reason. John's body shuddered at the thought of the night at Appledore, he tried to shake the image from his mind of his friend being lead away cuffed at gunpoint. Sherlock had been warned about his behaviour upon being realised from his exile, Mycroft had already told him there would be no second chances this time, why would Sherlock risk his freedom for the life of a petty potential murderer?

By the time John's cab rolled up to gloomy cul-de-sac it was well past midnight. He thanked and paid the cabbie and rushed towards the blinding blue flashing lights parked at the end of the road, blocking entry to anyone. Donovan met him at the police tape but said nothing, she simply raised the plastic obstruction, letting him past. John was sure Lestrade had probably warned her against a slanging match, John was thankful, he did not want to be responsible for assaulting a police officer tonight, although hitting a woman was not acceptable in John's books Donovan could have easily pushed his buttons right now.

"Greg?" John rounded on the front door of the semi-detached house to find the detective inspector talking to forensics, not Anderson, thank God.

"John." The inspector finished his briefing and pulled the doctor to one side.

"What's happened?"

Lestrade looked grimly to his friend. "I don't know, but perhaps you can be of assistance?" He handed a pair of gloves to the doctor who took them placing them over his clammy hands, he was already sweating with the rising panic. "I don't want to believe it John, I really don't. But there's no sign of anyone else involved and the victim has already named Sherlock as his attacker."

John said nothing, he strode forward into into the property without another thought. The hallway seemed to be a mess, a large mirror was smashed on the floor, telephone ripped from the wall and side table askew. There were several smears of blood along the wall, and John turned to look at the front door knob on the inside, a coating of blood was on this, so whoever left had blood on their hands. There was a large kitchen knife on the floor below the door, the blood on it dried and cracked now. The doctor pushed back the worry, he needed to take a minute, assess the situation and then find Sherlock.

The state of the living room was much the same as the hall, ornaments from the fireplace were smashed across the floor, a large family photograph was in the centre of the carpeted room, face up, the glass smashed with what looked like something pointed, yet, no sign of blood on it, odd, seeing as the rest of the decor was around the edges of the place much of it stained with red. There was a large patch of blood on the sofa, clearly where the victim had been when the medics and
police had arrived.

"Did he say where in the room he was stabbed?" John looked to another nasty looking splattering of Crimson, this time on the pale wall the opposite side of the room to the sofa, close to the television which was surprisingly still intact.

"He didn't." Lestrade said, "he could barely speak, but he certainly told us it was Sherlock who did this. Wouldn't stop telling me I'm fact."

The blogger frowned with unease, something about this scene was not right, too much blood for one victim, too much of a struggle, Sherlock was more than capable of holding his own in a fight, why would there be so much of a mess? "What else did he say?" He asked. "The victim that is?"

"He said this is Sherlock Holmes, that it's all his doing, that he came in here looking like a wild animal and attacked him unprovoked." Lestrade tried to sound professional but was not doing so well.

John did not answer, just hummed. He hurried on towards the kitchen diner, there were prints of blood across the linoleum flooring. The kitchen itself remained untouched, minus the missing knife from the rack. The backdoor was wide open, letting in the freezing air from outside, there was a worrying smudge of red along the door frame "Was this open when you got here?" The doctor asked.

"Yes." Greg answered, "looks like the attacker's escape route." He added, clearly choosing not to use the detective's name anymore.

"Was the front door open when you arrived too? Or did the victim open it for you?"

"It was ajar. The victim was on the sofa, but nearly unconscious when we entered. Looks like he came in the front, carried out the attack and left out the back door. The neighbours had called for just the police, when we arrived we called for medics."

John's detective brain began to piece bits together, Sherlock had taught him well over the years. One occupant had exited via the front door, the blood on the knob would confirm this, likely the attacker, the knife only served to confirm this as they dropped it before leaving. The second occupant, and likely Sherlock had left via the back door, John stepped closer to the back door, taking care not to step on evidence, yes, the footprints almost confirmed it. Size 12 feet, smart shoes and almost definitely Sherlock's. He stepped a little quicker and then through the back doorway into the garden. It was pitch black out but the snow on the grass reflected the lights from the house dimly by the open door. The snow had been trampled in places, John pulled out his torchlight and looked closer at them, one set was fresher than the rest and headed out towards the far corner of the garden.

"We've called for a dog unit to track him, but they're held up for a while on another call, hopefully the scent won't have gone by the time they arrive."

John gritted his teeth in anger, this was clearly not Sherlock's doing, but he knew Scotland Yard would probably not see it this way.

"Where does the garden back on to?"

"The Heath." Lestrade shook his head.

"He didn't do it Greg." John hurried back indoors and through the house.
"Are you sure?" Lestrade followed the doctor towards the front door and watched as he bent low over the door knob, inspecting it with interest.

"Yes, I'm certain." John drew a shaky breath in, "your looking for someone much smaller than Sherlock, and probably known by the victim, likely with some connection to the family considering the smashed picture in the living room. Probably a female, by the size of finger prints." He added in haste before hurrying through the open front door stripping away the examination gloves.

"Where are you going?" Greg followed him out.

"Where do you think?" John cried, "he's out there on the Heath somewhere, and it looks like he's hurt. I need to find him before your idiots do."

"John?" Greg warned, taking a step towards him slowly.

"You can't stop me." John pulled back, "and you have no grounds to arrest me. He's innocent and I need to find him. Now." And with that he took off down the road.

Greg watched him go with interest, and despite his police instincts he trusted John, the man had been hanging around with the consulting detective long enough now to pick up on his deductive skills, perhaps he was right.

John hurried along the pathway as fast as he could safely do, even in his winter boots he slipped on the compacted ice several times. Running on pavements in this weather would be impossible. He glanced at his watch in the street lamps. Half past midnight. He'd spoken to Greg at at least 11.50pm, he had told him that Sherlock had left the property an hour before that, which meant 10.50pm. That meant that the last sighting had been at least a hour and forty minutes ago, Sherlock could be anywhere in London by now. John pulled out his phone then, reluctant to ring his landlady but he needed to rule out his friend returning home in the last forty minutes without wasting time on a journey back there.

After a quick conversation, a very high pitched Mrs Hudson and several obscene words from her mouth he finally came to the conclusion that Baker Street was still empty and there was no signs of Sherlock returning. He would have to deal with the fallout of the kitchen disaster later, he told Mrs Hudson to go to bed for now and not to worry, although the reality was the lady would be up half the night now. He then pinged another text to his friend, 'please tell me where you are? I'm worried about you.'

The doctor wrapped his coat tighter around himself as he hurried on, there was a very light breeze in the air and it dropped the air temperature even further. John's inner trauma doctor started to panic slightly, he knew even as little as thirty minutes out in this weather could result in frostbite or worse.

"Where the hell are you Sherlock?" John cursed, darting across the road and into the darkness of Hampstead Heath. He pulled his torch out and began to run, the grass lands were much less trampled, only by dogs and their owners, little tourists hit the Heath this time of year without reason. Running would not only mean he could cover more area quickly, it also meant he would stay warm in the bitter air. He headed towards the back of the house where Sherlock was last seen, the area was shrouded in thick trees and shrubbery but John picked up his friend footprints with ease, he hadn't trained in the army for nothing, his tracking skills were still there. The tracks lead away and into the trees, heading west. John trailed after them, stopping occasionally to check he was still on track. He crossed the Hampstead ponds, fear gripping him at the thought of his best friend falling through the thin ice on its surface, but the tracks told him the detective had come no
where near the waters edge. He ran out onto Pryors field, where the tracks carried on straight ahead. A large dip in the snow appeared, he came to an abrupt halt, bending low he inspected the area, the pure white snow crystals were tarnished with a red hue, blood. "Fuck." John swore under his breath. Sherlock had stumbled and fallen in the drift here, and it confirmed he was probably injured too. He looked up and swung his torch around finding no signs of his best friend.

"Sherlock?" John shouted, in any hope that his friend may be in the vicinity to hear his call. There was no answer, funny how snow always dulls the sounds around you. John could not hear a thing, not a single vehicle, siren or creature in the undergrowth could be heard and it unnerved him.

"Sherlock?" He tried again but felt like he was doing nothing but calling in water, his voice only bouncing back at him from the snow.

He hurried on, tracks ahead of him now seemed less straight, looking like the detective had staggered haphazardly along, John refused to let the worry get the better of him. He ploughed onwards, kicking up the snow as he went, it was at least 3 inches deep in places, unheard of in London.

Finally, after what seemed like forever, the doctor made it to the tree line on the other side of the fields and the tracks disappeared. John cursed, bending over and placing his hands on his knees to catch his breath. "Damn it Sherlock where are you?" John pulled in a long breath and the freezing air made him cough. He headed north along the pathway, his torch darting from one side to the other in the hope of spotting his friend. When finally...

"Christ." John shot out and into the grassland towards a familiar mound of fabric. "Sherlock?"

The doctor rounded on his friend who was splayed out in the snow, his arms were stretched out before him and his cheek was pressed into the ice as if he had simply landed there for a quick nap.

"Sherlock?" John bent down, holding his breath as he placed two fingers under the detective's jaw. A steady thrum of a heartbeat was there, slow but steady, he then placed the back of his palm close to his friends slack mouth feeling relief when a huff of air tickled his skin.

"John?" Sherlock's baritone sounded then. The doctor watched his friends bloodless hands twitch and curl and quickly the man tried to pull himself upright.

"Steady." The blogger grasped him carefully, letting his friend rise with some help, the detective's eyes opened wide and he blinked several times to try and clear his vision. John then noted the split across his lip and darkening bruised beginning to appear around his right eye, John shone the torch in his face to inspect it further. The purple bleeding under his skin was a stark contrast to the rest of his white face, lips tinged with an horrible shade of blue.

"What are you doing here?" Sherlock's speech slurred considerably and John bit back the worry, this was not good. "Where am I?" He mumbled. "It's cold."

"Your on Hampstead Heath." John pulled his friend freezing hand into his own, the frozen skin was almost a shock against his own. He placed two fingers on his flat mates radial pulse and looked at his watch counting, his peripheral pulse was certainly weaker than his carotid. "Your hypothermic Sherlock, we need to get you inside, I'm here to look after you. You best not be hiding out here sulking."

"No." The detective smiled goofily, "I'm tired." His eyes slid closed and he swayed.

"Yes I know." John shook him by the shoulders to rouse him, "but you need to stay awake. If you
"sleep now I will never get you up again."

"Not good?"

"A bit not good yeah." He pulled out his phone, "stay awake ok, I just need to phone someone. Are you hurt?"

"Don't know." Sherlock swung his arm out, his bloodied hand landing in the snow without him realising. "I didn't do it John."

"Yes I know, it was the neighbour." John answered.

"What?"

"I'll explain later, do you think you can hold yourself up for a moment." John tested his friends coordination to find it useless, the detective swayed violently as he let go of him. "Right."


"Yes I know, it's alright." John frowned with concern, his friend was certainly not shivering, a sign that he was in moderate to severe stages of hypothermia, a core temperature of below 32 degrees. Reluctant to either involve the police or Sherlock's brother John phoned the next person who would help.

"Mary?" He cried, the moment the phone connected.

"What's wrong?" She could hear the panic in his voice already and John could hear the rustle of a book and a mug being placed down on the end of the line. Still up then, John thought.

"Will you meet us in Hampstead?" John quickly shook Sherlock's shoulder to rouse him and the man moaned in reply. "I found Sherlock, he's not well, long story but we need to take him home."

"No hospital?" Mary was busying on the other end of the line, John could tell she was changing and getting ready to leave the house.

"Not right now. Seems like he's a suspect in an attempted murder. And I think we can deal with this at home, I don't think he's got any life threatening injuries just the hypothermia, our home is closer than Baker Street."

"What?"

"He didn't do it Mary." John interjected quickly.

"Well of course he didn't, he wouldn't kill a soul without reason. Where are you? I'm coming to get you." Mrs Watson was now almost dressed to leave.

John pushed the Magnussen image from his vision yet again, he looked around at their location. "Meet us by the fairground carpark on the south side of the Heath."

"Got it." Mary replied, "ten minutes max."

"Drive carefully." John cried before the phone went dead.

"Cold." Sherlock's voice was barely a whisper.

"I know. But if we get you moving then we can start to warm you," John shook his friends
shoulder yet again to ensure his eyes opened in response. For a moment his inner medic considered the risk of afterdrop, a severe drop in core body temperature due to cooled peripheral blood being circulated into the main vessels. But Sherlock had moved since he reached him and looked like he hadn't been laying in one position for too long. He brushed the thought aside, he would deal with that if it happened and then he would have no choice but to call for medical back up.

"Where is this?" The detective screwed his face into a frown and then grimaced at the pain it caused his bruising eye socket.

"Hampstead." John huffed and then felt his own body shiver from the cold, thank god they were not far from help, he could feel the bitter winter temperatures leaking through his clothes too now, God knew how his best friend felt like right now, numb. "Come on..."

Sherlock protested somewhat to John's movements and groaned as the doctor pulled him upright, waiting for Sherlock's feet to follow suit and stand. It took some convincing and several bouts of shaking back to full consciousness but finally the detective's feet obliged and took at least some of his weight. John took the rest, forgetting how heavy his friend was despite his slight frame, his height easily made up for it. It was then that John realised Sherlock's heavy coat was actually open and flapping in the light breeze, a large soaked patch of blood could be seen on his pale shirt in the low light.

"What's this?" John tried to inspect the area but struggled to do both this and hold his flat mate in an upright position, he could see his friends shirt was clearly ripped and the faint line of a wound underneath but there didn't seem to be an actively bleeding wound even though he could see little of it. There was no drips of Crimson in the snow at their feet and Sherlock's low body temperature was probably helping keep any bleeding at bay. It would have to wait until they got back home right now.

"Let's keep going." John cried, pulling the detective's coat across his body and using it to stabilise them.

"Can't" Sherlock groaned, his legs stiff and useless, he stumbled forward, feet clumsily kicking into the deep snow drift.

"Yes you can." John looked forwards, squinting towards the dark carpark a few hundred yards ahead of them. "Not far now."

Sherlock didn't answer this time, he pitched forwards, dangerously so and John struggled against the strain, he stifled a small groan as his aching shoulder pulled. Small step by small step though they made progress and as they rounded on the car park John was practically carrying his best friends lax form.

"Jhn..." Sherlock slurred.

"Stay awake for me." The doctor looked worriedly to the detective, Sherlock's eyes were closed, his head bobbling like a rag doll on his shoulders. "Hey, hey, come on now, are lift is on the way, no falling asleep on the job."

"No."

John pushed forward again and Sherlock let go of his friend, grabbing for the wooden fence, his knees wobbled and began to fail.

"No, stay on your feet."
The detective mumbled, slumping down to the snow below in a heap, the doctor was powerless to stop it. He fell to his own knees beside his friend letting his head sink into his lap. "Mary will be here any minute. Just hang on for a bit and stay awake. Please." He pleaded.

"Hot now." The detective wined, his failing arms tried to tug at his coat, pulling one frozen hand inside.

"Oh no we don't." John held his frozen fingers in his own, he knew what this was. Paradoxical undressing was not unheard of in the severe stages of hypothermia due to hypothalamus malfunction and loss of vasomotor tone. Sherlock's body was failing itself and tricking him into thinking he was hot due to the rush of blood to the peripheral parts of his body. This was not good. "Come on Mary." John pulled a second hand around and took Sherlock's pulse, his breath hitched and he shivered himself. Heart rate was in the mid fifties, any lower and John would have no choice but to take his friend to the emergency department murder suspect or not.

As if on cue a familiar car rolled into the car park, John held his breath as Mary skidded the wheels on the ice and came to a halt beside them.

"Oh god, is he?" She hurried around to open the rear door of the car.

"He's fine, but he's heading into the severe stages of hypothermia, we can't wait much longer." John pulled himself upright, hooking a hand under each arm he hauled his best friend the few feet to the car and Sherlock moaned in response. "That's it Sherlock keep talking to me, come on mate." He stepped onto the back seat of the car, knowing that if this was any other day Mary would be shouting at his feet on the seats of the Audi.

The detective made no efforts of protest as John pulled him onto the back seats, pulling his now barely conscious form so he was slouched up against the doctor. His feet only just fit once Mary pushed the door shut. She sprung back into the drivers seat and twisted the heater controls to full blast before clicking the car into gear and heading out the car park.

"Hospital?" She asked, looking both ways before turning out into the thankfully gritted and relatively clear road.

"No." John held his fingers across Sherlock's carotid pulse, counting beats as if any moment it could change. "Home." He added, "we can't risk him in hospital, not so soon after..."

"Are you sure?" Mary eyed her husband warily in the rear view mirror, "he doesn't look too good."

"Just drive." A shot of captain Watson could be heard and Mary didn't pry any further, she stepped her foot on the gas, heading for home, thankfully only a few minutes across town.

By the time they reached Mary and John's townhouse the car was a small oven and two of the three occupants were sweating from the heat. The worst part next was getting Sherlock up the six steps to the front door. John cursed Mary for her help but they reached the front door in no time, the detective's lanky form draped forwards between them, his recognisable baritone was mumbling incoherent words at his feet. As Mary unlocked the front door John looked down to find a neat medical bag left for them.

"Mycroft." He whispered. As ever, one step ahead of him.

John dragged his friend over the threshold and down the hallway, at least now the detective was making some half hearted attempts at using his stiff legs even if they did nothing but hinder the process forwards. Mary went out and collected the medical kit and by the time she had returned
John had managed to deposit his best friend on the sofa.

The doctor pushed the coffee table back to give him space, he turned the main room light on and stripped himself of his coat and scarf and kicked his soaking boots off in haste. "Are you alright?" John paused once Mary had deposited the bag by Sherlock's feet.

"I'm fine." Mary frowned. "Why are you so worried?"

"Well," John paused, "I just put you in a stressful situation and we're not far of the little girl on her way."

"Oh don't start this." Mary rolled her eyes, "what do you want me to do?"

"You can go to bed?" The doctor bent down, unzipping the medical bag and rummaging inside.

"I want to help." Mary cried, "please John."

The doctor nodded silently and handed her a litre bag of saline, "warm this in the sink with warm water, and I want as many hot water bottles and hot hands you can get your hands on. And crank the central heating up too."

"On it." She disappeared into the kitchen and began to busy.

"Hydroxocobalamin should be given for cyanide poisoning." Sherlock's eyes fluttered under his closed lids.

"That's great." John sat up on his knees and began to inspect his best friend. "Can you tell me what the chemical formula for that is?" He pulled his friends shoes off and the peeled away the sodden black socks then proceeded with his scarf and the heavy damp belstaff.

"Triple carbon bonded nitrogen atom compound. Disodium methyl hydrocyanide, combustion at 234 degrees." He rambled.

John was sure somewhere along the line it made sense, but right now the words seems nothing but a jumbled mess, even if it were chemical compounds and combustion temperatures. He pulled gently at his friend arms, easily getting his relaxed limbs through the coat sleeves, he pulled the woollen fabric away and the detective moaned in protest. "Sorry."

"Kettles boiling." Mary appeared in the doorway, her hands full of bedding and cushions. "I brought these though, thought they'd be more comfortable than the bare sofa."

"Your a saint." John took the bedding, pushing his friend into a slightly more raised position he stuffed two pillows behind him and another by his neck so he was now propped half up. He unbuttoned his friends shirt, the red stain no worse than what he had seen earlier. Once he pulled the cloth apart a deep gash was revealed on the man's torso, clearly the work of a blade and almost certainly the kitchen knife used in the attack. He quickly snapped a photo on his phone, knowing too well that Lestrade would have to ask for evidence when the time came. The wound was still oozing somewhat, but thankfully was not deep enough to cause any real damage to underlying structures, it would just need cleaning and stitching. There was another small gash on Sherlock's right hand, John wasn't sure how he had missed this one, but it looked like a typical defence wound, blocking a knife strike, the doctor cursed himself for not going after his friend earlier. He snapped another picture and then proceeded to the man's trousers, blinking back the embarrassment he unbuttoned the top and zip before pulling the a garment down.

"Don't." A squeak of noise escaped Sherlock's lips, barely a whisper.
"I'm sorry." John hesitated, "but they're soaked, and we need to warm you up sharpest my friend, no time for pleasantries."

Sherlock made no more protests at all then. In fact, John began to worry somewhat as time went on. He hooked up a portable ECG machine to him, a small array of sticky pads littered his friends chest. He then wrapped the blood pressure cuff around his arm, setting it up to cycle every five minute. Mary arrived with a selection of warming products and John wedged several in his groin area, arm pits and one warm wheat bag around the back of his neck and a thick duvet was pulled up and over his now near naked form.

"Sherlock?" John pulled at his friends upper arm to rouse him.

"What now?" The energy behind the voice seemed to improve but his eyes did not open.

"I just need to put an IV in okay?" The doctor spoke slowly and deliberately.

"As you wish." Sherlock's arm flopped out the mound of blankets and John wasn't sure if he was offering the appendage or trying to bat him off.

John found a useable vein halfway up the detective's forearm, not too scarred from overuse, or the endless blood samples the man had provided in the last month. He slipped the catheter in without a flinch from his friend and taped the thing in place. Mary had returned with the warmed bag of saline and John set it running in.

The doctor sat back on his legs and let out a breath, glancing at his watch, how was nearly 2am already?

"Thirsty?" Mary asked from behind him.

"Gasping." John sighed and turned to face her, only to have a steaming hot mug of tea thrust into his hands.

"How's he doing?" Mary sat on the coffee table, her own mug of tea in her hands.

"Well temperature is now 33.2'C, who knows how low it was when you picked us up." John took a long swig of boiling tea, enjoying the feeling of it warming his stomach. "Blood pressure is a little low but not dangerously so. No signs of arrhythmias on the ECG, heart rate and breathing has increased so everything is heading in the right direction. I wouldn't mind him getting an X-ray for that eye though." The blogger motioned to the deep purple right eye, the bruising and swelling seemed to be spreading by the minute, probably due to the vasodilation of his blood vessels. "I wouldn't be surprised if he's cracked his cheekbone."

"I wouldn't expect my less." Mary smiled sadly, "he's not exactly a by halves sort of person."

"Nope." John exhaled loudly. He placed his drink down on the floor and pulled the medical bag closer, pulling out a small sterile pack of instruments, surgical gloves and swabs. He pulled out a smaller bag of saline and a bottle of antiseptic solution. "Would you mind?" He asked.

"Not at all." she hurried off to the kitchen and returned a few minutes later with a bowl of warm antiseptic solution. Mary pulled the coffee table closer and sat on it, she drew the blankets down and set to cleaning up Sherlock's knife wound. The nurse remained set on the task at hand, yet she couldn't help but gaze at the pink fresh scar across the detective's chest, still in the process of healing, the gaping gash had just nicked the edge of the puckered skin and it was red and angry from the disturbance.
"Ready?" John leaned closer, he had donned the pair of sterile surgical gloves.

"Nearly." Mary set to the cleaning swabs and began to flush the area with saline, now warmed to body temperature, Sherlock made no protest. Once over half the bag was empty she stood aside to allow John to suture the wound up.

Sherlock did nothing but mumble an incoherent babble throughout the whole procedure, he took several short intakes of breath as the needle bit into his damaged skin but did little else. John felt guilty for doing the procedure while the man was still somewhat incapacitated, but also knew that trying this with a fully conscious detective was no fun at all, for both parties involved. Mary repeated the prep with the wounded palm and within ten minutes both wounds were sutured and dressed accordingly. John deposited the needles into the small sharps bin and kicked the rest of the rubbish to the side, he'd deal with it in the morning.

"Get some sleep." The doctor asked, seeing Mary yawn widely, trying to stifle one of his own threatening.

"Are you sure?"

"Please." John smiled. "You need to rest, I'll stay up with him and make sure he's alright."

Mary kissed him quickly and left. It wasn't until John heard the familiar creek of the bed upstairs that he pulled the spare bedding up, sitting on the duvet and wrapping it around his lower half before leaning back against the sofa and turning the TV on, mindful of keeping the volume low. He spun the ECG monitor around to face him, his eyes glanced over the trace and recent blood pressure reading happy it was more normal.

The tele twittered on to itself but John really wasn't watching it, he clicked through the endless channels, and wondered why exactly why they bothered to pay for satellite television when half way through the night there was still f all on, he settled on a useless home improvement show, the extravagant presenters far too excited to see a magnolia wash. He stifled another yawn and pulled the duvet in a little closer happy he could hear his friends regular and deep breathing behind him. Before long his eyes drifted shut and he fell into a deep and relaxed sleep.

"What fresh hell is this!" John jolted up, grimacing as his neck crunched in pain, he knew that voice anywhere. "Dear lord, someone kill me."

"Nice to see your awake." The doctor sat up, he noted the first signs of the dawn light was beginning to make it through the closed curtains. He turned to his best friend.

Sherlock's good eye was staring wide at the television screen, his right eye now closed shut from the swelling. "Unlike you who has been snoring for the past thirty seven minutes." He moaned. "I mean who buys this rubbish John?" The detective's voice rose a pitch, "£134 to suck up some dust and half the universe by the sounds of it, their technical jargon is complete lies too, the rpm and wattage is complete rubbish for the size of motor and voltage."

"I see you've discovered teleshopping."

"Teleshopping?"

"Yes." John reached for the remote, "and it sounds like we should turn it off now before you put something through the screen." He clicked the off button hastily. "How are you feeling?"

Sherlock made no effort to answer, he simply scowled, trying to pull himself more upright with some difficulty, he groaned out, finding his legs had seized up from being in one position for
sometime.
"Take it easy, your probably going to feel quite sore. Do you remember what happened?"

"Why am I half naked?" He whined.

"Your clothes were soaked." John discarded his duvet and took a look at the ECG screen, it was flatlined and the connectors lay on the floor beside it, seems Sherlock had already been rearranging his monitoring paraphernalia.

"How did you know where to find me?" The detective itched at his IV and John batted his hand away with a warning glance.

"I deduced." John folded his arms. "Much like I deduced who the attacker was."

"Oh really." Sherlock mocked and finally managed to curl his legs up under him, pulling himself upright. He brought his left hand up and prodded at his swollen eye.

"Stop that." John cried, pulled the offending hand away.

"Bugger off."

"Although I do appreciate your feeling more yourself Sherlock, I would appreciate your cooperation."

"Why?"

"Because I'm your doctor, and what I say goes right now, especially while your recovering from severe hypothermia." John huffed loudly and stood up, heading to the kitchen to put the kettle on.

"Seems that way with most things right now." Sherlock grumbled when John finally returned with two steaming hot mugs of warm sugary tea.

"Not this again." John plonked the two cups down a little too hard, and the scorching tea spilled onto his hands making him inhale sharply. "We're not going over this now."

The detective snorted in response, he picked idly at his dressed hand.

John sat down on the table opposite and took a deep breath. "Look, I'm sorry ok." He started, "I said some really horrible things to you last night and I shouldn't have. I..." He stumbled, "i just worry about you ok."

Sherlock frowned and considered this. "Is this you apologising?"

"Yes."

"And is this were I accept your apology?" The detective seemed to be thinking quite hard now.

"Only if you want to."

"Well, you did save my life. Again. So I suppose we can call it a truce."

John smiled to himself, it was probably the best he was going to get. "Deal."

"So how did you know it wasn't me?" The detective accepted the mug and relished in its radiating warmth.
"Then neighbour rang the police and said they saw you leave the rear of the property, they seemed to give quite a detailed description over the phone but the back yard is pitch black and there's no security light so how could they have seen you? There was far too much thrown around for just you to be in the building, if you'd attacked him then you would have done so swiftly and with precision not rushed and messy like that. The family photo was smashed with a pointed shoe, probably a heeled woman's shoe, this was backed up by the exit made via the front door and the small finger prints on both the weapon and the door knob. The victim is covering for her because they probably have a romantic connection, hence the finger pointed at you. It wasn't hard, the neighbours are close friends but you yourself had said there was something off about the relationship between them and the suspect and victim, not a massive leap to make."

Sherlock's face cracked into a grin. "Then I taught you well Doctor Watson, time to give Lestrade a call I believe."
Toxic tea

Chapter Summary

John is forced to keep Sherlock alive after he ingests a deadly toxin.

Chapter Notes

TheGracefulBlueCat has done some amazing artwork to this chapter. It's here if you would like to have a look. (It's fabulous!!)
Paralysis - Poisoned Sherlock By TheGracefulBlueCat

I've also done a similar piece so check this out too if you like.
Trust - paralysed Sherlock

Thanks to all of the comments, kudos and kind words, they're appreciated so keep them coming. Sorry to anyone disappointed to see a similar storyline take. These are meant to be short stories not associated with each other. Enjoy. Medical notes at the bottom of the chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“What’s gotten into you?” John hurried to keep up with his companion, stumbling along the carpeted floor of the hotel corridor. “Where are we going?”

“To arrest him.” Sherlock strode out quickly, heading towards the stairwell in the hope that the criminal and murderer was in his office on the ground floor. Sherlock had decided to put the pair of them up for the night, a quaint oriental hotel in the heart of china town. The owner was wanted on suspicion of murder but had eluded police so far, Sherlock had scoffed at the useless excuses Lestrade has given for the police investigation. He hoped to be able to snoop around a little, so booking an overnight room with his best friend seemed the most logical idea. How Sherlock had managed to book, check in and snoop around without being detected John would never know but It hadn’t taken long at all. Barely the evening had passed and they’d found out the suspect had indeed murdered his wife with a machete, the prize possession was on display downstairs in the Chinese restaurant. There was no need for a nights stay now, just to simply arrest the man.

The detective stopped dead for a moment, John could hear him smacking his lips in a not so Sherlockian way. “You alright?” The doctor came to a stop beside his friend and watched at him visibly swallow hard.

“It’s too quiet, where are all the guests?” he shot back, question ignored.

“It is nearly 11 at night, I expect most of them are out or in bed. Did you want me to call Lestrade?” John rummaged in his coat to fish out his phone. "He's working late."

“No point.” The detective replied, waving his hand off to disregard the question, “If he comes in with the yard all guns blazing then we stand no chance of catching a confession."
John sighed loudly, taking just a second to admire the Chinese décor of the corridor. “So you’re doing the usual thing, confront a violent criminal and nearly get yourself killed?”

“No.” Sherlock smirked and continued on, rounding on the stairwell and hitting the call button of the lift.

"Are you sure your alright?" John frowned when he watched his friend prodding at his face. "Your looking a bit peaky."

The detective didn't answer immediately and as the lift pinged its arrival he turned quickly and violently heaved into a nearby flower pot.

"Okay." John stepped back and placed a hand on his friends back, rubbing it gently. "Let's head back to the room and get you sorted."

"No." Sherlock croaked, standing straight again, "get the lift." He pointed with his gloved hand at the metal doors beginning to close. John ignored the request, only to have the detective shove past him and stop the thing from closing.

"Are you sure...?"

"You didn't have tea did you?" Sherlock's voice was hoarse and not it's usually baritone boom.

"What?" John pressed the ground floor button inside and the doors clunked shut behind him.

"Well?" The detective cried, voice raising to a higher pitch, "did you?"

"No." John eyed his friend, a small line of concern etching itself into his forehead, a light sheen of sweat had appeared just below his flat mates hairline and upper lip, perhaps just a case of food poisoning John mused.

"Good." Sherlock inhale sharply and gulped again.

"What's wrong?" The doctors instincts were starting to kick in, the look in the detective's eyes told him something wasn't quite right here.

The taller man did not have a chance to answer when the lift gave an almighty crunch, juddering to a stop to the sound of grating metal, the light inside flickered and then returned.

"Great!" John pressed the ground floor button again but nothing happened, looking up he could see the digital display flashing between the digits zero and one. He tapped at the door opening button to no avail. "Son of a..." He swore under his breath and looked back to Sherlock quickly, to find him leaning heavily on the wall, his head tilted back as he huffed in a couple of deep breaths. "Are you going to spew again?" He asked.

"No." Sherlock smiled grimly, "I don't think so."

Something in his friends voice started to send dread into the doctor, what was he not telling him?

John growled audibly and pushed hard on the emergency call button. For what seemed like several minutes it's flashed on and off and just when the man was about to push it again a crackling sounded over the intercom.

"Hello?"

"Hello Dr Watson." A thick accented Chinese voice appeared on the other end.
"How do you know my name?" John's voice rose, though he knew there was little point in shouting.

"You and Mr Holmes are very special guests here today. Did you enjoy the complimentary tea?"

John's eyes widened in horror at the sudden realisation and the detective voice echoed in his head. 'Did you drink the tea'. He turned back to his friend to see him gulp hard again. Sherlock's eyes had widened a little, his pupils had dilated considerably and if John didn't know him better he'd have said his friend had been shooting up with seven percent solution again.

"John." Sherlock's voice wavered, it was weaker than it even had been only moments ago.

"Jesus." The doctor cursed, he looked back to the built in microphone. "What did you do?"

A short laugh could be heard on the intercom. "Perhaps Mr Holmes can fill you in. That is, if his voice is still working. I'm sure he has deduced it by now, what a shame he didn't work it out before he poisoned himself."

John was struck silent for a moment, he turned back to his friend, grasping Sherlock's upper arms he pulled him straighter so they were facing each other. "What's happening?" He commanded, "what are your symptoms? Talk to me!"

"M... Fine." The detective gulped back and for a moment looked like he was going to heave again.

John inhaled deeply to calm himself. "What did you ingest?"

Silence.

"Sherlock, talk to me. Right now!"

"TTX." Sherlock croaked, he smacked his lips together and John could see his friend hands were lightly trembling.

"Which is?"

"Tetrodotoxin." The detective inhaled with clear effort. "Neurotoxin." He gurgled and then gulped again, a small amount saliva escaped his friends lax mouth and dribbled down his pale cheek. John didn't think twice and mopped it up with his sleeve.

"And what exactly does it do?" John was familiar with neurotoxins to an extent, but didn't have a comprehensive detail on every one, that was something Sherlock was good at storing in his genius brain. Whatever this was, it was not good.

"Paralysis. Mouth. Throat. Respiration." Sherlock tried to speak but only managed a few breathy words, a useless noise passed his lips. "John." He sucked in another breath.

"Christ." The doctors voice hitched up a pitch and he struggled to remain calm, they're predicament only just beginning to set in.

"John. Please do calm down." He managed better this time.

"Calm down!" The blogger clenched his hands into white tipped fists. "We are stuck in a lift at the mercy of a bloody killer and you've just ingested a deadly toxin and are about to asphyxiate to death. I really don't think now is the time to be telling me to calm down do you?"

Sherlock groaned, he opened his mouth to speak but nothing of use or comprehensible passed his
"Sounds like somethings almost got his tongue already." The murderer was on the end of the line again, his jovial voice was making anger rise up in the blogger.

"Open the doors, now!" John shouted.

"I don't think so doctor." The blogger could hear the smile on his face. "Not a chance. I'm going to sit here and watch the great Sherlock Holmes die slowly. Watch as he suffocates on his own vomit and then stops breathing when his diaphragm becomes paralysed, all while he remains conscious of the whole thing. If he's lucky he might seize and lose consciousness. But then again..." There came a short sigh. "I was hoping that you'd be doing the same my good doctor, but oh well, death will come for you too, eventually. And besides, I get to watch the pantomime of you valiantly trying to save your friend's worthless life, or is it your lover like the papers say, this will be amusing."

Sherlock's eyes glared at the intercom, if looks could kill, John was sure the small panel of metal holding the internal communications would have imploded right there and then. The detective pushed John away, he hammered at the intercom with a fist and opened his mouth to speak. Nothing but air rushed passed his vocal chords with a feeble low moan. He turned to the doors, yanking wildly at the divide but they refused to budge a millimetre.

"Now now, Mr Holmes, I would preserve your strength if I were you. I'd say you don't have that many minutes now before you lose the use of your arms and legs." A cackling laugh sounded again.

"Fuck you!" John shouted and quickly turned away from the control panel, turning his full attention to his friend.

Sherlock was trembling lightly, he had his back up against the doors again, leaning heavily as if he didn't trust his own shaking legs. His face was now white making his huge pupils stand out even more against the stark pallor. John was surprised how quickly his health had deteriorated from less than five minutes ago.

"Right." John said calmly. "On the floor with you." He could see his friend trying to protest.

"I'm fine." Came a snide but weak reply.

"Don't you dare." John cried. "You are not fine, and you know it."

Sherlock's eyes watched the doctor as he pulled gently at his arms causing his lanky figure tip off balance. John gently pushed his own weight against his friend to steady his decent to the carpeted floor of the posh elevator. "Easy now." The doctor kept a hand behind his best friends head cradling it from any potential collision with the floor. "Alright?"

Sherlock actually rolled his eyes in response, making John smile slightly. The man tried to open his mouth, a short gurgle sounded followed by a "just peachy." Barely audible.

"Please stop trying to talk." John looked at him grimly, loosening his friends shirt collar and removing his scarf to make his neck less constricted, though he knew ultimately it wouldn't change the outcome. He pushed his friend gently onto his side, already becoming mindful that Sherlock's swallow and gag reflex was likely to be disappearing if his vocal use was anything to go by.

"Jhn..." So subtle the doctor hardly heard it.
"Don't speak." John bent low over his friend's face and took the detective's pulse, happy it was strong and regular. He used the scarf to mop up more drool escaping from Sherlock's mouth, it was pooling on the carpet and spreading, must have been a reaction to the toxin, John stored this information for later.

"I wonder how long he has left before he stops breathing altogether?" A laugh. "How long will you be able to keep him alive?"

"Long enough for you to be in cuffs!" John retorted, he clenched his fists in anger and looked to his friend, watching very carefully for his chest movements. Sherlock's breathing hadn't changed, except perhaps a little faster than usual. "Hold on ok, just a bit longer, Lestrade is on his way." He whispered quietly, mindful that they were being watched.

Sherlock blinked several times to confirm his understanding.

John looked around the elevator, as if the small cube they were in would yield some sort of help or answers. There was little space, not even enough for his friend to stretch his legs out straight, Sherlock was simply curled on his side. John took a deep shaky inhale and tried not to think about their predicament right now, concentrate on the task at hand and hope to god the text to Lestrade had got the message across. He pulled his phone from his pocket briefly to find no signal, quite typical being in a small metal box, he left it on the floor.

Sherlock's eyes tracked John's every movement as he searched his pockets for anything useful. The detective watched on in wonder as John revealed from his Parker a notepad and pen, stethoscope, a pair of surgical gloves, an intravenous catheter, tape, swabs, pen torch, scissors and a tiny box, which Sherlock could only imagine contained emergency drugs.

"Right." John seemed to calm himself and he surveyed his best friend again, mopping up more drool leaking in a steady stream from the detective's mouth. He folded Sherlock's beloved scarf and gently wedged it under his cheek to catch more. He checked the detective's pulse and respiration, timing both, listened to his chest with a frown then shone the pen torch into his eyes much to the man's useless protests. Sherlock's hand tried to rise and bat the annoying light away but barely made it an inch from his side before shaking violently and falling back to his coat.

Happy (as he could be) with his check over John wrote his findings on his small notepad and looked at his watch. Not even five minutes since Lestrade must have received the text, he hoped to God the inspector was still on shift as he was supposed to be. He could make it here in a matter of minutes, Scotland Yard only being less than a mile away.

"They said you were a good doctor." The intercom sounded again. "Very thorough I must say."

John clenched his jaw and was about to reply when Sherlock's left shoe kicked out against the metal elevator side involuntarily. His brows furrowed and he curled a little inwards, groaning. John frowned and gently rubbed his best friend's shoulder, biting his lip as he felt powerless to stop the oncoming barrage of shakes flowing through the detective's frame. He glanced at his watch again, exactly how long ago did they sit in the hotel room drinking tea? Perhaps 30 minutes, perhaps more. Sherlock had run off a lengthy deduction of the crime to John whilst sipping on the Chinese drink. John had declined the warm tea, never much of a fan of anything but a proper English brew. He swallowed back the rising lump in his throat, as time passed by Sherlock only grew closer to respiratory arrest and John watched his chest rise and fall with a little more effort than only minutes earlier.

"I'm enjoying this." A laugh sounded. "I can't wait to share the video online of the great Sherlock Holmes's death. Perhaps we could tell them it was a drug overdose, much more reasonable and
believable way for a junkie to die."

John growled under his breath and then lost it. He pulled himself upright in a flash, bringing an arm round he punched the communication panel with so much force the metal bent in response. It did not stop the manic laugh from sounding. The doctor stepped back, breath hitching in short gasps of rage, he studied his bloodied and split knuckles and grimaced a little. In his spat of anger his pressed wildly at the door open button and then growled again, face turning red, teeth ground so tightly together his jaw hurt from the effort.

A low mumble from behind him then caused every last shred of anger fall from him, John turned to find Sherlock's pleading eyes looking at him, his lips were moving soundlessly in an attempt at speech.

"Please don't talk." John found himself back on his knees and taking another set of vitals. "Sorry." He added.

Sherlock let out an abhorrent moan and to John's absolute horror began to convulse, curling inwards his abdominal muscles visibly heaving. The doctor wasn't sure if his friend was trying to vomit, cough or simply trying to inhale a breath, but this wasn't normal seizure like activity.

"Take it easy." John gripped his friends upper arm, feeling completely useless, his heart now beginning to staccato in his chest with rising panic. Where the hell was Lestrade?! "Easy." He soothed, and for once Sherlock's eyes mirrored his own, wide and panicked, blown pupils making the sight all but more disturbing. The detective gurgled loudly and John turned him further over, gently extending his friends neck to try and maintain a patent clear airway, a small trickle of what John could only guess was meagre stomach contents spilled out onto his scarf.

The doctor consulted his watch quickly, counting by as he held his friend close to him, wishing the shakes would cease. Sherlock's accessory muscles in his neck started to strain, his mouth opening like a fish out of water and the edges of his lips began to tinge an awful shade of blue. John could almost feel himself shake too, his heart pounded as the seconds ticked by until finally after almost two minutes Sherlock's body began to relax a little, leaving only his arms and legs twitching slightly.

"Jesus." John placed two fingers on his best friends neck to find a racing rapid pulse. Sherlock still watched him, though now through heavy lids, pain etched into his face and knitted into his brow. His damp hair stuck in clumps to his forehead and John gently pushed them away from his grimaced eyes.

John paused, took a breath to collect himself and gathered his supplies back up which had been haphazardly strewn around by the commotion. "I need to get a line in you Sherlock," he said very slowly and deliberately. "Once help arrives we're going to need to give you some drugs to help you out with your breathing and the convulsions, do you understand?"

Sherlock only answered with whimper and a small strangled grasp. The detective bent inwards against whatever pain was coursing through his abdomen, he closed his eyes briefly against the agony.

