Dear John

by Pantherlily

Summary

How will Sherlock cope while John is away? Johnlock story. Expect drama in later chapters. Sequel to 'In Sickness And Health.' It would be extremely helpful to read it first.

Notes

A few things before you start reading the sequel. The vacation scene was skipped, because really it would have been mostly just gratuitous sex and we felt it would retract and detract from the story arch we wanted to address next. So, we just never wrote it. The story picks up again on the day John leaves. This story will be a little more Sherlock-centric, but there is and will be Johnlock scenes!
It had really been a lovely vacation, better than anything he could save imagined. He and Sherlock had spent three weeks alone. The final week had been spent back in London while John got all of his uniform clothes and got acquainted with the group of men he would be working with.

Which led to today. John was standing in the living room of 221B in his full uniform, his hat held in his hands and all his bags at his side. The reflection in the mirror was different, his hair close cropped and his skin already tan from his week of work on the base. He turned slowly to face the rest of the living room, taking a deep breath. "Sherlock?" His voice was shaky and less confident than he would have liked but he didn't care because it was okay for Sherlock to hear it. "Ready?"

The weeks flew by. If heaven existed, Sherlock imagined the time spent in Scotland would be it. It had ended all too quickly. Today was the day. He had known it was coming but he couldn't shake the sense of trepidation in the pit of his stomach. He was in the bathroom. He was staring into the sink, his hands holding onto the sides for support. John's voice brought him from his thoughts. He walked out with a confidence he didn't feel. "Ready if you are, my dear doctor." He strode over to John, his blue-grey eyes locked on the other man. He took hold of the army doctor's hand and gave it a tight squeeze briefly. Now was not the time to be emotional. He had to be strong for John. Support his decision. Be an adult. He hated every minute of it, but the situation was out his control. So many times, he had thought about trying to talk John out of it. However, he had refrained because he knew a fight would ensue. He kept true to his word, and not once did the two get in a row and all be damned if he would start one on the day John was leaving.

John bit his bottom lip before letting his mouth hang open. It wasn't supposed to be this hard and it certainly wasn't this hard leaving the first time. Except he didn't have Sherlock last time, or any relationship for that matter. He squeezed Sherlock's hand again before rushing forward and smashing his mouth against Sherlock's desperately. He pulled away and pressed his open mouth against Sherlock's neck, his hands running down the front of Sherlock's pants swiftly. "I love you," he whispered, his voice cracking as he tried to keep the tears from his eyes. "I love you so much. Don't you ever forget that." He placed his hands on Sherlock's shoulders and moved to turn him to sit on the couch. "Sit, Sherlock," he rushed the words out.

Without hesitation Sherlock leaned into the brief moment of intimacy. He took a deep breath, fighting for control of his emotions. John was clearly upset, he needed to be calm. He took a seat next to the army doctor. He turned his head, so they could look at each other. He had taken quite a fancy to wearing John's dog tags and since coming home from the hospital and he hadn't taken them off once. He removed them now, grasped both of John's hands with his own and placed them into his gently. Once more he gave a firm yet brief squeeze, but didn't' let go of the hands. "John I love you. Stay safe. Stay safe for me." His voice held a considerable amount of control, despite the depth of emotion he was feeling. His voice might have been even, but his eyes and slightly rigid posture were a dead give away to what he was really feeling.

John hung the dog tags around his neck without hesitation, a bit of a smirk passing his lips as he looked at them. "Looking at these will make me blush in public," he whispered softly, setting a hand on Sherlock's upper thigh. "You wore them the entire time we were in Scotland." He cleared his throat and shifted to get off the couch, moving to his knees in between Sherlock's legs. "You have to promise me that you will stay off drugs," he muttered, keeping his gaze locked on Sherlock while his hands moved to slowly undo Sherlock's pants. "That you'll keep in touch with Lestrade
and Molly and Mrs. Hudson." He shifted Sherlock's underwear and grabbed his penis with a sure, knowing grasp. "And that you will write me when you can and always be near your laptop so we can video call." He lowered his head, placing a soft kiss at the tip of Sherlock's cock.

Right now, Sherlock would have agreed to pretty much anything John asked. He squirmed and whimpered from the advances. He had already planned on having Skype open at all times on his laptop when he was home. He had even downloaded the mobile version, for just in case. He had also planned on throwing himself into cases hard, so keeping in contact with Lestrade and Molly wouldn't be that difficult. Of course he would write. However, the drugs were a different story. He could feel the itch and call, just thinking about them. He would try to avoid temptation for John. He would most likely take up smoking again, even though he hadn't a cigarette since staying with Lestrade last month. He nodded his head in silent compliance to John's words. If they started something now, John would be late so he pulled away. He redid his pants and stood up from the couch. He cleared his throat before finally speaking. "We should probably go."

The abrupt movement had thrown John off guard. He froze, on the floor, looking up at Sherlock. "Right." He nodded and stood, pulling his hat onto his head and yanking it down so the shadow cast over his eyes. "Wanted to spoil you a bit before I left," he muttered a bit pathetically, standing on his toes and placing a quick kiss on Sherlock's cheek before turning and slipping his backpack over his shoulders. He turned, grinning widely, and stepped forward to grab Sherlock's hand. "I'm four hours ahead of you so I will be in Kandahar before the end of the night." He paused and reached into his pocket, slipping a folded up piece of paper into Sherlock's palm. "You can't read this until before you go to bed tonight. Promise?" He curled Sherlock's fingers around the note. "And then you write back. My address is on there."

Sherlock hadn't meant to be cold when he had pulled away; he just knew how they were. If one started something then before either knew it, clothes would be thrown all over the flat. The thought was tempting but if John was committed to returning to the Army, then by default so should he. He was really hating this being an adult thing. Soon though, he was certain he would be annoying to everyone around him with his usual childish nature. He took the piece of paper. "Promise." He leaned forward and kissed John on the lips lightly. "I am going to miss you."

"I'm going to miss you, too," John muttered. "Don't worry, though. I'm sure we can Skype before the end of the week." He took a shaky breath, turning slightly at the sound of the taxi honking outside. This was it. "Well? You ready?" He held his hand out, wiggling his fingers and smiling weakly. He couldn't hold back and leaned forward to kiss Sherlock again, soft and slow and putting as much emotion in it as he could. He would stay safe for Sherlock, he would come back and live a normal life again. "Just think," he stated softly against Sherlock's lips. "You will get a paycheck every month." He laughed, pecked Sherlock's lips, and moved toward the door. If he didn't leave the flat now he never would.

Sherlock took John's hand and returned the kiss. He put the letter in the front pocket of his white buttoned up shirt. "John, I don't care about the money. Although, I did use up most of my surplus money on Scotland. I guess I'll need it to make sure I eat at least once week." He smirked faintly and walked hand in hand with John to the door. He grabbed his long coat and scarf and put them on.

"Please eat," John said with a laugh and a squeeze to Sherlock's hand. "You honestly can't afford to lose any more weight." His free hand reached across them and patted Sherlock's stomach. "Need some of you when I get back." He grabbed his other bag with his free hand and tugged at Sherlock's hand as he headed down the stair, releasing it when they got outside. He opened the back of the taxi and threw his back pack and clothing bag there before climbing into the taxi with ease. "Y'know, I should have bought you a dog," John stated calmly as he bent to re-tie one of his
"A dog? John, that would be a terrible idea. They are needy and attention starved creatures. Not really my area. If I were to get a pet, a cat would probably fit my personality better. Maybe a fish, but those things are so boring." He took the few paces that was between them and leaned his head down so they were nose to nose, his hand gripping John's coat a little tightly in attempt to bring their bodies closer together still. "I love you. I really will miss you. I will think of you every day."

John closed his eyes and wrapped his arms around Sherlock's torso. "I love you, Sherlock Holmes." He placed a soft kiss on his lips before tightly hugging Sherlock, burying his face against Sherlock's neck. "Nine months. It will go by faster than you think. I'll be back in no time." He squeezed Sherlock one last time before pulling away and glancing back into the taxi. "I can't wait for your letter." His chest shook as he took a breath, his eyes glancing down the street before he gave a sure nod. "Need to go. I'll be late." He kissed Sherlock one last time before climbing into the taxi, shutting the door, and watching Sherlock out the window as the taxi drove off.

Sherlock clung to John tightly, he didn't want to let go. He knew he had to and he watched the taxi drive away. He continued to watch the street, even after the cab had left his field of vision when it had taken a right hand turn onto another street. He sighed, trying to come to terms with how empty and alone he suddenly felt. Without any precursor, there was a crackle of thunder and it began pouring down rain. He didn't seem to mind the water pouring down on him, it would prevent anyone from seeing the tears now streaming down his face. He cleared his throat, straightened his posture and turned back toward the flat. He was about to go back inside when he heard a pitiful mewling coming from somewhere.

A tiny, drenched ball of black fur was curled up by the stoop. He hadn't been serious about getting a cat, yet here one was. He went to pick it up. It hissed at him and bit his hand. "Fine!" He growled and stomped up the steps. He almost lost his balance as the kitten suddenly ran up his pant leg and perched itself on Sherlock's shoulder. "Finicky squirt, aren't you?" He growled at the kitten with a glare, which in turn just stared up at him with pitiful yellow eyes. "For God's sake, I'm talking to a cat. A cat." He went to remove the kitten from his shoulder and got bit again. "Damn it! Stop that!" The kitten just blinked at him. He sighed, grumbled and walked back inside with the black lump of fur still on his shoulder. They were both soaking wet. He took off his shoes and socks at the door, water dripping everywhere. He was about to go upstairs when he heard Mrs. Hudson call his name.

"Good, Sherlock, glad I caught you." Mrs. Hudson glanced around and sighed. "Tea, dear? Why don't you come and relax?" She took another step forward and froze, looking at the kitten perched oddly on his left shoulder. "Oh...Sherlock, there's..." She shook her head with a laugh and motioned toward her kitchen. "Come on, let me make you a cup. We can talk." she met his gaze knowingly. "It would be best right now."

"Let me get into some dry clothes and I will be right back down," Sherlock told Mrs. Hudson before heading upstairs. When he entered the flat, the kitten jumped down and began stalking around the living room like it owned the place. He rolled his eyes, stripped, toweled off and put on set of dry clothes. Shit. The letter. Hopefully it wasn't in any kind of ink, because otherwise it would be unreadable. He removed it from the pocket carefully and set it on the kitchen table to dry. On his way out of the flat, the kitten once more scampered up his pant leg and came to sit on his shoulder. "Would you stop doing that?" Sherlock scolded the cat. "These were clean and dry clothes. You are impossible." He sighed and walked back down the stairs. He entered Mrs. Hudson's kitchen.

"You are talking to that cat like it's a human," Mrs. Hudson commented softly, setting Sherlock's cup of tea on the table with a soft smile. "I think it will be good company for you." She took her
seat at the small table with her own cup of tea and smiled. John had talked to her last night, coming
downstairs looking rather disheveled with scratch marks covering his chest and love bites on his
neck. He had blushed but Mrs. Hudson had merely smiled, pretended she hadn't heard the two of
them upstairs, and took his hand. His request had been simple: look after Sherlock. She had
accepted without a second thought, hugged him, and sent him back upstairs to return to his
boyfriend. She glanced up at Sherlock. "You two should relocate. Your bedroom is directly above
mine." She smiled and took a sip of her tea.

"What? Company? Oh no, no, no. I'm not keeping this…this…thing. I will give it to Molly. She
likes cats." Sherlock glared at the kitten on his shoulder before taking a seat at the kitchen table.
He glanced at Mrs. Hudson with raised eyebrows and a smirk. "Wait until I tell John, he will be
mortified." He gave a small laugh, which surprised him because he didn't think he would be
capable of that with his dear doctor away. The kitten did a few circles on Sherlock's shoulder,
kneaded it's paws, laid down and went to sleep, purring loudly.

"Sherlock, I don't think you really have a choice in the matter. I have never seen a cat do that…and
it already looks so attached to you." She took another drink from her tea cup. The silence that took
over the room was tense. For a moment Mrs. Hudson had the idea of saying she had something to
do but decided to speak up. "Are you alright, dear?" She wrapped her hands around the warm cup
and leaned forward a bit. "You can come down here anytime. You and your little cat. I'm always
here."

Once more Sherlock glared at the kitten, even though it was sleeping soundly and minding its own
business. "Hmph. Maybe. If the damn thing will stop biting me and clawing its way up my pants." He
wasn't really angry at the kitten but it was an easy target. He looked back over to Mrs. Hudson
and gave a small shrug. "I'm…okay…considering…" Since being with John, he'd become a little
more open with his emotions but usually only with the army doctor himself and no one else. The
fact he had even admitted that much, had shown him just how much he had changed in a month.

"Well, you'll have your cases to keep you occupied." Mrs. Hudson reached out and patted
Sherlock's hand. "I'm going to go shopping. Do you need anything?" She stood slowly and eyed
the cat with a smile, as she shuffled over to the sink and placed her tea cup in it gently. "You look
exhausted, dear. Why don't you go upstairs and take a nap? By the time you wake up, he'll have
landed." She moved closer to him, placed a kiss on the top of his head and patted his shoulder.

"No, John made sure to stock up on food before he left. Wanted to make sure I had food in the flat
so I would eat." Sherlock got up from his chair, a small smirk on his face. He left the kitchen and
went back upstairs. His movement woke the kitten on his shoulder and it bit his ear. "That's it,
that's really it!" He picked the kitten up by the scruff of the neck and dangled it in front of his face.
He was about to yell at it when it licked his nose with it's small, rough, pink tongue. "Oh fine. You
can stay." He huffed and put the kitten back on his shoulder. Once back in the flat he picked up his
violin, the kitten jumping from his shoulder down into his chair where it promptly went back to
sleep. He smiled at it with the shake of his head. He played a harsh tune across the strings, the bow
moving rapidly and without any real tempo. The noise wasn't pleasant sounding by any means, but
it helped relieve the stress he was feeling.
"Sherlock?" Lestrade had let himself in. His phone call with John the night before had been tense. Exchanges of 'be safe' and 'do not let Sherlock be stupid' were quick. He had been requested by not only John, but Mycroft as well, to check on the consulting detective. He winced as he entered the room, glancing at Sherlock with a frown. "Well, just don't perform it in front of people." He smiled and shoved his hands in his pockets. He had recovered from the incident a month ago, putting the weight back on and losing the bruises and cuts.

Sherlock hadn't heard Lestrade come in and when he did notice the Detective Inspector finally, the bow came to a grinding halt against the strings. Was everyone going to come and check up on him? Couldn't he have two minutes of peace to himself? He put the violin away, picked up the kitten sitting in his chair and sat in it himself. The kitten yawned toothily, as Sherlock set it in his lap and pet its head absently. It didn't awaken and began to purr deeply. He finally regarded Lestrade. "Come to make sure I don't do something destructive, like set the flat on fire? Or are you here on business?" He hoped it was a case and not a social call. At this point, he would work anything even if was a dull murder.

Lestrade glanced at the cat for a moment before his gaze lifted. "Both, actually. Checking up on you on the request of John." He moved forward and smiled before nervously glancing around the living room. "We've got some bodies we found out by the Thames. Few weeks old, we think. I've brought pictures and the write up if you want to take a peek?" He cleared his throat and looked back at Sherlock.

Sherlock had all these people to check up on him, but who was there to make sure John was okay? He sighed at the thought, but at the mention of a case he looked expectantly to Lestrade. His one hand continued to scratch at the cat's head, the other hand was bent on the arm rest of the chair, waiting for the Detective Inspector to hand the case details over. "Let me have a look then."

Lestrade reached into his jacket and handed Sherlock the manila folder. "Two women and three men. They were all killed differently. Shot, stabbed, strangled." He cleared his throat and nodded toward the folder. "But all in the same spot. We need to know if we are looking for the same guy or more than one." The cat was unsettling him a bit and he moved to lean against the edge of the desk, his arms folded across his chest.

Sherlock took the folder and with his petting hand, moved the kitten to rest on his shoulder. It growled and clawed his shoulder from being moved. Then it moved to a sitting position with another yawn. He ignored the kitten and only half listened to Lestrade, as he looked through the pictures. He studied each intently, carefully. Without looking up he finally spoke, "What do you think, John?" The question was clearly directed at the cat and it meowed dutifully. "Exactly. No, I can't call you John can I? That won't do...I'll think of a suitable name yet..." Sherlock finally looked up from the photos to regard Lestrade. "What you have here Detective Inspector is a serial killer looking for their identity. He or she is experimenting with different ways to kill and even different people. They are looking for what thrills them most and apparently haven't found it yet. You can probably expect another body soon. Oh and obviously, the spot holds some kind of meaning to the killer."

Lestrade winced as Sherlock talked to the cat, his eyes narrowed at the small creature. Was it entirely healthy to be talking to an animal like that? Shit, it had only been a few hours since John had left. Sherlock's voice caused him to jump slightly before he took all the information in. "You
can't determine if we're looking for a man or a woman?" He asked skeptically. Maybe John leaving wasn't such a good idea. "I mean, should we expect them to change the place to dump the next body since we found this one?" He pushed himself away from the table and walked toward Sherlock, hand out to get the folder.

Sherlock shot Lestrade a glare. Was the Detective Inspector really questioning his deduction abilities? He muttered something darkly as he glanced down at the photos once more and then he finally went over the reports of each crime scene. The cat meowed. "Yes, I know. I see it. Now hush, I am trying to think." The kitten growled and bit his ear, before laying down and going back to sleep. "And everyone calls me a child…" Sherlock mumbled to himself. He was quiet a long while after that.

Finally Sherlock looked to Lestrade once more. "Male, mid to late twenties. Charismatic and charming. Above average intelligence. He has a decent job and despite his young age, will probably be pretty high on the corporate ladder or at the very least well on his way. The one shot, was the first to be killed. An accident and impersonal. A single gunshot. The killer panicked and hid the body and after it was all over, discovered he quite enjoyed killing. The next one, he used a gun again but it was overkill on the woman. The third to be killed was the woman who was stabbed. There are hesitation marks, not because he isn't sure he wants to kill but because he doesn't know how to use the knife effectively. Knifing someone is messy business and unless you know what you are doing isn't really as easy as you might think. Also, since he was an amateur with a knife you should probably look for blood on the stab victim that isn't theirs since he most likely cut himself when using the knife. The fourth to be strangled was with a scarf, judging by the width the marks on the neck and analysis report on the fibers found on the body. The last was strangled with his bare hands. Clearly the killer has gained the confidence since the first kill. It might even be the way he will kill again. Strangling someone else is very intimate and empowering. As for changing the dump site, yes most certainly. However, I would still like to see where you found the bodies."

There it was. Lestrade smiled and nodded, snatching up the file and instantly pulling out his cell phone. "Perfect. We can get you in tomorrow, that's when we are heading back out there." He started typing on his phone before checking the time. "Kandahar is four hours ahead of us," he muttered, glancing at Sherlock. "John's landed by now. Told me to tell you to stay near your phone." He folded the manila folder and slipped it into his jacket. "Tomorrow around noon. I'll text you." He nodded toward the door as he turned to leave. "Mycroft will be dropping by tonight. His shift. Don't get into trouble." With that, Lestrade left the flat, talking eagerly on the phone by the time he was at the bottom of the stairs.

John had landed in Kandahar, adjusting a bit to the time change. He smirked, slipped his body armor on, and followed his men into the base. Compared to his last base, Kandahar was the lap of luxury. It had a cinema, relaxation rooms, a rather nice computer lab, and even a room devoted to video games. He shuffled through his checking in process, receiving his gun as well as the arm band with the signifying red cross on it, easily slipping it on his left bicep. Settling in didn't take long, his room was cramped with two beds and the man he would be living with wasn't half bad. It took two hours to get settled and by the time he had finally managed to get enough nerve to call Sherlock he was exhausted. He dialed Sherlock's cell number and waited patiently for him to pick up.

Sherlock merely nodded and then rolled his eyes when Lestrade said Mycroft would be over later. Good God, was his flat going to become a revolving door of people for the next nine months? Did they really think he was going to blow something up, set himself on fire while reciting poetry or something else just as ridiculous? He sighed and absently pet the sleeping kitten on his shoulder. He took out his cell phone and stared at it, as if that action alone would make it come to life. When
it finally rung, he answered it almost immediately. "Sherlock Holmes, the only consulting detective in the world at your service Captain."

That voice. It had only been a day and it already caused a twist in his stomach. John laughed, lowering his head and sighing. "Hi," he replied weakly, scuffing his boot on the floor and wincing when he realized that he was already coated in a fine layer of brown dust and dirt. "Mr. Holmes? I think I've got a problem. There's this man who I love terribly and I can't seem to find him. Any idea where he might possibly be?" It had taken him a moment to recover but once he did he figured two could play at the little game. The flat sounded quiet and relaxing, quite different from the area around him where he was surrounded by soldiers talking on the phone as well.

"You are in love with man and you say have lost him? Why tell me, Captain, what is this fellow like?" Sherlock asked, a smirk twisted on his lips. The kitten woke up again and meowed loudly, at its sleep being interrupted once more. It jumped off his shoulder and stalked into the kitchen haughtily, tail high up in the air and the very tip bent sideways. He glared at the tiny black kitten as it disappeared from his view.

"Hmm. Well, he is tall and got this impeccably adorable shaggy black hair." John paused, licking his lips and laughing slightly. "He's got these beautiful eyes that can pin anybody down in one glance. And, oh God, his voice," an exaggerated gasp, "It's deep and wonderful. It helps certain Army doctors drift off to sleep after nightmares." He cleared his throat and dropped his voice, his hand cupping the receiver. "I also hear he's a pretty good shag." It was spoken with a smile, playful and full of laughter, something he knew Sherlock would be able to pick up on.

"Hmm, I'm not sure I know anyone like that Captain. Guess you are stuck talking to me instead," Sherlock said with faked modesty and shortly after a crash could be heard from the kitchen. Stupid cat. He would worry about it later. He was on the phone with John and he wasn't going to let anything interrupt that. He finally fell serious. "I miss you. Everyone keeps fussing over me already, it's annoying."

John laughed but quickly cut it off when he heard the crash through the receiver. Sherlock had seemed to ignore and so John did so as well. "I know they have. I've asked them to. I know you think it's annoying but I'm just a bit worried." He shifted on the stool he was sitting on and coughed slightly as he inhaled some of the dirt off of his uniform. "Sherlock, I'm sorry, but what the Hell was that crash? Did that come from the kitchen?" His brows furrowed as he asked.

"I know you did. I don't suppose you could ask them to stop? I'll be working a case with Lestrade and I don't need all their distractions. I would say something but they'd probably just ignore me, so it would just be a waste of my time." Sherlock glanced to the kitchen at John's question. "Um…it was a cat. It seems to have taken quite a liking to me, it's a bit weird. Pretty sure the Detective Inspector thinks I've lost my marbles, because I was talking to it earlier. Really, I was just thinking out loud. No different than me talking to the skull."

"Not for a while," John replied softly, rubbing the back of his neck. "I just want to be sure. Right now it seems really annoying, I understand...but in a week or so, even a few months from now, I want to make sure that you are doing alright. Eating, communicating with other human beings." He laughed softly and it increased when Sherlock mentioned a cat. "Cat? Oh, Christ Sherlock! Look at that, you've already replaced me! It isn't even dinner here! That little bugger better not be sleeping on my side of the bed." He paused and blushed. "Last night was really, really good." He wanted to change the subject, to focus on Sherlock because he already missed the way he smelled, the way he would catch the consulting detective looking at him.

"For God's sake John, I'm not a child...really I'm not. I don't need their constant mothering stares
and pep talks." Sherlock sighed and seriously considering moving out of the flat temporarily and living in a cottage outside of London away from the prying eyes of his brother's cameras. "I haven't replaced you. Don't be ridiculous. No one could replace you, ever." A slight smirk tugged at his lips at John's last words, "Yeah well I wanted to make sure it was a night to remember. Oh that reminds me, Mrs. Hudson says we should change rooms since mine is above hers and she more or less hears everything."

"She what?" John's voice was high pitched and nervous. "Oh, that's...Well. Last night. I was, um." He sniffed a bit, pursing his lips. "That's supremely awkward. I mean, really very awkward. Shit." He laughed softly and calmed himself a bit. He needed to try and remind himself that as much as Sherlock hated it, he did need to be monitored. He decided to move away from the subject. "I left one of my jumpers in your bed this morning. It won't smell like me for nine months but it should for a while."

John shifted slightly as a younger soldier slapped him on the shoulder, shouting 'C'mon, Doc! We're hittin' up the river for a swim!' and dashed away with eager laughter.

"You can snuggle with it, I guess. That was the intention."

The smirk on Sherlock's face only got bigger from John's reaction. "Yes, well one of my scarves is in one of your bags. You'll have to guess which one. It isn't a pillow but it's something." He shifted in the chair and heard another crash in the kitchen. He ignored it like before and the kitten suddenly ran into the room and started biting his shoe. Then ran away again, skidding into the kitchen and came to a halt under the table. It turned to stare at Sherlock with its unblinking gaze.

"John, I don't know if love or hate this cat. It's very...different...than what I expected."

"Well, you took it in, didn't you? Maybe it just really likes you." John remarked absently. How different could a cat be, really? "Have you even named it yet? Maybe if you give it a name." He smiled a bit. He already wanted to go back. It was hard to believe that he had woken up this morning wrapped in Sherlock's arms after only an hour of sleep, still sore from their previous activities. The thought of not doing that for nine months caused his chest to stop moving for a moment. "I love you," he stated suddenly.

"Sort of, I guess. If I believed in that sort of thing, I would tell you we found each other when we both were in need." Sherlock shrugged. "I haven't named it yet. It's stubborn, a bit violent, and hmm...intelligent, for an animal anyway." He stared back it, as the kitten continued its unwavering stare. "I love you too John. It hasn't even been a whole day yet and I feel like you have been gone forever."

"I've got to go." John exhaled a shaky breath and glanced around the room. "Going to wash up in the river and head out on my first patrol. Stay safe. And you can read my note now. I love you." He paused a bit before hanging up the phone, running his hands down his face before removing himself from the stool and heading out toward the river as he pulled his shirt over his head.

And just like that, the conversation was over. With a sigh, Sherlock got up from the chair and shoved his cell phone back in his pocket. He walked into the kitchen, the kitten getting up and rubbing itself in circles around Sherlock's ankles. He surveyed the mess on the floor. Appliances, dishes and cutlery were strewn everywhere. Cabinets and drawers were partially opened. The kitten mewed loudly and clawed its way back up to Sherlock's shoulder. He was getting used to the tiny claws embedding themselves in his skin through the cloth. He stepped over the mess and walked over to the refrigerator. For once it was clean and actually had food in it. He wasn't sure what a cat ate but he figured some kind of meat would do. He took out some lunch meat, ham. He opened the container, and offered a thin slice to the kitten on his shoulder. It gobbled it greedily. "Like ham
then, hm? I called you John earlier. My dear army doctor will hate it, but I do think I will call you Hamish.” He fed it another piece of ham.

An hour after John’s phone call Mycroft let himself into the flat, setting a manila envelope on the kitchen table. "That cat is...odd," he muttered before pushing the envelope for you. "A gift. Pictures of one Captain John Watson at Kandahar Airfield about an hour ago." He smiled softly. He was the British government and it wasn't too hard to get pictures for his younger brother, something to show him that John was alright and would be. The pictures held images of several soldiers in the river, John bathing in one, splashing somebody in another. The next was him leaving the river, one that caused Mycroft to blush because he was completely naked. After that one photo remained. John was completely dressed, body armor on, a helmet on his head with a visor to protect his eyes, a gun in his hands, and his red cross slid over his left bicep. "If you want more you just have to ask," he stated softly, as he eyed the cat on Sherlock’s shoulder with unease.

After feeding the kitten the entire container of ham, Sherlock went about cleaning up the kitchen. Not because he actually cared that it wasn't clean, but because it would give him something to do. Something other than thinking about John. The kitten took a nap on his shoulder, claws digging deeply into the shirt and skin of the consulting detective so it wouldn't fall off with all of the movement. He had just finished up when Mycroft had shown up. Sherlock smirked. "Lestrade didn't say so, but he was also unsettled by the cat." He rifled through the pictures and nodded his head thanks. The letter John had given him was still on the kitchen table, unopened. It was dry and a bit wrinkled from the water damage. He left it for now, opting to read it when Mycroft was gone and he would be alone. The kitten continued to sleep soundly, purring lightly.

"Dinner?" Mycroft asked smoothly, relaxing against the kitchen table. He watched his younger brother with interest. It was different to be in the flat without John, even he would admit that. Living here and not just visiting was something he didn't want to imagine. "I'll pay. I think it would be best if you got out of the flat for a bit. Fresh air." He would never admit it to Sherlock, or even John, but he was worried about how the next nine months would play out and how Sherlock would react.

Sherlock waved a dismissive hand. "I'm not hungry." He turned to look at his older brother. "Look, I know you all think you need to watch over me like I am some lost child at the market. I'm not. If you want to drop by from time to time, fine. Not every day. I like my space and before John really I liked being alone. If you all keep insisting on bothering me, I swear I will move out of the city or the country if it comes to that until John comes back home."

Mycroft shifted on his feet and shot a knowing glance at his brother. "Fine. I will have pictures delivered weekly, then. Lestrade is still stopping by but only for cases." He took several steps back and glanced around the flat. It was clean. John must have done that before he left. "I'll see you in a week, then? Don't do anything stupid." He twisted his mouth to one side before spinning on his toes and leaving the flat.

Really? That was it? Sherlock was expecting a fight, an argument. Mycroft had folded. He eyed his older brother with scrutiny and then merely nodded. He picked up the letter and went to the living room and sat down in his chair. He opened the letter carefully, hoping to be able to decipher the message within despite the water spots all over the page.

The letter was written in John's best penmanship, slightly shaky in some parts, but easily readable.

Sherlock,

I know how much you hate this. I could read your body language and I know. You held yourself back, you never argued or begged me to stay back. It's going to be a long nine months, we both
know that, but we'll make it through. I'll be back before you know it.

Scotland was the best time of my life and I know when I'll be awake during some long nights that I can look back to that little vacation and smile. Do the same. If you ever start to feel down then just close your eyes and remember.

Don't forget to feed yourself. Don't get angry with Lestrade or Mrs. Hudson and especially your brother. They all care about you and just want to help. Don't push them away. Let them be there for you.

I love you, Sherlock. More than I think you'll ever know. Don't forget that. I can't wait to see you again.

I look forward to your letter.

John

Sherlock read the note and almost crumpled it up and threw it on the floor, suddenly angry. The last month he had held a lot of the frustration in. He had tried to start a fight with his brother, but he had simply caved. His body tensed, causing the kitten on his shoulder to wake once more. It bit Sherlock's ear and then hopped into his lap and began purring loudly, rubbing its head all over his stomach. He picked Hamish up absently, set he kitten on the floor and then stood up from the chair. He walked over to the desk and got a clean piece of paper out, and a ball point pen. He sat staring at it for awhile as he thought of what he wanted to say. Finally, he wrote a letter and just as he finished he heard the kitten meowing loudly by the window. He folded the letter, put it into an envelope and licked the flap before sealing it. He scribbled the address on the front. In a few quick strides Sherlock was at the window and he opened it. Hamish darted out on to the ledge and jumped down to the street below with ease. He watched the cat disappear from view with a sigh, as he idly wondered if the thing would come back. He slumped against the wall and then slid to sitting position, closing his eyes as he thought of John. He wasn't tired but he was emotionally exhausted and sleep found him whether he liked it or not.
Chapter 3

Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

Lestrade entered the flat half an hour before noon, grimacing when the young cat managed to work itself in when he was closing the door. The stairs creaked with every step and that was when the Detective Inspector realized the flat was oddly quiet. It hit him that John was really gone and that Sherlock was by himself. He entered the flat slowly, looking around, and sighing when he found Sherlock asleep on the floor against the wall. That couldn't be comfortable. He turned toward the kitchen, put water in the kettle, and put it on the stove to start some tea before moving across the living room and kneeling next to the sleeping man. "Sherlock." He placed a gentle hand on Sherlock's shoulder, noticing the envelope addressed to John. "Sherlock, we've got a crime scene to go investigate."

Lestrade's voice didn't register, but a hand on his shoulder did. Sherlock awoke with a start, shoving the Detective Inspector away blindly and stumbled to his feet. The kitten scurried up his legs and the only thing that kept him up was the fact there was a wall behind him. He growled in ill temperament. Finally his vision focused on Lestrade. "Thought you were supposed to text me, not sneak into my flat." He clearly wasn't in a good mood.

"Calm down," he stated as he moved to his feet. "I did text you and you didn't answer. I was worried because you usually don't sleep." He moved over to the kitchen. "I started the kettle for some tea. Figured we could discuss a few things about the case before we left." He pushed the pictures of John away to place two mugs on the table. "Are you alright?"

"Look, we both know what's wrong and if I was going to discuss it with anyone it wouldn't be with you." Sherlock followed after Lestrade into the kitchen. The kitten meowed loudly. "I just fed you last night," he mumbled but went to the refrigerator anyway. He picked out some turkey but the kitten refused to eat it. He rolled his eyes and got a jar of jam, it was mostly empty. He stuck his finger inside and offered it to Hamish. The kitten sniffed it, whiskers sweeping forward and then began to lick it off. He sat down at the table, idly feeding the cat jam. "So, the case? You said you wanted to talk about it?"

Lestrade poured the hot water into the cups and placed the tea bags in each mug before sitting opposite of Sherlock. The cat caught his attention for a moment before he spoke. "We had another body show up last night. Kid..." He finally met Sherlock's gaze and sighed. "Not in the same spot but on the shore of the Thames. Except there wasn't a mark on him. Nothing." He shrugged and pulled a picture out of his jacket, sliding it past the kitten and toward Sherlock. "We need to know if it's the same person. Possibly what they did."

Sherlock took the picture with his free hand, still feeding Hamish with the other. He scrutinized the boy in front of him. "Clever, clever." He muttered to himself and handed the picture back to Lestrade. "I will want to see the first dump site, then where the kid was found, but the first thing I want to see is the kid's body." The jar ran out of jam and he wiped the stickiness onto the table, and finally picked up his cup of tea and took a drink. The kitten meowed loudly again. "No. Not right now." He spoke to Hamish, as if he had actually understood it.

Lestrade nodded and took a sip of the tea himself before nodding toward the cat. "So, did you name it yet?" He questioned with a bit of a smile. Sherlock didn't have John anymore but, still, he was talking to the cat like it was a human. "We can leave when you finish your tea and eat something. John called me before his patrol early this morning. Misjudged the time, really, and called me at
two in the morning. He worked overnight." Lestrade took another sip of his tea.

"Nope, no name." Sherlock lied easily. His body went rigid. "You talked to John last night? He called you, but not me?" The consulting detective glared into his cup of tea as he drank it. The cat meowed again and then bit his ear. "Damn you cat!" Hamish went wide-eyed and jumped off the shoulder, ran to the living room and hid under the couch. "Stupid thing," he muttered. It was clear he was displacing his anger on the poor creature.

"Yes, I did. And before you get any more upset, he knew you were asleep." Lestrade studied Sherlock for a long moment. "It wasn't personal, I can promise you that. He called me to see how you were doing. He knew you wouldn't tell him the truth and I had dropped by to see you. He also told me that you probably wouldn't sleep in the room but that you would sleep." He shrugged and lifted the tea cup to his lips. "He was right." He took several sips from his tea. "Don't worry, I'm sure he's calling you today. Also, he's waiting for your letter, he was extremely tired, and he was sucking on coffee grinds. He didn't want you to hear how miserable he was, especially on day one."

Sherlock slammed the tea cup on the table. The contents sloshed around violently but didn't spill over. He stood up from the table, shoving the chair roughly, it tipped over and landed on the floor with an echoing clatter. He had been a ticking time bomb ready explode over the last month and the latest news had been his ignition. He stalked out of the kitchen, picked up the letter he had written to John and was about to tear it in half but at the last minute he slammed it down onto the floor. "Shit," he muttered to himself and slumped down into his chair. The kitten watched his tirade, timidly came out from under the couch, jumped onto his lap and started purring loudly at him. He gave it a rough pet on the head, which in turn got his finger nipped. He sighed but didn't rebuke Hamish this time, as his temper tantrum seemed to run out of steam.

Lestrade sat at the table with his head lowered, waiting patiently for everything to calm down. When the silence became too overbearing, he slowly stood up and moved into the living room. "Sherlock, he didn't do it to piss you off. We all know how much you hate him being in Afghanistan and he wasn't going to call you to tell you to take care of yourself and then complain about how miserable he was. He wouldn't do that." He hesitantly set a hand on Sherlock's shoulder. "Do you want to call him?"

Hamish growled and bit down on Lestrade's arm, hard. Sherlock arched a brow and he had to yank the kitten by the tail for it to release its hold. The consulting detective couldn't help but smirk, even though he knew the Detective Inspector would not be amused. "No, I'm sure we'll talk tonight. I can…wait. We have things that need done."

Lestrade shouted and yanked his hand back when it was free, shaking it with a few choice words. "Okay, fine. Let's get the Hell out of here for a while." He moved instantly toward the door. "And grab your letter to John," he shouted over his shoulder as a second thought. "It'll make his day when he gets it. C'mon, we need to get you back in three hours." He moved down the stairs swiftly.

Sherlock laughed quietly, as Lestrade spoke to him. He picked Hamish up and put him on his shoulder. "I think I like you more now." He gave the kitten a pat on the head and it purred loudly. He got up out of the chair, picked up the letter to John and then with a few quick strides he caught up to the Detective Inspector. The kitten stared at Lestrade for a moment with a twitching tail, before doing a few circles and fell asleep on Sherlock's shoulder.

Lestrade glanced at Sherlock for a moment and did a double take. "No. The cat stays here. It can't come to the crime scenes." He shook his head and crossed his arms over his chest. "See you in the car." He turned and finished going down the stairs before leaving the flat.
Sherlock rolled his eyes but took the sleeping cat off his shoulders. Hamish was awoken immediately, meowed pitifully and looked up him with big, yellow eyes. "Big mean Uncle Greg said no, I'm sorry." The kitten meowed again and ran back up his pant legs and settled onto his shoulder once more. "He is just pouting because you bit him," he whispered to Hamish confidentially. He walked outside, the kitten still on his shoulder. "I know you said no, but Hamish isn't listening..."

"The cat isn't goi- Hamish?" Lestrade raised one eyebrow curiously before shaking his head. "No. Sherlock, you can't. We've discussed this before. I am breaking enough rules letting you go. I really can't let that cat go. You aren't getting in the car with it." He opened the door to the driver side and slid in, peaking out to speak again. "And I mean it this time." The door shut and Lestrade calmly started the car, glancing at Sherlock through the window.

Sherlock signaled for a cab. "I'll see you at St. Bart's Inspector." He smirked a bit and got into a cab as it pulled up. The cabbie arched a brow at the cat on Sherlock's shoulder, but drove off anyway. "This will be fun. I think you will like it," he told Hamish and stroked the kitten's head, which began purring immediately. He paid the fare and got out of the cab, once it came to a stop at its destination. He didn't bother to see if Lestrade was there or not and he headed down to where Molly would be, ignoring all the strange looks he was getting and the whispering.

Molly looked up with a flustered smile, frowning a bit when she remembered that Sherlock was alone. "Hello." She cast her glance down and jumped a bit when Lestrade entered as well, hands shoved tightly in his pockets and a scowl on his face. "Hi Greg." She bit her lip when she only got a grunt in reply. "Alright. Well, six bodies. The newest one is closest to you." He glanced at Sherlock, "And they go in order after that." She hugged her clipboard tighter to her chest, eyes trained on the ground.

Sherlock nodded a hello and was already inspecting the boy's body before it was even pointed out to him. He slipped on a pair of gloves. He circled the body several times, his body bent at the waist for closer inspection. "Cause of death was heart failure, yes?" He asked Molly, without looking up. The cat meowed at him. "Yes, I am well aware. Thank you for your input though."

Molly glanced at the kitten before nodding. "Yes, and we're still waiting on toxicology." She took a deep breath and glanced back at Lestrade with a smile that he readily returned. "Coffee again tonight?" She asked him softly, grinning when he nodded. "Right. Well, Sherlock, any thoughts."

"The toxicology report is a waste of time, you won't find anything. He wasn't poisoned." Sherlock turned the boy's head and pointed to a very faint and small needle prick on the neck. "Air bubble. Stops the heart. More or less undetectable unless you are looking for it." He stood up straight and finally looked over to Molly. "Have you had more of these? Heart failure cases? In particular on terminally ill patients from the local hospitals?" Even though he was looking at her, it was clear his mind was elsewhere as he went through different theories in his head.

Molly rushed over to inspect the boy's neck, furrowing her brows. "No, I don't think so." She bit her lip and met Sherlock's face. "He's the first one to show up like this." After a long pause she fidgeted with her clipboard and glanced back at Lestrade. "W-Why? Isn't it just a serial murder we're looking for?"

"Damn it. That doesn't fit or make sense." Sherlock was muttering more to himself than anyone else at this point. Hamish meowed. "Yes, of course you are right." He turned to face the Detective Inspector. "The crime scene where all the bodies were found, I need to see it now." Without another word, he left the lab.

Lestrade rolled his eyes and followed Sherlock without another word driving to the scene and
standing calmly. "We are between the two sites." He motioned his head to his right. "That's where the first ones were found." He met Sherlock's gaze and motioned to his left. "That's where the boy was found. Enlighten me," he snapped.

Sherlock held up a finger at Lestrade, hoping it would silence the Detective Inspector so he could think without any interruptions. He inspected the ground first. Shallow graves had been dug. He took several pictures on his phone, from several angels. He knelt down and inspected the graves individually, taking a soil sample from each one and placing them in separate baggies. He moved away from the dump site and moved to where Lestrade had motioned. "It isn't the same killer," Sherlock said at last. "The boy was a mercy kill. He had a degenerative disease that was killing him slowly. I am sure Molly will confirm my conclusion with her medical analysis. The body was dumped here to make us think it was related to the other bodies that were found. I had thought we had two serial killers, one of them an angel of death. That was too much to hope for I guess. For the boy's death, I would suggest looking at the parents first. Probably both, mother administered the air bubble. Quick and painless. She is probably a nurse or a doctor. The father is probably the one who dumped the body. A mother would have taken more care of her son, a blanket or some other sentimental thing."

Lestrade shifted on his feet before pulling out his cell phone and sending a quick text. "Right. Then the other bodies? What about them?" He glanced at the area, roped off by bright yellow tape, and shrugged. "Five bodies, same killer there? Same spot suggests it is, unless it's a group doing it all to throw us off. We've considered it," he muttered as he looked at Sherlock. "Honestly, it's the only thing we have to think. We could be dealing with multiple killers with this group." He knelt down and ducked under the tape. "They were all found lined up, kind of like a cemetery. All buried the same. Very politely, hands folding over the chest, bodies clean of any blood." His mouth twisted slightly to the side.

"A group of killers? Do you just stand around coming up with stupid theories with the other officers? Are you sure you're a Detective Inspector? Did you pay attention to anything I said at all yesterday?" Sherlock sighed with a shake of his head, clearly disappointed in the other man. Hamish suddenly jumped off his shoulder and began running down the beach. He didn't chase the kitten, because it had run away from where the bodies had been found so at least it wouldn't be contaminating any crime scenes. It stopped and began pawing at the ground and meowed loudly. Sherlock looked to Lestrade with raised eyebrows and went to go investigate what Hamish was up to. A hand could be seen beneath where the kitten was scratching. He looked over to Lestrade with a smirk. "Bet you are glad I brought him..." he paused, picked the kitten up and inspected its genitalia. "...yep...him along." Hamish squirmed from his hand and settled on Sherlock's shoulder once more.

Lestrade didn't answer, following Sherlock as he pulled his cell phone out of his pocket. "I'm not but thank you," he stated before talking. "This is DI Lestrade. We've got another body along the Thames." He looked at Sherlock and nodded his head. "I'll drop by tonight with information," he stated softly, almost mouthing the words, before turning his back and squatting beside the hand.

Sherlock smirked briefly but it quickly turned into a frown at the dismissal. He had intended on staying at the crime scene and look it over himself, not be informed about it later that night. He huffed in annoyance but he left without a word of complaint, because he had figured John would be calling him soon. Why else would the Detective Inspector have told him he needed to be back at the flat in three hours before leaving? He took a cab home, found some more ham in the refrigerator and fed the kitten.

John had just woken up, sleeping through most of the day to recover from his first night patrol. He had eaten silently and by himself, grimacing with every bite, before deciding he was bored enough
to try and phone Sherlock. His feet dragged on the ground and he plopped on to a stool with a sigh as he picked up the phone and dialed Sherlock's number.

Sherlock had just finished feeding the kitten when his cell phone came to life. He answered it without hesitation. "John, hey."

John hummed tiredly at hearing Sherlock's voice, running a hand down his face before replying. "God I forgot how much I missed your voice in one day." He laughed weakly and rested his head on the flat surface in front of him, smashing the phone against the side of his face. "How are you doing? And the cat? Named it yet?" He asked the questions quickly, his words slurring together a bit. It was a good thing his men could read him so well already because there was suddenly a large Styrofoam cup directly in front of his face. He took a noisy sip and let a small moan of appreciation escape his lips.

"Keeping busy. Have a serial killer dumping bodies on the Thames. Should keep my mind focused for a little while anyway. The kitten is fine, but I think I am the only one who likes him. Everyone says he is weird. He bit Lestrade." He gave a brief laugh, paused for a moment and then continued on. "I erm…named him after you. Hamish. He likes ham, so it seemed to fit. He also likes jam. You? Running around saving lives, my dear doctor? Getting enough sleep? You sound tired."

John set the hot coffee down with a sputtering cough, glaring a bit at the phone. "You named the poor thing Hamish? Oh, Sherlock." He chuckled and took a deep breath, taking another sip from his coffee. "I'm good. Nobody has been shot yet so I have just been going on patrol and trying to keep myself clean. Isn't working." He scratched the back of his neck. "I am tired, though. Night patrol wasn't nice to me. It never will be." He ran his tongue across his top teeth and glanced around, happy to see that he was the only one in the room. "Sherlock, Christ, I had a dream about you while I was asleep."

"A dream about me? Good I hope? No nightmares?" Sherlock asked, as he shifted in the kitchen chair to get a little more comfortable. "Do you want to tell me about the dream?" He gave up trying to get comfortable, got up and walked over to the living room and slumped into his chair. The kitten trailed after him and instead of jumping up on him, Hamish laid down on his feet and fell asleep. So much for trying to find a more comfortable place to sit. He wiggled his toes but the kitten didn't budge.

"Well..." John cleared his throat nervously and laughed. "It was certainly a nice thing to wake up to. You were below me." He lowered his voice a bit. "Scratching at my chest while I shagged you." There was a bit of a pause. "And even in my dreams you are extremely quiet." Another laugh before John took a deep breath and took a large sip from the coffee, ignoring the burning sensation at the roof of his mouth. "Had to jerk off before I left my quarters." He made the statement like it was completely natural but a grin was plastered on his face. "Maybe it's because I slept with your scarf last night."

Sherlock grinned a bit as he listened to John and then asked, "Do people have dreams like those often? I have never had a dream like that." He attempted one last time to get comfortable, shifting so the kitten would slide off his feet. Hamish growled and bit his ankle, before stalking off to John's chair and jumped up on it, where it slept once more.

"I don't know. I'm sure they do. Except it doesn't surprise me you haven't had a dream like that. You're Sherlock. Your dreams must be all about solving impossible murders and identifying new types of tobacco ash." John loudly licked his lips and sighed. "You might before I come back. I mean, do you ever wake up with..." He paused and shook his head with a smile. They were honest to God discussing this over the phone. "Y'know. A need?"
A frown formed on Sherlock's lips in thought, as he tried to follow what John implied. "Need? Like a sexual urge? John, I haven't even masturbated since we have been together. Although, that is probably due to the fact you more than satisfied my sexual needs in the last month." He paused as a thought occurred to him. "I forgot to send your letter out today, got distracted with the case. I'm sorry. I will send it out first thing in the morning, I promise."

Any thought of the last month with Sherlock caused John to tense and he tried to redirect his thoughts to anything but shagging or being shagged. "It's fine. I am glad you got distracted with the case. That's what I wanted." He shifted a bit on the stool and sighed with some frustration. "Seriously, just talking to you is giving me a blasted hard on. Just your voice." He groaned slightly and exhaled loudly through his nose.

"Really? Hmm, interesting..." Sherlock trailed off as he thought for a moment and then went on. "What's that thing people do on the phone? Phone sex? Does that work? It sounds silly to me, but I have never done it. Would that help you at all, or just make things worse?"

"Mmmm, I wish. I can't. I am in a pretty public area." John couldn't help but smile because Sherlock was trying. Really trying. "If I had a phone to myself near my bed I would take you up on that offer but I can't. Looks like I will have to take care of it myself when we are off the phone."

He kept his voice low and paused to finish his coffee. "Nothing for you at all over there? Not even an urge to kiss me?"

"Public. Private. Does it matter?" Sherlock shrugged, even though John couldn't tell. He thought about the questions. "I don't know. I know I miss you. I want to hold you again. Miss running my fingers through your hair. That sort of thing. I sound so stupid and ordinary admitting this to you..."

"It kind of does matter, Sherlock." John couldn't help the laugh and grin widely. "I can't just whip it out in the middle of a room where other soldiers call their loved ones. Not exactly appropriate." He clicked his tongue against the roof of his mouth and lowered his head. The blush spread quickly across his cheeks, coloring the tips of his ears. "I love it. It's not stupid or ordinary, Sherlock. That's what people do. I miss you running your fingers through my hair, even though it is shorter now. I miss sleeping against you. It's hard to fall asleep without feeling your heartbeat."

"Oh right. Social decorum and all that," Sherlock replied and couldn't help but smile. "Try imagining my heartbeat against your ear. The rise and fall of my chest. Think of me and smile my dear doctor. I don't know if that will help you sleep or not, but perhaps." He paused then said again, "I miss you."

John closed his eyes and instantly relaxed. His breathing slowed considerably and a weak smile tugged at his lips. "I love you." His voice was low, rough, and his words slurred together. He was suddenly tired and wanted to curl up next to Sherlock and sleep. When he opened his eyes the scenery jarred him slightly and he realized he wasn't in 221B. "I miss you so much, Sherlock. I didn't think it was going to be this hard."

"I love you too, John." Sherlock had expected it to be this hard. Really he thought it would be worse. Maybe it would get worse as the days wore on. Only time would tell on that. He kept his thoughts to himself, because as before he didn't want to start a row with John. He had decided the no fighting rule should apply to while John was away as well. "Is there anything I can do to make it better for you, my dear doctor?"

"Come to Kandahar and fuck me so loud the entire airfield will hear?" John stated softly with a laugh, shaking his head. "Just be strong. I will have enough time to get on Skype in three days. I think this will be the last time we'll talk until then. The patrols are picking up here." He hesitated

"Try imagining my heartbeat against your ear. The rise and fall of my chest. Think of me and smile my dear doctor. I don't know if that will help you sleep or not, but perhaps." He paused then said again, "I miss you."

John closed his eyes and instantly relaxed. His breathing slowed considerably and a weak smile tugged at his lips. "I love you." His voice was low, rough, and his words slurred together. He was suddenly tired and wanted to curl up next to Sherlock and sleep. When he opened his eyes the scenery jarred him slightly and he realized he wasn't in 221B. "I love you so much, Sherlock. I didn't think it was going to be this hard."

"I love you too, John." Sherlock had expected it to be this hard. Really he thought it would be worse. Maybe it would get worse as the days wore on. Only time would tell on that. He kept his thoughts to himself, because as before he didn't want to start a row with John. He had decided the no fighting rule should apply to while John was away as well. "Is there anything I can do to make it better for you, my dear doctor?"

"Come to Kandahar and fuck me so loud the entire airfield will hear?" John stated softly with a laugh, shaking his head. "Just be strong. I will have enough time to get on Skype in three days. I think this will be the last time we’ll talk until then. The patrols are picking up here." He hesitated
before continuing. "We were shot at last night a few miles out so we are going a bit further to see if we can get them." He hadn't planned on telling Sherlock anything like that. Worrying his boyfriend wasn't what he wanted to do. Except he had a right to know and he figured he shouldn't keep anything from Sherlock.

"Don't tempt me, I just might do that." Sherlock had a faint smirk tugging at his lips. Three days until they would talk again? The thought tugged at his stomach and twisted it into knots. Well, there was the feeling worse part sure enough. "Be safe. Be careful." He didn't say what else he was thinking. That he needed John to come back to him. That he really would be lost without his blogger. Fear gripped inside of his chest, causing his breath to catch.

"Of course. I'm coming back. I promised you." John spoke surely. He couldn't imagine not going back. Dying in the field and forcing everybody to go through that made him sick to his stomach. He heard Sherlock's breath catch. "Calm down. I'm fine. I'll be fine. So will you." A shout echoed through the phone room for him and he jumped to his feet. Wounded. "Sherlock, I've gotta go. Wounded soldiers. I love you." The call ended abruptly as he rushed out of the room.

Once more the call just ended. Sherlock threw the phone at the sleeping kitten out of frustration. Hamish awoke with a startled mewl and jumped out of the chair in fright. He closed his eyes, fighting for control over these stupid emotions. No drugs. John wouldn't be happy with him. He needed something to occupy his mind. He needed to get the hell out of the flat because everywhere he looked, it reminded him John. He stood quickly, grabbed his coat and scarf and then left. The kitten ran after him and barely made it out the front door. Hamish clawed its way up his back this time and settled onto its usual perch. He hailed a cabbie and took it to St. Barts. He was going to analyze that sand he had taken. He went down to the lab and used an available microscope.
Molly walked casually into the lab, a mug of coffee in one hand and a clipboard in the other. She hesitated when she noticed Sherlock sitting near a microscope, biting her bottom lip and sparing a glance at the kitten. "Hello again." She smiled tightly and moved toward one of the computers, setting her stuff down and sliding into a chair. It was difficult to watch Sherlock be alone after everything she had seen John give him. All she wanted to do was make it better, fix everything. "I see you've brought your little cat with you," she commented as she locked her eyes on the computer screen in front of her.

Without looking up from the microscope Sherlock spoke. "Not for lack of trying. He ran out the door just as I was leaving." He removed one sand sample and replaced it with another. "Didn't think anyone would be down here tonight. Thought you had a coffee date with Lestrade. Well, he does have a new crime scene, so he probably had to cancel on you. Speaking of, could you text him for me? I left my phone back at the flat. Let him know I will be working here all night, should he need me for anything." Finally, he glanced up from the microscope and began scribbling notes on a sheet of paper.

"He is coming down here, um..." Molly cleared her throat and looked back at the computer screen. "We are going back to his flat." The last part was muttered and she looked intensely between the computer and her clipboard. "Did you figure anything out today, then?" She bit her bottom lip and glanced at Sherlock.

Sherlock finally looked up from what he was working on. He opened his mouth to say something but then shut it with a shake of his head. Well, this was certainly none of his business. He busied himself once more by looking down at the microscope, looking at a different sample of sand. "I'm still collecting data, too premature to know anything with certainty."

Molly was about to speak when Lestrade came in, his gaze going straight to Sherlock. He took a hesitant step forward, shoving his hands deep in his pockets. "Didn't think you would be down here, Sherlock." His voice was sure as he took a quick glance at Molly. This was certainly awkward. He had yet to tell Sherlock that he and Mycroft had decided to go separate ways.

"It's none of my business. It wasn't then and it isn't now." Sherlock clearly spoke to Lestrade but he was still looking intently at the sample under the microscope. He once again scribbled on the piece of paper next to him, but he wasn't looking at it. Instead he put in the fourth sample of sand onto a slide and began to examine it. "Have anything for me from the crime scene?"

Lestrade opened and closed his mouth several times before nodding. "Yeah, here." He pulled case notes from his pocket and placed them near Sherlock. "Mom did it. Dad disposed of the body, just like you said." He shrugged softly and glanced back at Molly. "So we are just waiting on the info for the other bodies."

Sherlock looked up from the microscope and over to Lestrade, clearly annoyed. "Not that crime scene. I don't care about that case. I meant the new body Hamish found for you." He shook his head, obviously disappointed in the Detective Inspector. He resumed staring down the scope, changing out samples once more.

"Oh, right. Molly hasn't had time to get to it yet. We'll have it by tomorrow." Lestrade gave a nod and swallowed hard before holding his hand out and wiggling his fingers, Molly eagerly grabbing
Once he was alone, Sherlock spoke to the kitten on his shoulder, which had been uncharacteristically quiet. "How does one move on so quickly, I wonder? Of course, the Detective Inspector was still with his wife when he was with my brother. What a fickle and complicated man. I would never want to be with anyone else other than John." He sighed. He had come to do work so he wouldn't think about his dear doctor off at war. Then he began to wonder if the stress of the war would get to the army doctor and he'd end up... No...don't go there... He shook his head to himself, scribbled down some more notes with more force than necessary. What was he going to do now? Even though he didn't want to, he ended up going back to the flat. He picked up his cell phone, which was, of course, still on John's chair. He decided to send a text to the mobile Mycroft had given John before leaving.

John, I know you are busy but I miss you. Need you tonight. Think I'll sit in your room awhile. – SH

Three soldiers had come into camp injured by a roadside bomb. John had jumped into action and in two hours was informed that his patrol would go on without him so he could monitor the injured men. He readily accepted and moved straight to the computer room, ignoring the pointed looks he received with the blood splattered across his uniform. He knew Sherlock would have Skype up. He settled into a chair and started the video call.

Sherlock was about to head down to John's room when he heard his laptop making noise. He practically tripped over the coffee table in his haste to get to it. Hamish tumbled off but gracefully landed on his feet. The consulting detective sat on the floor, pulling the laptop into his lap and then clicked the answer call button. "John?"

"Sherlock!" John practically shouted, a grin on his face. He could see Sherlock and the relief was evident on his face. Sherlock hadn't changed much, though. He had. His face was already tan, covered in a fine layer of dust and dirt and causing his blue eyes to stand out. His hair was practically bleached blonde. "Look at you. You look wonderful. How're you?"

Sherlock put on a smile. John must not have got his text. Oh well, probably better that way. The army doctor had more important things to worry about than him sulking. "I'm okay. Trying to stay busy. Not sure I like the hair." He smirked slightly.

John laughed and gave a halfhearted shrug. "Sorry. The sun's already gotten to it! I look like some beach bloke from Australia." He lifted an arm to inspect his forearm playfully. "Not my style then? Thought it brought out my eyes!" His grin was back and he lifted a hand to run through his hair. "I am so glad I got to see you. Now we just have to hope the three injured soldiers stay stable." His voice was calm as he started to look around Sherlock to inspect the flat. "So, where's the replacement?" He asked as he searched for the cat.

Sherlock was glad to see John in high spirits and wished he could bring himself to return the enthusiasm. He was talking to his dear doctor; shouldn't he be in a better mood? "I think he went to go sulk in the kitchen. He is very temperamental." He was silent for a moment before quietly admitting, "I'm glad you were able to call. I was just thinking about you before you did."

"I'm glad I was able to call, too," John's admission was also quiet and he lowered his head for a moment. "I really wanted to see you. You look like you have been taking care of yourself." He smiled, talking to Sherlock had instantly lifted his spirits because after just two days John was already having nightmares. Not that he would tell Sherlock that. "I hope I get to see my little namesake at some point. This cat must be quite the character to stick around." He ended the sentence with a laugh and bit his bottom lip. The next sentence slipped out so fast that he barely had time to think about it. "Marry me."
As if on cue the kitten came up and walked across the laptop, sniffing the screen. It hissed and ran away when John spoke. Sherlock sat quietly. He had planned on asking the army doctor the same thing when he had come back from the war. He had been beat to the punch. After a moment of stunned silence he spoke, "Yes...yes, of course..."

John relaxed the moment he heard Sherlock's response, ignoring the fact that he had seen the cat and instead opting to grin widely. "I know it should be...Y'know, with a ring and all sorts of romantic but..." He shook his headfractionally and ran his hands down his face in disbelief. "I love you so much, Sherlock. I just..." He took a shaky breath and ducked out of view of the webcam for a moment. "We should be shagging each other right now!" He shouted confidently, popping back into view and throwing his arms up in the air.

Sherlock smirked a bit. He wanted to say, if John hadn't gone back to the war they would have been able to but he kept the thought to himself. Doubt and insecurity came back. "You aren't...going to relieve your stress, are you?" The words came out before he could stop himself. That wasn't exactly what John had expected to hear from Sherlock. He tensed, his eyebrows brought together in confusion. It was then that it hit him. He had explained to Sherlock that he had done so on his first tour. He had shagged Sarah, too. He wanted to be upset, wanted to walk away and make Sherlock feel guilty for even asking. Except, really, he had brought this on himself. "No," he answered through a tight throat. "No. Never. W-We're engaged now." He couldn't bring himself to meet Sherlock's gaze. "I couldn't do that to you again."

Sherlock held his breath, thinking for sure he had started a row. Oh thank God. John had decided to be more mature than he was. "Thank you. ...John...I believe you. I trust you." He smirked a bit. "So, does this mean I have to wear a ring since you asked?"

John glanced up up and let a smile tug at the corner of his lips. He laughed softly. At least they were able to move past it and trust each other. "Well, you could. I mean, I'm not saying you have to." He coughed a bit and grimaced as he stuck his tongue out several times. Dirt. The gritty feeling of the dirt and dust in his mouth was something he would never get used to. "You would look good with one on, though. A simple band." The idea made John squirm in his seat with elation. Engaged. "What are your plans for dinner tonight?" He asked simply, wanting to learn everything about Sherlock's normal, daily life without him.

"A silver one, I think. Would it be all right if I got a chain and wore it around my neck? I am constantly doing experiments and working with my hands in general, it would probably just get lost." Sherlock hadn't planned on eating. Maybe he should. Maybe he could get used to doing some ordinary things. "Perhaps dinner with Mycroft. I'm not sure yet..."

John nodded in agreement. "Go get some Chinese from that place down the street. I have been craving it." His comment was off-handed as he glanced around the room for a moment. Still alone. Most of the men on the base were either on patrol or sleeping. "Yeah, that would be fine. I'd rather you do that than lose it or do something to it." He shifted on his chair and pulled his tan shirt over his head, his dog tags clicking against each other before falling against his chest again. The look he shot the webcam was suggestive and mischievous, a smirk on his lips.

Sherlock watched John's dog tags and found he had missed wearing them. "When you get home, I'll put your dog tags with the ring." He smirked back at the look on the army doctor's face. "My dear doctor, whatever have you planned?" He knew of course, and he felt a shiver of excitement.

"I have no idea what you could possibly be talking about, Mr. Holmes," John stated with a practiced military calm. He shifted in the chair before standing, his face being replaced by his already tan chest and stomach, showing how slim he had already gotten in two days of horrid food
and the hard work that every patrol was. "It's just rather hot here and I'm uncomfortable," he said with a confidence he usually didn't have. The belt on his pants was soon undone with his hands and he collapsed back into the chair. "Why? What did you think I had planned?" His face was schooled with a questioning look but his left arm shifted and suddenly his entire body tensed, his eyes slamming shut and a soft whimper escaping his lips.

"Hmmm, I'm not sure. You might have to educate me. I'm not experienced," Sherlock replied, a small smile on his lips. Even though in the last month he had become quite experienced and adept at a whole new world he had no idea existed. John had awoken a sexual curiosity in him, which he hadn't realized he even had and was now willing to try most anything. He watched John for the time being, strangely fascinated yet again.

John opened one eye and smirked. "Don't lie to me," he whispered roughly. "You learned fast when we were in Scotl..." He took a sharp intake of breath as his left arm moved in three quick strokes. He bit his bottom lip and let his head fall back, swallowing hard. "Just looking at you..." He brought his head forward and opening his eyes tiredly, his tongue held between his lips. "C'mon, Sherlock, do it." It wasn't even a question. It was a demand. "Touch yourself."

"Such a demanding lover you are, John Watson." Sherlock feigned in a complaining voice. Even after learning everything, he had never masturbated before. Really, he hadn't needed to because John had always taken care of everything and then some. However, John was no longer here and even though a screen now separated them, he felt that arousal of desire. He finally undid his pants, grabbing himself. He started a moderate and steady pace.

John laughed and watched Sherlock with a growing smirk. "Trying to show you who's not submissive." He reached his free hand out to grab the edge of the table so hard his knuckles turned white. "Close your eyes and think about me, Sherlock. My hand pulling your hair while I work your cock." He let out a choked moan and slowed his left hand down. "And I'm sucking on your neck, marking you so everybody knows you are mine."

"Just keep telling yourself that and maybe someday it will be true." Fighting to see who would be the dominant had become sort of a game between them. John had won this time. On the occasions Sherlock did submit, he would still make the other man work for it. He didn't close his eyes, he wanted to see and watch John. It wasn't the same of course, but John's words still had the desired effect and he had to move the laptop to the floor, because he had begun squirming. It also made it easier to pump his penis with a more rhythmic and fluid motion. He could easily imagine John there with him and what he would be doing in return. "I'm kissing, biting, licking your ear all over, scratching your back with my free hand, bucking underneath you." How was it John always got him to try new things so easily and readily? The army doctor had a power over him he still didn't quite understand.

Hearing Sherlock talk to him made him moan softly and when he managed to open his eyes he was nearly floored by the sight on the computer in front of him. He had a perfect view of Sherlock's entire body and it was enough to send him abruptly over the edge with Sherlock's name on his lips. His head was hung low as his shoulders moved with his quick and shallow breaths. "I love you. I love you." He lifted his head up slowly, grabbing his discarded shirt and slowly cleaning himself up. "Imagine my mouth on you, Sherlock. Sucking you off."

Even just imagining John giving him a blowjob was enough to make his breathing become uneven. It had become one of his favorite sensations Sherlock had come to experience since everything that had started between them and he whimpered with desire at the thought. His hand instantly picked up the pace and increased squeezing pressure. Given his current angle, when his body tensed and then went limp from his climax, he ended up coming all over the computer screen. He couldn't
help but smirk. "Jesus John…what the hell…just words…thinking about it…never thought…" He trailed off, trying to catch his breath.

John watched with a smile, biting his bottom lip was he watched Sherlock climax. "Christ, that was hot." He laughed softly. It might have been the idea of being caught but he suddenly found himself exhausted. "Told you," he commented in a low tone, slowly letting his head drop with a satisfied groan. "Now just imagine how good it's going to be when I'm back in London." Both of his hands lifted up and rested at the back of his skull, contrasting sharply between tan skin and extremely blonde hair. "And now we're engaged. I hear it only gets better when we are married."

Sherlock smiled, even though the screen with John on it was a bit blurry from his mess. He would clean it later. "Better hmmmm?" He paused for a moment before going on, "...John before you left you asked me to stay off the drugs. I promise I will, for you." If his dear doctor could promise to not relieve stress, he could promise this. It would be hard at times he knew, but he would do it.

John slowly lifted his head, his smile so wide it tugged at his ears. "Thank you." He took a deep breath and shifted in the chair to adjust himself, redoing his pants and buckling his belt. "I trust you. I know you will." He pursed his lips and glanced toward the door as a young woman's voice floated through the air. After the message had been relayed he glanced back at the computer. "One of the soldiers has woken up." He reached toward the ground, slipping his shoes on and setting his gun on the table in front of the keyboard. "I've got to go. I love you, Sherlock." He kept his eyes trained on Sherlock. He wouldn't be the one to end the video call.

Finally, a conversation that didn't end abruptly. "I love you too John. Call again when you can, I will always answer. Good bye, for now." He gave a smile to the army doctor and then ended the call. The video chat had helped improved his mood a great deal. He redid his pants, got up off the floor, got a towel and then wiped the screen off. He pulled out his cell phone and sent a text to Mycroft.

_We should have dinner and talk._ –SH

John stared at the screen for a minute after the call before standing up and leaving the computer room with his gun in one hand and his shirt in the other.
Chapter 5

Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

Mycroft felt his phone go off and smirked slightly, glancing at the text and shifting his gaze out the window of his car.

Already outside, dear brother. Clean up and head down. -MH

He shifted in the seat of the car to put his phone back in his pocket.

Sherlock snorted as he read the message. Of course he was. He freshened up a bit and ended up having to lock Hamish in his room so the kitten wouldn't try to leave with him. Knowing Hamish, the room would be a bloody mess when he got back. He walked downstairs, out of the flat and slid into the waiting car. "Spying on me now, Mycroft?" He flashed a smirk to his older brother.

"Of course," Mycroft replied steadily, raising a brow before the car lurched forward. "John good with words, then?" He smirked and turned his gaze out of his own window, lowering his head and clearing his throat. "Talk? You are actually willing to talk? This must be a first between the two of us." The car slid to a stop and Mycroft opened the door and stood elegantly outside the Chinese restaurant John had mentioned during he and Sherlock's video call.

"John may be good with words, but apparently you like to watch." Sherlock replied, the smirk only getting bigger. "You know then, about John and I being engaged." He shifted, suddenly uncomfortable with the conversation. He looked away from Mycroft and out the window. "I figure if you are going to be my best man, we could at least be civil." He got out of the car once it came to stop, as he finally looked back over to his older brother.

Mycroft bowed his head slightly at Sherlock's words before nodding a bit. "Yes. Congratulations. Honestly. You two will be very good for each other once he gets back." He opened the door to the Chinese restaurant and glanced back at Sherlock. "I am being completely civil, Sherlock. And I would very much enjoy being your best man." For a moments Mycroft's gaze was serious before he turned around to enter the restaurant. He was ready to talk, wanted to hear what Sherlock had to say, and he was clearly excited for their dinner. A table was already reserved and Mycroft made himself comfortable in a chair right away.

Sherlock merely nodded as he walked into the Chinese restaurant. He took the seat facing the door, an old habit of his. Without needing to look at the menu, he ordered his food in Chinese. He was quiet a bit after that. He wasn't used to talking to Mycroft about anything really. "Know of a good jeweler, in particular a silver specialist? Thinking of getting John and I matching bands, with our names on them. Then we'd wear the other's name. Bet you would never thought I'd grow up or be sentimental." A small smile tugged at his lips and then he shrugged. "Well, neither did I...he has changed me in a lot of ways, I guess."

"I can get that done." Mycroft ordered his food with a tight smile before looking back at Sherlock. It was true, really. John had changed Sherlock in such an amazing way. Even when they first met Sherlock seemed to pick up when certain things shouldn't be said. He reached into his suit jacket and pulled out a Manila folder, sliding it across the table. "More pictures. The blood he's covered in isn't his." Mycroft met his brother's eyes for a long moment. "Will the ceremony be right after he gets back, then?"

A brief look of surprise crossed Sherlock's features when Mycroft said he would get the matching...
rings made. He took the folder with a nod of thanks. He would look through the pictures later. "I'm not sure. Maybe. Probably something I should discuss with John first. Don't want it be a big deal though...something simple." Their food came and he ate it with chopsticks. "I am sure Mum will make a fuss about everything though. Dad will probably be too busy with military things to even notice or care. Now if his golden boy was getting married, he would probably throw a parade." There wasn't anger or resentment in his voice, but he supposed that since childhood things had always been strained between them because one parent clearly favored a child and they were constantly striving to gain approval from the other. Ah, sibling rivalry. Mycroft seemed ready to let go, and maybe he could too in time.

Mycroft smirked and took a small bite of food. "Well, who can argue? I didn't want to grow up and be a pirate," he muttered behind his hand, hiding the fact that there was still food in his mouth. He smiled in amusement as he lowered his hand. Their Mum would make quite the fuss indeed. She had asked him constantly what this John Watson character was like, he just hadn't told Sherlock that. "He will want time to rest, no doubt. That man won't get much sleep once he transfers to Camp Bastion next week." He set his chopsticks down and folded his hands on the table. He kept his gaze lowered for a long moment before lifting it to study Sherlock. "It's been two months since...everything, really. He hasn't seen Sarah again, has he?" His gaze was serious, worried. This relationship meant so much to Sherlock and he didn't want his younger brother to get hurt again.

Sherlock didn't even bother to hide the cringe at the mention of Sarah's name. "I don't think so, no. It isn't like I ask him every day or anything. 'Oh by the way, have things gotten too stressful for you that you had to go shag Sarah?' They still text. Well, she texts him but he doesn't always reply. I don't think John realizes I know, but I do. It's hard to hide things from someone who pretty much notices everything. I'm surprised you don't know, with all your spying and cameras." He smirked faintly as he put a mouthful of noodles in his mouth.

"I don't track his phone," Mycroft stated calmly as he took another bite of food, returning Sherlock's smirk. "He hasn't seen her, I can tell you that. Not for her lack of trying. He's rather committed to you. It's very endearing." He straightened again in his chair. "Besides, he's got you to shag now. He feels something with you, it's more than just stress. With her that's all it was." He shrugged and smiled tightly as a glass of wine was set down in front of him. After a long sip and a low hum of delight, Mycroft glanced at his phone. "Do you love him?"

"Yes," Sherlock replied simply and without a hint of hesitation. He waved his hand as wine was offered to him, content with his glass of water. "Is that what happened between you and the Detective Inspector? Just a stress reliever? Not really love?" He raised his eyebrows questioningly, as he took another bite of food.

"Quite," Mycroft stated quickly, taking another sip of wine with his gaze locked on Sherlock. "There was never really anything there. We would have dinner, talk, go to his flat." He shrugged. It had been an understanding and after a while Lestrade had told him he couldn't do it anymore. They were both too busy to have a healthy relationship and the Inspector had mentioned his feelings for Molly. "It wasn't fair for me to just hold him back, was it? He's got a lot to offer to Miss Hooper." He swallowed hard and lowered his gaze. "Are you worried about him over there?" The question was low and Mycroft didn't bother to look up at his brother.

"Ah." Sherlock was quite certain his older brother had actually cared about Lestrade but it hadn't been reciprocated. He might have to find a childish reason to punch the Detective Inspector in the face at a later date. He kept his thoughts to himself and nodded once at the question. "Constantly. Talking to him on the phone and on Skype helps a bit. Of course the photos you give me do as well. Thank you for that, by the way."
"Oh, it isn't a problem. They might be a bit harder to get when he's at Camp Bastion. Kandahar was merely a holding base for his Company before they were sent out. I'll still get them though."

Mycroft took a deep breath and smiled. It was genuine and warm. "He told me before he left that he was coming back. His eyes were so set. He meant it. He's coming back for you, Sherlock. You get upset when he abruptly ends calls but just know that you mean the world to him." He finished his glass of wine and motioned toward the folder full of pictures. "They're mostly of him on patrol. The last few are of him treating a soldier. No shirtless ones this time, I'm afraid."

"Yes well, the problem with knowing everything is I have already thought of every single possible thing that could go wrong and on multiple occasions. It is hard not to worry. He's a good soldier, I know that. Things go wrong though, I have to prepare myself for that. Hope for the best but expect the worse." Sherlock's tone was surprisingly calm. He let a small smirk etch his lips. "Not that I am complaining but John would probably prefer it if he was clothed when the pictures were taken. He's modest and shy about such things. In fact, if he ever found out you were listening on the Skype call; he would probably be too embarrassed to ever do it again. Can't let that happen, now can we?" The smirk broadened, as he looked up to Mycroft.

Mycroft listened to Sherlock with a small frown. It was true. John was a great soldier but anything could happen out there, things that nobody could stop, and Sherlock was trying to make sure that if anything did happen, he might try to brace himself for it. He laughed and shook his head. "I wouldn't want to take that away from you two. We will make sure he doesn't find out. As for the pictures, he may hate it but you love it. Trust me, he is going to look much better in about a month. Those are shirtless pictures you'll want." It seemed like the two of them had settled into the conversation, something new but very exciting for them both. Mycroft couldn't complain because he was getting Sherlock to talk, something he hoped would put him at ease, if only for a small period of time.

Sherlock finished off his plate of food and shrugged a bit. "To be honest, John's physique isn't my attraction to him. In fact, it is something I barely notice. Don't get me wrong, he looks bloody fantastic without clothes on but it just isn't something important to me, I guess would be the way to put it." He shrugged again and gave the empty plate to the waiter. He pushed the chair away, so he could stretch out his legs under the table, hands coming to rest on his stomach.

"Understandable." Mycroft took another bite of his meal before aimlessly pushing some of the food around his plate. "I'll be happy to inform Captain Watson that you actually ate an entire meal. He'll be happy to hear that, I am sure." He watched his wine glass get refilled and glanced at Sherlock. "What is it, then?" He cleared his throat and shifted in his seat, mirroring Sherlock's position as he sat back and folded his hands across his midsection. "Why is John attractive to you?" It was more about picking Sherlock's mind now, figuring out how one person could change his brother so fast in such an amazing way.

Sherlock smirked a bit. "Yes. He is constantly bugging me to eat and sleep more." He fell silent for a few moments as he contemplated Mycroft's question. "Since the day we have met, he has always had my back. He's been there for me in a way no one else ever has. He never thought I was a freak, but actually found me to be brilliant. Despite my unorthodox way of seeing the world, he still put up with me. Even when I pushed him away with my childish fits, he always came back. Despite his infraction with Sarah, he's fiercely loyal. He would die for me Mycroft…" He trailed off, shifting a bit in his chair as emotion suddenly gripped him.

The amount of emotion in Sherlock's voice made Mycroft's chest tighten and he had to drop his head to take a deep breath. "Here. For when you get home." He reached into his jacket and slid a piece of paper across the table. "From John. He knew you'd still forget to mail his letter." The smirk on Mycroft's lips was threatening to split due to laughter. "You may be the genius but John
has you figured out. He wanted me to ask you. Just in case.” He picked up his cell phone and clicked several buttons before sliding it toward Sherlock as well. "A video for you.” He hit play.

John was standing proudly in the middle of a circle of men in the middle of the Afghan desert in his camouflage pants, his shirt off as a young man approached him. The two shook hands and another soldier shouted something off camera. The younger soldier tensed, hands up, while John stood fully and tilted his head to either side. He jumped three times on his toes before rushing forward, his shoulder hitting the younger man right below the ribs. They both hit the ground in a tumble of dirt and dust. After several moments John stood, shaking his head and raising a fist into the air with laughter. He walked toward the camera and grinned. "That's for you, Sherlock." He winked and the video ended.

"He wants me to keep you up to date on his everyday life. It is easy for him to get the stuff sent straight to me since you will be out. He figured these dinners would be a normal thing," Mycroft paused, "Which I hope they will be. We've got nine months."

Sherlock took the note and placed it inside the folder with the pictures. He smirked a bit. "I am going to mail the letter in the morning. You act like it's been a week since I wrote it. It's only been a day." He watched the video, a smirk on his lips. "Such a show off John," he mused out loud. "You two are conspiring against me to make sure I spend time with my older brother." It was merely an observation, not an accusation. "Maybe. Depends on how busy I get with cases. You know how I get once I focus only on solving a crime. The latest case is a bit boring for my tastes, so I am not chasing it with my usual fervor but it does give me something to do."

"I could get you more cases," Mycroft stated in a bored tone. "Greg isn't the only one with dead people on his hands." He reached across the table to claim his mobile, setting it on his side of the table carelessly. "Mail it. He won't be able to call or video chat for a week. It's for sure this time. He will need the boost. He is going on patrol and they're traveling far." There was a pause in the conversation as a pot of tea and two cups was set in front of them. "And we are both working to make sure you get out of the flat." He poured them each a cup of tea. "And you take care of yourself." Mycroft closed his eyes as he took a sip of tea. "In three months we might be able to get you out there to see him. We'll have you there under the pretense of a case." He glanced at his brother over the rim of his cup. "If you want to go, that is."

Sherlock’s eyebrows raised in interest when Mycroft mentioned the possibility of other cases, but his demeanor quickly changed. Okay, enough. He was damn near feeling smothered. "You do know I lived on my own before and I did just fine, right? All this trying to take care of me and holding my hand is irritating. I hate it. It doesn't suit me. I know I’ve changed in some ways, but I'm still stubborn and independent individual. I need my space and time alone still." He picked up the tea and was about to take a sip when his older brother mentioned the possibility of going over to see John. "Yes. Of course, I would."

Mycroft ignored his brother with a cool disposition. "Three months. You can go see him, you'll be there for two days. He will be able to stay with you in a hotel." He smiled softly and moved to stand up. "I'll get more information for you as it comes in. I no longer want to be smothering you." He grabbed his phone and tightly smiled at his younger brother. "Same time next week? I'll bring the pictures." He didn't wait around for an answer, sliding the money on to the table for both of their meals before turning toward the door. "Come now, Sherlock. Don't want you walking home in the dark."

Sherlock nodded, wondering how to make three months go by quickly. Work. He would have to rely on work, even if was something boring. Damn Mycroft for not giving the fight he was still looking for. Oh good, a weekly thing. Not something to be expected daily. The consulting
detective could deal with that. He snorted at his brother's last comment, but got up from the table and picked up the folder. He brushed by Mycroft and out the door without saying a word.

Mycroft watched his younger brother with amusement, grinning as he followed him and slid into the waiting black car. "I will not fight with you, Sherlock." He licked his lips and shifted in the seat as the car started to move. "Argue with that blasted cat if you really need to. Greg nor I will pick a fight with you." another knowing glance was cast at Sherlock as the car stopped in front of his flat. "Go enjoy your pictures. He's texting you tonight." With that Mycroft turned his attention to his cell phone.

Sherlock merely pouted the short ride home, staring out the window and refusing to look at his brother. He got out and slammed the car door shut. Maybe Mycroft wouldn't give him the fight he was looking for but he knew with certainty he could get under Lestrade's nerves with a little work. He entered the flat and went up the stairs immediately, so he wouldn't be forced to make small talk with Mrs. Hudson. He wasn't in the mood. He ignored the howling and scratching at his bedroom door. The kitten could be miserable with him. Perhaps John could cheer him up once more. While waiting for the army doctor to text him, he sat down the kitchen table and opened the letter.

**Sherlock,**

I wrote you two notes because I plan ahead. I know you, that note you wrote is still sitting on the table and you're sending it "soon."

I can't wait to read it.

I love you.

John

It was simple, very John-like. And as if everything was planned, John sent a text in sync with the opening of the letter.

_Ever had to shower in hot water while it's really hot outside? -JW_

It was simple but John was trying to distract himself. He was too sticky already to do much else but lie in his bed in his boxers and hold the cell phone Mycroft gave him above his face waiting for a reply.

Sherlock had heard his cell phone go off, but he read the letter first. It didn't take long to read it, a smirk on his lips. He opened the text message and read it. He hit the reply button and typed out a response quickly.

_No. Why not take a cold shower instead? I read your second letter. I will make sure my letter to you will be in the outgoing mail tonight before bed so it can be picked up in the morning. -SH_

John snorted and read the text again with a shake of his head.

_Cold water doesn't exist here. I'm laying in my bed in my boxers trying to cool off. I miss the air conditioning in the flat. -JW_

He hit send and jumped up slightly to press his back against the wall beside his bed, groaning in appreciation of the cold feeling on his back.
Can’t wait to read your letter. -JW

The second text was sent and John let his eyes close, relaxing as the cooling sensation faded away and his body heat slowly increased the temperature of the wall.

Sherlock was about to reply when the second text came through. He smiled a little, even though Hamish was yowling rather loudly at being ignored.

*I could give you an easy and detailed way to make sure the water is cool before using it, but I doubt you would have the time.* -SH

After the message was sent, he got up from the kitchen table and walked to the desk in the living room. He began composing a second letter while waiting for John's reply.

*I might be able to find the time if it means a few minutes of relief.* -JW

John hit send and shifted on the bed as a gust of wind came in through the window.

*You can’t even get clean here. You shower and two minutes later you’re covered in dirt again.* -JW

He knew he was sending multiple texts but he didn't care. He was communicating with Sherlock and he was excited. Right now, Sherlock was really all that mattered in his head.

The phone went off twice and Sherlock quickly finished the sentence he was writing before reading the messages and typing out a reply.

*Well, are you taking the showers at night and not day? It matters if you are really interested in trying to have a cooler shower because the process would be different depending on the time of day.* -SH

After hitting send, he sent another quick message, a smirk on his lips. Two could play that game.

*I know I keep saying this, but I miss you terribly.* -SH

John let the phone vibrate twice before reading both of the texts. Of course. Even now Sherlock would be himself and start something like sending two texts.

*Usually around 3 in the morning. Different today because I didn’t go on patrol. So 3am. What can I do?* -JW

He waited for a moment before starting his second reply. If Sherlock wanted to play then he would gladly keep the game going.

*I know. I miss you too. Miss curling against you at night.* –JW

Sherlock smirked a bit. Oh it was so on.

*3am? Approximately what time does the sunset and rise there? Don’t you dare say anything about my lack of knowledge on something so trivial. We already had this discussion when you felt the need to blog about how I didn’t know anything about the solar system.* -SH

The smirk got bigger, his fingers typing out another message rapidly.

*I miss not just cuddling, but running my fingers through your hair. Scratching you. Making you call out my name. Really, you are noisy enough for both of us.* –SH
Six thirty in the morning or so. Usually asleep by then. Why all the questions? How do I college off my water? -JW

John opened the second text and closed his eyes for a long moment. Sherlock was messing with him. The distraction, no matter how childish and on its way to sexual, was welcome.

I might be loud enough for the two of us but the last time I gave you a blow job you did shout my name. Besides, it's hard to stay quiet when your pounding into me so hard we break the headboard at some cottage in Scotland. –JW

Sherlock smirked yet again as he noticed the lapse in time between messages.

The questions are important. Do you want to know the process or not? -SH

He didn't wait to send the next reply, fingers moving fluidly over the keys.

You weren't complaining at the time. You know I like it rough. Biting, scratching and licking you all over so that you are covered with bruises everywhere. –SH

John replied quickly, frustrated with the heat surrounding him.

Yes! Please! Now would be great. –JW

The next text made him swallow hard, taking a shaky breath as he slowly replied. It was getting hard to not get excited. The time between the first and second text message increased yet again.

It is a two way street. I shag you slow, drag it out until you are thrashing against me and trying not to beg. -JW

He slid back to lay on his bed again, trying not to think about Sherlock above him, marking him.

Sherlock had certainly won this time around, he was certain.

You will be screaming that a lot in three months. -SH

Once more he didn't hesitate between texts.

That may be, but you know you love it when I leave teeth marks on your shoulder and claw marks on your back. Ramming you so hard, you can barely walk the next day. -SH

John closed his eyes with a loud sigh, holding the phone against his stomach. This wasn't how he planned their conversation going but with a rueful smile he decided that he would fight back.

Fuck, Sherlock, I love that. I love when I'm below you and you are pounding into me. I can't wait to see you and suck you off right against the door of the hotel the moment I walk in. I can't wait to have you inside me. -JW

He hit send with a cocky smile, his hips lifting lightly off his bed as he realized he was achingly hard after their conversation.

With a smirk, Sherlock replied, squirming in his chair.

And that was pretty much how the next three months went by. Sherlock and John would text, write, Skype, and talk on the phone. Hamish finally grew, no longer a small kitten. Mrs. Hudson
had agreed to take care of the black kitten while he was away. She was the only one, other than Sherlock, that the kitten was remotely warm to. Everyone else, he would bite and hiss should they try to give him any kind of attention.

Sherlock and Mycroft had a standing weekly reservation at the Chinese restaurant. The consulting detective solved the case for Lestrade, after two more bodies were found and a killing pattern had been established. In the moments he was alone, he would talk to Hamish or played his violin. The time went by faster than he thought it would and he managed to stay off the drugs, even cigarettes. From time to time he still relied on the patches to help him think, but otherwise he had stayed clean.

The next three months for John were nothing but routine. He had been relocated to Camp Bastion and did constant day to night patrols. Contact with Sherlock was what kept him going. The promise of seeing him or just texting him, reading a letter, it pulled him back to base when he thought his legs would give out and his bag was suddenly too heavy. He had kept his promise to Sherlock and had avoided sleeping with anybody on base, taking care of himself in the constantly warm water or while Skyping with Sherlock.
When the day finally arrived, John packed two pairs of camouflage pants and two tan shirts, the only clothes he had that would be slightly appropriate for the quick vacation, and slipped his dusty bag on to his back as he boarded the helicopter that would take him away from Bastion and straight to what he imagined would be a posh hotel where he wouldn't fit in at all.

Sherlock was all packed and Mycroft's car was waiting for him outside. The stay wouldn't be that long, so he fit everything into a carry-on. He was a light packer to begin with, so it worked. He climbed into the back seat, setting the luggage at his feet. He turned to look at his brother. "Did the rings get made in time? I wanted to be able to give it to John before I leave. You haven't said anything, right? I want to surprise him."

Mycroft glanced at his brother and placed two, small velvet boxes in Sherlock's hand. "Both silver, sized correctly. His has your name engraved on the inside, yours has his." He gave a short, sure nod as the car lurched forward. "You will be in Kabul staying in the hotel near the British Embassy. You'll be arriving first, I've been told Captain Watson is attempting to catch up on sleep before leaving Camp Bastion. You'll be in room 322, alone on the floor since your Captain has quite the penchant for being a tad loud. Two days and then you'll be back in London." He dropped a white envelope in Sherlock's hand. "Here are the keys to your room. Plane ticket. Your so-called case is nothing more than investigating possible mistreatment of power by a non-existent British marine. Only way I could get you in." He took a deep breath. "Be safe. See you soon."

Two days. God, if Sherlock thought these last three months had gone by quickly then these next two days would be but a blur and over far too quickly. He had already bought a nice but simple silver chain to hang his ring from. It was in his inside pocket, in a small plastic box. He opened the velvet boxes to glance at the rings while his brother continued to speak. He wasn't an expert on silver, but even his untrained eye could see it was fine and expensive. Mycroft had spared no expense and had really outdone himself. He closed them and stuck the boxes into the smaller pouch of his carry-on. "Thank you. For everything." No hesitation and he even managed to keep his gaze on his older brother while he spoke.

Mycroft finally turned his gaze to his younger brother. "Of course. John has changed you so much. All for the better. This is the least I could do." He reached out and placed a hand on Sherlock's shoulder. "You deserve this." After a moment Mycroft smiles, his phone going off. "I am to be corrected. Captain Watson is already in Kabul. He will be there waiting for you. Enjoy yourself, dear brother." He squeezed Sherlock's shoulder and pulled away from the contact with a dignified straightening of his tie.

Sherlock merely nodded at Mycroft's words and sentiment. The ride was quiet after that and the car came to stop in front of the airport. "If I don't call, don't be surprised." He smirked at his brother as he got out, picking up his carry-on easily. He shut the car door, went through the security check point and found his gate with ease.

John entered the hotel to stares. Men in clean suits. Not covered in dust or tracking it across the clean marble floor. He went to the front desk with his head low, the woman smiling at him and sliding the keys across the counter. He accepted them with a tight smile as he moved toward the stairs. 322. A whole floor to themselves from what Mycroft had said on the phone last night. He trudged up the stairs loudly, his combat boots making it difficult to do anything with finesse on even ground. The moment he entered the hotel room he grinned. Clean. No dirt. A large, king-
sized bed in the middle. John grinned and dropped his bag in the middle of the floor, instantly pulling his clothes off and moving toward the shower. He had forgone the shower after patrol early in the morning to sleep and the idea of being clean, really clean, caused him to trip over his shoes in anticipation.

The shower was long and John was fairly sure that the hotel must have been out of water once he was finished. He wrapped a towel loosely around his hips, letting it hang low as he fell stomach-first on to the bed. He had some time and he figured he would take a quick nap before waking up to change into clean clothes to greet Sherlock. He hadn't intended on literally falling asleep but the bed was too comfortable and he was out the moment his head hit the pillow.

