A Backward Glance O'er Travel'd Roads

by ElectraRhodes

Summary

Years on and Will finally makes it back to Florence.

Notes

This was a prompt from someone on the second bus tour at Fannibal Fest Toronto but I didn't get their AO3 handle or their Twitter! Well duh! If you recognise this let me know so I can gift it to you properly! and thank you.

The first three years there was really no point as Hannibal was in the BSHCI and there would be no one there to smile into his face.

The fourth year? Well that was moot as he was in hospital. Recovering. Probably. And Hannibal? No one knew where Hannibal was at all. Drowned. Dead. Or just plain disappeared.

The fifth year was a tough one. He almost made it there but in the end it was the straw that broke the camel’s back. He and Molly got a divorce and the bitter recriminations took months to work through. It was hard to explain. Harder still to justify the one way ticket he bought without telling her. So. Divorce. And maybe just a few of their friends thinking it was about time too, hadn’t Molly put up with enough of his shit already.

The sixth year? Well he could have gone. But the slough of despond and despair finally caught up
and it was hard. Too hard. And then there was the case. And Jack? Jack was still fucking relentless on the bad ones. He still hadn’t learned his lesson. But then, nor had Will.

So it came to the seventh year and this time nothing was going to stop him. Not a damn thing. He bought his ticket, he sorted out his meagre affairs, he left instructions just in case, and he packed.

The morning he left he looked at his carry on and bag. Not much to show really. Not in physical tangible terms. Almost zero. But he knew he had enough other baggage. And he knew it wasn’t the stuff he carried that defined him but the sum of the past, the totality of it all.

On the plane he tried to sleep, still wary of his dreams, haunted in a different way than before. But still haunted.

The sun in Florence was bright. He bought sunglasses at the airport and caught a taxi into town. He’d booked an Air BnB and had enough Italian now that he hadn’t mangled the communication or the instructions to the driver.

When he arrived he settled in fast. Just another American tourist here to revel in the wonders of renaissance Italy. He’d given himself a few days in hand to orient himself, find the landmarks, visit the sights, in case someone had flagged his passports. He hadn’t talked to Alana in a long time. But just in case.

On the morning he felt slightly sick. After all, there had been no plan. No talk of what might lie beyond. So it was all just supposition and hope. He wasn’t sure what to do without this thin vein of hope.

He walked across the Piazza Della Signoria glanced around. No faint shot half silenced against the wind this time. No forgiveness.

In the gallery he had to get his bearings again. But a docent was helpful and reminded him of the route. He checked his cell. He wasn’t totally sure of the time, but he reckoned he was a little early. So he headed straight for the room.

In the doorway he stilled. There were maybe a dozen people milling around and four people on the bench. He didn’t know why he’d thought it would be empty. Maybe it was better this way? He walked over and settled onto the small space to the right of one of the people drawing the ethereal beauty of La Primavera.

He leaned in slightly and the person stopped drawing to place an arm round his shoulders instead and pull him closer.

“You remembered.”

“I promised I would.”

He couldn’t help the small sob that got away from him, nor the hand that grabbed the lapels of Hannibal’s jacket. Nor the readiness to open to the kiss pressed to his lips. Nor the utter waves of relief and thankfulness.

“You’re still wearing that atrocious aftershave.”

“I know. I still get it for Christmas.”

“We’ll do something about that.”
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