"Right." John straightened himself, opened the intravenous catheter packet and then pulled one of Sherlock's hands to himself. The detective made no attempts at fighting him and this only served to worry John even further, if this was even possible right now.

Sherlock's veins were shocking, John cursed under his breath, it was clear his friends blood pressure was dropping and his peripherals were compensating. His hand was cold and pale, and the
tremors running through it were not helpful. John swabbed the top of his flat mate's hand and cursed a second time as he looked for a viable vessel. "Sharp scratch." John said pretty much out of habit rather than politeness. Sherlock didn't flinch all when John plunged the stylet into his vein and slid the plastic catheter off into it. He quickly placed a bung on to stop the bleeding and grabbing his tape to secure the device there. The tape was not the usual type for securing IV's in but he managed, wrapping it lightly around the entire of the detective's hand several times.

"John?"

The doctor could have cried at the sound of a familiar voice over the intercom. "Lestrade!" He almost shouted, "Mr Long."

"Reprimanded. Medic on the way. What happened, where are you, I can see you both on screen?" Greg's voice had an edge of panic in it.

"In the lift. Get this bloody thing open. Sherlock's dying here!"

"On it!"

The seriousness of his words started to sink in and the blogger let adrenalin course through his veins for a moment. It's was ok, Sherlock was not alone, he was here and he could deal with this. He just needed some kit and some drugs, his small box of adrenalin and morphine would do little to help him right now.

Sherlock let out another awful sounding strained groan and a pained gasp. The man pulled his head and chin back, straining to open up his paralysed airways.

"Easy." John carefully watched the detective's chest, noting the useless lack of intercostal movement and desperate abdominal strain to suck in a decent breath. Sherlock lips were turning pale and blue from lack of oxygen. John's stomach flipped in panic, they were running out of time.

"Lestrade, what's happening?" John shouted.

There was no answer. Sherlock's eyes fixed onto John's, a haze of saltwater was gathering in the detective's globes. "It's going to be ok." John smiled sadly, "just try to relax ok. If the medics aren't here in a few minutes I'm going to have to start breathing for you ok?"

Something in Sherlock's eyes told him all he needed to know, a sad but trusting gaze remained fixed on John's eyes, a tear escaped down his pale cheek, running down his nose and dripping to the floor. His mouth gaped with each useless inhale, barely moving air past his lips.

"Lestrade?!" John shouted again, not breaking eye contact.

"It's jammed." The inspector sounded, "we're on it but looks like he's jammed the mechanism. How long do we have?"

"We don't." John cried, assessing his friend in a matter of seconds, hypoxia was setting in, the detective's abdominal muscles barely trying anymore as his diaphragm began to fail. "I need medical kit here now."

"Medics are less than five minutes away."

"Too long." John whispered, he wiped up the saliva from his friends face and tried to clear his mouth quickly. He pushed the detective onto his back and gently pulled his head back. "I'm sorry Sherlock." He said before pinching his friends nose and sealing his lips over the detective's and
breathing deeply into his lungs.

Sherlock’s eyes had glazed a little, he stared listlessly at the ceiling while his friend ventilated him. The doctor hoped he wasn’t lucid yet Sherlock remained aware of each and every warm breath John pushed into his lungs. The feeling was both frightening and a relief for his body screaming out for oxygen. John’s phone had started a stopwatch, and the doctor timed each breath with accuracy, giving himself enough of a break to regain his own oxygen levels.

Over three minutes of this passed until John heard a grinding of metal behind him and the lifts doors forced open half way revealing a flustered looking Detective Inspector Lestrade.

"John." He smiled grimly, his head and shoulders were only visible, he was clearly standing on something as the rest of the doorway was taken up by the lift shaft walls, the thing really was jammed between two floors. "What's happening."

Sherlock's head and pupils slid weakly into a sideways glance at Greg and John gave him another lungful of air.

"He's paralysed." John inhaled shakily. "He's stopped breathing."

"Bloody hell John. What the hell happened?"

"Poisoned by a neurotoxin which has paralysed his diaphragm. Where are those medics?" He shot before inhaling and then giving his best friend another breath of life.

"Sounds like they've just arrived, hang on." Lestrade's face disappeared and within seconds it was replaced by a grey haired paramedic, a pair of large glasses pushed up his nose and a worried look on his face.

"What do you need?" He asked.

"Face mask and bag, suction, oxygen and intubation kit. I've already got a line in." John turned back to his friend, running a hand through black tangled curls, "help's here ok." He gave another breath.

The doctor received the Ambu bag first and quickly replaced his own manual breathing with the it, sealing the device over his friends mouth and nose and squeezing the bag to fill his lungs up. A handheld suction appeared. "Tubes and laryngoscope on the way." John could hear the medics murmured voices below.

John used the suction device to remove as much from Sherlock's mouth then and turned to find a small tray with all he needed to intubate his friend. He quickly gave another breath and then set to preparing the kit as he wanted.

"Anything we can do Doctor Watson?" A different medics face was in the doorway.

"Just want some oxygen once he's tubed, I should be fine. Thank you." John was well apt to dealing with emergency situations like this, except working on his friend was never easy. "How long until we get the lift down?" He asked, threading the tube with a stylet and then opening sterile lube and clicking on the laryngoscope.

"Working on it, they said they shouldn't be too much longer."

The doctor pulled Sherlock over by the top of his famous coat. letting his friend lay at an angle across the elevator so that he was now sat behind his head. He bent over him, giving him another
breath before talking to him. "I need to place a tube in your airway." He said calmly, Sherlock's eyes remained slits but registered John with a blink. The tremors in his arms and legs worsened a little. "Please don't worry, I'm right here with you. It's going to feel odd, though I'm not sure how much feeling you have in your mouth and throat anymore I'll still give you some local anaesthetic. I'll be as quick as I can ok?"

John gave a couple of breaths of the Ambu bag before attempting intubation. He tilted his friends head back as far as he could, placing the bag and mask to the side and picking up the laryngoscope. The doctors heart jumped to his throat, he'd done this on hundreds of patients, but knew too well time was of the essence and this was his best friend, seemingly half conscious too. He gently pulled his friends mouth open and slid the scope along his tongue and down. Sherlock made no efforts to gag or move when he pushed deeper only confirming his suspicions that his entire mouth and throat were numbed from paralysis. John passed on the local block and sprayed the end of the tube with lidocaine instead. "Sorry Sherlock." He inwardly winced as he advanced the laryngoscope further still, pushing his friends epiglottis up to visualise his vocal chords. With quick and practiced moves he slid the tube in and safely through his friends larynx and into his trachea. He removed the scope and stylet quickly and connecting the bag to the end and giving the detective a lung full of air, his blue tinged lips doing nothing for John's mental wellbeing right now. The doctor gently inflated the cuff and then took his stethoscope up to listen to his best friends chest whilst ventilating. Happy the tube was in place he quickly tied it in before giving yet another breath. "All done." John looked sadly into his friends eyes only to find a sorrow filled glaze looking back at him. "I'm sorry Sherlock, but I had to."

"Oxygen." The younger medic rolled a small cylinder into the space and John accepted it gladly, wishing he could have some himself. He connected the tubing into the bag and began ventilating with the gas, happier now. Airway secure, now circulation.

Sherlock's heart rate was slightly elevated but steady, his carotid pulse was strong but John was not happy with his thready weak radial pulse. "Blood pressure and ECG?" He asked quickly. A small oscillometric blood pressure machine and cuff appeared almost immediately. He pulled it close to his friend and began to undo the Velcro cuff.

"I'm just going to take your blood pressure. Won't be long before were out of here."

"Not long." John heard Greg shout from below. "We've got a man heading up to the top to let the lift down manually."

The doctor gave a couple of breath and then pulled at his friends arm to extract it from his belstaff only to find his appendage ridged. He furrowed his brows in concern but tried again with no luck. "Sherlock?" He bent over his friends face. The detective's eyes were rolled unnaturally upwards, unseeing and glazed over. "Sherlock?" He patted his friend on the cheek, "hey now, what's happening?"

If at all possible the detective's eyes rolled further up and he arched his back, John knew exactly what was about to happen and he pulled his friend over onto his side well before the violent twitching began.

"He's having a seizure. 4mg of lorazepam now!" John bellowed through the open doors. He cradled the younger man's head gently as his flat mates body was completely overcome with brutal contractions. His legs kicked out aimlessly against the metal sending an awful crashing noise echoing around them, his arms spasming relentlessly. John could only support him until the drug arrived. He watched in unblinking terror as Sherlock clamped down on his ET tube, trapping the plastic and his tongue between his teeth. A new trickle of thick red frothy liquid made its way out
of the detective's mouth and onto the doctors hands holding him steady. John wanted to vomit.

"Where's that bloody lorazepam!" He almost screamed, but kept his cool.

"Coming." A voice sounded.

Sherlock writhed, the toxin clearly coursing through his nervous system at full speed. John struggled to hold him steady as each convulsion seemed to overtake the man's body with more force, the doctor started worry. The detective's back arched again and he kicked out so violently John panicked that he was going do himself some real harm.

"Here." John turned to sweep the syringe up off the floor, he struggled to hold his friends hand still, finally resorting to placing a knee over his wrist to immobilise the limb while he plunged the contents of the syringe through the catheter and flushed it.

Sherlock's body began to relax almost immediately, the twitching easing. John guided him back onto his back, utilising the suction to remove the blood now filling up the detective's mouth. He checked the tube, happy it wasn't bitten through, though the same couldn't be said for the detective's lacerated tongue. He then gave a few breaths and listening with his stethoscope, cursing when bubbles and crackles could be heard, likely some aspiration during the seizure.

"Jesus Sherlock. Please don't do that again!" John peeled his friends now closed lids back and flicked the pen torch across his eyes, happy both pupils were reacting a little slowly yet otherwise normally.

"Lift coming down!" Lestrade shouted up to him.

John felt the elevator begin to descend slowly, he watched as the two paramedics and Lestrade came into view through the half wedged open doors and it finally came to a halt. One EMT stepped forwards the other disappearing and quickly reappearing with a trolly.

John ran off his handover, in full doctor mode. "Suspected oral ingestion of tetrodotoxin approximately..." He checked his watch, giving a breath to his friend "50 to 60 minutes ago." Where the hell had the time gone. "Vomited twice, paralysis of the mouth followed by limbs then respiratory arrest. Manually ventilated until you arrived then successfully intubated with an 8.5mm without local. Was mostly conscious throughout until he had a grand mal just now. All 4mg of lorazepam given. He may need more, he has a history of substance abuse." John's voice cracked at the last word.

"Thank you Doctor Watson, we'll take it from here." The more senior medic clamped a hand on the doctors shoulder and squeezed, he took the Ambu bag from his hand and began to ventilate again. "You've done great."

John bowed his head in acceptance, the adrenalin rush beginning to dwindle and catch up with him. He stepped up and back and watched both medics pick up his friend with some ease and move him swiftly to the trolley before beginning to hook him up to monitors. They pulled his great woollen coat from his shoulders and Lestrade gladly accepted it.

The younger medic loaded the oxygen onto the gurney and turned to the doctor. "We're heading to Barts." He began to follow his colleague who was already heading out with the detective.

"Be right behind." The inspector answered moving into the lift to meet the blogger.

John took one step forward and his knees gave way, Lestrade jumped quickly, grasping the man under his arms and lowering him to the floor below. "Whoa mate," he inhaled. "Take it easy."
"Just need a second." John waved him off and Greg pulled the belstaff out from his grasp, wrapping it around the doctors shoulders, knowing the familiar garment would be appreciated. John practically loved the thing as much as the daft detective did.

"Sure you do." The inspector sighed, "a bit two much fun for the both of you today by the looks of it. You look like you need a good cup of tea and a sleep for a week."

"No tea." John gulped back and dragged himself upright, pulling the soft woollen fabric tightly around himself. He would not be drinking tea for some time to come, that's for sure, Chinese or English.

"Come on then." Greg wrapped a hand around his friend. "I'll take us to the hospital, then maybe a coffee yeah?"

"Yeah." John murmured. "Coffee..."

Chapter End Notes

Tetrodotoxin - this is a toxin found in tetraodontiforms of fish such as puffer fish but also other species, it is a potent neurotoxin. Many of these species are a delicacy in Chinese and Asian cooking and can be eaten providing the parts of the animal carrying the toxin are removed. Symptoms of ingestion include, hyper salivation, numbness of mouth, lips and throat and limbs, pupil dilation, vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, tremors, convulsion and seizures, death usually occurs once the diaphragm is paralysed by the toxin and most victims remain conscious throughout the whole experience often until death.

Neurotoxin - a toxin which affects the nervous system, there are many different types and different mechanisms of action

Hypoxia - low oxygen perfusion to the tissues, can be local (a specific part of the body) or generalised (entire body)

Ambu bag - a bag used which has a one way valve on to push air into the lungs either via a tight fitted face mask or endotracheal tube

Intubate - to place a tube (endotracheal tube) into the trachea (windpipe) to maintain a patent and secure airway. The endotracheal tubes have a cuff which can be inflated on the end so that it creates a seal in the airway once in place

Laryngoscope - a special tool used to intubate. A handle with a removal blunt blade like instrument attached to it with a light. They come in different sizes and shapes (curved and straight) but are basically a special probe with a torch on to visualise the larynx (hard to explain if you've never seen one)

Oscillometric blood pressure - the blood pressure monitors you'd probably be most familiar with, the cuff inflates on the patients and slowly deflates, as the pulse is detected the computer works out the systolic and diastolic pressure, it's relatively inaccurate but a good guide on general blood pressures

Grand mal seizure - a type of the seizure, this is the one most people are familiar with when the sufferer loses consciousness and has violent muscular contractions. Also known as a tonic-colonic seizures.
John sighed loudly as he reached the top of the 17 steps of Baker Street, his back and shoulders ached with a constant thud. It had been one long day. The doctor had been taking extra shifts at a local minor injuries unit and the day had been particularly busy, full of coughing feverish children and potential broken bones, he was glad to be home finally.

"What are you doing now?" John pushed the door open slightly finding a long length of cable like material looped over the top.

Sherlock's garish grin met him in a second. "For a case." He gleamed. "Lestrade is convinced it suicide, but physics and human biology says otherwise, I'm just conducting an experiment to prove it. Must be another murder from the illusive Shoreditch strangler, changed his MO clearly. Strung this one up on a door, but all the measurements don't fit, a man can't possibly asphyxiate himself on what Scotland yard found him on… "

John let Sherlock's innate babbling faze into the background of his consciousness, he could tell the detective was edging to explain but he was simply not in the mood. He dumped his bag in the kitchen and shuffled off his coat. "I'm going for a bath." He huffed, his aching muscles were screaming for some soothing relief. He grabbed a beer from the fridge, surprised he didn't find a sheep's head or a plate of testicles inside, and stomped across the hallway.

"But don't you want to know how he did it?" The doctor could see his friend bouncing on the balls of his feet like a hyperactive puppy.

"Not now Sherlock." John sighed, "why don't you explain it all to me in about an hour once you've done your experiment, then I can take notes for the blog."

This seemed to suffice for now, and John felt himself a tad guilty when he saw his friend's face fall. He traipsed into the bathroom and pushed the door closed behind him, shedding his clothes quickly whilst running the hot steamy water. The vapours cleared his head and within a few minutes John's
aching body slipped into the warm water and his muscles eased, soothing the dull throb. He quickly felt himself drift off into a slumber.

The doctor didn't know how long he had been asleep when he was woken suddenly by a loud crashing coming from the main flat, his eyes snapped open and he blinked at the stained white tiles.

"Sherlock?" he cried half-heartedly, what was the man doing out there. The detective didn't answer, only the thud sound intensified further still. The now cooled water seeped into John's chest, sending a fleeting stab of panic into it, he jumped upwards, grabbing a nearby towel and wrapping it around his midriff before racing from the bathroom.

What met John's eyes when he darted into the kitchen was neither what he expected nor what he wished to see ever again, it was a scene akin to a horror movie. The door to the living room was half open, a spread of Evening Standard newspapers lay in a heap on the floor, clearly piled at some point and just above the avalanche of paper was two feet kicking and jerking wildly mid-air.

"Jesus bloody Christ!" John shouted. Sherlock was suspended half way up the door, his neck tightly embraced in the cabling John had seen earlier. The detective's body was thrashing and convulsing violently, his face was bright red and eyes slits, brow furrowed tightly against the strain of the ligature around his airway. He was tearing madly at the cabling around his neck, fingers uselessly scratching at the tight plastic material, yet unable cry out as the noose forced his mouth and airways closed.

John tore the cutlery draw open, nearly pulling it from its runners, the metal chinked loudly inside and he searched aimlessly for the kitchen knife usually stored there. "Damn." The doctor looked up to see his friend was teetering on the edge of consciousness, his lips turning an awful shade of purple and eyes rolling upwards. John jumped forwards, grabbing the kitchen footstall and coming to the aid of his friend. He pulled up the stall and pulled Sherlock's legs across to meet the wooden frame so his feet could rest on it.

"Just hang on Sherlock ok, I need to find something to cut you down."

The detective didn't answer, instead he exhaled in a drawn out wail, arms going limp at his sides he collapsed forwards and off the stool, this time not fighting against the noose. To John's horror Sherlock's body swung sideways, hanging like a discarded cadaver in an abattoir, a steady surge of blood trickled from the man's nose.

"Fuck it!" John lamented again, he leapt onto the stool, pulling his best friend into an awkward and close embrace so that his feet where back on the stool too. "Wake up you cock!" The doctor grunted pushing his friends head back roughly so that his airway opened up, he cringed at the red welts running across the man's delicate pale flesh and he checked for a pulse. A rush of relief washed through him when he found a strong beat beneath his fingers. "Wake up. Come on now." With one arm wrapped tightly around the detective's torso John used the other to pinch his friend's ear hard.

Sherlock let out a moan and then inhaled a huge gulp of air, his throat strained and he began to cough relentlessly. He sucked in desperate mouthfuls of air, jaw open wide in an attempt at opening up his airway and his eyes stared madly at the ceiling, John doubted the hypoxia had allowed his normal sight to return yet.

"Take it easy." John held him tightly, afraid that the hacking uncontrollable convulsions would send him off balance again.
"John?" a barely audible rasp amongst the unrelenting wheezes and brutal coughs.

"Yes its me." The doctor frowned in anger. "What the hell do you think you were doing?!"

"Not… Suicide." Sherlock heaved in a lungful of air.

"I'd hope not." John cried, "I'd hope that my company and cups of occasional tea hadn't pushed you quite that far." The doctor saw the edges of the detective's mouth pull up slightly in a faint ghost of a smile. "Do you think you can hold yourself up for me? So I can get something to get you down?"

Sherlock didn't answer, his head remained stretched upwards at the ceiling and he screwed his eyes shut against the burning in chest and neck. He swayed but John held him steady and tightly against his own body to stop the inevitable if he passed out again.

"Well we can't stay here all night." John grunted as the pain in his shoulders and back began to return, so much for a soak in the bath. "Me hugging you practically naked means people won't help but talk, and it's not a sight I think Mrs Hudson would appreciate if she popped up for a natter right now." John couldn't help but think that the landlady would actually be of some use right now considering their current predicament. However, the fact that his towel was beginning to slip from his body would only end in embarrassment for the poor old lady. "You're going to have to hold yourself up for a moment ok?"

"No." the detective wheezed. As John released his grip a little he began to sway wildly.

"Oh for goodness sake." John sighed, "Fine. We'll do it your way then."

With a grunt of pain against the strain John tensed his arm around his best friend just under his bottom and pulled him upwards, taking Sherlock's complete weight. With his free hand he pulled at the now bloodied cable and flipped it over the detective's head in one clean motion. He began to let his friend slowly back to the stool only to find that the figure was lax once again. Sherlock's head rolled forwards and his bloodied chin collided with John's forehead with some force throwing the doctor completely off balance. They both went down, wooden stool skittering across the floor and the pair of them a tangled mess of limbs amongst the newspapers.

The impact of landing heavily on the floorboards jolted the detective back into consciousness and he groaned loudly, beginning to cough again.

"You utter cock!" John shouted now. He pulled his towel tighter into himself and sat up on his knees while Sherlock rolled onto his side struggling to catch his breath yet again. "What the hell were you thinking!"

"Sorry." A meek and croaky reply came after sometime.

John ground his teeth together, the sound making him cringe internally. "You better bloody hope you haven't crushed your cricoid ligament, because I'm this far off calling you an ambulance and Mycroft!"

"No" Sherlock rolled onto his back and looked up at his friend, his voice was hoarse and barely audible. "Please…. Don't."

"Do you have any idea how dangerous that was, if I hadn't woken up." John shouted but then softened, looking his friend over and beginning to worry.

Sherlock's eyes were slits against the pain and John could see that there was subconjunctival haemorrhage in both. His nose was sluggishly trickling with blood, adding to that the bright red
ligature marks around his neck now oozing and the man looked a complete state.

"Cock." John swore, bending forwards he helped his best friend up into a more sitting position. "Think you can make it to the sofa?"

"No." for once the detective seemed to have given in, his voice clearly broken for the time being, and all his energy spent on breathing and remaining conscious.

"Right then." John stood quickly, retrieving his medical kit from across the room he opened the bag. "let's have a look at that neck then?"

Sherlock relented completely, he closed his eyes and pulled his chin up slowly so that the doctor could examine the damaged tissues underneath. John prodded carefully, wiping an iodine swab gently across the wound with only a slight protest. "You're lucky you haven't made any lasting damage, though I expect your voice to take a few days to get back to its usual tone." Sherlock only hummed in reply, as any speech seemed to send him into a barrage of coughing. "looks superficial, shouldn't scar." He added, now wiping the stream of crimson which was still dribbling from the detective's nose. Sherlock's eyes rolled around, he was clearly struggling with keeping conscious.

"Are you two alright?" The sound of the landlady's voice made John practically jump out of his skin and he turned to find the old dear standing hesitantly in the doorway surveying the pile of discarded papers. "I heard a bit of a kerfuffle, thought I should check your both still ok?"

"We'll be ok thank you, Sherlock just tried to hang himself on the door as an experiment, that's all." "Oh dear Lord." Mrs Hudson stepped into the room. "You are a stupid boy Sherlock Holmes," she berated him, pointing a finger. "It's a good job you have good old doctor Watson with you, because you can't always count on others to save you." She huffed at the mess and began to collect the papers together. "Remember that time you blew my kitchen up when John wasn't here?" she tutted, "Had to peel you off the floor and cart you to hospital. I bet that wouldn't have happened if John had been here." She gathered the newspaper's, staking them neatly into a pile.

John chose not to pry, that would be a story for another day, he pulled out his pen torch and shone the thing into both of the detective's pupils happy that both were reactive and the likelihood of hypoxic brain damage was reduced.

"You should put some clothes on John." Mrs Hudson laughed, "That is unless you were planning on…. You know…." She waved her hand to the pair of them.

The doctor's face flushed bright red. "We're not…" he stood up quickly, "Will you watch him while I change?" John wished the ground would swallow him whole, people would definitely talk now, he made for the exit quickly. "Just make sure he stays awake ok; I'll only be a minute."

"No problem dear." She bent down to Sherlock's level and the detective watched her, choosing not to use his voice.

Five minutes later John had dried and changed into more appropriate clothes and when he reached the living room he found the detective now curled up on the sofa under the afghan throw. A mug of warm tea was grasped in his slightly trembling hand and Mrs Hudson was next to him. The old lady ran her gnarly fingers through his unruly curls. "You clot." She sighed, "You really do take your best friend for granted my dear. I know you went to hell and back Mr, but don't you think you owe him enough after playing dead for 2 years. You'll give the poor man a heart attack one day." Sherlock's eyes were downcast to his lap like a naughty child, and John felt as if he were intruding on an intermit moment.
"Your tea is on the side John." Mrs Hudson's voice rose but she did not turn around.

The doctor smiled widely and collected the mug of camomile from the kitchen table, she knew him too well. "Thanks Mrs H." he took a long gulp of the drink and rounded on the coffee table, coming to sit on it. "I can carry on from here." He said lightly.

"Let me know if he's any trouble." She patted the doctor on the shoulder before beginning to leave.

"I'm not a… child." Sherlock whispered, voice useless.

"No you're a middle aged man who likes to hang himself as an experiment to see if a victim was murdered or committed suicide. How's that working out for you?" John took another gulp of his tea.

"Piss off." The younger man tried to counter but his hoarse reply had no gusto.

"Sherlock!" Mrs Hudson shouted from the doorway.

"Sorry." He replied, barely audible.

"So which was it?" John pulled his notepad from the table and flipped it open, "murder or suicide?"

"Oh definitely…. murder." Sherlock pulled his shaky hand towards himself and took a tentative sip of the warm drink, mindful he might cough the liquid back up if he wasn't careful. "Call Lestrade." He added with a weak grin, "The game… is on."
The one thing Sherlock had come to realise after all these years of being friends with John Watson was that the man was both a help and at hinderance when it came to a kidnapping situation. On the one hand, the man was not only useful at keeping them both alive, but he was usually the one who came to his aid, enough times John had burst in to rescue Sherlock from the hands of his captors. But on the other side, having John in the same predicament sent dread into him. Sherlock would never admit to human emotion clouding his judgement but when it came to John Watson the detective didn't always see straight.

Their current circumstances was no different. Sherlock lifted his aching head to look at his friend across the small room. John was looking back at him an air of concern etched into his features yet not a sign of fear. The doctors arms tied back behind him and to the wooden chair he had been deposited into, his ankles were treated the same, thick rope wrapped tightly around each, binding him to the wood. The detective was in much the same way, except he was certain his bonds were much tighter than that of his friends. The fact that he had also been gagged and the doctor not, told him their captors were clearly both angry at him and suspicious of the man.

"You ok?" John exhaled, brows raising in the gloom.

Sherlock nodded slowly, his neck stiff. The sound of pouring rain could be heard around them, pattering madly on the metal roof above. The detective recognised the place as an abandoned shipping container, coupling that with the fresh smell of salty air and given the approximate direction, speed, and time of travel he could vaguely remember after kidnapping Sherlock estimated they were in an abandoned yard south east of the city, probably somewhere between Crayford Ness and Gravesend. The consultant guessed the former due to the proximity of air traffic from London city Airport, definitely city airport due to the number and frequency of planes with props and lack of 747 jumbo's going over. Not that he could tell John any of this.

His head pounded just from the deductions, they must have used a knock out gas on them, Sherlock remembered very little apart from heading to a crime scene in Leiwsham but never arriving. He'd
woken up in the back of a transit van, groggy and half drugged. Damn the amnesiac effects, must have been methyloxyflurane, or perhaps halothane as it was easier to obtain.

"I know you're deducting." John frowned, Sherlock could see him wince, headache too then. "But unfortunately you're not going to be able to tell me anything with your own scarf in your gob."

Sherlock was reminded of the annoying fabric. He loved his scarf, yet somehow right now he wished he'd never worn it today, it was mid summer he didn't know why he'd bothered. The taste of the garment reminded him of home, the faint scent of tobacco and tea.

"I guess your going to have to listen to me instead until they get back and give us a beating."

The detective frowned, he pulled at his binds and the rope bit into his wrists, the circulation in his hands now poor, his fingertips numb.

"They must know how much you love to talk, considering they left me free to waffle and only silenced you, I'm guessing that means they know you to a certain extent. I know how many enemy's you've made yourself." John huffed and looked around them, "old container," he cried, "close to the river but not sure where, I'm guessing you do?" Sherlock nodded in confirmation.

"Good." The doctor looked to the ceiling and to the small hanging bulb that had been suspended there, offering them a dim glow. John thought about beyond their metal prison, it was likely growing dark outside, the evening must have been drawing on yet neither man could decipher the exact time, not even Sherlock. "That means once we're out of here you can get us to civilisation and a phone box so we can contact Lestrade."

Sherlock rolled his eyes, what use would the inspector be once the crime had been committed.

Several minutes passed of complete silence between them, nothing but the sound of relentless rain around them and the occasional drone of jet engines filled the void. The tide must have pulled in a summer storm from the North Sea, high tide was at 23:17 thought Sherlock, in a few hours the rain would begin to retreat with the saltwater and back out into the ocean.

The sound of scraping metal brought both of their heads up then and a crack of dim dusky grey light flooded the small container. Two large boot clad feet stepped into the place, the man was broad and tall, a pair of cargo trousers and leather jacket to finish off his attire. Their captors face was stark white and hair a bright blond which was clearly not the natural colouring.

"Evening!" The northern English accent boomed loudly, "so glad you could make the party." He clapped his hands together in happiness. "We're going to have lots of fun."

John scowled deeply, staring at the man from beneath his deepened brows. "Who are you? And what exactly do you want?" He growled.

"Oh, I don't know really." The man stepped inside and pulled the large door behind him shut with an echoing clunk. "Mr Holmes here has been a great asset to my family, I owe him my gratitude for all he has done."

John couldn't help but snigger at the comment. "Another criminal looking for revenge." He moaned.

"My brother is dead because of this man!" The kidnapper shouted.

Sherlock looked his usual disinterested self, one eyebrow raised in clear amusement.
"Don't you remember Mr Holmes?" The man stepped closer to the detective. "Daryl Jepson, I bet you don't." He snorted.

Sherlock looked the man in the eye. Of course he remembered, he stored every single crime he'd solved safely away in his mind palace, every detail, every date and evidence neatly filed away in case they became useful in the future.

"You killed him!" The man was now on top of the detective and mere inches from his face, he snarled like a wild dog, "I don't care what crimes he committed, he never deserved what you did to him."

"And what exactly was that?" John's heart rate had raised slightly at the thought of his friend on the receiving end of a beating, he tried to pull the kidnappers attention away.

"Accused him of killing his wife and children who burned to death in a house fire. Yet there was no evidence to prove he was there?" He shouted, standing full height, "of course there wasn't any, because he never worked alone did he, missed that didn't you?"

The detectives face had fallen slightly, clearly this information was new to him, John watched him delve into his mind palace, blanking out the surroundings for a brief moment, his eyes glazed.

"And so what's the point of all this then?" The doctor sighed.

"To teach him a lesson." The last word was spat through teeth, a spray of spittle appearing in the dim light. "He didn't hear the sound of my brothers screams of agony as he died a slow death, crushed on the construction site, due to an 'electrical fault'," the captor brought his hands up to accentuate the last two words. He stepped back to Sherlock and rounded on him. "No." a manic smile came to his face, "I'm here to listen to you scream today Mr Holmes." He laughed. "Do you think you can do that for me?"

The scarf was pulled from the detectives mouth forcefully and he snapped out of his mind palace and looked up again. "Bradley Jepson." He said simply, "step brother to Daryl Jepson. 39, unemployed, single, but I wonder why? History of service in the marines, didn't stay long because you couldn't cut it. Living alone in Greenwich, with a dog. German shepherd by the looks of it. All the close family have abandoned you, no wonder, they want nothing to do with your manic behaviours."

"Shut your face and scream for me."

In a moment of unbridled anger the man grabbed the detectives hands and he yanked them forcefully upwards.

Sherlock screamed, his right shoulder crunching audibly out of its socket, his left shoulder ligaments straining but remaining in place. The cry was short but deafening and the detective bent his head over, chin connecting with his chest. He breathed short heavy gasps against the agony and swallowed several times forcing the vomit back down, he would not give the man the pleasure of watching him succumb to all his transports needs. John could only watch on, he gulped back his own nausea and tried not to panic about his best friend, his physicians mind going over the complications of a dislocated shoulder.

"Acceptable." Bradley let the detectives arms fall back and Sherlock gave a light whimper. "But you'll have to try harder next time."

"I never killed him." Sherlock said breathily, "your brother... was killed in an accident."
"I don't believe you." He cried, "you're nothing but a liar." Another crunch and this time the madman pulled two of the detectives fingers back, fracturing them with a pop.

Sherlock growled between clenched teeth but did not cry out, dots danced across this vision momentarily as the pain came in a wave from his hand to his central nervous system. He was thankful the appendage was numbed from the bindings.

"Stop it." John couldn't help but retaliate.

"I've only just begun doctor, I only need you here to keep him alive and suffering for me" He grinned to him and then back to the detective, "you need to try harder Mr Holmes, really now. You're very disappointing."

"Human emotion." Sherlocks voice was slightly off. "Always clouds the judgement doesn't it. I'm not stupid enough to let such things get in the way."

"You're a heartless bastard." Mr Jepson delved into the pocket of his combat trousers. "I'm guessing you won't mind if I cut it out if you don't have one?" He waved a small pocket knife towards Sherlocks chest.

"Been chatting to Moriarty have you?" The detective exhaled.

"Who?"

"Criminal mastermind." Sherlock smiled, "killed himself to make me do the same." He could see John on the other side of the room bow his head and look at his feet.

"Oh." Bradley hummed, "sounds like my kind of fellow."

John listened intently and he couldn't help but laugh internally, trust Sherlock Holmes to chat with his own kidnapper so nonchalantly.

"Well, your are going to die soon too, but not quickly." The madman laughed.

"Is that all you can come up with?" Sherlock sighed, bored. "You're going to die." He took another breath as a wave of pain hit him. "Always such a dull and predictable thing to tell someone when they're being held hostage. Reduce their hopes of escape, emotionally blackmail them into doing what you want. Well it won't work with me."

"And why's that?"

"Because I'm Sherlock Holmes." He smirked.

The fist collided with the detectives face before he even drew another breath and he saw stars mix into his already burred vision.

"I knew there was a reason why I gagged you. Do you ever shut up?"

Sherlock gasped in a short ragged breath, setting his lips in a straight line and frowning, he spat blood onto the dirty floor. "Sometimes." He groaned.

"I could cut out your tongue!" The mad man welded the small blade close to the detectives face. "Then you really would shut up forever, none of your ridiculous bolshy deductions. What do you say?"

"Dull."
The small pocket knife plunged downward and clean into the detective's thigh. Sherlock simply let out a stifled gasping whimper but did not cry out. "Shut up!" Bradley shouted drawing the blade back out.

"Make your mind up." Sherlock said with a gulp of air, he squeezed his eyes shut for a moment against the ebbing throbs of pain now emanating from several different areas of his body. He could feel a gentle trickle of blood making it's way down his leg. "First you want me to make noise now you want me to shut up." He managed after a pause.

"Sherlock." John was warning him this time, the detective didn't even need to open his eyes to know the look that was planted on the doctor's face.

"It's ok." The detective opened his eyes and brought them up to fix on his friends. "You're here John, you can keep me alive."

The doctor set his lips into a straight line, "you cock." He mumbled.

"Always." Sherlock smirked and nodded his head subtly.

"Enough." The mad man shouted. "No more talking or Doctor Watson gets it."

Sherlock bowed his head again, he refused to show the pain etched on it to his friend, although he was certain John was well aware.

"We've got all night Mr Holmes so I might as well let you decide what we start with."

"Oh, just get on with it already." Sherlock sneered, "you're all the bloody same, trying to hype up the anticipation."

"Fine." Bradley Jepson took a step over to the side of the container where a small cupboard was, John watched him intently. How had either of them not noticed the piece of furniture before? He opened the door to reveal a small stash of items within, the doctor's eyes honed in on the hand gun, this would be useful later he thought. The kidnapper pulled out a small wooden implement. "We'll start with the rounders bat, always a favourite of mine." He let out a small burst of laughter.

The wooden item swung quickly in a perfect arc and collided with the detective's chest. Sherlock let out a growl and tried to catch his breath.

"Fuck." Sherlock picked up the sound of John's hushed voice and scowled at him, his friend needed to keep a level head, now was not the time for emotion, the plan was in place.

"You need to try harder detective." The kidnapper brought the bat around and smashed it into Sherlock's injured shoulder. A primal scream ripped passed his lips then, a sound that both defend John and their captor, long drawn out whimpering breaths followed and the detective struggled with remaining conscious.

"That's enough." John could no longer remain silent, "you'll send him into shock, please." A air of panic could be heard in his slightly off voice.

"Is that not the point?"

Sherlock drew a long ragged breath. "Not... in shock." He huffed, "please John, don't be so absurd. It's all just... transport." His body gave an involuntary shudder and he gulped back the bile rising.

Bradley laughed again. "Transport?" He cracked. "What kind of freak are you!?"
Sherlock’s brows deepened, he hated that word, regardless of how little he made out it never bothered him it was the one word which sent anger coursing through him. "I did not kill your brother." He snarled through bloodied teeth, "he died in an accident!"

The bat came down again, this time cracking audibly into the detectives face. Sherlock made no sound this time, his head lolled sideways and body gave into darkness.
"Sherlock?" A familiar voice filtered through the corridors of his mind palace where the lights were flickering wildly and the walls felt like they were tipping in around him. "Sherlock, can you hear me?"

"John?" His voice did not sound like his own, distant and lacking it's usual tone. His tongue felt heavy and useless like cotton wool and then the sudden agonising pulse of pain stimulation from his face hit him. He groaned deeply.

"That's it. Come on now, just open your eyes."

"John?"

"Yes it's me, now please open your eyes, I need to check you're alright." A hand was on his good shoulder giving it a squeeze.

"M.. fine." He moaned. "Jus..." before he could say another word his body convulsed and heaved, his stomach expelling what little to no food he had remaining in it down his front. And his lips now coated in a mix of saliva, bile, and blood made him heave for the second time.

"Easy." Johns voice drifted into his consciousness. "Can't you get him out of this bloody chair!"

Sherlock heard him bellow and frowned against the noise cracking through his skull.

"No." an unfamiliar voice.

Ah, yes. He remembered now. Kidnapped and tied to chair in an abandoned container on the way to a crime scene. Beaten into unconsciousness then, he mused trying to block out the pain signals now attacking his mind from every angle. The rain was still unrelenting above them, the sound deafening and making his head pound further. How long had he been out for?

"Come on now mate." Sherlock could feel a warm hand on his right cheek, pushing his heavy head into a more upright position, the world titled, "you need to try and wake up for me?"

"Tired." He slurred, cracking his eyes open into slits he moaned when the light from the dimly lit room hit his retinas.
"I know. You've probably got one hell of a concussion so you need to wake up for me ok?"

"M..Kay." Sherlock cracked his eyes open a little further and blinked like a startled animal. It was then he realised John's face was very close to his, mere inches from his own. The doctor had lines of worry etched into his skin and he was studying Sherlock eyes intently in the gloom.

John sighed audibly, happy that both the detectives pupils where equal and reactive, hoping that this meant there was less of a likelihood of brain damage. He bit his lip in worry, the younger mans cheek bone and jaw had not held up quite so well and John was almost certain that one or both had been fractured by the blow of the bat which had been well over an hour ago now. Their captor had got bored waiting for Sherlock to rouse and taken a break. This left John to do nothing but watch his unconscious friend helplessly for an hour, counting Sherlock's breaths and calculating the likelihood of brain damage, his doctors mind doing nothing but running through worst case scenarios. Finally the madman had grown inpatient, untied John and demanded he fix the detective and wake him.

"Well doctor?!" The kidnapper snapped, pointing his gun which had been trained on John, in the general direction of the consultant, "will he live?"

"Yes." John gulped back his rising panic. "But he's not only got a severe concussion he's also going into shock." The doctor had his hand on Sherlock's racing pulse under his fingers, one sign his friends body was doing its best to combat the pain and blood loss. John looked to the slow trickle of crimson which had pooled and congealed on the concrete flooring under his friends injured leg, not huge amounts but enough to cause the body to react to the missing fluid. He gently inspected the wound, it was deep but didn't look like it had hit anything vital. John could feel his friend shuddering lightly under his touch, all signs pointing to the detectives body being placed under unimaginable stress. He was unbelievable, John had seen many a man break under far less than what Sherlock had just undergone.

"Get back in your seat!" Bradley brought the barrel of the gun around to the doctors temple and John held his arms up in surrender, skipping backwards so he was now planted back in his own chair. "And stay down. I won't hesitate to use it."

The madman pulled out another implement from the storage cupboard. "Perhaps this will wake you up!?" He snarled.

He rammed the electrical stun gun into the detectives side and hit fire. Sherlock's eyes snapped open in an instant and he let out an guttural groan. His body convulsed against the voltage running through his muscles, violent and agonising contractions sending screams of agony through them. Bradley did nothing but laugh, the pitch increasing in joy as he watched the detective suffering in misery at his hands.

"Stop." John shouted now, unable to watch the torment pass through this friends face any longer. "Your going to kill him." He flew upwards from his seat only to find the voltage pulled from the friend and straight onto his own chest. He went down with a thump, crying out against the uncontrollable jerking in his body and struggling to pull in a decent lungful of air, his chest seizing from the current.

"I said stay down." The man screamed madly, not ceasing the discharge from the gun. "You will do as I say!"

John growled against the pain, he fought the blackness evading his vision but his eyes rolled upwards and his body relaxed, out cold. The kidnapper gently nudged him with his foot, happy that the doctor was no longer conscious and turned back finding the detective surprisingly awake.
"You loved him." Sherlock slurred breathlessly.

"What?" Bradley froze for a second, doing nothing but confirming the detectives suspicions.

Sherlock tried to grin but his jaw screamed out against the movement. "You heard me." He groaned and pulled a ragged breath, "that's... what all this is all about isn't it?"

"Say that again." The kidnapper dropped the stun gun to the floor and brought the hand gun around. He pressed the barrel deeply into Sherlock's chin, sending a stabbing flash of agony through his face.

The detective squeezed his eyes closed and took another shuddering breath, his vision was now glazed. "Love... is such a ... strange thing." He murmured, struggling. " Makes us do the unthinkable. Makes us steal, kidnap, kill, sometimes...." he gulped, "it even makes us take our own life." He bit back the guilt from deep within.

"What are you trying to say!?

"He was your step brother, but you loved him more than a brother didn't you?" Sherlock cried out, his shoulder muscles contracting and spasming. "I was too blind to see it on the original investigation... my apologise, my mind was clouded with other things at the time." He rushed the sentence, struggling to find his breath and then frowned grimly, remembering the 'drugs bust' Lestrade had conducted not long after the Jepson family murder case, it was all coming back to him now.

"Making excuses now are we?"

The gun ground into his chin and he inhaled through his teeth, breathing though the rising nausea once again.

"Too high you don't remember killing him?"

"I never killed him." Sherlock shook his head and regretted the movement instantly. "That was an accident, and you know it.... but you want someone to blame... for all of this. You... you both had it all planned out didn't you... Your future... together."

"Shut up!" Bradley's finger began to squeeze.

"You were going to run away together... Plane tickets...already bought, bags packed." His breaths picked up pace.

"Shut up or I swear to God I'll blow your brains out." His finger squeezed further.

"No...you won't."

In that instant the stun gun connected with the kidnappers leg and Bradley screamed, nerveless hands dropping his weapon, it landed with a clatter on the floor. John stood to his full height, hand on the weapon pressed into the mans side and watched as he dropped like a puppet at his feet.