It wasn't until Sherlock looked at his ticket did he realize it was first class. He shook his head and waited impatiently for his flight to start boarding. When first class was called to board, he got on the plane. It wasn't a big commercial one, but he figured many people weren't flying to Kabul lately. He sat next to a loud, rude and complaining businessman. He tried to tune him out, but the other man just wouldn't shut up. He turned to the man sitting next to him and told him everything about him. The man sat in stunned silence and then muttered something. A flight attendant offered him a glass of wine. "No thanks, I don't drink. I did it for me, not you." He gave a slight smirk and enjoyed the rest of his flight in silence.

It had felt good to tell that man off. It was better than any drug dose. Every once in awhile, Sherlock would get in a row with Donovan or Anderson but those two got boring after awhile. The plane landed a little ahead of schedule. He took a cab to the British Embassy and just walked to the hotel from there. He ignored the stares and took the elevator up to the third floor. He unlocked the door and smiled to himself when he saw John fast asleep on the bed, in nothing but a towel nonetheless. He shut the door quietly, leaving his bag by the door. In a few quick strides, he was at the bed. He slipped in next to John, his chest against the other man's back with an arm wrapped around him tightly. "I missed you my dear doctor," he whispered into the army doctor's neck.

John took a long intake of breath, shifting back against the warmth that suddenly surrounded him. Where was he? One hand curled tightly into the sheet below him as he stretched, pressing the bottom of his feet against the top of Sherlock's shoes with a low groan of confusion. He felt the lips on the back of his neck and slowly opened his eyes. This wasn't the barracks at Bastion. The wall in front of him was clean with wallpaper, the bed sheets were soft and white...

And there was an arm around him, tight and secure. Sherlock. He was in Kabul and he had fallen asleep after his shower. John turned almost frantically to face Sherlock, getting tangled in the towel but still managing to pin Sherlock against the mattress while straddling his hips. Sherlock. He smiled as he studied the man below him. He hadn't changed. No weight loss or gain. Just...Sherlock Holmes. He moved both of his hands into Sherlock's hair and roughly met his lips. Sherlock didn't fight anything and smiled up at John as he stared down at him. He returned the kiss, eyes closing immediately. He wrapped his arms around the army doctor's waist, pulling the other man closer to him. It felt wonderful to be in John's arms again. He wasn't sure how he had survived the last three months without it.

John slowly pulled away from the kiss, Sherlock's bottom lip between his teeth before he grinned. "Hi," he whispered in disbelief, one hand moving from Sherlock's hair to slide across his chest before settling on Sherlock's hip. He bit his bottom lip. Sherlock was beneath him and for the next two days he got to spend time with his fiance, the man he was going to marry. "How're you?" He lowered his mouth to suck on Sherlock's neck eagerly, determined to mark him.

Sherlock's body immediately responded to John's touch, squirming and writhing into the man
above him. "Perfect now that I am here with you." One hand trailed along the army doctor's spine, the other coming to brush through the shortly cropped hair. There wasn't much to play with, so he scratched lightly. He seemed content to let John do whatever, and he didn't even fight for control. He was just happy to be here with his beloved doctor.

John hummed against the red mark on Sherlock's neck, smiling proudly. The hand against his scalp caused him to go limp for a long moment before he jumped into action. He slid down Sherlock's body with ease, ignoring the shirt and moving straight to Sherlock's pants. His hands worked quickly, yanking the pants down roughly, Sherlock's underwear yanked down with more intensity. There was a pause, one of John's hands spread against Sherlock's stomach just below his belly button, and John took the moment to look up at Sherlock with a predatory gleam in his eyes. He smirked because right now he was in control. He tilted his head and placed an open mouthed kiss on the side of Sherlock's penis, nipping softly at the skin as his free hand moved between Sherlock and the mattress to roughly squeeze his ass.

Once more his body reacted, squirming a little more frantically now. Sherlock let out a soft whimper of desire, hands coming to rest on either side of him and his fingers grabbed the silky soft sheets. He smirked down at John. "Don't be too proud of yourself my dear doctor. I let you…this time…" His eyes closed once more, the smile still on his lips.

"Sure you did," John commented softly, his lips still on Sherlock's cock. His body wiggled against Sherlock's legs as he made himself comfortable. After one last glance at the man beneath him he opened his mouth and lowered it on Sherlock's penis, pulling up slowly with his tongue pressed on the underside. If Sherlock wanted to push the issue of control then John had a plan. He patiently bobbed his head, sucking lightly before letting a low hum escape from his chest. He stopped, Sherlock's cock halfway into his mouth, and reached out to grab one of Sherlock's hands, moving it to rest on the back of his skull.

Sherlock writhed in pleasure, but his eyes opened and peered down at John when he felt the army doctor move his hand. He quirked a brow, the smirk still there, although it held a bemused look now. He wondered what John could be up to now. He fell back against the pillow, eyes closing once more. He was most certainly curious, but he supposed he would just have to wait and see. The thought made his whole body shiver, because it would probably result in something fun.

John smirked the best he could, bobbing his head several times before pulling away with an obscene slurp. He ran his tongue along his lower lip before his hand moved to stroke Sherlock with a light touch. His mouth pressed against the inside of Sherlock's thigh, his chin brushing against the waistband of Sherlock's underwear. After several kisses his head turned, nipping at the inside of Sherlock's wrist as he glanced at Sherlock from the corner of his eyes. "If you are so in control," he muttered, lowering his neck to run his dog tags across Sherlock's hip. "Then why are you laying here taking it?" He quickly took Sherlock back into his mouth, bobbing and sucking without a pattern, a small moan coming from his throat.

It didn't take long for Sherlock's breathing to become uneven and fast. His body squirmed from all the teasing touches. He whimpered lightly, his fingers clawing at the sheets and John's head. "Told you. I let you," he breathed out quietly; another smirk twitched itself upon the tips of his lips. His eyes remained closed, quite enjoying the all the sensations.

John pulled away from Sherlock again, moving up his body with a speed he'd only gained with muscle in the past three months. He roughly met Sherlock's lips as his hand wrapped around Sherlock's cock again, pumping with a slow rhythm but a tight grip. He pulled away from Sherlock's lips and moved to suck on his neck again as his hips thrust lightly against Sherlock's thigh. "It's because you are the submissive," he whispered against his neck, grinning proudly.
"Sometimes I am, not always." Sherlock managed to admit in between breaths. His body continued to twitch in pleasure. Since John was close enough to reach now, he began to nibble lightly on the army doctor's ear. His hand ran through John's hair lightly, its short, soft, fine hairs almost tickling the pads of his fingers.

John let out a soft moan at the feel of Sherlock's mouth on his ear. "Christ, missed that," he stated through clinched teeth. Despite how good it felt he pulled away from Sherlock's mouth and slid back down his body. He licked his hand before taking Sherlock into his mouth, his hand wrapping around the base of Sherlock's penis and working the part he couldn't reach. His other hand moved between Sherlock legs, one finger lightly running across his entrance as his eyes shot up to study Sherlock's face. He wanted to spoil the man beneath him, show him how much he missed him, and that was exactly what he was doing.

A small smile formed on his lips at John's words. Sherlock's back arched, completely tantalized by the several sensations his body was receiving. "Jesus…John…" A rare murmur of appreciative words escaped his lips. "Close…so close…" He uttered between breaths, until his breathing became so irregular words were no longer an option. His hand on the bed, gripped the sheets tighter still and the hand that had been on John's head was dangling off the side of the bed, gripping the side board tightly as well.

Did Sherlock just say something? John froze for a moment, nearly slack-jawed. That was new, something he hadn't expected but something he very much enjoyed. He blinked several times before bobbing his head again, sucking harder than he had been. A finger slipped into Sherlock's entrance with ease, a breath nosily escaping his nose as he started moving faster. The hand on Sherlock's penis moved to pry Sherlock's hand away from the side board, moving it back on to his head forcefully. John hummed several times as the finger inside Sherlock hooked in rhythm with his mouth.

Sherlock let his hand be moved back to John's head. He had to shift a little, so he could reach. It didn't take much longer for his body to tense and then relax as he came, with a growl. He panted heavily, trying to catch his breath. His tight grip on the sheets finally unfurled, his hand once more dropping to off the edge of the bed. He tried to form words but all that came out was raspy breaths.

John pulled away with a small gag, swallowing several times before coughing. He watched Sherlock's mouth for a long moment. Speechless. Sherlock couldn't speak. "Yeah, I know." He nodded with a smile and crawled slowly up Sherlock's body, shifting to fall right beside him. "I love you." The warmth of Sherlock's side was enticing and he curled against him, an arm resting protectively across Sherlock's chest. "How's the flat? And Hamish?" He asked softly. They had forgone any sort of catching up because John had been so eager to please Sherlock.

Sherlock snuggled into John immediately, lacking the energy to return the favor at the moment. His dangling hand once more found the army doctor's head, fingers running through the hair lightly. After a few moments he found his voice. "I love you too and that my dear doctor was amazing. Or maybe it had just been so long, I had almost forgotten what it felt like. The flat is about the same, although a bit duller with you gone. Hamish has gotten pretty big of late. He doesn't like Skype for whatever reason and always runs to a different room anytime I use the laptop. I am hoping he will grow out of the chewing and clawing everything stage as he gets older. Mrs. Hudson, although unhappy with him, has agreed to watch him while I am away."

"I don't think he likes me very much," John commented absently as he started lightly drawing shapes on Sherlock's chest with his finger. "All he does is hiss at the screen when we video call. He might get worse when I am home." He arched his body slightly to place several kisses against Sherlock's neck. It was a simple thing, really, but he had missed doing it. Marking Sherlock had
become one of his favorite things before he left. "Do you want to nap a bit?"

Sherlock couldn't help but laugh a little. "I don't think that cat likes anyone. I sometimes wonder if he even likes me at all. If he doesn't settle down by the time you are home, I will get rid of it." He fell quiet and let his eyes drift closed from the kissing on his neck. "No, want to stay awake and spend as much time with you as I can. I have a surprise for you. Originally, I was going to wait until our last day together but I don't think I can wait that long." He turned his head slightly, so he could give a quick and gentle kiss on the army doctor's lips.

John smiled against Sherlock's lips before pulling away, looking at his fiance curiously. "A surprise?" Guilt was the first thing that shot through his mind. He hadn't gotten anything for Sherlock, he figured the two of them being together would be enough. "I- Yes. Right. Well..." He licked his lips and met Sherlock's gaze. "I didn't get you anything. Is that alright?" He met Sherlock's lips quickly, a half-smile on his lips as he pulled away. "Now you have me all nervous."

Sherlock smiled and gave another quick kiss to John, this time on his nose. "It is more than fine. If it makes you feel any better, I am a little nervous about this myself. It isn't often I'm worried about what others think but I am not sure how you will react..." He trailed off as he disentangled himself from the army doctor and rolled off the bed. He walked over to his carry-on bag, making sure his lanky frame obstructed the view of the other man. He picked his own ring and slid it into his jacket where the chain was located. He kept the other small box hidden in his hand, his hands behind his back as he walked back to the bed, purposefully walking slowly.

John watched Sherlock with interest, moving to rest on his knees as Sherlock turned around. A grin broke across his face and he impatiently moved off the bed, peeling the towel away from his body as he approached Sherlock and stopped to stand in front of him. "What is it?" He looked up at Sherlock and licked his lips, laughing softly. "C'mon, Sherlock." He wrapped his hands around Sherlock in a playful attempt to get at the gift.

Sherlock smirked, taking a few steps back as John tried to get the box. He brought a hand to the front to show the army doctor but it was empty. "Hmmm, nothing in that hand...let me see here..." He waited a few more moments for the sake of stretching the moment out. "Oh how silly of me. It is in my other hand." He brought his other hand forward, to finally reveal the small velvet box. "Go ahead open it." He smiled and watched John earnestly to gauge his reaction.

John watched Sherlock's first extended hand with a laugh, looking up at Sherlock with bright eyes. This side of Sherlock was nice. Playful, smiling. He was about to comment on it when his other hand was revealed. John looked at the box with wide eyes, glancing up at Sherlock before taking it gently in his own hands. "Sherlock," he muttered shakily, holding the box like it was extremely fragile. He swallowed hard as he opened it, making a small sound as he saw the ring and quickly shutting it. "God." He lowered his head and shook it fractionally, quickly looking up at Sherlock and smiling. He opened the box again to stare at the ring, clearing his throat and exhaling loudly. "It's...remarkable. Beautiful...how did you..." He shut the box and reached his free hand up to yank Sherlock's head down, meeting his lips.

Sherlock smiled as he watched John. "The idea and design for the rings was mine...but Mycroft had them made. They are an early wedding present to us." He leaned into the kiss immediately and returned it gently. "I have one as well, same style. My name is engraved on the inside of your band, and yours mine. I know the desert is dusty and you probably won't get to wear it but I wanted you to have it now anyway."

John shook his head, pulling the ring from the box and slipping it on to his left ring finger. "I don't give a damn about how dusty that place is. I am wearing this bloody thing." He looked up at
Sherlock and shook his head with a laugh. "It's perfect. You are perfect." He placed a kiss on Sherlock's hand and then glanced toward the bathroom. "I plan on taking full use of showering without the desert around me. Care to join me, Mr. Holmes? I could clean you up a bit." He turned and started walking backward toward the bathroom, doing so in a rather smooth manner before tripping on his combat boots and falling to the ground with a small shout.
Sherlock smiled and before stripping out of the rest of his clothes, put his ring on the necklace and around his neck. He turned in time to see John fall but not catch him. He was over there in few quick strides. He decided to take full advantage of the prone man on the floor. He smirked as he looked down at his beloved. He straddled John, knees coming to rest on the floor. He began to immediately suck on the other man's neck excitedly, a hand scratching the bare chest below him.

John had fully expected Sherlock to help him up but in one blink Sherlock was suddenly straddling him and God that mouth was on his neck. When he felt Sherlock's nails scratching down his chest he moaned, arching into the touch as he let his eyes slip closed. "Fuck," he hissed roughly, both of his hands tangling in Sherlock's hair and curling his fingers tightly in pleasure. It wasn't exactly glamorous but if tripping and falling got him this when he was back in London then he would have to do it more often. "Oh, God, yes." He nearly shouted as one hand traveled down Sherlock's spine before digging into his side.

"Love you," Sherlock whispered before continuing his licking and biting assault all throughout the soft flesh of the ear.

"Love you too," John replied breathlessly. His body squirmed slightly under Sherlock's touch and he moaned as he felt Sherlock's body buck against him. "Love you so much," he managed to say between heaving pants. He let his hands run down Sherlock's back, sliding to rest on his thighs as he slowly lifted his hips up into the body above him. "Wish I hadn't sucked you off," he muttered as he ran his fingernails down Sherlock's thighs. "Then you could shag me right here on the floor." He turned his head to sloppily meet Sherlock's lips.

A wicked grin and a mischievous look came to Sherlock's face. "Guess, I will just have to tease you until I am ready again." He then leaned into John's kiss, his tongue seeking out the army doctor's immediately. His hand moved to trail down the inside of his hip, then began to trail lightly along John's leg. He broke the kiss, so he could slide with his hand that trailed all the way down to the other man's knee. His mouth began kissing down his chest and stomach, stopping just above John's belly button. He glanced up momentarily to look at John, that same look on his face. He began gliding his tongue along the same path his fingers had just taken.

John let out a small whimper when Sherlock pulled away from his lips, lifting his head to watch Sherlock. His eyes were locked on the other man, his pupils dilated. When Sherlock glanced up at him, he tensed the muscles he had recently discovered after too long patrols with an overly heavy backpack. Both of his hands struggled to find purchase on the carpet below him and he growled when felt Sherlock's tongue on his inner thigh. "Shit," he shouted as he threw his head back, his back arching off the floor. His hips bucked in several quick motions without his consent. "Ah, Sher-" He took a sharp intake of breath and grunted. "D-Don't stop."

Sherlock smirked, even though John couldn't see it. He sucked for a moment when he finally reached the inside of the knee. His hand that had been scratching the army doctor's chest, dropped down to the other leg that had so far had gone untouched. Light finger tips started at the knee and began to move up slowly, his tongue matching pace on the other leg. The two met in the middle,
his hand deviating from course to lightly brush and outline John's cock. His tongue continued its curved course around to other knee.

Things like this had never been something John thought he would enjoy. Every time he had been with somebody it had been quick but Sherlock was here practically worshiping his body. The thoughts caused him to moan again, the sound escalating when he felt Sherlock's hand brush across his penis. He curled his hand into a fist and slammed it into the floor beneath him. "Ah, that feels good," he muttered aimlessly. His hips lifted again, seeking any sort of contact he could. "Sherlock. Bloody Hell."

Sherlock was rather pleased with himself. It was mostly for his dear doctor, but apart of him wanted to know every inch and curve of John's body. To commit it all to memory. Although admittedly he had no problem envisioning the army doctor. Chalk it up to his obsessive possession he had come to have for John. He crawled back up to his fiancé, yeah he liked the sound of that. He kissed the man below him on the lips, straddling John once more.

John choked on the next words that tried to escape his mouth, turning it into nothing but a loud shout. His hands moved to squeeze Sherlock's hips while roughly returning this kiss. "You are enjoying this," he ground out as he opened one eye to look up at Sherlock. The grip on Sherlock's hips tightened and John lifted his hips up with a satisfying moan. He nipped at Sherlock's bottom lip. "Ah, God, love you." He moved below Sherlock to suck at his neck, his hips starting a slow rhythm against the man above him.

Sherlock smirked behind the kiss, growling as John's grip tightened. He dipped down to once more give biting kisses upon the army doctor's ear. He murmured belatedly, "I didn't hear you complaining." He found an unmarked spot on John's neck, and began to suck on it to rectify that. Between suckles he breathed out, "Love you too." His hands were on either side of John, finger tips trailing along the lean oblique's of the stomach. He matched the slow pace beneath him, because he still needed a little more time before he would be ready again.

Every sensation on his body was almost too much. Sherlock's fingers running down his side, the lips on his neck, and the warmth of the body above him were nearly causing his head to spin. John whimpered as his hips bumped roughly into Sherlock's, biting his lips. "Fuck, I'm so hard." He moved his hands to claw at Sherlock's shoulder blades, pulling Sherlock's body down roughly in desperation. His fingernails dug into Sherlock's skin as his hips started to thrust faster. After a moment John reached between them and grabbed Sherlock's penis with a light touch. "C'mon," he growled, lifting his head to bite Sherlock's shoulder as hard as he could.

Sherlock had just enough time to brace himself against losing his balance, as John yanked him closer. Never before had the army doctor bit him so hard before. It hurt but it was a huge turn on and he growled loudly in response. His breathing immediately became spastic and he had to stop biting John's neck momentarily to regain some semblance of normal air flow. His hips ground anxiously and wildly, having no rhythm whatsoever. The desired effect came about though, his penis becoming firmer in his heightened excited state.

John managed a bit of a grin against Sherlock's shoulder as he felt Sherlock get hard. Perfect. "C'mon, Sherlock." He pressed his mouth against Sherlock's ear. "Fuck me," he snapped before nipping at his ear. His body went nearly limp beneath Sherlock's sporadic thrusts, taking it all with soft grunts. As much as he liked to tease Sherlock about their little games, about who was really the submissive, John loved to let Sherlock take him. Of course, he would never tell Sherlock that. He knew that was what Sherlock liked, being rough, and John would lay back and take it. He turned his head, biting roughly into Sherlock's neck and growling against his skin.
Sherlock smirked and waited it out a little longer, just to drive John crazy. He was in control this
time and he was going to make that perfectly clear. He finally calmed down just enough to let
his hips find a quick but steady tempo. His tongue ran the length of John's neck and back up to his
ear, making sure to explore every inch of it before the consulting detective began to bite it. After a
few more minutes of teasing, Sherlock finally entered with a quick and sharp thrust.

John shouted, clutching at Sherlock's shoulder as he slammed his eyes shut. It had been three
months and, Christ, Sherlock hadn't warned him or even went for the Vaseline. He wasn't going to
walk at all tomorrow. He wrapped his legs around Sherlock's hips, locking his ankles against
Sherlock's lower back. There was a moment where John thought he might not be able to handle it
but as he pressed back against Sherlock and a moan escaped his lips he realized how much he had
missed this. "Missed you being inside me," he forced out through quick pants. "Ah, God, missed
you." He turned his head and kissed Sherlock softly, his eyes still tightly closed.

Really, in his excitement he had forgotten. That and Sherlock knew his cock wouldn't remain hard
for terribly too long after being used again so soon. "Maybe that will teach you not to tell me what
to do," he muttered into John's ear between raspy breaths, trying to pass it off as an intentional
intent and not an accident. Like he suspected, he didn't last long at all. Four quick thrusts and he
came, his body collapsing on John's immediately afterward, his body suddenly tired. He found
enough energy to shift slightly, so he wouldn't be crushing the man under him and so he could
finish John off. His hand found the army doctor's cock and began to pump vigorously. Gauging
how hard John already was, it wouldn't be long for him either.

John grunted with each of Sherlock's thrusts, whimpering when Sherlock spoke to him. "S-Sorry,"
he stated through clinched teeth. The feeling of Sherlock's hand on his cock was bliss and he
arched into the touch, coming with a loud shout and Sherlock's name on his lips. He went limp
almost instantly, breathing hard. "G-Go-" He closed his eyes and let his arms fall on to the floor.
"Going to do that again," he managed to stutter out. "When you can last longer." He didn't give a
damn if Sherlock thought he was telling him what to do, they had two days and John wanted
Sherlock. "That was more exhausting than bloody patrol," he whispered in Sherlock's ear,
untangling his legs from around Sherlock's body.

Sherlock wiped the goop onto the floor, not caring that this was supposed to be a posh hotel where
having class was proper decorum. His body relaxed against John's, his clean hand running lightly
over the army doctor's head and into his hair. He rested his head on his fiancé's shoulder, eyes
closing in contentment. "I missed this. I missed you. Missed it all. And you sure you are going to
be able to go another round like that?" He opened his eyes, a slight smirk on his lips as he lifted his
head just enough so he could look up at John's face.

John hummed contentedly and leaned into Sherlock's hand, one of his hands moving to draw
shapes between Sherlock's shoulder blades. "Give me time to rest," he muttered as he opened one
eye to glance at Sherlock. The smirk on his face was perfect. John had missed that. "I might be able
to before we leave." If they couldn't then John would beg Mycroft for another day. "How is
London?" He asked softly, tilting his head to get a better view of Sherlock's face.

The smirk on Sherlock's lips only got bigger and then he shrugged at the question. "Boring and
uneventful." He continued to run his fingers through the short, soft hair. "Think the shower is
going to have to wait my dear doctor. Pretty sure neither of us in any shape to go anywhere right
now. That's okay though. Just laying here with you is nice."

"S fine," John replied softly. The fingers against his scalp, through his short hair, was the best
feeling ever. "Cept I do want to shower as much as I can." He turned his head and softly kissed the
inside of Sherlock's wrist. "Who knew laying on the floor could be so lovely?" There was a pause
and John smiled softly. "Do you know how much I love you?"

"Couches are more comfortable than the floor, but with you here by my side it doesn't really matter." Sherlock snuggled closer still to John. "Hmmm. Enough to want to marry me...so I am guessing at least a little." Once more he lifted his head to look at John's face, his eyebrows raised, a mischievous grin on his lips.

"I would do anything for you, Sherlock." John smiled softly and moved the unruly bangs from Sherlock's forehead. "I want to spend the rest of my life with you. I want wake up every morning curled against you and hear you complain about murders. I want to go to bed every night with your heartbeat under my ear." He leaned forward and gently met Sherlock's lips. His cheeks were a bright red, the color spreading to the tips of his ears at the emotional statement.

Sherlock smiled and returned the kiss gently. "I know you would John." He was quiet a moment, emotional sentiment not really something he did often. Even after being with John and the changes it had brought about. If he could sit and talk to Mycroft without being uncomfortable finally, then this should be easy with the one he loved. "If it ever came down to it, I would die for you."

"I hope it never comes to that," John whispered in reply. The thought of Sherlock dying, of being completely gone from his life, twisted his gut. He could never do it. John studied Sherlock's face for a long moment, moving to run a hand gently across his cheek. He wanted to take it all in. It would probably be another three months before he saw Sherlock again, if John managed to not get shot, and he wanted to take it all in. "You are absolutely breathtaking." He placed a soft kiss on the tip of Sherlock's nose. "I am the luckiest man alive."

Sherlock propped himself on an elbow so he could look back at John, a small smile on his lips. "You think so?" He continued to run his fingers through the army doctor's hair. "When do you want to have the ceremony? Mycroft wants all the details. I think he is more excited than we are." His smile twitched into a smirk.

John laughed, blinking several times. Ceremony. They were getting married. "Mycroft? Really?" He looked a bit confused. "What, have you actually been talking with your brother?" He asked in a joking tone before pursing his lips in thought. "I wish we could do it right away, the moment I land." Except that wouldn't exactly be possible and John knew he would need a break. "A week after I am back? Can you wait that long?" He met Sherlock's gaze, a smug smile on his lips. "What are we even going to wear? I've got to find... somebody to be there. Who's your best man?" The questions wouldn't stop, he had missed so much and they hadn't really talked about it when they had the chance to communicate with each other.

"Well, mostly about you. He insists we 'talk' at least once a week. I was a bit of a bear about it at first. He is trying to make amends, I guess. We were terrible to each other growing up. According to him our mum wants to make a big deal out of it. She is always fussing over me about something or other. Really, I just want something simple. A week after you are back is fine. As long as I don't have to wear a tie, doesn't really matter to me what we wear. Mycroft is going to be my best man. Don't you want Harry there at least?" Sherlock finally stopped speaking to take a breath.

John took in everything that Sherlock said, smiled softly before chuckling. "Jesus, that was a lot of information." He let his hand drift down to rest at Sherlock's hairline, scratching lightly at his neck. "I mean, you'll have to dress nice at least. Not that you don't dress nice already, but..." He swallowed hard and licked his lips. "I think you might have to wear a tie, Sherlock." What would he wear? He would be tan, bleach blonde and look nothing like himself. He would look like he did now, only cleaner he hoped. "I do want Harry there I just haven't talked to her since we got engaged. I've kind of been in the middle of a war," he stated with a smirk, giving Sherlock's hair a
gently tug to emphasize the point. "Wait, your Mum? She wants to be at the wedding? I've never even met her!"

Sherlock leaned into the scratching, eyes closing for a few moments before opening when he spoke again. "Why do I need to wear a tie? It's our wedding. Can't we wear whatever we want? Dress codes are stupid." He pouted momentarily and then smirked. "Well of course my Mum will be there. I would never hear the end of it, if she wasn't. I am sure we can arrange a meeting when you are back at home, if you want. Knowing mum, she's already found out everything she possibly could about you from Mycroft."

"Please. I want to meet her before the ceremony," John muttered nervously, his chest suddenly tight at the thought. He had never really thought about Sherlock's family and how they might react to Sherlock marrying him. "I mean...so she probably knows everything about me. Do you think she approves of me, then?" He paused and lifted his head to study Sherlock. "Aside from that, I think you'd be handsome in a tie. Very dashing." Just talking about the ceremony, about marrying Sherlock, twisted his gut and made him smile for no reason. Married. How did he end up being so lucky?

"I don't think anyone would ever be good enough for me in her eyes." Sherlock said with a roll of his eyes. "But...I think she will just be happy I am settling down and getting married. I think she had given up hope on that awhile ago." Once more he pouted. "John I don't want to wear tie." Not only did he hate them, but he also had no idea how to tie one. He had never bothered to learn how. It wasn't something he deemed important enough to remember.

"Oh," John seemed to deflate a bit at that comment. "You should have lied to me. Now I'm even more nervous. What if she says I can't marry you? I don't mean to be rude but does she know that...I mean, about men a-and." He bit his bottom lip and closed his eyes. This wasn't exactly how he pictured the parent conversation going. "I just want to impress her. I want her to like me, is all." This was like secondary school all over again. Nervously meeting parents and assuring them they would be home before ten, and yes, he did intend to be gentleman. "I've got some pictures for you," he muttered in order to change the subject. "Want to see them? They are ones that Mycroft doesn't have."

Sherlock frowned a bit and he moved toward John, so their noses were touching. "No worries my dear doctor. I am sure she will love you." He got a crooked smirk and then said, "If she doesn't approve we could always do what the Americans do and run away to Las Vegas and elope." He gave John a quick, light kiss on the lips before moving his head away. "Hmm, pictures of you that not even my brother has? Should I be worried?" He smirked once more.

John returned the kiss with a laugh. "Then she would really hate me," he replied against Sherlock's lips. "Also, tell Mycroft's photographer to stop snapping that blasted camera when I am unclothed. That's all he seems interested in. The moment my shirt comes off, the moment I'm heading toward the river." A pause as he narrowed his eyes at Sherlock. "I have a feeling it was requested. And that I'm not supposed to know." After studying Sherlock's face for a moment he stretched his arm out and yanked his bag closer to them, wiping his hand on the carpet to get rid of the dirt before grabbing a few pictures. "We had some American photographer come with us on patrol, stayed at camp for a few days. I managed to get some copies from him."

There were four, all kept as clean as possible in a sandwich bag. He pulled them out and spread them across his chest. One was of John kneeling, his sunglasses off but the rest of his armor on, with his arms around two young children. He was grinning and the young girl on his right was hugging him tightly, the other kissing his cheek. "Both had a bit of a flu. Helped take care of them," he whispered, looking up at Sherlock for a moment. The next one was clearly taken at
sunset, John was mid-air with a Frisbee in his hand. The next two were clearly taken one after the
other. John had his hands on his hips, head lowered with one foot kicking at the ground and the
next shot had him smiling widely at the camera. "I... wanted you to have them. Better for you to
hang on to them in case... y'know." He kissed Sherlock's forehead and grabbed one of his hands,
squeezing tightly.

Sherlock shook his head. "It wasn't requested by me. In fact, I told Mycroft you would probably
prefer it if your clothes were on in the photos. Maybe the photographer has a thing for you." Or his
older brother was a creeper. It didn't really matter to Sherlock, but John would most certainly have
a negative reaction to knowing how Mycroft actually found out they were engaged. He looked over
the photos. He was certain his heart stopped for just a fraction of a second at the last words spoken
by the army doctor. He squeezed the hand back tightly, then carefully moved the pictures so he
could embrace John in a hug. He stayed like that awhile, their bodies against each other, his arms
wrapped around his fiancé, and his head resting on John's shoulder.

John tightly embraced Sherlock, closing his eyes and forcing his tears back. He needed to be
strong. Crying in front of Sherlock wouldn't do any good in this situation. "I love you." His voice
shook, cracked, and he felt a tear run from his eye into his hair. The thought of dying shook him to
the core and it was a brand new experience. Last time he didn't have anybody to return to but
now...this could be the last time he saw Sherlock. "Don't you ever forget that, Sherlock."

Sherlock had to close his eyes tightly, to keep it together. Sometimes he hated all these emotions
that came with being in relationship. In particular, moments like these, where it was damn near
 crushing to his very soul. He let out a shaky breath. "I love you too." He kissed the top of John's
forehead and finally released him from the hug.

John swiftly wiped the back of his hand across his eyes to hide the tears from Sherlock. "Do you
want to order room service and watch crap telly?" He asked with a raspy voice, keeping his head
cast to the side as he tried to gather himself. Strong. Stay strong. Keep Sherlock happy. His chest
moved in several quick breaths before he stood up and moved to the bathroom, shutting the door
roughly and falling heavily against the door. He couldn't do this. Seeing Sherlock now was just
like teasing, holding something above his head that he couldn't really get. He slid to the floor and
let out a small hiccup, burying his head between his knees.
Chapter 8
Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

Sherlock watched John with a frown, reading his body language easily. He was about to say something when the army doctor walked away into the bathroom. Should he let John be alone or try and say something? He hadn't had to deal with comforting anyone before. He had learned and grown a lot, but he now felt overwhelming unprepared for what to do next. He wanted to wrap his fiancé in his arms and just let the other man cry. However, John was a proud man. Would he want that? He finally got up and went over to the bathroom door. "My dear doctor, may I come in?"

John took several deep breaths after he heard Sherlock's voice, trying to calm himself the best he could. This wasn't what Sherlock needed right now. He needed a fiancé who was going to spoil him while he was still here. After several calming breaths John stood, wincing at the reflection he saw in the mirror. His eyes were already slightly red. He placed his hand on the door knob, taking a deep breath before pulling the door open and looking up at Sherlock. "I don't want to lose you," he whispered before glancing away. "You deserve so much better."

Sherlock looked down at John, his lips tight with worry and brows scrunched together tightly. He really didn't know what to say. What the right words to say would be. Were there any? Here he thought he had figured out what there was to know about relationships finally. Yet, now he honestly didn't know what to do or say. It was frustrating. Stupid and selfish. Think about John, he needed him right now. Words still failed him. So, once more he wrapped his fiancé in a tight hug.

John pressed his face into Sherlock's bare chest, his arms wrapping tightly around his torso. He had run into a war without a second though, without considering how it would hurt Sherlock. What if he died? He slammed his eyes shut and groaned as he tried to hold back tears. "And now your bloody Mum probably won't like me either because she knows, Sherlock. She knows everything. About Jenny, how she was pregnant when I was twenty but lost the child. And about how I cheated on you with Sarah. And I was arrested for a night when I was in Uni for punching a Constable and I'm no man to marry her son," he ended with a loud, shaky breath and pressed tighter against Sherlock.

Sherlock blinked at the sudden outpour of John's words. "John, slow down. I don't think she knows any of that. Hell, I didn't even know two out of three." He brought his hand up to the back of John's head and gently stroked it, hoping to calm the army doctor. "There is nothing to worry about. Nothing at all, my dear doctor." He leaned his head down and kissed the top of John's head.

John leaned heavily on Sherlock as he slowly started to relax. A small hiccup caused his chest to jump slightly as he closed his eyes. "S-Sorry," he muttered as his fingers clutched at Sherlock's side. "I just...I want to make you happy and your family happy." He moved his head to look up at Sherlock. "And here I am overseas abandoning you and making you worry. I must look like the worst fiancé ever."

Sherlock unwrapped an arm from around John's waist and put it to his lips and shook his head. "Hush," He said quietly and then once more wrapped his arm around the army doctor for another hug. He didn't know what to say to quell the fears of the man in his arms, so he decided to try and distract him. He tilted his head once more, and began kissing John on the lips. His hand slid down John's back and squeezed his ass.

John hesitated slightly before returning the kiss, pressing back into Sherlock's hand with a soft moan. Distraction. It was the only way Sherlock probably knew how to handle the situation at
hand. John was emotionally charged and Sherlock didn't exactly have experience in calming down extremely emotional people. "Sorry," he whispered against Sherlock's lips, his eyes still closed. "I didn't mean to..." He gave up on the sentence and met Sherlock's lips again.

For a moment Sherlock thought his plan to distract John had failed. However, when their lips meet again he nibbled lightly on the bottom lip. He pulled away and looked down at his beloved doctor. "How about that shower? We can do that thing we did while we were in Scotland. As I recall, you rather enjoyed that." He knew it wasn't what John was looking for or needed right now, but he didn't know what else to do or say. This was far out of his depth. It was one of the things he worried about silently. That he would never be good enough John, be enough for him. Oh...OH! He suddenly hugged the army doctor tightly. "You, John Watson, are the most wonderful thing that has ever happened to me. So, please stop worrying. You make me happier than I ever thought possible. You've taught me so much. I am a better person because of you."

John had started to respond to the shower comment when his chest felt crushed against Sherlock. His words were quick but heartfelt, sincere, and Sherlock was trying. Really trying. "Thank you," he replied softly before glancing back at the shower. "I'm not up for another round of anything sexual but I wouldn't mind a shower with you," he added hopefully. "Just need to relax a bit, get rid of this stress." John let a smile grace his lips for a quick moment before he leaned back and turned the water on with a grin. "I still get to see you naked so I guess it will have to do." He needed to get away from the emotional situation. Bury it and ignore it until it never came back.

Sherlock smirked a little and nodded. He waited until the water was hot and then got in. John seemed to need the shower more than he did, so he moved toward the back of it so the majority of the steaming water could pour over the army doctor. His body shivered, suddenly cold because the water that splashed upon him was much warmer than the air that surrounded him.

John watched Sherlock with a lop-sided smile before getting into the shower directly under the spray. Every muscle in his body tensed from the sudden temperature change but as soon as he adjusted to it, John's entire body relaxed. His mouth opened slightly, he dropped his head, and let a small moan escape from his mouth. "I can share, you know," he said with a crooked smile, letting his eyes scan Sherlock's body.

Sherlock smirked. "You sure? If I recollect correctly, and I do of course, a certain army doctor has told me that he has trouble keeping his hands off of me. I wouldn't want to tempt him." Even as he spoke, he closed the small gap between them. He gave a quick kiss on John's nose, then reached over and grabbed the bottle of complimentary shampoo. He applied some to his hand and then his scalp. He offered the bottle to John, unsure if he would want to use it since the army doctor had already taken a shower earlier.

"Very funny," John mumbled with a playful pout. He watched Sherlock for a long moment before greedily taking the shampoo. Sure, he had taken a shower early, but it wasn't often that he felt very clean. Now was the perfect time to take advantage of any sort of clean feeling he could get. He eagerly put some soap in his hair, scrubbing vigorously with a grin. "I can't help it if you are fucking attractive," he stated calmly as one hand moved from his hair to spread soap suds across Sherlock's chest.

"Hmmm, 'fucking attractive' am I? Tsk, tsk, such language for a decorated army doctor." Sherlock smirked as he scrubbed the suds around in his curly, dark hair. There was still bubbles on his hands and he blew them at John's face, careful to avoid the eyes and to aim for the chin and cheeks. It wasn't often he was playful, but he wanted to help make John feel better. He didn't know what else to try, so he went with this tactic.
John laughed, ducking under the water to avoid the bubbles and grinning when some of them stuck to his face. "Did you really just blow bubbles in my face?" He asked with another laugh. "Oh, Sherlock Holmes." He shook his head and ran his hands through his hair. After a cocky smirk he lifted his hand and blew bubbles right at Sherlock's face. He didn't pause as he got more soap on his hand and smeared it across Sherlock's chest with a childish grin.

Sherlock grinned, getting the exact response he had hoped for. He reached down and grabbed a bar of soap. He advanced upon John closely, so that the army doctor would have to back up against the wall. The water sprayed on him mostly now, so he reached up with his free hand and tilted it so most of it was now spraying on the back wall of the shower. He lathered up his hands and then wiped the bubbles all over John's ears. "I think you missed behind your ears the first time my dear doctor." His eyes gleamed as he smirked.

John shivered as his back touched the cool tile wall. It was soon forgotten when he felt Sherlock's hands on his ears, a grin spreading across his lips. "Good thing I've got you here to help me with it." He reached anywhere he could and found the small bottle of conditioner. He folded his hands behind his back, popping the cap and squeezing as much as he could into his hand. "You'll make such a lovely husband." After a deep breath and swiftly moved his hand and smeared the conditioner across Sherlock's cheek, his mouth twisting as he tried to keep from laughing.

The smirk got bigger. "Mmm, indeed." Sherlock then began smearing bubbles on John's neck and then his back. God, when was the last him he just had fun? Well, he and John had fun in Scotland. However, this was…childish fun, something completely different. It was carefree, but he was enjoying it. Anytime spent with John was enough to make him happy. Seeing his fiancé happy as well, made it all that much better.

John watched one of Sherlock's hands until it moved to his back, quickly moving his gaze to Sherlock. He lifted a hand, gently wiping the conditioner off of Sherlock's face. He paused to stare at his hand for a moment before smearing it into Sherlock's hair, using both of his hands to mold Sherlock's hair into a mohawk. This time he laughed, leaning forward to meet Sherlock's lips. "That style suits you," he whispered with a grin. "And I'm now out of bathroom products that can make bubbles."

Sherlock rolled his eyes up to see his new hair style but it didn't work out too well. "Guess I get to have all the fun then." He wiggled the bar of soap in front of John's face, tauntingly. He reached down began putting suds on the army doctor's legs, from the knees down to the tips of the toes. He stood straight once more, reached up and tilted the shower head straight down so it could spray down over both of them, washing away the bubbles down the drain.

John let his head fall back against the tile, taking the moment in with a content sigh. When the water fell over him, he moaned and pushed himself forward to press against Sherlock. The water felt amazing and was massaging his muscles in a way that the showers on base didn't do. He wrapped his arms tightly around Sherlock's body and smiled against his chest. "I love you," he whispered against Sherlock's skin. He looked up at Sherlock, blinking to try and get the water out of his eyes.

Sherlock returned the hug with a smile. "Love you too," he murmured into John's head as he gave it a kiss. He looked down at John, head tilted at an angle that ended up dispersing the water on either side of his shoulders. "Love holding you like this. It's nice. Reminds me of the time I came from the hospital and I drew a Rubik's cube on your chest while we snuggled on the couch."

"You remember the most specific things," John said. He remembered snuggling on the couch but struggled to remember anything other than that. John reached behind him and shut the water off,
sighing at the loss of heat pounding against his back. "Mind if we relax on the bed? I want to sleep," he muttered as he placed his hand over Sherlock's heart. It was steady. Calm. It sounded exactly like he remembered. "I want to sleep with my head on your chest while you play with what's left of my hair.

Sherlock smiled. "You shouldn't be surprised by that. I remember what is important to me. Any moment with you, would fall into that category my dear doctor. Relaxing in bed sounds good. I'll draw another Rubik's cube on you." He smirked a bit, kissed the top of John's head, released the embrace and stepped out of the shower. He dried off while walking toward the bed, letting the towel drop on the floor just before climbing onto the comfortable mattress.

John smirked, watching Sherlock with interest. It should be a crime for that man tom walk in front of him, especially with no clothes on. He snatched up his own towel from the bathroom, drying himself off quickly as he walked toward the bed. "I mean, snuggling with you is important, don't get me wrong." He slid onto the mattress and instantly curled against Sherlock's side. "But I don't remember every shape I ever drew on you." He ended the sentence with a kiss to Sherlock's chest before he rested his head right on top of Sherlock's heart. That's when it hit him. Everything. The reality of his life. This was Sherlock Holmes, the cold and distant man he moved in with after knowing almost nothing about him. The man who delighted in solving murders, smiled and laughed at crime scenes. This was the man he was marrying. The man he had fallen in love with. He slowly lifted his head and studied Sherlock with wide eyes.

Sherlock snuggled into John immediately. One hand wrapped around the army doctor's body and the other one running lightly through John's hair. "You also don't have the memory I do though." He replied lightly. His eyebrows went up when the other man looked up at him. "What?"

"I'm marrying you," John stated softly. "You. Sherlock Holmes." He smiled softly because he realized he must sound like some sort of idiot. "I just...I never thought...It's you and you are so...just..." He shook his head. He was tired, it was difficult to explain everything going on in his mind. He met Sherlock's gaze for a moment before relaxing against Sherlock and closed his eyes. "Wake me up in a few hours, okay? I don't want to sleep too long," he yawned. "Want to spend time with you."

Admittedly, Sherlock was the last person to think he was marriage material. Yet, here he was engaged. There was a lot he had learned since being with John. A lot of him that had changed. He reflected quietly, so his dear army doctor could sleep in peace. He wasn't tired himself, so he stayed awake. His fingers continued to run through John's hair. Sherlock looked down at the ring on the necklace he was wearing. Married. He was getting married. As long as John came back alive that is. Nope. Don't even think about it. He tried to force it from his mind. However, the thoughts wouldn't leave him alone and plagued his mind while John slept. Without realizing it, he gripped the other man tighter and closer to him.

The dreams in his head had been pleasant. Well, more than pleasant. They weren't crystal clear but he knew Sherlock was beneath, writhing and begging, and suddenly there was tightness around his chest. John took a deep breath, his face tightening and the ring on his left hand running down Sherlock's chest in a sleepy effort to remove himself from the embrace. His dream changed, adjusted, and he pressed his hips against Sherlock's side with a moan. His face relaxed and his pressed closer to Sherlock. "Sher-" His hand stilled on Sherlock's chest, his hips pressing forward again before he relaxed into a restful sleep.

When John stirred, Sherlock broke from his thoughts to look thoughtfully at the army doctor. He wanted to make sure his fiancé wasn't having any nightmares. Good, he didn't appear to be. In fact, it appeared to be just the opposite. He smirked at the thought and then leaned down to give a light
kiss on John's head. Even though Sherlock wasn't really doing anything but watch John sleep time seemed to go by pretty quickly anyway. About four hours went by and he considered letting John sleep more rather than be selfish and wake him up. Clearly, the army doctor needed the sleep.

The rest of his sleep was dreamless, deep, and when John slowly opened his eyes he realized that the steady rhythm under his ear was Sherlock's heartbeat. He stirred slightly, stretching with a wide yawn and clicking his teeth together as his mouth snapped shut. "Wha' time is it?" He asked softly, looking up at Sherlock and meeting his lips. He winced at the movement, trying to hide it the best he could from Sherlock. Their earlier activities were definitely being felt. "Sherlock, how long did I actually sleep?" His voice was clearer now, holding a small twinge of frustration.

"It's eight fifteen in the evening, local time. You went to sleep around four thirty, so you slept for almost four hours. Did you get enough rest?" Sherlock asked, giving a small sideways hug to John. His fingers still strayed through the short hair, having not tired from doing it all.

John narrowed his eyes slightly. "You could've woke me up, y'know?" He growled despite the playful smile on his lips. Sleeping was something he had desperately needed but he would have much rather spent time with Sherlock. It didn't matter if they had just laid in the bed and talked or eaten food that would have been horrible for them. He had wasted it sleeping. "I'm sorry I fell asleep, I know you want to spend time together." He rubbed the heel of his hand against his eyes before dropping it back on to Sherlock's chest. "D'you want to do anything? Telly? Food?"

"You needed the sleep, so don't apologize for it." Sherlock shrugged. "It doesn't really matter to me. If you are hungry we could order some room service. You can have a proper meal." He leaned over to pick up the welcome packet on the table beside the bed. He opened it, found some menus to order from. In a place like this, would a kitchen be open late or close early? He really wasn't sure, because he usually avoided hotels like these. The people who usually stayed at them were what Sherlock considered to be the most annoying sort of people around.
Chapter 9

Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

John tried to keep himself calm but the idea of a real, proper meal was causing him to lurch forward and snatch the menu from Sherlock's hands. "Jesus, that sounds great," he groaned, reading the menu and shifted on the bed. He straddled Sherlock's hips without a second thought, relaxing against him as he grabbed the phone and dialed the extension. There was a pause as he just stared at Sherlock, waiting for somebody on the other line to answer. "Yes, hello, Captain John Watson, room 322," another pause, "Can I get a bottle of champagne with two glasses, uh..." He laid the menu out on Sherlock's chest and ran his finger down each column, "Aaaand the chicken pasta, a bottle of beer, and three slices of cheesecake?" There was a pause and John nodded. "Yes, that's correct. Thank you." And with that he hung up the phone, slid the menu off of Sherlock's chest, and looked down at him triumphantly. "Did you just watch me sleep then?" He asked softly, a finger trailing light down Sherlock's sternum.

Sherlock watched John with a slight grin on his face. So proper and polite on the phone. "I didn't want anything anyway," he said after the army doctor had hung up, the grin getting bigger. "Yes, for the most part." He decided to leave out the part of all the worrying he had done in the first hour or so John had slept. His fiancé had enough going on to worry about him being worried as well. "What do you want to do while we wait for your food to arrive?" The grin twitched into a smirk.

"Sherlock, I ordered three pieces of cheesecake," John stated with a sigh and a playful roll of his eyes. "And I intended for us to share the chicken pasta. Thought it'd be romantic." He grinned. That smirk. John was nearly powerless against it. He bit his bottom lip. "I could snog you until you can't breathe," he whispered with a mischievous grin. "I could suck you off and attempt to make you, finally, scream." He lowered himself to place a soft kiss at the center of Sherlock's chest, looking up at him with a cocked brow.

"Here I thought you were just very ravenous." His smirk got wider by each word he spoke. "Well, knowing that you want me to scream makes me not want to. Believe it or not, I have a considerable amount of will power when I chose to be stubborn. I would like to see you make me try." Sherlock arched his own brow back at John, to see if the army doctor would accept the challenge.

John sat up, a sure look on his face. "Fine." He shrugged, biting his bottom lip. "You are going to scream so loud that people in the lobby are going to hear you," he whispered as he bent down and gently met Sherlock's lips. His hand snaked between them and confidently gripped Sherlock's penis, giving it a few soft strokes. "And you will like it," he ended the sentence by biting down on Sherlock's bottom lip.

"We'll see about that my dear doctor. Do your worst or best in this case, I guess." Sherlock's smirk was rather large at this point. He could have been the Cheshire Cat. His body rocked in time automatically with John's strokes. He bit back and then began kissing the man above him roughly. His hands came to rest on the army doctor's back, and he began to scratch up and down. Not lightly, but not quite hard enough to leave a mark.

John gasped into the kiss, slamming his eyes shut as Sherlock scratched as his back. "Christ." He pulled away from Sherlock's lips and moved to his neck, kissing lightly with a knowing smirk. Sherlock wanted it rough. He wanted everything rough. So he would drive Sherlock positively insane by taking his time and being gentle. John slid down Sherlock's body with ease, pulling his hand away and placing gentle kisses along the inside of Sherlock's thigh. "I missed you," he whispered, looking up at Sherlock as he placed a kiss on the inside of Sherlock's hip bone. "Missed
this. How beautiful you look." He ran a hand lightly down Sherlock's side. "How easily you respond to everything."

Sherlock's body squirmed at the light touches and kisses, only helping to prove John's point. He closed his eyes and tried to keep his breathing steady. Even though he had let his fiancé take control for this round, didn't mean he'd make it easy for the other man. His hips began bucking incessantly into John. He had thought about pulling John's hair, but it was much too short to actually accomplish.

John moved his hands swiftly, tightly pinning them against the mattress and lifting his head to look at Sherlock. "No." He growled aggressively, his eyes narrowed. "Move again and this is over," he added as he slowly moved his hands away from Sherlock's hips and his eyes dropped back to Sherlock's cock. He lowered his mouth, running his tongue along the underside and stopping right at the tip, gazing at Sherlock smugly. He moved lazily to take half of Sherlock into his mouth, sucking lightly before pulling away completely and placing kisses along the side. "Do you understand?" He asked softly.

"Hey, this was your idea…remember? That you wanted to make me scream so loud the lobby can hear. If you quit, you lose." Sherlock matched John's gaze, that ever cocky smirk returning to his lips. He bucked roughly again, just to be the petulant child he often was. "Your move, Doctor."

"Bastard," John muttered before taking Sherlock into his mouth again. The argument was valid but John wouldn't admit that. He had wanted to control the situation but, like always, Sherlock had managed to keep himself in control. Even when it was John's idea in the first place. He sucked as hard as he could with every bob of his head, humming as he pulled away with a small cough and used his hand for a moment. "It would be cruel, wouldn't it, to just leave you like this?" He asked softly, his eyes darting up to look at Sherlock. His hand froze completely and he shrugged. "Beg for it, Sherlock."

Sherlock only smirked bigger but it was replaced by a smile of contentment when John began sucking him off. He cocked an eyebrow at the army doctor and then shook his head. "If you don't finish me off, I will. Won't be the same, but it will have the same result and you still lose. So, by all means, go ahead." He was rather enjoying this new game they had stumbled upon. His gaze never left John's, his smirk never wavering. "However, if you continue and win successfully I promise that I will give you complete control for one time while we are here at the hotel."

This was not supposed to happen. John took several deep breaths. The offer was there, though. Complete control before they had to leave. Fine. If Sherlock wanted to play like that then John would be more than happy to accept the challenge. He moved to quickly take Sherlock back into his mouth, moving slower this time. He stopped sucking and used just his tongue, pressing Sherlock's cock against the top of his mouth as he pulled away and then lowered his head quickly. He was going to make Sherlock scream. He needed to hear it. He pulled away for a quick second to wet his fingers, moving back down as his hand shifted between Sherlock's ass and the mattress. Without glancing at Sherlock he pressed two fingers into his entrance as roughly as he could, moving in until his knuckles stopped him from going any farther.

Sherlock studied John, knowing full well his fiancé wouldn't be able to pass up on the offer. He finally let his head drop back onto the pillow when he felt the army doctor go back work. His eyes closed and as soon as John's fingers penetrate his breathing became staggered. One arm rested across his forehead and the other dangled off the side of the bed, clinging tightly to the sheet, causing it to detach from the mattress.

It shouldn't be this hard to get somebody to shout in the middle of the most pleasurable experience
of a relationship. And yet, here was Sherlock managing to do the impossible. John pulled away with a deep breath, moving his fingers roughly a few times as he tested his cheek on Sherlock's hip. "I know you want to, Sherlock," he whispered, his fingers moving forward as rough as he could manage. Christ, was he going to have to recite the entire periodic table for this to happen? He took Sherlock back into his mouth, going as far as he could before he gagged and pulled back slightly.

Never would Sherlock admit it but the reason he purposed the challenge was because he thought it would be interesting to be completely submissive. Unmoving, unless directed otherwise. He couldn't scream too soon, John might figure it out. Was he really going to let the army doctor win? Probably. It really did feel amazing. Jesus, it felt bloody fantastic. He had a considerable amount of self control going on. His eyes were squeezed tight out of pleasure and to help him keep focused. The arm across his face, was so John couldn't see it and possibly figure out what he was thinking. He growled as he felt the pressure rising. John always seemed to scream when climaxing, so that would be a good time. Nothing unusual about that, right? His body tensed, his back arching as he came. His mouth opened, releasing a shout of pleasure at a volume that even surprised himself. Perhaps he wasn't pretending as much as he liked to think. His body relaxed, and he laid their motionless as he panted for breath. He thought about making a cocky comment but best to stay quiet, let John think he had won without any help on his part.

John closed his eyes, swallowing everything before pulling away and resting his head on Sherlock's thigh. "Christ, that was hot," he muttered as he took several deep breaths. Sherlock had made a noise. Not just a noise, either. A loud yell, louder than even John had intended. He opened his mouth to reply when a knock at the door caused his stomach to lurch. Food. He was out of the bed in a flash, yanking the blanket over Sherlock's legs and torso as he quickly wrapped a towel around himself. The door opened and John took everything he ordered, muttering a polite 'Shukran' before shutting the door, depositing the food anywhere he could manage, and jumping back on to the bed. "Glorious," he muttered, meeting Sherlock's lips with an eager grin. "That was...you sounded..." He shook his head and kissed Sherlock again.

When the knock at the door came, Sherlock couldn't help but laugh in between breaths. His eyes were still closed, with his arm still spread across his forehead. His eyes finally opened when John kissed him, his arm lifting a bit so he see the man above him. He smirked a bit and then shrugged. "If the lobby didn't hear me, then the server certainly did and everyone knows anyway." The smirk only got bigger as he spoke.

John hadn't thought about that and a blush instantly spread across his cheeks. That poor young man had probably heard Sherlock shouting. "Oh..." He swallowed hard and bit his bottom lip. How embarrassing. "We are probably going to be banned from this hotel at the end of this little vacation." It was stated with a hint of humor, a smirk on John's lips that was forced. He bent slightly and grabbed the cold bottle of beer, opening it and quickly taking large gulps. "Ah, Jesus." He closed his eyes and placed the bottom of the cold bottle on Sherlock's stomach. "That's amazing. I missed beer." He lifted the bottle and took another gulp. "So, you hungry after all that?"

"I hope he did," Sherlock said, knowing full well that John was embarrassed. "Doesn't really matter to me. No shame, you know. Wouldn't bother me who was watching or heard, not even my brother." Shit. Those were a poor choice of words. He continued speaking, hoping John hadn't noticed. "Eat what you want. I will just eat whatever is left over." The beer bottle was extremely cold compared to the rest of his body and he shivered slightly.

John was half bent over the side of the bed, straddling Sherlock the best he could, when he replayed Sherlock's words in his head. Brother. He snapped up so fast spots appeared in his vision. "What? I'm sorry...What?" He licked his lips and narrowed his eyes. "Brother? Did you say...Sherlock, has Mycroft heard us when we..." He paled considerably, his eyes going wide. "Oh,
God, Sherlock... You have got to be kidding me." He placed the beer bottle on the bedside table rougher than he intended. "How many times?" He asked in a low voice. "And why didn't you tell me?"

Luckily Sherlock was quick on his feet when it came to thinking and he replied without missing a beat. "I was referring to the time he was present the first time you gave me a hand job." It was mostly the truth. He didn't deny the allegations, so he couldn't be accused of lying later.

"You weren't very loud..." John's eyebrows knitted together before he stopped himself, glancing off the bed and focusing on the floor. This trip was about them. He didn't want to fight or cause any trouble. Even though he hated to admit it, this could be the last time they saw each other. It needed to be happy. Unforgettable. Fighting would only ruin things. "Alright, I believe you," he stated softly, smiling before leaning down and meeting Sherlock's lips. Without another word he grabbed the food, sliding to sit beside Sherlock with the large bowl of chicken pasta. He dug in eagerly, his face low and his fork putting food in his mouth before the previous bite had been swallowed. "You been eating?" He pushed his food to the left side of his mouth, speaking from his right as he glanced at Sherlock. "Back at the flat, I mean?"

Okay, now Sherlock was starting to feel bad. The words 'I believe you' cut like a knife. He sighed, eyes closing once more. He didn't want to do this now. Do it here. This wasn't how the time spent together was supposed to go. He was quiet a long time, weighing the options in his mind. "John..." He trailed off, sighing once more. "...he did listen in once. The night we got engaged. I don't know if he has done it since. I didn't want to say anything because I know you like your privacy about that sort of thing and I didn't want to embarrass you." He opened his eyes so he could look up at John. "I'm... sorry..."

Listened. More than once, possibly. John flushed, a deep red that spread to the tips of his ears and across his chest, managing to show even with his tan. "Oh," he squeaked. He didn't want to know what else to say. So, Mycroft had heard them. Not only that but Sherlock had tried to hide it. Except, really, he had fessed up in the end and told him. "We-Well, he got quite a show then?" He swallowed the food in his mouth with a grimace. "Don't think I'm too hungry anymore." His eyes locked on the food distastefully and he shifted to reach across Sherlock and grab his beer. One wasn't going to cut it. He might need a second. He wanted to shout, yell, ask Sherlock why he didn't tell him the next time they talked. He could see Sherlock's perspective though, trying to protect him. It was almost endearing. Almost. "Thank you for telling me." He flashed a quick, tight smile at Sherlock. "Just... make sure he doesn't do it again, yeah? Kind of a private thing between the two of us and it's rare with the lack of personal time I have." He leaned over and placed a kiss on Sherlock's cheek before finishing his beer.

Sherlock watched John's nonverbal cues as well as listened to what the other man had to say. Well, that went better than he thought it would. Once again, his fiancé had taken the mature route. "I'll talk to him when I get home." Not for the first time, Sherlock wondered if maybe Mycroft had a thing for John. All the pictures, a lot naked even though he had asked otherwise on behalf of the army doctor. He could have opted not to listen in at any point. Would John leave him for someone else? Lestrade had done it so easily. He had never seen the army doctor in a long term relationship before. The thought made his chest tight. He didn't like this thought process and he tried to halt it, but now all he could do was worry.

After a pause of several moments John dug eagerly back into the food, managing to stop himself with half of the bowl gone. He needed to be polite, save some for Sherlock. He parted with the bowl, setting on the ground, and grabbing two slices of the cheesecake with a boyish grin. With the fork mid-air John noticed Sherlock. Worried, thinking... scared? "Sherlock, you okay?" He asked softly, the fork hitting the plate as he pushed the dessert to the side. "Hey, Sherlock, come back
here." He curled his hand under Sherlock's chin and turned his face. "What's wrong?" He searched Sherlock's face worriedly.

It wasn't until John turned his face that Sherlock realized he was being spoken to. He tried to answer but he choked on his words. He cleared his throat and his gaze drifted to the wine bottle. He hadn't had a drink since he had gotten drunk at Lestrade's flat. The temptation was certainly there and staring him right in the face. His blue-grey eyes glanced back over to John. "I am just worried about a few things, is all. I'll be fine." He didn't want to explain further because he had worked so hard to help calm his fiancé down once already. He didn't want his dear doctor worrying as well.

"Nope. No, that's not how a relationship works, Sherlock." John moved to straddle Sherlock again, deciding almost instantly that this was the most comfortable position. It was also convenient, Sherlock was nearly forced to look at him. "Let's talk. Couples have to do this." He paused and took a deep breath. "So, I'm a bit upset that you didn't mention Mycroft hearing us on Skype, alright? But, you know, I see it from your perspective." A shrug and a smile, "You wanted to protect me and in your mind, your glorious, genius mind, you were doing the right thing." He brushed his thumb across Sherlock's cheekbone. "See? Now tell me, Sherlock. What are you thinking about? It is distracting you. You can tell me."

Of course John wouldn't let him off that easy. Sherlock tried to think of the best way to phrase it, and once more he was quiet for awhile. He trailed a finger along John's leg idly, still lost in thought. He couldn't seem to find the words he was looking for so eventually he just started talking. "It's stupid really. I am worried you will leave me, like Lestrade left Mycroft. Get bored with me. You have never been in a serious relationship since we've met. Then there is the strange fascination my brother seems to have with you. Well, not strange because I understand why so many people seem to be drawn to you. I don't know. My mind is all over the place right now."

John listened to Sherlock and took a deep breath when he was done speaking. Right. "Why don't we tackle those in order of least ridiculous to extremely important." He nodded and smiled softly at Sherlock's finger on his leg. "I will never ever leave you for your brother. Ever." With that out of the way John thought about Sherlock's other worries. Ones that were justified with Sherlock's logic. "I don't really know how...bad it must look, me bouncing from one person to another." He licked his lips. "But I'm marrying you, Sherlock. Not anybody else. You are the one I am with and nothing is going to change that. I love you." It was stated so simply, like it was obvious and the entire world knew it. "I promise. And I know the thing with Sarah hurt you and I've learned. I'm not going to ever do that again." He twisted his mouth slightly to the side. "It will always be you."
Sherlock gave a small smile to John, with a slight nod of his head. He remained quiet after the army doctor had spoken, because really he had pretty much said everything he had wanted to. He decided to change the subject after a lengthy silence. "Since dating, I've become rather curious sexually...as I am sure you know. I bought one of those sex books, to see if I could learn anything new. When you get back, we should try a few. Some look really interesting and others are pretty ridiculous. Speaking of your return, after the ceremony do you want to go anywhere? What is it married couples go, a honeymoon is it? Would you be interested in one of those?"

"Wait..." John flushed a deep red and laughed uncomfortably. "Y-You've done research?" His voice squeaked and he chuckled. "And you went and bought a book?" That picture was enough for him to bend at the waist and press his face into Sherlock's chest with a playful groan. He could picture Sherlock in a book store, looking at books about sex, of all things. The look from the cashier must have been priceless and Sherlock was probably completely unknowing. It was a little more adorable to John than it should be. He shifted his head to rest his chin against Sherlock's chest, looking at him with a smile. "Will we be able to afford a honeymoon? Where would we go?"

Sherlock gave a small shrug. "I get bored easily. I had to do something to keep myself distracted." He wrapped his arms around John in a light hug. "I can get money, so no worries there." His family had all kinds of money. The thought of asking though, made him uncomfortable. His Mum would be delighted but dad would be a different story.

John settled into the light hug with a content sigh. "Well, if the money isn't a problem then we just have to figure out where to go." He placed a small kiss on Sherlock's chest. "Except...not Paris, apparently. Too normal for you." He moved his hand out to grab his plate of cheesecake, placing it on Sherlock's chest and taking a small bite. "Any place you have ever wanted to go?" He moved to take another bite and frowned slightly when the bite of cheesecake slipped from the fork and landed on Sherlock's chest. With a small shrug he easily licked the food off of Sherlock's skin and chewed it happily.

"If Paris is something you really want to do, we can go." Sherlock gave a small kiss on John's forehead. He watched his fiancé eat the cheesecake off his chest, a shiver rippling through his body excitedly. "To steal a line from you, 'Christ that's hot.' Actually, eating food off each other was one of the things I read about in a book and something that sounded interesting to try. Now I am most certainly intrigued."

John glanced up at Sherlock with a smile, his cheeks a deep red. It had been completely unintentional, he hadn't thought about it. And now Sherlock was unintentionally discussing something that he had never tired and had seriously wanted to. "Oh," he said with a raspy voice, glancing down at his cheesecake. He was already getting hard and shifted his best to hide it from Sherlock. "D'you want to...?" He motioned his head to the open bed beside him, pushing the cheesecake closer to Sherlock with a bit of a smile. "The strawberry glaze would spread real easy. I mean, so would everything but the crust." He raised a brow and moved to slide slightly off of Sherlock. "If you want to try it, that is. I-I would be willing." He shrugged, trying to make it as nonchalant as possible.

Sherlock nodded eagerly. It was most certainly something he wanted to try. "According to the book it helps enhance the sexual experience without actually anything sexual happening. Unless food is
applied to genitalia." He was practically quoting the book verbatim.

John smiled and then hesitated. He had never really controlled anything in their sex life after their first time and he was nervous to ask Sherlock if it could be him. Because, Christ, he really wanted this. He wanted Sherlock's mouth on his body. "A-Are you going to-" He ran a hand through his hair as he slid off of Sherlock and settled on to his back next to him. He hesitantly dipped his finger in the strawberry topping and ran it down the center of his stomach, his head falling back as a soft moan escaped his lips.

Ah, so it was new for John too. Sherlock had thought for sure his dear doctor would want to cash in on their deal. However, John seemed content with being the one to submit this time. He briefly went through the chapter entitled "jam" mentally to help be his guide. He then rolled, so he was now straddling John. He dipped three fingers into the topping and then applied it to the army doctor's chest and stomach, in slow moving circles. Once he was satisfied John had enough smeared upon him, he leaned down and ran his tongue from the top of his fiancé’s right nipple and down to where the hip begins. He licked slowly, having read it was supposed to be the most sensual way of doing it.

Watching his body be covered in food shouldn't have been so bloody hot. But Sherlock, it was clear, was doing exactly what the book had told him step by step. John would have chuckled if it hadn't been so distracting. The moment Sherlock's tongue was on his skin he moaned, nearly shouting, and tangled his hands in the bed sheets. "Ah, fuck." He arched his back to press against Sherlock's expert movements and gasped for breath. Had he not been breathing? He hadn't really noticed. He was far too focused on Sherlock's blasted tongue and how it felt like a God-damn work of art. "W-When'd you get so good at this?" He sputtered out, moving a hand to grasp desperately at Sherlock's hair.

Sherlock glanced up to John and smirked. "I may have read more than one book... and a basic concept of human anatomy is also useful. Let's you know where certain pressure points are, that kind of thing." He licked his lips clean of the strawberry topping and then moved back up his fiancé's body. When he reached the top of John's chest, he nibbled lightly at the base of the army doctor's neck. After a moment of nibbling, he went back to licking, following along the outlining of the sternum. When he got to John's belly button he did a small circle around it rather than over it. He then nibbled lightly just below his belly button, a hand coming to rest on John's inner thigh. He ran his thumb lightly in small circles, while he continued his tiny little nibbles.

John whimpered, a sound that made him blush and quickly moan to hide it. Army doctors didn't whimper. He wanted to tell Sherlock that reading more than one book was actually quite endearing. Sherlock had been doing research in order to keep them both happy. It caused him to blush because it was the most personal aspect of their relationship. Without hesitation his legs spread wider, his hips lifting up slightly at the small circles on his inner thigh. "Jesus, Sherlock." He tugged gently at the other man's hair, biting his bottom lip in order to keep himself quiet.

With his free hand, Sherlock reached up and removed John's hand from his hair. It was a slow, gentle movement as he set both their hands on the bed. He rubbed his thumb over his fiancé's knuckles soothingly. He began his lap back upward, this time taking a moment to nibble on the left collarbone. After he was finished with the light bites, he leaned up to whisper in John's ear. "Be still my dear doctor. Won't work if you pull my hair; grab the sheets if you need to. Anything rough, will disrupt the pattern." He released John's hand, after giving it a very gentle squeeze and resumed licking down the chest to the abdomen, where he once more gave tender biting kisses. The topping was almost gone now; he only had one more trip back up.

If the situation wouldn't have been so romantic, if his body hadn't been so tense, he would have
laughed at Sherlock's words. They were nearly word for word from whatever book he had researched. He exhaled from the loss of contact with Sherlock's hand, gripping the sheets like his lover instructed. The muscles in his stomach tensed, contracted, and John forgot to breathe again. "Shit. Feels so good." His neck arched as he pressed his head hard back into the pillow beneath it. His body relaxed against the mattress for a moment, his chest moving rapidly as he gulped in air. Breathe. Don't pass out. Remember everything. The sensation of Sherlock's teeth on his skin, especially on his lower stomach, caused his hips to lift. He felt his erection and wished, almost desperately, that there was enough room to stick his own hand between them. "Love you," he whispered in order to get his thoughts in order. "So wonderful."

Sherlock worked his way back up, going slower than he had before to make it last slightly longer. Once again he gave gentle love bites on John's shoulder, coming to straddle the man below him once more. He rocked his hips in a steady but gentle rhythm. He was completely focused on his task, so he managed to keep a regular breathing pattern. The hand that had been rubbing circles on John's hip came to caress his fiancé's erection tenderly. His thumb once more did gentle circles, this time on the tip of the army doctor's penis.

"Yes." John lifted his head and opened his eyes. They were dark and he was having trouble focusing. This was almost too much, he was having trouble containing the movement of his body. He wanted to arch into Sherlock's touch, have him move his hand, but he was so excited that he was too rigid to do nearly anything. "God, Sherlock, so wonderful." His voice was shaking. He took a deep breath and arched his hips up with force, a grunt escaping his lips. He let his hips snap up again before sinking into the mattress with a moan. "B-Books are working." He laughed, searching for Sherlock's other hand to squeeze.

Sherlock smirked behind the gentle bites. He began to place light kisses, starting at the base of John's neck and slowly worked his way up to his fiancé's ear. The movement of the army doctor's hand was caught out of his peripheral, his free hand coming to rub lightly over John's knuckles again. His other hand was still caressing the other man's penis lovingly. Lube. This next part required lubricant but he didn't want to ruin everything he had been building up to. He blindly dipped his fingers into more strawberry cheesecake topping and began smoothing down John's cock slowly. It would have to do for now. He then shifted to his knees so his ass was in the air. His lower torso came down slowly, the hand on John's erection sort of a guide as he sat into the cock. Given the speed it took a little work and the lack of any real preparation, but he managed to wiggle in, his breath finally catching. It didn't take long to adjust and get situated, and he began moving up and down slowly, John's cock never quite going in all the way.

The fingers running over his knuckles relaxed him almost instantly. Just being able to have Sherlock touch him, even if it was their hands, was something that he had seriously taken for granted before Afghanistan. More strawberry topping. Was Sherlock going to lick that off too? He was so focused on that, when his cock was suddenly inside Sherlock he shouted. His eyes ripped open and he lifted his head, looking up at Sherlock frantically. "Shit. Ah, Sherlock, Christ." He struggled to breathe and ripped his hand away from Sherlock's, moving them swiftly to grab the other man's hips and force him to stop moving. "Need time." He bit his bottom lip and moaned loudly, breathing through his nose.

Sherlock stopped at everything he was doing, cringing internally. The book had made it all sound so easy. He lifted his head to look down John. "Sorry," he murmured. He was uncertain whether to stop altogether or keep going. Really, it was up to John he supposed. He nibbled on his lower lip thoughtfully, staring down at his fiancé.

John looked at Sherlock. Oh. That sounded an awful lot like he might have dislike the situation. Especially to Sherlock. "Oh, no. No, no, no." He shook his head, pushing himself up with his
elbows. "Sherlock, oh, no." He took a deep breath. "You're fine, it's fine." He sat up more and gently met Sherlock's lips. "I just didn't want this to end quickly and I was well on my way." He pressed their foreheads together, moaning softly as he pressed his hips up. "It's wonderful. It really is. I just wanted this to last." He placed a quick kiss on the other man's lips before falling back on to the mattress. "Okay, go ahead." He looked up at Sherlock with a challenging grin, realizing that he was in control and Sherlock wasn't.

Sherlock gave a lopsided grin back, not willing to give up the control that easily. "Oh no, you wanted to wait…we'll wait all right…" He kept John inside of him and started a slow but steady rhythm, just to make sure the army doctor's erection stayed intact and hard enough to stay in place without slipping out. He leaned down and began his light biting all over again on John's neck.

Well, John should have expected that. Sherlock was stubborn. John moaned and moved his hands back to Sherlock's hips, squeezing them tightly. "Rude," he stated through clinched teeth, smirking a bit. He lifted his chin to expose more of his neck and lifted his hips roughly, moaning loud enough that he was sure the floor before them heard. "I don't need to wait anymore," he growled. His hips lifted up roughly a second time, the hands on his hips squeezing tighter.

Really, the sensual moment had been over the moment Sherlock had stopped uncertainly. So, he began sucking on John's neck hard enough to leave a rather large redish-brown mark upon the skin in retaliation to the rough bucking and squeezing. Rough it would be then. He stubbornly refused to match John's pace but he did bring his hands up to the army doctor's chest and began scratching hard, red streaks forming as he dug his nails in.

"C'mon, Sherlock," John growled, attempting to glare at Sherlock. It was short lived. The moment he felt Sherlock's nails against his skin he shouted, ending it with a hiss as he yanked Sherlock's hips down. His hips started a fast past, thrusting up into Sherlock as he attempted to hold the other man still. The mark on his neck would be visible while he was walking around base, something John figured Sherlock was doing on purpose. John's hips slowed as he took a deep breath and moved one hand to dig into the skin stretched above Sherlock's shoulder blade. "You're so brilliant," he whispered.

Sherlock smirked and stopped his sucking to whisper in John's ear. "Oh, I know my dear doctor, I know." Cocky and being sure of himself was something that he almost always felt and thought. It was nice to have it reinforced by his beloved. "Beg for it," he hissed, his breath heavy upon John's ear as he spoke. He still refused to give in so easily.

Those words caused John to shiver. He had attempted to use them earlier, to no avail. Sherlock knew that John would beg. "Please, Sherlock," he yelled, turning his head to nip sloppily at Sherlock's ear. "Christ, please. I'll do anything." He lifted his hips slightly. For a small moment John realized how desperate he sounded and it caused him to moan because Sherlock seemed to enjoy it. "Let me fuck you, please," he rasped out as a last resort, running his nails lightly down Sherlock's spine.

Sherlock smirked in smug satisfaction. He began nibbling on John's ear, waiting it out just slightly longer after hearing his fiancé beg because well he could. He let his scratching fingers ease their digging and for a moment he stopped altogether for maybe five solid seconds. Something he knew would feel like an eternity to John. Without an indication, he began a quick but steady pace, each thrust harder than the last.

John kept his eyes closed and when Sherlock stopped moving he was sure the world was going to end. This was torture. There were laws against this. And...Christ, Sherlock was moving again. The pace was fast and John's hips were struggling to keep up. "Jesus, yes." His body tensed and he bit
his bottom lip before shouting out as he came. Every muscle in his body relaxed at the same time and he melted against the mattress, panting and running his hands down Sherlock's sides before letting them collapse on the mattress as well. "Fantastic. You're...Christ, that was..." He turned and lazily kissed Sherlock the best he could. "Thank you." He met Sherlock's eyes, conveying everything he could with his gaze. Thank you for the new experience because it means the world to me. So do you. The unspoken message carried the sense of fear that John felt about leaving the hotel room and returning to the battlefield.

Another smug smirk tugged at Sherlock's lips. It turned into a smile, when he lifted his head to look down at John and read his face just as easily as reading a book. He leaned down and gave a light kiss on top of his fiancé's head. He lifted his head once more, to look at John. "I love you." He trailed his fingers over John's chest once more, but not with his nails this time. Just the tips of them, careful to avoid rubbing against the red streaks.

John watched Sherlock's finger with a soft smile, lifting his gaze to Sherlock's. "I love you too." He closed his eyes and swallowed hard. "So much." His words were slowly starting to slur together but John fought it, forcing his eyes open. He couldn't sleep. Every moment he had left needed to be spent with Sherlock. "I'm sticky and smell like artificial strawberry," he muttered with a low chuckle. "And I just had sex with my fiancé. Very good night, don't you think?" He grabbed one of Sherlock's hands, lacing their fingers together.

Sherlock smiled again. "Had sex a couple of times, so a very good night indeed. Are you going to need another shower my dear doctor?" The smile turned into a grin, his eyebrows raising as he asked the question. He squeezed John's hand as their fingers intertwined. "Or perhaps you should sleep. You are getting sleepy again. I seem to have worn you out." The grin twisted into a rather proud smirk.

"Wasn't just you." John playfully smacked Sherlock's cheek, laughing as he glanced toward the bathroom. A shower did sound nice but if he slept for a few more hours the sun would be up and they could start another day together. "D'you mind terribly if I sleep some more? I can shower in the morning after a few more hours of sleep. You can sleep, too." He shrugged and bit his bottom lip, reaching past Sherlock with his free hand yanking a bit at the blankets. "Think you might need the rest. I know I'm quite the handful." He smirked himself.

"Of course I won't mind you sleep." Sherlock rolled off of John, but then instantly snuggled into him, his arm draping over the other man's midsection. He leaned his head onto his fiancé's shoulder. "Perhaps I should sleep too. I'll need my stamina for whenever you decide to take control." The thought made him excited and maybe even just a little bit nervous.

Just the mention of John getting control caused him to shiver. "You will need the rest," John commented softly. He lifted his hand to wrap protectively around Sherlock's shoulders. This was what he wanted every day. He wanted Sherlock snuggled against him, the protection that John felt near him. At this small, perfect moment John regretted running off to Afghanistan. He yawned and closed his eyes, resting his cheek on the top of Sherlock's head. "Sleep, Sherlock," he muttered before doing just that.

Sherlock snuggled closer still, finding that he could never be too close to his dear doctor. He closed his eyes, but sleep didn't find him right away. He wasn't really thinking about anything. Rather just enjoying this moment. The sex was always great, but the times he and John just cuddled were the moments he cherished the most and he wanted to cling to it as long as he could. He would never admit such a sentimental thing to anyone. Sleep did find him eventually, his body nestled and relaxed into John's.
After a few hours John's body had decided that he had spent enough time sleeping. He slowly opened his eyes and inhaled sharply. Had he slept too long? Had his patrol left? It was too quiet. He went to move off the bed and felt weight across his torso when he remembered. Sherlock. Christ, he was forgetting the fact that he was with his fiancé every time he woke up. He settled back into the bed instantly, gently tugging Sherlock closer to him, smiling softly when he noticed the other man was actually sleeping. He looked so much younger when he slept, something John always studied intently while he could. "I love you," he whispered into Sherlock's curls, kissing the top of his head.

Sherlock muttered, much like a child refusing to wake up, when he felt John pull away momentarily. Even in his sleep, he attempted to crawl closer to the body next to him. "Love you too," he murmured sleepily but didn't wake up. The time difference had wreaked havoc on his biological clock and the jet lag had finally caught up with him. He hugged John closer, his head nestling into his fiancé's chest before falling back asleep soundly.

It was endearing, really almost adorable, that Sherlock was sleeping in past him. Usually it was the opposite. He would have entertained the idea of staying in bed with his fiancé if his chest wasn't so sticky and tinged slightly from the artificial coloring. He shifted slightly away from the warm body next to him. "I'm going to shower real quick," he whispered softly, placing another kiss on Sherlock's forehead. "I will be back in five minutes. I guarantee you'll still be asleep." He smiled, taking one last look at Sherlock before extracting himself from the tangle of long and lanky limbs.

The shower was quick, extremely hot, and John stumbled out of the sweltering room with a small cough, a towel wrapped around his hips. He glanced at the tile floor, slick with water, before moving back to the bed. He discarded his towel and climbed into bed, his hair sticking up at odd angles and his body hotter than it should be, but he pressed his chest against Sherlock's back anyway, wrapping an arm around his waist and kissing his neck softly, sucking at the skin just below Sherlock's ear.

Another mutter escaped him and without John there to cling to, he found a pillow and hugged it close to his chest. He became aware of something moist on his ear, his body squirming but not pulling away. It slowly brought him awake, with a groan. Was John sucking on his skin? God, what a wonderful thing to wake up to. He released the pillow and rolled over, so he could look at John. He smiled, reaching a hand up to run through the messy, wet hair.

John smiled in return, chuckling at the feel of Sherlock's hand in his hair. "Had to take a shower. I couldn't stand being sticky anymore," he whispered. Sherlock looked wonderful like this, just woken up. He got to wake up to this every morning for the rest of his life. Hopefully. John would have to work hard to get Sherlock to sleep and make sure he actually woke up before the other man. "You want to go back to sleep? I am perfectly happy to just watch you." The arm around Sherlock's waist tightened fractionally. It was an overly protective movement, something John didn't feel often, but he suddenly wanted to make sure Sherlock was feeling alright, well rested.

"No. I'm fine. Rather be awake with you." Sherlock leaned forward and gave a gentle kiss on John's lips. "What do you want to do today? I could tell you more about what I read in those books." He smirked and brought his mouth to his fiancé's ear so he could breathe into it while he spoke. He continued to run his fingers through the damp hair, every once in awhile flicking a stray lock that was just long enough to do so, causing water to spray off.
John smirked and returned the kiss before Sherlock moved on to his ear. "I think I'll keep you in suspense all day," he muttered. "Y'know, because I'm in control." The last part was growled as his hand ran down to Sherlock's ass, squeezing it momentarily. "Don't want to ruin it either. Going to make you wait." He lowered his head, wiggled against Sherlock, and nipped at the hallow of Sherlock's neck. "Wouldn't be fun."

"Oh, so you think you get to be in control all day? We'll just see about that," Sherlock whispered into John's ear and then began nibbling on it. He rolled so he could straddle the army doctor, in hopes of pinning the other man to the bed. He moved his kissing down from the ear to the neck where he began sucking. After a moment he lifted his head so he could look down at John, a smirk on his lips. "I said you get one time to be in control. Not a whole day. If you want the whole day, you will have to work for it. Prove to me you can handle it, make me." Leave it to Sherlock to turn everything into a game or challenge.

Naturally. Of course John couldn't manage to get control for more than one promised time. He growled softly, arching into Sherlock's mouth before he pulled away. After their last experience his skin was, really, too responsive to Sherlock's mouth. John let his face relax, his eyes locked on Sherlock's face. If he wanted to get the upper hand then he needed to move quickly. He took a deep breath, smirked slightly, and lifted his hips swiftly off the bed, rotating at his waist. If this went like he planned he would have Sherlock pinned beneath him and John would be settled comfortably between Sherlock's legs.

Invariably, Sherlock fought to stay on top, but lost. Not terribly surprising, because John was much stronger than he was. Muscle mass didn't always matter, but it certainly helped in the favor of the army doctor this time around. He stared up at his fiancé, with a fake glare. He decided to cheat and reached his hand down so his fingers would lightly run along John's inner thigh. He smirked a bit, not quite ready to submit. He would make the other man work for it.

"Hmm, seems you're a bit-" John tossed his head back with a hiss at the touch to his inner thigh. "Stop it," he growled, opening his eyes and roughly grabbing Sherlock's wrist and pinning it above his head on the bed. There was a light in his eyes, a spark at having a sense of power over the man beneath him. He bent at the waist and licked slowly across Sherlock's right nipple, glancing up at Sherlock with a small sense of pride. "Don't move."

"Make me," Sherlock repeated, that cocky smirk still plastered on his lips. One hand might have been pinned but he still had his other hand free. It too moved down, his fingers once more coming to glide along John's inner thigh ever so lightly. With effort and force, he bucked his hips into the man above him.

John's jaw tightened instantly and he grabbed Sherlock's other wrist, lifting it above his hand and grabbing with his other hand. He pressed both of Sherlock's wrists together tightly, slamming them against the bed for emphasis. "I said don't move," he growled. He shifted his free arm, pressing his forearm against Sherlock's cheek and forcing his head to turn. He pressed Sherlock's head hard into the bed. John pressed his hips harshly into Sherlock, tilting his head slightly to meet Sherlock's gaze. "Understand?"

Jesus, John had never been this rough and sure of himself before and Sherlock loved it. He couldn't admit that out loud though. He wiggled his body, trying to move any part available to him. All he had accessible at this time were his legs and feet. He bent his knees, and he drew his foot up at an awkward angle and managed to find John's thigh once more, his big toe running along it this time. Looked like learning capoeira, a form of Brazilian kickboxing martial arts, had finally paid off.

Wonderful. Of course Sherlock had lanky legs that could bend at awkward angles. John's forearm
shoved harder into Sherlock's forearm and, for a moment, John worried that he might leave a bruise on Sherlock's pale skin. "That's an order," he barked harshly, his eyes flashing dangerously for a moment. His dog tags dangled from his neck, something he was sure would help to further intimidate the man beneath him. He shifted against Sherlock, looking down, as his knee dug into the inside of Sherlock's thigh and shifted to press it against the mattress. "If you don't stop I will be forced to show you what happens when you don't listen to your Captain."

When had John got so strong? Had his fiancé just turned this into one of the role playing things he had read about in his books? Sherlock most certainly wanted to see what would happen if he didn't obey. He struggled against John with the remaining of his strength but it was slipping with every second. He couldn't believe how turned on this made him. He always liked it rough, but with John asserting his authority it was like a whole new level of bliss for him.

For a moment a flare of anger shot through John. Sherlock wouldn't stop moving. He took several deep breaths and tried to calm himself down. All he could hear was the blood rushing through his ears and his rapid heartbeat. "Fuck," he whispered as he bent his head and bit down on an exposed tendon of Sherlock's neck. His free leg bent, his knee digging into the mattress, as he pressed his thigh against Sherlock's penis lightly. This would be more fun than John thought. He pulled away from Sherlock's neck, his forearm still pressing against the other man's face, and smirked. "Mr. Holmes, we might have quite the problem if you decide to keep this up," he whispered, moving so he was in Sherlock's vision, a lop-sided smile on his face as his eyes narrowed.

Sherlock couldn't help but yelp in pain from the bite, apparently he had his limits because he was no longer turned on by the recent turn of events. He stilled his body, his breathing increasing rapidly. He didn't trust himself to speak, so he didn't reply. That and John seemed to be enjoying it, and he hoped his sudden outburst hadn't ruined things for his fiancé.

A yelp. That was a different noise. Sherlock didn't make noise. John tore himself off of Sherlock as fast as he could, breathing hard as his eyes went wide. "I'm so sorry," he said as he moved to the foot of the bed and blinked several times. "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry." His mouth hung open, as if he was trying to speak again, and then his head dropped. "Oh, God, Sherlock, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to- I thought," he said, swallowing hard and burying his head in his hands. He brought his legs up and quickly made himself small. "I thought you would like it."

Any hopes he had at things not being ruined were dashed nearly instantly. Sherlock cursed himself mentally, he hadn't meant to yelp like that but it had caught him off guard and well it had hurt. He resisted the urge to rub the sore spot, because he didn't want John to feel any worse. He crawled to the foot of the bed and enveloped his fiancé in a hug. "It's fine. You just surprised me. I didn't think you had it in you..." He gave a small laugh and then placed a soft kiss on the top of John's head.

John managed a small laugh, it was forced but at least Sherlock had managed to make him laugh. "I've been working out," he stated the best he could. His body unfolded slightly and he shifted to bury his face into the side of Sherlock's neck. What had really scared John was that he had no idea that he had it in him. He had never felt like that, so aggressive and...violent, really. Not since going back to war. He opened his mouth, was going to tell Sherlock, but quickly decided against it. He wasn't going to worry his fiancé over little things like that. "I bit you really hard, is it okay?" He pulled away to gaze at the mark, his teeth still indented in the skin and the area turning pink.

"Christ, Sherlock, I'm sorry."

Sherlock gave a small smirk and then shrugged. "Guess that will teach me to mess with Captain John Hamish Watson again." He fell quiet and thought for a moment. "Those books I was reading,
mentioned something about a safety word. I'm not really sure, I merely skimmed that part because it was pretty boring but I think I got the basic jest of it. Anyway, maybe we should have one…?” He trailed off, because he wasn't sure how receptive John would be. Apparently they were still learning the limits of themselves and each other. He couldn't help but idly wonder if every couple had this problem in the bedroom.

The use of his full name and rank made John smile. After a moment of hesitation, his mind taking in all of Sherlock's words, John nodded. "I wouldn't see a problem. I mean, we've been together for a bit but...y'know, we both seem to have discovered some things we might not like." His lips pursed and he glanced up at Sherlock. "It needs to be very different, not something we woul- I would yell. Any ideas?" He ended the sentence with a soft kiss to Sherlock's jaw, one hand wrapping around Sherlock to run along the nape of his neck.

"Hmmm, the book gave a list of good safety words to use but like I said I didn't really pay attention to that section. Guess I should…” Sherlock trailed off, easily distracted by John's kiss and touch. He tilted his head slightly, so their lips could meet and gave a gentle kiss. After a moment of tender kissing he broke it to look at John, a slight smirk on his lips. "You are the one in charge today, so you will have to come up with it."

"Mmm." John kept his eyes closed for a long moment, licking his lips. He opened his eyes and met Sherlock's gaze for another long moment. "That's just unfair," he whispered with a grin. His eyes darted to Sherlock's lips for a long moment as his mind worked to try and find an unusual word. "Cheesecake?" He asked softly, his eyes lighting up almost instantly.

Sherlock smiled and nodded. He was about to move in for another kiss when he has to remind himself he had just given John control. He had promised his fiancé, total and utter control. He could play the part of submissive, right? He was a pretty strong personality he knew but he could play the part damn it. So, he committed himself to the role. He finally let go of John, his body going a bit slack and he averted his gaze from his fiancé to look at the bed.

For a moment John was completely confused, his eyebrows knitting together before it dawned on him. Submission. He would know that body language anywhere. Sherlock was really giving him control? He bit his bottom lip, grinned slightly, and reached for the phone. The food in the room was a day old and he was hungry. "Yes, hello..." A pause and a laugh. "Yes, that's us. Um, could I just get two large glasses of milk, eggs, toast, and perhaps some sausage, please?" The phone was set back down and John moved to recline against the pillows, his left arm spread out with just enough room for Sherlock to snuggle against him. "I'm hungry," he muttered softly as he turned the television on. It was all in Arabic. "So while I'm waiting...d'you think you could translate this? Tell me what it's saying?" He smiled softly at the man before him.

Really? Really? Sherlock kept his mental protest to himself. "I can try. I'm not particularly fluent in Arabic." He managed to reply without using a sulking tone. He fell quiet, brows knitting together in concentration as he listened to the television. "Some kind of propaganda news. Talking about the war. Not very American or Western Europe friendly from what I can gather." He didn't move from his spot, because it hadn't been requested. If John wanted control he had it. Sherlock wasn't going to do anything without being told or asked. He wondered how long it would take John to catch on to that and he fought the urge not to smirk at the thought.

John listened to Sherlock's voice for a moment before sitting up slightly. "Sherlock, c'mere," he stated it like it was basic fact. They were both in a bed so obviously they needed to be snuggling. He motioned with his hand for Sherlock to move next to him, glancing. "What're you doing? Seriously, sometimes I worry about you and your mind palace." His comment was low and playful. All attention to the television was lost and instead turned to Sherlock.
Sherlock didn't argue even though he wanted to tell John he was just doing what he was told. He sat where his fiancé asked, but did nothing else. He didn't move into snuggle. He didn't reach out to take John's hand. He didn't do anything. Once more he fought not to smirk. Perhaps he could have some fun with this too. He didn't even look at the other man as he sat there wondering if by being too submissive John would want to give up the control, which would result in a win for himself.