John scooped up the pistol, pocketing the stun gun he trained the weapon on the semi conscious man now wreathing on the floor. "Put these on." He dropped a pair of open hand cuffs onto the kidnappers chest.

"Piss off!" He snarled. "You're a dead man!" Bradley Jepson jumped to his feet nimbly, coming up to full height almost a foot above John's stature. "You will regret this." He shouted pitching
forward towards the detective.

Two shots sounded, a thud, then silence.

"You didn't have to kill him." Sherlock moaned, looking at the man's still body by his feet.

"He's not touching you again." The doctor growled, pure anger laced into every word.

"I could have taken him." The detective cried, "you didn't need to be quite so dramatic."

"Have you seen yourself recently?" John bent down to the body of Bradley and check his pulse though there was little need. The two holes in the centre of his chest told him his heart was no longer beating. "I've seen young men with minor cuts come limping into the accident department like they're dying, and yet here you are with a multitude of injuries, not to mention a concussion and you think you can take a crazed criminal." He started to rummage in the dead man's pockets.

Sherlock huffed and shrugged his good shoulder. "You won't find a phone." Slurred his words a little and frowned at the sound of them. The thumping in his head was not relenting, in fact it was worsening. Thankfully the rain was beginning to lighten on the roof, one less thing to barrage his senses.

"What makes you think I won't find it. He must have a phone?"

"The man was suffering from... " a breath, "paranoia," he paused, "he didn't bring his phone.... And too right, they could have traced it here. He ditched ours too" He let out a stifled moan and lowered his head in an attempt to regain control.

John was before him in a flash. "Take it easy." He said, quickly bending down to remove his friends leg bindings and then around to release his bound wrists, careful with every moment as to not jolt the broken fingers. John didn't need to ask which hand it was, the fact that the two middle fingers on Sherlock's right hand were already swollen and blooming with purple told him enough, most certainly broken, he would struggle with his violin for a some time.

"I just need to move your dislocated shoulder ok. I'll be as gentle as I can." The doctor grimaced as he began to pull his friends right arm around to his front, he watched his best friend closely as he brought his hand to rest gently on his lap. "You can breath now." He cried.

Sherlock let out a long ragged exhale. "Sorry." He sighed audibly.

"It's alright." John gently ran his hands under his flat mate's famous coat and palpated the luxated joint.

"Can you not... just... put it back in." The detective breathed through the growing agony spreading from his broken hand which was now regaining some feeling.

"No." the doctor answered. "I can't be sure it's not broken too. The mechanism of injury could mean your acromion is fractured, and he did give it a good whack with the bat after. We need to get a radiograph first."

"Fine." Sherlock frowned, his voice losing its baritone, his head rolled a little forwards and he let his eyes drift shut momentarily.

"Ah, no." John shook him gently. "Stay awake would you. I'm going to pop your arm in a sling and then we're getting out of here."
"Fine..."

The doctor slid the now bloodied scarf from his friend neck and pulled it out to his full length, tying it into a loop he gently pulled his friend arm into the sling with a soft whimper of protest.

"Sorry." John frowned.

"S... okay." The detective stuttered, ragged breathing continuing.

"Does it hurt to breathe?" John gently ran his hands over Sherlock's ribs, "are you sore here?" He poked sympathetically trying to determine if any were broken.

"I'm fine." The detective puffed, trying uselessly to bat his friend away, "please.... John, lets go home now."

"Okay." The doctor came to his friends left side, grimacing at the sight of his bloodied face. He looked closer at the purple plumed skin a nasty gash running across his cheekbone and swollen jaw, several dramatic streaks of blood marred his pale skin. Most defiantly fractured somewhere, John frowned, hoping to god that the facial trauma didn't have lasting damage or need surgery.

"Can you walk?" He wished he could examine all his friends injuries but right now they needed to get to medical attention, he was happy the leg wound, although sluggishly bleeding, was not life threatening.

"Of course I can walk, I'm not an invalid." Sherlock snarled but accepted the arm John had slid around his torso for support.

"Slowly." The doctor pulled gently on his friends good arm and Sherlock rose to his feet, swaying violently on the spot as the room spun around him.

He groaned, "hang on..." he turned away, stomach heaving despite the fact it was empty. John held him steady as his body racked with retching.

"Jesus." John whispered to himself.

"It's.... fine." Sherlock groaned, wiping haphazardly at his mouth and regretting it the second he touched his shattered jaw.

"Take it easy." John guided him forward and Sherlock took two tentative shaky steps. "We've got all night." He bit his lip, knowing too well they didn't have all night to waste like this.

"No we don't." The detective took another step, his injured leg burning in protest. "I'll be dead by morning."

"Shut up."

John wasn't sure how they managed it out the container but they did, it seemed like an age before they were out in in the darkness of the night. A pattering of light rain splashing into the muddy ground at their feet. The slick, oil filled mud did nothing for Sherlock's unsteady feet and he slipped with almost every shaky step.

"Where are we?" The doctor finally broke the silence.

Sherlock looked up, his eyes bleary, he blinked back the gathering saltwater in them and looked out. The distant north shoreline of the Thames could be seen, a speckle of watery colours on the horizon. The detectives deductions of their location had been correct. "Crayford Ness." He said
with a swallow. He concentrated hard trying to avoid another useless repulsion of his stomach.

"Where's the nearest telephone or shops?" John didn't know the area whatsoever. He stepped out and his friend followed suit, limping only slightly as they made progress through the thick sludge.

"None." Sherlock struggled for a second to remain upright, his world tipping sideways but John pushed him up, grasping tightly as to not let his friend fall. "Sorry." He groaned.

John swallowed back his worry, "What do you mean none?"

"The place is just... scrap yards, auto repairs and ground works," Sherlock took a long and drawn out breath to ease his pain and began to take another step forwards. "I doubt there is anyone up here at this time of night." He groaned but did not stop moving. "I suggest we find..." another pause, "a car, to hot-wire"

"Are you serious?" John cracked a smile, "carjacking? Haven't you had enough fun for one night?"

Sherlock didn't answer and John watched him closely, with each passing step the tightness of anxiety in the doctors chest increased, worry ebbing slowing away at him. The detective ploughed on though, both their shoes sticking in the oil slick mud of the scrap yard as they trudged on in silence.

"His van." The detective said after some minutes and he brought his shaking left hand up to point ahead. Sure enough, parked neatly in the roadway only yards away was a dark transit. "John," his voice slurred worse than ever before, "I, I think I..." his voice trailed off and legs buckled.

"Shit." The doctor grabbed his friends long coat in an attempt at keeping them both upright but Sherlock's larger body won and they both went tumbling into the greasy mud together.

"Damn it." John tapped his friends uninjured cheek lightly, pleased that Sherlock landed mostly on him, meaning he'd taken the brunt of the muddy ground for the both of them. He checked his friends racing pulse with concern.

Sherlock moaned out, and without even opening his eyes he turned violently to upchuck his guts once again, John's own stomach twisting at the sound.

"Nei" the detective murmured, "nok." A foreign language passing his lips.*

John's heart rate started to raise, he pulled himself up onto his knees and hauled his best friend up, now was not the time for this. Sherlock protested with an incomprehensible babble of syllables, only serving to heighten John's worry over the growing signs of severe concussion.

"Not now Sherlock." He heaved him onto his feet with a grunt and held him steady, watching as the detective regained some control over his motor functions. After a momentary pause he pitched them both forwards at an alarming pace, causing Sherlock to trip and stumble without coordination, but they reached the side of the transit van in a matter of seconds, both breathless and leaning heavily on it. John yanked the passenger door, rejoicing to find the thing unlocked. "In." He said simply in a short clipped soldier like tone. He bit back the remorse of shoving his friend forcefully up and onto the seat and tried to block out the sounds of his friends moans of agony.

Once happy that Sherlock's gangly limbs were not in the way he slammed the door, rushing around to the drivers seat he jumped in. The jolt of movement reminded him that perhaps he should get himself checked out too, the burn from the stun gun gave a short throb but he brushed it aside. In moment of relief John found the keys still in the ignition and he let out a long exhale before turning them and stepping on the gas as he engine fired up.
"Right." In finally said determinedly. John frowned and reached to his friend who was bent over in
his seat, an unmissable tremor had developed in the detectives right arm, his body clearly fighting
against the anguish. "You with me?"

"Never... better." Came a breathy reply.

"You're a terrible liar." John couldn't help but smirk. He pulled the seat belt over his friends good
shoulder and clicked it securely.

"Am not."

"Whatever." John sat back and stepped on the clutch, pulling the vehicle into gear. "Just try to stay
awake ok. We're going to get some help."

Sherlock didn't reply, he let out a whimpering gasp as the van lurched into motion, bumping across
the uneven soaking ground and jarring his shoulder.

"Sorry." John grimaced. The wheels of the van slid and skidded but the doctor kept it straight,
steering it off the muddy ground and finally onto a more solid roadway under the glow of dim
street lamps. "Hey..." speeding up, he looked to his friend, "hey, Sherlock, stay awake ok."

A mumbled moan replied and the detective gave an involuntary shiver.

"I need to know which way I'm going?"

"S...left... at the end." Sherlock dragged in heavy ragged breaths, and even in the dim light of night
John could see the sheen of sweat which was forming in his friends brow. "Then right." He yelped
as the vehicle hit a pot hole in the road. "Then... straight up the road then left into the estate."

The doctor bit his lower lip, so hard he tasted blood. "You need a hospital. Which is the nearest?"

"No."

"Don't be a cock Sherlock!"

"It's all... just transport John." He murmured, his voice broken from the pain, he sounded young
and vulnerable and John hated it, "I want to go home." He cried.

"Well tough, because right now your going no where except an emergency department." The
doctor pulled the transit out and onto the stretch of road back towards civilisation.

"Please." Sherlock said after a beat, his eyes came up to look at his friends, red rimmed and lined
with unfallen tears. "Please can we go home now?"

John didn't answer for a moment, a stab of guilt made his chest feel tight and he couldn't look at his
friend. After a minute or so he pulled up at a junction and clicked the van into neutral finally
turning his attention on him.

"Sherlock?" He started. His best friend was now visibly shaking from head to toe and the saltwater
which had been collecting in his globes had spilled out and down his cheeks streaking them. John
quickly pulled off his own coat, tucking it over and around his friend being careful of his injuries.
"Hey, look at me." The detectives eyes wondered, rolling a little. "Are you with me?"

"John?"

"Listen to me." The doctor started, "your an unimaginable bastard and I know your in a ridiculous
amount of pain right now, and I know you are adamant that this is all just transport." He accentuated the word, "but taking you back to Baker Street is not what you need."

Sherlock groaned in protest, his shoulder seizing again.

"Are you listening?" John cried, anger just on the tip of his tongue but held back with sympathy. "I cannot look after you there. You need strong pain relief, and X-rays and maybe even surgery Sherlock." He ground his teeth together. "Please understand, I promise I will look after you but I need a hospital to do that ok?"

The detective pulled in a ragged and shaking breath. "Okay." He moaned finally. "I trust you John."

"Good." The doctor stuck the vehicle back into drive and continued. "Just try to stay with me ok?" He said, "pretty sure I can find Queen Elizabeth hospital, Woolwich, closest A&E I think, but I you need to not fall into a coma ok?"

"Fine." John could practically hear his friends eyes rolling in protest and couldn't help but smile a little. How the hell they had managed of this one alive he wasn't sure.

Chapter End Notes

*Nei is Norwegian for 'no'
Nok is Norwegian for 'enough'

I don't know why I picked this language but I wanted one syllable words for Sherlock to say and I figured he was trying to take back control of his 'transport'. 
Just transport (part 3)

Chapter Summary

John is a good doctor but he forgets about himself too.

Chapter Notes

By popular demand I have written a third part of the 'just transport' storyline. All I can say is poor John and poor Sherlock. Some inspiration here from fellow writers sevenpercent, j.ballier and thegracefulbluecat. Thank you!

Medical explanations at the end of the chapter if you are interested.

By the time John turned the transit van into the entrance of the emergency department his best friend was doing nothing but mumbling innate babble to himself, head lolled to the side and eyes slitted against the pain. The luminous A&E sign shone like a beacon of hope for John who was beginning to edge into panic mode. He pulled the vehicle up to a stop, as close to the door as possible. He jumped out. He had changed his mind a few miles back about collecting a wheelchair and raced through the doorway in search of a trolley instead, mindful and panicked at the thought of leaving his half conscious friend alone. Less than a minute later he returned to the van with two nurses and a doctor in tow with a gurney.

"Lets go Sherlock." He said, pulling the passenger door open and stepping up to undo his friends seat belt, it seemed to be the only thing keeping the detective upright now.

"Home?" Sherlock barely looked up, his face twisted in agony.

"No, we've discussed this." John pulled Sherlock's feet gently over to the doorway and ready to get him out. "I need you to slide down with for me now ok?" He asked.

"Where's... Mrs Hudson?

John grimaced and scratched his forehead in a nervous gesture, he was not looking forward to this ordeal one bit. "We're at hospital Sherlock, do you remember?"

"No." in that moment of panic the detective tried to pull his legs upwards and back into the vehicle but his weakened body betrayed him, he turned, half off the seat and collided with his friend before falling. John grappled uselessly with his coat but lost his grip, thankful that a young nurse, almost as tall as Sherlock himself, managed to semi catch the idiot as he fell out the seat and van and to the pathway below.

"Thank you." John jumped from the cab and helped the medical team ease his friends half lax body onto the trolley.
"Please..." the detective cracked his eyes open and tried to remove himself from the bed, rolling haphazardly onto his right side he shrieked momentarily when his dislocated should came into contact with the mattress.

"Hey." His best friend pushed a hand onto his chest, "take it easy ok." The gurney rolled into the department swiftly. Sherlock remained on his back, eyes tightly closed. Ragged huffs of breath was all he could manage against the jolts of the trolley making its way into the resuscitation room and finally a cubical.

"This is Sherlock Holmes ." The lead doctor introduced them as they ground to a halt, "and his companion Doctor Watson. Doctor please let us know a brief history of injury."

John took a long breath, switching to physician mode he began. "Sherlock and I were kidnapped around seven pm this evening, we managed to escape and drive here. Unfortunately my friend has received a number of injuries. Sherlock is a 40 year old male, no history of medical conditions, but has had previous traumas and has a history of substance abuse. Injuries from head to toe from what I know. He has a potential fracture to the left hand side zygomatic arch and mandible following assault with a bat, but I cannot be certain, contusions and soft tissue trauma present, signs of severe concussion but a cranial bleed cannot be ruled out. Both pupils equal and reactive but he is extremely disorientated and has vomited on several occasions. I expect he will be difficult to treat, so I suggest waiting." John could see the nurses honing in with ECG pads and prep for an IV catheter. "He has potential rib fractures on the left side, lung contusions are likely. There is an anterior dislocation of the right shoulder joint with or without fractures as he received blunt trauma to this after the luxation. Digits three and four on the right hand are fractured. There are ligature burns on his wrists and ankles and a stab wound to his left cranial thigh with a blade of about four inches, venous hemorrhage, no major vessels to be seen to be hit but approximately a pint of blood loss as it happened some time ago." He let out a breath.

"Thank you doctor Watson." The medic who and met them in the car park introduced himself. "My name is Doctor Rawlings, I'll be taking the lead on Sherlock's case." He smiled sadly, "we haven't seen Mr Holmes in some time."

John ignored the comment, not surprised that practically every accident department knew his friend well.

"He is not going to be co-operative." John cried, "please let me assist you."

The medic looked pensive but in that moment Sherlock let out a roar turning both of their attentions back onto him. He was flailing madly in the bed, a young student nurse had clearly tried to attach a pulse oximetry probe to the detectives finger and was now two steps back holding the implement with the look of panic I her eyes. "Get off me!" Sherlock bellowed, kicking the rails of the gurney and attempting to sit upright with a growl.

John was on him in a second. "Hey." He grabbed his hand softy. "Take it easy. I'm right here. They just want to help."

"I don't need help!" The detective snarled, his lips curling and eyes snapping open. "I want to go home!"

"We've been over this." John sighed, his friend was delirious and confused, head injuries were never kind. "Just try to calm down ok?" He gently pushed some of the damp stray hairs from his friends forehead and pulled his fingers through the black curls with affection. "I'm right here ok."

Sherlock frowned in bewilderment, his eyes flicking around the room to take in the many members
of staff surrounding them. The bustle of noise and beeps of medical equipment in the vicinity made his head pound and he closed his eyes tightly. "Noisy." He moaned, good hand coming up to his ear with a wince. He mumbled incoherently, his hand on his ear had a pronounced tremor.

"I know." John soothed, pulling Sherlock's shaking hand back down to the bed, "I'll make it quieter in a moment ok. We just need to do a few things first."

"We should RSI." Doctor Rawlings stepped forwards, "it would be safer."

"No." John cried, "I don't want him out. I can keep him calm. I think he'll be fine once analgesia is on board I suggest an infusion of fentanyl."

"Okay, agreed." The doctor had his hands on his hips but bowed his head and relented. "Get on the phone and order a CT Miss García." A nurse scuttled off with the new job. "I will need to do a primary survey before I can prescribe doctor Watson. Do you think he will let me?"

John only nodded, he gently brought his friends attention to him and spoke in quiet hushed tones. "I need you to watch me ok?" Sherlock opened up his glassy eyes to meet John's and the doctor wished he hadn't for a moment. They were filled with unfallen tears again, creased subtly with lines of agony around them so much so that John felt a stab of pain in himself in response. Focus, John said internally, he was used to trauma patients he needed to stay focused on the task at hand. "We're just going to check you over, then we'll get some pain killers in ok? Just keep your eyes on me alright."

John watched the doctor out the corner of his eye quickly make an assessment of his friend, talking to a colleague who looked like a junior doctor who was writing down his findings, airway clear, he was now palpating the detectives chest and listening.

Sherlock's eyes did not wonder from John's, even when he shrunk back against the cold metal stethoscope pressed onto his now exposed chest.

"Bilateral air entry, increased noise over the left caudal lobe, left lateral ribs six and seven potential fractures. No signs of pneumothorax." Doctor Rawlings said. John let out an audible sigh, thankful at least for the small victory's although the scan would confirm the diagnosis.

Another nurse then gently placed the pulse oximetry onto his finger with more success this time and a blood pressure cuff onto his left arm, clicking it into the multi parameter machine. Sherlock moaned as the plastic began to constrict around him.

"Your doing great ok." John gently stroked his friends forehead, "almost done, just a few more minutes."

The medic cut through Sherlock's trousers inspecting the stab wound and then palpated the mans radial pulse. "Pulses weak and thready, tachycardia at 138." He looked to the screen, "hypotensive too, he's hypovolaemic." He turned to another nurse. "Order a unit of O negative."

"Just a neuro exam. Doctor Watson would you care to..."

John nodded and took the pen torch from the man. "I just need to give you a quick once over ok? You need to listen to me carefully."

Sherlock moaned. "Tedious." Came slurring out barely audible and the doctor smiled, happy to hear a normal word no matter how off kilter it was.

"Can you squeeze your left hand?" John asked, waiting patiently for a response but the detectives
hand remained slack against his. "Can you tell me where you're hurting?" He tried. Sherlock mumbled out an incomprehensible sentence of babble. Hesitantly John moved his hand to the other and gently grasped his friend's broken fingers apologetically. The detective whined and snatched the appendage away, puffing out breaths when his shoulder jarred.

"GCS 9-10." John said with certainty, he clicked the pen torch on and waved the beam into his best friends vision. "Both pupils equal and reactive, dazzle present." John placed the torch down and leaned over his friend again. "Do you know where you are Sherlock?" He asked slowly and deliberately.

A quiet murmur replied and the doctor pulled his head in further to try and hear him. "M...morphine John.... p...please." Sherlock's bottom lip wobbled and John felt his whole world crumble around him. He couldn't take the sight of his friend in such an vulnerable state, a man who would put pride and intellect over his own health at more cost than anyone. A splash of saltwater hit his cheek and he wiped it away quickly, sniffing back the oncoming emotion threatening.

"IV?" John asked, setting his face back on the task at hand. He turned back to the team and snatching the kidney dish from a nurse which was prepped with equipment for the insertion of an intravenous catheter, he had to keep busy. He scrubbed the crook of Sherlock's left arm with disinfectant, only now realising that the famous coat was gone. He was so focused on his best friend that he hasn't even realised that half the detectives clothes had been stripped from him, he was now bare chested and an efficient medic was now placing a 12 lead set of ECG pads onto his pale trembling torso. John had to tear his eyes away from the purple bloom over his left rib cage and the ugly gunshot scar over the centre, he swallowed back the guilt.

After his momentary pause John continued, grimacing at the sight of the wide bore catheter now in his hand, but also understanding the need for it. The larger the catheter the faster the rate of fluids administered to prevent further shock.

"Sharp scratch Sherlock. Sorry." He apologised before piercing his friends skin with the needle and into his median cubital vein, the flash of red confirming placement before he flicked off the plastic catheter and secured the line. The detective didn't flinch at the procedure and John looked up to find he had passed out again. Eyes closed and head gently rolled over onto his injured cheekbone staining the bed with crimson.

"Fentanyl?" John demanded and a fluid line appeared, which was connected to a syringe driver. "Loading dose?" He asked. A single smaller syringe was passed over and John attached it to his friends catheter port and began to inject slowly.

John watched his friend as he infused the opioid into his bloodstream, letting out a sigh of relief when he saw the lines of pain in Sherlock's face begin to ease and breaths slow to a steady speed and depth.

"CT is ready." A voice from another doctor amongst the trauma team could be heard and there was a hype of activity around them again. How the scanner had become available so quick John wasn't sure.

Happy that at least Sherlock had some of his pain under control John stood back for a second and surveyed everything. He was clearly not working at full capacity, he had worked on trauma teams in the field and hospital and knew the pace things ran at. Sherlock now had an array of equipment on him, a second IV line was in place with a large bag of warm fluids running in at shock rate, ECG, pulse ox, and an oxygen mask had just been applied. John grimaced at the smears of blood across the detectives shattered face and he wished he'd thought about at least covering the gashes, he glanced at the leg wound to find it already bound in a fresh temporary dressing, trousers now
gone his friend was half covered in a hospital blanket.

"Let's roll." Doctor Rawlings was to the side, arms folded, frowning sternly. The team moved like an well oiled machine together and John was swept up in the flow of bodies. He felt useless and could do nothing but grasp his best friend's hand as they rushed out into the corridor and towards radiography.

It wasn't until they reached the doors of the scanning room that John broke off his grip and finally left his friend to the team, watching through the glass of the control room as they slid the lax detective gently over onto the patient table. Since his loading dose of pain relief his friend had not roused from unconsciousness.

Minutes later the crowd of staff filed out the room and the X-ray light switched on, the radiographer clicking eagerly away at his computer to set the scanning cycle running. John felt bile beginning to rise in his throat, anxiety gripping at him when the images began to filter onto the screen. He leant on the desktop, breathing evenly and deliberately.

"Are you okay Doctor Watson?" The trainee nurse who Sherlock had frightened earlier was in front of him, kind eyes and a sympathetic smile. "I think we should maybe get you checked out? She said.

"I'm fine." John waved off her concern, not taking his eyes from the screen.

He catalogued the injuries he could see, his chest slowly tightening in worry. A fractured cheek bone and mandible. The latter would need surgery by the looks of it, his friend would have his jaw wired for months. He groaned audibly at the thought of it. The shoulder would need reducing but it looked like he hadn't fractured thankfully but who knew what ligament damage there was. The fingers would need pinning as they weren't simple brakes. Two ribs were partially broken and there was a small amount of blood in his thorax, that would explain the increased noise, the kidney under the ribs was swollen beyond its normal size suggesting a contusion. John felt sick, how could he let his friend get this hurt sat only two meters away. He felt his stomach begin to heave and escaped the room in an instant. He arrived in the bright corridor, squeezing his eyes shut against the strip lighting. He leant heavily against the wall, chest heaving in silent sobs and swallowing hard, forcing the vomit back down. "Shit." He moaned, struggling to maintain his breaths in a slow orderly rate. The burn from the stun gun was throbbing madly in the centre of his chest, radiating pain and making his heart ache.

"John?" A familiar voice reached his ringing ears. "John..."

The doctor looked up though bleary vision to see the eyes of detective inspector Lestrade on him, two hands were grasping his shoulders to steady him.

"Whoa mate." Greg steered him sideways and to a nearby seat, setting himself down next to him. "Take it easy." He grasped John's shoulder in affection. "What the hell happened?" He ran a hand nervously through his hair. "I got the call. We've been searching all night when you didn't turn up to the crime scene." He looked down the corridor. "Where's Sherlock?"

"He's a mess Greg." John felt the tears welling in his eyes. "I can't believe I let this happen."

"You don't look so great yourself you know." Lestrade smiled sadly, John was shaking, his breaths hitched, practically hyperventilating. "Let's get you sorted shall we." There was already nurse on them with a wheelchair in tow.

"I need to look after him." John cried but not resisting the two sets of hands forcing him into the
"Not right now you don't," Lestrade said, spinning the wheelchair and heading back towards resus pronto. "Let them do their job, and let's get you seen to. Then I promise we'll go and see how he's doing."

John nodded, not trusting himself to answer. He bowed his head in sadness and hope to God his friend would be ok without him.

Chapter End Notes

Zygomatic arch - a part the cheek bone

Mandible - the lower jaw bone

Cranial bleed - a bleed to the brain (seen in severe head trauma)

Contusions - bruising

Anterior dislocation - the most common (95% of the time) type of shoulder dislocation where the shoulder is pushed forwards out the socket (posterior (backwards) and inferior (downwards) are also types)

Luxation - another word for dislocation

RSI - short for rapid sequence induction where a patient is induced into a full anaesthetic, this happens often with head trauma patient so that the medical team can gain full control over airways, breathing and give the brain a rest

Fentanyl - a painkiller which can be given as an infusion, it is a synthetic opioid which is 50-100 times stronger than morphine

Pneumothorax- air in the chest cavity impinging on breathing

Pulse oximetry - measures the oxygen levels in the blood (the little clips you see on people's fingers)

Hypotensive - low blood pressure

Hypovolaemic - low circulating volume of blood - it's a type of shock from blood loss

GCS - short for Glasgow coma scale, feel free to google it to see how to score, 15 being normal conscious state and 3 being a coma

Median cubital vein - the largest vessel running over the crook of your arm, commonly used for venous access
John Watson clenched his jaw hard. He stood before the door of the private hospital room, afraid of what he might find on the other side. He wasn't sure exactly how many hours he had been in the emergency department since Lestrade had insisted he be checked over. Guilt washed over him, he didn't even know what the time was, let alone how long he had been apart from his best friend. Once Greg handed him over to the emergency team John had been poked and prodded, xrayed and drugged. The doctor was sure they had put him out for some time just to calm him down. Now donned in a fetching hospital gown since being admitted for observation John had escaped his bed in search of his best friend. He wasn't sure what they had given him but it sure made him woozy, the numbers on the door swam in his vision.

Before he grabbed for the door handle the thing opened. "John?" The detective inspector was standing before him. "Shouldn't you be in bed?" Greg frowned. "They said you passed out in A&E."

Not drugs then John thought, perhaps a side effect of the stun gun. "Sherlock." His voice was oddly croaky, "I need to check he's ok?" He finally managed.

"He's still asleep." Lestrade replied sadly. "They say he should be awake by now but he's not having it, you know what he's like. To be fair I don't blame him, think I'd sleep for a week if I'd just been beaten, and then spent the last four hours in surgery." The inspector rushed his words out nervously.

John frowned. Four hours? Had it really been that long? "He's had surgery?"

"Yeah." Lestrade looked guilty that he hadn't told John sooner, he sighed, pausing and looking at his friend. "You look like crap, should you really be out of bed? The doctors were quite concerned."

"I am a doctor Greg, and I say I'm fine to be up."

"Yeah well remember what they say, doctors make the worst patients." He folded his arms.

"Not as bad a consulting detectives." John couldn't help but smile.
"True that." Lestrade stepped back allowing the shorter man into the room, suddenly aware that he was actually blocking his pathway.

"Mycroft?" John said absentmindedly, fully expecting to find the Holmes brother in the room already.

"He's away in Russia on business apparently." Greg shrugged.

"Typical." John moaned, "his brother gets beaten within an inch of his life and he can't even be bothered to drop by." He said sarcastically.

"Well he did phone."

John didn't answer as he descended on the bed. Sherlock was far too still for the doctors liking, his matted dark curls a stark contrast to the white sheets beneath and around him. He looked childlike and vulnerable smothered by bedding and medical equipment attached at every angle, many wires and lines both under and over the blankets. His right arm was strapped up heavily, his hand raised up on a stash of pillows and in a thick dressing covering what John could only assume to be the surgical site for his now repaired broken fingers. His face though was what John hated the sight of the most, in the few hours they had been apart the swelling and bruising had begun to develop. The shadow of the bat used could be seen, a deep red and almost black line stretched from the side of the detectives left eye, across his cheekbone and down to his jaw. The swelling had distorted the entire side of his face. It was puffed out and pulling angrily at the stitches which had been placed onto the two neat gashes on his cheekbone and mandible. John could see under his swollen lips the signs of wire around his teeth, affixing his mouth permanently closed. The doctor sighed audibly, six weeks of trying to get liquid sustenance into the detective was going to be a battle and a half when even getting him to eat normal solid food was a struggle at the best of times.

"Shit..." John sunk into the chair beside his best friend's bed.

"What happened?" Greg asked, rounding on the other side of the detectives cot.

"He couldn't keep his mouth shut, that's what." John said grimly, bowing his head to take an intake of air and compose himself, "looks like he won't have a choice now."

"I have to admit, I wasn't exactly looking forward to being here when he woke up and realised."

"No." John said simply, he ran a hand across his face and pitched the bridge of his nose. It was then he felt his heart jolt a little within his chest and he stifled a small moan from escaping his lips. His grimace didn't go unnoticed.

"You shouldn't be out of bed mate." Lestrade frowned, "really John. I can sit with him until he's awake."

"I'm just fine." The doctor smiled sadly. "It's best I'm here when he wakes, never goes well I'm not does it?"

"Okay?" Greg gave up his protests and turned toward the door. "Coffee?" He asked. "Well, if you can call it that?"

"I'll pass." John pulled his hand up to place it over his friends left one, another IV that had been placed sat uncomfortably between the pair of them, as if purposefully preventing contact.

"Alright." The inspector took his leave. "Won't be long." The door clicked gentle shut behind him.
The doctor turned his attention fully back onto his friend then, running his eyes over the monitors and read outs which seemed pretty steady. He studied the line of stitches on his face with scrutiny, critiquing the handwork closely, he counted the rows one by one as if he didn't have anything better to do. He was so caught in the moment that it took him over a minute to realise his friend had shifted under his hand.

"Sherlock?" The doctor whispered softly.

A moan sounded in the detectives throat and John could see his lips twitching trying to form words, eyes rolled under closed lids before turning into half moon slits.

"Hey." John smiled. "Welcome back."

Another groan and the detective stretched his neck up his jaw clenched as eyes widened, darting around the white wash walls, an air of panic setting into them. Before John realised his hand had slipped out from under his and had risen shakily towards his face. The detective's energy was clearly dwindling already as the doctor managed to grab the appendage gently pulling it away with ease.

"Hey, no. Take it easy." John cried. "You're in hospital, you've had an anaesthetic and an operation. Your ok but you can't open your mouth right now, your jaw it's broken." He tried to soothe his friend but the detectives eyes remained wide, the swelling under his left one making it lack its usual shape.

"Jawn!" Sherlock drew through his closed mouth. "Wss..." his lips couldn't form any proper words and he sucked in a large gulp of air through his wired teeth.

John was on his feet now, the detectives agitation increasing substantially. Sherlock's uninjured leg was now up and braced against the edge of the bed, his shaking left arm now also against the bed side bars trying to push himself up unsuccessfully.

"Nnnuh." Another useless noise and the doctor saw his friends brows furrow angrily at what he had emitted. It would take some time for the man to get used to talking with his mouth shut. Sherlock pushed up on the bed and he immediately let out a moan of pain from deep in his throat.

"Stop." John said firmly then, placing a hand on the detectives good shoulder and pushing him back down into the pillows. "Sherlock." He said, there was no response, his friend was trembling now. "Sherlock bloody Holmes, look at me."

The detectives eyes continued to dart around, his body straining and twitching, agitated and trying to stretch up into a sitting position.

"Sherlock, at me." John cried a little louder. "Focus on me!"

This finally snapped his eyes to the doctor and the detectives pupils locked onto his friends. John could hear the whistle of air sucking in and out of his mouth in alarm.


Sherlock's breaths evened, his head slowly resting back against the pillows and eyes back to half slits, but a deep frown remained pulled into his brows.

John finally let himself down and back into the seat, turning to the morphine pump he pressed the flow up. He bit his lip in guilt but watched sadly to see his friend eyes slip closed and after a minute
or two Sherlock's face relaxed a little.

"I'm sorry." The doctor sighed, lacing his fingers through his best friend's curls in affection. "It's for the best, you need to sleep." John yawned at the word, feeling the pulls of sleep himself, and wishing idly that a morphine infusion would be most welcome right now, his chest was aching awfully. The doctor gulped back the worry of the opioid pump, trying not to think about the coming months. It would be a round of having to watch his friend like a hawk for any signs of drug habit relapse. No point in thinking about it right now he shook the thought off and sighed loudly. "Just sleep." He said again, his own eyes drooping.

By the time Lestrade made it back into the room John was face down on the sheets next to his friend. Half in the chair, half on the gurney his head was rested on the detective's lap and he was snoring softly into the sheets.

Greg sniggered quietly, regardless of how sad and grim the situation the two of them had just been through, the DI just couldn't help himself, sliding out his iPhone he snapped a photo of the pair of them. He gulped back a long swig of coffee, checking his watch and blinking back the sleep from his eyes when he realised it was getting on for 6am. The low morning sun was beginning to poke its face through the hospital blinds. He was due back on shift in two hours time, despite spending half the night with a search party looking for everyone's favourite consulting detective and best friend, he doubted the superintendent would see his compassionate side. For a moment he debated finding a nurse to usher the doctor back to bed but thought better of it, there was no separating these two for any length of time, there was little point in trying. Taking one last affectionate glance at the pair he slowly backed out of the room, closing the door gently behind him, he would be back later in the day to check in.

John woke with a shuddering start, letting out a yelp when his neck clicked audibly. He blinked a couple of times trying to focus his bleary eyes before realising exactly where he was. As his eyes fell on the empty bed he sat bolt upright, immediately regretting it when a wave of vertigo hit him. "Sher..." his voice was croaky from it lack of use, how long had he been asleep? He coughed to clear the dryness. The doctors eyes darted around the room when finally he spotted his friend on the other side of it.

"What the hell are you doing!!" His useless voice forgotten he almost shouted, jumping up onto his feet.

Sherlock was leant heavily on the far wall, he was almost doubled in two, sweat had beaded on his forehead and he was breathing short shallow puffs of air. John was on him in a flash, hands braced onto his friends shoulders to steady him. "Sherlock?"

"Buff...oom." The detective tried to speak, furrowing his brow deeply.

"No." Sherlock mumbled, John saw red flushing his uninjured cheek.

"Oh." The doctor realised what he'd meant then. "We can get a bed pan, you can't be out of bed, come on." He tried to pull his friend back towards the cot but Sherlock resisted.
"No..." the detective shuffled forwards, his injured leg struggling to take his full weight. He pushed John's hand away and swayed.

"Sherlock?!!" John warned, replacing his hand back onto his friends arm.

"Psss of." He hissed through his teeth, he pitched forwards and pushed the door handle of the bathroom down, stumbling in with John on his tail.

"Fine," the doctor cried, throwing his arms up in defeat. "Your way it is."

Sherlock barely made it to the toilet bowl before collapsing onto it heavily, John cringed at the whimper he let out as he collided with the porcelain.

"I'll just be the other side of the door." John pointed and backed out the room, not entirely happy that his friend wouldn't topple off the toilet seat at any moment.

He didn't. A few minutes later John heard the loo flush and pushed the door back open. Sherlock had managed it up and was braced against the small sink, considerably paler than minutes earlier. He ran his hand under the tap but began to sway before John was on him.

"Come on." John coaxed, cringing at the sight of his friends left hand. The detective had pulled out his intravenous catheter and a spectacular bruise was blooming under the skin and swelling where his vein at been damaged. The doctor bit his bottom lip to stop himself from berating his best friend, it would only serve to inflame the situation and then there would be no chance of Sherlock getting back to bed.

"Back to bed with you." He said softly, guiding his friend around and steering him back out the bathroom into the main room. The detective swayed but John held him steady.

"Hum." Sherlock murmured through his puffy lips."pls."

John noticed the angry flashing monitors as they made their way at snails pace across the small room. He wasn't even sure how his friend had managed to silence the alarms but nothing surprised him anymore. The morphine pump was still whirring away to itself, spilling the drug out the discarded catheter now draped on the floor.

"Jhn." A grunt and the detectives legs began to buckle.

"Not now." The doctor shoved his friend up and braced himself against him, pushing forwards they managed it three more steps back to the bed before Sherlock's legs gave out altogether. The detective collided with the side of the gurney before buckling over and ending up half on his front and face in the pillow. His breaths were thick and fast and he groaned in pain.

"You prat." John helped him back and rolled him into a more sensible position, with every movement causing nothing but a grimace or a moan. "Sorry." The doctor apologised, looking sadly to his best friends disheveled form.

Sherlock's head rolled back on the pillow and he let out a long drawn breath. "John." He managed this time, his lips co-operating to pronounce better. "Can wu g hum now?" Not quite so good but the doctor understood him well enough. The detectives voice was weak and useless, so much so that John actually shuddered at the sound of it.

"No right now." He cried sadly, "you need a bit of time to recover before we even consider Baker Street I'm afraid. Do you remember what happened?"
The detectives brows furrowed deeply. "...s" he finally managed. A stray tear escaped the mans eye and trickled down his bruised cheek.

John was taken aback, seeing his friend in such a vulnerable state was not something he took so lightly. "Hey." He stood. "It's alright, I'm here. Take it easy alright." He squeezed the good shoulder of the detective. "Let's get this morphine up and running again shall we." He pushed the call button on the bedside. Sherlock's outbursts of emotion was not a common occurrence and he hoped to hell this was just pain induced. But something deep inside him told him that it wasn't, he buried the thought for later. It was going to be one long and bumpy road to recovery for the detective one which neither was looking forward to.
Burned

Chapter Summary

John is BAMF, and Sherlock is more concerned about his coat.

Chapter Notes

This is a little homage to Sherlock's awesome coat. I bought a copy one myself a month ago and I love it to bits. I'll be cosplaying it at comic con London this year and hopefully Sherlocked convention too.

Please read the end of the chapter for more information on cremation (only if you want to know if not please skip reading those comments, there are no descriptions in the fiction itself)

"I need to see the body." Sherlock glared over the police file. He dropped it to the inspectors desk and raised his eyebrows in question. "There must be something else on it to explain the murderers identity."

"That's the thing you see." Inspector Lestrade leant back on his chair placing his hands behind his head and twirling his pen. "This is the third victim with the same MO where the body has already been signed off and sent for cremation by the coroner. It's likely already been cremated, there are no immediate family awaiting this one."

"What?" John unfolded his arms. "That can't be legal. Have you spoken to the coroner?"

"We're struggling to locate the man, seems he's more elusive than a London sewer rat." Greg pinched the bridge of his nose. "He’s based at the funeral home and crematorium too, not a good combination."

"Hmm." Sherlock smiled, "when?" He asked

"Yesterday. I've only just found out." Lestrade let out another exasperated breath. "Damn it, we'll never find the killer." He slammed his hands down. "It’s a bloody mess, if the papers find out we've lost another body."

"Oh I don't know about that." The detective grinned ear to ear. "Come along John." He turned quickly, his coat spinning dramatically. "We have an appointment at the crematorium." He pulled his coat collar up to remain in character and strode with purpose from the DI's office.

It wasn't until they were well on their way in a taxi that the detective finally spoke again to his friend, his face remained glued to the city going by however.

"Did you bring it?" Sherlock asked, His legs were bouncing on the balls of his feet with
"Yes." The doctor said simply, feeling the metal pressed up into the small of his back.

"Might be dangerous." The detective gleamed.

John could only smirk at his friends pure enthusiasm, just another day at the office for them both.

By the time they made it to the crematorium the detective was practically bubbling over with energy. John paid the cabbie and had to run to catch up with the man who was half way to the main door of the funeral services. When John had finally caught up with his friend the detective was at the front desk flashing an ID card at the young receptionist. “FBCA, here for a spot check inspection.” He had one of his patronising fake grins plastered on his face. The doctor eyed him, waiting patiently for his next move and maintaining innocence.

The young lady at the desk looked perplexed, she had clearly not been working there long. “What?” she looked around in confusion.

“Federation of burial and cremation authorities.” Sherlock said, “We hear you’ve been having some issues with one of your cremators, we’re here to inspect it for you.”

“Oh…” the young woman was flustered and reached for the phone, “Okay. I’ll just…” her unconfident manner reminded John of Molly when he first met her.

“No need.” The detective butted in. “Is it though here?” he strode forwards and through a staff entrance.

“Thanks.” John smiled politely as he followed his best friend. It wasn’t until they were well out of ear shot before he berated him. “What the hell are we doing here?”

“Here to see a man about a body.” Sherlock grinned. “Cadavers don’t tend to cremate themselves these days.”

“Yes I know.” John tugged on the detectives coat and his friend spun around with a glare which told John never to tug his garment again. “What exactly is the plan?”

“Plan?” Sherlock smiled, “there is no plan. We find the coroner; we find the missing body and find the link to the killer.”

“Right.” Was all he could reply as they continued on.

Sherlock dipped in and out of several open doors as they headed down the corridor until they reached a more open room which lead into the morgue. The detective quickly flicked through the files hanging up on the wall, not finding their missing cadavers name in any of them, so not in here. “We’ll have to search them individually if they are not somewhere else in the complex.”

“Great.” John sighed. Just what he was looking forward to doing on a weekend off, identifying dead people.

“Can I help you?” a senior man suddenly appeared in the doorway.

“We’re here from the FBCA, for an inspection.” Sherlock answered, rounding on the man, “And you are?”

“James Johnson.” The gentleman extended a hand to the detective but it remained unshaken, his
east London accent was thick. “I’m the caretaker here; tend to the graves and all that. Well not so much these days, but I’ve been here a while. Know the place well...”

"Of course you do." Sherlock sneered, "Your well past retirement age now, you must really like it here. Going by the arthritis you have in your hands you’ve probably been here you’re entire life. We need to speak with the coroner would you mind?” he added.