What in the world was going on? Sherlock wasn't acting like himself at all. "Sherlock? Are you alright?" John sat up with a worried gaze, placing a hand on Sherlock's forehead to check for a temperature. Everything seemed fine. "What's gotten into you?" He grabbed Sherlock's hand and gave it a gentle tug, willing the other man to curl against him.

Hmmm, maybe he was playing the submissive role a little too well. Sherlock finally lifted his gaze when spoken to. "I'm fine," he finally replied as John took his hand. How to answer the second question? Truthfully? But without revealing his ridiculous childish behavior of refusing to do anything unless asked. He settled for, "I'm just doing what is asked of me." He curled against John finally, his head resting on his fiancé's chest.

Leave it to Sherlock to make a literal interpretation of John's control. "Y'know, I appreciate the act and all, it's endearing." He moved his head and placed a kiss on the top of Sherlock's head. "But you are free to do little things like snuggle with me." He finished his sentence in a whisper and wrapped an arm protectively around Sherlock's shoulders. "I love you." His stomach growled loudly and John laughed his hand rubbing down Sherlock's bicep and back up to his shoulder repeatedly.

Sherlock couldn't help but smirk ever so slightly at John's word. Oh he knew all right. "I love you too." His body shivered from the rubbing on his skin. He snuggled into John a little more fully, an arm over his fiancé's stomach and his other hand finding the top of the army doctor's head so he could play with short hair.

Being this close to Sherlock was wonderful. It really was. Except now all John could think about was how warm Sherlock was, how he felt pressed against John's side, and all of a sudden he let out a soft moan. He couldn't help himself. A hand moved to tangle in Sherlock's hair and he gave it a gentle tug to pull his head back, swiftly moving to meet his lips. Anytime Sherlock was touching him, at all, John couldn't control himself. His tongue moved impatiently into Sherlock's mouth, running across the roof of his mouth as his other hand moved to squeeze Sherlock's hip.

Ah, so it had begun. Sherlock didn't fight a thing, he wasn't allowed to. He let John control the kiss, the pressure of it, the length. He merely followed his fiancé's lead. His body couldn't help but squirm at the touch on his hip. He wanted to straddle John here and now and with a force of will, he refrained from doing so and he was even able to still the squirming with a bit more effort. It was then he realized just how hard this might end up being for him. He would just have to have a little, well maybe a lot, of self control. He could manage that right?

John smiled into the kiss and pulled away when he realized that Sherlock was really trying to give John control. He smirked, studied Sherlock's face, and turned his attention back to the television. Despite Sherlock's obvious struggle John had a feeling he was really going to enjoy this. He took several deep breaths to calm his racing heart so Sherlock wouldn't notice how affected he was already.

So unfair. Sherlock let his head fall back onto John's chest. He wondered how long he would have to wait for more intimate contact. Not long based on how fast the heartbeat was against his ear. Unless John was making him wait just to torture him. Waiting for, anything, wasn't his style. He
was impulsive and brash in most things he did. Hopefully the cooks in the kitchen would be slow and wouldn't interrupt anytime soon. He needed to do something to occupy his rampant running mind. He lifted his head slightly so he could see John's head and concentrated on his hand in his fiancé's hair. The texture, the length, the color, every little detail he could intake.

John closed his eyes as Sherlock's hand ran through his hair, his lips parting slightly as he let out a relaxed sigh. Sherlock had to know what he was doing. Just touching him was driving John up a wall. He wanted to drag it out, to make Sherlock squirm and beg for it, but with the way Sherlock was touching him and studying him it was nearly impossible. After a moment of consideration John rolled to settle on top of Sherlock, settling between the other man's legs with a smug smile. "I've got a feeling you know exactly what you're doing," he whispered in Sherlock's ear, nipping at it with a breathy laugh. "Aren't you supposed to be submissive right now?"

Instantly, Sherlock dropped his hand from John's hair. He wanted to argue that snuggling was okay. That he always ran his hair through the other man's hair when snuggling. That really, he had done it to keep himself focused and hadn't meant it as a distraction. He didn't say any of that though. "I'm sorry," was all he said in quiet but clear voice. Couldn't John see how much he was trying right now? Once more he kept his thoughts to himself, his body uncharacteristically still.

"I can see why you like being in control," John muttered, lifting his head to meet Sherlock's gaze. "I should try this more often." He lowered his head, nudging Sherlock's chin with his nose before latching on to his neck. His mouth worked roughly against Sherlock's skin, nipping and sucking as his hands tangled in Sherlock's hair to hold him still. "Is this okay?" He whispered against Sherlock's neck, freezing for a moment so he wouldn't go too far.

With self control he didn't know he had, Sherlock didn't wiggle from the magnificent feeling on his neck. He didn't want John to think he is trying to fight back. He gave a small smile. "It is fine my dear doctor. We implemented a safety word for reason, so no worries." There were so many things he wanted to do in retaliation but he willed himself not to. Would he be able to keep this up all day? This total submission thing was harder than he had realized.

For a moment John studied Sherlock, eyes narrowed and his mouth tilted to the side. He ran his hands down Sherlock's chest, following them with his gaze. "I dreamed about this a week ago," he whispered, biting his bottom lip before lifting his gaze back to Sherlock's eyes. "Except we just talked. Not about Afghanistan or the flat or cases...just life. Us." His voice was far off, happy, eager. "I woke up so disappointed when you weren't next to me." He bent down and gently met Sherlock's lips, pulling away with an amused smirk. "And you can move your hands, kiss me back." he chuckled before meeting Sherlock's lips again.

At first Sherlock was confused when he saw John's eyes narrow. What had he done now? He was about to go through every twitch his body had made in the last few minutes mentally, when he heard John speak. "Is that something you would want to do sometime?" He didn't need to be told twice and he immediately returned the kiss, once more allowing his fiancé control it though. His arms wrapped around John's waist in a light embrace, his fingers interlocking together to prevent him from scratching.

It seemed that the underlying current of their two-day vacation was simple: do it now because this could be the last time. Unspoken, obviously, but it was there like an elephant in the room. John pulled away from the kiss. "Now?" He asked hesitantly, his voice soft and shaky. "We can do this later. We've got time. I just want to talk. To hear you breathe. Listen to you heartbeat. I just...I want to remember it all before..." He closed his eyes for a long moment and took a deep breath to try and calm himself. "This is the last night I have with you. Tomorrow we've got a few hours...I just...Now?"
The last time...no...now was not the time to think about that. Later, when he was alone with his thoughts back in the flat in London but not here with John. Sherlock tightened his hug around the other man and pulled him closer gently, giving a light kiss on his forehead. Now was not the time to let the game get in the way of comforting his fiancé. "Is there anything specific you wanted to discuss? I am afraid normal conversation isn't my forte and I might need a few pointers." He gave a small smirk, hoping it would help calm John down a bit.

John laughed slightly, snuggling into Sherlock's chest with a bit of a smile. "Tell me about growing up," he whispered as he lifted a hand to rest over Sherlock's heart. "About your Mum and Dad and Mycroft. Did you climb trees? Fall in mud?" He wanted to know. He had never really asked Sherlock about it. It would be best to know since they were getting married. He turned his head to rest his chin on Sherlock's chest and study Sherlock's face intently. Memorize everything. Take it all in. His pale skin, his piercing eyes, his mouth that was almost always smirking around him. "Did you ever think you would end up with somebody?" He asked softly as an afterthought.

"Well, I was pretty serious as a child. I was either reading or doing some experiment or other. Mycroft and I were terrible to each other. Mum always favored me and dad Mycroft. We were constantly arguing, fighting, trying to outdo the other so the other parent would notice us. It never really worked. I could do no wrong in my Mum's eye. The perfect, brilliant son. Dad's a military man. Complete opposite of Mum. When he was home, everything needed to be clean and in place. You can imagine how much he loved my room." Sherlock gave a small laugh and shrugged. "I would only climb trees, so I could spy on the neighbor. His name was Mr. Throughsdale. I never liked him. There was just something off about him. I mean he was nice enough and always polite. Turns out he was serial killer. I wasn't the one who figured it out, but I became enthralled with idea of them and started doing all the research I could on them." Another shrug and a moment to catch his breath. "I might have fallen in mud. I don't know. I wasn't outside often, really. And no, I never thought I would end up with anybody. For a very long time, it didn't even interest me in the slightest."

Everything was different, so different, from what John viewed as a normal childhood. Then again, this was Sherlock. It was only natural that his childhood would be something drastically opposite of the norm. "Young Sherlock sounds exactly like the current one," John stated with amusement. While Sherlock was busy already being a genius John had been running around playing rugby and proving his father proud be constantly attracting female attention. "What's Hamish like?" He asked with a raised brow. That cat must have done something special to earn a spot in the flat.

"Stubborn, extremely loud if doesn't get his way, violent..." Sherlock shrugged, but continued on. "He doesn't really seem to like anyone but me and even then I am not so sure. He has sort of warmed up to Mrs. Hudson. He's bitten Lestrade and Mycroft on more than one occasion. When I leave him alone in the flat when I have dinner with Mycroft, I come back to a very messy flat. Things chewed on, scratched up. He isn't very house broken, really. Sometimes he will want out and be gone all night but is always back by the morning. He refuses to eat anything but ham or jam. I talk to him and everyone thinks that's weird." Another shrug and he fell quiet.

"It sounds like you in cat form," John stated almost instantly, craning his neck to gently meet Sherlock's lips. It was long, slow, conveying every emotion John felt. Don't forget me. I love you. Stay strong. He pulled away and kept his eyes closed, placing his head under Sherlock's chin. With
a small smile, and a laugh, John declared, "We have been naked since you walked in the door." After a long moment he lifted his head and kissed Sherlock again, a little more urgent this time.

Sherlock snorted at the thought of him in cat form. Utterly ridic- His thoughts were quickly dispersed from the kiss, and he returned it. He clung a little tighter to John, hugging the other man closer still. He just held on quietly, enjoying and savoring this moment. Once more he returned the kiss, eyes closing in contentment.

"I love you," John muttered against Sherlock's lips, his voice desperate. "I love you. I want you." He gasped for a breath and sucked on Sherlock's neck. "I need you. Never leave me." He lifted his head and looked Sherlock in the eye. "Please, never leave me." After a long, intense gaze John moved his mouth to Sherlock's ear. It was slow and deliberate, his lips lingering against Sherlock's hair line before he spoke. "I want to fuck you," he stated with a bit of a growl. "And make you scream my name until you don't have a voice."

"I love you too and I would never leave you, my dear doctor." Sherlock had a hard enough time coping with John away at war; he couldn't even begin to fathom ever leaving the other man. His body shivered from the kissing and sucking, his head tilting to the side. He smirked a bit. "You might want to wait for your breakfast to get here. Otherwise we might have a repeat of last night." The smirk got a little bigger.

Breakfast. For some reason, despite the rather obvious growl of his stomach, John regretted ordering food. "You are probably right, not that your ego needs it." He took several deep breaths to calm himself, willing away the half-errection he had. "Sorry about that. I'm just happy I am eating a real meal at a proper time. It's a nice change." He twisted slightly against Sherlock's body, wincing as he pulled his dog tags over his head and tossed them on to the bed. It was quite uncomfortable to lay on top of somebody with the chain digging against his skin. "Tell me about London," he whispered, looking at Sherlock with a smile.

Sherlock sat up slightly, and reached for the discarded dog tags. With his long fingers, he grabbed the chain and pulled them closer to him and then picked them up. He put on the dog tags, having missed them. The weight of the ring he had started wearing, just wasn't the same. He turned the tags and ring around on his neck, so they were behind him and wouldn't be in the way. "Well, it's pretty much the same. Except it is very boring without a certain army doctor there to liven it up." He gave a small grin, his fingers trailing along John's back lightly.

Watching Sherlock put on his dog tags made John smile. "I'm sure it's not as boring as you think. I bet it is beautiful. When it rains and cools down. People can walk the streets there, care free, and go into shops" His eyes had a far-off look, a lost smile on his lips. "I miss it. I want to touch and feel it's beauty." He missed Sherlock, naturally, but the thought of London tugged at his heart and made him more homesick than he cared to think. "I miss our flat and it's organized mess and ridiculous experiments." He managed to sharp laugh, almost bitter. "I am even starting to miss the body parts in the fridge."

Sherlock watched John thoughtfully for a moment and then a smirk tugged at his lips. "You know, I haven't done an experiment since you left. However, the flat is no longer clean like it was. Just as messy as ever. Messier than usual, actually, due to Hamish. He has a tendency to throw tantrums when things don't go his way. I have managed to only shoot the wall once while you were gone. Lestrade walked in on me and took my gun." He puckered his lips in pout at the thought. "No one lets me have any fun John."

"Shooting the wall isn't fun, Sherlock. It is incredibly dangerous," John warned with a smile on his face. It sounded like everything had stayed the same, something that Sherlock needed. A sense of normalcy was best for anybody in their situation. He ran his hand down Sherlock's chest, his eyes
locked on the wedding band on his finger. "Do we want a wedding cake? I mean, after the ceremony are we going to have a reception? It sounds like your Mum will want one."

"A reception…?" Sherlock echoed because that hadn't even occurred to him. "You are right though, my Mum will definitely want me to have one. If she has it her way, our wedding will have all the bells and whistles. What kind of cake do you like? I'm not picky. Food is food to me. Something necessary but not something I worry or think about." He rested his chin on John's head lightly, giving him a small hug.

"Isn't a typical cake vanilla or something?" John asked slowly, his mouth twisting to the side. "Honestly? I really think your Mum will take care of it for us. If we are getting married a week or so after I'm back then maybe you should start planning with her tomorrow when you're back in London?" It was a hopeful question, nearly begging the consulting detective to work with his Mother to make the wedding as wonderful as possible. "We don't want anything extravagant, obviously, but I'm sure you and your Mum could figure something out." The idea of the wedding was causing his heart to beat a little faster, his lips curling into a smile without him thinking. "And if the flat's clean enough then we could always spend our first night there."

"You want me to plan the wedding…with my mother?" Sherlock groaned inwardly. He needed to ask for money anyway. He wasn't looking forward to do either. "Yes, fine. I will do that." He gave a smirk. "We could spend the first night at the flat and stay in my room, and certainly give Mrs. Hudson a good show." He only smirked bigger because he knew exactly how John would react to such a suggestion. "We still need to decide where to go. Was Paris something you really wanted to?" He had been there before and while it wasn't his idea of a getaway, he would go if his fiancé really wanted to.

"No! I mean, not no. Yes. Not yes, I mean..." John's head shot up, his cheeks a deep red that had spread to the tips of his ears. He blinked quickly, his lips pursed. "That wasn't funny, Sherlock." The idea that Mrs. Hudson had already heard them the night before John had left was mortifying. He imagined it might be even worse on their wedding night. "M-Maybe we can stay in your room if she's...I don't know, away or something." He bit his bottom lip before speaking again. "Not really. I mean, Paris is that generic place, y'know? Why don't you pick? Maybe your Mum could help with that, too." The thought of Sherlock's parents completely paying for the wedding was unsettling him, though. "Want me to ask Harry if she can pitch in? I don't...I mean, I feel horrid having your parents pay for everything."

Sherlock couldn't help but laugh at John's response. It was exactly as he had envisioned it in his head. "If I have Mum pick, she will most certainly pick Paris or Venice or some such place. I'm not sure my mother will let anyone pitch in to pay for the wedding. She is a bit of what people would call a control freak about those kinds of things. She probably won't let me help plan anything. As for my family paying for everything, it isn't a big deal. We have plenty of money." He gave an off handed shrug.

Why did it feel like John was learning so many new things about Sherlock? It would make sense, really, if he put everything together. Sherlock's card always had money on it. John was really the only one struggling, even with a regular job. "So you don't really use my checks getting sent to the flat, do you?" He asked with a small laugh, turning his head when he heard a knock at the door. "Ah, Christ, food..." He nearly shouted as he tore out of Sherlock's grip and hastily wrapped a towel from the floor around his hips. Quick words were exchanged in Arabic before John returned to the bed, removing the towel as he climbed over Sherlock. "This looks amazing," he whispered in amazement as he settled beside Sherlock, his back pressed against the headboard. "Want some?"

"I have been. I don't really like using the family money if I don't have to. The Holmes are known
for their arrogance and pride." Sherlock gave a small smirk and then shrugged. He watched John get the food, a clearly amused look on his face. He snuggled into his fiancé once he was back on the bed. He rested his head against John's side, and arm draping over the stomach. "No, I am fine. You eat it."

John didn't hesitate, picking up the fork and digging into the eggs on his plate. "That's good," he muttered, the food shoved to one side of his mouth so he could speak from the other. "It is a lot of money. I wanted to make sure you are feeding yourself." He swallowed loudly before shoveling more eggs into his mouth, only stopping to pick up one of the glasses of milk and loudly gulp half of it down. "I am worried your Mum won't like me." He picked up a link of sausage with his hand, putting the entire thing in his mouth with a small groan. "Christ, that's delicious."

Sherlock tilted his head up to watch John eat. He hadn't seen the other man eat with such fervor since he had been in that private, government hospital after being poisoned. "Of course she will like you. What isn't to like about you?" The person John should be worrying about was his dad. The man seemed to disapprove of everything he had ever done with his life. He kept that to himself, as he continued to watch his fiancé eat.

"I don't know. Mum's usually tend to that, though, find something wrong." John finished his eggs and glanced around the plate before picking a piece of dry toast and biting into it. "You never really mention your Dad," he added as an afterthought. "Military, you said earlier? Maybe I've got a bit of a chance there." John shrugged slightly and finished his first piece of toast before gently moving the tray to rest beside him on the bed. Eating so fast had caused his stomach to expand and he suddenly had lost his appetite. "I miss decent food," he stated as he lifted his hand to rest on top of Sherlock's.

Sherlock gave a small shrug. "Yes, Colonel Siger Holmes. At least, I think he is a Colonel now. Dad and I have never really gotten along. Our relationship is even more strained than the one I have with Mycroft. Dad thinks I am wasting my brilliance on a 'stupid career choice.' He thinks I should be finding the cure for cancer or working on the Hadron Collider in Sweden or something else that is boring." He didn't really like talking about his father and the distaste was clear in his tone of voice.

"Didn't mean to bring him up," John managed to say through a yawn as he moved a hand to run slowly through Sherlock's hair. "Hate you being upset." Another yawn and suddenly his eyes were struggling to stay open. "Can I take a nap?" His eyes closed completely, his body slowly relaxing. "Wake me up in hour?" The meal had been so good that it had, quite literally, knocked him out.

Sherlock stretched a bit and resituated himself so his head was now on John's chest along with one hand. The other hand found his head and began running through the short hair lightly. The telly was still on and it hadn't registered really until the room was quiet. He was too comfy and lazy to try and find the remote to turn it off. That and he didn't want to wake up John. He wasn't tired himself, so he just laid there in silent reflection. He actually ended up losing track of time.

Blood. Too much blood. Who was screaming? Gunshots. It was him. He was on the ground, clutching at his shoulder.

John woke up with a scream, his body breaking into a cold sweat as he searched the room. Kabul. Hotel room. Sherlock. He took his breaths on gasps, his chest moving rapidly and his mouth wide open. That was the first nightmare he'd had since their vacation in Scotland.

The scream caused Sherlock to jolt upright, his heart pounding in his chest. It had startled him. Also, hearing John sound so scared was terrifying in itself. He collapsed back into his fiancé, almost immediately. He gave a gentle kiss on John's lips. "You are safe my dear doctor." He ran
his fingers soothingly through the other man's hair.

John instantly wrapped his arms around Sherlock, a small sound escaping his lips as he started to calm down. "Sorry. I'm sorry." His voice was rough and he grimaced at the sound. He returned Sherlock's kiss, nipping at Sherlock's bottom lip as he pulled away. It had been more than an hour, perhaps three, since he had fallen asleep. "I didn't mean to scare you," he whispered.

"It is fine. You never have to apologize for waking up from a nightmare." Sherlock kissed John again, a little more passionately in hopes of distracting his fiancé from whatever had troubled his sleep. He rolled over so he could straddle John, his kisses moving from the lips to the army doctor's neck and he began to suck lightly.

The dream was playing over and over in his mind, hazy but a clear reminder. It wasn't until he felt Sherlock's body on top of him that he was distracted. He tilted his head back to expose more of his neck, his back arching slightly off the bed to press against Sherlock's. His body was on auto-pilot. John had no idea how to control his body but it seemed to be doing just fine without him really needing to think. His hands moved slowly to Sherlock's back, softly resting on the other man's shoulder blades. One hand moved to gently tug at the necklace that held Sherlock's ring. "Please," he whispered.

Sherlock hesitated, as he watched John. Sure, sex was a great distraction but he realized it had become his default setting when dealing with something that was emotional. Was that fair to his fiancé? Would John need more at some point? Would he be able to give more? His thoughts broke when he heard the army doctor's voice, and he realized they were face to face now when John had tugged at the necklace. "Are you sure? We can talk if you want?"

What kind of ridiculous question was that? Of course he was sure. He was responding eagerly to the man above him, nearly begging for it. Except...Sherlock had a point. This was the easy way out, fucking Sherlock to get his emotions out of the way might have sounded like a good idea but, in reality, it would probably be smarter to talk. The idea of talking about that dream though, about explaining it, was both nerve-wracking and embarrassing at the same time. John's eyes shot up to Sherlock's, his chest constricted, and his mouth struggled to form around his words. "Talk?" He asked softly as his eyes trailed between them, inspecting Sherlock's body. "J-Just...maybe just talk ab-about the dream?" He sounded lost, hurt, scared, and he hated it.

Sherlock wasn't used to hearing John sound like that. It was scary to contemplate. John Watson was a proud man and fearless. "We don't have to, if you don't want to." He didn't know what to say or do to make it all better. He didn't want John to lock himself in the bathroom again, because he wasn't capable of offering comfort. Weren't relationships supposed to be easy if you loved someone? Would he ever be able to handle all these emotions? No. Think about John. He could worry about himself later. His fiancé needed him right now and he was terrified he would somehow let the other man down.

John looked up at Sherlock. The dreams were personal, scary, and he never wanted to tell somebody else and have them to even have to hear it. "They're usually different," he whispered, not meeting Sherlock's eyes. "Sometimes they're really vivid. I can hear people screaming for me, for my help." He swallowed hard and closed his eyes. "And I always get there right as they die, as they're crying out for their Mum. I get there just in time to watch them die. When, really, that's never what happened. I always got there in time to at least attempt to save them, y'know?" His eyes opened and met Sherlock's gaze. "Other times it's from when I got shot and the helpless feeling doesn't even leave after I wake up." After a pause his voice cracked and he slammed his eyes shut against the tears he felt coming.
Sherlock listened quietly; his light eyes never leaving John's face even when the other man wasn't looking at him. He relaxed his lanky form gently on the other man, careful not to apply all his weight. He reached over and took John's hand and gave it a tight a squeeze. He nuzzled the top of his head into his fiancé's neck for a moment, placing a small kiss on John's chest. He finally lifted his head so he could speak, "John..." He hesitated briefly as he sought for the right words. "...you are an amazing doctor. I know it must have been scary getting shot, but you are strong. Brave. Fearless. Loyal. Never doubt yourself for a second, because I don't."

If somebody had told him it was possible for Sherlock to be involved in an emotional conversation, especially one of this level, John would have laughed. Except here he was, saying everything that John had needed to hear for so long. He tightly squeezed Sherlock's hand in return before his other hand wrapped tightly around Sherlock's mussed hair. When really, John doubted himself all the time. Every injury. "If you were injured in combat...would you trust me?" It was a serious question and John's half-embrace tightened slightly.

"Of course I would. You are the only doctor I would trust to work on me." Sherlock used his upper body to return the hug, nuzzling his head into John's neck once more. He continued to cling to the army doctor's hand, and his free hand came to run through his fiancé's hair soothingly. He had hoped he said the right thing. He thought so, because everything he said was true. What was that called...speaking from your heart? Never would he have thought himself capable of that but for John he had tried.

John relaxed and let his thoughts drift away from his dream, focusing instead on the body on top of him. "Sometimes, at night, I have dreams about you," he stated after a long pause. "They are always simple and I wake up homesick. That's when I text you. You're usually in the living room, on the couch. All stretched out, your hands doing that odd little steeple thing under your chin." The hand on Sherlock's back started running lightly along Sherlock's spine. "And we drink coffee in the morning, discuss a case," a long pause, "And even though I feel homesick I wake up feeling so damn happy."

"I don't dream often, or if I do then I don't remember them. If I sleep after taking drugs or alcohol I usually have some sort of nightmare." Sherlock gave a slight shrug. He looked down at John with a slight smirk. "Do I really do that a lot? Put my fingers under my chin? I guess I never noticed. Always busy thinking about other things to realize it." His face fell serious once more, his gaze intense with worry. "The offer still stands to hypnotize you so you won't have nightmares."

For a moment John seriously considered Sherlock's offer. "No." He shook his head, swallowing and narrowing his eyes. "It's nice, really, but I can't help thinking that I deserve them, y'know? That...that they are part of me." He took his bottom lip between his teeth and shifted beneath Sherlock. It was true. The nightmares, no matter how hellish, were part of him. A stark reminder of who he was, what had made him. He would never admit it to Sherlock but some of the dreams about Afghanistan were pleasant, filled with adrenaline, and more than once while living at 221B he'd woken up with a hard-on from just the excitement. He had been about to open his mouth, to suggest that maybe they should take advantage of the position they were in, when the cell phone from Mycroft started ringing from his bag. John didn't hesitate and moved from under Sherlock, sliding off the bed and rushing to answer it.

"Captain Watson," he answered, silly because of course it was Mycroft calling. He stilled before jumping into action, ripping the bag open as he pinned the phone between his cheek and right shoulder. "Right. Okay. Where?" He was focused on yanking a clean pair of underwear on, freezing as the answer was read to him. "Yes. How many?" Socks. Pants. Belt. "Two hours. Can he last that long?" He picked up his tan shirt, held it loosely in his hand, and nodded. "Okay. Tell them I'll be there." He ended the call, tossing the cell phone on the table next to the television as he
slipped his shirt on. "Sherlock, I've got to go." He turned to study his fiance. "There's been a tunnel collapse and we've got a soldier trapped in there that needs medical care. I've got to go take care of him before they can get him out." He was slipping on his camouflage shirt now, buttoning it swiftly and making sure the red cross was still on his left bicep. That was when he froze, looking at Sherlock before moving to the bed. "I love you," he whispered as he climbed on to the bed, balancing on his knees as he tugged at his own dog tags around Sherlock's neck to get him to move to his knees as well.

Sherlock frowned as he watched John rush around. No! Their time together wasn't supposed to end like this. He just laid on the bed, helpless to stop everything that had been set in motion. He wanted to yell and scream, demand that John stay. To be selfish and keep the army doctor all to himself until their time was up. He finally moved, when his fiancé pulled at the dog tags, bringing himself to a kneeling position as well. His eyes locked onto John's. "I love you too." His voice was calm and even but it was damn near impossible to keep the pain from his eyes.

"I'm sorry." John's eyes darted between Sherlock's several times before he slowly pulled his dog tags over Sherlock's head and slipping them around his neck. "Three months, Sherlock. Three more months and you can come back, yeah?" He met Sherlock's lips softly, holding himself back because the car was already downstairs waiting for him. "I promise. And we can text and Skype all we want." He pressed their foreheads together, one hand clutching at the back of Sherlock's neck. He didn't want this. This was their time, a time for John to escape the war and see his fiancé and not worry about anything. "Mycroft already had dinner set up for you two tonight. You will be fine. We will be fine." He met Sherlock's lips again, a bit rougher than before.

Sherlock didn't say anything because he didn't trust himself to be a mature adult about it. He merely nodded at John's words. Mycroft was here? Why did that surprise him so much? He sighed, the last thing he wanted to do was have dinner with his older brother. He would rather be alone, brooding and breaking things in the hotel room. Be a child and throw a fit. He finally found his voice. "Be safe. Be careful. Collapsed tunnels are dangerous, could be another cave-in." And now every way one could die in cave-in came to mind. Sometimes he wished he was capable of turning his mind off.

John bit his bottom lip and nodded. "Keep eating. Take cases. Go outside the flat as often as you can." He moved from the bed slowly, picking up his outer shirt and slipping it on, buttoning it slowly. "And remember that when I get back we're getting married." His left hand moved up, his fingers wiggling so the silver ring would glint against the light of the room. "I'll be all yours." He pulled his shoes on, quickly tied them, and slipped his back over his shoulders. "After dinner you're going back to London. Enjoy it, no dust." He smirked and moved forward to meet Sherlock's lips, lingering for a long time before having to nearly sprint out of the room so he would actually leave.

And like that, John was gone. Down the stairs and into the waiting Army vehicle as his armor was shoved against his chest with laughter and greetings from his men.

Mycroft watched from the back of his car as John disappeared into the hot desert.

Come downstairs when you're ready. Don't break anything, I'll have to pay for it. We need to talk. – MH

The last thing Sherlock wanted to do was have dinner with his older brother. He would rather be alone, brooding and breaking things in the hotel room. Be a child and throw a fit. He finally found his voice. "Be safe. Be careful. Collapsed tunnels are dangerous, could be another cave-in." And now every way one could die in cave-in came to mind. Sometimes he wished he was capable of turning his mind off.

John bit his bottom lip and nodded. "Keep eating. Take cases. Go outside the flat as often as you can." He moved from the bed slowly, picking up his outer shirt and slipping it on, buttoning it slowly. "And remember that when I get back we're getting married." His left hand moved up, his fingers wiggling so the silver ring would glint against the light of the room. "I'll be all yours." He pulled his shoes on, quickly tied them, and slipped his back over his shoulders. "After dinner you're going back to London. Enjoy it, no dust." He smirked and moved forward to meet Sherlock's lips, lingering for a long time before having to nearly sprint out of the room so he would actually leave.

And like that, John was gone. Down the stairs and into the waiting Army vehicle as his armor was shoved against his chest with laughter and greetings from his men.

Mycroft watched from the back of his car as John disappeared into the hot desert.

Come downstairs when you're ready. Don't break anything, I'll have to pay for it. We need to talk. – MH

Why was it harder to let John go this time around than the first? Sherlock just stared at the door, even after his fiancé was well gone. Good God, was he crying? He wiped at the tears angrily, but he couldn't make them stop. He growled his frustration, his breathing verging on the edge of hyperventilating. He took a deep breath and closed his eyes tightly, willing himself to calm down. He was Sherlock Holmes damn it and he did not lose it emotionally. After a few more calming
breaths he let his eyes open.

That stupid television was still on. In his blind rage, he couldn't find the remote. He got up off the bed and turned it off manually, punching the button harder than necessary. Miraculously, it didn't break but he busted three of his knuckles and they began bleeding. Sherlock ignored the pain and blood. His cell phone was turned off, so he didn't even know Mycroft and sent him a message. He got dressed hastily. He didn't want to stay in this hotel room any longer. It was no longer a happy place. It had been tainted and poisoned. He did a quick sweep of the room, to make sure nothing was left behind. He then grabbed his one bag and left, slamming the door behind him. Once down in the lobby, he threw the key at whoever was at the front desk and stalked outside.
Mycroft got out of the car right away, watching Sherlock protectively. "Sherlock." He moved in front of his younger brother with a look that clearly conveyed his worries, his apology. "Come on, Sherlock." His head motioned toward the black car that was waiting. "We really need to talk." His eyes darted down to the silver ring hanging around Sherlock's neck before he turned back toward the car.

Sherlock was startled to see Mycroft, although, he shouldn't have been. John had said he was supposed to have dinner with his older brother. What the hell was going on? Something was obviously up. He eyed Mycroft skeptically but got into the car that was waiting. "What? What now? What could possibly be so bloody important right now?" He was clearly on edge and upset.

After getting into the car Mycroft glanced over at Sherlock and decided that a private car was much better than a public restaurant. "Five months ago John slept with Sarah." He pulled an envelope from a pocket on the inside of his jacket, giving it to Sherlock with a strong flick of his wrist. His gaze on Sherlock strong, upset, protective of his younger brother. "And this is for you, apparently, since she does not have the mailing address for John." He wouldn't say more because he hoped, prayed, that Sherlock would figure it out himself.

For a moment Sherlock was confused. Oh wait. Oh God no. No. He didn't need this right. He couldn't deal with it. He didn't want to open the envelope. He stared down at it for a long while, without speaking. Then suddenly he hissed out a single word, "Fuck." He was so emotionally charged right now, something he was unaccustomed to. He wasn't sure how his brain was capable of any kind of thought process at the moment. He tore into the envelope with anger and vengeance. He emptied the contents onto his lap.

Mycroft glanced into Sherlock's lap curiously, letting out a disappointed sigh as he spotted a sonogram and a note, clearly written and a bit shorter than he would have expected.

"Sherlock," Mycroft knew not to touch his brother, to let him do this on his own, but he couldn't handle it. "Is everything alright?"

Sherlock read the note, a snarl escaping from his lips. He was already pissed off and this did not help any. He tore the letter into shreds, screaming his rage. He didn't care if Mycroft saw him lose it. He was fucking pissed. After his chest heaved heavily, and the piece of paper that the note was written on was no longer able to be made into smaller pieces he glanced down at the sonogram.
Finally his brain slowed down. A girl. John was going to be a father. Very belatedly, Mycroft's question registered. He lifted his gaze to his brother. He opened his mouth to speak and found he had made his throat raw from his screaming fit. He cleared his throat and tried once more. "Sarah is pregnant. It's John's. She wants me to tell him…" They had talked about kids briefly once before. Would John want to know? He had seemed so disinterested in having children. The army doctor had a right to know. He sighed. John had enough to worry about and now this? Would it be wise to say anything? It could distract him. His thoughts just kept racing nonstop, as he tried to decide if he should tell his fiancé this life altering news.

This wasn't how Sherlock had everything planned. It wasn't what Mycroft wanted for his younger brother. Finally, he had seen the younger man happy, eager to do things that he wouldn't have normally done. He had witnessed Sherlock opening up slightly, going to dinners with him back in London. And now Sherlock and John's marriage, their entire life, was starting to crumble because of John's mistake. Mycroft tensed slightly, holding his tongue so he wouldn't speak out against his brother's fiancée. He had known, of course, before delivering the news, but watching Sherlock find out had tugged at his heart and caused his stomach to twist uncomfortably. "We've got a choice to make, Sherlock." He glanced at the sonogram in Sherlock's hands. "It would be responsible to tell John, at least give him a chance to decide. You will have to wait until we are back in London because he is busy right now, obviously." He reached out and placed a hand on his brother's shoulder, his thumb running across the shirt comfortingly.

It was all just too much. Sherlock became numb to all the emotions he was feeling and it left him feeling drained and tired. All he could do was stare down at the sonogram. He couldn't bring himself to tear it up, like he had the letter. It was a tiny John. A girl. John's offspring. He hadn't heard a thing Mycroft had said and the touch on his shoulder jolted him back to reality. He glanced back up to his older brother, a blank expression on his face. He wasn't capable of anything else right now. He was just so exhausted. Right now, he would rather feel nothing than anything he had felt within the last thirty minutes.

That look knocked the breath out of Mycroft. He had embraced his younger brother once before, when they were both children and their parents had gotten into a particularly nasty fight. Sherlock had given him the same look. "Sherlock..." He pulled his younger brother into a tight embrace, closing his eyes for a long moment. "It's going to be alright." At least he hoped because Sherlock deserved better than this. "Do you want me to tell him?"

Sherlock didn't return the hug but he didn't push Mycroft away either. He had heard words spoken to him but they took longer than usual for his brain to process. "Hm? What...? Oh...no..." He managed to speak, but his voice was hollow sounding. It surprised him because not only wasn't he feeling anything right now he wasn't thinking either. Blank. Everything was just blank for him. His body and brain couldn't cope with everything that had just transpired. His only defense was nothingness.

This wasn't good at all. Mycroft's first worry was Sherlock returning to drugs. He was so distracted right now and it would be like this for a while. "We can call John in a few hours, if you would like. You don't have to tell him but you can talk to him." Mycroft didn't pull his arms away from Sherlock and kept him in a tight embrace instead. "Talk to me, Sherlock. Maybe getting this out will help."

Again, Sherlock was slow to reply. "Call...John? No...not yet...later...later..." He felt so disconnected right now. He suddenly shook his head violently. No. He didn't want to talk about it. Talking about it would mean thinking about it. He couldn't. He wouldn't. He wasn't ready. Just contemplating, thinking about it made him sick. He shoved away from Mycroft and turned his head to the floor. The only thing he had eaten in over twenty-four hours, was that strawberry cheesecake
topping. It all came out, some of it splattering on his shoes but he didn't care. When there was nothing left, he dry heaved convulsively.

Mycroft watched with a sense of helplessness. He couldn't do anything to change what had happened or to help calm his brother down. A hand moved to Sherlock's back soothingly, his hand moving to smoothly pull the sonogram from Sherlock's grasp just in case. "Deep breaths," he whispered, hoping Sherlock would hear him. When his phone went off he moved deftly to read the text.

_Arrived. Safe. Call when I'm free. Tell Sherlock I love him. -JW_

Mycroft slipped his phone back into his pocket. "John sends his love," he stated calmly. When he finally got his breathing under control, Sherlock coughed and made a face from the taste in the back of his throat now, cherry flavored bile. "Sorry," he muttered to Mycroft. He was okay now. Well, not really but he was no longer shell shocked into oblivion. He had just had a mental and emotional breakdown in front of his older brother. "Can we skip food? I'm not really hungry right now." He leaned his head against the head rest and closed his eyes. "John is okay then?"

"Of course we can skip food. I will just have our flight moved forward." Mycroft pulled his cell phone out with a bit of a smile, making a quick call before he turned to Sherlock again. "Yes, John is fine. Arrived at the collapsed tunnel and should be going in any minute now. We will get word when he is back out which should be before our flight leaves." He turned his gaze to the window of the car. This was worrying because Sherlock had never been through this, had never experienced such strong emotions. "Is your house clean?"

Leave it to Mycroft to just be able to up and change a flight schedule. Sherlock frowned in thought. 'Was his house clean?' What the hell did that matter? He had more important things to think about. He had to plan the wedding, get money for the honeymoon. Would there be one now that John was going to be father? Would the wedding get pushed back? Forward? Trying to find the right words to tell his fiancé he was going to be a father. Trying not to worry about John. Would John go back to Sarah, for a shot at a normal family? Would John want anything to do with his daughter? Would he? He finally answered the question, although distractedly."Does it matter? I don't know. It had some semblance of order before I left. Doesn't mean Hamish hasn't torn everything up again."

Mycroft studied Sherlock for a long moment. "You know what I meant, Sherlock. Do I need to be worrying about any drugs?" It was the biggest worry right now. Despite John's future parenthood there was still a chance for their relationship to work. If Sherlock started doing drugs again then Mycroft figured John would leave. His phone went off again and he read the text message before replying to it. "No problem, Greg is doing a sweep for me." After a bit of a smile Mycroft held the sonogram back out to Sherlock. "So, what are we going to tell him?"

Oh right, he should have known that was what his older brother meant but he was too distracted by everything else going on. "No. I haven't done drugs in almost two years. I promised John I wouldn't while he was gone. Bloody hell, I haven't even had a cigarette since he has been away. I'm surprised you didn't know that given your proclivity to listen in on our conversations or spy on me in general. Which reminds me, the spying stops now. No more Mycroft, I'm serious." Sherlock stared out the window. He turned to look at his older brother finally. "I don't know what I'm going to tell him yet. Just don't say anything to him. I'll do it."

Mycroft nodded. "Fine, no more spying. And I hadn't planned on telling him. This is between you two and I wouldn't want to share such personal information with him." He shifted in his seat as the car came to a stop. This wasn't the most wonderful situation. "Would you want John to be involved in the child's life?" The question was asked softly, Mycroft's eyes studying Sherlock intently.
Sherlock nodded once and then thought about the question. He shrugged. "What I want doesn't really matter, does it? I had told John once, that he would make a good father. However, he said he didn't want kids. So, I'm not really sure how he going to react to the news. It could go either way." He was getting married. Whatever John decided on, he would support the army doctor. It would be easier to be selfish and want John to just walked away, sure. Was that what he wanted him to do though? He wasn't really sure. He was still trying to process everything.

It had been stated several times before and it was never more true than in the current situation. Sherlock Holmes was one of the smartest men alive but, really, he could be incredibly stupid. "Sherlock." Mycroft studied his brother with a long gaze. "It does matter what you want. Sure, this will be John's child, but he is marrying you. If he decides to be in his daughter's life than this is a decision for you as well." There was a heavy pause, Mycroft sending another text on his phone and letting the thought hang in the air before he spoke again. "You and I both know John won't back down from any responsibility. He is going to help raise the child and that means she is going to be in your life, as well, since you will be his husband. I think you need to understand that."

Sherlock nodded once more. "I guess you are right." He looked away from Mycroft and out the window once more. He really didn't want to talk about this anymore. He needed time to sort everything out. It had all happened so fast. Which, usually was fine. Things didn't happen fast enough most of the time. But this…this had snuck up on him and he was having trouble keeping up. He finally noticed the car had come to a stop, picked up his carry-on and even the sonogram and got out of the car. He looked down at the tiny form in the picture. It was like he was holding a small part of John in the palm of his hand. "Yes." He finally answered, although it was quiet and more to himself than to Mycroft.

"She wants to meet with you," Mycroft said softly as he passed Sherlock, stopping at the doors to the airport. "Sarah, I mean. I've got an appointment set up for tonight back in London. My flat, more of a neutral ground. If that is alright with you." He glanced at the sonogram in Sherlock's hand and smiled softly, missing the small statement from Sherlock. "It's probably a good time for you and Sarah to get to know each other a little better because she might be around a lot."

Tonight? Already? Sherlock needed more time to think, needed more time to prepare. He had never thought he would wish it, but he really wanted life to halt. Or at least slow down just enough so he could breath, to think clearly. Yet again, he nodded at Mycroft's words and then made his way into the airport. He went through customs and security without any hassle.

While a nod was a bit noncommittal Mycroft took it as a 'Yes' on his younger brother's part. As difficult as it would be he figured it would be he knew Sherlock was going to try and see what he could do and how he could help. He followed Sherlock through everything and sat down at their gate, pulling his cell phone out as he started to ring. "Yes?" He answered with a bit of a crease between his eyebrows. He glanced once at Sherlock before standing and walking away for a bit more privacy. He returned several minutes later, sitting next to Sherlock and studying the sonogram again. "Do you really think he'll make a good father?" He asked softly, worry clear on his face. The man was a soldier. John wasn't exactly what many people would called 'domesticated' which is why he was a perfect match for Sherlock.

Sherlock eyed Mycroft while he was on the phone. He was going to ask if everything was all right, when his older brother asked his own question. "Yes, of course. Although, I think he may be a bit lost with a having a daughter for awhile. He will probably worry about everything that does and doesn't happen to her. I imagine he will be bit over protective and even overbearing at times, but he will do fine. John always manages to land on his feet."

"I've got a feeling that you might be a bit protective of her as well," Mycroft muttered with smile. "I
can just imagine you cooing over her, deducing her future boyfriends the moment they walk in the
door." He paused and let a small laugh escape from his chest. "You're going to have to learn to be a
father as well, Sherlock. Assuming John wants to take care of her, which we both know he will.
She is going to be in the flat a lot. Possibly sleeping in a crib in your room." Mycroft snorted at the
thought. Sherlock Holmes caring for a child. The thought wouldn't have been ridiculous if the
reality of the situation weren't hitting his younger brother so hard. "You might be able to feel the
child move tonight while we are with Sarah. That will give you a bit of a personal connection.
Maybe after that you will calm down a bit."

"Maybe..." It really hadn't occurred to Sherlock that he would have to help take care of the child
too. God, just one thing after another. It hit him then. "John still has six months left on his tour, the
baby will be here in four months, give or take a few days. I guess I will need to make the flat more
baby friendly." He rubbed at his head, he wanted time to think but right now he was so sick of it as
each new thought and worry popped into his brain.

Mycroft studied his brother intently before reaching into his jacket and pulling out several pictures.
"Here, I have a distraction." He handed them to Sherlock with a weak smile. "Murder. Yesterday,
right after you arrived at the hotel. She was found in plain sight in an alley. No blood at the scene
and, oddly enough, no blood in her body. Second person to turn up like that, both females and both
prosti- with less than prestigious occupations." His eyes scanned the area for a moment before
glancing back at his younger brother. "Tell me what happened."

Sherlock took the pictures and studied them. He turned them around, sometimes staring at the
photos upside down or some other strange angle. "Obviously, the body was dumped. Not the
murder scene. The bodies aren't posed, just thrown out like trash. Killer has no remorse and clearly
doesn't like prostitutes. No puncture marks on the neck or anywhere else. So, the only way to
exsanguinate a body without leaving a mark would be to hang them upside down and do it through
between their feet. In fact, there should be a little blood left over in the toes. There will be a small
prick in between the two biggest toes, most likely. Easy to overlook if you don't know what you are
looking for. Although it seems to me a thorough work over should have been done, if things are
unclear. Molly is distracted, clearly. Probably because of Lestrade."

There he was, confident and cocky as ever. Mycroft smiled and moved his hand before Sherlock's
final comment. His body tensed, his fingers curled into a fist, and his hand moved away to rest in
his lap. "Quite." His gaze was locked outside the window now, rapidly trying to hide the hurt that
the comment brought but, really, shouldn't have. He was over Lestrade, it was nothing more than a
work arrangement. The other man was happy with his choices and Mycroft had cursed himself for
too many nights for feeling more than he should have.

Sherlock eyed his brother and shook his head. "Oh for God's sake, just tell him." Probably wasn't
the best thing to say but it was obvious his older brother still cared about Lestrade. The Detective
Inspector got burned by his wife, who had cheated first. The other man was probably just too
scared reciprocate so he started dating Molly. The girl will probably end up with her heart broken,
if Lestrade kept on his current path. He really did need to punch the Detective Inspector in the face
next time he saw him.

"Tell him what? There's nothing to tell him," Mycroft replied evenly. Anything he had to tell the
Inspector would be too much information, too much emotion. Caring wasn't an option and the twist
in his gut was just proof. "He has made a choice and he and Molly seem happy. I wouldn't ruin
that. It was just...It wasn't anything, really." His lips pressed together in a thin line and he lowered
his head, adjusting his tie as he cleared his throat. "It isn't important," he snapped as he stood up,
shoving Sherlock's ticket against his chest as they called for first class to board.
Sherlock rolled his eyes. "You are both bloody idiots." He took the ticket and was about to board when a thought occurred to him. "You said John would call before we leave. He hasn't yet, has he? Or was that him on the phone earlier?"

"That was just information on him," Mycroft stated quickly, meeting Sherlock's gaze. He wouldn't give Sherlock more news, not after this. "One of his men called to update me on the situation." He nodded surely and started walking into the tunnel to reach the plane. The thought of having to tell Sherlock everything, to share with him what was going on as well as the fact that John was going to be a father, was almost too much for him.

Sherlock stopped just before handing over his ticket the flight attendant. "What's wrong? What happened? Tell me!" He wasn't boarding that plane if something had gone wrong. What if John needed his help? What if the tunnel had collapsed while John was still inside? He didn't wait for his older brother to answer and began to walk away, his breathing tight in his chest of all the worst possible case scenarios of a tunnel collapse ran through his mind.
Mycrof glanced between Sherlock and the tunnel leading to the plane before jogging after his brother. "Sherlock!" He caught up to him and put a hand on his shoulder. "Alright." He took a deep breath and glanced around, shooting his brother a scolding look as several other passengers watched them curiously. "There was another collapse in the tunnel, alright? John is fine, completely fine. He is conscious and talking. He can escape. The problem is that only he can escape and the soldier he is with is stable. John won't leave him." He swallowed hard, raising a brow and pressing his lips together. "So, effectively, John is stuck because he won't leave the other soldier behind."

"You were going to let me leave, knowing that? Just fly back to London, like nothing happened!" Sherlock shoved Mycroft away and began running. He had to do something to help John. He couldn't just leave. Not now. Maybe if he could talk to John. Talk some sense into the army doctor. So stubborn!

Mycrof stumbled back several steps before moving after Sherlock. "You don't even know where the Hell he is!" He shouted after his younger brother. "You still need me, Sherlock! I have the car you need!" He reached forward and snatched Sherlock's wrist, giving it a small tug as he struggled to catch his breath. "You will need a ride there, you git." He shoved his brother forward gently as his car pulled up. "You aren't going to convince him to leave that tunnel until both of them can come out. Period. This is worthless."

Sherlock almost tumbled on his face from the sudden halt of his forward progress. He spun to face Mycroft. "Just because you were willing to walk away from Lestrade, doesn't mean I am going to walk away from John! I'm not leaving until he gets out of the tunnel." He yanked his wrist from his brother's grasp. "If you want to help fine, but I am not going anywhere."

"Get in the car, then," Mycroft stated as calmly as possible. He opened his own door and slid in, giving the coordinates of John's location to the driver. "He is fine, so don't worry about that. The worry, obviously, is getting them out before another collapse. They are working to find a way to get them both out. John's bravery and loyalty are to be admired, though," he stated tersely. It was understandable that Sherlock was worried and wanted to get John out but Mycroft had a feeling it would be tougher than his younger brother thought.

Sherlock got in the car and slammed the door shut. Why did this all have to happen at once? Everything was spinning out of control and he couldn't do anything to stop it. It was all out his hands. Maybe if he told John he was going to be a father it would change his mind. It wasn't how he wanted to tell his fiancé but he was feeling desperate. He knew John was just doing what he thought was right. He closed his eyes, trying to focus. "Tell me everything you know about the tunnels."

"They are used to smuggle drugs and weapons. They knew the risk going in." Mycroft pulled his phone out and opened something. "This one was particularly sturdy so they figured they would be alright. The first collapse crushed this soldier's leg. John went in and stabilized him when the second collapse happened. John did get a cut on his head but he is fine. We are waiting to see if they can both be reached." His eyes darted to Sherlock. "That is it."

"Have maps ready for me when they get there and an expert on the tunnels. Preferably a native." If John couldn't be talked down, then he would have to go to the army doctor. He was already in the
process of formulating a plan. Well, several actually. Each plan was contingent on what information he would be able to glean once on the scene.

Mycroft had almost agreed until he realized what Sherlock was saying. "You aren't going into the tunnel," he stated with a shake of his head. "I'm not risking it. That is far too dangerous." His eyes darted to his brother with a serious gaze. That wasn't an option at all. John knew what he was doing when he went into the tunnel. It was his job. Sherlock didn't need to do anything. "We will get him out without you being an idiot and risking your life."

"My risk. Not yours. I either go in with a guide and map or I go in blind. I already heard where, so even if you turned around I would just ditch you at the airport. And then you would just be wasting time. Time that John doesn't have." Sherlock managed to keep his voice a steady.

There should be an argument there, something to keep his younger brother safe. Except it was hard to determine if it would even be worth it. Sherlock was going no matter what Mycroft said. "Mummy is going to be so extremely upset with me," he muttered as he sent out a text with Sherlock's requests. "It can be arranged but if John refuses to leave without this other soldier then you will come out of the tunnel." The car slid to a stop and Mycroft gave a pointed glare at his brother.

Sherlock smirked. "Then don't tell her." He wasn't going to try to talk John out. He had planned on finding an alternate route to lead them out. It would be quicker than arguing. Well, hopefully quicker. There was always a possibility that something could happen to him. That didn't matter. Getting John out did.

"I won't have a choice if the tunnel collapses and you get trapped in there, Sherlock. I am sure that conversation will be wonderful. 'Oh, Mummy, I just let him saunter off into that tunnel. He said he was coming back.' Because, really that would work." Mycroft was shouting now and then slammed the door shut. All of John's company was there, standing with amused smirks.

That's him, isn't it? Tall? Hooked nose?" Shouted a voice from a small hole in the ground.

"Yup, Doc. Except...no umbrella," one young man replied as he peaked down into the hole.

"Well it isn't exactly raining here, Hollman, so he doesn't bloody need it. Christ you're an idiot," the voice replied with laughter.

"Doc's down there. He is good, bit of blood but nothing he hasn't taken care of before." The young man stepped forward and inspected Mycroft. "Mike Hollman, I work with Doc. He said you two would be arguing. Except...where's the tall one?"

"Me? I am right here," Sherlock replied as he stepped out of the car. God it was hot out here. Of course he was wearing a suit. He threw his jacket onto the back of the car, undid a few buttons on his shirt and rolled up his sleeves. "A pleasure, I'm sure boys but if I could be directed to the maps and the local with knowledge of the tunnels that would be splendid." No time for small talk, only business.

Hollman let out a wolf-whistle, looking back at the small hole in the ground. "Hot damn, Doc. You never said your fiancé was this good looking." Laughter echoed across the group of young men, a loud laugh even managed to escape from the tunnel. The young soldier stepped forward with a sure smile on his face. "We couldn't get any local knowledge but I know these tunnels like the back of my hand. I have the maps over here on the table. We'll tell you the best way to go in and direct you from there the best we can. Doc's said the you aren't coming down, though, so you'll have to take that up with him before we even start looking at the maps." He smiled and motioned his head.
toward the hole in the ground. "You can sorta see him, y'know, if you squint."

Idiots. He was surrounded by bloody idiots. Sherlock ignored the man who had spoken and peered down the hole. "John, I am coming down whether you like it or not. If you don't you will have to come up here to stop me. Otherwise, shut it. We don't have time to argue." He was agitated, and it was clear with every word he spoke.

John looked up, his eyes squinting against the harsh sunlight. He could barely make out Sherlock's face. "I've got men up there that are mapping it out right now and know this better than you. Let them, it will be safer." He shifted slightly, a sign he was sitting on the floor with his back against the wall. A small groan echoed through the tunnel and John looked away from Sherlock. "Hey, Blackford, you've gotta stay with me, alright?" Another groan before John looked up again, the sunlight catching the blood running from the hairline on the left side of his face. "Let them, I don't want to risk it."

"No! You would do the same thing. No more arguing!" Sherlock shouted. He wanted to say that John needed to come back safe. That it just wasn't for him anymore. That he had a daughter to worry about. He didn't want to tell John like this, but if the arguing continued it would force his hand.

John hesitated before speaking again. "Sherlock, I would do the same thing for you, yeah, but I...I can't lose you. There is a risk here, alright? And if you..." He moved, shuffled, and then stuck his hand out of the hole. "Hollman, water," he stated simply, wrapping his hand around the small water bottle before it disappeared. "If they can't find a safe route in, Sherlock, leave it to them. If they find one that is secure enough then you can come. That's it. End of discussion." His hand reappeared and Hollman took the water bottle with a bit of a smirk in Sherlock's direction.

"John, I'm coming in no matter what! You don't understand...I...I have to get you out..." Sherlock trailed off for a moment and then went on, hesitantly at first but his voice grew momentum with each passing word. "John, I have to get you out safe. You are going to be a father. Sarah is pregnant. What am I supposed to tell your daughter if I just stood by and did nothing? 'Sorry, daddy didn't make it because he is a stubborn git and I decided to just stand around and twiddle my thumbs.'"

John half listened to Sherlock, expecting nothing more than the usual 'I love you' and 'You would do it for me' argument. And then he listened, really listened, and suddenly he felt like he couldn't breathe. Too much dust. Too much dirt. "What?" His face appeared a few feet from the hole, looking up at Sherlock in pure shock. "I-I think I misheard you," his voice was shaky, struggling to get past the lump in his throat. "Daughter?" He tilted his head slightly to the side, his lips pressed together. "Sarah's pregnant?" The tears in his eyes were unavoidable and he quickly ran his dust shirt sleeve over his eyes. "Sherlock, I swear to fucking God if you are making this up..."

"Yes, pregnant. Five months along. Do you want to see her? I have the sonogram in the car..." Sherlock trailed off and looked to Mycroft expectantly. No words needed to be exchanged and he turned his attention back to John. "It just isn't me you have to come back to now. I am helping. Maybe you don't want to think of her but I am." He hadn't even realized it until now, but he had already become attached to the tiny baby girl in the picture and it wasn't even his. It was John's. The daughter of the man he loved. He knew in that instant, he would do anything for that little girl because her being hurt would hurt John and that was just something he couldn't bear. Christ, when had he become so sentimental?

Mycroft had turned to the car and pulled the sonogram from Sherlock's seat, moving toward the other man as he held the picture into the hole and it was quickly snatched.
John moved around slightly before finding his torch and flipping it on, looking at the picture and instantly letting out a small noise. "Oh, God." He took a shaky breath and looked up at Sherlock, a watery smile on his face. Baby. His baby. A little girl. He turned the torch off and held the picture against his armor, closing his eyes for a long moment. It was too much to think about, too much to process, and fuck he was suddenly nervous. "Fine. But I swear, Sherlock, if we don't get Blackford out then I am not leaving." He shoved the sonogram through the opening and watched Mycroft grab it roughly. "Careful, don't bend it," he snapped instantly. That was the only picture he had of his little girl.

Sherlock smirked a bit. He played to win and he played for keeps. "I will find a way in John. You know how relentless I am my dear doctor." He smirked again and then looked to whoever had spoken to him before. "Now, how about those maps...hm?"

Hollman stepped forward with a warm smile on his face, motioning his head toward a table near an Army vehicle. "We are pretty sure we have found the safest way in about half a mile to the southwest. The section that feeds into this tunnel hasn't collapsed yet so once you get in it should be a straight shoot to Doc and Blackford. The problem is getting Blackford out. His leg is trapped under some rubble so you will have to help Doc move it. I assume you will carry his backpack and he will carry Blackford the same way out. If there is another collapse you are probably trapped for good so be careful. Don't bump walls." He was shoving armor against Sherlock's chest, placing a helmet haphazardly on his head. "Don't touch anything, really." He placed a torch in Sherlock's hand. "And don't kill the batteries or you're fucked." After a long pause, his gaze locked on the only connection they had to John and the other soldier, he met Sherlock's gaze. "And take care of Doc."

Sherlock blinked at the armor in his hands. Did he really have to wear this? He supposed he was in a war zone. He strapped it on; it was a bit small on him and didn't cover his entire torso. He gave the soldier a cocky smirk and wink. He walked over to Mycroft. "If John and I don't make it...make sure his daughter is taken care of." He met his older brother's eyes briefly and then walked back over to the map and took a moment to commit it all to his memory.

Mycroft met his eyes, nodding slightly and watching his younger brother hesitantly.

"Right then." Hollman slipped his helmet on and grabbed his gun, nudging Sherlock with a half smile. "Let's go, civilian." He moved in the direction of the tunnel entrance, not bothering to look back as he spoke into a radio piece attached to his helmet. "Going in to get Doc. One stubborn as fuck civilian. Doc's fiancé." He paused and chuckled softly. "No, he did good. We all knew he had it in him." The conversation died after that, Hollman occasionally glancing over his shoulder at Sherlock before they arrived at the entrance to the tunnel. He slung his gun over his right shoulder and ripped the door open, looking down. "Straight drop, about seven feet, and then you're in. See you soon."

Sherlock snorted at being called a civilian. He barely listened to the solider as he followed after. So hot. How did John work in this desert sun day in and day out? He dropped down in, landing in a crouched position and one hand in the dirt. He stood carefully and began walking, briskly but not at a fool's pace. Too much was at stake to screw up. He turned on his only source of light to occasionally make sure he wouldn't run into a wall. Eventually he found John and the other solider. He tried to talk but coughed instead. Dirt and grime tasted bitter in his mouth. He gave a smirk to John, eyebrows raised as if asking if he was ready to do this. There wasn't time for a heartfelt reunion.

The footsteps alerted John to Sherlock's presence before he finally came into view. "This rock needs to be moved to my left. Not too fast but it has got to be clean." He gripped the rock with a warm smile in Sherlock's direction before turning his gaze to the soldier on the ground. "Okay
Blackford. Stay calm and don't move. We are almost out, okay?" There was a weak groan in response. John's gaze turned back to Sherlock. "Ready?"

Sherlock merely nodded and gripped the other side of the rock. He lifted with a small grunt and when John was ready, he set it down at the same time as the army doctor. He took a moment to catch his breath and then picked up John's pack. He shouldered and had to make a few adjustments so it would fit his lanky form a little more comfortably. He coughed on the dust once more and spit it out but managed to find his voice this time. "We will have to walk single file. You take your wounded man here first and I'll be right behind you."

John nodded in agreement; turning his back to Sherlock to crouch down near the injured soldier. "Alright Blackford, I am going to pick you up. I'm going to carry you over my right shoulder, okay?" A small agreement escaped from the dark and John nodded, working his hands under Blackford's shoulders. It took a bit of maneuvering but John finally had the soldier over his right shoulder, his arm wrapped around the young man's torso. Blackford's hands clutched at John's belt and he rested his head against John's back.

"Good catch, Doc. He's a looker." Blackford's voice was weak but he was clearly smiling.

"Thanks, I like to think I'm the luckiest bastard alive," John replied as he started moving forward, his free hand holding his torch in front of them so he wouldn't bump into any walls.

Sherlock wasn't a modest man by any means, but he found it strange all of John's men kept commenting on his looks. Or maybe he just didn't understand military camaraderie. Between the body army, helmet and the pack he began to slow down his pace. God, this was all so heavy. He considered himself to be in pretty good shape, but there was a lot of weight on his body right now. He had an all new respect and admiration for what John did out here every day. He kept track of the army doctor until he went around the bend and he was left in darkness. It was fine. The bend was about thirty paces in front of him, so he didn't turn on his torch. He got about half way there and tripped over a protruding rock. He leaned back, so he wouldn't fall on his face. However, he hadn't corrected for the weight of the bag on his back and he ended up falling backward instead. He slammed into a wall and the ground above him began to shake almost immediately. Dust and debris fell around him and then he heard a loud rumble. The turn John had just taken, caved in. Well, at least nothing heavy fell on him and most likely not on the men in front of him. However, now he was trapped. Perfect.
That sound was all too familiar. Crumbling rock, dust invading his lungs. Collapse. "Sherlock?"
John whipped around and was face-to-face with a wall of debris. "Sherlock!" His shout was frantic
as he coughed to clear his lungs, his breathing suddenly hard. Blackford. He needed to get the other
soldier to safety. He glanced around the tunnel and was more than relieved to see the light from the
entrance. He picked up a steady jog, Blackford groaning every once and a while in pain, and the
moment he saw Hollman he lifted the other soldier up. "Hollman, second collapse. Sherlock's in
there." And he twisted on his feet and darted back to the wall. "Sherlock, talk to me. Are you
alright? Injured?" His free hand was running up and down the wall of debris. He couldn't move it
without killing them both, the tunnel wouldn't hold. "Sherlock?" The last question was quiet,
scared, tentative.

Once the debris stopped falling down all around him, Sherlock realized his ears were ringing. He
had been closer to the cave-in than he thought. He rubbed at his ears reflexively, even though it
wouldn't do a bit of good until the sensation subsided on its own. Was someone speaking? John
probably. He went to reply and all he could do was cough on the grime that was still floating in the
air around him. When he finally spoke, his voice was a loud shout but in his head it sounded like a
dull whisper. "John, if you are there I am fine! I can't hear anything right now! Think my
equilibrium got knocked off somehow!"

"Fuck." John looked around the cave for a moment, pressing his head against the rocks in an
attempt to hear Sherlock speak. "Fuck, Sherlock, I told you this was a bad idea!" He shouted as he
slammed a foot against the ground beneath him. It was like the man on the other side of the wall
never listened to him. Sure, Sherlock was a genius, but John had been through this before and
Sherlock had just played his emotions so he could come into the tunnel. "You just had to go and
get yourself trapped in a God-damn tunnel, you bastard!" He was shouting as loud as he could now
and it was only a hand on his shoulder that yanked him away from his thoughts.

"Doc, we've got maps, c'mon." Hollman spread them out on the ground and John fell to his knees
instantly, studying them. "There is one last way in but that tunnel is probably going to collapse
soon. It is losing structure really fast and this cave in obviously isn't helping. It's really narrow and
you should fit just fine. Sherlock might have to duck." He glanced at the Captain who nodded.

"Fine. How far away is the entrance?" John asked instantly. The response chilled him.

"A mile," Hollman responded softly.

"You hear that, you bloody idiot? A fucking mile. You better not die Sherlock!" John moved to
stand right next to the rubble. "Don't you dare move or I'll fucking kill you myself."

John was saying something, of that he was certain. All he could make out was the words 'move'
and 'kill' all the other words were muffled echoes in his ears. Sherlock sighed. He didn't have time
to stand and argue with John. He closed his eyes and let himself think only of the map he had just
studied. There was another way out. He would have to double back to get to the other exit. He
finally leaned up off the wall. He had to resituate the bag on his back before beginning to walk
back the way he came. He flicked on the torch once he was close to where the opening should be.
He swore rather loudly. It was narrow. The opening was big enough for him to crawl through,
maybe. The first collapse must have caused the entrance way to get obstructed. He removed the
pack and set it down gently. He didn't want to risk another cave in. He took off the body armor and
helmet. Sherlock stripped off his shirt, shoes and socks and then his pants. He couldn't risk anything getting snagged and him trying to struggle free and getting crushed to death. Now he was only wearing the necklace with the ring on it and his underwear. He began to go through the contents of the bag for anything useful.

John ripped off his body armor and tossed it at Hollman. "I'll be back." He climbed rapidly out of the tunnel and started sprinting as fast as he could. One mile. He needed to reach Sherlock and ignore the burning in his lungs, the weakness in his legs, and just go. It felt like an eternity before he noticed the entrance, sliding to a stop and ripping the door open. Narrow. That was what he remembered. He dropped himself carefully into the tunnel, wincing at the sudden light change, and instantly turning his torch on. "Jesus," he whispered, having to turn to the side to start going in. After several minutes of slow movement he noticed light that could only be coming from another human. Sherlock would move. "You bloody git," he hissed, sliding out of the narrow tunnel and studying his fiancé. Almost completely naked. Good thinking, he noted for a moment. "Don't you fucking scare me like that ever again." He wrapped a hand tightly around the back of Sherlock's neck before roughly meeting his lips.

Sherlock was still recovering his hearing, so he never heard John. He hadn't even noticed the other light source, as he was intent on going through each item in the bag. He found a large baggie with gauze and emptied the sterile pads into the dirt. He spun around the same moment John appeared in front of him and he squinted to try and read the lips that spoke. It was probably some snarky rebuff so he smirked in response. He returned the kiss, embracing John tightly.

John whimpered into the kiss, pulling away as he inspected Sherlock's body. Injuries. Look for injuries. He couldn't hear. "Hurt?" He mouthed to Sherlock, tilting the other man's head from side to side to check for injuries there as well. He laughed softly at their situation before moving around to pick up Sherlock's clothes. "Put them back on, you should be fine if you hurry." He moved to his bag, closing all the opening pockets of his bag. "We need to go. Now."

Sherlock took the clothes and shoved them into the baggie. He could put them back on later. He eyed the opening and then John, wondering how the other man had fit. He shrugged it off and picked up the torch. No time to argue who would go first, not that Sherlock would be able to hear John anyway without shouting at each other. No sense in risking another cave in with unnecessarily loud sound waves bouncing around off the walls. He squeezed through, dust and dirt covering his sweat covered body. It was still sweltering hot, despite being stripped down to his skivvies.

John watched Sherlock with a glare before picking up his bag and putting it above his head. He slid into the narrow tunnel with his arms above his head, clutching his bag. It was hard to breathe, too hot and too dusty and Christ he wanted to get out of here. The light to the exit was finally visible and John nearly shouted with joy, tossing his backpack out before eagerly climbing out himself. He collapsed on to his stomach into the dirt, breathing heavy and swearing through his tan undershirt. "Fuck you, Sherlock," he stated with a grin, not caring that the other man couldn't hear him.

Sherlock tried to wipe the sweat and dirt off himself, but only succeeded in smearing it across his body. He grumbled in discontent and wondered if it would even be worth putting his clothes back on. Probably not. He was hot, dirty and sticky. His clothes would just cling to his body and cause even more discomfort. "I guess spelunking is out when we go on our honeymoon." He still spoke louder than need be, a smirk on his lips. His hearing was getting better though, the ringing wasn't nearly as loud before.

John burst out laughing, sitting up and pulling his shirt off. "C'mere." He stood up and moved toward Sherlock despite his words. "I was seriously going to kill you," he stated with a smile, running his shirt down Sherlock's chest and stomach to clean him off. After inspecting Sherlock he
turned toward his bag and pulled out his water bottle, wetting his hands and running them down Sherlock's face before following that with his shirt. "Welcome to Afghanistan," he muttered with a glance in Sherlock's direction. He pushed himself up on his toes and gently met Sherlock's lips.

Sherlock smirked and watched as John cleaned him off as best as the other man could manage. He returned the kiss, drawing John into a hug. "I was worried about you. Glad you are okay." He gave a tighter squeeze, his head coming to rest on John's shoulder. He supposed they shouldn't be out here too long. At the rate things were going for them, an enemy patrol would come along and capture them both. He released his fiancé finally, and hastily put his clothes back on.

John let his eyes scan Sherlock's body before he turned to his bag to grab a new shirt. "I'm Captain John Watson," he muttered as he pulled the shirt over his head. "I'm always fine." It was a cocky statement, something Sherlock would say, but he didn't care.

"Oi, Doc." Hollman tossed John's armor in his direction, dropped a second pair at Sherlock's feet. "Don't scare us like that again!" The two men embraced and laughed.

"C'mon, let's get to base." He took the gun that the soldier handed him and moved to stand beside Sherlock. "We've got quite the walk ahead of us." He slipped his armor on and pulled his bag on to his back, and smiled. "Let's try not to get you killed."

Sherlock eyed John and the other soldier when they embraced. Would he always be jealous? He grumbled to himself and put the body armor on. The ringing in his ears had finally ceased, so if he listened carefully he could make out what was spoken. He figured in another half hour, his hearing would be back to normal again. Even though he had long legs and could have easily kept up, he lagged behind the other two men. He was pouting.

It took several minutes for John to realize that Sherlock wasn't keeping up with him. He slowed down slightly and fell into step beside Sherlock. "Stop pouting," he whispered softly, smiling up at Sherlock. "It's just a hug. We're like family out here. There isn't anything going on." He elbowed Sherlock's side and glanced ahead of them. "This means we get another night together. I imagine you'll be sleeping on the base now."

"Well, you had said you wanted me to fuck you out here." Sherlock smirked, his eyebrows raised slightly. He walked side by side with John the whole way back to the base, not seeming to mind the distance or the heat right now. He was just happy that they were both okay. When they got back, he heard a familiar voice yell his name. No. It couldn't be. Dad? He found Mycroft and glared at his older brother.

"Sherlock! Don't pretend you didn't hear me! You stupid, selfish boy! What were you thinking? Are you trying to lead your mother to an early grave? I swear, your older brother is the only one who has sense between the two of you!" Colonel Siger Holmes, stood in front of his son. He was an inch or two taller, his posture straight like a proper military man should have. A formidable man indeed.

It was like being a child all over again. Even now, he was still intimidated by his old man. Sherlock didn't shirk away though and he met his father's gaze with a glare. He shouted back. "Why is it bloody okay for everyone else to run around risking their life but when I do, all I get is flak?" His nostrils flared and he tried to stare his father down.

Siger slapped his son in the face, hard. "Don't talk back to me!" He growled.

Sherlock bit back a retort, rubbed his check sullenly and looked away in defeat.
Everything had seemed perfect until they had gotten back to base. It was obvious the tall man was related to the Holmes boys, and it was even more obvious where Mycroft got his looks from. The man was tall, taller than Sherlock, and carried himself exactly like John. The arguing caused him to wince and glance toward Mycroft who looked like he suddenly regretted getting the older man here.

That was when the sound of the smack reached John's ears.

His head whipped around, eyes narrowed, and he shed his backpack with a speed he didn't know he had. "Sherlock..." He pushed his fiancé a few steps away from the other man, pulling his hand away to inspect the skin before turning back to Sherlock's father. Who the Hell hit their child like that, adult or not? He completely turned his back to Sherlock to face his Dad, spine straight and hands at his side. "Captain John Watson." He glanced back at Sherlock before he spoke. "I am Sherlock's fiancé."

"I know exactly who you are. You have a superior officer in front of you, Captain," the word 'captain' had a bit of condescending tone to it, "and I'll ask you only once to show me the proper respect I deserve. Something I've earned in my years of service." Siger Holmes, quite possibly the only person who was more arrogant than Sherlock. He expected anyone of lower rank of him to stand at rigid attention, give a crisp salute and to stay standing at attention until otherwise stated. He ran a tight ship within in his ranks and even if wasn't officially in charge, he still expected it of every enlisted military personnel.

Sherlock hadn't really been shocked his father slapped him; it hadn't been the first time and it probably wouldn't the last. He glanced at John and his father talking. Nope. No one talked to John like that. He got in his father's face, so they were chest to chest and his head titled up slightly so he could stare into the older man's eyes. "No! You won't bully him, ever!"

Siger smiled dangerously. "Are you ever going to grow up, boy? You had such potential and you do nothing but waste your talent. You are a disgrace and disappointment." He spat the words and then he turned to the helicopter that head brought him here, twirled his finger in the air and ducked into the aircraft as it started up and flew away.

If the older Holmes hadn't jumped away into a helicopter John was fairly sure he would have punched the man in the face. It didn't matter that he was Sherlock's Dad and it was probably a good idea for the man to like his future son-in-law. Except right now, with the way the man had treated his fiancé, he didn't give a damn. He flipped off the helicopter before roughly grabbing Sherlock's hand and leading him toward the barracks. He knew Mycroft would have a single room with a door.

"Out. Now!" John whipped the door open to the personal room and when Mycroft opened his mouth to protest he shouted again. "Now!"

The older Holmes brother darted from the room and John slammed the door shut behind him, roughly shoving Sherlock against the door and attacking his neck. "Fuck me," he growled, ripped at the shirt Sherlock was wearing. "Now."

Sherlock trailed after John, more automatically than anything. He blinked when the army doctor yelled at his older brother. He was about to say something but John had moved in on him aggressively. Never would have thought these words would come out of his mouth, but here he was saying them. "John. No stop. I'm not really in the mood." He put his hands on his fiancé's chest to halt the progression but he didn't push the other man away.

John looked up at Sherlock with wide eyes, panting as he glanced down at Sherlock's hand. Jesus,
he was hard and Sherlock wasn't in the mood. He took a small step back, his hand adjusting the bulge in the front of his pants. "Sorry. Just... adrenaline. Sorry." he lowered his head, his hands resting on his hips as he struggled to compose himself. Sherlock had taken a step forward while they'd been at the hotel and now it was John's turn to step up. "D'you want to talk about it?" He asked softly. There was a bed in the room, they could easily snuggle and talk.

With a slight frown Sherlock watched John. "I'm sorry," he muttered. He felt miserable for having told the army doctor 'no' when it was obvious the other man needed him right now. He shook his head and then said, "Not really, no. Believe it or not, that was one of the more pleasant interactions I've had with him." He tried to smile, but it didn't reach his eyes and it was almost sad looking.

John didn't hesitate as he moved forward, wrapping his arms around Sherlock's body in a tight embrace. "Talk to me. Now. Obviously something is wrong." He placed a soft kiss on Sherlock's jaw and met his gaze. "That's what husbands do for each other." His smile was soft, knowing, and he took a step toward the bed with Sherlock still in his arms. "We can relax, talk, take a nap after our ordeal." He smirked.

Sherlock returned the hug, just as tightly. Once more he followed automatically and when they laid down, he curled into John immediately. He was quiet a long moment, his head laying on John's chest. "It's stupid really. That I even care what he says or think. I've wasted a lot my time trying to impress him or at the very least make him proud. But if Mycroft does anything then by all means he should win the Nobel Peace Prize." He couldn't help the bitterness in his voice. It was why he had chosen to live the life he did, to shut everyone out and shove everyone away. So, he wouldn't care what anyone thought or said but John had broken down his walls and defenses so easily.

John hummed appreciatively and rested his chin on top of Sherlock's head. "It isn't stupid, Sherlock. Kids always want to impress their parents and seeing one parent favor the other child is never nice. I love you and everything but your father is a dick. More of a dick than you, if that's possible. You don't need his approval." His hand ran lightly up and down Sherlock's side, his head tilting slightly to place a kiss on the crown of Sherlock's head.

Sherlock couldn't help but laugh and then gave a slight shrug. "Mum always favored me. Probably because dad favored Mycroft. I don't know. If my mother ever found out what happened tonight, the whole neighborhood would hear about it. She is the only person I know who isn't afraid to go toe to toe with dad and then still win. When I was really little, they got into bad. Dad shoved Mum and she fought back. It is the only physical altercation I've ever seen them get in."

What Sherlock was describing didn't sound like a childhood. It sounded horrid, not the way he would ever want anybody to grow up. "She sounds like a wonderful woman." John smiled softly. "Given your personality she must be perfect to deal with you and your brother." John's hand snuck smoothly into the waistband of his pants, his fingers pressing lightly against Sherlock's skin.

"More like because she put up with my dad," Sherlock muttered. He closed his eyes at the touch. It wasn't out of contentment though. He just didn't have the heart to tell John 'no' again and he realized now would be a perfect time to be the submissive. "You can have control, I still owe you." He wasn't really interested in the game but maybe it could distract him for awhile.

John seemed to instantly react to Sherlock's words. He titled Sherlock's head up with his free hand and kissed him gently. This was perfect. For weeks the stress had been handled with just his hand and now he had Sherlock, who he thought was completely willing to do this. "I love you," he whispered against Sherlock's lips. He grunted in disappointment at the size of the bed, a twin pressed directly against the wall. He shifted his body slightly, turning to his side the best he could and wedging one leg between Sherlock's.
Sherlock followed John's movements. He returned the kiss, eyes still closed so his fiancé couldn't see the trouble he felt. "Love you too." He murmured quietly. John seemed eager so he tried to shift so the other man could be on top, his legs spreading immediately and offering no resistance.

John tore away from the kiss with a growl, glancing between them as he moved so he could comfortably situate himself between Sherlock's legs. All he could think about was how stressed he was, how this would help, and failed to notice that Sherlock didn't seem to share his enthusiasm. His hands moved to Sherlock's shirt, unbuttoning it slowly and nipping at the skin as it was revealed. "You're beautiful," he whispered against Sherlock's skin, his hands wrapping around Sherlock's waist when his shirt was open.

Sherlock tried to concentrate on John's kisses and touches, to try and get himself as eager as the man on top of him. He just couldn't get there, there was no way he was going to be aroused enough to get the blood flowing and his penis hard. He opened his eyes to look down at John nipping at his chest. He thought about saying something to stop it, but his fiancé seemed content with the task. He laid his head back, eyes closing once more.

John glanced around the room for a moment, focused and determined, before frowning. There wasn't anything in this room that could be used to help them right now. His eyes turned back to Sherlock. Eyes closed, head back, hands still at his side. Somewhere in the fogginess of his arousal John realized that he was a bit uninterested but when his pressed against Sherlock and a moan escaped his mouth he forgot about any of his thoughts. "Jesus, yes." His hips thrust against Sherlock again and he buried his face into Sherlock's shoulder to hide another moan.

Even with John rocking against him, Sherlock couldn't get excited. He was too distracted with other thoughts. He was still thinking about the incident with his father. He had decided that he didn't want that man at the wedding. He became angry suddenly, and to release his frustration he began sucking on John's neck and scratching his back, completely forgetting he had given consent to his fiancé to being in control.

Scratches and teeth? When the Hell did Sherlock decide that this was being submissive? John let out a small shout and was relieved when it was muffled by the sheets and mattress below his mouth. "Fuck. Fuck." His hips snapped forward roughly, his pace faster than he would have liked. It was like he was a bloody teenager trying to get off before his parents caught them. He even still had his pants on. When did rutting against his fiancé become so damn pleasurable? He hissed against Sherlock's skin, pressing his neck against the other man's mouth without a second thought.

Sherlock gave some reprieve to the neck, when he began nibbling on John's ear aggressively. His hands trailed from the back to the other man's pants eagerly. In his haste he fumbled for a moment before they came undone. His lower body squirmed wildly with desperate need against John's.

John struggled to take a deep breath, lifting his head to glance between them. "Don't have anything," he managed between pants. "This w-will have to do." He reached between them and swiftly undid Sherlock's pants, reaching inside and instantly freezing. Sherlock wasn't hard at all. "You okay?" John asked as his hips snapped down involuntarily. This wasn't normal but he was having trouble stopping himself. Sherlock was usually just as eager as him.

It was then Sherlock realized that he was just plain pissed off and not the least bit horny. He growled out, "Can't..." Damn it. He shoved John away, a little harder than intended. He stumbled out of the bed, hastily redoing his pants, threw the door open and stalked out into the desert heat. He quickly found Mycroft. Perfect, his older brother had his back turned. He tapped the other man on the shoulder and when Mycroft turned around, Sherlock cold cocked him right in the face with his fist.
John grunted from the impact of hands against his body, landing on his back on the ground with a groan of pain. "Sherlo-" He took a deep breath and struggling to stand up, quickly buttoning his pants and making sure his shirt was pulled down before following Sherlock. That was when he saw it.

Mycroft turned and before he even had a moment to recognize his younger brother he had hit the ground, out cold.

"Sherlock!" John rushed forward, dropping to his knees next to the older Holmes and placing a gentle hand on his cheek. "The fuck, Sherlock?" His eyes darted up and he studied his fiancé. This wasn't normal. This wasn't supposed to be happening. "Mycroft?" He looked down at the man on the ground who had stirred slightly. "Mycroft, can you hear me?"

After the punch connected Sherlock shook his hand, wiggling his fingers experimentally. They were a bit bruised but not busted. "It was all his fault," he grumbled, as if that explained everything. He still didn't feel better after venting his frustration on the only person around who even vaguely deserved it. "Need to go for a walk..." He muttered and then began walking away. He didn't care it was the middle of the desert with possible hostiles around. He wasn't thinking very clearly right now anyway.

John had barely heard Sherlock and the moment he did he was on his feet, shouting for another soldier to make sure Mycroft was alright. He darted to Hollman, who was wearing a knowing smirk, and snatched his armor and helmet with a, "shove it."

John ran as he slipped it all on, grabbing extra body armor as he sprinted out off the base. "Sherlock! Come here." He stopped beside Sherlock, falling in step with him and grabbing his hand. It was then he decided to pull the best card he knew. "What should we name her?" He gave Sherlock's hand a squeeze.

For a moment Sherlock almost pulled his hand away, but the question had completely surprised him and he ended up squeezing John's hand back faintly. He was still angry but the question did make him pause and think of answer. "I don't know," he said after awhile. "Sarah sent a letter to me with the sonogram. She said if you have suggestions to mail her a letter. Her address is on the back of the sonogram. Are you still going to want to have a honeymoon? The baby will be born by the time you get back."

"Of course I still want a honeymoon," John stated the information like it was obvious. "Sarah can handle her for a few days, I am sure." The little girl who he had just found out about was already wiggling her way into his heart. Just the thought of her made him smile softly and his heart rate increase. "Are you going to go see her, then? When she is born before I am back?" He studied his fiancé for a long moment. "I want you in her life." He knew they were avoiding a serious issue but John figured getting Sherlock's mind off of his troubling thoughts might be best for now.

Taking a stroll through a desert, where one might end up shot or worse wasn't the ideal situation. However, Sherlock found it strangely calming. He walked hand in hand with John, listening quietly and thought for a moment before replying. "Yes. I had planned to be there the day she was born, so I could take a picture and text it to you. As long as it was okay with you and Sarah too I guess." Really, he didn't care if Sarah would mind or not. It was then he realized that the woman would be
in their lives forever now, a constant reminder of John's infidelity. He couldn't help but wonder if someday he would hold that against the army doctor's daughter in some kind of childish fit. Probably. He sighed at his thoughts and even though the body armor made it uncomfortable, he leaned his head onto John's shoulder.

The moment John felt pressure on his shoulder he stopped walking, turning and wrapping his arms around Sherlock. "She won't mind at all," he whispered into Sherlock's ear. He dropped the extra set of armor with a sigh. "Sherlock Holmes, you are a brilliant and beautiful man. Don't let anybody tell you different or ever bring you down. You deserve so much more, but I will do my best to make you as happy as possible for the rest of my life." His eyes closed for a long moment, his hands rubbing up and down Sherlock's spine. "And my daughter will view you as a father and I am sure you will be the best Dad."

Without a second's hesitation, Sherlock returned the hug. He didn't say anything for a long time. He just clung to John tightly, lost in thought. He hated that after all these years his father could still get under his skin. He thought he had outgrown it. He'd thought wrong. He tried to push the thoughts from his mind, so he finally spoke. "Do you think she will like me? I don't really have experience dealing with children."

"Of course she'll like you." John laughed slightly and gave Sherlock a squeeze. "She won't really have a choice. Besides, I have a feeling that once she is here you will be comfortable with her. They say parents usually are." He turned his head and placed a kiss on Sherlock's cheek. He wouldn't tell Sherlock but he was more nervous than he had ever been. This wasn't just babysitting or seeing somebody else's child for a few hours. This child was his. A lifetime responsibility. "You will be fine."

Parent? Him? Technically he would be... Sherlock frowned in thought. He supposed while John's daughter was there, he would take on some parent-like responsibilities. Why hadn't he realized that before? Sometimes his work involved dangerous things. Would he be able to do experiments in the flat anymore? Good God, not just John's life was changing but his too. He couldn't ever imagine not being the only consulting detective in the world. It was his livelihood...his legacy...it was a part of him. Maybe he would set up something boring like an office, to keep work and home separate. Yes that could work... Sherlock blinked as his thoughts finally trailed off and then a smirk formed on his lips as he looked down at John. "So, we are out here all alone...maybe we should take advantage of that?"

Watching Sherlock think made John smile and at his comment he glanced around. "We could. We really could. I...I don't think I have anything with me but..." His hands traveled to the front of Sherlock's pants slowly, an eyebrow arching under his helmet. "I have my mouth though. And I'm sure one of your fantasies must be a soldier in uniform sucking you off." He gently met Sherlock's lips.

Fantasy? Sherlock never really had one of those. His thoughts don't get very far and he returned the kiss. With a little effort, he maneuvered a hand under John's shirt and body armor so his fingers could trail down his fiancé's skin. He broke the kiss and began lightly nibbling on John's neck, his body pressing against the man in front of his tightly.

Sherlock's hand was cooler than John's skin and he instantly shivered at the touch. "Ah, fuck." He tilted his head to expose more of his neck. "Camp?" He asked in a moan. God, he wanted Sherlock and everything they would need was in his bag. "Christ, Sherlock, I need you." He forced his hand into Sherlock's pants, grabbing his cock and giving it a squeeze. "Camp. Now."

Sherlock reacted to the hand on his penis immediately, his knees buckling a bit and his body
slumping into John's for support. His cock on the other hand, grew firm. "Don't want to wait. Here. Now." He muttered the words into John's neck, sucking on it roughly now. His fingers began scratching, his hips thrusting with a slight rhythm into the other man.

John opened his mouth to argue, to demand they go back to the camp, but the movement of Sherlock's hips was enough to stop him. Sherlock wanted this and John wanted nothing more than to make him happy. He braced his body to help support Sherlock. "Tell me what you want, Sherlock." John gave a slight smirk. His hand slowed and loosened on Sherlock's cock. They were alone and had very little chance of being interrupted. John was going to take advantage of it.

With his free hand, Sherlock grabbed John by the collar of the body armor and pulled the other man down on top of him as he laid down in the sand. He found John's ear and growled into it, "I already told you. Now shut up and get to it." Okay, so maybe he was being a little more aggressive than usual but they often fought for control and he wanted to assert his authority early on. Or perhaps it was the residual anger he still felt from earlier. Either way, he began to buck against John roughly and impatiently, losing the rhythm he'd had before.

Had Sherlock said what he wanted earlier? John had missed it, he was too focused on everything. And now he was on top of Sherlock. He was struggling to keep up. Except now he wanted to play games. Sure, Sherlock had clearly asserted his dominance this time around but John wasn't just going to take it. "Tell me again," John snapped as he pulled his helmet off and tossed it aside. His hand darted to the straps on the side of his body armor, undoing them with practiced ease before pulling it off with a small sigh. "Do you want me below you, Sherlock? Do you want to fuck me with your clothes still on?" His hips pressed slowly into the body below him, his lips holding a cocky smirk.

Usually, Sherlock was all for the games. However, now was not one of those times. "Shut up," he growled again. He grabbed John's shirt this time, and rolled them over so he could be on top. He leaned down and began biting the army doctor's neck. He blindly reached down and began undoing his pants. He was already breathing heavily, but he used his nose for air as he continued to mark the man below him. The thrusts of his lower torso began to have a trace of rhythm.

"Fuck, yes." John arched up into Sherlock, wrapping his legs around the other man eagerly. It had never occurred to him that he liked this rough. Before Sherlock it had always been slow, soft, nothing more than whispers and soft kisses. Now it was biting, marking, shouts, things he would feel in the morning. He couldn't imagine sex any different now. "Christ, y-yes." He lifted his hips to meet Sherlock's thrusts the best he could, turning his head to nip at Sherlock's ear. With each of Sherlock's thrusts he let out a small gasp of air, moving his hands to claw at Sherlock's shoulder blades through his shirt. "Fucking beautiful."

Once his pants were undone, Sherlock wiggled his hips so they would slide down to his knees. He wasted no time sliding his underwear off as well. He next worked on John's pants, as he continued to kiss the army doctor eagerly. Satisfied with the rather large mark on his fiancé's neck he moved his lips to John's and with his tongue parted the other man's lips to eagerly explore the mouth beyond. He finally got John's pants open and he pulled them down as well. He broke the kiss and leaned his head to his fiancé's ear. "Better hold on tight. Might hurt." He was eager sure, but he figured he should probably give John a heads up. A curtsey he hadn't given back at the hotel when they were on the floor.

John took several deep breaths, placing his hands on Sherlock's chest. "H-hold on." He reached out the best he could, his fingers hooking around a side-strap of his armor and tugging it toward them. "I love you, I really do." He looked desperately in all the pockets on the left side of the vest, "But you are preparing me. Period. I can't just walk back to camp after you dry fucked me, you git." He
rotated at his waist and flipped the vest over. "I might have Vaseline in my vest to protect my skin," he muttered, fumbling when he finally found it. It was a small package and he visibly winced. "At least prepare me and put some on your dick, will you?" He thrust it against Sherlock's chest, his eyes narrowed and determined.

With a mutter Sherlock did as asked. He didn't want to wait any longer than he had to, however he supposed John was right. He dipped his fingers into the Vaseline and applied it to his penis and around his fiancé's entry. He could hardly stand it any longer and he eagerly slid his cock in, starting a fast but steady pace. He placed his hands on John's shoulders for some support, fingers digging in a bit.

In the middle of the desert John figured he didn't have to hold anything back. The moment Sherlock entered him he threw his head back, shouting. Christ, it shouldn't be so hot to just lay on his back and take it but, really, it was perfect. "Shit, off." He shifted his left shoulder, moving his right hand to shove Sherlock's hand off of his scarred shoulder. "Don't stop, fuck." He swiftly moved his hand to Sherlock's hair, roughly pulling the man's head down to meet his lips. "Harder." He nipped at Sherlock's bottom lip and glanced between them, biting his bottom lip as he let out a groan. His free hand scratched at Sherlock's back, his feet digging into Sherlock's lower back.