"Of course. I’m not sure where he is right now but we can look."

"That would be most helpful." The detective smiled again. "But sometime today would be good." He added hastily as the older man shuffled over to the door of the morgue at a snail’s pace.

"You are an inpatient fellow aren’t you" James laughed and walked a few steps faster. "Our new coroner is a bit like you, odd fellow if you ask me, not been here long."

"Interesting." Sherlock followed, they headed down another short corridor, "anything especially odd about him?"

“Can’t put me finger on it.” The elderly man said, “Just always busy, never gets off his phone. Drives around in one of those posh sports cars, what are they called now... Bugatti? He chips in a lot though mind, often helping out with the cremators and the constant back up of bodies. I’m sure you know what it’s like eh?”

The detective didn’t answer, his mind collecting data and processing it quickly, this was turning into quite the case. He snapped out of his mind palace when John tapped him on the arm. He then realised he was being spoken to and they were now in an office.

“He’s not in.” James was talking. “I suspect he’s down helping the lads out again, we’re a bit thin on the ground today being the weekend and all. Did you want me to leave you here, I can try to find him?”

“No that will be fine.” Sherlock finally spoke again. “John here can do a once over of the death records, if you just point me in the direction of the cremators I’ll let you be on your way Mr Johnson.”

“Oh no trouble.” The man said. “They’re just down the end of this building.” He strode out the office door and pointed. “Head out the end and across the yard.”

Sherlock was off at a brisk pace before John had a chance to follow, and the doctor decided that perhaps there were a few clues hiding in the midst of the paperwork strewn across the desk and filer. He sat down on the chair and began trawling through the files in search of the missing cadavers name.

The detective was out the other end of the building in the flash, he practically ran across the courtyard and into the outbuilding, which held the furnaces. He had been to enough crematoriums to know how they worked. The bodies were signed off by the coroner, prepared for family viewing, sent to the ceremony and then the cremator. By law all bodies had to be processed within 24 hours of a ceremony, but considering this one had not had one, there was still a chance he could get it before all evidence was completely destroyed. When he rounded the corner, he found a man readying a cadaver for the furnace, sealing the cardboard coffin with parcel tape.

“Michael Rogerson?” Sherlock said, coming to halt.

“Depends who’s asking?” the man did not look up from his task, sliding the body over onto the loading rollers of the furnace.
“Destroying the evidence are you?”

“What?”

“This is your latest victim is it not?” the detective had a grim frown planted on his face. “Come on how else would you afford a Bugatti and the obvious recent botox?” Sherlock was in full deduction mode. “Tell me how do you do it, do you search them out or do they come to you? The distant family members that is? How much do you take of the inheritance, I’d say at least 50% going by the fact you’ve had at least three holidays this year and it’s only April. Must be quite the money maker. All you have to do is sign them off and then pop down here to give crematorium techs a hand, destroy your latest victim’s body, to ensure there is no evidence of foul play. I suspect you kill them with an overdose given the MO of the last two victims, am I correct?”

“Who the hell are you!?” The man was frozen on the spot.

“The names Sherlock Holmes, and I’m here to arrest you on the murder of your last three victims, who knows how many others you’ve murdered before.”

The young man laughed, his whole body shaking from the sound. “You’re a bloody psychopath mate; I dunno what the hell you’re talking about.”

“High functioning sociopath.” Sherlock grinned. “So you won’t mind me taking a look at this cadaver then will you?” He stepped forwards reaching for the cardboard coffin and began to pull the tap from the edges.

"I'm afraid i do."

"Too bad." The detective ripped the first piece of tape clean off, turning his back to begin tearing at the second piece. Unusual for the genius, Sherlock seemed too caught up in his own devices. Oblivious to the scene around him, he missed the hoe as it swung, colliding with the base of his skull. The world faded to black well before he hit the floor below.

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A deep foreboding in the pit of John’s stomach told him something was very very wrong. Sherlock had been gone no longer than 15 minutes, rushing off the the cremators in sign of the coroner himself, leaving doctor had rifled through most of the papers on the suspects desk. He had so far found no documents whatsoever for their missing cadaver, and his patience growing thin and concern magnifying by the second. As time drew on, John’s suspicions rose and the worry began to set in, until finally it became to much. Dropping the last of the files he out the office and went in search of his best friend.

When the doctor swung the door open to the room of the cremators he immediately spotted what looked like their suspect in question by one of the control panels. The furnace was burning, the glow of flames could be seen from the open door of the metal box. A cardboard coffin was sliding slowly into the heat.

"Michael Rodgerson?" From the reaction to the name John could confirm it was indeed their suspect. "Stop right there!" John had his gun out now, trained on the man. "Step away from the controls right now."

The coroner gave a garish grin and laughed.

"Where's Sherlock?"
"What's it to you." He chuckled, the coffin had now disappeared into the flames.

"He's my friend." John cried.

"Huh. What a shame." Michael brought a hand up to panel to press a button but John shot before he moved another inch. The bullet tore clean through the man's palm and sent a screech into the room as the coroner reeled in pain, holding his now profusely bleeding limb close to his body and whimpering in agony. "You bastard!" He screamed.

John was on him in a flash, though smaller in stature the soldier bowled the man backwards and into the wall, one hand clamping around his throat in a vice like grip. "Where is he!" He growled, teeth baring close to the other mans face. "What did you do with Sherlock!"

"Your... too late." The suspect breathed against his new pain, his eyes tracking towards the furnace and the door which was beginning to close.

John's eyes widened, realisation dawning on him. "Don't you move!" He slammed his hand into the coroners neck hard, bouncing his head off the wall and causing the man to be momentarily stunned.

"Sherlock!" John shouted, jumping to the control panel and hitting what looked like the emergency stop button. He was thankful when the burners ceased but as the doctor hauled himself up and onto the loading trolley John could see the cardboard coffin was already in flames, the paper layers was melting away at an alarming rate. "Sherlock!" He shouted again, panic now evident in his voice. He grabbed the bloodied hoe from beside the trolley, using it to hook around the smouldering box and pull it out towards himself. As the coffin was dragged out the furnace the sides of the container fell away. John stood above the blaze and yanked the lid away letting the flaming piece fall to the floor.

"Jesus!" John cried as Sherlock's pale face was revealed under the smouldering mess. His belstaff was actively burning too, his sleeves licked with flames at least three inches high. "Shit."

The doctor grunted, pushing his friend roughly over so that the pair of them went tumbling to the concrete floor below with a horrible thud. John pulled his jacket off his back using it as a makeshift blanket he hastily began to smother the flames from Sherlock's coat. The smell of burning flesh hit the doctors nostrils and turned his stomach but he remained calm, putting out every last lick of orange until his friends clothes were only smoking.

"Sherlock? Can you hear me?" He asked hastily, tapping his best friend's cheeks and cursing at the sight of the singed dark curls.

After a momentary pause the detectives body gave a light shudder and blue green eyes opened and fixed on the doctors. "Ah. John." Sherlock's voice was croaky and a little shaky. He gave a light cough, "good of you to come. I believe a made a small miscalculation in my haste to retrieve the missing body."

"You think?" John smiled grimly. "You nearly got yourself cremated at 3000 degrees, I think that's quite a big miscalculation don't you?" He scolded.

"Close call I grant you that." The detective pulled himself up and groaned.

"Not so fast, I haven't checked you over yet." John tried to push the man back down but his hands were batted away and the lanky man managed it into a seated posture.

"My coat!" He exclaimed, his face the look of horror as he inspected his sleeves to find them both
burned to a crisp. The fabric had blackened and melted, half dissolved and sticking into his severely burned skin in the process, it seemed the pain from the injuries had not quite made it into the detectives brain just yet. "My head hurts." He said finally.

John laced his hands around the back of his friend's skull and inhaled sharply when he found a large lump beginning to form, his palms came away red with blood. "We need to get you to a hospital." He said. "Head injury and severe burns, I'm not taking any chances."

"Oh do calm down," Sherlock flapped his arms in annoyance, "it's hardly even a concussion, and you can dress these burns at home. I'll have to get Mycroft's tailor on the phone to sort this out, this will never do." His bemused face looked at his blackened woollen garment."Though my brother did mention the risk of this happening, I do wish he wasn't so right all the time."

"Sherlock!" John warned, "I really don't think your coat is a priority right now do you?" He glanced to the suspect, happy to find the man a few feet away, eyes half lidded in pain, still clutching his bleeding appendage.

"But I love my coat." The detective sounded like a child then, whining idly about something pointless.

"Yes I know," John soothed, "but right now half of it is embedded in your flesh and I really don't think you will enjoy me peeling and flushing the thing out of your arms without some decent analgesia do you?"

"Oh." Sherlock's face abruptly fell, his eyes coming to rest on one of his wounded arms and the gory mess, it was as if suddenly the pain stimulus began to override his bodies adrenaline and a deep pulse of unbearable agony radiated from the burns. "That sounds good." He said with a stutter and a stumble of words. He frowned deeply and took a quick inhale against the pain.

"Good." John cried, with his phone in hand he dialled three numbers into the keypad. "Police and ambulance please." He answered the questions. "Yes two wounded, one gunshot wound to the hand, one with severe burns and a head injury." He shook his head in disbelief, realising if he'd been even a few seconds longer he'd be calling in two dead bodies.

Chapter End Notes

Facts about cremation (only read on if your not weirded out or squeamish about it), thought you might be interested to know.

Western world cremation contrary to belief is not actually burning of a body but more heating it to extreme temperatures which actually liquefy and evaporate all fluids and moisture in the tissues. Many cremators get to around 3000 degrees Celsius and it takes an average of 1-2hours to cremate an average sized human body. Once nearing the end of the process the crematorium tech will open the furnace and the skeleton left with be broken down with a hoe like instrument. Once the 'heating/burning' process is complete the remaining pieces of bone are swept into a machine called a cremulator. This is where the remains are ground up using ball bearings and turn the bones into what we know as ashes. There are loads of things you can do with ashes these days including making jewellery out of them, placing them in fireworks and even in tattoo ink, the possibilities of having your love ones with you forever are endless.
Descent

Chapter Summary

After what was meant to be a relaxing holiday John and Sherlock find themselves in a rather dangerous situation which is slowly turning into a desperate one.

Chapter Notes

I wrote this over the Easter weekend while recovering from being poorly all week. I miss the Isle of Wight, it was one of my last holidays in 2010. (I haven't had a holiday for over five years now) I hope you enjoy. I was debating if John would actually move his friend in this situation but my theory is he has no choice. This is a nod to one of my favourite John and Sherlock whump fiction, not meant to be a copy in anyway. Medical notes at the end of the chapter for interested parties.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The week in the Isle of Wight was supposed to be a relaxing break away for the pair of them, since all that had happened in the past year. From losing Mary and months later being subjected to torture by Sherlock's long lost sister John was actually hoping that getting away might just do them good. But of course the consulting detective had found a case, he just couldn't be trusted to go anywhere without sniffing out a criminal and ending in a pursuit. Except this pursuit had not ended well for any involved.

"Sherlock?" John cried and cracked his eyes open, he blinked several times to clear away the mist in them. His face was close to rocks and after a beat the entire series of events running up to now dawned on him. The doctor was wedged half way down a cliff face on a tiny ledge, he could hear the sound of the sea below him, the relaxing ebb of the waves almost sent him back off into blackness but he shook his head to bring himself to again. 'Focus,' the doctor internally shouted to himself. Priority one, assess current injuries and current predicament, also priority one, locate Sherlock and assess status. The last he remembered was the brief scuffle on the cliff edge, one assailant, John and Sherlock, a gun shot and they'd all gone over together. The doctor had missed his friends belstaff by inches as they both descended down the cliff, then there was nothing.

John groaned, head injury then. He brought up his right hand which seemed to be in tact and poked at his forehead finding a tender spot above his left eye but no obvious blood. Well that was a lucky escape, the bone underneath seemed fine but poking the injury made him feel nauseous, conclusion, mild to moderate concussion, he could live with that. Bringing his right arm around he found his elbow scream in pain and after closer inspection the entire area was caked in a fresh flow of blood and underneath an impressive and deep gash which was almost to bone level.

"Shit." He moaned, staunching the flow with his hand until he could think of a better idea. He wriggled his legs from under him, thankful to find no pain in either, the only other affliction he could find was a deep throbbing in his ribs. How an earth he'd only come away with a couple of broken ribs, head injury and one bloody wound John wasn't sure, he looked up. Must have fallen at
least 30 feet or more from the top. Pulling free his shirt he tore a strip off and wound it around his
bloodied arm.

"Sherlock?" John shouted again but this time with more gusto behind his voice, an ebb of panic
beginning rise in his aching chest. He gently pivoted around, well aware now of how small an edge
he was precariously balanced on and looked down.

The sea below was only around 15 feet from John's position, a small beach was barely big enough
for one person to walk along and it was lined with deep stony shale at the cliff edge. Directly
below the doctor was a prone form of the suspect they had been pursuing, he was face first in the
beach, his arms and legs at sickening angles and a long line of blood had soaked into the sand and
merged into the swirling water. The doctor gagged, hoping to god his friend was not in the same
twisted and deceased state. "Sherlock." He shouted again but there was no answer except the
crashing of waves below. He squinted his eyes against the low evening sun but could see no sign of
anyone, it was no use, he would have to lower himself down to search for his friend.

With a deep moan John managed it to his feet carefully, he wobbled and cursed the dizziness
which passed over him, bracing himself against the rocks. The doctor breathed hard, swallowing
down the nausea rolling in his stomach. "Right." John said to himself, searching out a viable foot
hole to start his careful climb down, he inhaled sharply as his ribs wedged up against the rocks
forcefully. "Fuck." He swore under his breath, every small inch downwards jarring his aching
body, sending shots of agony from his wounded elbow.

It was when he was almost half way down the doctors energy began to wane, his head rested
forwards, sweat beading on it. In the momentary lapse of concentration his foot slipped, sending
the doctor careening backwards and to the beach below. John let out a great shout of pain as his
collided with the shale below, the collection of stones boring into his back and fractured ribs. He
saw stars and a cloud of white came across his vision before he saw the blue sky again. Seconds
later he turned and vomited into the stones.

"Sherl?" He breathed hard against the rising bile threatening another round of gagging.
"Sh...Sherlock?" He force himself to a sit with a groan and wiped the sweat and spittle from his
face, composing himself to make it up onto his feet. As he staggered to upright John heaved again
but nothing came up. "Bloody hell." He swore angrily, bracing himself for a moment he stumbled
forwards and search of his best friend.

The whole search didn't actually take him long at all. As the doctor tripped forwards, he barely
made it a few feet before the great detectives coat came into view. It was a black stark expanse
against the pale sands beneath. John stumbled to his knees beside his friend.

"Sherlock?" John cried for what seemed like thousandth time, "hey?" He breathed, looking over his
friend's lanky form.

The detective was flat on his back, arms gently out at his sides and legs perfectly straight. It was
the position akin to the way John had found his friend in Magnussen's office not so long ago now.

"Jesus bloody Christ." John placed two finger on his friend's carotid exposed pulse and breathed a
massive exhale when the thrum of blood could be felt under them. "Sherlock, can you hear me?"
He called.

John did a quick survey of his friend's body, thankful to find the detective breathing regularly and
without excessive effort. He pulled back his friend's coat collar he cursed when stark crimson came
into his view. The other side of the detectives neck was gashed and bloodied, clearly ripped open
on the jagged rocks as he fell, he hadn't been wearing his scarf today. The blood loss from the
wound was moderate but certainly not life threatening, he'd been lucky considering the major vessels running in that area. He gently ran his hands round the back of his friend's head delicately, surprised to find no sign of a head injury. He ran them down both his friend's arms finding no deformities or swellings, his radial pulse was thready and John frowned at the discovery, concerned by a potential internal bleed. He checked both sides of ribs but no fractures, palpating his friend's abdomen he was pleased to find no symptoms so far of an abdominal haemorrhage. Sighing with some relief he moved further down, scooting in the sand he felt the man's hips and pelvis. He gently compressed his friend's pelvic iliac crests and to his horror they both moved freely away from each other, it was then the detective came to.

Sherlock's eyes snapped open wide and he screamed, a long guttural noise which went straight through John, sending a shiver through him, the sound bounced from the cliff face and echoed around them.

"Shit!" John was at his friend's face, "oh god, I'm so sorry. It's ok, I'm here, it's alright." He tried to calm his friend's clear agony and the detective's howl died down into moaning sobs before finally after what seemed like forever coming to an end.

"J...John." Sherlock murmured after a beat, eyes still staring unseeing to the sky above, it was turning a purple red shade as the sun was beginning to set across the ocean.

"Yes, I'm here. I'm sorry." He doctor grabbed a handful of dark curls, "look at me?" He asked kindly.

The detective's eyes blinked back he tears which had quickly gathered in them, darting around before finally coming to rest on his friend. "John?" He asked, voice shaking, "w...what happened?"

The look of panic was set into his face.

"We fell don't you remember?" John's eyebrows pinched together, "up on the cliff," he traced his eyes up and gulped at the height of the great chalky expanse, "we were chasing a suspect. I shot him as he was about to take you over the edge, seems I was too late as all of us took the fall."

Sherlock didn't answer, his breath hitched in panic and John eyed him with suspicion.

"What is it?" The doctor tried to study his look, "Sherlock?" He warned.

"I...I." The detective stuttered, he never stumbled over his words and a lump began to ball in the doctor's throat.

"Sherlock?" He asked a little more firmly but not without compassion.

"I... I do believe... I can't feel my legs." He cried, "John, I can't feel them." His lower lip wobbled and it broke the doctor's heart, John could feel the lump in his throat threatening another vomiting episode.

"J...John. Why..." Sherlock's voice was broken now, "w...why can't I feel them?"

"Just try to stay calm ok." The doctor took a deep inhale and calmed himself, doctor mode was how he had to be now. "It's alright, your pelvis is broken badly." He said, keeping his voice slow and steady, "it's probably causing pressure and swelling on your nerves which connect to your legs."

"But?"

"Yes I know, we both also know it can be a sign of a spinal chord injury but let's not jump to
conclusions ok?" John gave his best friend's hand a squeeze. "I'm going to need to check the pulses in both of your feet and make sure that the blood flow is not compromised ok?"

"Ok." The detective faltered.

"I'm just here ok, just at your feet." John took a deep breath and swallowed back the constant nausea, it wasn't unnoticed.

"Are... you ok?" Sherlock asked, his eyes now sharp on his friend's face.

"Just a mild concussion." The doctor rubbed his forehead, hissing when he touched the swollen and angry bruising eyebrow. "Don't worry about me ok." He dug into his pocket in search of his phone, how it had taken him this long to think up calling for help he didn't know. He cursed when he found it lifeless with the screen shattered dropping it to the sand he looked to his friend.

"Got your phone?" He asked.

Sherlock swung an arm up reaching over to his belstaff pocket but John pushed his shoulders back when he found his friend's body moving too much for his liking. "Lay still would you." He cried, "just let me."

The doctor lent over and retrieved the mobile from the coat pocket only to find it in a similar state, smashed and beyond repair. Fine, he sighed, he would have to scout the other victim of the cliff face in search of a viable phone, right now he needed to stabilise his friend's shattered pelvis, it would have to wait, blood flow to his friend's legs was more of a priority.

"Right." He said, dropping Sherlock's mobile next to his. "Stay right there." He said, catching his friend's half hearted eye roll as he shuffled down to the detectives feet.

As carefully as he could he unlaced and gently removed one shoe, his friend's light whimper did not go unnoticed. He then did the same to the other and rolled both black socks off. Sherlock's dorsal pedal pulses were almost absent, barely a feeling of anything, John's lips pursed together into a line, he checked the posterior tibial pulse to find not a flutter under his digits. "Damn it." He cussed. The fracture was compromising flow or causing so much blood loss that blood vital to keeping his legs alive was not reaching where it needed to go.

"Right." John returned to his friend's head end and checked his carotid pulse again, tachycardia, almost certainly massive blood loss, his friend was going into shock and fast, he needed to stabilise the pelvis to reduce the flow quickly. His trauma training kicked in, he needed a pelvic splint or sling but without any means of medical supplies despite his usual small trinkets he would have to improvise. "Stay awake Sherlock ok." He said firmly, "it's important that you keep talking to me."

"What?" His friend's eyes fluttered, "why?"

"Because your going into hypovolaemic shock, you need to stay conscious and talking, I'm going to stabilise your broken pelvis, it should stop most of the bleeding."

"Oh, ok." Sherlock's breath hitched, "hypovolemia, extreme fluid loss," he nodded weakly, much to John's dismay, "usually blood loss which can be either externally or internally or from other fluids, in cases of extreme diarrhoea, vomiting, severe burns or dehydration from not consuming enough fluids at regular intervals."

John gave a short chuckled despite their predicament, "and you should know the latter well shouldn't you."
Sherlock shot him a glare.

"I need your trousers I'm afraid." John winced, he knew it wouldn't be taken well.

"No."

"Yes. No if's, no but's." John set to work on his friend's trouser button and zip trying best not to flush with embarrassment, 'pull yourself together Watson' he cursed inwardly. With a gentle but swift tug he pulled his friend's trousers down and Sherlock whimpered in response. "Keep talking." The doctor asked as he lay the fabric out on the ground and folded it in half longways.

"Symptoms of shock..." The detectives voice quivered, "increased respiratory rate and heart rate, poor capillary refill time and pale or blue mucous membranes, weakness and lightheadedness leading to eventual..... loss of consciousness." He finished weakly, eyes closing to slits.

"No, no, stay conscious." John pitched the back of his friend's hand and the detectives eyes opened.

"Hey!"

"I'm afraid this might hurt again." John bit his bottom lip in anticipation and guilt. "Sorry." He slid the pair of trousers side ways under his friend's hips in one motion as he had removed them, this time his friend sucked in a breath. "Ready?"

"No." Sherlock's body was shaking lightly.

"Okay." John positioned the black fabric in line with the top of his friend's femurs and pulled the two sides tightly up together. Sherlock cried out, but this time his voice holding back the majority of the scream, John could hear it deep in his friend's throat edging to get out but the man not allowing it. Sherlock's eyes screwed tightly closed, a steady stream of tears running down his cheeks and collecting in his ears. "I'm so sorry." The doctor whispered, looping the trousers and pulling so hard he whimpered himself from the pressure on his own wounded elbow. The detective let out a short but bellowing howl and then was silent, passed out from the level of pain his body had just endured.

He came to almost immediately, breath hitching in short ragged gasps, he winced several times before finally pulling himself together and slowing his breathing down.

"Sorry." John was leaning over him again, checking his best friend's still racing pulse.

"Berk!" Sherlock snarled, his face now a stark white even against the pale sandy beach below his head.

"Hey!" John cried, "really any need for that, I probably just saved your life you bloody prick."

"Thanks for that." The detective smiled falsely.

Eyeing the corpse of one of their suspects back down the sands the doctor then drew a long breath. "Stay here." He groaned as he clambered roughly to his feet. "I'm just going to see if he has a phone." He pointed and slowing began making his way back over to the dead man. "We really need to get some help, give it an hour and we'll lose the light."

John stumbled back over towards the dead suspect, with any luck there would be a useable mobile on the man, but given the state of his body the doctor was no holding out his luck. John winced as he landed heavily on his knees beside the body, he hesitated for a moment, feeling wrong to be searching a deadman, something in his morals hated it. He peeled the mans jacket back and buried
his hand into the pocket. Nothing. John then pulled the other side of the mans arm up and
rummaged in his other pocket, slightly horrified when he felt crepitus in the appendage, his bones
must have been shattered by the fall. Finally after what seemed like and age of looking in every
pocket known to man the doctor located the phone and held it out to look at.

He let out a sigh of relief to find the device not completely smashed and it light up with life. The
thing didn't have a password and he opened up the dial screen and pressed 999. 'No service' flashed
up. "Damn it." John shouted. He wrote a haphazard text and tried to send it, typing in multiple
recipients in the hope that at least one message would make it to them, Mycroft, Lestrade, Mrs
Hudson. The doctor thought about Rosie in that second, his heart lurching with concern about her
welfare but knowing for well she was safely being looked after by Molly and Mrs H, the pair of
them expecting that Sherlock and he where having a restful break, so much for restful. He glanced
to his best friend, who looked like he had passed out again and took a deep breath. He pocketed the
phone and turned to look at the sun preparing to set across the sea, it wouldn't be long before night
fall and their chances of being found would diminish considerably.

"Sherlock? Are you with me?" John was back at his friend's side in a beat, but immediately
regretted his quick movements when his stomach began to detest again, he swallowed back the
rising nausea carefully. "Sherlock?"

"Hm."

"Open your eyes for me?" John checked his pulse and found it much the same, the only change in
the detectives current state was his slightly increased breathing rate.

"The tide is coming in." Sherlock said with a croak but did not open his lids in response.

"What?" The doctor turned to look at the edge of the sea to find the gentle laps of waves meeting
his friend's bare toes. "Got your feeling back then?" He said with a smile.

"Quite." The detective finally cracked his eyes open to slits and eyed his best friend, "so what's the
plan boss?" He smiled back.

John cringed at the stark paleness of his lips, concern ebbing away slowly. What if the pelvic
splint hadn't slowed the blood flow enough, what if is friend had ruptured his liver of spleen too, a
fall from that height would easily cause such a trauma.

"John?" The worry must have shown on his face because the detective was now tugging lightly at
his jacket sleeve. "I'm just fine, stop panicking."

"Not panicking... yet." He added, feeling a headache beginning to throb behind his eyes.

"So, what's the plan?" Sherlock's face showed nothing but trust in his friend and doctor, "I mean I
love sunbathing and all that but it is getting a little chilly out and I could do with some new pants if
we're planning on company anytime soon."

"Ha." John gave a short laugh but immediately regretted the pain it brought him, "no pants doesn't
usually stop you." He pulled out the deadman's phone and checked the messages and signal, still no
luck, he paused looking down the beach and to the endless cliff faces. "I dunno Spock. What do
you think? No signal on the phone, tried to send messages and contact the coastguard but it won't
connect, suns setting, temperatures are dropping and the tide is on the in. And no, leaving you here
to drown while I find help is not an option."

"Shame." Sherlock smirked, "I was hoping for some peace from your constant babbling, even on
holiday you can't help yourself can you."

"Like you can't stop crime solving?" John shot in a friendly fire.

"I can't switch it off like a light bulb." The younger man countered.

John couldn't help but smile again, it was true. Perhaps next time Mars H sent them both on a last minute getaway it should be the remote highlands where they'd likely not see anyone or pick up any cases. He looked to the remote tiny beach and shuddered, or perhaps not, if they'd been on the banks of the Thames they'd have been picked up well before now.

"If you won't leave me then all I can suggest is you taking me with you, or you could try scaling the cliff face?" His eyes strained to look backwards and up the vast expanse.

"I don't think so, even in a fit state I'm not sure I'd make it up that, but I don't think my ribs can take a climb I'm afraid."

"Ribs?" Sherlock frowned, "I thought you just had concussion?"

"Just a few broken ribs too, and a scuff to the elbow." The doctor waved him off, "nothing I can't handle, at least I can walk."

"Well then, let's get going?" The detective asked, "I'd say we have a minimum of 15 minutes of sunlight ahead of us before night starts to fall, we should make the most of it. High tide isn't for another 2 hours or so, so I'm hoping that should give us enough time to get to the nearest beach with access, Brook."

"We're going nowhere until I've checked your back for damage." John warned, pulling his friend's arm out of his great coat with some protest. "No ifs." He said before any words could cross the detectives lips.

The doctor gently and slowly rolled his best friend onto his right side, trying to block out the whimper with his friend emitted at the movement. "Tell me if any of this hurts?" He asked sadly, he pushed firmly and palpated each vertebrae one by one. Sherlock remained silent until the doctor finally reached his sacral bones connected to his pelvis.

"Stop!" The detective let out a moan and batted John away. "Please, not there..." he let out a ragged exhale.

"Fine." John gently lowered him back to the sand and placed the mans arm back inside his coat. "Wiggle your fingers for me?"

Sherlock rolled his eyes in return.

"Stop mocking me, we're going nowhere until I'm half happy you haven't broken your spine."

The detective finally obliged.

"And your toes."

Sherlock made a face but both feet moved. John slipped his socks back onto them, thankful the tide had not yet claimed them. He pulled both shoes on loosely and then sniggered at the look of his friend, trouserless and wearing footwear.

"Right." John said finally, he bent down pulling the belstaff into his friend's body and buttoned it
"This is not going to be pleasant for either of us, so I apologise in advance." He paused for a moment, "which way are we going?"

"West." Sherlock pointed toward the setting sun, "we chased the suspect from Brighside campsite for at least half a mile, we're probably only around a mile off the beaches of Brook and you can access the main land from there, the tide comes close in though so we'll have to stick close to the cliff edge regardless."

John cringed, he knew the dangers of walking close to the cliffs, the weather had eroded away plenty of the chalk and lime and rockfall was always a danger of walking too close, but it was that or get washed out to sea. Without any further delay he laced his hands onto Sherlock's coat collar and pulled him slightly upwards as well as back, he would walk backwards for now, until the beach became to unstable for it.

The detective bit his lip hard refusing to allow a cry to sound, he furrowed his brows tightly and braced himself for the movement across the sand. John was right, this was not going to be pleasant for either party.

They were silent for sometime, John's laboured breathing could be heard over the crashing of the incoming waves but his grip did not falter, the burning pain from his injured elbow was worsening by the stride but he continued on for a good few hundred meters before finally coming to a stop.

"Just a second." He pulled out the mobile and checked it. Still no signal. By now the sun was a small crescent on the surface of the rippling blue water, neither was sure where the time had gone, when they'd set out to confront their suspect today it had only been just past lunchtime, how had it got so late so quickly. John gulped back the worry that he had been unconscious for longer than we realised on the ledge. "How you holding up?" He asked, inspecting his friend.

Sherlock's face was stark white, his coat didn't help with the pallor. "Peachy." Came a weak reply, a smile and a lift of the eyebrows.

The doctor frowned at his friend's feet to find one turned outwards at 90 degrees, the sling must have slipped, "hang on." He rounded on his friends lower end and released the last two buttons to inspect his handiwork. The trousers where held fast, John's knot had not so much as budged. The sickening realisation then hit him. Sherlock's lower leg was in tact but just above the detectives knee there was a clear deformity in the appendage, pointing to nothing other than a fractured femur. Dark purple was visible deep inside the flesh showing severe haemorrhage from the injury. "Shit." John rebuttoned the belstaff and pinched his brow, how had he missed this, the pain from the fractured pelvis must have masked the pain from the leg. With the level of blood loss from the pelvic injury and the signs of more heavy bleeding from the fractured leg Sherlock was on the cusp of full cardiovascular collapse, the man might have been superhuman in some sense but their was no fighting biology. His friend needed blood, and he needed it now.

"You alright?" Sherlock could see the lines of worry deepening on his friend's face, "what is it?"

"You've broken your leg too." John said flatly, he turned his back on his friend placing his fingers on his carotid pulse. It was faster than before, tachycardia, pale skin. He swallowed back the panic, this was not doing his nausea any good.

"Not good?" Sherlock said, his breaths now short.

"A bit not good yeah, we need to get a move on." The doctor but his back to the detectives and then pulled his arms in loops around his friends, pulling him up with a grunt. "Sit tight yeah, the beach gets a bit rocky in a minute, we need to head over it because the seas getting in closer."
Sherlock didn't answer, he gritted his teeth against the agony, the rocks did nothing but worsen his situation. He cried out once as his feet slid over the uneven piles of shale and broken chalky rock face. He could hear John's ragged breathing behind him, the doctors feet were tottering and slipping on the sticky algae.

"John." The detectives head was feeling light, it felt like his heart was fluttering wildly in his chest and nauseous all of a sudden. "John slow down..." he inhaled and exhaled quickly, stifling another whimper of pain. "Please..." his voice faltered, "I... I don't feel well."

Either John didn't hear him over his own ragged breathing or he chose to ignore it because for almost a minute they continued their precarious journey over the rocky terrain.

"John?" Sherlock's voice wobbled, the sun had set now but he was certain the darkness creeping into his vision was not the night falling. He could feel his body beginning to shake lightly, jarring his lower limbs into agony. He let out a shrill and weak wail and this seemed to bring the doctors attention onto him.

"Sherlock?" The doctor stumbled haphazardly, his feet faltering until finally they reached the sandy beach the other side of the rocky obstruction. His knees gave out and the pair of them hit the beach, gritty sand spraying into the doctors mouth. The salty shower sent him into a fit of coughing followed by unrelenting endless retching. Just as his vision began to blur, the agony of his ribs pulling him towards unconsciousness he brought up blood and the heaving ceased. "Oh hell." He choked, this was not good.

"...hn." The detectives voice was barely a whisper, his limbs were shuddering a a bid to keep him awake, but the darkness was pulling him slowly down.

"It sent!" John suddenly exclaimed. His hand gasping the mobile which made his face light up in the dimming light. "Mycroft got it, helps coming." He read the text on screen again, almost to confirm it.

'We have your position, Solent coastguard on the way, should be with you in less than 5 minutes, take care of my brother. MH.'

The message was posted 4 minutes ago. "Sherlock." John turned to the detective and his face fell in an instant. "Hey!" He pulled two fingers onto his best friend's pulse, it was weak and was now so fast John could no longer count the flittering beats or distinguish one from another. Stage four hypovolaemic shock, time really was running out. "Sherlock, stay with me ok, talk to me, help is coming."

"John." Sherlock's eyes were listless and staring at the purple darkening sky above.

"That's it stay awake," John's voice fell to barely audible levels, "oh please, God please stay awake for me."

The doctors ears picked up a familiar noise then, his face shot up to the sky just as a helicopter appeared over the cliff edge, the sound of the rotors deafening him. It turned sharply across the ocean, saltwater spraying up from its powerful downforce, the search beam rounding on the pair of them fully. The detective looked nothing but ghostly under the white glare and John kept his fingers firmly on the mans pulse, worried that if he stopped for one second it would be gone forever.

Before the doctor even realised a medic was on him, clearly been winched down in double time, he was nothing but a silhouette before him in the search light. "Doctor Watson?" The man shouted
over the din of the chopper circling above.

"Yes." John felt a weight lift of his shoulders. "Please, Sherlock needs blood, stage four hypovolaemia, fractured pelvis and right femur, he's lost a catastrophic amount of blood."

The man barked into his transmitter, "I need the scoop down here, we're heading to Southampton general, we have a priority one code red, major haemorrhage and multiple fractures." The medic turned to the detective, Sherlock's eyes were now slits, his lips were moving soundlessly.

With quick precision the man did a primary survey of the detective, coming to the same conclusion as John in under a minute. "Doctor." He said finally turning to him. "I need your help."

John did nothing but nod in agreement, his fingers had not moved from their position on Sherlock's neck. The medic slung his bag down on the sand, he rummaged quickly in it bringing out iodine swabs and an array of intravenous cannulas. "We need to secure a line, I'm not sure a peripheral one is going to be doable in his state." He gently pulled the detectives arm from his coat with no protests, Sherlock was now slipping in and out of consciousness with little awareness of his loud and hectic surroundings. The medic swabbed the crook of the detectives arm, sliding a tourniquet on above the area he pulled it tightly and searched for a vein.

John did not move from his position, the racing thrum under his two fingers grounding him in the moment, he worried if he moved them he might just lose it. He looked at the site the medic was probing and shook his head, there was no time for this. "External jugular vein." John managed to grab the mans attention, the doctor was used to having no viable limb veins, he shuddered at the thought, no point in struggling with a small peripheral vein when there was one right beside his fingers.

The medic agreed quickly and he was scrubbing the area before John even had a chance to move. "Care to do the honours?" A large bore cannula was thrust in his view. John was not prepared for this, but considering their positions it made more sense than trying to swap around. Grinding his teeth and biting back the growing headache and nausea he took the catheter without question. Within moments the thing was cleanly inside his friend's jugular vein and securing tape and y-connector was passed his way. By the time it was neatly fastened in place a syringe of flush was in his hands.

"TXA." The medic cried as he passed the second syringe. Then we start fluids and run for it, we don't have time to hang about."

John pushed the drug slowly, knowing it could cause some side effects if forced into circulation too quickly. Despite the desperation of the situation and wanting to check his friend's pulse his hands didn't shake a millimetre. Minutes later a huge bag of saline was running in at full pelt and the medic at scooped the detective onto a spinal board, already securing the clips and the winch from overhead. The detectives eyes were closed now, given in to the pulls of unconsciousness.

The doctor had forgotten about the helicopter he wasn't sure how. Its roaring presence now closer than ever, the skilled pilot had the thing in close to the cliffs and nearly feet above them, the engine exhaust sound was vibrating through the doctors body.

"We'll send Mr Holmes up first then we'll go together." The medic signalled to the winchman and Sherlock headed up at a speedy rate, John lost sight of him in a second, panic suddenly setting in. Less than a minute later a soft ring was thrown around his arms and he was practically carried upwards by the medic. As they reached the door of the chopper he rolled in, energy diminishing. The door snapped shut and the helicopter banked dramatically, setting off towards the emergency department. John let himself lay back, relief at finally finding safety for them both, his heart
fluttered madly in worry for his friend, but he was in the right place now, they both were.

Chapter End Notes

TXA is something called Tranexamic acid and is a substance used in trauma medicine when haemorrhage is a concern. It's mechanism of action is quite complicated but in short it stops the breakdown of clots and therefore helps to reduce bleeding.

A new coastguard helicopter was introduced two weeks ago which covers the Isle of Wight.
Chapter Summary

Sherlock clings to life on his journey to the hospital and John struggles to hold it together.

Chapter Notes

TheGracefulBlueCat has done some great artwork for this chapter. Check it out here, I highly recommend it.
Desperation - John's hand By TheGracefulBlueCat

Well this has taken me forever to write, apologies. I have to also say sorry, not sorry for the intense emotional roller coaster of this chapter. Hurt John and Sherlock, some comfort, angst and lots of medical stuff. A little shout out to Boton for always commenting something lovely and GracefulBlueCat who is always wonderful support. I have to say if your not medically minded and want to know a little more prior to reading (especially what REBOA is) then please feel free to read the medical definitions at the end of the chapter. Anyone in human medicine spot a mistake then feel free to flag it up, i want this to be as true to life as i can be. Thanks again and enjoy (if you can lol) sorry!

Ps. I'm looking for people interested in doing some fan art to these stories, if you know anyone or fancy a shot yourself please feel free! : )

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The sounds of the helicopter were deafening to John's ears, but not as deafening as the sound of the screaming ECG monitor beside him. The doctor’s heart pounded wildly in his chest, the whooshing pulse in his ears only adding to the panic within him. He struggled to remain at least the tiniest bit calm and swallowed back the nausea as the chopper banked harshly again, its passengers thrown towards one side until it levelled out. The movement was doing nothing for John's dizzy concussion filled head.

"Sherlock!" He shouted over the din, grabbing his friend's hand in a death grip, the detectives appendage was cold to touch and the temperature sent a shiver down the doctors own arm in response. "Come on Sherlock, not this, not now." He shook his head defiantly.

The detective’s eyes cracked into slits, half-moon ellipses and pupils vaguely on his friend's figure. "John..." a weak and barely audible moan came from his throat, muffled by the oxygen mask now strapped the detectives face.

"That's it, stay with me." John brought his face closer to his friend's; in his peripheral vision, he could see the medic working hard. The fluids hanging above them were racing into the detectives veins at terrifying speed that any doctor who did not work in trauma would have been uncomfortable with. "Sherlock, stay awake!" John brought his hands up so that he was now
cupping his best friend's cheeks in his palms. "It's important, please."

John could see the medic pushing another drug through the IV line quickly, "noradrenalin," he said without question, John nodded in agreement, the drug would help Sherlock's blood pressures at least temporarily, and within moments the numbers on screen rose a little in response.

"Four minutes to Southampton general." The paramedic cried, "the trauma team is on standby, as is blood and a vascular surgeon." He jotted a few notes down on his pad hastily before checking the detectives pulses in his feet and then covering him with a blanket, John couldn't help the ghost of a smile at the orange 'shock blanket.' "Are you okay Dr Watson?" He asked, "Are there any injuries I need to be made aware of before we arrive?"

"I'm fine." He wave off the advances of the man, "just look after him."

Another moan and a gasp escaped the detective’s lips and his eyes began to roll backwards, leaving only the whites of them visible. John could see his friend’s arms shaking slightly, likely a side effect of the drug. His body in full flight mode now, cardiovascular system literally fighting to continue each beat of his struggling heart, muscles and organs screaming out for oxygen rich blood that was depleting fast.

"No, no." John gripped his friend's head and gently shook it. "Sherlock, come on." He looked to the monitors, still angrily screeching, the figures were dropping again, the ECG trace was now barely readable, pulse rate either too fast or Sherlock's heart muscle itself was not contracting properly. The detective’s body took another great gulp of air, eyes slipping closed.

"We're losing you." John cried.

"Step on it Geoff!" The medic shouted to the pilot and John felt the aircraft quicken slightly. The man pulled his intercom out and barked into it, "This is Alfa Whiskey 189 coast guard contacting Southampton general accident department do you read?"

The machine crackled slightly, "this is Southampton general receiving, what is your position."

"Coming into approach, ETA 2 minutes." He looked out the window, "I need the team up here to meet us. Patient is extremely unstable. Middle aged male, approximate 50 foot cliff fall, pelvic and femoral fracture in severe hypovolemic shock and hypotensive, vascular team need to be prepped for potential REBOA."

"Message received." The person on the end of the line replied in a flash, "team being briefed, see you in a few moments."

The conversation with the ground crew barely registered into John Watson's ears, his attention fixed between his best friend's blue translucent pallor and the protesting monitor, the detective gave another abhorrent gasp. John read the ECG with utter horror, the trace beginning to lose its uniform shapes; Sherlock's heart was failing, not enough blood to pump anymore and acid imbalance taking their toll.

"He's in VF!" John shouted, his own heart in his throat, he was well aware that his friend’s breathing had turned into agonal gasps, full cardiac arrest was imminent.

The medic reached forwards, pulling open Sherlock's now ripped and bloodied shirt to reveal his bare chest. He pulled up the defibrillator and quickly stuck the electrodes onto the detective’s ghostly skin. "Oxygen off." He said and John pulled the mask away. "Charging." The machine whirred. "Stand clear."
A beeping sounded before Sherlock's body jolted and his muscles seized, his voice gave an involuntary groan, which made John want to vomit. Both trained physicians stared at the screen, but the rhythm on it remained chaotic.

"Charging again." The medic pressed the machine and it loaded up again.