Sherlock muttered an apology and moved his hand so it rested above John's shoulder, in the hot desert sand. He lasted longer than he thought he would, keeping the pace steady but quick. After several thrusts he came and he collapsed slightly to one side into the grainy dust. He panted for breath for a few seconds before shifting so he could give John a blow job. His mouth enveloped his fiancé's cock and he began to bob his head in steady rhythm.

It happened so fast that John barely had time to realize that Sherlock's mouth was on him, that he'd already finished. His hips snapped up and he attempted to apologize when he felt Sherlock's nose against his stomach. It wouldn't do any good to fuck the other man's mouth, it would probably be the last time Sherlock sucked him off if he kept that up. "God, your mouth is wonderful." He squeezed the hand in Sherlock's hair as his body tensed, coming with Sherlock's name on his lips. "Ah, yes, God yes." He tugged at Sherlock's hair gently, his stomach tense as he tried to catch his breath. Honestly, it'd been quick but now he could say he'd had sex in the middle of the Afghan desert. Always a plus in his book. "I love you. I love you so much."

Once John came he swallowed and then removed his mouth from the penis. Sherlock licked his lips and then moved so he could snuggle into his dear doctor. "I love you too." He laid flat on his back, a hand behind his head and his nestled into John's shoulder. He was staring up at the clear night sky. He could see the stars so clearly here, something that couldn't be done back in London. When had the sun set? He hadn't noticed the change in time until now. He shrugged it off and rolled to nuzzle into John, his head now resting on the army doctor's chest. His unwanted thoughts from earlier came to mind and he spoke them out loud to John. "I don't want him at the wedding..." He trailed off quietly, fingers trailing lightly along his fiancé's side.

John moved his head slightly, wrapping his arm protectively around Sherlock's shoulder. "Who? Your Dad?" Really, it could have been Mycroft as well. Sherlock had punched the older Holmes brother right in the face, something he never thought he would see. "That's fine, Sherlock. It's our wedding. And personally," he smiled a bit, "I don't want him there much either." His lips pressed against the crown of Sherlock's head, lingering as he took a breath, memorizing what Sherlock smelled like. "Are you upset about it? The fight? I know you said that was actually better than most encounters but...it bugged you, yeah? That was why we just fucked like rabbits in the middle of the desert?" His eyes lifted to the sky with a weak smile and he tilted his head back to view more of the stars.
"Yeah. I get the need to relieve stress now, I guess. I don't want him there, John. Not after the way he spoke to you. He has always been a bully. Used to getting his way. Saying and doing whatever he wants to those around. I won't let him treat you like that. It is not okay." Sherlock gave John a hug, as tight as he could from his perpendicular position.

For a moment, an extremely irrational moment, John wanted to remove any bad experiences from Sherlock's childhood. He wanted to get rid of anything horrid his father had ever done to him. "You are perfect," he whispered as Sherlock's embrace tightened. "You are brilliant and wonderful and I don't know what I would do if I ever lost you." His free hand reached across his body and settled at the base of Sherlock's skull, pressing his face tighter against the other man's chest. "So much better than he will ever be."

Sherlock was silent a long moment as he continued to cling to John tightly. A jarring thought came to mind. "If I hadn't met you, I would have probably ended up just like him, minus the family part. I did meet you, I've changed and now I'm going to end up with a family." Life had a funny way turning out sometimes. "We always talk about me and my family. What about yours? You've never really mentioned them other than Harry and you rarely speak of her."

For a moment John smiled, the thought of having a family with Sherlock causing his gut to twist. And then he asked about his family. It was expected, really. John couldn't hide it forever. "Dad died when I was fifteen. Heart attack. Mum died during my first tour in Iraq, so...oh-four, I think. November of 2004." He cleared his throat and exhaled loudly through his nose. "Harry and I were close through our childhood. I picked on her an all that but we were kids. We stopped talking when I refused to come home for Mum's funeral." It was painful to admit and he had never told anybody. "So, really, you are my family. I like it that way."

Sherlock frowned a bit as John spoke. He would have said 'I'm sorry' but that seemed a little too trite. He gave another tight hug instead. Well, that explained Harry's drinking problem but he kept that to himself as well. "Why did you join the army? I mean it's obvious you love the thrill but before that, what drew you to a life of military?" He shifted a bit, trying to get comfortable in the sand and failing. It was itchy and kept sticking to the parts of his body where his skin was exposed.

God. Oh God. This was information that his fiancé shouldn't be learning about. Too bad his mouth moved before he had a chance to stop himself from speaking. "Jenny. Uh, Jenny Worthing. We had been seeing each other for three years when I enlisted. She was pregnant. We needed money." John paused and let his embrace tighten around Sherlock. "She lost the child while I was training. We were still considering marriage, kept that up through my first deployment. I was different when I came back and she couldn't handle it. Up and left one morning." He shrugged and glanced at Sherlock. "And I've never told anybody that."

Her loss, his gain. Sherlock honestly couldn't fathom how anyone could ever leave John and the thought of a life without his dear doctor was too terrible to even contemplate. "Is that why you told me before that you didn't want a family? You were worried you would lose it again? To be honest, I wasn't sure how you would feel about Sarah being pregnant. You had seemed so disinterested in kids when we discussed back in that private hospital. Did you become a doctor before or during your services?" He couldn't help all the questions, being a curious man by nature and all. Well, he supposed he could have deduced it all out himself if had wanted to but John had said on more than one occasions that couples were supposed to talk to each other about things.

All of the questions were...endearing? John figured that Sherlock should know this. They were getting married, after all. "I don't know." He shrugged and tore his eyes away from the stars to meet Sherlock's gaze. "I thought that after Jenny I just wasn't meant to be a Dad. Like...there was a reason I hadn't met the right woman and that Jenny had lost the child." His voice seemed far-off
and disconnected, lost in his memories. He smiled at Sherlock. "I got my training at Uni. While I
do have medical experience I'm more of a medic right now than a doctor. I fight, I've got a gun. I'm
only used when it is really necessary." He placed a kiss on top of Sherlock's head, his lips curled in
a smile. "I'm nervous about the kid. I am not the sort of man that's supposed to be a Dad."

As Sherlock listened quietly, he took hold of John's hand and intertwined their fingers in a light
squeeze. "You will be a great Dad. Have you thought about a name you like?" Really, he was
nervous himself...not that he would ever admit to that. Maybe he should read some books on babies
and being a father to prepare himself. John had said he would want the little girl in his life, so in a
way that would make him a dad too. As an adult and even growing up, he had little to no
interaction with children.

John returned the squeeze with his hand and twisted his mouth to the side. "I have a bit, yeah. I like
Stephanie. Maybe Melanie. Amy, even." Thinking of a name was tough. He didn't want to stick the
poor girl with a name she wouldn't like. "Have you? Any ideas? Of course we'll have to run them
by Sarah. I am sure she has a few." His gaze locked on Sherlock's eyes and he bent his neck to
gently kiss him.

"As I'm sure you have noticed the Holmes family doesn't have a predilection for naming children
what most people would consider 'normal' so I'm probably not the best person to ask." Sherlock
gave a small smile and thought for a moment. "Sandoval? We can call her Sandi?" He tilted his
head up so he could look at John's face to see what his fiancé thought about the name he had just
picked out at random.

Wait... "What?" Was the man pressed up against his side, his future husband, one for oddly
compelling names? "Sandoval?" He furrowed his eyebrows and bit his bottom lip. "Sandoval
Watson." There was a small nod of his head and he glanced down at his fiancé. "Run it by Sarah
and see what she thinks. If she isn't too keen it could always be her middle name." He smiled
warmly. After shifting his body slightly he realized that his pants were down at his ankles. "Are
you going to maybe drop by Sarah's to see her? You know, get to know her and hold her."

Sherlock was rather pleased that John liked the name he had picked out. He couldn't help it when
his body tensed at as Sarah's name. It had the same effect on him that a swear word would on an
overzealous religious person. He forced himself to relax and he took a calming breath. "I was
supposed to see her tonight in London. I guess she wants to talk to me, what about I am not entirely
sure but I have a few theories."

John felt it. Sherlock tensed the moment he heard Sarah's name. It was small but John had felt it
and frowned slightly. His fiancé was going to have to get used to her name because Sarah was
going to be around the flat a lot, no doubt about it. "I'm sure she wanted to talk to you
about...everything. I mean, we are getting married but she is going to be part of our life now.
Permanently. And by now I'm sure she is showing and you can feel the baby move." He frowned
even more. He was going to miss all of that. Talking to Sarah's stomach like a typical father,
rubbing it and feeling the child move. He was missing the birth of his first child. His body tensed
at the thoughts but he managed to catch himself and covered it the best he could by pulling
Sherlock closer. "Will you see her tomorrow? Please? Maybe send me a picture?"

It was inevitable, he supposed, that he would be seeing a lot of Sarah. A constant reminder to
Sherlock of when he had caught John with her in bed. It would have been easier to get over it, if
she could be cut from their lives completely. That wasn't going to happen now. He closed his eyes
in thought. He had told himself time and again he was over it. Had even forgiven John, and was
able trust him again. He realized it bothered him so much because he associated her with the
tumultuous emotions that had come the night he had found them. He had been so lost in thought he
had almost missed the questions. Tomorrow? Picture? "Yes. I suppose so," he murmured finally, in answer to both questions.

It was clear that they were both lost in thought. Sherlock was good at hiding it all but John knew. "Suppose so? That's a bit dodgy. I would prefer 'yes,'" he joked softly. His hand drifted into Sherlock's hair, tugging his head back gently to meet his lips. "Talk to me. I can see you thinking. This is bugging you, isn't it?" His eyes were soft, understanding and his voice was low. "Please. There can't be any secrets, Sherlock, or this won't work."

Sherlock met John's lips briefly and then shrugged. "I guess. John, thinking of her makes me remember everything I was feeling when I caught you two that night. I would just assume delete the memory from my brain altogether." He fell quiet once more, reflecting a bit before speaking once more. "I will make the effort to be civil. I doubt however, I will ever like the idea of her being in our lives."

Oh. This child, this thing that John was slowly starting to view as a blessing, was something Sherlock saw as nothing more than a reminder that his fiancé had been unfaithful. John felt guilt rush through his body. "I'm sorry." His voice cracked and he tried to cool the simmering anger he felt in his gut. "Please don't hate her. She...She'll be like your daughter, Sherlock. I want her to be, at least." He let his eyes fall close, his heading dropping to the desert ground with a thud.
Sherlock frowned a moment as he looked to John intently. "When I said 'her' I meant Sarah. Not your daughter. I don't think I will hate your little girl. She's apart of you. A little, mini you running around all over the place. I'll admit, when I first found out my reaction was a little less than thrilled but I've moved past it." Okay, so that was understatement but he couldn't bring himself to tell John about the visceral reaction he had in the car. His older brother always told him he had flair for the dramatic. Mycroft…he had punched him in the face because their father hadn't been there. He supposed he owed his brother an apology. That wasn't something he was looking forward to.

"At least be civil toward Sarah," John stated softly as he took in the rest of Sherlock's statement. The way Sherlock described his daughter made him smile and laugh. "I've never thought about it like that, really. God, does the world really need another Watson like me running around?" That was a scary thought indeed. "I have something to take the edge off," he whispered as he searched the pockets of his body armor. It was difficult to do in the dark but he managed to wrap his hand around his pack of cigarettes and his lighter. "Here." He slipped one into Sherlock's hand and popped a second in his mouth, lighting it and inhaling eagerly as he passed off the lighter.

"She will wear pink and run around terrorizing neighborhood boys by pulling their hair." He smirked a bit at that thought and then blinked in surprise. Sherlock looked down at the cigarette John had just given him. "Since when did you smoke?" He lit up as well, but didn't inhale as deeply. He wasn't craving a cigarette but he would never turn down a quick nicotine fix. "You can no longer yell at me if I smoke again." He smirked a bit more, shifting off of his fiancé so the ash wouldn't get on John or worse accidentally burned the army doctor. He laid next to the other man, shoulder to shoulder.

"Since I fucking get shot every day," John replied with a smirk, blowing the smoke slowly between his lips. "I pick up smoking every time I'm deployed. Always drop it back when in back home." He took another long drag and exhaled with a sound of satisfaction. "Pink?" The question was late but it finally struck him that Sherlock had said that. "You want to dress her in pink?"

"You are also prone to fucking swearing more." Sherlock matched the smirk. "Isn't pink the color associated with little girls?" He thought for a moment and then he realized why John had questioned. "Ah. Well, pink is what started it all for us didn't it?" He gave a slight shrug, as he exhaled a plume of smoke. "I wonder how Hamish will react to the baby." He wondered idly, not realizing he had voiced his thoughts out loud until he had finished speaking.

John rolled to his side, coughing as he burst out laughing. "Jesus, Sherlock." He forced himself to sit up, continuing to laugh. "That was bloody hilarious. Fuck yes I swear more!" After another inhale from his cigarette he looked at Sherlock over his shoulder. "I was just thinking...I don't know. Pink is nice but not all pink. Some gender neutral." He flicked the cigarette away from him and moved to snuggle against Sherlock's side. "Shit, I forgot about your cat. I am sure he will be alright. Maybe he's mad all the time because you gave him a bloody horrible name."

Sherlock arched a brow as John laughed. He hadn't thought it was that particularly hilarious but he was glad the army doctor got a kick out of it. Oh. Gender neutral. Right. If he knew a bloody thing about kids or raising them he probably would have figured that out. "No. He was like that before I named him," he replied automatically. He wasn't finished smoking yet, so he switched the cigarette to his other hand so it could wrap around John as he nuzzled into him. "Besides, Hamish isn't that terrible of a name." Another thought occurred to him. "John…when people get married it is usually
customary to take someone else's last name. How do you want to do it? Really, I can't imagine either of us changing our names."

Last names. That was something John hadn't really thought about. Typically the woman in the relationship changed her name and, clearly, this wasn't one of those relationships. John Watson was a name he particularly liked and Sherlock Holmes was probably the best name any consulting detective could have. "Would it offend you at all if we kept our names the same? I mean, getting married isn't about changing our names. It is more about just being together for the rest of our live." He winced when he lifted his head, realizing instantly that the mark Sherlock had left there was bigger than he was used to. Might as well return the favor. John smiled into the dark, barely making out the shape of Sherlock's face, before his lips latched on to Sherlock's jaw, sucking gently as his tongue worked circles on the skin.

"It wouldn't offend me at all. I thought it best as well but wanted to hear your thoughts on it." Sherlock was about to finish off his cigarette when John began kissing his neck. It was quickly forgotten, the burning butt slipping from his fingers into the sand below. He tilted his head upward to allow his fiancé more access. The hand wrapped around John's waist, gently tugged the man toward his lanky body, so that the other man could come to rest on top of him. He brought up his other hand to trail through John's military short hair.

John followed the pull of Sherlock's arm without argument, settling easily between Sherlock's legs without pulling his lips from the man's neck. The current that rushed through his body made his mouth work harder against Sherlock's neck. "Mine," he whispered, nudging Sherlock's jaw with his nose. If he didn't come back alive, if he was an urn resting on Sherlock's fireplace, he wanted the man beneath him to know that he was John's. Period. This was their last night until he was back in London, he figured. With his first child on the way it would probably become Sherlock's responsibility to stay with Sarah and help as much as possible. His hands clenched in the dirt on either side of Sherlock's head and he picked a new spot on his neck.

Sherlock couldn't help but squirm under John as the other man marked his neck. God, it felt so good. It always did but he wasn't ready for another round. Too soon for that. That didn't mean he couldn't enjoy what was happening though. The hand on John's back slid up his shirt and he began to scratch lightly. His other hand dropped from his fiancé's scalp to his arse, and gave it a firm squeeze.

John smirked against the skin when he realized that both of their pants were still securely around their ankles. There was no way he was ready to have sex again, probably wouldn't be before it was time for Sherlock to leave, but laying on top of him and being close enough to inhale the scent of his skin was enough. It was perfect. "I love you. You are wonderful and brilliant and I don't know what I would ever do without you," he whispered as one hand tangled in Sherlock's hair. His mouth trailed across Sherlock's neck until he found his Adam's apple, eagerly sucking on it.

Sherlock was going to speak but John sucking on his Adam's apple promptly put a stop to that. It caused a combination of pleasure and pain. The sucking felt nice but the location was a pressure point on the male anatomy. After a moment, breathing became a bit difficult and not because he was aroused. He tried to say their safety word but all that came was a strangled cough. If John continued then he could end up collapsing Sherlock's larynx, which would effectively suffocate the consulting detective to death. As he fought for air, he brought his hands forward and shoved desperately at John's chest hoping to get the other man's attention.

The pressure on John's chest caused him to pull away with a gasp, looking down at Sherlock's hands before searching in the dark for Sherlock's eyes. "What? What's wrong?" After several women had discovered that part of his body John had learned quite quickly that it was extremely
sensitive. He figured Sherlock might have liked it. His eyebrows lowered in confusion. One moment Sherlock had been enjoying it and the next he was practically pushing John off of his body. "Are you alright?"

Hurt to breath. Chest on fire. Sherlock struggled for breath and was completely incapable of answering any of John's questions at the moment. Eventually air flow came back and he began to cough violently, his hands dropping to the sand below him for support so his body would shake a little less. He had forgotten he had dropped a still burning cigarette next to him and he would have sworn in pain from the burn now on the palm of his hand but he was still coughing and he couldn't seem to stop.

John jumped into action, moving off of Sherlock and pulling him to sit up. He situated himself to sit behind his fiancé, Sherlock's back against his chest with his own legs spread so Sherlock could relax between them. After making sure Sherlock was sitting up he moved Sherlock's arms and laced his fingers together on top of his head. "Calm. Try and take some deep breaths," he whispered soothingly in Sherlock's ear, his hands holding Sherlock's sides.

Eventually the coughing died down and Sherlock swallowed air in greedy gulps a few times before settling for deep, long breaths. He brought his burned hand around to inspect the wound. It was hard to tell in the night sky but it looked to be only a second degree burn. It was red but not blistering. It still hurt though, causing his entire palm to throb in pain. After sitting awhile longer his breathing returned to normal. He wasn't sure how much, if any damage his larynx had taken but he decided it would best to try and not to speak for a little while longer.

"Sorry," John whispered against the back of Sherlock's neck. His arms wrapped protectively around Sherlock's stomach. That had not been the intended outcome at all. Honestly, John had no idea about what had actually happened. Maybe he had gotten a bit more excited than he thought. "Just wanted to make you happy." His lips pressed against Sherlock's hairline gently. Even though the circumstances that led to their position were less than desirable, John felt this was the intimacy he had desperately wanted.

"It's fine." Sherlock's voice was a little rougher than usual but at least he could form words. He leaned into John, eyes closing in contentment from the close proximity of the their bodies. His burnt hand hung at his side, but he brought his other hand to rest upon his fiancé's, his fingers brushing lightly upon the back of the other man's hands.

John rested his forehead against the back of Sherlock's neck with a sigh, placing soft kisses against the skin he could reach. When he felt only one of Sherlock's hands lifted he craned his neck to glance over Sherlock's shoulder. "What's wrong with your other hand?" He didn't wait for an answer and pulled one hand away to grab Sherlock's injured hand, bringing it close to his face and inspecting it him the best he could. "What happened? I can barely see."

Sherlock opened his eyes when John took his hand to look at. "Burned it on the cigarette. Think it's only a second degree burn. It will be fine." As he spoke, he dropped his good hand and flicked the cigarette butt away from them and then resituated his hand back into place over John's.

"I'll take care of it when we're back in the camp," John whispered against his skin. His free hand moved lightly down Sherlock's stomach as his mouth started to suck on the side of his neck. After a moment of hesitation John wrapped his hand around Sherlock's penis, just holding it. He knew Sherlock wouldn't be ready to go again but he didn't care. "I wish you could stay."

Once more Sherlock's eyes closed, a shiver running up and down his spine from kissing and light touches. He whimpered quietly and couldn't help but buck into John's hand on his cock. "I wish I could stay too." He leaned into his fiancé a bit more, enjoying and savoring the closeness of their
bodies. Six more months. Just six more months to wait. He hoped with all these things going on, it would go by quickly for him. This would mean doing ordinary and boring things, but if it kept his mind preoccupied for even a second then he would trudge through it.

"Y'know, for being a virgin before our relationship you are really damn sexual," John whispered against Sherlock's neck with a smirk. It shouldn't surprise him at all. He figured that most of the time they shagged Sherlock was taking it all in, cataloging everything for future reference and memorizing how everything felt. Sex was probably more of a science experiment for Sherlock than anything else. The hand on Sherlock's cock tightened for a quick moment while his other hand pressed against Sherlock's stomach. "Promise me something?" He knew asking the question in this situation was a bit unfair but he didn't care.

Sherlock smirked at John's comment even though the other man couldn't see it. His brows furrowed at the request, and he shifted so they could finally look at each other. "What?" He would do anything for John but the tone of voice made him a little concerned. He wasn't sure what his fiancé might request from him.

"That if I don't come back you'll take care of Sarah and my daughter." John held Sherlock's gaze steadily, his eyes showing the emotion his face wasn't. "And that you will move on." The sentence ended with a soft kiss, his hand moving from Sherlock's penis to rest against his stomach. He tightened his embrace on his fiancé and let a small smile quirk his lips. "That is all I want."

It was like being in the car with his brother all over again. At least, the feeling was the same. Sherlock was quiet awhile. At least he didn't have the urge to throw up this time. Finally he nodded once. "I promise." The thought of John not coming back was hard to handle. He supposed though, it was something he had to mentally prepare himself for. It was always a possibility for every day John was over here in Afghanistan.

John let his head fall away from Sherlock's skin to look up at the sky. "Beautiful, isn't it?" His fingers curled against Sherlock's stomach to gently scratch at his skin. "You never see this in London. Too many lights and all that. Out here, though, you can see it all." His voice was low as he moved his head to press his lips against Sherlock's ear. "Did you think when we first met that this is where we'd be? Getting married?"

Scenery really wasn't Sherlock's thing, but he glanced up at the sky anyway. He supposed it was pretty and certainly not a view accessible in London. He looked over to John when the second question was asked. "Well, no. I sized you up right away and knew you would be a perfect flatmate for me though."

"I remember." John chuckled from low in his chest. The arms around Sherlock's torso tightened. "You knew everything about me the moment I walked into the lab at St. Barts and I was sure you were a bloody mad man." He pressed the tip of his nose against Sherlock's and smiled happily. This moment, although small and in quite the odd spot, was nearly perfect. Until he heard the knowing crack of a gunshot and the sound of a bullet against dirt a few meters from them. John's head shot up and he ripped away from Sherlock. "Up. Dressed. Put this on." He threw the extra body armor at Sherlock and put his own helmet on top of it. "Base. Now." His body armor was on quickly and he picked up his assault rifle from the ground.

Sherlock stood up immediately when he heard the gun go off. In his haste, he tripped over the pants around his ankles. His chin hit the sand and he bit his lip as he grunted from pain. The metallic taste of blood trickled into his mouth. He licked it away, but more continued to drizzle through. He muttered a curse, as he picked himself up more carefully this time. He redid his pants in a timely fashion, but the body armor took him some time to get on. Another shot sounded and
missed his foot by a mere fraction. He threw the helmet back to John. "You are going to be father. You're the one who needs to make it back home alive." The base... It occurred to Sherlock he had absolutely no idea which way they had come from. He probably should have paid attention to that but when he had left, he had been too pissed to notice which direction he had taken. Lost in the middle of a desert and getting shot at. Bloody fantastic. Another bullet came at him, hitting the body armor he wore and causing him to stumble back but he still managed to stay standing. However, he crouched down low to make himself a smaller target to hit.

"I don't fucking care, Sherlock!" John caught the helmet as he whipped around when he saw his fiancé stumble back. "Here, take it." He tossed Sherlock his torch and a compass. "Straight east, Sherlock. Go." He slipped the helmet on to his head and instantly spoke into it. "Captain Watson. Ten minutes due west of Bastion. Shots fired. One hit. Civilian. Body armor. Still standing, should be fine." He pulled his pants up, yanking on the belt hastily. When he looked up and realized Sherlock hadn't moved he shoved him roughly in the chest. "Now, Sherlock! Get the fuck out of here!" Another shot ran out and John whipped around, assault rifle raised as he fired several shots in the direction of the sound.

"No! I am not leaving you here by yourself!" There were several reasons Sherlock had never joined the military. He would never have followed the chain of command. He didn't react well to orders being shouted at him, no matter who was issuing them. The other reasons had a lot to do with his father. It was completely irrational that he should stay. He didn't have anything to protect either of them. However, he couldn't just leave John out here alone.

"I swear I will fucking kill you," John ground out between clinched teeth, letting his assault rifle drop for a moment. "I have people on their way, people who are trained. I'll be fine, alright?" The sound of footsteps and shouts were getting closer, clear in the desert night. "Go, Sherlock, I promise I will be fine." He approached his fiancé and gently met his lips, ignoring the blood that he felt getting smeared on his own. "Just...go." The next bullet was too close to Sherlock for John's comfort and he shoved him back by his shoulders, holding eye contact until his group arrived, turning with them and jogging into the dark.

Sherlock wasn't meant for a war zone. He watched as John and his men jog away, hating the thought of staying behind. But really, if he had chased after his fiancé he just would have been a liability and an unnecessary distraction to his dear army doctor. He sighed heavily, kicked at the sand below him angrily with a loud growl of frustration. Instead of using the compass, he used the stars to find east and he began walking back toward the base. He flicked on the torch, just to make sure he didn't trip again.

The sound of an engine and tires crunching under the sand met his ears and Sherlock paused to look around. He turned off his light instinctively. The tires weren't coming from the direction the base. So, it wasn't John's people coming to pick him up. The enemy who had been shooting at them earlier maybe? He slapped his hand into his face. How could he have been so stupid? Divide and conqueror. He was easy pickings now. The only thing he could do was run, and so he began sprinting. He dropped the torch at some point, but he didn't have time to pick it up.

It didn't take long for the jeep that was tracking him to catch up and pull in front of Sherlock. He skidded to a halt as four men with automatic weapons came out and pointed their weapons at him. He lifted his hands in surrender immediately. It would be suicide to try and take them or run away. Sherlock got shoved to the ground roughly, his hands tied behind his back and then hit in the head with the butt of a gun that spiraled him into unconsciousness.
"That looks like him. He was with that Captain so it's got to be him," one man muttered as he hauled Sherlock into the back seat of the Jeep. "Obviously a Holmes. Dark hair, long face, tall as Hell. No doubt. Grab his phone." When the phone was tossed into the back seat the man snapped a picture of Sherlock shoved uncomfortably into the jeep and sent a picture to the number labeled 'John Watson' with a small laugh. "C'mon, let's go before they come back."

The group had patrolled the area without success, trudging back toward camp when John felt the cell phone Mycroft had given him vibrate in his pocket. That was odd. He moved one hand from his assault rifle to pull the object from his pocket and open the text. What he saw made him stop cold. His fiancé, hands tied and tossed in the back of some vehicle.

*Found your little toy, Captain Watson. Probably shouldn't leave things like this unprotected in the middle of the desert.*

His knees buckled and he fell to the ground, Hollman was at his side pulling him up with shouts that he couldn't make out.

The four men entered a small abandoned house, one throwing Sherlock into a corner with a small grunt. "Hey, get up!" He kicked Sherlock in the stomach and crouched down to study the consulting detective. "I said get the fuck up." He tangled a hand in Sherlock's hair and yanked his head up.

Pain brought Sherlock back to consciousness with a groan. His eyes struggled to open and it took a moment to focus his gaze on his tormentor. "Wha?" He managed to slur out. He was disoriented and confused. He was forced to his feet by whoever was pulling on his hair. His head was pounding. Right. Butt of a gun to the head will do that. His chest hurt too. That was new. Probably got kicked at some point. Lovely. He tried to tune out the pain his body was screaming at him, and focus on his captors and began to deduce everything he could about them.

"Good morning." The man grinned and patted Sherlock's cheek. "So Captain Watson just went off without you, did he? And we've got something to solve. He killed our friend Sebastian and you killed Moriarty." A hand tightened against Sherlock's neck, slamming him back into the wall. "And we've got a fancy plan to bring him here and get you both in one go. Like the sound of that?" He held the cell phone up and hit the 'call' button, putting it on speaker right as John answered.

"Sherlock? Sherlock, are you there?" His voice was worried, he was panting, and the voices of men planning were echoing in from the background.

The man smirked and nodded toward the phone, mouthing 'talk' as he held the cell phone close to Sherlock's mouth.

What? John didn't kill Moran. One of his own sniper's did. People really should get their facts straight before saying things to make themselves look stupid. Sherlock's thought process was cut short as he found himself gasping for breath and slammed against a wall. Fuck this guy. He wouldn't play their game, not even with a gun to his head. He rushed out the words as fast as he could so the message would get through. "Stay away. Trap."

John had barely caught the words by the time the phone call ended and he was left staring at the
"The fuck? You asking to get killed?" The man tossed the phone on the floor and slammed Sherlock into the wall again and pinning him against the wall with a growl. "Tell me about him, why don't you? Before we hunt him down ourselves. Your darling little future husband. He's got a kid on the way, doesn't he?" He gave another tug to Sherlock's hair and pressed his nose against Sherlock's cheek. "This isn't the time to be acting like some sort of hero, Sherlock Holmes. We'll get both of you."

Despite the pain and torment his body was going through, Sherlock laughed. He looked up to his captor, a strange smirk on his face. "You think you can threaten me, by using them? You are wrong. Kill me, fine. I won't give you anything. You clearly haven't done your homework. Do you have any idea who my family is? What will happen to you?" He laughed some more. He wasn't bluffing either. Between his older brother and father, he almost pitied these guys. Mycroft may be a Government suit but he was dangerous nonetheless and his father was just well him. Such a perilous situation shouldn't be so funny, but he was still laughing. Something he was sure would only get more pain inflicted upon him. However, if he continued to fuel their rage they would get sloppy and he may be able to gain an edge.

Laughing? That caused the man's blood to boil, a growl escaping his mouth as he grabbed Sherlock by the body armor and lifted him from the ground. "I'm going to kill you. Nice and slow, make you scream." He crouched slightly and tossed Sherlock into the air toward the center of the room. "And send it to your...what's that you call him? Your 'dear doctor'?" A laugh echoed through the room. "I'm that sniper that was supposed to kill your darling little pet, Holmes. I'm the one that shot Sebastian. And I need to get rid of Watson because he knows too much." He lifted his foot and placed it on Sherlock's cheek, pressing his head into the floor.

That was about the response he expected. Well, pissing this guy off was sure easy enough. The pain was excruciating by now but that wasn't important right now. If Mycroft was smart, he would have contacted Dad again and the whole building would blow up, preferably without him in it but his father wasn't known for being patient. He had certainly gotten his reckless nature from the Colonel. His hands behind his back searched the floor and found a piece of glass and began to use it to cut through the rope on his wrists. Time, he needed to buy a little more time. By his calculation, his dad's people should be showing up within five minutes or less. All this was based on assumptions with no data to back it up. He just had to hope Mycroft had made the call.

After a long moment the man glanced into the rest of the house and walked away with a disinterested grunt.

John had followed Mycroft with his group of men, a few men added in and Sherlock's father tagging behind. The plan was relatively simple: Sherlock's Dad and his three men would storm the back of the house while John and his men went in with the sole purpose of rescuing Sherlock.

When the man returned with a hot cup of water, bending to lift Sherlock's shirt and pour the boiling water on to his skin, he suddenly noticed something was wrong. Movement. It was outside and that wasn't normal. The door burst open and John rushed in, gun raised with a single shot fired. The man fell on top of Sherlock with a 'thud,' blood pouring from his neck.

"Sherlock? Sherlock!" John threw his helmet off as more gunshots went off in the back of the house, dropping to his knees and tossing the dead body off of his fiancé. "Oh, Christ, Sherlock." He winced at the hot skin on Sherlock's stomach. "Are you alright?" He was shouting above all the commotion.

Free. His hands were finally free. Sherlock was about to shank the guy with the blade of glass in
the stomach, but suddenly the man was dead and the cup of water dropped from the dead man's grasp. He didn't have time to move and hissed with pain as the hot water seeped through his shirt where the body armor didn't protect him. Which was pretty much his lower stomach because there wasn't body armor long enough for someone of his size apparently. Between his head pounding, his ribs, his stomach, his whole body aching, he found it difficult to focus. He was safe now, so there was no point in keeping it together. "Wha took yaslong?" He muttered before falling unconscious.

John wanted to keep him awake, to shake Sherlock, but the state he was in was horrible. He handed his gun off to Hollman and maneuvered Sherlock over his shoulders, bending Sherlock at his stomach around his neck. "C'mon, let's get the fuck out of here," he grunted. It was several miles until they were back at the camp but John ignored the burning in his legs, his head lowered as he carried his fiance across the desert. All of the talking behind him was ignored, the horrid comments from Sherlock's father even drowned out.

The moment they were back on the base John carried Sherlock to the infirmary, moving quickly and stripping Sherlock of his clothes. He cleaned his wounds, treated the burns on his stomach and hand, and hooked him up to an I-V. It wasn't until John fell into the chair beside the bed that he realized how exhausted he was. "Sorry, Sherlock. I'm sorry," He rested his head beside Sherlock's hip, holding his hand and stoking his thumb across his knuckles, and fell asleep instantly.

Siger Holmes was talking to his eldest son. "When your younger brother wakes, you get him the hell out of here, you understand? He can't go two seconds without getting himself into some kind of trouble. That Captain of his is lucky I don't have him court marshaled. He left a civilian alone and unarmed in the middle of the desert." The Colonel was clearly agitated. "I swear to God Mycroft, if you call me a third time I'm not coming. I have more important things going on than having to worry about my boys out here in this shit hole." It was the closest he would ever get to admitting he cared about his sons. He slapped Mycroft on the back and then walked away to his chopper that was waiting for him.

Sherlock wasn't sure how long he slept, but when he woke up his body was still aching. It hurt to try and move so he didn't bother trying. He stared up the ceiling, when he became aware of someone holding his hand. He gave it a faint squeeze. "John?"

Mycroft watched his father leave, glancing toward Sherlock and John with a sigh. It was only natural with those two that they were constantly in trouble. One was in the middle of the war and the other was constantly fighting his own. He had been about to leave the room when he heard Sherlock speak. It was quiet and he was sure John wasn't going to wake up, the soldier was lightly snoring with his face pressed against the mattress.

"He's asleep, Sherlock." Mycroft walked toward the bed and flashed a tight smile toward his younger brother. "Are you feeling alright? You've been through quite a lot in the past few hours."

Sherlock turned to look at Mycroft. "Dad didn't go in blowing everything up. He is either getting soft in his old age or he is slipping." He gave a small laugh but regretted it when his chest hurt from the effort. He cut it short with a cough. "...Sorry for sucker punching you earlier..." He coughed again and turned his head away.

"I convinced him not to. John and I did, actually. The risk of possible injury to you was too high," Mycroft explained, smiling a bit at Sherlock's laughter but frowning the moment he heard Sherlock's cough. It was then that Mycroft laughed, lifting a hand to rub against the deep purple bruise on his cheek. "It's fine, Sherlock. You were upset, it's fine. It was nice to see a bit of emotion from you, to be honest. Hadn't seen it since we were younger." His eyes traveled to John who had shifted slightly in his sleep, the muscles in his face tightening as his grip on Sherlock's hand did
the same. "Dad was thinking about court marshaling him, Sherlock. He left you in the middle of
the desert without an escort or a weapon. He put you in serious danger."

Sherlock's eyes narrowed for a moment as he listened to Mycroft speak, but then gave a small
smile. "Dad's definitely going soft then." With a bit of effort and groan of pain, he shifted so he
could see John. "He didn't mean to. He thought he was protecting me at the time. Keeping me safe.
Admittedly, it was a tactical error but don't hold it against him. I don't." He rolled back over onto
his back, because it didn't hurt as much at being propped up on his side.

"I will continue to be slightly upset with him. It is a bit upsetting, to be honest. He should know
better." Mycroft paused for a moment before his cell phone started to ring and he politely left the
room.

"Well, fuck him," John muttered, lifting his head with a smirk before yawning. "You doing okay,
then? I took care of you the best I could." He stood and pulled his hand away from Sherlock's,
inspecting his body closely. The guilt that shot through John's stomach at seeing the injuries on
Sherlock caused him to visibly wince. "Christ, Sherlock, I'm sorry."

"I'm in some pain but I will be fine. I've been in worse shape." Sherlock wondered if this would
ever be over. He made a mental note to talk to Mycroft about the information he had learned while
being held captive and tortured. He couldn't discuss it with John. The army doctor would only
worry. "John, I know we were going to try and make plans to see each other in another three
months but with Sarah pregnant, there is a lot that needs to be done. A lot that needs to be taken
care of." What he didn't mention was that he was worried that more of Moriarty's people were out
there. Watching. Waiting. It was a possibility.

The look that John gave Sherlock was hurt but he puffed out his chest with a sure nod. "Right. Of
course. I mean, it would be best. Good. Very good." He blew the air noisily from his mouth and
ran a hand through his short hair. It was true, John didn't want to admit it, but he was upset that he
wouldn't be able to see Sherlock for the next six months. "We can text, then? Skype?" He kept his
gaze locked on the floor, moving into the bed without question and laying so Sherlock could
snuggle against his side. "Letters, of course. Pictures of the future terror."

Sherlock most certainly snuggled into John, taking his fiancé's hand and intertwining their fingers
as well. He leaned his head on the army doctor's shoulder, eyes closing in contentment from the
closeness. This could be the last time for awhile or worse ever. No. Not right now. He had to keep
a clear head so he could to talk with his older brother later. "Of course we will text, Skype and
exchange letters. Anything new regarding the baby, I will tell you next time we talk."

John studied their fingers for a long moment before speaking again. "I love you," he whispered. He
turned his head and placed a soft kiss into Sherlock's hair. It was moments like these, quiet and
loving, that John would always remember. "You are leaving in the morning. Please stay safe, don't
do anything stupid like blow up the flat...and I guess we could start making my room into your
study, yeah? You can't exactly do experiments in the kitchen if there's going to be a kid around."
He lifted their intertwined hands and placed several soft kisses across Sherlock's knuckles. "Buy
whatever Sarah wants, use my next paycheck."

"Since we are getting married, shouldn't we share a room?" Sherlock asked with a bit of smirk, his
eyes opening and tilting up so he could look at John. "Oh, I had thought about the experiment
thing. I am going to find an office building. To keep home and work life separate. I could never
stop being a consulting detective John, but I can adapt and change things a bit."

"We've been breaking rules since before I got deployed. We've shagged in every room of the flat
and been sleeping in the same bed," John replied with a grin, meeting Sherlock's gaze warmly. The
man snuggled against him was changing his life for John's little mistake, for the future pitter-patter of feet in their flat. "I had planned on sleeping in your room, though. Bed's much bigger." He gently met Sherlock's lips, sucking Sherlock's bottom lip into his mouth as he pulled away. "We can put her crib in that free corner right across from the door the first few months...then change my room into hers." He met Sherlock's lips again, a little more passionately than he had before.

Sherlock returned the kiss, eyes closing briefly. His body was in too much pain and damaged to do anything else. He broke the kiss eventually, because he didn't want to start something he couldn't finish. He slid down with a small groan of pain, so he could lay his head on John's chest. His one hand stayed in his fiancé's and his free hand laid across the army doctor's stomach. "I'm going to miss you. I don't want to go home, but I know I need to. It really isn't safe for either of us for me to stay here. It was stupid of me to come in the first place, but I just couldn't leave you when I found out you were down in that collapsed tunnel. I love you." He gave John a small sideways hug, as best he could from his current position.

"Shh, calm down." John looked down at Sherlock with a tight smile. "Why don't you go back to sleep? You need it." The arm around Sherlock's shoulder tightened protectively and he squeezed Sherlock's hand. "I love you too," he whispered. After the comment John let his body relax slightly, his head falling back with a loud sigh. This entire situation was horrid, he would admit, but the fact that he was with Sherlock managed to get rid of all of that. "I'm just glad you're alive. I threw up when I found out you'd been kidnapped, Sherlock. I was so scared." He squeezed Sherlock's torso tighter to him and slammed his eyes shut. "And as much as I hate to ruin this perfectly romantic moment, please ignore the hard-on I have right now. Adrenaline, I swear."

"If I thought I could get away with doing anything, I would. However, I really don't think my body is any shape to try and most certainly wouldn't appreciate me trying." Sherlock smirked a little even though John couldn't see it. He was sore and tired. Maybe sleep wouldn't be such a bad idea after all. He let his eyes close, his body completely relaxed as fell asleep on John.

John watched Sherlock with a smile on his face, relaxing after a long moment. He wasn't going to sleep, he couldn't. Watching Sherlock was too wonderful, something he was going to miss for the next six months. This was the perfect opportunity to just stare at his future husband, admire how young he looked in his sleep. "You're the most perfect person I have ever met," he whispered into Sherlock's head. "I hope I never lose you." As much as he tried to stay awake his body gave out on him after several hours and he eventually fell asleep with both of his arms wrapped tightly around Sherlock.
Several hours must have gone by, because the sun was up and shining down on Sherlock. With a groan he turned his head from the bright light. At least his body wasn't in as much pain as it had been last night. He got to a sitting position, and experimentally moved different parts of his body. Some hurt worse than others but he would manage.

John groaned sleepily at Sherlock's movement, rolling so his back was facing Sherlock as he fell back asleep.

"We've got a few hours left before we leave. We want to make sure you are stable before you get on the airplane." Mycroft spoke calmly, smiling slightly at his younger brother. "How you doing?"

Sherlock glanced over to Mycroft. "I'm fine." He pulled the I-V out of his arm, glad that John was still sleeping so he didn't see that. He put two fingers over where the blood started to seep and applied pressure to it for a few moments. He wiped the blood onto the bed sheets. "We need to talk later. Not on the plane though. Your flat or some other location you feel is secure." He looked back over to his older brother as he got up off the bed.

"About what, exactly?" Mycroft asked softly as he watched his brother. "You can lay back down, Sherlock. We aren't leaving for a while. Don't you want to spend some more time with John?" His eyes darted to the army doctor still squeezed into a small section of the bed, sleeping blissfully. The fact that Sherlock was just getting out of the bed made him nervous. "Lay back down, Sherlock. You aren't seeing him for another nine months."

Sherlock titled his head to John and then shook his head in answer to Mycroft's question. He turned to look at his brother sharply. "What do you mean nine months? His tour is over in six." His eyes were narrowed and he took a few steps toward Mycroft. "Did it get extended? Is this dad's way of getting back at him? Me?"

Mycroft tensed instantly, sucking in a sharp breath and lowering his gaze. He couldn't meet his brother's eyes. "The papers came on this morning. Captain Watson will be informed after we've left." His voice was tight. Of course it had been their father, upset that John had just left Sherlock to get kidnapped. "Unless he gets shot he will be serving an entire year."

"Out! Get out! Or I'll give you matching cheeks!" Sherlock was livid, fingers curling to make fists in both hands. That bastard. Of course he would do something like that. He turned away from Mycroft and stalked back over to the bed, climbing back into it to be close to John once more.

The yelling had pulled him from his sleep and the sound of heavy footsteps and the rough movement of the bed forced his eyes open. "What's wrong?" John asked sleepily, happily pressing his back against Sherlock's chest. He paused when he heard more footsteps, tensing when he realized Mycroft had been in the room. "Sherlock?" John's eyes narrowed in confusion.

"My father," Sherlock spat the word with contempt, "has extended your stay here. Instead of six months left, you have nine." He supposed the Old Man could have done worse to John, like actually court marshaling the army doctor. It still pissed him off though. Really, he shouldn't have been surprised. It was exactly the kind of thing his father would do.

Nine months? John tensed against Sherlock and twisted violently on the bed to look at him. "What?
No...no. I can't. You...no..." His eyes searched Sherlock's face for some sort of joke or a lie. When he realized it was true, that it was really happening, he ripped himself out of the bed with a yell. He started pacing beside the bed, panting as he stopped himself from punching the nearest wall. "Fuck! No, I can't. That's impossible, I can't..." His words started to get more desperate as he spoke.

"John, I'm sorry." Sherlock got up from the bed, to stand in front of his fiancé and to halt his pacing. He wrapped his arms around John's waist to draw him into a hug. "It'll be okay. We'll be okay. We can tough it out for another three months." He wanted to believe his own words. The truth was, the longer John stayed here the less likely his dear doctor would be to return to London. Something he really didn't want to think about.

If John hadn't been so worried about Sherlock's strength he would have fought against his fiancé. With a shaky breath, one that was clearly forcing back tears, he lightly returned Sherlock's embrace. "Want to be home with you," he whispered through clenched teeth. His entire body was tense and his breathing was short and fast. "We're supposed to get married. This isn't supposed to happen. I promised you nine months. Only nine months." He buried his face against Sherlock's neck. Breaking his promise to Sherlock was the worst part of this, the fact that now his fiancé couldn't even believe him when he said anything.

"We are still going to get married. Just three months later than we thought." Sherlock held John close to his chest. He ran a hand through his fiancé's hair soothingly. He wished he was better in these emotional moments. The appropriate words and actions were difficult for him to come up with. "It isn't your fault. My dad's being an arsehole." Obviously his father had a complete and blatant disregard for how he would be affected as well. Hell, he probably did it to teach them both a lesson.

Three months later. That was too long and seemed like an eternity right now. In the extra three months his little girl will grow and he will miss it all. Sherlock will be stuck taking care of his mistake. Sherlock will be alone. John tensed and tightly hugged his fiancé. "Doesn't mean he has to punish you, too. You don't deserve this." Another three months would just be more time for something else to happen. When he heard Mycroft's footsteps he shook his head. "I don't want you to go," he whispered into Sherlock's chest.

"Welcome to the Holmes family," Sherlock muttered attempting some form of humor but it lacked any real light hearted or playful tone. "I know. I don't either, but I have to. We both know that." He placed a kiss on top of John's head and even though his chest was still bruised from getting body armor kicked into him, he hugged his fiancé closer. "I'll miss you." Mycroft had said they had a few hours until they would need to leave. What did his older brother want now?

Mycroft entered the room hurriedly, meeting Sherlock's gaze with a dangerous glint. "We must go," he stated in a calm tone, betraying the emotion in his eyes. "Mummy wishes to meet with you. Plans about the wedding," he lied smoothly. His hand tightened around a slip of paper in his hands and Hollman appeared behind Mycroft with a serious expression.

The tight smile on his lips wasn't giving much away but it seemed that John had bought the lie. "Stay safe. Please take care of yourself, yeah?" John nodded to himself as he ran his hands down Sherlock's chest. "Text me when you land. And a picture of Sarah so far." His eyes lifted to meet Sherlock's gaze before he pushed himself up on his toes and passionately met Sherlock's lips. He didn't give a damn who saw, he was going to make sure Sherlock remembered this. When he pulled away, gasping, he rushed from the room with a grunt in Hollman's direction.

"Let us go, dear brother," Mycroft stated as soon as John was out of earshot. "We've got some men after you and we need to leave. Now."
If it wasn't one thing, it was another. Maybe John bought the lie, but Sherlock wasn't fooled for a moment. He returned his fiancé's kiss and then watched the army doctor leave. He returned his gaze to Mycroft. "I'm not surprised. It was what I wanted to discuss with you. Also, I want dad's number. I need to send him an important text." He began walking out of the building, thinking of all the things that needed to be done before John got home. Really he had just been bought more time to make things safe for John and his fiancé's little girl.

"We'll discuss it at my house tonight before we meet with Sarah," Mycroft replied as he followed after Sherlock, his eyes locked on the cell phone in his hands. "Dad has given me quite a sum of money for you and Captain Watson with specific orders that it is to be used on necessary items for the infant," he stated in bored tone as he managed to finally catch up to Sherlock. He held his cell phone out to Sherlock, a new message already open under their father's number. "I've taken the liberty of already getting your stuff into the back of the helicopter. We're ready to leave now." His eyes scanned the base one last time, lingering on John's group of men as the stalked out into the desert, before he hoisted himself into the helicopter with a small nod toward the pilot.

Sherlock snorted. "Does he think by throwing money at us, he will fix everything? " He was still feeling bitter. He snatched Mycroft's cell phone and was about to copy the number to his phone, when he noticed the message. His eyes narrowed suspiciously and he opened it. He got into the helicopter, ducking his head automatically as the blades above spun nosily. As the helicopter lifted off the ground, he looked below him. "Good bye John," he muttered softly and then returned his attention the text message.

Who knows, maybe this three months will knock some sense into him. He doesn't need to marry some soldier with a record like that. I'm trying to convince your Mother of the same thing. See if you can talk him out of it, Mycroft. He deserves better than John Watson.

Mycroft fell back into his seat with an undignified grunt, shooting a glare at the pilot before he buckled himself in and put on the a headset. He set the second one on Sherlock's lap so they could at least begin talking here. That was when he noticed Sherlock reading the text, ripping the phone out of Sherlock's hands with a glare. "I said get the number, not snoop through my messages."

Mycroft was lucky he took the phone back, because Sherlock almost threw it out of the chopper after reading the text message. He ignored his older brother and the head set for now, and took out his own cell phone and input the number he had just read from the other phone.

Don't think for a minute you can interfere. If you do, I will tell Mum about the time I caught you having an affair when I was nine. Don't think for a second, I ever forgot about that.

He typed the text angrily, fingers pounding the small keys with more force than necessary. He didn't bother signing the message; his father would know it was from him so there was no point. As far as Sherlock knew, not even Mycroft knew about the affair. He deleted the message after it was successfully sent, ignoring the head set still.

Watching Sherlock type furiously on his phone made Mycroft narrow his eyes for a long moment. His curiosity increased when his brother's phone lit up with their father's number on the screen. He managed to read the message quickly before turning away.

Piss off. I can still court marshal that little prick.

Wonderful. Absolutely fantastic. A family fight over the decision of a solider in a time of intense stress and pressure. Mycroft picked up his phone, glanced at Sherlock, and quickly sent him a text since he refused to put his headset on.
Sherlock was too busy being upset, to even notice that Mycroft had read the message at the same time he had. He was about to text his father back when he got another text, from his older brother. He lifted his gaze briefly to look at his brother, eyes narrowed. He glanced down at his phone with a growl and deleted both messages. In frustration, he rammed his head into whatever was behind him. Whatever it was, it was metal. His head was still tender from the blow to the head from last night and he growled again, this time from inadvertently inflicting pain upon himself. He knew his father was just being an arse and trying to get under his skin. Hopefully the Old Man would care enough about the secret to at least mind his own damn business. It was the only leverage he had on the Colonel.

The helicopter ride finished without incident and by the time the plane had landed in London Mycroft was yawning and clearly wanted to do nothing more than sleep. Instead he was greeted by his black car and slid into the back with a tight smile, his eyes locked on his younger brother dangerously. "We are meeting with Sarah first, she is already at the flat." He tilted his head down slightly. "You will behave and once she leaves we can discuss what's going on. Period. Get in the car."

Sherlock had kept to himself during the flight, going over many things in his head. He didn't like his brother's tone or being told what to do. It reminded him too much of their father. However, he had told John he would be civil and get a picture for him, so he slid into the car. He pulled out his phone and sent a text to his fiancé.

I love you. Try not to punch your brother in the face. Take a bite of real food for me. -JW

Back in London. Going to see Sarah. I'll send you a picture soon. Miss you. –SH

The moment the cell phone went off John dropped his fork into whatever the Hell was on his plate and fished it from his pocket. Just reading Sherlock's text made him smile.

I love you. Try not to punch your brother in the face. Take a bite of real food for me. -JW

Mycroft watched his brother with a small smile, turning his gaze to the window of the car to give Sherlock a bit of privacy. As the car came to a stop he rested a hand gently on Sherlock's knee. "You'll be fine," he whispered before sliding out of the car and walking around the back to pull Sherlock's open. "I'm going to give you some privacy with her, alright? Just in the door to the left in the sitting room. She's on the couch." He flashed his brother a tight smile before entering the house himself.

Food? When was the last time he had eaten? The day before he had left London to see John. He should probably eat at some point he supposed. Sherlock typed out a reply, ignoring Mycroft and the stopped car for a moment.

Love you too. I'll eat soon, promise. Expect a picture soon. I'll talk to you later. –SH

He finally got out of the car and entered his older brother's flat. He walked into the room mentioned to him and saw Sarah. He gave a small forced smile and nodded a hello.

It was odd looking at the fiancé of the father of her child. "Hello Sherlock." She stood slowly, arching her back with a hand on her swollen stomach. "It's nice to see you." There was a long pause and the air in the room carried the tense feeling. "Do you want to feel her move? She's been really active today." She took a hesitant step forward, a weak smile on her face.

Try. He had to try. He told John he would. Sherlock reached out tentatively to Sarah's stomach to see if he could feel the baby kicking. He tried to think of something to talk about so there wouldn't
be awkward silence on his part. "I told John. We talked about names…" He thought for a moment to remember the names his fiancé had come up with. "…Stephanie, Melanie, Amy were the ones John came up with. I suggested Sandoval."

Sarah focused on Sherlock's face for a moment, inspecting the bruises before noticing several love marks on his neck. The moment she felt movement in her stomach, a flurry of activity that she had gotten used to, she grabbed Sherlock's hand and pressed it above the little girl. "I think she likes your voice," she whispered with a genuine smile. She lifted her gaze to study Sherlock once again as she listened to the names. "Amy," she tested it, nodding slightly. "Amy Sandoval?" She asked, looking at Sherlock for confirmation.

Weird. Sherlock moved his hand away. "Doesn't that…freak you out?" He furrowed his brows and stood up straight. How was that natural? Of course it was, but it was still a weird sensation to feel. "Amy Sandoval?" He echoed back and then nodded. "I will see what John thinks. Oh, he wanted me to send a picture showing how far along you are…would that be acceptable?"

Sarah couldn't help but laugh. "It was at first but I'm getting used to it. She gets really active about tea time. Reminds me a lot of John, actually." Her smile only grew at Sherlock's question. "Of course it would be acceptable, Sherlock. Then...maybe we could sit and talk? We obviously have some things to discuss." The smile on her face faltered and the seriousness of her face flashed into focus.

Sherlock snapped a quick photo on his phone once Sarah was ready and then immediately sent the picture to John. He then situated himself on the arm of the couch, leaning against it for support. He returned his attention back to Sarah. He was quiet, so she could say whatever it was she was thinking. He figured it was better to let her go first.

Sarah hesitantly sat down on the opposite side of the couch, her hands resting protectively on her stomach. "First," her eyes cautiously lifted to glance at Sherlock, "I wanted to apologize. I know this isn't exactly the best situation with you two getting married and the fact that this child was conceived because of John's adultery." She bit her bottom lip and lifted a hand to tug some hair behind her ear. "I just wanted to apologize because I know you must not be happy about it. Second," with a shaky sigh and a sure nod her voice gained a bit of confidence, "I want you to be involved in her life, Sherlock. I'm certain you and John have discussed this and I'm am all for you being like a parent to her. I feel like that's the best option. I would love it if you were there when she was born and, if you're comfortable, I figured we could meet every two weeks for the next four months until she's born to catch up, discuss how everything is going. It will be a good time to get John pictures and give you sonograms." She finally stopped to take a breath and looked at Sherlock, smiling slightly. "You...you can talk now, just tell me what you think..."

Sherlock listened quietly and politely. Be civil, he reminded himself and he took a moment to search for congenial words. "Admittedly…I wasn't thrilled when I first found out, but I've gotten used to the idea. I will be spending time making sure the flat is safe for an infant and other work related things while John is away. His tour has been extended for another three months." He paused ever so briefly before going on, "but I'm sure I can make time to see you every two weeks easy enough."

"What? Three months?" Sarah tensed, looking down at her swollen belly for a moment. "Oh. Yes, well, I guess that's the problem with being a soldier." She grimaced and hissed slightly as the child started moving again, her eyes closing for a moment. Sometimes it wasn't exactly comfortable and every time the child heard the deep rumble of Sherlock's voice it started moving. "I think she really likes your voice, Sherlock," she blew air steadily from her mouth. "D'you want to talk to her? She can hear you now."
More like the problem of having a jackass of a father, but Sherlock kept that to himself. Talk to the baby? Did people really do that? It wasn't even born yet. Sure the fetus could pick up audio waves but there would be no comprehension. He supposed being civil meant humoring Sarah, no matter how ridiculous the request. He leaned up off the couch and took a seat next to the pregnant woman. Was he seriously going to do this? It seemed so silly and pointless. He refused to speak in one of those altered voices so many adults seemed to use when speaking to an infant. "Hello there little Sandi…" He trailed off with a cough, shifting a bit. This was certainly one of his more awkward moments in life.

Sarah laughed almost right away, reaching a hand out to rest on Sherlock's shoulder. "It's fine, I understand. It's a bit weird to think that this thing is a little human being. I haven't quite gotten used to talking to her myself yet, either. Especially without a name." She looked down at her stomach as she felt more movement and shamelessly grabbed Sherlock's hand so he could feel it again. "I think she's going to like you. She hasn't moved this much ever. It's your voice. She likes the sound." She met Sherlock's gaze with a wide smile and glanced when she heard Sherlock's phone go off.

Oh thank God, an interruption from this situation. Sherlock took out his cell phone to read the message and a second one came through while he read it so he clicked it open.

*Christ. That's five months? Is that normal, Sherlock? -JW*

*Can I call? I'm free right now. –JW*

Instead of texting back, he merely called John himself and put the phone on speaker as it rang.

"Sherlock?" John's voice was eager, happy. It was clear there was a smile on his face. "Hi Sarah!"

"Hi John," she tentatively replied.

"How is she, Sherlock? Moving? Did you feel her move?" There was a long pause and John exhaled loudly. "I miss you."

"Everything is fine John. Yes, she is moving and yes I felt it. According to Sarah the baby likes my voice. What do you think of Amy Sandoval as a name for her? I know John, I miss you too."

Sherlock managed a smile, his fiancé's enthusiasm rubbing off on him some as he spoke.

"Amy Sandoval," a long pause, "Yeah, that's good. Really good." John smiled and laughed slightly into the phone. "Perfect. Is she really active then, Sarah?"

"Only near tea time, bit like her father," Sarah replied with a smile.

John's laughter came through the phone and Sarah tensed, looking at her stomach. "What's it like to feel her move, Sherlock?"

"It's…weird John…I don't really know how else to explain it… Sarah had me talk to the baby that was…an interesting experience as well." Sherlock was once more in a situation he felt entirely out of depth in.

John couldn't help but laugh. Sherlock probably never had felt a baby move. "Yeah, I bet it was a bit weird for you. God, I wish I could feel her move," he stated with a sigh. When Sherlock's second statement registered with John he started laughing so hard he couldn't breathe. "You talked to her? I wish there was a video of that. Christ, what did you say?" It was clear there was a smile on his face as he spoke and Sarah was smiling at the phone as well.
"I said hello." Sherlock was feeling silly all over again for admitting such a thing. He shifted once more. "Do you want to talk to her? I could put the phone up to Sarah's stomach?" He glanced to the woman next to him with raised eyebrows.

John was silent for a long moment before replying. "Yeah. Yeah, I do."

Sarah smiled and shifted to be closer to Sherlock. "Go ahead John."

"Hi there Amy." It seemed so much simpler when he saw other people do this. What did one typically say to their unborn child conceived because of infidelity? "I'm your Dad. Me and Sherlock. And you already know your Mum, of course. You're keepin' her up with how active you are. You get that from me."

Sherlock listened quietly. He was feeling more awkward with each passing moment. Maybe he wasn't as prepared for this at he thought he was. He had a feeling that this might become a regular thing. Would he ever be comfortable with any of this? He kept his reservations to himself, moving the phone away from Sarah's stomach once John was done talking to the unborn baby.

"I've got to go. Need to sleep. I've written you a letter Sarah, should be there soon. I will text you Sherlock. Love you." He ended the call.

"I know you feel awkward," Sarah stated with a glance toward their feet. "It will get better, I promise. I know you aren't one to talk about your emotions but you can talk to me Sherlock."

Sherlock put the phone away, trying not to be jealous or upset that John had sent Sarah a letter. He glanced to her when she spoke and gave a slight shake of his head. "I'll be fine." Yeah, sharing with Sarah, that would never happen. He barely felt comfortable around his own brother.

"Right. Well, I must be going. I'll see you next week, then?" Sarah stood slowly and made her way out of the room right as Mycroft entered. "

How did that go?" Mycroft asked softly, handing his brother a cup of tea as he took a sip from his own. "You can talk to me. Or text the man you will be marrying. He should know how you feel."
Chapter 20

Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

Sherlock shrugged. "Better in some ways than I thought, worse in others." He took a sip of tea and then got down straight to business. "Mycroft, the people who kidnapped me in the desert are a fraction of Moriarty's empire. They think John knows something and will be gunning for him. Either through me or Sarah and the baby. I have too much going on to track all the bastards down on my own." He paused, hating that he would be asking for help. "Think you could put together a cleanup crew? If you don't have people to spare, I'm sure dad does." He would never ask the Colonel for help directly, but maybe his older brother would.

Mycroft took a deep breath, studying the tea in his cup with a narrow gaze. "Yes. I can do that. I will have them sent out when we are done talking. Is that why you were kidnapped, then? It wasn't actually because of you?" He glanced at his brother with a bit of a smirk. "You're becoming quite the family man."

"Yes. They thought by kidnapping me, they could lure John there and kill him. They wanted me to tell them all about John. They threatened Sarah and the baby, thinking that would make me talk. I just did everything to press the guy's buttons, which obviously he took out on me but I was just buying time. I figured dad or somebody would show up eventually." Sherlock shrugged and took another sip of his tea.

Mycroft nodded and set his teacup and saucer down on the coffee table in front of them. "I did some research of my own. Those shots were to get him away from you. John is brave to the point of stupidity when it comes to things he is passionate about. Right now, that's you." He nodded surely. There was a moment where Mycroft studied his younger brother's obvious bruises. "I'm proud of you." It was steady, truthful, and the emotional admission made him find a more interesting spot on the carpet over his younger brother's face.

Sherlock raised his eyebrows at his brother's admission. "Proud?" He mused out loud, clearly confused. He drank his tea thoughtfully. What had he done lately that could possibly make his older brother proud of him? Really, he was surprised Mycroft wasn't upset over being punched in the face for no real reason at all other than Sherlock had misplaced his anger on the wrong person. Of course, his older brother was a little more mature than he was about such things.

"You've changed. Years ago you wouldn't have even humored people like you just did with Sarah. You wouldn't be engaged. You wouldn't be in love." He smiled softly. It was a whole new side to his brother that he was happy to see. "John Watson helped change you and it's been amazing to watch. I couldn't ask for a better brother-in-law, to be honest."

John took a hesitant breath before starting to type his text.

I sent you a letter, too. So you know. I miss you already. It's weird to be sleeping by myself. How are you doing? Bruises? Ice yourself, maybe take an entire ice bath. Should help. -JW

Ah. Sherlock smirked a bit at his older brother and shrugged. "It was either change or end up like dad, minus the family part." He gave another shrug and finished off his tea. Just then his phone went off and he took it out to read the message from John. With everything that had been going on, he had been ignoring the pain in his chest and stomach.

I look forward to reading it. I'll reply back to it as soon as I get it. Miss you too. I'm fine. How
After he sent the message he glanced up to Mycroft. "I have a lot to do tonight still. There are other things I want to discuss but they can wait until tomorrow. You are obviously tired." Sherlock stood up off the couch as he spoke.

Mycroft stood with his brother and glanced toward the slowly opening door. Lestrade's head popped in and suddenly Mycroft was smiling and backing away from Sherlock. "I've got stuff to take care of myself. I'll call you. We have a lot to talk about between Sarah and everything else. Go get some sleep." He turned his back to Sherlock and motioned his head upstairs, following Lestrade with one last glance at the other Holmes.

John smiled softly, relaxing against the pillow with a happy smile.

*Covered in dirt. Dying for a good meal. Good other than that. -JW*

He shifted against the bed, rolling on to his side and smirking as he sent the second text.

*Just jerked off in the shower thinking about you. –JW*

Sherlock didn't bother to hide the glare as Lestrade walked in. He shook his head to himself as he left his older brother's flat. Maybe they had both decided to stop being stupid. He got in the ever waiting black car and then pulled out his cell phone to read the messages from John. He smirked a bit.

*Happy that things are mostly well for you. –SH*

He sent a second message after it quickly. Ah yes, the ever familiar two texts at a time game.

*Did you now? Did you scream my name so the whole base could hear you? -SH*

John couldn't help the small chuckle that escaped his chest, reading the texts in quick secession. At least they were already falling back into a routine, no matter how childish.

*Of course I did. I couldn't help it. You're good with your mouth when I imagine you. -JW*

The smirk on his lips was hurting his cheeks he was so happy about the entire situation. Just texting Sherlock was helping lift his mood after the crazy few days they had.

*Could probably do it again here pretty soon. Thinking about you is quite the distraction. -JW*

Sherlock waited for the inevitable two texts to come in before reading them both and then replied to the first one.

*Are you trying to say I'm not good with my mouth for real? –SH*

He smirked a bit to himself and then typed out the next text quickly after the first one.

*Captain John Watson: Man of Stamina Extraordinaire -SH*

*When I imagine you, you don't tease me to the point of absolute torture. -JW*

John opened the second text before he burst out laughing, grateful that his small room was empty for the time being. Despite the blurriness of his eyes, Christ he had laughed so hard he had cried, he quickly started his second reply.
While Sherlock waited for the customary two texts to come in, the car he was in came to halt outside his flat. He got out, grabbing his bag and walked through the door. It was good to be back home. Hamish immediately ran at him and with a mighty jump landed on his shoulder. Sherlock stumbled back a bit from the sudden extra weight, the door behind him preventing him from falling down all the way. The cat began meowing incessantly. He ignored the loud noise in his ear and answered the texts as he walked up the stairs.

*Please. You like it.* –SH

He entered the living room by the time he was sending the second text.

*We really ought to do something about your fucking language.* –SH

John read the texts multiple times before replying slowly.

*You like it more when I suck you off nice and slow, let you fuck my mouth right before you come.* - JW

His head pressed harshly against his pillow and he hissed at the sudden bulge appearing in his boxers.

*Piss off. There's nothing wrong with my language. You seem to like it. Have a military fetish, Mr. Holmes?* - JW

Sherlock settled into his chair, Hamish still yowling in his ear and demanding attention. He pet the cat briefly before dropping his hand back down to text John once more.

*Well, you like it when I'm rough. Biting and scratching you all over.* –SH

He thought for a moment before smirking and replying to the second text.

*The only fetish I have is for sailor mouthed army doctors.* –SH

That was too much. Just reading that text made him arch slightly off the bed with a soft moan. Even through a bloody text Sherlock was effecting him.

*And you only do that because I'm fucking you speechless.* - JW

The friction caused by his boxers and the next text was enough for him to consider taking a second shower.

*That's convenient. I have a fetish for consulting detectives with glorious bodies and who rather enjoys cheesecake.* - JW

John smirked proudly as he hit send.

Finally Hamish stopped meowing and when Sherlock went to pet him again, he got a bit finger for his troubles. The cat made a few circles and went to sleep.

*I'm only quiet because you are loud enough for both of us and all of London. Just ask Mrs. Hudson.* –SH

He smirked a bit as he began typing the second message almost immediately.
We both seem to like cheesecake. You ordered three pieces. I smeared a piece all over you and licked it clean, slow and easy. –SH

The first text made John blush, his eyes closing for a long moment before he managed to, hopefully, rid himself of the red across his cheeks.

That's a lie. Mrs. Hudson can only hear us because her room is right below us. I'm not THAT loud. –JW

He couldn't help himself with the second text, running one hand down his stomach with a feather light touch before running his fingers over his erection through his boxers. He let out a small whimper before he started to reply.

When I get home I'm going to buy whipped cream and lick it off your fucking body. –JW

Sherlock smirked at the first text and the second text made his whole body squirming at the thought.

Yes you are. I'll record you next time. – SH

He smirked yet again and began the next reply.

The whipped cream out of can or tub? According to the books, it matters. For application purposes, that is. –SH

The last text was certainly a bit of a mood killer for John. Sherlock would be technical. His cheeks tinged red with a blush.

You ARE NOT recording me the next time we shag. At all. Ever. And out of the can. Easier to spread. Tastes better. -JW

He rested the phone against his chest as he attempted to slow his breathing and calm himself down. It didn't matter much that he just lost their little unspoken game. He was too focused on trying to will his erection away.

Sherlock smirked triumphantly, even though John couldn't see it. He opted for a single message reply as well, his fingers moving over the buttons with quick practiced ease.

You never let me have any fun. Speaking of fun, we could both be covered in the whipped cream and lick it off each other at the same time? -SH

That definitely sounded interesting to try, although he wasn't quite sure how their body positions would work out for that. He was certain they could come up with something or maybe he could find another book about it.

Christ we need to stop texting like this. I can't walk around camp with a hard on because you brought up licking whipped topping off each other at the same time. -JW

John smiled at the phone, just staring ay Sherlock's name before glancing at the ring on his left hand.

My perfect husband. –JW

The patented smirk that Sherlock wore so well, faltered and twitched into a frown after reading the first message. Without inflection or body language, he wasn't sure if the army doctor was joking or
being serious. The second text made him smile though. He hesitated a moment before typing out a reply.

*What do you want to talk about? I'm more than happy to keep going on about all the things we are going to do to each other once you are back home. Like how I will mark every inch of your body. Or would you rather I recite to you all my infinite knowledge of tobacco to you? -SH*

John laughed and held the phone against his chest. For a moment he tried to imagine Sherlock's voice saying that and not just reading them himself through a text.

*I want to tie your hand behind your back and take you from behind. Shove your face into the mattress while you beg for it. –JW*

After hitting send John closed his eyes for a long moment, not believing for a moment that he had sent such a forward text. At this rate he was going to be taking a second shower. This was better than Sherlock explaining tobacco though.

The smirk returned immediately after reading John's text. He came up with a reply fairly quickly.

*Okay, but then I get to tie you up and blindfold you so you'll be in constant anticipation of my every move that you will beg multiple times for it. –SH*

Yes. Definitely two showers tonight. John let a soft moan escape from his lips, closing his eyes as he imagined returning home.

*Jesus. I want our honeymoon to be now. Right now. Touching myself. -JW*

John smirked slightly as he wrapped his left hand around his cock, squeezing it slightly before starting a slow pace. His eyes slammed shut and he imagined Sherlock above him, lowering his lanky body on his own.

The smirk only got bigger. Sherlock was always rather proud of himself in moments like these.

*When I have you tied up and blindfolded, I'll be licking and touching you all over. And when you least expect it, I'll be inside of you. -SH*

Once more he squirmed, his body reacting to his very vivid imagination.

It shouldn't surprise John that Sherlock could do this to him with just words. At this point he was so hard that it didn't matter anyway.

*I would shout so loud people outside the flat would hear and pull you down so I could scratch your back. God, Sherlock -JW*

The text was slow given the fact that had one hand free but he didn't care that he had kept Sherlock waiting.

While waiting, Sherlock's body continued to twitch as he anticipated different replies. His phone came to life and without hesitation he clicked it open.

*I would start off slow and then go hard and steady. I'd have you shouting so loud the whole street would hear you. –SH*

John pulled his hand out of his boxers with all the willpower he had to reply as quickly as possible. He could wait. The idea of getting Sherlock off through texts was exciting enough.
I would clench around you and beg you to go harder before flipping us and taking over. Slowing down, torturing you. –JW

Sherlock ignored the firm member against his leg and instead another smirk twisted onto his lips as he typed his next message.

That is highly unlikely, as you are tied up and blindfolded in this little scenario. So, we do things /my/ way. Hard and fast. –SH

John exhaled loudly through his nose, tensing in slight anger over the text. They were practically shagging through text messages and Sherlock was still in control.

I am in the Army, Sherlock. I can do a lot of things while I'm bound and blindfolded. Would you like to find out? –JW

His hand snaked back into his boxers, the rhythm faster than he had planned.

Sherlock smirked as his eyebrows arched in curiosity while reading John's text.

Yes, well until I can test that theory I will just have to assume you are bluffing Captain. –SH

He shifted in his chair, one foot tapping rapidly against the floor. He wasn't one to fidget usually, but damn it he wanted to win. John ripped his hand out of his boxers with a frustrated growl. Damn it, he wasn't giving in.

Then I'm beneath you sucking on your neck, whimpering your name. Christ, you're wonderful. C'mon Sherlock. -JW

He winced when the vivid memory of attempting a tell Sherlock what to do was resurfaced but he didn't care and furiously started a second text.

Fuck me. -JW

Sherlock's foot tempo only increased as he began typing his next message.

Only whimpering? Are you sure you aren't screaming for all of London to hear? Must be losing my touch. Guess, I'll have to slow things down a bit and make /you/ beg for it. –SH

Once more he shifted, which upset Hamish who jumped off his shoulder and stalked off to the kitchen.

John took a moment to focus on keeping both of his hands on he cell phone. His eyes slammed shut as his chest moved rapidly to try and catch his breath.

Screaming. Oh, Jesus, Sherlock. Move now. Harder. I'm going to take the blindfold off if you don't go. -JW

Sherlock's replies were too quick. It was obvious he had yet to remove a hand from the cell phone. John wasn't going to give in, then. He would tough it out.

Even in a text messages Sherlock liked being in control and he was still a child about some things. He typed out his next message.

I will go as fast or slow as I want. You are tied up. Let me know how taking the blindfold goes for you. –SH
It was getting harder to ignore the full erection he had going on right now. God, they were definitely doing this when John got back home to London.

_Army, Sherlock. I can do a lot of things. -JW_

John hit send and stared at the phone for a long moment before pulling up Sherlock's number and hitting the call button. His free hand instantly moved into his boxers and he let out a satisfied moan. "Sherlock, touch yourself. Now." His voice was low and he clearly didn't want to wait.

Sherlock was about to reply to the text when John's call came through. He answered it immediately, smirking at the words spoken to him. "You really are a demanding lover. What if I refuse, hm? Shall I incur the wrath of Captain Watson?" The games were what it made it exciting, at least for Sherlock anyway.

"Then I guess you'll just have to listen to me get off and do something about your erection by yourself," John snapped right away. His stomach tensed and he let out a long, low moan. "I'm picturing you on top of me, riding me and scratching my chest," his voice caught in his throat and his hips bucked involuntarily into his hand. "And when I get back I'm tying you up and showing you what happens when you don't listen to your Captain."

For as much as Sherlock liked being in control, he realized he loved when John got snappy and lippy and try to take over. His eyes closed and he finally undid his pants. "Well in that case, yes Sir but just so you know, you are the one who is getting tied up." He smirked a bit, unwilling to relinquish complete control over to John.

John hissed in reply, arching off the bed slightly and trying to keep himself quiet. "Fine. I like a bit of a challenge. I'll show you what I can do tied up," he growled. There was a moment where he was fairly sure he wouldn't mind being tied up, that having Sherlock control him that much would be delightful, but the thought ended almost as soon as it started. A blinding white light flashed in front of his eyes and he shouted slightly as he came into his hand and across his stomach. "Oh, God. Christ. Sher-" he bit his bottom lip and laughed. "Even over the bloody phone you're fantastic."

Rather pleased with himself, Sherlock began a quick pace on himself. "It's hard to be amazing at everything, but I seem to get by just fine." He couldn't help but be a bit cocky right now. His eyes remained closed, as he thought of all the things they would do together once John was back home. It didn't take long to get himself off, considering how hard he had been before he had started. He panted out, "miss you…"

"Miss you too," John muttered in reply, trying to hold in his laughter. He wouldn't give Sherlock anymore of an ego boost than he needed. At all. "We'll get through this, Sherlock. I promise. I love you," his voice was happy and proud, a smile on his face. "I think I need a smoke after that." He finally managed a laugh. Nine months was going to be tough but he would try to do it. "I've got to go, alright? I'll let you end the call."

Right. Nine months. Not six. Sherlock didn't want the call to end but knew that John had things to do. "I love you too. Call, text, Skype whenever you can. I'll answer every time. Good night my dear doctor." He terminated the call and eyed the mess on the floor, his pants and hand. He supposed he should clean up a bit. There was a lot to do still. Would he have enough time to do it all?
Chapter 21

Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

"Sherlock, dear?" Mrs. Hudson knocked on the door but didn't move to open it. "A-Are you alright? I heard...you're brother is here. I am going to assume the bell still isn't working." There was a shuffle of movement behind the door.

"Sherlock, I'm coming in!" Mycroft's voice echoed through the flat and he opened the door a crack, squeezing in and having the decency to shut the door before Mrs. Hudson saw anything. He didn't even bother to glance at Sherlock, merely placed a large box near the entrance of the kitchen and placed several other bags on top of it. "Men have been deployed, we've already caught two. They're being questioned. Clothes and a crib. Bottles, formula, diapers, the like." He finally glanced up at Sherlock and narrowed his eyes. "You two really can't stop, can you? You're going to have to slow down when the child gets here."

Sherlock had his pants redone and was about to clean up the mess when there was knocking and then his brother burst in. He nodded slightly at Mycroft's words, as he eyed the new baby stuff. He smirked and shrugged at the last thing said to him. "John started it," he muttered and then came over to investigate the box of things. Things would have to stay in the box until he found a place for everything. He hadn't expected Mycroft to be so thorough, so quickly on the baby front or Moriarty front. He supposed there was a reason his older brother practically ran the British Government. Really, he hadn't expected to see Mycroft at all the rest of the evening.

"Yes. Quite. Sure he did." Mycroft smiled gently and glanced at his younger brother. "I've talked to father," he stated with a small glance around the flat. "He has requested to not be at the wedding." Despite the fact that this wasn't his wedding, Mycroft was clearly slightly hurt. "But Mum has already gotten a lot of things together. A place for the ceremony. Clothes," his voice trailed off nervous. "She would like to meet with you tomorrow. She wants to see pictures of John. She even requested video chatting with him."

"Good, he wasn't going to be invited anyway," Sherlock growled, his eyes narrowing at the thought of his father. Even when he wasn't there to annoy him, it was still possible. He smiled slightly though, happy that at least his mother was excited for him. Not that he was really surprised. "Yes, I was planning on seeing her tomorrow anyway. So, that will work. Mother does so love sitting down and talking over tea, more so than you love cake." He glanced up to Mycroft with a smirk. "I'll see if I can arrange a video chat with John. I'm sure he won't mind, but I'll discuss it with him first anyway."

Mycroft narrowed his eyes. "The diet, Sherlock. It's going great, in case you haven't noticed," he replied. A smirk lit up his features, it was proud and something that was clearly only an older brother could have. "You should see the tuxedos Mummy has picked out for you both, dear brother." It was clear he was trying not to laugh. "I'm sure you'll look dashing." He moved to sit in John's usual chair, nodding for his brother to sit across from him. "Care to talk? You will soon have a small child in your life, Sherlock. I have a feeling another Watson might be a bit to handle."

"Tuxedos? No, no, no, no, no! I am not wearing a tuxedo." Sherlock pouted as he sat back down in his usual chair. He glanced up to Mycroft and shrugged. "How hard can it be? Feed it, change a diaper or two, and put it to bed." Hamish finally came out of the kitchen, growled at Mycroft as it passed and then jumped up onto Sherlock's lap and laid down. He pet the cat on the head, and it issued a rumbling purr.
Oh yes you are, Sherlock. Yours is black, John's is white. It's quite adorable, really. Mummy is so excited." Mycroft folded his hands in his lap as he studied the cat in Sherlock's lap with distaste. "I have also talked to Sarah who is willing to stay here at the flat for a few weeks after Amy is born to help you. She could use the help, as well. If that's alright with you, that is?" He pulled his cell phone out of his pocket and read a text message with a bored expression before slipping it back into the inside of his jacket. "I will be willing to help, as will Mummy. We've got quite a plan put together."

Sherlock pouted once more and muttered, "I don't want to wear tuxedo." He made a face at the mention of Sarah staying at the flat. "I'll do fine on my own. I don't need her help." This time he rolled his eyes. "Do you two really think I can't do this by myself? You're acting as if I'm a child who needs looking after as well. I can do research, buy books, whatever. Like I said, it can't be that hard to figure out. Stupid people take care of children every day. I'm sure I am more than qualified to do it."

"You are wearing a tuxedo, Sherlock. It's what Mummy wants." Mycroft straightened in his chair and studied Sherlock for a long moment. It was true that Sherlock was a genius, he wouldn't hesitate to say that. The problem with Sherlock was that dealing with humans, especially newborns, wasn't his area. "I hate to tell you that you don't really have a choice." He paused and nodded to assure himself this was the right decision. "But you don't really have a choice. Sarah needs the help just as much as you need the training. It's beneficial for you both."

Sherlock's lips puckered. "Fine, but I won't like it." Why did he suddenly not have a choice about what happened in his flat? The child wasn't even related to them, what did they care? "Why does everyone feel the need to interfere with my life? I'm an adult. I can do things without other people's permission, especially in my own flat. If I really need help, I can always ask Mrs. Hudson. I don't want or need people fussing over me. You know I hate that. Yet every time something comes along that you think I can't deal with, is exactly what happens."

"I know you can deal with it, Sherlock. That isn't really the point." Mycroft leaned forward, his gaze on Sherlock stern. "But you are marrying John and that child is his, which by default makes this little girl yours as well. Seeing as John is fighting a war in Afghanistan and can't exactly be here for the first few months of his daughter's life, Sarah has politely requested that you and I, even Mrs. Hudson, help take care of the infant." He folded his hands under his chin with a sigh. Sometimes dealing with his brother was difficult. "It isn't fussing over you. This isn't about you anymore. It's about your future husband and the child you will be raising with him."

Damn it. He was Sherlock Holmes and he didn't need help from anyone. He didn't want to continue the conversation so he changed the subject. "Do you know of a big empty building I could rent out? Preferably two to three stories high." Tomorrow before tea time with his mother, he planned on finding books on parenting and other miscellaneous baby books and hopefully find a suitable place for an office.

Mycroft sat back into his chair with a defeated sigh, his eyes roaming the room instead of resting on Sherlock. "I do. One isn't too far from here. I will text you the address once I am back home," he stated with a hint of anger. "I'm glad you're taking this seriously, though. You're being extremely responsible. It's good." He glanced back at the entrance to the flat. "Have you told Mrs. Hudson yet? I'm sure she would love to know about the little child."

Sherlock nodded once. "That would be appreciated." He continued to pet Hamish on the head, the cat hadn't stopped purring. "No, not yet. I was texting with John when I got home so I didn't have time." He gave a small smirk. "I did plan on telling her though." He decided to shift the conversation off himself and onto his older brother. "Things better with Lestrade then?"
Mycroft's body tensed instantly at the question, his eyes slightly narrowed as he turned toward his brother. This wasn't about his personal life. This was about Sherlock's. "Quite," he spat, his lips curved in a tight and forced smile. "And with that I fear I must be going. Leave you to your wonderful news sharing after you clean up a bit." His eyes studied Sherlock's body for a long moment. "I shall see you tomorrow, dear brother. I'm giving you a ride to Mum's to make sure you are there on time."

Sherlock smirked slightly, knowing full well he had struck a nerve and that it would end with his older brother leaving. "Tomorrow then," he said, as he set down Hamish on the floor and stood up from the chair. The cat growled and found its way to Sherlock's shoulder immediately. "You act like you haven't seen me in a year." He frowned at his choice of words. A year. That was how long John would be gone from his life. Three months had already gone by and he had another nine long months to go.

"Sherlock?" Mrs. Hudson brushed past Mycroft as he left, a smile on her face as she entered the flat. "Oh, dear, I just wanted to see you. I heard about everything." She moved forward in the flat and gave him the best hug she could while avoiding the cat. "I wanted to invite you down stairs for a cuppa, if you would be interested. You could tell me all about your little trip to Afghanistan." She glanced at the necklace hanging around Sherlock's with a bit of pride, her eyes studying the silver ring intently.

With a blink, Sherlock looked up as Mrs. Hudson came in. He gave her small smile and returned the hug. "Quite a bit happened. Probably best discussed over a cup of tea. Maybe something to eat as well?" He was hungry after not eating for several days. John would certainly not be happy with him. He could hear the army doctor's voice chiding him and telling him to eat and to take care of himself. He followed his landlady down the stairs automatically, absently petting at the cat on his shoulder.

"Not your housekeeper, dear," Mrs. Hudson replied over her shoulder as she entered the kitchen. Despite her words she put together a small meal for Sherlock: left over roast beef and corn on a plate. "Sit, Sherlock, I can't wait to hear how everything was!" She poured them each a cup of tea and sat down at the table with a warm smile, taking a sip. It wasn't often that Sherlock was willing to sit and talk about something other than the cases he worked. Mrs. Hudson was excited to hear about how his life had been changing since John had moved in.

As soon as the plate of food was in front of him, Sherlock began eating it. He took a few mouthfuls before speaking. "We just spent time in the room. Talked about a lot of things. Discovered a few new things about each other." He gave a sly smirk. "Things were intense for awhile, John got called away and a bunch of stuff that would only make you worry happened." He shrugged. "John's going to be a father. His tour got extended another three months, so he won't be back for nine months now. We plan on getting married about a week after he is back. You are invited of course." Once he finished speaking, he ate the rest of the food on his plate and finally started drinking the cup of tea.

Everything was spoken like it was off of a grocery list. Mrs. Hudson narrowed her eyes before covering her mouth with her hands, reacting to the most important news first. "J- John? He's going to be a father?" Her shoulders lifted and she let out an excited little noise from the back of her throat. Her body relaxed slightly when she played the rest of the news in her head. "But another nine months? That's quite rude, isn't it? Can they do that? Oh, Sherlock, are you alright?" Her head shook and she finally flashed a sly smirk in Sherlock's direction. "I hope you kept him down. By the way your last night here was with him I'll have to leave the flat on the wedding night. You got yourself a loud one, Sherlock." She laughed heartily and took another sip out of her tea.
"Well, I do agree it is rude but nothing can be done about it now." Sherlock decided not to mention the part about his father at all. It would only upset her. "I will be fine. There are a lot of things to take care of so, it will give me time to do them." It was then he realized he probably wouldn't have time to work on a case, not properly anyway. Never in his life would he have thought there would be too much going on at once. He would certainly keep busy over the next few months. After a few thoughtful sips of his tea he smirked at Mrs. Hudson once more. "Indeed. He can't seem to help himself."

Mrs. Hudson lightly clapped her hands together, smiling widely. "Does this mean I get to see you and John in tuxedos? Oh, I bet your Mum has some of the best clothing picked out for you two. This is going to be great." Her tea was promptly forgotten as she leaned across the table. "The child, then? Are we going to have a boy or a girl?" She grinned excitedly. It was amazing to see how much the man in front of her had changed, willing to start changing things in his life to let John in. She looked at him like a proud mother.

Sherlock groaned inwardly. Tuxedos. "Yes, mother insists that we do." He wished he could share everyone else's enthusiasm over the baby. He wasn't upset necessarily but he wasn't as excited about it as everyone else seemed to be it either. "A girl. They have picked out a name already. Amy Sandoval. Mycroft came over to drop off necessary baby supplies. I will need to rearrange the flat a bit before I do anything with them though."

"Amy Sandoval Watson," Mrs. Hudson muttered with a nod. That was a good, strong name. When she glanced at Sherlock again the glee in her eyes died down. "Except you aren't as excited as everybody," she whispered with some regret. "Sherlock, I'm sorry." One hand reached across the table to rest lightly on top of Sherlock's. "Have you talked to John about this?"

Sherlock gave a small shrug. "It will just take me a little longer to get used to the idea, I think." He then shook his head slightly at the question and took a sip of tea before giving a verbal reply. "No. John has enough to worry about right now. No need to add to it." So much in his life was going to change now. All because of a one night stand. He tried not to think of it like that but he couldn't help it. He was still struggling with coming to terms with it.

"I understand you want to protect John and make sure he stays focused," Mrs. Hudson paused and smiled at Sherlock. "But at some point he needs to know. You can't build a healthy relationship by burying things." After patting Sherlock's hand she stood up and sighed. "I'm going to bed dear, you best do the same. You look exhausted." She moved to Sherlock's side of the table, placed a kiss on his forehead, and left the kitchen.

Sleep? There was no time to sleep with so much else to do. Sherlock left the kitchen quietly, and went back upstairs. He decided to take a long hot shower first. He didn't really use it to clean up, merely let the water spray down on him, as he leaned into it, one hand on the wall for support. When he finally got out, the water had turned rather cold. He caught a glimpse of himself in the mirror, noting the scars on his chest and stomach from when he'd had surgery. The scars were lighter now, but they would never completely fade. His stomach was red and blotchy from the burn, he imagined his hand looked about the same. There was also an ugly looking purple bruise on his left pectoral from where he had been kicked. Despite all the physical wounds, Sherlock was feeling rather beaten down by the psychological ones. He sighed at his thoughts and redressed. For a moment, he just stood in the living room and took it all in. This would be the last time the flat would ever look like this. It would forever be altered, changed. There was no looking back, only forward. He went from room to room, systematically cleaning each out. Except his bedroom. He would do that closer to the due date. It was almost dawn when he had finished his task, and he sat down in his chair to finally rest. He closed his eyes, intending to only take a brief respite but ended up falling asleep.
Chapter 22

Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

Mycroft entered the flat hesitantly, his eyes scanning the area in disbelief. This was Sherlock's flat and it was...clean. Organized. And right in the middle of it was Sherlock, fast asleep in his chair. Something was definitely wrong but he didn't have time to worry about that. Keeping their Mum happy was his number one priority right now. "Sherlock?" His voice was low as he moved toward his younger brother, studying him intently. "Sherlock, it's time to go. Wedding to plan." He sat gracefully in John's chair.

The words spoken caused him to stir but the pain in his chest was what woke Sherlock up. He groaned at the aching, eyes slowly fluttering up. Had he fallen asleep in the chair? Sleeping upright must have agitated the bruise on his chest. Finally, his eyes focused on his older brother. "Mycroft?" He muttered but then he remembered tea time with Mum. God, how late had slept? Ignoring the pain he stood up from the chair, disrupting the sleeping cat on his lap that he hadn't realized was there. Hamish mewed his protest loudly.

"Obviously," Mycroft replied with a bored tone. "I've come half an hour early. Go shower and dress up," he stated with a smirk on his lips. He let his eyes wander the flat, taking it all in. This was new, different and it was obvious that Sherlock was making an effort. A giant effort. "Captain Watson is waiting nervously at Camp Bastion to meet his future mother-in-law via Skype." His eyes finally landed on Sherlock and he motioned his head toward the bathroom.

A thin smirk etched Sherlock's lips. "I took one last night, but I'll change clothes." He hadn't meant to sleep so long. He would just have to do the other things later, he supposed. He walked to his bedroom and got ready. With a bit of a fight, he managed to lock Hamish in the bedroom. Mum didn't like cats. Better Hamish tear up the one room in the flat not cleaned up yet. He would probably end up having to get rid of the cat, if it didn't mature. He tried to ignore the pain from every breath as best he could. "Ready whenever you are." It wasn't really a necessary statement, but he didn't feel like talking about anything else at the moment.

Mycroft stood slowly and buttoned his jacket. "Do try to hide your pain a bit from Mummy. She is worried about you enough." He took one last glance around the flat, nodding his head in approval, before starting down the stairs. "I hope you will be on your best behavior, Sherlock. She is extremely excited about all of this. I advise you to share that enthusiasm with her." As he slid into the car he pulled his phone out, making a quick call. "About fifteen minutes John. No need to be nervous," a pause, "She will love you. Don't worry. See you soon." The call ended and Mycroft occupied himself with emails on his phone.

"I'm fine," Sherlock muttered as he followed his older brother down the stairs. He got into the car without answering to anything else said to him. He sat staring out the window as Mycroft spoke on the phone with John. Wedding planning really wasn't his idea of a fun filled day, so maybe he would just agree with everything to make it go by faster. It really wouldn't do to argue with his mother anyway. Everyone thought he was impossible sometimes but his mum could be just as incorrigible when her mind was set.

Mycroft flashed a knowing smirk in Sherlock's direction as the car stopped. "Happy, dear brother. This is a momentous occasion. You, marriage. Mum never thought it would happen." He got out of the car with an excited jump and opened Sherlock's car door as he walked by. "And you get to see John. That will put a smile on your face."
"I know how to handle our mother," Sherlock replied before getting out of the car, but not with the same exuberance as his older brother. Mycroft was right about one thing, seeing John would improve his mood. He glanced up at the mansion and not for the first time wondered why his mum would want to live in such a big place by herself, since his father was away on military tours more than he was ever in London. It was amazing they had time to raise a family. As soon as they got up to the large double doors on the cobble porch, they opened. He gave his mother a pleasant smile. It wasn't really a surprise his mum answered the door personally and not one of the servants. How long had it been since he had been here? Since Christmas? So, almost ten months?

"There are my lovely boys! Come here and let me look at you!" The Holmes' mother hugged Sherlock tightly.

With restraint Sherlock managed not to cringe in pain from the pressure being applied to his chest. He returned the hug and gave his mum a quick kiss on the cheek.

Mrs. Holmes hugged Mycroft next. "You've been watching over him, haven't you? It's your job as the older brother, you know. Come on in, tea is about done." She turned away and led them inside to the expansive foyer.

Sherlock turned to Mycroft and smirked. He had lost count how many times their mother had told that Mycroft and then followed her inside.

Mycroft managed to shoot a glare in Sherlock's direction as they entered the house. It instantly disappeared the moment he thought Mum might be able to see it. "Yes, of course. He has been just fine. Bit worse for wear but what can we expect with dear Sherlock?" He flashed a smirk of his own in Sherlock's direction before taking a seat around the round table that had been set up for tea. He wasted no time in logging into the laptop that had been provided for the meeting. "Let us call up Captain Watson, shall we?" The sound of ringing echoed through the room as Mycroft turned the computer to face all three of them.

After a small shuffle John appeared on the screen, looking around nervously. His hair was wet, his face almost completely clean. It was obvious he had just showered for the occasion. His eyes landed on Sherlock and he relaxed instantly, smiling a bit and locking his gaze on the ring around Sherlock's neck. His husband. "Hey," he said in a light voice, tensing right away and clearing his throat. "I-I mean, h-hello, Mrs. Holmes. Pleasure to meet you. Captain John Watson. Um...I'm...marrying your son?" His voice squeaked at the end of his sentence and a blush spread across his cheeks. Wonderful. He had already mucked up.

When their mother had her back to them, Sherlock shot his brother a glare. It turned into a quick smile when his mum turned around and he took a seat on the chair next to her. When John appeared on the computer screen, his smile brightened. He was about to say something but he was interrupted by his mother's laughter.

"Oh Sherlock! He is adorable!" She smiled brightly, her hands clapping together in delight. "And, John, please call me Nancy."

That was about the right, Sherlock mused with a smirk. A smirk that clearly told John 'I told you so about my mum liking you.'

"Now tell me, why do want to marry my Baby Boy?"

Sherlock groaned inwardly, suddenly feeling like a small child again. "Mum, I'm not..."

Oh hush, you will always be my Baby Boy. Now be quiet so I can talk to your fiancé."
With a pout, Sherlock bit his bottom lip to prevent himself from talking further.

The blush on John's cheeks spread to the tips of his ear. He looked at Sherlock desperately for a moment. Adorable? He was older than Sherlock! He took a shaky breath and nodded his head fractionally, licking his lips. "Right. Yes. I love him, for starters. I can't imagine what my life would be like without him." There was a pause and he tore his gaze away from Sherlock's mother to look at him. "I want to wake up every morning and have Sherlock be the first thing I see. I want him to be the last thing I see at night." He closed his eyes for a long moment and lowered his head. "I hope that is alright with you, Mrs. Holmes."

Mycroft had to duck away from the computer, looking at Sherlock with a hand over his mouth to hide his laughter. "Yes, 'Baby Boy,' is that alright with you, as well?" He asked with a smirk across his lips.

"It will only be all right with me, if you stop calling me 'Mrs. Holmes' young man." She gave a large smile, her eyes twinkling with clear amusement.

Since their mother was preoccupied talking to John, Sherlock gave Mycroft the middle finger behind her back. A gesture he almost never used, but it was better than yelling in front of their mum.

"You two boys will behave while in this house. Mycroft, stop instigating. You know how sensitive Sherlock is." She gave them each a stern motherly look before looking back to John on the screen. Sherlock would have smirked at his older brother but he had just been called 'sensitive.' God, he could really use a cigarette right now.

John finally managed a grin at Sherlock's actions, his heartbeat increasing at how he was acting. How normal it all was despite their situation. "Right. Of course. Sorry Mrs. Hol- uh...Nancy?" There was a long moment where John finally had a chance to study Sherlock's mother. His mouth quirked to the right as he realized that it was obvious where Sherlock got his high cheekbones and amazing eyes. "Sherlock's told me that you've been putting some things together for the wedding?" He asked hesitantly, his eyes glancing to Sherlock with a bit of a smile. Christ, it was inappropriate, but looking at Sherlock had him bite his bottom lip and shifting slightly in his chair. With his Mum right there. He took a deep breath before mouthing 'I love you' to Sherlock.

"Oh, honestly Mummy." Mycroft leaned back in his chair, his eyes narrowing in Sherlock's direction. "I got those rings for them. Sherlock, technically, is in debt to me. A little teasing isn't much." He pulled his phone out of his pocket and read through an e-mail with a bored expression.

She glanced to the older Holmes brother before answering him. "Mycroft, I said not in this house. Don't argue you with me with company present. It is rude, not to mention disrespectful." Nancy returned her attention to John, smiling pleasantly despite chastising her offspring."Yes, I am so very excited. I never expected either of my boys to get married. You two will look so handsome in the tuxedos I picked out. For the reception, what song would you two like to dance to? Do you have a song?"

Sherlock was glaring daggers at his brother, even though Mycroft's attention was on the phone. He then looked from his mum to John bewildered. Song? Dance? There would be dancing? First he had to wear a tie and now he was expected dance? Maybe they really should just run away to Vegas and elope. "Mum-"

"I already told you to hush once Sherlock, I won't tell you again. I am talking to John right now. You will have your turn soon enough."
"Do we have a so- No. We don't." John shook his head, his eyebrows knitting together. They had never really listened to music. "I like the music plays on his violin." His hand lifted to run nervously at the back of his neck. He couldn't dance to save his life and the idea of having to do it in front of people was mortifying. "Tuxedos?" The words tumbled from his mouth and he giggled softly, focusing entirely on Sherlock now. This was going to be quite the wedding. "What do you think, Sherlock? Any idea what song we should dance to?" The smirk on his lips was smug, his eyes bright and playful.

"Don't ask me, I'm not allowed to talk apparently." Sherlock was clearly pouting.

"Sherlock! Don't be rude. He asked you a question, now answer it politely." Nancy spoke without turning to look at her youngest son.

This was going to kill him, he just knew it. "Well, honestly I've never thought about. I prefer classical music on the rare occasions I actually listen to it."

"We can figure that out later I suppose, when you two have time to discuss it. There will be dancing Sherlock, we can finally put to use those ball room dancing classes you had when you were younger." She finally looked over to Sherlock and smiled.

Yes, it was definitely going to kill him. Sherlock certainly and desperately needed a cigarette. He managed a small smile back and when he looked back to John, he couldn't help the hopelessness that showed in his face.

John's eyebrows shot up instantly, a wide smile on his lips. "Ballroom dancing classes?" He ducked his head out of view for a moment before popping up again. "Sherlock, you never told me about those!"

"Yes, dear brother, tell us about your ballroom dancing classes," Mycroft stated with a chuckle.

John tensed defensively, looking at Mycroft the best he could. "Sod off! Only I can tease him like that!" His gaze flashed back to Sherlock's mum nervously. "S-Sorry." His eyes traveled to Sherlock and he took a moment to study his fiancé.

Sherlock shrugged at John and then turned to glare at his older brother once more.

"Oh! You are so protective of my Baby Boy. I love it. You really are adorable dear," Nancy said to John. "And Mycroft, second warning on teasing your brother. I won't tell you a third time. You know what happens after the third time."

Even though they were grown adults, she would put them in an empty quiet room for time out when she told them not to do something for a third time. Sherlock couldn't help but smirk, despite being on a second warning as well.

John flushed and kept his eyes trained on Sherlock as his mother chastised her two children. At some point he figured he might be on the receiving end of that once he was officially in the family. "Mum, we are adults. You can't possibly be serious." Mycroft didn't bother to lift his head as he spoke, instead keeping his eyes focused on his phone.

"Sherlock," John spoke up slightly. "How're you?"

"If you are going to act like a child then I will treat you like one," Nancy told Mycroft.

Sherlock continued to smirk at his older brother and then turned his attention to the computer screen. "I am well John. How are you holding up my dear doctor?"
Nancy stayed respectfully quiet; to let her son and his fiancé have a conversation.

"I'm good," John nodded slightly and bit his bottom lip. He hadn't slept much the night before and had instead been taking care of a soldier who ended up dying from his wounds. He wasn't going to tell Sherlock but he figured his fiancé could deduce it anyway. "Just miss you. Ready to be back in London solving cases." He managed a half smile and it grew as Mycroft spoke up.

"Sherlock started it. Clearly. I'm am the mature one between the two of us." Mycroft put his phone away and lifted his gaze to study his mother. "I can't help it that Sherlock gets a bit flustered whenever he thinks about John."

"Mrs. Holmes," John turned his attention to his future mother-in-law with a warm smile. "Do you have any idea where you might want to have the ceremony?"

Sherlock studied John closely but merely nodded. "I miss you too." He glanced to his older brother and once more glared but it turned into a smirk as he heard his mother speak.

"Of course you are the mature one, you are the older brother. Now start acting like it and stop instigating." The Holmes mother said to Mycroft and then looked back to the computer screen. "I have a few ideas. I am going to talk with some girls in my book club and we will find the perfect place for you boys. However, if you call me 'Mrs. Holmes' one more time we are going to have problems young man."

"S-Sorry," John dropped his head. As much as she wanted him to regard her by her first name he was trained to be respectful. It was engrained in him. "That sounds like a great idea. I haven't really discussed things with Sherlock but I think we can eliminate any churches from that list." He scratched the back of his neck with a small yawn. "I wish I could be more of a help. I feel like I'm not doing much over a computer screen."

Mycroft sunk lower into his chair with a resigned sigh. Arguing with his mother while she was captivated with Sherlock and John obviously wasn't going to end well.

Nancy smiled as she watched John. "If you aren't comfortable using my first name then just call me 'Mum.' You are, after all, going to be family." Despite what Siger had said, she found the army doctor to be adorable and endearing. Pish posh on what her husband thought of him. "You are fine dear. I will take care of everything. Mothers are supposed to spoil their Baby Boy, you know."

Sherlock managed not to groan at being called a 'Baby Boy' this time and matched his brother's slouch as he sank into the chair.

John's eyes shot up as the woman spoke. Deducing people apparently ran in the family. "Yes. Of course, Mum." He smiled weakly. He watched Sherlock with a growing smile. It was amazing to watch Sherlock's family, wonderful to take in something he had been missing for years. He was going to have a Mum again. "I hope that I haven't upset your husband too much," he commented. "It certainly wasn't intentional. And I do understand if he wishes not to be present at the wedding."

Mycroft stood from his chair with a sigh, leaving the room as his cell phone started ringing. "Yes, father," he droned as he entered another room.

The smile on Nancy's face tightened at the mention of her husband. "Oh he will be there. He is Sherlock's father. I will make him go if I have to."

Sherlock was about to argue that he didn't want the Colonel there anyway. However, Mycroft answering his phone caught his attention and he sat up immediately with narrowed eyes. He was
about to get up and follow his older brother but his Mum stopped him.

"Sherlock, no. You are just as bad as you brother and father with spying on people. Honestly, you act as if I never taught you manners." Nancy gave him a stern, warning glance.

Sherlock hated when his mother compared him to the other men in the household. He didn't want to be like either, though, even he had to admit the similarities that did exist. With an unnecessarily loud sigh, he slouched back down into the chair.

"Quit pouting dear. It is unbecoming of one of your intellect," Nancy chided lightly and then finally returned her attention back to John. "I'm sorry dear, I don't mean to be rude and ignore you. Apparently my boys still don't know how to behave when company is present."

John couldn't help but have his interest piqued the moment he heard Mycroft on his phone. Sherlock had heard it too, certainly, because the moment he realized what was happening he heard Sherlock's mum chastising him yet again. "Hmm?" His eyes widened slightly and his lips tightened before he realized what Mrs. Holmes was really saying. "Oh, no, it's quite alright. I understand his curiosity. It's a lot of my job out here." He smiled and trained his eyes on Sherlock as he heard Mycroft reentering the room.

"Sorry," Mycroft stated simply as he fell back into his chair. "My father wishes to know how Captain Watson and Sherlock are doing with the child arrangements."

John paled almost instantly, rage bubbling in his stomach. Even if Sherlock's mum wanted him there, John was now extremely sure he didn't want Colonel Holmes at the wedding. His eyes shot to Sherlock and he bit his bottom lip.

Not 'our father' but 'my father.' Sherlock hadn't missed his older brother's phrasing. His eyes narrowed at Mycroft as he spat out, "It isn't any of your father's business." He was sitting upright once more; half tempted to punch his brother again.

"Sherlock!" Nancy screeched at her youngest son. She turned back to the computer. "I'm sorry John, I must cut this short. I am sure we'll speak again soon." She terminated the call and she turned back to glare at both of her sons. "Stop it, this instant. Both of you!"

Sherlock looked from his mother and then to his brother. He couldn't take it anymore and he stalked out of the room and outside. Unfortunately, he didn't have any cigarettes on him despite his desperate craving for nicotine right now. He ignored his older brother's waiting black car by walking by it down the long drive way and out onto the street.

"Wai-" John's shout was cut short and he slumped his shoulders when the screen went black. Wonderful. Bloody fantastic. Now Sherlock's mother hated him too.

Mycroft stood with an agitated sigh, stalking his way after his brother. "Sherlock! Get back in the house now." He jogged lightly to Sherlock's side. "For Mum, she's planning your wedding for Christ's sake!"

"Piss off. I'm not in the mood now, Mycroft. We can do it later. Now get lost, or you can find yourself off the guest list as well." Sherlock stopped just long enough to glare at his older brother and then resumed walking, at a brisker pace than before. He didn't care if he was being child. Everything was happening so quickly and it was all catching up to him now. The wedding. The baby. The flat being forever altered. John away for an additional three months. Everything. Eventually he had to slow his gait because it was too much stress on his already pained chest.
Mycroft nearly argued. It was going to be his head the moment Mum saw he returned without his younger brother in tow. He slowed down and dropped his head.

John shifted and quickly pulled his cell phone from his pocket.

_I love you. –JW_

In his agitated state, when his cell phone went off, Sherlock yanked it from his pocket roughly. He lost his grip on it and bounced out onto the road. Just as he was about to retrieve it, a car zoomed by and ran over it. He swore loudly at the driver. The phone was in several pieces, broken beyond repair. Naturally. What else could possibly go wrong right now? Without looking, he leaned over to pick up the broken phone parts. A car swerved to miss him, the horn blaring frantically. He stumbled back and he hit his head on the lamp post next to him. The car drove off, as he slumped against the metal pole while his head began to bleed. "Well, that's what I get for asking…" he muttered to himself since there wasn't anyone else around at the moment.
"Are you alright?" A young man dropped next to the man slumped on the sidewalk with a worried gaze, keeping his distance as a precaution. "I'm a doctor," he stated calmly. His bright blue eyes scanned the other man's face before he craned his neck to try and see the wound on the head. "I can...take you back to my flat? If you'd like, I mean. Take care of you there?" He flashed a smile at the man before him.

"I'm fine," Sherlock muttered and regretted it immediately when he tried to stand up. Nausea and vertigo hit him and he slumped back down against the pole. Maybe a quick nap would help. No, that wouldn't help. Going to sleep with a possible concussion wasn't a good idea. He was tired and groggy though. Without meaning to, his body leaned over onto the stranger and he passed out.

"Whoa!" The man supported the unconscious form easily and glanced around. He was alone with a man who clearly needed medical care. Right. He was a doctor so the best thing to do would be to get the fainted man to the hospital. He pulled his cell phone from his pocket and called ahead to his hospital to reserve a private room. With a little difficulty he managed to get the lanky man a block away to his car. It didn't take long to get the stranger a bed and hooked up to the necessary equipment. The young doctor relaxed in the chair besides the still unconscious man's bed with a worried sigh. Now all he had to do was wait.

A painful groan escaped his lips as he came back to consciousness. Where was he? Better yet, who was he? His head was pounding and his chest hurt? Why? What had happened to him? He fought furiously to remember but couldn't. His gaze finally focused on the man next to him. Did he know this person? He frowned in thought, eyes furrowed together but no name came to mind.

The young man turned eagerly toward his patient at the groan. "Hello," his voice was low but a hopeful smile played across his lips. "I was worried you weren't going to wake up." He stood slowly and gently picked up Sherlock's wrist, choosing to manually take his pulse. "How are you?"

"I would be better if I could remember something," he admitted. "I'm in a hospital, I am guessing? Are you my doctor?" He eyed the man a bit suspiciously, because he wasn't dressed like one. "Or do I know you? Are we friends?" He couldn't help all the questions. Not knowing anything was making him feel anxious.

Oh. Well, that explained a lot. "Ummm. Yes, I am a doctor. I'm Jackson, we don't really know each other. I...I found you...you really don't remember anything?" He asked nervously. This wasn't good. The man before him had no identification. Not even a cell phone. "Are you sure?"

Was he sure? Why would someone lie about memory loss? Why was he so angry over this guy asking stupid questions? He sighed and then nodded. "Where did you find me? Do you know what happened?" He managed to only ask a couple questions this time around.

"I found you out on the street. You knocked your head against a lamp post and passed out." Jackson nodded and moved to the end of the bed to read the clipboard. "No identification whatsoever. No mobile or anything. By yourself." He bit his bottom lip. This wasn't good at all. "Concussion, small cut to the back of the head...and memory loss, apparently."

"Obviously," he muttered, feeling agitated by this man but not really sure why. This Jackson fellow was being nice; there was really no reason to be rude to the doctor. He glanced down at himself
and eyed his clothes. Nice enough suit he supposed. Strange. Didn't hospitals usually outfit you in gowns? He frowned as the necklace around his neck caught his gaze. He picked it up curiously and analyzed it. There was a name inscribed inside, 'John H. Watson.' Was that his name? Someone else's? It looked like a wedding band. Why was it around his neck and not on his finger? It looked like it would fit? Wait, John was a man's name. Did that make him gay? Not that there was anything wrong with it. Christ, so many questions and absolutely no answers. No ID the doctor had said, was that normal? No mobile either? Everyone had cell phones these days didn't they?

"Right, sorry." Jackson glanced back down at the sheets before he noticed the other man studying the ring. "Right. The ring. My staff is fairly sure that it's a wedding ring. Only we can't seem to find a John Watson anywhere in London. No cell phone number listed or an address." His eyes settled on his patient a little longer than necessary. "So now, obviously, we're at a bit of a loss."

A thin smirk etched on his lips and he met Jackson's gaze. "Your staff? Oh right, you are a doctor. Private practice, I am guessing then? Given this private room." He dropped the ring, having lost interest in it and suddenly more interested in the man in front of him. He shifted a bit, grunting in pain. The doctor had said he had hit his head. Why did his chest hurt then? He ignored it, and kept his attention on the other man.

For a moment Jackson was speechless before dumbly nodding his head. He smiled softly and rubbed the back of his neck. "But yeah, private practice. Worried about you and all after you passed out." He shrugged his shoulders. "Wasn't a big deal, really. D'you want to tell me where you are hurting right now?"

He wasn't really sure how he knew that, but he just had. Strange, he couldn't remember a thing about himself and in just one glance he was certain he knew Jackson's whole life story. "Chest hurts a bit. It's no big deal," he muttered and he shifted once more, to alleviate the pressure.

Jackson lifted the clipboard and wrote something down with a small nod. "Would you mind if I had a look at that, then? It's just a bit odd since you are here for a head injury, y'know." He inched closer to the side of the bed and studied the man before him. "Want to make anymore amazingly correct assumptions?" He asked with a small laugh. His hands moved gently to the top buttons of the other man's shirt.

He smiled and laughed too. "I don't know how I did that. I just did. It was weird. I feel like I know you better than I know myself." He gave a small shrug and hissed in pain. "Christ that hurts..." He trailed off, not having meant to complain so much. He relaxed as Jackson started to do undo his shirt. He was curious himself, head tilted down so he could examine his torso as well. What the hell had happened to him? A purple bruise, faded scars...from surgery...? a splotchy red area on his stomach, another faded scar. With a frown he brought his hand up to run through his curly hair in thought. He noticed a similar mark on his hand that was on his stomach, his frown deepening. He voiced his confusion and dismay, "At this rate, I'm not sure I want to remember..."

Jackson glanced up at his patient's face for a moment before inspecting the other man's torso. "Obviously two surgery marks." He traced them quickly with his fingers. "Don't know what from. This bruise..." He tilted his head slightly and nodded. "Shoe. Kicked. And that's very much a burn. Second degree, not too bad." As he lifted his head he noticed Sherlock inspecting his hand. "That one is a burn, too. Cigarette from what I could tell when I got you into my car. Bit beat up but you are doing alright." The doctor stood up completely and let his gaze fall on the wedding ring hanging around Sherlock's neck. "So, you don't remember this John Watson?"

"I can see why you are private practice. You are very thorough and astute." He smiled for a moment and then frowned as he looked down at the ring in thought. "You say there was no address
listed for him? I'm not wearing it. Hmmm...he must be deceased then. No other reason to hold onto it otherwise. If divorced I can't imagine wearing it around my neck as a constant reminder. I think he was important to me...special..." He glanced back up to the doctor, shrugging lightly so as to avoid pain this time around.

"Not that we could find. We found...one cell phone number but it just rang out." Jackson's eyes darted to the ring one last time before he motioned toward the coat hanging on the back of the door. "We found...a picture, well, four. All of a soldier clearly in Afghanistan." It was too early to start showing the man in front of him everything. Too much wouldn't be a good idea. "I think our first goal right now is to figure out who you are, exactly. That might take a while. If you remember anything I need you to press that red button above your bed. I'll come in here and we'll figure some things out."

Pictures? He struggled to sit up, which caused the room to spin. He blinked several times, hoping that would make the double vision go away. "Do you think the memory loss is due to the concussion? Or is it possible something traumatic happened and triggered the amnesia? Maybe a combination of both?" He trail ed off with each word, talking to himself more so than Jackson at this point, as he tried to deduce what had happened to him.

"Easy." Jackson gently placed a hand on the man's shoulder to make him lay back down. "Don't sit up too fast, alright? You really need to rest. We are fairly sure that the amnesia is because of your concussion. That means a lot of rest on your part." The doctor managed to steal a quick glance around the room. There wasn't anything in here that he was willing to show this man too soon. "Maybe later we can try to figure that all out. Does that sound good?"

"Not really," he replied with a sigh, sliding back down onto the bed. The thought of just sitting around and hoping his memory would return irked him for some reason. He wanted answers now. "Does this mean I won't be leaving anytime soon?" Not that he had anywhere to go to. He had no ID, which probably meant no wallet and no money. Effectively, he was stuck at this hospital until whenever his memory returned.

It was obvious that some part of this man was still there, a part that didn't particularly like waiting around. "Looks like it. I can't exactly let you run out into the world without even knowing your name, can I?" Jackson laughed as he moved back to the chair in the room, relaxing into it with a content sigh. "I've got things I can show you to see if, maybe, things will jump-start your memory but I think it would be best for you to rest right now."

"I am fine. I would rather keep busy than rest." He couldn't help but worry his memory would never return. What then? Where would he go? What would he do? Once he was physically capable of leaving, the hospital wouldn't be able to hold him any longer. He really didn't want to stay here any longer than he had to. Hopefully, his memory would return soon but Jackson seemed to think that would take some time. He sighed at his thoughts, feeling frustrated by the whole situation.

"I-I guess I can show them to you," Jackson stated softly as he stood up, moved to the coat and dug into one of the inside pockets. He glanced through the four pictures of a soldier in Afghanistan once himself before moving across the room and holding them out to the man in the bed. "I have no idea who it is... but you've pictures of him."

He took the pictures and studied them intently. Who was this man in the photograph? Shouldn't he know? He frowned, eyes furrowed deep in thought. Why couldn't he remember? After a few minutes of staring at the photos in intense silence, he growled loudly and threw the pictures onto the floor in anger. "Damn it!" His fingers curled tightly into small fists, his nails digging into his flesh but he ignored the distant pain it caused. Shit, he needed a cigarette. Was he smoker? He
w asn't sure, but he really needed a nicotine fix right now that much was sure. His body finally relaxed a little. "Don't suppose I am allowed to smoke in here am I?"

Jackson jumped slightly as the man in front of him shouted, patiently picking up the pictures and placing them on the small table beside his hospital bed. "Um...no. We found a few nicotine patches in your jacket, though. I suppose we could give you one of those if you really want." He licked his lips and glanced at Sherlock again. "I could tell you more from what we found during our examination while you were out? Maybe that will help?"

A loud groan of frustration escaped his lips. He was getting more agitated with each passing moment. For a moment he pouted about not being able to smoke. He doubted nicotine patches would help calm his frayed nerves. His eyebrows went up in interest at the last thing Jackson said. "Yes, please." He hesitated a moment and then added, "Sorry if I'm being a bit childish. I'm just... frustrated…" He trailed off.

"No, it's fine," the doctor cleared his throat and took a deep breath. "Right. You had several...er, love marks...on your neck. Recent, suggesting a lover. There were some scratch marks on your back. Same thing there. A bite mark on your neck." His cheeks flushed and he dropped his gaze to the ground. "So...we don't know if it's the John Watson man or not...but you have recently been intimately involved with somebody." After a hesitant breath he lifted his gaze to study the man in the hospital bed.

With genuine surprise, his eyebrows shot up once more. "Really? I see…" He trailed off, trying to think of something. Anything. Yet, his mind remained stubbornly blank. As if some invisible door kept him out of his own mind and he lacked the proper key to unlock it and see what was inside.

This was getting him nowhere. Nothing seemed to be helping to jog his memory. He was getting restless just laying in the bed. He sighed, closing his eyes as he tried not think at all. Not that it was difficult, since he couldn't remember anything. For a moment he just laid there silently. Finally, his eyes opened again and he stared up at Jackson. "Even if I don't get my memory back, I would like to be able to leave once I am back to a hundred percent physically."

"I'm afraid we can't do that until somebody comes forward and says that they know you. We can't just let you out on to the streets without even knowing your name." Jackson glanced out the window of the room to watch a few nurses going by. "I know it's unfortunate but...that's the rule, I am afraid. We could let you walk around the hospital, with an escort of course, so you won't be so restless."

What the hell kind of rule was that? "What? Why?" He frowned and let out another growl to vent the frustration he was feeling. He probably wasn't helping his cause by acting so unruly but damn it he wanted out of here. He couldn't quite explain it, but he detested being in the hospital bed. In a hospital period. Somewhere there was a deep seated hatred that he didn't understand. He supposed walking around would have to do for now. "Yes, please. Can I?" He felt like a small child, begging for something so simple but maybe it would help ease his troubled mind.

It wasn't difficult to tell the other man 'no' when he was doing quite the job of annoying Jackson. "Not now, no. You are still recovering. Maybe in a few hours. Why don't you try getting a little more rest?"

"I have annoyed you," he muttered to himself and then sighed. His attention shifted away from Jackson to find something more interesting to look at, like the wall. He wasn't really pouting, more upset at himself for being so stupidly childish. He wondered if that's how he always acted and the thought made him frown. What if he got his memory back and it turned out he didn't like the person he was? Was he different now? Would it change him later? Of course, it would be
impossible to answer those questions until his memory returned.

Meanwhile…

Mycroft had already started his search. After several hours of Sherlock not responding to texts and the calls going straight to voicemail, he left their mother's house to see what he could find. Guilt was attacking his mind, he felt horrible for making Sherlock run off like he had.

It didn't take long for Mycroft to figure out which way Sherlock had run off to. What bothered him was what he found. A crushed cell phone and blood by a lamppost made his blood run cold. He was rooted to the spot. Kidnapped. His little brother had run off, in the middle of wedding preparations, because of something he had said. And now he was gone. His first instinct was to call John but he managed to stop himself from doing so. He couldn't worry the army doctor anymore. His second thought was to try and do some research of his own.

Mycroft had checked any known sources, worried that all of the men from Afghanistan hadn't been captured. It wasn't until he finally got surveillance tapes from surrounding buildings, an infuriating fifteen minute wait, that he saw a man plop a very unconscious Sherlock into his car and drive off after his younger brother had been stupid enough to try and rescue his dropped mobile. Wonderful. Now he was on the hunt to find a man who would take some random stranger off the street and, hopefully, see that he got proper medical care.

The leg work was infuriating but Mycroft managed to find the private hospital that he was fairly sure his brother has been taken to. Leave it to Sherlock to do something so incredibly stupid and selfish. Now it was only a matter of finding his younger brother.

The moment Mycroft found out what room Sherlock was in he rushed to it, pushing the door open with a sly ease. It was clear he was containing his anger. "What the Hell do you think you are doing?" He glanced at the other man in the room threateningly. "And you, just yanking him off the street instead of calling an ambulance?" Jackson tensed and tried to speak up before Mycroft started up again, his eyes trained on Sherlock. "Care to explain?"

Startled, he turned sharply to look at the door that had just been rudely shoved open. He blinked rapidly at the man speaking with confusion. His eyes finally narrowed in anger. What was this guy's deal? "Hey! Leave him alone. I don't know who you think you are but that man saved my life!" He stumbled out of the bed and managed to put himself between Jackson and this mad man. It took effort and he breathed a little heavily, ignoring the spinning room and double vision, but he stood his full height in hopes intimidating the man threatening his doctor.

It took a moment for Mycroft to try and decipher what was going on. "What are you talking about? Of course I know he saved your life, why else would I be here?" He moved forward slightly when he realized Sherlock was having trouble standing.

"He's recovering from a concussion," Jackson stated from behind his patient. "He has suffered some memory loss. And who are you exactly?"

Mycroft frowned slightly and let his eyes run across Sherlock's face with a sigh. "I'm his brother."

Brother? He turned to face this man claiming to be related to see him more clearly. He didn't make it though. His knees buckled and he stumbled back into Jackson. He hadn't realized just how weak he was until he had gotten out of the bed. No wonder the doctor had told him 'no' to walking around. "Tired…" He muttered, a hand clinging tightly to Jackson's shirt as he closed his eyes and passed out once more.
Jackson caught Sherlock the best he could, stumbling back several steps in order to support the man's weight. "Right. Wonderful." He glanced at Mycroft for a long moment.

"Oh, good Lord." Mycroft moved forward and helped the doctor move Sherlock back on to the bed. "This is great. He would go and do something like this." Once Sherlock was comfortable he fell into the chair beside the bed and steepled his hands under his chin. "You can go. I will wait until he wakes up." Jackson hesitantly nodded before leaving the room.

He slept for a few hours. With a groan he woke up slowly. He was groggy at first, and it took him a moment to realize he was still in a hospital. He shifted to see who was seated next to him. It was the man who had rushed in and said they were brothers. He frowned, still unable to make a connection of any sort. "Are we really brothers?" He asked, still staring at the older man intently but unable to recollect anything.

Mycroft slowly moved his gaze to Sherlock, taking him in before nodding slowly. "Yes. I am your older brother, Mycroft. And...I am assuming you forgot your name. You're Sherlock." He lowered his head, hiding the pain in his eyes. The man before him was supposed to be strong and powerful and now he was reduced to wondering who he was. Nothing could ever go right. "So you don't remember John?"

Mycroft? Sherlock? What the hell kind of names were those? "Our parents must hate us to name those," he said half jokingly. His brother mentioning John got his attention right away. "His name is on this ring around my neck. I really haven't figured out much though. I have all these different puzzle pieces but I can't seem to make anything fit. Anytime I go to remember it's just this big blank wall and I can't find the door..." Sherlock sighed and shrugged slightly. "Even looking at you and knowing we are siblings, I still have no clue who you are. Are we close? You seemed rather upset when you came in... how...how did you find me? I wonder if this means I can leave soon...?"

The last question was to himself, lips pursing together in thought.

Mycroft couldn't help but laugh. Even with amnesia his brother was very much himself. "They are certainly unique, I will give you that," he stated with a small laugh. The way his brother referred to John, though, without an ounce of the love that he had been. It stung and his stomach twisted violently. "We are...brothers. I'm protective but I never tell you that. I occupy a minor position in the British government and was able to use my resources to find out what happened." He cast his gaze toward the floor and ran his hands down his face. "I'm going to let you take some of that in, possibly take you home, before we even start discussing you and John."

Sherlock narrowed his eyes at the laugh. He wasn't sure what the hell was so funny. Suddenly he became suspicious of the man in the room. "How do I really know you are my brother? What if you are the person who did this to me?" He gestured at his chest, even though it was covered and the bruises weren't visible. "I don't want to go with you. I'll figure things out on my own. As far as things go about this John fellow, I'm sure he was important to me I just don't know how..."

"Why would I come to pick you up from the hospital if I did that to you, Sherlock?" A single eyebrow raised in question, Mycroft's head tilting forward slightly. "That happened while you were in Afghanistan two days ago," he answered simply. This was the tough part, apparently. Trying to convince the man in the hospital bed who didn't remember a thing that, honestly, he needed to
return to their Mother's house before anything else. "I'm your brother. I helped raise you. Made sure you brushed your teeth, made sure you went to bed, and made sure Dad didn't find out about your little experiments."

"Hmmm, I suppose you are right. Afghanistan? What the fuck was I doing in that war hell hole?" Sherlock suddenly remembered the pictures on the table next to the bed and he leaned over and picked them up to study them once more. He more or less ignored what Mycroft had said about growing up. Who was this man in the photos? This mental block was infuriating and he once more threw the pictures onto the floor with a growl of frustration.

Mycroft smirked and lowered his head, lifting it fractionally when the pictures were thrown on the ground. "I guess I shouldn't lie and say you were just visiting, should I?" He stood slowly from his chair and moved slowly to pluck the pictures from the floor. They were placed, one by one, on to Sherlock's chest with a deliberate glance toward his younger brother. "This is Captain John Hamish Watson. He is an army doctor currently serving his second tour in Afghanistan, his fifth tour over all in the Middle East. He asked you to marry him three months ago. This man is your fiancé."

Having to explain this to Sherlock was causing his throat to tighten slightly. The man in front of him had fallen madly in love and now he couldn't even remember the name of the man who returned those feelings.

"Ah. So he isn't deceased then? I thought maybe he was, since I wore the ring on the necklace and not on my finger. Why don't I wear it I wonder…strange…" Sherlock was thinking out loud, rather than actually speaking to Mycroft. His gaze once more dropped to the photos. So, he was engaged to this man in the photos. Why didn't he know? Shouldn't he feel something when he looked at this man? He looked back to his brother and clearly directed the question to the other man this time. "Do I love him?"

This was going to be far more complicated than Mycroft had originally intended. How did he explain to his younger brother that he didn't physically wear the wedding ring on his finger because he was too busy with experiments that could ruin it? It wasn't simple knowledge, really. Sherlock didn't remember anything. He decided that explaining his job and his entire life could wait until they were back at their Mother's. He chose the question that needed to be answered almost right away. "Yes. Undoubtedly. You love him more than anything. I have never seen you so happy."

A frown found its way to Sherlock's lips once more. "Hmmm..." He muttered. "Shouldn't there be something then? Why did he feel nothing at all? "What happens if my memory doesn't return by the time he's finished with his tour? Should I still marry him? Even though there isn't an ounce of recognition? Of anything. Whatever I felt for him before isn't here now…will it return if I do remember I wonder..."

Mycroft tensed and cleared his throat. "That is entirely your decision. I haven't told him yet. He is, obviously, very busy and has things to focus on while he is out there. I don't know when I am going to tell him." He trained his gaze on the pictures again and felt his heart tighten nervously in his chest. This was the last thing John needed was to find out that the one man he had fallen in love with suddenly didn't return the feelings because he had been a blasted idiot. "We could try and get him when he's free...you could video chat with him and explain the situation?"

"Me explain it? Uh...I guess…what should I say? 'Sorry, whatever I felt for you is gone along with my memory. Oh, by the way, how are things going in Afghanistan? Oh, I ruined your day you say? ' Bloody brilliant." Sherlock shook his head at himself. He looked back up to Mycroft. "Is there anything else I should know about myself that might help return my memory in an expedite fashion?"
"Probably not like that. Maybe a bit more of 'I seem to have lost my memory but I would still like to get to know you again since we used to shag like rabbits' might be a better response," Mycroft stated with a steady smile. There was a small falter in his demeanor as he debated on how to tell Sherlock what exactly he did. "Why don't you do me a favor and look at this picture and tell me what happened?" He reached into the inside of his jacket and pulled out a single photo, holding it out for Sherlock. It was of a man laying spread eagle, covered in his own blood without any actual physical wounds.

"Did we really?" Sherlock asked, although he supposed that made sense since Jackson had told him about all the love bites and scratches on his body as well. If this was true, why couldn't he recollect any of it? He took the photo and eyed the dead man and was surprised he wasn't in the least bit squeamish at the grisly site. "It's a dead guy. So what?" He frowned, wondering what the point of showing him this picture was. Then something caught his eye in the picture and without realizing, tilted the photo at a different angle to inspect it little more intently. Without thinking he began voicing his thoughts out loud. "The blood is old, not fresh. An analysis under a microscope should confirm it, as the red blood cells will be a bit damaged from the cold while it was stored for however long. Probably a forensic counter measure to confuse the police. Look for other means of cause of death, poison probably. Which means it was likely a woman. Probably his wife, or ex or soon to be ex. Wedding band is missing, as indicated by the pale imprint where it used to be on his finger. Removed recently, obviously." He blinked in surprise. How had he done that? It was the same way he had figured out things about Jackson without really meaning to. It just happened. He just knew. "Freakish," he muttered and returned the photo to his brother.

"That's you," Mycroft commented softly as he took the picture back. "That's what you do. You and John, when he's not invading Afghanistan. You solve crimes. You're a right genius." And now he was stuck in some hospital and didn't remember a damn thing. Nothing about who Sherlock Holmes was, nothing about how his life had changed for the better...nothing about the man who had done that. The even bigger worry was that it was possible for Sherlock to not remember anything at all. "And, to answer your previous question: yes. You two can't keep your hands off each other." His smile was tight lipped and he had trouble keeping his gaze on his younger brother.

"Solve crimes for a living? Really? Like a detective? Genius? Me?" Sherlock asked the questions consecutively and then finally took a breath, as he tried to wrap his mind around this information. It all seemed so foreign to him. How did none of this refresh his memory? He was being given all these answers but he still felt like he didn't know a thing about himself. With effort he gave a small smile back to his brother, but it didn't reach his eyes. He was still preoccupied with all his thoughts and trying and failing to get past the barrier that incessantly denied him access.

"Yes. One of the brightest people I know, Sherlock. You solve crimes that nobody else can." Mycroft glanced around the room and visibly grimaced. "Would you want to go back to our Mother's for the night once you are released?" He asked softly, scratching the back of his neck. "We could Skype John when he is done with patrol...explain the situation to him. It will give us a little more privacy to fully explain what is going on. Perhaps that is what you need to try and remember everything?"

"Mother's? Don't I have my own place? Please don't tell me I'm some loser who can't take care of himself..." Sherlock trailed off muttering under his breath at the thought of being one those ridiculously smart people but completely incapable of doing normal things. That wouldn't make sense though, if he was emotionally mature enough to handle a relationship that apparently involved a lot of shagging. Intense shagging by the sounds of it. He was so lost in his own thoughts, it took a moment to register the rest of what his brother had said. "Tonight? Already? So soon?" He bit his bottom lip at the thought. Was he ready for that? "We should see what Jackson thinks. He is the doctor after all. See if he thinks it is a good idea...?" There was a part of him that
just wanted to see the doctor again. Even though the man was a stranger to him, he had felt some sort of connection when first waking up. A connection that so far he didn't feel with anyone else. He sighed. Oh God, had he just made things even more complicated? He was supposed to be getting married for fuck's sake. He sighed at his realization, and suddenly he didn't want to talk this John Watson character at all.

"Oh, no. You do have your own flat, I promise. You and John started out together as flatmates, actually. That's how you met." Mycroft had moved forward to start help Sherlock out of the bed and tensed suddenly. Why was Sherlock asking about this doctor? A man that wasn't John Watson. "Sherlock, we don't particularly need that man's opinion, alright? We'll just get you back to a place where we can watch over you and you can rest and I'm sure your memory will return in no time." He was clearly agitated as he held his hand out to help Sherlock out of the bed.

"I can't just leave...he should know. I don't want him to worry..." Sherlock spoke before he could stop himself. He sighed again. Well, might as well go for broke at this point. "If it's all right with you, I think I would rather stay a bit longer. I know I said I wanted to leave but I've changed my mind." He declined the offered hand and looked away from his brother.

Mycroft let his hand fall to his side rougher than intended and glanced around the room. "Fine. Just...fine. I'll be back in a few hours so you have enough time to figure all that out," he snapped as he turned on his heels and left the room.

Jackson entered the room hesitantly, lifting a hand to run through his short brown hair with a nervous laugh. "Everything alright in here, then? Figure out who that bloke in the pictures was?" He closed the door securely behind him with a small smile.

Sherlock watched his brother leave with a sigh. When the door opened again, he was relieved to see Jackson enter. He smiled back briefly and then frowned. "Yes. John Watson, the name of the guy on this ring." He tugged at the necklace briefly before going on. "He's my fiancé. He is over in Afghanistan. Apparently I went to visit him for some reason or other. It's why all those markings were on my body it would seem, even the bruises and burns. My brother didn't go into detail how it happened though. He wanted me to leave with him..." He coughed and looked away shyly. "...I didn't want to..."

"Oh. Fiancé." Jackson nodded slightly and shifted his shoulders to adjust the white coat now hanging on his shoulders. "Well, at least we figured out who he was, right? That's good." He nodded with pursed lips, moving toward the end of Sherlock's bed to study his charts. "But...you didn't want to go with your brother? Why is that? It is something familiar." His blue eyes glanced up for a moment, contrasting against his slightly tanned skin. "Could help bring your memory back." He pulled his bottom lip into his mouth and moved to check Sherlock's pulse again, lightly holding his wrist between his fingers.

"Yeah. Great." Sherlock replied with a lack of conviction. Why was he suddenly so nervous? He rubbed his arm with his hand. "I didn't go with him because I wanted to stay here..." He hesitated and then added, "...with you. I know it's stupid." He groaned at how ridiculous he must sound and he fought the urge to pull the bed sheet up over his head to hide his mortification.

A blush spread quickly across Jackson's skin and he nodded vigorously. "You wanted to stay with me?" His voice was a bit high-pitched and nervous. "T-That's good, too." He smiled warmly and studied the clipboard intently, not taking any of it in. "I would say that I want to take you on a date but you've got your fiancé and I don't really think that would be appropriate, y'know?" The man in front of him was highly attractive but didn't even know who the Hell he was. It wasn't a very good idea to get emotionally invested despite everything he wanted to do.
Sherlock smirked slightly at Jackson’s initial response and then frowned at the rest. Right. Of course. “Just one night of…fun…?” He ventured a bit nervously. Not a fair question at all. To either of them he supposed. And definitely not to the man he was engaged to. However, right now he didn’t feel anything for the man in the photos. But right here, right now he did feel something. It was the only connection he had to anything and he wanted to cling to it as long as he could.

Jackson’s head shot up instantly, eyes wide and chest stuttering as he tried to suck in a breath. Holy shit the man had just propositioned him. He shouldn’t. He really, really shouldn’t. Except…Sherlock would be out of the hospital by the end of the day and technically he wasn’t even on shift. The moment Sherlock was done, so was he. “W-What did you have in mind?” He asked softly, setting the clipboard down to rest at the end of the bed. This man had a fiancé, what was he doing?

"I don't know…” Sherlock admitted. He fidgeted with the blanket beneath him, twisting it around his fingers nervously. "I know its wrong…not fair to put you in this position…I just…whatever I felt for my fiancé is gone right now…but I feel something…some sort of connection with you and right now it's the only one I have…” He trailed off feeling stupid with every word he spoke. After a moment he added, "my brother will be back in a couple hours...so if you wanted to…we should probably have to leave now…”

Wrong. So, so wrong. Jackson glanced at the door, to Sherlock, and then took a deep breath. "W-We can stay here, the door locks, the blinds close...the room is practically sound proof since the hospital is private..." His voice trailed off as he took several steps backward to click the lock on the door. Damn the man's fiancé, Sherlock wanted to get shagged and so did he, it was the reason he had approached Sherlock before to begin with. His steps back toward the bed were slow and deliberate, giving Sherlock enough to back out if he wanted. The white doctor's jacket was dropped to the ground as the front of his knees bumped against the bed. "Are you sure?" He leaned forward and gently met Sherlock's lips, his eyes instantly closing.
Chapter 25

Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

Sherlock grabbed Jackson's shirt to pull him closer into the kiss, and he returned it. This man was a fantastic kisser. Although he supposed he had nothing to compare it to. He pulled the doctor closer still, so the other man would hopefully come to settle on top of him. God. This was so wrong but it felt so good. Maybe this was some sort of sign that shouldn't be getting married after all. Or maybe he was just trying to justify his actions. Oh fuck it. His one hand still clung to Jackson's shirt and he loosened his grip so his fingers could trail along the exposed skin where the top few buttons were undone. The other came up to the doctor's face, caressing it gently.

Jackson followed the pull of the other man's hands without a question, moaning into the kiss as he climbed on to the bed to straddle Sherlock's hips. When he finally pulled away from the kiss and he felt Sherlock's hand on his face he took a deep breath. "Just tell me if you want to stop," he stated breathlessly, his hips grinding into the body below him with a grunt. This shouldn't be happening but it felt way too good to stop.

Any second thoughts Sherlock may have had were immediately discarded as Jackson grinded into his lower torso. "N-no…don't stop, please. Need this…" His voice was raspy and a bit thready as his breathing became slightly irregular. He ignored the pain that came from the pressure of the doctor being on top of him. His hips bucked back, gently but steady. He didn't want to rush this. He wanted to savor it. Remember it. He needed something to remember desperately. Being locked out of his mind was damn near maddening. He needed something he could call his own. Not just something told to him that didn't register or mean nothing at all.

"Oh, God." Jackson choked slightly on the air in his lungs, his hands moving deftly to undo the buttons of Sherlock's shirt. This was just a quick shag, Jackson reminded himself. A caution to the wind type of thing that he really only saw in movies. He bent at his waist to suck gently at the exposed skin in Sherlock's chest and easily met the rhythm the man below him had set. The friction of Sherlock's body and his trousers caused him to moan softly against Sherlock's chest. Sherlock let out a whimper as he felt Jackson's lips on his chest. His finger tips slid down the doctor's face slowly, down the length of his chin and then his neck. The hand that gripped the shirt released and he dropped it to move up Jackson's shirt, so his other hand could glide along the chest lightly. He bent his head slightly and kissed the first available spot to his lips, the doctor's ear. He nibbled gently, almost tenderly. The bucking became a bit rougher in his excitement and he groaned into Jackson's ear in pleasure. "God. You are fantastic," he murmured between little bites.

Jackson moaned at the feeling of Sherlock's fingers, one hand clinging tightly into the sheets beside the other man's head. "Y-You -too." He stumbled over his words at the feel of the lips on his ear. Shagging a complete stranger, one who was engaged and had no idea who he actually was, should have been wrong but Jackson couldn't help himself. It had been a while since he had been shagged. Despite the fact that it looked like they would get off with their clothes mostly on, Jackson responded eagerly to Sherlock's thrusts. "Shit, you are wonderful."

Sherlock smirked, pleased with himself. He continued to nibble lightly on the ear. His lower torso began an eager pace against Jackson, in mad anticipation. The hand under the shirt trailed down slowly to the doctor's trousers. Despite the fact he wasn't looking, it didn't take long to undo the trousers. Without a trace of hesitation his hand went down the other man's trousers. This time his fingers trailed along the soft boxers, outlining the bulge there. "Christ. This is fantastic. This. You. Everything. Not sure how much longer I will last," he admitted, as he took a brief reprieve from the
light love bites to whisper into Jackson's ear breathily.

Jackson had been about to respond when the touch from Sherlock's hand through the boxers caused him to tense and come with a low moan. He pulled away from the lips at his ear, wiggling back slightly on Sherlock's legs so he could shakily undo the other man's pants. "Fuck, that was..." He shook his head with a smirk. The moment he could, he shoved his hand down Sherlock's trousers, lacking the finesse that he seemed to have while doing the same act. "Wish we could do this more than once," he added as he started to calm his breathing. His hand moved deftly into Sherlock's underwear, wrapping confidently around his erection and starting with strong strokes as he bent and met Sherlock's lips.

Sherlock was about to reply but any words that had thought about forming were gone the instant Jackson began stroking and kissing him. He returned the kiss eagerly, his body rocking in time with the doctor's hand. His body tensed and then relaxed when he came. "Oh God yes." Those three words. They seemed so familiar. Where had he heard that before? Apparently it was the key to his locked mind because everything came crashing back to him a jumbled rush. Oh no...Oh God...what had done...John...how could...have ever... Was he still kissing Jackson? Fuck, yes he was. He pulled away. "I...I'm sorry...I can't...we need to stop..." His breathing became frantic now, and it wreaked havoc on his bruised chest but he just couldn't seem to control the breaths coming and going no matter how hard he tried.

The kiss was lazy and slow and Jackson had been enjoying it until Sherlock had pulled away. His brows knitted together and he glanced around the room. "Why? We are fine. Nobody's here." He smiled slightly as he sat up, grimacing as he re-did the zipper and button on his trousers. "I...I think I might have changed my mind. What are you doing tomorrow night?" The doctor glanced up at Sherlock as he yanked at the blanket at the bottom of the bed, cleaning Sherlock's stomach and shirt the best he could before tucking Sherlock back into his underwear and buttoning his trousers back together with a sense of care that had lacked before their encounter. "I want to take you to dinner."

Sherlock stared up in Jackson in horror. What had he done? He tried to explain why he couldn't, to say something at all, but his breathing still hadn't calmed down. If anything it had become worse, on the verge of hyperventilating. Christ, his chest really hurt. How could he ever explain to this John? Should he tell John? So hard. He had tried so hard to be accommodating, even though it bothered him and hurt him. He had screwed everything up and now this man on top of him wanted to take him to dinner? In the midst of his flurry of thoughts, his chest tightened. It wasn't getting the oxygen it needed. Panic attack? Probably... His eyes closed in effort to try and concentrate but instead he passed out.

Jackson jumped out of the bed immediately, rushing out of the room and shouting for a nurse. It wasn't long before he had on oxygen mask around Sherlock's nose and mouth, measuring his breathing with a relaxed sigh. So...shagging patients with amnesia and chest pains probably wasn't the best idea but at least he could say he had been with the extremely attractive man.

Mycroft entered the room with a bored sigh before tensing, looking at his brother and then to the doctor. "You..." His eyes narrowed and he grabbed the doctor by the collar of his shirt, shoving him out of the room with a soft growl. Great. He had just managed to, hopefully, fix the issues between John and Sherlock after John had cheated and now Sherlock had run off and done the same thing. At least there wouldn't be an accidental pregnancy involved this round. "Wonderful. Way to go, you bloody genius," he stated to himself as he fell into the chair beside the hospital bed. It looked like Mycroft had more cleaning up to do in his younger brother's relationship.

Usually nightmares didn't plague Sherlock, but he had fallen into the slumber deeply troubled. He
whimpered in his sleep, fingers digging into the sheets desperately. The oxygen mask muffled most of his slumbering murmurs but some words were still audible. "Don't leave…I'm sorry…"

With a start he woke up, sweat covering his body. He was certain his breathing would have been heavy if not for the oxygen mask on his face to help control it. He swallowed several times, trying to calm his racing heart. His light eyes spotted Mycroft. Great. Of course his brother would be here. He slumped back down into the bed, feeling rather defeated.

"We've got a few options," Mycroft stated with a bored drawl. His gaze landed on Sherlock disapprovingly. "We can elect to not tell your fiancé that any of this happened. He will never know." He cleared his throat as he tossed a new cell phone on to Sherlock's bed. "Or we can tell him and hope he understands. After all, did he not do the same thing to you a few days into your relationship." He had nearly called John while Sherlock was asleep, while Sherlock was dreaming and muttering and clearly scared about what John would do, but he kept to himself and forced himself to listen to his younger brother's nightmare. It touched him that the worst he could dream of was John leaving him but it scared him, also, because he realized it might be reality. "I am taking you back to Mum's, you will need to be observed because apparently I can't leave you alone at all without you mucking things up."

Sherlock glared at Mycroft and took off the oxygen mask, so he could talk clearly. "I didn't remember until afterward…" The words were mumbled and even sounded lame to his own ears. He shook his head, and he wasn't sure if it was at himself or his older brother. "I would rather go back to my flat. If I called him now, would I have time to talk to him? To…try and explain… Could I have a few moments to talk to him alone?"

"He is on patrol and cannot be reached right now," Mycroft snapped impatiently as he stood. "And I tried to stop you but you insisted on staying here because Jackson might be worried. Can you not let anything in your life be happy? You are engaged, Sherlock. You have a man who loves you more than he has loved anything. You've brought meaning back to his life and he has done the same for you and you just can't let anything go right!" He was standing now, practically shouting as he paced the room. "And no," he replied as an afterthought. "You will not be going back to your flat. Mum is worried, naturally, and wants to talk to you in private. You're staying there at least for the night."

The words stung more than Sherlock would have liked as his brother rebuked him. It was all true though, every single word. He almost hung his head in submission but Mycroft's last bit sparked anger. "You may be my older brother, but you aren't my keeper and you don't get to tell me what to do! I can do whatever the hell I want without your say so!" He was yelling, breathing heavily and those damn chest pains returned. He ignored them and kept on with his shouting. "Oh God, you didn't tell Mum did you? I'll kill you if you did!" He struggled out of the bed, staggering toward Mycroft but didn't get far and Sherlock had to slump against the wall for support.

"I am your keeper when you can't properly make decisions for yourself!" Mycroft's voice bounced off the walls of the room and even he slightly flinched at how loud he had been. His chest was heaving as he closed his eyes in an attempt to gather himself. It would do no good to just yell at Sherlock. The consulting detective already knew that he had done something wrong. His eyes opened slowly and he moved toward Sherlock gently, placing a hand softly on his chest. "No, I didn't tell Mum," he whispered, evenly meeting his brother's gaze. "I haven't told anybody. If you want Mum to know then you can tell her, it isn't my place to do that." It took him a moment but Mycroft moved to bring Sherlock's arm over his shoulders for support. "Come on, lay back down. You need to rest."

Sherlock shoved at Mycroft weakly. "Get away! Just leave me alone! I'm sick of you and father always trying to tell me what to do! Just get the hell out of my life! I hate you! I hate you both!"
The anger he was feeling at himself had been displaced onto his older brother. He didn't care. He needed this stupid childish fit, to release all he was feeling. In truth, he was feeling worse than when he had caught John and Sarah together.

Mycroft didn't relinquish his light hold on his younger brother. A frown etched into his features and he shook his head. "No, you need somebody. John isn't here and that's my job. I'm your older brother, I am supposed to protect you," he admitted feebly. He met his brother's gaze for a moment before jerking his head toward the hospital bed. "Go lay down, please. You need to rest and we need to figure out how we are going to tell John. I'm here to help you." His voice was weak because this wasn't supposed to happen. None of this. John shouldn't be preparing to become and father and Sherlock shouldn't have lost his memory for a short while and slept with the damn doctor. They were supposed to be married and back at 221B, not in a hospital and fighting a war.

Somewhere, something cracked in Sherlock. Everything he had been holding in since finding out John had wanted to go back into the military. Sure, he had a few childish fits here and there but other than that he hadn't really done anything to release everything he had been feeling. Instead he had bottled it all up and now they came pouring out all at once. He slumped into Mycroft heavily, tears streaming down his face. He managed to weep silently, his hands clinging tightly to his older brother's clothes. He hadn't cried like this since he was a young boy and he hated himself for it, but he couldn't stop the watery flow. There was a part of him that wanted to go back in time where he didn't have or care about emotions.

It was a shock, at first, to have his younger brother clinging to him so desperately, but he realized what was really going on. This wasn't just the current situation. It was everything. The drastic changes in Sherlock's life had finally hit him. "It's alright," he whispered as he wrapped his arms around Sherlock. "I'm here." He slid his feet a bit further apart to support Sherlock's weight. "It'll work out." Emotionally charged situations were difficult for both of them but Mycroft did the best he could to console the man in his arms. With a sniffle and an undignified clearing of his throat Sherlock finally found control. "I'm fine," he mumbled the obvious lie. He released his grip on Mycroft and righted himself.

"It's your fault you know. You wouldn't fight with me or let anyone else do so either." More mumbled words. He was still feeling a bit bitter. He moved away from his older brother and back over to the bed. Sherlock rolled on his side, so his back was to Mycroft.

"Yes, I'm sure," Mycroft stated with a soft smile. It didn't really matter that nobody had fought with him, Sherlock had needed to try and fight that habit. "When you get married you will go through the same thing. John isn't just going to fight with you because you want a fight." He settled into the chair with a weak smile. "We just fought. Don't you feel a bit happier?"

"Sort of. I guess." Sherlock was still mumbling his words and continued to keep his back to his older brother. He didn't want Mycroft to see him like this, even though he had lost it twice now in his older brother's presence. John had let him feel and experience things he never knew were possible and he was thankful for that but it was times like these he wished that emotions just had a switch he could turn off and on. It felt like his was in permanently in the 'on' position no matter how hard he tried to flick it to 'off.' He finally turned over to look at his older brother. "Do you think John would have told me about Sarah, if I hadn't accidentally walked in on them?"

Mycroft locked his gaze on Sherlock for a long moment. The texts between John and Sherlock during the time that Sarah had been in the flat were monitored and Mycroft had seen every single one. Telling his brother the truth was going to hurt and he so badly wanted to shake his head and say 'no.' There was a long pause, his eyes dropping as he sighed. "Based on the texts John wanted to get Sarah out of the flat before you returned. My guess is that he wouldn't have told you but I
can't be certain. That's a question for him," his voice was low and he shifted in his seat. "We've made it so John won't have to know, Sherlock. Your phone has been replaced, the same one with the same number. These hospital records will be shred. If you don't want to tell him you don't have to and he will be none the wiser about what just happened."

Really, Sherlock figured that was the answer. He knew it without needing to ask. He had just hoped his brother would tell him he was wrong. He sighed. Not telling John would be the easiest thing to do, but the thought of not telling the army doctor gnawed at him. Deception had been so easy at one time but now keeping anything from John was almost impossible. He grabbed the phone Mycroft had thrown on the bed and he sent a text to his fiancé.

*John, I know you are busy right now but when you have time to talk call me. It's important. I love you.* –SH

The last bit was more for his benefit, to remind himself that he did because never again did he want to forget. How he had forgotten at all to begin with was beyond him. It bothered him really. He stared at the phone for awhile, as if sheer will power would make it come to life. Finally, he glanced up to his older brother once more. "Did Mum say what she wanted to talk to me about?"

"The wedding, of course," Mycroft muttered with a small smirk. "She needs your measurements and clothing that John looks best in to get his for the tuxedos." He studied the phone in Sherlock's hand for a long moment and lifted his gaze to study his younger brother. For a moment he did nothing but admire the man in the hospital bed. He had made a mistake, although at the time he didn't really know what he was doing, and he was going to tell John when he had all the tools to hide the entire thing. It was admirable. "We have both also decided it would be best for you to stay there for the night, just in case."

John shifted slightly on the ground. It was the evening and they had stopped to rest. He was leaning casually against a rock, his assault rifle resting in his lap, as his cell phone vibrated in his pocket. He read the text for a moment before hitting reply.

*Is everything alright? You aren't hurt, are you?* -JW

"Right of course she does." Assuming there would still be one, Sherlock thought to himself bitterly. He must be some kind of idiot to have decided to tell John everything. 'Doing the right thing' wasn't really something he usually concerned himself with. He hadn't been able to keep Mycroft spying a secret so he didn't trust himself with this. Better to get it out of the way. His thoughts were interrupted by his cell phone going off. He opened the text, read it and then promptly replied.

*Long story. Rather talk about it on the phone or even on Skype. Only when you have an hour or so to spare.* –SH

John read the message several times before swallowing hard and replying.

*Okay. Should be a few hours. I hope everything is alright. I love you.* –JW

Mycroft only chuckled and shook his head marginally. "Oh it'll be fine, Sherlock. Entertain her, this is the only wedding she will ever get to plan. Let her enjoy it." The phone in Sherlock's hand caught his attention. "What is he saying?"

Sherlock read the new message and sent a text back quickly.

*All right. Talk to you soon. Love you too.* –SH

He glanced up to Mycroft and shrugged. "I haven't told him yet. I am waiting to tell him over the
phone or maybe even Skype when he has some time to spare. He said it would be a few hours." He
shifted, so he was sitting up slightly and he rested his head on the wall. His eyes closed in thought.
Without opening them, he spoke again. "Do you think John and I will ever be able to live in peace?
Just when things seems like they have stabilized, something new comes along and disrupts
everything. If I believed in God, fate, karma and what have you I would swear they were all against
us..."

The question that was posed to him only made him chuckle slightly. Sherlock Holmes and John
Watson would never be able to live normal lives. "Honestly? I don't know. I don't think I can
properly answer that. At this rate it would look like you both have a bit going on and it seems like it
will never look up." He paused and moved closer to the bed and placed a gentle hand on Sherlock's
shoulder. "Everything will be alright, Sherlock. I know John will forgive you and once you two are
married and have a bit of a family I think you will fall into a routine." A hand moved into
Sherlock's hair with a bit of a playful ruffle. "Stay positive."

Sherlock listened to his brother quietly for a moment. He opened one eye, his eyebrows tilted
cockeyed as he looked up at Mycroft a small smirk on his face. "Did you just ruffle my hair like
you used to when I was a child? You haven't done that since I was what, six? I got mad at you and
said I wasn't a kid anymore and then punched you in the face and gave you a bloody nose. Dad was
unhappy with me that day... Not that he ever really happy with me anyway..." It was nice to be
able to remember everything clearly. Something he would never take for granted ever again. For as
much as he relied on his mind, memory loss was a scary thing.

"Quite," Mycroft replied with a soft smile. It was little moments like this that had made their
childhood slightly normal. Little things that he would use now to help make sure Sherlock knew he
was going to be alright. "You should know that I will always be proud of you. It doesn't matter
what Dad thinks. You've done just fine for yourself." He paused and pulled Sherlock's head to rest
against his stomach. "Do you want me to be there when you tell John?" It really was like they were
kids all over again.

Sherlock left his head there, eyes still closed. Once more he couldn't help but reminisce, because
remembering was suddenly important to him now. The last time Mycroft had held him like this, he
was four. A nightmare had woken him and he had gone to his older brother's room crying about it.
He couldn't remember what the nightmare had been now, but he supposed it was something silly
like a monster trying to get him or some such childish thing. After a moment, he finally answered
the question. "No, I would rather do it on my own."

Mycroft nodded with a small smile and glanced at the clock on the wall. "I can take you back now,
if you would like. You can rest for a few hours and by then it will be time to talk to John." His
hand slowed on Sherlock's hair and he closed his eyes. It was little things like this that he would
never forget. "I will even have Mummy make you some tea."

Sherlock finally pulled away from his older brother, only able to take the sentiment so long. It was
weird to be comforted by Mycroft after all this time, like they were small children again and
nothing had happened to change that. He sat up fully and slid off the bed and at least this time he
didn't stumble. "Yes, let's get the hell out of here. I hate hospitals. I swear, one day I'm going to
snap and become an arsonist and burn them all down." Truthfully, he wanted out of here as quick
as possible. This room was a constant reminder of just how stupid he really was sometimes.

"Please don't tell me that. The less I know the better." Mycroft grabbed the pictures from the floor
and placed them in the pockets of Sherlock's coat before tossing it toward him. "Mum is excited to
have you for a night." He paused with a knowing smile. "She has even offered to let you and John
stay at the house on your wedding night." A soft snicker escaped his lips as he opened the door to
the hospital room and slid out.

"I hadn't meant it seriously. Okay, maybe a little..." Sherlock admitted with a mutter. He caught the coat and slipped it on. "Yeah, well I hate to disappoint Mum but that probably won't happen. John would be too nervous to perform and I can't have that on the first night of being married now can I?" His lips twisted into a smirk, and followed his brother out of the room.

It took a moment for everything to register but when it did Mycroft laughed loudly. "John is quite gun shy, isn't he?" He asked as he glanced over his shoulder. After walking past the welcome desk with a tight smile he left the hospital and into the ever-waiting black car, studying his brother intently as he slid into the seat. "I'm staying at Mum's tonight, as well," he stated in a bored tone as he glanced out the window. "Just for support." The smile he flashed Sherlock was warm and genuine.

Sherlock smirked at his brother and when he passed the welcome desk, he briefly looked to Jackson. For a moment he thought of stopping and saying something but decided against it and followed Mycroft out to the car and got in. He rolled his eyes at his older brother. "Right, I'm sure keeping an eye on me and making sure I don't get into trouble isn't the reason at all." He gave another smirk.

"That works, too," Mycroft replied with a simple nod of his head. He wasn't always willing to openly admit that he was worried about his younger brother. Mostly it was because Sherlock would object to any of the attention in the first place. Right now, though, he figured he should be there for his younger brother in a time of complete doubt and while he was dealing with a completely new experience and emotions. It was what older brothers did, according to their Mum. As the car stopped in front of their Mum's house, he shifted in the seat and stared at Sherlock. "I'm here for you." He could have gone on, could have told Sherlock that he always would be, but he figured that was all he needed to say. With glance out Sherlock's window toward the house he exited the car and strode proudly into the front door.

Sherlock merely nodded and for a moment he sat in the car and looked up at the house. He finally got out and wished he was feeling half the confidence that Mycroft was exuding. His demeanor lacked the usual air of arrogance and surety that he usually carried with him. As soon as he crossed the threshold, his mother began fussing over him.

"I swear, you get into more trouble than anyone I know." Nancy inspected her youngest son with the critical eye that only a mother could have. "I'll get some ice for your head, dear."

He gave a slight smile and shook his head. "It's fine Mum. I am fine. What was it father always said? 'A knock in my head would always do me some good.' Maybe he was actually right about something," he muttered the last part.

Nancy frowned disapprovingly. "Don't talk about your father like that Sherlock."

Of course. Mum always defended the Old Man and for the life of him couldn't understand why. Instead of arguing he kept his thoughts to himself and made his way to the sitting room.

Mycroft smiled tightly at their Mum as he moved down a hallway, disappearing for a moment before freezing as his cell phone went off. He froze and pulled it from his pocket.

_Is Sherlock alright? -JW_

It would come to this. John was worried, naturally, and if Sherlock wouldn't tell him then maybe Mycroft would.
Mycroft grabbed a pillow and blanket from a closet before moving into the sitting room and laying them out on the largest couch for his younger brother. His phone chimed again and he glanced at Sherlock.

*Yes. Had an injury on patrol today. Keeping watch to see if he makes it through the night. Can I Skype him now? -JW*

"Sherlock, he is ready to talk," Mycroft stated softly, his voice cracking under the pressure of the situation. "If you are, that is."

Ready? Sherlock doubted if he would ever be truly ready to have this conversation. He just wanted to get out of the way. "I will talk to him in father's study. It will offer the most privacy." Their father had the room sound proofed a long time ago when they were kids. He was never really sure if it was to prevent people from listening in or to block out any outside noise. Probably both. Dad was at least pragmatic in that way. He finally got up off the couch and strode to a room that had been off limits as a child. He passed his mother on the way. "I need to talk to John and then I promise we will discuss the wedding without me running off like git."

"Oh Sherlock, honey. You are fine." Nancy patted his cheek softly and then went off to another part of the house.

Sherlock entered the room, standing there a few moments trying to collect his thoughts. What would be the best way to start this conversation?

Mycroft followed him and logged into the computer with ease, calling John up before promptly leaving the room.
Chapter 26

Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

John answered with a slight wiggle in his chair, smiling tightly and showing the obvious worry he had for his fiancé. A large Styrofoam cup sat in front of him, steaming as he tilted it to take a sip of the coffee. He clearly hadn't showered, his face covered in dirt and his eyes bright in contrast to his skin. After a bit of shifting a bare shoulder flashed on the screen, his dog tags clicking together.

"You alright?" He set the cup down and folded his arms on the table in front of him, studying Sherlock with a worried gaze. This wasn't good. Things like this never were.

Sherlock closed the door and sunk down into big black chair at the mahogany desk. "I have some news that is going to upset you. Just please listen to everything I have to say and then you can have your turn, all right?" Suddenly he wished this was on the phone, because now he would have to look at John when he did this.

John stopped relaxing almost instantly, his arms sliding from the table and his lips pursed tightly. It felt like his chest was too tight, like somebody was stepping on it, and suddenly he wanted to end the call. This shouldn't be happening. He nodded numbly. Was he shaking? He didn't even know what Sherlock was going to tell him, for all he knew it could have been him just yelling at Sarah. Except he wouldn't so nervous. So scared. Sherlock was never like this which instantly meant, in John's mind, that something went horrendously wrong. "Okay," he stated with less confidence then he wanted.

Right. Okay. He could do this, right? Just start from the beginning, Sherlock told himself. "After the call with you ended, I got in a row with Mycroft. I left Mum's place upset. I had gotten a text message and dropped my mobile. A car ran over it and I went to pick up the pieces like a git and almost got run over. I stumbled back in time but I hit my head and lost consciousness." He took a breath, not looking forward to this next part. "When I woke up, I had amnesia. I didn't know anything about myself. A doctor named Jackson took care of me. We talked about the ring around my neck and pictures found in my coat of you, that you had given me while at the hotel." Another breath, this one shakier. "It still didn't help with my memory at all. I didn't know who you were, or how I feel about you. Nothing. Just…emptiness…" Sherlock frowned at that but pressed on. "At some point Mycroft showed up. He had tracked me down, no surprise really. He told me who you were, what I did, that he was my brother. He wanted me to leave with him and come back to Mum's. I…" He cleared his throat. "...I refused. I still didn't have any inkling who he was, myself, you…” The words were getting more difficult to come by now. "I had taken uh...erm a fancy to my doctor. I knew I was engaged but for whatever reason I didn't care. God John…I didn't care…” His voice had turned frantic at that point, because he found that part the most terrifying and horrifying part. "I guess he didn't either. We...kissed and got each other off…” He could no longer look at his fiancé, his gaze staring down at the desk now. "Shortly after my memory just suddenly came back, like some kind of switch had been flipped. I swear John, when I realized what I was doing…I stopped everything immediately…I'm sorry…I'm so sorry" He trailed off and finally lifted his gaze once more and braced himself for whatever John had to say.

Sherlock's words hit John so hard that he had to lower his forehead to the table. No. No. He should be understanding because Sherlock didn't know anything when it had happened. John had cheated on Sherlock. And he wanted to lift his head and smile and tell Sherlock that it would all be alright. But it wasn't. They were engaged and some other man has touched his fiancé and got him off. Both of his hands moved to rest on the back of his head before he looked up and powerfully ran his arm across the table, the cup of coffee flying off the table as he yelled. "Fuck, Sherlock!" His gaze
locked on to the computer screen as he panted, mouth ajar, and tried to comprehend everything. What else could he say? The words were stuck in his throat and he was struggling to hide how wet his eyes suddenly were. The urge to pull the silver band away from his finger was so strong and he lifted his hands to twist it questioningly.

John’s words made Sherlock cringe. "I'm sorry," he repeated miserably. With trepidation he watched his fiancé fidget with the ring on his finger. He shifted in his seat uncomfortably. What else could he say at this point? He couldn't think of anything to make things all better. He supposed there wasn't anything.

John's instant reaction was to tell Sherlock that he wasn't sorry, that he wasn't really sorry because he wouldn't have done it. That was false. John was sorry everyday for what Sherlock had witnessed between he and Sarah. "Did you enjoy it, then?" He asked childishly. "He better than me?" His head tilted slightly to the right and his mouth pressed into a thin line. "Bigger than me? More submissive? Perfect?" He was shouting now, shaking as he clenched his hands into fists and slammed one against the table.

Sherlock shifted even more as the questions were thrown at him. His voice was quiet but he answered each one asked. "Yes, I liked it. Not better, different. I honestly don't know his size. He got off before I did anything…” He trailed off, hesitant to answer the next question. "If anything, I was the submissive... Not perfect, just different like I said." He looked away again, his shifting turning into squirming.

"You aren't supposed to answer, damn it!" John shouted as he stood up, his bare chest and stomach now the main focus of the webcam. He started pacing in the small area, his chest heaving as he tried to calm himself down. He turned back to the computer abruptly and fell back into his chair. "So what do we do now?" He asked harshly. "Do I forgive you and pretend it never happened? Do I pull my ring off and end this call and act like you didn't mean anything to me?" It shouldn't be such an issue because John had done the same thing and didn't even have the reason that Sherlock did.

What was the point in asking if he wasn't supposed to answer? Sherlock frowned in thought, not understanding. He glanced back up to the screen when the new questions came about. Was it okay to answer these? He was quiet a moment, but finally spoke. "I don't know. I guess it is up to you at this point." He wasn't sure if this was going better or worse than he thought it would. In some ways better but in others worse, he supposed. It was weird to be so timid and squirming, this wasn't him.

John's shoulders relaxed slightly and he closed his eyes for a long moment. "I love you, Sherlock Holmes," he whispered. "I love you so much and I can't picture my life without you." His eyes opened slowly. It wasn't the fact that Sherlock cheated on him that caused the twist in his gut. The idea that somebody else touched his fiancé in such an intimate way caused him to feel overly protective. And helpless. From his current position he couldn't find that man and defend Sherlock's honor. He couldn't comfort Sherlock despite his rampaging emotions of hurt and anger. "And I did the same things to you, didn't I? Guess I deserve this." He kept his eyes locked intently on the table.

"I love you too John." Sherlock managed to finally still his body. He had to bite his tongue to prevent him from arguing that this was nothing like what had happened with Sarah. That what John had done was intentional and his was just an accident. If there hadn't been a loss of memory, none of it would have ever happened. Instead he was quiet for a long moment, as he watched his fiancé intently. He wished he could give the army doctor a tight hug. He was certain they were both in need of one. Finally he found his voice again, "Do you still want to get married?"
The question shocked him and his head jerked up. "Yes. Of course." His eyes narrowed and he bit his bottom lip. It was a reasonable question, he figured, given the way he just acted. His stomach was still twisted in knots at the idea of Sherlock writhing underneath some other man, panting and begging- No. Stop. Don't think. "Of course."

The faintest of smiles managed to find its way to his lips and Sherlock gave a nod his head. However, he couldn't help but feel anxious. Shouldn't he feel relieved right now? He frowned as he studied his fiancé and was about to ask what was wrong when he realized what a stupid question that would be. Maybe changing the subject would help? "I cleaned up the flat after the meeting with Sarah. I'm staying at Mum's tonight but I'll send you a picture of it tomorrow. You won't recognize it."

John took the conversation change with a smile, even managing to chuckle slightly. "Really? I-" The flat was clean? The thought was...weird. Different. It would take a while to adjust. He had just gotten used to the mess Sherlock constantly left around. "For Amy?" He asked softly. The little girl coming into their lives, the daughter that John was never supposed to have, was showing him a whole new side to Sherlock. "Except your room?" An eyebrow raised curiously. "You can leave that. I like it that way. It reminds me so much of you."

Okay, there was the relief he had been looking for. Sherlock smiled back at John. "Yes for your daughter." The smile twitched slightly bigger. "I didn't touch my room yet. I will need to before she is born though, if you want the crib in our room. Sarah wants to stay over when the baby is born and help me. I am not keen on the idea but Mycroft says it'll be good for both of us. As usual, my brother is telling me what to do…"

"Our daughter," John corrected almost instantly. "And you can keep it a tad messy, I'm sure. She will only be in the crib while she is in there." The talk of caring for Amy, of everything Sherlock had done for her, was causing his cheeks to flush in excitement. "Looks like we will have to shag on the couch." The joke helped John relax further and he lowered his head with a small laugh. "Oh, let her. She needs the help as much as you do. It will be good. That way I get more pictures of Amy as she grows. God, I will even be able to Skype and see her."

Things were going to be okay it seemed. He and John would be fine. Sherlock managed a real smile. The thought of sharing the flat with Sarah was annoying to him but he would do it for John. He had done a lot of adjusting for his fiancé he realized but he wanted to make things work so the effort was worth it. "I miss you." More so than usual, because for several hours he had been missing John completely and he felt like he needed to make up for lost time. Maybe they could squeeze in one meet, despite the last fiasco that happened when he had been there.

John smiled, genuine and warm, and just stared at Sherlock. "I miss you too," he replied softly. Civil. He needed to be civil and respectful and understanding. That was what married people did. If Sherlock could forgive him for shagging Sarah and then knocking her up while completely in his right mind then he should step up and forgive Sherlock. "So much. I want to be there right now taking care of you. How is your head?" He leaned closer to the computer screen to see if he could get a closer look. "Stitches or anything? Or just a smaller wound?" He absently placed his hand on the screen, sheepishly pulling back when he realized that doing so wouldn't make Sherlock's head move like he wanted.

"I'm not sure actually…" Sherlock touched his head tentatively. "No stitches. Stings a bit but I will be fine." He hadn't even thought about checking and probably wouldn't have if John hadn't inquired about it. He didn't want the conversation to be over so continued on with a new topic. "I'm going to be looking into getting office set up, for work. Rent out a whole building. Mycroft says he knows of a place close to the flat and I am going to look into it, tomorrow sometime probably." He relaxed
comfortably into the chair finally, leaning back with his hands on top of his head, where it hadn't been cut, and his feet stretched out completely under the desk.

John fell back into his own chair like a gust of wind hit him. "The great Sherlock Holmes is moving his experiments out of 221B? It is not going to be home anymore!" He stated with a small giggle, high pitched as he had his mouth behind a hand. "I'm glad." His tone was serious as he nodded in agreement. "I think it will be good. Maybe it will help you relax more. Definitely won't have to worry about heads in the fridge anymore." A small grin on his lips as his eyes scanned Sherlock's comfortable position with his bottom lip between his teeth. "Are you nervous?" His eyes locked on Sherlock and the smile slowly faded. "About Amy, I mean. Are you nervous?"

"Who says I will be doing the experiments there?" Sherlock asked with a smirk. "Nervous? No. Why would I be nervous?" He frowned a bit in thought, but he couldn't think of a reason why he should be nervous like John asked. How hard could it be take care of a kid? "Are you nervous about it?" He asked, the same thoughtful frown on his face.

"I don't know. You said that one time that you think I would be a great parent but I'm not inclined to think so." John glanced away from the computer screen for a moment and shrugged. A corner of his bottom lip was pulled between his teeth and his tongue quickly peeked out of his mouth. "I'm not so sure I'm going to be the best Dad, really. I mean, I didn't really have one in my life. What happens if she meets a bloke I don't really like? Or she has her first awful break-up and I can't handle it?" It was ridiculous, he knew, but the thought of caring for a child was slowly eating away at him. "On top of that she's half of me. Half of that blood is mine and I know I was a monster when I was child. And...you..." His voice dropped off at the last statement and he swallowed hard. "It isn't fair to you."

Sherlock listened quietly and really wasn't sure what to say. He didn't know anything about kids really and he hadn't had what most people would consider a 'normal childhood.' It couldn't be that hard to figure out though? Yet, he didn't have an answer to any of the hypothetical questions. He wanted to repudiate what John had said last, but it was true. It wasn't fair. He was practically changing everything in his life to accommodate his fiancé's little girl. He wasn't upset about it but he wasn't thrilled either. "I'm sure you will do fine and life isn't fair John. Everything will work out, stay positive." No need to say Mycroft had just told him the same thing more or less.

"I wanted to make everything perfect for you," John blurted out. "I wanted to marry you and give you everything you never had and make you happy." And his accidental child wasn't exactly part of that plan. This wasn't supposed to be happening. "You deserve so much better than what I'm giving you so far." He dropped his head and gave it a small shake. "I don't want my mistake to ruin this. I want you to be happy."

Admittedly Sherlock was getting better at dealing with emotional situations but they still made him feel flustered and lost while he sought for the right words to say. He sat back up in his chair, leaning toward the screen a bit. "John, look at me. I am happy. You make me happy. That is all I really need."

John chanced a small glance at his fiancé. "You are completely changing your life for Amy," he whispered, his voice broken. Sherlock may have been happy in front of him but John knew, it was his job to know, that Sherlock wasn't exactly the happiest with the current arrangement. "I just wanted everything to be perfect. I may make you happy but will you feel like that when Amy is waking us up every few hours? Or when your experiments won't be in the kitchen or the living room?" He paused to take a deep breath and ducked out of view from the webcam, attempting to gather himself and calm his emotions.
Sherlock still wasn't used to these emotional situations. He sighed. What was he supposed to say to that? Everything John had said was pretty much true. Words failed him, as they often did in these instances. He didn't know what to say to make everything okay again. He wasn't there with his fiancé to distract him either, so his default setting wasn't even an option right now. Eventually, he found words but he wasn't sure if they'd be helpful. "It will be an adjustment but it will be one for both of us. Together we can make it."

For being absolutely horrid in emotionally charged situations, Sherlock knew exactly what to say. John popped back into view with a weak smile. "Yeah." His head dropped for a moment. "Yeah, together." A small laugh escaped his lips and he reached a hand out to touch the computer screen. "You are perfect, d'you know that? Bloody perfect. I am the luckiest man alive."

Sherlock gave a small smile back, glad that his words seem to work. A smirk came next. "Yes, well I am the only consulting detective in the world. No room for errors on my end, obviously, so I have to be perfect." Usually, his cocky arrogance would get John to laugh or at least smile and that was exactly his intent this time around.

John laughed loudly as he shook his head. "Shove it," he joked smoothly. "You cocky bastard." There was a long pause and John took it to study his fiancé with silent contentment. Perfect was really the only way to describe him. "Do you think you can come out here again? Maybe a month before Amy is born? That would be another three months and I miss you." He flushed slightly. "I really miss you."

There it was. The smirk on Sherlock's face got bigger. He relaxed back into the chair, thoughtful for a moment as John's question. "Maybe, I hope so. There is a lot to do still and I don't know if Mycroft will give the clearance I need to go for a second trip. Especially if my father has any say in it, then I will never get there." He sighed. It had been his own fault really; if he hadn't gone after John during the tunnel collapse then a second trip would be more viable. The only good thing that came of that incident was he had learned Moriarty's network was after John and that was being taken care of. Strange, that Sherlock would keep that from his fiancé and not the affair.

"What if we promise to stay in the hotel this time?" John asked hesitantly. They needed to see each other again before Amy was born, before everything changed. The idea of getting to see Sherlock again was going to keep him going. At this point he needed anything to boost his spirits. "I'm sure we will make it happen. I can convince Mycroft, I think. I know some things after being out here." He smirked proudly. "So...does your Mum like me then?"

"We'll see how things work out John. Hopefully we can." Sherlock was still distracted by the thought of all these people after John and he wasn't sure what his fiancé knew that they would perceive as a threat. He would have to sit down and talk with Mycroft about that at soon. Depending on how the cleanup of Moriarty's network went, going to see John may not be the wisest of choices. With a smile he answered the last question. "Of course she does. She thinks you are 'adorable' as she put it."

"I am not adorable," John replied with a growl, his eyes narrowing as Sherlock smiled. "I'm a normal bloke. There is nothing adorable about me." He lifted his arms for emphasis before glancing off screen and reaching out to grab another cup of coffee. He turned back to the computer as he took a sip. "If anybody is adorable in this relationship it's you. You are younger, clearly adorable applies to you." The cup was set down as John winced, wishing he could have a cup of coffee from the flat. For a moment he was tempted to ask Sherlock what the real reason was for him not being to come back to Afghanistan. Mycroft seemed more than happy to let them see each other and suddenly Sherlock was nervous. It was obvious something was wrong but they had managed to change the tone of their conversation to a lighthearted one and he didn't want to ruin it.
Sherlock grinned and shrugged. "Mum will more than likely continue to refer to you as adorable, so you might as well get used to it my dear doctor. And as far as me being adorable, oh I know. No need to tell me that." He smirked widely, his hands coming to rest behind his head once more. "I need to stop telling you things like that. Your ego is big enough." John smiled and leaned back in his chair as well, the smile transforming into a smirk when he realized his bare chest could be seen on the screen. "Keeping yourself occupied? Any interesting cases as of late? Maybe I can blog about them from the base." He laced his hands behind his head to mirror Sherlock with a smug laugh.

Any cases? When the hell did he have the time to fit a case into all this mess? Sherlock hadn't been home for more than a couple days and in that time he had talked with Sarah, cleaned the flat, gone to his Mum's and had amnesia. Maybe John was just trying to keep the conversation going. He shrugged. "I'm not actively working on anything right now. Mycroft's shown me a couple photos and any information I deduce I'm guessing he passes along to Lestrade or whomever. I haven't been called in officially on them, so it's safe to assume I was correct the first time around with my deductions." He smirked. "Not that it's surprising. I'm almost always right."

"No you're not. Baskerville, remember?" John chuckled and lifted his feet, letting his combat boots fall heavily against the table. "Turns out there wasn't anything in the sugar." The one and only time Sherlock had been wrong and John was going to make sure he used it to his advantage. "Keep smirking like that and I'm going to shag it off when I get back."

Thus the keyword 'almost' John." Sherlock still had a smirk on his lips. He shifted slightly in his chair and then the smirk suddenly got wider. "I doubt that. Mum wants us to stay over at her place the day after the wedding." He couldn't help but laugh at the thought, because he knew it would make John nervous and stammer.

John's boots slid off the table and he choked on the air in his lungs. "She what?" He shook his head frantically, his cheeks a bright pink. "No. Why? W-We're going to be...and she would know...and h-hear!" The blush spread to the tips of his ears and he hid his face in his hands. Sherlock was doing it on purpose, wanted to watch him squirm, and he couldn't help his natural reaction. "Still gonna do it, just hold off until we are on our honeymoon."

This was nice. They didn't sit and talk like this often. Sherlock figured the two of them spent more time screwing around than anything else. Maybe it was because they had both known John would be away for awhile. "Well, we don't have to stay at my Mum's the day after the wedding. I'm sure if I explained it to her, she would understand." The smirk returned, clearly amused and even proud of himself.

"No, Sherlock!" John was grinning slightly despite the clear mortification on his face. "No. You can just politely tell her that we had already planned on staying at the flat...or something." He ducked his gaze away from the webcam with a small laugh. "Don't tell her it's because I'm afraid she might hear me while you shag me. That's the last thing I need her to know, honestly." That smirk caused his stomach to twist and he lowered his gaze like a nervous school boy. "Don't tell her," he muttered.

"John, if I politely decline she will figure out why. My mum is a smart woman. I wouldn't have to tell her the real reason. She would of course, just tease you over it later next time we would visit. I'm sure you would prefer that, right?" Sherlock was smirking so much, it was beginning to hurt a little but he didn't care. It was so easy to fluster his dear doctor and he delighted in it.

"I would rather neither of those," John mumbled like a small child. "Except I would like her to tease me over what she thinks over what she might actually hear." The smirk on Sherlock's face
"No she wouldn't. She would not walk in right in the middle of our wedding night. You have got to be joking." John shook his head in disbelief. "Would a mother honestly put herself in that position? The problem was that, suddenly and for some unexplainable reason, John viewed it as a challenge. "Let's do it." He locked his gaze strongly on Sherlock.

Sherlock leaned forward in his chair, eyebrows rising in clear surprise. "Really? Okay then, sure. But if Mum walks in cause you are so loud the servant's quarter hears you, I'm going to say 'I told you so.'" The smirk returned amusement clear in his eyes.

"Servants quarters?" Leave it to the Holmes to have bloody servants at their house. "I want to see if she'll actually come and stop us. It is our wedding night, I'm allowed to enjoy it as much as I want!" John grinned happily and laughed. "It was something about Sherlock that just drove John to complete and utter silliness. He couldn't control himself even just Skyping him. "This is what love feels like," he blurted out in between small giggles. "I'm head over heels for you."

"Yeah, grew up in a mansion. Butler, maid, gardener, kitchen staff, etcetera..." Sherlock shrugged. "Well, she did it to Mycroft when he brought some girl over when he was a teenager. He never did after that... Dad and I had a good laugh over it. Probably my only pleasant memory I have of him."

"You are an adult. You will have a husband. I'm sure we will be fine," John stated as seriously as he could. "We'll spend our first night there, then. And I'm sure once I get back we will have more time to plan where we want to have our honeymoon and everything." The smile on his face was warm and suddenly his attention turned away from the screen, his face dropping into a serious gaze. "Sherlock, I've got to go. My patient isn't doing so well. I love you. I'll text you." He flashed a tight smile as he ended the call.
Chapter 27

Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

After the Skype call was over, the days, weeks and even months went by fairly quickly to Sherlock's surprise. He kept the flat clean, continued to make wedding arrangements with his Mum, set up an office, met with Sarah biweekly, kept in contact with John any way possible, kept up to date on Mycroft's people rounding up the rest of Moriarty's network, converted John's room into a nursery/guest room for when Sarah would start staying over, and he did a lot of research on parenting and bought a few books he thought would actually prove useful. Sarah was about a month away from being due so Sherlock decided it was time to build the crib. Only it wasn't going well. Whoever had designed the instruction manual was a bloody idiot. He growled his frustration and threw a rod across the room. Hamish lifted his head and then went back to sleep on Sherlock's chair.

The planning had, honestly, been Hell. Keeping secrets from Sherlock wasn't anything he had wanted to do but he figured it was going to be worth it in the long run. Surprising Sherlock after thinking they wouldn't be able to see each other was what he had been looking forward to. During the entire trip he was too excited to sleep and instead settled for shifting restlessly anytime he could. London made him smile and he managed to nab a taxi to the flat without a problem. He was in his uniform, his bag thrown over his right shoulder, as he entered the flat silently and winced at the sound of something being thrown around upstairs. Not good. John hesitantly moved into the flat and smiled softly. "D'you want some help with that, then?" He let his bag slide to the floor and he crossed his arms over his flat with a grin.

No, it couldn't be. Impossible. Sherlock scrambled up off the floor so quickly he almost tripped over the parts by his feet. "John?" He asked as he spun around. He took the few steps toward his fiancé and embraced him in a tight hug. He had so many questions but right now he didn't care about them and just held on to his dear doctor. "I've missed you."