John's urge to vomit was so strong that as Sherlock gave a groan after another the shock he actually heaved. With a hand tightly across his mouth he managed to hold himself together though, not that there was a thing left in his aching stomach to expel. He glanced up at the screen, swallowing hard, and feeling adrenaline rushing through his veins, the beats had evened and a more normal trace could be seen.

"Jesus." The doctor cursed, his voice broken. He tipped slightly forwards onto his arms and heaved in a deep sob, emotion welling towards the surface at an alarming rate. "Please... don't." He croaked, tears threatening. "I can't do this again Sherlock."

Paralysed by what could only be described as emotional shock John watched the experienced medic work on his best friend, pushing air into the detective’s now static lungs with a mask and ambu bag.

"Tube?" John asked weakly, where the hell had all his energy suddenly gone, he was practically on the floor. His limbs were shaking, teeth chattering from the overwhelming surge of adrenaline in him.

"We're about to land Dr Watson." The man said, squeezing the bag with precise timing, not letting his eyes off the screen, "the team will be with us any second."

John wasn't sure what he expected to happen in the coming minutes, he was well are of how trauma medicine worked but found himself at a loss all of a sudden. His mind numbed to his surroundings. As the door of the helicopter slid open, the sound of the rota blades increased ten fold and a sea of doctors and nurses flocked towards them. The detective disappeared into the throng of activity within seconds. John stumbled out the door hastily after them, accompanied by a young lady he could only assume to be a nurse, a kind but panicked look in her eyes.

"Sherl..." he was unsteady on his feet and the young nurse took his arm gently.

"It's ok Dr Watson, he's in good hands."

"Can't leave him." He cried, swallowing hard, quickening his pace after the gurney which was clattering down the ramp towards the main hospital building at break neck speed. "Please, he's my friend."

"I know." The young nurse supported John's shaking form and they made their way towards the hospital doors, Sherlock had now disappeared from view. "We're under strict instruction not to separate you." She said.

John would have to thank Mycroft for that one later he thought. Finally, after some time they made it to the doorway and he was guided into a wheelchair, which he accepted gladly. Their pace quickened once wheels replaced his wobbling useless legs and the nurse did not hang around. The blogger wasn't sure how long it was but within a matter of minutes he was back at his best friend's side, his wheelchair now parked directly next to the gurney. They were now in the middle of the busy accident department.

John watched on for several minutes. The trauma team were working at full pelt, each member of
staff moving like a well-oiled part of an engine, completing each job and each task quickly and precisely. John could not keep up with each and every one. Tubes and wiring were in a criss cross pattern across his friend's body, monitors bleeping out different tones and alarms. The doctor's had wasted no time in intubating the detective and John watched on while a medic breathed for his best friend through the tube. He grabbed uselessly at Sherlock's dark curls, his friend's arms both occupied at being pincushions for now, another IV was in and the doctor could see a flow of blood running into it. A member of the team was pulling arterial bloods from his friend's radial artery, John cringed, he hated taking arterial samples.

The lead doctor stepped up and spoke. "Ortho are being prepped, I want a FAST scan please." a medic had pulled up a portable ultrasound and the probe was already on the detective’s abdomen. "Thank you Doctor Grant." Many eyes turned to the screen. "I need two units in and a pelvic X-rays stat please, if conformation of a pelvic fracture then placement a REBOA zone III is necessary considering Mrs Holmes's severe hypovolemia. Once in place we prep for a CT then straight to theatre."

This was not happening; John braced his hands on the side of his friend's bed and took a long inhale to regain control. "Come on Sherlock, just hold on a little longer." He whispered, his voice barely audible above the organised chaos of the room. "Please Sherlock, for me, just hold on ok?" He let his forgotten painful forehead rest against his friend's dishevelled locks in affection and tears rolled down his pale cheeks. "I can't lose you again." His whispered into his friend's ear, voice broken. "I can't do it again."

"Doctor Watson?" The nurse was by his side again, her eyes betrayed her worry and she gently pulled at his upper arm. "We need to move now?"

"I can't leave him..." John cried, sudden panic gripping his chest, he held fast to the bars of the gurney as they tried to wheel him backwards. "No."

"We need to take an X-ray, you can't sit there for a moment, we'll only be minute I promise."

John's head bowed and he relented, letting his arms fall from his grip to his sides. He looked over his best friend. Sherlock was barely recognisable on the bed, most of his clothes were now gone, he would not be impressed to see the expensive attire in scraps in a pile in the corner. A new pelvic split was in place as well as a leg splint. His alabaster bare skin was a shocking contrast to the many wires, tubes and patches across his body, the blood from his neck wound glistened in the strip lighting, despite the attempt at a light dressing, it was still oozing. John could only think of how small and vulnerable the detective looked laying almost lifelessly before him, unable to breath for himself, heart still struggling against the ongoing blood loss. As the doctor was wheeled backwards and his friend disappeared from view nausea rose back up into his throat and he swallowed hard.

"Would you like something for the pain Doctor Watson?" A different nurse this time. John looked blearily to his injured elbow to find a neat and thick bandage there, and his very own IV catheter in the back of his hand. When had this happened? His breath hitched quickly in panic, what else had happened that he didn't remember?

"Doctor Watson?"

"I'm fine!" John spat angrily, "I...I... can't." His voice broke and soften apologetically at his outburst; the sound was so pitiful it made the young nurse cringe. "He doesn't do well with unfamiliar company."

"It's ok." She replied, "you can sit with him, but he's probably going to surgery soon and you need
some treatment yourself."

"I'm really fine." The doctors sighed "I'm sorry I just..." he bit his lip hard, angry that every last shred of despair was escaping him, when had he become this emotional? He took a long deep breath and immediately regretted it by the pull of his broken painful ribs, he stifled a moan.

minutes passed before John was wheeled back to his position and as he glanced across the working trauma team he was sure he caught a glimpse of Mary's sad eyes. John shook his head, no, she was gone, she was not here, he pulled his thoughts away from her and tried to concentrate on the situation at hand. He looked up to the small screen at the end of the bed and the X-ray image now displayed their, two doctors were discussing the findings but John could clearly see the fractures to his friend's pelvis. It would need surgery to realign and repair, at least the blood loss was explainable. A second image clicked up and the doctor cringed at the sight of his friend's broken femur, another source of heavy bleeding, there was no wonder his friend had gone into shock. The monitors were less angry now, the doctor read the numbers which were slightly better than earlier, although Sherlock's blood pressure was still dangerously low.

At any other time John would have been interested in what the trauma team were doing, John was well aware what a REBOA was but had never had the chance of being involved in one. During his time in the army he had never had the luxury of being able to use the procedure which may have saved many lives out in the field.

John ran a hand through his friend's hair as he watched them work quickly. A nurse was now prepping the inside of Sherlock's groin area, John could see the heavy bruising now mottling the detectives other leg and he cringed, berating himself for missing the obvious break in the bone. The vascular surgeon moved into the nurse’s place and quickly cut down into the detectives flesh locating the femoral artery before he began inserting the catheter stylet. John hoped to God this would buy his friend some more time because clearly the haemorrhage was uncontrolled and wasting more time would only risk another near cardiac arrest or worse. The procedure was not without risk though, if left in for too long Sherlock would lose the use of both his legs, he shuddered visibly at the thought.

"Beginning balloon inflation." The surgeon said, bringing John's attention back to the present. He stared up at the multi parameter screen as the blood pressure cuff began to whir, waiting with baited breath to read the measurement and hoping that it would rise to more than its current 65 systolic. His own heart pounded loudly in his own ears, practically in time with his friends own racing beats ringing out. It seemed to take an age before the numbers flashed up 86/58.

John breathed a quick sigh. “That’s it mate, more of those numbers would be great.” He rested his head on his friends shoulder and exhaled. His doctor’s brain trying not to think about the potential irreversible damage to Sherlock’s kidneys or worse his genius brain from the lack of blood pressure and oxygen. John breathed past the panic, now is not the time, he closed his eyes and tried to remember a happier moment but all he could see was his best friends bloodied face below Bart’s.

Suddenly a twitch of muscles below him made the doctor snap his eyes open. Down the bed, he could see the detective’s fingers stretch outward and John grabbed them in an instant. “Hey, it’s ok.” He soothed and when his attention finally landed on Sherlock’s face he was both horrified and relieved to see his eyes open to slits. His pupils were staring listlessly at the ceiling above them.

"Sherlock?” John whispered standing out of his chair; he did not trust his voice not to break. "Sherlock you with me?” He doubted the detective was fully lucid but hoped his voice would at least bring some familiarity to the man’s muddled brain. Sherlock’s lips curled upwards and then against the unnatural plastic tubing. The doctor could feel his friend’s arm tensing, trying to rise up
but failing.

"Can we have some sedation please?" The lead doctor could be heard.

“It’s alright.” John ran a thumb over his friend’s cheek and caught a stray tear which suddenly escaped the detective’s pale exhausted eyes. “You’re never going to remember any of this and you’ll be asleep in a moment but I promise everything is going to be ok.” The doctor swiftly blurted out everything he needed to say in a rushed stream of words. “You’re going to surgery very soon to fix your broken bones and you might be asleep for a little while, but I’ll ring Mycroft and I promise we’ll both be there when you wake up again. Don’t you do anything stupid while I’m not there ok?” John wasn’t sure if he could see a ghost of eye roll under heavy lids and smiled in return.

“Are you listening to me you cock. No dying ok?” The edges of Sherlock’s mouth turned upwards slightly and John felt the grip on his hand tighten, this time a tear escaped his own eye. Sherlock’s pupils rolled upwards and his lids slid closed back into oblivion.

John collapsed down into his wheelchair and let the floodgates open, burying his head into his hands the tears ran freely. He would not lose his friend again; he gritted his teeth and growled, not today!

Chapter End Notes

Noradrenalin - a type of adrenaline hormone given to aid the raise of blood pressures, it has a more specific effect to just simple adrenaline which has a more general effect on the body. It is used in situations such as cardiac arrest, sepsis or drug reactions.

Agonal gasping/breathing is a reflex the body does when the brain is not receiving enough oxygen, it is seen in extreme situations such as cardiac arrest and seizures. The patient will often gasp or take uneven deep or gasping respirations, it is often accompanied by vocalisations and myoclonus (involuntary muscle twitching). On a side note animals who are euthanized can often do this after cardiac arrest, it can be distressing for owners who don't understand it.

VF - short for ventricular fibrillation, in simple terms the bottom chambers of the heart quiver uncontrollably and means that blood cannot be pumped correctly around the body. It is caused by many things including electrolyte imbalances, long term cardiac diseases such as long QT syndrome, heart attack, drugs or sepsis (blood poisoning). It often results in complete cardiac arrest (heart stopping) if not corrected. They only way to correct if by shocking the heart back into rhythm.

Defibrillation (shocking) is used to shock the heart back into rhythm, oxygen should be removed from the patient prior to this as oxygen is flammable and shocking can potentially cause ignition. As far as I understand (someone please correct me if I'm wrong) patients can occasionally groan or make a noise after a shock due to involuntary muscle spasm/pain.

Ortho - short for orthopaedics - doctors/surgeons who deal with bones and joints including surgical fixation

FAST scan - short for focused assessment with sonography in trauma - an ultrasound scan which doctors do quickly to check for major trauma - mostly bleeding or free fluid. In veterinary we sometimes split this into AFAST (abdominal) and TFAST -
(thoracic/chest). There are certain areas and/or markers, which we use to find blood or effusions.

**REBOA** - short for resuscitative endovascular balloon occlusion of the aorta, this is a newish procedure when trauma doctors are starting to use. A balloon is inserted into the aorta (large artery running from the heart through the main body) and is inflated to occlude the artery and stop blood flow past it. This can be a life saving procedure because it stops bleeding below the balloon and in situations where a patient is bleeding to death. For example from a pelvic fracture, severe limb trauma (traumatic amputation for example), or bleeding from a stabbing or gunshot wound to the liver or spleen or the chest. There are three zones described in the placement of the balloon which correlates to a place in the body, zone I - in the chest, zone II - between the diaphragm (celiac artery) and renal arteries (which feed to the kidneys) and zone III - between the renal arteries and the where the aorta splits into the femoral arteries down the legs. The placement site will depend on what is bleeding, in Sherlock's case here his pelvis and leg are bleeding out therefore a REBOA zone III is needed. Due to occluding the blood flow the balloon cannot stay in place for long as starves oxygen to vital structures, it is a simple by for time before the patient can be taken to surgery to stop the main source of bleeding.
John wasn't sure why he didn't see it coming. Perhaps the weather was getting to him too? Half of London was suffering the effects of a mid summer heat wave. In typical British fashion the extreme freak weather was causing chaos, trains were delayed or cancelled and the tube was practically an oven for anyone who dared take the risk of travelling on it. Sherlock had been on a rather taxing case which had gone on for several weeks now, tracking the criminal had been problematic and John was on high alert doctor mode for the past few days, well aware that in typical Sherlock fashion the detective had eaten and slept very little for at least a week. John had berated him today for heading out in his belstaff despite the over thirty degree heat, but the man had mumbled something about needing to carry supplies.

They had been in pursuit of the known and rather elusive kidnapper for nearly ten minutes now. Central London was heaving with people partly due to the glorious sunshine and partly due to being the end of July and the middle of the school holidays. The place was teeming in swaths of tourists and families clogging up pathways and roads and making a chase across the capital more than a little tricky. The trail had begun not too far from the Bank of England in the city, the tall banks and exchanges had served at least some shade from the sweltering mid afternoon sun. The criminals pace was relentless though. John was always first to admit he was no sprinter, even in the long run he could never keep up with the detectives long strides. Yet the man they were following was something else, short and fast like a whippet, clearly trained in running professionally, even the detectives long legs and endless energy seemed to be failing. They had already raced past Monument station and were belting along lower Thames Street, John was grateful for the very light breeze blowing from the river. The Thames was at low tide and the muddy stoney banks let out a stagnant algae like smell which made John regret his heaving breaths.

When they finally rounded on Tower Hill John had lost the suspect, he must have been some hundred yards in front of the Sherlock as his friend was a some way in front of him. As they came by the Tower of London the droves of tourists caused the doctor to lose sight of his friend altogether for a moment, until suddenly as he squeezed out from between two buggies he saw the unmistakeable bellow of the famous coat, heading straight for Tower bridge faster than the ever before. Sherlock was not going to let this man get away at any cost, he'd spent far too long tracking him down.

Another foreign family mingled in a group and slowed John considerably. As he hopped onto the
road around them he squinted ahead but saw no sign of the detective. He bounced back into action, quickening his run and heading over the bridge. He was so busy looking into the distance that he nearly collided with his friend as he rounded the first tower half way across the river.

"Sherlock, what...?" John tried to catch his breath as he rounded on his friend who now only seemed to be wondering forwards in an uncoordinated manner.

"Ah, John. I was hoping you'd come along." The detective swayed excessively to one side only just catching his feet.

"Sherlock?" The doctor was still trying to catch his breath, he wasn't sure how his friend could so easily recover from such a brutal relentless run.

"Do you catch them?" The detective slurred and stumbled to the edge of the bridge. John was by his side in a flash.

"No Sherlock, we lost him." He said plainly, furrowing his brows in concern, this was well and truly out of character. "Don't you remember?"

"Oh." Was all the detective replied before bending over the side of the barrier and vomiting into the water below. "Sorry." He turned back to his friend. It was then his eyes slipped closed and he slid bonelessly down to the pavement below. His arms and legs went stiff before he relaxed, flat on his back.

"Shit." John was on his knees in a second. "Sherlock?" He patted his best friend's cheeks, shocked at the heat radiating off them. This was not good.

The doctor quickly turned to the pedestrians who had now already gathered behind him at interest in the commotion. "You!" John said in a clipped tone, pointing at a young man heavily clad in tattoos and a music festival t-shirt, "give me that water!"

The water was hastily thrust forwards and John pulled the top off the bottle emptying the entire contents over Sherlock's dark curls. The detective did not rouse and John bit his lip in worry. He felt the rapid bounding pulse of his friend under his fingers and wished he had his coat full of medical supplies. He was only wearing a light shirt and trousers, unlike the detective who had somehow thought that his famous attire could not be left at home, the cock. Sherlock's skin was dry and hot to the touch, he was not sweating, which meant he was suffering the effects of severe heat stroke and dehydration, his body was at a dangerously high temperature.

"Call an ambulance now!" John turned back to the young lad who was hesitating on the curb side. "And find some more water!" He demanded, little did he know another helpful passer by was already on the hunt for water.

"You?" John pointed at a senior lady and tried his best not to sound too military but as the words left his mouth he was Captain Watson. "What's your name?"

"Helen." The lady stepped forwards eagerly, she must have been in her late 40's, sunglasses on and clearly just out enjoying the summer, "what can I do to help?"

"Help me get his coat off." John was already working one of Sherlock's arms up and out of his giant sleeve. The lady bent down and started with the other arm and within a few moments they had managed to pull both out. "Get his shoes and socks off and get some water onto his feet." John commanded. He quickly undid every button on his friend's shirt, thankful that the idiot hadn't worn his jacket as well. The doctors mind started running through when he had last seen the detective
take on board fluids, only coming up with the half a mug of tea from this morning before they had rushed out the door. John had demanded they stop at lunch time as they'd spent all morning racing around the city. They'd stopped by a pub and while he rehydrated Sherlock had been his usual stubborn self and uninterested in refuelling.

"J...john?" The detectives eyes cracked open, he furrowed his brows deeply and moaned, "was hapng..." he slurred and tried to pull at his shirt now fully pulled open exposing his chest. "Whm nk...d"

"Your half way to frying your genius brain that's what's happening you dick." John was leaning over him. "Do you think you can move to shade for me?"

"What?" Sherlock's mouth was dry and voice hoarse. He bent his neck sideways and frowned across the roadway, staring vacantly at the traffic.

"Hey, look at me." John grabbed his friend's face gently and brought it back to meet his, "Sherlock?"

The detectives pinpoint pupils gazed blankly and the look on his face was indescribable. John's heart gave a staccato in his own chest in panic as his friend's eye lids began to twitch. "Sherlock?" He said uselessly.

Sherlock did not answer, his eyes stared listlessly ahead as his whole body begun to jerk. John quickly pulled his shoulders so he was now on his side before the seizure set in. "Where is that water?" He asked calmly, knowing that any excess noise and panic would really not help right now. Helen was now on her feet gathering water from the nearby stranger.

John held onto his friend's head gently as the seizure overtook his body, Sherlock's now exposed toes curled tightly closed and his legs spasmed aimlessly. The detectives breaths were uneven and laboured through his clenched jaw and a line of drool made its way down his cheek. What the doctor hated the most was the look in his eyes, rolled upwards and staring, it made John want to vomit. It wasn't like he'd never seen a patient fitting, but when it was his friend somehow things were always different.

"Come on now." John said, not letting his hands go as they cushioned his friend's head from each convulsive moment. "I didn't mean you had to actually fry your brain you cock."

"Can I help?" Two boots came into John's view then and he looked up to see the familiar uniform of a first response paramedic.

"That was quick." John replied.

"Only got the call as I cut across the bridge, saw you here so stopped. Full ambulance on the way."

The doctor looked over to see the first response car parked up by roadside, lights still flashing in the bright sunlight. He then pulled his attention back to his friend.

Sherlock gave out a grown before going ridged, his jerking begun to slow a little. "Easy." John squeezed his shoulder in affection. "This Sherlock Holmes." He started to give a brief rundown.

"I know Mr Holmes quite well." Said the medic, "seen him many a time in my years serving London sadly, he has quite a reputation."

"Oh." John wasn't sure why he was so surprised by the statement or why it hadn't occurred to him before now. "Well the idiot has gone and overheated this time." He added quickly. "Taken a
seizure but it's barely been over a minute now."

"I think he's coming out of it." The paramedic dropped his bag onto the floor and unzipped it. "No
matter though, let's get a line in and some fluids going now, and a dose of benzo's and dextrose."

John only nodded in answer and set to helping the medic out with his work. He gently laid his
friend back as the detectives body began to relax a little more, his eyes had slipped closed now but
his limbs were ridged and his lips an awful tinge of blue against his red cheeks.

"Sherlock?" John tried to rouse him, "Sherlock can you hear me?"

The medic placed a thermometer probe into the detectives ear and it beeped. He grimaced at the
reading and showed it to John.

"Bloody hell." John wiped his sweaty hand through his hair and exhaled at the numbers 41.3. No
wonder his was convulsing, temperatures this high could cause brain and organ damage. He turned
to the lady now hovering by the detective feet having doused them in water. "I need that water all
over him now." The doctor pointed across Sherlock's torso and legs. "Don't hold back, we need to
cool him down quickly." But not too quickly, John also knew that cooling the body too quickly
could also be life threatening.

The paramedic had now laid out his kit for placing an intravenous catheter and was applying a
tourniquet to Sherlock's upper arm, on his other bicep was a blood pressure cuff inflating for a
reading, which as it beeped the doctor was sadly not surprised by the low numbers. The detective
gave no response when his arm was constricted by the tourniquet but his eyes crept open as the
large gauge stylet passed under his skin and into his vein.

"Jhn...?"

"I'm right here." The doctor was close to his friend's face. "How you feeling."

"Urgh." Sherlock made a moan in his throat, "where... I?" He sounded confused again.

"Tower bridge." John smirked, "of all places to collapse from the heat you chose the middle of
bloody tower bridge didn't you?!" He couldn't help but smile. "You alway love to be dramatic."

"Don't." The detective brought a hand around to stop the medics continual work at securing the
catheter in place but John intercepted it.

"No, we'll have none of that." The doctor gasped his best friend's hand and held it firmly in his
own, it was now slick with water that was fast turning warm from Sherlock's burning body heat.
"You're going to behave. Let the lovely emergency services do their job, cool the the hell down and
then hopefully you can be home late this evening if you promise not to have another fit."

John seemed to have spoken too soon. As the last word left his mouth Sherlock's body began to
convulse again and he set his hands either side of the detective head again to steady him. This
seizure seemed all the more violent, his friend let out a horrible moan and curled his body inwards
as what seemed like every muscle twitched and contracted uncontrollably. His horrible strained
gasping breaths sounded like a horse after running the national.

"10mg of diazepam." The paramedic quickly pulled up a vial as John watched him hastily draw up
the drug.

"Make that 15." The doctor cried.
The medic only nodded, drawing up the full dose before quickly flushing it into the detectives veins chased down by a syringe full of cool saline. Sherlock's body relaxed almost immediately. His limbs went limp and his cheek rested on the warm pavement, face now lax and motionless.

"Thank Christ." John sat back on his feet, suddenly feeling slightly lightheaded himself then realising he had been holding his breath the entire time. He wasn't sure if the heat or Sherlock's condition was getting to him more.

"Ambulance is here."

The doctor looked up to see two paramedics making their way to them with a gurney. "Time for your free ride to hospital." He said grimly, realising he had actually now lost count the amount of times the pair of them had been in the back of an ambulance, it was not worth dwelling on.

Sherlock would have murdered them all in their sleep had he been awake to realise they had used his coat as a makeshift stretcher to get him on the trolley. Thankfully he remained unconscious for the entire move from the pavement into the back of the waiting ambulance and only seemed to show rousing when a mask of oxygen was applied to his face. His eyes opened to slits and his pupils tried desperately to focus on something.

As always though John was by his side, "we're heading to hospital alright. And this time when we get home we're going to talk about this." The doctor held back his anger as best he could. "You can't keep doing things like this to yourself, do you hear me!"

Sherlock pupils rolled to the side to try and take in his friend's face but the world was nothing but a fuzzy unfocused blur. He inhaled deeply before speaking like a mouse. "Fine." He murmured before his eyes slipped closed again.

Chapter End Notes

Benzo's - short for benzodiazepines (a type of sedative) for example diazepam or lorazepam used for anxiety, siezures or sedation for other reasons.
Mystery illness (part 1)

Chapter Summary

John has to use his medical detective skills to work out what is wrong with Sherlock.

Chapter Notes

Aren't you a lucky bunch, another chapter in as nearly as many days (can you tell I'm off work on holidays?). Can you work out what's wrong with Sherlock? (Two parter here second coming in the next few days)

John considered himself not just a good doctor but a very good one, he was always good at solving a medical mystery and always kept a level head in an emergency, well that was until Sherlock liked to put a spanner in the works. It was a damp and rainy Tuesday afternoon which he his friend did just that. John was lucky to have the afternoon off work, and considering Mary was not so lucky with her shift arrangements John jumped at the chance of spending the afternoon with his best friend. He had finally forgiven the idiot for 'playing dead' for two years and almost blowing him up under parliament. All was back to (almost) normal. Lestrade had been steadily filtering through a collection of cold cases to keep the detective busy and to keep the inspectors numbers on target.

When John bounded his way up the stairs of 221B he expected to find Sherlock busy doing just that, solving crimes. But instead as he entered the flat he did not find his friend either at the kitchen table or in the middle of his mind palace mapping out a murderer's route to their next crime. No, the detective was on the sofa, curled into himself and fast asleep, despite the relentless rain spattering loudly down the window outside.

"Hmm." John made a hum in his throat and shrugged his shoulders, perhaps the idiot had spent all night on a case and driven himself to exhaustion, it was not unheard of.

Choosing not to disturb his best friend John considered leaving but as he turned to go his friend let out a light groan and stretched. He took a moment to rouse, more of a moment than usual and John watched him questionably before finally after what seemed like almost a minute the detective identified the doctor's presence.

"Oh, hello John." He said lightly, stretching again and then yawning, "what can I do to help you?" He rubbed at his eyes. Was that a grimace? John wasn't sure.

The doctor frowned at the look of his friend. "I was coming to see you," he began, "afternoon off. Thought you could do with a hand with some of these cases Lestrade gave you."

"Solved them all." Sherlock dismissed the comment. "Graham said he'd be around later to drop a few more off."

"Greg."
"Whatever." The detective rose from the sofa and stumbled a little.

"Are you okay?" John practically had to do a double take of his friend's dishevelled state as he came closer.

"What?" A questioning and piercing glance.

John watched him totter into the kitchen a little unease settling into his stomach. "I mean you look a bit,...I dunno,...peaky?"

"Don't be absurd John." The man flicked the kettle on. "I'm perfectly well, just a slight headache." John's alarm bells started to ring, if Sherlock was admitting a headache then he was more likely suffering from a migraine by the way the man played down his health.

"Would you like something for it?" The doctor put his hands on his hips and cocked it head. "I've got something injectable if you don't think you can stomach anything?"

"No thank you." Sherlock set two cups side by side and deposited a tea bag in each.

"Are you sure?" John stepped closer, taking in his friend's pallor a little more under the strip light of the kitchen. Despite being daylight the weather made the flat so dark that the lights were on.

"Oh John please stop." The detective sighed. "Your sentimental fussing is nauseating me, not my headache. If you want someone to bother go and see Mrs Hudson."

"Why? What's wrong with Mrs H?" The doctor cursed himself for not being by sooner, what with work and Mary it had been nearly seven days since he had been to Baker Street.

"Come down with some sort of flu, she wouldn't stop moaning," he berated, the kettle clicked off and the detective poured the hot water with what seemed like more effort than usual.

John's anxiety level rose a little. "Have you checked on her today?" He said pointing to the door.

"Gone to her sisters, I think that's what she was saying, I wasn't really listening." Sherlock handed a mug out to John.

The doctor looked at it the brown water within the receptacle. "Milk?" He asked.

"Oh yes." Sherlock pulled the door open and handed his friend a bottle, only it wasn't the milk bottle but a bottle of what John could only describe as being either some form of mucous or perhaps seamen, he almost choked at the sight of it. "Eh, that's not the milk."

"Sorry." Sherlock replaced the bottle in the door shelf. "Experiment." He smiled and picked up the milk carton.

"I don't want to know." John opened the carton and stiffed it for good measure, "as long as whatever that is isn't in here I don't care." Long had the blogger cared anymore about what lay in the fridge, nothing surprised him anymore. He poured his milk and then topped up his friend's mug which was still on the side, the detective was now already half way across the room and routing through the case files on the table. John returned the milk to the fridge and collected the forgotten cup dumping it in front of his friend on the table.

"Drink." John said firmly, pulling his coat off and settling back into his chair. He watched as his friend placed all the files back together ready for Lestrade's collection of them.
"Why?"

"Because God knows when the last time you took on any fluids." The doctor took a long gulp of his tea, satisfied with the warm feeling it created in his stomach.

Sherlock huffed loudly and shrugged his shoulders. "I'm not a child."

"Yes you are." John pointed to his friend chair opposite. "Sit down." He added.

Surprisingly the detective complied and settled opposite, cradling the warm tea between his palms. He looked at it for a long moment and the doctor eyed him carefully over the rim of his own mug. Sherlock took a small tentative sip before gulping it back a little more dramatically than usual. He then stared at the mug again before taking another sip, this time with upturned lips.

John could stand it no longer and placed his tea on the coffee table beside him. "Are you feeling sick?"

"No." a rather too quick reply.

"Are you sure?" The doctor lifted on brow in query.

"Why?" The detective shot defensively.

"You were not only asleep when I got in, which is practically unheard of, but you've also made several errors simply making a cup of tea, and now you don't want your tea, you're clearly not feeling yourself."

Sherlock hesitated which was all John needed as confirmation.

"Let me take a look at you?" He asked tentatively.

"No." Sherlock snorted, "I'm not ill..." he sniffed, wiping his nose, which all of a sudden started running, "just picked up a little cold."

"You don't get colds Sherlock." The doctor sat forwards, "you either get some sort of life threatening pneumonia or you're just right as rain. This isn't you which is a concern."

"It's none of your concern!" The detective snarled angrily standing up with a slight stumble. "I said I'm fine, just a bit tired." He made his way over to the sofa and collapsed on it turning his back to the blogger. His mumbled voice sounded again. "If you want to help you can leave me to sleep in peace." He grumbled against the pillows.

John frowned deeply, "right." He said, finishing the last few mouthfuls of his tea before standing himself, "don't blame me if you come down with pneumonia again." He pulled his damp coat back onto his shoulders and taking one last regretful look at his friend he left for home.

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By the time John made it home his temples were pounding, probably from the shear anger at his friend had made him, the detective could be a right cock when he wanted to. He would be sure to stop by again tomorrow, be damned if he had books and other objects thrown at him, he'd never forgive himself if Sherlock went down with something really bad. He could deal with a stroppy snotty detective if needed, in fact he'd prefer it rather than another trip to hospital with another chest infection.
John settled himself in front of the tele for the afternoon, he quickly pinged a text to Mrs Hudson to check how she was doing. The doctor didn't actually know where the time went because before he had even realised Mary had appeared through the door, cheery and her hands full of shopping. "Bought us something nice for dinner." She said, giving him a loving peck on the cheek.

"You're a little saint." He grinned.

"How was Sherlock?" Mary was already in the kitchen, unpacking her loot and busying with cooking utensils, it must have been a busy afternoon at the surgery, she was always hungry after a long shift.

"He's got a cold or something." John grumbled, turning the TV down and joining her in the kitchen.

"Or something?" She asked.

"His usual grumpy self." The doctor smirked, "seems like a regular cold, which is unusual. I'll check in on him tomorrow though to make sure."

"That's nice." It was clear she was only half listening as she dished out two fresh fillets of fish onto a tray and into the oven.

John only then realised how hungry he was too, it had been hours since his measly cup of tea at Baker Street. Before he had a chance to make conversation his phone began to buzz loudly in his pocket and he pulled it out frowning at the screen before answering the call.

"Lestrade?" He said as he put the phone to his ear.

"Hey mate." The inspector answered, "listen just a quick courtesy call really." John heard him hesitate, "just wondered if you've seen Sherlock lately is all?"

John sighed loudly. "Yes." He said simply. "I know he's got the flu."

"Oh." Greg paused again, "Yeah, I mean I called in on him just now and he looks like death warmed up, practically fell asleep on me while I showed him some new cases."

"I know, I'm going to pop in first thing and check he hasn't run out of tissues or forgotten how to wipe his nose." John grimaced at his venomous words and wished he could take them back instantly. "Sorry." He apologised, "he just kicked me out like his usual Royal highness. I'll check in on him Greg don't worry, he's on my radar."

"Ok good." Lestrade replied, "just making sure you know, we both know what he's like, let me know how he is and I can always call by later in the day too."

"Thanks." John exhaled, glad to have someone else on his side.

"Listen gotta go," John could hear keys rustling in a lock on the other end of the phone, "got a bloody migraine coming on and the beer in the fridge is calling."

The doctor chuckled and said his goodbyes before pressing the end call button. He then saw that Mrs Hudson had replied from his earlier text and clicked it open.

'Feeling much better love, heads much clearer now thank you. Being spoiled here, should be home in a couple of days no need to worry. Luv M x.

John smiled at her text, hearing her voice saying every word. He pocketed his phone and watched
his partner carefully prepare dinner with love. She moved about the kitchen like she had for many years and John enjoyed watching her cook. Yet there was something, something in the pit of his stomach which started eating away at him, ebbing worry which wouldn't leave him alone. It was only when Mary placed her knife and fork down after dinner and looked at his half cleared plate that she spoke about it.

"Why don't you go and check on him?" She said softly, taking John's hand in her own. "I know you're worrying."

The doctor looked into her caring eyes sadly, guilty at forfeiting an evening in with her, "sorry." He said simply.

"Please don't be. If you're worried you can bring him back here you know?" She said, pulling the plate from John's lap. "To keep an eye on him that is."

John hesitated, staring at the TV and the mindless soap playing out on screen, neither had been watching it. He only looked up when Mary appeared in front of him, his coat in her arms.

"Do you want me to drive you?" She asked.

"No." John stood, "I'll be fine." He shrugged the coat on and kissed her. "Thank you." Collecting his car keys from the side he made his way to the door. "Love you."

It rained the entire way back to Baker Street, which did nothing for the doctors mood or for the growing knot of concern in the pit of his stomach, he wished he hadn't eaten. When he finally made it and up the 17 stairs two at a time he didn't know what state his friend was likely to be in. Lestrade' words had been the nail in the coffin, falling asleep while he was given a new case to solve, this was not a good sign. But he supposed that he didn't expect to find his best friend full clad in his belstaff and shoes ready for a night out chasing criminals. Except that he wasn't waiting by the door for John but sitting silently on the floor on his knees propped up against the sofa. He was facing towards the window as if mesmerised by the rain.

"Sherlock?" John rushed to his side.

The detective was awake but his eyes were staring at the floor with a look of confusion planted on his face. "John." He muttered. "Why you shouting?"

"I'm not shouting." The doctor frowned, "What are you doing?" He bent low to take in the look of his friend's face.

"Going out." The young man deadpanned, looking up a little and wincing at the movement of his head.

"Well you're clearly not down here." John placed two fingers onto Sherlock's carotid and felt a racing pulse under them.

"Got dizzy." Sherlock mumbled, bracing one hand on the floor, "still dizzy." He inhaled a gulp of air. "Tired. Sick. Head hurts...." he trailed off and let out a stifled moan, "migraine." He groaned before pitching forwards into John's coat and passing out cold.
Mystery illness (part 2)

Chapter Summary

John works out what's wrong with Sherlock.

Chapter Notes

Sorry about the small rollercoaster of poor John in this. Well done to all who guessed correctly, I'll have to try something harder next time. ; ). I had the privilage of an afternoon off and wrote most of this then, sat down in my favourite spot by the Thames on the south bank, it was a beautiful day. Anyway enough rambling, enjoy...

See the end of the chapter for more notes

John was taken a back as his friend face planted into his chest and slid down into his lap. Although alarmed he was not overly surprised by Sherlock's loss of consciousness, the man had a great track record for passing out, with his useless perception at knowing when to stop, fainting seemed to be a Sherlock thing. What worried him though was the fact that his friend had actually moaned about feeling unwell prior to this. Despite being good at being ill or more often injured the detective was not good at vocalising his emotions or feelings, let alone his sickness and this was what sent dread into John the most.

"Hey, can you hear me?" The doctor patted his friend's cheek and got no response.

John carefully shifted rolling the detective sideways and off his lap. As he gently let the mans head down to the floor Sherlock's eyes snapped open and he groaned, grimacing somewhat before bringing a shaky hand up to his temples and rubbing them hard.

"John?" He said bewilderedly, "what's going on?"

"You passed out, don't you remember?"

Sherlock made a grumbling type noise and quickly sat up, pulling his feet under himself he braced himself against the sofa and began to stand. John was on his feet beside him in a moment.

"Whoa, steady!" John gasped his friend's arm as he rose to full height and listed dramatically, staggering to the side.

"What's happening?" Sherlock looked around the flat. He shook free of the doctors grasp and wobbled on unsteady feet across the room.

"I'm taking you to get checked out that's what." John pulled his phone out his pocket but before he could dial either a cab or Mary the detective crashed haphazardly into the kitchen table and chairs, his knees almost gave out and he clung helplessly to the wooden frame, limbs shaking visibly now.

"Christ Sherlock." The doctor nearly dropped his phone as he hurdles across the living room and
supporting his friend. He pulled out a chair and pushed him gently into it quickly. The detective seemed to be struggling to remain conscious, his head lolled forwards slightly. John felt for a pulse again and suddenly alarm bells began to ring as the doctor felt an irregular and speedy pulse under his fingers. "Listen to me." He said firmly, taking the man by the shoulders, "look at me."

Sherlock's hazy eyes partially opened and flicked over John's face. "What do you want now?" He swayed backwards and forwards.

"Have you taken anything?"

"What?"

"It's important Sherlock, have you taken anything?" John looked at him closely, his skin was pale and sickly looking under the lights.

"Where's Lestrade?" The detective slurried, rubbing his eyes again.

"Right. That's it." John bit his lip, pulling his phone back out just as his friend pitched forwards for the second time in as many minutes. This time the doctor was less successful at breaking the man's fall. The chair went skittering across the kitchen floor dramatically as the younger man collapsed to ground in a heap next to John's feet.

Sherlock came to immediately, he sat up again quickly, his face dazed and eyes cracked into slits. "My head hurts." He moaned.

"Me too." John was already on his knees in front of him, "just sit tight ok, I'm calling an ambulance."

"No ambulance." Sherlock whimpered, closing his eyes tightly he groaned. "Make it stop John..." he flopped bonelessly sideways and lost consciousness yet again. The doctor was full expecting an immediate come to but this time he seemed to remain out cold.

To John's absolute horror the detective's limbs stretched out, his muscles ridged and spine and neck gave a slight backwards bend. "Jesus!" The doctor lifted one eyelid to find his friend's pupils rolled upwards unnaturally, John's own pulse was racing now.

Sherlock's breathing was fast and uneven, small sharp inhales which quickly slowed down to complete apnoea then suddenly hyperventilation again. John knew the pattern well, this was Cheyne-stokes respirations a sign of many different conditions. His heart skipped lightly in his chest in panic, his doctors mind working quickly to deduce, he felt like the consulting detective for a minute. He spoke out loud listing the symptoms of his friend, "Migraine, nausea, disorientation, weakness, loss of consciousness, ridgidity of muscles, cheyne-stokes."

John took a steadying breath to calm and spoke again in rushed tones, "Right. Differential diagnosis - 1, traumatic brain injury - unlikely considering he hasn't left the flat in several days. 2, overdose - not a a typical presentation when Sherlock prefers seven percent cocaine, plus no signs of recent use, 3, heart disease - unlikely considering age but not impossible, 4, encephalitis or meningitis- no signs of rash or fever but need to check, possible, 5, brain tumour," John gulped back panic, "unlikely." He sighed, "6, stroke - incorrect symptom correlation, no signs of hemiplegia seen. 7, carbon monoxide poisoning." John stopped and paused, his head pounded slightly, only confirming his diagnosis.

"Fuck." He swore, everything fitted, including a headache in everyone who had visited the flat today and Mrs Hudson's mystery illness. The fact that John was already clearly feeling the effects
of the gas and only been in the flat for less than 5 minutes made him realise just what toxic level the poisonous gas must be at. How the hell his friend had managed to evade death so far he didn't know but he needed to get them both out, now! Despite needing an ambulance John's initial trauma medics mind thought better of it, first and foremost -D- danger - ensure you are safe and if possible move patient away from further danger.

After a quick pulse and respiration check John stood up quickly, there was no signs of his friend rousing at all. He hastily grasped the detective under his arms. "Let's go." He said determinedly and with a grunt of pain shifted the lanky and thankfully less ridged frame up and over his shoulder. Sherlock was always heavier than John gave him credit, probably akin to his tall frame rather than his stature. The doctors shaky legs pushed up and forwards and the strain of his friend's body made his head pound just a little more.

John hurried, concerned his legs wouldn't hold them both for very long and when he reached the top of the stairs he hesitated. One wrong move and it wouldn't just be poisonous gas they would need to worry about. Slowly he balanced himself against the bannister rail and huffed with each downward step. His heart was beating like a crescendo in his ears by the time he made it around the corner and to the bottom, stumbling wearily into the hallway before grabbing for the door handle.

The rain was now a torrential downpour on the street outside and John didn't even think twice, fresh air was more important than staying dry. The rain was actually a refreshing relief as he staggered onto Baker Street, slowly releasing the hold on his friend he lowered the detective down to the pavement below.

"Bloody hell mate, you need to stop eating Mrs H's macaroons." He joked but soon let concern overcome him. He dropped to his knees into the river of water streaming down the pathway and checked his friend's carotid again. Arrhythmia was now unmistakeable in the beats thrumming under his fingers. He hastily pulled his phone out this time dialling 999.

"Ambulance and fire please." He barked down the phone, still breathless, "carbon monoxide leak at 221B Baker Street. Patient is unconscious and unresponsive. Marked cardiac arrhythmia and neurological deficits." The young operator on the end began to speak first aid care to him. "I'm a bloody doctor," he cried, "just get them here." He hung up, immediately regretting his irritable rant at the poor lady. Abandoning the phone did however give him more chance to watch and monitor his friends condition closely, they had at least 8 minutes before help arrived.

As Sherlock took hitched and useless breaths his bottom jaw began to twitch a little. John pulled him onto his lap as his limbs juddered unnaturally. "Don't you dare have a seizure on me do you hear me!" The doctor warned.

As if the detective listened though it was highly unlikely, Sherlock cracked his eyes open slightly and blinked at the rain assaulting his lashes.

"That's it, stay awake alright, you promised no comas remember." He joked, trying not to let the shear severity of the situation get to him. It had been a recent joking conversation, both had promised no comas or life support machines, typical that right now the detective could easily slip into one.