The hug knocked the air out of him and he leaned heavily against Sherlock, grinning as he pressed his face against Sherlock's shoulder. "Hi," he muttered, returning the tight embrace. "Christ, I've missed you." He let his eyes slam shut. This was probably the best idea he had ever had because seeing Sherlock like this, happy and excited and caught off guard, and it made his heart swell. "How're you?" He should have pulled away to study Sherlock's face but he kept his face buried in his fiancé's shoulder, inhaling the scent of home.

Here...John was really here in his arms. It was so unexpected but wonderful. For a while, he just held onto his fiancé, his head resting on the army doctor's head comfortably. "So much better now that you are here." Finally, he let go so he could take in John's whole form, hands still resting on his fiancé's shoulders. He smiled. "Are you home for good?" He asked hopefully.

John's smile faltered slightly and he moved his hands to run down Sherlock's chest as he shook his head. "Just a week and then I go back to finish out my tour." He took a deep breath and cleared his throat. "But it's a week, that's awhile. I get to spend it with you. It was a surprise." He leaned forward and place a chaste kiss on Sherlock's lips. "And I can help finish setting everything up for Amy...and hopefully see Sarah one of these days."

A week. That was better than only a couple days in some hotel in the desert. John here with him at the flat, what a brilliant surprise. "Well, the only thing left really is the crib. Probably a good thing you came when you did, I was about to throw the whole damn thing out the window." He smirked a bit. "I'm supposed to see Sarah in two days, I'm sure you would be more than welcome to come
as well."

"We can build it together." John laughed as he moved across the flat, picking up the thrown piece with a glance over his shoulder in Sherlock's direction. "Shouldn't be too hard, should it? There's directions. I think we'll be fine." He moved across the flat heavily, his combat boots clunking against the floor without grace. "And I'd love to go," he commented absently as he studied all the parts to the crib. There were a lot more pieces than he thought. "You didn't throw out the instructions, did you?" He turned to look at Sherlock with a hand nervously rubbing the back of his neck.

The noise of John walking, startled Hamish awake. The cat blinked up at the unknown presence, jumped off the chair and then ran into the kitchen. "Well, he didn't hiss at you. That's something." Sherlock watched the cat for a moment. He turned his attention back John and nodded to the piece of paper on the floor. "They are right there. Maybe you can make sense of them." He nudged a piece of the crib with his foot, his lip puckering into a slight pout.

"That bloody cat," John muttered, glancing in the direction it had run off. "Has it gotten any better? It needs to calm down." He crouched down and picked up the piece of paper. Directions should be straightforward. These were practically written in Japanese. "The...Hell?" His eyes raised to Sherlock and he shrugged. "This makes no sense. At all." The paper was dropped to the floor as John turned to look at the crib pieces spread out on the floor. "I guess we could just wing it and see what happens? Aren't you a genius?" He kept his head lowered to take in all of the pieces. "Shouldn't you be able to, I don't know, put these all together in your mind or something?"

"He has gotten better actually. Doesn't destroy things anymore, I think he will be okay. Hamish just isn't a people's person." Sherlock shrugged and couldn't help but smirk. "My dear doctor, flip the paper over and you'll find the instructions in English on the reverse side. All the parts are labeled with a letter with a picture but..." He sighed and shrugged again. "But...apparently I can't seem to figure it out." He cleared his throat, trying not get flustered over such a silly thing. "It's just another solar system to me," he muttered.

"Sod off," John muttered as he ripped the instructions off the floor and flipped them over. A smirk was on his lips and he read through the instructions twice before looking back at the parts. "Right. So...I feel like it might be a bad omen if a bloody genius can't even put this thing together. We'll try anyway," he stated with a nod. He slowly started to sort out the pieces into piles before slowly figuring out where each one went. "Have you got a screwdriver or something?" He turned to Sherlock and ran his forearm across his forehead. "Need one to keep putting this together. Go find one and then help me put this together, lovely husband." He slowly started unbuttoning his over shirt before tossing it somewhere on the floor behind him.

Sherlock huffed at John's words. He wasn't an architect. Building things wasn't something that interested in him. "The screw driver is right..." He searched the floor for a moment, before picking it up and offering to John. "...here." He smirked a bit and then sat down on the floor to see if maybe attempting to build the crib would go smoother a second time around.

After double checking the piles of pieces John moved to sit beside Sherlock on the floor with a sigh. "See those pieces to your right? I'm going to need them soon so make sure they don't run off." He grabbed two different pieces and slowly started attaching them. "The flat looks different," he commented with a small shrug. "Very different."

Sherlock put the indicated parts in pile near John. "Well, I have moved a lot of stuff out and into my office. It's a 'chaotic mess' as Mycroft puts it." He shrugged and smirked slightly. "And I may have had help from one of the baby books. Things you shouldn't have, sharp edges covered,
electrical sockets also covered, special locks on cabinet doors, that kind of thing. I also got one of those gates, to put up by the stairs."

The amount of work Sherlock had done shocked John. He was taking this seriously, more seriously than even John had thought about himself. "That's...amazing." He lifted his gaze to his fiancé and laughed slightly in disbelief. "You've really prepared for Amy." The shock restricted his chest and he dropped the screwdriver and the connected pieces he'd been working on to lean forward and meet Sherlock's lips.

The work had kept him mostly preoccupied and helped not think about John being away. However, Sherlock couldn't wait to start working cases again. To have John home. To have his normal life back. It would be a bit different with the baby, but things shouldn't change too much he figured. His thoughts dispersed when he felt John's lips on his. He smiled and returned the kiss, eyes closing instantly.

It had been so long since he had really kissed Sherlock and John took advantage of it, letting his tongue roam the other man's mouth eagerly before pulling away to take a breath. "Good. That was good," he stated while licking his lips. While being distracted by Sherlock was certainly something he wouldn't have minded, he figured it would probably be better to finish putting the crib together before he did anything else. "Been practicing with your pillow?" He asked with a chuckle as he turned back to the crib pieces and started putting another two together.

Sherlock savored the kiss, not remembering the last time they had just made out a little. It was a nice change of pace. He smiled at John as his eyes opened when the kiss ended. The smile turned into a frowned at the question. "No...do people do that?" He eyed the instructions and the diagrams and picked up a few pieces but couldn't get them to fit. He sighed, wondering why this was so difficult. John made it look easy. He discarded the pieces back onto the floor. He was about to stand up when Hamish pounced into his lap and laid down. He scratched the cat behind the ears absently.

"Yeah, people do that all the time," John muttered with a shrug. "I did when I was younger, I know that. Wanted to impress my first girlfriend." He started putting a few more pieces together with ease and sat back with a proud grin. "There, we've got the base." He glanced at Sherlock and bit his bottom lip as the cat jumped into his lap. "Think I could pet him?" He asked with a chuckle as he turned back to the crib pieces and started putting another two together.

John snatched his hand back quickly, glancing up at Sherlock with a nervous smile. "I hope he does warm up to me. I want you to keep him." He turned his gaze back to the crib pieces. At least the bottom was already put together, all that was left was to put the surrounding pieces around and put the mattress in. "Want to take a break? I am craving a good cuppa." He turned to rest on his knees, ignoring Hamish as he straddled Sherlock's thighs and met his lips again, deciding that making out with Sherlock again was more important than anything else.

Before Hamish could bite John, Sherlock removed the cat from his lap and instead got bit himself. The cat stalked off but he ignored it because John was kissing him and that was far more interesting. He wrapped his arms around his fiancé, pulling the other man into a slight hug. "I
missed you," he murmured behind the kiss.

"I know," John whispered against Sherlock's lips, snaking his tongue in between Sherlock's lips with a breathy sigh. "I missed you too, so much." He let his hands travel to rest on either side of Sherlock's face, tilting the other man's head to get better access to his mouth. He had been so focused on putting the crib together, on helping Sherlock, and he wondered how he managed to not attack his fiancé the moment he walked in the door. He sucked Sherlock's bottom lip into his mouth and nipped at it with a small smile.

After moving some bed parts blindly away, Sherlock laid down on the floor. His hands came to rest on John's back, fingers trailing down it lightly. He still owed John a day of submission and after his accidental affair, he felt like he owed it to the army doctor. "Do you want to take advantage of you being in control now or later?" He asked, pulling away from the kissing momentarily.

John shook his head despite the strong feeling in his gut. He wouldn't tell Sherlock, he never would, but he was constantly thinking about Sherlock cheating on him. It twisted his gut and he had the strong feeling to take Sherlock as rough as he could to remind his fiancé that he was his. Despite those feelings he took a deep breath and met Sherlock's eyes. "No, later. Kissing is fine, perfect." He gave Sherlock a quick kiss. "We haven't done this much and you are a bloody fantastic kisser." He slid one hand to rest on the side of Sherlock's neck while the other tangled in his hair. He let his lips drop to Sherlock's neck as he started to mark him, not holding back and attacking the skin beneath his mouth roughly.

Only kissing? Sherlock smirked a bit and tilted his neck up so John could reach more of it. He ran one hand up his fiancé's back, to his neck and then finally came to run through the short hair on top of the army doctor's head. The other hand maneuvered its way up John's shirt, to scratch the skin lightly. With control he managed not buck the man above him.

John exhaled loudly through his nose and pulled back to inspect the deep red mark on Sherlock's skin. "Mine," he whispered as he moved to a new spot, giving a gentle tug to Sherlock's hair. "Mine," he repeated as he shivered at the scratches against his skin. A hand dropped from Sherlock's neck as he shifted against the warm body beneath him, managing to reach under Sherlock's shirt and hike it up to expose half of Sherlock's chest. His hand grabbed roughly at Sherlock's body, a thumb running across Sherlock's left nipple as he grinned against Sherlock's lips. He had been ready to deepen the kiss when he heard a knock at the door to their flat and he raised his head with a messy groan. Who would be visiting the flat? He looked at Sherlock quizzically. "Who did you have plans with?"

Sherlock had been so entranced by John's attention that someone knocking hadn't even registered. He blinked at the question and frowned in thought. "No one. No plans with anyone until I see Sarah in a couple days and dinner with Mycroft at the end of the week. And if it was my brother or even Lestrade, they would just let themselves in. No one knocks anymore...A case maybe?" He couldn't think of anyone else it could be. "Just ignore it. Maybe they will go away."

John took several deep breaths and nodded in agreement, meeting Sherlock's lips again and continue the rough movements with his hands before another knock was at the door. "Sherlock Holmes?" A voice asked on the other side, clearly a bit nervous. That made John's head shoot up almost instantly because the only explanation for that was a case. Case. The thought made him grin and look at Sherlock as he scrambled to his feet, completely forgetting their previous activities as he straightened himself up, ran the back of his hand over his mouth, and opened the door with a flourish. "Oh, Sher-" The man paused as he spotted John, tensing right away. Tan skin, bright blue eyes, a sudden flush of skin...and a white coat that had a name written across it in blue stitched
yarn. "Jackson," John commented absently before his hand was moving forward, connecting with the other man's face in a loud crack.

Of course after all these months a potential case would come along and ruin this moment with John. Sherlock got to his feet and clear surprise was on his face when he saw who was standing on the other side of the door. Jackson. No. What? Why? Why was that man here? He watched his fiancé punch the other man. Stop the fight? Let John vent his obvious frustration? He stood by, unsure what to do. He was usually a man of action but he really wasn't sure what to do about this current situation.

John wiggled the fingers of his left hand with a hiss and when he turned back to glance at Jackson the other man rushed forward, plowing his shoulder into John's stomach. They both fell to the ground, John grunting as Jackson landed on top of him. Jackson lifted an arm, preparing to deliver a blow to the man below him, but John wiggled his body quickly, rotating at the waist and throwing the younger man off balance. The small scuffle resulted in Jackson propped slightly against the back of the couch with John above him, landing several rough punches to the other man's face. "Fuck you," he growled as Jackson tried to push him away and failed. It didn't take long for blood to start coating John's hands, for Jackson to slowly start losing the power to fight back, but John didn't stop.

For a moment rage found him, as Jackson plowed into John. He was about to intervene but his fiancé held his own and then things began to get out of control. Oh shit. "John!" Sherlock rushed over. "Stop! Jesus, you'll kill him at this rate!" He grabbed his fiancé around the waist and pulled him away, and held him in a tight hug. "Breath my dear doctor. It will be okay." He kissed the top of John's head, more concerned with calming his fiancé down than the bleeding man on the floor.

The moment he was pulled away tensed, attempting to fight the hold around him until he felt the kiss against the top of his head. Sherlock. Safe. John took several deep breaths, slumping back against his fiancé with a low sound from his throat, letting his arms relax.

Jackson groaned and lifted up the end of his white jacket, running it across his face in an attempt to clean it. "Wanted to check on Sherlock," he muttered, blood pouring from his nose and a split lip. "Wanted to make sure I was sorry about everything. Didn't think you would be here."

John fought against Sherlock's hold now, clawing at the arms around his midsection. "What, so you could shag him again?" He shouted angrily.

The man on the floor pressed tightly against the back of the couch to avoid John. "No, to make sure he was doing alright, you bloody madman! To make sure everything had worked out and that I didn't screw anything up!"

Sherlock kept a tight hold on John, ignoring the scratches raking across his skin. "Be still my dear doctor. Enough is enough." He shifted his gaze to Jackson. "You should leave. Don't try to contact me ever again." He squeezed John into him, hugging his fiancé closer to him. He gave another kiss on top of the army doctor's head.

Jackson stood slowly, stumbling slightly to the side and running his arm down his face to clear the now constant stream of blood. "Fine," he muttered as he locked his gaze on Sherlock. "I hope everything is going alright, then." He paused and kept his eyes locked on the consulting detective.

John tensed and tugged against Sherlock's arms again before Jackson got the hint and slowly left the flat. John leaned back against Sherlock with a low sound from his throat, letting his arms relax.
After a long moment he lightly pulled away from Sherlock's grasp and moved into the kitchen without a word, turning on the sink and slowly starting to wash his hands off.
Once Jackson was gone, Sherlock figured it was safe to let John go so he didn't restrain his fiancé further when he pulled away. He watched the army doctor go into the kitchen and he hesitated before following after the other man. He itched absently at the scratches, which only resulted in irritating the skin further rather than making it feel better. He wasn't sure what to say, so he said nothing at all.

"Stop scratching at those," John muttered as he winced, running some soap across newly discovered wounds. "I'll take care of them in a moment." He took his eyes off of his hands for a moment to glance at Sherlock in warning. He wanted to say so many things but managed to bite his tongue as he turned the tap off, grabbing a small towel and drying his hands off. "He was good looking," he stated in a low tone as he took one of Sherlock's hands and pulled him closer to inspect his forearms. He had done quite a number on his fiancé without knowing it. He grabbed a clean towel and wet it down, putting some soap on it before running it across Sherlock's arms.

Sherlock let his hands fall to his side. "Was he? I guess. I hadn't really noticed to be honest," he muttered with a shrug. He wasn't one for aesthetic beauty and it wasn't something that registered when looking at another person. The towel hurt but he didn't pull away and managed not to wince. He did bite down on his lip though, his body tensing slightly.

"Sorry," John commented as he dropped Sherlock's arm and gently grabbed the other. "Almost done. I'll wrap these, some of them are a bit deep. Need to keep them as clean as possible." He stood on his toes and placed a soft kiss on Sherlock's cheek before he rummaged through the cabinets in search of his first-aid kit. It was a bit frustrating because Sherlock had rearranged everything but he managed to find it with a weak smile. He didn't bother to speak as he placed gauze on the deepest scratch marks and taped it down with ease. After that he brushed by Sherlock, not bothering to clean up his small mess, and plopped back down on the floor to continue making the crib. The emotions inside of him were uncontrollable, difficult to understand, and he wanted to keep his mouth shut before he ruined their day. Not talking was the only way he knew how to deal with the situation.

Sherlock watched John work in silence. He watched his fiancé with worried eyes and frowned when the other man simply went back to work on the crib. He sighed and cleaned up the mess John had left. Hamish came into the kitchen and with practiced eased, jumped onto Sherlock's shoulder and meowed at him. He gave the cat a pat on the head, moved to the fridge and then opened it. He got out a container of ham and fed the cat. It gobbled the pieces greedily and when it finished eating, it head butted him in the neck. A weak smile formed on his lips but it didn't reach his eyes. He pet Hamish and the cat began to purr loudly.

It didn't take too long for John to stand with a small smile, plopping the mattress down into the finished crib. He had watched Sherlock from the corner of his eyes, studying the consulting detective and the cat. He moved into the kitchen slowly, awkwardly, and wrapped his arms around Sherlock as he pressed his chest against his fiancé's back. "I'm jealous," he whispered softly against the back of Sherlock's neck, ignoring Hamish. "And I hate him for it. Hate him for touching you and for giving you what I couldn't while I was gone." The embrace around Sherlock's waist tightened. "I...just couldn't stop myself."

The cat growled but jumped off Sherlock's shoulder and went to another room. Jealousy. That was something he could relate to. Before he realized what he was doing, he pushed away from John.
"Well, maybe now you know how I feel every time I see Sarah. Unlike Jackson, she simply can't go away. She'll always be there…"

John almost objected to Sherlock pulling away until he realized what the other man had said. His entire body tensed. Oh. Of course it made sense, why wouldn't it? But it hurt to actually hear that from his fiancé, the fact that even though he put on a front about Amy coming into the world that, really, this little girl was nothing more than a reminder. "What do you want me to do then?" He was speaking before thinking it over, his body shaking as he took a threatening step toward Sherlock. "Just not be in my daughter's life? 'Oh, sorry, my fiancé only sees you as some mistake from a night we got in a fight and doesn't want me to be around you.' That what you want me to tell her in the future?" His voice was steadily rising. "Or do you just want me to leave? That it? You want me to walk away from our engagement so you can go back to your experiments and your cases and I can go slinking back to my little bloody mistake?" Before he even had a chance to stop himself he lifted a hand and gently shoved Sherlock's shoulder.

So careful. Sherlock had been so careful not to start a fight with John since finding out he would be in Afghanistan. He suddenly didn't care anymore. His eyes narrowed as he watched his fiancé come toward him. "It's all your fault!" He shouted the words. "If you hadn't…" he trailed off, unable to bring himself to say it. "…just couldn't help yourself, could you? Because of what? 'Stress' was it? Fucking stress? What the hell kind of excuse is that?" When he felt the light shove, he shoved back but not nearly as gently. This wasn't supposed to be happening. They were supposed to be happy, not fighting. Not being physically aggressive with each other.

"Fuck you, Sherlock!" His body moved back slightly from the push. "You been keeping in contact with your little fuck buddy from the hospital? That why he showed up here? Couldn't stop yourself, could you?" Both of his hands lifted, pressing roughly on Sherlock's chest. "Because stress was your only excuse for nearly dry fucking me in the desert a few months ago, you bastard!" Another shove as he took a step forward.

"What? No! Today is the first time I saw him since…I would never…" Sherlock trailed off, shaking his head violently at the thought. That John thought that, even in anger, hurt and whatever fight he had in him was gone suddenly. He stumbled backward from the shoves, running into the counter by the sink. Out. He needed to get the hell out the flat. He couldn't breathe here. He glanced to John briefly, the pain evident in his eyes. He attempted to get around his fiancé, to flee this place.

John's first thought was that Sherlock couldn't leave. He effectively trapped Sherlock against the counter with another shove to his chest. "Sure, and that's how he knew our address," he growled, ignoring the pain he clearly saw from Sherlock's gaze. He curled into a fist as he attempted to steady his breathing. "Fuck off," he growled as he turned away from his fiancé and stormed out of the flat.

Sherlock wanted to chase after John and fix everything, but instead he collapsed to his knees in defeat. Stupid. So stupid. Why had he started this stupid argument with John to begin with? He took out his cell phone and sent a text to Mycroft.

*John and I got in a bad row. He left the flat angry. Please watch over him to make sure he stays safe. —SH*

An easy enough task for his older brother, since Mycroft pretty much had access to every camera in London. He sat down on the floor, leaning his head against the cabinet door. Once more Hamish came to comfort him, jumping up into the available lap and rubbing its head all over Sherlock's stomach.
Mycroft shifted as his phone went off, reading the text with a frown. That didn't take long.

*Are you alright? -MH*

Despite the bit of anger at his younger brother's fiancé, he contacted who he needed to so John could be tracked.

*Downtown London. Just walking the streets. Been crying. -MH*

He watched the videos with narrowed eyes as John stopped and looked around, realization dawning on the soldier's face. Apparently he hadn't been paying much attention to where he was going.

Sherlock read the messages from Mycroft but didn't feel like replying. Damn it, he should be the one going after John. Not have to rely on his older brother to do it for him. He sighed, picked up Hamish and placed the cat on his shoulder as he stood. He left the flat in a hurry, not even bothering to put on his usual coat and scarf. With a map of the city clear in his head, he navigated the streets with ease and speed. He began searching the downtown area, hoping to find John soon. Hamish apparently got bored because the cat curled up and went to sleep.

John would recognize that body anywhere, lithe and graceful. It was surprising, though. He had shoved Sherlock, physically assaulted his fiancé, and here he was in downtown London hunting him down. He pushed his way through the crowd and stopped several feet in front of Sherlock, swaying uneasily on his feet. "Hey," he stated softly, taking a few hesitant steps toward him. His lips pursed and he tilted his head slightly to the right. With no trace of hesitation, he wrapped John into a hug.

"I'm sorry," Sherlock murmured into the top of his fiancé's head. He clung on to the army doctor desperately, as if letting him go would mean John would walk out of his life completely and that was something that he just couldn't let happen.

John instantly returned the tight embrace, closing his eyes and burying his face into Sherlock's chest with a soft sigh. "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. Are you alright? Did I hurt you?" He pulled away slightly to study Sherlock's face. He had pushed Sherlock, shoved him angrily, cornered him. "God I'm so sorry. Sherlock, I'm sorry." The only words in his vocabulary escaped his lips and he pressed his wet face back into Sherlock's chest.

Sherlock raised his eyebrows. "I'm fine my dear doctor." When John leaned back into his chest, his arms once more wrapped around his fiancé. He kissed the top of his head lightly, ignoring the stares and the people walking around them to avoid bumping into the couple. "Perhaps we should go back to the flat and have a cup of tea?" He suggested, stilling hugging the army doctor closely.

"Right, yeah." John sniffed as he pulled away slightly from Sherlock. "Sounds good." He instantly reached for Sherlock's hand and gave it a squeeze, tugging his fiancé in the direction of their flat. Perhaps they could work everything out over a cuppa and spend the rest of their week not fighting.

Sherlock gave John a small smile and returned the squeezing hand. He trailed after his fiancé, mentally yelling at himself for starting the argument. No more. He wouldn't do it again. The rest of the time would be pleasant.

The trip back to the flat was nice, John slowed the pace more than once to just take the city in with a large smile. He entered the flat slowly and gave a long glance to Sherlock as he moved into the kitchen to put the kettle on. For a moment he stayed leaning against the counter, his eyes locked on his fiancé, before moving forward and confidently capturing Sherlock's lips in a kiss. He just needed to be close to him, to let him know that he really loved him.
In silence, Sherlock followed John. The pace was slow, considering how long his legs were but he matched it without complaint. Once inside the flat, Hamish jumped off his shoulder and took up napping in Sherlock's chair. He entered the kitchen, watching John as he started the tea. As their lips met, he once more wrapped his arms around his fiancé in a fierce hug. "Please don't leave me," his voice was a barely audible whisper. His voice restricted his chest and he furiously shook his head.

"Of course not," John stated with a raspy voice. "Never, Sherlock." He met his lips again, ignoring the high-pitched whistle of the tea kettle as he pinned Sherlock against the archway leading into the kitchen. "Please forgive me," he stated suddenly as his lips moved to run along Sherlock's jaw.

"I do. We both said things...I'm sorry." Sherlock stumbled into the wall. He tilted his neck immediately, fingers fumbling a bit as they worked their way under John's tucked shirt and he began to scratch the skin lightly. He moved his head, so their lips could meet once more. His tongue explored John's mouth anxiously.

"Are we neglecting our tea?" John asked into Sherlock's mouth, dueling with his fiancé's tongue aggressively. Honestly, he wouldn't mind too much. His hand had been abused in the past few months. Sherlock's touch under his shirt caused his stomach to tense and he moaned breathlessly. John's hand yanked Sherlock's shirt up with a growl, his thumb ran across Sherlock's nipple roughly.

"Don't care about the tea," Sherlock muttered behind the kiss. He wondered if John would want control this time and hoped he wouldn't because he wasn't feeling particularly submissive at the moment. To help assert his dominance early, he tried to maneuver his fiancé over to the kitchen table so the other man's back was against the wooden surface.

Sherlock smirked because he knew he had won this time around. He broke the kiss long enough to reply. "Unless you want to go to my room so Mrs. Hudson can hear us." He decided to begin kissing John's neck roughly next, his finger nails digging in a bit more into the skin. He pressed his body tight against John's, his lower torso bucking impatiently.

John let Sherlock push him back with a small growl, giving a gentle push to Sherlock's chest to assert a bit of his own dominance. While he knew he would let Sherlock take control he figured he could put up a bit of a fight. "The kitchen?" He asked breathlessly against Sherlock's lips, moaning softly before lowering his head and nipping at Sherlock's exposed nipple.

"Kitchen's good," Sherlock muttered behind the kiss. He wondered if John would want to go to his room so Mrs. Hudson could hear them. He raised his chin to expose more of his neck with a needy moan. Christ, he sounded like a whore but this was Sherlock and he couldn't help himself.

"Come on then." Sherlock grabbed John's shirt and pulled the army doctor with him to his room. "Get your boots off while I get the Vaseline." He placed his fiancé in the vicinity of the bed and then rooted through his nightstand for a moment.

John followed, tripping over his boots and falling on to the bed with a small grunt. "Right. Yeah." He didn't hesitate in yanking at the shoelaces, toeing off one boot and kicking it toward the wall. The ridiculous framed photo of the Periodic Table rattled as the second boot hit a few inches below it. His gaze fell on Sherlock as he slowly undid his belt, the clicking of the metal echoing in the small room. In an instant he didn't give a damn if Mrs. Hudson heard them because at this rate John didn't know if he could make it back to the kitchen.

Sherlock finally found what he was looking for and threw it onto the bed. He stripped naked
quickly and the pounced John on the bed, the mattress groaning a bit from the sudden weight. He straddled his fiancé immediately and began nibbling on his ears, fingers scratching his chest. His lower torso squirmed upon the man below him.

John fell back on to the mattress and struggled to glance between them, trying to work open the zipper and button of his uniform pants. Sherlock had almost always been eager to shag but, honestly, this was more than he was used to. He figured his fiancé was excited given that they hadn't really slept together in months. A small sound of success came from John's mouth as he finally managed to get his pants undone, attempting to slightly pull them down from his hips.

Between the several months of not being with John and the recent fight, Sherlock was crazy hormonal. His hands slid down to the army doctor's pants to help push them down further. His kissing moved to his fiancé's neck, sucking excitedly and roughly. He blindly reached one hand around on the bed in search of the Vaseline; the other went back to scratching harshly against John's chest. His body grinded into the man below him eagerly, but without any real pace. His breathing became thready but instead of breaking for breath, he exhaled loudly through his nose.

John shouted at all of the sensations his body felt. The scratches on his chest and the sucking on his neck had him arching off the bed with loud moans. "Sherlock, yes." He tangled both of his hands into his fiancé's hair and wiggled beneath Sherlock to finish kicking off his pants. It was almost too rough but John had a feeling that the man above him needed this release, needed to be rough. He was willing to take it if it meant keeping Sherlock happy. When he noticed Sherlock's free hand groping around the bed he reached out to help, knocking the Vaseline container into Sherlock's hand with another moan.

Once his hand came in contact with the container, Sherlock snatched it up. The scratching stopped briefly as he spun the cap off and flicked it somewhere onto the floor carelessly. He continued to kiss John's neck, shifting to the other side to make sure it wasn't neglected and unmarked. Using only his sense of touch, he took off the army doctor's boxers, applied the Vaseline to his fingers and prepped them both. It was a bit messy and smeared everywhere, but the important areas were covered and that was all that really mattered. He dropped the bottle back onto the bed. His fingers scratched along the sides of John's chest and stomach. Sherlock entered with a hard thrust and he repeated with the same pressure and pace as he went in and out. He had to stop scratching, to brace himself and not fall over. One hand gripped the head of the bed and the other tangled into the sheets. He growled loudly and began nibbling on John's ear.

By the time Sherlock had everything prepared John was practically whimpering and the moment Sherlock entered him and didn't let up, he shouted. Loud and clear and all he could manage was Sherlock's name. "Christ, Sherlock." His hips thrust back as rough as he could manage, his legs wrapped around Sherlock's waist as he slammed his eyes shut. Rough and fast and shit it was perfect. He lifted his hands and clawed at Sherlock's shoulder blades, tensing around Sherlock as he moaned again. He could hear himself in the room but didn't care, let all of Baker Street hear if they wanted. "Don't stop," he moaned. "Feels so good, fuck."

To his surprise, Sherlock managed to last awhile. Longer than he usually did anyway, which was interesting given how rough and fast everything was right now. On top of how long it had been since their last shagging. Eventually he came, his body tensing and once more growling loudly. He collapsed onto John, paning heavily as he finally stopped his incessant kissing and biting. He took a moment to catch his breath and then maneuvered his way down to his fiancé's lower torso. Instead of finishing the army doctor off with a hand job, he opted for a blow job. He sucked on John's cock and then began bopping at a steady pace.

All of the previous activities had heightened John's arousal to the point of near exhaustion. The
mouth on his cock made him moan lazily and he thrust into Sherlock's mouth twice before coming. "Sorry, sorry." His eyes slammed shut and he bit his bottom lip. "Didn't mean to abuse your mouth." The grin on his face was tired as he tugged Sherlock's hair for him to come up and snuggle against his side. His free arm fell to the side so Sherlock could use it as a pillow before his eyes closed and his breathing slowly evened out. John had been shagged to the point of needing quite the nap.

Sherlock almost gagged from John's thrusting but he managed not to and even was able to swallow. He pulled away, wiping his mouth with his forearm. He crawled back up to John and snuggled into his fiancé immediately. Instead of using the arm as a pillow, he rest his head on the army doctor's chest. He wasn't really tired, but he couldn't think of being anywhere else right now. Hamish jumped up on the bed and curled up against Sherlock's back, purring loudly before going to sleep.
Chapter 29

Chapter by **audreytiphaine, Pantherlily**

For the first time in six months John slept calmly, no nightmares and no waking up in a cold sweat. His chest expanded quickly as he took a sharp intake of breath and slowly opened one eye. 221B. London. The warmth snuggled against his side was his fiancé. John groaned slightly and stretched his body out, curling his toes against the tops of Sherlock's feet. "Morning," he stated through a yawn as he turned to look at Sherlock.

Sleep didn't find Sherlock at all. He was too busy thinking. He was laying on his back, head tilted onto John's shoulder. One hand was bent behind his head and the other was absently scratching behind Hamish's ears. The cat was laying on Sherlock's chest, its whiskers tickling under the consulting detective's chin. "Morning my dear doctor." He shifted slightly, so he could snuggle closer to his fiancé.

A small chuckle escaped John's lips as he studied Sherlock. "Y'know, even though it's three in the afternoon." He moved his head cautiously, eyes locked on Hamish, and placed a soft kiss on Sherlock's temple. That bloody cat was practically attached to Sherlock's hip. "Didn't sleep, I assume?" He asked with a raised brow and a knowing smile. "So...we left with the kettle on and now it's off. I can only draw the conclusion that Mrs. Hudson now views me as a whore. A needy, very loud whore." He laughed despite the red tinting of his cheeks.

"Wasn't tired." Sherlock gave a slight shrug. "She came by awhile ago. Didn't stay to chat though." He smirked a bit, moved Hamish off his chest and then turned sideways so he could be closer to John. His head came to rest on his fiancé's chest, fingers trailing along the other man's side lightly.

The lack of sleep that Sherlock got honestly worried John but he couldn't force his fiancé to sleep. "The next time it's time to go to bed I am going to try something," he whispered as he pressed his forehead against the top of Sherlock's head. "I'm worried about you not sleeping. Or eating, for that matter." A proud smirk tugged at his lips as the cat moved out of the room. It was stupid, John realized, to feel proud that he took standing over a bloody cat in Sherlock's mind. "Are you hungry? I'm craving some carry-out from the Chinese down the street."

Sherlock tilted his head up to look at John, eyebrows raised curiously. "Try what?" He hadn't slept or eaten much since coming home. There was too much stuff to do, so he hadn't really bothered with the basic stuff. Mycroft had tried and failed to get Sherlock to take better care of himself. "Well, I probably should eat. Been a few days since my last meal."

"Just something I learned when I was playing rugby," John replied with a small laugh. "It helps relax you, which I think you really need." Sherlock's next comment made him tense slightly. A few days? How did somebody go that long without eating? It made no sense. "Right. You need to eat. I'm going to go and order the carry out and put a new kettle on." He placed a soft kiss on Sherlock's lips and moved away from the warm body as he slipped on his boxers and left the room with a bit of an awkward walk.

Relax? When was the last time he had relaxed? Sherlock couldn't remember. He watched John leave the room quietly and for a moment he just laid in bed. The bed was comfortable. It wasn't often, as of late, that he just did nothing. Usually, not doing anything would bother him but right now was a nice change of pace. He got up off the bed, when he heard the kettle go off. Instead of putting clothes on, he wrapped himself up in a sheet and walked to the kitchen.
John set his mobile down next to the two mugs he had set out with a bit of a smile, pouring the hot water with practiced ease. "Should be here in fifteen minutes or so, would you mind..." He turned around and couldn't help but roll his eyes and smile. "I was going to ask you to pick it up but you're in a bloody sheet...probably not too appropriate. I'm sure Mrs. Hudson will end up getting it for us since I bet you have yet to fix the bell." He yanked playfully at the sheet as he leaned against the counter. "Crap telly tonight?" He asked with a half-smile. The idea of sitting on the couch with Sherlock and doing nothing sounded wonderful.

"I can get it." Sherlock gave a small shrug. He wasn't one to care about what was and wasn't deemed as 'appropriate.' He had completely forgotten the bell still didn't work, it wasn't a high priority on his to do list and probably would remain broken until things had fallen into some kind of routine. Watching the telly wasn't something that appealed to him but he nodded anyway. "Later in the evening. I have some experiments to check up on at the office. Would you like to go see it later?"

Experiments. In John's excitement to see Sherlock, along with the fight, he had completely forgotten that the kitchen was free of experiments. "Yeah, I would love to." He studied his fiancé with a loving smile and reached behind himself to grab his mug of tea. He took a slow sip and groaned, snapping his eyes shut. "Christ I've missed a good cup of tea." He took another sip before jumping slightly and hiding himself behind Sherlock the best he could.

"Boys, I've got your carry-out." Mrs. Hudson moved into the kitchen and smiled at them setting the bad on the kitchen table. "Good afternoon," she stated cheerfully.

Sherlock picked up the other cup and sipped it quietly. He was unperturbed that Mrs. Hudson just walked into the kitchen. "Hello, sorry if we were too loud earlier. John really can't help himself sometimes." He smirked, taking another sip of his tea and turning sideways to take in his fiancé's reaction.

John pursed his lips as a blush spread across his cheeks, his mouth opening and closing several times. He sent a quick elbow into Sherlock's side. "Thank you for getting our food, Mrs. Hudson," he stated calmly.

"No problem, dear," Mrs. Hudson smiled and looked at John. "At least we all know your enjoying yourself." With that she left, leaving John to bury his face into Sherlock's back with a groan.

Sherlock couldn't help but laugh. He smirked as he continued to sip his tea, obviously amused. "We should do it in every room, just to make sure Mrs. Hudson knows how much you are enjoying your little hiatus." He smirked again, moved over to the table and sat down in a chair. Hamish appeared and promptly jumped onto Sherlock's shoulder.

John watched Sherlock with a glare. "Hilarious, really." He plopped into his chair with a look toward Hamish and grabbed his box of food. He tore into it with a groan of pleasure, his head falling back as he chewed his first bite. "Honestly I am only loud because you insist in being rough." He looked at Sherlock with a raised brow and took several more bites.

Sherlock was about to take a bite of his food but he paused and glanced up to John. "I don't hear you complaining," he replied with a smirk. "Would you like to try a more..." He paused in thought for a moment "...a more gentle approach?" His eyebrows rose curiously, and ended up giving the first bite of food to the cat on his shoulder.

John pushed his lips to one side in thought. "I don't know, maybe? I've still got a time for me to be in control. I mean, our first time was a bit slow." He took another bite and winced when Sherlock fed the cat. "I like rough, don't get me wrong, but I think I'll always be a bit vocal." After a long
pause he shrugged and dropped his gaze to his food. Sherlock liked it rough, it was just how it was
and John really just wanted to please him.

Sherlock nodded and finally began eating the food. Rough was all he really knew because he had
discovered he quite liked it after catching John and Sarah together. He frowned at the thought and
drowned even deeper at his next thought. With Jackson it had been slow and gentle, and he had
liked it but he could never tell John that. After only a few bites, he wasn't hungry anymore and he
dropped the chopsticks onto the plate. He picked at the food with his fingers, taking out the meat
and feeding Hamish.

The change in Sherlock's demeanor didn't go unnoticed by John and he set his chopsticks down,
folding his hands together as he licked his lips. "What's wrong? You were hungry and now you are
feeding the cat. Talk to me." He pushed his own food slightly to the side and kept his gaze locked
on his fiancé.

"I was just thinking." Sherlock picked up his chopsticks once more and forced himself to eat the
food. He really hoped John wouldn't push him to talk this time, because he didn't want to end up in
another fight like they had earlier. This wasn't something he could talk about with his fiancé. All it
would do is hurt the other man. He would rather John be mad at him for not being willing to talk
than his dangerous thoughts.

John bit his bottom lip and turned his head slightly to the side before clearing his throat. It seemed
that he was going to have to get used to Sherlock keeping some thoughts to himself. "Alright," he
stated in a defeated tone before glancing at his food. He had suddenly lost his appetite. "I'm going
to move the crib into our room." He stood from the table and moved into the living room,
picking the crib up with ease and moving toward their bedroom.

After John left the kitchen, Sherlock slid the food away from him. Hamish jumped onto the table
and began eating off the plate. Shouldn't he be grateful his fiancé didn't push him? He sighed,
turning to watch the army doctor carry the crib into the bedroom. It wouldn't be wise to talk about
it, but was all he could think about now. He got up, leaving the sheet behind in the chair and went
into the only messy room in the flat. "I'm going to the office soon, if you still want to go." He took
out a fresh set of clothes and then moved to the bathroom.

John set the crib at the foot of the bed for now, letting his eyes linger on his fiancé for a long
moment. "I think I'll take you up on that offer. Am I allowed to shower?" The air between them
was tense and he felt it. Christ, this needed to end. He moved swiftly into the bathroom after
Sherlock, pressing his chest against the other man's back and wrapping his arms around his waist.
"I love you." He placed a soft kiss on Sherlock's shoulder blade.

Instantly, Sherlock relaxed into John's arms. "I love you too." His hands rested on his fiancé's, a
thumb brushing lightly against across the other man's skin. He tilted his head back and gave the
army doctor a small kiss on the cheek, and then nuzzled the top of his head into John's cheek.

A small sigh of relief escaped John's mouth and he tightened his embrace around his fiancé. "I'm
going to shower." He turned his head slightly and placed a kiss on Sherlock's temple before pulling
away and slipping his boxers off. "Hey, is there any beer in the fridge?" John stepped into the
shower and turned the water on, peeking back out to stare at Sherlock. "I haven't had a drink in
ages. Can we get some?"

"No, there isn't any alcohol in the flat but we can get some if you want." Sherlock stepped into the
shower after John. He shivered momentarily, making sure to close the drape so water wouldn't get
all over the tiled floor. He stood toward the wall closest to the shower head, so the water could fall
over both of them.
"Yeah, I'd like some." John stepped closer to Sherlock and closed his eyes as the warm water spread across his body. He relaxed instantly and leaned slightly against Sherlock's chest. Instead of grabbing the soap and cleaning himself, the soldier put his hands to better use by running them up and down Sherlock's back lightly, placing soft kisses against Sherlock's collarbone. "Is that alright?"

Sherlock closed his eyes in content from the light touching. He rested his chin atop of John's head, after he placed a small kiss on the army doctor's crown. His arms wrapped around his fiancé in a light hug. "That would be fine. Just because I don't drink, doesn't mean you can't." He gave another hug, squeezing slightly tighter this time.

Opening his mouth would be too much effort so John settled on a small hum as a reply. He closed his eyes and groped blindly around them before finding the bar of soap. After a bit of maneuvering he pulled away slightly from Sherlock's embrace and started running the soap over his fiancé's chest, tilting his head up to gently meet Sherlock's lips. "I just realized that bloody cat is probably eating all of my carry-out," he whispered with a playful push against Sherlock's chest, opening one eye.

Sherlock opened his eyes, to watch John soap him up. He returned the kiss and then smirked slightly. "Probably. He enjoys eating. Tried to get him to eat cat food but he refuses. Can't very well let the poor thing starve can I?" Really, Hamish ate better than he did considering the cat ate far more and often than Sherlock did.

John blew a few bubbles in Sherlock's face with a small laugh before running the soap over his arms and chest, keeping his eyes locked on Sherlock the entire time. "You could make him eat cat food, really. That thing eats better than me. It gets carry-out and my dinner is sucking on some bloody coffee grounds." He placed the soap back against the wall with a dejected sigh. "Not fair." He pressed himself against Sherlock to slowly rinse the soap off of them. "D'you want your hair washed?"

Sherlock smirked again and then shrugged a bit. "He likes people food. When he just a small ball of fur, I didn't know what to feed him, so I gave him ham. Tried to get him to eat cat food too late, I guess. If it really bothers you, I can condition him to eat cat food." It really wouldn't be that hard, he just never had bothered because he didn't care what the cat ate. Instead of answering the question, Sherlock reached around and got the shampoo and squirted some into John's hair with a grin, before applying some to his own scalp.

"Doesn't bug me, you are the one that has to deal with the little git," John muttered as he reached his hands up and started to wash his hair. "Just an observation, really." He moved his hand, covered in suds, and trailed it along Sherlock's cheek with a grin and a chuckle. "I could make you look like Saint Nick," he stated jovially, both of his hands moving suds to the end of Sherlock's chin. "Now go off and gain some weight and say 'Ho Ho Ho,' will you?" After a pause John looked up at his fiancé with large eyes. "I would like the world's most handsome consulting detective for Christmas. I promise I've been a really good boy."

Sherlock shrugged again. "Doesn't really matter to me what Hamish eats." John sure was in playful mood right now. Maybe he could muster the same light heartedness his fiancé was displaying. "Hmmm, I don't know. My elves tell me you've been a very bad boy. Do you know what boys on the naughty list get?" His smirk returned once more.

John's smile faltered slightly and he shrugged. "Hopefully equally naughty consulting detectives?" He ran a hand down Sherlock's chest. After their day John figured that his fiancé needed a bit of light hearted interaction. Even if it was in the shower. He moved both of them under the spray of
the water and gasped when Sherlock lost all of the suds on his face. "The illusion's been shattered!"
He laughed and gently met Sherlock's lips.

Sherlock tried to match John's enthusiasm. He just couldn't quite get there. He let the hot water
spray over him, his eyes closed momentarily. What was he going to do about this? It bothered him
more than it probably should. Why couldn't he stop thinking about it? Would talking about it
work? That was something he rarely did. Who could he possibly talk to? Lestrade maybe.
Although, it would most certainly make the Detective Inspector uncomfortable, of that he was sure.
Maybe he could distract himself with his experiments. After opening his eyes he stepped out of the
shower and began drying himself off. It was clear that John's light hearted moment wasn't doing the
trick.

For some reason, one John couldn't exactly put his finger on, his fiancé was upset. He knew it
started with their conversation at the table about their sex life, of all things. Something that
Sherlock didn't have much experience with. Was this all about Sherlock's little affair? The fight
they'd had earlier? John stood under the warm spray of the water for a few minutes longer, eyes
closed and arms holding him up against the wall. At this point he wasn't ready to face the man on
the other side of the curtain. He had made the unspoken decision that Sherlock could scamper off
and do his experiments on his own.

Sherlock glanced into the shower and sighed. John being home should be better than this and he
was messing it all up. First the fight and now this. He wasn't sure if a silent fight was worse than a
vocal one. Would talking about it work? For God's sake, John wouldn't want to know that
information would he? It would probably ruin any chance of a slower pace ever happening. It was
something he was interested in trying with his fiancé. Part of the reason was he hoped it get
Jackson the hell out of system completely and other part was he was genuinely curious to see how
it would be with John. He sighed again and now just stood in the bathroom, shivering slightly.

The shadow outside the curtain alerted John to the fact that Sherlock had yet to leave. It was
obvious that something was wrong. John felt it running up his spine, attacking his thoughts, and it
was all because of Sherlock. Irrationally he wanted to lash out, to shout at his future husband to
leave and let him be for a bit but he figured that would be irresponsible, rude, childish. "Do you
still want me to go with you, then? Or is there another reason you're standing in the middle of our
bathroom naked and shivering?" He turned the water off with a rough jerk of his wrist, yanking the
shower curtain open with one hand as his fingers clenched at his side. Nervous. He was nervous.
Part of him knew what was bothering Sherlock. The other half just didn't want to admit it.

John's words jarred him. "Do whatever you want," he muttered as he walked out of the bathroom.
He walked into the bedroom, where the clothes he had put out were on the bed. With a growl of
frustration, he punched the wall. It stung and bruised his knuckles. He proceeded to throw a
childish temper tantrum, knocking over boxes and scattering papers everywhere. He came upon the
crib and he had to forcibly stop himself from destroying the infant's bed. He still couldn't bring
himself to call the baby by name. Always referring to it as a baby or infant or John's daughter. He
growled again and punched the wall with more force this time, this time with his other hand.
Ignoring the throbbing in his fingers he finally began getting dressed, roughly putting them on and
not caring about the wrinkles he caused from the abuse he was showing his clothes.

Crashes and thuds caused John to nearly bolt from the bathroom, haphazardly holding a towel
around his hips. If he had been merely wondering if something was wrong with his fiancé earlier
he knew for sure now. "What the fuck is wrong?" He couldn't take it anymore. Whatever was
going on between them needed to stop and with a twist in his gut John stepped forward and
grabbed Sherlock's hand. He should have thought his actions through but the emotion running
through his body was too strong. With a sure movement he pulled the silver band from his left ring
finger and placed it roughly in Sherlock's palm. "I need some time to think about this." His voice was rough and unconfident. He took a hesitant step away from the taller man and looked around the room before going into the bathroom and closing the door.
Chapter 30

Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

Sherlock was about to answer but what John did next let him numb and breathless. When his fiancé left the room, he sank to his knees in defeat. He clung to the ring tightly, the metal digging into his skin so hard that blood began to seep through his fingers. He couldn't move, think, or do anything. His world had just flipped upside down and torn asunder. How could John…after everything… He found himself incapable of breathing as he fought off a panic attack. Before John, Sherlock wouldn't be having this problem. All these stupid emotions that lately all they seemed to do is hurt him. There was a part of him that wanted to go back to those days, where emotions didn't exist. But John had taught him so much; could he just walk away from that? Apparently the army doctor could. He had been thinking so furiously, he had forgotten to breathe and found himself automatically doing it in pained and desperate breaths, his chest constricted and aching from the lack of oxygen.

Shit. Did he just give his wedding band back to Sherlock? He fell back against the door and slid to the floor, burying his head between his knees with a shaky breath. At the time it had seemed logical. The tension was slowly driving him mad and without Sherlock voicing the actual problem that had started everything he had no idea what to do. Effectively ending their future probably wasn't the best idea, in hindsight. The lack of movement in the room beside him made him shift slightly against the door. What should he do now? He couldn't just saunter into the room to get his things. He couldn't face Sherlock.

This was worse. So much worse than catching John with Sarah. Sherlock didn't think that was possible. He continued to cling tightly to the ring, ignoring the pain and the blood. He drew his knees to his chest, wrapping his arms around them. The last time he had sat like this was when he was child, after a particularly brutal beating from his father after an experiment had gone wrong and he had almost blown up the house. His forehead came to rest on his knees and he was aware of tears streaming down his face. When had he started crying? He wasn't sure. Maybe this was all just a bad dream and he would wake up any second now. It was just too horrifying to be real. This couldn't be happening. This wasn't how it was supposed to be. John was home, they should be happy and laughing and making love in every single room in the flat. Hamish must have been on the bed because he began to feel the cat licking his ear. He wanted to swat it away angrily but he didn't have the energy.

Deep breaths. His chest contracted painfully and he sucked in a loud breath as he managed to stand. He stumbled forward slightly and caught himself on the sink, the towel falling from his hips. John couldn't just stay in the bathroom without clothes and wait for Sherlock to leave. On some level that was immature. If he never left then facing Sherlock would only get harder. He took a deep breath, braced himself, and opened the door into the bedroom. His head stayed low. No eye contact. He moved across the room and rummaged through the dresser where he assumed his clothes would be. Wonderful. "Have you..." He cleared his throat and kept his back to the other man. "My clothes, uh, are they down here or still upstairs?"

After what had just happened, John was worried about his clothes? Didn't the army doctor care at all anymore? Was it really so easy for the other man to walk away? Too much. It was just too much. He finally opened his hand and the ring fell to the floor. There was no point of holding onto it anymore. Not now. He had nothing left. He couldn't stay here anymore. With effort he forced himself to his feet. Blinded by tears he made his way out of the room and then down the stairs. It wasn't until he was outside did he realize he wasn't wearing any shoes, as the cool concrete came in
contact with his bare skin. He searched around for his cell phone to send a text but in his haste to leave, he had forgotten it as well. Suddenly, he began running. He wasn't sure where he was running to but anywhere was better than 221B Baker Street.

John's initial reaction was to run after Sherlock but his feet stayed glued to the floor of the bedroom. *Their* bedroom. He pulled on a pair of his boxers that he finally managed to find, followed by a pair of jeans and a red button up shirt. He left the room without even looking at the ring, if he did he was sure his knees would give out. He glanced at the cat as he dragged his feet to the couch, falling on to it as he curled his legs up against his chest. The blanket beneath him smelled like Sherlock and, Christ, there were the tears. Hot and silent and streaming down his cheeks with abandon.

Running, it was all Sherlock could do. The pavement was rough in some areas and tore at his feet. The blood and pain now on his feet weren't what stopped him from running; he had become physically incapable of continuing anymore. He stopped and slid down the side of a random building, ramming his head against it with as much force as he could muster. His head cracked so hard, he actually dazed himself for a moment and saw black spots. At this point, feeling physical pain was a blessing compared to the emotional turmoil inside. His breathing was hot and heavy. At some point he had managed to stop crying or maybe he had just run the ducts dry. With a shaky breath, Sherlock stood up. To his surprise, he was standing in front of the private clinic Jackson worked at. Oh God. Why had he come here? Disgusted with himself he began running once more, ignoring the chest pains and heavy legs from the vicious pace he had set for himself.

It didn't take long for Mycroft's black car to pull alongside the consulting detective. It never did. The entire incident probably shouldn't have been overheard but the apartment was still bugged, for Sherlock's sake he reminded himself. His younger brother was a mess. Bloody, running in a not-so-straight line, barefoot, and looking like quite the drug user that he used to be. The car stopped and Mycroft got out as smoothly as he could, using the end of his umbrella to nab one of Sherlock's arms. "Car. Now," he growled with a yank to the umbrella. John and Sherlock were, quite possibly, the most stubborn and idiotic men he had ever met. God help him, Mycroft was going to fix this.

Sherlock's dead sprint was suddenly halted and if it hadn't been for the umbrella hook holding him in place, he would have stumbled right onto his face. He spun to face his older brother, eyes narrowed and breathing heavily. It was amazing he was able to form words, given his heaving chest and the pain it caused. "Piss off. I don't have time for you and your stupid advice. John doesn't want to get married. That should make Dad happy. It's over. He and I are through! I just want to be alone right now." He had started off shouting but it died down to a mutter by the time his tirade was through. He removed the umbrella from his arm and when he went to walk away, he stumbled and had to use a nearby building for support. His legs were sore and didn't want to cooperate.

The state of the youngest Holmes was, simply put, horrid. Sherlock had never dealt with emotions before. Now, on the level of quite the catastrophic marriage rejection, he didn't know what to do with himself. "No advice, Sherlock." Mycroft moved forward with his younger brother, grabbing an arm and wrapping it around his shoulders. "Just me being a brother and making sure you don't make any decisions you will regret in the future." Ideas of what Sherlock could do, ranging from drug use to murder, had prompted him to jump into action in the first place. "And I can promise you that you and John aren't done, Sherlock." He gave the man's body a gentle tug toward the car. "You never will be."

"Still spying then." It was a statement, not a question. Sherlock turned to face his older brother. "He took the ring off Mycroft..." His voice trailed off, the dejection he was feeling clear. How could his brother sound so sure about him and John? Lost and confused were not feelings he was
used to but now they overwhelmed his senses. "Please, just leave me alone." He didn't want to be around anyone right now.

Mycroft didn't acknowledge Sherlock's first statement and merely tugged at Sherlock again. "I know, Sherlock, and he shouldn't of, alright? I'm taking you back to my house. I can give you a room to yourself but I don't think you need to be out here right now." He closed his eyes for a long moment and took a deep breath. It was horrible to look at his brother, a strong and confident man, reduced to this after one man decided he couldn't handle a petty fight. Honestly, it wasn't fair to Sherlock. "Please, for John. Sherlock, he still loves you."

Sherlock wasn't sure who was the more stubborn between the two, him or Mycroft. He was too tired to continue arguing though; physically, emotionally and even mentally. He sighed, shrugged away from his older brother and finally moved toward the waiting car. He got in without saying a word, slamming the door shut behind him. Sitting down was a wonderful relief to his body. It was rather thankful for the respite after he had pushed himself so hard. His muscles would be sore tomorrow, of that much he was certain.

Mycroft opened the door on the other side with a sigh, giving Sherlock a pointed look before sliding into the seat next to him and shutting the door. "It's for the best, coming home with me." He studied his brother with a frown. This wasn't the situation he wanted Sherlock to be in. At this point John returning the ring, on top of some illegitimate child, made Mycroft want to throttle the soldier within an inch of his life. Hurting his younger brother wasn't part of the package deal. "Just to keep you safe."

A roll of his eyes was the only response Sherlock gave to Mycroft. He decided staring out the window was much more interesting than anything involving his older brother. Just because he had relented and got in the car did not mean he had to make conversation. He had absolutely no inclination to talk about anything, especially not John and the fight that had just happened. After a moment he got bored with watching the scenery go by and with a sigh, he rested his head against the window and closed his eyes.

It had been a tough plan and without his position in the British government, Mycroft was fairly sure he wouldn't have been able to move John at all. Some minor drugs had cleared that issue up almost instantly. Sherlock didn't need to know that a rather unconscious John Watson was on the bed in his designated room. Sherlock also didn't need to know that the soldier would probably be unconscious for quite a while and that the door would be locked the moment Sherlock entered. It was a loving gesture, surely, aimed at knocking sense into the most stubborn men in London. "You know which room, dear brother. Left hallway, second door on the right," Mycroft droned as the car stopped and he exited. "See you for breakfast tomorrow."

Sherlock still refused to converse with his older brother, and merely got out of the car and into Mycroft's flat mutely. He eyed the couch as he passed, it was much closer to him than the room mentioned. However, a bed would be much comfortable. Despite the weariness, he walked to the bedroom. He wasn't really paying attention when he entered, instead staring at the ground in thought. He closed the door behind him automatically. Just as he was about to climb into bed, John's unconscious form finally registered. His eyes narrowed at the ploy his older brother had just used. No, he wasn't ready for this yet. He moved back to the door to leave, only to discover it was locked. He pounded on the door. "Mycroft!" He didn't have the strength for a long temper tantrum, so gave up on it after a few seconds. He slid down the door, his head leaning against the door. Tired. So very tired. His eyes closed and he welcomed the slumber readily.

*Jesus.* Had he gone out to a bar? The pounding in his head and his dry mouth were slowly leading him to that conclusion. He lifted his left hand and ran it across his face. Oh. That was different. No
ring. He frowned and groaned, burying his face into the blanket below him when he realized that this wasn't his bed. Or Sherlock's, for that matter. "Shit." He sat up slowly and glanced around the room before freezing. That was Sherlock resting against the door, near comatose really. And looking worse for wear. His gaze swept the room and landed on a first-aid kit. Of course, Mycroft was always prepared. John moved from the bed slowly, grabbing the first-aid kit and situating himself in front of Sherlock as quietly as he could. He reached out and gently took Sherlock's hand, reaching into the first-aid kit and grabbing the cleaning agents. After glancing at Sherlock's face he slowly started to clean the wounds.

A groan escaped Sherlock's lips and he shifted slightly in his sleep. His body was in desperate need of sleep, so he didn't wake up. He had cuts and abrasions all over his knuckles from punching the wall, a circular indent on the palm of his hand from death grip on the engagement ring and his feet were all tore up from running violently for long periods of time in bare feet. His physical state wasn't the only thing hurting. The emotional and mental damage clearly showed on his slumped body, even in a state sleep.

John bandaged Sherlock's knuckles with ease before moving to care for the man's feet. The only thing he could really do was clean them and place gauze across the bottom, which is exactly what he did. He finished with a sigh before letting himself study Sherlock. Exhausted. Hurt. It was too much and he reached under Sherlock's arms to pull him up and against his own chest, laying Sherlock in the bed with a small grunt and pulling the blankets around his body. The drugs still running through his system suddenly convinced him that laying with Sherlock, pressing his chest against the warm body, was a good idea. He stumbled into the bed and draped an arm over Sherlock's waist before falling asleep again.

Several hours went by before Sherlock stirred again and finally woke up. His body was sore from the previous day's gauntlet run. When had he gotten in bed? Someone was curled against him? John? His eyes fluttered open and he shifted to look at the army doctor. He inspected the bandages on his hands and he couldn't help but glance at John's hand. Still no wedding band. He sighed, wiggled out of the grasp, and laid on his side as close to the edge of the bed as he could get. He had his back to John, one hand under the pillow and the other on top of it and gripping both sides tightly.

Movement on the bed and the sudden cold air where warmth had previously been made John groan and shift slightly on the bed. The drugs had mostly worn off and as he opened his eyes he froze. He had been cuddling with his fiancé with Sherlock. Not his fiancé. He had lost the privilege to call Sherlock that the moment he took his ring off. He sat up slowly, cradling his head in his hands, tilting his head fractionally to glance at the other man in the bed. Awake. His body wasn't relaxed enough to be asleep. Should he say something? Knowing Sherlock the words would be ignored. "Are your hands feeling better?" He asked feebly.

No movement or sound came from Sherlock to indicate he had heard John. He had heard the words but he didn't feel like talking to the other man right now. He had gone from wanting to fix things between him and the army doctor, to being a stubborn pouting child. Mycroft might have locked them in the same room but that didn't mean he had to cooperate and be an adult about things. He was tired of making adult decisions. Life had been simpler when he had a blatant disregard for others and only cared about himself and right now it was tempting to go back to that life.

Right. It turned out he was dealing with a child. John moved off the bed slowly, his legs shaking slightly as he wobbled toward the nearest wall. "Christ," he whispered as he pressed his forehead against the wall. The room was spinning and suddenly the contents of his stomach were churning. He swallowed hard before stumbling to the small trashcan near the door, vomiting with a small
whimper. He was going to kill Mycroft. After a small gag he fell back to rest his back against the bed breathing hard and trying to calm himself down.

Hearing John vomit made Sherlock frown. No. He wouldn't care. If the army doctor didn't care anymore, then why should he? Why should he be the one to put in all the effort? He was tired of trying to fix things. If John really cared then let him try to make things right for once. It was stupid and childish, he knew that. Frustrated with himself, he threw the pillow at the wall with a growl.

John lazily lifted his head in time to watch the pillow hit the wall, his eyes narrowing in frustration. This was ridiculous. They were both acting childish, to be honest, but at least in his drug-induced haze he had bandaged Sherlock and snuggled against him. "I asked you how your hands were doing," John rasped as he craned his neck to look at Sherlock.

"What do you care?" Sherlock grumbled, still refusing to look at John. His hands hurt a little but what really ached were his calf muscles and his feet. It was all the army doctor's fault. If the other man hadn't taken off the ring, they wouldn't be in this position. He sat up finally, his back still to John. He set his feet gingerly on the floor, eyes narrowed in thought.

"Because I'm a doctor, mostly," John snapped as he pushed himself up, slowly unbuttoning his shirt. "Don't walk on your feet just yet. You did quite a number on them." He tossed his button up shirt into the corner of the room, yanking his white undershirt over his head before moving to kneel in front of Sherlock. He tensed his arms and smoothly ripped his undershirt in half, lifting one of Sherlock's feet and removing the bandages, quickly placing his shirt against the bottom of his foot. "I cleaned the wounds but I'm a bit worried since it's the bottom of your foot. High traffic area."

Of course that would be the only reason John would care. "I'll do whatever I want. You lost the right to tell me what to do when…” His voice constricted, he couldn't finish the sentence. Even though John was now in front, he still refused to look at the army doctor. Like a fool, he stood up and almost immediately regretted it. He bit his bottom lip to prevent vocalizing the pain. He toughed it out, stubbornly standing, eyes closing tightly the only indication he was showing that his feet felt like they were on fire.

John looked up and read the pain that was clear just by Sherlock closing his eyes. "I know that, but I'm also a doctor," he growled as he stood up. "Sit. Back. Down. Now." He placed his hands gently on Sherlock's chest and moved him back to sit on the bed. "Please, it is going to help." He dropped back to his knees and removed the other bandage, placing the other half of his shirt on the open wounds. "I need to clean these again so stop moving."

"Stop telling me what to do! And quit touching me! Just get away!" Sherlock moved to brush past John, and that was even bigger mistake than standing. God, it hurt so much. He stumbled into the army doctor, unable to stand the searing pain of his feet. Grumbling, he tried to crawl away from the other man on his hands and knees.

John wrapped his arms around Sherlock instantly, tightening his embrace as he tried to crawl away. "Please listen to me," he whispered, closing his eyes for a long moment. "If only because I'm a doctor. You just need some medical care right now, Sherlock, and it's my job to give it to you."

The urge to turn his head and place a kiss on Sherlock's temple, his typical manner of soothing the consulting detective, was overwhelming and he had to dig his fingernails into Sherlock to stop himself.

"Let me go! I don't care if it's your damn job. Just leave me the hell alone!" Sherlock yelled, struggling to get out of John's grasp. Shit, fingernails in his skin. He tried to prevent himself from being aroused. With effort he restrained himself from squirming into the man below him.
Everything just kept getting worse, no thanks to himself. John wasn't trying either, so why should he?

"No. I am not letting you go. I love you, Sherlock, and I can't just let you walk around on your feet after you tore them apart, you git." John took a deep breath and pushed Sherlock back to rest against the side of the bed, moving swiftly to sit on Sherlock's shins with his back to the other man. "Don't move," he growled over his shoulder before yanking the first-aid kit near him and slowly starting to clean his wounds again.

Those words. Sherlock wanted to believe that what John had said was true, but if they were how could he have removed the ring? Thinking about that moment all over again, sucked the fight out of him. His head hung in defeat, as he still refused to look at the army doctor. After a moment of sulking, he finally raised his head to look John in the face. His voice was a hoarse whisper when he spoke. "Do you really love me?" John lifted his head for a moment and nodded.

"Of course I love you, Sherlock, I took off the ring but that doesn't mean I decided to stop loving you." He moved on to the second foot with a shrug. "It just means that I need some time to think about our future, about what you deserve." He paused and started bandaging the bottom of Sherlock's feet with practiced ease. "Which, right now, is somebody who is better than me." The admission made his body tense with pain, anger. Sherlock deserved so much better, not some soldier with a daughter on the way.

"Isn't what I 'deserve' my decision?" Sherlock hesitated a moment, but finally his hand reached out to gently caress John's chin. After a few strokes he let his hand drop back down. He really didn't know what to say or do now. The simple act of the army doctor removing the ring had been a crushing blow to him. What if his dad had talked John into this? The thought was irrational and suddenly he was angry all over again.

The hands on Sherlock's feet stilled instantly and he held the other man's gaze. How in the world had he been able to hurt him? What had been going through his mind? "In a way, yes." He licked his lips. "But when people are in love they tend to think irrationally. You can love me until the day you die, Sherlock, but that doesn't mean I'm ever going to be good enough for you." His throat constricted and he dropped his head.

"That's what my famther thinks. Did he put you up to this?" Sherlock managed to keep his tone even, despite the rage that had washed over him. Once more he lifted his head to look at John, his light eyes intense, as he stared searchingly into the army doctor's. He wasn't sure what he wanted the answer to be. Would it be easier or harder if this had all been Old Man's idea?

The conversation had been private and held in the airport as John had landed. He had easily brushed it off, declaring he loved Sherlock and that if Sherlock didn't want him than it was his decision, not his father's. But the fight...it had knocked everything into perspective. "Yes..." His gaze lifted to the consulting detective much like a child being reprimanded by his parents. "He said he didn't want you with a soldier, especially one as irresponsible as me."

"I'll kill him! I'll fucking kill him!" Sherlock struggled against John to get up. It didn't matter if the door was locked. He would kick it off its hinges and track the bastard down. He didn't care if his feet had endured enough abuse already, he would keep going until he was able to strangle the life out of the Colonel.

John jumped slightly before moving to straddle Sherlock's thighs, pinning the man down with a bit of force. "Calm down, Sherlock." He placed his hands on either side of Sherlock's face and pressed their forehead together. "Stop. He just put the idea there. Our fight...our first fight, it just made me think, alright? I thought you might deserve better after I upset you. It wasn't just him." His eyes
closed and his head dropped to Sherlock's shoulder, his arms wrapping around the other man tightly.

Sherlock returned the hug fiercely. "Please don't leave me. I don't think I could make it if you did." It was true. He had been on his way to the seedy hotel to go back to using drugs. While he didn't think he would do something as drastic or stupid as kill himself, it was entirely possible that he would retreat so far into drugs that he could accidentally overdose. "Please don't leave me," he repeated, not caring how desperate and scared he sounded. "I need you. I love you."

If John hadn't just emptied the contents of his stomach he would have kissed Sherlock but instead he just nodded, agreeing to everything Sherlock was saying. "No. Never." He pressed his nose against the hallow of Sherlock's neck. "I love you. I could never leave you." Despite this step forward, John knew this was far from over. They had so much to talk about, to figure out, that there was no way that they would be able to just drop this. "I'm sorry. Forgive me. Please, forgive me."

"I do. I'm sorry too." Sherlock continued to hold onto John tightly, refusing to let go for the moment. Well, that was something. Now what? Did they keep talking? Just snuggle for a bit? This was their first huge fight they had since being together. He wasn't sure what to do next, so he just continued to hug John quietly.
John sniffed against Sherlock's skin and smiled softly. "This is where couples normally have make-up sex," he whispered with a small chuckle, moving his head to place a soft kiss on Sherlock's temple. "But you are clearly exhausted and I just threw up because your brother had his men drug me." Another soft laugh as he lightly pressed his hips forward to press his obvious erection against Sherlock's stomach. "And I'm not kissing you because of that," he whispered into Sherlock's ear. "Don't take your clothes off," he whispered, nipping at Sherlock's ear with another rock of his hips. "Don't touch me," he whispered again.

Sherlock whimpered as John pressed into him. Usually he would fight for control but his body wasn't really in any shape to do so. Also, he still owed it the army doctor for one time of submission. His arms dropped to his sides in compliance. He wasn't sure what John had in mind but he was curious to find out. So, he sat there letting his fiancé do whatever he wanted.

John let out a breathy laugh into Sherlock's neck. "I mean don't touch my dick," he whispered. "Put your arms back around me." He hadn't done this since high school when he had been too worried about getting caught by teachers or his parents. Or military commanders, for that matter. It was possibly the messiest thing they could do but fucking Sherlock with his clothes on was one thing he had always wanted to do. His breath hitched as his hips pressed his erection against Sherlock's stomach in several rough thrusts.

Sherlock smirked slightly and wrapped his arms around John once more. His body twitched into John's, another whimper escaping his lips. This was certainly different but he was enjoying it. Did they really have to keep their clothes on? He wasn't sure if he had that kind of restraint. To keep his hands busy, he ran his finger tips along John's back lightly.

This wasn't going to work. Sure, John was getting enough friction for himself but he wanted to help Sherlock even if he was exhausted. "C'mere," he whispered, yanking Sherlock up on to the bed and shoving him toward the headboard. Out of courtesy he kicked his shoes off before climbing onto the bed and situating himself between Sherlock's legs with a grin. The friction of Sherlock's shirt against his bare chest made him moan loudly, his mouth instantly attaching to Sherlock's neck viciously. Quiet. He needed to stay quiet. The last thing he needed was Mycroft finding out. His hips started a slow rhythm, pressing down and sliding up in the most perfect way against Sherlock. His hands tangled in Sherlock's hair, pulling his head back softly to expose more of his neck.

Sherlock followed John's lead, and fell back onto the bed with a slight 'umph.' His eyes closed as soon as John began kissing his neck and didn't resist his head being moved. His arms once more came to wrap around the army doctor, fingers trailing along softly against his fiancé's back yet again. Another whimper was issued at the slow pace but he matched the rhythm set by the man on top of him. It occurred to him then why he had been bothered by the difference in his sexual acts with Jackson. He had been vocal then and he never really was. That seemed somehow wrong to Sherlock. He needed to fix it. Make things right. "Jesus John…please…I want you. Christ…don't make me beg…"

John tensed as he heard Sherlock speaking, his hips hitching at the sound of the man's voice in his ear. "Fuck," he growled, the words going straight to his cock. That voice was enough to deal with outside of intense and romantic situations but the way Sherlock spoke, the way he could feel Sherlock's voice against his own chest. "I don't have anything, Sherlock." His hips kept their slow rhythm and he wished desperately that he could kiss the man beneath him. He nipped at Sherlock's
neck in slight frustration. The thought of making Sherlock beg, of hearing him talk and moan and say his name, was enough to keep his hips in control.

"It doesn't matter. I'll be fine. Please?" Sherlock whispered, as he continued to match the pace John set. It was difficult and damn near maddening but he needed this. The slow rhythm, making noise, talking. God, he needed to make things right in his mind. Things needed to make sense and until he did this, he was certain he would never forgive himself. His finger tips continued to trail up and down gently. "John...this...you..." words failed him. "Please, oh God, John please?" He pleaded, suddenly not caring that he was begging.

God. After this John wasn't sure he would be able to sleep with Sherlock again without hearing the other man's voice. He moved one hand, forcing two fingers into Sherlock's mouth and pressing down on his tongue. "Lick," he commanded softly. They didn't have Vaseline but John could at least prepare Sherlock a little. It was the least he could do. His hips stopped as he moved his other hand to struggle with the button of Sherlock's pants. He lifted his gaze to Sherlock, biting his bottom lip. Fuck, he wanted this too, but he wasn't going to force Sherlock to do anything, or injure him for that matter. The fingers in Sherlock's mouth applied more pressure to his tongue and John placed a soft kiss on the bottom of Sherlock's jaw.

Sherlock obeyed and he licked the fingers that had been shoved into his mouth. He could feel John fumbling with his pants and for a moment he wanted to help the army doctor to expedite the process but once more he showed restraint. To keep his mind occupied, he focused on the fingers in mouth. He bit down on them ever so slightly. Soft. Slow. He wasn't going to ruin this. Self control. Just have will power, he kept telling himself mentally. With fingers in his mouth, he didn't bother trying to talk as it would probably just come out mumbled and incoherent. He settled for a soft moan. He was so used to everything being so fast and hard, this was all just about too much. It was so different but he was enjoying it, despite the fact that it was practically torture.

The small bite on his fingers made John moan, low and long, and he finally managed to get Sherlock's pants undone. He pulled his fingers from Sherlock's mouth and slowly removed Sherlock's pants, placing kisses on every inch of exposed skin of his right thigh. "You're wonderful," he whispered. "Beautiful. Fantastic." He managed to carefully pull the pants around the injured feet before maneuvering back up Sherlock's body. "Beg," he whispered against Sherlock's taut stomach, a smug grin on his face. The two fingers that had previously been in Sherlock's mouth slowly moved into his own, moving in and out slowly as his other hand pulled down Sherlock's underwear.

Sherlock's arms fell to either side of him, and tangled into the sheets below him as John placed the light kisses. "You are pretty damn wonderful yourself, my dear doctor." He tilted his head down to look at his fiancé as he sucked on his fingers. "Jesus, that's sexy." He murmured a faint smirk on his lips. He couldn't help but squirm as his underwear began sliding off; another moan came out, this one louder. He laid his head back on the pillow. "Please. I'll...I'll do anything you want. I need this. Need you. Please."

"Yes," John stated around his fingers, closing his eyes and resting his forehead just above Sherlock's belly button. He moaned, loud and certainly not holding back, the moment he heard Sherlock's own moan. Perfect. Why hadn't Sherlock been this loud before? His fingers slid from his mouth with a loud 'pop' and without warning he pressed one into Sherlock, up to his knuckle, and hooked it. At this rate, with Sherlock begging him beneath him and his eagerness, John didn't know how long he was actually going to prepare the man beneath him. "I love you," he whispered as he placed a soft kiss on Sherlock's right hip bone.

Sherlock arched his back, issuing another moan, louder still. His fingers curled even tighter, his
knuckles turning white. "Love you too," he whispered between thready breaths. His chest was rising and falling at irregular intervals now, but he mustered out some more words. "Feels so good John. Please, don't stop." His lower torso reacted to the kiss, writhing excitedly.

The encouragement, the obvious pleasure that Sherlock was feeling, was enough to give John confidence to slip a second finger in with a soft moan of his own. "I know." He smirked and turned his head to place a soft kiss on Sherlock's penis. "I've been in this position a few times," he whispered before kissing his penis again. His free hand moved sloppily to undo his own pants, his belt clicking loudly as he forced his pants down. Too much fabric. "Fuck," he growled, looking down and managing to get his underwear off as well. Both were kicked randomly somewhere in the room and his fingers slowly picked up the pace.

Once more, he moaned as another finger slid in. The grip on the sheets couldn't get any tighter, so he tangled them into his knuckles more so than they already were. Upon hearing John undoing his own pants, Sherlock panted out between breaths, "Yes. Please. So amazing. So good. Shit, John I love you." His body rocked in time with the pace the army doctor had set. Everything was feeling so amazing, he was certain it was going to get off just by having John's fingers inside of him.

John couldn't handle much more of this. It was too much and he wasn't even inside of Sherlock yet. "Do you think you're ready?" His voice was rough and low. This was going to hurt Sherlock at some point but John had the right of mind to spit into his free hand and run it across his cock. His own touch was enough for him to throw his head back and shout.

"Oh God yes. Please." Sherlock pleaded, his body bucking roughly now with anticipation and another moan of pleasure. This was all so wonderful. Why hadn't they tried this sooner? When John shouted, he tilted his head down to once more peer at his fiancé. He smirked a little. "Now you know how I feel every time you touch me." Even though he dropped his head back down, the smirk got even bigger.

As eager as John was, because Sherlock hadn't let him do this since Scotland, he knew he needed to take it slow. If he went as fast as his body wanted he would seriously hurt Sherlock. "You need to tell me if I need to stop," he whispered as he grabbed on of Sherlock's legs and lifted it to rest the calf on his own shoulder. For as loud as they were both being, he knew at some point Mycroft would hear. That was exactly what he wanted. He brought Sherlock's other leg to rest against his waist and moved forward on his knees before pressing against Sherlock's entrance with a moan. Slow. Steady. He pressed forward slightly and instantly had to stop himself. "Fuck," he dropped his head and hesitantly pushed in a little more.

Without resisting he allowed John to position his legs however the army doctor saw fit. The initial entry was painful but he ignored it by slamming his eyes shut. Everything else was feeling too good. "Don't st-stop" Sherlock stammered out between clenched teeth. "Please. Love you."

Pain. Sherlock had slammed his eyes shut and his jaw was tight. John should care but Sherlock was talking, telling him to not stop. Who would stop? One hand fell against the sheets, searching desperately for Sherlock's as he kept pushing in slowly. "Love you." The words came out quickly, ended in a moan, and then John froze. His hips were pressed against Sherlock. When had that happened? "Christ, you're wonderful." His free hand dropped to Sherlock's hips, holding it in place as he pulled back slowly and kept the same pace as he pushed in again.

One thing was sure, he wouldn't be walking straight for awhile. The Vaseline most assuredly made a difference. When Sherlock felt John's hand near his, he disentangled from the sheets and latched onto the army doctor's with a tight squeeze. He had already committed himself to endure through it though. Despite his tight and sporadic breathing, he spoke once more, his voice quiet and raspy.
"F-feels good. D-don't stop." He rocked in time with John's thrusts as another moan escaped him. His cock was hard and throbbing, he was certain he wouldn't last much longer.

Not hurting Sherlock had been his main goal but the fog of arousal in his mind was too much and his hips started a steady rhythm. Slow and soft. When Sherlock started moving beneath him, John moaned. At this rate he wondered how in the world Sherlock had stayed so quiet. "Shit." His hand moved lightly from Sherlock's hip to wrap around his cock. It worked in time with his own thrusts, his hand tight. He squeezed Sherlock's hand as a grunt escaped him and his eyes slammed shut. "Oh, God. God, Sherlock." Was he shouting? He didn't even know. The blood rushing through his ears was too loud.

The line between pain and pleasure was blurry at this point. Sherlock's body continued to rock in time with the set pace. "Jesus John," he panted out when he felt his fiancé grab his cock. His hand's grip tightened on the army doctor's. To his surprise several minutes and thrusts went by before his body finally tensed as he came, shouting John's name for the first time when climaxing. His body relaxed instantly after that, his breathing far too erratic to allow him to say anything at the moment.

Sherlock shouting made him tense, frozen as the man below him went limp. "Few more." His hips snapped forward roughly into the exhausted body below him before he came, shouting before collapsing on top of Sherlock with a groan. "Fuck." He pressed a light kiss to Sherlock's chest as he pulled out, grunting at the loss of warmth he'd just had. Perfect. That was...the best shag he had ever had. Period. "I love you. I love you." He flopped on to the bed beside Sherlock. Exhaustion made him relax into the overly soft mattress and he blushed when it creaked beneath his weight. Not only had they been making quite the racket, the bed noises were certainly a dead give away to their activities. He snuggled into Sherlock's side with a content smile. "How was that?"

"Never…realized…" Sherlock trailed off trying to catch his breath still. He swallowed heavily a few moments and tried speaking again. "That was amazing. We should do that more often." He snuggled into John's shoulder, trying to shift to a position that wasn't so sore for him to be in. On his side seem to work best, his arm across his fiancé's stomach. "I love you too. After that, I don't know if I will ever want rough sex again. You were fantastic." He tilted his head up slightly and gave a light kiss on John's cheek.

"You won't be saying that in a few hours," John whispered with a low chuckle. It had really felt wonderful and going by Sherlock's reaction, the other man had really enjoyed it, but there was no denying that he had hurt Sherlock a bit. He had been there. He knew. "You were wonderful." He wrapped an arm around Sherlock's torso protectively and placed a kiss in his hair. "Rest. I think you might need it after that."

A small smirk found its way to his lips. "Even if I wanted to I don't think I'll be doing much of anything for awhile. No wonder you always insist on the Vaseline." After sleeping, Sherlock shouldn't be tired but his body was still worn out from his long, ruthless, sprint. Of course, having sex was tiring as well. Even if the pace had been slow and steady. He snuggled into John more fully and let himself fall asleep.

John had opened his mouth to reply when he noticed Sherlock had fallen asleep. Good, he needed it. After the day they had Sherlock needed a good nap. He yawned and suddenly realized how tired he was, too. "You little git," he whispered against the top of Sherlock's head. "I love you." He kicked his feet and managed to get the spare blanket wrapped tightly around both of them before falling asleep as well.

After a couple hours of napping, Sherlock woke up. Good God, he was still sore. It had seemed like a good idea at the time. Well, it had been the best shag with John yet so the ramifications were
worth it. Moving really didn't appeal to him right now, so he remained snuggled into his fiancé, his fingers trailing lightly over the army doctor's chest and stomach.

The light fingers trailing on his skin made John's face scrunch, a small groan escaping his chest. "Wha'?" He buried his face into the top of Sherlock's hair with another groan. "M tryin' ta sleeef." The arm around Sherlock tightened and he yanked the blanket over both of their heads, sighing when he realized he probably wasn't going to get anymore sleep. "How do you feel?" He pulled back, looking at Sherlock owlishly in the sudden darkness under the blanket.

"Sorry, didn't mean to wake you." Sherlock shot his eyes upward to look at the blanket covering them both and smirked a little. "Sore but fine and worth it my dear doctor." He stopped his light trace and gave John a sideways hug. While laying there, he wondered if things would just go back to normal for them or if their relationship was forever altered. It had been a pretty bad fight. If things did change, would it be for the best or end up making things worse?

"I can practically hear you thinking," John muttered in a rough voice, melting into the embrace slightly before stretching with a wide yawn. "You don't regret that, do you?" He asked hesitantly, pulling the blanket away to get a breath of fresh air. Admittedly they had shagged in the truest form of make-up sex. True, it wasn't rough like most make-up sex but it had been slow, and honestly, it had been the most romantic they had ever been. "That was the best sex I've ever had, Sherlock. If you say you regret that I might have to cry."

"What? Oh no-no-no. No regret here. That was the most amazing thing we have ever done. I think… I've even thought of few new things to add to it next time. Hopefully make it even better than this last time." Even though that wasn't what Sherlock had been thinking before his fiancé spoke to him, he had indeed thought of some interesting ideas. Those books really had come in handy. He lifted his head to look up at John with a smirk and gleam in his eye. "You will just have to wait and find out though." The smirk got bigger.

John visibly relaxed and even managed a chuckle through the blush on his cheeks. "You mean I get to do that again?" He asked in mock surprise, eyes wide. "Oh, goodness, the great Sherlock Holmes is letting me shag him again?" He licked his lips and winced when he suddenly remember he had thrown up because of the medication. Just his luck, not being able to kiss Sherlock in such a romantic time. "How long do I have to wait, then?" The bed shifted as he glanced out the window. It was dark and his first day back in London was almost over. Six more days.

Sherlock smirked a bit more. "I think I could get used to it." He fell quiet for a moment as he became thoughtful. "Do you think I could try the new things out on you first? Then you can return the favor, if you wanted?" Once more, he tilted his head to look up at John his eyebrows raised slightly in question. Before tonight, he would have never asked and merely done so. There would still probably be times where he would want to be in control, rough and fast but not as often. Not after the incredible shag they had just had.

John contemplated the question, his mouth twisting to the side. "Yeah, I wouldn't see why not. I mean, you are the one who read up on them. Only fair that you get to try them first." He placed a kiss on the tip of Sherlock's nose. The thought of being in control a few more times caused a small shiver to run down his spine, a stupid grin tugging at his lips. "So, think Mycroft heard us?" He motioned his head toward the door but didn't tear his gaze away from Sherlock.

Sherlock nodded and then shrugged. "He probably did. Though he knows how we are, so he probably won't be surprised in the least." He paused in thought for a moment. "Mycroft said we'll have to slow down after your…" He trailed off and then amended his words "our…" Another moment of hesitation before he settled on, "…little Sandi is born. Do you really think so? Will it
matter when she is an infant? Children usually don't have memories before the age four."

It was a good question, he would admit. Definitely something John had considered himself. "I love
the nickname you have given her," he whispered softly before clearing his throat. Too emotional.
"I mean, it might a bit only because I'll probably be lacking in sleep a bit. And...with her in the
room we can't...y'know," he chuckled. Christ, this was awkward. "The couch will probably be our
new spot for a bit. Maybe the floor, the windows if you're feeling a bit daring." He licked his lips
and took a breath, opening his mouth slightly. "We'll figure it out."

Sherlock smiled softly and then went thoughtful again, after hearing John reply. No, he didn't
know why they couldn't do in the bedroom with Sandi sleeping there. Why did it matter if she
wouldn't remember anyway? He frowned a bit, it must be one of those social things he still didn't
understand. "John, I have no shame. Of course, I would be up for doing it against the windows.
The question is would you?" The smirk returned once more.

"Oh, no, of course not." John laughed loudly. The windows? Anybody could see. He had been
joking but Sherlock would take it seriously. "Not against the windows. No. Sorry, but no." He
shifted slightly on the bed, looking around the room before sliding off the mattress and away from
Sherlock's warmth with a bit of a frown. "I need to brush my teeth. I want to kiss you," he
muttered, opening a door and turning the light on when he discovered a bathroom. "Perfect." He
went inside and breathed a sigh of relief, quickly preparing a toothbrush before exiting the room
brushing his teeth. He just kept his eyes locked on Sherlock, standing proudly despite his lack of
clothing.

The smirk got bigger but quickly turned to frown when John got out of the bed. Ah. The frown
disappeared almost as quickly as it had appeared, as Sherlock watched John find a bathroom
attached to the room. "You know, if we'd taken the time to look beforehand we probably could
have found Vaseline in the bathroom as well. We'll have to remember that for the next when
Mycroft decides to kidnap us and lock us in a room together." That ever present smirk returned to
his lips.

"Ou vant-" John rolled his eyes and moved into the bathroom, rinsing his mouth out and shutting
the light off before jumping back on to the bed and straddling Sherlock's hips. "You wanted to go.
Right then. I didn't exactly have time nor did I really care." He bent at the waist and gently met
Sherlock's lips, sucking at his bottom lip softly. "Now you know what it's like when you get over
eager. And you aren't even going that slow." Another kiss, his tongue running across the top of
Sherlock's mouth.

Sherlock couldn't help but keep smirking. He was about to reply, but John's kiss distracted him like
it had done so many times before. He returned the kiss, eyes closing, as he reached out hand to pull
John back onto the bed by grabbing the other man's wrist and pulling gently. "I love you." He
murmured between kisses. They were light and soft, his tongue trailing along his fiancé's lips every
once in awhile. "Minty, you taste better than usual." He spoke once more, behind a kiss.

"Very funny." John nipped at Sherlock's bottom lip as he pressed himself against Sherlock with a
smile. "I haven't heard you complaining before," he muttered with a smug grin. While making love
to Sherlock was quite a wonderful experience, the Army doctor was fairly sure that his favorite
thing to do was kiss him. Right now was perfect. Slow and soft, lazy in their post-nap happiness. "I
love you, too," he whispered before letting his tongue explore Sherlock's mouth again.

Sherlock wrapped his arms around John, pulling the other man a bit closer with a hug. This was
nice. Slow and easy. Again, he couldn't fathom why they hadn't tried this sooner. Probably because
he had been an idiot and was always rushing things. His tongue explored John's mouth slowly,
going over every inch with care.

After a few minutes John had to pull away, taking a deep breath and pressing his forehead against Sherlock’s. "I love you." He moved in to kiss Sherlock again but jumped the moment he heard the doorknob turning. He ripped the blanket up, crawled underneath, and curled tightly against Sherlock’s side. Not good.

"I believe congratulations are in order." Mycroft opened the door and smiled at Sherlock tightly, flipping John’s silver band toward the bed.
Chapter 32

Chapter by audreytiphaine, Pantherlily

Leave it to Mycroft to ruin this perfect moment with John. Although seeing his fiancé dive under the covers out of modesty's sake was amusing. He caught the ring with a glare to his older brother. "Careful!" He growled and inspected the ring, to make sure it had been cleaned of his blood.

"Oh, it will be fine." Mycroft glanced at the large bump under the blankets against Sherlock's side. "Weren't very modest a few hours ago, Doctor Watson. Not really much to hide."

"Sod off, Mycroft!" John's voice was muffled against Sherlock's side. "That's his ring. I assume he will be putting that back on." His gaze lifted to his younger brother again.

A smirk found its way to his lips as he listened to Mycroft and John bicker. "No worries John, he is just jealous that Lestrade doesn't get him off like that." Sherlock smirked again, his gaze never leaving his older brother. He slid his hand under the covers and offered the ring back to John. His free hand ran lightly and comforting on his fiancé's shoulder blade.

Mycroft's lips pursed instantly and he shifted on his feet. He didn't really need to openly admit that, Sherlock could just read it.

John grabbed the ring eagerly, slipping it on his finger and leaning into Sherlock's hand with a snicker. His head peeked out of the blanket at an angle where only Sherlock could see him and smiled warmly. The touch on his shoulder blade caused his eyes flutter shut, a hand splaying across Sherlock's chest and resting over his heart. "There is extra dinner downstairs," Mycroft snapped before shutting the door.

"Maybe that will teach him not to talk to my fiancé like that." Sherlock watched his brother leave the room clearly flustered. He lifted the covers and slid under them to be face to face to John. "Now, where were we my dear doctor? Right about here, I think…" He trailed off and leaned into to kiss the army doctor on the lips lightly.

A small appreciative hum escaped John's chest as Sherlock kissed him. Without hesitation he returned it, tilting his head slightly to get a better angle of Sherlock's mouth. Kissing had never been so romantic or perfect but here was Sherlock, his fiancé, causing him to squirm against the warm body next to him. He exhaled loudly through his nose and let a hand tangle in Sherlock's hair.

Sherlock continued to kiss John, his tongue running lightly along the other man's lips before going to explore once more. His body automatically pressed into his fiancé's when he felt the squirming body on his. He wrapped both arms around the army doctor, to hug John closer still. He had found that their bodies could never be too close together. He scratched lightly on the bare skin, as he began breathing through his nose because he didn't want to break the kiss just yet.

The solidness of Sherlock's body against John calmed him instantly. His hands ran down Sherlock's back lightly and he let out a soft moan into the kiss. John decided in that moment that he could snog Sherlock for the rest of his life and die happy. The man was an unnaturally good kisser. It wasn't fair. He tugged at Sherlock's bottom lip with his teeth as he slowly pulled away from the kiss, panting and keeping his eyes closed.

As the kiss finally ended, Sherlock took a moment to catch his breath. Even in the dimness under
the covers he could still make out John's face and he smiled. It was hot and stuffy under the blanket now so he pulled it down enough for fresh air to circulate around them. One hand moved up to run through his fiancé's hair. "I missed doing this with you," he admitted quietly as he pressed their foreheads together. He smiled again and gave John a quick kiss on the nose.

John smiled widely, pressing his head up into Sherlock's hand. "I did too," he replied in a whisper. "Kissing you is, quite possibly, my favorite thing." His nose scrunched at the kiss and he playfully pressed his hand against Sherlock's stomach. This moment was perfect and could easily replace the rest of the day on his thoughts. Playful. He liked playful and happy Sherlock. "I love you."

"I love you too," Sherlock replied. He continued to run a hand through John's hair. He didn't want to leave the bed for the rest of the day. Judging from how dark it was outside, wasn't much left of it. When was the last time they had just laid together like this? The day he came home from the hospital after being poisoned? It seemed so long ago. "Can we stay like this for awhile?" His eyes closed in contentment and he hugged John once more.

"Yes, please." John smiled into Sherlock's chest and placed his ear over his fiancé's heart. The steady beat soothed him, reminded him that he was with Sherlock. "Marry me," he whispered softly. "I want to spend the rest of my life with you. I want to fall asleep in your arms every night and see you every morning when I wake up." He opened his eyes to glance up at Sherlock. "Marry me," he repeated softly.

"Of course I will marry you. Since you think you are going to be such a terrible father, someone's got show you how it's done." Sherlock smirked and gave John a light kiss on the lips. He then rested his chin on top of the army doctor's head. "I love you John Watson." He didn't care he had already professed his love a couple times tonight. With a slightly tight squeeze he hugged his fiancé once more.