Sherlock gazed up with a peculiar blank look in his half moon eyes, John was certain he wasn't fully conscious or composmentus but he spoke to him anyway, it helped the anxiety levels in the doctor from rising any further. The detectives arms curled upwards and contacted so hard that John winced at the sight of them shaking from the strain. The younger mans eyes rolled slightly upwards again, lids twitching and his neck flexed back a little.
"Ah, no." John grasped his face. "Look at me, stay with me, no napping and definitely no fitting." He bit back the rising ball of emotion catching in his throat making his voice crack. "Don't you dare die on me! The Great Sherlock Holmes doesn't die from a simple bloody gas leak do you hear me?"

The detectives eyes remained fixed in a stare but his body contorted slightly in the doctors hold. John wished to god the time would just hurry up, they might be in fresh air, or as fresh as London air could be but Sherlock needed oxygen, his body was carrying around the poisonous molecule in his blood causing potential irreversible damage. John inhaled and swept back the rain from his forehead doing the same for his friend. He was drenched already, the water had soaked up his trousers from the pavement below and ongoing deluge from above meant that there was nowhere on him dry anymore, his body gave an involuntary shudder from the dampness.

"Do you remember last time we got stuck in a rainstorm." John was trying his best to hold on to every last shred of sanity, if he thought about Sherlock's state of health right now he might just lose it. "We were staking out for a suspect near a bar in Soho. You moaned the entire time about your coat getting wet and about how stupid people are when it came to spending money on alcohol and sex, I never laughed so hard in my life." The doctor couldn't help a small chuckle.

John looked up then as blue lights caught his vision, the light were watery and blurred in the rain and the doctor only recognised the fire brigade as the truck came to a stop almost beside them. It had only been three minutes but the local station was only on the Euston road so no wonder they were first on scene.

Sherlock made an awful gasping gurgling at the back of his throat which brought John's attention back onto him. The detectives limbs were convulsing slightly and his neck was taught from his strained breaths. "Hey, easy." John was close to breaking, "nice even breaths ok, helps coming." Sherlock looked like he was trying to talk, his arms though shuddering were grasping uselessly for his best friend's sodden coat uselessly.

"It's alright." John's voice was broken now.

As if by magic a large blanket was draped around John's shoulders and another over the detectives lap. An oxygen mask was now already being gently strapped around Sherlock's face even as he struggled to evade his helpers, clearly highly disoriented and agitated. John could feel his friend's muscles twitching against him, taught like a coiled spring, distressed from the strangers touching him and the noise and flashing.

"Please turn your bloody lights and engine off!" John barked to the firemen, "he already has hyperasthesia, you'll give him a fucking seizure." He shouted, feeling Sherlock's pulse, it was now erratic and disconnected. The younger mans eyes were still only half moon slits but John could see that his pupils were twitching wildly about the place. They settled almost instantly as the lights stopped their endless flashing the resounding engine rumble ceased.

"Thank you." John sighed.

"What's the situation sir?" What looked like the most senior member of the fire team bent down to him.

"Suspected carbon monoxide leak in 221B but 221A also needs checking. It's Sunday night so Speedy's has been closed for some hours." The doctor did not look up. Sherlock's mouth was gasping under the mask, as if the cool flow of oxygen was making him all the more desperate to breath. "My friend's had severe exposure and a few others have been affected but are ok." John made a mental note to call Lestrade and Mrs Hudson the moment he was in the ambulance.
"Harry get your breathing gear on, I want you and Marcus in to turn the gas supply off." The senior was directing orders to his team by the truck. "Where's your gas meter and switch."

"Cupboard in toilet for 221A, and under the stairs by the bathroom in 221B."

John was watching worriedly as Sherlock slipped in and out of consciousness, not allowing his fingers to stray from the position over the detectives carotid, panicked that at any second the man could easily go into arrest. The doctor watched on for a couple of minutes, his own breaths matching the odd series of anxious inhales from Sherlock. Thankfully the Cheyne stoke pattern of breathing had stopped and it was now only due to the detectives semi-conscious and delirious state of mentation. The rain was still unrelenting and when finally sirens could be heard in nearby streets Sherlock decided he had had enough with consciousness altogether. His body fell limply in John's grasp, sending a shot of adrenaline through the doctors twisting gut.

"Don't die you bastard!" John whispered, barely audible against the weather. "Don't you fucking dare." Pulse was still fast but steady under his touch, though still marked with arrhythmia.

John did not give up that feeling of life until finally the medics were on them, bags of kit and spinal scoop in toe. In part he was glad that Sherlock had lost complete consciousness, having to man handle an extremely disoriented detective into the back of an ambulance was not exactly a desired activity - though an unconscious Sherlock was not really any better.

The ambulance crew wasted little time on the pavement and they were both bundled into the back of their waiting transport, blue lighting to the nearest accident department at full speed. Despite refusing it, oxygen was strapped to the doctors face too and he watched the ECG trace and pulse rate, rising and falling with each uneven beat, unusual and irregular lines cutting across the screen. He just needed oxygen, John repeated, just oxygen, he would be fine after oxygen, everything was going to be fine wasn't it??

Chapter End Notes

Cheyne-stokes respirations - a type of respiration where the patient takes short sharp breaths tapering off to completely stopping (apnoea). It's seen in patients with many different conditions, commonly those with heart failure, brain damage or sometimes an end of life body process.

Cardiac arrhythmia - an irregular heart beat due to many different problems including heart diseases, poisonings, trauma and genetic conditions, can cause the heart to fail in some cases.

Hyperasthesia - an abnormal increase in sensitivity to stimulus (e.g., sight, sounds, touch), pretty certain due to Sherlock's genius brain and other issues he would be prone to this especially so when I'll or in this case mentally incapacitated

Carbon monoxide poisoning - this gas is deadly, thousands of people die from this 'silent killer' each year across the globe. Carbon monoxide (CO) comes from incomplete combustion from engines, gas heaters, boilers and cooking equipment that are not working correctly. I would highly recommend having a CO alarm in your home if you don't already. The gas itself poisons by disrupting the oxygen carriers (heamoglobin) in the blood and therefore slowly begins to starve the body of oxygen. Mild poisoning can include headaches, nausea/vomiting and weakness or often flu like
symptoms. As it becomes more severe the patient may lose consciousness, have cardiac arrhythmia or cardiac arrest. Neurological signs are common including - rigidity of muscles, Parkinson's like twitches, seizures or convulsions and disorientation. There is a build up of lactose in the body and a change in PH in the blood and muscles and other organs (including brain) can become damaged. In many cases neurotically dysfunction is not seen for up to three months after the initial exposure. Treatment includes giving the patient 100% oxygen for 60-100minutes to combat the oxygen carrying issues in the blood. Arterial blood gases and supportive care until the patient can recover. There are some studies suggesting that using a hyperbaric chamber (chambers used for driver with the bends which delivers oxygen at a higher pressure than atmospheric pressure) can be advantageous but medical professionals seem to debate this.
Chapter Summary

Pretty self explanatory title I believe

Chapter Notes

I have done an accompanying art piece to this chapter. If you wish to see it please click here.

'Please John, don't let me die' by sparkypip

Apologise for the delay in posting, lots going on here at home and I half wrote a chapter for this and I'm not sure I like it yet. So I wrote this instead as I've been wanting to for a while, there will be a part two. You may recognise the theme from a similar and very fabulous story by J.baillier, please do check it out it's called 'harmless things'.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

John jumped at the sound of his phone and reached across the table to look at it, Lestrade's name was bouncing up and down on the screen as an incoming call. What had Sherlock done this time? He cooed Rosie as she bounced up and down on her lap and swiped the phone to answer.

"Hey Greg." He said with a sigh. "What's up?"

The next two words were more than predictable. "It's Sherlock."

"I figured." John waved the soft toy in front of his daughter to keep her entertained, she giggled. "What's he done this time? Knocked out a suspect, or fainted again?" He joked.

"Er," the doctor could practically hear the inspector scratching his head in thought. "Well you see the murder wasn't quite a average jo killing, looks like a sacrificial cult killing of sort, all weird paraphernalia and creatures around the cadaver and heart ripped right out the chest. Anyway, to cut a long story short the victim was some avid snake collector, the place his full of them, had to wait for some herp guy to come over and ensure they were secure, but Sherlock being Sherlock decided to go in before it was made safe, I wouldn't let the boys in though. The idiot was still inspecting the body when we finally made it in."

John shuddered, he really wasn't a snake fan, "did he get bitten then?"

"He swore blind he didn't, but I don't trust him, theirs some hardcore snakes here, the expert said some are pretty deadly ones too." Greg continued, realising he'd gone off topic, "anyway, Sherlock muttered something about not feeling well and made for the exit sharpish, he looked awful though, all pale and the like. Saw him get into a taxi for home. So I was kind of hoping you were at Baker Street and you could give him a once over, make sure he really hasn't been bitten."
"I certainly am here, brought Rosie round for dinner together later and to talk over some cases."

"Well maybe don't let little one see the pictures from this one yeah." Lestrade shook his head despite the doctor not being able to see it. "He should be their soon, left here about 5 or 10 minutes ago."

"Don't worry Greg, I'll check him out, he's probably just not eaten for 3 days again and being a drama queen." John hoped to God.

The inspector paused, "I do hope so, keep me updated yeah?" He added with a worried tone.

"Will do." John said his goodbyes and ended the call with a groan, turning his attention back to Rosie who was now lightly sucking on the corner of her teddy bears ear. "What's uncle Sherlock gone and done now hey Rosie." He bounced her again and she squealed in happiness making him smile back.

It was only a matter of minutes later that the doorbell downstairs rang out. "And he forgot his keys too?" John was half talking to himself. "Why can't he just pick the lock like he usually does?" The doctor balanced his daughter on his hip, an action which was slowly becoming more difficult due to her increasing weight and size. He headed downstairs. As he reached the bottom he found Mrs Hudson had poked her head out of 221A, she was frowning at the door as the bell rang out again.

"Alright alright." John clicked the lock open, "Sherlock, what are you playing at?" He pulled the door open to find a man standing in the gloomy daylight. "Eh, hello." He stepped back, strangers at the door did not always mean well here.

"Who is it John?" Mrs Hudson cried from behind him.

The doctor looked past the man hovering uncomfortably in the doorway to a parked taxi behind him and the familiar outline of his friend in the back. "It's Sherlock," he said before he man could speak, realising the stranger was a cabbie, "will you take Rosie for a minute?"

The landlady stepped forwards happily taking the toddler from the doctors grasp.

"What's he done?" John asked.

The taxi driver rung his hands in worry, "I dunno mate," he said, "he don't look well, white as a sheet, thought he'd passed out half way here but he hadn't."

John pushed past the man just as the passenger door of the cab opened and his best friend stepped out unsteadily onto the pavement. The driver was right, Sherlock's complexity was more than a little pale, he was practically ghostly.

"Sherlock?" John questioned, "you alright?"

"Never... better." The detective dismissed the comment with a breathy reply.

"You sure?" The doctor cocked his head in question, raising his brows disapprovingly, "because really Sherlock, you look like death to me right now."

"I asked him if wanted me to take him to hospital but he said he was fine." The taxi man added.

"I am fine. Just flu." The detective staggered across the pavement past the doctor and cabbie and into the hallway of 221.
"Thanks." John regarded the driver, "I'll sort him from here."

"You sure you don't want me to take you to A&E?"

"I'm his doctor," the blogger replied, "if he needs hospital he's getting an ambulance. Here." John pulled out two £20 notes from his pocket and offered the to the cabbie. "Thanks so much for getting him here safe, keep the change."

"Thanks, no problem mate." The man pocketed the cash and left.

John stepped through the door and closed it behind him quickly, sending the room back into shadows. "Sherlock?" He said quickly, clicking on the light for a better view of his friend. He folded his arms. "Will you answer me honestly if I ask you a question."

"That depends on the question." The detective was leant heavily on the bannister rail, one foot firmly planted on the first step but he seemed to be frozen in motion, his torso swayed slightly.

"Oh Sher," Mrs Hudson exclaimed, "you really do look ghastly dear."

"Thank you for that kind observation." The detective grumbled. "Perhaps you can make some tea and it'll be all better." He shot angrily.

"Sherlock." John held a warning in his tone, "you know what I'm going to ask don't you, Lestrade's already been on the phone."

"You know, I really was looking forward to a round of 20 questions when I got home." Sherlock did not look back, he hunched a little and let out a soft moan.

"Were you bitten by any of those snakes?" The doctor got to the point quickly. "Think very carefully about your answer."

"Will you stop fussing and leave me be." the detective put a second foot on the step and listed slightly to the left, letting his body rest on the wall, he heaved in a breath.

"Sherlock?" John stepped forwards just as his friend let out another groan.

Sherlock muttered incoherently before dry heaving, his hand clasping like iron onto the bannister as he bent forward shakily.

"Oh dear." The landlady exclaimed.

"Shit." John rushed towards his friend. "Mrs H, take Rosie inside would you?" He pointed to the open door of 221A.

"Are you sure dear?" She asked.

"I don't think Rosie will like to see uncle Sherlock so unwell, leave the door open, I'll call if I need."

The old lady did as she was told leaving the pair of them alone in the hallway. With both out of earshot John did not hold back his annoyance. "Sherlock Holmes, will you answer the question?"

"Bugger off." The detective wiped his mouth and visibly flinched.

"Alright then." John stood back defiantly, "if your so 'fine' you can make it upstairs then can't you?"
This time Sherlock did turn to look at him, a scowl planted across his furrowed brows. "Fine." He shot. He placed another foot up onto the next step and his body swayed but his hand held fast to the rail. As shakily pulled himself up two more steps before stopping to breath heavily, John's worry hitched up a notch, the detective was never breathless, even after a marathon suspect chase. Two more steps and Sherlock tried to rearrange his supporting hand but failed, his knees unable to take his weight gave way and he went crashing forwards. John was on him in a second, his quick reactions stopping the lanky man from tumbling down the five and a half steps he had managed up. The detective was now slumped forwards into the first landing area at the top of the flight of stairs, his feet uselessly still on the steps.

"Damn it." The blogger held onto the belstaff coat tightly as he hopped up the flight careful not to step on his friend. He then proceeded to pull him up and into a safer position so there was now no chance of a fall. Pushing Sherlock's half lax figure over found a small splattering of blood on the floor. "Bloody hell, did you hit your nose?" A fresh line of crimson was dribbling slowly from one of the man's nostrils.

"No." The detective moaned, weary eyes drifting up to meet his friend's, "I don't feel so well."

"You don't say." John shook his head, "what are you like eh?"

"Cold." Sherlock's teeth suddenly chattered together as a small shudder passed through his body. The doctor placed his hand over his friend's forehead and pulled it away quickly. "Christ mate, your burning up."

"Urgh." A breathless wine replied.

"Get this off now." John tugged at the heavy coat.

"No." Sherlock tried to fight John's advances of pulling his arms out the coat but failed as his right arm was yanked free. The doctor then proceeded with the left. "Stop, no, no, please! Fuck!" The detective snatched his arm back with a hiss cradling it close to his body.

"I'm sorry." John held his hands up, "what is it?"

"Nothing." Sherlock sucked in an uneven breath against his pain.

"You cursing is not nothing, now give?" The doctor asked firmly but kindly.

The detective slowly extended his arm outwards, a tremble evident in the appendage, John did not touch it but as the hand came better into focus he swore himself. "Jesus fucking Christ Sherlock!" He nearly shouted. His friend's hand was puffy and swollen. There was clearly two puncture marks from a snake bite evident on outer edge of the hand, both small wounds were oozing a bloody serous discharge. "Mrs Hudson!" He bellowed quickly.

"Right." The doctor said, "you either get this coat off now or it's going to be cut off."

Sherlock's face twisted in anguish, "you can't cut it!"

"Then off now." John nodded, sliding the thing from his friend's shoulder in almost one swift motion he pulled the arm and hand through the the sleeve and out. Sherlock let out a stifled yowl just as Mrs Hudson appeared at the bottom of the steps.

"Oh John. He looks terrible." She cried.
"I know." The doctor turned to her. "Call an ambulance would you, tell them he's sustained a venomous snake bite and needs immediate medical attention." He said calmly.

"Oh god!" The landlady covered her mouth in shock. "Of course." She quickly rushed back to the flat.

"Am I going to die?" Sherlock's eyes were now wide with fear, John was taken aback by the look in his panicked eyes.

"What.... no, your going to be just fine." He pressed two fingers onto his friend's pulse, it was racing wildly.

"I don't want to die." A meek whisper. "Please John, don't let me die."

"Jesus." John took a steadying breath, trying not to remember the recording from their recent run in with Culverton - Smith, the thing had brought the doctor to tears though he'd never admit it, his secret safe with Greg thankfully. "Just try to keep calm, I suspect your filled with adrenaline right now, it's making you feel this way."

"Please." Sherlock cried, letting his head rest back against the wall, his dark curls were now sticking to his damp sweaty forehead. "John, help me."

"It's alright." John tried to hold it together. "Helps coming I promise."

"Hurts..." the younger man groaned, suddenly turning quickly he heaved violently, this time bringing up a small pool of fresh blood into John's lap, sending another shot of worry through the doctor. "S..sorry." The detective stuttered. "My legs feel funny." His voice wobbled. "Do I still have my legs?"

"Yep, they're right here." The doctor tried not to let the sound of his friend's vulnerable tone get to him but in honesty his heart was breaking with each sad word the detective murmured.

"Please John, promise you'll save me?" Sherlock shook, his eyes wild and frightened.

"I promise." John bit his lip hard, doctors never made promises, but come hell or high water he would do everything in his absolute power to keep his friend alive, everything.

Chapter End Notes

A few have mentiomed Sherlock being ooc here, but from my research and what I've heard snake and other venomous bites/stings can send you full of adrenaline and the feeling of impending doom (aka you start to panic).
Bitten (part 2)

Chapter Summary

John is a good doctor but is it good enough to save his best friend?

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the wait, I hope you enjoy. Not sorry about the ending... more to come soon. Thanks all for your continual support. As usual medical terms explained at the end.

************************************************
To read the next part of this storyline please head over to Bitten - A lovely collaborative piece with 'TheGracefulBlueCat.' - she's awesome!
************************************************

See the end of the chapter for more notes

When pain and panic takes over there is nothing but raw emotion left to hide behind. Sherlock Holmes was a proud man but right now he was stripped bare to just that, nothing but unbridled despair and pain. John hated it, the great man reduced to such a wreck before him in a matter of minutes, it took all of the doctors control to keep himself sane in moments like this. Moments when Sherlock needed him the most, needed him to be a best friend and good doctor he was.

"It's alright," John soothed, "nice steady breaths."

Sherlock made a mumbling whine, tears prickling his vision and spilling down his pale trembling cheeks. "Can't." He choked then coughed, breaths sharp and noisy. The audible wheeze which was quickly becoming present sent more than a little worry into John's medical mind. It meant that there was swelling in his friend's airways and likely pleural effusion too considering the degree of effort the detective was now putting into each and every breath. Accessory muscles showing a visible strain with each inhale.

"Take it easy." John bit his lower lip. He considered two options now of how to proceed. One, to leave the man on the landing, allow him to settle himself into a comfortable spot or, two lower him back down the steps slowly so he had more access to him in the event of an emergency.

"Sherlock?" He said firmly and slowly, knowing sadly which was the lesser of two evils. "Sherlock listen to me." The detectives health was deteriorating fast, with every passing second his face seemed to grey further, the wheeze in his throat increasing.

"Just let me die." Sherlock whispered, voice lost amongst the heavy breaths.

"Nope, not today." John pulled himself up a little. "Okay, we're going downstairs, and no buts, I'll help you."

The doctor practically lifted his friend from his current position and Sherlock groaned out in pain,
eyes fluttering closed. "No. stay awake and breathing. Come on, help me out a bit would you?"

The detective stumbled on his feet, vertigo hitting him hard, he swayed so violently that they both nearly toppled down the steps together but John held him fast. "Steady." He commanded, "We’ll do this one step at a time."

Sherlock gagged unproductively, a film of fresh blood now coating his ashen lips.

"Jesus." John felt his own stomach churn wildly. "Right." He said firmly. "Downstairs now." He grasped his friend firmly by the shoulders ignoring the moan of pain he pushed them both quickly forwards and downwards. With each step the doctors heart lurched madly, his friend's consciousness level was quickly diminishing, as they descended he felt the detectives weight increase in his grasp.

Sherlock's feet stumbled aimlessly on the final step and John felt his grip falter. "No..." they were tumbling forwards, "damn it." He guided his friend down as best he could but as he landed the detective hit the floor hard, his shoulder colliding with the ground with an audible crack.

Another moan sounded and a short strained gasp. "Open your eyes for me." John was bent over him in a moment, gently extending the younger man’s neck to keep a clear airway. "Sherlock!" He said louder, "wake up."

A string of uncomprehending words spewed from the detective’s mouth followed by a louder screech of pain. His eyes tightened in agony and his body gave a visible and fierce shake.

"Sherlock bloody Holmes." John shook his friend by the shoulders and leant into him, "open your eyes and stay awake!"

The detectives eyes cracked to slits, the whites of them now visibly reddened, the doctor wasn't sure if this was from tear production or the venom quickly spreading systemically. Sherlock coughed weakly and another small stream of crimson made its way from his nose, this time enough to make it down his cheek and drip to the floor.

"Fucking Christ." John felt for the racing pulse on his friend's neck then on his uninjured wrist finding it weak there. Peripherals shutting down, body going into shock and DIC. The doctor wish to God this was not the case but every sign pointed to his friend bleeding out. The bite-wounded arm was now a mass of bruising and swelling, his nosebleed was worsening by the second, sclera’s red and blood in his vomit and mouth, it was highly likely the detective was haemorrhaging internally too. John nearly lost it, but he had to keep calm, he could do this.

He took one long and deep breath and keeping one hand on his friends pulse for reassurance he pulled his phone out his jacket with the other, hitting the speed dial button and then speakerphone, leaving the thing on the floor.

The recipient picked up quickly, “John?” Lestrade’s voice was uncertain.

“Greg.” John didn’t realise his voice was shaking until now. “I need you to get me the ID on the snake that might have bitten Sherlock, we need it.”

“Shit.” The inspector swore on the end of the line. “Everything alright?”

“No, we’re in big trouble.” The doctor looked to his friends eyes, barely conscious, breathing still laboured but thankfully no worse. The detective let out a breathy whine; clearly still conscious enough to comprehend the conversation going on by his left ear.
“I’ll do what I can.” Greg finally said.

“No you’ll get it; I want species common and Latin name and type of venom. Ring me back in five minutes or I’m ringing you.” John knew he was panicking and knew he was being unreasonable. He also knew that antivenom may not even be indicted, he had treated enough envenomation’s in Hellman’s without it, but right now he was helpless, ordering Lestrade to find out the species was all he could do.

“Right.” The inspector said simply, “Phone you back.”

The line went dead.

The doctor pulled his hands into fists and took another long slow breath composing himself, he closed his eyes and bent his head down, trying to hold it together.

“John…” Sherlock’s voice was barely audible but enough for the blogger to hear it.

“Don’t talk.” He replied without opening his eyes, “please.”

“No.” The detective let out a horrible noise of agony from his throat, his body seizing from another wave of pain. "I...I made a miscalculation. I'm... sorry." His voice stuttered and slurred.

"Shhh." John cracked his eyes open and looked sadly to his best friend trying to calm him. "It's alright, we'll sort this, it's going to be okay."

Sherlock didn't answer, his body contorted sideways, curling up on himself he retched again. "Too late." He murmured between rasping breaths.

"Quiet." The doctor gulped back the rising panic which was rolling through his stomach and threatening his throat. He grasped the detective's shoulder as if to ground himself, the light tremors running through the muscles under his palm meant his friend was still alive. It would be okay, the ambulance must not have been far off by now, Sherlock would be fine, he just needed some blood, some diagnostics and supportive care, it would all be just fine.

"Oh John." Mrs Hudson's voice sounded behind him and she suddenly appeared in his line of vision, "oh dear, he really has got himself into a right pickle hasn't he?"

The doctor didn't look up, his glare remained on his friend, Sherlock was shuddering lightly under him, a weak string of groans passed his lips which were now an alarming shade of blue, his breaths, shallow and raspy were becoming weaker.

"Oh, he's going to be okay isn't he?" The landlady dithered in the hallway, "you're a good doctor John. He'll be okay won't he?"

"I don't know." John's voice now wavered, emotion slowly making its way up to his larynx, the thick ball of angst which sat there and made it hard to speak. "I'm a doctor but I can't stop venom once it's in his system, he needs a hospital, antivenom and an ICU bed right now." The blogger watched in trepidation as his friend finally lost his battle with consciousness, Sherlock's lanky frame suddenly stilled. "Please don't." His whispered, quiet enough that the old lady could not hear him, fingers finding his friend's extreme racing pulse. Sherlock's skin was pale and now cold to touch, in shock, peripherals shutting down in a bid to save internal organs, the doctor gulped again to rid the rising nausea.

"Ambulance John." Mrs Hudson suddenly said.
There, in the very distance he could hear it, the sirens of his friend's salvation and they couldn't get there quick enough.

"I'll go meet them..." the lady hurried towards the door, opening it and casting a long dull shadow across the hallway.

The daylight made the detective look even more cadaverous, skin white and lips a horrible purple tinge in contrast to the red frothy blood now flowing freely from his nose. His breaths were shallow and useless and John feared if he took his eyes of the man's chest for a second that it would stop rising altogether.

The sirens grew louder, to the doctors ears they were both a sign of hope and the sound of dread. He could hear Mrs Hudson's muffled voice out on the street before after what seemed like forever, but was probably less than a minute two paramedics appeared through the doorway.

"Dr Watson?" One of them recognised him.

"Hi." John said simply, not trusting his voice much, "Sherlock." It put simply, "bitten by an unknown venomous snake approximately 20 to 30 minutes ago on his left hand. Severe local reaction and systematic symptoms of envenomation. Epistaxis, heamatemasis, muscle tremors and tachycardia, lost consciousness about two minutes ago, respirations shallow and cyanosis present."

He took a large inhale, suddenly feeling lightheaded from the panic.

"Alright." The older medic said, "let's scoop and run, we need to get him in ASAP. Charlie pass me the scoop and get an ambu bag ready I think we're going to need it."

The younger and clearly less experienced EMT quickly passed the spinal scoop from his shoulders before opening another bag to retrieve the other equipment. With John's help they pushed the detective lax body onto the board quickly, clicking the sides together and then securing his body with the straps.

"Lets go." They weren't hanging around, before the poor young man had even assembled the breathing bag John and the other medic had him and were already half way out the door.

Mrs Hudson only stood and watched in horror as they loaded the detective into the waiting ambulance, a hand over her mouth. "John, call me as soon as you know..." tears welled in her eyes and she turned away.

The doctor said nothing in return, shell shocked from the last few minutes of hell he quickly pulled the door to, he was in full doctor mode now, he would deal with the fallout once he was sure his friend was out of danger, right now, he needed to be on his best game. Regrettfully he pulled the second door shut, leaving a distraught landlady on the pavement as the ambulance sped away. He was worried about Rosie, but knew Mrs Hudson would look after her well.

John turned back to the scene behind him, thankful to see the senior medic at work and the young lad at the drivers seat, they were not hanging about. An oxygen mask was already on his friend's face but the numbers on the screen told him the gas was doing very little to oxygenate his body, Sp02 88%, a bit not good. The ECG was worse though, an irregular whining rhythm played out across the monitor, the lines of the trace spiked and waved madly in ways which John had never seen before. The medic was placing an IV line in his friend's upper arm with precision, despite the movements of the vehicle and Sherlock's shut down veins he hit it first time, securing it quickly and flushing it through. John turned up the oxygen flow rate in the hope the higher flow would increase his numbers but not holding out hope. The machine suddenly beeped out an angry warning, the low blood pressure flashing up on screen in red.
"Oh hell." John pulled out a bag of Ringer's lactate solution from the one of many drawers and began assembling it with a giving set ready for administration into the detectives veins. Just as he hung the bag on the ceiling hook his phone rang out, he hit answer and speakerphone again, placing it down on the side of the bed as he began to connect the fluids up, the medic pulled the line into a fluid pump and hit high numbers out before pressing run.

"Well..." John cried.

"Puff Adder." Lestrade was on the other end of the line, breathless and clearly flustered, "part of the viper family, the herpatologist said it can be serious if someone is bitten, they cause local necrosis and clotting problems and they need antivenom as soon as."

"Great thanks." John replied with an automatic tone, wincing as he looked at the bitten hand, bruising and blistering worsening by the minute. He pulled his phone back to him to disconnect the call.

"There's something else." Greg said quickly. John paused. "this keeper was smart, looks like he stocked antivenom for all his dangerous species here, they've found a fridge full of the stuff."

"Get it here now!" The doctor almost shouted, he knew London hospitals stocked antivenom for many species but it was likely quicker having Lestrade blue light it to them.

"Where?" Greg was now in a rush, the doctor could hear movement and talking in the background. John looked up, quickly aware that he hadn't a clue which hospital they were headed.

"Kings College." The medic said quickly, readjusting the detectives oxygen mask and staring worriedly at the screens low readings.

"On it!" Lestrade replied.

"Bring all of it, and bloody hurry!" The air of panic was creeping back into the doctors voice.

"I'm coming." John could hear his friend running on the end of the line. "See you soon." The call disconnected.

"Just hold on mate, we're nearly there." The doctor clasped his friend's good hand and prayed, he was not a religious man in the slightest but he hoped for a miracle, hoped that his friend's stubbornness would just keep him alive a little bit longer.

John's pleas were not answered, as only moments later Sherlock stopped breathing. The EMT stepped in immediately, pushing the mask to the man's face and squeezing the ambu bag to inflate the detectives lungs.

"Jesus Sherlock, come on." The doctor felt tears pickling the back of his eyes, he sat down with a start and pulled his friend's appendage into his own. "Please..."

"Everything alright?" The young medic driving shouted to the back, clearly noting the change in atmosphere.

"He's going south, step on it!" The older medic bellowed back.

The vehicles engine groaned in protest as it accelerated, lurching them forward faster than ever.

"Please don't die." John whispered, "please God Sherlock, don't die."
Pleural effusion - excess fluid which accumulates within the chest cavity around the lungs. Happens in many many different scenarios such as heart failure, trauma, infection etc. In this case it is likely to be a reaction to the venom and potentially bleeding.

DIC - Disseminated intravascular coagulation (when I was training I knew it as death is coming). This is a very complicated condition which even I don't understand the full ins and outs of but basically the bodies normal clotting factors in the blood become unbalanced and causes a number of issues including bleeding out from all places internally and externally in the body and clots to develop within blood vessels. The condition is only seen as a complicating factor for other conditions such as sepsis, toxins, cancers (especially blood based), liver diseases and severe trauma to name a few. Patients can survive it but it is a serious and life threatening complication. Many animals I see with this do not make it.

Epistaxis - medical term for nosebleed (used to be my favourite word when I was training)

Heamatemasis - medical term for vomiting blood

Tachycardia - resting heart rate of over 100 beats a minute, caused by many many things from stress to sepsis.

Cyanosis - blue tinge of the skin (most commonly lips) when there is a lack of oxygen in the tissues,

Sp02 - a monitoring devise used to measure the oxygen saturation in the body by measuring the level of heamaglobin (oxygen carrier in the blood). The numbers should be above 95% in a heathy patient, numbers below 90% suggest severe hypoxia (lack of oxygen) in the circulating blood a tissues.

Necrosis - when tissues (e.g. Muscles, skin etc) die off due to lack of blood supply. There are different types.

Puff Adder - Latin name Bitis arietans, a type of viper snake which inhabits Africa, Morocco and Arabian countries. They are not an overly aggressive species but when they do strike they do so quickly with a nasty deep bite. Their venom is very potent and causes the most deaths from any other African snake. I love snakes and nurse/handle then often in my job but thankfully don't have to deal with the venomous just the occasional grumpy soul.
John has to save more than one life when he and Sherlock are left in a collapsed building following an explosion.

Chapter Notes

There will be a part two to this. Apologise for the slow going works, struggling with writing.

"Get down!!" John's small stature comes hurtling through the doorway straight for Sherlock. He launches himself forwards, rugby tackling the lanky figure to the ground just as the deafening rumbling hit their ears and everything went black.

The first thing that Sherlock was aware of was the maddening ringing noise, he brings one palm up to bat his ear, but to no avail the buzzing continues. The detectives head aches and throbs and there's a warm sticky feeling surrounded his upper leg. It was then he realised he was laying face down, cheek pressed into the threadbare carpet.

"John!" Sherlock's voice was muffled by the disarray of fallen rubble, his eyes stung and watered from the dust which was still settling in the musty air, he blinked them open. "John?!" His vision whitened out then as he tried to sit up slightly and the detective took a long slow breath in before the world around him came back into focus. He let out a grunt when he pulled himself more upright, staggering to his feet with some difficulty before swaying violently to the left and leaning on fallen brickwork. His leg was stinging and with a quick glance the issue was evident. A long spiked shard of metal had bored into his upper leg just above the knee, that warm sticky feeling was blood, trickling steadily from the wound. "Damn..."

Pain was a strange thing to him, he was not immune to the feeling but perhaps more tuned out from the nerve endings screaming back at his consciousness. He not only felt that pain was more of annoyance to him but he had also developed an amazing ability to block it out. His leg did not seem painful, if anything the area around the wound was numb, probably not good. There were more important things to think about right now though, namely, where his companion was.

"John?" He coughed.

"Sherl..." a weak moan sounded from behind him and he spun on the spot, cursing at the sting and the feel of a renewed stream of blood.

"John?" He was back on his knees now, grabbing madly at the great lumps of plasterboard and brickwork until finally his best friend was revealed. Flat on his back, he doctor blinks up at him starry eyed, his skin is coated in dirt from the rubble but the detective can see his ashen skin beneath.
"Fine..." the doctors voice was weaker than usual and Sherlock eyes him with a worried glance.

"Then why aren't you getting up?"

"Just a minute." He holds a hand out momentarily and Sherlock cocks his head questioningly.

"What is it?" The detective pales, he may struggle with emotional cues but when it came to John Watson he rarely misses a beat. Something was wrong about this situation, but the doctor was giving very little away in response.

"Nothing..." the older man gave a sharp hiss as he pulled himself into a sitting position, "just took a bit of a hit I think." He brushed at his coat, covered in dust. "Are you okay?" They lock eyes.

"A little concussed maybe," Sherlock smiles weakly, the throb at the back of his eyes is not helping matters. He choses to leave the leg injury out but John was a doctor, there was no hiding injury from him.

"Let me see that?"

"It's nothing." The detective pulls back slightly as John reaches for the embedded shrapnel, perhaps it did hurt a little more than he imagined. His heart rate raises in his chest, the pulse whooshing in his ears in response. He wasn't sure if this was from the sudden stinging pain or the ebbing panic about his friend's health but it didn't feel good. His vision whitened briefly again but he held himself firmly upright in response, blow to the head was maybe proving more of a challenge then.

"Sherlock?" John warned, pulling himself up a little more with a visible grimace on his face. He gasped out a ragged breath and inhaled with a shallow unnatural gurgle.

The detective did not allow the man to reach for his leg, he shuffled backwards again still, frowning deeply at the look of his best friend. John was pale, really pale, and as he looked closer the effort he was putting into each and every breath was far more than it should have been. His chest was suddenly heaving in each inhale and in a matter of moments the doctors eyes went from a slitted grimace to wide with utter panic.

"Oh, hell." John murmured.

"Not good?"

"A bit not good yeah." The doctor clutched at his heart, pulling the cloth of his coat and shirt into his hand in a fist, his ragged breaths were increasing in rate and he raises his chin to help.

"What's happening?" The detectives own eyes widened in horror as the man collapses backwards into the same spot Sherlock had found him in. He lets out a short moan of pain.

"Chest...." John breathed out raggedly between each word, "trauma..." he quickly pulled the zip down his coat, his hands are trembling now and he fumbles with the buttons on his shirt underneath. "Can you?"

Sherlock shuffles forwards quickly, the pain it caused as the metal in his flesh jostled made him involuntarily cry out and John reaches for the wound.

"Leave it!" The detective batted the doctors advances away and set to undoing his friend's shirt, his own hands are shaking too and as he reached the last two buttons he gave up, popping them from their threads in a hurry. "What's happening John, what do I do?" He tries desperately not to allow his voice to quiver but it did, the ebb of shear panic was pounding in the back of his mind, but he
needed to focus, now was not the time for emotion, Sherlock knew better than any what it did to people.

John brought his palms down and across his ribs, feeling them gently before hissing out in pain. "Fractured..."

"Do I need to bind them?"

"No. Punctured lung."

"What?" The detectives face drops, his eyes widening in panic.

John held a finger out, the other hand exploring his body, examining his thorax, he tapped on each side, carefully listening to the acoustics and then feeling for his trachea and then his jugular pulse.

"What... w...what i do?" Sherlock was stuttering, he has to hold his focus, he would be no use to John if he keeled over from the panic and blood loss now. "J...John. What?!

The doctors eyes drooped dramatically and his chin hits his chest, momentarily seeming to black out.

"John!" Sherlock shook his friend's shoulders and the man's eyes fly open wide. "Stay awake, help me."

"Tension pneumothorax." The doctor finally ground out, his voice weak and edging on a whisper, "need to.... release pressure..... remember?

Sherlock didn't, John had taught him so much about first aid at a scene how was he supposed to remember it all? John was the doctor not him, it wasn't his job, how was he supposed to remember everything, he probably deleted it and now John was going to die because of him.

No.

He stopped, his trail of thoughts running madly away. John dying was not an option. Think Sherlock think!

"Coat..." the doctors voice sounded. He pointed to the pocket on his coat and Sherlock delved into it, coming out with a small wrap which looked more like that carried by a painter to hold brushes in. He undid the small thing and spread it across the floor. The packet was well packed, IV cannula's, dressings, prep pads and tape all snugly wrapped together in a tiny medical kit, John was a genius.

"Tourniquet." John's voice was weak and barely a whisper, his chest was heaving more with each breath.

"What?" Sherlock pulled the military style tourniquet from the pouch and held it up with a bewildered look on his face. He was aware of how to use the device. Many a time John had insisted on he knowing how to apply basic first aid including these at a scene. The doctor was determined to ensure his friend was capable of saving a life in case he was out of action, right now being exactly why.

"Leg." John pointed to Sherlock's injured appendage and coughed weakly.

"No. Not now." The detective let the thing back to the floor and began rummaging through the rest of the kit, trying desperately to remember what his friend had taught him about thoracic trauma and
the biology of a collapsed lung. He wasn't stupid, why couldn't he remember!?

"Do it!" The doctors voice rose a notch, but it took so much effort he struggled to pull in air, a horrible wheeze followed his voice.

"John?" Sherlock's face was contorted in worry, "J... John help me?" He locked eyes with his friend, not even sure if he was asking for help with now. A film of saltwater was beginning to form before his globes, making his vision slightly blurred, he hoped his friend could not see his transports weakness.

"Tourniquet. Now." The doctor pointed again. "Do you... want to... bleed to death?" He huffed out.

At this point the detective looked down to the floor below them, a red stain was stretching out across the carpet, mixing and congealing with dust as it went. Sherlock was then aware of the trickling feeling of a rapid stream of crimson running down his inner leg, his trousers were soaked through and the floor below not faring much better, by his calculations there must have been a good two or more pints lost. Perhaps John was right, his head suddenly felt light at the thought, or maybe that was the growing concussion he wasn't sure.

"Sherlock?" He warned. This time John had managed to grasp the medical device and he held it out insistently in his tremulous hand. The detective took it, undoing the Velcro his swept his coat out the way and pulled it around the top of his thigh securing it in place. Sherlock knew from experience this was not going to be pleasant, but John was right, he would be no good to his best friend if he bled out. Losing consciousness right now was not sounding favourable. He unclipped the small windlass rod and began to twist the thing, increasing the pressure slowly, within seconds the excruciating agony kicked in. His face twisted in response and he ground his teeth together in the hope that he would not cry out. As blackness began to invade the edges of his vision he stopped, locking the thing in place.

"Not enough." John managed to grab for the thing, turning the small rod a couple more times. This time the detective did vocalise, a weak screech ripping from his throat before he could stifle it down to a whimper.

"Stop!"

The doctor didn't. John turned the thing four more times before clipping it closed.

Sherlock's breathing was now matching his friend's, the detective bent forwards, bracing his hands on the blood soaked carpet, the pain was so overwhelming that nausea was threatening. He grunted before sitting back up, face almost translucent and lacking all colour.

"You fucking pillock."

"Glad to be of service." John smiled, and chuckled lightly before a fit of coughing began ripping through him. His eyes screwed tightly closed and he convulsed with each painful hack, struggling to catch his breath between each one.

"John!" Sherlock was unable to keep the panic from his voice now, it didn't even sound like his own baritone anymore. "John stay with me."

It seemed to take forever for the doctor to calm his strained and uneven breaths, but as he does his eyes droop again, he struggles with consciousness and Sherlock shakes him for the second time.

"John!" The detective is nearly hysterical, "h...help me, what do I do?" He's rummaging in he kit again, trying desperately to think, what had his friend had taught him about chest trauma.
"Pressure." John wheezes out, his lips are now tinged with a shade of blue, "need... to release pressure." His eyes are rolling, but the younger man can't get him to focus, the pull of oblivion is tugging at the edges of the doctors mind.

"Right." Sherlock tries to think logically, he knows this, he can do this. He pulls out a chest drain from the kit amazed that one was even in there. John must have thought of every eventuality. The needle is large and imposing, Sherlock knows this is probably going to be far more unpleasant than the tourniquet they'd just applied, stabbing his best friend in the chest was not what the detective had planned to do with his Friday night. He picks through the other things and decides on a iodine swab. "Where?" He finally says, holding out the two bits of kit.

John's glassy eyes try to focus on his friend but he fails and they close. For a second Sherlock thinks he blacked out but he finally takes a large and agonising breath before speaking, "Left side...Third rib..." he whispers, and is barely audible above his horrendous breaths, his left hand trying to pull to to point but it's useless. "Be quick."

Sherlock feels oddly uneasy as he pulls the wet iodine out the packet and begins to scrub his friend's bare skin, human contact is not something he is very comfortable with, and high emotions are not making it much easier. He scrubs the pale scarred skin between John's nipple and clavicle, he can remember now, his friend pointing out the area on a diagram and explaining what a pneumothorax was, his muddled mind is starting to remember. Sherlock remembers being flippant about his friend's first aid lesson, moaning that he'd never need this piece of information as that's what John was here for. Except John can't help now, he's now dying before him and he was nothing but a selfish brat about being taught basic medicine, how could he be so stupid?! Sherlock fists the swab in his hand and scrubs harder, he grinds his teeth together, John dying is not an option.

The scrub is cold on the doctors skin but he doesn't care, the man's eyes are tightly closed. His breaths are slowly becoming more desperate. The accessory muscles in his neck are straining with each pull of air, his mouth opening but of little use. The awful rasp which follows each breath sends the detectives insides into a twisted ball of anguish.

"I'm sorry." Sherlock pulls the sterile packet open and uncaps the large gauge needle, his hands are shaking madly, how the hell was he supposed to do this, how does John keep so calm in such a situation? He clasps his fingers around the drain harder, knuckles turning white. He takes a long deep breath against his threatening dizziness, blinking away the unfallen tears. "This might hurt a bit."

If John hears him he doesn't respond, Sherlock isn't even sure he's actually conscious anymore. The detective feels for the third rib and rests the drain in the space just before it. He inhales another deep breath and plunges it down. Both John and Sherlock let out a groan of discomfort simultaneously. The detective doesn't realise just how much force he needs to push the needle through his friend's chest wall and into the plural cavity. His arm shakes at the effort until the thing makes a small popping noise and air begins to hiss from the end of the device.

"Oh God." Sherlock pulls back, shocked by the thing he's just done, he knows how it works so why is he so panicked. He stares at his blood stained hands, a mixture of his own and John's now. There is a small stream of the red liquid had run down the doctors pale skin from the drain and Sherlock has to bite back the bile that threatens from the sight of it.

If at all possible the detectives his hand starts to shake more, but this time his body follows suit. "John." he chokes out.

The doctor is unresponsive, the air is still escaping angrily from the drain and Sherlock looks over
him. "No, don't die." His voice is broken and useless.

The doctor does not respond, his body is still, pale and lifeless. The detective bends over him, fumbling uselessly for a pulse, he shouts, his voice shaking.

"John!"

Chapter End Notes

Tension pneumothorax - this is where air leaks out of a injured lung either from a closed injury (e.g. A closed fractured rib puncturing the lung or from a impact to the chest) or an open injury for example a stab or gunshot wound. The air leaks out and becomes trapped in the pleural space around the lung. This increases the pressure within the chest cavity as there is no where for this excess air to go. It results in a collapsed lung and in some cases a tension pneumothorax where as the tension rises in one side of the chest the heart and trachea is pushed to one side, you get increased pressure on the heart causing back pressure in the jugular veins and eventual cardiac failure. The only way to solve the problem is to release the pressure from the cavity by placing a drain in.

If you've never seen a military tourniquet then google one. They're great I learned how to use one one a course recently and I'm going to purchase one to have with me on my motorcycle first aid kit. They're life saving bits of kit.
Chapter Summary

We love a good bit of Lestrade here.

Chapter Notes

Many many apologise for taking so darn long to write anything. Being busy does not really cover life right now. I’ve not had a moment to myself and I really needed to write something. And I don’t care if it’s nearly 3am here, I needed an outlet. Enjoy anyway. We love Lestrade in this chapter (you might want to refresh your knowledge and read the previous chapter).

Greg Lestrade was known for being very unflappable, calm in any situation brought before him. He would never be able to do his job if he were. In his career so far he had seen his fair share of violent crime, murder, disaster and gruesome scenes. Since meeting Sherlock Holmes his job had done nothing but become more of this and he had to admit in some respects he enjoyed it.

However when the call that day came in, something in the pit of his stomach twisted into an agonizing knot.

“Explosion near Mansion House sir.” A young constable peered through the door of Lestrade’s office with a worried look in his eyes.

“Aren’t counter terrorism all over it?” Greg’s eyebrows rose in question, it must have been sent to him for something.

The uneasy pause from the PC only heightened the inspectors anxiety, the hairs on his forearms tingled. “What is it?” he asked sitting straighter at his desk, coffee that was half way to his lips now forgotten.

“Eye witness’s say they saw two men enter the building not long before the place went up…”

“And what did they look like?” Greg swallowed back the nausea beginning to ebb.

“One short, greying hair, the second tall, dark hair, long coat.”

“Christ… lets go. Give me that address.” Lestrade jumped from his seat, collecting his car keys in haste.

When the detective inspector arrived at the scene of the explosion it was utter carnage. Several large fire engines dominated the street view, one crew were working on a small fire, which seemed to have broken out in one of the adjacent buildings to the blast. Many police services had already arrived and were in the process of securing the scene and calming a number of distraught individuals who had clearly been witness to the whole event. One ambulance pulled up just behind
Greg’s car as he made his way into the maelstrom of activity.

“Inspector Lestrade” Greg flashed his ID. “Any casualties?” He asked the chief fireman who had taken control of the scene.

“Two men were seen to enter prior to the explosion but we cannot go inside until we have assessed the stability of the building structure, there is substantial damage to the load bearing walls. Although there is no active fire inside and a chance of people being trapped I cannot risk my boys going in until we cant get braces on these walls.” He pointed to the cracked brickwork of the old Victorian house, its walls clearly bowed and buckled from the explosion. The windows were blown out and glass and debris littered the front pathway before the house.

Lestrade’s heart thundered in his ears. This was an address of interest in Sherlock’s latest mystery, a murder of an Austrian Government official, a high profile case, this was an empty property in question. The likelihood of the dynamic duo being inside was high considering witness statements.

Greg pulled his phone out, hitting his speed dial he held the mobile to his ear.

‘The number you have called is unavailable’

It was not unusual for Sherlock’s mobile to be off but this didn’t help the rising panic setting in. He dialed again, this time John Watson and this time the phone rang out several times before switching to the answer phone message system.

“Shit.” Greg pocked his phone and pushed past the emergency services, paying no heed to the cries for him to stop. Be damned, it might be dangerous to enter but he cared about these two men a little more then he ever admitted to anyone. The idea of leaving them in the path of a building at risk of collapse was not worth thinking about.

He barely made it through the front door before almost tripping on debris in what must have been the hallway. Plasterboard and what looked like floorboards where almost completely barring his way into the building.

“John? Sherlock?” Greg shouted in the eerie silence of the wrecked building.

There was no answer to his shouts and he tried twice more but with no luck before continuing on and picking his way slowly through the debris, taking care not to injure himself on the jagged rubble.

It was only then, after stumbling through what was probably an old doorway he heard the soft whimper of life. And what he was about to see he wished didn’t burn into his memory but it did.

Lestrade’s hand flew to his mouth in the hope to abate the rising nausea. As he had rounded into the room the sight of Sherlock Holmes on his knees came into his sight.

His famous dark coat was powdered with white from the blast, and he was bent forwards on his knees his body forcefully pushing downwards. It took Greg several seconds to see that the force he was exerting was onto nothing other than John Watson’s bare chest.

“Fucking Christ.” The inspector swallowed hard to avoid vomiting.

It was clear the detective had not seen him. He bent forwards, sealing his pale lips over the doctors and forced air into the older man’s lungs before continuing chest compressions. “Please.” Greg heard him whimper, “Please John.”
Lestrade hurried to them, partially tripping on seemed to be an old table, now just a pile of wooden splinters. This brought Sherlock’s face up to meet his view.

There was a mixture of blood and soot at the detective hairline, his eyes were wide and red from panic and raw emotion and his skin was white as a sheet.

“Greg…” Sherlock cried, barely audible. “He can’t…. not…” He pointed to John’s lifeless form. His eyes then screwed tightly closed and he turned his head into the sleeve of his coat letting out a cry of both grief and utter despair. The sight enough to almost send Greg to his knees.

“It’s alright mate, we’ve got this Sherlock.” Was all he managed to say before he watched the detective continue his efforts at restarting his best friend’s heart.

Lestrade was no medic but he had enough training and even more so with John teaching him plenty. He bent down beside the jolting form of blogger, CPR was not a nice sight in any case. The recipient’s body receives quite the beating for any chance of survival and Sherlock was performing the task in textbook fashion despite his clear anguish.

The inspector placed two fingers onto John’s neck, feeling a pulse thud beneath them in time with the detective’s compressions, he was doing a good job but Lestrade could see exhaustion setting in.

Sherlock paused and gave two breaths to his friend.

“Stop.” Greg grabbed his arm before he continued the compressions. “He’s got a pulse.”

“John!” the younger man shouted, bending close to the doctor’s face again. He tapped roughly on the other man’s cheeks. “John?” his voice was hoarse and near unrecognizable.

“It’s alright.” Lestrade gasped at the detectives shoulder to steady him and gently pushed him back a little. “Give him some room would you, hang on.” His own voice was shaking.

John gave a gurgled a strained groan before inhaling a short and clearly painful breath. He moaned out and inhaled again. Lestrade suddenly noted the large gauge needle sticking out his skin between his ribs, the thing was hissing with air alarmingly, a trickle of bloody fluid was in a perfect line down to the floor. Only then did he notice the amount of crimson spread around them.

“Shit, whose blood is this?” Greg’s panic really was at the end of his physical abilities to control.

“John?” Sherlock was back bending down over his friend, “Can you hear me? Talk to me John?” he stuttered near hysterical in his tone, his cupped the doctors head in his hands. “John?”

“Sherl…” John whispered, his voice weak and breath strained. “I… I’m here.”

“Take it easy.” Lestrade gently gripped around the detectives upper arms again to attempt to get his attention back on him and to calm the shaking man. It was then that Sherlock felt all but heavier than he should and in an instant Greg saw the man’s eyes roll back.

“Right… down we go then.” He acted quickly, pushing up and supporting the detective backwards and into a pile of what looked like soft furnishings. He cradled the man’s head as he loll bonelessly into a partial sitting position, his legs askew.

Greg swept the famous coat back to assess for injury. “Fuck.” He swore. “Guess we know where all that blood is from then.” He clocked the large jagged metal sticking into the man’s leg and the temporary tourniquet above it. From the look of it, he was sure it was almost through and through.
“You did good mate, just hang on yeah?” he felt for a pulse again but on a different friend. He found it rapid and bounding, he was no doctor but knew this was a sure sign of shock and blood loss.

“Inspector Lestrade?” a shout came from other side of the house. “The building is a risk of collapse. You need to get out. That’s an order sir.”

“I have two casualties with severe injury. I’m not leaving without them.” He shouted back.

“You need to get out sir.” The fireman replied. “Can they walk?”

Lestrade partially laughed at the thought and partly at the predicament that he was finding himself in. The place was obviously at such a high risk that the fire and rescue service had been ordered to hold back, this was unusual that the danger must have been pretty likely.

“No.” Greg said but not certain it was loud enough for the man to hear. “But we’ll find a way.” He bit his lip turning back to the two friends.

“Right.” He inhaled and paused.

John’s eyes were near slits, he was gazing weakly at the ceiling, his breaths hard and strained. Sherlock was out, head rested back, eyes closed and hollow looking, his jaw slack.

“Right.” He said again. He needed to move now, no time to decide. In his eyes John was both the priority and the sickest since he had suffered a cardiac arrest not minutes ago. That and he knew if he got Sherlock out and lost John the detective was likely murder him in his sleep for saving him and not his blogger.

“Your first John.” He bent low sliding his hands under the man’s knees and his upper back.

The inspector was by no means the fittest he could be and right now he was regretting all those weekends in the pub. John was not overweight but he was stocky and not easy to lift from the floor. With an uncountable amount of cursing he slowly managed to pull the doctor into his grasp, John’s head rested into his shoulder.


“Coming.” Lestrade moaned out, the strain on his arms causing his own level of agony, he didn’t know if he could do this. Stepping over the wreckage in the room he shuffled towards the front door down the hall wobbling as he began the ascent then descent on the debris blocking the exit.

“Down.” John exhaled, “Go get Sherlock….” his voice was barely audible but his grip on the inspectors clothes tightened. “Let me down, I can walk.”

“Like hell you can.” Lestrade near fell as he reached the other side of the rubble and he had to use the remains of the wall to steady himself. As his shoulder met the structure a small array of bricks came away and began crashing around them.

“I need some help!?” he cried reaching the outside his knees beginning to buckle and as he tried to lower the doctor down he lost his grip.

John’s feet met the floor but he could not hold his own weight, he went tumbling forwards but just as Greg thought he was going down a fireman caught him in his grasp.
“Chest trauma.” Greg sucked in gulps of air from the exertion, “Cardiac arrest, get him to the ambulance now.” He pointed, turning back to the crumbling building.

“You can’t go back in there, the place is about to come down!”

The inspector heeded no attention to the statement and he almost vaulted the blocked hallway, cursing as his trousers snagged on a jagged piece of glass and it gouged into his flesh.

“Sherlock!” he shouted, rounding into the room to find the man exactly as he left him. “Sherlock, we’ve got to go… now.” Another small selection of building material clattered to the floor.

“Come on?” Greg pulled at the large Belstaff and with another groan he levered the man into a near standing position.

Sherlock’s eyes opened slightly, his globes rolling from one side to another but not focusing on anything. “John?” he asked.

“He’s safe, now it’s your turn come on, one foot at a time.” The inspector wedged an arm around the chest of the lanky man and used the other to hold tightly onto the front of his coat in a bid to steady him should he fall forwards or backwards.

“Tired.” Sherlock moaned but managed one step forward, his injured leg then gave way and his weight fell into Greg’s, nearly sending them off course.

“Yeah I know.” Lestrade pushed him back up. “You can sleep in a bit, but first let’s get out this place alive shall we?” he smiled sadly pushing forwards. They made it out the room in what seemed like forever, slow going when Sherlock could not weight bare on his leg. When they made it into the cluttered hallway the enormity of trying to get the detective over the pile of wreckage then becoming apparent. This was going to take an age if they were going to ensure no more injury to either. Greg’s new wound was throbbing with pain.

“Get out!” The shouts from outside filtered in. “Its coming down, get out now!”

The rumble of falling bricks and mortar filled the inspectors ears and dust began to fill the hallway, blocking the daylight filtering in from the open door behind the rubbish.

Greg then did the only thing he could think of. He bent slightly and brought his hands together around the detective’s bloodied leg and pulled him into a fireman’s lift.

Sherlock howled, thrashing slightly at the pain the lifting caused before going limp in the inspectors grasp. In that instant Greg wondered if it were harder to carry a conscious or unconscious person. It didn’t matter right now, he would ask Sherlock later if they got out this hell alive.

He drove forwards, the sounds of the collapsing building increasing in intensity around them. Growling in pain at the strain of carrying his friend over the multitude of rubble, stumbling madly before practically diving out the door and into the street. He kept running as he reached the front path and road, feeling and hearing the house behind them coming down in a deafening roar.

As he reached the other side of one of the fire engines his legs gave out and both he and the unconscious detective went crashing to the tarmac, a cloud of dust pluming around them.

Moments later, as the dust began to settle a horrible silence came over the scene. Sherlock was beside him, still and limbs out in awkward angles, Greg swallowed back the panic once more checking and finding a pulse to his relief.
“You lucky bastard.” The lead fireman came into view. “That was the most heroic yet foolish thing I’ve seen. Well done.” He clamped a hand onto Greg’s shoulder. ‘You alright?’

Greg just nodded, his brain struggling to keep up with the shock of the situation, he had literally just cheated death by seconds.

“Stay here the paramedics are coming, your other friend is already on the way to hospital, they weren’t waiting around.”

Greg only sighed a slight exhale of relief when the medics arrived and began to assess the detective’s unconscious form, scooping him onto a spinal board and gurney before he barely realized.

“I think you should come with us too Sir.” One of the medics gently asked, guiding the inspector to his wobbly feet and into the waiting ambulance where they were loading Sherlock. “Sounds like you’re the hero of the day.”

Lestrade sat into the chair of the ambulance, gazing over the pale unconscious form of the detective being hooked up to wires and IV lines.

The medic draped a blanket around his own shoulders and it was then he realized his was shaking, the magnitude of the situation only just coming to light. “Thanks.” He said simply as the doors closed and the vehicle jolted into action.
Chapter Summary

Chasing a criminal ends in hanging onto life, and not just for one of them.

Chapter Notes

As always it's been a while. Apologise. I dug this out the files as I had half written it many years ago. Thought it could do with polishing off, tweaking and publishing. There will be another instalment to this I promise. Enjoy for now.

John's heart pounded twice the speed of his feet as they hit the pavement. His breath caught his throat and he struggled for it for a moment, trying desperately to keep up with the bellowing dark coat several lengths in front of him. Sherlock's feet made no noise as he sprinted through the darkened alleyway, the criminal not too far ahead, they were gaining on him.

John barely had a chance to think when the consulting detective had shouted to the cabbie to stop and had darted from the vehicle. Half way down the street after the assailant before the doctor registered. The soldier was quiet proud of himself for not just catching up with his friend but paying the cabbie and apologising prior to it. Clearly his fitness from Helman hadn't been completely lost, Sherlock had very much ensured that.

The hooded figure leapt over a gateway, racing on. The tall detective made light work of the obstacle but John slowed, hesitating before finally making it over the industrial mesh, avoiding the barbed wire. His foot caught wire on his decent and he let out a stifled yell as he crashed onto the dusty ground below. Feeling his shoulder give with horrible crunch he couldn't avoid a full blown yell.

"Sherlock!" he cried, gripping his injured arm close to his chest he staggered to a stand, watching helplessly as his best friend's form sped into the distance.

His friend's form suddenly disappeared, obscured by shrubbery. "Cock." he grunted.

John swayed slightly on the spot for a moment, his vision swam with the pain. Clavicle; he prodded the already swelling collar bone - almost definitely broken. Thankfully usually easy to heal but agony to break, every expansion of his rib cage as he breathed hard sent a small wave of pain up into his neck and shoulder.

"Fuck." He swore.

He reached gingerly to his belt, hand now gripping the butt of his familiar browning, with one limb out of use and a violent fugitive about to be jumped by Sherlock Holmes this was going to turn messy if they weren't careful.

He considered calling Lestrade for a moment, he examined his phone and the time, hands shaking
now from both pain and adrenaline. 11.23pm. Surely the DI would be home by now, or at the pub? It was Friday night after all. Sherlock had already told him not to bother ringing the police, 'useless bunch of time wasters', he had grumbled.

A heavy thud of a gunshot brought John's attention back to the present then, the familiar and sickening sound echoed across the way, bringing back a flash of Afghanistan and sent his heart thundering with worry. Bugger this, his finger hit speed dial and he pressed the mobile to his ear.

"Lestrade!" he didn't even give the man on the other end a chance to speak. He didn't care if he was on shift or out, they needed help. "Back up. East India docks, now! A spot of bother with your wanted man, gunshots fired."

"Understood." The inspector replied.

He hit end call, pocketing the phone he raced on in the direction of the gunfire, clenching his jaw tightly against the shearing pain in his shoulder.

"Sherlock?" He rounded a corner and onto the pathway surrounding the large body of water. The scuffle of feet could be heard. The detective and the criminal were head to head, struggling wildly between a gun in the centre of the tussle. The ominous side of the dock only meters from them, any second and they would both be in the water. The risk of hypothermia or worse in seconds.

"Get out of here John" Sherlock's voice was strained and gruff.

From where the doctor was standing even in the poor dim lighting could see the shine of fresh blood across his friend's forehead, dribbling across one eye. The doctor gulped back the thought of Sherlock's fall at Bart's not 3 years ago.

The gun fired again and John ducked wildly as the bullet ricochet off the wall close by. He turned back to the struggle, refocusing his blurry vision, Sherlock eyed him carefully. He was clearly checking his friend for signs of gunshot wounds.

The detective grunted and clenched his jaw tightly against the other man's strength. The fugitive seemed stronger even though shorter, his large muscled arms twice the size of the consultants. Sherlock went in for a head butt, but caught off balance the criminal ducked and pushed him slamming the tall man into the small barrier, the only thing now stopping them from plummeting into the water below.

"Careful" Sherlock cracked a famous grin, one which always made John think he really was a psychopath. What the hell was he smiling about?

The detective threw a punch, splitting the man's lip, yet it only served to anger him further. The gun turn inwards towards the tall man and Sherlock twisted unsuccessfully attempting to avoid its firing line.

"Let him go!" John pulled his own gun this time, training it on the man. "Leave, or I'll kill you right now"

Letting out a laugh he twisted and taking advantage of the detectives momentary lapse in concentration he gabbed Sherlock's arm into a lock. The detective let out a short whimper of pain as his bones crunched unnaturally. His legs gave out and he was spun and pushed up against the railings unceremoniously, his hands held fast in the assailants iron grasp behind him.

"Not a chance" the hooded criminal brought the gun down to point it at back of Sherlock head. The detectives eyes closed, poised.
"You've already killed two people with your stupidity." John shouted.

"Ha. And I'm about to make the Great Sherlock Holmes the third." The man laughed, his finger squeezing the trigger.

Two shots fired and the fugitive stumbled slightly.

Two holes now blasted in his chest and shoulder. He laughed again viciously and paused, smiling at John with a lopsided grin. "Moriarty sends his love from the grave." He brought the butt of the gun down in one movement, striking Sherlock over the back of the head. The detective pitched forward, unconscious before his body rolled over, tipping across the railings and over the edge into the water below.

"No!" John was at the edge before the assassin went down to his knees with a choked cry, John kicked him for good measure, he wouldn't be getting up anytime soon.

The water was at least 10 foot below, a black and ominous expanse running out and into the vast basin of water which used to be a cargo dock, now nothing more than a local natural reserve. Yet despite being supposedly full of wildlife nothing but deathly silence could be heard.

"Sherlock!" his shout near echoed.

Not even the sound of nearby busy London could be heard. Just John's thundering heart of frantic panic rising in his chest.

He buried his gun back in his jeans, snatched his shoes off his feet and his coat tumbled to the ground, pain of his fractured bone somehow lost in the midst of adrenalin. Hopping over the barrier he jumped, hoping to God that he wouldn't hit his friend upon hitting the waters below.

The water was cold, even in the middle of summer and John inhaled sharply as he resurfaced. His eyes darted wildly, trying desperately to focus in the pitch black area around him. "Sherlock?" he called again but nothing.

His hands roamed the surrounding area as the panic set in, his breathes coming fast and sharp, "Jesus, Sherlock, where are you?"

Suddenly his hand connected with fabric, one he could not mistake. The thick expensive coat that his best friend loved dearly. John pulled madly on the coat, finally a solid body connecting with his, but it was deathly still and doing nothing but bobbing in the black waters.

Sherlock was face down, that much John could just tell in the faint street lamps. The panic was overwhelming but the soldier and the doctor kicked in then, he had trained for water rescue a long time ago in his army days. He flipped the detective over carefully, his face was lax and eyes closed. John pulled his cheek up to his friends. Not breathing. He needed to get to land, and now.

His head whipped round to see nothing but walls either side of them. The opposite side of the dock was too far to swim right now.

"Shit." He exhaled.

No time for attempting to get out.

He cradled his friend's head gently, extending his neck and turning it sideways so he could give a rescue breath. Sherlock's skin was frozen on his already.

"Just hold on." John's voice was broken with emotion, he clutched his best friend close, kicking
hard to keep them both buoyant in the water. He could feel the detectives carotid pulse under his fingers around his jawline. It was strong and steady but wouldn't be for long if he didn't start breathing for himself.

Sherlock's head bobbed limply in his grasp, John's eyes were now adjusting to the darkness and he could make out the crimson mixed into the water on his friend's pale forehead. He turned it again to give a long breath. He wasn't sure how long he would be able to keep this up.

His legs were already screaming at the effort of treading water, his shoulder numb from the pain.

"Sherl..." his voice slightly hoarse and useless. "Breathe you idiot."

He gave another breath.

"I said breathe!" John shouted, both inner soldier and friend appearing on the surface, he slammed his fist up and around into the centre of Sherlock's chest, hard. The lithe body jerked but made no attempt to wake or draw air.

John yelped as his shoulder collided with the wall of the dock. He took the moment to try and find grip on the side to steady them but to no luck. The green slimy algae only made John slip from his attempt and duck under the surface unintentionally. Panic was beginning to take hold. If someone didn't come to there aid they would both die here.

The doctors mind flitted away momentarily, he couldn't die right now. He just got his best friend back, he was getting married in a few months. This was not happening. Not now.

He gritted his teeth and pushed more air into his friend's lungs. His own breath taken away.

"Breathe!" his fist came down again, splashing up the dirty water.

Sherlock's eyes shot open, he tried to drag in a gulp of air, only to choke uselessly.

An air of utter terror came from the detective, clearly disoriented by the unusual surroundings upon waking. He flailed madly before choking, coughing raggedly, and finally expelling the Thames from his congested lungs with difficulty. The water spilled from his mouth. He struggled, sucking in air into his burning chest only to choke hopelessly. He tried desperately to pull from the doctors steady grasp around his neck and torso, still dazed.

"Take it easy." John cried but said firmly. "We're stuck in the dock, the less you panic the easier it will be for us to stay afloat."

"John..."

The lanky detectives voice was near inaudible but his struggling limbs slowed and he relaxed slightly. He fought for each breath, his abdominal muscles cramping from the strain, his lungs still water ridden but at least some oxygen was beginning to make it to his genius brain cells.

"Jesus Sherlock, don't do that to me again." John reached out again, his hand this time finding a small notch in the old wall, he grasped tightly. Pulling both of them up close to the brickwork.

"John" the man's voice more strained this time as he struggled, the doctor could see the pale pallor of him even in the dimly lit light. His mouth agape in the hope to draw as much air inward, God he look like death.

"Hey. No talking." John found a second step in the wall for his foot underwater, offering the doctor
at least a partial relief. He pulled his friend closer and Sherlock's eyes slipped closed and his head leaned up against the doctors shoulder.

John bit his lip hard from the pain but found himself alarmed by the detectives placid response. This was a bit not good.

"Sherlock?" He cried. "Hey? You with me?"

"You said no talking." A weak whisper passed the younger man's lips.

"Yes but I didn't say pass out."

"Not passing." Sherlock's body gave into hacking coughs again.

"Hang in there ok." John could hear sirens in the distance. "Help is on its way, just stay awake."

A gurgling horrible wheeze could be heard in the detectives airway as he sucked in weak lungful of oxygen. Thames water was not something you wanted in your system, even in this day and age, the water was brown and filthy.

"Mory" Sherlock stuttered and let out a violent shiver and John suddenly noted the more fresh blood coating his best friend's temple. Another round of hacking coughs took his body.

"Not here. And what did i say about not talking you idiot" the shorter man felt his anger for Sherlock stupidity bubbling under the surface, but worry for him took over. "Stay with me."

Sherlock struggled slightly in the water, he was clearly fighting the pulls of unconsciousness but trying his best to do as his friend suggested.

"Killer?" He asked weakly.

"I shot him. Don't you remember." John shivered and inhaled deeply. He was tiring now and the cold of the water was beginning to seep into his muscles. He hoped to God the police would hurry up.

Sherlock's voice babbled, his words slurring into one long mumble. But John heard the words which sent dread into him. "He shot me."

"What?" The doctors heart turned to ice. "Where."

"Nowhere."

"Sherlock?" John's limbs were shaking from the exertion. "Where?"

The detective let out a small groan, he shifted in the water nearly dipping under but the older man held him tightly into him. They had survived this long, they weren't going under, not yet.

A pregnant pause only broken by strained breaths from the both of them followed.

"Sherlock?" John cried. "Talk to me?"

The lanky frame relaxed back again and the lanky body went lax against the doctor.

"Christ." John exclaimed. "Fuck." He struggled to hold on with one hand, the other cradling his best friend's face above the water line. He well and truly didn't know how much longer his body would be able to put up with the strain of holding them both. But he was certain of one thing. He
would not let Sherlock go. If he was going to drown, John was going to drown with him, together.

With one last attempt the doctor opened his mouth and shouted at the top of his voice.

"Help!!"
"Help!" John's hand slipped and he went under, taking Sherlock with him. "Jesus." He scrambled for the wall, managing to grasp it again.

"Anyone?" He cradled the detective head. They were going under, any second and his shaking arm was going to lose it. He wasn't sure he would be able to keep the both of them above the surface if he did.

"Hello?" A voice.

John's head craned upwards into the an oncoming flashlight of a torch. "Doctor Watson?"

"Yes." He inhaled sharply against the rising agony in his muscles.

"PC Firth." A woman shouted back. "Help is coming sir. I'm just going to throw in the life buoy if it can be of any help. More help is coming. Lestrade is on his way and an ambulance."

The doctor bit is lip to avoid an angry retort, he didn't need Lestrade or an ambulance, he needed out. Now. His muscles were screaming in pain but there was no way he could let go of the edge right now. The floating ring landed several feet from him but he did not move, he would never make it to the float without drowning himself or losing his friend.

"Have you detained the suspect?" John looked at the useless buoy and pulled his friend up a little, realising he had allowed Sherlock's head to almost dip under. The detective groaned in response but did not open his eyes.

"No suspect here. The path is empty?"

"Shit." The doctor growled. He wanted to send the police women away. The man was still armed and potentially dangerous. Yet right now, the prospect of being left alone again sent more dread through him than he would care to admit. His body was beginning to shiver now, not just from exertion but from the cold of the water seeping into his core, hypothermia would not be far off if
they didn't get out soon.

John could hear the women on her radio above him but couldn't make out what she was saying only that her voice was rushed and worried. His gripped hand was beginning to lose all sensation now.

John's mind screamed internally.

'Fucking hurry up!'

This was becoming desperate.

"ETA?" John shouted, coughing briefly. His friend moaned out and eyes fluttered open and closed.

The women hesitated. "Lestrade 5 to 10 minutes out, medics 15, I've called for the canine unit for searching for the suspect and London fire brigade and the RNLI, I don't know who will be here first though. How are you holding up?"

The doctor took a breath to speak, but as he did an involuntary and violent shudder overtook his whole body. He cried out, his hand and foot slipping completely from his delicate hold on the wall.

He went under, Sherlock going with him.

Filthy water rushed into his mouth and nose and he coughed before breaking the surface again, his eyes complaining at the contact with the liquid. He spluttered and gagged violently, grappling with the detectives form to try and keep his head above the surface. Panic began to settle into him now, heart skipping into a staccato of anxiety. This was it.

"Hold on sir." The women was shouting from the bank but her voice was foggy and distant.

John kicked madly for the float and reached it in what seemed like forever. With fading energy he hooked one arm around it. Leaning his aching head on his forearm. His other arm was unceremoniously and uncomfortably circled around Sherlock's neck in a choke hold. Not tight enough to restrict his friend's labouring breathing but enough to keep his head out the water. His shoulder was now screaming in near unbearable pain from the strain. He closed his eyes, gritted his teeth against it and waited.

He didn't know if he passed out or how long it was but a voice finally sounded in the deathly silent dock.

"John?"

"John?" What seemed like a familiar voice trickled into his consciousness but he did not move, locked into position, afraid that any movement now would almost certainly seal their fate of death.

"John listen mate..."

He knew that voice.

"The fire brigade are almost here.... John can you hear me?!"

Lestrade. It was Lestrade. John wished he had the energy to look up but he didn't. His nose was near touching the surface of the water. To any onlooker he must have looked a goner.

On the pathway Lestrade stood, he had only just arrived but the sight which had met him made bile swell into his throat. For several moments he wondered if either of the men, barely visible in the
blackness of the dark water, we're alive. From the flicking torchlights though he could see
Sherlock's strained awful breathing, his eyes slitted in a semi lucid state, unaware of much it
seemed. John though was deathly still and unresponsive, yet the rigidity of his muscles and
occasional tremble from his body told him he was also still alive, his level of consciousness
though, the inspector wasn't sure.

"Where the hell are they!" Greg paced. He began to remove his coat. Balancing it on the railings.

"Lestrade?" One of the policeman looked up from his radio.

"If they don't arrive in the next few minutes I'm going in there after them."

"That is not protocol sir. We need to wait for assistance."

"They're fucking dying out there!" Lestrade pointed, "and I'll be bloody damned if I'm going to sit
here and watch it happen." He shouted. "You can fuck your bloody protocol Bartram. The chief
super can sack me in the morning!"

"Sherlock?" Greg lent over the railing and bellowed into the waters trying for the detective this
time. The two lifeless bodies had already drifted out a little.

There was nothing. The white torchlight on the detectives pallid face made him look only ghostly
and the line of fresh blood mixed with water looked like black against his skin. His eyes still
slitted, did not so much as twitch when the inspector shouted again. "Sherlock, can you hear me?"

"Christ." Lestrade whispered turning away briefly, he bit his lip and grimaced.

"That's it, I'm going in." He bent to unlace his shoes.

"Wait sir," PC Firth interrupted, she pointed towards the roadway and to the new set of flashing
blue joining the mirage of others, lighting up the nearby area. Local residents had appeared from
their flats and were gathering on the street. The arriving fire engine beeped to clear the path so it
could park close by.

"About bloody time."

Greg greeted the lead fireman as he rushed from the cab of the truck.

"What's the situation sir?" He held a hand out to his crew, as if to say wait until further orders.

"Two colleagues in the water following a suspect chasesdown. Unsure on injury status, both
unresponsive but managing to stay above water. Unsure of how long they've been in there but it's
getting pretty darn serious."

"Understood" the older man nodded and then began to bark orders at his team to mobilise the water
rescue gear and raft. He pushed on to the railing and reviewed the scene for a moment before
turning back to the inspector.

"We'll send in the small raft from over there." He pointed to a further side of the dock not far away
which had a less steep drop into the the waters edge. "I'll send a couple of the boys in to collect
them and return them to shore. Where is LAS?"

"Delayed in Limehouse tunnel, should be here any minute."

"Okay. Send them to us as soon as they arrive, get your team securing the scene would you?" He
growled, pointing back to his crew who were preparing kit.

Greg could see the civilians slowly edging closer to the action, and beginning to hinder the emergency services. "Bartram!" He shouted for the youngest officer. "Get this place cordoned off and send for more resources. We're going to need SOCO here too."

"Right 'O sir." The young lad set to his task.

For those next few minutes Greg was helpless. He felt weak with worry and stood at the railing, holding onto the metal as if he were to offer some form of emotional strength. He wished he could jump in and save them but knew he would be foolish to now the rescue team had arrived. His eyes remained fixed on his two friend's stranded. How an earth John was holding the pair of them up he really did not know, but he hoped he could hold on just for a few more minutes.

Within just a few minutes a team of fireman rushed past Greg with a small inflatable boat. It wasn't the brigades usual boat. They had larger ones moored at Lambeth but they were large and would take too long to arrive. Lestrade followed them down to the waters edge where they launched the small rescue raft with practiced precision and three men where out into the dock in seconds.

To the inspector, the small vessel seemed to take an age to reach the two stranded men but he watched hopelessly from the shoreline as they arrived by them. The firemen initially struggled to prize Sherlock from the doctors grasp. But as they did so, pulling the detectives limp body out and over the edge John seemed to let himself relax, losing grip on the small buoy and slid under the surface.

"Christ!" Greg held his breath, and watched one of the men drive forwards, catching the doctor below the surface and pulling him seemly effortlessly into the boat with his friend.

John was less lifeless as Sherlock, but he was hacking and coughing as they pulled him aboard, even from where he was standing Greg could see the man shaking violently.

Greg waited with baited breath as the small raft made its way back to them, by now medics had arrived and were with him and he could hear the sounds of the dog unit nearby, in search of the missing suspect.

John seemed to refuse any help from the team and would not budge before Sherlock had been taken to shore.

The detective was listless and did not seem to be conscious at all. The medics jumped into action as the lanky figure was gently laid onto the pathway, his coat was stripped off him but he made no efforts to rouse. His face was pale and near translucent in the torch and rescue teams temporarily lighting and it made Greg want to vomit at the sight of it. The only colour on it was the red smattering of blood close to his hairline. It was only, as a needle was slid under Sherlock's skin that he twitched, his eyes barely opening to slits and he groaned.

Shamelessly, Lestrade turned his back, unable to take it. He watched John bat the helping hands away and step onto the concrete from the boat.

"John?" The inspector met him.

The doctors legs were wobbly, he struggled to stand and Lestrade placed on hand on his shoulder to try to steady him.

"Sherlock?" John said, voice hoarse and near inaudible, "I need to..."
"You don't need to do anything." Lestrade said, now blocking his path to his friend. "Let them work."

"Get out of my way Lestrade." The doctor's voice was both deadly and acrimonious.

The inspector held still, knowing he was risking a physical confrontation with the man but also knowing he was unlikely to have the strength to really do much. The doctor's legs wobbled more, his whole body was shaking and he tried to take a step forward, failing.

"John. You need to sit down mate."

"No."

Lestrade placed another hand on the man's other shoulder to steady him. "John?" He both said as a warning and questioningly.

"Let me past. I need to see him." Less Captain Watson now, more John Watson.

"No." Greg held his ground.

"Please..." he trailed off. His eyes rolled slightly and he staggered.

Lestrade grasped him tighter, gently allowing the shorter man's knees to give out and descend to the floor. He bent down before him. "You with me?"

"Yeah." The doctor replied breathlessly swaying on his knees. "Tired." Understatement to say the least.

"You're in shock. Are you injured anywhere?"

John grimaced then, as if the question had prompted his brain to remember. He moaned but tried to stifle it briefly. "My collar bone is gone."

Lestrade frowned in sadness. Accepting a blanket from one of the firemen he draped it around his friend's shaking shoulders. "Anywhere else?"

"Everywhere." John relented, his teeth started to chatter as the cold begun to hit him. Greg hoped the warm summer night would heat his body quickly. "I need to help." He started to stand but the inspector pushed him down.

"No you don't. They're doing just fine without you." He glanced over his shoulder at the paramedics working on the detective. He was now hooked up to all sorts of medical kit, oxygen and fluids, they were working quickly. He gulped past the worry at the fact Sherlock was still barely conscious and not resisting any care.

"You need to concentrate on you."

"I'm fine." John shivered. "Just cold and I could sleep for a bloody week. Please Greg. I need to be there for him."

The inspector bit his lip. "He's out and he's receiving the best care from London's finest. What the hell happened?"

"Sherlock was a reckless prick that's what."

Lestrade couldn't help but crack a small smile at that. His brief interlude from their current
situation was broken by the chief fire officer bent in to speak to him.

"HEMS have been called. They should be here in 5 minutes or less. Just awaiting clearance from London City Airport. Your boys and girls have cleared the road and closed it for landing." He pointed up to the dual carriageway flyover. "Are you both okay?"

"We should be fine. I think John should go by ambulance though."

"Absolutely not!" John chattered, his jaw unable to hold back the shaking. He curled in on himself in a bid to maintain some warmth.

"Right." The senior man nodded. "My lads are packing up. The other units are out on jobs and we've got reports of an RTC on the A406 coming in needing assistance so we're going to have to shoot."

"Thank you." Greg shook the man's hand.

"Jesus." John cried as the fireman left. "They called the chopper." He coughed.

"You know it's standard protocol." Lestrade moved closer, grasping the doctors arm as John began to cough violently before finally coiling in on himself retching hard. "Easy mate." He soothed.

"Fuck that hurts." John squeezed his eyes shut against the pain and puffed out several short hard breaths

"Maybe we should get the medics to give you some pain relief yeah?"

"No. They're busy with Sherlock." John steadied his breathing out. "Let them work. If he needs the air ambulance is must be bloody serious," the doctor managed to catch a glimpse of his best friend, now covered with a thick set of blankets with nothing other than his head visible under them and even that was covered mostly. With the oxygen mask strapped tightly to his face and a heavy bandage around his curls he was barely recognisable.

"You know they're being cautious, you know the chances of survival of drowning. If you were right in after him, I'd say he has a good chance. I know your track record John Watson and it's a bloody good one at that."

"Less than five minutes without basic life support and ventilation, a 90% chance of full recovery, that's if he doesn't succumb to secondary drowning or his gunshot wound." John let his breathing quicken again, the adrenaline was ebbing away and the worry was forcing its way through. Lestrade saw it in an instant. "Easy okay." He tried to lighten the mood. "I thought Sherlock was the walking textbook, looks like he's rubbing off on you." He tried to joke.

"Nice try." John squeezed his eyes shut and let another wave of trembling overcome him, having to steady himself with a palm on the ground.

A long pause followed and Lestrade felt somewhat at a loss. Until the silence between them was broken by the sounds of rotary blades. The unmistakable noise of a helicopter nearing.

Before the inspector had a chance to realise it the doctor was on his feet and moving. It took him several seconds to follow him.

John rounded on the gurney which had now been loaded with his best friend, and he had to hold fast to the side bar to steady his shaking form.
"Sherlock?" He said. "Hey can you hear me?"

"He's not roused at all Doctor Watson, he won't respond to commands, GCS of 9." One of the medics said calmly. "With the gunshot wound to the head we are worried about brain function currently."

John swayed violently as a wave of nausea overtook him. Lestrade managed to stabilise him from behind, with little to no objection. "Sherlock?" The doctor tried again, bending slighting forward.

"..hn" from under the mask the detective tried to form his friend's name. "...nh." His voice was barely a whisper, no where near the usual baritone those who knew him by.

"Sherlock, can you hear me?"

The detectives eyes flickered open very slightly but his pupils were unfocused and rolled slightly skyward. His hand grasped uselessly out from under the blankets and John caught it in his own.

"Your heading to hospital in the helicopter, do you understand. I'll meet you when you arrive." The doctor's knees began to give again and he tried to hold tighter.

"Right that's it." Lestrade said, he looked up to see the helimed 27 landing gently on the roadway, its side door sliding open and onboard team exiting.

"We need to go sir." The paramedic looking after Sherlock said. "We'll transport Doctor Watson by road once we have Mr Holmes loaded up."

Lestrade nodded prizing John's hand off the detectives and carefully guiding him to the bench close by to sit.

The doctor relaxed back against the wood and closed his eyes for a moment that only felt like a second. Except it perhaps wasn't just a second.

"John?" The inspector tapped his friend's cheeks, lightly at first. "John mate, you with me? John?"

A moment.

"Nope you're scaring me now." Lestrade persisted. "John." He slapped a little harder. "Open your eyes!"

He looked up to the helicopter and could see Sherlock's ascent up the slip road towards it. As he turned back he found the doctors eyes open again.

"Jeez!" He cried. "Don't do that to me again." He exclaimed.

"What?"

"You passed out."

"Did I?"

"Can you walk?" Lestrade eyed the nearby ambulance on the road. Much closer than the helicopter up on the flyover. If he could get John there he'd feel much happier than out here.

"Maybe." John let a small shiver overtake him again, they were lessening which pleased Greg. The warm air must be helping.
"Let's go." The inspector crouched low, wrapping a hand around John's waist he supported his wobbling and uncoordinated steps. "Your carriage awaits."

Chapter End Notes

A few abbreviations in this chapter.

LAS - London ambulance service
HEMS - Helicopter emergency medical service
SOCO - scene of crime officers
Chapter Summary

John saves a good friend, in a slightly different way.

Chapter Notes

Thank you to all my very loyal followers. I am so busy with work I am struggling with time to write sadly. So many deadlines etc. But I managed to crack this out over the festive period.