At Sherlock's comment John could help but chuckle, looking up at him the best he could. "You are just as nervous as me, Sherlock. Sarah's been talking to me. She can tell." He ran his fingernails lightly down Sherlock's chest, smiling a bit. He rested his ear directly above Sherlock's heart. Hearing the other man declare his love, especially more than once in one day, made his heart swell. "I love you, too." He yawned and tilted his head, playfully running his tongue up the scar at the center of Sherlock's chest.

"If you're still tired take a nap my dear doctor," Sherlock said as he noted the yawn. The tongue on his chest made his body shiver in delight, even if it was on the faded scar. "We are doing the whipped cream thing while you are home." He lifted his head after speaking and gave the top of John's head another kiss.

"I don't want to sleep," John declared stubbornly, looking up at his fiancé. "I want to stay awake and spend as much time as possible with you." His head tilted and he placed an open mouthed kiss on Sherlock's chest, sucking slightly at the skin. A soft hum of agreement escaped his chest. He was tired. Exhausted, really. His thoughts were slow and his body barely had the energy to move, but sleeping meant being alone. Nightmares. No Sherlock. He couldn't just sleep when he was going to be gone in six days.

"You are clearly tired. You are always on me about taking care of myself. I will wake you in an hour. How does that sound?" Sherlock's body reacted to the kiss, and he snuggled into John even more. His fingers gently ran through his fiancé's hair and the nape of his neck to help him relax and hopefully sleep.

"Good," John whispered in reply, relaxing fully into Sherlock's body and letting his eyes fall shut. Just an hour. Then he would wake up to Sherlock next to him and they could start his second day
in London. After a few moments he finally fell asleep, his mouth open slightly as soft snores escaped him.

Sherlock smiled as he felt John relax into him. His fingers continued to lightly stroke the other man's head. It was hard to believe just yesterday they had gotten in the worst fight they had ever had since being together. Everything was fine now though. Would they get in fights like that often? He frowned at the thought. The only thing worthwhile about it had been the amazing make-up sex. Even still, he never wanted to get in another fight like that again with John. It had almost shattered everything they had shared together. He pushed those thoughts aside, trying to concentrate on the here and now. How wonderful it all was. An hour went by quicker than he thought it would and he shook his fiancé gently.

John's dreams had been happy, foggy around the edges, and the gentle shaking made him groan softly and take a sharp breath. An hour. It had been an hour and Sherlock's arm was around him. The idea to beg for another five minutes crossed his mind but he shook his head slightly and opened one eye to glance up at his fiancé. "Hey." He stretched, pressing toes against the top of Sherlock's feet and placing a quick kiss on Sherlock's jaw. "M hungry," he whispered.

"Mycroft said there were leftovers downstairs. Want to eat here or would you rather go out somewhere? Maybe Angelo's? I'm sure he will give us a candle to make it more romantic." Sherlock gave a slight smirk, as he recalled the first time he and John had gone there together. "I can text him ahead of time, so when we get there the food will be ready and you won't have to wait." He wasn't really hungry but he would nibble on something to appease his fiancé.

"That sounds fantastic," John stated as he rotated slightly in Sherlock's grasp in an attempt to locate his clothes. "Chicken Alfredo," he commented with a small smile. Romantic. The thought made him chuckle softly. They were the farthest thing from romantic. "And some wine, lots of wine." Getting drunk, trying to forget their fight the day before seemed like quite the plan.

Sherlock nodded and then remembered he didn't have his phone with him or his shoes. "We will need to go back to the flat first. My shoes and phone are there. Probably should clean up a bit as well, or at the very least change into some fresh clothes." Lots of wine? If that's what John wanted then he supposed there was no reason for him to object. Hmmm, maybe he would have drink as well then.

Oh. Right. Sherlock had run off and that's why they were here. "I should probably get a taxi...and carry you down the stairs. I don't really feel comfortable with you walking on your feet yet." He slipped his boxers on and climbed back on to the bed. "How do they feel?" One foot was lifted and he inspected the bandage with a small nod. No visible blood through the bandage, so better than yesterday.

Sherlock had forgotten about his banged up feet. He supposed since he had endured worse pain, that he had just stopped noticing it in his feet after awhile. He wiggled his toes experimentally. "I will be fine. I can manage going down some stairs." Stubborn pride. He didn't care if it would agitate his already tender feet or that he probably couldn't walk straight. The thought of being carried like some invalid did not sit well with him.

John glanced up with a raised brow, biting his bottom lip. "I'm not so sure," he muttered. "Which one hurts less? I can help you out, have you lean on me." He crawled up Sherlock's body, lightly meeting his lips, teasing his bottom lip slightly. "Let me help you. That is what I am here for." He nudged Sherlock's cheek with his nose before pulling away, straddling Sherlock's thighs with a proud grin on his face.

"Fine, I will use you for support but I don't want to be carried," Sherlock relented with a slight pout.
A smirk found its way to his lips though, as he eyed John straddling him. "You just like telling me what to do. You are a power hungry doctor and lover. Might have to show you who is boss later tonight." His smirk broadened, confident and cocky.

"Not tonight," John reminded him with a small shake of his head. "We are supposed to meet Sarah. I wanted to have her come to the flat." He rubbed the back of his neck nervously at the admission. "Thought I could make dinner for all of us. Also, this is our crappy telly night, Sherlock." A hand carded through Sherlock's hair with a warm smile on his face. "I just want a quiet night in. I want to fall asleep in your arms tonight." He gave Sherlock a chaste kiss as he moved off the bed. "Mostly because I am power hungry." The grin on his lips stretched to his ears, his hips wiggling slightly as he pulled his jeans on.

The pouting lip returned but Sherlock nodded in compliance. "Fine." He didn't like the thought of John and Sarah in the flat together. Grant it, he would be there too but it still irked him. He supposed it always would. It wasn't like he could beat her to a bloody pulp like John had done to Jackson. He sighed at his thoughts and swung his legs over the side of the bed to place his feet lightly on the floor to test how pressure sensitive they were. Still tender and painful but he wouldn't tell John that. His fiancé would only worry and insist on actually carrying him.

It was more than obvious that Sherlock was a bit unhappy with John's plan but he wanted to be polite and, honestly, he was excited. The butterflies in his stomach were going crazy at the thought of seeing the growth of his daughter in person. Daughter. His child. He would be able to feel her move, talk to her, have some sense of what a normal pregnancy was supposed to feel like. "Did you get to feel Amy move the last time you met with Sarah?" He asked softly. The glance in Sherlock's direction was nervous as he moved to his fiancé's side, biting his lip and tightly wrapping his arm around Sherlock to support him.

"Yes, it is still weird to me every time though. Little Sandi kicks a lot when I'm talking. I guess she likes my voice, or that's what Sarah says." Sherlock gave a slight shrug. With John's help, he stood up. He found his left foot was slightly more bearable, so he favored that side over the right. He glanced up to his fiancé, a small smirk on his lips. "In your expert opinion, doctor, how long until my feet heal?"

John felt his heart rate pick up at that. Active. Healthy. His daughter. "Of course she loves your voice, it's quite wonderful." He paused a bit in contemplation. "Wonder what it sounds like to her? Bit jumbled, I bet." He smiled and picked up Sherlock's slack as he stood. His feet were in horrid condition. He didn't even know how the other man was standing. "Maybe three days if you keep off them? I will take care of them the best I can." He used a foot to kick Sherlock's underwear up into his free hand, holding them toward Sherlock. "Going to be a bit tender for about two weeks so take care of them after I leave."

"Guess it's a good thing I got stuff done early, instead of waiting last minute then," Sherlock mumbled. "Oh, knowing Mycroft he will bug me into submission while you are gone. He is an annoying older brother like that. Mum says it's his job to look after me. I think he does it just to annoy me." He shrugged again. He had been so focused on his feet, he had forgotten he needed to redress. He plopped back onto the bed and put his clothes back on as carefully as could so the fabric wouldn't brush against his feet too much.

John smiled, eyes scanning the floor as he searched for his button up shirt. It had been shed far before they had decided to stop fighting. Once he found it and slipped it over his shoulders, he moved back over to Sherlock. With a confidence he had lacked in the beginning of their relationship he tangled his hand in Sherlock's hair and pulled his head up for a heated kiss. "It's because he loves you," a pause, "Also because I've asked him to." His lips turned in a mischievous
grin. "You get pictures of me on a weekly basis, right? The same goes for me. Mycroft wants to make sure I'm happy, too." He glanced at the door as he felt his stomach growl. Food. He was starving.

"I guess." The words were mumbled as he slid his trousers on. After Sherlock was properly clothed, he stood up once more. Yeah, staying off his feet for a few days sounded like a good idea. He ignored the pain and once more used John for support. "John, maybe we should have Angelo deliver us the food. I don't think…" He trailed off and then growled in frustration before going on. "...I don't think I will be able to make it…"

John looked at Sherlock and sighed. "I can carry you, Sherlock. I at least want to get you back to the flat. Nobody will see us. We are going straight into a taxi and straight out." His eyes studied the profile of his fiance, a small smile on his lips. "Let me help you, that's what husbands are for." A hand ran down Sherlock's spine in a soothing motion. "I'm strong enough."

It wasn't that Sherlock thought John wasn't strong enough. It was his pride. He shook his head. "I can make it outside, I just don't think I'll be able to go anywhere else the rest of the day." He also didn't want to hear his older brother make some snide come back at him, after his remark about Lestrade that had made his brother leave the room uncomfortably.

"Alright." John moved forward and kept his arm wrapped tightly around Sherlock's torso. Part of him understood. When he had been shot he was scared of people looking down on him, carrying him and viewing him as weak. It made sense. "It's alright. We've got this. I'm here to help." He stood up on his toes to kiss Sherlock's cheek. Being in love with Sherlock, John was slowly learning, was a lot of responsibility that he was...oddly looking forward to. The thought of having to wait another six months made his blood run cold for a moment and he stopped walking without realizing it.

Sherlock merely nodded in agreement as he concentrated on anything but the pain jabbing into his feet every time he took a step forward. They were about to head down the steps when John suddenly stopped, something he wasn't ready for. He jerked to a stop and with his free hand he gripped the railing so he wouldn't tumble down the stairs. That could have been bad, as they probably both would have fallen if he hadn't stopped his tumbling forward motion. "You okay my dear doctor?" He turned his head to look at his fiance, his lips creased slightly in worry. The words were stuck in his throat and John opened his mouth several times before he smiled tightly and nodded. Fuck. He couldn't keep thinking like that. If he kept his mind on the positive then he was able to focus, to keep his head clear, and remind himself that he would return home. That he wouldn't get shot. Or worse. "Fine. It's fine." He tightened his arm around Sherlock and helped him down the steps the best he could. "D'you want me to ask Mycroft if he has any...I don't know, slippers or something?" His voice was rough and tight.

With a critical eye, Sherlock stared at John for a moment. He then shook his head at the question. "No. It is fine." He mimicked the words back to his fiance. He didn't think slippers would help anyway. Either way there would be some kind of friction against his feet. So, to him there was no point in asking to begin with.

"Mycroft got us a bloody car. Of course he did." John looked up at his fiance with a grin as the door to the black car door opened. "Sometimes your brother scares me," he muttered out of the side of his mouth as he pulled Sherlock into the car with him. He pulled away from Sherlock right away and pressed himself against the window. His thoughts were over-taking any rational moment he was having and he wanted to be by himself.

Sherlock wasn't surprised there was a car waiting for them outside. In fact, he had been expecting
it. He smirked a bit at John's words and climbed into the car carefully. It was nice to sit down, to get off his feet finally. Walking from the bedroom to the car had been excruciating and the relief was more than welcomed. He turned to watch his fiancé with a thoughtful frown, wondering what was bothering him. He reached over and took John's hand and gave it reassuring squeeze, hoping that would help ease whatever was clearly troubling the army doctor.

John returned the squeeze without a second thought but didn't turn to face Sherlock. He couldn't. Looking at the other man would only upset him more. Maybe it had been a bad idea to come back to London for a week, showing him something he had to wait another six months for and holding it over his head. Hopefully, if he didn't get shot first. "Do you ever get scared?" He whispered with another squeeze to Sherlock's hand.

Sherlock raised his eyebrows at the question in surprise and then frowned in thought. Should he answer truthfully or lie? He knew where this conversation was heading. He remained in quiet reflection a moment before finally replying. "Well...yeah...I have pretty much thought of every scenario of what might happen to you while you are over there. Sometimes knowing everything isn't what it's cracked up to be." He had opted for truth, though regretted it because the words weren't exactly comforting.

John visibly tensed and slammed his eyes shut. "I'm sorry," he whispered as pulled away from the window and curled against Sherlock instead. "Two weeks ago we were on patrol at night and we were getting shot at. Hollman got hit..." His voice trailed off and he took a shaky breath. "And he was right next to me and all I could think about was how close it was to me." He kept his eyes shut. After this he wasn't going to be able to face Sherlock. "It hit him square in the head, Sherlock. One moment he was there and the next...blood. Everywhere..." And John trying desperately to save his best friend. "It was almost me."

Sherlock let go of John's hand and wrapped it around his fiancé's shoulder, to draw him into a sideways hug. Hollman...had that been the fellow that had lead him to the tunnel entrance? While he had been there, he hadn't really taken the time to know any of John's company. This wasn't a story he wanted to hear. Knowing how close it had been for the army doctor. However, John clearly needed to talk about it, so he tried not to dwell on all things that could have happened instead. He wasn't really sure what to say, so he reached his other hand across his lap and squeezed his fiancé's hand once more.

"And I didn't tell you because I didn't want to worry you." John opened his eyes, wide and scared, to look up at Sherlock. "But I cried for the first time on a tour and yelled at my company." His eyes moved again, locked on Sherlock's leg. "We Skyped that night and you asked what was wrong and I just lied. I'm horrible." His neck stretched and he placed a kiss on the underside of Sherlock's jaw.

"No you aren't." They had both kept things from each other to try and protect the other. For instance, Sherlock still hadn't told John about Moriarty's network trying to get to him. Mycroft's people had a vast majority already rounded up. Hopefully all loose ends would be tied up by the time his fiancé came back home. He kissed the top of John's head and snuggled closer into his fiancé. He let his head drop onto the army doctor's shoulder.

The car slid to a stop and John moved fractionally. "I love you." He gave Sherlock's hand one last squeeze before getting out of the car and helping Sherlock to his own feet. Being outside, being in London, brought a small smile to his face. "C'mon, I'm hungry." He tugged Sherlock toward the front door of 221B.

"I love you too." Sherlock let John help him out of the car. He followed John inside and up the stairs. He moved to the couch and slumped into it immediately, closing his eyes against the
throbbing pain in his feet. "If you bring me my phone, I'll text Angelo. It's in the bedroom." Usually he requested things be brought to him because he was too busy thinking but this time it had been because he didn't want to be on his feet any longer than he had to.

John went without question, grabbing Sherlock's phone and bringing it back. With a look toward Sherlock's feet he moved back into the bathroom. "Chicken Alfredo," he reminded Sherlock as he rummaged through the cabinets. Pain pills. Where has those been relocated to? It took him several tries but he finally found them, pouring some into his hand and getting a glass of water. "Here, take these." He placed the pills in Sherlock's hand and gave him the water.

Sherlock sent a quick text and then let the phone fall into his lap, as he leaned his head against the couch. Usually he would argue against taking pain medication but right now it seemed like a fabulous idea. So, without protesting he swallowed the pills with a gulp of water. Hopefully they would work quickly because the pain was more intense than he was letting on. He didn't want John worrying over him.

John managed a tight smile as Sherlock took the medication, taking the cup of water and moving into the kitchen. He needed to keep moving. If he sat down and relaxed he would just start thinking again. That couldn't happen. He moved to the center of the living room, rigid with his hands tensing at his sides. Laptop. Blog, maybe? That would distract him.

Sherlock watched John with a worried frown. He just didn't know what to say or do to help calm his fiancé down. How could he take away a fear that he, himself, had on a regular basis? He wanted to get up and give the army doctor a hug but his feet were still throbbing from coming up the stairs. He didn't think he would get very far without stumbling. John had enough going on in his mind to worry about him. So, he stayed on the couch. He closed his eyes again, as he continued to try and think of a way to make his fiancé feel better.

While the cleaning of the flat had been nice, and John really did appreciate it, he hated how difficult it was to find anything. Where had his laptop been moved to? With an agitated sigh he fell on to the couch next to Sherlock and flipped the telly on, not even bothering to change the channel as he curled into Sherlock's side. Watching telly was a mindless activity. That was something he needed right now. "Did she cheat on him?" He asked softly as the crowd on the channel started to shout and boo at the woman who appeared on the screen.

If Sherlock had been paying attention, he would have pointed out where the laptop was. However, he was lost in his own thoughts until John snuggled into him. He snuggled back, an arm resting around his fiancé's shoulders. He turned his attention to the program on the telly at the army doctor's question. "No. She was planning a surprise birthday for her husband, which was why she was spending so much time with the brother." He shrugged a bit, wondering how John could possibly find this drivel entertaining.

John turned the channel with a violent push on the remote, only moving to suddenly acknowledge Mrs. Hudson's presence as she brought their food up. "Thank you." He stood slowly and placed a kiss on her cheek as he took the bag. The tension in the room was strong and she left. "Do you want to eat now or wait?" His stomach growled. He needed to eat and slowly start to figure out what he was going to make for dinner. What could Sarah even eat?

Sherlock couldn't help but wonder if they were spiraling into another fight so soon, as he watched John change the channel. He gave Mrs. Hudson the faintest of smiles when she brought their food up. "We can eat now," he answered cautiously. He wasn't sure if his fiancé was upset with him, the conversation in the car, or something else entirely. Usually, he was good about reading people but he found himself lost as he tried to decipher John's body language and words.
Sherlock's voice made John relax slightly. Nervous. Sherlock was...being cautious. With good reason. He was snappy, tense, and wasn't really telling his fiancé why. "Sorry," he whispered as he moved back to the couch with the bag, setting it on the coffee table gently before meeting Sherlock's lips in a tender kiss. "I'm just stressed. You are fine." He smiled softly and turned to open the food, giving Sherlock his carry-out tray and a plastic fork. He dug into his Chicken Alfredo without a second thought.

Stressed would be an understatement, but Sherlock kept that to himself. He hadn't been very hungry to begin with and now even less so with it in front of him. He wasn't sure what he had ordered, because he had told Angelo to just fix him a random appetizer of the restaurant owner's choosing. It appeared to be fried calamari. He ate a few pieces and then glanced over to John. Maybe if he changed the subject. "I have a surprise for you. Well, sort of. I talked it over with Mum and she loves the idea. Mycroft said it was 'cute.'" He rolled his eyes at the recollection. "It's about what song to dance to at the wedding, since my mother insists upon it. You said you liked my violin songs and I like mostly classical anyway..." He trailed off for a moment "...I wrote a song and had it recorded. A simple piece really. If my feet weren't so tore up, I would teach you to dance while you were home but I guess it can wait until you are home for good. If that's okay with you, of course?" Being timid wasn't his style by any means but he wasn't sure how John would react at all and he wanted to avoid another fight if at possible.

John swallowed his large mouthful of food and turned to Sherlock, blue eyes wide and his lips curled slightly at the end. Who knew that Sherlock Holmes could be so bloody adorable? He pushed down the fear of dancing, especially in front of people, and just stared at his fiancé in awe. "T-That's fine." He dropped his fork for a moment and ran a hand through his hair. "Perfect, actually. Amazing." He chuckled and leaned forward to place a kiss on Sherlock's cheek. "I'm not a very good dancer, though. Two left feet." He grinned and pushed his food aside and meet Sherlock's lips eagerly, pulling away the moment he realized the other man tasted like calamari. His tongue hung out of his open mouth as he shook his head. "Ah, gross," he whispered, opening one eye. "Never again. Gross."

"Well, I can teach you. I only know how to ball room dance but the piece I wrote has the same tempo, so it should still be doable." Sherlock finished with a shrug of his shoulders. He couldn't help but smirk at John's reaction after getting kissed on the lips. "I take it you aren't a fan of squid? It isn't bad, a bit chewy but I still enjoy it." At least his fiancé seemed to be in a better mood, which had been his goal in the first place.

"Disgusting," John muttered, taking a large and messy bite of his own meal to get rid of the taste. "Why would you ever consider putting something like that in your mouth?" He glanced at Sherlock and licked his lips with a small shrug. "As for the dancing," he muted the telly, "I literally cannot dance. You can teach me multiple times and I will still step on your feet." He stood up and moved to the fridge, opening it and smiling when he discovered beer. Mrs. Hudson was a saint. "I guess I will just make you look really good during the dance." He opened it and took several long gulps as he fell back on the couch beside Sherlock.

"You know, the taste of food has never really registered. I only eat because it's necessary, but really I will eat anything." Sherlock gave another small shrug. "Dancing isn't hard. I could go into all the technical details now but it is pretty boring stuff. It will just be easier to show you then try to
explain it." He ate a few more pieces of food, before setting the carry-out box aside. He had at least gotten through a little over half of the calamari.

John glanced over at Sherlock with a small chuckle. "You are trying to tell me you can't taste that?" He pointed an accusing finger at Sherlock's food. It was bloody squid. "Well, with that new information, any input on what I should make for dinner? I was thinking some turkey. Mrs. Hudson even got Sarah some nice tea. Probably to soothe her stomach." Because his child was restless. A month away from being brought into the world. Without him. He tensed and grabbed his food, taking several large bites before finishing his beer.

Yet another shrug was given. "The texture is weird but the taste is fine." Sherlock thought a moment regarding dinner. "I don't know. Don't women get weird cravings when pregnant? Like pickles and ice cream?" He had read that in one of his books. Really, he didn't want to partake in the dinner. Maybe he could use his sore feet as an excuse to turn in early and after eating once today already he wouldn't be hungry later anyway.

John had to bite his lip at Sherlock's statement. "I know they do but I really don't know what her weird eating habits are. I haven't exactly been here." He relaxed against Sherlock's side. Guilt flooded his system. He should be there for his child and her mother and here he was fighting a war and marrying a bloke. He surely wouldn't win father of the year. "Have you asked her about what she likes to eat?"

"What? No, why would I?" Sherlock was honestly confused on why he should have asked such a question. John had asked him to be civil, and in his own mind he had been. He would politely listen while she talked about things he mostly didn't care about and would say something in turn when the conversation would dictate to do so. He even did ridiculous things like talk to the baby and feel it kick when it was activate. He still didn't understand why people did those things, and even the books he was reading didn't really explain it. He supposed it was one of those ordinary things he had just failed to grasp.

"I don't know, I just figured it might have come up in one of your conversations. Turkey should be good, I think. All we have." John looked up at his fiancé and crinkled his nose slightly. "I'm so excited to feel her move," he whispered with some awe. "I think you might need to talk if she really likes your voice." He gently kissed Sherlock's cheek, a hand moving to run lightly up and down Sherlock's arm.

Well, there went his idea for trying to avoid the dinner. Or maybe he could just stick around for a little bit and then go to his room to be alone. Sherlock shoved the disparaging thoughts aside and tried to focus on something else. He suddenly remembered the experiments at the office and how they would all be ruined from not being checked up upon in the correct time frame. He would just have to do them all over again he supposed.

The silence from his current pillow made John shift uncomfortably. "You're upset," he muttered. It was difficult to read Sherlock but his resounding lack of communication was a clear signal that he was upset. "Do you not want her to come over? Is that why you've stopped talking?"

Being spoken to jolted Sherlock out of his thoughts and he turned to look at his fiancé. "Oh. Sorry. I just remembered all my experiments at the office are ruined and I'll have to redo them." It was mostly the truth. Maybe John wouldn't notice that he hadn't answered the first question at all.

John bit his bottom lip and frowned. The thought of pulling away from Sherlock was strong and moved to do so until he realized he didn't want to start another fight. "Right," he replied as he closed his eyes. Not even worth talking to him anymore. It was pointless if Sherlock wouldn't answer his questions or even pay attention. "I guess you don't have to be here tonight if you don't
want to. I can always help you to bed."

At times Sherlock could be a selfish child and now was definitely one of those times. "Yes, that would probably be for the best." He gave a slight nod after speaking. Even now, the thought of John and Sarah sharing company in the same room bothered him. He didn't want to be there first hand to have to witness it. All it would do was feed his jealous rage.

"Fine," John snapped back. He wanted Sherlock there. It was an important moment in his life. Why couldn't his fiancé suck it up and be there to witness it? He gave an agitated sigh and pulled away from Sherlock to grab their meals. "She should be here in about two hours," he whispered as he moved into the kitchen. "So I guess you can run off and hide."

"Would you rather I lie to you, like you did during that Skype call?" It was a low blow, and Sherlock knew it. He regretted the words as soon as they left his mouth. This was just going to start another fight. It was all they seemed to do since John had gotten home. He hated it. Things should be happy and perfect but it just never worked out that way. He supposed he was to blame for that mostly. If anyone deserved someone better it was his fiancé. Great, now he was the one having second thoughts. He closed his eyes tightly as if that action alone would block out his thoughts.

John froze, his back to Sherlock as he crushed the carry-out boxes in his hands. So many words wanted to pour out of his mouth and after a long moment he threw the food on the ground, whipping around to face his fiancé. "That was different and you know it," he stated through clenched teeth, a finger pointed at Sherlock. "I didn't want to worry you!"

The response could have been worse, Sherlock supposed. His eyes remained stubbornly closed. He couldn't look at John right now. It wasn't like he could go anywhere either, to escape. He didn't want to continue this fight. He muttered an apology, stretched out on the couch and flipped over so his back was to his fiancé. It was reminiscent of the day he had told John he had used all his jam for an experiment and the other man had gone to the store only to be shot. His fault. Everything was always his fault. He just couldn't get anything right, no matter how hard he tried. He should have stayed alone, protected.

Of course. Sherlock would completely ignore the situation. "Fuck you," he whispered as he yanked his Army coat from the rack and roughly pulled it over his shoulders. "I'm going out. I need some air." The door squeaked on its hinges as he ripped it open, stomping his feet on every stair as he left. The final door to the flat slammed as he made his way on to the street.

Right then. He did just keep making things worse. Damn it. Sherlock didn't want a repeat of the last fight. He rolled off the couch and ignored the pain that flooded his senses as he walked to the stairs. He descended them slower than he would like, but the throbbing sensation prevented any real speed. He gripped the railing tightly for support and managed to make it to the bottom without stumbling. He shoved the front door open roughly and looked around to see if John was still in the area. Hamish came out of nowhere and jumped on his shoulder. It drove the consulting detective to his knees, because he wasn't ready for the extra weight and his feet couldn't handle the pressure anymore.

Sarah had been planning on surprising Sherlock and John a few hours early. Mostly because she was exhausted and ready for bed. She wasn't sure if she could make it to dinner. As she approached the flat she noticed Sherlock and picked up her speed the best she could, one hand resting protectively over her stomach while the other rested on her lower back. "Sherlock! Are you alright?" She looked down at him worriedly.

Bloody fantastic. Sherlock had come out here looking for John and instead Sarah was in front of him. "I'm fine, I just dropped something." He lied without even bother to look at her, pretending
instead to study the pavement from some lost object or other. "John isn't here. You just missed him." He didn't want to get up and have to show his weakness to the woman near him.

Sarah bit her bottom lip and pulled some hair behind her ear. "Oh." She glanced into the flat. "Do you mind if I come in?" The hand on her stomach moved slightly and she winced. "I'm a bit tired. I just need to rest." When she realized that Sherlock had yet to actually stand up she took a step closer to him. "Are you sure you are alright?"

"Yes. Go ahead inside and I will be up in a minute." Now Sherlock would be forced to spend time with Sarah. The thought definitely didn't help to improve his already sour mood. He continued to stare at the concrete below him. Hamish meowed loudly in his ear. "Not now," he growled at the cat. It bit his ear in response. He rolled his eyes at the cat and was half tempted to pick the animal up and throw it out into oncoming traffic. It would be better than shoving Sarah into it. He sighed at his suddenly dark thoughts.

Sarah gave Sherlock one last look before brushing past him and heading slowly up the stairs. The moment she got into the flat she moved to sit in John's chair, both hands on her stomach and her eyes closed tightly. She had considered asking Sherlock if being this uncomfortable a month from birth was normal. He was a genius, he would probably know. Except his icy disposition was giving her second thoughts and she settled on toughing it out. Amy would be in her arms in a month and it would be worth it. She waited patiently for Sherlock to come upstairs.

Sherlock stood up once Sarah was up the stairs. He had to remove Hamish from his shoulder, so weight wouldn't be distributed awkwardly on his feet. It wouldn't matter usually, but he could feel his feet bleeding again. He had reopened the wounds. He made his way up as carefully as he could and then forced himself the rest of the way to the couch, even though he really just wanted to drop to the floor once inside the door. Be civil, something he always reminded himself of when with Sarah. "Is everything all right?" She had come early and he wasn't sure why. "Is everything okay with little Sandi?" The hands on her stomach hadn't been missed. His cell phone was still on the couch. Did John have his? He sent a text.

Sarah is here. You should come back. - SH

He hesitated then sent another text.

I'm sorry. -SH

"I told John you were here. Perhaps he will be home soon."

John pulled his phone slowly out of his pocket, downing his third shot since arriving at the pub. He should have opened the text but Sherlock's name stopped him instantly and he shoved the phone in his pocket as he started on his first beer.

Sarah opened her eyes slightly, taking a deep breath and nodding. "She is fine, I think. Been moving a lot. It's..." She let out a small shout of pain and laughed slightly. Sherlock's voice. Even across the room Amy could hear it. "Just hurts a bit right now." She blew a loud breath from her mouth. John. Maybe he would know. Hell, she should know too. They were both doctors, but she couldn't find any medical reason for the pain. "Where did John go?"

Alarmed, Sherlock studied Sarah carefully. John had already lost a baby once, and he could only imagine what it would do to his fiancé a second time especially so close to the due date. "We should get you to the hospital and have you checked out." While relying on instincts wasn't his thing he knew motherly instincts were usually uncannily accurate. If Sarah thought something was wrong there probably was. "John went out. I'll text him when we are at the hospital instead. Come
on." Despite his aching, bleeding feet he stood up, hobbled to his room and forced shoes on his feet. He sent a text to Mycroft.

*Please locate John. Taking Sarah to the hospital. Possible complications with the baby.* -SH

Sherlock was worried. *Genuinely* worried.

Sarah knew that the only reason he met with her on a biweekly basis was to appease John. He didn't talk much and listened to her with a far off look in his eyes. She did appreciate it though. Meeting with him was nice. It was like having somebody there, a bit like a normal pregnancy. Another cramp to her stomach and she decided Sherlock was probably right. She stood slowly and swallowed hard, taking a deep breath. "Calm down, Amy," she whispered as she ran a hand in small circles over her stomach. "Shhh, calm down." The pain seemed to subside a bit and she let out a sigh of relief, glancing back toward Sherlock's room.

*Drunk. Pub down the street. Probably don't want him at the hospital in this state.* -MH

Despite the text Mycroft had parked his car outside the pub just in case. John had managed to down another three shots and finish two beers by the time he had received Sherlock's text.

Drunk at the pub when he was supposed to be making dinner in couple hours? Well, obviously John wouldn't be now but Sherlock seriously didn't understand some of the choices his fiancé made sometimes. He vented his frustration to his brother through another text message.

*Boody brilliant. Just keep an eye on him then. I will keep you updated.* –SH

Having shoes on made the pain worse, despite the pills he had taken earlier. He hobbled out of his room managing not to grimace at the torture he was putting his feet through. He let Sarah go first and then followed her down the stairs carefully. He wasn't surprised there was a black car waiting for them outside the flat. How many cars did his brother have with drivers willing to go wherever? Whatever. Now was not the time to worry about such things. As Sherlock slid in the car, he eyed Sarah worriedly. "How are you feeling?"

Sarah couldn't help it and the moment Sherlock sat down she leaned against Sherlock. "Nervous," she replied, a hand darting out and tightly gripping Sherlock's thigh. Pain shot through her again and she failed to stifle a gasp. It was getting worse. At least when she had walked to the flat she had been able to stand and hide the pain. Now she wasn't sure she was going to be able to stand up. "Sherlock, I'm scared," her voice was shaky and she looked up at him with wide eyes.

*Hospital room and doctor waiting for Sarah. Thank you.* -MH

Usually, Sherlock would brush someone off from physical contact like that but he suffered through another discomfort as Sarah clung to him. He even attempted to comfort her, by placing his hand on top hers. With his other hand he pulled out his cell to read the text from his brother and sent one back using only his thumb to type but still did so in a quick fashion.

*It doesn't look good. She is in a lot of pain.* –SH

"Everything will be fine," he told her. Even now though, he was going through every book he had read about women, pregnancy and babies. Sherlock had read enough books on the subject he could probably write his own book on the material. As the car came to a stop, he helped Sarah out and into the waiting wheel chair. "I think she may have preeclampsia," he told the doctor. Something that would need to be attended to immediately. If untreated it could kill both the mother and child. If he was right, they would have to induce labor or do a C-section to get the baby out. It would be
the only way to save both, assuming either could be saved. Maybe he was wrong. He hoped he was, after all he wasn't a doctor. He could really use a cigarette but instead he slumped into a hospital chair in the waiting room.
The nurse wheeled Sarah away quickly, her eyes closed and head lowered as she tried to calm herself down. She had vaguely heard what Sherlock had said and tensed. She knew that medical term. Not good. Very not good. Sarah relaxed in the bed the best she could, letting the doctor poke and prod her until he gave a relieved smile.

"It's your gallbladder," he whispered softly. Sarah only relaxed marginally. "Just gallbladder disease, Sarah. Very common during pregnancy. Unfortunately we can't operate because of little Amy but we can give you some medication." She tensed. "That won't hurt her at all, that will help you stay out of pain until her birth. We can operate a few weeks after she is born. We want to keep you over night to make sure everything else is running smoothly."

Sarah nodded in agreement and smiled. Safe. Amy was safe.

_Stay with her? Don't just sit in that waiting room, you git. Be the man that John isn't. _-MH

Bah. Sherlock read the text and then endured more pain as he stood up and found his way over the nurse's station. He was given the room number and he gave a slight knock on the door before entering. She wasn't being rushed to surgery or anything so that was good sign. Must of have been wrong. Usually being wrong would not sit well with him, but in this instant he was relieved. He stood there in the door quietly and awkwardly for a moment and then cleared his throat. "Do you want me stay?" Please say no. Shouldn't her family be here? Not him? "Is there anyone you want me to contact for you?" He leaned against the door frame, ignoring the blistering pain his feet were radiating.

Sarah looked up at Sherlock with a soft smile. "I don't have any family," she whispered with a small laugh, a hand resting on her swollen belly. "Just little Amy here. I'm fine, Sherlock. You are more than welcome to leave." She pulled some hair behind her ear and blushed. "Thank you." Her eyes moved to lock on him. "For everything. Thank you. You're going to be a great parent to Amy." After a sigh she let herself relax and closed her eyes.

John had stumbled out of the pub, overlooking the black car in his haste to call Sherlock. He needed to talk to him. Needed him. He sloppily leaned against a phone booth and after a few mistakes, managed to find Sherlock in his contacts. He didn't even wait for Sherlock to start talking. "Hi," a small hiccup. "Sherlo' I think..." He closed his eyes and giggled softly. "Phone booth," he muttered and let his head fall. "Love you."

No wonder the woman kept coming over to his flat and talking about everything. Sherlock was about to say something to Sarah when his cell phone went off. It was John. He excused himself politely and walked away from the room. "John. You are drunk. I don't have time for your foolishness right now. I'm at the hospital." He was hoping to shock his fiancé into sobriety. He sat down in the waiting room because his feet were killing him. It would probably take much longer for his feet to heal at this rate. He sighed and shoved his own misery aside for now.

"Hospital?" John's eyebrows knitted together and he pushed away from the phone booth as he stumbled toward the black car. Mycroft...right? Always Mycroft. "Are y-you okay?" His words were starting to slur together and he was grateful that the door to the car opened. He fell into the seat without a second thought, looking up at the warm body he was leaning on. "Mycrof!" He smiled and didn't move, enjoying the warmth Mycroft provided against his bright red cheeks. "S
okay, Sherlock, brother." He ended the call and let his eyes fall shut.

You would think he could hold his alcohol. -MH

Mycroft gently pushed at John's form and grimaced when the soldier was heavier than he looked. Wonderful. The car stopped in front of the hospital and John only stirred slightly.

Outside. Want to take him back to the flat? –MH

With a sigh Sherlock hung up the phone and then glanced at it as a text came through. He shook his head to himself. How was it he got accused of being a child so often and yet John did things like these? Another text came through and this time he replied.

Everything seems to be okay. She doesn't have family, so I should stay? Someone should be here just in case... Just take John home and let him sleep it off. –SH

Home seemed like a better option to Sherlock but if something went awry there should be someone here. He really needed that cigarette right about now. However, he didn't think his feet could take any more pressure than what they had been through. He shoved the phone in his pocket, rested his head against the wall and closed his eyes. He let sleep overtake him because then he wouldn't have to think about anything. Not Sarah, John, little Sandi, his feet, nothing. He needed to escape to a land of oblivion and bliss.

Mycroft didn't need to be told twice and had the car take John back to the flat. He helped the man up into Sherlock's bed, kept him on his side, and left with a look of disgust.

It didn't take long for a doctor to come out, kneeling down beside Sherlock's sleeping form and studying him. "Mr. Holmes?" He didn't touch the other man, merely raised his voice a bit. "Mr. Holmes, Sarah has requested your company. If you would like, she'll explain." He had a wry smile on his lips. "She's clear now and asking about... John?" He tilted his head a bit before standing. "Same room, Sir."

So close to being lost in slumber. Someone speaking his name brought Sherlock back to full wakefulness. Of course. Why should he get any kind of respite after the last couple days? He shuffled to his feet with a hiss of pain and then limped back to the room, ignoring the doctor's request of, if he was all right. He made it to the room and collapsed into the chair it offered immediately. These shoes were stifling and he kicked them with a groan. Slightly better but not much. He glanced up to Sarah, trying to mask the pain with a small smile.

"You're in some pain." Sarah smiled a bit and nodded her head toward his feet. "I can tell John bandaged them. You should have told me, Sherlock." She smiled weakly and leaned slightly off the bed the grab Sherlock's hand. "Feel." A smile as she placed his hand on her stomach. Amy was kicking. A lot. And she was strong. "She's been like that for a while. I don't think she likes how stressed I was." The hand on top of Sherlock's tightened slightly. "I even tried talking to her but it wouldn't work. Talk to her?" Her gaze lifted to Sherlock hopefully.

"I'm fine," Sherlock muttered the obvious lie. He felt the flurry of activity. He always felt so stupid when asked to talk to the baby. Might as well humor Sarah yet again. As long as he wasn't expected to talk in one of those dozy high pitched voices. Besides according to Sarah the baby liked the sound of his voice. He found this odd and didn't really know whether that was true or not. He finally said something. "Little Sandi, Mum needs you to settle down. Everything is okay now. Think of a silly clown." He had thought of the ridiculous rhyme last minute.

Sarah laughed softly but seemed to relax a little as Amy calmed down. It was crazy that simply at
the low tone of Sherlock's voice that Amy would stop moving and let her rest. She let her head fall back, her hand slipping off of Sherlock's. "Thank you." She took a deep breath. "It's like she's running a marathon, honestly." She turned her head to glance at the consulting detective. "Ever going to tell me where John is?" It was like she was already a mother. A knowing look crossed her eyes, her lips tilted in a half-smile.

"Mmm," Sherlock replied at being thanked. He frowned at her question and shrugged. "We got in a bit of a domestic before you came over. He left, got drunk and is now sleeping it off back at the flat." He gave another shrug. Never before had he been so desperate for sleep, as he usually fought it for as long as he could. Maybe if by actually being straight with Sarah for once the woman would leave him alone and he could finally take a much needed nap. He was feeling bitter again but contained it. Just like he was containing everything else right now. An escape from reality seemed like the only option right now because he didn't want to exist in it any longer at the moment.

"Go to sleep," Sarah muttered as she turned her head away. She couldn't show Sherlock the sudden disappointment she suddenly felt. Drunk. That wasn't like John. The fight must have been bad. Now she was scared that he wouldn't be able to see her tonight. She sighed and wiped away the tears suddenly streaming down her cheeks. Bloody emotions.

Was Sherlock so beaten down, that he was that transparent to Sarah? Was she crying? He closed his eyes tightly but now his mind wouldn't turn off and he knew sleep would never find him right now. "You'll upset little Sandi if you keep crying, you know. Then I'll be forced to come up with another ridiculous rhyme and nobody wants that." He cracked an eye open to look at her, a very faint smirk on his lips. John better throw him a God damned parade or something after tonight because his fiancé should be the one in this chair not him.

Sarah managed to choke out a laugh, turning her head to look at Sherlock. "Why should she be upset? She's the one giving me all these mood swings." She flashed a watery smile. As if right on cue Amy moved and this time Sarah smiled. Sure, the little girl was a bit of an inconvenience but she and John, and even Sherlock, were making the best of it. Well, her and Sherlock. "Besides, she seemed to enjoy your ridiculous rhyme. Feels like she wants another one, Papa."

Of course. Sherlock thought hastily for a moment. "Little Sandi, I'll give you candy. Whenever you want, if you stop this taunt." He smirked, rather proud of himself this time around. John was never going to believe him when he told how much he was humoring Sarah right now. His fiancé better let him try all the new things because he could really use some make-up sex or at least a cigarette…several cigarettes really.

Sarah quickly covered her mouth, laughter shaking her body. "Oh God, that was perfect." She rested a hand on her stomach and grinned at Sherlock. "I'm beginning to think you'd make a wonderful father," she whispered as she closed her eyes. She fell asleep for the first time in a day, little Amy finally resting as well.

John is awake. Still drunk. Wants you. –MH

The solider had stumbled out of their bed nearly shouting for his fiancé. His face was still beet red and Mycroft helped him take his jacket off.

And I mean wants you. In the most vulgar meaning of the term. –MH

Oh thank God, maybe he could get some sleep now too. No, of course not. His cell phone just went off. With a sigh, Sherlock pulled out his phone.
He dropped the phone into his lap, closed his eyes and finally sleep found him.

Mycroft grinned slightly as he read the text, hitting reply.

*He will be over in a few hours. -MH*

He put John back on the couch, watching the Army doctor fall asleep without a second complaint. After a few hours John woke up, Mycroft helping him nurse his hangover and dropping him off at the hospital. He had managed to clean up a bit and walked hesitantly into the room. Sarah was still asleep and he froze at the sight of her. Pregnant. A hand resting on her swollen belly. On Amy. On their daughter. He had to lean against the wall beside the door, his knees locking at the sight of everything. He hadn't even noticed Sherlock.

The message sent to Sherlock's phone went unread. He had already slipped into a fitful slumber. John's presence didn't register as the consulting detective slept. He shifted, his body trying to get more comfortable because of its currently cramped position. He muttered in discontent and shifted again.

John looked at Sherlock the moment he moved slightly. He swallowed hard. They had fought and he ran off like some child to go drinking. Fuck. He took a deep breath and moved forward, falling on to the floor beside the chair and rested his head under one of Sherlock's hands. "I love you," he whispered.

Another groan and Sherlock shifted once more. He woke slowly, and he became aware of something touching his hand. He turned and John being in the room finally registered. He must have slept a few hours though, but it had been far from a restful sleep. For a long moment he didn't say anything, because he wasn't sure what should be said. Now wasn't the time or place to bring up the fight from earlier. Better to talk about something else. "Apparently little Sandi likes it when I rhyme."

John glanced up at Sherlock with a half smile. "Does she? Good thing you're a genius and can do it all the time," he whispered. He wanted for Sarah to wake up for entirely selfish reasons but managed to control himself. She needed to sleep and stay healthy. "I didn't know Sarah was in the hospital. You said you were," he muttered, forcing the lump in his throat down.

"I said I was *at* the hospital. I sent you text saying Sarah had come over to the flat. If you hadn't been drunk, you probably would have put two and two together. It isn't my fault if you were too drunk to figure it out." So much for trying to keep the conversation civil while in the room with a sleeping pregnant woman. Sherlock sighed in frustration and looked away from his fiancé.

"Oh. Right. John certainly should have felt offended but Sherlock was right. "Right then," he muttered with a small nod of his head. He hadn't even opened those texts. They were still sitting in his inbox. He shifted on the floor and dropped his gaze away from Sherlock. "Thank you," he whispered.

It was ironic to him, that he had been the one to be here after he and John had just had a fight over having Sarah over at the flat and Sherlock not wanting to be around when it happened. He shrugged at the thanks given to him. He sighed at himself again and turned to face the army doctor once more. "I did it for you," he admitted quietly.

John licked his lips and chanced a look up at Sherlock. "I know," he stated with a smile. "I love
you." He shifted to his knees and gently met Sherlock's lips, not hesitating as he ran his tongue along Sherlock's bottom lip. He needed this. Needed to apologize to Sherlock. And he knew he was a good kisser. He lifted a hand and tangled it in Sherlock's hair.

"I love you too," Sherlock replied as he returned the kiss. He leaned to whisper into John's ear. "When we get home, you owe me a lot of make-up sex. I have a lot of things in mind and you are going to take it and like it." He smirked and arched his eyebrows forward as he brought his face back in front of his fiancé's. He leaned into John's lips again for another kiss.

Jesus. That shouldn't be so hot when said in a hospital next to the woman carrying his child. But Sherlock's voice was enough. He returned Sherlock's kiss with a soft moan of agreement.

"Am I interrupting something?" Sarah looked at them with a small blush. John pulled away from Sherlock's lips with a gasp, falling back with wide eyes. "Good to see you not drunk, John," she muttered. He stood slowly, rubbing the back of his neck. "Oh, get over here. She's moving a bit." John clenched his fingers several times before stepping forward, giving one glance back to his fiancé. He hesitantly put his hand out and let Sarah direct him where to place it. He was still for a few moments before his face lit up and his eyes went wide. "T-That's," he took a deep breath. "My God..." He laughed in disbelief and kept his eyes trained on Sarah's stomach.

Sherlock smirked at Sarah and then looked away when John went over to the hospital bed. He would have left the room but his feet still weren't feeling any better. They weren't bleeding anymore, or at least he didn't think they were. Maybe he could get some pain medication while he was at the hospital. Usually he would do without pills but he doubted he would be off his feet that much because, well because, he was a stubborn idiot.

Without hesitation John bent at the waist and placed a kiss on Sarah's stomach. "Hi Amy," he whispered. He closed his eyes and rested his forehead against her swollen belly. "I'm your Dad," he added. "I can't wait to meet you." There was a long pause and after a small sigh and a second kiss John pulled away and resumed his nearly perfect posture. He kept his hands over his daughter to continue to feel her moving.

"Feels like she likes your voice, too," Sarah stated softly, resting her hand on top of John's.

Fuck, he couldn't do it. His feet be damned. Sherlock stood, muttered a lame excuse about needing to use the loo and left. He didn't get far. In fact he slid down the wall just outside the door. He closed his eyes and wished he had just stayed asleep and oblivious to the last few moments that had just occurred.

It wasn't too difficult to read his fiancé. That wasn't a trip to the loo at all, just an excuse to get out of the room. Despite his fast heart rate and the excitement churning his stomach, he pulled away from Sarah to follow Sherlock. It did surprise him that Sherlock hadn't moved a bit farther. "I...don't really know what to think." He rocked from heel to toe and clasped his hand behind his back. "I'm excited because that's my daughter in there. My first child." He paused and dropped his gaze to the man on the floor. "Except you're upset. Very upset."

Sherlock opened his eyes, surprised that John had followed him out of the room. "Seeing you with Sarah was too much for me. All it did was remind of me when I caught you two. You two together is like..." He trailed off with shrug, as words failed him. He thought for a moment and then added, "...probably the same feeling or at least similar to how you felt when Jackson randomly showed up at the flat."

Oh. Oh. That made sense. A lot of sense. "Except it's different for you because Sarah can't just disappear. My foolish mistake is permanent. That...really upsets you." And there was nothing John
could do to make it better. He was excited about Amy. Excited about the idea of being a father. "I'm... sorry." He moved to kneel in front of Sherlock and placed a hand on his cheek.

Finally, John seemed to get it. Sherlock had tried to explain it to his fiancé twice before. Once in the Afghan desert where they made love and shortly after the army doctor had nearly beaten Jackson to death but that had resulted in the worst fight they had ever had. The unwanted image of John taking off the ring and shoving it into his hands came to my mind. He leaned forward slightly, wrapping his arms around John in a tight and needy hug. He leaned his forehead on his fiancé's shoulder. "I love you," he whispered. Suddenly and irrationally he was afraid that John would leave him so he clung tighter to the other man still.

John fell forward and roughly pressed a hand against the wall behind Sherlock to brace himself. "I love you too," he whispered, using his free arm to wrap tightly around his fiancé. "So much." There was no going back to change everything between them but John was going to do his best to make Sherlock the happiest man alive. "I owe you everything."

Sherlock held onto John for awhile and then finally released the hug. "Now go in and spend time with your daughter." Maybe later down the road he would be able to deal with being in the same room as Sarah and John, but right now he just couldn't. He should probably get medical attention for his feet because he had no business being on them in the first place. They had reopened, bled and scabbed back over without further treatment and he didn't want to risk getting an infection.

"Okay," John whispered as he leaned forward and met Sherlock's lips. "Go find a doctor. You're pale," another kiss. "Get your feet taken care of. I'll see you soon." A parting kiss as he stood. His eyes lingered on Sherlock for a long moment before he went into the room and moved the chair closer to the hospital bed. Sarah seemed to light up instantly as John leaned closer to her stomach, a large smile on his face.

Sherlock hailed a passing nurse and then argued about needing a wheelchair briefly. He finally relented when he was told he would have to go to a different floor for treatment since this one was for pregnant women only. After waiting impatiently for what seemed like forever a doctor finally showed up.

The doctor cleaned the wounds and bandaged them. She wrote a prescription for Sherlock, that would allow him to buy an antibiotic ointment for his feet and also a mild pain medication that only had thirty pills and couldn't be refilled. She informed the tall man that the bandages should be changed once a day and stressed staying off his feet completely for at least three days.

He thanked the doctor and once more was forced to be carted around in a wheelchair, much to his dismay and annoyance. He wasn't ready to go back to Sarah's room, so he had the nurse take him to the exit. He lied, saying someone would be there to pick him up soon and to just leave him there. Once the nurse left, he found someone smoking and bummed a cigarette and a light. With a deep inhale, he closed his eyes and enjoyed the almost instantaneous calming effect the nicotine had on him.

John and Sarah had talked for a long time, discussing everything, before she told him he should go. "You'll be seeing me again before you leave," she had insisted and he left with a soft kiss to her forehead. After asking several nurses where he might find a skinny bloke in a billowing jacket, he left the hospital and rolled his chair to the hospital bed. Sarah seemed to light up instantly as John leaned closer to her stomach, a large smile on his face.

"You'll be seeing me again before you leave," she had insisted and he left with a soft kiss to her forehead. After asking several nurses where he might find a skinny bloke in a billowing jacket, he left the hospital and rolled his eyes. Smoking. "You can't do that once Amy is here, y'know." He smirked and plucked the cigarette from Sherlock's hand, taking a long drag off of it. "It's unhealthy." He exhaled and gently placed the cigarette back in Sherlock's mouth. His fiancé looked a bit better, less pale and certainly not in as much pain. "Want me to carry you home, then? Sarah's good for the night. I'm coming back in the morning to help her home." He wiggled his fingers and
glanced either way down the sidewalk before looking back up at Sherlock. "Any plans?"

A thin smirk etched Sherlock's lips when John plucked the cigarette away and took a drag. He finished the cancer stick off and even though it could result in a fine, he flicked the butt to the ground. "I got some prescriptions that need filled. No need to carry me, we can take a cab." His shoes were still in Sarah's hospital room. Oh well, John could get them tomorrow when he visited again. It wasn't like he needed them right now anyway.

John raised a skeptical eyebrow and glanced at Sherlock's feet. "How about I drop you off at the flat? I don't think they'll let you in without shoes." He reached a hand out and intertwined his fingers with Sherlock's. "It's the least I can do. You go rest. I know that's what the doctor told you to do." He gave Sherlock's hand a small squeeze. Christ, if he hadn't already told Sherlock that tonight was going to be relaxed he would beg his fiancé for a quick shag. He paused at the thought, bit his bottom lip, and moved to press his chest against Sherlock's. "And if you're good I'll do whatever you want me to. You told me earlier I owe you, didn't you?" He gave Sherlock a chaste kiss as he hailed a cab.

"Well in that case my dear doctor, make sure you get some whipped cream, from a can was it? Probably a few of them." Sherlock smirked. "I already have everything else needed back at the flat. I think…" He trailed off for a moment as he took stock of the inventory in his room mentally and then nodded. "Yes, I have everything else. Besides, what I have in mind won't have me on my feet at all." He smirked again. A cab finally pulled up and with John's help, Sherlock got into it.

The color of John's cheeks shouldn't have been medically possible and he turned away from Sherlock as he cleared his throat. He was already having to adjust himself in his jeans. "Right, yes." He glanced at Sherlock nervously. The fact that he had to even think about everything else back at the flat... What had he gotten himself into? The cab stopped and John leaned across the seat and place a kiss on his fiancé's cheek. "See you soon." He slid out of the cab and watched it start moving again toward the flat before going into the store.

The look on John's face and readjustment of the trousers didn't go unnoticed by Sherlock. He smirked proudly before the cab took off. It didn't take long for the ride to end, and after paying he got out. He hobbled up the stairs and even though he was supposed to be off his feet, he went around the flat destroying the bugs in his house that Mycroft had placed. He made sure to do it noisily, so the other end would crackle with loud static. "If you really feel the need to continue spying, then do it after John leaves. You know how he gets." He smirked a bit before destroying the last bug he could find. Since no one was here, he dropped to his hand and knees and crawled into his bedroom to give his feet a rest. He found the necessary items and placed them in the top drawer of the nightstand. He flopped onto the bed after taking his shirt off and waited for John to come home.
John returned to the flat a deeper shade of red than he had been in the car, a large bag in his right hand. He moved loudly through the flat and entered their bedroom. For a moment he couldn't speak, his eyes locked on Sherlock, before he nodded. "Yes. So..." He cleared his throat. "Got your medication. And the whipped cream." There was a pause. "A-And the lady asked me what all of it was for and...I told her pie. Which, of course, was a lie. So...we have also got pie." He kept his eyes locked on the ground, his voice dropping. "Because I didn't want her to think I was some sort of pervert." He set the bag on the floor and slowly removed the four cans of whipped cream. "And I got an extra can...for the pie, y'know?" He toed his shoes off, rubbing the back of his neck nervously as he stood next to the bed.

Sherlock couldn't help but laugh at John's admission. Once the laughter died down he smirked as he looked over at his fiancé quietly and contemplative. After a moment he spoke. "Take your clothes off, lay with your back on the bed and." He reached over to the nightstand and withdrew a black blindfold and threw on the pillow next to him. "And put that on."

Sherlock wasn't serious, was he? John glanced at the blindfold and shifted on his feet. In terms of a sex life John figured his was fairly normal before Sherlock. Very basic. Lights off and, if he was daring, above the blankets. But now. "God, yes." He yanked his jumper over his head and pulled his undershirt off as well, taking a chance to look at his fiancé before managing to get his pants, socks, and underwear off without any trouble. The lack of clothing compared to Sherlock's trousers made him blush but he did as instructed, laying on the bed, on his back, and expertly putting the blindfold on. "I don't think this is very fair," he muttered, shifting a bit against the mattress.

Once the blindfold was on, Sherlock took out a couple other things from the drawer and placed them on his pillow. "Don't move until I tell you to." He crawled down to where the cans of whipped cream were located, then back up and put those on the pillow as well. He straddled John and leaned his head down to whisper in his ear, "Do you trust me?" For this to work, his fiancé would have to trust him and give over total control more or less. If there was doubt or even discomfort it would ruin the whole experience or at least, that was what the books had said.

Without his eyesight everything going on around him seemed louder, stronger...better. He felt Sherlock's body heat and suddenly there was his voice, close and sensual. He swallowed hard and bit his bottom lip to suppress a moan. "Yes," he answer surely, his stomach tensing tightly as he kept himself from lifting his hips up into his fiancé. What the Hell was he supposed to do with his hands? His fingers clenched excitedly into the bed sheets below him. Was that considered moving? Fuck. These rules seemed difficult to follow already.

Even though John couldn't see it, Sherlock smirked as he watched his fiancé squirm and fidget. "Okay then my dear doctor. If at any time you want this to stop, just use our safety word." He got off John and sat next to him. "Place your hands above your head, not straight up but more like forming the letter 'Y' and spread out your legs." As he waited for the army doctor to comply, he picked up two items from the pillow.

Oh good Lord. What had been their safety word? His brows furrowed as his body unconsciously followed Sherlock's instructions. It didn't take a genius to see where this was going and John swallowed hard. He wiggled his toes as his legs spread apart, tensing his stomach again, more for show, as he lifted his arms and let them fall back. Safety word. Cheesecake. Right. Of course. A bit of a joke. "L-Like this?" He asked, turning his head toward where he had last heard Sherlock's
voice. He had heard the other man grab something from the pillow beside his head and wanted to reach out and feel it but managed to keep himself in check.

"Remember when I said I was going to blindfold you and tie you up via text?" Sherlock asked as he opened one end of a hand cuff and then secured it to the right bed post. "Well..." He picked up John's wrist and placed the other end to it. "I decided to change it up a bit. Captain 'I'm in the military and can do things' Watson." He smirked and leaned over to attach the next wrist to the other bed post. The chain link in between was longer than police handcuffs, to allow a little movement and some slack. He also made sure not to make the cuffs too tight. The next pair of hand cuffs had slightly longer chains and he attached these to John's ankle's and the bed post ends.

John was suddenly taking short and shallow breaths. This was erotic as Hell. He whimpered softly and tested the handcuffs with a hesitant tug of his hands and ankles. Fuck, he couldn't work his way out of bloody metal handcuffs. It didn't take long for him to get hard and he moaned to keep himself still. No moving. "Fuck." His tongue darted out to lick his lips. This shouldn't be so damn hot but Christ Sherlock was making him so excited.

Next, Sherlock picked up a can of whipped cream. He shook it for awhile, removed the cap, leaned over and began to apply the cream onto John's chest. He applied three lines. One strip started at the right nipple and ran down to the inner thigh. The next followed along down the sternum, over the belly button and down the length of John's already hard cock to the very tip. The third line mirrored the one on the right, only starting at the left nipple. Once more he straddled the army doctor, but just above the knees and not the chest. He didn't want to smear his current work of art. Instead of licking the whipped cream off, he trailed his fingers along John's obliques. "Oh, you are free to move now. Just nothing violent or too sudden."

John didn't have to be told twice and strained his arms to tug at the handcuffs around his wrists. "Shit." He slammed his head back against the pillow and let the muscles beneath Sherlock's fingers tense. The feel of his touch was so strong now that he couldn't see it and Sherlock's skin felt like it was on fire, causing another moan to rip from his chest. "Sherlock..." His voice was rough and needy but he knew he couldn't say more. It was Sherlock's turn to be in control. And this was complete control.

Sherlock watched John, the smirk returning. "How does it feel my dear doctor, to know that I can do whatever I want to you and you can't do a thing about it?" His tone was cocky and taunting. He leaned forward, kissing along John's neck lightly and slowly made his way to the right line of the whipped cream. His tongue ran light and slow down his fiancé's chest and at the end of the strip he diverted left when he came to the second line he went past it, to the third and back up John's chest. He paused, to drive the army doctor mad with expectancy.

This was very similar to the cheesecake thing, but not being able to see or know what would happen was supposed to enhance everything being experienced due to anticipation and minus a sensory. To spoil the hell out of whoever was on the receiving end. The handcuffs? Well, that was for more of Sherlock's benefit for the control. He had read about these in different books but decided to combine the two to see how it would go. So far, it seemed to be working. Finally, his tongue worked along the remaining line and down to John's penis. His tongue ran along it teasingly well after the whipped cream was gone.

John bit his bottom lip to keep from shouting. He followed Sherlock's tongue mentally and every pause made a loud moan echo through the room. The center row of whipped cream was still on his chest. He felt it. And Sherlock was just sitting there. There was probably a smirk on the bastard's face. He was about to speak when Sherlock's mouth was on his chest again. "Sherlock!" Shit. He just yelled that. And now Sherlock's tongue was teasing his erection. This was his chance to gain
some sort of control and he took advantage of it. His hips lifted up slowly, his erection bumping against Sherlock's lips. "Not gonna suck itself," John whimpered. That was what he sounded like now? Christ, this was driving him nuts.

Ah, so John thought he could control this now did he? Sherlock removed his mouth from his fiancé's cock and crawled up to whisper in the army doctor's ear breathily. "I'm sorry, what was that? I didn't quite hear you." He straddled John's chest and then without waiting for an answer he began nibbling the ear he had just whispered in. Fingernails scratched lightly along his fiancé's side, trailing down to the outside of the hips.

"Not go-" John took a sharp intake of breath and moaned again. Sherlock's teeth on his ear was suddenly the greatest feeling in the world. With the fingernails running down his side he was moaning again, multiple times, as he tried to press into Sherlock's fingers. "Ah, yes, fuck." He arched his back to press his stomach against Sherlock. "Sherlock, yes." He was yelling so loud he was sure the people on the street knew what was happening in their flat. He couldn't form coherent sentences anymore and the demand he had attempted to make earlier died on his tongue in preference of short words of encouragement and Sherlock's name.

A proud smirk etched his lips. "That's what I thought," Sherlock murmured between small bites. He began a trail of kisses: starting with the ear, down the length of the jaw, down the neck, down the chest, down the stomach. With a teasing pause he stopped just at the base of John's penis. Without warning he moved off his fiancé. "You know, I think we need more whipped cream. I mean you went through the trouble of buying it all. We should really use it, don't you think?" He picked up the can he used before, straddled the other man's chest once more, put some of the cream on his finger and held it to John's lips to suck off. The hand holding the can shook it once more and then began applying it on his fiancé's shoulders.

This had to be illegal. Sherlock's tongue had to be illegal. Christ, where did he learn all of this? The closer Sherlock's mouth got to his cock the faster his breathing got and the moment he felt the weight shift off of him, he moaned at the loss, tugging at the handcuffs with a grunt. What about the pie? He had wanted to say but the thought was stupid and he couldn't really talk anyway. Not with all of the distractions going on around him. John eagerly took Sherlock's finger into his mouth, biting it softly as he sucked and licked at the whipped cream with a hum of appreciation. When he felt more on his shoulders he nipped at Sherlock's finger in excitement. In his haze of arousal he decided that this was, quite possibly, the greatest thing to ever happen to him.

A shiver of pleasure went through him when John licked the whipped cream off his finger. Sherlock gave a small growl of excitement at the nipping and he almost lost his focus. He had made a decent sized mound on either shoulder, before he dropped the can and then began spreading it on the rest of the army doctor's shoulders and neck. Once he was satisfied the whipped cream was spread evenly and smeared in all the desired places, he began to lick it off slow. He started with the tip of the right shoulder first.

John opened his mouth and tilted his head slightly. He had heard Sherlock's growl and there was no denying that his fiancé was getting excited. His tongue lapped at Sherlock's other fingers sloppily, moans and gasps escaping his mouth at the feel of Sherlock's mouth working away at his shoulder. "Please," he moaned, the handcuffs clicking as he shifted and tugged at them. "Oh, Sherlock, Christ." His stomach tensed and he arched again to try and get closer to Sherlock.

His tongue worked its way along the shoulder and once it was clean, Sherlock sucked on it lightly. He gave small nips, his body bucking into the man below him as John's tongue ran along his fingers. He moved onto the neck, repeating what he done the shoulder. Licking it clean and then giving it light biting suckles. He did the same to the other shoulder, his lower torso writhing
excitedly into his fiancé. Self control. He wanted to draw this out as long as possible, even if they were both dying and begging for it by the end of it. He removed his hand from John's mouth and once more found the can of whipped cream, the first can was almost empty already.

Perfect. Sherlock was moving against him. He wanted this just as bad as he did. John could feel every little bite, where it had been and if there was going to be mark. The loss of Sherlock's fingers made him frown and his tongue ran across his bottom lip. A frustrated growl ripped from John's lips and the muscles in his torso tensed. Christ, he wanted to kiss Sherlock. "I love you," he whispered. "Sherlock..." His body wiggled and the feeling of Sherlock's pants fabric against his skin had him thrusting roughly into the body above him.

Concentrate. Sherlock needed to stay focused but he wasn't sure if he was going to make it. He supposed he could tell John to stop moving but God it felt so good. No, stay on task. His breathing became a little thready and with willpower he moved down to a kneeling position between the army doctor's legs. His thin frame was a bit scrunched but he ignored it and began applying the whipped cream on his fiancé's inner thighs and then finished off the can on John's cock. On hand smeared the cream around with a light touch on his thighs and the other began gentle strokes on the penis as he rubbed the cream on the hard member.

After the whipped cream was spread around, Sherlock rest his hands on either side of John's legs. He leaned down and begin licking the left thigh slowly. Once it was cleaned, his tongue ran teasingly and lazily over the base of his fiancé's cock and then over to the other thigh, where he licked it clean but slower than the last time. Finally, he got to John's penis. Sherlock didn't take the whole thing in his mouth, instead he started at the base and worked his way up. At the tip, he put his lips around it and ran his tongue along the sensitive area lightly.

John decided suddenly that he needed to see this. While just feeling was amazing, and that feeling was heightened because of the blindfold, he needed to see Sherlock's mouth licking his thighs. It wasn't until there was a delicious heat on the head of his cock that a moan ripped through his throat. His head worked frantically against the pillow and with a proud grin he lifted his head as the blindfold fell off. "Fuck, that's beautiful." His eyes were narrowed against the sudden brightness.

"Cheater," Sherlock muttered with the tip of John's penis in his mouth. He supposed that next time he would have to tie the blindfold himself, extra tight, so the army doctor couldn't slide it off. "Close your eyes," he growled out, his mouth still in place but not moving or licking. He tilted his head up and gave his best glare, which was proving difficult because he was excited and amused right now.

Sherlock's low voice vibrating around his cock made him moan again and he struggled to hold the other man's glare. His eyes slammed shut as his head fell back against the pillow. After a long moment of both of them being still John lifted his hips slightly, grinning at his small show of dominance. "Shit, yes." His hips dropped again and the growing grin on his face was playful and cocky. While Sherlock technically had control, John wanted to put up a fight and make Sherlock work for it. "C'mon, Holmes," he growled, "put the bloody blindfold back on me." He needed to kiss Sherlock and making him put the blindfold back on was the only way he could get the man close enough.

Sherlock removed his mouth from the tip of the penis. "Be still and quiet or this all stops and I leave you chained to the bed the rest of the day." He smirked, because he wasn't bluffing. "And keep your eyes closed, should have just kept it on but he just had to wiggle out of it." His fingers trailed along John's thighs lightly.

John's body went slack almost immediately and he slammed his eyes shut. Sherlock wasn't joking.
He could tell. But staying quiet? Christ, that was going to be impossible for him. He moaned softly at the continued loss of contact, biting his bottom lip. Kiss. He just wanted to kiss Sherlock. His thighs tensed under the light touches and he arched into it.

"Perhaps I should clarify, noise is fine so long as you aren't talking and telling me what to do."
Sherlock couldn't help but smirk bigger. Now, to stretch it out. It had been his intention all along anyway. His fingers traced to one thigh, over the penis, where he stopped to to caress it momentarily and then over to the other thigh. He crawled up back to John, fingers trailing over the stomach and chest as he came back up. He leaned down, kissing the other man's lips, tongue running along the bottom lip lightly. His fingers came to run through the short hair.

Every touch made John twitch and let out a low moan. The moment he felt Sherlock's lips on his own his mouth opened in surrender, his eyes shutting tighter. He moved his tongue and ran it across the roof of Sherlock's mouth and nipped at Sherlock's bottom lip. He grunted and pressed eagerly into Sherlock's lower body. The muscles in his arm moved and tensed beneath his skin as he yanked at the handcuffs in a desperate attempt to touch his fiancé.

Sherlock continued the kiss, tongue exploring every inch inside of John's mouth it could find. The man below him bucking into his lower torso caused him whimper, and returned the eager grinding with his own. Easy. Steady. Make it last. It always seemed like they were in a hurry to finish. With control, he settled for a slower pace against the man below, his tongue still roaming around in the mouth, hot air blowing out his nose in attempt at breathing.

A whimper. John was getting somewhere. He returned the kiss aggressively, gasping into Sherlock's mouth. The man was a damn good kisser and the fact that he apparently never needed to breathe through his mouth. He wanted to tell his fiancé to take his trousers off, to get on with it and stop torturing him, but he also didn't want to stay tied up to the bed the rest of the day. "Sherlock," he whispered against the other man's lips. "Sherlock, yes."

Eventually Sherlock broke the kiss, not because he was worried about breathing but because he couldn't stand it anymore. He was driving himself crazy at this point. His breathing was heavy and sporadic, so he took a moment to get it under control. While he waited, he removed his trousers and underwear, throwing them in some random location on the floor. He reached over and grabbed the Vaseline off the pillow. He applied some to his fingers, prepped himself and then John. He leaned up and kissed his fiancé's cheek and then whispered in his ear, "I love you." He let his tongue run along and in the ear briefly before straddling the army doctor's lower torso. Despite how anxious he was, Sherlock managed to enter with a light thrust and maintain a slow but steady tempo. His hands held onto either side of John's chest, fingernails digging in ever so slightly for a better grip.
"God this is fantastic." His breathing once more went erratic, one hand trailing down to his fiancé's cock and began to stroke it with his thumbs.

"Fuck, yes," John shouted. Everything. With his eyes closed everything felt better. The fingernails digging into his side felt wonderful and Sherlock thrusting inside of him was enough to make him moan with each movement. "Sherlock." His fingers curled tightly and dug into his palms. "I love you," he shouted again. After a moment of hesitation he moved his hips. Back to meet Sherlock, forward into the perfect hand wrapped around his erection. The handcuffs pulled against the headboards, squeaking loudly in time with Sherlock's thrusts and mixing with John's constant moans. "Perfect. Christ, you are wonderful." He arched his back off the mattress as his hips snapped forward and he came suddenly across his stomach, falling limp with a loud moan.

Sherlock smirked broadly, clearly proud. He continued his steady pace, and lasted a little longer than John did. He came with a loud throaty growl, his body going lax as his breathing continued their labored breaths. His hand let go of the penis, wiping some of the mess off absently on a sheet
and then bunching it together to clean John's stomach. He crawled up to snuggle into his fiancé, his head laying the army doctor's shoulder. "That was good, yes?" He figured he already knew the answer based solely on how John had responded through the whole thing.

John slowly opened his eyes, panting as he nodded. "Yeah." A deep breath and a smile. "That was..." It was bloody fantastic. If John could form words he would tell him that. He tugged slightly at the handcuffs and bit his bottom lip, chuckling. "The skin around my wrists is going to be raw," he muttered as he looked down at his fiancé with a crooked smile. "Good touch with the handcuffs." He tugged at them. "Couldn't get out of them if I wanted."

"Maybe next time you won't tug so much." Sherlock smirked. He rolled off of John and to the edge of the bed, opened the drawer and removed a small key. "They had those fuzzy handcuffs so they wouldn't chafe so much but..." He trailed off with a shrug, moved back over and undid the cuffs from John's wrists and then his ankles. He could detach them from the bed later, so he leaned over and placed the key on the nightstand and then snuggled back into his fiancé.

"You expected me to not move during that? Are you joking me?" John instantly wrapped his arms around Sherlock, placing a kiss on the top of his head. "Besides, the fuzzy ones are tacky," he squeezed Sherlock, "and you're a gluten for pain. That was good." More than good. The craziest thing he had ever done as a sexual act. "It will be you next." With a grin Sherlock tilted his head slightly to look up at John.

"Me next, hmmm? What makes you think I will let you cuff me to the bed? Besides, we still need to cover each other in whipped cream and lick it off at the same time. There are a couple positions that would make that feasible, actually." For a moment he was pensive and quiet before asking, "how far are you willing to go with all this stuff?" He wasn't sure what limits he had, because it was all new to him every time they tried something.

"I've gotten a bit stronger since I was deployed," John whispered with a small kiss to the tip of Sherlock's nose. "It won't take much." After Sherlock's next statement he blushed but his fiancé's question was enough to bring his eyebrows together. For Sherlock it made sense. Sex was a completely new thing for him. John had experience but not on this level of sexual exploration. "I don't know really," he admitted. "That was new. A few years ago I would have never tried it but now..." He smirked and licked his lips. "I think we'll just have to figure that out, won't we? That is why we have a safety word." Another pause and he closed his eyes. "But just being with you is enough. Having you here, knowing I'm going to marry you."

Sherlock nodded and once more fell quiet, thoughtful. When he finally spoke again his tone was serious. "John, I don't want to fight anymore while you are home. The first couple days got off to bad start and don't get me wrong the make-up sex is fantastic...I just...I don't like fighting with you." He wrapped his around his fiancé in a tight, sideways hug.
Sherlock’s next request was simple, understandable, and John nodded heartily in agreement. "I think we can both manage that." He tilted Sherlock's head up by his chin, lazily meeting his lips. "No more fighting. I've got five days left so let's just be happy." He let himself relax, yawning loudly and snapping his mouth shut with a grin. "Nap? I think that exhausted you." There was a smirk on his lips now, knowing and cocky. "I heard you gasp and whimper, felt you tense and try to keep yourself under control. You can't keep your hands off of me."

"Well, you are just so," Sherlock paused with a grin for effect, "adorable as my mum says. It was hard not to." Another pause, his voice a little more serious at his admission. "I just wanted to make it last. Try something different rather than hurrying it." He gave John another hug. "Is there anything you want to do while you are home?"

Oh, wonderful. Now he was 'adorable.' John's eyes narrowed slightly. "I'm not adorable," he muttered with a bit of a glare in Sherlock's direction. Soldiers weren't adorable. He let his eyes close and let a smirk tug at his lips. He wasn't entirely sure that his fiancé would like his next statement. "Not have sex," he whispered. "A lot of couples stop after they get engaged. Makes the wedding night more special. What do you think?" One eye cracked open to gauge Sherlock's reaction.

Sherlock arched a brow. "Okay, good thing you bought pie then otherwise we would have an over abundance of whipped cream." Up the ante? Sure why not, it had been John's idea after all. "Does that mean no sex talk via Skype and texts while you are gone then? Can you last that long?" He tilted his head up to smirk at his fiancé at the challenge he had just issued. Could he? Maybe. Little Sandi would be born soon, that would keep him preoccupied.

John playfully smacked Sherlock's chest. "Nothing," he said through a laugh. "Not through texting or Skype. Nothing at all!" The grin on his face grew and he tried to glance seriously at his fiancé. It was a good question. John was a very sexual man. He was before Sherlock and it carried into their relationship. "I think I can. Doesn't mean I can't jerk off. That isn't sex." He bent down and met Sherlock's lips roughly, determined to wipe the smirk off his face.

The smirk only got bigger and he pulled away from the kiss. "Oh no. You said nothing at all. So, no kissing…snuggling…should we sleep in separate beds too?" He disentangled himself from John, the smirk only bigger. He sat up, looking over at his fiancé. A new challenge. He always did like a challenge. He could do it, he was fairly certain. "Guess that means I should get dressed, hm?"

What? No. That wasn't part of the plan. John bolted up from his position, nearly tackling Sherlock and effectively pinning him. "You know what I meant," he stated with a laugh. "I'm sleeping in the same bed as you while I'm here." His arms wrapped tightly around Sherlock and he lifted his head to look at his fiancé sternly. "Just no sex. I want to kiss you and snuggle with you." One hand ran down Sherlock's stomach. "Admire you." He placed a kiss on Sherlock's shoulder. "Don't be a git."

Another smirk crossed his lips. "So…if I begin kissing you like so…" Sherlock trailed off, leaned forward and nibbled lightly on John's neck. He wrapped his arms around his fiancé in a small hug, one hand playing with the army doctor's hair and the other hand trailed along the back lightly. He moved his lips to John's ear. "This okay, then? You sure you are going to be able to resist my
ravishing good looks and charm?” If his fiancé wanted to do this, he wasn't going to make it easy for the other man. He enjoyed teasing John far too much.

John’s breath hitched in his throat and his free hand gripped tightly at the sheet next to Sherlock’s shoulder. "'S fine,” he muttered through clenched teeth. Perfectly fine. Wonderful. His eyes closed and he tried to force back a chuckle. "Yeah, I can," he whispered. "Not a problem," he added with a soft smirk. Of course he couldn't. No, Sherlock was perfect. Bloody perfect. How the Hell could he turn him down? "S-Stop." His lower body was already starting to writhe against the man below him without his consent.

"I don't think you mean that," Sherlock whispered in his ear. He wasn't ready for another go around by any means, but teasing and torturing John was a sheer delight for him. His fingers continued their light touches through the hair and down his fiancé’s back. He kept his lips near the army doctor's ear, his breathing steady and purposefully expelling gentle hot air upon the ear's skin.

"I...no..." John went limp against Sherlock's body. Of course he didn't want Sherlock to stop but if they really wanted this to happen then Sherlock needed to stop teasing him. "But we can't have sex," he whispered as an afterthought, his voice low. Goosebumps spread across his back under the other man's touch and a soft moan pressed through his lips at the light touches in his hair. That was what he hated about Sherlock, that the other man knew exactly what John liked just by looking at him. Probably some weird way he walked or carried himself. While John had to learn through experiences and had to focus intently.

Sherlock spoke breathily into John's ear once more, "then I'll just tease you until you can't stand. Tease you until you beg me to stop." He gave a small laugh. "That will be different. Begging me to stop instead of to keep going?" He had a feeling he was going to enjoy the next few days. He hugged his fiancé tightly briefly, enjoying the closeness of their bodies. "Just remember, snuggling and kissing was your idea. I am merely complying with your wishes, my dear doctor."

"I hate you," John growled as he lifted his head and met Sherlock's lips. He nipped at Sherlock's bottom lip with a small hum of victory before letting his tongue explore the other man's mouth eagerly. Two could play at that game. John wasn't a genius but he was fairly sure he could get the other man to go crazy as well. His tongue was slow and methodical before he pulled away, moving to latch on to his fiancé's collarbone. "You'll be begging, too," he mumbled against the skin.

"That's okay. I love you anyway," Sherlock replied with a bit of a smirk. Oh, so John wanted to play too? He matched the kissing pace set by his fiancé, when the kiss broke he spoke again. "I bet I can get you to beg first.” His fingers continued their light tracing through the hair and up down the other man's back. Since, John was marking his neck he tilted his slightly and began run his tongue along and in the army doctor's ear.

"Shit." John moved a hand to clamp on to Sherlock's side, clawing at the skin without a second thought. He would not break first. He always did but this time he was determined to make Sherlock lose their little game. "Bet you can't," he growled as his tongue ran up Sherlock's Adam's apple to the bottom of his jaw. His other hand moved to claw down Sherlock's side, rougher than he felt comfortable doing but hard enough that he knew Sherlock would like it. "You'll be first."

Sherlock's body arched from the scratching, despite the mixing sense of pleasure and pain. He stopped licking to whisper into John's ear. "You forget how quiet I can be. You are the one with a predilection for making noise. If I lose, I'll let you have complete control on the first night after the wedding. What do I get, if I win?” He gave light kisses from the ear down to his fiancé's neck, where he stopped to suck on it.

"Ah!" John slammed his eyes shut and moaned softly. It ended in a gasp and a small whimper. "If
you win..." Another moan and his hand tightened on Sherlock's side. "We can have sex once before I leave at the end of the week. That good?" He pulled away from Sherlock's mouth to meet his eyes, panting. What else could he give Sherlock? "Even against the windows," he whispered as he placed a chaste kiss on the consulting detective's lips.

For a moment Sherlock almost declined the deal until John threw in the window part. "Deal," he murmured and began sucking on the other side of the army doctor's neck. In his mind, he went over the human anatomy and where certain points were more sensitive to light touches on the body. Both hands slithered to John's chest and then slid down to the stomach. His fingers began to trail ever so lightly over the area in between the stomach and obliques.

The loud moan that John produced because of Sherlock's fingers even made him blush and he aggressively nudged Sherlock's head away from his neck before latching on to the man's ear. He nipped at the skin and pressed into Sherlock's touch without thinking, whimpering at the sensitivity of his skin. It was almost too much. He released Sherlock's ear and dropped his head to rest against the mattress, breathing hard and tensing his arms. "S-Yes, God, Sherlock." He sloppily ran his tongue across Sherlock's jaw.

Sherlock continued the light touches on the sides of the stomach. There were also sensitive areas on the back and even the back of the knee. The knee would be too much effort, but the back would be doable. He glided his fingers along to circle to the lower part of John's back, where his fingers danced teasingly along the area between the spinal cord and the curve that lead back to the stomach. When his fiancé's tongue ran along his jaw, he turned slightly to meet the other man's lips and began kissing eagerly. His tongue ran along the bottom lip before exploring the inside.

John returned the kiss without hesitation, grateful for the distraction from Sherlock's fingers. This was going to be tough. Sherlock knew exactly what to do to him and he couldn't tell him to stop. Losing wasn't something John Watson did. One hand moved to tangle in Sherlock's unruly hair, tugging it with a bit of force to end the kiss. It was then that something from the corner of his eye captured his attention. A wry smirk graced his lips and he reached one hand over to grab a can of whipped cream, shaking it as he met Sherlock's gaze. "Ready to lose?" He popped the cap off and leaned slightly to spray some on Sherlock's chest, moving down to eagerly lap it up.

How was that not cheating? Besides the time of accidentally dropping the cheesecake, John hadn't licked food off him before. He had been extremely turned on then and was now. However, Sherlock had been under the impression this was all supposed to be snuggling and kissing. Fine, he could cheat too. His eyes had closed and he fought to control his breathing. He thrust his hips into the man above him, fingers still managing their light tingling touches.

John's hand darted down to pin Sherlock's hips to the bed. "No," he growled, his eyes flashing dangerously. "Cheating," he whispered with a small grin. With a sure movement he put whipped cream up the inside of Sherlock's arm, taking his time to slowly lick it off. His eyes darted up and he smirked at his fiancé. "Do you like that, then?" He nipped at Sherlock's jawline.

"You cheated first," Sherlock growled back. "I was just evening the odds." Christ, it did feel good though. Despite the warning glance he had been given he thrust his hips into John again. His fingers trailed down to the army doctor's inner thighs and he began to trace along the skin there lightly. "If you get to use the whipped cream, I get to use other means of persuasion too." He smirked, thrusting his hips upward once more.

"Whipped cream isn't cheating." John lifted his head, his lips, chin, and the tip of his nose coated in white. "This isn't sex. It's kissing. That," his hand pressed harder against Sherlock's hip and he bit his lip to stay quiet. "That's cheating. That's sex." The touch on his inner thigh jolted his hips down
into his fiancé and he did let a small moan out. "Ah, fuck." He licked up the rest of the whipped cream and then moved to meet Sherlock's lips.

It was hard to take John seriously with his face covered in whipped cream. Sherlock smirked and instead of kissing the army doctor, he moved so he could lick the residual cream off his fiancé's face. His fingers continued to trail along John's thighs and he couldn't help but buck once more into the man above him. After his fiancé's face was cream free, he began nibbling on the army doctor's ear.

It pained him, it did, but Sherlock's fingers on the inside of his thigh was the end of him. "Stop," he rasped, quickly grabbing Sherlock's wrist and yanking it up. "S-Stop, you win." His hips pressed down against his fiancé weakly and he bit his bottom lip. "You win," he repeated before dropping his head against Sherlock's shoulder.Fuck, he'd just given up. This wasn't good.

"Told you I would win. When we have sex against the window, I think we'll try a new position. I'll take you from behind, so all of London can see you plastered against the glass while I make you scream." Sherlock whispered into the ear he had just been nibbling on, his hands coming to wrap around John in a hug. He pulled his head back with a smirk, so he could look up at his fiancé.

A deep flush spread across John's cheeks, traveling down to his chest. "Don't want to think about it," he muttered as he looked down at his fiancé with narrowed eyes. "Go make some tea or something." He playfully pushed at Sherlock as he turned away so his back was facing the other man. "You've exhausted me and I think I need a shower." It was true. The bed sheets were sticking to him uncomfortably.

"I can't, I'm on bed rest remember? I'm not allowed to be up on my feet walking around." Sherlock's smirk got bigger. "How about this my dear doctor, an alternate price for the deal that you might find more to your liking? Until I'm able to walk around safely, you have to be at my beck and call. You can even buy me one of those bells, so if you are in the other room I can ring for you to come." Usually, he would never even entertain the idea of someone taking care of him but he was certain he could milk it to the point where he would be amused by the whole thing.

John rolled quickly on the bed to look at Sherlock. "You're kidding. You've got to be joking." His mouth opened and closed several times before he growled and rolled out of bed. "Fine," he muttered, one hand drifting down to cover himself. "But I swear if you wake me up in the middle of the night..." He dropped the sentence in favor of moving to the bathroom, turning the tap on and quickly stepping under the hot spray.

"You could have gone with the first option!" Sherlock shouted to John as he walked away. He put the handcuffs and other items away. He then rolled off the bed, staying on his hands and knees. He stripped the sheets, found new ones and even though it was difficult to do on the floor he managed to put new ones on. He crawled back up onto the bed and waited for John to come back from the shower.

"Could do both," John replied softly as he left the bathroom, rubbing a towel over his hair with a sigh. "Or neither. Neither would be good." The towel ran down his body as he tried to dry himself off. "Apparently you had enough power to change the bloody sheets," he growled as he walked toward the bed, a wry grin on his face. "We'll do both. I don't think you'll actually follow through with the other one." He tossed the towel on the floor and climbed into bed, collapsing against his pillow with a happy sigh. "Hell, I could go for a nap. Again."

"I did it while on my hands and knees, if you must know. No, we are going to do what I suggested because I like the idea you running into the room every time I ring a bell." Sherlock smirked. Now he was just being stubborn. No one was going to tell him what he could and couldn't do. He
instantly snuggled into John. He rested his head on his fiancé's shoulder. "A nap? You tire easily, do you know that?" He wasn't that tired.

"I'm aware," John replied through a yawn. "It's just...that was good." He placed a soft kiss on Sherlock's head. "And I really like sleeping, especially next to you." The subject of their debt being repaid was dropped in favor of his eyes closing. Sleep. He wanted to sleep. "Just an hour, yeah? Wake me up." He turned to lay beside Sherlock, wiggling down to press their foreheads together. "Love you."

Sherlock smiled. "Love you too. I'll wake you in an hour." He brought a hand up to run lightly through John's hair. He laid there, just watching his fiancé sleep. He tried not to think about anything. Luckily, Hamish came along to distract him. The cat curled against the inside of his knees and his free hand reached to scratch the furry head.

It was dark and... Was he running? He had to be, he was breathing hard and sweating. Then he heard gunshots, whipping around just in time to watch Hollman fall into a pool of his own blood. And now he was shouting, crying, begging Hollman to look at him.

John shot up with a scream. "Hollman!" His eyes darted around the room as his mouth fell open, his chest rising in heavy pants. "Hollman," he repeated at a whisper, forgetting that he was at home, in London, and that his fiancé was laying beside him.

The scream startled Sherlock. He supposed he would never get used to John waking up from nightmares. It had also scared Hamish, as the cat jumped off the bed and ran out of the room. The army doctor didn't seem to realize that he was home. That he was safe. He reached a hand to gently caress the face of his fiancé. "John, easy. You are home with me. You had a nightmare." It was obvious what the dream had been about, so he didn't ask about it.

The touch to his face made John jump back slightly, eyes wide. Sherlock. His fiancé. Home. He didn't hesitate and buried his face into Sherlock's chest with small groan. "Sherlock," he stated through a deep breath, letting a few tears fall down his cheeks. "Sherl-" He clung tighter to the other man.

Sherlock enveloped John in a comforting hug. He placed a kiss on the other man's head, and then rested his own atop of it. He wished there was something to do, to prevent the army doctor from having nightmares. Well, he had offered but John had declined the hypnosis. Twice. No point in asking a third time.

"I'm sorry," John whispered as he slowly pulled away. "Sorry," he repeated before running a hand sloppily across his eyes. "Didn't mean to scare you." This was embarrassing and John didn't want to be crying in front of his fiancé. "Tea?" He asked with a raspy voice. "Food, maybe?" He looked up at his fiancé and slowly moved to pull out of Sherlock's grasp.

"You never have to apologize for a nightmare, my dear doctor." Sherlock let his hands fall to his side as John pulled away. He leaned over and grabbed the bag with his medication and took two of the pills dry. Hopefully it would work quickly, because he wasn't sure how long he would end up being on his feet. Bed rest was annoying him already. He got up off the bed. "Come on. Let's get you something from the kitchen."

John watched Sherlock hesitantly before standing up himself. "Here." He moved to the dresser and tossed Sherlock his pajama bottoms. "Don't want to be indecent if Mrs. Hudson comes upstairs." He slipped his pair of boxers on and brushed past Sherlock without meeting his gaze. He didn't hesitate to put the kettle on, rummaging through the fridge. "Eggs?" He asked softly, the carton in
his hands but his eyes on the ground.

With a roll of his eyes and a slight smirk, Sherlock put on the pajam bottoms before following John out the kitchen. He wasn't hungry, he never was really. "Sure. Sounds good." He was about to sit down to get off his feet but instead he moved over to his fiancé. He wrapped him in another hug. "Do you want to talk about it?" They had briefly before but maybe there was something more John wanted to say.

John pushed the eggs on the counter and leaned heavily against Sherlock. "I am so scared it will be me," he whispered, wide eyes darting up to meet his fiancé's. "That I'll leave you and never see you again. And just watching it all over again, knowing the result." His arms wrapped lightly around Sherlock's lower torso. This was too much. He wasn't sure he could do this. "I'm sorry. Sorry, it's stupid."

Sherlock closed his eyes, it was a fear he had as well. The thought of only have ashes in an urn on the mantel the only reminder of John was something he tried not to think about despite the fact it was a very real possibility. Especially since the tour had been extended another three months. The tour was only half over now, but anything could happen in the next six months to follow. "It isn't stupid." He didn't make the mistake of saying he worried about it too this time. He didn't want John to feel worse than he already did. Instead, he just hugged the army doctor close to him.

"It's scary," John whispered like a small child, keeping his eyes shut in hopes that he would stop crying. "You git." He looked up at Sherlock, laughing slightly and wiping at his eyes with the back of a hand. "Go sit down. Your feet must be killing you." He stood on his toes and gave Sherlock a quick kiss before turning toward the whistling kettle and pouring them each a cup of tea. It didn't take long but John had managed to cook the six eggs left in the carton and prepared each of their cups to tea. "Here." He slid the cup in front of Sherlock and sat down with his plate, taking several slow bites.

"Pain medication." Sherlock lied smoothly but walked over to a chair and sat down anyway. Hopefully the meds would kick in soon because even being on them for that short amount of time had been painful. He picked up the cup of tea and drank it quietly, watching John pensively from across the table. "You should go see Sarah and little Sandi today." The thought didn't exactly thrill him but his fiancé needed something to lift his spirits.

John looked up at Sherlock as he slowly finished a bite, swallowing and tilting his head to the side. "Why is that? I'm just fine here with you," he muttered, shrugging and returning to his food. "Need to take care of you." Another bite, slow chewing. "Besides, I need to be here to make sure you are taking care of yourself." He shook his head at the thought. Seeing Sarah and doing everything an expectant father got to do didn't sound pleasing to him at the moment. Spending time with Sherlock seemed like a much better plan. "I've got things to take care of," he lied as he glanced at his plate.