To add to all, any who wish to use this stories for ideas, artwork or their own take on them feel free. I love to see others works on all things hurt comfort Sherlock. I miss seeing some of it.

TRIGGER WARNING: Mentions of sexual assault and rape. Be warned.

It was nearing 4 in the morning and a deep but patchy mist had drifted down the Thames river, hugging the buildings close by in a white blanket. It was early spring and the air was near freezing. Yet despite the temperature but two men stood silently behind a concealed garage area, barely visible except their occasional puffs of exhalation as it condensed in the air.

Sherlock wasn't sure how he had managed to convince Lestrade to come out on an overnight stake out with him. Maybe the inspector was concerned about him, what with John being away at a conference for the week leaving the detective to his own devices. Or maybe it was the need to capture the criminal, one of the victims had been extremely young, perhaps it was personal for him, Lestrade wished all rapists 'eternal pain' he would say. No matter what he must have had a good motive because right now the pair of them had their coats wrapped tightly around them to shield out the freezing cold as they had been waiting for hours.

The suspect in question had drugged and sexually assaulted several women and in his latest attack had beaten and hospitalised one of their partners, if not stopped he would only go on to worse crimes. The police had not had enough evidence so far for any kind of conviction and the man remained at large.

In his usual way Sherlock had managed to decipher the man's next victim and after and evening of pursuit he had messaged Lestrade to join him by a small block of dreary flats in Bermondsey's region of the city. The suspect had brought his next victim home after meeting her in a club in the city. Sherlock hoped, that with any luck the man could be reprimanded for his crimes finally.

The light of the dawn was beginning to just filter into the foggy sky when the suspect exited the flats. With any luck the women inside was already calling the police or medical aid. Lestrade had cursed the detective for not allowing intervention before now, arguing that allowing another attack was unethical. Yet Sherlock had won his trust over, explaining that there would be little use in catching the man in the act, the young women would only deny all accounts of assault in fear of
repercussions. Lestrade had relented. So right now all they needed to do was to catch the criminal straight after the act, all evidence they needed for conviction would be on him.

"Stop, police!" Greg shouted across the car park taking off at a sprint. The criminal sped up two fold, putting some distance between himself and the two men as quickly as he could.

"Well done Lestrade, great way to scare him off." Sherlock joined at a run.

The detective increased his pace and gave chase, three sets of hurried footfalls echoed eerily in the dawn, heading out onto the roadway and away from the flats. The place was surprisingly quiet for the capital, then again, being a Sunday morning there was less of the normal daily commuter bustle beginning to sound across the city. Yet still, there was not one single early morning runner or dog walker around, it was like a twilight zone.

"Shit." Lestrade stumbled to a halt breathlessly next to a wall, and Sherlock turned to scowl hard. "We bloody lost him."

"No we haven't, he's heading for the Thames path, get down that way!" The detective pointed down one way whilst turning in the opposite direction. "I'll head him off." And he was gone, disappeared into the morning mists.

"Jesus." The inspector caught his breath and followed the opposite path down towards the river.

Moments later Sherlock turned the corner onto the pathway running alongside the river and he spotted the suspect heading towards him, ready to meet him head on.

"Stop!" He bellowed. And the man came to a halt some feet from him in panic, turning to run back just as Lestrade then appeared behind him.

"There is no where for you to go." Greg jogged towards them, clearly less fit that he dare admit.

Sherlock shot forward to grab the man but it seemed he had other ideas. Dashing sideways he vaulted over the small concrete wall and down onto the shoreline a few feet below. With the tide on its way in there was still a small amount of the riverbank to run along.

Really? The detective rolled his eyes. "Unless you plan on swimming your way out of here then I suggest giving up Mr Louis."

The criminal heeded none of this, setting off at a jog through the puddles of water dotted along the shore.

Predictable. He sighed.

What happened next though, Sherlock did not predict.

The body of Lestrade darted passed him and followed the criminal over the wall and onto the bank below. The inspector was not letting this one go, Sherlock watched him for a moment, Greg clearly needed this arrest.

"You're under arrest." Greg shouted, running after the man along the shale and rocky ground underfoot. He caught up in no time and drove forwards grabbing the him by the arm and swinging him around before reaching for the handcuffs.

But as he pulled the cuffs from his belt he missed the glint of the hidden blade, the detective saw it from the path but it was too late to shout.
The knife plunged into the inspectors upper thigh and he screamed.

The sound of the inspectors screech in pain jolted Sherlock into a forward motion. Vaulting the wall he fell awkwardly as he hit the sand below before picking himself up to sprint to the inspectors aid.

But it was not fast enough.

As Lestrade reeled back in pain the handle of the knife came down with a sickening blow to his head the sound of bone against the handle was deafening and seemed to echo against the nearby buildings. He went down bonelessly and face first into the shales at the very edge of the river.

Sherlock only sped up, rugby tackling the criminal at full speed they both went tumbling to the rocks, and both shouted out in pain as they collided with them.

The detective threw a hearty punch, breaking the man's nose in one and sending a spray of blood down the criminals face. He growled angrily, kicking back, the pair of them rolled across the shingles and rocks, in and out the waters edge, struggling to gain advantage in the brawl.

The man was near twice the weight of the detective and easily had the upper hand when it came to size, but Sherlock was faster and smarter. However, not seconds later an unexpected hefty headbutt to the upper nose dazed the detective. He collapsed back against the beach with a groan when a second blow to the head rendered him near unconscious. For a moment all he could see what the grey cloudy mist filled sky above dotted with black. A shearing white hot pain in his arm then nearly brought his vision to complete blackness. Too shocked to cry out he lay, bewildered, listening to the sounds of hurried wet footfalls disappearing into the distance.

Time passed, but he could not decipher how much, his vision blurred and faded in and out. When finally Sherlock blinked several times, clearing unfallen tears from his eyes, was the sky lighter now? Was it even dark before? Since when did he have a headache? He attempted to sit upright but froze in pain. The freezing water was seeping into his clothes but this is not what was stopping him. He tilted his head back to look at his arm which was tossed back against the ground in the fray and found nothing other than the knife, buried to the hilt within it.

He gulped back the vomit which threatened for a second. By the looks of it, the blade was clean through and through his lower arm, just before his elbow. It must buried into the shingled beach below, as it was effectively pinning him to to the ground.

"Lestrade?" His voice wobbled and he craned his neck to look back to his friend.

The inspector was where he had fallen, his still body crumpled to the beach, but his face was now under the rising waterline.

Sherlock heart lurched, this was a bit not good. He inhaled sharply, gritting his teeth before rolling and grasping the knife handle, pulling hard.

A low and guttural growl left his throat and once released from the ground he pulled himself into a half sitting position, feeling the blade grind across his bones as it slid from his flesh and finally free.

"Fuck." He moaned, a wave of dizziness washing through him. A fresh and substantial flow of blood then begun to dribble from the gaps in his torn clothes and down his wrist into his palm. The unmistakable iron smell hit his senses which were already heighten from the pain. He retched uncontrollably, bringing nothing up but half digested tea from hours earlier.
'Focus!' His mind screamed internally. 'You've dealt with worse, get a grip.'

Limbs now shaking slightly he pulled his injured appendage into his body and used the other arm to release the scarf from his neck. Working quickly he wrapped the woollen garment tightly around the wound. With a muffled and stifled groan he then used his teeth to aid him, pulling it into a tight knot to put pressure on the bleed before finally bringing his attention back to the other man.

"Lestrade?" He cried again, though his voice had somehow lost it usual intensity.

Sherlock half crawled, half stumbled forward, his knees sinking into the frozen water edge as he reached the inspectors body.

With one arm he dragged the man's form out of the water and managed to turn him onto his back with a grunt.

Lestrade's face was white, his lips a deathly shade of blue and a purple hue hung around his closed lids. He looked dead.

With a panicked hitch of breathing his mind blanked, he knew what to do didn't he? But he didn't remember, why couldn't he remember? His head protested with a thud of pain.

The detective did know someone who would remember though. Pulling his phone out his inner coat pocket and dropped it to the ground below, he shouted to it. To any onlooker he looked like a mad man shouting at his mobile, but there was no one, the cold misty air clung around them and no sound could be heard except the lapping of the gentle waves at their feet.

"Siri, call John Watson." His voice croaked.

The phone lit up in the dim light, showing John's name on the screen.

"Speakerphone." He added.

The dialling tone rang out, it rang, and rang, when until finally a muffled answer sounded.

"Sherlock." John's voice was both filled with sleep and exasperation, "you better have a bloody good reason to be phoning me right now, or so God help you when I get home tomorrow night."

The detectives voice failed, but the blogger must have heard his laboured and rapid breathing because back in his hotel room John Watson sat bolt upright in bed, his senses heightening.

"Sherlock?" He shot, "can you hear me? Where are you?"

The detective opened and closed his mouth but nothing appeared, when finally moments later his voice worked, but it shook far more than he thought it would. "Thames shore." He said, "Bermondsey." He managed.

"What's happened?" The Doctor was out of bed, turning his room light on and taking stock of his belongings, keys, money, medical essentials, he could be out in a few minutes if he needed. The soldier in him always kept himself ready for any eventuality, it was second nature now, especially since living with the Great Detective.

"Lestrade." Sherlock replied, his cold fingers feeling for a pulse on the inspectors neck, "he's not breathing." His own body was starting to shake, the cold seeping into his core.

"Jesus." John cursed. "Does he have a pulse?"
"Yes."

"Tell me what happened, as quick as you can please."

"Chased criminal down to the river shore, Lestrade stabbed in the thigh." Sherlock took stock of the wound on the inspectors leg, it was bleeding heavily, mixing with the river water, turning the surrounding area a sickening shade of crimson.

"Sherlock!" John shouted on the other end. "Tell me!"

The detective realised he must have stopped talking.

His teeth chattered slightly as he spoke again "Heavy... bleeding to the leg, he was knocked out, blunt force to the the temple. Small wound..... above his eyebrow, some bleeding there. He fell face first..... into the river."

"How long has he been in the water?"

"I don't know." The detective stuttered, "I..."

John read between the lines, "how long were you out?"


"Are you hurt otherwise, any actively bleeding head wounds?" John asked quickly.

"I'm fine."

The doctor didn't believe him, but there was no time to fight now, Sherlock was breathing and talking, the other casualty was not. Lestrade needed his help, fast. "You know how to do this Sherlock, you need to breath for him."

"I... I can't remember." His voice wavered, "I can't."

"Alright. Listen to me carefully and do exactly what I say." John bit his lip, Sherlock knew this. He was either concussed or truly panicking and the detective near never did the latter.

"Ensure he is on his back, tilt his head head back to extend and open the airway and pinch his nose. Use the other hand to help you seal your lips over his and give him two long breaths. Watch his chest for movement."

Sherlock grimaced, white hot pain shooting up his arm as he moved it. He pushed air into the inspectors lungs, breathlessly finishing and watching for any signs of response, but none came.

"Have you called for an ambulance?" John asked from the phone.

"No." the detective exhaled, "no time."

"He's still not breathing." Sherlock's ragged breath added.

"Pulse?"

"Yes. Slow. 54." Sherlock's head suddenly throbbed in revolt and he thought he might vomit again as he bent forwards again to give another couple of breaths.

"Keep going, you're doing great, I'm just phoning in an ambulance for you, stay on the line, I'm
right here."

Something about his best friends voice calmed the detective. Though his heart still pounding with adrenaline it steadied somewhat, knowing he was not alone.

"Update?" John's voice appeared again after what seemed like forever.

"No change." Sherlock breathlessly answered.

"Right, let's start compressions." The doctor said, his voice composed but direct. He knew that even with a pulse this might help drive some water from the inspectors airway and induce breathing. "One hand over the other, centre of his chest, lock your arms straight and push down, hard."

Sherlock's eyes watered and his gritted his teeth against the white hot pain.

"Follow my rhythm, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6... 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. You're doing great."

Sherlock nearly rolled his eyes, how could he tell he was doing any kind of decent job just via a phone call. He grimaced, stifling every shred of a cry of agony from his throat, if John caught wind of his injury he would only worry more. It was then that the detective noticed his hand own was slick with fresh blood again. The force of the compressions was clearly doing nothing to avoid blood loss of his own.

He continued, for what seemed like forever.

His arms burned, not just from the pain in his stab wound but the pain to his muscles, protesting the strain they were being put under.

"John... I..." Sherlock cried, his voice breaking slightly. "I don't think..."

"No." The doctor cut in. "Keep going, it's only been a couple of minutes, be patient Sherlock, you can do this" he said calmly. "Keep it up until help arrives, they're on their way, Scotland Yard too."

"Nothing's happening." The detective moaned, his own pain intensifying, physically and emotionally. How long could he actually keep this up?

Suddenly with and violent jerk Lestrade came to, his eyes snapping wide open and his mouth gaping for air. The water of the river spilled freely from his lips and he choked violently.

"On his side Sherlock." Captain Watson's commanding voice sounded.

The detective pushed his friend sideways and more water seemed to tumble from the inspectors body. He retched and hacked and between each episode his throat desperately attempted to pull in breaths of air. Though each one seemed to heighten his cough reflex further still.

"Easy now." Sherlock tried his best to soothe, but it didn't come naturally.

Finally, after what seemed like absolute age of coughing, vomiting and gasps for air Lestrade eased into a more relaxed but still wheezing respiration.

"John?" Greg croaked weakly in confusion, trying to focus his blurred eyes with difficulty, his head was pounding in response.

"I'm on the phone." The doctor answered, "consider me there in spirit, Sherlock's got you covered though."
Lestrade smiled weakly, turning slightly to take in the darker figure above him. He was still not quite able to focus fully but he recognised that silhouette anywhere.

"Thanks mate." He weakly managed, coughing before grabbing the detectives hand that was still resting firmly on his shoulder in support. "I owe you one." He patted.

"Anytime." Sherlock replied awkwardly.

"Your bleeding." Greg coughed, this time managing to focus his eyes on his now blood smeared palm.

"Who's bleeding?" John's voice picked up.

"Lestrade"

"Sherlock."

Simultaneous replies sounded.

"I'm not playing games, who is bleeding and from where?" John was not amused.

"Lestrade's leg. I told you, he was stabbed in the thigh, and he's bleeding heavily into the water."

"What?" Greg frowned, pushing himself weakly up on his elbows shakily, his whole body was now beginning to tremble in shock. "Oh shit." He croaked, noting the red hue of the surrounding area.

"Stay still." The doctor shouted down the line, "stay on your back you will reduce the flow."

"That's fantastic, I just need a lie down." Lestrade weakly replied, his head rolled back into the beach and he passed out.

"He's out." Sherlock felt for a pulse.

"The blood loss I suspect, he still breathing okay?" John asked.

"Yes."

"Right, you need to apply a tourniquet, I don't want you applying pressure right now." The Doctor added. "I know you're bleeding too so hurry up."

"What?" Sherlock glanced to his bound arm, the scarf was now near soaked through with his own blood.

"You heard me."

"It's just a scratch." He announced finally, trying now, to stop his own body from trembling against the cold and blood loss.

"Then why do I not believe you?"

"Shut up John and help me!" Sherlock shot.

A pause. On the other end of the phone John exhaled, Sherlock was right as always. "Is he wearing a belt?" He began.
"Yes."

"Then remove it and place it around Greg's upper thigh, as high as you can get it, we need to compress the vessels in his groin area to stop the blood flow. How much has he lost do you think?"

"Eh." Sherlock looked around as he fed the belt off his friend's waist and onto his leg, his head was really beginning to protest at all this movement and the pain was throbbing behind his right eye so much it was making his vision spotted.

"Sherlock?"

"I'm fine John." He replied rather too quickly. "Two, perhaps three litres."

"Okay." The Doctor but his lip worriedly. "What about you?" He added, and was now collecting his things in his hotel room, a small bag of essentials only. He would leave the rest and get Mike to collect it later for him. If he could make it to the station, first train back into London was in half an hour, he could be at the hospital within about two hours from now.

"Sherlock?" John asked again.

"I'm here." The detective tightened the belt on Greg's leg and the inspector let out a small groan but did not come to.

"How much?" The Doctor slammed the door of his room and hurried down the corridor. "Answer me you cock."

Sherlock looked at his soaked scarf and blinked, his hands were shaking. When did this start? "One and a half litres, or so. I think it's stopping." His teeth chattered again. When did it get so cold?

"Hello there?"

An unfamiliar voice shouted and the detective looked up.

"Mr Holmes." The medic was couched before him.

How did he get there so quickly? Why was he so shaky all of a sudden, stupid transport.

"Sherlock?" This time Johns voice.

"Mr Holmes can you hear me?" The paramedic grasped the detective by the shoulders and gently shook him. "Mr Holmes." The detective didn't answer but swayed slightly.

On the other end of the phone John snorted in both anger and ever so slight amusement under his worry. "One and a half litres my ass." He cried.

"Doctor Watson." A second medic now picked up the phone talking to John on the other end.

"Yes it's me." He said.

"Thank you for your assistance sir." He replied. "We'll take it from here."

"Of course." John was almost at a jog now, heading for the train station, "which hospital will you be heading too, I'm on my way back from Oxford now?"

"Kings." The paramedic was unloading his kit quickly. "I'll let them know you're on your way."
"Thank you." John hung up, now setting off a full run, knowing too well that once in the care of the hospital staff, Sherlock would prove to be more than a handful without his assistance.

"Right let's get some fluids running a run. The second unit are just around the corner, they can take inspector Lestrade, he's more critical. The longer we're out the more risk of hypothermia." The first medic now near holding the detective up said.

"John?" Sherlock moaned.

"He's meeting us at the hospital Mr Holmes, do you think you can walk to the ambulance for me?"

The detective didn't answer, this time he rolling forward and into the paramedic, giving into the pulls of his concussion.

"I'll take that as a no."
High heroics

Chapter Summary

John’s fore thinking may just save Sherlock again from a cold winter fate.

Chapter Notes

Thank you so much to people who still follow me, those who comment and give kudos and those still active in the Sherlock fandom. I know there are less of us these days. My life does not make it easy to write and I have a lot planned for this coming year but feel determined to get more written, and manage my time well.

Fear not, I have not abandoned this fandom or fiction writing! Second part to this story in the process already. Brownie points for those who know where Sherlock has been left.

The icy air hit Sherlocks cheeks, rousing him from his half conscious stupor. For several minutes all he could do was blink against the wintery blast, his eyes watering from both pain and the temperature, only serving to chill his skin further as involuntary tears spilled from his lids. The daylight flooding his retinas only sent more agony into his skull.

The detective squeezed his eyes shut and tried desperately to remember what had happened and exactly where he was. Reluctant to crack his eyes properly open, he used every one of his sluggish and dulled senses he could to ascertain his location and situation.

All arms and leg in tact, but not well. His hands were numb and from what he could tell his wrists were tied together with what he thought must have been cable ties. From what he could feel his coat and scarf was gone, that much was obvious from the whipping wind through his shirt, he shivered violently. His shoes and socks gone too, great, was his perpetrator short on footwear?

Couldn’t have been here too long, otherwise would already be hypothermic, or was he already and just delirious? He shivered again, this time teeth chattering.

What day was is? His head hurt, something about today he needed to know, what was it.

He grunted in annoyance, stupid transport, if only he could just think and his arms would work. He tilted a little in an attempt to either stand or decipher if he was bound to anything. His body crushed forward, shoulder colliding with cold metal and exploding with pain, which quickly dissipated into his numb arms.

“Outside’ the detective roughly mumbled, a small bluster of sleet hit his face sending more frozen tendrils into his body. Another shake of muscles.

He ground his teeth together to a bid to stop them chattering and in anger at his slow mind, think you fool.
No traffic, nothing. Not a sound of anything could be heard. Surely not good.

‘John’

The name of his friend jolted him somewhat, ‘where was John?’

A wave of horrendous nausea passed through him then and he gagged, making his headache worsen ten fold. Unable to brace himself up he lay bound on his side and vomited into the ground before him. It was the then the shivering began more relentlessly.

‘Christmas’

Finally something of potential use popped into his mind. It was Christmas Day, he remembered now. And John was at Harry’s for the day, with Rosie. That meant several things, one, he would struggle to reach John and two, wherever he was he may not be found quickly depending on location.

Terrific.

If he didn’t hurry up and start thinking he would just die of hypothermia right here.

Think...

He growled, this time rolling onto his back he snapped his eyes open wide, this quickly followed with pain and then another wave of nausea, the detective swallowed it back hard and refused to allow his transport to rule his mind.

A white winter sky met his vision, and a shower of light sleety snow was falling into his face, the pain behind the eyes proving too much and only forced his lids closed again. A lack of buildings in his brief vision meant one of two things, he was in an open space or up high. But he was on metal which was less likely to be in a open space such as park or reserve. So up high it was.

The lack of traffic was not usual for Christmas Day but he expected to at least hear a few taxis ferrying people about the city to relatives and friends or whatever it is they do. So, not central then, not near a hustle of the city.

There was two issues here. One, he had no idea where he was, and two, currently had no way of contacting his one friend who would be able to get him out of this situation. With his coat seemingly gone, as must be his phone too.

But hang on, somewhere in the back of his aching head he remembered something.

__No so long ago__...

“This is ridiculous John, since when I’m I not going to be with you when I get into trouble?”

_The doctor eyed him for a second and sighed a little. “What about the time you were stabbed on the Thames shore recently?” He said._

_“Lestrade was with me.” Sherlock announced._

_“And incapacitated, and you had lost so much blood I’m not even bloody certain how you managed to remain conscious enough to let me know your location let alone save his life”_

_“You saved his life”_
John folded his arms.

“What about the time you collapsed on Hampstead Heath in the snow after a stabbing?”

“Apart from that.” The detective shot.

“The time I lost you at Surrey keys after being taken an assaulted by a mad man, by he time I found you?” John swallowed back the nausea the memory brought back to him. His eyes glared are his friend with the look of indignation.

“Your point is what?” Sherlock quirked a questionable eyebrow and pulled himself into his chair with a huff.

“My point is I’m not losing you again, not again.” The blogger said firmly.

“We are not having this conversation John. Before you came along I was perfectly able to look after myself.”

“Sure you were...” the doctor shook his head, “a junky unable to control himself at a crime scene, scraped up off the pavement by not just Lestrade but your brother many times.”

Sherlock pulled his legs up into his body but said nothing.

John held out a tiny back item which looked more like a small usb memory stick. “Mrs H can stitch a few pockets into your clothes. I would recommend underwear, because let’s face it everyone who kidnaps or attacks you loves that bloody iconic coat of yours.”

“Your wasting your time.” The detective grumbled. “If this is my brothers way of showing he cares...”

“It was my idea.” John interrupted, “I just needed his contacts to come up with the thing, I have several spare too.”

“You’re not going to let this go are you?” Sherlock narrowed his eyes.

“Nope.” The blogger held the small item out to his friend and the detective snatched it with the an inaudible mumble. “It’s a GPS tracker.” He added.

“Wonderful, another chance for my brother to have access to my whereabouts at all times.” Sherlock smirked and emptied the contents of his hand onto the coffee table.

“He doesn’t have access to its location, nor is the thing activated until you press the alarm on it. It sends a message straight to my phone with your co ordinates and alerts me to the fact your in trouble.”

Sherlock side glanced the tracker.

“Please.” John added, this time his voice softer and with more meaning. “What with Rosie and all, I might not be on one or two cases, and it would make me feel better to know I could get to you should you be in trouble.”

“Sentiment.” Replied the detective in a slight snarl.

“Humour me.” John shot.

“I’ll think about it.”
Sherlock groaned and rolled onto his side again as a threat of nausea rose but amounted to nothing. He was sure that somewhere on him was the tracker, all he needed to do was activate the thing. If only John had considered what the detective was supposed to do when he was restrained.

Zip ties were nothing though, he thought, he was easily able to break bounds like this, all he needed to do was sit up a little more, maybe easier said than done.

He took three deep breaths before trying to roll back onto his legs, growling in pain as he did and finally heaving again as the floor beneath him tilted, he squeezed his eyes shut, berating himself for opening them briefly.

He attempted to pull his arms back and up behind himself but shots of agony fired from his arm and this time caused him to cry out more audibly. Okay this was a bit not good, he needed a plan B.

Plan B was find something else to break his bonds, but first he needed to decipher his exact location. He very slightly opened his eyes to slight slits and squinted at the floor beneath himself. Grey mesh, and below that white. He knew this place, but what was it.

Very very slowly the detective pushed himself back onto his bum and tried to gently slide back until finally he came into contact with cold railings. Although shivering violently from the temperature the cold metal was slightly soothing against the burning agony now consciously spreading through one of his arms. The railing may just give him the leverage he needed to snap the small plastic binds, with some thought he may be able to push against them.

He braced himself.

And screamed from the agony. Even in his closed lidded eyes he saw white as the shearing pain seized up into his shoulder and neck before dissipating slightly.

No, plan C it may need to be. The less conventional method and also the most painful one. But if he didn’t hurry up he would be taken by the effects of the weather, and John really would kill him, if he wasn’t dead already.

The idea of John’s face looking over his dead one was enough to set the detective to work. This would not be pleasant.

“Your phones gone off John.” Harry looked up to her brother, and shovelled a large slice of turkey into her mouth.

The doctor turned back from helping his daughter with her lunch. “I’m sure it’s just Sherlock asking where I’ve disappeared off to for the day.” He joked, adding food to his own mouth.

As he swallowed down his mouthful, something deep down made his stomach do a small flip of worry, something was very wrong. He pulled back from the table and retrieved his phone from the sofa.

“What’s up?” Harry saw the colour drain from her brothers face.

“I have to go.” Was the only reply.

“He lost his pen, need you to collect it from the floor for him.”

John silenced his sister with a glare.
“That bad?”

John nodded and turned to Rosie who was doing her best to enjoy her Christmas lunch but seemed to be wearing the majority of it so far. “Daddy needs to go and find uncle Sherlock, he’s in a bit of trouble.”

“Uncy Lock.” Rosies face brightens up considerably, “can I come?”

John glanced for his phone screen to see the GPS locater home in on his best friends location and shook his head.

“No Rosie love, you stay here with Auntie Harry and finish your lunch, Daddy won’t be long.”

“Oh...” the toddler frowned, “I like Uncy Lock.”

“I know,” John kissed her briefly on the cheek and turned to his sister.

“Sorry.” He said, “I will ring you once I know what’s happening.”

An awkward silence fell across the room and Harry looked sadly to her brother, a slight worry not just about her brothers best friend but also the fact of being in charge of a 3 and a half year old alone.

“I trust you.” The doctor added, “you have Mrs H and Mollys numbers, if you need a hand call them, I’ll give them a quick text but you’ll be fine.”

“Good luck.”

“Love you.” John grabbed his heavy winter coat and car keys, flying out the front door.

“What have you done this time Sherlock...”
John pulled his car into the a parking space, all were empty. Driving in London on Christmas Day was like nothing else, barely any traffic to slow you down and every parking space available even if it was a staff one. Yet still, the journey from the other side of London had put him on edge about the current state of his friend's health, he knew the time he had lost traveling may have meant the worse for his friend.

The doctor was in two minds about alerting the emergency service to Sherlock's call for help, on one hand he knew his friend's reluctance to allow others to aid him and on the other the worry about how injured or ill Sherlock may be played on his mind. As a compromise he had called Mycroft on his hands free phone in the car to inform him of the current happenings and promised to update him later, although the bureaucrat was currently out the country on business he still could coordinate things in the country at alarming speed.

John pulled his coat closer into his neck against the blowing north wind and grabbed his medical bag from the boot, slinging it over his shoulders. He looked up at the structure before him and shook his head.

"How the hell have you managed to get up the top of the bloody O2 arena!?” He cursed, locking the car, checking for his gun and setting off at a run towards the steps and ticket centre of the official O2 climb.

The blogger made quick work of the locked centres door, Sherlock's skills did come in handy from time to time, he smirked to himself. Wasting no time at all John located the climbing gear and quickly familiarised himself with a climbing harness again. Although he didn't remember using them in Afghanistan, the army had taught him how to use them safely and he quickly kitted himself out, collecting a second for his friend and extra safety ropes and equipment, he had no idea what he was about to walk into - or in this case up to.

He jogged to the stairway and made light work of the locks here too but as he took one step upwards a voice shouted towards him.

“What are you doing, you have no authority to be here sir.”

John turned to see an overweight and slightly red faced security officer standing mere feet from him. He sighed. “My name is Doctor John Watson...”

“I don’t care what your name is, get down from the steps before I call the police.”

“Call them!” John shouted as he turned and sprinted two steps at a time. “Tell them Sherlock Holmes is injured and at the top of the O2 and in need of assistance.”
“Mr Watson!” The security guard shouted but did not pursue, perhaps he knew he would never catch him, or maybe he didn’t like heights.

“That’s Doctor to you.” John replied but didn’t stop climbing, two steps at a time, reaching the top. He had no intention of slowing down or chatting anytime soon. Any other words the guard spoke were lost to the wind, and suddenly John realised just how windy it really was up this high. He was never a massive fan of heights, although not phobic he just simply didn’t enjoy them, and the strong winter blustering sleet did not help.

He took a deep breath, readjusting the bag on his shoulders and climbing gear before clipping himself to the safety bar and starting his ascent.

At normal walking pace it takes around 15 to 20 minutes to walk to the top but John was planning on doing it much much less time, he had wasted enough as it was. He cursed inwardly. He sped, as fast as he could upwards, not stopping for anything.

Minutes passed and he continued on, his Christmas dinner jolting in his worried stomach.

“Sherl...” the doctors breathless voice was barely audible as he stumbled up the last rise of the O2 and to the top the of the 52 meter high dome, his lungs were heaving and legs burning from the exertion but this is what he lived for, the adrenalin. As he reached the top he unhooked his harness and rushed across the platform. The form of his friend was just visible in the bitter winds, propped precariously, back against the metal railings, head lollled down and onto his chest.

The detective was deathly pale and after a very long couple of seconds John let out a short exhale of relief to find his friend breathing lightly. His legs were stretched out before him and he made no signs of being awake.

“Sherlock.” The doctor called him, checking his pulse in his neck before calling more forcefully, “Sherlock, you with me?”

The younger man let out a groan, his eyes fluttering under his closed lids, but he did not open them.

“Open your eyes for me?” John gently pushed back his friends head and his locks and his hand came away sticky with blood. There was fresh crimson under his hairline, soaking his dark curls, a bruise under the skin looked like it was spreading down his forehead. “Sherlock, open your eyes come on.” He gently tapped his cheek.

A soft moan replied along with an violent shiver.

The doctor held his friends head gently, peeling an eye lid back to inspect his pupils and looking closer at the head wound with a grimace. Blunt force trauma, probably from a hard object.

“Jeez, mate, someone had it in for you didn’t they?”

Sherlock didn’t answer, instead his body gave another violent shudder.

John frowned, he quickly opened the medical bag and pulled out a foil blanket draping it around his friends shoulders followed by a fleece blanket to hold it in place against the winds. He gently slid a thermometer into the corner of the man’s mouth with no resistance. He bit his own lip in concern at the lack of complaint.

Beginning to look over his friends body, very quickly noting the way his arm was pulled tightly into himself.
“Injured your arm?” John asked. He felt surprisingly calm, considering their predicament but he was slowly beginning to let the worry set in, and he was beginning to regret how much he had eaten since waking up this morning. Why do people eat so much at Christmas anyway?

The thermometer beeped and John pulled it from his friend’s mouth.

“Fuck it.” 31 degrees was not the numbers the doctor wanted to be reading. “Sherlock can you stand, we need to get you out of here and in the warm.”

The detective gave no reaction.

“Sherlock?” John grasped his friend’s upper arm and the man jolted awake, his eyes wide and a deep moan escaped his throat.

“It’s ok.”

Sherlock bent sideways trying to heave unsuccessfully, his body shook from the effort and the cold.

“Right.” John pulled his phone from his coat and dialled the services. “I need paramedics to the O2 arena in Greenwich I have a 41 year old male with stage 2-3 hypothermia and head trauma, possible other injuries.”

A pause.

“We’re on top of the arena.... yes the top, hoping to have the casualty at least partially down by the time you arrive.” John eyed his friend’s barely conscious form, questioning his statement. “Yes I’m a Doctor.” He ended the call quickly and abruptly.

“Right Sherlock we’re getting the hell out of here.” He laid the climbing gear out to establish its orientation and began to loosen it. “You’re going to have to help me out a bit though.”

John wasn’t sure if he was deluding himself here but he needed to try, a moment longer in these weather conditions was only worsening his friend’s condition. If there was any chance of them getting out of here he needed to try it, and now.

“Come on mate, lay down for me a moment, I need to assess you properly.” The doctor again found little resistance to his request and he worryingly easily cradled his friend’s head and gently pushed him down onto his back.

“Christ.” He peeled his friend’s eye lid back again to check his pupils and then his pulse. Sherlocks eyes slide slightly open into slits but he did little else before closing again. Pulse steady, he counted it, a little slow, pupils equal and reactive, Glasgow coma scale 9, a bit not good.

The doctor quickly pulled a lancet from the bag and went to clip it on one of his friend’s thumb, he stopped, finding the appendage swollen and displaced.

He cursed inwardly - dislocated.

He gently used a different finger staying well clear of the source of discomfort. The needle pinged against his friend’s fingertip but Sherlock made no response and John collected them tiny bleb of blood into a little test strip nearly losing it in the strong breeze, he clicked it into the machine and let the glucose meter run the sample.

The machine beeped, 2.3mmol. Low.
That would make some sense to his friends state, a low glucose could easily explain his near unconsciousness. John pulled out a tube of glucose solution and parting his friends lips smeared a large amount inside the detective’s cheek and on his gums.

“Now...” John didn’t wait, he quickly moved on, “this arm fine” he felt down the younger friends long bones of his arm. “But one dislocated thumb.” He noted the remaining restraints of a zip lock tie on the opposite wrist and moved to the top of the bad arm, gently touching the top near the shoulder. Sherlock jolted again, his whole body spasming in pain.

“Take it easy.”

Sherlock groaned out and as John laid a gentle hand down to his lower arm his eyes shot open and he let out a higher pitched wail.

“Alright.” John led his hands out in defeat. “Fractured” he mumbled. “I need to get it immobilised but I also need this gear on you.”

The doctor then gently felt down his friends legs but found no outward signs of breaks or severe injury. He wished he had time to do a full assessment like they did in hospital but now was really not the time or the place. He looped the detectives bare feet through the bottom part of the harness, pulling it up and onto his hips, doing his best to secure it tightly.

“Your going to have to sit up for me.” John said sternly, and suddenly felt ashamed of his treatment of his friend. In any other sense he would have been more gentle and slow about his patient handling. But right now with a temperature of 31, a low glucose, a concussion and a severely broken arm time was not on their side. A helicopter would not be retrieving them in this kind of weather anytime soon and even if medics arrived in their average time of 8 minutes they still needed to gear up and reach them, then potentially call in reinforcements to get the patient down the climb path. They didn’t have time for that. If there was a chance he could get his friend on his feet even for a short period he would be able to get him down he was sure of it. He gulped back the doubt. He had to remain positive.

The doctor pulled his patient into a sitting position and held him firmly there as he partly swayed. “I know your feeling retched mate but you gotta stay still and bare with me, we need to get out of here. I’m sorry.” He cried.

“John.” Sherlocks eyes cracked open slightly.

“I’m here.”

“What you doin er?” The detectives voice was shaky and weak but more comprehensive now.

“Here to save you, why else would I be here?” John pulled one loop of the the upper harness around his friends good arm.

“Chris...mas. Dinner?” Sherlock swayed a little more, having to be steadied.

John let out a small fake laugh. “Perhaps we can have dinner up here when your feeling a bit more up to it.” He smiled, “I’m sure it can arranged. Seems like the perfect spot for meeting fugitives though, is this what you were doing? Came up here to meet someone?”

“Don’t... member.” Sherlock took a sharp intake of breath as John slid the harness strap over his shoulder.

“Sorry but you really need this, I can’t lose you over the edge on the way back down. Rosie for one
will not forgive me, I told her you’d be seeing her soon.”

The edge of Sherlocks mouth rose a tiny fraction before he let out a cry of pain and John looked sheepish, pulling the harness under his protected limb to his body and beginning to secure it in place in the loop.

“Last thing is to get that arm immobilised.” The doctor said sadly.

“No,”

“Not an option.” Captain Watson spoke. “That thing looks like more than a simple break in one place, I suspect it’s defence wounds so likely comminuted fractures in several places from multiple blows. If those bone fragments get jolted out of place and damage an artery then you’ll bleed to death before we even make it to the bottom. So you are having it immobilised. It’s not up for discussion.”

If Sherlock could have rolled his eyes he would have done so, but instead his eyes slipped closed again.

“Stay awake would you.” John retrieved the sling bandage material from the bag, zipping it quickly.

“Not... demanding... at... all.” The detective breathed out heavily, clearly trying to maintain some control over his agony.

“I’m sorry. I don’t have any pain relief in my medic bag. If we were back at 221 or I was out on a case with you it would have been a different story.”

“Fine...”

Sherlock did his best to stave off the oncoming barrage of involuntary cries of pain as John carefully and as gently as possible wrapped his broken arm and secured the limb to his chest.

“Sorry.” The blogger said sheepishly, squeezing his friends heaving and shaking good arm. A single drip of saltwater landed on his hand as he adjusted the harness. “I’m really sorry.” He added. “Once we meet the medics I promise I’ll get them to give you a shot of morphine.”

“No morphine John.” The detective ground between his clenched teeth.

“Don’t be a cock.” The doctor replied. He zipped the bag fully closed and returned it to his back and then tucked the blankets corners into Sherlocks harness in an attempt to hold it in place.

“Ah. One last thing.”

John pulled his own shoes off quickly and then removed his socks, applying them to his friends feet. “Sorry, not super hygienic but might just stop your toes getting frostbitten.”

“Terrific.” Sherlocks voice wavered and slurred.

“Let’s go.” The blogger tied his shoes quickly and got to his feet, “we gotta go.”

The detective didn’t move.

“Can you get up?”

Sherlock looked up weakly, his eyes glassy and unfocused, his body was overcome with another
violent shiver, he whimpered, the sound lost to the wind. John’s stomach did a small flip in anxiety, this man did not let his guard down, to see him so helpless made the doctor want to vomit.

“Right.” John took a deep breath and braced himself, grasping his friend’s harness he forced the detective upwards and onto his wobbly feet with a grunt. “Steady. The railing is a couple of steps behind you if you need it.”

If it were even possible Sherlock paled several shades to near translucent, his body heaved slightly with the ongoing nausea.

“Easy.” John held him still, bracing himself against the winds and his friend.

“We’ll take this nice and steady alright.”

The doctor hooked his arm around his friend’s good one, holding him firm and guided him forwards slightly.

Sherlock wobbled and groaned, struggling with his feet but successfully took a couple.

This was going to be painfully slow. John looked out to the view across the capital and for just a split moment admired it. The blizzard like sleet was creating quite a white spectacle. It near never snowed in London properly, let alone on Christmas Day. In any other situation he would be admiring the weather, but here he was again, by his fallen friend’s side.

Sherlock’s feet dragged as he took his steps, and John gently guided him forward until after what seemed like ages they reached the slope downward on the edge of the platform.

“It’s all downhill from here.” The doctor clipped his friend’s harness onto the safety bar, feeling a little better. If his friend were to go down he knew the harness would hold him in place and not allow the unthinkable.

“We’re going to take this nice and slow okay.” John clipped his own gear onto the bar just before his friend’s, being in front made more sense as the path got steeper later, he could be there to catch the detective should he need to.

“Come on Sherlock.” John tugged gently at his friend’s harness, like he would a dog to remind it to move along. The taller man obliged wobbling forwards and onto the pathway feet slipping slightly on the incline.

“Steady.” John braced him, “nice and steady okay.”

The detective took a couple of hitching breaths before walking with more determination, even if very unsteady.

They continued, all be it at snail’s pace but John was glad for them to be actually getting somewhere. Each step of the detective made not only Sherlock grimace but also the doctor. He wished there were an easier way to do this but it would take an age to get medics and fire brigade up here for assistance. Sherlock was doing fine, they could do this.

He slipped.

Or not.

John grasped his friend’s harness fast, stopping him from swinging out on the end of the safety line and going over.
“Easy.” He said. “I’ve got you, can you stand anymore?”

Sherlocks feet were in an awkward position and most of his weight was put either on the doctor or through his climbing gear.

“Sherlock?” John said firmly, “talk to me?”

The detective only tilted further forwards, this time allowing his safety line to run taught. John tried desperately to push him upwards.

“Wake up, you can’t lose it now mate, come on.” Regretfully he gently placed a hand on his friends fractured arm and the taller man groaned out, staggering to his feet but he still did not hold his own weight fully.

“Right.” Was all John could say as he stood there in limbo, half holding his friend half balanced himself.

This was a bit not good, the doctor sighed to himself. But what happened next was worse.

All of a sudden a blur of hand reached John’s vision but not with enough time for him to react. Although weakened, the force of Sherlocks fist reaching the doctors chin took him by surprise and John staggered slightly tasting copper in this mouth.

“Shit.”

He grabbed the rail to steady himself.

“Sherlock?”

The detective mumbled incoherently before trying to shout but his voice was nothing more than a hoarse moan. “Get away from me.”

“It’s John, Sherlock, look at me?”

The detectives eyes rolled and struggled to focus on anything.

“I don’t need your help John...” he spat before swaying violently. A new fresh trickle of watery blood then appeared from his nose.

“Christ.” John grabbed his friends harness. He pulled himself up straight and soldier like, avoiding another poorly aimed swing from his friend. “We are getting the hell out of here right now.”

The doctor knew that out of character agitation, or aggression could be a sign of a brain injury, they were running out of time.

He cringed at his bedside manner, but this was now no time for niceties. He pushed forwards dragging a agitated and painful detective behind him. They needed out of here now. Where the hell were the emergency services?

Chapter End Notes

The O2 arena was once called the millennium dome and was a structure built for the
celebration of the turning of the millennia. It is built in London on the Greenwich peninsula, and you can spot it on aerial maps as the big round white thing. It’s design was to represent time, having 12 support towers for the 12 months of the year, is 365 meters in circumference for the days of the year and 52 meters high for the weeks of the year. The dome is used these days as a concert location and has many restaurants and activity centres inside. You can also climb over the top of it, quite a fun experience I did a few years ago. And I can tell you it is quite breezy up there even on a clear day. You have to gear up with climbing harnesses but it was great fun. If your visiting London anytime and you want to do something different I would recommend it.

Works inspired by this

**[Art] Desperation - John's hand** by TheGracefulBlueCat, **[Art] Paralysis - Poisoned Sherlock** by TheGracefulBlueCat, **Trust - paralysed Sherlock** by Sparkypip

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