No more fighting. Sherlock didn't want to fight so he didn't say everything he was thinking. It wasn't like he cared about Sarah anyway. He sighed at his thoughts. The woman was scared and alone. Someone should be there. John should be there. Everyone always accused him of the being the stubborn child, but sometimes his fiancé was one too. Why did it bother him so much? At one time, he would have commended the army doctor for distancing himself from others. After a moment of contemplation he realized what it was. One of the things that had drawn him to John to begin with was his compassion for others. He was upset because his fiancé had disappointed him by being a selfish git. No. No arguing. He remained silent, sipping on the tea and staring at the table.

The fact that Sherlock even mentioned to John that he should go see Sarah startled him a bit. How

The
did he respond to that? 'Yes, wonderful. Let me leave you, my lovely fiancé, to go take care of the woman I cheated on you with.' That...just didn't sound right in his head at all. "Do...will that upset you?" He asked, looking at Sherlock but keeping his head low. "I know you don't like her or this situation. I don't want to leave you for her. Don't think it'd be fair." He bit his bottom lip and pushed his half empty plate away, taking a slow sip of tea. "Will you be alright for a few hours?"

"It's fine John. If it wasn't, I wouldn't have suggested it." Sherlock placed the cup of tea down and finally lifted his gaze to meet his fiancé's. A slight smirk tugged at his lips. "Besides, I'm sure Mycroft will show up at some point to make sure everything is okay. Especially since I tore out all the bugs he had placed in here awhile ago. At least, I think I got them all." He gave a slight dismissive shrug, the smirk growing.

John figured it must have been alright. What really pleased him was that he had started referring to Amy by name, or his own little nickname, over John's child or the infant. It made him smile softly. That smile quickly disappeared from his face at the mention of bugs. "You think you got them all?" He nearly dropped his tea on the table, hissing as some of the hot liquid sloshed over the side on to his hand. "You better have got them all, Sherlock! I don't want him hearing that!"

"I'm pretty sure I did, there is no way for knowing for sure without asking him." Sherlock replied, shrugging once more. He didn't have the heart to tell John, that it was entirely possible someone else could have listened in as well as it was unlikely Mycroft had time to sit and monitor the audio surveillance at all times. Probably someone who had screwed up somewhere and got stuck listening to it instead.

"Don't ask him," John whispered with a small smile as he stood up. "I'm going to go see Sarah then." He nodded and glanced around. "D'you want me to help you to the living room? We can get you a patch and you can sit and think about things. Maybe sleep. That pain medication should knock you out." He shifted and his boxers slid to hang low on his hips as he carried his plate to the sink. "Sound good?"

Sherlock smirked and then nodded. He got up off the chair and took the offered help by John without complaint. Once they made it to the couch, he plopped down on it and stretched out immediately. "I love you. Now go see our daughter." God, he really hated being an adult sometimes but he was getting better at it he supposed. Though, it didn't mean he had to like it. He probably never would.

John smiled down at his fiancé and met his lips in a soft kiss. "Love you too." He kissed Sherlock again, his heart beating fast at the fact that Sherlock had said our daughter. "I'll tell her you say hello." Changing into new clothes and getting ready didn't take long and soon John was out of the flat on his way to Sarah's.

Sherlock laid on his back, hands behind his head and staring at the ceiling after John had left. There wasn't a lot to do he could with his feet all tore up and the constant strain he kept putting on them by merely standing and walking on them. He wanted to go to his office but that really wasn't the best of ideas. As much as he hated it, staying off his feet was the best way to make them heal and he wanted to be back on his feet as soon as possible. Like John had said, eventually the pain medication kicked in and he dropped off to sleep.
John spent hours with Sarah, doing pointless little things like rubbing her sore feet and talking to her stomach in a ridiculously high voice. They talked about everything, from her pregnancy to how scared she was. How scared he was. Laughter and even some tears were exchanged before he decided to leave, parting with a small peck on her cheek and promising to stop by again before he left again for Afghanistan.

His taxi ride back was calm, a soft smile on his face, and when he entered the flat and when saw his fiancé sleeping on the couch he nearly melted. The man was perfection. Even while he was sleeping. Without a second thought, he toed his shoes off and crawled lightly on top of Sherlock, resting his head at the base of the other man's neck and relaxing. He decided he wouldn't fall asleep and would, instead, enjoy the steady beat of the consulting detective's heart and the rhythmic rise and fall of his chest.

A murmur was issued from Sherlock in his sleep, when John had crawled on him. In a drug induced haze, he wrapped his arms around his fiancé muttering how much he loved him before drifting back into a deeper sleep. His head leaned into the army doctor's to snuggle closer, his subconscious desiring more closeness despite his slumbering state.

John smiled softly and allowed himself to relax even more against Sherlock. "I love you too," he whispered, closing one eye as the other man snuggled against him. After a few moments of stillness John lifted his head slightly to gaze at his fiancé. Sherlock looked so much younger while he was asleep. No worry lines, nothing about a case causing him to frown or think too hard. Just peace. He placed a soft kiss on Sherlock's chin before returning his head to Sherlock's chest.

Usually Sherlock wouldn't have slept so long, but the medication and his own weariness had led to the long snooze. A few hours after John had came home, he finally woke up, pleasantly surprised to see his fiancé atop of him. He kissed the top of the army doctor's head, wrapping his arms tighter around John in a hug. "You should have woke me up when you got home."

"No." John shook his head the best he could, a warm smile on his face. "You look wonderful when you sleep and I didn't want to pass it up." Which was true. Sherlock didn't sleep much as it was and it was even more rare for John to be awake while his fiancé was exhausted. He closed his eyes for a moment as Sherlock hugged him tighter. "You are wonderful. How did I get so lucky?"

"It's hard to be as amazing as I am, I'll admit." Sherlock smirked. "As for how you got so lucky, it's because you are so adorable. Makes you irresistible." He knew John would probably scoff and disagree but that was what he was going for. He liked making the army doctor squirm and blush because it was just so damned easy.

"Oh, hush you." John playfully smacked Sherlock's chest, looking up at him with a small grin. "Stop," he stated with a bit of a serious tone, dropping his gaze instantly and clearing his throat. Don't blush. Don't let Sherlock see it. He buried his face into Sherlock's chest with a small chuckle. "M not adorable," he stated against Sherlock. "Or irresistible."

And there it was. His smirk got bigger. After a moment of thoughtful silence Sherlock spoke once more. "So, what do you want to do? Not much I can do but lay around...as annoying as I find that. And we aren't doing anything sexual until after we are married." Really, if he thought about it their relationship was mostly based on sex. Not that he had a problem with it because it was fun, new
and exciting but maybe Mycroft was right, they would need to take it down a notch once little Sandi was in the flat. This would be good practice. A trial run. But the question was, what were they to do? What did normal couples do, if not sex? He honestly didn't know.

Christ, he had nearly forgotten about their decided lack of sex until the wedding night. "Normal couples usually watch telly, make dinner." He smiled at the thought. "Normal things, I guess. Clean, take care of each other." His head lifted and he glanced at his fiancé with a smirk. "So I'm taking care of you. I can make something, if you would like. Are you hungry?"

Ah. Boring things. Maybe boring would be a nice change of pace? "No thank you. I have eaten more in the last couple of days than I usually do in a week. I will be fine for awhile. We could play Cluedo." Sherlock smirked, already knowing the answer to that suggestion. "Oh, did you buy the bell while you were out? So, I can call you when I desire? Speaking of taking care of me, you could start by getting the foot ointment out of our bedroom and putting it on my feet. This sick patient needs taken care of properly." He just smirked bigger, amusement clear in his eyes.

Leave it to Sherlock to bring Cluedo up. "No. Definitely not." He slowly pulled out of Sherlock's grip, shooting him a glare before standing fully. "But I will take care of your feet." He took a few steps before turning around. "And not because I lost some silly bet but because I am a doctor and I have to." It took him a while to find the ointment for Sherlock's feet but once he managed to find it he walked slowly back into the living room. With a sly smile he lifted Sherlock's feet and plopped on to the couch, resting Sherlock's feet on his lap and slowly starting to apply the medication. "We could talk. We need to," he muttered with a quick glance to Sherlock. "About the fights."

Sherlock winced, and he wasn't sure if it was from the ointment application or from the words John spoke. Right. Talk about the fights. It wasn't something he particularly wanted to do but he supposed his fiancé was right, it needed to be done. "Okay. We had three, which one do you want to talk about first?"

Three? John's eyebrows knitted together and he shifted in his seat. He only remembered two. Maybe his memory had already started getting rid of the horrid moments. "I think going at them in order would probably be best." He said with a nod. The lump in his throat wasn't going away, either. This was going to be difficult. "We both know why the first one started...I think..." he finished applying the ointment and rested a hand on Sherlock's shin. "We both realized how jealous we are of the other one's affair."

Sherlock nodded. "Yes, I have always been jealous John. Even after I forgave you. Then finding out she was pregnant with a child, your daughter, it was like I was never going to have a chance to forget what happened because she would always be there. Will always be in our lives now. Seeing you two together is like...that night all over again." The second fight. Jesus, he wasn't ready to talk about that one but that one had been the worst. Remembering it made him feel sick inside all over again.

That fight. Oh. John had to tear his gaze away from Sherlock. "I don't know what happened that night, Sherlock. I was upset and I...stress isn't even an excuse." He shook his head and closed his eyes. "I know you hate that she is pregnant," his voice cracked. "I'm sorry about that. I know that Amy is a representation of everything and I just..." He tilted his head and looked at his fiancé. "I'm sorry about that, I truly am." John was also excited about his daughter, about the future of Amy, but he wouldn't tell that to Sherlock. "And then...Jackson."

"My issue isn't with you having a daughter, my problem is Sarah. Not little Sandi. None of this is her fault. I don't blame her. I blame Sarah...you..." Sherlock trailed off and shrugged at Jackson's name. "I can try to explain why I did what I did but I don't know if that would make you feel better
It felt like somebody had replaced his blood with ice water. John had always known that Sherlock blamed him for the entire incident with Sarah. Actually hearing it from his mouth was different. "Don't blame Sarah." He shook his head. "I texted her and asked her to come over that night, Sherlock. It was all me. I asked her to sleep with me and she asked about you. She was worried..." he paused. Sherlock had never heard any of it. "And I said that you had run off and left me alone. That was when I just...I don't know, we kissed and I begged her to sleep with me." He bit his bottom lip with a shrug. "I was mad at you for leaving, mad at you for everything going on." He took a deep breath to steady himself. "Why did you sleep with Jackson?"

Sherlock frowned a bit. Everything that had happened to John almost a year ago had been his fault. All his fault. He supposed it made sense his fiancé had blamed it on him. He couldn't help but wonder if they would be here right now if he had never used the last of John's jam for an experiment. He was quiet awhile before finally answering the question. "Mycroft had told me I was engaged. That we were together. I didn't remember anything. I didn't feel anything. Jackson was the first person I saw when I woke up. My first memory. It was obvious he was attracted to me and I took advantage of that John. I desperately needed to have something I knew to be my own, something I could remember without it being recited to me. To have some kind of emotional attachment because I had absolutely none." He paused, not sure if he should tell his fiancé that shortly after getting each other off, his memory had returned in that instant.

It was different. So different. Sherlock hadn't really remembered him, had only been told he existed. While he had initially been upset he couldn't really yell at Sherlock. "Was that the reason you were so loud and vocal the last time we made love?" Did he really want to know? He had asked, so somewhere in his mind he obviously did. Actually hearing the answer from his fiancé might make him sick to his stomach. John's insight startled Sherlock and he lowered his gaze. "Yes. Everything was so different with him...gentle...vocal...I had never had that with you and it felt wrong to me...It was why I wanted to try it. To fix it in my mind. It bothered me...it was what was bothering me the day we got take out and you...you took off your ring because I hadn't told you what I was thinking and the tension was palpable." Not once could he bring himself to look at John, even after speaking.

John struggled to keep himself calm. Different. Everything was different with him. After their first few times having sex John figured Sherlock just liked it rough. While he wasn't exactly a big fan he figured he would go along with it to keep his fiancé happy. Had he been doing something wrong then? But suddenly it was all making sense. Sherlock felt horrible and felt like he needed to fix things. He was afraid to tell John. "Oh." He took a deep breath. "And you were just scared to tell me. You didn't want to upset me."

A nod was all Sherlock could muster in reply. If it had been a viable option, Sherlock would just get up leave and go somewhere else. He didn't want to be here and having this conversation. Without any real options he turned away from John, like he had done that had incited the third fight. Hopefully his fiancé wouldn't run off drinking again. He wasn't even sure what had started the last fight really. All he really remembered was he acted like a child and so had John. He wasn't trying to be childish this time around; he was just extremely uncomfortable with the current conversation.

John kept Sherlock's feet in his lap, frowning slightly. Calm. Stay calm. Don't snap. He ran his hand up and down Sherlock's calf soothingly. The other man clearly didn't want to talk about it anymore. They had left the other fight untouched but John wasn't going to push his fiancé if he didn't want to talk. "I love you," he whispered, resting his head against the back of the couch and
studying Sherlock. There wasn't much more he could say. Anything else might upset him. "And I owe you so much for everything you have done."

At John's voice Sherlock finally looked to his fiancé with the faintest of smiles. "Love you too." He shrugged at the last words. It was true. He had changed everything for John. He would never have his old life back. Only now, he didn't care about the changes. As long as the army doctor was there, that was all that really mattered. "I did it for us...things are changing, whether we like it or not...just better to work through it." He shrugged again and then shifted on the couch so his head could rest in John's lap.

They had never done this. Just relaxing on the couch. John decided the moment that Sherlock's head was in his lap that he quite liked it. His hand moved instantly to Sherlock's hair, running through it gently. "When I was little my mum would do this to me all the time to get me to sleep." He tilted his head slightly to meet Sherlock's gaze. "And she would tell me stories but I would always get upset because I would fall asleep before the end. She refused to tell me the end in the morning." His fingers shifted slightly and ran along the outside of Sherlock's ear as a soft smile spread across his lips.

This was nice. His eyes closed as his fiancé ran a hand through his hair. "Tell me a story John." Sherlock opened one eye to look up at the army doctor, a small smile on his face. It would be a nice distraction. It would be nice to not think about anything for awhile. He closed his one eye, though he wasn't in the least bit tired after his long drug induced nap. He was just content and relaxed.

"Tell you a story?" John laughed, pursing his lips for a moment in thought. "Well, okay." He bit his bottom lip and shifted slightly before taking a deep breath. "Once upon a time there was a little boy in London with quite the imagination." His hand shifted back to Sherlock's hair. "He always used to run around his Mum and Dad's flat with a pirate hat and a wooden sword. Determined, he was, that he would one day run off and become a pirate. So determined, in fact, that one day he did." John's voice rose and fell with the words, adding excitement when necessary. "Little Sherlock joined a gang of other pirates on the high seas, sailing the world. Until one day he met the son of a Naval officer while docked." He slowed his hand. "Would you like me to continue? It only gets cheesier from here."

Sherlock couldn't help but laugh, because he knew exactly where John was taking this story. He shifted once more, turning so his face pressed into his fiancé's chest. One arm slithered behind the army doctor, the other resting below his chin on John's stomach in a sort of hug. "Hey, don't stop now. You started the story, so now you have to finish it." He smirked into the chest of the other man.

John looked down at Sherlock with a knowing smirk. "Sherlock teased the young boy for his boring life of following orders and he told him about his life of adventure." The hair in Sherlock's hand stilled almost completely, just his fingers massaging Sherlock's scalp. "When he asked the little boy his name he replied 'John' and Sherlock asked John if he wanted to come with him." A smile and a small laugh. "So John agreed with a smile and the two young pirates sailed off into the sunset. The end." He shrugged and laughed softly to himself. "So...they were pirates."

"You will have to come up with better stories for when little Sandi is born." Sherlock snuggled into John's chest even more with a smirk. "I like this. Just laying here with you. Comfy. You make a good pillow. What else do you want to today? If you say watch 'crap telly' again, then we get to play Cluedo."

Better stories? Weren't there books for that or something? John raised an eyebrow and glanced
down at his fiancé, smiling weakly. "Just sitting here not enough for you? You can't even move." He pursed his lips and laughed. "You could tell me a story? Only fair." He took a deep breath. Spending time with Sherlock on the couch was perfect enough for him.

"I get bored easily, you know that." Sherlock fake pouted for a moment and then thought about a story to tell. He had never done that before. He enjoyed reading but usually only if it was nonfiction. It wasn't that he didn't enjoy fictional stories, they just didn't hold any real value or knowledge worth keeping. "Once upon a time..." He trailed off in thought and then asked, "John why do stories always start like that?"

Oh, of course. Sherlock's story would end in a damn question. "Sherlock, it is just a story. You don't have to start it like that. And I don't know why stories typically start like that. To make the story sound good?" John looked down at him and playfully ruffled his hair. "You are a genius. Be creative."

"Fine." Another fake pout as Sherlock thought for a moment. "A long time ago, in a land not of this realm..." He paused because he wasn't sure where he was going with this, "...there was an evil wizard, a brave knight and an orphaned boy." This was sounding stupid already, he was certain. He continued on anyway. "The evil wizard was trying to take over the kingdom the knight and orphan lived in. Many knights had tried and failed to defeat the wizard. One day the orphaned boy was dared by his friends to steal something from the wizard's tower. He brazenly entered the ominous, looming building. Inside the courageous knight and wizard were in a fight. He went unnoticed and he saw a shining black crystal floating above a pedestal. Surely that would fetch enough money to eat dinner tonight. The crystal was of course cursed with black magic, and it sent the boy sprawling onto the floor unconscious. The tower had shook and it was then the knight realized that the crystal acted as some sort of catalyst for the wizard. If he could break it, he would be able to be beat the evil wizard for sure. The problem was, getting to the crystal without being obliterated by some spell or other. He was certain his sword could destroy the crystal because it had been blessed by the White Goddess. His only hope was the boy, who was coming around. He threw the sword at the orphan's feet and he told the boy what to do. The boy was confused and scared when he woke up. The wizard was now focused on the boy but the knight kept the evil doer at bay and once more told the boy what to do. The sword was heavy and almost bigger than the orphan, making it difficult to pick up let alone wield. The boy stumbled forward, unable to raise the sword above his head. The pedestal rocked and fell over as the orphan crashed into it. The crystal fell as well, but didn't shatter. The tower rumbled violently, debris falling all around. He tried lifting the sword again, once more stumbling, as the boy barely got it off the floor. The sword fell into the crystal and it shattered immediately, releasing a black light that enveloped the whole tower. The boy, knight, wizard and tower blinked out of existence in the kingdom and peace was once more found."

He lifted his head to John when he finished the unexpected long tale, to see what his fiancé thought.

Wow. It was obvious now that John wasn't the one that would be telling little Amy stories at night. "How did you...that just..." He bit his bottom lip and tried to suppress a grin. Perfect. His fiancé was utterly perfect. "Wonderful." He bent his neck at an awkward angle to meet Sherlock's lips in a slow kiss. "You are telling Amy stories at night. I am horrid compared to you."

A brief and rare moment of modesty came over Sherlock. "Really? I forced the ending because I was becoming bored with the story." He gave a small shrug. Apparently he had a penchant for rhyming and storytelling. Who knew? Certainly not the consulting detective and he would have scoffed at the idea a year ago. He really had changed a lot. After a quiet, pensive moment he spoke again. "We never did finish talking about the fights...we probably should..."

John tensed and met Sherlock's gaze. The fights. "The third one," he muttered, his eyes glancing at
the ring around his left finger. "I just...I got upset, Sherlock. You weren't talking to me and then you started throwing stuff around your room..." His bottom lip got pulled into his mouth. This was difficult. "I didn't think. I had planned on everything being so laid back and when we started fighting I just got really upset. I'm sorry. I really am." He moved a hand to grab Sherlock's, intertwining their fingers and squeezing. "I want to marry you. I am never taking this off again."

Sherlock nodded. "I didn't know what to say then. I didn't want to upset you, which I failed at obviously." He frowned a bit. "Wasn't the third fight when you went to drink down at the pub? Honestly, I don't even know what started that fight...other than the fact I turned my back on you while laying on the couch..."

They had fought so much since he had been back in London that they had both lost track of the number. That made his stomach churn. "I don't even remember," he whispered. It was broken, scared. "Is that when Sarah dropped by? I just...I hadn't been to a pub since I deployed and I wanted a drink so bad. I was upset and I just couldn't stop." He let his head fall back, his hand resuming its movement in Sherlock's hair. "Did I call you when I was drunk?"

"Yes and yes. I went to go after you, which didn't work out well. I ran into Sarah just outside the front door. She was worried something might be wrong with baby so I took her to the hospital. I sent you a text but you ignored it, I guess. You called later, drunk. The conversation didn't last long." Sherlock explained with a shrug.

"I'm...sorry." John looked down at his fiancé and closed his eyes for a long moment. "That was irresponsible, to say the least. I just, I mean, I didn't think she would be dropping by until later, you know?" He shifted slightly on the couch, tilting his head to the side to study Sherlock's face at a good angle. This man was changing his life for him and his life altering mistake. When did he get so damn lucky? "I love you." He bent a bit, lifting Sherlock's head, and gently met the other man's lips.

Sherlock smiled and returned the kiss. "I love you too." He was quiet a moment, as he tried to come up with a topic that would improve both of their moods. "Do you want to hear the song I recorded for us to dance to? The CD should be in our bedroom somewhere. It is the first track. I think it is in a box on the other side of the door."

Hearing the music that Sherlock had recorded did sound wonderful but that meant he would have to get up and leave the wonderful moment they had created. "Sure," he whispered, carefully extracting Sherlock's head from his lap and moving toward the bedroom. The shrill ring of his cell phone from the kitchen table quickly caught his attention. He rushed toward it, picking it up and instantly going still. "What?" He stumbled back several steps, his back hitting the wall behind him. "S-Sh- Yes. Of course. Fifteen minutes." He ended the call and his eyes darted toward Sherlock. "Sarah's in the hospital again."
Sherlock got up as soon as John answered the phone. He frowned and got up off the couch, ignoring the instantaneous pain it brought on. He made it to their bedroom, put on some shoes and came back out. "Come on, I'll go with you." So his fiancé wouldn't argue he should stay behind, he went out the door and began going down the stairs. John was going to be there for Sarah, but someone needed to be there for John. What if something went wrong and the baby was lost? He kept his thoughts to himself, the army doctor would be plenty worried enough already.

John didn't even have time to argue, grabbing his coat and quickly following after Sherlock. No. No no no. This wasn't happening. He didn't want to think about it. He rushed past Sherlock, not even scoffing at the black car in front of the flat and eagerly climbing in. "No," he whispered out loud, dropping his head to his knees and running his hands violently through his hair. "Fuck, no, please." He took a deep, steady breath and shouted as he slammed his hand against the seat beneath him.

Sherlock had to steady himself on the hand railing to prevent himself from tumbling down the stairs as John brushed by. He hurried after his fiancé as fast as his pained feet would allow, clambered into the car and was grateful as soon as he sat down. Ignoring the burning sensation in his feet, he turned to John. "I'm sure it's nothing just like last time." He reached over and took the army doctor's hand giving it a reassuring squeeze.

The squeeze on his hand yanked him back into reality. John's gaze shot to Sherlock and he swallowed hard. How did he know? For all they knew he could be losing little Amy right now. After all the work, all the excitement. All the trouble. This wasn't fair. "How do we know?" He stated softly, his voice broken. "S-Sh-" He shook his head and squeezed Sherlock's hand without a second thought. It was his anchor. He needed it. The car stopped and John glanced once at Sherlock, smiling softly and exiting the car. "Sorry about your feet," he stated as he stood, glancing back into the car before walking around to help his fiancé from the car. He wasn't going into the hospital alone.

Of course, Sherlock had no way of knowing for sure. Thankfully the car came to stop and he got out with John's help. "They are fine. I'm fine." A lie but his fiancé had other things on his mind and worrying over his feet should be the least of them. He took John's hand, giving it another squeeze and walked into the hospital with him. They walked to the maternal ward and to the nurses' station to try and find out information on Sarah.

A young woman glanced at the two of them, her eyes settling on John hesitantly. "Doctor Watson?" She asked softly, looking down at her paperwork as she glanced down toward paperwork. "Sarah Sawyer...there was something wrong." She glanced up at him. "The child was born just fine, a month early but she is healthy." The young nurse bit her bottom lip as John's knees buckled and he leaned heavily against Sherlock. "Sarah didn't make it."

It felt like a train had hit him. What? Sarah couldn't just die, couldn't just bring Amy into the world and leave her without a Mum. "W-What?" He shook his head, praying that would knock the words out of his mind. Dead? No. "I'm sorry, that's- Is there another Sarah here? I thin-think you've got the wrong person."

Sherlock supported John and embraced him in hug. "Come on my dear doctor. Our daughter has been born. Don't you want to see her?" He needed his fiancé to concentrate on little Sandi and not
Sarah's passing. He wasn't upset about it personally, but he didn't rejoice in it either. He was merely indifferent about the whole thing.

"No." John pulled away from Sherlock slowly, snatching up the charts and looking them over. "She was here a day ago!" He shouted, throwing the clipboard down and drawing the attention of everybody in the area. "And you fucking let her go! She could still be alive! Now my daughter doesn't have a Mum!" His arm moved across the counter, knocking over paperwork bins and other supplies.

"John!" Sherlock wrapped his arms around his fiancé's waist and turned the army doctor around to look at him, his head tilted down slightly so they could make eye contact. "Your daughter needs you right now. Our daughter needs us. Now man up and let's go see Amy." He kissed John on the forehead and drew him near for a close tight hug.

John took several deep breaths, closing his eyes and relaxing against Sherlock. Daughter. She was here. "Right," he muttered with a nod. Sherlock was here. He could do this. Another nurse, clearly a bit shaken, led them to the room where several other babies were, picking up a small pink bundle and placing it in John's arms.

The little bundle wiggled and made a small squeak, her mouth opening slightly before she curled into the warmth of John's chest. He tensed, glancing up at Sherlock before dropping his gaze again in amazement. "The child's name?" The nurse asked quietly, failing to hide the smile on her lips.

"Amy Sandoval Sawyer-Watson," John stated instantly, without hesitation. She opened her eyes and he let out a small chuckle. His eyes, of course. It always worked out like that.

"Sarah didn't make it. Baby is fine. Is there any way you can get John's tour terminated? I know you would have to go above the Old Man's head...or maybe talk some sense into him? If I tried, I would just make things worse... -SH"

Mycroft's text was almost instant.

"His entire company was killed today. Seven fatalities. He doesn't have a choice. His new company is waiting. -MH"

John took a few steps back and plopped into a chair, holding the small bundle close to him and inspecting her curiously. His eyes. Sarah's nose. God bless her, his jaw line. "Hi there, Amy," he whispered, his finger moving to gently poke the tip of her nose. She studied him just as intently. Her hair was already a sandy blonde like his, a bit unmanageable. It scared him how much this little girl was already like him. She yawned and quickly fell back to sleep so John took the time to sit in awe at the small wonder in his arms.

Well, that was news that could wait. John had enough to deal with as it was. He glanced over to his fiancé and little Sandi and smiled faintly. He glanced back down at his mobile and after a moment of thought sent another message to Mycroft.

"Fine. Besides John, Amy doesn't have family or a legal guardian. With him at war, there could be issues of me claiming her since we aren't married yet. How soon can you push adoption papers though? –SH"
Already taken care of. You doubt me, dear brother? -MH

John glanced up at Sherlock and smiled weakly. His eyes were wet, it was clear he was trying not to cry. He didn't know if it was because of the sleeping infant in his arms or the fact that Sarah didn't get to live to see her. "Who're you texting?" He asked with a sniff. The movement jolted the small bundle, a small cry escaping the pink blanket. Without a second thought John started to rock her, keeping his eyes locked on his fiancé.

Sherlock smirked faintly at his older brother's text and was about to reply when John spoke to him. He glanced up John. "Mycroft. I was updating him on the situation." True enough. He put his mobile away and walked into the room. He slumped into the stool a doctor usually sat on when examining patients, just to get off his feet. He rolled it the rest of the way over John and Amy.

"Right." John smirked as the little girl calmed down, falling back to sleep like nothing had happened. "Look at her..." He glanced at Sherlock with wide eyes. Shock. Wonder.
"She's...perfect." Her lips smacked together and she curled away from Sherlock in favor of the warmth radiating from John's stomach. "Sarah did a wonderful job." His lips twitched in a smile before he glanced at his fiancé. "D'you want to hold her?"

"Me?" Sherlock asked, because he wasn't sure if he knew how to hold a baby properly. Well, he did but now he was feeling nervous and anxious. With John going back to Afghanistan, it would fall on him to raise little Sandi alone until his fiancé came back home. He supposed he might as well get the practice in now. "Yeah...sure..." He reached out to take the small bundle carefully.

John moved slowly and placed Amy in Sherlock's arms. She moved and opened her eyes, clearly not displeased about moving around so much. Her gaze locked intently on the new person, a small squeak escaping her mouth. "Maybe you should talk to her," John whispered.

Sherlock smiled down at Amy. "Hi little Sandi. I'm going to be your other dad. I hope that makes you glad." He smirked a little because that time he hadn't meant to rhyme, it had just happened without any real thought. He held the small bundle carefully against his chest and made sure to support the head.

Amy closed her eyes at the sound of Sherlock's voice. "She likes you already," John said softly. It was endearing to see his fiancé with his...their daughter. Amy opened her eyes again and kept her gaze on Sherlock. "Christ, Sherlock, we've got a kid." He reached out and gently ran a finger down Amy's cheek.

"Apparently she likes looking at me as well," Sherlock commented as he peered down at the tiny eyes looking up at him. He finally looked over to John. "Do you think they will let us take her home tonight? We will need to get special formula for her as well, I believe?" The thought of spending more time in a hospital than needed was not something he relished, but he couldn't imagine John leaving while little Sandi stayed. Well, he couldn't see himself leaving either if he was to be honest with himself.

John shook his head almost instantly. "Probably not. She is a month premature, Sherlock. They will need to keep her for a few days." His gaze lifted and almost instantly he decided that he was going to stay with his little girl over night. He was fairly sure that he didn't need to tell his fiancé twice. "The hospital has specialized formula for her right now." He leaned forward and gently met Sherlock's lips, unable to stop himself.

Amy squeaked a bit unhappily at the obstruction of Sherlock's face, taking several deep breaths before letting out a loud wail.
Sherlock nodded a bit at John's words and then frowned when little Sandi began crying. For a moment he thought about shoving the small bundle to his fiancé's hands. No. He needed to get used to this, because it would probably happen a lot. He quickly recalled the books he had read, and began to gently rock the infant in his arms.

John had slowly started to lean forward to take Amy from Sherlock but the other man started to rock his arms and he sat back with a small grin. Sherlock was going to make a great father.

Amy quieted slowly, her little chest moving quickly as she tried to breathe, blinking her eyes rapidly.

"Think she's hungry?" John asked softly, studying Sherlock with a raised brow.

Well, that was easy enough. Sherlock glanced from little Sandi over to John. "Maybe. Did you know different cries mean different things infants want? With enough time, I should be able to distinguish them apart. Shouldn't take too long, I don't think." He glanced back to the infant in his arms, still rocking her.

"What, too early to see what that one actually mean?" John asked teasingly. He smirked toward his fiancé and let his gaze fall to Amy. The scene in front of him made his heart swell. His daughter, innocent and having no idea that her Mum had just died, in the arms of a man who wouldn't have done such a thing just a year ago. A nurse entered the room with a bottle and handed it off to John without a second thought. "D'you mind if I feed her first?" He asked softly.

Sherlock looked back over to John and matched his smirk. "Of course not." He handed little Sandi over gently to his fiancé. "Tomorrow, would you mind if my Mum came over? She is very excited about the baby." He shifted a bit in the chair, pulling out his mobile again.

"Not at all," John stated as Amy latched on to the bottle and started to drink loudly. She swallowed as loud as she could, it seemed, and breathed heavily through her nose in order to get air. "I didn't think she would be very excited," he whispered, taking his eyes off of his daughter for a short moment in order to glance at his fiancé. "She isn't upset?"

Sherlock shook his head. "As she put it, 'it was the only way she would ever have grandchildren.' So, if she coos and ahs over little Sandi don't be surprised." He sent another text to Mycroft.

You should bring Mum to see Amy tomorrow. –SH

She has already found the address to the hospital. -MH

John laughed and slowly pulled the small bottle from Amy's mouth, yanking the sleeve down to his hand to wipe her mouth clean. "There you go," he whispered, his voice a bit higher than normal. She cooed as he placed her against his shoulder and gently started patting her back. "I hope she's always this low maintenance." He chuckled again and rested his gaze on the little girl lovingly.

Sherlock smirked a bit at his brother's text. Of course she had. "Looks like Mum will be here soon." He glanced to John and just then his mother walked in.

"There she is!" Nancy chirped, with a gift bag and a balloon that read 'It's A Girl!' She gave the gifts to her son and walked over to John and the baby.

"There she is!" Nancy chirped, with a gift bag and a balloon that read 'It's A Girl!' She gave the gifts to her son and walked over to John and the baby.

John smiled bashfully at his fiancé and let his gaze travel to his future mother-in-law. "Hello, Mrs. Holmes," he stated shakily. She seemed more intimidating in person. Taller than him, that was for sure. Both the Holmes boys were tall, it came from somewhere. "Pleasure to see you again. This is
Amy," he explained awkwardly.

The little girl twisted slightly in the pink blanket, her eyes adjusting to the new person in the room and narrowing slightly, much like John.

"Nancy," She corrected automatically. The Holmes mother peered fondly down at Amy. "She's beautiful. Has your eyes."

Sherlock smiled a bit as his mother and fiancé spoke. He sent another text to his older brother.

*You can visit too, if you want. You're an Uncle now. –SH*

*Handling a situation with the Korean elections. Maybe later. -MH*

John bit his bottom lip. "Oh, yes. Sorry." He took a deep breath and tried to keep himself calm. "D'you want to hold her, then? I'm sure she'd like that." He held the small bundle out and Amy twisted slightly in her blanket, desperate to get back to the warmth her father provided.

Nancy took Amy carefully, holding the infant to her bosom, cooing and talking softly Amy and completely ignoring the other two men in the room. She was clearly thrilled and enthralled with the baby.

Sherlock put his mobile away after reading the latest text from his older brother. He peered into the bag. It was a fair sized gift bag but not very heavy. He moved the paper around. There was a stuffed dog with over sized floppy ears, teeny tiny white shoes, a pink onesie, and a light yellow dress. He offered the bag to John, to see if he wanted to inspect the contents as well.

John watched Amy intently, glancing at Nancy before the bag caught his attention. He took it with a weak smile, glancing inside and taking quick stock of the items. Apparently Nancy already loved the little girl like her own. She had done more to prepare for Amy than he had. "Thank you," he responded with a tight throat, standing slowly. "I just...I need some fresh air." He set the bag beside Sherlock and stumbled from the room.

He couldn't do this. Not without Sarah. Amy needed a Mum and just minutes of her being brought into the world, she had lost that. How was he going to do this? He had to go back to Afghanistan, to his company, for six months. He slid down the wall, curling into himself, and slamming his eyes shut.

Sherlock frowned as he watched John leave the room. He glanced to his mother and she merely nodded. Words were seldom needed in the Holmes household at times. He got up off the small stool and left the room. He found his fiancé slumped against the wall and he sat down next to the army doctor. He wasn't sure what to say, so he took John's hand and gave it a reassuring squeeze.

John didn't hesitate to squeeze Sherlock's hand back. ''I know you don't want to hear this," he whispered, turning his head to look at his fiancé. ''I miss Sarah." He closed his eyes, knowing they were already red from the tears that had started coming without his permission. ''Sherlock, Amy doesn't have a Mum now. Sarah...she was so excited. I talked to her yesterday and she...Sherlock, she had so many things ready for her." His voice broke and he curled into Sherlock with a sob. Soldiers weren't supposed to cry but John was breaking. He was crashing and burning.

Lately, Sherlock had been getting better about saying the right thing in times like these. However, right now he was sure he wouldn't be able to find any words. So, without a word he wrapped John in a hug and comforted him as best as he could. He wanted to tell his fiancé everything would be fine and work out for the best but those seemed like trite and hollow words so he continued to hug
John quietly.

This was supposed to be one of the happiest moments of his life, based on what everybody had told him while he was growing up. "I'm sorry. I should be in there being the best Dad I can to Amy, not some blubbering idiot outside." A hand gripped Sherlock's shirt tightly as he tried to compose himself. "She really is beautiful. I'm glad she didn't get my nose." He laughed softly, opening his eyes and looked up at his fiancé with a small smile. "And she likes you."

"It's fine. Perfectly natural response, given the situation," Sherlock replied. He gave a light kiss to John's head. "You think so?" He supposed his fiancé was right, she had calmed down for him pretty quickly. He wondered if she would always be that easy to sate or if she would end up being a fussy baby. He had read up on both and figured since he didn't sleep much anyway, being up all night wouldn't be that much of an imposition.

John placed several soft kisses along Sherlock's jaw, pulling away with a sigh. "When you comfort me like this I get so bloody turned on," he whispered in Sherlock's ear. It was in that exact moment he regretted telling his fiancé he didn't want to have sex until their wedding night. "I've been up here before. There's a supply closet two doors to the left and I've had dreams of taking you in there." He pulled away with a cocky smirk, moving slowly to his feet. "Guess I'll have to wait." He offered his hand to the man on the floor, glancing into the room and smiling. Nancy was going to make quite the grandmother.

Sherlock couldn't help but squirm closer to John from the kisses. Wait? Oh right. He cocked an eyebrow, smirking a bit. "Hey, waiting was your idea." He took the hand, standing on his feet as carefully as he could. Ignoring the urge to take his fiancé right there in the hallway, he moved back to the room. His mother was in the rocking chair, murmuring quietly to the sleeping baby in her arms.

"Never said I was complaining. I'm sure it's going to be well worth the wait." John followed Sherlock into the room and seemed to relax the moment he was near Amy. Sleeping. Content. Happy and innocent and not knowing what was really going on around her. "I'm so glad you like her," he whispered to Nancy, smiling warmly. "And you got her to sleep. I'll pay you to be a nanny while I'm gone," he half-joked.

Nancy smiled and shook her head. "Shhh..." She chastised quietly, indicating Amy sleeping in her arms. She got up slowly and carefully, and offered the baby back to John. When her future son-in-law took the delicate bundle she excused herself quietly and politely. She gave Sherlock a pat on the shoulder before leaving the room.

Sherlock sat back down in the doctor's stool. His feet did not like all the attention they had been getting lately. At this rate, he was certain his feet would never heal or at least not properly. He looked up to John holding little Sandi and gave a smile.
John watched Nancy with a smile, moving to sit with Amy hesitantly. "I'm not going home tonight," he whispered as he glanced at Sherlock. "I need to stay here wi-"

The door opened and Mycroft entered slowly, smiling and letting his eyes dart to the infant in John's arms. "Congratulations," he stated calmly, his gaze moving toward his younger brother.

"Thank you, Uncle Mycroft," John said with a bit of a smirk.

Sherlock nodded to John, knowing what John was going to say. "I figured. I'll be here with you both." He glanced to Mycroft with a smirk. "Did those Korean elections work out the way you wanted?" He didn't really expect an answer. The shoes on his feet were beginning to irate his already agitated feet, so he kicked them off. He wiggled his toes once the socks were removed as well. Still didn't feel great but it was a slight relief.

A small cry escaped Amy and John winced, looking nervously at his daughter. Christ, she wasn't sleeping for very long already. A nurse came into the room with a warm smile, moving John so he would stand. She walked him through changing the small diaper and making sure he did everything right.

"You'll make a proper husband out of him yet," Mycroft muttered to Sherlock as John settled back down. His index finger was being held tightly by Amy and she was sucking on it boredly, her eyes locked on her Dad's face.

Sherlock watched John wince at the cry. "Mum warned us to be quiet." He gave a slight smirk. He watched the army doctor and nurse change the diaper and it was pretty much how the book said how to do it. He glanced over to his brother, the smirk returning once more. "Here I thought he would be making me the proper husband."

Mycroft couldn't help but pat his brother on the shoulder. "He needs you now more than ever, Sherlock. He has his first child and doesn't have Sarah with him. It is going to be difficult." He lifted his gaze just in time to see John setting Amy in his arms. "I, oh, tha-"

"Hold her, Mycroft," John stated with an amused smile. Amy tilted her head to get a good look at the new person holding her, yawning and eagerly snuggling into his chest. "See, despite her better judgment, she likes you. Imagine that." He moved to lean against Sherlock a bit, wrapping his arm around his fiancé's shoulders.

Difficult. Yes, Sherlock supposed his older brother was right. It wouldn't be easy for him either. He didn't know what the hell he was doing. Sure he had read a bunch of books to help prepare him but would that be enough? He smirked at the sight of Mycroft holding little Sandi. He relaxed into John, resting his head on his fiancé's shoulders. He brought his hands up to rest on John's, giving a brief light squeeze.

John glanced down at Sherlock with a warm smile, bending down to gently place a kiss in his hair. "Perfect Uncle right there," he commented with a smug smile. Amy had already fallen asleep, appearing completely content with her full stomach and clean diaper. He didn't hesitant in pulling away from Sherlock to take Amy back from a rather uncomfortable looking Mycroft.

"Right, I must be going. Good luck with all this," Mycroft stated tightly, swallowing hard as he
turned and left the room. John glanced at Sherlock, struggling to hold back a laugh so Amy wouldn't wake up. He moved to sit on the examination table, holding Amy close and relaxing against the wall as his eyes closed.

Sherlock watched his older brother carefully. He didn't think Mycroft was uncomfortable about having little Sandi but rather feeling like he was missing out on something his older brother felt like he would never be able to have himself. He only assumed his deduction to be correct with how Mycroft had left. His gaze shifted to John and he smiled. His fiancé looked so happy with Amy in his arms.

"I love it when you smile," John commented softly as he cracked one eye open. "When you look happy like that...it makes my stomach twist," he admitted with a small blush. He shifted Amy in his arm so she could rest against his chest. One little hand moved and gripped the fabric of his shirt tightly, her head resting just below his collarbone. "I'm always trying to get you to smile or laugh." One hand moved to support Amy's little body as he slid to lay at an awkward angle to make her comfortable. "I especially love it when you say 'I love you' first."

Without using his feet, Sherlock slid the rolling stool over to John by pushing off a nearby ledge. He slid off it and laid down next to John. He nestled his head onto his fiancé's shoulder. "I love you," he whispered into the army doctor's ear. He smirked a bit and then tilted his head so he could reach John's cheek and gave it a quick kiss.

John grinned, unable to stop himself, and turned slightly to meet Sherlock's gaze. "I love you too," he replied with a small laugh. "I always will." He placed a soft kiss on the top of Sherlock's head and hesitated when he felt his phone go off. It was a call and he glanced at Sherlock. Should he answer it? Calls always meant something bad. Who on Earth would be calling him right now? Always interrupted by a damn phone call. For entirely selfish reasons, Sherlock didn't want John to answer the phone. It could actually be important or it could be some sort of bad news. He gave a small shrug in response to his fiancé's glance. He sat up, ready to take little Sandi just in case the army doctor opted to step outside the room and answer the call.

John slowly worked his mobile out of his pocket, smoothly handing Amy over into Sherlock's arms. "I'll be right back." He slid off the examination table and answered the phone. "Hello?" The door shut behind him just as the person on the other line started to talk.

It took over ten minutes for John to figure everything out, to learn what had happened, and for the color to return slightly to his face. He entered the room in his best attempt to make it look like nothing had happened. No words. Nothing. He moved to the examination table and took his spot next to Sherlock without a second thought but stared at the opposite wall blankly.

Sherlock absently rocked little Sandi while she slept. When John came back in he raised his eyebrows expectantly but his fiancé didn't say anything. "John?" He asked quietly, so as not to wake the baby in his arms.

"Did you know?" John asked softly, glancing at his fiancé with a small frown. "It happened a few hours ago. Mycroft knew, they said. So...you knew?" His eyes dropped to Amy. Dead. All of them. The men he called his family, the ones he had grown so close to, were all gone. He should have been with them. If he hadn't have been selfish he would have been with them, protecting them. Doing his job.

It didn't take any time to follow what John meant. "Mycroft text me about it shortly before my mum came by. I didn't say anything because you were upset about Sarah. You should be happy right now..." Sherlock indicated little Sandi in his arms. Would this start another fight? Or would
his fiancé understand?

Right. It was all true, really. Sherlock had a good reason to keep it from him. "I know." He moved forward and gently met Sherlock's lips. "It's alright. You are fine." And it was. Sherlock wanted to protect him. He deepened the kiss without a second though, forgetting that his daughter was in Sherlock's arms.

Sherlock smiled and returned the kiss briefly. He pulled away though, indicating little Sandi in his arms once more. The infant was still sleeping at least. He looked around for a place to lay Amy down, and saw a bassinet. He stood, ignoring the pain in his feet and placed her down gently. For a brief moment he thought of pulling John to the supply closet mentioned by his fiancé earlier. That would irresponsible. Also, no sex until after the wedding. He sighed quietly, sitting back down on the stool to get off his feet.

John watched his fiancé with a small smile, standing the moment the other man sat down. "I love you." He spread his legs and sat lightly on Sherlock's lap, locking his arms around the other man's neck. "And I cannot wait to call you my husband." Kissing Sherlock was something he would never get tired of and he gently met the other man's lips.

Sherlock returned the kiss, telling John he loved him back. He wasn't sure how much longer he would be able to resist his arousal. Waiting until the wedding night was going to be harder than he thought. He wrapped his arms around John, to help keep the other man balanced and to pull him closer still.

This could end up being quite the bad idea. Christ, his daughter was in the room and he was ready to rip Sherlock's clothes off. John nipped at Sherlock's bottom lip, taking the time to take a deep breath before letting his tongue explore Sherlock's mouth. Memorize. Take everything in. A soft moan escaped his mouth, his hips involuntarily rocking forward, and that was when he pulled away. His forehead rested against Sherlock and he grinned down at his fiancé. "How's it feel to be a Dad?"

Sherlock explored John's mouth eagerly, whimpering with desire from the thrusting from the man on top of him. Stopping? Oh. Right. It was easy for him to forget the deal when John was all over him. It took a moment for him to concentrate on the question, rather than his body. "I don't know yet. Still taking it all in, but...I think it will grow on me..." He smiled slightly. He had never thought he would be a father and even now he wasn't sure he would be good at it but he would try.

A smile tugged at John's lips and he wiggled slightly. "You will be fine considering you hardly sleep," he stated with amusement. In fact, John was thankful that his fiancé hardly slept. With Amy, Sherlock's odd sleeping patterns were a Godsend. "She likes you. You will be fine. I have faith in you." He wanted to pull himself from Sherlock's lap. "Is this uncomfortable?"

Sherlock smirked a bit and shook his head. "Not at all my dear doctor." There wasn't a backing on the small stool, so it took some effort to balance them both but he really didn't mind. He leaned forward and kissed John once more, tongue exploring almost immediately. Maybe he could tempt his fiancé into violating the no sex rule. He wouldn't ask or plea; he was far too stubborn to do that. However, trying to seduce the army doctor was something he was fairly confident he could do with enough time.

The kiss was soft and slow and perfect. John was sure he wouldn't want to ever stop. He returned the kiss eagerly, exhaling loudly through his nose as one hand gripped Sherlock's side tightly. His other hand ran lightly along Sherlock's jaw. Christ. He moaned into his fiancé's mouth but managed to keep his hips frozen in place. No sex, he reminded himself.
Sherlock continued the kiss, opting to breath though his nose like often did when he didn't want to break the kiss to allow for normal breathing. One hand slid up John's shirt, and then his fingernails scratched down lightly on the skin below. The other hand rested on the back of his fiancé's head, fingers running through the short hair.

The nails on his skin threw him over the edge and his hips thrust forward without his consent. Every muscle in his body tensed for a moment. John's thoughts were suddenly clouded and all he could think about was Sherlock. "Fuck," he whispered against his fiancé's lips. He pressed his erection against Sherlock's stomach with a soft moan. "Ah," he stifled his cry with a harsh kiss. "Sherlock."

Sherlock smirked behind the kiss. His fingers continued to scratch along John's back. He would have bucked back but he was certain that would cause him to lose his balance and they would both end up on the floor. Not a bad idea, but collapsing off the chair in a crash wasn't really that appealing to him. It would wake up little Sandi, probably, and that would ruin everything. Despite his constantly aching feet, he pushed them backward on the rolling stool until his back was against a wall to offer them both a little more support. He moved his lips to John's ear, where he began to lick and suck it all over.

John dropped his head slightly to give Sherlock better access, panting heavily already. Wait. Didn't they agr- Oh, Christ, that felt wonderful. "Sherl-" He took a deep breath and managed to get a hand under Sherlock's shirt, scratching at his skin with a desperate moan. Angry. He was angry. Upset. Needed a distraction. He wanted to take it out on Sherlock. He moved his head, pulling away from Sherlock's mouth, and roughly grabbed one of the other man's hands. He met Sherlock's gaze for a moment before slamming it against the wall behind them. "We agreed," he whispered, moving to suck at the skin on Sherlock's jaw.

Sherlock couldn't help but squirm from the scratching on his chest. Apparently his fiancé had more control than he had given him credit. "You said kissing and snuggling was okay." It was all he had done, although his intent had been to incite things further. He tilted his head so John could have better access to his jaw. He wanted to be selfish and keep things going but if waiting was something his fiancé really wanted to do. He supposed he could always find a bathroom. "You and I both know if things keep going…" He trailed off, figuring he would leave it up to John at this point.

"You're seducing me," John whispered with a bit of a smirk against Sherlock's skin. "I'm not a total idiot, y'know." He tightened his grip on Sherlock's arm, pressing it harder into the wall. "You are a bit hard to deny and you know that." And how could he just leave with this bloody erection? How was he even supposed to walk straight after that? "I want to wait," he whispered, his breath hitching as he pressed against Sherlock again. "But I've always wanted to get off in a hospital like this." He paused and slowly kissed his fiancé. "I hate you a little."

The pressure on his arm didn't go unnoticed. Sherlock understood and knew it well. Angry and desperate, the way he felt when he had caught John and Sarah together. However, this was different for John. He knew he could use it his advantage if he wanted to and there was a part of him that wanted that badly. No. He could wait damn it. "Then let's wait. Besides, you were the one who said we can't do it with Amy around." He tilted his head to little Sandi sleeping in the bassinet, completely innocent and unaware.

For a moment John almost told Sherlock to ignore their sleeping daughter and make him feel better but he bit his tongue. If Sherlock, of all people, could exhibit some self control then he could, too. Knowing him he would end up waking Amy up right in the middle of their little exploit. "I'm sorry," he whispered, smirking a little. "But you can seduce me in six months like that and I'll give
you anything you want."

Sherlock smirked back. "Trust me, I know." He rested forehead his against John's shoulder. He was trying to ignore the erection in his trousers. Wait. They were going to wait damn it. Good thing being stubborn was a strong trait of his, otherwise he was sure he would lose the self control he was exuding right now. The thought of getting up and finding a restroom was strangely not that appealing, largely due to his already suffering feet.

John released Sherlock's arm with a small snort of laughter. "Sod off," he whispered playfully, slowly moving off of his fiancé and not even trying to hide his erection. "Want me to wheel you to the bathroom, then?" He smirked and eyed the bulge in the other man's trousers. Just because he wanted to wait didn't mean he wouldn't let Sherlock relive himself. That would just be plain rude.

It was times like these, his stubbornness made him a difficult person to get along with. Really, it was just a matter of stubborn pride. "No, I'm...I'll be fine," Sherlock replied. He shifted on the stool, fingers drumming on his legs without any real rhythm. It was clear he was trying and failing to distract his mind.

John crouched in front of Sherlock with a soft smile. "It's fine, it really is. I kind of know how uncomfortable you must be." His hand soothingly ran up and down his fiancé's thigh. "Or would you consider a hand job sex?" His lips twitched in an attempted smile and his hand traveled higher. If it meant making Sherlock happy then he could that for him.

Sherlock squirmed into the touch on his thigh. He smirked a bit, cocking an eyebrow. "It is technically a sexual act. If we are going to do this, might as well do it right." He shifted once more and then forced himself to his feet despite his better judgment. He managed not to cringe or groan in pain. "I'll be back in a bit." He didn't get far before stumbling into a wall for support. His feet had endured enough abuse over the last couple days and they didn't want to cooperate with him now. It was too much. All he wanted to do was sink to his knees and give reprieve to his feet but he didn't like looking weak in front of John. On the upside, the intense pain had made him think about something other than his erection which was beginning to fade away since the torture occurring wasn't of the pleasurable kind.

John bolted to Sherlock and supported the other man the best he could. "C'mon, lay down." He used one arm to usher Sherlock to the examination table, the other fishing in the pocket of his jeans. "Brought some of your pain meds. Why don't you get some sleep?" The last thing he needed was an in pain fiancé and a soon-to-be hungry infant. "I'll give you half, yeah? That will keep you out of pain and it will just be like a quick nap." He grinned and handed half a pill to Sherlock just as the tell-tale signs of a crying Amy started to come from the other side of the room.

Sherlock sat down on the table as requested, more than happy to be off his feet. He didn't want to sleep, but pain medication was more than just a tempting idea so he took the pill and swallowed it dry. He laid down just as little Sandi started crying. John could tend to her. His fiancé would probably want to anyway. He needed to stay off his feet as much as possible while the army doctor was still home, so he could actually be on them when John went back to war. No one would be there to take care of Amy while his fiancé was gone, except for him. He figured his Mum and Mycroft may pitch in here and there but a vast majority of the responsibility was going to lie with him. He realized then, that his days as a consulting detective would probably be halted until after his honeymoon with John. He sighed at the thought, it had been almost a year since he had truly worked a case last. He missed it. The chase, the puzzles, the thrill, the hunt, all of it. Feeling bitter and grumpy, he turned his back to his fiancé and the baby.

John watched Sherlock for a long moment, biting his bottom lip before slowly turning to his
daughter. "Shhh, Amy, honey." He picked the little girl up, causing her to wail louder. For such a small thing she had quite the set of lungs, John determined instantly. "It's alright, Daddy's here." He started to slowly rock her in his arms, his eyes locked on his fiancé's back with a small frown. Something was bothering Sherlock but he was too damn busy with the crying infant in his arms that he couldn't ask. "Hey, it's fine. Shhh." He bounced slightly on his toes before slowly starting to hum. The vibration of his chest against her body seemed to calm her and she was reduced to loud sniffing and staring at her Dad in wonder.

The crying baby irritated his already sour mood. Sherlock was about to shout at John to shut the kid up but by then the infant had settled down. With a discontent sigh, he slammed his eyes shut hoping that would make the pain medication work faster and he would be able to find peace in slumber. A moment ago he hadn't wanted to sleep but now he didn't know how to make the brooding thought process turn off other than passing out into a drug induced sleep.
John moved to sit in the chair in the corner of the room, far away from Sherlock. He could feel the tension in Sherlock from where he was and it upset him. "See, look there," he whispered, looking down at Amy. "Just fine. Daddy's here. No need to be scared, is there? Of course not." He bent and placed a soft kiss on Amy's forehead, moving to rest her against his chest as he relaxed. "Sleep," he whispered as he held her against his chest, her head resting on his shoulder. He took his own advice and let his head rest against the wall. Before long they were both asleep, Amy using her Dad's chest as her bed and John snoring softly.

Another sigh escaped Sherlock. It was because of times like these, he seriously doubted his ability to be a good parent. Pouting over what? Because he hadn't had case in awhile? God, he really was a child sometimes. The room settled into silence. He continued to lay there, despite his realization about his childish ways. It didn't take much longer for the drugs to kick, his body relaxing as sleep found him.

John woke slowly, Amy staring at him curiously. "Oh, good morning," he whispered, turning his head slightly and discovering a still warm bottle on the counter across the room. "Hungry?" He asked softly as he stood, glancing once at Sherlock as he grabbed the bottle and held it to Amy's mouth. She latched on instantly, sucking loudly and lifting one little hand to rest on her Dad's as he held the bottle. The moment was making him smile but when Mycroft entered the room he tensed. No good ever came from that man.

"I know you've got three days left," Mycroft muttered softly, glancing at his sleeping younger brother. "But...we need you. Things have gotten worse a few miles outside of Bastion. They need you."

John's blood ran cold but he managed to hold onto Amy as she continued drink her formula as loud as she possibly could. Leave? He couldn't leave Amy or Sherlock. He still had a few days left with his little family. "Are you sure?" Mycroft only nodded and John felt his knees going out, managing to fall softly into his chair without disturbing his daughter.

The sound of voices made Sherlock stir from his sleep. One was John's of course and the other was his brother's? That brought him to full consciousness and he rolled over quickly to see what was going on. Body language said it all and he shot a glare at Mycroft. He then looked over to his fiancé and little Sandi. He slid off the bed, thankful the pain medication was still working and helped to dull the pain of the pressure on his feet. He walked over to John, pulling the rolling stool with him and sat in front of the army doctor. He wanted to hug the other man tightly, but that would result in crushing the small bundle in John's arms. He opted for placing a hand on one of his fiancé's arms.

John looked up at Sherlock and took a deep breath. Leaving. Turning around three days before he was supposed to and leaving his fiancé and daughter to throw himself back into a war zone. It wasn't fair. It was never fair. "I'm sorry," he whispered. Little Amy seemed oblivious to the sudden tension in the room, continuing to drink out of the bottle with a manner akin to John's after a week without a real meal. "Sherlock, I'm so sorry."

Don't start a fight right before John left. Sherlock wanted to blame his fiancé for everything. If the army doctor hadn't insisted on going back into the military or slept with Sarah they wouldn't even be here at all. Instead he simply said, "It's fine. Don't get trapped in any tunnels this time around,
okay? I can't come save you this time. I'll be taking care of our daughter while you are away." It was an attempt at humor, the faintest of smirks touching the corner of his lips.

John tried to return the smirk but only managed to slam his eyes shut. "How long do I have?" He asked softly, opening his eyes to stare at Amy.

"A few hours. We have your things here." Mycroft motioned to his Army bag leaning on the wall beside the door, his uniform and boots in front of it. "I will be in the waiting room."

The moment they were alone John looked at his fiancé. "Sleep with me," he whispered. "Please. Amy will be asleep and we can find a room."

Besides the initial glare given to his older brother, Sherlock had refused to acknowledge Mycroft's presence in the room. When his brother left, he raised his eyebrows at John. Usually, he would agree readily to such a request. However, he really wasn't in the mood. Maybe it was a side effect of the medication or maybe he was trying to stay committed to the agreement of no sex. He really wasn't sure. "Are you sure?" The question was stupid because he already knew what the answer would be even though he had been hesitant to begin with. He supposed John was a selfish lover at times because of it, but if the answer was 'yes' like he thought it would be then he would do it anyway. Sometimes, he was more submissive than he would like to admit.

The question from Sherlock made John look back down at Amy. Of course he wasn't sure. He wanted to get everything out of system, wanted to take it out on Sherlock, which is something they had done so many times. It wasn't healthy at all, he knew that, but *Christ* he needed to do something. He dropped his head without an answer, pulling the empty bottle from Amy's mouth and moving to burp her. "I don't know," he mumbled finally. "I'm frustrated. Upset. That's...just usually what we do."

The answer genuinely surprised Sherlock. "If you really want to, then we'll go find that supply closet." When the consulting detective was upset he usually pouted until things went his way, so he really wasn't sure how other people dealt with things. "Well, before us...what did you usually do to relieve stress? Or did you always use sex as a fall back?"

There was no mistaking the flush that quickly spread across John's cheeks. He was *not* telling that to Sherlock. "Um..." He cleared his throat and glanced up at his fiancé. "I just watched some...y'know, and used my hand. On a lucky day I would go to Tesco and maybe get a nice woman there." He looked back down at Amy, ashamed that he'd said that with his newborn daughter in his arms. "I've always used some sort of sexual act as an outlet. Or, well, one time when I was seventeen I punched the wall in my bedroom. Mum nearly killed me."

Sherlock smirked a bit. "John, you forget I have used your laptop on multiple occasions. I am well aware of your proclivity toward porn." It really didn't surprise him that his fiancé had used sex like that many times before. "You need to get a hobby." The smirk got slightly bigger. Moving in at an angle due to little Sandi in John's arms, he gave his fiancé a quick kiss on the lips.

John smiled after the kiss and laughed softly. "I've got one. I invade countries, remember?" The joke was lighthearted and poking fun at their situation the best he could. There wasn't much more that he could do. He expertly avoided the mention of porn and looked down after Amy burped softly. "There we go," he whispered, holding her out with a proud smile. "All set then! Sleepy time, yes?" Amy reached a hand out toward his face, grabbing at his nose.

For someone who didn't think he would make a good father, Sherlock thought John was doing a pretty good job so far. He almost mentioned it, but his fiancé would probably disagree and mention something about having to leave for war. So, he kept his thoughts to himself. When the army
doctor did leave, little Sandi would be all he had left of John. Just a piece, but it would have to do until his fiancé came home for good. And maybe, just maybe he might be good at this parenting thing after all. Though, he still had some doubts about himself.

John glanced over at Sherlock as he tucked Amy safely into his arms, holding her close to his chest in an attempt to get her to sleep. "Remember that you have got people to help you," he stated calmly. He needed to tell Sherlock everything he could now before he forgot or ran out of time. "Your brother, Mrs. Hudson." He paused and chuckled softly. "Your Mum, even. She seemed excited about Amy." His voice dropped as he noticed Amy's chest slowing down. The moment he was asleep he placed her in the small bed provided, moving toward his stuff and slowly pulling off his civilian clothes. He stood clad in only in boxers and dog tags, staring at his uniform as his hands clenched several times at his side.

Using the wall, Sherlock pushed himself on the stool over to John. "What about your sister? Does she even know?" He wasn't sure if his fiancé would want Harry around little Sandi since she was an alcoholic. He wrapped his arms around John's waist from behind in a tight hug, resting his head on the army doctor's back. "I'll miss you. I have little Sandi to keep me company this time. I certainly won't be bored." Maybe still lonely, but only John could fill that void. Just six more months. The tour was half over. Then, John would be home all the time. Then maybe, just maybe they would be able to live a peaceful life.

"She doesn't know," John whispered, turning his head slightly even though he wouldn't be able to see Sherlock. "Harry always wanted me to have kids. Last time I talked to her she had stopped drinking for a few months." He paused and moved his hands to rest on Sherlock's, glancing down with a weary smile. "Maybe call her? The number's written down in the notebook under my chair." He smirked and turned around so Sherlock's head was resting against the tense muscles of his stomach. "I will miss you so much. We will still Skype and text." A hand rested protectively on the back of Sherlock's skull. "Six months and we will be together again."

"I'll let her know." Sherlock continued to hold John in a hug. He didn't want to let go. Not yet. He wanted to make the moment last as long as he could. Trying to find the humor in something just to ease things along, he glanced down at the stool he was sitting on. "I'm going to have to get one of these. I'll just roll around in the flat. Give little Sandi a ride maybe. Twirl around a bit. Kids like that, don't they?"

"Depends on the kid," John replied with a small laugh. "You would have to be careful, wouldn't want to run over her fingers once she started crawling." He glanced over at their sleeping daughter. "She'll probably start doing that before I get back. You will have to make sure you don't leave anything out." His free hand moved to rub the back of Sherlock's neck, trying to keep him as calm as possible. Everything would be fine. He had made it through six months without a problem. He could do it again. It would be easy. "I have to get dressed, you know," he whispered. "I'm standing here in my boxers. It looks just a bit weird."

"I know. I have read every conceivable book out there on babies. I'm sure Mycroft will tell me if I do something wrong. He always does." Sherlock gave a slight shrug and then tilted his head up to with a smirk to look at John. "I like you without your clothes on."

"I'm aware," John stated with a smirk of his own. "And as much as I enjoy making you happy I really need to get dressed." He shifted and moved to his knees, situating himself between Sherlock's legs and eagerly meeting his lips. "Besides, you still have clothes on. That's hardly fair." With a final nip at Sherlock's bottom lip he stood, grabbing the trousers to his uniform and slowly pulling them on.
Sherlock returned the brief kiss, smirking a bit. He watched John get dressed in silence. He wasn't really sure what to say at this point. Anything that came to mind seemed to be trite or would just end up making his fiancé feel bad about having to leave. So, he kept his thoughts to himself. It seemed every time it was time for the army doctor to leave, it was harder than the last. At least, after this he wouldn't have to worry about John leaving him anymore. Or at least, he hoped not.

"I talked to Mycroft while we were planning my trip out here." John yanked his belt through the loops and clasped it. "I got you a present." He lifted his gaze from his trousers and turned toward his bag. It had been a spur of the moment. The words were out of his mouth and before he had time to think it over Mycroft had agreed. "So I had these made for you." He turned around and placed the chain around Sherlock's neck, dog tags clanking together at the end. "They have got my name on them. Exactly what I'm wearing now." He shrugged as he pulled a tan shirt over his head. "I figured you might like it.

Sherlock raised his eyebrows at John mentioning getting him a present. He picked up the tags around his neck to look at them. He squeezed them tightly in his hand for a moment and then glanced up to his fiancé with a smile. "I do. Thank you." Another thing for him to hold onto while the army doctor was away. A piece of John, even though they were merely replicas. He removed the chain that held the ring, and slid it off. Then he turned the chain with dog tags around to undo it briefly and then slide the ring on so it would fall in between the two tags before clasping it back together. He shoved the now empty chain into his trouser's pocket.

John watched with a smile as he tugged his outer shirt over his shoulders. "I'm glad." He nodded surely. It wasn't as wonderful as wedding rings or recording a violin song for their first dance but he knew Sherlock had liked wearing his dog tags. "I love you." He grinned at his fiancé. "And you will do fine with Amy. I promise."

"Love you too," Sherlock replied. "I suppose so. I didn't think I would be nervous, but I guess I am now that she is here. I'm not cut out to be a father John...but I'll try." He had been too. He had done everything to change his life and accommodate little Sandi into it. His life seemed to be constantly changing of late. There were still adjustments that needed made, mainly by him personally, to fully accept everything that had happened since he and John had been together.

"You're a genius," John muttered as he finished buttoning his shirt. "And you've got a wonderful support system around you. I'm not worried." He moved to stand between Sherlock's legs, pulling the other man against him the best he could. "Six months and then you'll have me all to yourself. And I'll buy some new whipped cream."

Sherlock smirked a bit, arms wrapping around John to return the hug. He rested his head on his fiancé's shoulder for awhile before tilting his head up to look at the army doctor, the smirk getting slightly bigger. "Just so you know, my mum really is expecting us to stay the night before we go on our honeymoon so be ready to make some noise after six months of nothing."

John blushed and buried his face in Sherlock's chest. "Why?" He asked with a soft laugh. His main guess was that his future mother-in-law was taking care of Amy while they were gone. "Hate to do this but I have got to get my boots on." He pulled away from his fiancé slowly and grabbed his boots, moving to sit on the floor. It took a while for him to get both boots on and once he was done he looked up at Sherlock with a weak smile.

"Well, one I told her we already had agreed to do so. And two, I'm sure she plans on spoiling her granddaughter to death. According to her, it is what grandma's are for." Sherlock gave a slight shrug and smiled down at John. He offered a hand to help his fiancé back to his feet. Just six more months, he reminded himself. He could do this. The first six months hadn't been as terrible as he
thought it would be, despite all the things that had happened.

John didn't hesitate and grabbed Sherlock's hand, embracing the other man as soon as he was standing. "She is in for quite the shock," he said with a smile. "She is going to hate me." Except that was an understatement. She already didn't mind him but given what she might hear... John pulled away and slowly took on his military posture. Shoulders back. Spine straight. Head high. "Stay safe."

Sherlock smirked a bit, returning the hug immediately. "She won't hate you. She will probably be more amused than anything." He smirked again momentarily, but it fell when the last two words were spoken. Being safe wasn't something he was worried about for himself, but for his fiancé. "I will. You too." He wanted to say that John needed to come back, come back safe to him and to Amy. But the army doctor already knew the score; he didn't need it thrown in his face.

There was still at least an hour left for him to spend with Sherlock and Amy. While the idea did sound amazing he knew that the longer he stayed the harder it would be to leave. "I love you. I'll see you soon." He placed a soft kiss on Sherlock lips and the moment he did so he decided he didn't want it thrown in his face.

Sherlock returned the kiss readily, arms enveloping around John as well to hug his fiancé closer. "Love you too," he murmured behind the kiss. He brought one hand up to the back of the army doctor's head, fingers running through the short hair. It was one of the things he would miss the most; he had always enjoyed stroking John's head and feeling the soft bristles on his finger tips.

After a small moan John pulled away from the kiss, taking a deep breath and keeping his gaze locked on his fiancé. "I'll text you when I land," he whispered as he pulled away from Sherlock's arms and moved toward his sleeping daughter. He picked her up gently and just stared at her in awe, studying her face before holding her against his chest. A soft kiss was placed on the top of her head before John set her back down and moved across the room to put his backpack on. "See you soon." He flashed a weak smile and gave Sherlock a quick peck before leaving.

After John left, Sherlock just sat on the stool. It had never been easy for him, when his fiancé left. He glanced down at the tags around his neck, one hand lifting them to scrutinize them easier. His grip tightened around them as he whispered to himself, "Come back to me John Watson. Your daughter needs you. I need you." He really was lost without his blogger. He gave a small growl of frustration, relinquishing the dog tags. He rolled over to little Sandi and took a picture of her sleeping and then sent it to John. The army doctor should have a picture of his daughter. He couldn't think of a caption so he left it blank. "Your Dad is the bravest and wisest man I have ever met." He spoke softly to the infant, who was oblivious to the world. He envied Amy's innocence and bliss.

John took the slowest route he could in the cab, taking in London before he arrived at the airport. Mycroft walked with him and couldn't help but smile when John stopped walking at the picture of his daughter on his phone. He quickly saved the attachment. Refusing to speak to Mycroft, he simply boarded his aircraft. With a small smirk John flipped Mycroft off as he took off.
The trip back to the hospital was tense but Mycroft managed to smile softly when he entered the hospital room. "And here is a proud new father," he whispered with a glance toward Amy.

Sherlock was staring down at little Sandi, his elbows on his knees and fingers steepled under his chin when Mycroft walked in. Without looking to his older brother, he spoke in an icy hushed toned. "Get out. You and I are no longer on speaking terms." It was easy to displace his anger on his brother.

"You're honestly blaming this on me?" Mycroft shook his head and ran a hand down his suit jacket. "Sherlock, I didn't make him go back. It was his job. I don't have control of his previous company getting murdered. He needed to go back." Without a care he moved further into the room, looking down at Amy with a soft smile. Sleeping. Happy. She had no idea what was going on around her. "Don't be mad at me. I wasn't the one who decided to go back into the military."

"You stay away from her!" Sherlock hissed, standing from the stool quickly and ignoring the burning sensation on his feet. He advanced on his older brother aggressively, eyes narrowed. "They could have waited another few days. You could have made that happen, but you didn't. Don't think for a minute that I don't see Dad behind the scenes pulling the strings. You-you are just his puppet. God forbid you disappoint father. You are pathetic. You disgust me. Now leave."

The sudden movement in the room made Amy stir slightly and Mycroft tensed instantly. "This wasn't anybody, Sherlock. This was the Army. Dad had nothing to do with this and I couldn't stop it. I tried. Do you think I wanted to take him away from you and Amy? This should be the greatest moment of his life and he isn't here. I would never take that from him. The Army would." He straightened up and nodded toward the slowly waking infant behind his brother. "I'm here to help you with her.

"I don't want or need your help! Just get the hell out!" Sherlock didn't want to listen to anything Mycroft had to say. It was easier that way. Easier to remain angry at his older brother. He would have continued his childish tirade but little Sandi seemed to be waking up. He spun on his heels, teeth meshing into his bottom lip from the torment upon his feet. He picked the infant up carefully, rocking Amy in his arms. He didn't turn around to face Mycroft, opting to keep his back to his brother at this point.

Amy glanced up at Sherlock with wide eyes, taking several deep breaths before reaching a hand out toward his face.

"You don't mean that," Mycroft stated calmly. "You are upset at the situation. A lot of things just happened, Sherlock. Don't push me away." He was polite enough to turn toward the door and leave but he remained outside the door.

Sherlock managed a smile at the tiny hand reaching for his face. He sat back down on the stool carefully, purposefully ignoring whatever his older brother was saying. "Hopefully you won't develop my ill temperament. I don't think John could deal with two, stubborn children." He really wasn't sure what to do with little Sandi, other than to try and comfort her and keep the infant from crying. His fiancé had seemed to know what to do instinctively and despite all his book reading, he suddenly felt lost and overwhelmed.
Mycroft came back into the room but opted to stay near the door. Gazing at Amy from a distance was enough for him. "You're doing very good so far," he said with a small nod. It was true. A year ago Sherlock wouldn't know what to do with himself. Now he was sitting with his daughter in his arms. "And I'm here to help you while John is gone."

"You?" Sherlock asked, with a smirk. His tone was clearly amused and not accusing. "What the hell do you know about taking care of children? An infant no less." Probably not the best choice of words in hindsight. He could already hear Mycroft's reply in his head. His older brother had him to deal with, didn't he? He looked back down to little Sandi, who was being quiet. Not that was a bad thing, in fact it was marvelous. He had worried that Amy might turn out to be one of those infants who cried and cried for hours on end. Maybe this was just the calm before the storm?

"I practically raised you," Mycroft replied calmly. It took some effort but he stepped forward, freezing the moment Amy's eyes shifted to him. "A lot like John, then," he muttered with a half-smirk in his brother's direction. "She is very alert."

Amy yawned, a small squeak coming from her mouth as she wiggled in Sherlock's arms. The moment she was turned, her head resting against his chest, her eyes closed.

"And despite her better judgment, seems to really like you." He stopped moving, then. This was what he had always wanted. A family, a child to call his own. Now Sherlock had it all.

Sherlock smiled proudly. "You think so? She will probably change her mind later on if life. Children and that rebellion stage and what have you. I was reading about that recently and I ended up throwing the book in the trash. I think I will wait on the teenage years and just concentrate on now." After a moment, he picked up his train of thought once more. "Did you know some teenagers start having sex at thirteen? Thirteen, Mycroft. And given John's penchant for sexual release…Jesus, we just won't let her date until she's eighteen…no thirty…” He trailed off. Usually, planning and worrying about the future wasn't something he did but now it was all he could do.

It seemed Amy's entire life was already planned out. "You've really put some thought into this," Mycroft said with a small chuckle. "I'm sure Amy might be just as good as her mother, Sherlock. Sarah waited." He nodded surely and let his gaze drop to the child. "We don't want her to end up like you," he joked lightly as he stepped forward. Amy's eyes opened and locked on him again, her head pressed against Sherlock's chest. "I think she'll like you both, to be honest. A soldier and a consulting detective as parents? She'll have a lot of friends."

"Friends? No. Absolutely not. She won't be allowed to leave the flat without me, John or both. She won't need to go to school, we can teach her at home. I am all too aware of everything that is out in the world and I won't let any of that touch her. It is a very real possibility someone could take her or hurt her to get at me or John." Shit. When had he become so protective and overbearing? Sherlock hadn't thought about any of this until now. "Speaking of, how is cleaning up Moriarty's web going?"

"I think you might want to discuss some of that with John." Mycroft laughed again. "I think he might want her to go to school, have friends, a normal childhood. Probably a lot like him." While Mycroft was aware that he and Sherlock's childhood was far from average, he had determined a while ago that he didn't wish any other child to go through that. "She will want to be a normal little girl. John seems like the type to spoil her rotten." At Sherlock's next question Mycroft nodded slowly. "Almost done. He had ties with terrorist groups in Afghanistan so obviously we are uncovering more every day. But good."

"I'll just make him see…understand…" Sherlock muttered as he trailed off, his mind thinking furiously. He had not one vulnerability now, but two. It wouldn't surprise him in the least if it was
used to exploit him later. He couldn't, wouldn't let that happen. If it meant keeping her locked up in
the flat forever, then so be it.

"He is just as stubborn as you," Mycroft told his younger brother with a raised brow. "She will be
fine, Sherlock. Let her grow up and be normal. Look at her, she deserves that much. Being locked
away in a flat her whole life? That isn't for her." He understood, though. With Moriarty's web still
operating Sherlock was naturally nervous. Honestly, Mycroft would be feeling the same. "Once
John gets back you will be fine."

If John came back, Sherlock thought bitterly. "I guess you are right. I just don't want her to be used
against me like John was. I know caring isn't an advantage but…" He shook his head as he trailed
off once more. He looked down at Sandi with a worried frown, his dog tags dangling in the air
above her.

The objects dangling above Amy's reach were suddenly the most interesting thing in the world. She
reached one hand out and grasped one of the tags, holding on to it for a long moment.

"I think you will both be fine after we get rid of the last few men. With them gone you can return
to normal. Working cases for the Yard." Mycroft was even getting distracted by the scene in front
of him. It was impossible, he knew, but it was like Amy knew the magnitude of the situation
around her. She knew that those dog tags were her Dad's.

Sherlock couldn't help but smile. "You like them too? They are your Dad's." He balanced little
Sandi carefully in one hand and slipped the necklace off with the other. "Do you want to hold
them?" He never thought he would take them off, but the infant had a right to them too. More so
than he did, he supposed. He glanced up to Mycroft. "When do you think I can get the hell out of
here? She is perfectly fine. No reason to keep her here." He was pouting a little because he hated
hospitals and being stuck in one was annoying him.

Amy held the dog tags with amazement, putting one in her mouth as she glanced up at Sherlock
curiously.

"Obviously they are a bit worried because she was born a month early." Mycroft glanced out of the
room for a moment. "But I have already managed to talk to them. You are free to go. Your flat is
set. Clothes, formula, diapers. The changing table is right in front of your desk in the living room."
He smiled softly when Amy squeaked, continuing to gum at the dog tags. "I've got a car waiting if
you really want to go."

"Do those taste good?" Sherlock asked little Sandi with a smirk. He held onto the chain so she
wouldn't accidentally try and swallow the whole thing. "She will be fine. Amy here is a Watson.
And yes, leaving now would be great." He stood, ignoring the immediate painful sensation in his
feet. "Grab the bag Mum brought, would you?" He brushed by his older brother as he left the
room, towards the exit of the hospital.

Mycroft rolled his eyes at the demand but did as he was told. "This child is going to be spoiled
rotten," he commented softly as he followed Sherlock. He watched Amy curl tightly into Sherlock
chest at the movements, holding on to the dog tags and keeping her gaze locked on him. "Do you
want me to stay on the couch tonight?" He finally caught up to them, the doors to the hospital
sliding open just as a black car pulled up. "The first night home is usually the worst."

It was Sherlock's turn to roll his eyes. "If I say no, will it matter? You and I both know you are
going to do whatever you want to anyway." He smiled down at little Sandi again. "You sure do like
Dad's dog tags don't you? I don't blame you, I do too." Since his hands were full he waited for
Mycroft to open the door. Once it was, he smirked a bit. His older brother was always prepared.
There was a car seat and he placed Amy in it carefully. He tried to fasten it, but he was having trouble getting the buckles to fall in place properly and snap into place. "Christ, this is the damn crib all over again..." He muttered to himself in frustration.

Mycroft went around the car and gently moved Sherlock's hands out of the way. Amy turned to him, dog tags still in her mouth, and watched Mycroft as he smoothly buckled everything. "You will figure it out in time." He smiled and fell into his own seat. "And yes, I do intend to stay in the flat. It is the least I can do." He smiled over at Sherlock and rested his hand on the side of the car seat. Amy immediately moved a hand to rest on it, patting at it as she looked over at Sherlock.

Sherlock sat next to the car seat, happy to be off his already aching feet. He watched little Sandi and Mycroft interact. "Apparently, dear brother, she also likes you. Boy is she in for surprise when she gets older," He smirked a bit. "Hey kid, you keep slobbering on Dad's dog tags I'll just let you keep them okay?" Of course Amy didn't understand, but just like Hamish he talked to her like a grown adult. Shit. The cat. How would it react to the baby?

Mycroft laughed and turned his hand so Amy's would fall in his palm. "She is making wonderful choices. Maybe someday she could work for the British government." He brought his other arm across his body and gently poked the tip of her nose. "I think Papa wants those back," he whispered playfully. Amy tilted her head at the sound of his voice as the dog tags slowly slid from her mouth, clinking into her lap. "She is rather quiet." His gaze lifted to Sherlock.

"Like hell," Sherlock growled. "She is going to have a nice normal job, like being a teacher. Something boring, safe." He narrowed his eyes at his older brother briefly before he turned and smiled at little Sandi. "So far she has been quiet but that could change. And don't you listen to mean old Uncle Mycroft. You can keep the tags as long as you want."

The little girl already had her life planned out by Sherlock. "What if she wants to work for the Yard? Would she be allowed to do that?" Mycroft smirked at the end of his question. Amy kicked her feet slightly and squeaked at the sound of the dog togs tapping together. She glanced at Sherlock and wiggled her feet again. "Who knows, maybe she'll have a set of lungs on her like John. You might be in for a long first night." He moved his hand to gently wiggle the dog tags, Amy's gaze fixated on them.

"And have her work with someone like Anderson? Please." Sherlock scoffed at the thought. He arched a brow at Mycroft playing with little Sandi. "For a man who hasn't been around kids, you do all right. Maybe you and Lestrade should look into adopting or a surrogate mother." Bringing up the Detective Inspector was always a sore point for his older brother, but he meant it as a compliment not to make Mycroft uncomfortable. Although, the latter would probably be the result. Oh well. His older brother would get over it.

Mycroft's gaze shot up to Sherlock and he tensed. "We just restarted our relationship," he stated softly. "Greg doesn't want kids. Amy should be enough." He wiggled the dog tags again and let his eyes focus on the little girl as the car came to a stop. "It's late. You should feed her and see if she will go to bed." He slowly undid the buckles of the car seat for Sherlock and got out of the car.

"Mmm," was the only reply Sherlock gave as he slid out of the car. He picked up Amy and snatched the dog tags from his brother. "Uncle Mycroft thinks he can tell me what to do. Isn't that silly of him? Maybe we will stay up late to annoy him." He smirked as he walked in through the front door. It didn't surprise him when he was greeted by Mrs. Hudson. "Amy, this is your other grandma. When you get older, you had best mind your manners."

Mrs. Hudson held her hands up to her mouth, looking at Sherlock before shaking her head. "Oh, Sherlock, she is beautiful." She looked over his shoulder and frowned almost instantly. "Where is
the other proud father?" She looked at the little girl in Sherlock's arms with a frown. "Already
gone, is he? You'll be fine. Sherlock she is wonderful." She reached a hand out and gently grasped
one of Amy's wiggling it slightly before resting it on Sherlock's shoulder. "I'll be here if you need
help. It has been ages." She grinned.

Mycroft went up the stairs calmly, looking around the flat proudly before falling on to the couch
with a sigh. All set up and ready to go.

Sherlock matched the frown at the mention of John. "He had to leave early," a pause as he cleared
his throat, "I know. Thank you Mrs. Hudson. She needs fed. You can visit tomorrow if you want."
He walked up the stairs, always the worst part on his feet. "I'm supposed to warm the bottle, right?
Pretty sure I read that somewhere." Sitting seemed like a great idea instead he passed off little
Sandi to his brother and then went into the kitchen to prepare dinner for Amy.

Mycroft took Amy with a small frown, looking down at her. "Yes, warm it. Test it on your finger.
It needs to be warm. Not too hot, not too cold." He rocked her gently. "You are in pain, do you
want me to do it for you?" He stood up slowly and moved into the kitchen. "Sit, Sherlock, I'll do
this." He managed to balance Amy in one arm and grabbed a bottle out of the cabinet he had set up.
"The crib is in your room, then?" He mixed the formula and put the bottle in the microwave before
glancing back down at Amy. "You are doing a good job, Sherlock."

"I can do it just fine!" Sherlock snapped when Mycroft came and took over. "Yes, the crib is in my
room. There is a nursery set up in John's old room. I'll move it there when my feet have healed and
I can go up and down stairs with a bit more ease. I bought one of those baby monitor's so I can hear
her in any room as long as I have the receiver." Sitting sounded wonderful, but he stubbornly
remained standing.

The moment Sherlock's voice rose Amy let out a small wail, taking a deep breath and letting out a
louder one. Mycroft winced as she continued to cry, shouting and wiggling. "Shhh..." He rocked
her, occasionally bouncing on the balls of his feet. "Shhh. Shhh, Amy." He held her so her head
was resting against his shoulder, rocking his body from side to side and glancing at his younger
brother. "I'm just trying to help," he stated over the slowly quieting infant. "I was going to let you
feed her but I know your feet hurt. I was just helping so you could be out of pain." The microwave
went off and he handed Amy over to Sherlock, who sniffed and snuggled into him. "Here." He
passed off the warm bottle to Sherlock.

Sherlock snatched the bottle roughly, but took little Sandi gently. "Hey, no need to cry. I've got
you. Stiff upper lip young miss." He offered the bottle to Amy. He remained standing out of
stubborn spite. His feet would hate him later but he didn't care. He was trying to prove a point. That
he could do this without help from anyone.

Amy turned her head away and let out a soft cry, slowly starting to shout again. Mycroft looked at
Sherlock for a long moment. "Sit down, Sherlock," he told the consulting detective calmly. "She
can feel every bloody emotion you are giving off right now. Take a deep breath, stop acting like a
child, and sit down." By the end of his instructions Amy was wailing again, taking a deep breath
before each shout.

Frustrated, Sherlock let out a growl. "Don't tell me what to do! You know what, if you are so damn
smart you can feed her!" He gave the infant back to Mycroft, stalked out of the kitchen, went to his
room and slammed the door shut. He collapsed onto the bed heavily. He clamped his hands over
his ears to try and drown out little Sandi crying.

Mycroft stood in the kitchen for a long moment before setting the bottle down and rocking Amy
the best he could. After two minutes of crying she calmed down and curled against Mycroft's chest.
"There we go, it's alright." He grabbed the bottle and held it to her mouth. She latched on to it almost immediately, pausing in her loud eating to take deep breaths before resuming. "Papa is just stressed," he told Amy in a higher-pitched voice. "You didn't do anything wrong." She finished the bottle and he laid a towel over his shoulder to start burping her. "You could never do anything wrong."

After the crying died down, Sherlock dropped his hands. He should be the one feeding little Sandi, not his older brother. Yet here he was, pouting in his room. This was why he shouldn't be a father, he thought to himself. He just didn't have the emotional capacity to do so, he figured. Despite how much he had changed as a person. Despite all the changes he had made to accommodate Amy. He would never be a good enough father for her. A father that she would deserve. Mycroft seemed to have it all down already and he hated his brother for it. Fine. Let the snide Government official do all the work. He would just stay in here and hide, he was supposed to be off his feet anyway.

After burping the baby, Mycroft moved slowly to knock on the door to Sherlock's bedroom. "She needs to nap." He opened the door and moved toward the crib. He set her down slowly and pulled the small blanket over her. "Look, a present from Grandma." He put the stuffed dog next to her as she drifted off to sleep. "Do you want to talk?" He asked softly.

Sherlock almost started yelling but he bit his tongue. He didn't want to make little Sandi start crying again. Instead, he turned with a pillow in his hand and chucked it at Mycroft with a glare. He then promptly turned his back on his older brother. He had already broken down twice in front of Mycroft, and all be damned if he was going to do it ever again. He just wanted to be alone.

"Right. Fine then." Mycroft tossed the pillow back at Sherlock and took one last look at Amy. "She will sleep until about three for a few hours, I think. See you then." He paused when his phone went off and he answered it right away as he shut the door behind him.

After moving around slightly to snuggle against her stuffed dog, Amy fell asleep.

With a quiet sigh, Sherlock finally sat up in the bed. He stared over at the crib for awhile. After several moments lost in thought, he went through the nightstand and found the picture of John catching a Frisbee. With the picture in hand, he crawled over to the crib and attached it quietly to the mobile that hung above the sleeping infant. "There you go. Now when you wake up, you will see Dad every time." The words were barely an audible whisper. He dug out the empty necklace from his pocket and took out the dog tags. He placed the ring back on the original chain and wore it once more. He then hung the dog tags next to the picture. He slid down the crib to a sitting position. A fuzzy head came up and startled him by rubbing all over him. When had Hamish got in here? He shrugged, picked the cat up and set it in his lap. His head leaned against the crib, one hand petting the cat on the head.

Amy slept peacefully until a little after three in the morning. She started to stir in the crib, one hand curling into a fist as she opened her eyes. The new items in her vision caught her attention almost instantly and she sat in quiet contemplation for a moment. When she came to the conclusion that she was alone, and rather hungry, she let out a small cry.

Mycroft had been on the phone all night, stressed and worried, but had somehow managed to fall asleep on the couch. Even then he was prim and proper. Legs crossed at the ankles, shoes set neatly at the side of the couch, and hands folded on top of his stomach. Not even Amy's small cry could wake him up.

Sherlock had stayed up and sitting on the floor, petting Hamish the entire time. When the baby started crying, he sat stubbornly, thinking for sure Mycroft would get it. The cat pulled away from his hand bit it, growled, flicked its tail and glanced up at the crib. "Fine...I'll get it..." He muttered
to the feline. It jumped from his lap as he stood. "Hey, little Sandi. I don't have any candy. No need to cry, I'll wipe your eyes dry." He recited the rhyme effortlessly as he picked Amy up carefully.

Amy quieted her cries for a moment, Sherlock's voice calming her down before she started again. It wasn't as loud but it was enough to attempt to capture Sherlock's attention. She hadn't eaten in a few hours and the new feeling in her stomach was making her uncomfortable.

Mycroft shifted on the couch turning to hide his ears and eliminate the sound coming from Sherlock's room.

First Sherlock checked the diaper. It appeared unfilled. "Hungry then?" He questioned out loud, as he moved to the door and opened it. "Uncle Mycroft is sleeping. We need to be quiet. We can wake him after your bottle, hm?" He smirked a bit and went into the kitchen. He got out a fresh bottle and warmed the milk. Once the bottle was ready, he slumped into a chair gratefully and offered little Sandi the bottle. "Here you go, time to eat." Hamish jumped up on the table and peered curiously at the infant for a moment, then lost interest as it began to clean a paw.

Amy took the bottle greedily, eating loudly as she kept her gaze locked on Sherlock. She lazily lifted one hand to rest on the bottle. Every swallow was punctuated with a loud gulp followed by a deep inhale through her nose.

Mycroft shifted slightly on the couch and sat up, turning the telly on for some background noise. "Good morning," he commented softly as he moved into the kitchen.

Sherlock eyed the cat but Hamish didn't seem to notice. He turned his gaze to his older brother. "Your grumpy Uncle is up." He leaned down to whisper in little Sandi's ear confidentially, "He isn't a morning person." He shifted slightly so Amy would nestle a little more comfortably in his arms.

Mycroft had been about to reply when his phone went off. He answered it promptly and moved out of the kitchen.

Amy released the bottle right as the news started, curling against Sherlock's chest.

"This morning we start with breaking news from Afghanistan. A company out of Camp Bastion has been reported missing. It is believed this company is being led by Captain John Watson, known in London as the infamous blogger of consulting detective Sherlock Holmes..."

Mycroft reentered the kitchen right as he ended the call, freezing the moment he heard the news in the background. That wasn't supposed to be publicized yet.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!